

# Displacement and Health Issues of Women: A Study in Udalguri Village of Dibrugarh District, Assam

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## Abstract

Displacement has an effect on the life of the displaced people including social, economic, political and cultural spheres. Apart from these, it has been affecting the physical and mental health of the displaced people. In general, it has been seen that women are physically weaker than men. As a result, women have been faced more health-related problems during the period of displacement as well as post displacement period. Women are always subjugated as marginalized as inferior in our society. Women experienced different challenges during and after displacement including health issues. Therefore, the present study has an attempt to explore the health-related issues of women in all the phases, i.e. pre-displacement, during displacement and post-displacement period.

**Keywords:** Displacement, women, health issues, marginalization, reproductive.

## Introduction

Displacement is a worldwide phenomenon. It has been affecting the daily life and activities of the displaced people. It is multidimensional in nature which affecting the lives of people including economic, social and cultural spheres. The term displacement refers to remove something from its original place and establish it to another place. In sociological point of view, displacement is a process of transformation in where a huge number of people displaced from their original inhabitation to another place. Though both men and women are affected by displacement, the effect on women is different from men because of gender-based differentiation. Gender biases negatively impact on displaced women. Male biases in society cause perpetuate gender inequality in terms of unequal resource allocation and distribution and also legitimize silencing of

women's needs. Women experienced different challenges during and after displacement including health issues.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

Due to displacement women become more marginalized and vulnerable section of the society. They have faced different challenges including their economic status and their health issues. Therefore, the present study tries to find out the health issues and its consequences into three phases, i.e. pre-displacement, during displacement and post-displacement period.

### **Objective of the Study**

- (i) To know about the health issues of women.
- (ii) To explore the consequences related to their health issues.

### **Field and Methodology**

The study was conducted in Udalguri village of Dibrugarh district of Assam and selected sample purposively. The study selected 50 respondents as a sample unit from the universe. The information, which required for the present study was collected from the primary and secondary sources. The Primary Sources such as interview schedules, interview guide, observation, focus group discussion, case study, photographs etc. The secondary sources are books, magazines, newspapers, paper-clips, journals, published works made by the scholars, different statistical reports, internet, website etc. In this study, the design of research work is an exploratory research design.

### **Socio-economic Profile of the Displaced Women**

The analysis of the socio-economic background of the respondents is very important because it facilitates and helps to understand the social and economic condition of the respondents and help to study the personality pattern of the individuals. In this study, it was found that out of 50 respondents, the highest numbers of respondents are from the age group of 29-39 years and only a rest no. of respondents belong to the age group of 40-50 years. It has been revealed that all the respondents 50(100%) belong to the caste group of

More Other Backward Class (MOBC). Regarding the community of the respondents, out of 50 (100%) respondents, maximum respondents belong to the Muttak community and rest of respondents belong to the Chutia community. In this study, it is found that maximum numbers of respondents are married and all the respondents belong to the religion of Hinduism. So, there is a no different opinion of the respondents towards their religion. The study reveals that the educational and occupational status of the respondents is very poor.

### **Health issues and its consequences of Displaced Women**

A healthy mind is the result of a healthy body. Health is considered as one of the essential factors for smooth working in our day to day activities. Displacement is one of the worldwide phenomena which effect greatly to the life of the displaced women. Basically, it is seen that women are physically weaker than men. In this study, it also reveals that women suffered from more health problems than men during the period of displacement. A maximum displaced person suffered from health problems during displacement.

Though both men and women faced various problems during the period of displacement and post-displacement women are always suffering more than men during the whole process of displacement. The maximum respondents are suffered from health problems and only the least number of respondents had not been suffering due to displacement. The respondents are suffering from different health issues like skin diseases, viral fevers, cardiological problem, acute dysentery, actual cough and other kinds of problems. Above these, women are faced with reproductive health problems. Reproductive health care covers a wide range of issues such as pregnancy and childbirth; the protection of women from emotional, physical and sexual abuse, family planning etc.

During displacement, women's physical and social vulnerability increases such as- stress and malnutrition endanger the health of pregnant and lactating women and their children, the extended network of family support during pregnancy and lactation is lost and also young, single, widowed or disabled women may be at particular risk of sexual violence. Moreover, women's authority to control their own reproductive lives may be eroded by the social changes associated with displacement. During displacement, violence against women may increase, not only in acts of war but also within families and communities. Due to displacement women have diminished the capacity in terms of reproductive health.

Displacement destroyed the complete social fabric of existing societies and lack of health services are the main cause of diminishing the reproductive health after displacement. In this situation the women need sufficient reproductive health care facilities; they need support from their family as well as their communities. Without the mental and physical support, it is not possible for women to develop their strength regarding health. But displacement compelled them to lose everything. They unfavorably faced the problems of food and nutrition; not able to take extra care for their babies under the mother's womb. This is a very pitiable and pathetic condition of women. Post-displacement compelled them to lose everything which is more essential for the livelihood.

### Conclusion

The study reveals how displacement influenced the entire life of the displaced people in general and women in particular. Women have been faced with more challenges than men due to displacement. The experiences of displacement have been different from men and women. The socio-economic condition of women becomes very poor. They faced different health issues during the period of displacement and even after the displacement. Displacement affected their reproductive health also. Though, the government has been implemented many policies regarding displacement and rehabilitation processes but the government has not provided any special provisions for women. In this context, it can be said that the government should take some major initiatives for rehabilitating the displaced people in the near future for their socio-economic development.

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