



Research Article

The Influence of Natural Laws and Astrological Predictions on Human Rights: A Study of the Mishing Scheduled Tribe Community in Majuli District

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15715737>

Abstract

The Mishing St community in Hanitan, Majuli district, lives near the banks of the Brahmaputra River. They are an indigenous group of Northeast India with a unique identity, culture, language, and traditional social norms. They take pride in their heritage and maintain strong ethnic values.

The community follows astrology and Vaastu, integrating these practices into their daily lives. They also uphold Assamese cultural values while preserving their distinct traditions. This research paper explores the challenges faced by the community in studying and practicing astrology.

Manuscript Information

- **ISSN No:** 2583-7397
- **Received:** 27-05-2025
- **Accepted:** 13-06-2025
- **Published:** 22-06-2025
- **IJCRM:** 4(3); 2025: 481-486
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- **Plagiarism Checked:** Yes
- **Peer Review Process:** Yes

How to Cite this Article

Boruah CR. The Influence of Natural Laws and Astrological Predictions on Human Rights: A Study of the Mishing Scheduled Tribe Community in Majuli District. Int J Contemp Res Multidiscip. 2025;4(3):481-486.

Access this Article Online



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KEYWORDS: Mishing (Missing, Mising), Astrology Predictions, fertile land, ST Community

1. INTRODUCTION

The Mishing people, the largest ethnic group in Majuli, Assam, belong to the Tani people and speak Mising, Assamese, and Deori. Originally migrating from Arunachal Pradesh, they are believed to be descendants of Tibetans who moved south in

search of fertile land for farming. However, life on Majuli Island presents significant challenges, as land erosion and flash floods frequently destroy their homes and farmland, forcing many to relocate. Additionally, logging bans and declining forest cover have made traditional livelihoods more difficult.

Despite these hardships, the Mishing people have shown remarkable resilience by adapting to their environment. They use banana tree boats to navigate floodwaters, develop stronger, erosion-resistant houses, and focus on disaster preparedness to safeguard their community against future natural disasters.

Astrology Predictions

Astrology predictions are forecasts about a person's future based on the positions and movements of celestial bodies like the Sun, Moon, planets, and stars. Astrologers believe that these cosmic patterns influence human life, personality, and events. Predictions are usually made using horoscopes, which are charts based on a person's birth date, time, and place.

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Astrology is not scientifically proven but is followed by many people for guidance on relationships, career, health, and personal growth.

Philosophy of the Mising ST Community in Majuli: A Tradition Rooted in Nature

The Mising Scheduled Tribe (ST) community of Majuli has traditionally evolved and developed through the guidance of ethnic universal norms and the natural world rather than relying on astrology for predictions. Their way of life has been deeply intertwined with nature, where the sun and moon play a significant role in shaping their cultural and philosophical outlook. Unlike societies that depend on astrological forecasts, the Mising community has adhered to indigenous wisdom, spiritual practices, and ancestral traditions to determine individual and collective futures.

Historically, their societal growth has been sustained by the strength of their cultural heritage and communal harmony, rather than external human-imposed standards. Their social energy, derived from traditional ethnic systems, has been instrumental in maintaining a balanced and cohesive society. The norms and values of the Mising community are passed down through generations via traditional social communication and religious practices, forming the foundation of their philosophical beliefs.

One of the key aspects of their traditional belief system is Tutom Pr—a symbolic representation of individual, family, and socio-cultural values. This symbol encapsulates their religious and philosophical principles, which guide their way of life. Unlike astrology, which attempts to predict the future based on celestial movements, the Mising community believes that their

destiny is shaped by their connection with nature and their adherence to age-old customs and rituals.

However, with the advent of modern education and globalization, astrological predictions have begun to influence various aspects of life, even among indigenous communities. Contemporary knowledge systems, influenced by scientific advancements and global perspectives, have introduced new dimensions to the understanding of individual growth and development. Despite these modern influences, the Mising ST community continues to preserve its traditional wisdom, ensuring that its cultural identity and indigenous philosophy remain intact.

Thus, the Mising community of Majuli stands as a testament to the enduring power of nature-based traditions, where the strength of society lies not in external forecasts but in the wisdom of ancestral practices, communal values, and an unbreakable bond with the natural world.

The Interplay of Natural Laws, Human Rights, and Astrology in Shaping Existence

Natural laws govern the foundational principles of the universe, orchestrating the physical, biological, and moral dimensions of existence. These immutable laws dictate the order and continuity of the cosmos, ensuring harmony and coherence across all realms of reality. Within this universal framework, human rights emerge as intrinsic principles derived from natural law, affirming the inherent dignity, freedoms, and entitlements of every individual. Rooted in justice, equality, and protection from oppression, human rights serve as the ethical cornerstone of civilized societies, fostering fairness and safeguarding fundamental liberties.

Parallel to these scientifically and morally established principles, astrology interprets the celestial influences exerted by the movements and alignments of planetary bodies. By studying cosmic patterns, astrological predictions seek to offer insights into human behavior, societal trends, and potential future developments. Though distinct from the empirical foundations of natural law and the ethical imperatives of human rights, astrology reflects humanity's enduring desire to comprehend the unknown, connecting the microcosm of individual existence with the vast macrocosm of the universe.

Together, these three domains—natural laws, human rights, and astrology—encapsulate the diverse ways in which humanity seeks to understand the forces that shape existence. Natural laws provide a scientific framework for interpreting reality, human rights establish the moral and ethical foundations for justice and social harmony, and astrology explores the mystical dimensions of cosmic influence on human life. The convergence of these perspectives underscores the human quest for knowledge, balance, and meaning, harmonizing reason, justice, and belief in the grand tapestry of existence.

The Missing ST Community in the Majuli District holds a significant place in the region's traditional, ethnic, and cultural landscape. Rooted in indigenous social norms, language, and customs, this community continues to thrive while preserving its unique identity.

Embedded within the rich heritage of Majuli, the Missing ST Community upholds its traditions through ethnic social media and linguistic expressions in the local mission language, ensuring the continuity of its cultural legacy. This tradition is further reinforced by recorded historical and seasonal astrological observations, along with astronomical studies, which have played a vital role in shaping their societal practices and seasonal transitions.

The principles of human rights and ethical norms are deeply intertwined with the community's way of life, emphasizing individual growth, social development, and collective well-being. In a broader sense, these human rights values align with their cultural practices, social commitments, and identity preservation, upheld through ethnic customs and traditional social structures.

Through a profound understanding of astrological predictions and astronomical cycles, the Missing ST Community of Majuli continues to maintain its cultural significance, strengthening its connection to the rhythms of nature and the wisdom of its ancestors.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the concept and subject matter under study, a thorough review of existing scholarly works has been conducted. Various studies by renowned scholars have been examined to explore the theoretical foundations and research developments in the field. As part of this review, three particularly relevant research papers and articles have been selected for detailed analysis.

It is important to note, however, that while these selected works hold significant relevance to the present study, they do not address the exact subject matter of this research paper. Instead, they provide valuable insights, related perspectives, and conceptual frameworks that contribute to the overall understanding of the topic under investigation.

Payun Manik Chandra, research paper on the origin of the Mishing tribe and women's role in their society (Published International Journal of Analytical and Experimental Model Analysis), ISSN08869367, VOLXIII, ISSUE XII, DEC2022, PG1658. The Mising Tribe: Heritage, Migration, and Social Structure.

The Mising tribe is the second-largest indigenous community in Northeast India. They belong to the Tibeto-Burman linguistic group, a sub-branch of the Mongoloid ethnic lineage. The Misings have a distinct cultural heritage and traditions that have been meticulously preserved across generations. Their society is also governed by indigenous customs and social norms.

Having coexisted with the Assamese people for centuries, the Misings have successfully retained their traditional socio-cultural identity, despite significant transformations in Assam's socio-political and religious landscape. The Mising people currently residing in the plains of Assam are not descendants of a singular ancestral group but rather a composite of various Tani tribes of Arunachal Pradesh who migrated over time. This historical migration accounts for the presence of multiple

Mising clans, each distinguished by its unique dialect and varying degrees of socio-cultural evolution.

Originally, the Misings were hill dwellers from the Himalayan region of Northeast India, inhabiting the mountainous terrain between the Subansiri and Siang districts of Arunachal Pradesh. Over time, they gradually integrated into the indigenous communities of the Assam plains, adopting several aspects of the local culture.

According to the 2011 Census of India, the total Mising population stood at 737,836, with 680,424 residing in Assam and 57,412 in Arunachal Pradesh. Historical records suggest that the earliest Mising migration to the Upper Assam valley occurred between the 13th and 14th centuries A.D., during the reign of the Chutia kings in the Sadiya region.

Social Structure and Gender Roles

The Mising social structure reflects a traditional division of roles between men and women. Women, however, have historically occupied a subordinate position compared to men. In contemporary times, the empowerment of women remains a crucial challenge, given that they constitute half of the nation's population.

The fundamental rights and directive principles enshrined in the Constitution of India uphold the principles of equality and non-discrimination, ensuring that women are entitled to the same rights and opportunities as men as equal citizens of the country. Social Issues of the Mising Tribe in the Brahmaputra Valley Kaman Dr. Ranjit Assistant Professor, Department of History, Chaiduar College, Gohpur Published in Indian Journal of Research, Vol. 7, Issue 5, May 2018 ISSN: 2250-1991

The Mising are one of the distinctive indigenous tribes of Assam, primarily residing in nine undivided districts of Upper Assam. They are known for their well-structured social system, governed by strict rules and regulations. To maintain order and discipline within their community, the Mising enforce stringent measures such as Yodpaknam, Menpaknam, Dormonam, and Gildahnam against individuals who violate social norms.

For the smooth functioning of their society, the Mising have established various social institutions, including Dolung Kebang, Mimbir-Yame, Rigbo-Ginam, and Daglig-Alig, which play a crucial role in overseeing social affairs and resolving disputes.

Despite their strong adherence to discipline and social governance, the Mising community continues to face socio-economic challenges. In the 21st century, certain traditional beliefs persist, including witchcraft hunting and the existence of evil spirits, leading to various ritualistic practices aimed at appeasing supernatural forces. These deeply rooted customs contribute to the community's backwardness and hinder social progress.

This paper seeks to examine the key social issues affecting the Mising tribe, analyzing the factors responsible for their socio-economic stagnation while exploring potential pathways for their upliftment.

3. OBJECTIVES

This study aims to achieve the following key objectives:

1. To analyze the benefits and impact of astrological predictions on the Mishing Scheduled Tribe (ST) community in the Majuli district.
2. To assess the sustainability of human rights within the Mishing ST community in the Majuli district.

4. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive research design, aiming to explore the challenges and opportunities associated with organic farming among the Missing ST community in the Majuli District of Assam.

To achieve this objective, both personal and telephonic interviews were conducted to gather primary data from civil society farmers in the region. The collected data was systematically analyzed to derive insights into the prevailing conditions, constraints, and potential prospects of organic farming within the community.

Area of Research: Astrology Predictions, Human Rights Norms, and the Mishing ST Community in Majuli

Astrology predictions and human rights norms have gained global significance, particularly in the context of marginalized communities striving for sustainable development. Among these, the Mishing Scheduled Tribe (ST) community in Majuli, Assam, has emerged as a crucial area of research due to its unique socio-cultural identity, economic activities, and environmental challenges.

Majuli, the world's largest river island, is home to diverse indigenous communities, with the Mishing ST population forming a significant part of its demographic structure. Within Majuli, villages such as Jengri Nukh Phulani in the entire Kamalabari region have become focal points for studying the evolving socio-economic conditions, cultural sustainability, and environmental resilience of the Mishing ST community. As a tribal society, their traditional way of life is deeply interwoven with nature, yet it faces contemporary challenges related to identity preservation, economic opportunities, and adherence to human rights norms.

The district headquarters at Garamur oversees administrative functions, but a pressing need exists to strengthen sustainable development initiatives, ensuring that the Mishing ST community receives adequate support for social and economic progress. Given that 56% of Majuli's total geographical area is dedicated to Mishing ST community activities, it is imperative to develop strategic interventions that promote their well-being while preserving their cultural heritage and environmental balance.

This research seeks to explore the various opportunities and challenges that influence the identity, socio-economic empowerment, and sustainability of the Mishing ST community in Majuli. Key areas of focus include:

The role of astrological beliefs in shaping community decisions and traditions. The impact of human rights frameworks on their

social and economic upliftment. Sustainability challenges, particularly concerning climate change and river erosion. The integration of modern development policies with indigenous knowledge systems.

By delving into these critical aspects, the study aims to provide insightful recommendations for fostering inclusive growth, identity preservation, and long-term sustainability for the Mishing ST community in Majuli.

Sample Size

This study is based on a sample of ten villages, carefully chosen from different Mishing community settlements within the Majuli district of Assam.

Sampling Technique

A non-probability sampling method has been utilized for this study. Specifically, the convenience sampling approach has been adopted to ensure ease of access and practicality in data collection.

Source of Data Collection

This study relies on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary Data: The primary data were gathered through personal and telephonic interviews conducted with respondents residing in Mishing community villages. Additionally, reports from print and electronic media within the Majuli district have been considered to ensure diverse and firsthand insights.

Secondary Data: The secondary data were obtained from a wide range of published sources, including books, journals, research papers, magazines, and reports. Furthermore, relevant information was also collected from credible online sources to supplement the study with updated and extensive perspectives.

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on a specific geographical region, namely the Majuli District of Assam, where the research is conducted within the Mishing Scheduled Tribe (ST) farming community.

The research primarily examines the socio-economic conditions, traditional agricultural practices, challenges, and the impact of modernization on the Mishing farmers. The scope is limited to this community, enabling an in-depth analysis of the subject while maintaining contextual relevance.

Limitations of the Study

Every research study encounters certain constraints that may influence its findings. The key limitations of this study include:

1. Restricted Geographical Coverage

The research is limited to a specific region—the Mishing ST community within Majuli District—thereby excluding broader perspectives from other tribal communities or regions.

2. Potential Respondent Bias

The findings of the study may be subject to personal bias from respondents, including village residents and individuals associated with modern education systems. Personal opinions

and perceptions may influence the responses, affecting the objectivity of the data.

3. Time and Financial Constraints:

Due to limited time and financial resources, the study has been conducted with a restricted sample size of respondents. A larger sample would have provided more comprehensive and generalized findings.

Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into the lives, struggles, and perspectives of the Mishing ST farmers, contributing significantly to the existing body of research on tribal communities and rural development in Assam.

Analysis, Challenge, and Findings

The Mishing community in the Majuli district primarily engages in farming (72%) and small businesses. Their societal philosophy and human rights values are deeply rooted in nature, with reverence for the Sun, Moon, and seasonal cycles. At the same time, their way of life incorporates spiritual practices, where worship of gods and goddesses influences individual well-being and future aspirations.

Additionally, some customs and norms are shaped by the village headman, who plays a significant role in resolving community matters. The sustainability of human rights within their culture is upheld through traditional ethnic practices, Tantric rituals, and social group discussions. However, astrology and horoscope predictions do not hold a significant place within the Mishing (ST) community of Majuli.

Despite this, some ancient palmistry and horoscope-making traditions still persist in certain segments of the community.

Challenges and Findings

1. Lack of Awareness on Astrology Predictions and Human Rights Norms

There is a significant gap in awareness regarding astrology predictions and human rights principles, particularly in relation to their role in future planning and societal development. This lack of understanding hinders informed decision-making and strategic progress within the community.

2. Inadequate Education on Astrology and Human Rights

The absence of structured educational programs and training in astrology and human rights deprives individuals of the necessary knowledge to interpret astrological insights effectively or advocate for their fundamental rights. Without proper education, misconceptions persist, leading to a lack of intellectual and social empowerment.

3. Limited Governmental Support and Institutional Frameworks

The lack of dedicated governmental organizations or authoritative bodies to regulate, support, and promote astrology education and human rights awareness weakens the institutional framework needed for sustained progress. Without state intervention and institutional backing, efforts to integrate these fields into societal development remain fragmented.

4. Challenges in Natural Law Enforcement and Parliamentary Legislation

In the Mishing community of Majuli district, the effective implementation of natural law principles and parliamentary legislation faces significant challenges. The absence of clear legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms results in inconsistencies in human rights protection and social justice. Strengthening legislative efforts and ensuring their practical application is crucial for maintaining equity and justice.

5. Deficiencies in Educational Standards and Training Quality

The quality of education and training related to human rights and resource management in the Mishing community lacks standardization. The absence of well-defined curricula and high-quality instructional materials prevents individuals from acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to safeguard their rights and optimize their resources effectively.

Impact on Human Rights and Resource Utilization

The aforementioned challenges contribute to the ineffective implementation of human rights and resource management strategies in the Mishing community of Majuli district. The lack of structured awareness, education, governmental support, legislative enforcement, and standardized training creates a cycle of socio-economic and legal vulnerabilities. Addressing these issues through policy reforms, institutional support, and educational advancements is essential for ensuring equitable development and sustainable resource utilization.

Findings and Suggestions

5. FINDINGS

Currently, no standardized astrological predictions or human rights frameworks with recognized universal values have been formally applied to the Mishing Scheduled Tribe (ST) community in Majuli. Instead, the community follows traditional ethnic social norms and non-scientific methods for future predictions and human resource planning. However, traditional astronomy, including the study of the sun, moon, and natural laws, plays a significant role in the community's cultural and spiritual practices.

6. SUGGESTIONS

To promote standardized human rights practices within the Mishing ST community in Majuli, it is essential to integrate formal scientific education in astrology, astronomy, and natural sciences. This will enhance their understanding of celestial phenomena while ensuring alignment with human rights sustainability principles. By incorporating scientific literacy and ethical frameworks, the community can preserve its cultural heritage while benefiting from modern advancements in astronomy and human rights awareness.

7. CONCLUSION

The study highlights the absence of standardized astrological predictions and universally recognized human rights

frameworks within the Mishing Scheduled Tribe (ST) community in Majuli. Instead, the community relies on traditional ethnic practices and non-scientific methods for future predictions and social organization. However, the influence of natural laws and celestial observations remains deeply embedded in their cultural and spiritual life.

To bridge the gap between tradition and modernity, it is crucial to integrate formal scientific education in astrology, astronomy, and natural sciences. This approach will not only enhance the community's understanding of celestial phenomena but also align their indigenous knowledge with contemporary human rights principles. By fostering scientific literacy alongside cultural preservation, the Mishing ST community can benefit from sustainable development while maintaining their rich heritage. This research underscores the need for a balanced synthesis of traditional wisdom and scientific advancements to ensure a more informed and rights-conscious society.

It is inspiring to witness the real-life experiences of the Mishing Scheduled Tribe community of Majuli in alignment with government regulations, construction philosophy, and the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

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