



# Gendering Materials: Cultural analysis of Gender Differences in Tribal Society

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## Abstract

*Material culture is a concrete manifestation of the culture of a community. It represents the basic nature of a community; gender differences, livelihood practices, division of labour; religious, economic, and political activities. The material culture also gives an identity and pride to a community. It has utmost significance in simple societies because all the activities, folklore, and mythologies revolve around the material possessions of the people. Therefore, it reflects the entire cultural fabric of a community. The Chenchu is a hunting-gathering community with their habitat in Nallamalai hills and forest in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states of India. Their material possessions changed over time. The community is gradually segregating into territorial groups with the emergence of marked diversity depending on the place of residence. Accordingly, changes have been taking place in all the attributes of culture including its tangible part. The paper examines the gender specificity of materials, their manifestations and intra-community diversity.*

**Keywords:** Tribal, Chenchu, material culture, gender, transition, territorial diversity.

## Introduction

Material culture includes all those objects that people produce, use, and gives meaning. The study of material culture has been the part of anthropology since its inception. According to the *Dictionary of Anthropology* material culture encompasses all the physical objects produced by members of any particular culture<sup>1</sup>. In the same vein, Woodward defines it as something portable and perceptible by touch and therefore has a physical, material existence that is one component of human cultural practice<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, materials are not simply physical objects but they often carry culture specific meanings. The same material objects may have varied meanings in diverse cultures or in various contexts in same culture. Materials are not simply utilitarian; their meanings are deeply non-materialistic or ideological. Material objects are culturally powerful because in practice they connect physical and mental manipulation<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, they play a significant role in the understanding of society and its cultural attributes. Furthermore, it is a product of society's reaction to the environment to fulfil personal or community needs. It reflects the innovative abilities of human beings and their response to the needs in time and space. Therefore, human beings devise culturally specific techniques to access the resources required for a living and consistently alter them according to the changing needs and technological advancements. As a result, material objects, their relevance, and meanings are subjected to change.

Gender is about the social construction of masculine and feminine. Therefore, it is very interesting to analyze and find out how gender shaped in the cultural context. The construction of gendered identity through material culture

reveals the differences among men and women. The construction of meaning in time and space is significant because space provides more than just a map of social relations, it is primary to the construction of gender identity<sup>3</sup>. At the same time, female and male identities are fluid and subject to change; as creations, they are products of specific social groups acting in accord with particular value system<sup>4</sup>. The gendered identity of materials too changes in course of time depending on the changing social context. The impact of interacting groups is very significant on the social construction of gender as well as power relations imbibed in it since gender itself is constituted through social interaction<sup>5</sup> and cannot be isolable. Therefore, the material needs of male and female too may change depending on changing constructions of the gender.

The position of women in tribal society is not as egalitarian as it appears. In fact, sexual division of labour is popular among most of the Indian tribes. Power positions play a pivotal role in such division. The activities performed by man attained importance over that of a woman. The tribal society too treats the man more powerful. There are specific differences between the activities of men and women in Chenchu community. Among Chenchus, males are entrusted with the task of trekking or hunting, collecting honey in difficult situations, felling timber and so on; while the females are employed more with domestic activities and minor collection from the forests<sup>6</sup>. The gendering of materials is in tune to the division of labour among Chenchus.

## History

The Chenchus are well-known to the world only after the seminal work of Haimendorf<sup>7</sup>. The Chenchu is a “pre-agricultural” and “hunting-gathering” community in transition. They predominantly inhabit the Nallamalai hills and forest of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states of India. They are not only racially but also culturally survivals of most ancient India<sup>7</sup>. They are identified as the Primitive Tribal Group (PTG) by the government of India. The community is in transition because of growing contact with neighbouring Hindu caste groups.

The literature pertaining to the origin and history of the Chenchus is very unclear. The archaeological evidences traced the human existence in the Nallamalai forest to pre-historic period. Lower Palaeolithic evidences have been found near two Chenchu hamlets, Tummalabayalu and Peddamantanala of Prakasam district<sup>8</sup>. Bhowmick also identified few stone tools in the Nallamalai forest. He observes, some of the Chenchu habitats bear evidences of early Stone Age civilization<sup>6</sup>. The stone circles, menhirs and dolmens found in the Amarabad region indicate a megalithic culture<sup>9</sup>. However, no connections have been established between pre-historic stone tools and the Chenchus. But Murty (1985) tried to establish connections between archaeological evidences and material culture of the Chenchus. According to him, the antiquity of bow and arrow possibly goes to the Upper Palaeolithic times. He believes that the unretouched, robust, parallel sided blades with pointed ends, if mounted as arrow points may as well serve the function of *potu ammu* of the Chenchus<sup>10</sup>.

Ferishta describes Chenchus as wild and shy hunter-gatherers<sup>11</sup>. In the same text Chenchus are described as they appeared before Prince Muhammad Masum, a son of Aurangzib, who passed through Kurnool in 1694. They are exceedingly black, with long hair on every part of their bodies, and on their heads wore caps made of the leaves of trees. Each man had with him unbarbed arrows and a bow for hunting. They molest no one, and live in caverns, or under the shady branches of trees. The Prince presented some of them with gold and silver, but they did not seem to put any value upon either, being quite unconcerned at receiving it. Upon the firing of a small gun they darted up the mountains with a surprising swiftness, uncommon to man<sup>11</sup>. The material goods such as gold and silver neither had a utilitarian function nor an ideological function; therefore, they were not known to the Chenchus of that time. Similarly, there can be few Indian tribes so poor in earthly goods as the Chenchu<sup>7</sup>. The reason is, when moving house he and his wife often carry with them all that they possess, but this mobility, certainly advantageous so long as the Chenchu retains his semi-nomadic mode of existence<sup>7</sup>. The semi-nomadism is disappearing and the Chenchus are gradually acquiring material wealth with a more settled life and growing contacts with non-Chenchus.

## Material culture of Chenchus

They made several tools to satisfy needs. Bamboo occupies a significant role in their material possessions because it can be used for multiple purposes and abundantly available in their territory. It is useful for making bows, arrows, digging sticks, wattle walls of hut, doors of hut, roof of the hut, bamboo mats, designed sticks, water and liquor drinking vessels, baskets for honey collection, fishing equipment, carrying goods, storing vessels, etc. Some of these products are for personal use and others for market. However, the materials made up of bamboo are not so widely used by the Chenchus living at the fringe of the forest and multi-ethnic villages. It is due to the adaption of new materials from the people of plains as well as the scarcity of bamboo with the allotment of bamboo groves to paper industries. The Chenchus were severely affected by the allotment of bamboo groves to Sirpur Paper Mills in the year 1980<sup>12</sup>.

**Housing materials:** A few decades ago Chenchus were the semi-nomadic people moving in the forest and having temporary dwellings at a temporary habitat. However, they usually have a permanent residence near the natural resources. They prefer to come back to the original settlement after a brief period of migration. If the resources in the vicinity of the habitat become scarce, they use to move to other territories where resources are plenty and not occupied by any other group. The hut might be the shelter for the Chenchus for past few centuries. Buchanan has mentioned a tribe called *Chensu Carir* or *Cat' Chensu* or *Cad' Eriliguru* or *Chensu* who lives in the jungles of Madras<sup>13</sup>. He says, they live in the little huts...have a small piece of blanket, or cotton cloth, to cover their nakedness. But, Hodson says the Chenchus who lived in caves; even now, here and there, are those who use caves as places of temporary habitation<sup>14</sup>. The Chenchus of present day presents a different scenario. The Chenchus of core areas of the forest live in the thatched conical or oblong huts. The huts are small in size build with the materials available in the vicinity of their habitat. The place for the hut usually decided depends on the availability of space. They prefer to maintain distance from the neighbour. As a result, they keep huge front yard. Conical huts are popular with the Chenchus of Mahabubnagar district whereas oblong huts are popular in Kurnool and Prakasam districts. The huts are rarely seen in Guntur district. They use bamboo, few wooden logs, and grass or leaves for the construction of hut. The materials are available in the forest at free of cost. They do not maintain any measurements to build a hut. The huts are in different sizes depending on the wish and ability of the owner. In some cases, they make a partition inside the hut with the bamboo mat (*thadika*). They clear the place and mark it with stones prior to the construction of the hut. The circular hut has one central pole supported by few vertical posts along the circumference whereas more vertical poles and central poles are needed for rectangular hut. The roof is made up of grass or leaves supported by bamboo and other wooden material. The bamboo mat serves as the wall of the hut. They have a single

door to the hut and it is also a bamboo mat. It is usually small in size and do not exceed 4 feet length and 2 to 3 feet width. Mud and cow dung are pasted on the bamboo mat in the habitats at the fringe of the forest. The hut is usually built with the labour of the family and the kin members. Men collect wooden logs and the women collect the grass for the roof. Husband and wife together make bamboo mats for the walls. Men play an active role in the construction of roof while floor making is an exclusive activity of women. Woman maintains the hut, but a major damage is addressed by the man.

**Materials in livelihood activities:** The gendering of materials has been evident in the materials use for hunting and protection. *Villu* or *dabba* (bow), *ambu* (arrow), *goddali* (axe), *katthi* (knife), and *ballem* (spear) are the important material possessions use for hunting and protection in the forest. These materials are treated as powerful and masculine. Men possess and use them extensively but women rarely use them. However, women are allowed to use axe due to the shift in livelihoods. Chetty (1886) observes the elders carry a spear, a hatchet, or a matchlock; others a bamboo bow and an arrow of reeds, tipped with iron; sometimes poison is applied to the ends of the arrows<sup>15</sup>. In particular, bow and arrow were indispensable from the Chenchus of olden days. It is difficult to imagine any traditional Chenchu going without a set of bow and arrow during his peregrinations in the forest<sup>6</sup>. Hunting is often claimed as original occupation. It plays an important role in the identification of Chenchus by outsiders. The Chenchus were using different types of arrows for various purposes. The gendering of materials is clearly evidenced in the terminology use for bows. Chenchus have five different types of arrows. Of the five...the triangular or leaf-shaped *villa ambu*, described as “female”, the simple spike *guka*, described as “male”<sup>7</sup>. It seems that there is further decline in the types of arrows. They use two types of arrows: *potu ammu* (male arrow) and *penti ammu* (female arrow)<sup>10</sup>. At present, the Chenchus are using these two types of arrows. In fact, the Chenchus of plains are not aware of these types of arrows and also incapable of making them. Women were denied of an opportunity to learn the skills of hunting as well as to possess bows and arrows. Very few women identified with the expertise in using bows and arrows. They have learnt skills from their male siblings. But they were not allowed to participate in hunting. Therefore, bows and arrows not only understood as weapons but also treated as a symbol of manly power. In fact, they are essential assets and not having them not only reflects the poverty of the family but also weakens the man. A man never asks his wife to carry bows and arrows when both of them going together in the forest. It is considered as the dominance of a woman if she carries bow and arrow in the presence of her husband. Axe is equally important, in fact, it can be seen with the Chenchus of all territories except with the Chenchus living in towns and cities. The axe is also the material of man. But, women also carry it when they go to forest alone. However, a man carries it if wife and husband together go to forest.

Digging stick is an essential for the collection of roots, tubers, and other kind of edible products which have to be dug up from the earth. The mainstay of Chenchu economic life is the digging-stick. Indeed, if we were to adopt the prehistorian’s habit of naming a whole culture after one type of artefact, we would be justified in describing the Chenchu culture as a digging-stick culture, for without this he would soon be reduced to starvation<sup>7</sup>. Digging-stick is a wooden implement with the iron tip. Sometimes wood is directly used by sharpening its tip. It is not only useful to dig the roots and tubers but also to sow the seeds. It is basically the possession of women as they play a very important role in food gathering activities. But the decline of hunting practices made it compulsion for men to go with a digging stick for food gathering. Nowadays men go out with their digging-sticks in exactly the same way as women<sup>7</sup>. A Chenchu man can own a digging stick and he can gather food like a woman. Men and women use similar digging sticks. But the traditional digging-stick is almost disappeared and replaced by a similar iron implement.

Gum collection is a vital activity for the Chenchus living in the forest or in the close proximity to forest. In fact, their economy revolves around gum collection. Nearly 75 percent of the income of Chenchus living in the interior forest areas is from the sale of gum to GCC<sup>16</sup>. Both the men and women collect gum from the trees but the women are active participants. Women use knife and men use axe to make an incision on the bark of gum tree. In practice, the men usually make the incision and women collect the gum. They carry gum in a *butta* (basket) or make a carrier with big leaves. Honey collection is another important economic activity of the Chenchus. Usually, men go for the collection of honey. It is treated as a difficult task and that only men can do. It involves climbing the tree and getting into *sarris* (cliffs of hills and valleys). Women are not allowed to climb the tree. But, they carry honey from the place of collection to home and purify it at home in order to make it a marketable product. Women are prohibited to participate in honey collection process if they are in menstrual period. *Moku* (rope or rope-ladder), *kheda* (to generate smoke), *veduru bongu* (bamboo stick), *jaali* (filter) or *batta* (piece of cloth), *cheda* or *pudaka* (basket), and *sarava* (earthen pot or aluminium vessel) are used for honey collection. Even though these materials are considered as the property of the family, the actual authority is vested with the man.

Fishing is considered as an activity of men but women may participate. However, the women alone never go for fishing, instead, take part in it along with men. They use *Kidama* (fishing basket), *vala* (net), and *Galamu* (hook) to catch fish. Fishing basket is a good example to the artistic and intellectual abilities of the Chenchus. But not all the Chenchus are capable of making it. No woman identified with the skills of making it. It is a fine work with thin slices and threads collected from bamboo. Net is not the work of the Chenchus but they buy it from the market. Hook consists of a long bamboo stick which is

tied with a thread and a small iron hook at its end. All these materials are considered as the materials of the men.

The agriculture is not a very important occupation for the Chenchus. The Chenchus engaged in cultivation use very few implements, such as; *nagali* (plough), *gorru*, *guntika*, *eddulabandi* (bullock cart), *para* (spade), and *kodavali* (sickle) for cultivation. *Nagali* is a wooden apparatus with an iron hook at the end which is useful for ploughing. *Gorru* is a kind of plough with multiple iron hooks for tilling the land. *Guntika* is a quadrangular wooden block useful to flatten the land after ploughing. *Eddulabandi* (bullock cart) is useful for the transportation of agricultural products. *Para* (spade) is useful for multiple purposes, particularly, to level the land and to dig small water-ways in the field. *Kodavali* (sickle) is useful for cutting the crop or clearing the bushes and other small plants. *Butta* and *gampa* are useful to store and carry the produce. *Cheta* is a winnowing fan useful to clean the grains or separation of grains and dirt. Sickle, winnowing fan, and baskets are of the materials of women and rest are of the man.

**Materials in kitchen:** The Chenchus have a small kitchen space in a single roomed hut. They keep one earthen hearth or a hearth made up of stones at a corner of the hut and another one outside the hut. They neatly maintain the hearth inside the house by pasting it with cow-dung periodically. But hearth outside the house is not properly maintained as they make it as a temporary arrangement. They possess very few materials required for cooking. These are maintained by women and usually described as their property. The woman has the right to lend the vessel to a neighbour or friend in the times of need. But the man cannot give them without the consent of a woman. However, man may override and exercise authority at the times of need<sup>17</sup>. The Chenchus were using traditional fire-making techniques in olden days. Men as well as women are capable of making the fire. Chenchus were making fire by friction, by means of the horizontal or sawing method<sup>18</sup>. But, people did not remember any such method, instead, they use flint or steel pieces to create fire with the help of cotton-like hair surrounding the seeds of *Bombax malabaricum*<sup>7</sup>. They no longer use this method too but few are aware of it. The match-boxes are available everywhere and the Chenchus are also using the same. They use few vessels such as *bugana*, *sarava*, *kunda*, *garita*, and *theddu* for cooking. *Bugana* is a clay or aluminium vessel useful to cook the rice. *Sarava* is also made up of similar material but smaller in size useful to cook the curry. *Kunda* is an earthen pot used to prepare curry. *Garita* is an aluminium spoon useful to stir the food while cooking and to serve the food. *Theddu* is a wooden spoon useful for the same purpose as *garita*. *Thallē* or *kanchamu* is a plate to eat the food. *Kadava* is an earthen pot useful to store the water. It is now almost replaced by *bindi*, a steel or aluminium or plastic vessel. *Chembu* or *lota* are steel vessels to drink water. Bhowmick mentioned about a conical shaped earthen ware resembles tortoise, known as '*thabetikaya*'<sup>6</sup>. Nowadays, it is not seen anywhere among the Chenchus. But the Chenchus are not responsible for its disappearance. The pots are traded by

outsiders and they must have stop making this pot. In fact, the earthen ware is gradually disappearing and giving way to steel or aluminium vessels. Besides the vessels used for the purpose of cooking, Chenchus use materials like *rolu*, *rokali*, and *tiragali* to prepare certain foods. *Rolu* is a stone mortar and *rokali* is a wooden block with a convex shaped end useful to pound the food products to make pickles. *Tiragali* is a stone grinder. It is a combination of two round disc-like stones placed one over the other. A small wooden block is there at the centre of the lower stone whereas upper stone is having a hole to fit into the wooden block. The upper stone is also having a wooden handle to move it in a circular way for grinding the grain. *Rolu*, *rokali*, and *tiragali* are considered as the property of women. Chenchus living in towns have electric mixers and grinders.

**Dressing practices and ornaments:** Much has written about the dressing of the Chenchus. The dressing patterns of the people at different times in the history reflect social, cultural, and economic status and the changes in such attributes. The men are nearly in a state of nudity, having only a piece of cloth around their loins. The women dress more decently than men<sup>15</sup>. The Chenchus of that period might be living in a state very close to nature. They make use of the leaves for personal decoration. Some Chenchus bear on the head a cap made of wax-cloth, deer or hare skin. By the more fashionable the tufted ear or bushy tail-end of the large Indian squirrel (*Sciurus indicus*) is attached by way of ornament to the string with which the hair of the head is tied into a bunch behind<sup>18</sup>. But, they were influenced by non-Chenchu neighbours and started using clothes to cover the body. Thurston further described leafy garments have been replaced by white loin-cloths, and some of the women have adopted the *ravikē* (bodice), in imitation of the female costume in the plains. Boys, girls, and women wear bracelets made of *Phoenix* or Palmyra palm leaves. By some pieces of stick strung on a thread, or seeds of *Givotia rottleriformis*, are worn as a charm to ward off various forms of pain. Some of the women are tattooed on the forehead, corners of the eyes, and arms. Few men tattooed on the shoulder as a cure for rheumatism<sup>18</sup>. Thurston's observation has come from Madras Presidency. But, a brief note on the Chenchus of Hyderabad observes, the men are almost nude, wearing merely a piece of cloth round their loins, while the more savage members of the tribe are said to cover nakedness with aprons made of leaves. They are still in a half savage state<sup>19</sup>. However, a change in dressing practices further hastened with their movement toward plains.

Dress is a potential marker of identity of a community. It remains as a signalling device of gender, occupational and economic status. The dressing of present day Chenchus is different from their traditional dress patterns. However, the old aged Chenchu men living in the interior areas of the forest wear a traditional dress. For example, old men from core settlements are still wearing a loin cloth (*gosi*) and a long shirt. The loin cloth is not a separate cloth but women tear a strip of their sari. This is usually taken from the sari of the wife or sister or mother. But, the dress patterns of Chenchu women of any

territory are similar. There is no significant change in the dress patterns of women. They dress in bodice and *sari* of various colours as their neighbours. Clothing patterns of the men of different territories is marked by diversity which is similar to the non-Chenchus of a particular territory. Some men wear knickers with a shirt as an upper garment. But, the educated or the Chenchus from towns prefer to wear a shirt and a pant. The young men maintain a difference between the dresses of day and night and it is similar to that of town's men. The Chenchu women of interior hamlets and multi-ethnic villages wear cotton saris whereas the women of towns wear polyester saris.

The men usually wear a bracelet made of beads or copper or bronze or a thread of black or saffron colour. Its purpose is to protect them from evil eye or black magic. Some men wear bands with a magic locket on the arm, very close to shoulder to serve the same purpose. The men also wear finger-rings made of gold, silver, or copper as part of personal decoration. The women do not wear any ornaments of gold or silver; they however, use some copper ornaments, and adorn their necks with rosaries of *Guruvinda ginja* (*Abrus precatorious*)<sup>18</sup>. But, it has changed probably because of the contacts with outsiders as well as changing economic system. In recent years, most of the women are getting a pair of golden *chevi pogulu* (ear rings), a *pustē* (locket), and silver *mettelu* (toe rings) at the time of marriage. In addition to that, they wear *golusu* (necklace) of gold or silver and a golden *mukkeru* (nose ring) depending on financial condition. But golden ornaments are rarely found with the women living in interior settlements of the forest. The old women wear silver ornaments whereas the young women prefer golden ornaments. *Gajulu* (bangles) have become indispensable part of their hands. They have adapted this practice from caste-Hindus. A woman without bangles considered as a widow because bangles are removed at the time of the death of husband. Some Chenchus use silver bangles too, in fact, widows may keep silver bangles. They wear finger-rings made of gold, silver, or copper.

The men and women had certain similar practices, such as; keeping vermilion mark on the forehead and dressing the hair as a knot<sup>15</sup>. The women smear their faces with the oil they extract from *sarapappu* (*Buchanania latifolia*) and *kanugapappu* (*Galedupu indica*), but the men do not do this. Oil smearing practice is very rare nowadays, instead, they use talcum powder. The hair dressing practices of younger generation are totally different. The men are going to saloons to cut their hair. The women either tie their hair as a knot or weave it in a proper way known as *Jada*. The men and women apply coconut oil to the hair. They use *duvvena* (comb) of wood or plastic to delouse and dress the hair. The young girls use hair clips available in the market. The women use flowers to decorate hair. In olden days, men were also decorating hair with the flowers of *Gmelina arborea*<sup>7</sup>. The practice of men using flowers is not found but women use wide-variety of flowers. Chenchu men wear a *molatadu* (waist-string) which is made of thread. It is the symbol of manliness. This practice was probably adapted from

the neighbouring non-Chenchus. It serves the purpose of holding the loin cloth both the sides. The young girls may wear it but they have to remove it after attaining puberty because of its association with men and manliness. However, the women do not need this for their attire.

**Modern gadgets:** Modern gadgets have made an entry into the life of Chenchus as a result of increasing contact with outsiders. In course of time, these gadgets have become a part of their life. In fact, the traditional Chenchu materials such as the bow, arrow, and axe are gradually decreasing with the increase of modern gadgets. They include plastic chairs, cot, wrist watches, wall clock, TV, radio, tape recorder, CD/DVD player, mobile phone, cycle, motor cycle etc. The ideas on wealth and property have been changing with the acquisition of these gadgets. The present generation is experiencing change. Therefore, the rules of inheritance of these goods are not yet devised. But from the few cases observed, it may be said that the rules of traditional inheritance extended to new material possessions. But, the women's access to the property is completely declined. Women do not acquire any of these gadgets. They have often termed as the property of a male. The entry of these gadgets made the man more powerful and his dominant position is further crystallized.

## Conclusion

Material possessions often reflect the status differences in a society. But, it is not the hallmark of hunting-gathering communities. Similarly, it is very difficult to depict economic differences in Chenchu community through their material culture. The Chenchu is said to be one of the most ancient ethnic groups in India. The role of both the gender is equally important in traditional Chenchu community which is true even today in some hamlets. The community appear egalitarian when examine the material culture across various clans in a village. But, gender differences are clearly evident in terms of customary rights over materials. The Chenchus are gradually moving away from a "hunting-gathering" mode of existence. Bow and arrow are gradually disappearing from parts of their habitat. Their movement from the traditional way of life and occupational diversification increased the need for material goods which subsequently led to the accumulation of material wealth. The man has become more assertive in acquiring new materials. This is an outcome of multiple factors but the significant impact came from non-tribal contacts. The Chenchu habitat is encircled by diverse non-tribal communities which are at an advanced level in terms of technological development. The intensive contacts with those communities influenced social and economic aspects of Chenchus.

The women as active participants in food gathering and collection of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) play a pivotal role among the Chenchus living in core hamlets of the forest. The men are not a sole authority on material possessions. The women too have a right to acquire, utilize, exchange, and dispose materials. Probably, their significant role in the

livelihood and other income generating activities is helpful in this regard. Therefore, the gender inequality is not very much asserted neither by men nor by the women of these hamlets. But the inequalities are gradually increasing towards the town. The Chenchus of fringe and multi-ethnic villages stands in-between. The men and women of these villages work as wage labourers in the agricultural activities. There is a huge disparity between the wages of men and women. The woman usually gets half the amount in what the man earn. Therefore, women have less scope to acquire materials. A slight disparity is observed between the Chenchus of fringe and multi-ethnic villages. The Chenchus of multi-ethnic villages have intensive interaction with the non-Chenchus. The rigid patriarchy and man's authority over every material among the non-Chenchus has influenced the Chenchu community too. The gender differences further amplified among the Chenchus living in towns. The Chenchu men living in towns are employees in government and non-government organizations. They acquire wide variety of modern gadgets. But, the women engage in domestic activities and depend on men for their financial needs. It paves the way for man to establish authority over every material acquired by the family. The woman's jewellery is also not an exception. It has led to the crystallization of man's authority and the socially dominant man is being established among the Chenchus of rural areas and towns which is different from not so dominant man in the traditional society. It may be assumed that the differences in material wealth may translate not only into gender differences but also the wide spectrum of social differences in course of time.

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