

Tribhuvan University

**CHANGE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF LEPCHA
COMMUNITY**

(A Case Study of Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU)

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted To the Central Department of Geography, Faculty
of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Tribhuvan University
in the partial fulfillment of requirement of
Master's Degree in Geography**

Submitted By

**SANAM RINCHEN LEPCHA
Central Department of Geography
Tribhuvan University
Kathmandu, Nepal
September, 2006**

CHANGE IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF LEPCHA COMMUNITY

—By Sanam Rinchen Lepcha

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to pour my sincere gratitude to the Central Department of Geography for giving me an opportunity to prepare this dissertation "Change in socio-Economic condition of the Lepcha community. A case study of Kaputhang-Taza and mamiring-Amba GPU of east Sikkim" for the partial fulfillment for my master Degree of Humanities in Geography.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my respected supervisor Associate Professor Dr. Narendra Raj Khanal, Central Department of Geography for his sincere guidance, co-operation, encouragement, suggestions and continual support to development this dissertation.

I would like to give my humble gratitude to Professor Dr. Puskar Kumar Pradhan head of the Central Department of Geography, T.U and all respected teachers and staff of the Geography Department for their valuable support and co-operation.

I am very much grateful to the member and staff of different organizations and institutions such as central library, T.U. state library, Sikkim, science and technology library, Gangtok, Tibetology, Deorali, District library, Namchi and Geography Department Library, T.U. for providing me valuable materials required for this study. I would like to thank Mr. Rajiv and Bishow Maharjan (Friend Computer Service) for computer work.

I am equally delightful to the people of Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba who provided me the authentic Information during field survey. I would like to pour my thanks to Mr. Sonam Rinchen Lepcha, Mr. Tom Tshering Lepcha, Mr. kazim Lepcha and Mr. Phur Tshering Lepcha for their kind help and support.

My special thanks connects to my best friend, Krish Judas, Lalita Ruchal, Arbind Thapa and Sunil Adhikari and Room Partner Ramesh, Manoj, mandip, Umesh, Laxuman, Dupgyal and Roshan for their co-operation, help and moral support.

Last but not least, I would like to give my sincere gratitude to my parent, brother and sister for their prolonged support, warm family affection and encouragement for pursuing this study.

Sanam Rinchen Lepcha

September 2006

CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION	1-3
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Statement of Problem	2
1.3 Objectives of the Study	2
1.4 Significance of the Study	2
1.5 Limitation of the Study	3
CHAPTER II : REVIEW OF LITERATURE	4-22
2.1 Changing Conditions of the Eskimos, Aborigines and the Sherpa	4
2.2 Origin of the Lepcha Community	7
2.3 Socio-Cultural System of the Lepcha Community	11
2.4 Economic Conditions of the Lepcha Community	16
2.5 Language of the Lepcha Community	18
CHAPTER III : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	23-25
3.1 Selection of the Study Area	23
3.2 Sources of Data	23
3.3 Method of Data Collection	25
3.3.1 Household Survey	25
3.3.2 Key Informant Survey	25
3.3.3 Field Diary	25
3.4 Data Processing and Analysis	25
CHAPTER IV : INTRODUCTION TO STUDY AREA	26-39
4.1 Sikkim	26
4.1.1 Geo-Physical Setting of Sikkim	26
4.1.1.1 Location	26
4.1.1.2 Physiographic and Natural Vegetation	26
4.1.1.3 Climate	27
4.1.1.4 Soil	28
4.1.1.5 Drainage System	28
4.1.2 Socio-Economic Settings of Sikkim	29
4.1.2.1 Population	29

4.1.2.2	Agriculture	29
4.1.2.3	Animal Husbandry	30
4.1.2.4	Transport and Communication	30
4.2	Study Area	31
4.2.1	Geo Physical Setting of the Study Area	31
4.2.1.1	Location	31
4.2.1.2	Physiographic and Natural Vegetation	33
4.2.1.3	Climate	33
4.2.1.4	Soil	33
4.2.1.5	Drainage	34
4.2.2	Socio-Economic Setting of the Study Area	36
4.2.2.1	Population	36
4.2.2.2	Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	36
4.2.2.3	Infrastructure Development	37

CHAPTER V : SOCIO-CULTURAL CONDITION AND ITS CHANGE

40-60

5.1	Population	40
5.2	Family Structure	41
5.2.1	Size of Family	42
5.3	Marriage	43
5.3.1	Types of Marriage	43
5.3.2	Marriage Age	44
5.3.3	Women's Child sex Preference	45
5.4	Family Planning	46
5.5	Education	47
5.6	Health Services	48
5.7	Food and Drink Habits	50
5.8	Religion	51
5.9	Language	54
5.10	Dress and Ornaments	55
5.10.1	Female Dress and Ornament	56
5.10.2	Male Dress and Ornament	56
5.11	Festivals	57

5.12	Housing Pattern	58
5.13	Interactions with Other Ethnic Groups	

CHAPTER VI : ECONOMIC CONDITION AND ITS CHANGE 61-78

6.1	Occupation	61
6.2	Farm Size	63
6.3	Ownership of Land	63
6.4	Crop Production	64
6.5	Foods Sufficiency	66
6.6	Livestock Farming	67
6.7	Horticulture Farming	68
6.8	Income Pattern	68
6.9	Expenditure Pattern	69
6.9.1	Expenditure in Food	70
6.9.2	Expenditure in Health	71
6.9.3	Expenditure in Education	71
6.9.4	Expenditure in Meat	72
6.9.5	Expenditure in Drinks	73
6.9.6	Expenditure in Vegetables	73
6.9.7	Expenditure in Electricity	74
6.9.8	Annual Expenditure in Religions/Festivals	74
6.9.9	Expenditure in Other	75
6.10	Natural Resource Use	77
6.10.1	Forest Resources	77
6.10.2	Water Resources	77
6.10.3	Cultivated Land	77

CHAPTER VII : DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS 79-83

7.1	Problems	79
7.2	Prospects	82

CHAPTER VIII : CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION 84-86

8.1	Conclusion	84
8.2	Recommendation	85

REFERENCES 87-89

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 :	Time Line of Infrastructures Development	38
Table 5.1 :	Number of People by Age and Sex	40
Table: 5.2 :	Number of Households by Family Types	42
Table: 5.3 :	Number of Household by Size of Families	43
Table 5.4 :	Number of Households with Types of Marriage Practices	44
Table 5.5 :	Number of Respondents by Sex and Age of Marriage	45
Table 5.6 :	Number of People and their Status of Education	47
Table 5.7 :	Number of Respondents Visiting to Different Health Institutions	49
Table 5.8 :	Number of Household by Religious Group	52
Table 5.9 :	Number of Respondent by Linguistic Group	54
Table 6.1 :	Number of People by Occupational Type	61
Table 6.2 :	Number of Household by Landholding Size	63
Table 6.3 :	Number of Household by Ownership of Land	64
Table 6.4 :	Number of Household by the Level of Annual Production of Different Crops	65
Table 6.5 :	Number of Household by Level of Food Sufficiency Status	66
Table 6.6 :	Number of Households by Level of Monthly Income	68
Table 6.7 :	Mean Monthly Household Expenditure (in Rs)	70
Table 6.8 :	Number of Households by Level of Monthly Expenditure on Food	70
Table 6.9 :	Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure on Health	71
Table 6.10 :	Number of Household by Monthly Expenditure in Education	72
Table 6.11 :	Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure in Meat	72
Table 6.12 :	Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure in Drinks	73
Table 6.13 :	Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure in Vegetables	73
Table 6.14 :	Number of Households of Monthly Expenditure in Electricity	74

Table 6.15 : Number of household by annual expenditure in Religious/Festivals	75
Table 6.16 : Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure in Luxurious Goods	75
Table 6.17 : Number of Household Responding Changes in Forest Area	77
Table 6.18: Number of Household Reporting Changes in the use of Cultivated Land	78
Table 7.1 : Number of Respondents Reported Infrastructure Development Problems	79
Table 7.2 : Number of Respondents Reported Different Socio-cultural problems	81
Table 7.3 : Number of Respondents Reported Development Prospects	82

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 : Study Framework	7
Figure 2 : The Following is the Chieftainship of Mayel Lyang	9
Figure 3 : Language Hierarchy - I	20
Language Hierarchy - II	20
Figure 4 : Number of People by Age and Sex	41
Figure 5 : Percentage of Households by Family Types	42
Figure 6 : Number of People and their Status of Education	47
Figure 7 : Percentage of Household by Religious Group	53
Figure 8 : Percentage of People by Occupational Type	62
Figure 9 : Percentage of Household by Level of Food Sufficiency Status	67
Figure 10 : Number of Households by Level of Monthly Income	69

LIST OF MAPS

Location Map of Study Area	24
Location Map of Study Area	32
Drainage Map of Study Area	35
Major Settlement of the Study Area	39
Land Use Map of the Study Area	76