

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Sikkim is a land of diversification where there is a combination of different ethnic group having Mongoloid and Caucasian features and speaking Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman language with different tradition, culture and languages. Among them the Lepchas are the first tribes who enter the footstep as earlier settlers in Sikkim. The Lepchas are scheduled tribes of India in the state of Sikkim and the district of Darjelling/Kalimpong in west Bengal. In both states the Lepchas are in minority of population with about 10 percent living in Sikkim (census 1991) and above 4 percent (not yet updated) living in Darjelling district of west Bengal. Ethnic majority in Sikkim and the Darjelling districts are considered to be Nepali. There is also Lepcha community in Ilam, a district of eastern Nepal and in the 'Ha' province of Bhutan. These areas are considered to be part of the *Mayel Lyang* and formally belonged to Sikkim. The Lepcha word for this tribe "*Rong*" is variously interpreted as 'the son of god' and the son of snow. The word '*Lapche*' may be of limbu origin (Foning1987). They have a legend, which says that they originated from *Mayel Lyang*, a mythical land at the foothills of mount Kanchendzonga in Sikkim itself. They have own tradition, culture and languages. however their socio-cultural and economic conditions have been changing in recent years with the improvement in accessibility to modern technology and infrastructure services such as market, health, education, road etc. Dr. Pawan Kumar Chamling the leader of Sikkim Democratic front decided to enlist the Lepcha tribe as a primitive tribe. The proposal received the approval of the cabinet on 29th January 2005 whereby the Lepchas were recognized as primitive tribe.

Change is a universal and continuous process, which is inevitable in all societies. Change in societies occurs through different processes with different path ways. In some cases it leads to the complete disappearance of traditional

socio-cultural conditions developed base the long experiences of the people within a specific environmental condition. So the major challenge is how to preserve such unique culture with improvement in livelihood condition of the local people. In this context this study was proposed to discuss the process of change of the Lepcha tribe.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The Lepchas are the oldest inhabitant of Sikkim, are mostly found in Mountain region i.e. Sikkim, and Darjelling. As in other aboriginal groups the Lepcha's socio-cultural and economic conditions have been changing. However, the processes of change have not been examined in details.

In this context, following research questions can be formulated.

- What were their socio-cultural conditions in the past and how they are changing?
- What were the main economic activities in the past and how they are changing ?

This study tries to solve the above research questions.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the changes in socio-economic and cultural conditions of the Lepchas community. Following are the specific objectives of this study.

- a. To assess the changes in socio-cultural conditions of the Lepcha community.
- b. To examine the changes in the economic conditions of the Lepcha community.
- c. To discuss the development problems and prospects perceived by local people.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Sikkim is a multi lingual and multicultural state. The Lepcha are the oldest inhabitant in Sikkim now it is declared as a primitive and autochthons

race of Sikkim by analyzing semantic names of places, rivers, lakes, mountains through anthropological, geographical and cultural studies with duly consultation by *Mun-Boongthing* (Lepcha Sermans Priests) (Mainwaring 1876). It is a place where different races and tribes are inhabited; the social, economic and cultural condition of any community has its own significance for introducing them in the world likewise in Sikkim the socio- economic status of each ethnic group is somehow contributing to identify their status in the world. Besides that the changing socio-economic status of the community shows the changing living status of their family language, occupation, cultural practice, physical infrastructure and population size which are the main causes that affects the socio-economic and cultural condition of any society. It is very important to know the real history of past Sikkim but the truth is, history itself is like gems, wealth and heritage of one universe, nation or state one can imagine of shaping up future only if one knows about past. This study explores change and development in socio-economic condition of the Lepcha's relating to their past and present context. Similarly this study will help to identify the problems; they are facing and also seek its appropriate prospects. The results of this research would helps to know about the culture, tradition custom, and socio-economic condition of the Lepcha community for future generation.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

Every research has its own limitation and no research can be conducted without limitation. This study is mainly concentrated on the Lepecha community of a particular area of Sikkim and other limitations of the study are:

- This study covers a small area of Sikkim, where the Lepcha community is mostly concentrated so it may not represent the Lepcha communities of whole Sikkim.
- This study is limited to selective aspect of Lepcha economy and society due to time and financial constraints.
- This study is based on the preliminary exploratory research work, so it does not creates any working hypothesis. It is purely a descriptive in nature.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literatures on the works came out for different world's indigenous people and their changing pattern in both socio-cultural and economic activities. Many researchers have carried out various ethnographic studies upon the several indigenous people in the world. In this work the only three of the world's indigenous people and their changing socio-cultural and economic activities has been reviewed. This chapter is broadly divided into two parts, first part is about the general background of indigenous people and their changing condition in different areas of the world and second part is about the specific review of literature of the Lepcha indigenous people about their changing socio-cultural and economic conditions between 1975 and 2006.

2.1 Changing Conditions of the Eskimos, Aborigines and the Sherpa

The Inuit or Eskimos

The Inuits or Eskimo's are the indigenous people who live near the artic. Their homeland stretches from northeastern tip of Russia across Alaska and Northern Canada and Greenland. In the beginning the socio-cultural system of the Inuit was orthodoxy type, they had little contact with other people. They believed that all people, animal, thing and forces of nature had spirit. The spirit of people, and animals lived in another world after they died. The other spirits included those of the coined, the weather, the sun and the moon. The language of the Inuit comprises of two groups, majority of communities spoke dialects of the Inuit Inupiaq language. The clothing of the Inuit was usually made from the skins of animals. The Inuit preferred caribou, skin as a material for clothing. Skin from seals, foxes, polar bears and other animal served as substitutes for caribou. The hunting and fishing were the main occupations of Inuit. The size of the group depended on the amount of food available in different seasons. Their hunting tools were made of a stone, tree root and animal bones. Their houses are called igloos(encyclopedia 1995).

The nomadic life of Inuit has changed into permanent settlers in the early and middle 1900's where the people from Europe started to migrate in that area. Similarly, housing and clothing pattern has also changed into wooden

house and imported clothes. Their religions was changed into Christianity. Most of the Inuit in these days speak English, Russian or Danish in addition to their native language. Majority of people at present are educated and their life style has changed into trade and business. The Inuit population almost doubled between 1950 and 1970 and it continued to grow rapidly due to the improvement of health and better living condition.

The Aborigines

Aborigines have lived in Australia for at least 50,000 years. The word "Aborigines" comes from the Latin phrase "Aborigine" meaning from the beginning. The socio-cultural system of the Aborigines is different and distinct. The Aborigines were a deeply religious people. This attitude found not only in their myth and rituals but in all respects of social living. An important aspect of religious belief was the dreaming or dreamtime. Aborigines believed that the great creative and spirit being were present at the beginning things. Aborigines' belief, they are living today and they will continue to live on into the future. The greatest of the spirit being were gods and goddess. There were probably 500 languages in use by aborigines. Member of the same community often speak different dialects of one language. Many Aborigine's words are used in Australia for the names of places, animal and plants. Hunting and fishing were the main occupation and they prefer cooperate hunting. Spears and sheath rowers were the main weapons used by these people. They also used boomerangs, clubs, large nets and fishing trap. They eat raw food and meat Aborigines usually went naked except for public covering. In winter season they wore cloaks made of Kangaroos, wallaby or possum fur or huddle over their fires. In heavy rain, they sought protection in a hut or rock shelter and put on sheet of barks.

The nomadic life of the Aborigines ended and their traditional setting of life has changed into modern life. Majority of people are educated and engaged in different occupations. The government or other institutional efforts were focused on the development such as industries, fishing, timber milling and farming in order to provide greater independence. Nowadays the Aborigine has participated in different social affairs and is benefited from a wide range of welfare activities in areas such as health, education and employment. Special

programmes are being developed to emphasize aboriginal life. English is spoken by the majority of the Aborigines rather than their traditional language. Today the aborigines are not only engaged in administrative fields but also professional in different sector of sports.

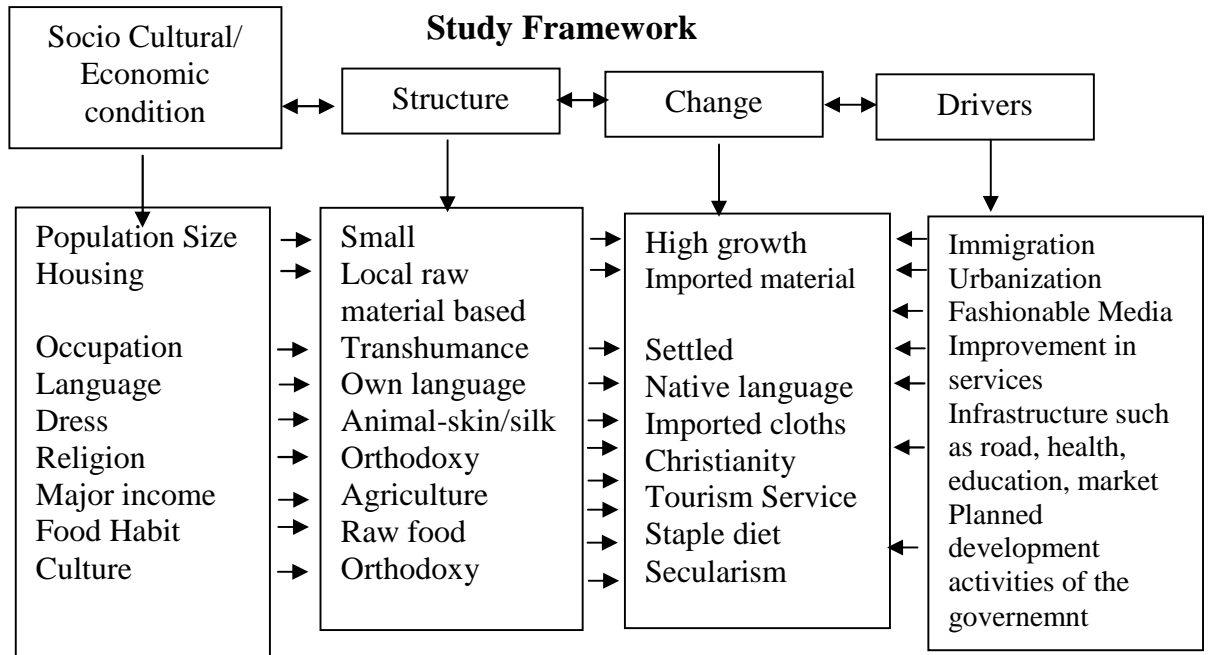
The Sherpa

Sherpa's of Nepal is another example. Their original homeland is Solu-Khumbu and they are also found in northeastern Himalayas zone i.e. Sikkim, Bhutan and some district of North Eastern India. The Sherpas were migrated in Solu-Khumbu from Kham's region of eastern Tibet about 450 years ago. The Sherpa's are well adopted in high altitude region they resemble their own racial, cultural, linguistic and religious cousins. The Tibetans and Sherpas differ substantially in both style and physique from the south Asians and the Chinese. Sherpa cultures, religion tradition are related with Tibetan Buddhism. Fraternal polyandry is found among the Sherpa that is, two brothers may marry one joint wife. If the parent has three sons usually make a celibate monk of the middle child. The cross cushion marriage system is prohibited in the Sherpa society. The Sherpa economy was characterized as one of mixed agricultural and animal husbandry, supplemented by cash from labour and traditional ventures. The pastrolism and trading continue to play important roles in the economy.

Nowadays the occupation pattern of the Sherpa's has changed into trade, trekker's and mountaineering guides and porters due to the development of tourism activities in that area. The socio-cultural system of the Sherpa has slightly changed i.e. change in language, religion and marriage system. Nowadays they prefer polygamy marriage system. The Sherpas are engaged in different administrative works as well as there are several Sherpas who have been to Europe, America and other countries in the world (Bista 1967).

The findings of the changing socio-cultural and economic condition of these three indigenous groups have been summarized in figure 1. The structure of their socio-economic conditions has changed. Several factors are responsible to drive such change. Figure 1 is taken as the frame work for this study.

Figure 1



The Lepcha is also one of the indigenous group and they followed more or less similar economy. Their socio-cultural and economic conditions have been changing lot in these days. Attempt has been made to review of the change taking place among the Lepcha community.

2.2 Origin of the Lepcha Community

Hermanns (1954) describes the Lepcha as a mountain tribe in Sikkim. He mentions that the Lepchas are called "*Rong kup*" but in short "*Rong*" which meant "Mountain people". Further he discusses the perception of the Lepcha about God and spirit. They believe that the land of the god does not lie above the region of the heavens but below, they call this region "*Dhing song-sum*" meaning "below". Some of the "*Mun*" and the "*Boongthing*" (Priest and Priestess) are perceived as the supreme god "*sa-dzug-sum*" meaning "sun god".

The Lepchas were the first people recorded as living in the valleys of Sikkim as early as 900AD. The original homelands of the Lepchas are in Sikkim and Sikkim was originally ruled by the Lepchas. The Lepchas are often referred to as "*Rong-Pa*" or Ravine people and it is also called "*Rumkup*" which means son of god. But now it has changed into '*Rongkup*'. They now comprise only 10 percent of Sikkim population. The Lepchas themselves have no tradition of migration. According to an article written by Dhendup Lepcha(1990), the Lepchas called themselves "*Mutanchi-Rong*" which means

'mother's beloved children, whose hearts are as white as snow and as great as the mountain. According to him the Lepcha's legends and their ancestors were the people of "*Mayel-lyang*" whose boundaries were from the village of Rinchonsunga to Pro, Rochong, Ranga, Chyu (Chumbi valley) Jol Ashi (now in Jalpaiguri)

These indigenous people are typical in their physical characteristic and it is not similar to other ethnic groups, which are now living in Sikkim. Some author's said that the Lepchas came from Assam and Nepal and some author's said that they are from Burmese origin but the Lepcha themselves have no tradition of migration, This is some how true that the Lepcha's ancestors origin was in Sikkim, "*Mayel lyang*" which means that the land of hidden treasure" (Dhendap Lepcha 1990).

According to Tamsang (1983), the Himalayan region known as the Sikkim and Darjeling hills, now a state in India Union was known in ancient times by the name of *Mayel-lyang*, which means the land of hidden paradise or the delightful region or abode. After studying all the books on Lepchas, he also visited the whole of Sikkim, the district of Darjelling, the Eastern district of Ilam, Nepal and the western most district of Zaong saw, Chamurchi, Bhutan, met Lepcha people of all places search and studied about them. The author also met the old Lepcha *Mun* and *Boongthing* (priest) of different places and discussed about the origin of the Lepcha community. The author wrote that the ancient period of the Lepchas can roughly be dated from Paleolithic age of the 8th century.

According to him the fragments of earthen pottery abundantly found at Daramden and its neighbouring mountain ridges in western Sikkim, the huge and mugged ruined forts scattered all over Sikkim and the Darjelling district, the huge stone monuments at *Kabi Tingvoong*, *Puntaong*, the *Lingshey Khaa* and *Chekra*, all these evidences give many missing links in the Lepcha history and give prove that the Lepcha are the original and oldest inhabitants. It is called as the oldest primitive tribe of Sikkim.

Lepcha (2005), has stated that according to their semantic names of places, rivers, lakes mountains through anthropological, geographical and

cultural studies with duly consultation of *Mun-Boongthing* reflects that the Lepchas are the most primitive and autochthons race of Sikkim. It has to be presumed to be more than 3000 B.C The name of Sikkim was "*Mayel Lyang*" the land of hidden treasure and it was administered by *Thekung Adek, Rujo-Melon-dang, Tarvey Punu, Tarsong Panu, Tar-eng punu, Tuz-at-punu* and *Punu Mun Solong* (Chopra 1979: P, 24). The Figure 2 shows the Lepcha chieftainship of *Mayel Lyang*. The history of Sikkim is older than during the Indus Valley civilization (2300 BC -1750 BC) was flourishing.

Figure 2
The Following is the Chieftainship of Mayel Lyang

Name of the Chieftains panu	year of consecration
Thekung Adek	7-8 century
Thup Athak	9-10 century
Thekung Tek	13 century
Rajo Panu/Athing	1353 AD - 1410 AD
Tervey panu (killed by Nepali King)	1425 AD - 1454AD
Tarsong panu	1454 AD - 1481 AD
Tar-enmg paun	1481 AD - 1520AD
Tarjyi panu	1520 AD - 1564AD
Tar-eak panu	1564AD- 1595 AD
Thekung mun solong punu	1595 AD - 1642 AD
(The last panu who witness the consecration of phunsog Namgyal along with three Lamas of tibet)	(But most of his men believed he is not dead and will return in mayel lyang one day)

Source: "Halfden Sieger" The Lepcha Culture and religion of the Himalayan People Part I (1967) Copenhagen Guru Oden Namtho; Dungrap)

Sikkim study series (2006) shows that the Lepcha's ancestors emarged within the foothills of Mount Kanchandzonga . The Lepchas call Sikkim "*Ney-Mayel-Renjyong Lyang*" i.e. the secred place inhabited by honest and peace loving people. In short they call it '*Mayel Lyang*' or '*Ranjyung Lyang*' The Bhutias call it *Denjong* i.e. the land of paddy. The Limboos call it '*Sukhim*' i.e. the new home. They love to call themsleves '*Rong Kup-Rumkup*' i.e. the beloved children of mother nature and god. They are simple, unsuspecting and easy going and do not bear any ill will against anyone their peaceful and gentle character is evinced by their numerous terms of tenderness and compassion and

by the fact that not one word of abuse exists in their language (Mainwaring 1876).

The history of the Lepchas can also be drawn from old manuscripts and other un written sources like rendering of hymns/chanting by *Boongthing* (priest) and *Mun* (priestess) describing the legends, events, heroes, their adventures etc. The details of events concerning their ancestors, legendary heroes, chiefs etc, passed down orally by the elders from generation to generation also from another sources of their history. These sources indicates that the lives of the Lepchas have been closely related with the forests, hills, rivers, and places of Sikkim from time immemorial, centuries before the coming of Guru Padma-Sambhava in the eighth century. These sources tell that their primogenitors *Fodoing thing* and *Nazaongnyu* were created by god in Sikkim. The Tendong Hill, situated in south Sikkim rescued them during the deluge, in significance of which the Lepchas have been carrying out *Tendong Lho-Rum* Faat worship, every year from the ancient time. The very mountains /hills/lakes/river, being worshiped from time immemorial and called upon to stand witness and bless the auspicious events are situated in Sikkim. In their legends the heroes have taken birth in Sikkim and their heroic acts are performed in the soil of Sikkim. The names of the hills, places, mountains, rivers etc of Sikkim originate from the Lepcha language. These facts are enough to prove that the Lepchas are the original inhabitants of the sacred land of Mount Kanchandzonga. They have not come from other land. But some of them have migrated to other places in course of time.

2.3 Socio-Cultural System of the Lepcha Community

Nakane (1978) writes on "a plural society in Sikkim". He divided his discussion into two parts; first deals with the problems of the Lepcha and the Bhutia in terms of a community centered on the Gumpa (monestry), specifically how the Bhutia immigrants had contact with the native Lepchas and how the kingdom was finally established, the "*Mayel Lyang*". *Kye Bumsa*, was the ancestor of the Maharaja of Sikkim who first migrated into Sikkim established a great friendship with *Thekongtek* (the Lepcha king of 13 century)

the *Kye Bumsa* went to Sikkim in the 13th century to seek the blessings of the then Lepcha chief *Thekongthek*. After the swearing of the blood brotherhood between *Thikung Tek*, *Nykung Knal* and *Kye-Bumsa* at *Kabi*. The migration of Bhutias into Sikkim led to the organization of entire population in one political unit. The spread of Tibetan Buddhism among the Pagan Lepchas was successful. Gradually the Pagan Lepchas were entirely converted to Buddhims.

Tamsang (1983) mentions that the Lepchas have their own ancient religion called *Boongthingism and Munism*. Their religion is simple. They believe in the existence of a god called *Rum*, and to him they offer their prayers and thanks giving. The first fruit of the season are always offered to god. They also believe in evil spirit who causes illness and misfortune. The purity of their belief is now prevented by the introduction of various 'isms' but it had and still has however, but little hold on them.

They believe that the soul of the dead person is taken to heaven, the *Boongthing* and the *Mun* perform all the religious ceremonies and rituals of the Lepchas. Three days after the birth of child, the *Boongthing* perform *Tungbaong faat* ceremony, which means the participation and of naming ceremony of the child. The *Boongthing* offers sacrifices the animal for sickness and also works as a doctor by giving herbal medicines to cure the sick.

In Lepcha marriage, the *Boongthing* plays the most important role. It is called *Byekboo*, which means the middle man who arranges and fixed the marriage ceremony. In the marriage he performs the ceremony of *Moongko Mungla faat* and *Nunglyon faat* which mean the invocation prayer to god for the longevity, prosperity of the bride and the groom. In death, the *Boongthing* performs the funeral ceremony, *Chyoak boom*, by burying the dead body into his or her final resting place in a sitting position, facing towards Mt. *Kanchandzonga*, the creator of their first and foremost primogenitors, *Fodongthing* and *Najaongnyoo* (ancestor), admit the chanting of prayer and invocations. In the New Year harvested first fruits and crops are offered to god. So from birth to death without a *Boongthing*, the Lepcha cannot do anything. He is an important person of Lepcha culture.

Foning (1987) in his book has stated about the traditional customs, rights and historical stories (folk tales) of Lepcha community. He has discussed about the origin of clan, marriage customs, customary lanes, which they perform from the beginning of their life to death. In his book he also writes about the creator god i.e *Itbu-Rum* and also describes the other "Rum" like "*Sakyu Rum* and *Lungzee Rum*". The Lepcha believe and worship the three god i.e. *Itbu-Rum*. It means the creator god *Sakyu Rum* and *Lungzee Rum* are the natural god (in Nepali language is called it *Devi-Deo-rali*). This book also discusses the processes of conversion of the Lepcha religion from *Boongthism* to Buddhism. He also mentions that a few of them are converted into Christianity. It is somehow true that till the brotherhood treaty between the Lepcha and the Bhutia in Kabilung-chok, the *Boongthism* was popular and after that the *Boongthism* is converted into Buddhism. During the 19th century due to British colonial rule a few Lepchas were converted into Christianity.

Thakur, (1988) has made a research on the Himalayan Lepchas in which he has given the details of the tradition, customs and manners of the Lepchas. The impact of Christian missionaries the Tibetans Buddhism and the Nepalese and other plainsmen on the Lepcha's community are also discussed. The book also deals with the contribution and level of interest in the current up serge in the region.

Bhasin (1989), studied ecological condition and the socio-cultural system of two tribes in Sikkim i.e. the Lepcha's and the Bhutia. An attempt has also been made to analyze the manifestation of planned and unplanned change in these remote and isolated communities. The study is mainly focused on one district of Sikkim i.e. North Sikkim where there is more concentration of the Lepcha and the Bhutia communities. This study compares two Tibeto-Burman speaking tribes, inhabiting the northern part of Sikkim where there is much variation in topography. It describes the social and cultural effects of different ecological areas. According to him the Lepchas living at lower altitude practice agriculture while the Bhutias living at higher altitude have adopted mixed farming and pastriolism in varying degrees. The Lepchas are the original

inhabitants of Sikkim, while the Bhutias came from Tibet and Bhutan. The Bhutia conquered the Lepcha land and established a monarchy in Sikkim.

Tamsang (1998) states about the culture and religions of the Lepchas tribes of Sikkim and Darjeeling districts. Formerly the Lepchas have only one heaven called '*Rumlyang*' but since the advent of Lamaism into Sikkim and the Darjeeling district. Now they believe in more mythical world besides their own ancestral belief of *Rumlyang*. Now they believe in *Rumlyang* (heaven) *Nyolyang* (hell) *Numsyim-Nyolyang* (human world) *Thamchyanglyang*, (animal world) and *Muknyumlyang* (spirit world).

At present on religious point of view the Lepchas are now divided into two sections, namely the Lepcha Buddhists and the Lepcha Christians. The Lepcha Buddhists though they have become Buddhists, they still observe their own ancient religion *Boongthism* and *Munism* and their own ancient culture, customs, traditions language, way of life and living. On the other hand the Lepcha Christians are sub-divided into many sects, as Protestants, Roman Catholics, Baptists, Seventh day, Adventists, Methodist etc and among them, the orthodox Lepcha Christian living in the interior villages still observe their own ancestral, culture, customs, manners, traditions, language, way of life and living but are very deeply pained to say that the modernized Lepcha Christian living in the urban areas, have lost their identity so called the Lepcha traits. They have adopted Christian ritualism that is mostly foreign.

Sengupta (2001) in this book describes various socio-cultural conditions of different tribes of eastern Himalayas. The characteristic features, demographic profiles, ethnicity, and social organization and change among the Lepcha tribe of Sikkim have been discussed. The Lepchas are one of the original inhabitants of Sikkim and its neighbouring hills but have now been reduced to a small minority. The Lepchas have their own traditional custom and religion. They worship nature god like river, tree and Mt. Kanchandzonga turned Buddhists during three centuries of the Namgyal Dynasty in Sikkim in order to avoid wrath of the rulers as well as to get favor from the palace. Now majority of the living outside Sikkim have converted themselves into

Christianity whereas those living in Sikkim are mostly Buddhists. Lepchas are the Mongoloid by race and speak a language falling under the Tibeto-Burman family.

He also describes the different rites of the Lepcha's in Sikkim i.e. birth, marriage and death rites. In the olden times the rites of the Lepcha were very costly but now the rites and rituals of the Lepcha are simple. In the birth rites, if the child is a son, the expenses are high and if the child is a daughter it is vice versa. Biasness was common between a boy and girl child. Most of the marriages of the Lepchas are arranged and monogamy marriage is common but for reason of the spread of venereal diseases and high infant mortality polygamy of some form still do exist. For the death the monk perform the funeral rites for seven days. On the seventh day gathering of friends, neighbors and relatives is a must. The monk addressed the spirit of the dead, to go to its final resting place to join the ancestors in heaven. Finally the dead family put hundred and eight flag over the grave and around the house. At times a small size stupa also is erected.

Lepcha (2005), has described the social structure and clan/sub clan of the Lepcha tribes. The Lepchas do not observe caste system as some tribes of the Himalayan region do. The Lepcha is main clan. It is broadly divided into ten clan according to origin of the Lepchas connected with the murder of *Lasho-Mung Punu* the enemy/demon of the Lepcha tribe. The demon was killed by *Jor Bongthing* and the Lepchas by sword, bow and arrow. This is how the seven days of a week were named according to the materials or weapons used for the destruction of the demon i.e. *lung* (stone) *sayak*, *kung* (wood) *sayak*, *punzeng* (iron) *sayak*, *fat* (soil) *sayak*, *mee* (fire) *sayak*, *sukmut* (air) *sayak* and *ung* (water) *sayak*. Then all of them came to salute their great leader and deliverer *Jor Bong thing*. *Jor Bongthing* then offered various titles according to the works they had performed.

He bestowed the title of *Lutsom-mu* to the person who first dared to listen to the heart beats of the demon. The title of *Samik-mu* was given to the person who had taken out the eyes of the demon. The title of *Sangoot-mu* was

offered to the person who had cut down the parts of the body of the demon. One who had thrown the ashes of the body into the air was called *Sangdyang-mu*. The title of *Karvo-mu* was given to the one who had made the sword and other weapons for the battles. The maker of bow and arrows was called *Flungtail-mu*. The maker of bow and the weaver of the string for the bow was named *Bri-mu*. The title of *Aden-mu* was given to the one who prepared the sitting arrangement, one who had made all the arrangements of food for the army and the title of *Joribumu* was offered. The last one who prayed for the victory over the demon was called *Munlom-mu*. At present there are more than 450 sub-clan of the Lepchas in Sikkim and Darjelling/Kalimpong districts of West Bengal.

Sikkim study series (2006) describes the socio-cultural system of the Lepcha community of Sikkim. In the 13th century *Kye-Bumsa* from the *Kham* district of Tibet had settled in the Chumbi valley, he had no children. After receiving his blessing *Kye Bumsa* returned to Yatung. Three sons were born to him. This meeting between these two personalities was a turning point in the history of Sikkim. This led to the usurpation of power by the descendent of *Kye Bumsa*. Later in Sikkim the history of Namgyal dynasty begins with coronation of Phunsog Namgyal who was consecrated at Yaksam as the 1st *chogyal* of Sikkim in the year 1642. This dynasty ended during 1975 when Sikkim becomes a state of India.

During more than three hundred years of the Bhutia rule many political, historical and religious changes came with the passing of time. The Tibetan rulers brought Buddhism in the land of the Lepchas (*Rongs*) who were nature worshipping. Hinduism came with the coming of the Hindu Nepalese of the Aryan race and with the British missionaries who brought Christianity with them. Thus the hidden sacred land of the *Rongkup* i.e. the "*Mayel Lyang*" was filled with people of various races and various religions. The ancient tradition and culture started vanishing from the land of the sacred Kanchendzonga.

2.4 Economic Conditions of the Lepcha Community

Siiger (1967) have stated that the main economic activity of the Lepcha people is subsistence agriculture, hunting and fishing. The Lepchas prefer to do their field-work in groups irrespective of whether it is ploughing, sowing, weeding and harvesting. Such working-parties are made up of relatives and friends who in turn work in the fields of each other. No payment is given for such mutual assistance, but the person who profits from the labour of the day is expected to provide a good meal and a fair portion of *chi* (rice beer) at the end of the day. Formerly hunting played an important part in the life of the Lepcha. The Lepchas are expert in hunting and fishing. They used poisonous arrow and *lisho* (as type of trap) for trapping birds and animal. While nowadays its importance had dwindled owing to the development which has taken place in agriculture and cattle breeding.

Thakur (1988) has given the detail about the occupational mobility among the Lepchas. According to him the Lepchas in the distant past lived by hunting and gathering but by the nineteenth century nearly all turned towards agriculture. With the coming of missionaries and the spread of modern education their traditional occupation of agriculture suffered a set-back. Several Lepchas turned to become religious priests, many took to the teaching profession and a few got job into the government offices. This facilitated their spatial and vertical mobility. The white colour job provided them higher income and prestige. Their status was raised and their standard of living went up. Among the Christians the inter-generational mobility was on vertical line, son of village school master became high school teachers. Their sons in turn acquired master degree some become doctors and some become government officers. As compared with their Christian Lepchas the Buddhist Lepchas continued to remain less mobile.

Bhasin (1989) states that the Lepchas have their own traditional inhabitation called "*Mayel Lyang*" or "*Ranjyong Lyang*". Their main occupation

was hunting, fishing and shifting cultivation but now they practice agriculture. Almost all the Lepchas land was under the *mandal* system where by the people exercised inalienable communal rights over the land. During the Maharaja period the *Mandal* and *Gyapon* were the two such officials in Sikkim. Administratively "*Mayel Lyang*" was divided into different blocks each with a *mandal* as its head. The office of *mandal* was and is still hereditary within the extended Lepcha family. The *mandal* was responsible to the Royal court for the maintenance of village affairs and collection of revenue, he was considered a respected person who helped in organizing marriage, arranging feasts for collecting loans for needy person's who had requested him to take personal interest in the day to day life of local people. The other privileges that the *mandal* office carried were remission of house and land tax, right of three days of free labour annually from every household. The other officials who looked after the administration were *Youmi* and *Gyapon*. During the monarchical rule, the *mandal* was an important official; a forceful individual in that job could become very powerful in the village. This situation has changed and nowadays the *mandal* only collect land tax. Other responsibilities have been transferred to the panchayat.

Nowadays the Lepchas are mostly employed in the state police and Indian Armed force for their cash income. Now a few Lepchas are employed in the civil services and private service. A farmer usually keeps some cattle such as goats, pigs, and chicken to fulfill their urgent need of cash.

Tamsang (1998) in his book has mentioned that the Lepchas are good in arts, architecture and handicraft. Some of the important architecture of the Lepcha's are cane bridge, Lepcha bamboo raft, Lepcha house, Lepcha forts, Lepcha earthen tower etc. The ubiquitous bamboo called '*Poh*' in the Lepcha language is the most useful plant for the Lepchas. The majority Lepchas say like this "*Pomik potong ayit Sa dookkung mo*", which means God had actually created the bamboos along with the Lepchas for it helps to build house, rafts, bridges, handicrafts, bow, arrows, spears, fishing rod, traps and contrivances,

furniture, utensils, basket, mats, water jugs, fences, props, ropes, sticks, firewood, flutes, Jens harps, poles, stakes and whatever that can be made out of it for the use of mankind. The Lepchas build attractive handicraft, which are made from bamboo, and it is sold in both local and national market. Now a days people get good education, the Lepcha's people are engaged in government and private sectors.

Lepcha (2005) mentions that the main traditional occupation of the Lepchas are hunting, fishing, weaving, gathering of wild fruits, agriculture, animal husbandry and making handicrafts. But now due to the educational development of state support they have become professionals, techno crafts and bureaucrats and some of them have taken up government service too. The house type of the Lepcha community is usually made of stone plastered with mud. In remote areas, some of the houses remain thatched with local *khar* or *siru* roofed with beaten bamboo. Nowadays besides these there are cemented buildings and wooden house that are well planned with roof of plain sheet. He further mentions that some of the author said that the Lepchas people moreover looks like Japanese and Koreans people. The Lepcha are very sincere, and dedicated about their professions (Dhendup 1990).

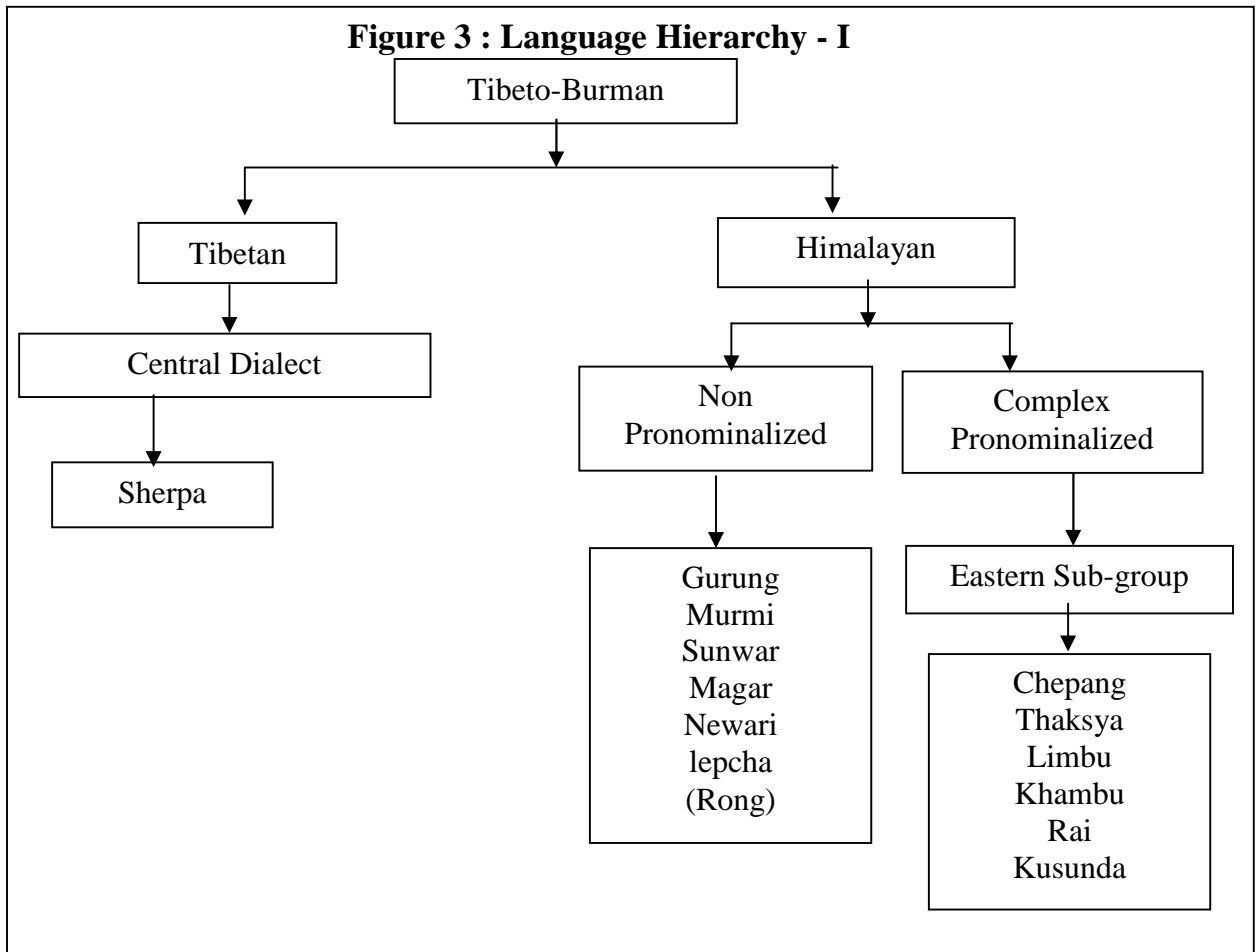
2.5 Language of the Lepcha Community

Mainwaring (1876) was the first man who constructed the Lepcha grammar and dictionary; he died before these were published. Subsequently a German scholar published a Lepcha script based on phonetic translations published by Grunwedel in Berlin in 1898. In this book he writes that the Lepcha is the language spoken by Adam and Eve and hence older than Sanskrit and Hebrew. It proofs, that the Lepcha language is one of the oldest language in the world, but due to lack of exposure the language is laying behind. Take some fact examples. In Lepcha language alphabet (*Ra*) all the big river, stream starts (*Ra*) alphabates. i.e *Ranyau, Runyeet, Rangpo, Reshi* etc. The name of the trees and animals starts the alphabets (*Sa*) i.e. *songkung sunongkung, sana,*

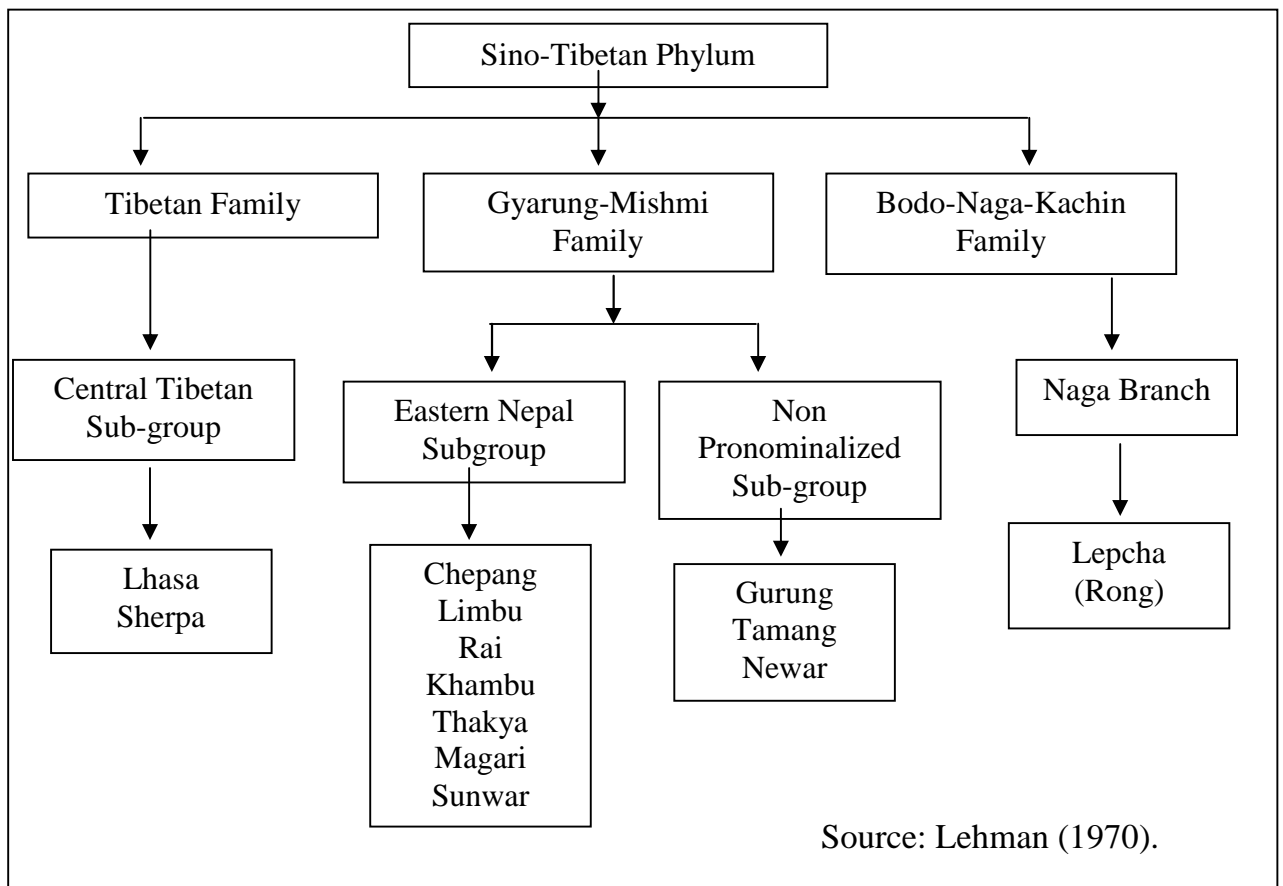
suchak etc. Sensative or beautiful outer organ starts alphabet (*Ah*) ie *Abong*, *Amik*, *Aking* etc. The least used word or the waste products, is alphabate (*Ta*) i.e. *Talam*, *Tuknom*, *thichik* etc. In Lepcha language the high land called *Blu*. In German is termed as *berg* (hem *berg*). The Lepcha script must have been developed, based on the Tibetan alphabet. The main Lepcha words were Tibetan scriptures translated into Lepcha to facilitated the progress of the lamaistic religion among the Lepchas. There are however references to ever earlier Lepcha manuscripts narrating Lepcha mythology and legends. They were destroyed and burnt by the Tibetan lama due to their zeal to convert the Lepcha. Through the Lepchas they have no life memory of such happenings.

Lehman (1970) has studied the Tibeto Burman Linguistics and the Tone System of Tibeto-Burman Languages in Nepal. He mentions that the Lepcha language come under both the Tibeto-Burman and Sino-Tibetan Phylum (Figure 3 and 4).

Figure 3 : Language Hierarchy - I



Language Hierarchy - II



Source: Lehman (1970).

Thakur (1988), in his book "The Himalayan Lepchas" writes that the '*Rongring*' is the language spoken by the Lepchas. '*Rong*' means Lepcha and their language is known as '*ring*' or '*aring*' like the origin of the people who speak the language. The origin of this language is difficult to trace. The Lepcha language is distinct one not a dialect of the Tibetan. But Chatterjee (1967) refuting his previous contention says that the Lepcha language is a branch of the himalayan group of Tibeto Burman family.

Since the time of Mainwaring (1876) a new chapter in his history of the Lepcha language begins. Their rich and beautiful language has been preserved from probable extinction by the efforts of Mainwaring and other people. It is said that Mainwaring lived with the Lepchas for considerable period of time and made an in-depth study of the Lepcha language. He concluded that the language is unquestionably far anterior to the Hebrew and Sanskrit. It is pre eminently the oldest language. However the language gives some clue to the origin of the tribe. The Lepcha language is one of the most scientific languages. The system of naming has its own significance. It is not sufficient to say that names of places, hills tree and river etc bear the Lepcha names and hence they belonged to this region.

Tamsang (1998) stated that the Lepcha language is a very ancient language of the world because in the Lepcha language, there is no traces whatsoever of Mongolian Sematic or Indo-Germanic origin can be found. The Lepcha language has developed independently in the course of past millennia, preserving its simplicity and purity of the language, unaffected by other languages until the Tibetan refugees entered into the Lepcha land, Sikkim in the 13th century. The Lepcha tradition says that the Lepcha is the language of God, because after God had created the Lepeha's first primogenitors *Fodongthing* and *Nazaongnyo* from the pure, virgin snow of Mount Kanchandzonga pinnacle, God had spoken with them in this very Lepcha language which, they in turn later taught this very language to their children and which the present Lepcha's speaking to this day as handed down to them from God and from their first primogenitor and ancestors.

The Lepcha language is so vast that no other language of antiquity can match its enormous quantity, variety and vitality. Its regularity and simplicity are definite proof of its more ancient origin. The Lepcha language is perfectly distinct from other and it is a very comprehensive language it is the ancient and purest of the pure language because there is not a word of abuse. The Lepcha language is formed in a syllabic manner in which latter vowels, diacritical mark, finals, circumflex, signs and other affixed signs are combined conjoined and arranged in Lepcha alphabetical order, forming syllables and comprehending all forms that words in the Lepcha language can take. Thus if each letter be carried out with consonants vowels, diacritical marks, finals, circumflex signs and other affixed signs, it will give 6,600 monosyllabic words.

The Lepchas prehistoric writings, religious manuscripts, chronicles, literature, records, documents of past fact and events that could be tell the past history of the Lepcha were all collected and burned them down at *Ayonggong*, near Rabdenste (2nd capital of Sikkim in 1826) and a testimony to support this true fact, are burnt in a flat stone Lepcha manuscripts and still be seen even today as an evidence. Later on the first Lepcha Grammar in 1876 and then compiled the first Lepcha English Dictionary in 1898 (G.B. Mainwaring) now a days the Lepchas of Sikkim have their own printing press in Gangtok and already publishing Lepcha monthly magazine, bulletins texts book etc for the promotion and advancement of their language and literature.

Above all else, whatever the literature reviewed for this present study, are focused on origin, socio-cultural and economic condition of the Lepcha community in different area i.e. Sikkim, Darjelling, Kalimpong and Nepal. No study has been made yet on the process of change in socio-cultural and economic conditions in recent years among the Lepcha communities. So, the present study intends to focus on the change and development in terms of their socio-cultural as well as economic condition of Lepchas communities. The methodology used to carryout this work in discussed in chapter III

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

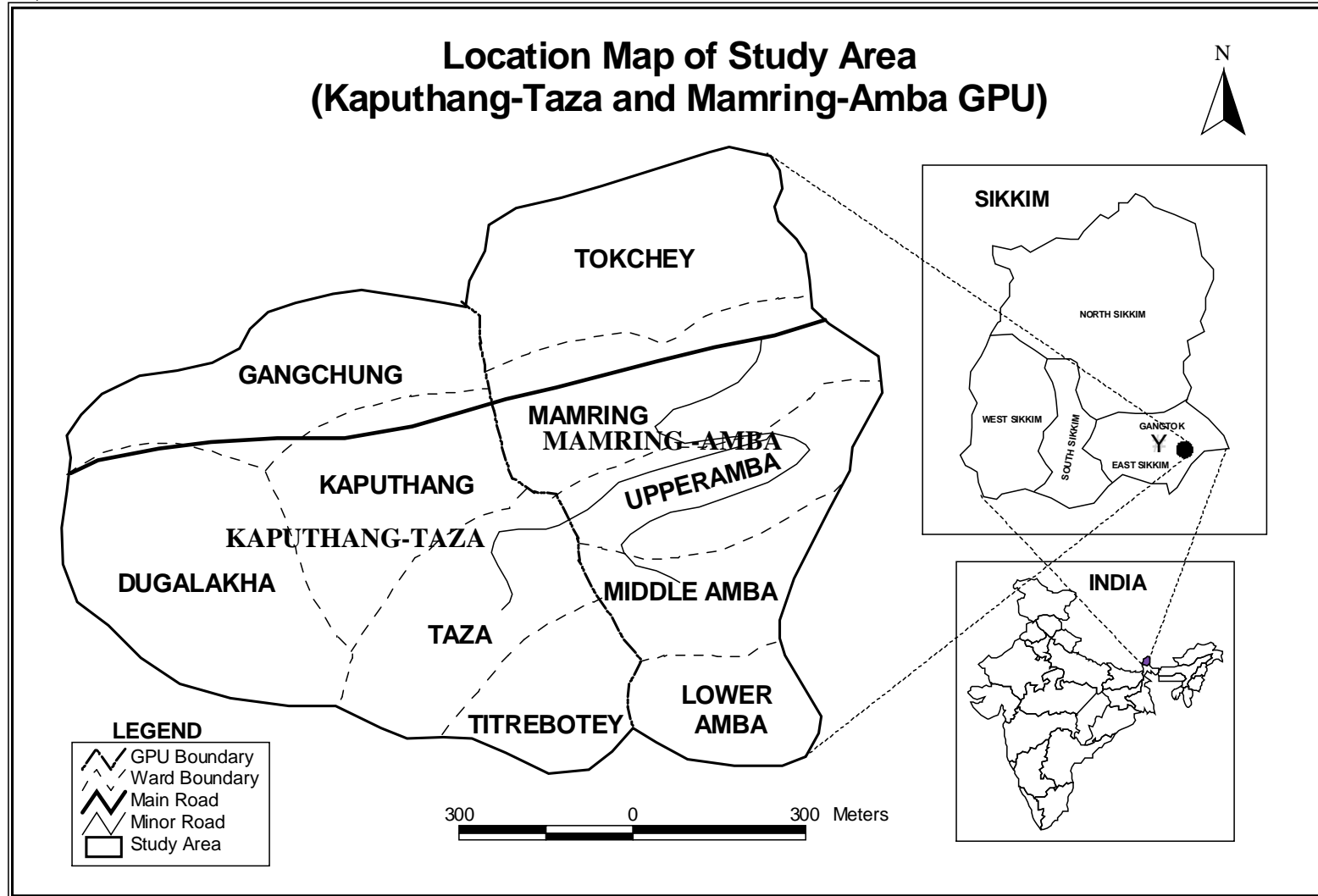
Methodology is the main guideline for any research work. Different research methods are used during the research. They are as follows:

3.1 Selection of the Study Area

Sikkim is a small state of India, which comprises only four districts i.e. East, West, North and South district. Among the four districts North Sikkim has a highest population of the Lepchas community, then comes East district and other two districts has lowest concentration of population of the Lepcha community. Two areas were selected for this study i.e. Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchyat Unit (Map 1) because these areas have large concentration of the Lepcha population in comparison to other GPU. The total population of Sikkim is 540851 as per the census of 2001 and the East district has 245040 population. In the total population of East Sikkim the Lepcha population comprises 21.12 percent that is 11603 out the total East district population. In the total Lepcha population of east Sikkim, Kaputang-Taza GPU 605 shares 5.12 percent (605 persons) and Mamring- Amba GPU shares 6.12 percent (710 persons).

3.2 Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary sources of information have been used in this study. Most of the data is based on primary sources, which is collected through field survey of sampled households using structured questionnaire. Besides the secondary sources of data is also used wherever relevant to complete the study. The important sources of secondary data are Population Census, Statistical Profile, Human Development Reports, Electoral Roll and other published book, journal, study series and articles.



3.3 Method of Data Collection

3.3.1 Household Survey

Out of a total 75 households in study area, selected for the study is only 46 household (60%) were randomly selected for survey. Information related with the change and development of socio-economic condition of the Lepchas community has collected. A structured questionnaire was prepared and administered. Each households heads or senior member of the family were taken into consideration in order to administer those structured questionnaire. From this structured questionnaire necessary quantitative information regarding the family structure, age and sex composition, their educational structure, occupation types, religion, custom and cultural practices of past and present were collected. (see Annex)

3.3.2 Key Informant Survey

Some selected senior members of the community i.e. teacher, panchayat and aged person were interviewed. The interview was conducted in order to obtain their views about their changing in their social structure, traditional custom and religions practices of Lepcha community in the study area. The interview was also conducted for the time line development of infrastructure such as road, health post, educational institution and market etc.

3.3.3 Field Diary

Field diary is another important method for the collection of relevant data. A field diary was maintained to record necessary information which were observed during the field survey. It contains the important incident, event and discussion of the key information or respondent, which were not included in structured questionnaire.

3.4 Data Processing and Analysis

The data obtained from field study was processed manually in a chart sheet and it is manually processed in tabulated form. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques are used to analyze data. Simple statistical tools such as percentage and average have been used to analyze data quantitatively. Beside these, maps, diagrams, photographs are also used.

CHAPTER IV

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY AREA

This chapter deals with the general introduction of the Sikkim and specific introduction of the study area in terms of their geo-physical settings, economic and social characteristic.

4.1 Sikkim

4.1.1 Geo-Physical Setting of Sikkim

4.1.1.1 Location

Sikkim is the 22nd state of India with a total area of 7096 sq. km which constitutes 0.22 percent of the total geographical area of India with the population of 540,493 (DESME, 2005). Sikkim is situated in the eastern Himalayas bordered by third highest mountain peak in the world i.e. Mt Kanchendzonga (8585m) preserved by the Sikkimese as their protective deity. It is separated by the Singalila range from Nepal in the west, Chola range from Tibet in the northeast and Bhutan in the Southeast. Rangit and Rangpo rivers form the border with the Indian state of west Bengal on the south. It is a very small hilly state in the Eastern Himalayas between 27^o 04' 46" to 28^o 07' 48" North latitude and 88^o 00' 58" to 88^o 55' 25" East longitude extending approximately 115 km from north to south and 64 km from east to west. The state being a part of inner ranges of the mountains of Himalayas has no open valley and no plains but carried elevations ranging from 300 to 8585 meters above mean sea level, consisting lower hills, middle and higher hills, alpine zones and snow bound land.

4.1.1.2 Physiographic and Natural Vegetation

Sikkim encompasses the lesser Himalaya, central Himalaya and the Tethys Himalaya. It is essentially a mountainous state without flat piece of land of any extent anywhere. The northern portion of the state is deeply cut into steep escarpment and except in the northern Lachen and Lachung valleys there are no human settlement. Southern Sikkim is lower more open and fairly well cultivated. The physical configuration of Sikkim is partly due to geological

structure. Major portion of state is covered by Precambrian rock and is much younger in age. The northern, eastern and western portion is formed for comparatively soft, thin massive gneissose rocks capable of resisting denudation. The central and southern portion is formed of comparatively soft, thin slaty and half-schistose rocks, which denudes very easily. However, chief ridges run in a more or less north-south direction. The geographical and climatic characteristics of the state have deeply influenced its economic and social development. The green cover of the state is critical for sustaining livelihoods in agriculture, animal husbandry and tourism.

In Sikkim the total forest area constituted 44.9 percent of the total area (DESME, 2005). There are three distinct types of forest i.e. the tropical, deciduous and coniferous. According to latest base line survey of forest resources in the state there are 978 sq.km of dense forest, 75 sq. km of degraded forest and 31 sq.km of alpine/pasture/shrub forest. There are 4000 species of flowering plants, 300 species of ferns and its allies, 11 species of oak, 8 species of tree fern, 30-40 species of primulas and 20 species of bamboos. In fauna, the state is also very rich; 144 species of mammals, 500-600 species moths. Many medicinal plants/herbs and important shrubs are found in low and high altitude area.

4.1.1.3 Climate

The climate of Sikkim has been roughly divided into the tropical, temperate and alpine zones for most of the period in a year, the climate are cold and humid. Rainfall occurs in each month. The area experiences heavy rainfall due to its proximity to the Bay of Bengal. The rainfall in North district is comparatively less than of the other districts. The general trends of decrease in temperature with increase in altitude hold good every where. Pre-Monsoon rain occur in April - May and monsoon (south-west) operates normally from the month of May continues up to early October. An examination of available rainfall data shows that the mean annual rainfall is minimum at Thangu (82 mm) and maximum at Gangtok (3994 mm). An isohyatal analysis of these data reveals that there are two maximum rainfall areas (i) South-east quadrant,

including Mangan, Singhik, Dikchu, Gangtok, Rougli etc (ii) South-west corner including Hilley, Gyazing etc. In between those two regions there is a low rainfall region e.g. Namchi. The highest annual rainfall for the individual station may exceed 5000 mm and average number of rainy days (2.5 mm or more) ranges from 100 at Thangu to 184 at Gangtok. The maximum and minimum temperatures vary between 4 degree Celsius to 30 degree Celsius in Gangtok. The maximum temperature is recorded usually during July and August and minimum during December and January. Biting cold is experienced at high attitude places in the winter month and snowfall is also common during this period.

4.1.1.4 Soil

The soil types of Sikkim varied with elevation, temperature and rainfall. The stiff reddish loamy soil is mostly found in Sikkim. The upper steep slopes contain brown loamy skeletal soil with rock particles of micaceous gneiss rocks and talus deposits (National Bureau of Soil Survey 1992). Brown to dark coloured soils have been formed in gneiss rocks in steep slopes and escarpments are also susceptible to landslides. At places with steep lower slopes grayish brown to yellowish loamy skeletal soils with deep profile is developed on gneiss because the river in the flat land deposits sediment. The forest and the pastureland in the slope on the side is with 10-15 percent gradient. The soil is deep and has loamy skeletal texture. The National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning Regional Center, Kolkata, has surveyed the soils of Sikkim and classified the soils into three taxonomic order of inceptisol, entisols and mollisols and 12 sub groups on the basis of nature and properties of soil.

4.1.1.5 Drainage System

The configuration of the state is partly due to the direction of main drainage, which is southern. The Tista and Rangeet are the main rivers of Sikkim which form the main channels of drainage run nearly north to south. The valleys cut by these rivers and their chief feeders are very deep. The valleys are rather open, towards the top, but usually attain a steep gorge like

structure as well approached the bed of the rivers. There are 180 perennial lakes of different altitudes. The other important rivers in Sikkim are Rangpo, Rangli, Dikchu, Rambang, Rani and Bakcha. Many hot spring water i.e. Phur-sacha, Ralang-sachu, Yamthang, Mombay are also found in the state. The perpetual snow line in Sikkim is located approximately at 16,000 ft.

4.1.2 Socio-Economic Settings of Sikkim

4.1.2.1 Population

Sikkim is a multi-ethnic state; broadly, the population can be divided into tribal and non-tribal groups. The Lepcha are the original inhabitant in the state and it has separate identity called primitive tribe. The Bhutia, Sherpa, Tamang and Limboo are considered as the tribal or scheduled tribe. Over 70 percent population consist of Nepalese, they are dominant group in the state. The total population of Sikkim is 540493 out of that 288217 males and 252276 female (DESME, 2005) the decennials growth has come down as in 1971-81 it was 50.77 percent whereas for 1981-91 it is 29.47 percent and in 1991-2001 it slightly increased to 32.98 percent only. The overall density of population in the state is 76 person per sq.km. East district is the most populated (244790) with highest density (257 person per sq.km) whereas North district (71023) with density less than 10 person per sq. km. Sex ratio (female per thousand male) in 2001 was 875. There are only eight urban towns and urban population is 9.10 percent of total population. Schedule caste and schedule tribal population is 5.93 percent and 22.36 percent respectively and the rest of the population were non-tribal (1991 Census). Literacy rate is 69.68 percent (15th position) higher than the all India average literacy rate of 52.11 percent (DESME, 2005).

4.1.2.2 Agriculture

Agriculture is the main occupation of Sikkim, about 75 percent of populations are living in rural area and they are directly or indirectly dependent upon agriculture. The state economy is largely agrarian, based on traditional farming method, on terraced slopes. The rural people grow crops such as paddy, maize, cardamom, orange, apple, tea and fruits. Sikkim has the highest

production and largest cultivated area of cardamom in India. Cardamom is especially grown in the humid area of the state; paddy and maize are grown in the tropical region of the state. Barley, millet and buck-wheat are grown in certain areas. Cabbages are grown in abundance in the Lachung area and its yield is sufficient to meet the requirement of the state. Potatoes are grown in abundance in the Ribdi area in western Sikkim and even exported, out of the state. The climate and soil is also favourable for the growth of ginger especially in eastern and southern Sikkim. The Temi tea estate annually produces about 150 tons of high quality tea, which carries a high premium in the international market. Because of the hilly terrain, and lack of reliable transportation and infrastructure, there are no large-scale, industries; Breweries, distilleries, tanning and watch making are the main industries.

4.1.2.3 Animal Husbandry

Besides agriculture, animal husbandry is one of the main sources of income in the state. The cow, goat, pig, poultry, yak, sheep are the main cattle of the state. Most of the cattle in the state have been cross breed with the Jersey and Holstein Friesians species and this has led to the milk yield increasing considerably. Sikkim is self sufficient in milk and produce more than 30 percent of which is pasteurized in the chilling plants and sold in poly packs. At the higher altitudes yaks and sheep are used to provide milk products, meat and skin. Yak cheese is exported out of the state to Darjelling and Kalimpong and also exported in international market. The development of diary farming, goatry, piggy and poultry in different parts of state to meet local demand as well as exported to neighboring state and country of the world.

4.1.2.4 Transport and Communication

Sikkim does not have any airport or railheads because of its rugged terrain. The closest airport, Bagdora, is located near the town of Siliguri, west-Bengal. The airport is about 124 km away from Gangtok. A regular helicopter service connects Gangtok and Bagdogra. The flight is thirty minutes long, operates only once a day and can carry 4 people. The closest railway station is new Jalpainguri which is situated 16 km from Siliguri. There is only one

national highway i.e. 31A links Siliguri to Gangtok. The highway is an all-weather metalled road which mostly runs parallel of the river Tista, entering Sikkim at Rangpo, so, the river Tista said to be the lifeline of Sikkim. Numerous public and private bus, jeep and taxi connect the airport, railways station Siliguri with Gangtok. The government of Sikkim has promoted tourism. Sikkim has a vast tourism potential and by tapping into this the state has grossed an earnings windfull with the general improvement in infrastructure. Tourism is stated to be the mainstay of the Sikkim's economy. The opening of the Nathula pass on July 6th 2006 connecting Lhasa, Tibet to India expected to give a boost to the local economy. This part, was closed since the 1962-Sino-Indian war, was an offshoot of the ancient silk route, which was essential to the wool, fur and spice trade.

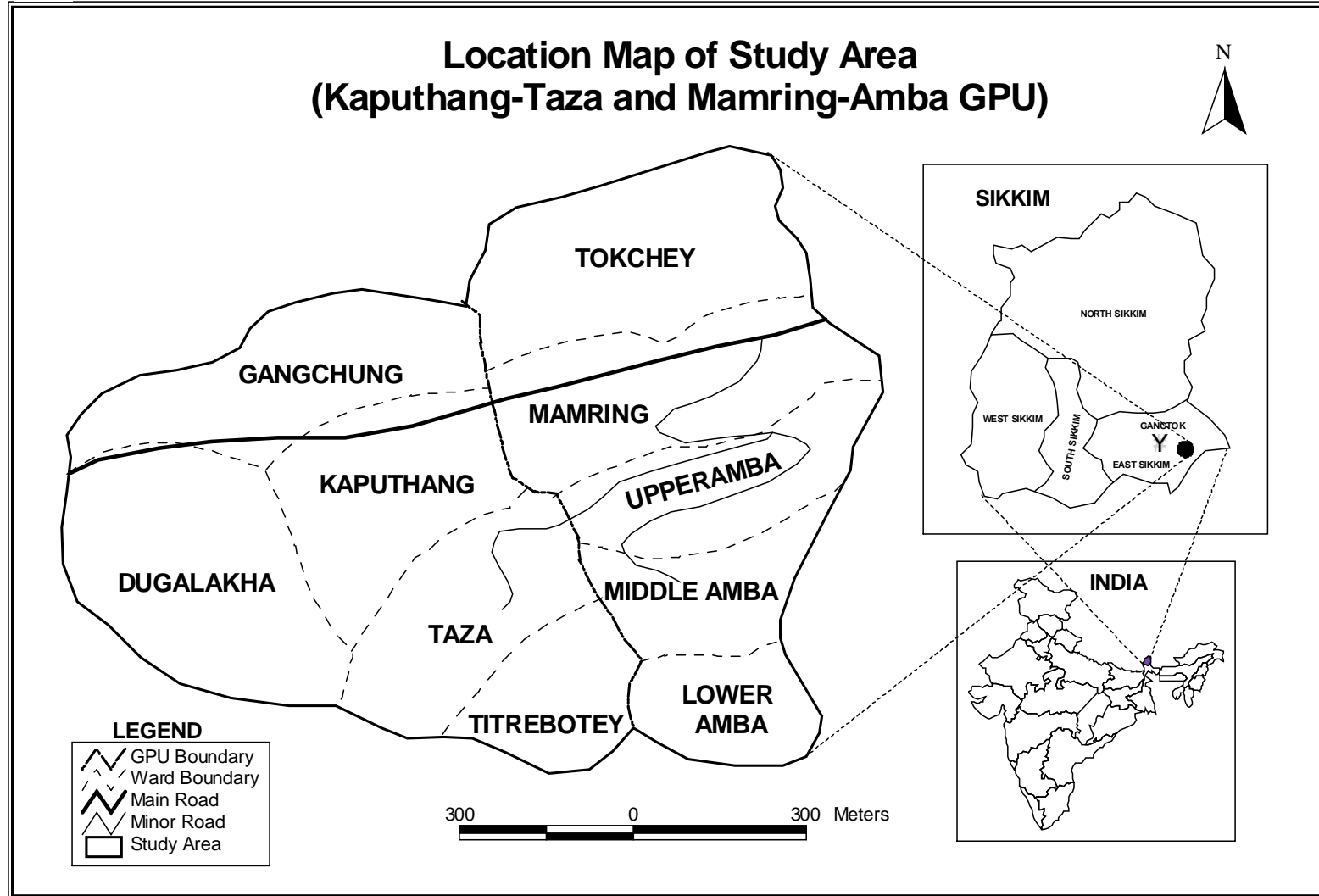
Communication is also an important asset for daily life; it plays a vital role in the development of any area. There are 36 telephone exchange offices and 287-village/Gram panchayat are connected by telephone network. There are 179 branch post office and 19 sub-post offices and 5 head office in Sikkim.

4.2 Study Area (Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba)

4.2.1 Geo Physical Setting of the Study Area

4.2.1.1 Location

Sikkim is divided into four districts i.e. East, West North and South. There are 48 Gram Panchayat Unit in the East district, out of them Mamring-Amba and Kaputhang- Taza are the two Gram Panchayat Unit that have been selected for the study. This study areas lies in south-eastern part of Gangtok, About 5 km from Pakyong bazaar and which is parallel to Pachay Khola and Ralang Khola by two sides and in the southern part there is a Rangpo river. This study area comes under 17 Rhenock constituency and 20 Pathing constituency. In terms of absolute location the Amba Gram Panchayat Unit extent between $27^{\circ} 43' 45''$ to $27^{\circ} 45' 45''$ North latitude and $88^{\circ} 03' 30''$ to $88^{\circ} 05' 30''$ East longitude with an area of 435 hectares. Taza Gram Panchayat Unit extends from $27^{\circ} 45' 45''$ to $27^{\circ} 47' 45''$ North latitude and $88^{\circ} 05' 45''$ to $88^{\circ} 06' 45''$ East longitude with an area of 425 hectres.(Map 2)



4.2.1.2 Physiographic and Natural Vegetation

The relief of the study areas varies from 700 meters to 2200 meters high above mean sea level. The areas are situated on semi-flat land in the southern part and northeastern part of the area is occupied by rocky steep-slopes. About 25 percent of Mamring- Amba Gram Panchayat Units are covered by semi dense forest whereas Kaputhang- Taza Gram Panchayat Unit has only 20 percent area under forest. There are different species of tree both flowering and non-flowering tree. Some of the important species of trees includes Mahawa (*Engellardtia spicate*) Chilaune (*Shorea robusta*) Chap (*Mognolia champ belli*) Uttis (*Alnus nepalensis*) Simal (*Bambox ceibal*) Lampate (*Duabanga grandiflora*) Pani-saj (*Terminala myriocarpa*) Saur (*Betula aluides Buch-ham*) Philphire (*Aceroblongum wall. ex DC*) Kalo Siris (*Albizzia chinensis*) Seto-siris (*Albizzia procera*) Dhalne Katusa (*Castanopsis indica*). Some important herbs and Grasses such as Sishnu (*Urticadioca*) Titepatti (*Carchorus capsularis*) Amlisoo (*Thysanolaena maxima*) are also found in the study area.

4.2.1.3 Climate

The climatic condition of both study area is of warm-temperate type Summer is hot and winter is cold. The northern part is covered by fog in winter season i.e. December to February. In the both area Maximum temperature is rerecorded during month of June to September i.e. 20⁰ to 27⁰ C and the minimum of 7⁰ C to 13⁰ C during month of November to February. Other months remain moderate. During monsoon season last June to first week of September 250 cm to 350 cm of rainfall occur. Scanty rainfall occurs during winter i.e. 25-50 cm. The study area has average of 320 cm rainfall per annum.

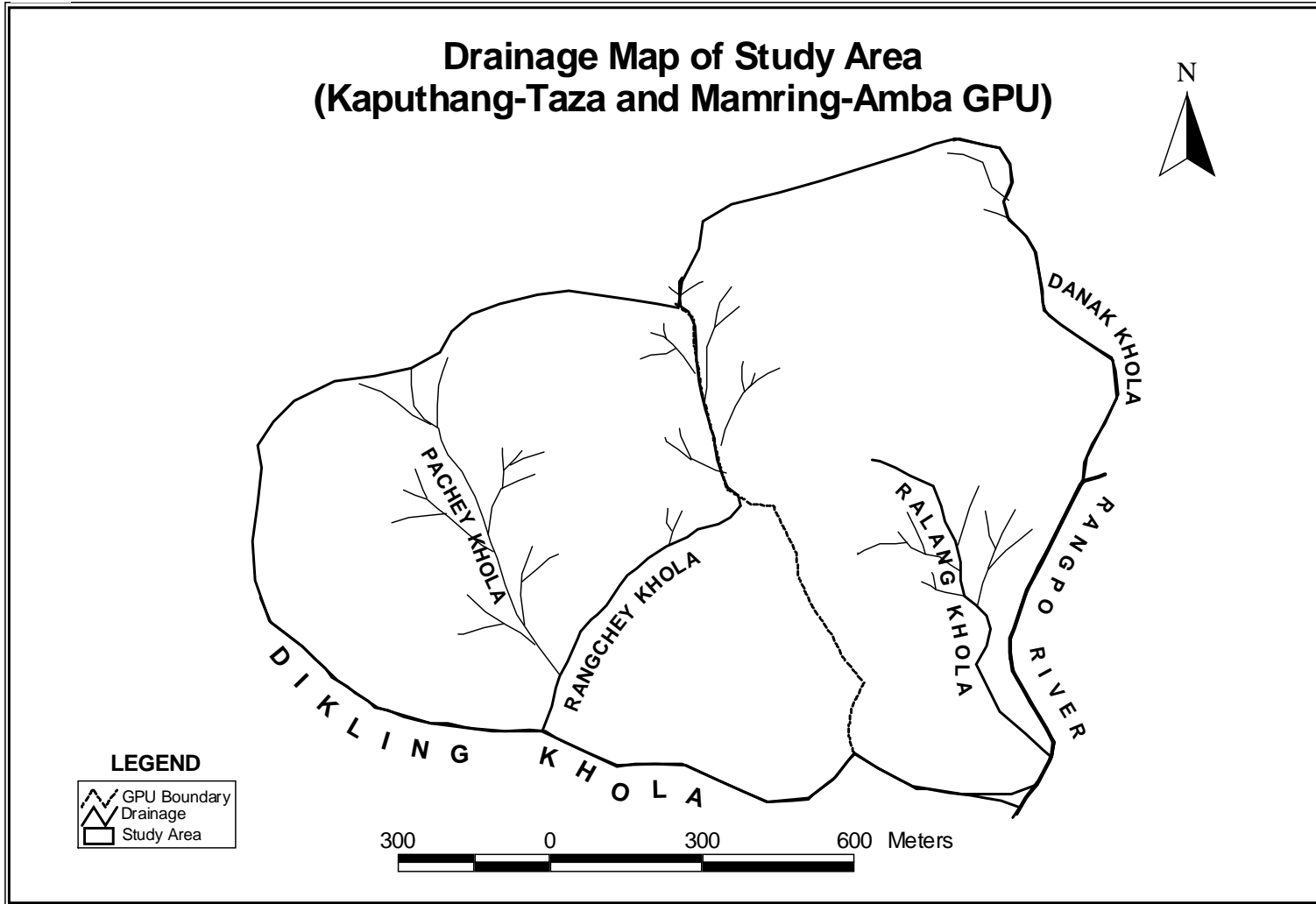
4.2.1.4 Soil

The soil type of both study area are mixed black loamy soil in the central and southern area where the elevation ranging from 700 meters to 1600 meters and the northern part of the area i.e. 1600 meters to 2200 meters is covered by mixed red loamy soil. The black loamy soil and mixed red loamy soil are good for cultivating rice, maize, millet, wheat, and buckwheat and oil

seeds. The main cash crops of the study area are ginger, cardamom and Amlisoo.

4.2.1.5 Drainage

The study areas are drained by several rivers and streams (Kholas). The major river of both Gram Panchayat Unit is Rangpo which flows in the southern part of the study area. There are three major streams (Khola), which separate study area into three parts. The Pachey Khola is in the western part, the Ranchey Khola in the middle part and Ralang Khola in the eastern part. These three Khola are perennial. In the summer season the flow volume is higher, but it is lower in winter. These three streams are the main drainage, which provide water for both drinking and irrigation purposes. These three streams are the main tributary of Rangpo river, they meet separately with Rangpo river and finally join the Tista River at Rangpo bazar(Map 3).



4.2.2 Socio-Economic Setting of the Study Area

4.2.2.1 Population

The total population in East district is 244790. The density of population in East district is 257 person. sq.km, which is the highest as compared to other district in Sikkim. The total percentage of schedule tribes in East district is 21.09 (DESME, 2005). The total population of both Gram Panchayat Unit is about 7987 out of that about 75 percent population consist of Nepalese. The study area consists of multi-ethnic groups. The major ethnic groups are the Bahun, Chettri, Lepcha, Bhautia, Tamang, Rai, Limboo, Magar, Sherpa, Darjee and Biswakarma. Neary 5.12 percent of total population in Kaputhang Taza Gram Panchayat Unit and 6.12 percent in Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat is of the Lepchas.

4.2.2.2 Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

Agriculture and animal husbandry are the main occupation of the study area. About 70 percent of the population of the study area directly or indirectly depend upon agriculture and animal husbandry. Only 30 percent of population the study area are engaged in



Photo 1: Paddy field of the Study Area

secondary and tertiary occupation. In Kaputhang- Taza Gram Panchayat Unit there are only 247 hectare of land under cultivation whereas the Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit has 256 hectare of land under cultivation. The rest of the land is under forest and cardamom and amlisoo (broom). The major crops of the study area are paddy, maize, millet, wheat, buckwheat, oilseeds and pulses. The hill slopes are terraced and used for paddy cultivation. (Photo 1). The ginger, cardamom and amlisoo (broom) are the main cash crop. They also grow vegetable and fruits.

Before 1995, livestock was raised only for household consumption. But now a days the development of two Milk Diary Corporation Center in two

Gram Panchayat Unit, opened the eye of the people to keep livestock for commercial use. Today it became a major source of income besides agriculture. People are more conscious about their quality of cow. Cows with higher milking capacity has higher value. The livestock has multipurpose use its manure is used in agriculture and milk product for cash earning. Animal product like milk, butter, cheese are sold in the main market or local market. Brahmin and Chhetri do not tame livestock like pig and chicken but other ethnic groups keep the cattle including cow, ox, goat, pig and chicken.

4.2.2.3 Infrastructure Development

Transport and communication plays a vital role in the development of any area. It brings the linkages between rural to rural and rural to urban, and provides communication facilities. Mamring- Amba and Kaputhang- Taza Gram Panchayat Unit has one motorable road which connects the area with local town and market. It was constructed in the year 1982. The extension of road from Mamring to Amba was in 1990. But recent development of road i.e. Paradhan Mantri Gram Sadak has to connected the several areas of Gram Panchayat Unit by fair weather road and foot trail. The health post at Mamring was established in 1985.

In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring - Amba Gram Panchayat Unit the infrastructure development is noticed in period between 1950 to 2006. The first school in the area was established in Amba as primary school in 1950. In 1952 another school named Mamring School was established in Mamring. Similarly the Kaputhang Primary school was established in 1975 at Kaputhang. As the number of student rises for further studies, in 1999 Mamring School was extend to 10+2 level. Similarly in 2000 private school was also established at Mamring.

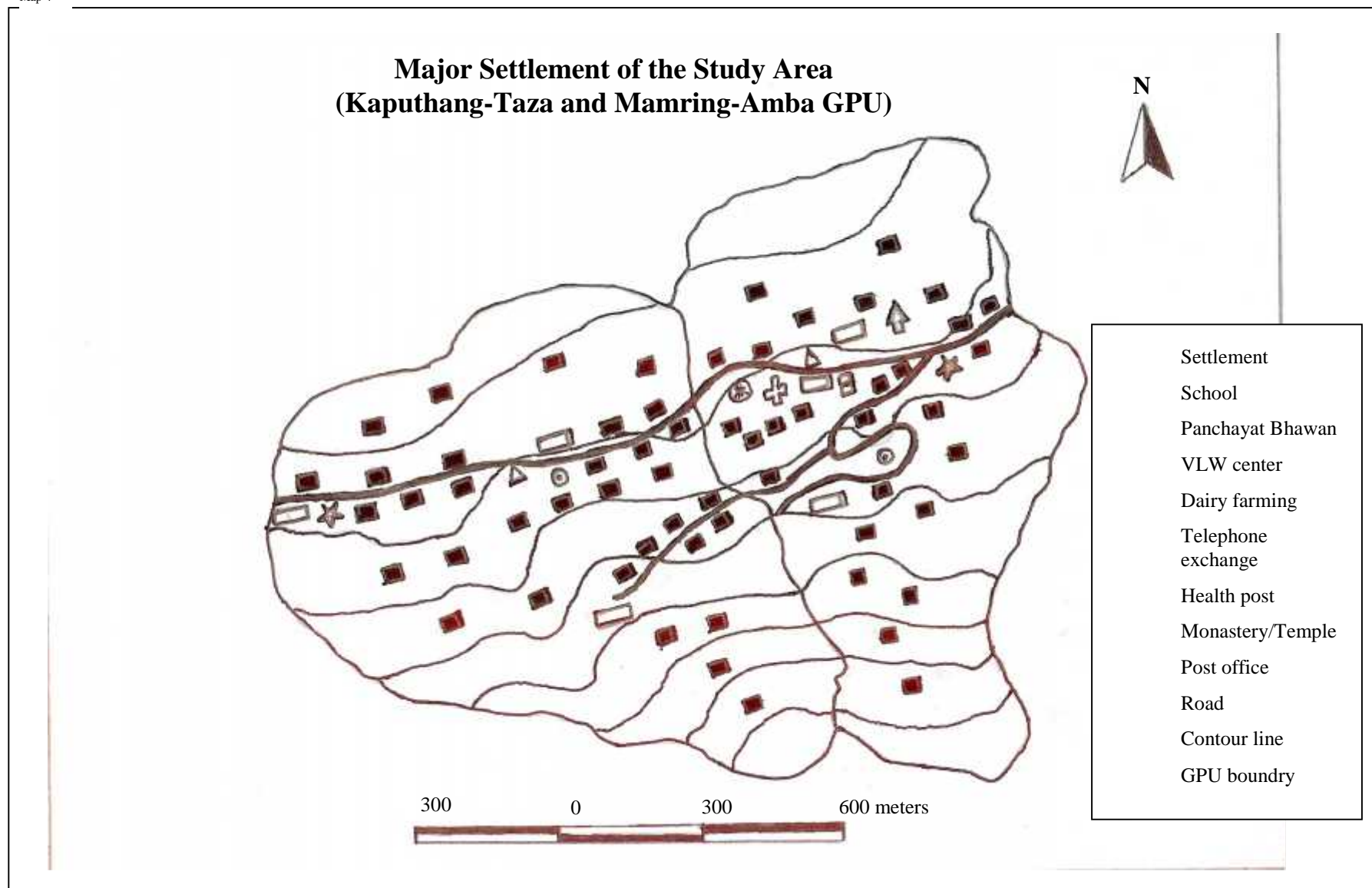
In terms of communication both Gram Panchayat Unit has good telephone service, post office and electricity. In 1990 there was Establishment of village level worker center, Telecom and Panchayat Bhawan in both Gram Panchayat Unit. The Dairy Farming and horticulture was developed in 1995. Farmers are attracted to the extra income(Map 4.)

Table 4.1
Time Line of Infrastructures Development

Year	Description
1950	Amba Primary School
1952	Mamring Senior Secondary School
1975	Kaputhang Primary School
1982	Construction of Road (Pakyong to Mamring)
1985	Health Post (Mamring)
1990	VLW center, Telecom, Pranchayat Bhawan road Extension (Mamring to Amba)
1995	Dairy Farming/Horticulture
1999	Extension of Mamring School (+2)
2000	Establishment of private school (Puspanjali Vidhalaya)
2006	Road Extension (Amba to Taza School)

Source: Field Survey, June 2006,

This study is limited within such bio-physical and socio-economic settings described above. The changes in socio-cultural conditions of the Lepcha communities within these settings are discussed in chapter V.



CHAPTER V
SOCIO-CULTURAL CONDITION AND ITS CHANGE

5.1 Population

The total population of sampled household is 340. Sex and age are the basic characteristic or the biological attributes of any demographic groups and affect not only its demographic but also its social, economic and political structure for they influence birth and death rate, internal and international migration, marital status, man power, the gross national product, planning regarding educational and medical services and housing etc.

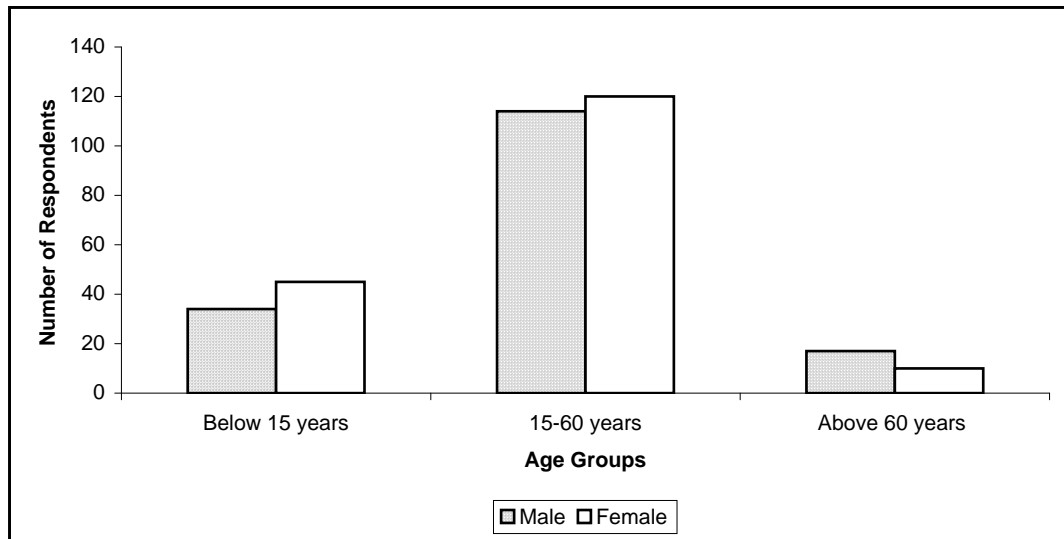
Table 5.1
Number of People by Age and Sex

Age group	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Below 15 years	34	45	79	23.23
15-60 years	114	120	234	68.82
Above 60 years	17	10	27	7.95
Total	165	175	340	100.00

Source: Field Survey June 2006

Table 5.1 shows that in Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit the population between 15-60 years of age accounts for 68.82 percent. The other two age groups i.e. below 15 years and above 60 years share 23.23 percent and 7.95 percent respectively. In two-Gram Panchayat Unit the economically active population of the Lepcha community (15-60 years) is more than children and older people.

Figure 4
Number of People by Age and Sex



5.2 Family Structure

Family is a primary social group of people residing together and related by blood, marriage or adoption. It constitutes a single household where interaction and inter communication takes place with each other in their respective social roles of husband and wife, mother and father, son and



Photo 2: Family Structure of the Study Area

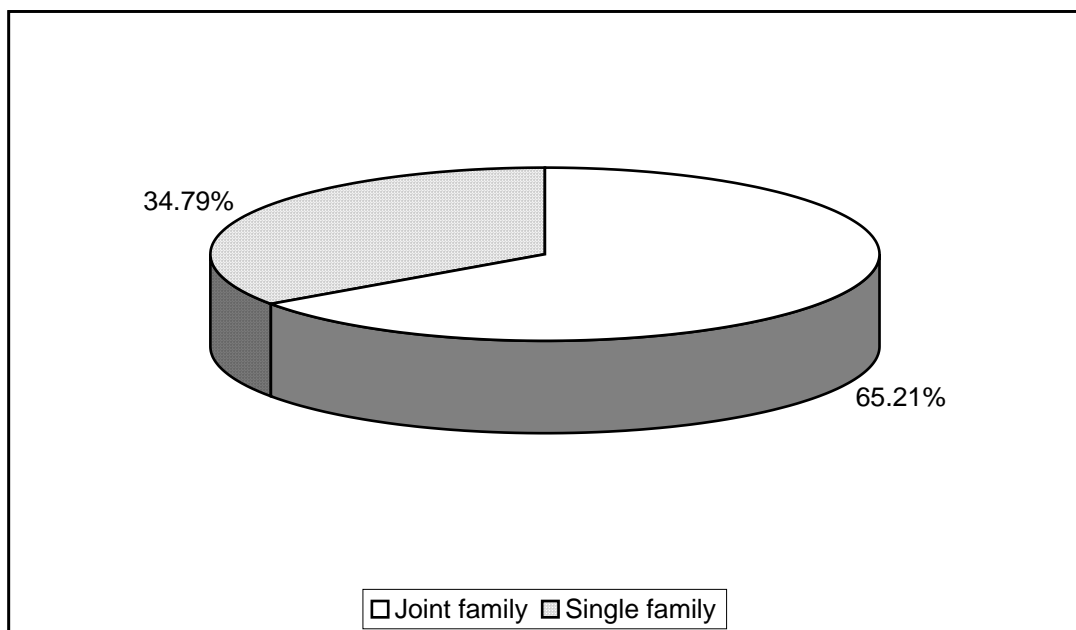
daughter, brother and sister who practices a common culture. Lepcha's family is broadly divided into two broad categories i.e. single and joint family. The single family can be described as a married couple with or without their unmarried children, but on the other hand joint family is a complex family structure. It includes people up to three to four generation eating together.

Table: 5.2
Number of Households by Family Types

Types of Family	No of Households	Percentage
Joint family	30	65.21
Single family	16	34.79
Total	46	100.00

Source: Field survey, June 2006

Figure 5
Percentage of Households by Family Types



In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU out of the total respondents the maximum members of respondents are living in the joint family, which shares 65.21 percent and rest 34.79 percent are found single family (Photo 2). It shows that they prefer joint family. Most of the households has single son in the family and the parents are not willing to separate their children from family.

5.2.1 Size of Family

The size of the Lepcha family depends highly on status of education of household head. The literate family size is small and illiterate family size it is

just the opposite. According to intergeneration wealth flow theory of J.C. Caldwell now a days parent prefer small family size because children are an investment, they need to be provided with good education and facilities. In the past big family was considered as an asset. But now a big family is considered as liability.

Table: 5.3
Number of Household by Size of Families

Size of Families	No of Households	Percentage
2-5	8	17.39
6-7	20	43.48
8-9	13	28.26
More than 9	5	10.87
Total	46	100.00

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

Table 5.3 show that is Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit the family having 6-7 shares 43.48 percent the highest followed by 28.26 percent by the families having 8-9 members and 2-5 members represent 17.39 percent and families with more them 9 members shares 10.87 percent. Though the family size is still large among the Lepchas, it has been declining in recent years. People are aware with the modern trends and they have to pay for education and health services to their children.

5.3 Marriage

Marriage is an institution, which admits union between man and women. It is a stable relationship in which a man and women are socially permitted to have children, the right to sexual relations. Marriage is the more or less durable connection between male and female. Marriage is also one of the most universal and most important social institutions of human society.

5.3.1 Types of Marriage

In the study area, arranged, love, love cum arranged marriage are commonly practiced. Polyandry form of marriage is no longer exit within the Lepcha community of the study area. However traditionally Lepcha families prefer monogamous marriage. Traditional practice was the son-in-law should

stay for at least one year prior to marriage as a sponging son-in-law in the father-in-law's home. The main features of the Lepcha marriage consists of a number of ritual and customary practices all along the different stages of the rather long drawn-out weeding processes. There are four main stages of marriage ceremony i.e. '*Nyom Byet*', meaning " making inquiry about the bride '*Ashok*', which means joining or linking it is almost appropriate synonym of analyze the term 'Engagement" '*Katyap*' meaning boy and girl are formally engaged in presence of a gathering of relatives and friend. "*Bree*" meaning weeding ceremony day of the bride and bridegroom.

Table 5.4
Number of Households with Types of Marriage Practices

Types of Marriage	No. of Households	Percentage
Love Marriage	12	26.08
Arrange	14	30.42
Love cum Arrange	20	43.6
Total	46	100.00

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The table 5.4 shows that in Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU, 43.6 percent of the total surveyed household have practiced love cum arranged marriage, 30.42 percent have opted for pure arrange marriage and only 26.08 percent comes under love marriage. In study area when asked what sort of marriage do you prefer for your son/daughter, about 75 percent respondents said that they given their children freedom to choose their life partner on their own choice. Only 25 percent of the respondents said that it would be better if the children get arranged marriage within the same caste. The statements argue that now a day the Lepcha communities of the study area are not conservative because of education and other development. So the parents are making themselves free, whereby there is no need to search a good spouse for their son/daughter.

5.3.2 Marriage Age

In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU the highest number of male population were married within the age group of 25-30 years which

accounts 43.48 percent whereas the maximum number of female were married within the age group of 20-25 years representing 54.34 percent. The age group of male with marriage age less than 20 years is only 8.70 percent whereas the marriage age group of the female of same age group comprises 17.39 percent. In the study area females are married earlier than males. Late marriage is less preferred in both sex in the study area, which comprises 10.87 percent in males and only 4.35 percent in females.

Table 5.5
Number of Respondents by Sex and Age of Marriage

Age Group	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage
Less than 20	4	8.70	8	17.39
20-25	17	36.95	25	54.34
25-30	20	43.48	11	23.12
above 30	5	10.87	2	4.35
Total	46	100.00	46	100.00

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

It the past polyandry form of marriage was in practice. In recent time monogamous form of marriage is dominant. The levirate and sororate marriage is totally outdated in the Lepcha community, and this is due to their changing socio-culture as well as economic condition.

Monogamy marriage exists as told by the key informant because of education and modernization. Monogamy marriage which is love cum arranged, was due to the believe that such marriages turn out well since love is a mutual understanding between two people. Other notable change in marriage system was in terms of cutting down huge expenditure on marriage ceremony. Less people are being invited. According to the change of time the compulsion rules and practices are avoided in recent time. The age of marriage has also risen, because earlier the Lepchas used to get married at a very early age of 12 to 15 years. Today they get married after they enter 18 to 20 years.

5.3.3 Women's Child sex Preference

Women and children are respected in the Lepcha families. Women get up early in the morning and being their household chores. Usually in large

families the youngest daughter-in-law has to do the cooking under the direction of the eldest daughter-in-law. But in small families, the housemother does the cooking. The Lepcha women equally contribute in the economy of the household by working in the field or forest.

Women are usually hard worker. They work in the fields usually during plantation and harvesting periods. They are good weavers, They make mats, baskets out of the bark of bamboo which are used for a variety of purposes. A married daughter inherits the movable property, women inherits property through marriage or by adoption girls usually to look after their younger siblings. Women are more inclined towards household chores and field works but they never participate in hunting and fishing. It is considered to be a sin.

In the Lepcha society, harmonious relationship exists between a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law. The relation between daughter-in-laws is also cordial. Children in the Lepcha societies are treated lovingly, there is no discrimination regarding age and sex. Boys of the family look after their livestock and the girls are inclined to tag along with their parents or look after their younger ones. The Lepcha children are extraordinarily unselfish. They never quarrel among themselves. In study area 80 percent of the respondents reveal that at least two children is sufficient whether the child is either male or female but 20 percent of the respondents think that one son is most essential. It shows that moreover the Lepcha are biased towards sex, although they do not want to show it directly.

5.4 Family Planning

Family planning is an important controlling factor of population growth. But it is based on the demographic characteristics of particular area, it differs from place to place. In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU out of total respondents 65 percent have accepted family planning and rest 35 percent do not yet accept family planning. The reasons for not practicing family planning is that some respondents have only two babies, some are just married and are not interested some think they ought to be conscious about that matter and others perceived that it is not necessary to practice family planning.

5.5 Education

Education is the key indicator of socio-economic development of any community, state or nations. It helps to develop skilled manpower to participate in nation building efforts. According to DESME, Report 2005 the literacy rate of state has 56.94 percent in 1991 and it is increased to 69.68 percent in 2001. However a great priority within the state has been give in training in professional fields, as well as to strengthening disciplines like information and technology, accountancy, medical science, physics, chemistry, business, management administration, rural development and tourism. In study area there is only one senior secondary school (+2 level) one high school and two primary school. All the children of the study area are getting free and compulsory education.

Table 5.6
Number of People and their Status of Education

Educational Status	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Illiterate	10	14	24	7.05
Primary	46	53	99	29.12
Secondary	63	67	130	38.24
+2 and above	49	38	87	25.59
Total	168	172	340	100.00

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

Figure 6
Number of People and their Status of Education

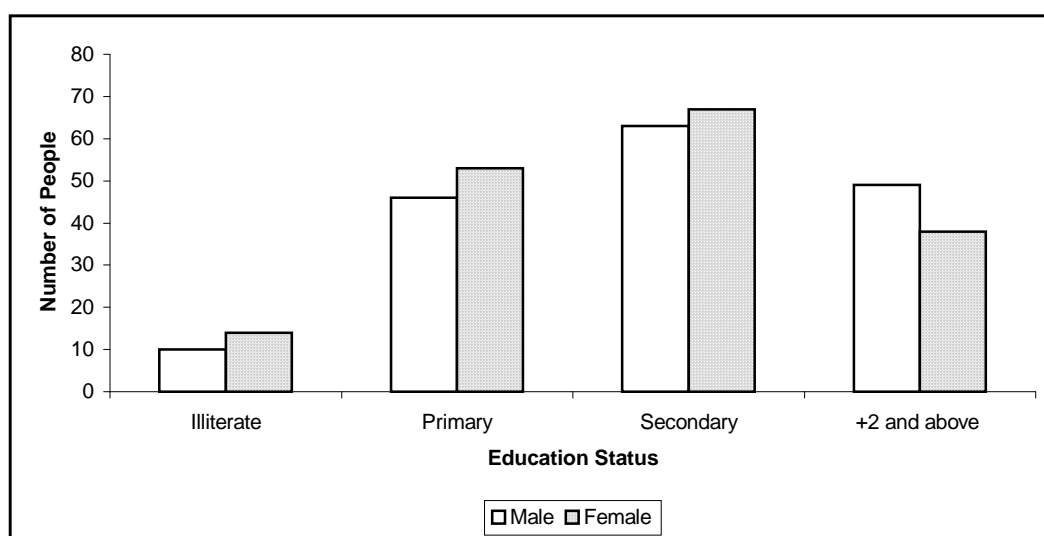


Table 5.5 shows that in Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit, most of the populations are of having secondary education i.e. 38.24 percent out of total population. In study area it has been found that female are more illiterate than male. In total it constitute only 7.05 percent. In primary level the female population is higher than male, which account in total of 29.12 percent. In higher secondary and above level the male population is higher than female. It accounts 25.59 percent.

The development of free education in government schools in terms of books, uniform and even mid-day meal have definitely attracted more children to the schooling system, in secondary and senior secondary and above level the population of female is lower than male. It is mainly due to social custom, negative parental attitudes, and some how at +2 level most of the female get married and tie with marriage system.

Change and development of a society is a continuous process. In recent time in study area there is a drastic change in education system. In earlier time there was only two primary school and one high school in the study area, but in recent time there are two secondary level schools and one senior secondary school within the Gram Panchayat Unit area. In earlier time only male used to go to school, female used to help their parent at home. But nowadays both male and female are entitled to compulsory education. Parent are strict and conscious about education system. The institution are strict and well-trained educated teacher provide quality education aiming for the all round development in the study area.

5.6 Health Services

In earlier time health is the synonym of spirits in the Lepcha society. During any sickness, the people perceived it as the result of devil like *deutmoong* (fever devil), *sabdokmoong* (stomach and treat pain disease devil), *loomoong* (skin diseaster devil) *mamoo moong* (female devil) etc, and they made sacrifice that should enable the sick person to recover. The Lepcha

community in the study area still adhere to the belief in spirits, devil and the *Mun* and *Boongthing* come to chant mantra and tell the evil power within the patient to appear and speak through the patient.

Table 5.7
Number of Respondents Visiting to Different Health Institutions

Types of health Institutions	No. of Respondents			
	1975	%	2006	%
Hospital	5	10.87	30	65.21
Traditional Healer	24	52.17	5	10.87
Both	17	36.96	11	23.92
Total	46	100.00	46	100.00

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

Table 5.6 shows in study area, when they get sick, they either go to the hospital or they go to the traditional healer or both. In the past before 1975 about 52.17 percent of respondent used to visit traditional healer, 36.96 percent respondent used traditional healer and hospital and the rest 10.87 percent of respondent used to visit hospital only. In earlier time the settlement was scattered type, no there was modern means of transportation and communication. It took long time to reach the health centre or hospital. But at present about 65.21 percent of respondent visit hospital, 23.92 percent of respondent visit both traditional healer and hospital and only 10.87 percent of respondent believe only on traditional healer. During 1980s primary health centre was established in Mamring. The development of good network of modern transportation and communication has enable people to visit hospital frequently within a short time. Moreover people are conscious about health and sanitation by the set up of health post at nearby village.

Health is wealth. In the study area now a days there is an emphasis on health and sanitation. It is due to the increasing educated youth in every household. In recent time only 10.86 percent of respondent prefer traditional hearler. In the past when any member in family get sick, firstly the patient was sent to the *Mun* and *Boonthing* When the patient did not recover, only then the

patient was carried to the nearby hospital. Nowadays about 65.21 percent of respondent totally depend on the modern medical services, when any of member in the family get sick, they visit hospital for treatment. The development of health post within the Gram Panchayat Unit, people are self-conscious about health and sanitation, when they get sick they usually go for treatment, which is free of cost.

5.7 Food and Drink Habits

The Lepchas take two principle meals a day. Rice and maize are their staple food. They take vegetable with chillies. Most of the Lepchas take meat regularly at meal. The meat consists of different animal i.e. ox, buffalo, goat, pig, fish, fowl etc. In fact pig and fowl is a essential for a marriage ceremony. They keep pig goat, ox and fowl for different purposes including as a source of alternative income. The wealth of a Lepcha is also estimated by the number of cattle and agricultural land especially cardamom field. Children eat first than followed by their parents.

Every house has a garden attached to it where they grow vegetables and fruit. Main fruit grown by them are banana, orange, mango, passion fruit, guava and papaya. Barley, wheat, millet maize and rice are the main crop and important cash crops are broom (*Amlisho*), cardamom and ginger. The farmers and other, take rice '*Zo*' and '*Chi*' rice or millet beer in the morning before they go to the fields where they take lunch, which comprises rice, meat/vegetables. In the evening the women prepare buckwheat or millet bread (*Khuru-khu* or *Mung-khu*). The women give '*Chi*' to men after meal. Tea is taken frequently with salt and butter. Lepcha have their own traditional method of preparing tea, The system of making tea varies from other communities. The butter is mixed with tea leaves, hot water and salt with churned, that their is no grease floating on the surface of the tea. All class of people takes '*Chi*' or beer made of millet. It is used for every ceremony for example-right from birth to the funeral rites of the people. But in recent time in funeral rites they do not use '*Chi*' and meat instead of that they use pure vegetarian type of food and drinks. The traditional methods of the Lepchas food and drinks habits are being changed with the change of time. More hygienic method are applied to follow up the manners of

their customary habits. Moreover the children's also discourage their parents to consume alcohol.

5.8 Religion

Religion is more or less coherent system of belief and practices. It is connecting to a supernatural order of being, forces, places, or other entities. A system that for its adherents has implications for their behavior and welfare, implication that the adherents in varying degrees and ways take seriously in their private and collective life. There are supernatural beings (god and goddesses, angels), supernatural places (heaven, hell) supernatural forces for examples (The Holy spirit: The Hindu "law" of cause and effect), by which men's deeds have inevitable consequences not only in this life but also in the next life. Religion is any set of belief that fulfills certain function in an individual life; it means of providing social cohesion in a community.

Religion is a part of culture. Each and every society of world has its own religious traditions. The religion of every ethnic group is interwoven with their cultural process. The Lepchas are rigid in their religious beliefs. Each and every part of their cultural activities is related to religious myths. The main religions of Lepcha is" own ancient religion called *Boongthism* and *Munism*".

They believe in existence of god called "*Rum*" and to hill they offer prayers and thanks giving. They are nature worshippers. They believe in two types of spirits, the god, which brings good things to the people and the bad, which do harm to them. They also believe in supernatural power and evil spirits



Photo 3: Lepcha Priest Performing the Ritual

who cause illness and misfortune. The *Boongthings* and *Mum* (female Priest) who are regarded as religious priests are responsible for the religious ceremonies and rituals from the birth to death and till the soul of dead person is taken to heaven(Photo 3.)

The greater number of *Mum* and *Boongthing* ceremonies are performed for the benefit of individuals, households or geographical group of households. The prophetic possession, the calendrical harvest rituals have to be performed separately for each household. The '*cherim*' ceremony which is held twice a year, at the beginning of the rains and at the beginning of winter season, to keep of illness from the community, is performed. At least one individual from each household has to be present, and each household contributes a little amount of money and grain. *Boongthism* and *Munism* teach or advocate the doctrine of one ultimate substance or principle, as mind or soul of something that is neither mind nor matter but are ground of both the position that reality is one. In *Boongthism* and *Munism*, there is no recognized cathedral church, or mosque or temple, pagoda or monastery etc. like in other religions of the world. The Lepcha believe that this world is a living house of all human beings, so it is the heart of every man, it is the cathedral, church, mosque, temple, pagoda, or monastery of god and therefore according to Lepchas God resides in every one of us, in our very own heart.

Table 5.8
Number of Household by Religious Group

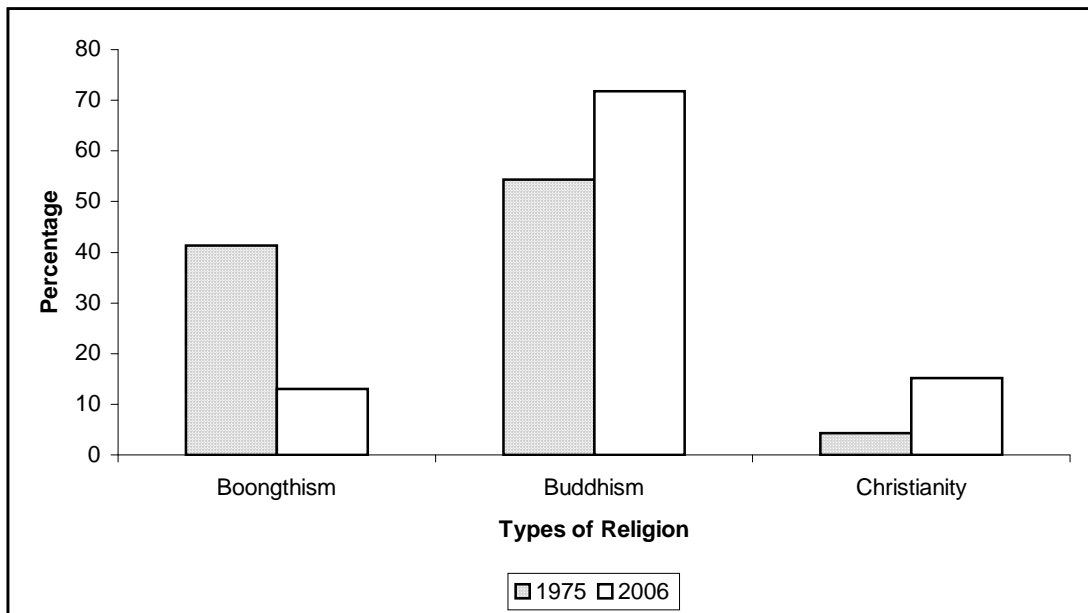
Types of Religion	No. of Respondents			
	1975	%	2006	%
Boongthism	19	41.30	6	13.04
Buddhism	25	54.35	33	71.74
Christianity	2	4.35	7	15.22
Total	46	100.00	46	100.00

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

Table 5.8 shows that in Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit, majority of household belonged to in Buddhism (between 1975 which constitutes 54.35 percent, about 41.30 percent belonged to *Boongthism* and *Manism* which is traditional religion of the Lepcha. Only 4.35 percent were converted from old religion to Christianity. But in recent time about 71.74 percent of household belongs to Buddhism 13.04 percent still follows old traditional religion i.e. *Boongthism* and *Munism* and rest of the

household i.e. 15.22 percent are Christian. In the study area it has been found that nowadays many Lepcha families have changed their old religion into Buddhism and some families have changed their religion into Christianity. According to key informant, the main reason for the change in their religion from *Boongthism* and *Munism* to Buddhism is that the old traditional religion has plundered their economy. In festival and ritual time, they have to spend lot of money and it is quite compulsory for every Lepcha household. Lacks of cooperation among them are the main draw back and encouraged them to change their religion from *Boongthism* and *Munism* to Buddhism and Christianity.

Figure 7
Percentage of Household by Religious Group



The Lepcha's are nature worshippers and earlier used to worship lightening, thundering, sun, rain etc. by performing sacrifice and making offering spending lot of money and time but today they perform rites by only offering flower and fruits etc. In the past they used performed ritual for



Photo 4 : Buddhist Monk Performing the Ritual

each and every household, separately at the interval of every month of year, but in recent time they perform such a ritual only once in a lifetime with combined way if there is necessary (Photo 4.)

5.9 Language

Language is a systematic means of communication by using of sounds or conventional symbols. A written and spoken method of combining words to create meaning is used by a particular group of people. Each language has symbols, which can be understood by its own group, and they communicate to each other. Language is a backbone of culture.

The Lepcha's language is one of the dialects of Sikkim/Darjelling district west Bengal spoken by Lepchas only. In the case of the Lepcha language, (Tamsang, 1983) writes "The Lepcha language has developed independently in the course of past millennia presenting its simplicity and purity of a language unaffected by other languages". Though the Lepcha language has perished in other part of Sikkim Darjelling, Kalimpong but the in study area the language has been preserved and nourished through its usage. They use Nepali language while communicating with other ethnic groups but within the society and home the Lepcha language is in practices.

In the 1960's Lepcha language and literature was taught in the primary levels. In 1977 the Lepchas language received the official language status. The central Board of secondary school education in 1981-82 included the Lepcha language for standard IX and X in the school curriculum and subsequently for class XI and XII. From 2001 onward the Lepcha language is avail in the university level.

Table 5.9
Number of Respondent by Linguistic Group

Language	No. of Respondents in Study area			
	Male	%	Female	%
Lepcha Only	93	57.05	95	57.92
Nepali Only	10	6.14	13	7.93
Both	60	36.81	56	34.15
Total	163	100.00	164	100.00

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

Table 5.9 show in Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit both male and female speak their mother tongue which accounts 57.05 percent and 57.92 respectively. About 36.81 percent of male and 34.15 percent of female speak both the Lepcha and the Nepali language and rest 6.14 percent male and 7.93 percent female do not speak their mother tongue they use Nepali instead. Majority of male and female speak in their mother tongue, it is because the language is compulsory subject in both school and college level for a Lepcha student.

In the study area the Lepcha language is very much in use and is spoken by majority of the Lepchas. So there has not been any change in the language spoken so far in term of the number of people. But today majority of the people speak Nepali and English equally well. The official language is Nepali and English, so they use to speak Nepali and English at the time of communication for trade and business.

5.10 Dress and Ornaments

The Lepchas so called "*Rongkup*" by them wear cloths, which are known as '*Paki*' by them. The term "*Paki*" generally refers to the male dress of the Lepchas. It consists of long cotton stripped material, which is worn round the body, keeping the arm free. It is an old dress of the Lepcha which was also used in the past period. In recent time the dress of males Lepchas is divided into two parts (Photo 5b.) '*Yantaz*' is worn in upper parts and '*Gyadoo*' (Quarter pant) is worn in the lower part. The middle part is covered by the main dress called "*Thokroo*". They

always kept a broad knife, which is called '*Bamphok*' in the Lepchas language.

On the



Photo 5a: Lepcha women wearing traditional dress



Photo 5b: Lepcha man wearing traditional dress

other hand the Lepcha women put on a '*tugo*' (blouse) as and the "*Dhumbuhn*" (like a *sari* of Nepali women (Photo 5a.) Both men and women worn finger rings of various cuneal bones, gem, gold and silver. Today very few of them use ornament made of bones instead they prefer gold and silver.

5.10.1 Female Dress and Ornament

- a. *Togo* - It is a loose shirt, made of a thin cloth, with long sleeves which are folded up to the wrists.
- b. *Dum-Bun or Dum-Dem* - The real and old *Dum-Bun* is made out of silk. Such clothes are durable, creamism in colour and is particularly called "*Asyam Dum Bun*". Today other materials like cotton nylon, are used to make *Dum-Bun*. It covers the body from neck to foot.
- c. *Namrek* - It is a type of belt made of thick cloth which is hand woven. It is wrapped around the waist to hold the *Dum-Bun* firmly.
- d. *Jyerdong Togo* - It is a long sleeved gown and is worn over *Dum-Ban*.
- e. *Taro* - It is a scarf made of a cotton to cover the head.
- f. *Sumbrang Bur* - Married women wear an ornament made of a silver coin, shape like *Sumbrang Bur* (flower of chilauney) with long chain fastered to *Namrek*, at a side. Married women also carry a small sickle called "*Gnazo*" tucked in the *Namrek* on their back.
- g. *Lyak-Kukep-Khu-Gher-Chain-* this is ring and bangles-brasslet made of white gold, silver and gold.

5.10.2 Male Dress and Ornament

- a. *Togo or Hyantaz* - It is a loose shirt with stiff high neck.
- b. *Tomu or Gyadoo* - It is the Lepcha trouser, which is loose and reaching up to the calf. It is usually made of thick cotton cloth.
- c. *Dum-Praa* or "*Thokroh*" - It is the main male dress which is essentially a thick shawl type cloth. It has two uses as a dressing garment during day time and as blanket during the night. In present days the *Dum Praa* is made from hand woven cotton fibers with mainly the following designs and patterns.

1. *Tagaap* - The oldest design.
 2. *Khemchu* - seissors like pattern.
 3. *Tamblyaak* - a butterfly like design.
- d. *Namrek* - It is a type of belt made of thick cloth.
 - e. *Sumok - Thak/Tukh*- It is an old Lepcha hat or cap.
 - f. *Kum-Bankup* - Lepcha sword
 - g. *Kukep-Gyer*- Ring and beracelet made of silver and gold.

Now in recent time the Lepcha people with the traditional dress and ornament is rarely found. During the time of festival, old Lepcha men and women wear traditional dress and ornament. It is too costly than that of simple dress and ornament. The old traditional dress and ornament is a luxury of the rich people. The majority of people wear simple silk and cotton dress during ceremony and festival. In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU about 70.2 percent. Lepchas wear their traditional dress and ornament during the ceremony and festival and 29.8 percent are deprived of traditional dress and ornament. The reason for not wearing their traditional dress is that it is very expensive and majority of them find it awkward.

5.11 Festivals

Festival is an event of celebration. In all countries, festivals are celebrated in different ways and with varying degree of intensity, depending upon location, economic and social status, and religion, education and family background.

The Lepcha people of the study area celebrate various festivals according to their culture and traditions. During festivals they celebrate and enjoy themselves by eating, drinking and dancing. The major festivals celebrated by the Lepcha are *mukjurding Rum faat*. This festivals is celebrated during the month of March. They worship "*itbu Rum*" means the (creator god). The second festival of the Lepcha is "*Thekung mun solong saknon Sukhim*". It is observed in the second week of April. It is celebrated as a commemoration day of *Thekung mun solong*. The third festival of Lepchas is "*Tendong Lho rum faat*" i.e. on the 7th and 8th of August. It is celebrated by worshipping of Mt.

Tendong, on its role as a protector of mankind. It is one of the important festivals of the Lepchas. Another festival of the Lepcha is *Dushi Munlom* i.e. second week of August, they worship for prosperity. The *Sokue Rum Faat* and *Sugi Tyek Rum faat* which are observed for good harvest and they worship *Lepon rum* (mentor). The last and important festival of the Lepcha are the *Mardik sukhim, larsong mungtya maar lavo Tyangzing sonap*. These festivals starts from last week of December and end at the first week of January. These festival are celebrated as the victory day of god over evil. *Lasongmung purn* was executed by the Lepcha and *Jor Boongthing*. During the festival the Lepcha people worship Mt Kanchandzonga and they put on their best attire. This festival is celebrated as a mark of respect to *Jor boongthing*.

Change can be observed in the manner by which festivals are celebrated. An elderly key informant said that earlier Lepchas used to celebrate for a longer duration accompanied by high expenditure. Today Lepchas have broadened their horizon and realized that too much of expenses were leading them to poverty.

Earlier, Lepcha used to celebrate *Muk-zikding-Rum-faat* that is a festival connected with nature for greenery every year. This festival was celebrated on a community level where *Boongthing* offered prayers to *Rum* (God) for the timely rains, sunshine, water and for good production of crops. Chanting mantras and offering prayer followed by merry-making, eating, dancing, but today this festival is celebrated either on a household level separately or only during times of drought and uncertain monsoon.

5.12 Housing Pattern

In earlier time traditional Lepcha dwelling house is an example of a brilliant Lepcha architectural skill (Photo 6). Big log each of diameter 2 to 3 feet of sufficient height to reach the roof of the two storeys, are placed



Photo 6: Traditional house of the Lepcha

vertically flat stones, which rest firmly on the ground to act as pillars. The except about 6 to 7 feet length at the bottom of each log pillar, the rest length is made square sectioned and not round. Those logs numbering nine are placed at about 10 to 15 feet distance from each other and support the total load of the house. Long beams pass horizontally through the rectangular shaped holes punched through the pillars to function as beams. Over these beams, timbers are placed to form the floor of the first story, where the family lives. The sidewalks of the first storey are made of timber plank or bamboo splits. At the top of the pillars, are placed long beams made out of logs to support the bamboo rafters. Bamboo splits are used as purlines. Bamboo splits are used as purlines, around which the bundles reeds (*siroo*) are secured to form the thatch roof. When seen from the sky the roof looks oval in shape.

The ground floor has usually three walls made of stone masonry, the fourth side being open. Sometimes domestic animal are kept in the ground floor called *Tanghap*. The house is earthquake proof and not a single nail is necessary in building such house. The word *lee* means house and *woon/waar* means to go round. The shape of the roof is round when seen from the sky. The house is called *Lee woon/waar lee*. It is also called *Do-Ke-Moo-Lee* of all the places of a Lepcha dwelling house. The kitchen is the most interesting place where the fire keeps burning. This is the place for the family members and others near ones to gather for the meal. Sometimes even stranger are taken into the kitchen to share their food, with respect and love. The good old *Chi* (millet beer) will be always there to welcome any one. The newly wed bride picks up the family bond from the ever-burning hearth fire of the kitchen.

The housing pattern of Lepcha *woon/waar lee* has changed into modern gravitated coated iron and multi storyed building (Photo 7). Thatched roof houses have given way to tin roofs. Houses are well planned with separate rooms for their sons and daughter, separate guest room, separate kitchen with attached bathroom and toilet. According to field survey (June 2006) in the study area about 70.1 percent of the respondent has gravitated coated iron type house with separate kitchen and attached bathroom and toilet. Rest of 29.9

percent has terraced building type with attached kitchen, bathroom and toilet. Those who have attached kitchen uses Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) for cooking purpose and those who have separate kitchen uses fire wood and charcoal as the main sources of energy. In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchyat Unit people are more conscious about their health and hygiene. Their house is surrounded by flower garden with lots of seasonal flower with clean and beautiful courtyard. So, they take adequate care of sanitation while constructing their house.

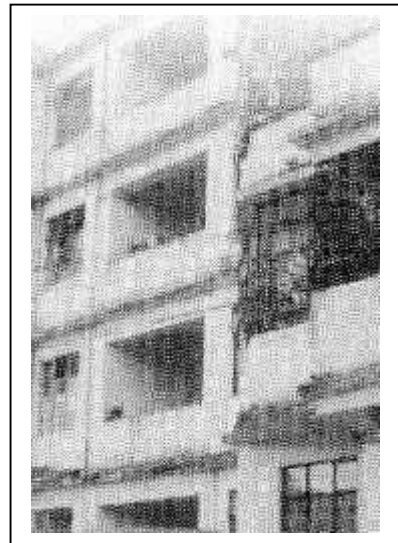


Photo 7 : Modern House of the Lepcha Community

5.13 Interactions with Other Ethnic Groups

Man is a social animal; man must have contact and must cooperate with others for his survival. The Lepcha are no exception in this matter. In study area the lepecha's community is bound with other community like, Bahun, Chettri, Tamang, Bhuita and Rai etc. There is a good relationship with other ethnic groups. People are engaged in one another for many activities, be it agriculture or celebration of festivals. Assistance of the Bahun and Chettri and Limboo is sought during the religious ceremony.

The change in socio-cultural condition of the Lepchas in study area has been discussed here. Along with these changes, in economic activities have been discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI
ECONOMIC CONDITION AND ITS CHANGE

6.1 Occupation

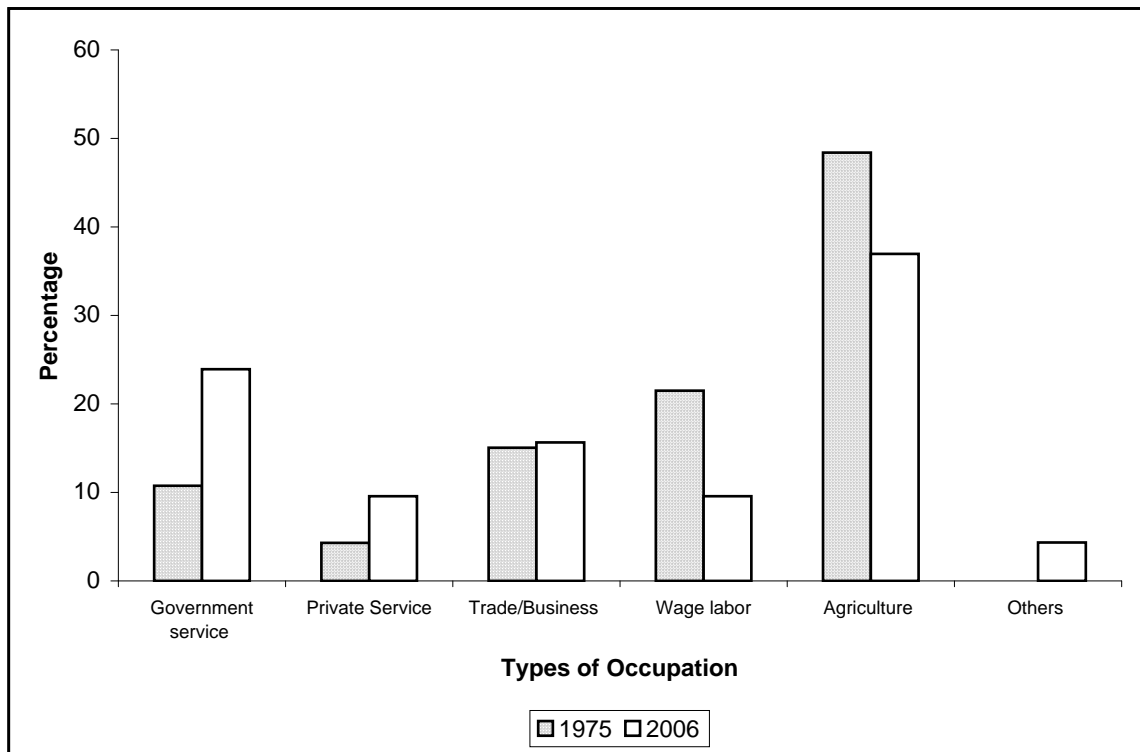
The Lepcha people in the study area are engaged in different occupation but their main traditional occupation is agriculture, hunting and fishing, weaving, gathering of wild fruits, handicraft, animal husbandry and joining army. They depend directly or indirectly on primary occupation. Now in recent time due to the development of education and infrastructure they are engaged in different sectors i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary. Table 6.1 shows the occupation patterns of the Lepchas in the study area.

Table 6.1
Number of People by Occupational Type

Types of Occupation	No and percent of Economically Active Population			
	1975	%	2006	%
Government service	20	10.75	55	23.92
Private Service	8	4.30	22	9.57
Trade/Business	28	15.05	36	15.65
Wage labor	40	21.50	22	9.57
Agriculture	90	48.40	85	36.95
Others	-	-	10	4.34
Total	186	100.00	230	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

Figure 8
Percentage of People by Occupational Type



The table 6.1 shows the number of people by occupational type in Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit. In the study area there is an increase in every occupation since 1975 except wage labor and agriculture. There is a decrease in wage labours from 21.50 percent in 1975 to 9.57 percent at present. Agriculture has slightly decreased from 48.40 percent in 1975 to 36.95 percent at present, but still agriculture is the major occupation. The decreases in wage labour and agriculture during the span of 31 years is 11.93 and 11.45 percent respectively. There is an increase in the number of people engaged in government and private service as the educated class expands and changed from primary occupation into secondary and tertiary occupation during the span of thirty-one years is noticed which is a plus points in economic development. According to field survey most of the household has more than two people in government service or private service, nowadays Lepcha people are quit interested in trade and business due to increasing in unemployment in the study area.

6.2 Farm Size

Agriculture is the most important source of family income. Every household in the study area has their own farm land either it is big or small in size. In the past agricultural land and forest were the main sources of their economy, but now forest area is controlled by the government though they practice cardamom and broom (Amlisoo) cultivation in forest area. Nowadays there is a decrease in the production of cardamom and broom. People are considering alternative farming. Nowadays few people have started to convert their cardamom fields into agricultural land. The table 6.2 gives the clear picture of the distribution of the land holding size.

Table 6.2
Number of Household by Landholding Size

Land holding size in Acres	No of household	Percentage
1-3	4	8.70
3-5	11	23.91
5-7	17	36.96
> 7	14	30.43
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

There is no landless household in study area. In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit, the total land of forty-six households is about 255 acre including forest land, barren land, wet land and dry land in the study area. Maximum number of household has land in between 5-7 acres, which accounts 36.96 percent. Those having more than 7 acres comprise 30.43 percent. In the study area there are only four households that have less than two acres of land and eleven households has 3-5 acres of land, which is 23.91 percent. In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit the maximum household occupy large portion of land.

6.3 Ownership of Land

Land is mostly owned by the family. Small family with less land is engaged in agriculture in order to sustain their livelihood. In study area are

three types of land ownership can be found such as owner cum cultivator, owner cum tenant or rented in and rented out. The Table 6.3 shows the different types of land ownership in the study area.

Table 6.3
Number of Household by Ownership of Land

Types of land ownership	No of household	Percentage
Owner cum cultivator	31	67.39
Owner cum Rented in	6	13.04
Rented out	9	19.57
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

Owner cum cultivators means those who cultivate their own land by themselves comprise 67.39 percent in Kapathang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit. Owner cum tenants are those who have land and also cultivates other land. In the study area only 13.04 percent household cultivates others land. The rented out means those who have given land to other for cultivation. In the study area this types of ownership accounts 19.57 percent. In the study area majority of respondent cultivate their land by themselves. Population growth compelled large families to opt for tenant farming, however in the past this practice was absent.

6.4 Crop Production

The major food crops and cash crops in the study area are paddy, maize, millet, blackgram, potato, ginger, cardamom and broom (Amlisoo). Agricultural production is like gambling with nature. Production fluctuates in every year. The table 6.4 shows the annual crop production by the Lepcha household.

Table 6.4
Number of Household by the Level of Annual Production
of Different Crops

Level of Production (kg.)	Crops					
	Maize	Ginger	Millet	Cardamom	Paddy	Broom
Without Production	-	-	11	5	-	2
< 100	2	-	1	6	-	-
100-200	17	-	12	3	-	3
200-300	8	-	10	3	-	7
300-400	9	-	9	4	-	10
400-500	3	5	3	6	-	10
> 500	7	41	-	19	46	14
Total	46	46	46	41	46	44

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

In the study area the major crops are paddy, maize, millet, ginger cardamom and broom. Out of the six major crops and cash crop, ginger maize and paddy are grown by all households. Broom is cultivated by only 44 households, cardamom farming is practiced by 41 households and only 35 households have cultivated millet. Paddy, maize and ginger are the main crops for rendering their livelihood. The majority of people cultivate paddy and maize for household daily use as well as few quintals are sold in the near by market. Ginger, large cardamom and broom is cultivated for commercial purpose and some of the farmers depend upon these cash crops for monthly or yearly expenses. Out of 46 households, there are 41 households cultivating large cardamom, it is also one of the important cash crops for generating household income. In the study area the production of paddy, cardamom, gingers and broom is higher. There is a favorable climate and good network of transport and market system. They cultivate millet for making beer during festivals. Though they have sufficient land but few households experience food shortage for few months. In the past there was traditional method of farming but at present it is modern methods of farming has been used. In order to meet

the feed demand, H.Y.V seeds, fertilizer and modern tools and techniques are used.

6.5 Foods Sufficiency

Food sufficiency status determines the economic condition of households, society and state. In the study area the food grain production of The Lepcha community is sufficient too as well as insufficient. The table 6.5 shows the food sufficiency status of the Lepcha community in the study area.

Table 6.5

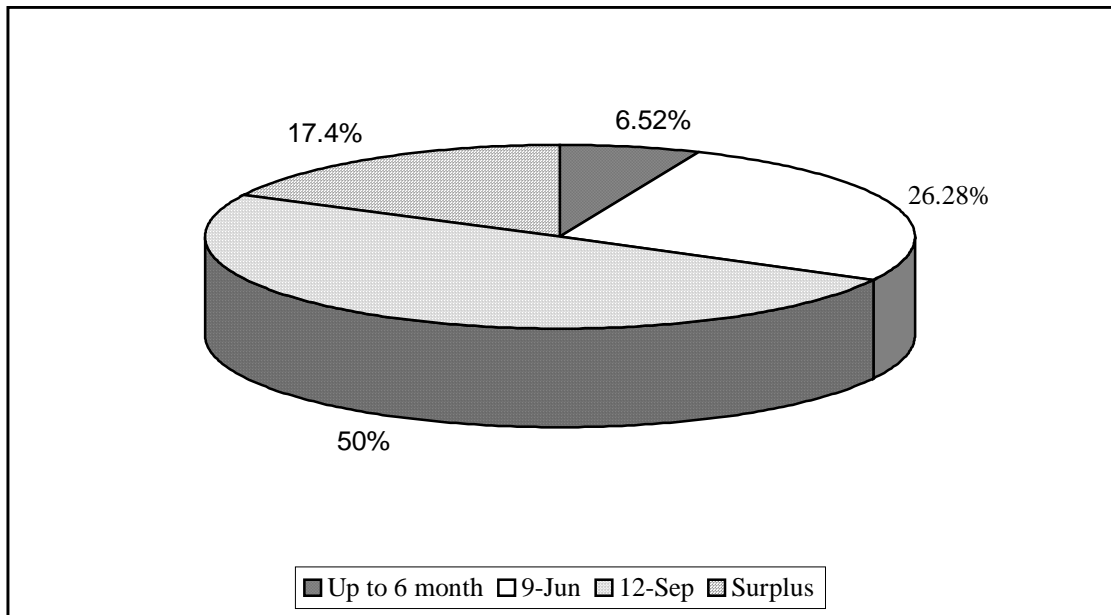
Number of Household by Level of Food Sufficiency Status

Food sufficiency Status	No of household	Percentage
Up to 6 month	3	6.52
6-9	12	26.28
9-12	23	50.00
Surplus	8	17.40
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

From table 6.5 it is clear that in the study area, out of total household only 17.40 have surplus food, 6.52 percent have food sufficient for six months, 26.08 percent have sufficient food for 6-9 months and 50 percent have adequate for 9-12 months. In the study area few household is deprived of sufficient food grain. In large family there is high consumption. So in order to fulfill their requirement they purchase or borrow from near by market or relatives. The farmers of the study area have to improved their production either by using high yielding variety of seed and by using modern tool and technique or chemical fertilizer or by taking proper training regarding crop cultivation. Previously production was to sustain household needs. Nowadays surplus is sold in the market.

Figure 9
Percentage of Household by Level of Food Sufficiency Status



6.6 Livestock Farming

Livestock farming is also an important source of income. This farming is not seasonal whenever they need money they sell and fulfill the basic demand. In the earlier time in the study area, the Lepcha community rear all kinds of domestic animal for their domestic use, their product were used for household consumption and they used to get little amount of money from goat, pig, and fowl. So, in those days the value of domestic animal was low.

In recent years the development of dairy farming in the study area opened the eye of the people. The pig, goat poultry are often associated as the side activities of dairy farming. They rare cattle and their product are sold in the dairy of near by market. The dairy product are collected in the local dairy and supplied to the main market. The development of good network of transportation between rural and urban area, the value of dairy product and animal products (pig, goat, poultry) provide a good income for the people of the study area. Nowadays the dairy farming has multi-purpose use, manure is used for agriculture. From 2002 onward the government of Sikkim has banned on the use of chemical fertilizer. Sikkim is a chemical fertilizer free state. Every Lepcha household keeps cattle in order to meet their requirement of daily life.

6.7 Horticulture Farming

It is a specialized cultivation of vegetables, fruits and flowers. The horticulture farming is developed during 2000s in Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU. It is also one of the alternative sources of income beside agriculture and livestock farming. In the study area the farms are small and transport and communication linkage with consumption centers are quite good. In Kapthang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU the warm and sunny climate allows the cultivation of wide range of green vegetables, fruits and flower (both seasonal and orchid). Vegetables include, beans, carrots, onions, radish, cabbage, tomatoes, pumpkins, long-guard, bitterguard, chili (*Akbaray* or *dalley*) cauliflower and many types of leafy vegetables. The main fruits are orange, guava, passion fruit, banana, papaya, mango, pine apple, jack fruit and grapes.

6.8 Income Pattern

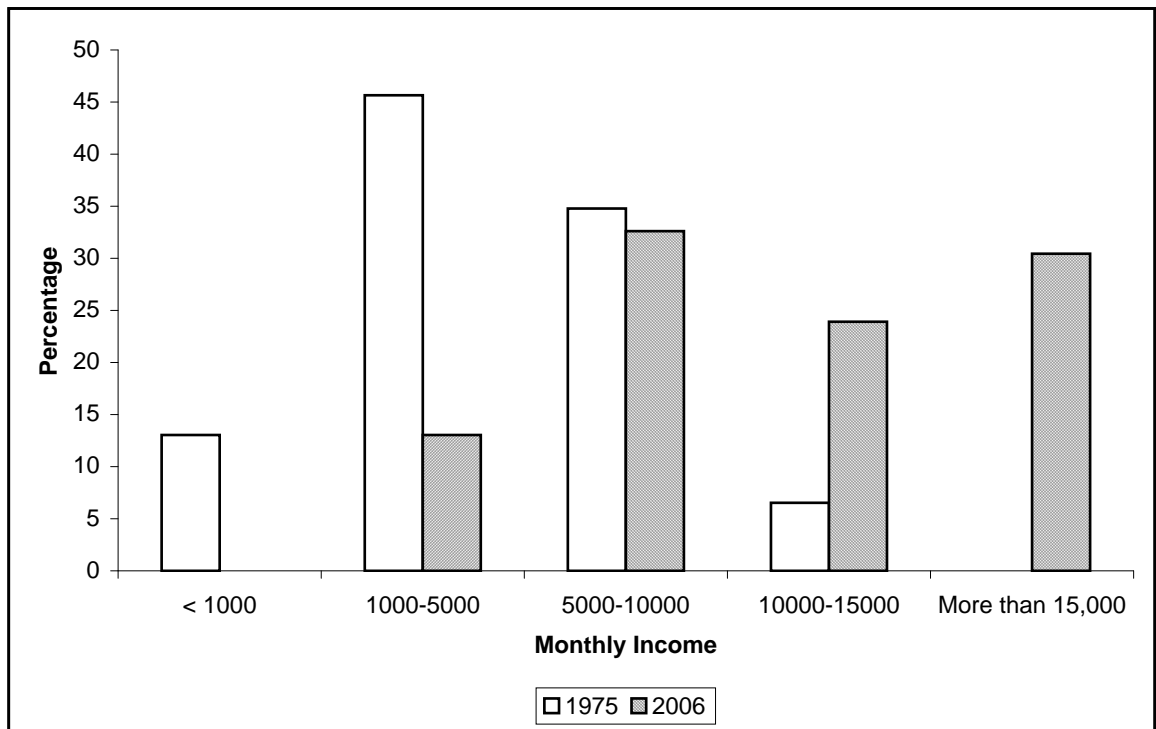
Normally, cash income is earned by working in government and private services and as wage labor in agriculture and transport sectors. Another source is the interest or rent lending money or by renting out a building. The income is the major indicator to know the living standard of the people, it also shows the livelihood status of the Lepcha community in the study area. Table 6.6 shows the monthly income of the Lepcha community in the study area.

Table 6.6
Number of Households by Level of Monthly Income

Monthly Income in Rs	No. Of Households			
	1975	%	2006	%
< 1000	6	13.04	-	-
1000-5000	21	45.65	6	13.04
5000-10000	16	34.78	15	32.61
10000-15000	3	6.53	11	23.91
More than 15,000	-	-	14	30.44
Total	46	100.00	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

Figure 10
Percentage of Households by Level of Monthly Income



The monthly income of the Lepcha community of Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba has been increasing since 1975 in the last thirty-one years. In 1975, six households had their monthly income less than Rs 1000, which constituted 13.04 percent and not a single household had a monthly income more than Rs 15,000. But their monthly income has increased. This has led to increase in expenditure. Presently there are no households with less than Rs. 1,000 monthly income, now the households with monthly income more than Rs 15,000 account 30.44 percent and maximum number of households have monthly income between Rs 5,000 and 10,000 which constituted 32.61 percent. It is clear that the monthly income of the Lepchas of Kaputhang -Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU is increasing.

6.9 Expenditure Pattern

Expenditure pattern is also an important indicator of socio-economic condition of the people. Generally people having higher income spend more.

Table 6.7
Mean Monthly Household Expenditure (in Rs)

Items	Mean Monthly Expenditure	Percentage
Food (crops)	1543	9.58
Health	465	2.89
Education	1043	6.48
Cloths	785	4.88
Meat	547	3.52
Drink	586	3.64
Vegetable	528	3.28
Electricity	63	0.39
Religion/festivals	8913	55.36
Others	1608	9.99
Total	16101	100.0

The table 6.7 shows that the mean monthly household expenditure (Rs) of Lepcha community in the study area. In study area the highest percent of mean monthly expenditure are found in Religions/festival which share 55.36 percent. Similarly household mean monthly expenditure on food and other items account 9.58 percent and 9.99 percent. There is similar mean monthly expenditure on education, clothing, Drinks, vegetables and meat but low average mean monthly expenditure found in Health services and electricity.

6.9.1 Expenditure in Food

Monthly expenditure of the Lepchas family on food is presented in table 6.8

Table 6.8
Number of Households by Level of Monthly Expenditure on Food

Amount in Rs	No. of households	Percentage
Less than 1000	5	10.87
1000-2000	19	41.30
2000-3000	12	26.09
More than 3000	10	21.74
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

The table 6.8 shows that in Kaputhang - Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU the maximum number of household i.e 41.30 percent spend Rs 1000-2000 monthly on food. Similarly, household spending Rs 2000-3000 monthly income accounts 26.09 percent. Households having less than Rs 1000 expenditure on food shares 10.87 percent of total household. Similarly, households having monthly expenditure more than Rs 3000 on foods share 21.74 percent. Household's expenditure in food is generally high. People are conscious about the need of balance diet and spend more on food.

6.9.2 Expenditure in Health

From the table 6.9 it is clear that every household spends on health. In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU most of the households (34.79 percent) spend Rs 200-400 per month in health. The percentage of household spending less than Rs. 200 per month in study area is 8.70 percent and 10.87 percent household spends more than Rs 800 per month.

Table 6.9

Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure on Health

Amount in Rs	No of household	Percentage
<200	4	8.70
200-400	16	34.79
400-600	15	32.60
600-800	6	13.04
>800	5	10.87
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006,

6.9.3 Expenditure in Education

Out of total of 46 households, 19.57 percent households in Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit spend less than Rs. 500 per month for education. In Sikkim up to class five, there is a free education (free text books, free uniform, free exercise book and free mid-day meal) facilities

provided by the government of Sikkim. So the households having primary class children have little expenditure in tuition and other necessary items. Some households have children less than three years of age who are yet to go to school. In the study area number of households having higher expenditure in education, accounts 32.61 percent.

Table 6.10

Number of Household by Monthly Expenditure in Education

Amount in Rs	No of household	Percentage
<500	9	19.57
500-1000	15	32.61
1000-1500	12	26.08
1500-2000	6	13.08
>2000	4	8.70
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

6.9.4 Expenditure in Meat

In earlier time the main occupation of Lepcha tribal group was hunting and fishing. They consumed meat of different wild animal, birds and fish. As time elapsed they started to engage in different secondary and tertiary activities. At present in the study area maximum number of household's expense is Rs 300-600 per month in meat. It depends upon the income pattern of the household, few households in the study area spend more than Rs 900 per month in meat (Table 6.11).

Table 6.11

Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure in Meat

Amount in Rs	No of household	Percentage
<300	10	21.73
300-600	16	34.78
600-900	12	26.09
>900	8	17.40
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

5.9.5 Expenditure in Drinks

Being tribal people, alcohol is one of the important drinks. But in the recent time because of education and awareness, majority of household spend less on alcohol. In the Kaputhang - Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU about 50 percent household spends less than Rs 500 per month in drinks, 32.60 percent of household spends Rs 500-1000 per month in drinks and only 17.40 percent of household spends more than Rs 1000 per month in drink.

Table 6.12
Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure in Drinks

Amount in Rs	No of household	Percentage
<500	23	50.00
500-1000	15	32.40
>1000	8	17.40
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

6.9.6 Expenditure in Vegetables

Majority of the households (36.96 percent) have monthly expenditure of Rs 300-600 on vegetables in the study area. 26.09 percent of household spends less than Rs 300, 26.09 percent household spends Rs 600-900 and only 10.86 percent household spends is more than Rs. 900 per month on vegetables. In Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU households having their own land and residing in the village spends less and those residing outside the village, spends more in vegetables. Large families consume more vegetables and they have to spend more.

Table 6.13
Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure in Vegetables

Amount in Rs	No of household	Percentage
100-300	12	26.09
300-600	17	36.96
600-900	12	26.09
>900	5	10.86
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

6.9.7 Expenditure in Electricity

The government of Sikkim had introduced the scheme for the extension of electrification to the remote area. It also provides two unit free electricity to the households below the poverty line. In Kaputhang Taza-Mamring-Amba GPU 13.04 percent household have free connection of electricity, 47.83 percent of households spend Rs 50 - 100 of per month on electricity. Among total only 17.40 percent households in study area have expenditure more than Rs 100 per month. These households belong to rich class and use electricity for home appliances.

Table 6.14

Number of Households of Monthly Expenditure in Electricity

Amount in Rs	No of household	Percentage
Free connection	6	13.04
Less than 50	10	21.73
50-100	22	47.83
More than 100	8	17.40
Total	46	100.00

Sources: Field Survey, June 2006

6.9.8 Annual Expenditure in Religions/Festivals

The Lepchas celebrate eight festivals in a year. In all these festivals expenditure is high. The most important of all the festivals is *loosong* (Namsong). For this festival the Lepchas put on their best attire and spend lavishly. However expenditure varies from one household to other. Table 6.15 shows that nearly 10.87 percent household spends more than Rs. 15000 in festivals in a year.

Table 6.15

Number of household by annual expenditure in Religious/Festivals

Amount in Rs	No of household	Percentage
Less than 5000	10	21.74
5000-10000	18	39.13
10000-15000	13	28.26
More than 15000	5	10.87
Total	46	100.00

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

6.9.9 Expenditure in Other

From the table 6.16 shows the expenditure in luxurious goods which are used for day-to-day life. In study area some household prefer low price goods and some household prefer high price goods it is based on the income generation of household. Maximum households expense Rs 1000-2000 per month representing 34.78 percent. Out of total household only five households in study area spends more than Rs 3000 per month in necessary items. Map 5 shows the major landuse pattern of the study area.

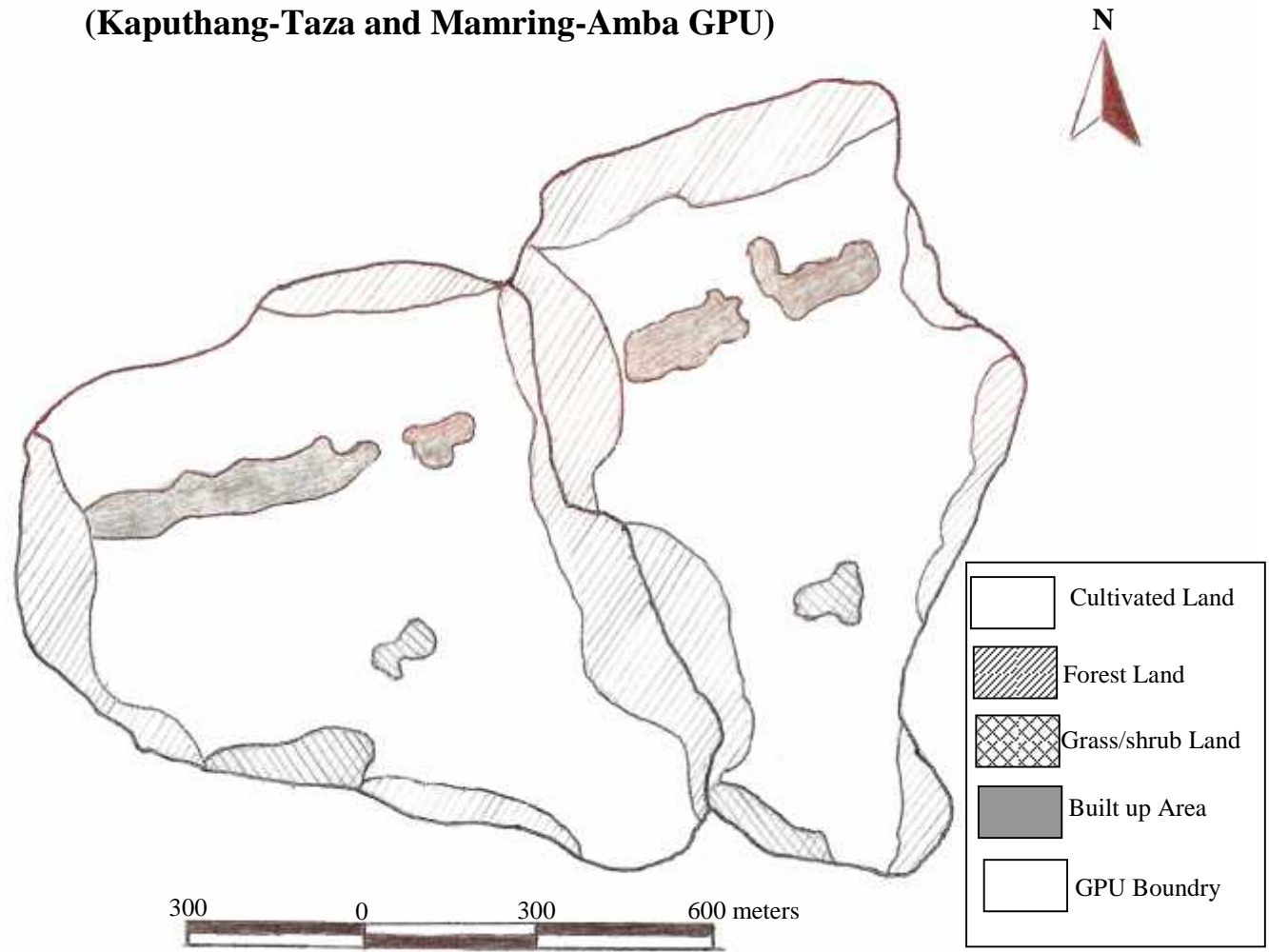
Table 6.16

Number of Households by Monthly Expenditure in Luxurious Goods

Amount in Rs	No of household	Percentage
Less than 1000	15	32.61
1000-2000	16	34.78
2000-3000	10	21.74
More than 3000	5	10.87
Total	46	100.00

Source: Field Survey, June 2006.

Land Use Map of the Study Area (Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring-Amba GPU)



6.10 Natural Resource Use

6.10.1 Forest Resource

The basic requirement of human beings are fresh air, water, food and shelter, these needs are fulfilled from land river/spring forests, etc.

Table 6.17

Number of Household Responding Changes in Forest Area

Type of change	No. of Household	Percentage
Forest into cardamom field	41	89.13
Forest into Broom field	44	95.65
Forest into Agricultural field	10	21.74
Deforestation	6	13.04

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

In the study area forestland has been utilized for different purposes. Nearly 89.13 percent household has been using forestland for cardamom cultivation. Similarly 95.65 percent household has been using it for broom cultivations. Forest has been cleared for agricultural use. Nearly 21.74 percent household reported that they have cleared forest for agriculture. Similarly 13.04 percent household perceived deforestation in the area due to excessive use of forest for firewood and timber and also destruction of forest due to landslide.

6.10.2 Water Resources

Water is one of the basic requirements for survival water is life. About 24 households use water for irrigation, which in turn have a direct impact in production of food crops. The dominant form is canal irrigation.

Water is made available in the entire household. Water is a necessity in order to carry out the daily activities for human life.

6.10.3 Cultivated Land

Almost all the households of the Lepcha community have practiced improved farming technique-using improved seeds and manure. Nearly 65.22

percent can't household is engaged in fruit farming and 95.65 percent household is engaged in vegetable farming for commercial purposes.

Table 6.18

Number of Household Reporting Changes in the use of Cultivated Land

Type	No. of Households	Percentage
Traditional Agricultural system into new system	46	100
Fruit farm	30	65.22
Vegetable farm	44	95.65

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

CHAPTER VII

DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

7.1 Problems

This chapter deals with the development problems and prospects in the study area which directly or indirectly the development of the Lepcha community. It is based on the information given by the respondents of the study area. Major development problems in the study area are broadly divided into two parts i.e. general problems and specific problems. The general problems that they are facing in the study area are town development, road, communication, health post, agriculture extension, irrigation, drinking water and post offices etc.

Table: 7.1

Number of Respondents Reported Infrastructure Development Problems

Major problems	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Market town	45	97.83
Road	12	26.09
Telephone	16	34.78
Health Post	15	32.61
Village Level Workers Centre	17	36.96
Drinking Water	35	76.09
Agricultural extension service	40	86.96
Post Office	10	21.74

Source: Field survey June 2006

Table 7.1 shows that is Kaputhang -Taza and Mamring-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit, the maximum number of respondents representing 97.83 percent said that they have a problem of local market because it is far from the Gram Panchayat Unit. Most of the people have to travel for 10 km to reach the town/market center. Mamring market center has 10 to 15 shops catering to household items. Local products are sold in either Pakyong bazar (market) or

the Rhenock bazar, which is far from the study area. In the study area there is only one fair weathered road, which connects the Kaputhang, Mamring via Amba. In the rainy season i.e. June to September people are facing serious problem in terms of transportation. Due to heavy rain, most of the stream become big and road are blocked by landslide. Even today it is not improved to as metalled road. The respondents reporting a problem of road account 26.09 percent in the study area. During the time in emergency, they have to face lot of problem. They have to walk half hour to reach the road. Similarly another serious problem is the drinking water facilities. In nearby area there is no permanent sources of drinking water. In the winter season the people of Mamring and Kaputhang are facing a serious problem of drinking water about 76.09 percent of respondent reporting a problem of permanent source of drinking water. In the lower part of Amba Grampanchayat unit people's are facing communication problem which constitutes 34.78 percent. Due to lack of additional connection of telephone in that area. Another serious problem is the unavailability health facilities in this area. Within the two Gram Panchayat Unit there is one health post which is situated in the central part of the two GPU, only people's of nearby area has access to this facility, but the lower and upper part of the study area cannot get full fledged facilities. The problem of health post constitute 32.61 percent.

The Lepchas are mostly agriculturalist and they are engaged in primary occupation. About 89.96 percent of the respondents of study area are facing a serious problem of irrigation. This gives rise to insufficient production. In the context in agriculture production the Lepcha are facing lot of problem nowadays, due to the lack of alternative sources of cash income beside cardamom and broom production. About 65 percent of the Lepcha land is covered by broom and cardamom field. But nowadays they gain low income from cardamom and broom production in comparison to earlier time. It is mainly due to declining soil productivity on the one hand and frequent occurrence of pest and diseases. In the study area there are only two village level worker office (VLW) centre about 36.96 percent of respondents are facing the problem of good network of VLW office. Due to inaccessibility people cannot get the quality seeds and manure for different season of

vegetable as well as crops. The least problem of the both area is the problem of post office. It accounts only 21.47 percent from the total respondents.

The specific problem of the sampled respondents, which they are facing, being a Lepchas are the vanishing of language, culture and tradition excess use of alcohol, inter-caste marriage, sterility and lack of unity.

Table 7.2
Number of Respondents Reported Different Socio-cultural problems

Specific Problem	No. Of Respondent	Percentage
Languages	32	69.57
Custom and Culture	44	95.65
Consumption of Alcohol	20	43.48
Inter-caste marriage	25	54.35
Lack of unity	4	8.70

Source: Field survey June, 2006

The respondents of the study area said that the specific major problems of the Lepcha community are the erosion of traditional custom and culture. Among the total respondents 95.65 percent of Kaputhang-Taza and Mumring-Amba GPU, said that they have this problem. In the past Lepcha's festivals was an expensive affair. The basic problem is the conversion of the Lepcha into Christianity thereby embracing foreign culture and customs. Language is also a serious problem due to the impact of modernization Lepcha people refuse to speak their own language about 69.57 percent of respondent reporting.

Another specific problem is the lack of unity among the Lepchas which account 8.70 percent. With the impact of modernization the spirit of we-feeling is vanishing. Each clan has a felling of superiority. Marriage is another issue in the Lepcha community about 54.35 percent of the respondent reported that there is a problem of that issue. Majority of the young generation have married relation with other castes. As a result their language, custom and culture are vanishing day by day. Once the Lepchas were a dominant group, but now they comprise only 10 percent of the total population. This is also due to the low fertility rate in comparison to other ethnic group.

7.2 Prospects

Prospects in general sense, it is a mental picture or image of a future event. It is depends upon possibility of change and development. Every nation state, society or village has their own paradigm or stages of development. It also depends on the people and their place of interaction of what they perceived. The prospects of the study area have been discussed in table 7.3 which is based on the information provided by the respondents.

Table 7.3
Number of Respondents Reported Development Prospects

Prospects	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Government Plan/Programme	45	97.83
Unity	30	65.22
Self awareness	28	60.87
Education	22	47.83
Protection of religion and culture	36	78.26
Control of environmental degradation	12	26.09

Source: Field survey June 2006

In the study area every respondents have reported different prospect for the development of their village. About 97.83 percent households reported that the government participation for the development of the village is necessary. The village needs policy, programme and plans, which is suitable for the development of the area. It efforts should be on development of horticulture, floriculture, animal husbandry (dairy farming, rearing of high breed cattle and poultry) and advanced agricultural farming (providing high yielding seeds, manure, and different tools and technique which are less labour intensive. etc. which solves not only the problem of unemployment but also reduced the pressure of government to give them to government jobs. These plans and Programs help to generate self-employment and improve livelihood status. About 65.22 percent of respondents said that the felling of unity or we feeling among them is necessary. The feeling of oneness among the peoples brings the extra strength for the development of a society. Beside this about 47.83

percent of respondents said that the education is vital. Literacy brings awareness and makes people conscious of their rights of duties.

In the study area they said that changes and development in their quality of life is necessary to adjust with the changing world. But it doesn't mean to end their identity or traditional customs and cultures. Now the Lepcha community is at the critical or endangered stage, new generations are not interested in the own culture and custom. Preservation of the Lepcha culture and custom is responsibility of the Lepcha community. About 78.26 percent of respondent reporting the preservation of custom and culture is necessary. So, preservation of culture is one type of development. Feeling of oneness and brotherhood, interest of learning languages, participating in traditional customs and culture are necessary in order to keep the identity as a Lepcha's among other indigenous tribes.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Conclusion

The aim of this is to investigate the change in existing socio-economic condition of the Lepchas and the impacts of these changes on their lifestyle from 1975 (unification) to 2006.

Every society change from simple to complex. So the Lepcha community of the study area is not an exception. It has also undergone through different phases of changes and development. The Lepcha are the original inhabitant of Sikkim, now declared the primitive tribes of Sikkim, their historical documents and legends are the evidence for this. The economic condition of the Lepcha of study area is quite well as majority of household depends on primary occupation, grows enough food grains to feed all year round, and remaining population supplement their production by working as either tenant or adopting non-agricultural occupation. There is no landless household in Kaputhang-Taza and Manming-Amba Gram Panchayat Unit. They also rear cattle for their economic betterments. New innovation has been introduced in the development of daily farming and horticulture. Nowadays-new generation is not only engaged in agriculture but also looking for alternative way of livelihood according to their ability such as government service, private service, trade and business and contractor etc.

Regarding family size, the joint family is dominant and few single families are existed. Women and children are respected in the Lepcha families but gender discrimination exists to some extent in all spheres of life. Nowadays it has been changing and there is an equal participation among both in each and every works. Monogamous type of marriage is dominant which interlinks through love cum arranged marriage. The Lepchas have their own typical culture and custom regarding childbirth, marriage rites, funeral rites, food and drink habits, dress and ornament and language etc. The Lepchas are the nature worshippers believe in God, good spirit and evil spirit, but now majority of them are converted into Buddhist and few of them have totally changed their

religion into Christianity. The Lepcha of the study area celebrate eight festivals in a year, some of the important festival are *Namsoong* (Namboon) and *Tendong Lho-Rumpat*. The traditional dress and ornament by the new generation is only worn during festival and a few occasions. The traditional dress was replaced by modern fashionable dress like jeans, pant, vest, T-shirt, Kurta-Surwal so on.

On the education status the highest percentage is found in secondary level. Education status has been improving mainly due to increased self-awareness and compulsory education for both sex. The rate of illiterate female is higher than male. Nowadays no sex biasness exists and there is an increase in literacy rate too but still needs some improvements in education system. Language is a compulsory vernacular subject, which has been taught from pre-primary level to +2 level. On 2001 onwards in college level also included as major Indian languages. The Lepchas are good botanists and medicinst. But nowadays awareness among the Lepcha community has increased and they frequently visit hospital, health centre, in order to overcome sickness and diseases.

Since thirty-one years in the study area there has been tremendous change in the lifestyle of the Lepcha community. With the incoming of modernization and westernization there is rapid erosion of the Lepchas culture and tradition. No doubt the Lepchas have adapted to the process of modernization and they are not ignorant about their rights and duties. In order to sustain the future development of the study area, it is necessary to introduce new approaches of development that improves quality of life as well as all round development of the entire community is achieved.

8.2 Recommendation

The Lepchas are indigenous people who are a minority. There should be encouraged to form voluntary organization in order to promote socio-cultural and economic condition. The Lepchas should be made needs of formal local institutions for their preservation of rich culture and heritage. Every Lepcha should be made for all the responsible for preserving their culture and identity.

In order to promote the language and culture various programmes should be organized within the school, college and society. Inter-caste marriage may be advantageous in certain contexts. But for a minority group it is not welcoming, it should be discouraged. The Government should formulate laws, policies, whereby the rights and identity of the Lepchas are safeguarded. During religious ceremonies, alcohol is a basic requirement. The educated and younger generation should play a constructive role in discouraging alcohol.

The majority of the Lepchas are engaged in agriculture. Current agriculture production is not sufficient to fulfill their needs. In order to overcome such shortages current farming practices should be improved. The study area is suitable for the cultivation of cash crops like ginger, cardamom, broom. The government should provide assistance pertaining to cash crop cultivation. Whereby the community earns extra income. Most of the farmers sell their agricultural products to the middleman, who maximizes profits. Co-operatives with active participation of the Lepcha community should be developed. In addition to this market centers should be developed. Majority of the educated Lepcha youth in the study area are unemployed. The government should tackle the problem through various effective implementations in order to meet household beneficiaries for economic enlistment.

REFERENCES

- Awasty, I. (1978). *Between Sikkim and Bhutan; Lepcha and Bhutias of Pedong*. New Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation .
- Bhasin, V. (1989). *Ecology. Culture and Change; Tribals of Sikkim Himalayas*. New Delhi: Inter India Publication.
- Bhattarai, S.(2004). *Perspectives on Social and Cultural Change and Development*. Kathmandu: National Books Centre. Bhotahity.
- Bista, D. B. (1967). *The People of Nepal*. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar. Bhotahity.
- Chopra,P.N. (1979). *Sikkim*. New Delhi: Nam Nagar Publication.
- Das, A.K. (1962). *The Lepchas of Darjelling District*. Calcutta: Mukherjee Publication (P) Ltd.
- DESME (Directorate of Economics, Statistical Monitoring and Evaluation). (2005). *Statistical Profile*. Gangtok: Government of Sikkim
- Foning, A.R. (1987). *Lepcha My Vanishing Tribe*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited.
- Gorer, G. (1984) *The Lepchas of Sikkim*. New Delhi: Cultural Publication House.
- Government of Sikkim. (2006). *Sikkim Study Series*. Gangtok: Information Public Relation. Government of Sikkim.
- Hermanms, F. M. (1954). *The Indo-Tibetans, The Indio-Tibetans and Mongoloid Problem in the Southern Himalayans and North-Northern India*, Bombay: Bandra.
- Husain, M. (1979). *Agricultural Geography*, New Delhi: Inter-India Publications.

- Lehman, F.K. (1970). *Tibeto-Burman-Linguistic. Tone System of Tibeto-Burman language of Nepal*. Volume III. Urbana: Department of Linguistic. University of Illinois.
- Lekhak, H.D. and Lekhak, B. (2003). *Natural Resources Conservation and Sustainable Development in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Kshitiz Publication.
- Lepcha, S.R. (2005). *The Wealth of Sikkim*. Gangtok: Mayel Muluk House of Treasure.
- Mainwaring, G.B. (1876). *A Grammar of the Lepcha Language*. New Delhi: Manjusri Publishing House.
- Nakene, C. (1978). *Caste and Kin in Nepal, India and Ceylon, Anthropological Studies in Hindus-Buddhist Contact Zones*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.
- Orther, S. B. (1978). *Sherpas through their Rituals*. Cambridge. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Panday, N.K. (2002). *Socio-Economic Condition of the Lepcha in Dzongu Area of North Sikkim*. MA Dissertation. Central Department of Geography T.U.
- Rai, A. (2005). *Change and Development in Socio-Economic Condition of the Rai Community; A Case Study of Chumbong and Paren Gaon Gram Panchayat Unit, West Sikkim*. MA Dissertation Central Department of Geography. T.U.
- Risley, H.H. (1981). *The Tribal and Caste of Bengal*. Vol II. Calcutta: Firma KLM.
- Rizal, R. (2004). *Economic and Socio-Cultural life Pattern of Lepcha Community; A Case Study of Daramdin Block in West Sikkim*. MA Dissertation. Central Department of Geography. T.U.

- Roka, S. (2005). *The Lepcha Among the North Sikkim; A Case Study of Hee-Gyathang, North Sikkim*. MA Dissertation. Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology. T.U.
- Sengupta, S. (2001). *Tribes of the Eastern Himalayas*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications.
- Siiger, Halfden (1967). *The Lepchas culture and Religion of a Himalayan People*. Denmark: The National Museum of Demark.
- Sprig, R.K. (1921). *Shedding Some Light on History, Culture and Literature of Lepcha*. London: Oxford University.
- Subba, J.R. (2005). *Horticulture is an Economically Viable and Environmentally Sustainable Driver of Socio-Economic Development in Mountain Sikkim*. Todong: Krishi Bhawan. Government of Sikkim.
- Tamsang, K.P. (1983). *The Unknown and Untold Reality About the Lepchasm*. 1st Edition. Kalimpong: Mani Printing Press.
- Tamsang, K.P. (1987). *The Unknown and Untold Reality About the Lepchasm*. 2nd Edition. Kalimpong: Mani Printing Press.
- Thakur, R.N. (1988). *Himalayan Lepchas*. New Delhi: Archieves Publishers. Distributors.
- The World Book *Encyclopedia (1995)*. 'A' Volume 1. Illinois 60661 USA: World Book. Inc, 252 W. Moriroe Chicago.
- <http://www.Sikkimgovt.org>.
- <http://www.ipr.org>
- <http://www.worldindigenouspeople.com>

CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF LEPCHA COMMUNITY

(A Case Study of Kaputhang-Taza and Mamring -Amba Gram Panchayat Unit)

QUESTIONNAIRE FIELD SURVEY REPORT

Name of Respondent

Age

Sex:

Family Type: Nucleated [] Joint [] Occupation:

Date:

No. of family member

Village/GPU

1. Detail information of your family member on the basis of age and sex?

S.N.	Sex	Age	Relation of household head	Marital Status	Education	Occupation

2. Do you have your own land?

a. Yes []

b. No []

3. If yes kindly mention the land type is areas?

a. Wet land []

b. Dry land []

c. Fallow land []

d. Other []

4. Please specify the different type of land you are cultivating?

Type of Land	Ownership		
	Own	Rented in	Rented out

5. Detail information about your crops production?

Crops type	Area (in acre)	last year production in quintal	Trade	
			Sale place	brought place
Maize				
Rice				
black gram				
Ginger				
Cardamom				
Millet				
Others				

6. Which crops give your more income?

a. Maize []

b. Rice []

c. Ginger []

d. Cardamom []

e. black-gram [] f. millet []

g. Others []

7. Information about your fruits and vegetable production

Fruits				Vegetables			
Types				Types			
Rs./kg				Rs./kg			

8. What are your other sources of income besides agriculture?

Sources of Income	1975 (Amount in Rs)	Now/At present (Amount in Rs.)
Government service		
Private service		
Trade/business		
Labour wages		
Rented -house		
Others		

9. How many cattle do you have?

- a. Ox [] b. Cow [] c. Goat []
d. Pig [] e. Other (Specify) []

10. Which livestock gives more benefit for your household income and how?

11. Have you practiced family planning?

- a. Yes [] b. No []

12. If No, give reason?

- a. Lack of knowledge [] b. Not interested []
c. Lack of information [] d. Others (specify) []

13. What size of family do you think is the best one?

- a. Son [] b. Daughter []

14. What was your and your wife's age at marriage?

- a. Your age [] b. Wife age []

15. In your opinion what will be the best age at marriage?

- a. Girl [] b. Boy []

16. What sort of marriage do you prefer for adults? (Son/daughter)

- a. Arrange marriage [] b. Love marriage []
c. Both [] d. Other (Specify) []

17. Is there any change in marriage system before 1975 and in present day?

- a. Yes [] b. No []

18. If yes, what sort of change in Marriage system?

19. Do you want to put your son in a separate house after his marriage?

- a. Yes [] b. No []

20. Has anyone married inter-caste in your family?

- a. Yes [] b. No []

21. Are there any changes in family relation of inter caste marriage?

- a. Yes [] b. No []

What Changes _____

22. Can you tell me whose marriages are expense more? Son/daughter, why? Give reason.

45. What is your housing pattern?

Housing pattern	Past (1975)	Present
Cooking		
Washing		
Type of house		
Bathing		
Construction Material		

45. In your opinion what has been changed in the educational system from 1975 to present day?

46. Agriculture Calendar

Months	Crops	Land preparation	Cultivation	Weeding	Harvesting
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					

48. Time line: Development

Year	Development Component	Consequences

49. Natural Resources use (Change)

Forest	Change	Consequences
Water		
Agriculture		
Other		

50. What problems you have faced being a Lepcha ?

51. What prospects do you see for the development of Lepcha Community?
