

# Lotha Tribe and Livelihood: A Sociological Study

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**Abstract**— Nagaland, the state of India is inhabited by various tribes. The different tribes, speaking different languages represent different social and political institutions. The Lotha is one of the major tribal group in the region. They are the indigenous people of the state. The Indian constitution provides various political and economic safeguard of the tribal people. But even after 69<sup>th</sup> years of independence they are still underdeveloped. **The study mainly highlighted the socio-economic condition of Lotha tribe in Moilan village and impact of welfare policies and programmes in their life.**

**Keywords**— Nagaland, Moilan village, Lotha Tribe, Socio-Economic Condition, Constitutional Provision, Govt. Programmes and Policies.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Indian tribes are always centre of hot discussion especially in social anthropology and sociology. Indian tribes may not be constantly compared with African tribe or aborigine of Australia. Though a countless degree of commonality exists in term of their socio-economic status, qualitative or major difference lies in term of their relationship with outside world. Anthropologists and sociologists specifically involve themselves in this kind of studies to investigate and analyze the nature, structure and feature of interrelationship vis-à-vis intricacy emerging out between one community and another. Studies relating to different issues and problems of tribes have been conducted in large scale across societies. The tribal population is identified as the inhabitants of our country. For a long time, Indian tribe have been living a simple life on the natural environment and have established cultural patterns to their social and physical environment. According to L.P. Vidyarthi “tribe is a social group with definite territory, common name, common culture, common descent, behaviour of an endogamous group, common taboos, existence of distinctive social and political system, full faith in leaders and self-sufficiency and their distinct economy” (Vidyarthi, 1981). There are more than two hundred million tribal people in the entire globe, which means about 4% of the global population. They are concentrate in different regions of the world and majority of them are the poorest amongst poor. According to census 2011 Scheduled Tribe comprises 8.6% of the population. The distribution of Scheduled Tribe population varies widely across India's states and territories. After Indian independence, number of policies and programmes were initiated in the tribal areas, which had far reaching consequences.

## II. THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

Moilan is a medium size village located in Lotsu of Wokha district, Nagaland. Moilan extends between 26.0600791 latitude and 94.0660321 longitudes. According to the census report of 2011, the total population of this village is 915 of which 445 are males while 470 are females. Moilan village is one of the oldest and recognised villages among the Lotha tribe. It is also one of the highest mountain range which is 399 feet above sea level. The exact year of establishment of the village cannot be traced but according to the oral history which was passed down from generation to generation it is believed that it has passed 14/15 generation since the establishment of this village. The Britisher during the course of exploring India reached even this remote village and build a Telegraph wall and is a witness to the present generation and also elected Shampo Nrathung Humtsoe as the first village headman of Moilan village.

The Lotha's of Moilan village practiced head hunting in the olden days, but after the arrival of Christianity, they gave up this practice. Though the majority of the people are Baptist, there also exist other forms of Christianity like the Catholics in the village. Before Christianity came in this land, the Lothas were worshipped the God of the earth and the God of Sky in the form of religious celebration, festivals and feasts. Now a day's all religious activities are executed under the leadership of the priest in the village. In terms of casting vote, it is found that the people of Moilan village regularly casting vote in election as they are conscious about the Indian political system and all the villagers are following the customary law in the village. As customary law is very much important for the tribal people and has been practicing from centuries.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data was collected from the

census and sources like books, theoretical, journals etc. and after that for the collection of primary data, an “Interview scheduled” was used to interview the respondent and the method for selecting my sample was “Purposive Sampling Method” and also through field observation and narrative analysis for the study.

**IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The socio-economic condition of Lotha tribe of Moilan village in Wokha district, Nagaland are as follows:

Table: 1 Educational qualification

Educational qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	12	30%
Primary	1	2.5%
Jr. High school	9	22.5%
High school	14	35%
H. S	4	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Study

The above mention table shows that 35% of the respondent’s education upto High school level and 30% of the respondents are illiterate. 22.5% of the respondent are found to be between classes one to class seven pass. 10% of the respondents are twelve pass and only 2.5% of the respondent are primary level. Thus, we can say that the level of education of the respondent are not satisfactory

Table:2 Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Agriculture	21	52.5%
Self employed	5	12.5%
Govt job	5	12.5%
Unemployed	4	10%
Retired	5	12.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Study

The above table revealed that more than half (52.5%) of the tribe are still engaged in agriculture. Beside these each 12.5% of the respondents are self-employed; Government job, Retired person and only 10% of the Lotha tribe in Moilan village are unemployed. Most of the tribal people in India are still depended on Agriculture for their livelihood and still in some backward areas, the tribal people practice the old traditional method for cultivation, without making use of the modern technology method or without any assist from the Government. Thus the agricultural productions of the tribal people are not profitable but only for the family to sustain and which leads to economic problem.

Table:3 Types of family

Types	Frequency	Percentage
Joint family	5	12.5%
Nuclear family	35	87.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Study

The above mentioned table shows that 87.5% of the household in Moilan village are Nuclear family and only 12.5% of the family were found to be joint family in nature. There was no extended family in Moilan village. So we can say that the village practices more of a nuclear type family.

Table: 4 Types of house

Types	Frequency	Percentage
Semi-pucca	12	30%
Kucha	28	70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Study

In terms house of the Lotha tribe in study area Above table shows the types of house found in the village was that 70% of the houses in the village were Kucha construct using bamboo and tin roof .30% of the houses in the village were semi-pucca construct using bricks, cements and tin roof. There was no pucca house in the village. All the respondent of Moilan village has owned their own house and no one lives on a rented house and they have electric facility in their houses. In terms of drinking water it is found that Moilan villagers still practice the traditional way of drinking water by fetching water through pond and not even a single household is connected to water supply. Thus we can say that the tribe people are depended on pond source for drinking water.

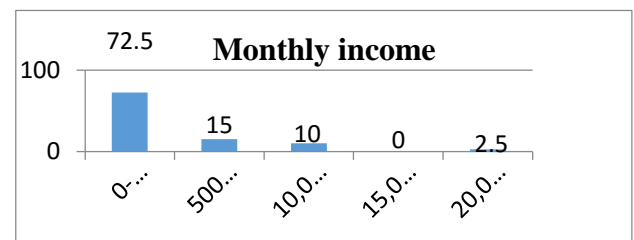


Chart:1 Monthly Income

Source: Field Study

Above mentioned data show that 72.5% of the respondent monthly income is below Rs 5,000 and 15% of the respondent are earning an amount of Rs.5,001 to Rs.10,000 per month.10% of the respondent are earning an amount of Rs 10,001 to Rs. 15,000 per month and only 2.5% of the respondent are earning of Rs 20,001 and above.

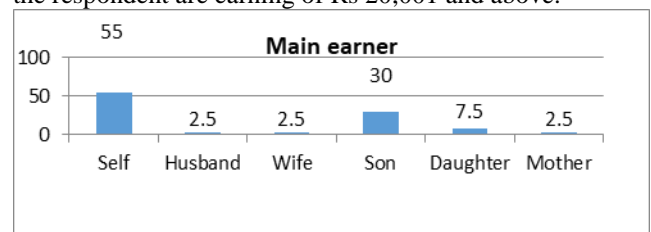


Chart:2 . Main Earner

Source: Field Study

The above data show that 55% of the respondents are sole earner in the family. 30% of the respondent family depend on their son. 7.5% of the respondent family depend on

their daughter and 2.5% each of the respondent family depend on either husband, wife or mother.

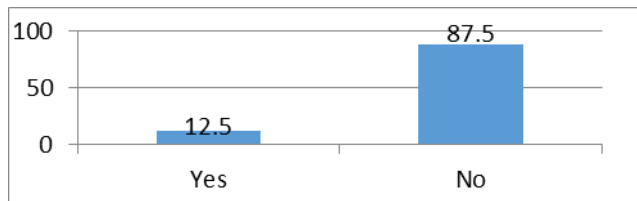


Chart:3. Govt. and Non-Govt. Organization

Source: Field Study

The above data show that 87.5% of the respondent do not received any loans from Government and non-Government and only 12.5% of the respondent received loans from the Government.

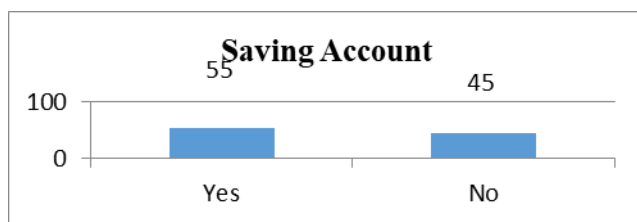


Chart:4. Saving Account

Source: Field Study

From the data we can say that 55% of the respondent have saving account and 45% of the respondent do not have any saving account.

**Constitutional Provisions for Tribal Development**

The constitutional provisions of scheduled tribes programme and policies of tribal welfare given by the central and state government for the improvement of their socio-economic condition. After independence a series of articles are associated with tribal development. Article 342 of the Indian Constitution clearly mention that the president has the power to specify the tribal communities or parts or groups within them as Scheduled Tribes in relation to a state or Union Territory. In 1999 the government of India was introduced a Ministry of Tribal affair to give special attention for their development. In order to give special attention to Scheduled Tribes under 89th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2003 the government introduced separate National Commission. This Commission came into existence in 2004. This act amended Article 338 and inserted a new article 338A in the constitution.

Beside these a number of Constitutional Provisions have been made for Tribal Development. These are: Article 14, 15, 15(4), 16, 17, 29, 46,350, 21, 21A, 23, 24, 16(4), 335, 244, 244A, 164, 330, 332 etc. All these articles deals with the different aspects to protect the tribal life in India like their Social Rights, Educational and Cultural Rights, Economic Rights, Political Rights, Employment Rights etc. Beside these constitutional provisions, both state and central government frequently implemented various Programme and policies for the upliftment of the tribal

people in India like, Indria Awaas Yojana (IAY), Grant-In-Aid (GIA), Matching Cash Grant (MCG), Swaranjayanti Gram Swarazgar Yojana (SGSY), National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) etc. We can say that Indian government has given special attention for tribal development. A series of constitutional provisions and programmes and policies are the witness for the seriousness of the government for the welfare of the tribal people in India. But unfortunately Lotha tribe in Moilan village are deprive from welfare programme and policies.

**Lotha Tribe and Government Policy**

All the respondent of Moilan village have some basic knowledge about (NREGS, IAY, GIA, BRGY) the programmes and policies provided by the Government if compared to earlier days, the new generation are gradually becoming more aware of the policies and programmes because they are always in need of help in every ways, like better road connectivity, Agricultural tools, better electricity, loan etc and to acquire all these essential needs, they need help from the Government. Whereas even the Government are working hard for the upliftment of the rural people by implementing several policies and programmes for the scheduled tribe and which makes the present Generation so conscious about Government policies. Moreover, respondent were asked whether they benefited from govt. programmes and policies.

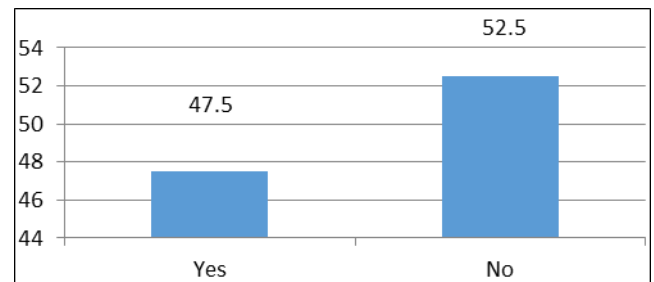


Chart: 5. Respondent view about Govt. Programmes and Policies

Source: Field Study

Data show that more than half (52.5%) of the population of the Moilan village have not benefitted from the Government schemes while they are fully aware of the Government policies and programmes and also they know that the Government has provided various schemes for rural development. But they are not benefitted from these schemes. Thus, it is clear that the programmes and policies are not implementing or functioning accordingly for the betterment of their society.

**V. CONCLUSION**

From the above discussion we can say that the constitutional makers of India were very much concern about the tribes people for their upliftment in whole squares. Article 32 of Indian Constitution provided the right to constitutional remedies. All articles in favour of tribes are indicated the preservation and upliftment in socio-economic and political life. The makers of the

constitution wanted to create an egalitarian society with the help of these articles. Within the boundary of these provisions both central government and state government are establishing several schools, colleges, hostels, and others.

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Dr. Nabarun Purkayastha obtained his M.A Ph.D in Sociology from Assam University, Silchar. Dr. Purkayastha is at present faculty and Head of the Department of Sociology in University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya. As a researcher, he is interested in Sociological concerns of plantation labourers, ethnic and tribal communities, Education and Society, Ethnography and has published many research papers and books in both national and international level.