

**Chapter: IV**  
**ECONOMIC PROFILE**

In the preceding pages I dealt with historiography of Thadou, touching almost all pertinent dimensions from origin to its present society. Both primitive and present activity of Thadou is analysed. In the present chapter I try to highlight economic life of the Thadou inhabiting especially in six villages. For the purpose, village economic organisation is broadly divided into two type's viz., agricultural and non-agricultural activity. Though occupational differentiation is observed in all villages, practice of agriculture is the mainstay of majority of Thadou. Since practice of agriculture is related to land; ownership and land use pattern is discussed at the very outset followed by mode of cultivation- shifting and settled cultivation and non-agricultural activity such as handicraft and domestication of animal, wage labourer, service, business venture, income and living standard.

**Agricultural Activity**

L.P. Vidyarthi and B.K. Rai (1976) argue that tribal culture is cognated to tribal economics and economic system of tribals can be understood in purview of cultural factor. Economic anthropology envisages economic activity of man in his social and cultural framework.<sup>1</sup>Writing about pre-colonial pattern of village economy, Sema (1992: 1320) said autonomous village that British encountered was in main primitive economic units with a system of subsistence agriculture which provide them with barely enough for

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<sup>1</sup> Vidyarthi and Rai. 'The Tribal Culture of India', p. 93.

their need.<sup>2</sup> Likewise George T. Haokip (2011) maintains that Kuki socio-economic and political system is more or less based on their land system.<sup>3</sup> Land is important economic resource which they exploit with simple technology for agricultural purposes.<sup>4</sup> Agriculture is basis of Thadou economy where land cultivated is owned by chief.

### **Land Ownership and Land Use Pattern**

Almost all Thadou-Kuki villages are located in hill area with limited land. Village land is used for various purposes but mainly used for agriculture as it is the main occupation of people and is mainstay of their life.<sup>5</sup> A traditional Thadou-Kuki village usually includes village site or residential site, reserved forest and cultivation site. The haosa (chief) has supreme authority over all land within his jurisdiction. He controls and levies tax on product of forest and cultivated field. Villagers have no right over land, except for temporary cultivation purpose. Even a piece of land cannot be registered by villagers in their name. They may stay in a village so long as they maintain good relationship with a chief. They can enjoy right to settlement and cultivation during their stay in village.<sup>6</sup> At the end of every year, chief organises a meeting called *Semang Juvah* where along with his *Semang Pachong* (village council) discusses proper administration of village and which site of village land have to be used for jhum. No individual can cultivate land against wish of chieftain and his council.

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<sup>2</sup> Cited in J. Longkumer. 2009. 'Change and Continuity in Tribal Villages: A Sociological Study'. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House, p. 213.

<sup>3</sup> Haokip. 'Changes in Kuki Traditional Land Ownership System', p. 151.

<sup>4</sup> Arunkumar and Touthang. 'The Chongthus of Manipur'. p. 79.

<sup>5</sup> Gina Shangkham. 2006. 'The Ethno- History of the Kharam Tribe'. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House. p. 116.

<sup>6</sup> Arunkumar and Touthang. 'The Chongthus of Manipur', pp.79- 80.

### **Mode and Type of Cultivation**

Agriculture is the main occupation of Thadou and they practice both shifting and settled cultivation (wet rice cultivation). Those living in hilly slope practice traditional jhum cultivation of various kinds but no wet land cultivation due to irrigation problem. Whereas those living in sub-urban (periphery of plain and hilly region) area practiced both type of cultivation. Land used for shifting cultivation is called *Thinglhanglei* meaning hill jhuming, whereas land used for wet rice cultivation is called *Phailei* meaning plain or valley field.

### **Jhuming (*Thinglhanglei*)**

Shifting cultivation or jhum cultivation was the most prominent or dominant form of cultivation earlier. Jhum cultivation is now also known with slash and burn agriculture and is commonly defined as clearing a patch of forest by felling and burning tree then cultivating land for one or more year before abandoning the same in favour of other patch.<sup>7</sup> After cropping each patch is allowed to revert to secondary growth for a number of years before it is re-cleared and re-cultivated.<sup>8</sup> On basis of geographical location *thinglhanglei* (jhuming) is usually practiced in area where tree is in abundance. Such place is called *thinglei*. Where on other hand there are grassland field called *ponlei*. Cultivation in *thinglei* is much more common practiced than in *ponlei* since produced is more. *Ponlei* is usually second option for practicing jhuming in case of limited land, because it required more labour power and is always less fertile.

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<sup>7</sup> Ronald E. Seavoy. 'The Shading Cycle in Shifting Cultivation', <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2562057> (assessed on 9 May 2013).

<sup>8</sup> Seavoy. The Shading Cycle in Shifting Cultivation.

Three forms of shifting cultivation are observed among the Thadou-Kukis of Manipur: *Loupi/Loulen, Changlei and Joulei*.

Term Loupi/Loulen literally means big field. It is a kind of shifting cultivation which involves cultivation of large area only for one year after which a land is left fallow for 4-7 years for growth of fresh vegetation. Selection of jhum plots begins in early November and December, where they mark size of plot to be cultivated depending on their needs. After careful selection of suitable site, felling of tree begin in last part of December till January. After at least one month gap felled trees are burnt in early part of March before rainy season. Half burnt logs called *Mang* are then collected and burnt again to make soil more fertile after which field is ready for plantation. The most common and widely cultivated crops are rice which is sown by digging hole with help of a small hole called *Tucha*. Sometime, besides paddy grains, maize, cucumber, sugarcane and various vegetables are also grown amidst paddy plant. Jhum thus becomes a mixed crop field. No manure or fertiliser is used in cultivation process. Weeding is done once or twice depending on how well burned a field is about and that is after three months of planting. A small platform hut with thatched roof is constructed in field where one can rest, live and also served as a watch hut to drive out animal attacking crops. Harvesting of crops usually take place during following year between June to October. Cultivated plot is then left fallow for 7- 10 years to let tree matured and restored lost soil fertility.

Changlei is another kind of dry cultivation practised by Thadou, where principal crop planted is rice. Four type of paddy grains are grown in such type of cultivation: *Changpal* (early harvest rice), *Changgei* (late harvest rice), *Butun* (millet) and *Mim* (jobs tear).

Changpal and Changei is cultivation of rice where the former is an early harvest crop whereas the latter takes a little longer time. Butun and mim is also another form of grain that is often used as a substitute for rice.

Joulei is yet another form of dry cultivation widely practiced among Thadou. It is also known as *Melei* where cash crops like maize, cucumber and various vegetables are grown in suitable places in the same field. Rice is also cultivated sometime but not in many cases.

Practice of jhum cultivation is observed in all villages. Of total number of 300 respondent household in six villages, more than half (61.66 %) households practice jhum cultivation of various kinds. Area under jhum cultivation is difficult to ascertain as there is no definite measurement. However, area is taken by talking with elder members depending by number of seen sown measured in tin. Following table shows number of households and area under shifting cultivation:

**Table 4.1**  
**Household and area under jhum cultivation**

Sl. No.	Area under shifting cultivation (in acre)	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	0-1	14 (100)	8 (18.61)	5 (10.0)	9 (21.95)	7 (36.84)	5 (10.86)	48 (25.94)
2	1-2		17 (39.53)	11 (22.0)	22 (53.65)	9 (47.36)	28 (60.86)	87 (47.1)
3	2-3	–	14 (32.55)	5 (10.0)	8 (19.51)	3 (15.78)	12 (26.1)	42 (22.71)
4	3 above	–	4 (9.31)	1 (2.0)	2 (4.87)	–	1 (2.17)	8 (4.32)
Total		14	43	22	41	19	46	185

The data reveal of total number of 185 family practicing jhum cultivation, over four-tenth (47.1%) family practice jhum cultivation within range of 1-2 acre, 25.94 % family within range of 0-1acread a little over two-tenth (22.71 %) family within range of 2-3 acre and a small fraction of 4.32% family within range of 3 acre and above. Thus all villages practice jhum cultivation though area under cultivation varies with an average land area of 1-2 sangam.

### **Crop Kind**

Two types of crops are generally grown in jhum field- rice and cash crop like maize, cucumber and various vegetables. Following table demonstrate type of crops under jhum cultivation in the study villages:

**Table 4.2**  
**Distribution of family into type of crop grown**

Crop Grown	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
Rice	–	7 (16.27)	3 (13.63)	4 (9.75)	3 (15.78)	7 (15.21)	24 (12.97)
Cash Crops	14 (100)	8 (18.61)	7 (31.81)	21 (51.21)	7 (36.84)	32 (69.56)	89 (48.11)
Rice/Cash Crops	–	28 (65.11)	12 (54.54)	16 (39.1)	9 (47.36)	7 (15.21)	72 (38.91)
Total	14	43	22	41	19	46	185

The table shows that of 185 respondent households, 48.11% households cultivated only vegetables while 38.91 % cultivates rice as well as vegetables and the remaining 12.97 % cultivates only rice. It is thus observed that both rice and vegetables are equally cultivated.

### Purpose of Growing Crop in Jhum

Rice is specially cultivated for consumption as rice is the staple food while vegetable are also mainly for consumption as well as commercial. Purpose of growing vegetables in six villages is shown in following table:

**Table 4.3**  
**Distribution of family for purpose of growing vegetable**

Purpose	Motbung	T.Moulbug	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
Consumption	5 (35.71)	7 (16.27)	3 (13.63)	4 (9.75)	3 (15.78)	7 (15.21)	29 (15.67)
Consumption/ commercial	9 (64.28)	36 (83.72)	19 (86.36)	37 (90.24)	16 (84.21)	39 (84.78)	156 (84.32)
Total	14	43	22	41	19	46	185

The data shows that in six village, over four-fifth family (84.32 %) grow crops for domestic consumption as well as commercial purpose whereas only few families (15.67 %) are mainly for domestic consumption.

Besides growing rice most of the families have separate vegetables field which are mainly for commercial as well as consumption.

### Seed

The villagers used two types of seeds for cultivation; namely, local and high yielding variety seeds. The following table shows the types of seeds used by the families for agricultural production in the two villages:

**Table 4.4**  
**Distribution of family into type of seed used**

Type	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
Local preserved seed	4 (28.57)	53 (100)	22 (100)	51 (100)	16 (84.21)	56 (100)	172 (92.97)
Local as well as high yield seed	10 (71.42)	–	–	–	3 (15.78)	–	13 (7.1)
Total	14	43	22	41	19	46	185

The table reveals that most of the families (92.97 %) in six villages used local preserved seeds and a very few (7.1%) uses local as well as high yielding seeds.

In T. Moulbung, Chalva, Govajang and Bolkot, all agricultural families used local preserved seeds while in Motbung and Saikul village there are few families using both local and high yielding seeds. Thus, the villager uses more of the locally preserved seeds over high yielding one.

#### **Wet Rice Cultivation (*Phailei*)**

The term *Phailei* literally means wet rice cultivation. Preparation of soil begins in May where bullock, tractors, power tillers and others is used to make soil soft and readies for used. Land is then irrigated by letting water flow from the nearby irrigation canal. Then the paddy seedlings are planted in the field prepared in the month of June and July. Weeding is done twice. One is done after three to four weeks and second just before harvesting. Pesticide, weedicides and fertiliser like diamond phosphate, urea are used to make harvest more productive. Plantation, weeding and harvesting is usually done by reciprocal labour, hired labour and if field is small it is done by family member itself. Harvesting takes place from November to beginning of December. Since wet rice



cultivation is totally dependent on monsoon rain month of planting and harvesting time is not always same and may vary.

Practice of wet rice cultivation is observed in four villages. Of total of 300 respondent households in sample village 75 (25%) practiced wet rice cultivation. Motbung has 19 (38%), Chalva with 18 (36.0%), Saikul village has 22 (44.0%) and Bolkot village has 16 (32 %) families from total sample household of each village. Village T. Moulbung and Govajang have no concentration of household practicing wet cultivation since these villages are in the hill top. Following table shows number of household and areas under wet cultivation:

**Table 4.5**  
**No. of household and area under wet rice cultivation**

Sl. No.	Area under wet rice cultivation (in acre)	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	0- 1	3 (15.78)	–	2 (11.11)	–	3 (13.63)	2 (12.5)	10 (13.33)
2	1- 2	11 (57.89)	–	9 (50.0)	–	10 (45.45)	4 (25.0)	34 (45.33)
3	2- 3	5 (26.31)	–	5 (27.77)	–	7 (31.81)	7 (43.75)	24 (32.0)
	3 above	–	–	2 (11.11)	–	2 (9.1)	3 (18.75)	7 (9.33)
	Total	19	–	18	–	22	16	75

The data reveal that 75 respondent families practice wet rice cultivation of which 13.33 % families cultivated wet rice within range of 0-1 acre, 45.33% families within 1-2 acres, 32% families within 2-3 acres and 9.33% within 3 acres/sangam above respectively.

Due to migration to sub-urban area in search of better education, marketing and employment, Motbung and Saikul village lost most land used for wet rice cultivation since most land now turn into homestead land. Wet field in two villages are patta land. Whereas settled cultivation in Chalva and Bolkot village is pattaless but permanently owned by individual. Thus out of 300 respondent households in six villages, only two-fifth of them possess wet field at an average land holding of two sangam.

### **Agricultural Implement**

Modern agricultural implements like tractor, power tiller and traditional method pulled by bullock are used in preparation of the soil for wet rice cultivation. The following table gives the type of implement used by the six villages at the time of field work:

**Table 4.6**  
**Distribution of agricultural implements used to ploughing**

Sl. No.	Name of Chemical/ Fertiliser	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Tractor	10 (52.63)	–	–	–	7 (31.81)		17 (22.66)
2	Power Tiller	7 (36.84)	–	11 (61.11)	–	11 (50.0)	4 (25.0)	33 (44.0)
3	Bullock cart	2 (10.52)	–	7 (38.88)	–	4 (18.18)	12 (75.0)	25 (33.33)
Total		19	–	18	–	22	16	75

Data reveal that for ploughing field in wet rice cultivation in three village, 22.66% used tractor and another 44% family used power tiller. Traditional method pulled by bullock cart is used by 33.33%. Most implements are hired. Table below provides hiring cost of mechanised as well as traditional implement and labour in preparing soil for wet rice cultivation:

**Table 4.7**  
**Money paid to prepare soil for wet rice cultivation**

Sl. No.	Type of Implement	Hiring cost (Rs per acre/sangam)	Labour invested (per sangam/acre)
1	Tractor	1000	1 and half hour
2	Power tiller	800	2 hour
3	Bullock cart	600	1 or 2 days

The table shows the cost for ploughing is highest in tractor followed by power tiller and bullock cart. However, as is shown in table no. 4.7, most of the household uses power tiller and tractor than bullock cart.

Though traditional method of ploughing by bullock makes soil softer most families use power tiller and tractor to save time and labour. Thus modern mechanised machine has almost replaced traditional method of cultivation in wet field cultivation.

### Chemical Used for Wet Rice Cultivation

Pesticide, weedicides, fertiliser and soil conditioner are used to make harvest more productive. Following table shows type of fertiliser, pesticides and weedicides used by cultivators in six villages:

**Table 4.8**  
**Type of chemical fertiliser used in Wet Cultivation**

Sl. No.	Chemical	Type
1	Fertiliser	Diamond and Urea
2	Pesticide	Super killer and Gem
3	Weedicide	Potash
4	Soil Conditioner	Apsa and super phosphorous

In all villages practicing wet rice cultivation, chemicals are used and quantity depends upon size of field. Chemical such as super phosphorous and apsa are used to make soil

soft and easy for weeding, Potash is used to get rid of weed and gem, super killer is used to kill pest and chemical fertiliser like urea and diamond used to make it more productive. Leveling, fencing, plantation, weeding, fertiliser application, mowing, harvesting, banding etc. are mostly done by reciprocal labour, hired labour or family member itself if field is small. For transporting harvest rice, mini truck is hired against cash or kind.

Thus, from table no. 4.1 and table no. 4.5, total number of households and area under jhum cultivation is found more in number than settle cultivation. Agriculture is main source of livelihood of the Thadou. Rice accounts for more than 50 percent of total land area under cultivation. Although average landholding is low, yield per acre/sangam in settled cultivation is comparatively high than that of shifting cultivation. Increasing use of fertiliser and modern method of cultivation in wet rice cultivation facilitate to increase production.

On the basis of fieldwork conducted in the study villages the following table is formulated to understand major crop, cropping pattern and purpose of growing crops in both jhum and settle cultivation:

**Table 4.9**  
**Major crop, cropping pattern and purpose to grow crop**

Sl. No	Name of Crops	Month of Seed Sowing	Growth Period (month)	Month of Harvesting	Purpose
1	Rice (jhum)	April	4 month	August/Sept	Non commercial
2	Rice(wetrice)	July/August	4 month	Nov/Dec	Non commercial
3	Millet	July/August	4 month	Nov./Dec.	Non commercial
4	Maize	March- May	4 month	August/Sept.	Commercial/consumption
5	Arum	March	9 month	Dec/Jan/Feb	Commercial/consumption
6	Potato	January	3 month	May/June	Commercial/consumption
7	Chili	June	5 month	Nov/Dec	Commercial/consumption
8	Beans	March/April	4 month	July/ Sept	Commercial/consumption
9	Mustard leaves	October	2 month	December	Commercial/consumption
10	Brinjals	May	2 month	July	Commercial/consumption
11	Peas	May/June	6 month	Nov/Dec	Commercial/consumption
12	Ginger	April	8 month	Nov/Dec	Commercial/consumption

The above table shows that out of ten items of crops grown only two items that is rice and millets were for consumption as rice is the staple food. The remaining items are for consumption as well as commercial. Maize, peas and ginger are specially cultivated in large number for commercial purpose since the price is high. Thus agricultural routine of the Thadous in both shifting and settled cultivation can thus be summarised in the following table:

**Table 4.10**  
**Agricultural Routine of Thadou**

Sl.No.	Month	Local Name of Month	Major activity
1	January	Tolbol	Preparation of field for jhuming, felling of trees and under growth begin.
2	February	Bulte	Felled trees are kept for drying
3	March	Lhakao	Burning of felled trees followed by clearance of half burnt logs
4	April	Lhatun	Sowing of paddy and different seeds in jhum areas
5	May	Lhaphul	a)Weeding of paddy and millet in jhum areas and b)Preparation for wet rice cultivation
6	June	Lhadou	a)Wet rice cultivation begins
7	July	Lhamul	(a) Weeding in wet rice cultivation (b) Harvesting of maize, beans, cucumber begin
8	August	Lhajing	Harvesting of seeds planted in April and May begins
9	September	Lhalam	Harvesting of early paddy in jhum areas
10	October	Ellha	Harvesting continues
11	November	Phallha	Harvesting of paddy in wet field rice and harvesting of late paddy in jhum areas
12	December	Ollha	Harvesting in both areas continues till first to second week. Selection for jhum site begins

Thus agricultural routine of Thadou revolves around tending their field from January to December. It is only between January to March that they can tend to other activities besides agriculture because during this month the felled trees are kept for drying. This period is called *Chapphou* (drying of felled trees). In earlier days, the Thadou spent their days in the field itself since the jhum field is always far from homestead. They built small huts called *Loubuh* which provide them with shelter. It is during this period that they can tend to other chores. During last of March burning of felled trees begins followed by seed sowing, weeding and harvesting till the mid of December.

### **Kitchen Garden**

Today kitchen garden, traditional occupation, has occupied an important place among the Thadou where woman of house cultivates variety of vegetables like pumpkin, maize,

yam, cucumber etc. Kitchen garden is mainly meant for home consumption but sometimes surplus is sold. In Saikul and Motbung village, kitchen garden is usually small due to lack of space so products from kitchen garden are barely enough to meet family need. Besides there are people who have private land used for kitchen gardening which can produce enough and where they can sell the surplus in small scale. On the other hand since village Govajang, Challva, T.Moulbung and Bolkot village usually have big kitchen garden since they have enough place for it and where the produce is more than sufficient enough for them, so they sell in the neighboring villages market which is usually about 5-35 km.

### **Non Agricultural Activities**

Economic organisation of Thadou at present can be said to have consists of mixed type. Besides agriculture they are now engage in different kind of **secondary** and **tertiary** economic activities. However, the largest number of Thadou is at present engage in agriculture, either as cultivators or as agricultural labourer. The 2001 census shows that out of the total Thadou population of 1,82,594, the total number of Thadou population workers is 84,287 of which 43,067 is cultivators and 3,122 is agricultural labourers. The practice of agriculture continued to be the primary occupation of most of the Thadou.

### **Handicraft**

In addition to the activities of agricultural practices the Thadous at present is engage in different kind of occupations. In earlier days women were engaged in weaving different kinds of traditional shawls and costumes and making mattress and blankets out of cotton

products using ordinary hand loom. They also make pots of different shape and size for different purposes, like cooking and brewing of rice beer. Men are good in making agricultural and household implements like Dao, hoe, axe, spade, basket and casket etc. Every village has a professional blacksmith.<sup>9</sup> However today, with globalisation great change has taken place where money and market have a significant bearing in their life. The women of today weaved different kinds of traditional wrap-round for women called *Ponve* and shawl called *Ponsil* since they can easily get access to variety of yarn from market. This earn them good amount of money when sold. Machine made traditional shawl and wrap round from Aizawl, Mizoram have recently been introduced into the state with variety of design and with a much lower price that place a threat to the handmade ones. However, preference is always given to traditional hand weaved one. There are many women who engage themselves in weaving as profession and since the price is usually high, women usually form a *Lom* (group) where they donate money daily, weekly or monthly depending on the price to purchase the products. The men folk no longer makes agricultural implement like dao, axe, spade, etc. since these are easily accessible in the market. However, making of different traditional baskets continued. The following table illustrates the price of some traditional wrap round and shawl along with handmade implements like basket and casket etc.

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<sup>9</sup> Haokip. 'Re- Discovery of Traditional Institutions', p. 19.



**Table 4.11**  
**Price of some traditional manufactured items**

Sl.No.	Name of Some Traditional Manufacture	Market Price (Per Piece)
1	<i>Saipikhup</i> (Shawl)	900
2	<i>Thangnangpon</i> (Shawl)	700
3	<i>Ponmongvom</i> (Shawl)	400/500
4	<i>Khamtang</i> (wrap- round)	2500
5	<i>Pahchapon</i> (wrap- round))	800
6	<i>Pondum</i> (wrap- round)	500
7	Others (wrap- round/shawl)	200-1000
8	<i>Bengbit/Longkai</i> (Basket)	500
9	<i>Kongvang</i> (Basket)	300
10	<i>Nam</i> (bamboo string rope)	200
11	<i>Godal</i> (winnow)	250
12	<i>Pheh</i> (mat made from cane)	2000

The above table provides the price of some manufactured commodities which the Thadous valued in spite of the change in their culture. Traditional shawl and wrap round still occupied an important in their life which were often worn on special occasions and festivals and in times of funeral. *Pondum* (wrap round) still occupied its important place where the woman wore in funeral. *Kongvang*, *Bengbit* and *Nam* are the three important handmade manufactures from bamboo mainly used for domestic purpose. They also made mortal and pistles for pounding rice and others necessity like turmeric, dry chillies etc. Following table provides us with the numbers of person engaged in traditional handmade manufactured from each villages:

**Table 4.12**  
**Type of manufacturer in village**

Sl. No.	Category	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Weaver	7 (77.77)	2 (66.66)	4 (57.14)	2 (40.0)	5 (55.55)	2 (33.33)	22 (53.65)
2	Basket maker	1 (11.11)	2 (66.66)	1 (14.28)	2 (40.0)	3 (33.33)	3 (50.0)	12 (29.26)
3	Blacksmith	1 (11.11)	1 (16.66)	2 (28.57)	1 (20.0)	1 (11.11)	1 (16.66)	7 (17.1)
Total		9	3	7	5	9	6	41

The data show that handicraft works provide additional source of income to the village economy and are the mainstay in some families. In the sample villages 41 members in the six villages are engaged in weaving, basket making and blacksmithing. Of these, 53.65 % women (more than half) are engaged in weaving of traditional shawls and wrap- round, another 29.26 % male population is engaged in basketry and yet 17.1 % of male is engaged as blacksmith.

It is thus evident that cottage industry still played an important role in the economic life of the people. The availability of yarn and agricultural tools in the market makes it easier for the women weavers as it save time and labour though it has in some way replaced most of the work of the blacksmith. However, it is found that every village still has a professional blacksmith and making of different traditional baskets continued. Handicraft works are mostly done along with other work like agricultural works in the hill areas. Most of the products are sold locally.

### **Domestication of Animal**

The domestication of livestock is another aspect of the economic life of the Thadou. They domesticated animals like buffaloes, cows, pigs, dogs, cat, buffalo, mithun, fowls, etc., for socio-religious and economic purposes. In the past no religious ceremony or rites took place without animal sacrifices. However today, these domesticated animals added as a subsidiary income to the family.

**Table 4.13**  
**Distribution of livestock**

Sl. No.	Category	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Buffalo	3 (0.17)	2 (1.17)	9 (0.99)	2 (2.35)	2 (0.18)	4 (1.28)	22 (0.51)
2	Pig	362 (20.81)	31 (18.23)	159 (17.53)	8 (9.41)	233 (21.14)	27 (8.68)	820 (19.1)
3	Cow	–	–	4 (0.44)	–	12 (1.1)	–	16 (0.37)
4	Fowl	1217 (69.94)	128 (75.29)	689 (75.96)	68 (80.0)	817 (74.13)	268 (86.17))	3187 (73.85)
5	Dog	158 (9.1)	9 (5.29)	46 (5.1)	7 (8.23)	38 (3.44)	12 (3.85)	270 (6.25)
Total		1740	170	907	85	1102	311	4315

The table indicates that in the six villages, fowls constitute the most common livestock with 73.85% followed by pig with 19.1 %. Cow, pig, dog, fowls are common domesticated animals which are for commercial as well as for consumption. Besides they are used in almost all occasions and festivals. The price of a fully grown pig cost between Rs 25,000- 35,000. A bull or a cow cost not less than Rs 30,000 while the price of a chicken and duck ranges from Rs 300- 500. Buffaloes are rear mainly for agricultural work. Thus domestication of animal is also another important economic activity of the Thadous today.

As already stated before, the present Thadou economy is of mixed type, though agriculture constituted the mainstay of their life. Many Thadous of today are engage other occupations beside agriculture as daily wage earner, salaried jobs both in private and government sectors, private business activity etc. which comes under the **tertiary** sector.

## Wage Labourer

Small number of Thadou are at present engage as daily wage earners either as construction workers, manual labourer, quarrying of sand and stone, etc. to support their family. Following table shows the number of daily wage earner in the respondent households of the six villages:

**Table 4.14**  
**Distribution of daily wage labourer**

Sl. No.	Category	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Carpenter	2 (18.18)	1 (33.33)	2 (22.22)	2 (33.33)	1 (11.11)	1 (20.0)	9 (20.93)
2	Mason	4 (36.36)	–	4 (44.44)	–	2 (22.22)	2 (40.0)	12 (27.91)
3	Quarry Worker	3 (27.27)	–	–	4 (66.66)	5 (55.55)	2 (40.0)	14 (32.55)
4	Manual labourer	2 (18.18)	2 (66.66)	3 (33.33)	–	1 (11.11)	–	8 (18.61)
Total		11	3	9	6	9	5	43

The table reveals that the number of daily wage earner is 43 (2.21% from the total population of the respondent household). The table further shows that 32.55% is engaged quarrying, while 27.91% in masonry work, 20.93% are engaged in and carpentry work and another 18.61 % as manual labourer respectively.

## Employment and Service

Some sections of the respondent are salaried job holders working in private sector. Regarding the distribution of villager working private venture such as teachers in private schools/colleges, nurses in private hospital and company workers in the sample villages the following table is formulated:

**Table 4.15**  
**Distribution of villagers into types of private services**

Sl. No.	Category	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Teacher in Private school/college	3 (17.64)	2 (100)	2 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	5 (38.46)	1 (50.0)	14 (8.69)
2	Nurses in Private Hospital	7 (41.17)	–	3 (37.5)	–	4 (30.76)	1 (50.0)	15 (32.61)
3	Company Workers	7 (41.17)	–	3 (37.5)	3 (75.0)	4 (30.76)	–	17 (36.95)
Total		17	2	8	4	13	2	46

So far private jobs are concerned, 46 members out of the six villages under study reported the presence of private jobholders in their villages. Of which, teachers in private schools constituted 8.69%, while 32.61% works as nurses in private hospitals and 36.95% as company workers outside the state.

The table further reveals that, in Motbung village nurses working in private hospital and company workers mostly outside the state have recorded the highest percentage with 41.17% and teachers in private schools teachers in private schools constitute 17.64% respectively. T.Moulbung village has only 2 teachers working in private schools. Chalva village has recorded 37.5 % concentration of company workers and nurse in private hospitals with 25.1 % teachers in private school. Village Govajang has only three persons working in private company and one private teacher. Again village Saikul has 30.76 % company workers and nurses working in private hospitals with 38.46% of teachers in private schools. Bolkot village has 1 person each working in private school and hospital outside the village i.e., 50 % from the grand total.

It has been thus observed that the Thadous at present are also engaged in different private salaried activities working within or outside the village, within the state or outside the state. While teacher in private school earn between 3000- 5000, those working as a nurse or private company outside the state earn a decent salary enough to help in the family economy.

### **Service in Government Sector**

Many Thadous of today mainly sub-urban areas are government job holders employed in different government department ranging from 4<sup>th</sup> grade to 1<sup>st</sup> grade. The number of government employee is much higher than other occupation besides agriculture. Motbung and Saikul has the highest concentration of government service holders among all the six villages where we can find one two or more member of one household employed in government offices while again some household are again without any job. Within these two villages, there existed a number of Government department such as ADC Office, high school and primary school, colleges, post office, police, primary health centre, electricity, telecom, forests etc. The following table shows the number of persons engaged in government jobs:

**Table 4.16  
Government service job**

Sl. No.	Category	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Male	21 (60.0)	1 (100)	13 (68.42)	4 (100)	18 (66.66)	2 (100)	59 (67.1)
2	Female	14 (40.0)	–	6 (31.57)	–	9 (33.33)	–	29 (32.95)
	Total	35	1	19	4	27	2	88

The above table shows that 88 members of the six villages under study are government job holders with 67.1% male while the remaining 32.95% constituted female.

Number of job holder is higher among male since most of female after completion of class XII got married or go for some professional course like nursing. Furthermore the reason for little or no concentration of government service holder in hill areas can be attributed to remoteness or non-existence of government department. Few people manage to get jobs but have shifted to other place due to the inconvenience of the place.

### **Entrepreneurial Job**

The most common business activity of the sample village includes vegetable vending, shop keeping, hotel running, logging and tailoring. The following table represents the number of those engage in small business activity in the six sample villages:

**Table 4.17**  
**Distribution of entrepreneurial job**

Sl. No.	Category	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Vegetable Vender	4 (20.0)	2 (40.0)	6 (42.85)	–	5 (27.77)	–	17 (25.37)
2	Shop Keeper	9 (45.0)	2 (40.0)	3 (21.42)	4 (80.0)	7 (38.88)	2 (40.0)	27 (40.29)
3	Butcher	2 (10.0)	–	–	–	1 (5.55)	–	3 (4.47)
4	Hotelier	2 (10.0)	–	2 (14.28)	1 (20.20)	3 (16.66)	1 (20.0)	9 (13.43)
5	Tailor	2 (10.0)	–	1 (7.14)	–	1 (5.55)	–	4 (5.97)
6	Logger	1 (5.0)	1 (20.0)	2 (14.28)	–	1 (5.55)	2 (40.0)	7 (10.44)
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>67</b>

The data reveals that of the total of 67 persons of the six villages 40.29 % is engaged in shop keeping, 25.37 % constitute vegetable vendors, 13.43% are engaged in hotel running, logger constitutes 10.44 %, while tailor and butchered constitutes 5.97 % and 4.47 % respectively.

The role of market plays an important role in shaping one's economy. Village Motbung and Saikul economy is much better than the other villages because both these two village have their own marketplace. Besides, they also have easy access to Imphal bazaar since both the village has well connected road to the capital. Village Bolkot, T.Moulbung, Govajang and Chalva located in the hill areas have no market within their village. They have to make use of the nearby market which is located at a distance of more than 5- 25 km.

### **Income**

Income is one of the important determinant of one's economy as well as social status of people in a society. But it is however very difficult to ascertain the income of the six villages as the people do not maintain any record of income nor they have any regular fixed monthly income except some salaried group. The following table however is formulated as per fieldwork:



**Table 4.18**  
**Monthly income level of respondent household**

Sl. No.	Category (Rs. per month)	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Less than 3000	12 (24.0)	29 (58.0)	18 (36.0)	26 (52.0)	17 (34.0)	22 (44.0)	124 (41.33)
2	3000-6000	5 (10.0)	19 (38.0)	7 (14.0)	16 (32.0)	6 (12.0)	13 (26.0)	66 (22.0)
3	6000-9000	7 (14.0)	–	4 (8.0)	2 (4.0)	4 (8.0)	12 (24.0)	29 (9.66)
4	9000-12000	3 (6.0)	–	4 (8.0)	–	2 (4.0)	1 (2.0)	10 (3.33)
	12000 or more	23 (46.0)	2 (4.0)	17 (34.0)	6 (12.0)	21 (42.0)	2 (4.0)	71 (23.66)
Total		50	50	50	50	50	50	300

The above table shows that, 41.33 % families have monthly income less than Rs.3000 which is below poverty line income while 23.66% families has monthly income of more than Rs.12000.

Thus the family income data of the sample households shows that most of the families are below poverty line except for few families who have regular government salaried jobs. The income figures of the households showed that more than 40 % families in the study villages have below poverty line income.

### **Standard of Living**

Living standard of a community or group is determined by the availability of various facilities like housing, sanitation, availability of drinking water, cooking style, medical, education, electricity, banks, postal services, transportation, communication etc. It is observed that the Thadous of Manipur lives very simple life. They mostly live in hill areas with a small number of household except only for few villages in the sub-urban

areas. The following analysis will provide us with a brief insight of the standard of living of the six villages.

### Housing Pattern

A decent housing pattern determines a person financial position in the society. Fieldwork in the six villages shows stark disparities. Following table shows the distribution of families by house type in the six villages:

**Table 4.19**  
**Distribution of family by type of house**

Sl. No.	House Type	Motbung	T. Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Mud Wall House with Thatch roof	5 (10.0)	15 (30.0)	6 (12.0)	9 (18.0)	7 (14.0)	13 (26.0)	55 (18.33)
2	Mud Wall House with Tin Roof	11 (22.0)	19 (38.0)	17 (34.0)	19 (38.0)	13 (26.0)	18 (36.0)	97 (32.33)
3	Mud plastered Bamboo Wall House with Thatch roof	1 (2.0)	7 (14.0)	5 (10.0)	6 (2.0)	2 (4.0)	11 (22.0)	32 (10.66)
4	Mud plastered Bamboo Wall House with Tin Roof	6 (12.0)	6 (12.0)	6 (12.0)	14 (2.08)	7 (14.0)	7 (14.0)	46 (15.33)
5	Wooden Wall House with Tin Roof	2 (4.0)	2 (4.0)	1 (2.0)	–	1 (2.0)	–	6 (2.0)
6	Brick Wall House	11 (22.0)	1 (2.0)	7 (14.0)	2 (4.0)	12 (24.0)	–	33 (11.0)
7	Stone Wall House	7 (14.0)	–	6 (12.0)	–	3 (6.0)	1 (2.0)	17 (5.66)
8	RCC	7 (14.0)	–	2 (4.0)	–	5 (10.0)	–	14 (4.66)
Total		50	50	50	50	50	50	300

The data show eight type of house in village: mud wall house with thatch roof (18.33 %), mud wall house with tin roof (32.33%), (iii) mud plastered bamboo wall house with thatch roof (10.66%), mud plastered bamboo all house with tin roof (15.33%), wooden wall house with tin roof (2.0 %), brick wall house (11.1%), stone wall house (5.66%) and RCC (4.66 per cent).

Thus housing pattern has undergone change. Earlier type of house made of bamboo houses with thatched roof have almost gone. Even in remote village we can now find houses with tin roof. But most of families live in kachcha houses made of mud plastered bamboo wall with tin roof or thatched roof or mud wall with tin roof or thatched roof or wooden wall house with tin roof. However, some families are also living in pucca houses like brick wall house and stone wall house and some with RCC.

### **Sanitary Facility**

To determined sanitary condition of the villages, the type of toilet used is shown which is divided into three types; open defecation, sanitary and non-sanitary latrine. The following table shows the types of latrine used in the villages:

**Table 4.20**  
**Distribution of family having toilet**

Sl. No.	House Type	Motbung	T. Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	S. Bolkot	Total
1	Open defecation	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2	Sanitary	34 (68.0)	21 (42.0)	31 (62.0)	24 (48.0)	32 (64.0)	19 (38.0)	159 (53.0)
3	Non-Sanitary	16 (32.0)	29 (58.0)	19 (38.0)	26 (52.0)	18 (36.0)	31 (62.0)	141 (47.0)
Total		50	50	50	50	50	50	300

The sanitation status of the sample villages shows that the villagers are conscious about sanitation. Of the total 300 households in the sample villages a little over half families (53 %) possess sanitary latrine, while over two fifth is with non-sanitary latrine (47 %). While the use of open space for defecation is not found. In almost all the villages sanitary latrines are more in number than non-sanitary one.

### **Healthcare Facility**

To determine the availability of health care facilities of the six villages he following table is formulated:

**Table.4.21  
Distribution and type of health facility**

Sl. No.	Category	Motbung	T.Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	PHC	1 (20.0)	–	–	–	1 (25.0)	–	2 (20.0)
2	Medicine Shop	4 (80.0)	–	1 (100)	–	3 (75.0)	–	8 (80.0)
Total		5		1		4		10

The table reveals that government medical facilities and business oriented medicine shop are available in some villages. But some villages have no access to any. This shows that health care facilities are not evenly distributed. The villages where medical facilities do not exist have to get access either within the nearby villages, block or within the district which may however be situated within 10km or even more.

## Drinking Water Facility

To determine the level/source of drinking water facilities in the sample villages, it is divided into PHE water, well, river/pond/stream.

**Table 4.22**  
**Drinking water facility**

Sl. No.	Drinking Water Facilities	Motbung	T. Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	PHE water Supply	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2	well within the premises	19 (38.0)	–	–	–	17 (34.0)	–	36 (12.0)
3	pond/river/tap	31 (62.0)	50 (100)	50 (100)	50 (100)	33 (66.0)	50 (100)	264 (88.0)
Total		50	50	50	50	50	50	300

The availability of drinking water facility in the sample villages shows that majority of the households (about 88%) use pond/river/stream as the prime source of water supply. A little over one-fifth (12 %) households have well within their home premise. Further none of the sample villages depend on government water supply for their daily used though it is found in the entire village.

Thus, though government water is available it is not dependable. The tank means for storing water are always empty, which shows the irregularity and thus undependable. Most of the families has well or taps water taken by the nearby stream rivers or pond for their daily used.

## Cooking Technology

The technology used for cooking purpose is one of the important criteria in determining the standard of living. Firewood is most commonly used. Following table shows the number of household with the type of cooking equipment in the six villages:

**Table 4.23**  
**Type of cooking technology in respondent household**

Sl. No.	Category	Motbung	T. Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Firewood	15 (30.0)	34 (68.0)	32 (64.0)	37 (74.0)	18 (36.0)	42 (84.0)	178 (59.33)
2	LPG	12 (24.0)	–	–	–	9 (18.0)	–	21 (7.0)
3	Firewood/ LPG	23 (46.0)	16 (32.0)	18 (36.0)	13 (26.0)	23 (46.0)	8 (26.0)	101 (33.66)
Total		50	50	50	25	50	50	300

The data shows that more than half of the households (59.33 %) used only firewood, single LPG user constituted only 7% while a little over one-third uses combination of LPG and firewood.

Thus, the villagers are using both the modern technology as well as firewood. Those in the hill areas mainly made used of firewood since they have no direct accessibility to LPG but to nearby forest. While those in the sub-urban areas made used of both LPG along with firewood. Since the price of firewood is high it is mostly used during winter season for cooking as well as for warming oneself.

## Modern Household Asset

Household asset here is used to include luxurious items and items that can produce economic value including mechanised vehicles that an individual/ household possessed.

In the six villages, 13 items are mentioned which includes generator, inverter, rice mill, television, refrigerator, washing machine, sofa, two wheeler, three wheeler and four wheeler. The following table shows the household assets in families of the six villages:

**Table 4.24**  
**Consummation of Household Asset**

Sl. No.	Category	Motbung	T. Moulbung	Chalva	Govajang	Saikul	Bolkot	Total
1	Generator	18 (8.69)	–	1 (1.13)	–	11 (6.35)	1 (2.38)	31 (5.1)
2	Inverter	17 (8.21)	6 (9.83)	7 (7.95)	–	19 (10.98)	2 (4.76)	51 (8.25)
3	Rice Mill	2 (0.96)	–	1 (1.13)	1 (2.12)	1 (0.57)	–	5 (0.81)
4	Television	39 (18.84)	19 (31.14)	32 (36.36)	17 (36.17)	32 (18.49)	21 (50.0)	160 (25.88)
5	Refrigerator	31 (14.97)	5 (8.19)	7 (7.95)	–	17 (9.82)	–	60 (9.71)
6	Washing Machine	27 (13.1)	–	3 (3.41)	–	31 (17.91)	–	61 (9.87)
7	Sofa	37 (17.87)	24 (39.34)	27 (30.68)	22 (46.81)	29 (16.76)	11 (26.19)	150 (24.27)
8	Two wheeler	11 (5.31)	3 (4.91)	3 (3.41)	2 (4.25)	12 (6.93)	3 (7.14)	34 (5.51)
9	Auto Rickshaw	6 (2.89)	2 (3.27)	3 (3.41)	2 (4.25)	4 (2.31)	–	17 (2.75)
10	Car	16 (7.72)	–	2 (2.27)	–	11 (6.35)	1 (2.38)	30 (4.85)
11	Community Buss	2 (0.96)	–	–	–	2 (1.15)	–	4 (0.64)
12	Mini Truck	2 (0.96)	2 (3.27)	2 (2.27)	2 (4.25)	4 (2.31)	2 (4.76)	14 (2.26)
13	Mini Jeep	1 (0.48)	–	–	1 (2.12)	–	1 (2.38)	3 (0.48)
		207	61	88	47	173	42	618

Thus, scenerio of thehouseholds asset which includes luxurious items as well as mechanised vehicles of the six village under study indicates that tmodernity has touched matterial culturet on the remote villages with respethe people even i.

### **Other Facility**

The availability of other facilities in the sample villages reveal that for majority of the villages in hill areas the nearest town and market are located at a distance of more than 25 km. The sub-urban areas have regular market within the village. The nearest bus stop for the hill areas is available within an average distance of 2-5 km and above. Again the nearest bank for all the sample villages is also located at a distance of 25-30 km and above. The rest of the facilities like general shops, post office, police outpost, school, etc. are available in the sub-urban areas while in the hill areas under study it is reported to be within a distance of 2-10 km for majority of the sample villages. There are no proper communication and transport facilities in most of the hill areas under study. While still there is not even electric facility in the selected remote village.

### **Conclusion**

Agriculture is the main occupation as well as primary economic activity of majority of Thadou in Manipur. From time antiquity, Thadou is found to retain its occupation even till now. Every Thadou household has its own cultivable-wet or dry-land except some families, who may not now alone depend upon agriculture. With regard to standard of living, most Thadou suffer from serious deprivation relating to employment, education, public health, sanitation, transport and communication including other modern amenities. To understand other important aspects of Thadou life, next chapter is going to discuss education profile of the community.