

**Chapter -5**

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC**

**CONDITIONS OF MAO**

**NAGA FARMERS**

## Chapter -5

### **Socio-Economic Conditions of Mao Naga Farmers**

The term socio-economic refers to a wide range of interrelated and diverse aspects relating to or involving a combination of social and economic features. It can be a combination of variables such as occupation, education, income, wealth, housing, sanitation, participation in community life as well as other social and cultural attitude and values, etc. “The socio-economic status was the position an individual occupies in a society with respect to the amount of cultural possession, effective income, material possession, prestige and social participation” (Chapin (1933), Rogers (1983), Akinola and Patel (1987), Tubbs (1988), Onwueme and Ugbor (1994), Akinbile (2007), and Marriage and Family Encyclopedia (2010) and Ovwigho, 2011). Ovwigho added that it implied the two dimensions of social and economic inequality. He also cited Goode’s (1974) note that it was the family that is ranked in the class structure and not the individual. The importance of socio-economic studies of an individual, group and community has been widely recognised. Socio-economic background of an individual indicates the status of an individual in the society. The development of a group/society is gauged from their socio-economic conditions. Nevertheless, socio-economic conditions are usually hard to identify and assess, as they are related to the human beings and their characteristics, which usually differ widely within the same community and from one community to another. And as socio-economic assessment deals with dynamic variables, no comprehensive list of areas of concern could be developed to fit socio-economic assessment. For instance, the socio-economic life of the Mao Naga which was seen in the light of homogeneity and egalitarianism has now begun to change. They are subject to the influence of changes in religion i.e from animism to Christianity; in education and occupation i.e. a shift from solely agricultural activities to non-agricultural activities; or in the nature of relationship with other communities or within their own.

### **5.1: Socio-Economic Conditions of Mao Nagas in the Past**

To mention a few about the social and economic life of Mao Naga farmers, their economic life was seen in the light of non-monetary aspect in the past. They were economically independent. Like most of the tribals in the North-Eastern States, the Mao farmers practiced shifting cultivation, a customary practice that they had been engaged in through generations. The other principal methods of cultivation by the Mao people include wet terrace cultivation, dry terrace cultivation and permanent garden cultivation. Details of the cultivation practices have been given in chapter 6. Their economy was self-sufficient or subsistence type in which there was assurance of subsistence livelihood to all persons in the community. It was basically only iron that had to be imported from the lowland or salt from other Naga villages that had access to brine- springs. They indulged in a complexity of economic subsistence and followed what is known as “marginal economy” because they practiced different types of occupation at one time for their livelihood. To eke out their subsistence, apart from cultivation they indulged in all kinds of occupation such as foraging, hunting, fishing, domestication of animals, horticulture and also were skillful in weaving and making artisan work with bamboo and wood such as spoons, plates, baskets, mats, wood carving and other required items. Among the Mao Naga people, women play an equally important role in agricultural activities. Infact, a woman’s role is seen as even more laborious because apart from the same amount of time engaged in tilling the land in the field or other work with the male members, it is the mother who carries tiffin for mid day meal and agricultural implements in a basket on her back with baby slung on her front on way to the field. On returning from the field, she carries firewood, agricultural implements and empty tiffin boxes in a basket on her back with the child in her front. Besides, it is generally she who performs domestic chores at home before going to the field and after returning from the field or taking merchandise for sale in the morning and evening.

Rice is their staple food and meat forms an important part of the daily food. Cereals and varieties of green vegetables are grown. They prepare fermented soya beans, dried mustard leaves, cabbage, and other leaves that can be eaten in dried season. Edible wild products from the jungle such as fruits, flowers, mushrooms, vegetables, tree worms, insects, and bees (hornets) form an important part of people’s

diet. They lived in confinement within themselves where the resources, goods and service transaction took place among themselves but without any social obloquy attaching to them. There existed within themselves a culturally social unit, with being an entrepreneur and worker as well as producer and consumer – all at the same time. The production and consumption among them was household based. Their simple and primitive method of cultivation ruled out large scale production that they could produce only rice in bulk. They emphasised on cooperative and collective endeavors and believed in the system of distribution in the form of barter system or mutual exchange. There absolutely was no selfish motive and the role of an incentive was fulfilled by a sense of mutual obligation, sharing and solidarity. Thus, the socio-economic conditions of every one were more or less homogenous. Since the society was characterised by such basic sense of equality and based on consensus in determining what is good for the whole, there absolutely was no distinction between the rich and the poor. A beggar or anyone in the society suffering from extreme poverty and destitution were unknown. Till today the society is well organised in such a manner that no member in the society is deprived from the basic requirements of food, clothing and shelter. Such reflections prove the words of Chacko factual, who pointed out that “there are many areas of tribal life which the mainstream non-tribals can profitably assimilate. This includes the notions of wealth, of gender, equality of sex and marriage and of principle of non-interference” (Chacko, 2005, p.16). Sharma, (2004) has also stated that “The classic example of such classlessness is found in a Naga kitchen where all sit and eat together including employees and servants” (p-207).

Similarly, the social life of the Mao Naga tribe revolved around various activities mostly agricultural. It provides a ground for common existence by sharing in common activities under the bonds of mutual aid. To substantiate a few vestige of their cooperative spirit which still exists in the present day situation; the conversion of the terraced rice fields from the hills and construction of houses may be mentioned. Till date, paddy fields of the Mao have been carved out from the hills only with the sole physical strength of man in digging and carrying the soil and stones out of the field area. It is understandable that to cut down a slope of a landscape in order to form a paddy field would require labours of about a thousand men and women. Therefore,

whenever any family is in need of constructing paddy fields, announcement will be made to the village to seek the help of the villagers. On the selected day, the whole villagers come forward to put their workforce together. For the day, the family in turns feed everyone in the field. In a similar manner, the houses of Mao are constructed. All the village people come together to help in the construction of the house while the owner feeds them for the day. This is because; the traditional houses of the Mao Naga are generally very big when compared to the houses of other tribals in the North-East like the Khasis, Garos and the Bodos. They are constructed with very big pillar hewn out of very big trees. Such construction of house is never possible without the help of many people. Besides, the existence of the requisite household asset like very big mortar (for pounding paddy or rice for baking Naga cake and rice beer) curved out of huge log found in many homes till today is also an evidence of great physical strength of many people and co-operative work. A reciprocal system practiced among the Mao farmers called *ava kocho* is not just about helping self by helping each other but a source of great entertainment and perfect social life. In case of deaths or sicknesses or if any other such ill-fated circumstances happen to a household of a farmer, the relatives, neighbors and villagers lend a helping hand to the bereaved family by working in their fields as social work, free of cost. It has been a practice amongst the Mao farmers that whosoever family completes the paddy plantation early render free service to the field neighbours or relatives to complete. Till today, it is an obligatory practice that whenever anybody dies in the village, the whole villagers give moral support to the family by forbidding themselves from performing any kind of agricultural work. During the mourning period of the deceased family, no loud music will be played or no children will play around the locality. They come to the house of the decease to sing hymns, read Bible and recite prayers. Youth form groups to sleep in the mourning house for many days. In this manner, the contemporary Mao society continues to be enriched by their rich socio-cultural life. Community feasts of Mao are the major features of all festivals. They are celebrated with great enthusiasm. People gather at a common place wearing colorful traditional dresses and ornaments to feast, sing, and dance. As all the Mao people were agriculturist in olden days, most of their festivals are connected with agriculture. Some festivals are held before the seeds are sown, some before harvesting

and some after to rejoice over good harvest. In olden times, festivals were also celebrated after being victorious in war. During festivals people do not work in their own fields. Everybody join hands together in collective work, cleaning village surroundings, footpaths and ponds/spring. Sacrificial ceremonies are performed during festivals. People also pray to god to bless their crops. Above and beyond, social ceremonies are observed at every stages of each life: birth of a child, marriage of a community couple/member and death of the community member.

Mao farmers used to play various types of indigenous leisure games, sports and music which all indicate that they could have such entertainment only because of richness and availability of time. The fact that every grown up boys and girls was bound to partake in *Morung* and the dormitories system are the signs of great unity and sociability. Boys in groups could visit the girls' dormitories to feast-rite and enjoy the company of each other. The present-day youth still find themselves unable to distort of such deeply rooted system of entertainment that they continue to live up with the *morung* and dormitories like of system by forming groups of the same age to feast rite and party during festivals though they do or do not sleep together. Social celebrations like *Chiivii Kovii and Zhoso Mozii* (feast of merits) make us known of the richness of the people in the community and the existence of a socialistic and classless society. Lokho (2004) writes that according to Mao tradition, sacrifices are performed following the birth of a child, recovery from sickness, harvesting plentiful crops and livestock. The people of the village are asked by the family performing the sacrifice to feast with the family and to observe holiday from work on their behalf. The family will kill many animals for meat and call people for feasting. Towards the end of the day, portions of meat are also distributed to the families of the village. It consists of a chunk each for all the members of the family to whom a meat portion is given. Such distribution of meat per individual of the entire village is called *Chiivii Kovii*. And *Zhoso-Mozii* as a feast of sharing the wealth by the rich people with the entire village people/community. It is done by feeding the whole community with the best of food and drink. During such celebration, every visitor will eat and drink as much as he can and is given a chunk of meat at the time of departure. The celebration may last for few days and each day, an attempt is made to call as many people as there are in the village. The family hosting the feast *Zhoso-Mozii* has to maintain the

spirit of the feats for one whole year. The meat has to last for the whole year and their wine barrel cannot be empty for even a day during this one year. The family has to keep praying throughout the year. On an appointed day, the village people are called to help him erect a mound of stones in his own memory. He may also find a big memory stone and erect it at some auspicious place near the village. After completion of the raising of the memory stone and mound in the village, the family can relax and experience satisfaction of having achieved the highest social status. At the end of the year, the man wears a special commemorative shawl of social recognition to which he becomes entitled. He can now wear that shawl in public places and meetings. His reputation spreads far and wide. He will be heard when he speaks. Shimray, (1985) remarks that “because of the culture of feast of merit none could be too rich” (p.126). Likewise **peace treaty** feast is done in a unified social manner. Any village can enter into a treaty by performing the treaty feast. To celebrate the feast, the elders of the concerned two villages will have to come to an agreement first. When agreement is concluded and agreed upon by the parties, one village will invite the villagers of the other village for celebration of the feast. After this celebration, the hosts of the first are also invited to their village for the same. During such celebration, the elders of both will discuss on no declaration of war between them and agreement on mutual assistance when necessity occurs (Ashuli, 1970s).

**Village purification ceremony** was an important means of social control which used to be performed symbolically once a year to purify the village. “On an appointed day, the chief will declare a genna and call for the purification ritual. An appointed person prepares a human figure with straw and old cloths outside the village. An announcement is made that families examine themselves and find out all people, spirits that caused them harm during the year. Each family prepares a list of theft committed against them, evil spirit that caused them sickness, etc. and prepares one lance (made of stick) for each of the culprits. On the appointed day, one person from the family goes near the scarecrow, hurling the lance at it and cursing the spirits of all those who caused harm to the family. From the number of participants and the number of sticks thrown, the people will judge whether their village is progressing, disciplined and living in harmony. Accordingly, the chief will promulgate laws to live better lives, work hard, fear God, promote harmony amongst people, etc. Prayers are

offered that God might forgive the wrongs of the inmates of the village and urges Him to improve the fortunes of the villagers. Among the Maos, the village chief is most faithful to the code of conduct and laws, as the village believes that God punishes people by creating calamities like famine and pestilence, if the Chief is found in the wrong”(Lokho, 2004). Laws are also formulated during the two types of feasts of merits known as *Mozii* and *Zhoso*. The feast of merit of *Mozii* is celebrated in the month of December and *Zhoso* in the month of March or April. At the time of such celebration, a representative from each clan will be represented and all the representatives will take their seats in the house of the feast of the host of owner. They will discuss problems, review the customary laws and adopt new customary laws when felt necessary. After the celebration, the headman of the village or an old man will come out and announce to the participants in the celebration of feast of merits about the reviewed laws (Ashuli, 1970s). Everybody is considered equal before law including the village headman who acts as the ritual head but does not possess any judicial powers. He functions his office according to the customary laws enacted by the common people and in the celebration of ceremonies, he is respected by giving the first place. Old people are also respected by giving meat and rice beer.

Today, under the influence of Christianity and modernity, traditional practices have been replaced with celebration of Christmas, Easter and New Year. But till today, elders in the society such as Church Chairman and Secretary are respected by giving the legs of cow or pig during Christmas. Like religion, a lot of transactional changes of both good and bad have taken place where there is a need to retain the good. In the past few decades, all the Mao people were farmers and lived in the villages only. Till today farmers continue to live in the villages. But with the passage of time, more and more people are moving towards urban areas for better life opportunities. They have made a fast progress in education that today a good number of them are employed in the government offices and other private companies which necessitate them to live outside Mao. And as the community is not endogamous, there are instances of marriage alliances with the neighboring tribes and other outsiders because of which many Mao women are married off to non-Mao and vice versa. Therefore, today the strong traditional structures of socio-economic life of the Mao Naga tribe have become challenged. Homogeneity and equality in the society which



made the Mao community egalitarian now begins to erode. Ideals of collective responsibility to maintain equality begins to give way to individualistic culture dividing the society into various strata of society. Ovwigho (2011) opines that though the terms socio-economic status and social stratification are often used interchangeably, it should be understood that social stratification is an empirical process which leads to assignment of socio-economic statuses to members of a society. According to the theory of Marxism, it is the “haves” and the “have nots”. The ‘haves’ here refers to the government officials, big business people, politicians and the ‘have nots’ are farmers, poor widows, aged and disabled members. The ‘haves’ continue to have more, with their acquired skills, knowledge, competence, authority, fame whereas the conditions of the ‘have nots’ deteriorates who, being devoid of knowledge, skills and expertise respond to survival only through their manual capacity of cultivation which limits their scope of any progress without external force.

## **5.2: Socio-Economic Status (SES) Scale**

Socio-Economic Status (SES) Scale is frequently used as a relative measure of people and communities. The outputs of socio-economic status scale are used as the key indicators for the growth and development of any backward society and are considered as an important variable in the planning of development programmes. Of late, the growing importance of quantification and rationalisation in social sciences has led to the formulation of scales for the measurement of social and economic phenomena. In rural areas, with growing importance of rural development programmes, the need to formulate a standard device to measure the important variable in rural families has assumed special significances. Thus, in order to understand and help social mobility of an individual/ community, measures of social rank are usually in terms of socio-economic status and indices. The study of socio-economic status is rather used immensely in various fields. Researchers use socio-economic indicators as an important ingredient to their research outcomes. It is used as a way to learn about the conditions of various stakeholders. Several studies have shown how socio-economic status influences values and norms of behaviour, social participation, pattern of leadership, motivation for improvement and communication

in a community. Researches of laboratory experimental and behavioral studies in the field of education and psychology show how one's socio-economic standing impacts one's behavior and attitudes. Sociologists often use socio-economic status as a means of predicting behavior (Dictionary.com). A wide range of similar knowledge of this kind of relationship has been utilised in better planning of programmes.

The present use of Socio-economic Status (SES) Scale is intended to assess the prevailing socio-economic conditions of Mao Naga farmers so as to characterise and identify their development. It has been adopted to stratify the category of the Mao farmers which can be considered as a tool to understand their conditions and evaluate changes resulting from development intervention programmes. The socio-economic life of Mao people revolves around agriculture. Every Mao household engages in agriculture in one way or the other. But it must also be noted that within agrarian class, exists types of agriculturists viz: households who solely depend on agriculture as its primary means for sustenance; and households who have supplementary means of livelihood besides agriculture. The present chapter is an attempt to study the socio-economic conditions of Mao farmers who depend on agriculture as its primary means for sustenance.

### **5.3: Usage of Socio-Economic Scale to Measure the Status of Mao Naga Farmers**

To classify the socio-economic status of the respondents, socio-economic status scale for rural areas primarily developed by Uday Pareek (1964) has been adopted with subject to preliminary test and slight modification as per the need of the study (See Box 5.1). Besides, the categorised suggestions about using the scale developed empirically by Public Health in India have been referred to a great extent. The standardised SES has been extensively used in different rural areas of India including tribal areas. This scale calls for information about a rural family on important aspects of socio-economic status of the family and consists of 9 main items such as (1) The general nature of the family; (2) Education; (3) The occupation (4) Category of farmers (5) Land; (6) Farm power; (7) Material possessions; (8) House; and (9) Social participation of the head of the family. A typical socio-economic measure asks about income but Uday Pareek's scale does not include income but instead asks about material possessions. Exclusion of income can be understood as devoiding of subjective measures. Socio-economic status measurement is an empirical procedure

which should be devoid of subjective measures. As Vaughn notes “The subject tends to irritate respondents and thus demoralise interviewers” (as cited in the Importance of Socio-economic Status in Research Design, 2012).

The modified SES with the score of each sub-item has been shown at Box 5.1. These have been found to be significant in indicating the socio-economic status of Mao Naga families. The items included in the scale are such that information can be easily collected about these. The items on income has been collected but not included in the scale. So that, as mentioned above, the data collected with the scale may be more valid. Only such items are included on which quantitative information can be objectively collected.

**Box-5.1: Socio-Economic Status Scale Along With the Score of the Sub-Items Under Each Item**

<p><b>(i) Family type</b>          (a) 1= nuclear    (b) 2= joint    (c) 3= extended</p> <p><b>(ii) Education (head of the household)</b>          (a) 0=illiterate          (b) 1=can read only          (c) 2 =can read and write          (d) 3 = primary          (e) 4= middle education          (f) 5=high school          (g) 6=graduate</p> <p><b>(iv) Category of farmers</b>          (a) 1- Agricultural labourer          (b) 2 - Marginal farmer          (c) 3 - Small farmer</p> <p><b>(vi) Farm Power (animals for ploughing)</b>          (a) 1=no draught animal          (b) 2= 1-2 draught animals          (c) 4=3-4 draught animals          (d) 6=5-6 draught animals or tractor</p> <p><b>(vii) Material possessions</b>          (a) 1=<b>Traditional household necessities and agricultural implements for production of food</b> ( barn for storing paddy/ mortar for pounding/ mat for drying paddy/ basket/ winnowing fan/ Dao/ mattock/ axe/ wooden hand rake, etc.)          (b) 2=<b>Modern household necessities</b> (improved agricultural implements/ sewing machine/ telephone/ LPG, etc.)          (c) 3=<b>Luxurious items</b> (television/ computer/ laptop/ generator/ washing machine/ refrigerator/ any four wheeler.</p> <p><b>(viii) Housing</b>          (a) 0= no house          (b) 1= hut          (c) 2= kutchha house          (d) 3= mixed house          (e) 4= pukka house          (f) 5= mansion</p>	<p><b>(iii) Occupation (head of the household)</b>          (a) 1= wage labourer          (b) 2= artisan          (c) 3= trader          (d) 4= petty employee          (e) 5= farmer          (f) 6= service (professional)</p> <p><b>(v) Land</b>          (a) 0=no land          (b) 1=&lt; 1 acre          (c) 2=1-2 acres          (d) 3=2-3 acres</p> <p><b>(ix) Social participation</b>          (a) 1= member of 1 organisation          (b) 2= member of &gt;1 org.          (c) 3= office bearer          (d) 4= wider public leader</p>
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Source: Udai Pareek’s SES(1964) adopted and modified

The items on the scale relate to both the head of the family and the family itself. Out of the 9 main items, the 3 items such as (1) Occupation; (2) Education; and (3); Social Participation are more or less related to the head of the family. Other items such as (4) Category of farmers; (5) Land; (6) Housing; (7) Farm Power; (8) Material Possession; and (9) Family Type are related to the family.

There is another basis of the arrangement of the items in the scale. The seven items such as Category of farmers; Occupation; Education; Social Participation; Land; Housing; and Farm Power are of graded scale type. This means that each item had been scaled from the lowest to the highest in which each sub-item represents a point on the scale. This also means that only one of the sub-items had been checked for a particular respondent under each of the mentioned seven items. On the other hand, Material Possession; and Family Type are additive in nature. In the type of family, (a) Nuclear and (b) Joint had been checked, in addition to (c) i.e extended therefore making the total check being three. But none of the household under study lives in an extended family.

The time taken in collecting information on the items of the scale ranged from 15 minutes to 25 minutes for each respondent. The information needed for checking on the scale was collected by simple interview. Since most of the head of the family are illiterate or semi-literate, self-administration of the scale was not done though most of the households have their children educated who could actually do the task. Therefore, the information was collected from the head of the family or from any other adult member of the family and in very exceptional cases from the neighbours/close relatives who have thorough knowledge about the respondents. After getting information from the respondents, the sub-items were marked by ticking the number of the sub-item concerned. Other information collected were exact number of bullocks, material possession, number of family members, name of organization of which the head of the family is a member or office holder, name of the office held, etc. Besides, significant observations during the interview have been noted and utilised at the time of data analysis.

## Respondents' Profile

### (i) Distribution of the Head of the Household by Sex

A household may be a one-person household or a multi-person household. A one-person household is a unit where a person lives by himself/herself and makes separate provision for his/her food, cooking or purchasing. A multi-person household is a group of two or more family members or relatives who live together and has a common arrangement for cooking and partaking food. According to Census of India 2011, a 'household' is usually a group of persons who normally live together and take their meals from a common kitchen unless the exigencies of work prevent any of them from doing so. And head of the household is a person who usually resides in the household and is acknowledged by the other members of the household as the head of the household. It refers to the eldest member in the family, not necessarily only the eldest male member. She or he is generally the person who bears the major responsibility for the maintenance of the household and takes decisions on behalf of the household. Table-5.1 shows the distribution of the head of the households of the respondents by sex.

**Table-5.1: Distribution of the Head of the Household by Sex**

<i>Head of the households by Sex</i>	<i>Number of households</i>	<i>%</i>
Female	78	26
Male	222	74
Total	300	100

From the above Table-5.1, we see that 74% of the households are headed by male and female headed households constitute only 26%. It is further found that female headed households comprise of widows, divorced/separated from the husband, unmarried, family without parents with female as the eldest child in the family and whose senior most male member in the family is entirely dependent because of old age or sickness.

## (ii) Head of the Household by Age Group

**Table-5.2: Distribution of the Head of the Household by Age Group**

<i>Age group of the head of the household</i>	<i>Female</i>		<i>Male</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
21-30	5	1.7	24	8.0	29	9.7
31-40	6	2.0	59	19.7	65	21.7
41-50	13	4.2	69	23.0	82	27.3
51-60	11	3.7	37	12.3	48	16.0
61-70	20	6.7	23	7.7	43	14.3
71+	23	7.7	10	3.3	33	11.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

We see from the above Table-5.2 that 31.4% of the head of the households are below 40 years of age whereas 68.6% of the head of the households are 41 years and above. The highest age group of the head of the households is 41-50 years with 27.3%. Similar trend is also seen where the highest age group of the male head household is found between 41-50 years with 23% but the age group of the highest female headed household is 71 and above. An interesting feature is that the number of male headed household keeps on decreasing with years after 51 years whereas the number of female headed households keeps on increasing with years after 51 years and above.

## (iii) Religion

In olden days, Mao people worshipped nature and offered sacrifices to good and evil spirits. While they believed in good spirits that brought life and prosperity, they also believed in evil spirits which brought death and destruction to men, animals and crops. But with the arrival of Christian missionaries, they received Christianity. It is said that when Christian missionaries proposed to initiate their mission in the Mao areas in 1894, they strongly opposed due to their deep rooted traditional belief. According to Singh and Maheo, (2010), the seed of Christianity were sown in the 1920s (p.204). Mao Nagas closely related to the Angamis and Chakhesangs of Nagaland – were the fourth major group in Manipur to receive Christianity (DOWNS, 1971). Presently, it can be said that if not 100%, 99% of the Mao people are Christians. All the respondents under study belong to Christianity.

They belong to different denominations majority of them are Baptist Christians and a sizeable amount of them belonging to Roman Catholic Church. Among the other, Christian denominations are the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church and Christian Revivalist Church. However, the acceptance of Christianity has not completely wiped out traditional animist beliefs and practices (Mathur, 1992). This view expressed for the Angami Naga can be applied to the Mao people as well. Important traditional festivals are celebrated, and gennas are observed by name among many Christians till today. Lotsüro (2000), another Mao Naga scholar, is of the opinion that Christianity among the Nagas is “nominal and external”.

**(iv) Age Wise Break-up of the Mao Farmers**

Mao farmers’ population under study is 1,560 with a male population of 751 and 809 female population. Age wise break up has been given at Table-5.3. The dependency group of children below 14 years amounts to 33.8%. Reproductive age range of 15-45 (World Health Organization WHO generally uses the age range of 15-45 years as reproductive age) constitutes around 50% of the respondents. The working age group of the population of 15-64 years forms 62.2% of the respondents. And the old age dependency group of above 65 years comprises of 4%.

**Table-5.3: Age Wise Break-up of the Mao Farmers of 300 Households**

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Upto 14	262	16.8	265	17	527	33.8
15-24	170	10.9	190	12.1	360	23.0
25-34	115	7.3	128	8.2	243	15.6
35-44	87	5.6	77	5.0	164	10.6
45-54	64	4.1	64	4.1	128	8.2
55-64	33	2.1	41	2.7	74	4.8
65& above	20	1.2	44	2.9	64	4.0
Total	751	48	809	52	1,560	100

**(v) Family Size of Mao Farmers**

The number of family members indicates the size of a family. The ideal family size proposed by the family planning of India is four. Its famous slogan “We

two, our two” (*Hum do, hamare do* in Hindi) meaning one family with two children is intended to reinforce the message of family planning thereby aiding population control. The size of Mao family is found to be large. As indicated at Table-5.4, 42.3% have a family size of upto 4 members; majority of the respondents i.e 52.7% have a family size of 5-9; and 5% have 10 or more members.

**Table-5.4: Family Size of Mao farmers**

<i>Family size</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
1 to 4	127	42.3
5 to 9	158	52.7
10& above	15	5.0
Total	300	100

#### 5.4: Components of Socio-Economic Status (SES) Scale

##### (i) Family Type

The family type refers to the family being nuclear or joint or extended. We see at Figure-5.1 that 89% of the respondents live in a nuclear family and only 11% live in a joint family. No respondent live in an extended family.

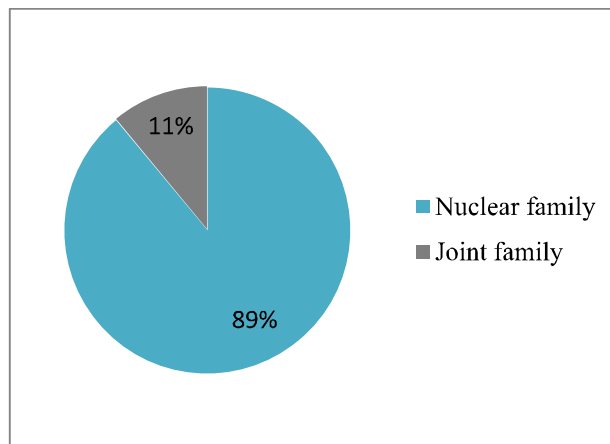


Fig.5.1: Family type of the Mao farmers

Further findings shows that the type of family do not deter the size of Mao family as we see at Table-5.5 that most joint family have a small size family of upto 4 members whereas most nuclear family members have 5 and above members. The biggest nuclear family size of the respondents is found to be 15.



**Table-5.5: Family Type with the Size of Family**

<i>Family size</i>	<i>Family type</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>No of respondents (nuclear family)</i>	<i>No. of respondents (joint family)</i>	
1 to 4	106 (35.3%)	21(7%)	127 (42.3%)
5 to 9	147 (49%)	11(3.7%)	158 (52.7%)
10& above	14 (4.7%)	1 (0.3%)	15(5%)
Total	267(89%)	33(11%)	300(100%)

**(ii) Education (Head of the Household)**

Prior to the arrival of Christianity, formal education had never been introduced to the Mao Naga. However, like many other tribes, informal education was imparted to them through a social youth organisation called as *lochiizii* for girls and *khruchiizii* for boys. Ashuli writes that such social youth organisations of Mao are equivalent to *Morungs* and dormitories. Shimray (1985) calls the *Morungs* and dormitories as the Naga Schools (p-193). *Lochiizii* and *khruchiizii* were the most esteemed establishment to impart self-sufficient device of social life and responsibilities to the youth more than from their parents. In such institutions, the age-old social mores and values, customs, folk songs, dances, folk tales, war techniques, past histories, traditions, responsibilities of an adult member in the society, disciplines, desirable habits, etc. were projected before the youth to prepare them to be manhood and womanhood. Dormitory system also provided a platform to gather young people under a single roof in times of fire breakage in the village, enemies/wild animals' attack or in times of other emergency. The importance of the dormitory system declined with the advent of modern educational institutions, penetration of Christianity and westernization in the 20th Century.

It is said that the American Baptist missionaries were the first to spread modern education in English in Manipur hills, using the Roman script. Their efforts helped to convert most of the hill inhabitants to Christianity. It is said that Rev. Pettigrew had started a Lower Primary School at Mao village as early as 1903 after setting up as school at Imphal in 1894 and Ukhrul in 1897. However, another writer-Mao (2012) also reveals about Rev. William

Pettigrew starting a school at Mao in 1892 which had to be closed down consequent to the outbreak of the First World War. Mao-Maram Higher Secondary School, Tadubi set up in 1954 is believed to be one of the first government schools if not the first government school in Mao. Till then, with no means of any transportation facilities, Mao people had to receive education from Imphal (105 kms away from Mao Gate Police Station) and Ukhrul (187 kms away from Mao Gate Police Station) because it is said that Mao-Manipur road was opened only in 1896-97. An early private school set up in Mao was Don Bosco School, Punanamei 1957 (initially known as St. Mary's school). Therefore, though formal educational system has been introduced in Manipur much later than many States of India, its literacy rate of 79.9% (male literacy rate of 86.5% and female literacy rate of 73.2%) is higher than the national average of 74% (82.1% for male and 65.5% for female) according to 2011 Census. Below Table-5.6 shows the literacy and educational level of the head of the households.

**Table-5.6: Educational Attainment of Head of the Household**

<i>Level of education</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Illiterate	147	49.0
Can read only	4	1.3
Can read and write	18	6.0
Primary	26	8.7
Middle education	39	13.0
High school	56	18.7
Graduate	10	3.3
Total	300	100

The educational level of the head of the family has been ascertained under sub-items as shown at Table-5.6. This relates to his highest formal academic qualification. In the case of person with no such qualifications the highest grade or class passed in school has been considered as the level of education or educational attainment. The findings indicate that 49 % of the households' heads are illiterate; 16% are upto primary level; 31.7% read upto high school; and only 3.3% studied upto graduation. There is no household head with Post Graduate among the Mao farmers.

Educational level		7-14 years		15-24		25-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65+		Grant total		Total	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Illiterate		2	5	9	22	12	42	19	39	24	55	20	34	15	43	101	240	341	
Literate Without Educational Level		-	-	2	2	3	2	4	7	6	3	3	4	1	1	19	19	38	
<b>Pre-Primary</b>																			
Reading		25	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	18	43	
Read upto		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	3	
<b>Primary (Standard I to V)</b>																			
Reading		82	98	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	82	98	180	
Read upto		4	-	10	12	11	13	10	8	8	4	-	2	2	45	39	84	84	
<b>Middle Education (Standard VI to VIII)</b>																			
Reading		51	32	13	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64	40	104	
Read upto		-	5	22	14	30	23	13	8	14	2	4	1	1	84	53	137	137	
<b>High School (Standard IX to X)</b>																			
Reading		1	3	33	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	55	90	
Read upto		-	-	8	11	28	17	17	11	9	-	3	-	1	66	39	105	105	
<b>Higher Secondary/Intermediate/Pre University</b>																			
Reading		-	-	25	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	27	52	
Read upto		-	-	15	19	17	22	12	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	46	44	89	
<b>Graduation/Degree</b>																			
Reading		-	-	20	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	16	36	
Read upto		-	-	9	5	11	7	10	1	1	-	-	-	-	31	13	44	44	
<b>Post Graduation</b>																			
Reading		-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	
Read upto		-	-	3	-	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	1	8	8	
<b>Ph.D</b>																			
Pursuing		-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
Completed		-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	
Total		165	161	170	190	115	128	87	77	64	64	33	41	20	44	654	705	1,359	

Note: The total population of Mao farmers from 300 households was 1,560 with a male population of 751 and female population of 809. Out of which 201 were below 7 years of age (97 male and 104 female). Therefore, a total of 1,359 were considered for effective literacy rate with 654 male (553 literates and 101 illiterates) and 705 female (465 literates and 240 illiterates). See Table-5.7.

According to Census 2011, a person aged 7 and above who can read and write with understanding in any language is considered as literate. A person who can only read but cannot write is not literate.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Effective Literacy Rate} &= \frac{(\text{Number of Literate persons aged 7 and above} \times 100)}{\text{Total population aged 7 and above}} \\ &= 1018 \times 100 \\ &= 1359 \\ &= 75\% \end{aligned}$$

The effective literacy rate for Mao family of 300 farmers is 75% (with a male literacy rate of 85.6% and female literacy rate of 66%). It is lower than the State's literacy rate of 79.9% (male literacy rate - 86.5% and female literacy rate - 73.2%). But, it is slightly higher than the national literacy rate of 74% (male literacy rate of 82.1% and female literacy rate of 65.5%) according to 2011 Census. Educationally, Manipur is at a different level of development when compared with the national level but within Manipur, particularly farmers under study, lag behind not only in terms of literacy rate but also in terms of quality and technical education. The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine. Table-5.7 shows that the rate of children enrolment in school is good as almost everyone is in school. However, few children i.e 2 boys and 5 girls are still left out of free and compulsory education. It is also noticed that in recent years there has been a significant rise in the rate of literacy especially female literacy and the pace of education is seen gradually increasing. Even if the parents are farmers and illiterate, it is a dream of every Mao parent to see their next generation educated and developed. The rate of school dropout is gradually diminishing. It is because in the present context, with educational facility, it is possible for more people to get education. Therefore, before decades, it is found that most of the Mao farmers were illiterate. However, looking at the increasing rate of literacy, it can be understood that within few decades all the Mao farmers will be literate.

It may be worth noting that universal coverage of education never reached the Mao people until the launching of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

in Senapati district during 2004-2005 (Senapati District Annual Administrative Report., 2007-2008, p-25). Today every recognised village of Mao has a government supported school though the quality of education remains far from satisfactory. Therefore, private schools are always preferred. One can see that all the affordable parents/guardians send their children only to private schools. So, those children whose parents are farmers with no regular income opt for government schools.

### **(iii) Occupation (Head of the Household)**

The occupation that the head of the family is occupied with most of the time is considered as his/her occupational status. The primary occupation of the head of the household is agriculture i.e. they are farmers but farming alone is not adequate to maintain the family. That is why many farmers have opted for other petty occupation as well together with agriculture such as labour, etc. The operational definitions of different types of occupations are described below.

- (a) Wage labourers** are those who are engaged by others on wages, or who are casual labourers. Usually they get wages on daily basis and maintain their families with the wages. They do not confine to a single occupation. Depending on the season and availability of work, they work as carpenters, agricultural labourers, quarry work, mending of road, and assistance to masons, etc. The average wage paid is not less than ₹ 250/- per day which is more than the minimum wage rate of MGNREGA. (During 2011, the minimum wage rate of MGNREGA for Senapati District was ₹ 126/- per day). Respondents without land or with limited land holding appear to come under this category. Because with no land or limited skills, only resource left for them is labour power. Marginal farmers whose major source of income is drawn from labour or whose part of occupation largely depends on hunting, fishing, bee keeping also comes under this category.
- (b) Artisans** according to the adopted SES are those who follow occupations like driver, blacksmith, carpenter, weavers, etc.
- (c) Traders** maintain shops and or are engaged in small business and trade activities.

(d) **Petty employees** include persons who are in employment not carrying big social status. It includes private school teachers, NGOs or religious workers. They also have meagre production of paddy and vegetables mostly for household use.

(e) **Farmers** are those who depend on agriculture as its prime means for support and subsistence.

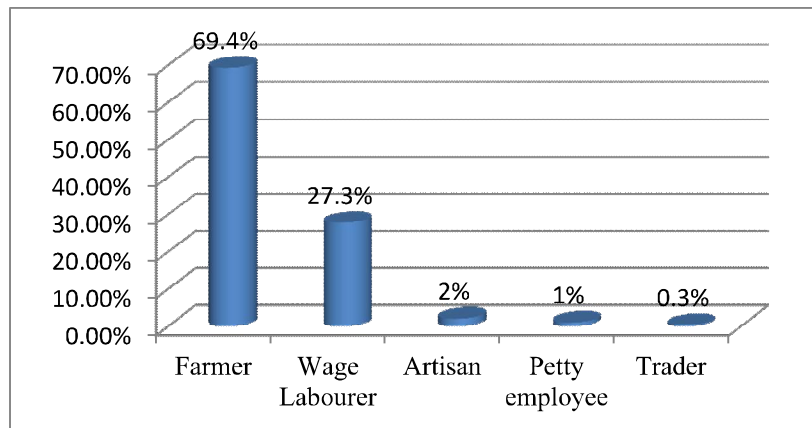
(f) **Service holders** occupy the highest social status but this category does not apply to the respondents.

Table-5.8 shows the occupation of the head of households:

**Table-5.8: Occupation (Head of the Household)**

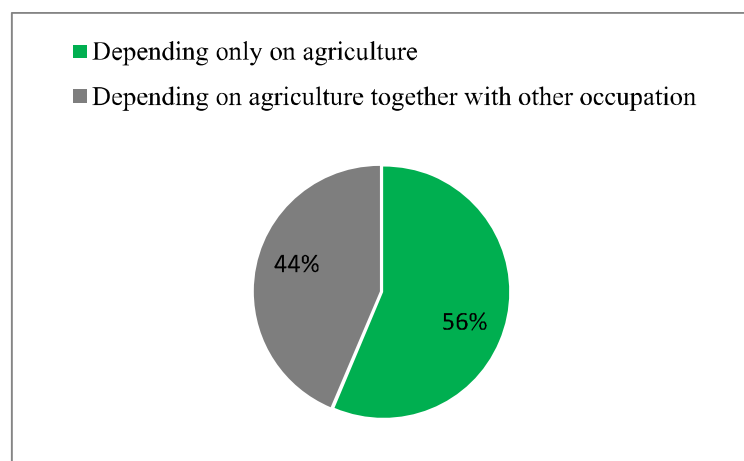
<i>Occupation</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Wage Labourers	82	27.3
Artisan	6	2.0
Trader	1	0.3
Petty employee	3	1.0
Farmer	208	69.4
Service holder	-	-
Total	300	100

The result of the occupation of the head of household at Table-5.8 shows that majority of the head of the households i.e 69.4% are farmers. 27.3% work as wage labourers most of the time as agriculture alone is not sufficient to maintain the family. It is also observed that the skills which every Mao farmer used to possess to weave their own baskets, weave own clothes, make tools for agricultural work such as plough-heads, spades, etc. have begun to defunct. This is due to change in occupational structure and easy availability of products from outside including customers' choice. Only 2% perform the work of artisan particularly bamboo baskets and mat-making. Only 0.3% is a trader and 1% is petty employee. Occupation of the head of the household has also been shown at Figure-5.2.



**Fig. 5.2:** Occupation of head of the household

Farming alone is not adequate to maintain the family. That is why many families opt for other petty occupation as well together with agriculture. Figure-5.3 shows that 56% the families are solely dependent on agriculture. And 44% of them depend on agriculture together with other occupation.



**Fig. 5.3:** Respondents' dependency on agriculture

#### **(iv) Category of Farmers**

Originally, under the adopted SES, there is an item called 'Caste' with its sub-items as the Scheduled, Lower, Artisan, Agricultural, Prestige and Dominant. The item of Caste does not apply in the study area because caste system does not exist in the Mao Naga society. Therefore, according to the suitability of the study area, the item 'Caste' had been replaced with 'Category of farmers'. Farmers can be generally categorised as landless waged agricultural workers, marginal, small, medium and large farmers. The category of Mao farmers is generally classified according to production of paddy and size of land holding. To classify the category of farmers more specifically, in the context of Mao farmers' conditions, they can be broadly

classified as (a) Agricultural labourer; (b) Marginal farmer; and (c) Small farmer.

**(a) *Agricultural Labourer***

There are many definitions of agricultural labourer. The First Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee (1950-55) defined Agricultural Labourer as those people who are engaged in raising crops on payment of wages. The Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee (1956-57) enlarged the distribution to include those who are engaged in other agricultural occupations like dairy, farming, horticulture, raising of live-stock, bees, poultry, etc. The first *Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee* (ALEC) used the concept of agricultural labour household. If half or more members of household have wage employment in agriculture, then, those households should be termed as agricultural labour household. The Second Committee (ALEC) submitted that to know whether a household is an agricultural labour household, we must examine its main source of income. If 50% or more of its income is derived as wages for work rendered in agriculture only, then it could be classed to agricultural labour household. According to the National Commission on Labour "an agricultural labourer is one who is basically unskilled and unorganised and has little for its livelihood, other than personal labour" (as cited in Padhi, 2007, p.24). Thus, from all these definitions, an operational term of agricultural labourer had been adopted for the SES study as "an individual/individual household with no individual or individual household land holding and whose maximum source of livelihood (cash or kind) is drawn by working for others".

**(b) *Marginal Farmer***

A marginal farmer is "a cultivator with a land holding of 1 hectare (2.5 acres) or less" (Agricultural Finance Corporation Ltd, p.62). This definition had been considered for the marginal category of farmers under the adopted SES. Some of the farmers under this category may be also drawing their highest source of income from labour work which is generally higher than production from own land but since they at least own some tiny bits of individual land, they have been designated under this category.



**(c) *Small Farmer***

The operational term of a small farmer is a cultivator with a land holding of 2 hectares (5 acres) or less as defined in the land ceiling legislation of the concerned State / UT (Agricultural Finance Corporation Ltd, p.62). This definition of small farmer holding land of between 2.5 acres to 5 acres has been adopted for the present study. This category of farmers may mostly work in its own land but partly, most of them also engage in labour work to supplement their income.

Classification of Mao farmers according to the above definitions show that 13.7% belong to the category of agricultural labourers, 79.3% belong to marginal farmers and 7% belong to the small farmers (See Table-5.9).

**Table-5.9: Category of Mao farmers**

<i>Category of farmer</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Agricultural labourer	41	13.7
Marginal farmer	238	79.3
Small farmer	21	7.0
Total	300	100

**(v) Land**

Land is a basic necessity of a farmer. Naga researchers like Christina (2006) and even others have already pointed that “there is no Naga without land”. Christina also writes that it is not necessarily an individual who owns land but the household; if not the household, the clan or village to which the household belongs. The difference between land owned by the household and the land owned by the clan/village/community is that, individual household if wishes can sell/mortgage/gift/gamble away the land belonging to him but the same cannot be done in case of a group land even if he belongs to the group. But any member of the clan or village can use the group land to cultivate or cut firewood for their own use.

Land here refers to the total area owned by the respondent i.e individual/individual household only and not included the land owned by the clan/community/village of the respondent (i.e group land). The categories (sub-items) of land mentioned indicate the range of land holding by Mao farmers. In the past, every individual household owned land apart from the group land but today we see in Table-5.10 that 13.7% of the respondents do

not own any individual agricultural land. 78.3% are marginal land holders of upto 2 acres; only 8% own land of 2-3 acres and no respondent owns a land of above 3 acres.

**Table-5.10: Ownership of Land by Mao Farmers**

<i>Land holding (in Acre)</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Landless	41	13.7
Upto 1	126	42.0
1 to 2	109	36.3
2 to 3	24	8.0
3 & above	-	-
Total	300	100

It may be noted that the land owned by the respondents as indicated in the sub-items have not been measured according to standardised land measuring acre system but according to the estimation given by the respondents. This is because there has neither been any systematic measurement of land in the study area, nor any written records they have. Therefore, the worth of the land is usually determined according to location and productive capacity. The terraced fields land is measured by production of paddy according to a traditional basket/barn. The gardens, *jhum* fields and forest land is likewise measured in terms of number of plots and sometimes according to the relative amount of firewood production or potato in terms of *maunds* (40 Kg = 1 *maund*) or cost of vegetables incurred from the land. Therefore, the actual production of paddy by the household from its owned land had been obtained and later converted into standard measurement (see chapter 6).

<b>Box 5.2: Table of Measurement of Land</b>	
A. Square Measurement	
1 Hectare = 2.5 Acres	
1 Acre = 40 Gunthas	
1 Guntha = 121 sq.yards = 101.17 sq.metres	
1 Guntha = 33 ft. x 33 ft. = 1089 sq.feet	
1 Acre = 4840 sq.yards	
1 Acre = 4067.23 sq.metres	
1 Acre = 43,560 sq.feet	
1 sq. yard = 0.8361 sq.metre	
1 sq. metre = 1.190 sq.yards	
1 sq. yard = 9 sq. feet	
1 sq. metre = 10.76 sq.feet	
B. Lines Measurement	
1 Kilometre = 0.621 mile	
1 Mile = 1.609 Kilometres	
1 Kilometre = 1000 metres	
1 Metre = 39.37 feet	
Source: <a href="http://www.accommodationtimes.com/real-estate-news/headlines/table-of-measurement-of-land/#sthash.o7n9Iphy.dpuf">http://www.accommodationtimes.com/real-estate-news/headlines/table-of-measurement-of-land/#sthash.o7n9Iphy.dpuf</a>	

**(vi) Farm Power(Animals for Ploughing)**

Amongst livestock, the draught animals i.e buffaloes are the main sources of farm power. Other prestige animals (like camel, elephant, horse, etc.) are not at all found in the study area. Weightage has been given according to the number of buffaloes possessed by the households as shown at Table-5.11. Of course, the tractor occupies the most important item in this category. But tractors cannot be used in the agricultural fields of the study area because of small land holdings and hilly difficult terrain. But, tillers are used for ploughing but no respondent under the study owns a tiller.

**Table-5.11: Farm Power of the Mao Farmers (Animals for Ploughing)**

<i>Farm power</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
No draught animal	226	75.3
1-2 draught animals	50	16.7
3-4 draught animals	20	6.7
5-6 draught animals	4	1.3
Total	300	100

We see from Table-5.11 that 75.3% of the respondents do not own any draught animal. Therefore, when required they have to hire other's animals to plough the fields. When some cannot afford to pay money for the service of draught animals, they have to work in the fields of the owners during plantation or weeding season. 16.7% own 1-2 draught animals; and 8% own 3 or more draught animals. Those who own draught animals do not have to hire

others' animals to plough their paddy fields. They infact receive income by lending their animals to plough other's fields as well as from meat when slaughtered.

**(vii) Material Possessions**

Material style of life, which is important for socio-economic status, has also been found to be associated with material possessions. Significant possessions of the households have been grouped into 3 sub-items. Possession of each items have been ascertained and scored accordingly.

- (a) The first sub-item consists of traditional and basic household necessities and agricultural implements for production of food such as barn for storing paddy, mortar for pounding, mat for drying paddy, basket, fan for winnow the husk, hoe, dao, mattock, axe, wooden hand rake, etc. These are mostly locally available and accessible items.
- (b) The second sub-item consists of modern household necessities such as mobile phone, improved agricultural implements, sewing machine, LPG, etc.
- (c) The third sub-item consists of luxurious items such as television, computer, laptop, generator, washing machine, refrigerator, any four wheeler, etc.

**Table-5.12: Material Possession of the Mao Farmers**

<i>Material Possession</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Traditional household necessities and agricultural implements for production of food	300	100
Modern household necessities	237	79
Luxurious items	54	18

In modes of other material possessions as seen at Table-5.12, all the respondents possess one item or the other of traditional household necessities and agricultural implements for production of food. While 79% of the respondents possess atleast one important item of modern household necessities such as mobile telephone, LPG, etc., but more than 80% of the respondents do not possess any luxurious items such as television, etc. The use of washing machine and refrigerator by any household is nil. Thus, the

possessions of household assets reflect the economic status of the respondents' i.e the better off family can afford to have better amenities.

**(viii) Housing**

Housing is one of the basic necessities of human life next to food and clothing. Housing is an important indicator to assess the position of a household. Depending on the quality of materials used for construction, the types of houses that the respondents live in can be characterised with more or less uniformity type of houses: Pukka, Kutcha and a mixed of pukka and katcha. The information in this category is related to the main house where the family resides. The information about the house is significant in terms of the type of the house the respondents own and reside. For the purpose of calculating, no score is given to those respondents who do not own a house.

- (a) The lowest score is for a hut. A hut is usually a one-room construction of mud walls with a thatched roof.
- (b) The construction of houses with more than one room and using the mud walls and floor with tin roof has been put under the category of *kutcha* house.
- (c) The houses in which some cement or mortar plastering, of flooring or roofing is used have been classified as the *mixed* house.
- (d) A house which is built with a foundation, using stone or bricks with mortar and cement, and having a concrete or a stone laid roof have been classified as *pukka* house.
- (e) A large house, containing more than 5 rooms and having more than one storey have been classified as mansion but no respondent owns a mansion type of house.

**Table-5.13: House Types of the Mao Farmers**

<i>Types of house</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
No house	6	2.0
Hut	-	-
Kutcha house	289	96.4
Mixed house	1	0.3
Pukka house	4	1.3
Total	300	100

At Table-5.13, we see that only 1.3% of the respondents live in a pukka house made of bricks, cement and a tin or stone laid roof. Majority (96.4%) own and live in their own kutcha houses. This type of house is made of mostly locally available materials such as wood for pillar, bamboo and mud for the wall, mud flooring and Galvanised Iron Sheets for the roof. Houses of very few respondents have thatch roof not for the whole rooms but for the kitchen. Only few respondents (2%) do not have their own houses. It indicates the emergence of housing crisis amongst the farmers. Some of them are temporarily sheltered in houses that belong to their respective relatives or village people with the consent of the owners and some also live in rented house. Such situation on the one hand reflects that there exists the endurance of the traditional practices to help the poor through mutual understanding. On the other, it can be said that house renting system or landlord system which was non-existent in the past among the Mao Nagas has begun to emerge. Such state of new affairs put the poor at the receiving end of insecurity.

**(ix) Social Participation**

To measure the social participation of Mao farmers according to the standard scale, we can say that different types of social participation exist especially for leaders like chairman, secretary at Mao Union including village heads and authority members at village level. And at the whole Mao union there are chairman, secretary and other executive members. Such leaders are not hereditary but are elected by the people for their experience, wisdom and concern for common welfare.

Under the scale, there are four levels of social participation: membership of one organization; membership of more than one organization; holding office in one or more organization; and exercising wider leadership. One of those has been checked in the case of each respondent. All these relate to the head of the family

- (a) If the head of the family is a member of any social, political, voluntary organization, it has been noted down, and the category has been checked accordingly.
- (b) Multiple memberships, i.e. membership of more than one organization have been given one higher score.

- (c) If the respondent holds any office in one or more organizations like village/church Chairman/Secretary, it has been noted down and scored accordingly.
- (d) If the respondent exercises wider leadership, he is given the highest score for this. For example: he may be a member or associated at the Mao level, block or district level or might have held such other high position that his status can be in a wider area beyond his own village.

**Table-5.14: Social Participation by the Mao Farmers**

<i>Social participation</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Member of 01 organisation	53	17.7
Member of >1org	2	0.6
Office bearer	2	0.7
Wider public leader	4	1.3
Not a member at all	239	79.7
Total	300	100

The study on the social participation of the head of the household at Table-5.14 indicates that 17.7% of the households' heads are members in either social or political or voluntary organization; 0.6% of them are engaged in more than one organisation; 0.7% of them hold office in one or more organizations like village or church Chairman/Secretary; and only 1.3% of them are involved in wider leadership beyond his own village. The rest 79.7% are formally neither member of any organisation nor holding any office. But, by religion they are all attached to their religious institutions and by customary, they all belong to a clan group.

### **5.5: Class Category of the Respondents**

Having explained all the items of the scale with its sub-items, the classification of Mao farmers on the basis of score from using SES scale has been interpreted. Using the SES, if the score of the respondent is above 43, the respondent is considered as belonging to the Upper Class. Similarly, if the respondent's score is between 33- 42, it is considered as belonging to Upper-middle Class. The score range of between 24- 32 is considered as belonging to Middle Class; the score range between 13-23 is considered as belonging to Lower-middle class; and below 13 score is regarded as belonging to Lower Class. Therefore, after all the information about the respondents on the different nine categories has been collected and scored, the total score received

of each of the family has been calculated accordingly. The score at Table-5.15 shows against the sub-items score for the family indicating the overall socio-economic status. Measuring the socio-economic conditions of Mao Naga farmers from the above SES, it can be concluded that all the Mao farmers belong to three categories viz: Middle Class; Lower-middle Class; and Lower Class. 5 % belong to middle class. 95% are below middle class (77% lower middle class & 18% lower class).

**Table-5.15: Explanation of the Different Class Categories of Mao Farmers**

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Scores on the Scale</i>	<i>No. of households</i>
A	Upper Class	Above 43	Nil
B	Upper-middle Class	33-42	Nil
C	Middle Class	24-32	15(5%)
D	Lower-middle Class	13-23	231(77%)
E	Lower Class	Below 13	54(18%)
Total			300(100%)

Similar to the findings of this class classification of the Mao farmers, Aier (2006) classified Naga society into the Lower Class, The Middle Class and the Upper Class (pp.113-117). Though Aier did not adopt any models of ranking to classify the classes of society, the Lower Class type of people classified by Aier had been found to be similar with findings using SES. Thus, we get a general idea that farmers not only among the Mao but in the whole Naga society mostly occupy the lowest rung of the society unlike farmers in other parts of India like Punjab, Haryana, etc. who are well to do economically.

### **5.6: Other Parameters to Assess the Socio-Economic Conditions of Mao Farmers**

As already mentioned above that a typical socio-economic measure asks about income but Uday Pareek's scale (1964) does not include income but instead asks about material possession. However, income is an important indicator of a socio-economic study. Along with income other important factors like sanitation, cooking fuel, etc. are also indicators of socio-economic status. Hence, these factors have also been assessed in the study. They are as follows:

#### **(i) Income of the Respondents**

Income is an important indicator to study socio-economic conditions. Income here refers to the total monetary income received by all the members of the family from all the sources. The imputed values of home grown rice, vegetables, firewood and other freely received items or whichever is not



bought is not included in the income calculated. In Manipur (rural) BPL families are identified to those who have the monthly income of all sources of the families' income of below ₹ 2,890.55/- (Planning Commission, Government of India, Report November 2009). Considering the income of the Mao farmers according to this definition, it is seen at Table-5.16 that 42% of Mao farmers are living Below Poverty Line.

**Table-5.16: Total Household Income of the Respondents**

<i>Income group</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Below ₹ 2,890.55/-	126	42
Above ₹ 2,890.55/-	174	58
Total	300	100

Respondents with higher income have atleast one children being employed in the government or private sector. Respondents possessing vehicle for public transportation are also found to be among higher income group. Besides, higher income groups include households involving in small business, or those with traditional skills. Among other groups, households who receive interest by lending money, who own a small apiary/bee yard and who regularly work as wage earners have also been found to be Above Poverty Line. Households whose source of income is only agriculture have been found to be in the low income groups. Their petty income meets the immediate needs of the households that do not take them beyond little savings.

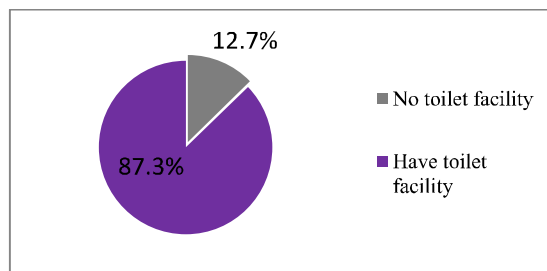
**(ii) Sanitation**

Sanitation is another important indicator that reflects the quality of life. It is a basic necessity and vital for healthy environment. It is also understood as a yardstick to socio-economic development of a nation as our honorable Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India has also said “the day every one of us gets a toilet to use, I shall know that our country has reached the pinnacle of progress”.

**Table-5.17: Toilet Facility and Types of Toilet of the Mao Farmers**

<i>Toilet facility and types of toilet</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
No toilet	38	12.7
Pukka toilet constructed by self	5	1.7
Pukka toilet constructed by IFAD	97	32.3
Kutchha toilet	160	53.3
Total	300	100

We see at Table-5.17 that a huge chunk of households lack access to appropriate sanitation facilities. Out of 34% pukka toilet users, 32.3% are constructed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Majority (53.3%) use kutcha toilet out of which around 7% of them received materials for toilet construction under Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC). (See Table-7.30 under chapter 7). Only less than 2% constructed pukka toilet by themselves. And the percentage of respondents without toilet is 12.7% as shown at Figure-5.4.



**Fig.5.4:** Toilet facility of the Mao farmers

Some respondents do not have toilet because they have no space or resources to construct. Some are underway of constructing. They use other's toilet or use nearby jungle for ablution. The use of open fields for open defecation in and around the village not only pollutes the environment but results health hazards especially worm infection among children and women.

### (iii) Cooking Fuel

Table-5.18 shows that firewood is commonly and highly used as cooking fuel by Mao farmers (78.3%). Liquefied Petroleum (L.P.) gas with firewood is used by 19.7% of the respondents and only 2% use electricity along with L.P gas and firewood for cooking. No household use kerosene. From this data, it can also be understood that uncontrolled felling of trees go on every year in many hectares of forest land leading to undesirable deforestation and climate change in the area.

**Table-5.18: Fuel Used for Cooking by Mao Farmers**

<i>Types of fuel used for cooking</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
wood	235	78.3
Wood and L.P gas	59	19.7
Wood, L.P gas & electricity	6	2.0
Total	300	100

#### (iv) Power Supply

Power supply is an essential requisite for the lighting; charge of cell phone battery; usage of tape recorder, television, etc. Except Robve Solephe village (6.7%), electricity connection for domestic use only has reached all the respondents in all the villages under the study area. In place of electricity, all the households of Robve Solephe have been provided with solar light for lighting and charging but in no way an effective substitute of electricity. Only 2 villages (Mao Karong and Taphou Pudunamei) i.e 13.3% get a regular supply of power (95-100%) if not affected by the wind/rain. For the rest of the villages (80%), electric supply is available only for a few hours in a day (See Table-5.19). For one day, they get for 9 hours in a day (5-7 AM, 12-2 PM and 5-10 PM). And, for the next alternate day, they get for 6 hours (5-7 AM, 12-2 PM and 10 PM to 12 AM). Timing of supply sometimes differs in some village but the duration of supply provided is the same. This means, they get supply only for 25-30% of the time. Therefore, it is not reliable to use electricity for irrigation, powerlooms and other industries. Farmers prefer power supply of electricity from 5.30-8.30 pm to cook, eat dinner or let their children study. That is why; farmers consider that they do not get supply every alternate day as they hardly need/use electricity in the morning, afternoon and mid-night.

**Table-5.19: Electricity Facility for Mao Farmers**

<i>Electric facility</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
No electricity	20	6.7
Electricity with regular supply (95-100%)	40	13.3
Electricity with irregular supply (25-30%)	240	80.0
Total	300	100

#### (v) Source of Drinking Water

All the villages under study have access to the supply of pipe borne water brought to the villages from the fountains. Therefore, pipe borne water has been major household source of drinking water. But during winter, due to insufficient supply, villagers also need to fetch water from the natural spring and pond. Every village enjoys the availability of spring water which is naturally discharged underground water. Pond water sources are usually found at the lower part of the village. So, during rainy season, such water sources

easily get contaminated. When such water is used for drinking without taking care, it causes cough, cholera, dysentery, typhoid, etc. In recent years, people have begun to save and limit the use of water due to scarcity. Some of the natural springs/ponds have been maintained, but only very few springs have been improved where many can be captured and improved as well. Brine-springs are found in some villages of Mao and are fetched for cooking purpose.

In brief, it can be said that the early Mao Naga society revealed an element of egalitarian social conditions. However, the components of the socio-economic scale reveal a low standard of social and economic conditions of farmers within the Mao society as 95% are below middle class. 96.4% of the respondents live in a kutcha house while 2% do not even own a house and more than 80% do not own any luxurious items at home. Respondents without toilet facility stand at 12.6% which reflects the poor quality of life. All the villages have access to pipe borne water and electricity (without regular supply) has reached all the villages except one. Their income level show that 42% belong to BPL. And although farmers, more than 2/3 do not own any source of farm power. Universal coverage of education reached them with the launching of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) during 2004-2005. Looking at the trend of education, there has been a significant rise in the rate of literacy especially female literacy. The study also indicates lower social participation of the farmers as more than 2/3 are neither member of any organization nor holding any office. With sudden growth rate of population, the study also reveals an emergence of landless and marginal farmers. While a large number of farmers have been found to be engaging in agricultural labour work, the existence of artisans have been found to be at stake if not extinct.

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