

KOHIMA COLLEGE

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PROJECT ON:

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TOPIC ÷ A REPORT ON FOREST CONSERVATION (IN
WOKHA DISTRICT, 797111,
NAGALAND,

SUBMITTED TO

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SEC - C

5th SEMESTER

DATE OF SUBMISSION - 30-9-2021

Topic

Project 30 marks.

A report on forest conservation in
WOKHA DISTRICT.

The research study was carried out with the main objectives to study the status of forest cover, to classify the types of forest resources and to study the utilization and management patterns of forest resources in Wokha district of Nagaland. The impacts of modernization and human activities on forest leading to problems of forest resources management were also examined so as to suggest suitable and improved management plans.

The WOKHA district is the home of the Lotha Nagas and is located between $26^{\circ}01'$ to $26^{\circ}8'$ North latitude and $94^{\circ}18'$ to $94^{\circ}27'$ East longitudes covering a geographical area of 1628 Sq.km.

The topography of the district is characterized by hill ranges and ridges dissected by seasonal streams with some valleys.

Purposive sampling method was adopted for the selection of eighteen sample villages to carry out the research study. Interviews and focused group discussions were conducted based on structured questionnaires which were complemented by observation made in the field.

The forest resources utilized in the study area were of two types, namely Timber and non-timber forest products (NTFPs).

Apart from the use of wood for construction, making furniture and other household items, wood was mostly used as fuel for making fire because of the fact that the use of other sources as fuel for making fire was very less.

The non-timber forest products consisted of leafy vegetables, meat of wild animals and birds, aquatic life forms, shoots, stems, flowers, fruits, insects, fungi, bamboo, rock, sand and mineral resources.

The traditional and socio-economic life of the people in the study area was also studied as these factors also influence the utilization of forest resources in many ways. The study showed that the pattern of utilization of forest resources varied depending on the location and proximity from the main commercial centre, i.e., Wokha town.

It was observed that forest resources were mostly utilized for commercial purposes in the sample villages located near the main commercial centre which were facilitated by access to markets and good transportation and communication facilities whereas the absence of the same had led to the utilization of the forest resources mostly for domestic purpose in the villages located far from the main town.

Since no study of this kind have been done before, the present study have brought to light the prevailing conditions with regard to the utilization and management of forest resources in WOKHA DISTRICT and thus this study can be the base for various researches, academicians, students, NGOs, Administrators and policy makers.

WOKHA DISTRICT : A GEOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

An understanding of the geography of the study area is of tremendous value while studying the utilization and management of forest resources. The various geographical aspects covering physical and human geography are of utmost importance as they are inter-related and influence each other in various ways. The physical aspects such as the topography, soil, climate, vegetation, drainage, etc. of a place or a region determine the activities and ways of life of the people living within the area on one hand and on the other hand the human geographical aspects such as population, economy, social and cultural on the other hand. This helps us to understand how the people adapt and adjust to their physical environment.

The FOREST COVER AND TYPES

Forest is a complex ecosystem composed of communities of plants, animals and micro-organisms interacting with each other and their environment which consists of abiotic components such as soil, water, air, etc. The forest offered them food in the form of plants, animals and water. Throughout the history of mankind till the modern times the role played by forest and its resources had changed dramatically, initially forest provided man with just some basic amenities which were required by him for his survival but with the passing of time the human beings gained more knowledge and became very innovative.

The Wokha district is dominated by rural inhabitants by rural inhabitants which accounts for about 78.95% of the total population according to the 2011 provisional census.

For a district with such a large composition of rural population, it is obvious the most of the people are engaged in agriculture and occupation associated with the forest or in one way or the other such as hunting, fishing, logging, quarrying etc. Thus, in order to wisely utilize and manage the services provided by the forest resources for our benefit and development it is imperative to study, understand and acknowledge the importance of the forest that surrounds us.

Status of Forest in Nagaland.

In the hills and in mountainous regions two third or about 66% of the areas under such cover needs to be maintained in order to prevent erosion and land degradation and to ensure the stability of fragile eco-system.

Types of forest in Nokha district

Classifying the types of forest is important for acquiring useful information on the composition of vegetation, types of forest resources, ecological assessment, socio-economic and intensity of dependence of the people on forest resources, effective planning and management, etc. It is not easy to classify the types of forests as the forest types differ which are determined by various factors such as latitude, temperature, rainfall patterns, soil composition and human activity.

Though Nokha district represents only about 9.82% of the total area of Nagaland yet because of its unique geographical location and a wide range of physiographic terrains and climate it has wide varieties of forest types.

pattern and land ownership.

Because of the unique and traditional land holding system like that of the other tribes in other districts of Nagaland most of the land in Wokha district is owned by the clan, family, individuals or village and as such the land owned by the State government is very negligible. The ownership of land during the forefather's time was acquired at the time of establishing the village.

UTILIZATION OF FOREST RESOURCES

The rural population in Nokha district accounting for 78.96 percent of the total population substantiates the fact that the majority of the people in the study area are forest dwellers and are dependent on the forest for their survival and livelihood in one way or the other apart from practising the traditional method of agriculture popularly known as Jhum or shifting cultivation.

Consumable forest resources:

The products obtained from the forests, which are utilized by the people for their sustenance and livelihood falls under the category of consumable forest resources, these products are used very frequently and they play an important role in the economy of the people, as they are the ~~some~~ source of monetary income and food for bulk of the rural population.

Types of forest resources and utilization:

A wide range of forest resources are utilized in various ways both of for domestic as well as commercial purposes. Forest resources are being utilized for food, timber for construction, firewood, fodder, recreation and agriculture practice, watershed protection, soil protection and fertility, gas exchange and carbon storage, habitat and protection of biodiversity and species, etc. which are benefiting the local population to a great extent. Two types of forest resources identified in the study area are consumable and non-consumable. The consumable forest resources includes both flora and fauna species which are harvested from the forest and are utilized by the people for their benefit and livelihood throughout many generations influencing their way of life thereby, rendering the consumable forest resources important from the economic as well as cultural prospective.

Non-timber forest products:

Non-timber forest products have satisfied human needs since long time back and are currently receiving focused attention from ethno-botanists, conservationists, policy makers and breeders, as they embody the goals of conservation, development and production activities.

Non Timber Forest Products are the materials of biological origin, derived from forest or any land under similar use, excluding wood in all its forms. They are either living or non-living items like plants or animals or their parts like boulders, sand, gravel, honey etc.

Like any other tribal people, the Lothas of Wokha district are also dependent on the non-timber forest products for their day to day needs. It was observed that the bulk of the people living in the village used many that were obtained from the forest which were also supplied to the towns nearby.

especially those villages located within the vicinity of the towns, thus, rendering the non-timber forest products an important source of monetary income for the rural population.

Utilization of the non-timber forest products is not a new thing as the utilization of these products have been practised since time immemorial. Keeping in mind the importance of traditional aspect of the ways of utilization of the non-timber forest products for studying the patterns of

utilizations, during the interviews informations were obtained from the patterns of utilization, during the interviews informations were obtained from the respondents on how the forefathers utilized the NTFPs and also the changes that have taken place in the present times with regard to the utilization of the NTFPs.

CONCLUSION:

The research study on utilization and management patterns of forest resources in Wokha district of Nagaland was undertaken with the main objectives to study the status of forest cover, classify the types of forest resources, to study the utilization patterns of forest resources by the people, to do study of area and the various forest related concerns that have evolved because of the activities of the people have been discussed in the preceding chapters.

The research study is based on extensive field survey and first hand interaction with the people at the grass root level as well as review of related literature and since no research study of this kind have been conducted in the study area as well as in Nagaland before the outcome of the study can be a base for the research scholars, academicians, students, NGOs, Administrators and policy makers.

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