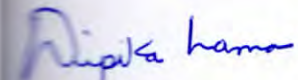


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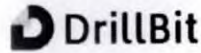
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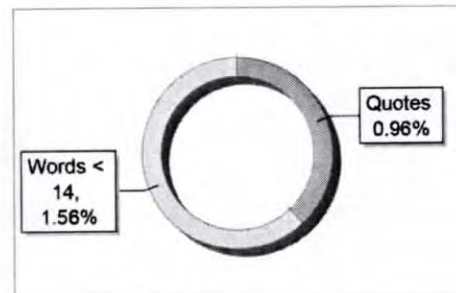
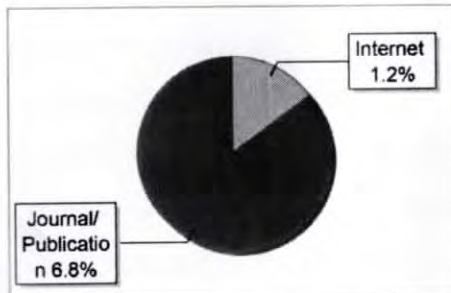
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PREFACE

Tribals have been living in the forest for centuries and have shaped their life and determined the kind of society they presently have. The socio-economic life of the tribals is so intimately interconnected with the forest that their customs, religious practices, folklore and livelihood are all influenced by it. Tribal way of life revolved around the forest and B.K. Roy Burman, a famous Anthropologist (1982) said that "Directly or indirectly in the tribal mind forest symbolizes life in its manifold manifestations i.e. home, worship, food, employment, income and entire gamut. Tribes can, in fact, be regarded as children of the forest". The well-being of the tribal community, as that of any other community, depends importantly on the status of their women. Women in the tribal society are more important than women in any other social group because the tribal women work harder and the family economy and management depend on them. Their contribution to the welfare of the family and society is praiseworthy.

In brief, the study highlights the role and status of tribal women especially Sherpa and Tamang women residing in the forest villages of Darjeeling Hills. The study aims to determine the role played by these tribal women in uplifting their socio-economic status. The study also focuses on the role of Sherpa and Tamang women in the conservation of the forest village environment. The main questions which need to be dealt with are: whether these women are successful in uplifting their status as well as their family and society and whatever roles they are assigned, whether they are successful in accomplishing it or not. The data were collected with the help of stratified random sampling from 300 respondents. The study is based on a comparative study and accordingly, 150 Sherpa and 150 Tamang women respondents were selected from 15 forest villages situated in Darjeeling hills in North Bengal. The respondents were selected based on the availability of these tribal women in the selected forest villages.

It can be assured that the present study provides some information about the Sherpa and Tamang women residing in forest villages of Darjeeling hills which obviously will help in carrying out further investigation.

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Dipika Lama

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATREE -Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment

BCWD-Backward Class Welfare Department

CHAI- Community Health and Advancement Initiative

EDC- Eco-Development Committee

F.V- Forest Village

FAO-Food and Agriculture Organization

FD-Forest Department

FDG- Focus Group Discussion

FHHs- Female- Headed Households

FPC- Forest Protection Committee

FRA- Forest Rights Act

FRA- Forest Rights Act

GAD-Gender and Development

GOI- Government of India

GTA- Gorkhaland Territorial Administration

HFVO- Himalayan Forest Villagers Organisation

HOF-Head of the Family

ICDS- Integrated Child Development Scheme

IISWBM-Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management

JFM-Joint Forest Management

LAMPS - Large Sized Agricultural Multipurpose Society

LIC -Life Insurance Corporation

LPG-Liquefied Petroleum Gas

MFP- Minor Forest Produce

NGOs- Non- Governmental Organizations

NOC- No Objection Certificate

NTFPs- Non Timber Forest Products

PESA -Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas

QOL- Quality of Life

SDB-Sherpa Development Board

SERVE -Save the Environment and Regenerate Vital Employment

SHG- Self Help Group

SSK- Sishu Siksha Abhiyan

ST-Scheduled Tribe

TDB-Tamang Development Board

TRIFED -Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India

UNDP- United Nations Development Programme

WED- Women, Environment and Development

WGEEP- Western Ghats Ecology Experts Panel

WHO- World Health Organizations

WID-Women in Development

GLOSSARY

Vanyajati - forest communities

Vanavasi - inhabitants of forests

Pahari - hill dwellers

Adimjati - primitive communities

Adivasi - first settlers

Janjati - folk people

Anusuchit Janjati - scheduled tribes

Jaher Than - sacred Groves

Vanadevatas - forest deities

Chullah - a small earthen or brick stove

Chaang- Local beer

Rungpo - foreigners or inhabitants of the borderlands of Tibet

Dzo - property

Rhui/Ru - clan among Sherpas and Tamangs

Kokomendo - sacred flower

Ban pooja - forest worship

Nag pooja - snake worship

Dasai - The biggest Hindu festival

Sonam Lochar - Tamang New Year

Kul-Puja - a form of ancestor worship

Bhumesthan - places of worship

Nadhung - Forest in Sherpa language

Kanchi buri - second wife

Haat - weekly market

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