

## Temporal Changes of Socio-Economic Factors in Chena Cultivation of the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka

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Chena cultivation holds a prominent place in Sri Lankan agriculture, due to its prevalence over long periods of time. At present, the traditional Chena cultivation is undergoing drastic changes. Though there were specific cultivation patterns, labor use, water use and land use in the traditional Chena cultivation, they have undergone various changes due to population increase, developments, and socio-economic transitions. Therefore, the aim of this study was to examine the alternations that have occurred in the selected geographical area. Pahala Mattala Grama Niladari division of Lunugamwehera Divisional Secretariat in Southern province has been chosen as the study area and it consists of 278 families; of which 96% is engaged in Chena cultivation. As the sample, 45 of families have been selected by using random sampling method and data was collected through questionnaires, interviews and direct observations. Data was analyzed qualitatively and simple statistical parameters were used. It was evident through results that the traditional cultivation practices have changed temporally due to the socio-economic transitions. The findings revealed that the temporal socio-economic changes in the selected study area has resulted in significant changes in the factors such as patterns of land use, labor and cultivation in Chena traditions and has affected the changes in the life style of the farmers. In conclusion, it can be emphasised that changes need to be made to aspects such as permanent land use instead of alternative land use, hired labor instead of collective labor and crop specification instead of crop diversification.

**Keywords:** Chena cultivation, socio-economic, temporal