

**TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF  
DALIT COMMUNITY:**

**A Case Study of Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika Lamjung District**

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Historically, Nepal is a landlocked country located in South Asia. With an area of 147,181 square kilometer however Central Bureau of Statistics is provided data on hundreds cast/ethnicity based on 2011 population census. Moreover, National Dalit commission is listed 22 cultural groups within the Dalits. The number of counted in the 2011 population census was 26,620,809 (2 crore, 66 lakhs) this number among them 12,927,431 were male and 13,693,378 were female indicates the female dominance if the Dalit population which is the 13.6 percent of the total population but researchers and Dalit organizations assess that this number could be above 20 per cent – or as many as five million people. The Kami is found highest (30.41percent) and followed by Damai/Dholi (13.25 percent) among the Dalit. The result also shown that 8 percent of the Dalit are residing the urban indicates that most of Dalits are residing in the rural part of country (CBS, 2011)

The Constitution of Nepal 2072 B.S. regards Nepal as multi-lingual, multi cultural, sector, inclusive and absolutely democratic country with majority 80.62 (CBS, 2016) of Hindu people Nepal over centuries has developed a rigid hierarchal society based on “high” and “low”, “touchable” and “untouchable”, “pure” and “impure” castes and Dalits occupy the bottom of Hindu commission has defined Dalit community as racial community who are most backward in social, economic, educational and political as well as religious sector due to racial discrimination and untouchability, and are abstained from enjoying the human dignity and social justice.

Nepal is a multilingual, multi cultural and multi-ethnic country. When go back through out the Nepalese history it can be found syncretism of various cultures, languages, religions castes and creeds. It is a model of society, in the real sense; Nepal is a garden of all castes and ethnic groups. The constitution of 1990 of Nepal explicitly has declared Nepal as a Hindu Kingdom and on the other hand, allows practising traditional, religions ways in the form of religious impartiality.

The people of Nepal are socially segmented along the lines of castes, sub castes and ethnic, sub ethnic groups. The member of such groups can not be stated with sufficient precision, partly because it is dependent on the definition employed, while the 1991 census recorded more than 6 such groups and 20 major languages. The National Ethnic Groups Development Committee has identified 61 such groups and the National Language Policy Advocacy Commission lists 60 living languages (HDR 1998). The national census 1991 provoked that Dalit communities represent 15.57 percent of the total population in the country. Dalits, however, believe that, they were under enumerated for several reasons. It was estimated that the Dalit community constitutes about 20 percent of the total population of the country, i.e. the present population is 4.8 million (Sagar, 2010).

In Nepal three major occupational castes: The Kami, Damai and Sarki are traditionally artisans. These three castes have their specific occupation in the village. Damais or the tailors sew and mend the clothes of the village people. Sarkis are the leather worker. Sarkis make and repair the shoes. The Kamis are the blacksmiths and goldsmiths of the villages. The blacksmiths forge and repair all kinds of farm instruments and households utensils. Of all the untouchable castes, the Kamis occupy higher position within the traditional caste hierarchy. The Kami (black smith) and the Damai (Tailors and Musician) for example, regard bodily contact with each others as polluting. The same is true of sexual intercourse between the Kami and Damai. A 'Kami' does not allow, a Damai to enter his house and would never accept 'Bhat' (rice) or pani (water) from him (Hofer, 2010). Kami people as occupational caste are scattered all over Nepal along with the settlement of the higher castes.

Kamis are the members of the occupational and untouchable caste groups locally called by different names such as Bishwakarmas and Sunars, Lohars, Sobh, Snehi, etc. (Parajuli, 2011). Most of the sub castes groups of Kamis were found living in the study area.

Nepal is a country of multi religious and multi-ethnic society. Nepal is small in size but rich in bio as well as cultural diversity. Thus, socio-cultural systems operate as complex procedure of transition from traditional ritual to modern socio-economic context.

The “caste system” of Nepal is basically related in Hindu religion. Historically, Nepali society holds deep roots in the Hindu “caste system” with hierarchy of different groups of people within the system. Dalits or untouchables is one of the groups of people within this Hindu “caste system” whose social, economic, health condition, new political status etc are lowest in comparison to other groups in Nepal. The “caste system” division and the practice of untouchables reaches to the Arayan invasion that begun even before 1500 B.C (NHDR, 2004). The definition of caste and classification is not clear in Nepal, the census of 1991 has recorded 60 castes and ethnic groups. Instead of these National Ethnic Development Committee (NEGC) has identified 65 groups and 103 such groups in Census of 2011 A.D.

In Nepal, there are four main racial groups: Caucasians, Mongolian, Dravidian and Proto-Austroliad. Caucasians are further divided into four Varnas, (Brahmian, Kshyatriya, Vaisha and Sudra) and each of these varana is further divided into many caste groups. King Jayasthiti Malla (1380-1394) has formulated the “caste system” in Kathmandu valley by dividing the Newar (large indigenous people) population in 64 caste groups each occupying a distinct functional basis in ancestry or strictly religious ascription, but denude from the nature of work performed (HDHR, 2004).

Dalit is one of the socially and economically discriminated and excluded group of the society. Their socio-economic status is in vulnerable condition. Basically, their traditional skills and knowledge are displaced due to the existing practice, caste base discrimination and untouchability. They are stigmatized by the society despite of their decent occupation. The process of social exclusion was imposed by the cultural and religious norms and values upon than; evade of political and legal scheme and starved economic situation.

“Caste system” is the foundation of social organization. The National Dalit Commission (NDC) defines Dalits as those communities who, virtue of caste based discrimination and untouchability, are most backward in social, economic, education, political and religious spheres and are deprived of human dignity and social justice (UNDP, 2004). The literal meaning of Dalit is ‘the person who is suppressed’. Dalit originated in India and were later extended to Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lank and elsewhere (Bhattachan, et al. 2003) in the context of South Asia. Dalit is a common

term used to address culturally, economically and socially marginalized individuals or communities.

Kami is the largest group in Nepal in terms of population and size among Dalit. According to the census 2011, the population size of Kami was 895,951 or 3.9 percent of the total population (CBS, 2011). They are distributed throughout the kingdom but their number is more (population size with more than 1,000) in 39 Districts. Jajarkot, Achham and Dailekh districts have the highest percentage of Kami. Kamies are blacksmith, who are along with their traditional caste occupation of making and repairing iron tools, also practise farming occupation. Within the Kami group, there is another more professional group called Sunar (gold and silver smith) who makes jewellery and repair them. Historically, they were economically dependent on their client for livelihood and used to provide their service to their clients, through the traditional Jajamani system such as Bali or Khan. This system exists in many parts of Nepal even today.

Damai is the second largest Dalit group according to the size of population. The population size of Damai was 390,305 or 1.7 percent of the total population of Nepal (CBS, 2011). Like the Kamies, they are distributed throughout the kingdom but their heavy concentration (more than 10,000 population) is noted in six Districts (Accham, Kailali, Jhapa, Kaski, Surkhet and Dang). The Damai or tailors practice their traditional occupation of tailoring along with agriculture. But they are less engaged in agriculture because of their selectable profession such as tailoring in the market. In addition, they play musical instruments in various services to their clients in the traditional celebration or *Baldighare* system in an annual contact mainly in the village area. The literacy rate of Damai is one of the highest among the Dalit groups (28.2%) but only few of them have jobs in government offices, universities and corporations. In the Hill, Dalit community are treated lower in hierarchical structure than Kami and Sarki. They marry within their group only according to their social norms and values

Sarki is the third largest group. According to the census (2011) the sarkies' total population was 318,989 or 1.4 percent (CBS, 2011) of total population of Nepal. Sarkies are concentrated heavily (more than 10,00 population) only in four districts (Gorkha, Dhading, Baglung and Kaski) (CBS, 2011). Traditionally, Sarkies are cobblers, whose occupation is the leather work. Such as hiding the body of dead

animals and making the leather goods such as shoes, bags, etc. Along with their traditional occupation of leatherwork, they also practise agriculture. A number of sarki families are also engaged in Haliya system where the male members of the family becomes hali (plough man) and other family members support to agricultural activities in the family of high caste people. They marry within their own society with their traditional values and systems. The present study is livelihood condition of Dalit community in Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika ward no 4 and 5 Lamjung districta.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Nepali society has deep-rooted Hindu “caste system” with group hierarchy. The bottom strategy of Dalits’ or untouchables’ whose social, economic, health status, political and demographic conditions are lowest compared to other groups. However, there exists a serious problem of definition of Dalits. There is no problem for majority of the caste/ethnic groups with their traditional occupations. But a few groups are in the edge with dilemma of whether or not to be included in Dalits.

In the history of Nepal, the king and the governments have proclaimed the hierarchy of caste/ ethnic groups and even in recent years government has identified a number of caste ethnic groups of Dalit. In this process of either defining category of social class or identifying some groups as Dalit, some are included and excluded in the list that obviously creates the problem of definition.

Dalits are still not allowed to enter in religions, education, health and common natural resources at all with the same degree as the members of upper caste do. So they are excluded and deprived of the basic socio-economic infrastructure and are living in vulnerable condition. The historical effect of the “caste system” exists because the families belong to upper castes tend to priority on education and state jobs. While the lower castes are still confined to menial labor over generations. These types of discrimination and exclusion ramify from the cultural to political to economic spheres. So they are in the state of economically, socially impoverished. Their socio-economic conditions are vulnerable by transition from the modern market economy as well as growing consumerism. A cycle of discrimination thus belongs to cultural and religious taboos and culminates in their reinforcement, perpetuating and depending both Dalit poverty and inherent stigma of inferiority (UNDP, 2004).

Educational attainment and health status remains below the national average of Dalits. Various circle of poverty plays the major role for economic hardship and low access to natural resources and control over them. The major occupation of Hill Dalits is rooted to their ancestral occupation. Their occupation has not been modernized so they are unable to compete with new technology and cheap products (clothes, shoes, utensils, etc) available in the nearby market (Bhattachan et al., 2003).

The transition from traditional to modern market economy has marginalized their knowledge, skills and products. The modern market plays important role in failure of Dalit occupation. There is a steep rise in the price of necessities required good food and drop wage and price of their native production. In this way, the Dalits are coinable to concept the capitalist economy. So, the capitalist economy has been playing a vital role to displace them from their ancestral occupation. On the other hand, due to the lack of endowment (land, capital, technology, skill) they are unable to improve their traditional industries (cloth, shoes, utensils). Therefore, their native and small scale productions are replaced by the mass industrial product and new technology. Many Dalits have abandoned their traditional occupation because some Dalits look down upon them, if they pursue them. Also many Dalits devoid of skills can not take up new professions which further precipitate their situation because of the lack of modernization of traditional occupation. In Nepal, most of the Dalits are poor and landless. Abandonment and losing their traditional occupation is the main causes of their unemployment. Due to the lack of employment opportunities most of them went to India to be involved as construction workers, agricultural laborers, and domestic servants. Dalit plays the most important role for the development of socio-economic transformation. In spite of these, Dalit's vulnerability creates many social problems. Still they are deprived of the ways of development and exclusion from the main stream of development activities. These questions rise related to Dalits and their socio-economic condition as well as ancestral occupation.

- i) What are the existing socio-economic condition of Dalit in study area?
- ii) What are the livelihood strategies of Dalit of study area?
- iii) What are the major factors those changes livelihood strategies of Dalit?
- iv) What are they doing to support their livelihood in the present context?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to examine the livelihood condition of dalit. The specific objectives are as follows

1. To assess the ancestral occupation of Dalit
2. To find out the changing pattern of occupation of dalit.
3. To analyze the impact of new occupation adaptation on their livelihood

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This research focus highlights mainly on livelihood condition of Dalit Community of Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika. This study focuses on changing pattern of traditional occupation and its effects. Very few studies have been done on the changing attitude of ancestral occupation of Dalit.

It has been researched through national and international data that Nepalese Dalits have been marginalized in various ways. They have been economically, socially, politically and educationally marginalized. In this context the condition and occupation of the Dalit of Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika has been found to have been deteriorating according to the field survey done in 2016 of the livelihood of Dalit. It has also been found that the new generation of Dalit people has also been cultivating the feelings of hatred towards their traditional occupation day by day. The intention of young generation to leave their parental occupation has also been seen due to very low income in their traditional occupation and the inability to deal with and undertake the skyrocketing market price. There is a huge gulf between their income and the prevailing market price. Because of these reasons, this topic has been considered the subject of this research in order to explore the what lies in the traditional occupation that discourage young generation to uphold its spirit.

The following are the significance of the study:

1. There is a need to investigate the main problems of Dalit occupation.

2. This study will help the planners, NGO's and INGOs, for making policy plan and programme to improve conductions of Dalit communities.
3. This study will help to pay attention how they are adopting themselves in the market economy situation by changing their existing pattern.

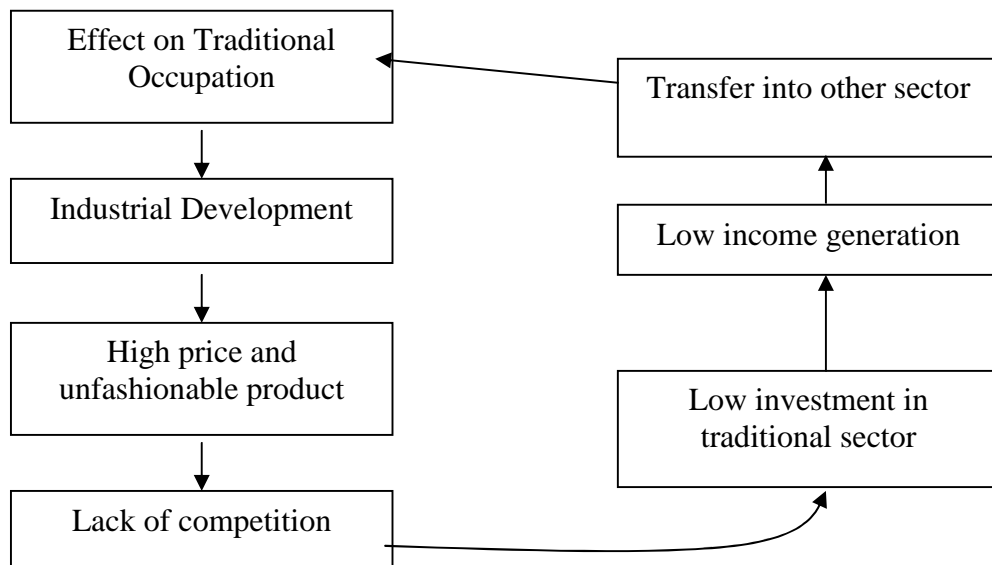
### **1.5 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The traditional occupation of Dalits such as tailoring, scavenging, shoe making and the like have been undergoing the various effects of industrial development at present. For instance; the shoe making occupation of the Dalits has been revolutionized by the industrial advancement in terms of fashion and factory products. Similarly, the occupation of tailoring by dalits has also been facing the same sort of challenge in terms of modern, scientific, technical and fashionable production. On the other hand, the industrial progress has also influenced the sector of gold-smith, silver-smith, black-smith and iron-smith as well. For instance, the production of material instruments like axe, sickle, knife on the one hand and the production of jewels on the other hand have undergone the massive change in the same fashion.

Besides, the industrial development has also caused high price and unfashionable products in traditional sector. The cheap fashionable, and modern products produced by the modern, scientific machines have replaced the value of the traditional products in terms of price and quality, either. As a result, the traditional occupation is less attractive and therefore diminishing. The matter of competition between the traditional occupation and the industrial occupation has therefore become tough and almost impossible.

Likewise, the lack of competition has triggered the low investment in traditional sector. Because of this reason, the traditional occupation has become less productive. As the productivity has been put into crisis, the low income generation has come through. The young generation of people has been attracted towards modern, scientific and technological sectors in terms of income and progress. As a result, people involved in traditional occupation have been transferring themselves into other sectors of occupation.

### Conceptual Frame work



### 1.6 Limitation of the Study

As every study is followed by some limitations, this study is also not free from limitations. The limitation of the study can be pointed as follows:

- ) Both primary as well as secondary data will be used.
- ) The views of respondents are collected only from Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika, Lamjung among three Dalit (Kami, Damai and Sarki) only.
- ) This study focuses on their ancestral occupation.

### 1.7 Organization of the Study

The study has been organized into five main chapters in order to make the study more specific, precise and impressive. The First chapter is an introductory chapter which provides general introduction. Similarly, this chapter also provides statement of problems and the objectives of the study, significance of the study and limitation of the study. Chapter second describes the theoretical orientations and other reviewing the prior relevant literature.

Chapter third deals the research methodology applied to generate necessary data for study and sources of data for the study and method of data analysis. Chapter Four

presents a data analysis and interpretation. Similarly, chapter four reflects the socio-economic changes influence of initiative development programs and Sanscritization process of upward mobility. This chapter also reveals the analysis of social discrimination against the Kami, Damai and Sarki by upper castes in different degree of laces in Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika.

Final Chapter five is the summary of the findings of study; the research conclusions are given some recommendations in brief.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

Livelihood Strategy refers to the way and means of individual engaging in particular economic activities, organized in a particular way to product their livelihood outcome or meet their needs, wants and aspiration. Individuals engaged in various means to enable them achieve their basic needs and aspiration. Available status have within geographic area, across sectors, within household and over time. This is not a question of people moving from of employment or ‘own-account’ activity farming to another. Rather it is a dynamic process in which they combine activities to meet their various needs at different times. A common manifestation of this at the household level is ‘straddling’ where by different members of the household live and work in different places, temporarily (e.g. seasonal migration) or permanently, Social patterns such as this clearly complication with their wider context. Since goods, financial resources and people are all mobile, an accurate picture of livelihoods cannot be gained if artificial boundaries are drawn (Dahal, 2010).

Though a great deal of literacy articles have been published regarding Dalits in Nepal till today, yet the specific and significant traditional occupational oriented article has not been found. Articles published regarding Dalit, till today, are merely confined in untouchability and social injustices. A selected analytical, the review of literature on Dalit is presented.

The historical perspective and present situation of Dalit and suppressed people according to the study of Bhattanchan et al. (2002) focuses on the existing practice of caste based on untouchability and socio-economic sector. Conditions of Dalit have been distinguished under the following categories.

It is found that only 19 percent of the Dalit reported that they are involved in traditional caste based occupation. Mainly the Damais are involved in their traditional activity. Damais are the ones who maintain their caste based occupation as their highest priority even a large number of them also involve in agriculture Damais are the highest proportion who are continuing their caste based occupation. Besides, some

Kamies, a few Sarkies, are also involved in their caste-based occupation in mainly due to the fact that for example blacksmith are hard hit by by availability of Factory-produced farm implements, Damais by the availability of ready made clothes and Sarkis by the availability of cheap footwear (Bhattachan, 2002).

One of the main economic activities of majority of Dalit is wage labour. The groups more involved in this activity are: Damai, Sarki, Gaine, Hudke, and Badi. Bhattachan (2002) identified the main activity of the Dalit for survival is non-agricultural activities (51%), mostly wage labour. Dependency on wage labour has a direct correlation with the land holding position; the landless and those holding less than 5 ropani of land have no better option than to work of daily wages. Actually data suggest that many Dalit do both wage labour and agricultural side by side, because only one would not be sufficient for survival. So, Dalit's have adopted multiple resource tapping strategies for their survival (Sharma, 2004).

Historically, Nepal is the house of a number of ethnic groups with different languages, religions and cultural traditions. An ethno-cultural diversity and complexity in Nepalese society can be noticed easily by reading old legal code of (1854) of government very well.

The birth-based occupational distribution on different castes were entirely opposite in nature. It proved to be a divine privilege to the upper castes enjoying the virtual monopoly of education, industry, trade, commerce and so on: on the other hand, it spelt disaster for the lower castes. This is based the tasks involving only manual labour. They were thus prevented from earning/ accumulating wealth, which restricted their need to base existence. What proved further deplorable, menial labour on the upper castes for stigmatized. Thus, the absence of freedom of occupation, low earning (Mainly in kind), implicit restriction on needs, and stigma on menial labour destroyed the economy of the lower castes. They came to be wholly dependent on the upper castes for their bare economic existence. As a result, the Dalit remained socially outcaste, economically dependent, politically powerless, and culturally backward (Michael, 2005).

Dalits are bound to adopt traditional humiliating and inferior occupation such as scavenging, carrying soil, removing dead animals, leather works, beating drums in

rituals, which have ranked in a low position in the traditional caste. For the emancipation of Dalit without such movements against caste discrimination and untouchability, the socio economic condition of Dalit community would not improve. Hence, the agenda of Dalit should be the right to equal opportunity, access and treatment in various fields and above all the movements to capture political power, eradication of class caste and touchability through social justice and state socialism in the alternative (Bishokarma, 2011).

Dalits are still facing very much possible conditions. Presently the degree of injustice, exploration suffering and humanity can not match the past never in the past have Dalit faced such as complex and grave situation as Dalit are facing now (John, 2012).

Hindu society is divided into four broad social divisions locally called Jati or caste which is based on birth and heredity of a person. The Jati or caste plays a vital role in the society within the ideal scheme of social values. In the past, violation of practice of any such occupation used to cause punishment and subsequently severe harassment. So, the ancient laws give prescription of occupation for different caste or *varnas* at the wider level used to be strictly practiced. The castes are normally distinguished by their traditional occupations as each caste practices its traditional calling and hence 'enjoys' certain degree of cultural, ritual and judicial autonomy". This indicates clear-cut caste hierarchy and defines the position of caste through the baseline notion of super ordinate or subordinate ritual sanctity of caste occupation and thus it has made some caste economically prosperous over some others (Mohanty, 2013).

It is seen that the distribution of power within society some what differently. He claimed that the economic status of a person in a community is associated with stratum of his or her social prestige and not solely a result of the economic relationship. He incorporates social inequality, non-economic forces such as ideas and interest that emerged from politics, religion and institutional structures into his explanation (Cox, 1994).

The phenomenon of ethnicity is an intrinsic component of the socio-political realities of multi-ethnic states in South Asia as well as in most of the countries of the world. Nevertheless, an equality significant pointer of inter-ethnic group relationship is that

of harmony, not necessarily of conflict. Groups maintain their separateness without jeopardizing this harmony. Mutual tolerance of each other's belief and value systems remains the cornerstone of such cordiality. However, ethnicitisation of politics and politicians of ethnic communities has diffused mutual toleration and has sharpened ethnic consciousness. The process of socio-economic change, the ethnic dimensions of the power structure, and the policies, strategies as well as tactics adopted by various regimes to cope with the urges and aspirations of ethnicity and the processes of the nation building (Cheria, 2001).

Dalit women, as the most economically deprived section of Nepali society are being affected by globalization in specific way. Dalit women have the highest participation in work among women. They also suffer from the reduced access to house amenities, poor health condition and are victims of sexual harassment by dominant caste. The reduction of government expenditure on social service has direct impact on health, education and livelihood of Dalit women. There is a need for state intervention within a specific government on gender and caste globalization of Dalit in Nepal in order to understand the impacts of globalization on Dalits and similar excluded social groups is also important. On the basis of caste and descent, one has to understand the ways in which economic and caste discrimination also plays a role in the participation of these groups in the economic sphere. It is important to know that the forms of economic discrimination is high so that appropriate interventions are introduced to protect Dalits from unequal access to the economic sphere and markets. The caste economy involves exclusion of caste or scheduled caste in multiple spheres, and this brings high level of economic deprivation and poverty. The assignment or division of occupations and property rights across castes is unequal hierarchal and some occupations are also considered socially inferior with low social status for those engaged in them. Dalits who have been placed at the bottom of caste hierarchy, have least economic and social rights. Exclusion, then, leads to deprivation in so far as they are excluded from access to all sources of livelihood and factors of production like agricultural land, service to caste above. Though Dalits can participate in the labor and other markets they face unequal treatment or are included in un-favourable terms. The romantic frameworks of the "caste system" involves exclusion and discrimination in multiple market and non market transaction and social relations. The issue of caste and economic discrimination are interlinked and reinforce each other. Globalization

affects Dalits by contributing to their marginalization and reinforcing the negative impacts of economic caste based discrimination and market discrimination (Gisele, 2004).

### **2.1.1 Caste System: A Conceptual Overview**

Caste system as a form of social stratification is popular in India and Nepal in which society is inseparably segmented as horizontally in a hierarchy position. The caste is an inseparable, aspect, that is closely related with the Hindu philosophy, religion, custom and tradition marriage and family, morals and manners, food and dress habits, occupations and hobbies. The caste system is believed to have divine origin and sanction is endlessly supported by rituals and ceremonies. It is a deep rooted and long lasting social institution. However, Rao mentions caste and class are the two main forms of social stratification and the range of one's social stratification and the range of one's social contracts is almost fixed by one's status in society. The further adds that the caste system is the basis of stratification in India where as the class system constitutes the basis of the stratification system in the western society.

The caste system is Indian origin in the Chaturverna system. According to the Chaturverna doctrine, the Hindu society was divided into four main categories namely the Brahmins, the Kshetries, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. The Verna system, which was prevalent during the Vedic period, was mainly based on the division of labour and occupation. The castes system owes it's origin to the Verna system. The present caste system can be said to be the degenerated form of the original Verna system. Verna which was four in number and caste which are found in hundreds is not same (Rao, 2011).

### **2.1.2 Caste System in Nepal**

Though, Nepal is considered to have long been Hindu, its native Hinduism has not included a belief in caste principles which remain for a long time. The caste system gained any kind of endorsement. Although as a group they are strict ambitions and high achievers, with a sense of commitment, national pride and self-confidence a rapid and efficient Nepali adaptation, pride to social and technological change is expected. But as a group these critically positioned people do not have these qualities,

instead they are the victims of their own fatalist beliefs, poor self image, hierarchy caste status and constant defensiveness, and to hamper national development through inactivity and conservative reaction (Bista, 1991).

The Nepali religion is 'Dharma' which also means duty, ethics, morality, rule, merit and piety etc (Bista, 1991). In Nepal Hinduism includes shamanism and hence religions derived from the early Gopal and Kirant traditions as well as Brahmanism, ancient and early medieval history has been documented by higher caste Brahmanic scholars whose interests have not facilitated the most comprehensive and objective direction of Nepali history. The documentation is limited by a genetic Hindu World view. It overlooks the fact that the various ethnic communities within Nepal were undergoing a significant process of change throughout the Lichhavi period.

Though Nepal has long been Hindu in a very general sense of a stratified caste system, caste concepts only entered in Nepal for the first time at the beginning of the Lichhavi era in the form of Vaishnavism and when it did occur it has to adopt itself not only to Shamanism and Shivaism, but also to Buddhism.

The Bahun caste was to consist only of Indian Brahman migrants and they might have maintained their own levels of ritual purity. It is not, at all; clear whether their new Nepali clients similarly labored to maintain caste purity (Bista, 1991).

A few may have come to the Nepal region for purposes of proselytizing. But most were forced to immigrate from hostile invasions of the plain states. In particular, there were to be many who were running away from the religion persecution of the Muslims these people were not bringing away from the religion mission with them but an excessive concern for self-preservation which was to affect their relations profoundly with the inhabitants of Nepal and Nepali culture the preservation of caste culture required that they did not succumb to Nepali influence nor in any way diminish the purity of their cultural treasures. The defense of their culture leads readily to the depreciation of the cultural lifestyle of the Nepali's. Nepali people in general and an exaggerated education of the fatalistic caste cultures of the plains with their religions centers this denigration of Nepali culture has become an inherent aspect of the developed Nepali from or Hinduism with fatalistic caste hierarchy is interpreted by Bahun priests (Bista, 1991). During the latter part of the fourteenth century, king

“Jayasthity Malla” tried to purify religious practice in the Kathmandu valley by introducing caste principles and conducts according to the Manusmriti (Sagar, 2010) he developed many types of Clothing and ornamentation and for the constructions of houses, different rated according to caste levels, and made it punishable for any one to violate rules prescribing professional activities for different castes. He did this as a measure towards modernization little realizing that would lead the society to regression rather than progression.

Another attempt as imposing the caste system was made in the nineteenth century by Jang Bahadur Rana and secured Rana control over the land. He succeeded in introducing the caste system to a much greater degree than the Malla kings had done. The Khas Bahuns called Parvate, Bahun (hill Bahun) divided to put all Newari speaking people into single caste category at the lower level known as Matwali meaning liquor Drinker (Bista, 1991). The legal code (Muluki Ain 1854) has tried to comprehend the pluralities culture of Nepal into a single scheme of the Hindu caste tribal and ethnic groups have been made its members and are given a ranking in it. The totality of this caste has been defined in the code as ‘Char Varna Chhatis Jat’ This phrases shows the similarity of the Nepalese castes to the Varna model and letter being the main basis of the Varna model for all functional purposes all recognition caste can be grouped into four or five main categories.

Caste system in Nepal before 2007 B.C. was based upon marriage, eating food stuff and traditional occupations of people. Caste was fully developed form and people were more conservative but when the Naya Muluki-Ain was passed and conducted all the conservation of the caste system declined and caste system is now observed only by marriage or birth. All the people of Nepal are equal in law and constitution still people have not come out of same conservative feeling of caste discrimination, in rural society. Even, in rural area, where people of the lower castes (Sudrass) are not allowed to enter the house to the higher caste and not to allow touching to the people of high caste.

Sociologists/anthropologists have applied various theories to analyze and describe society. In this context from the process of sanskritization and modernization, socio-economic condition of Kami, Damai and Sarki communities have been changing. So it is applied in theoretical aspects of sanskritization, modernization framework to find

out and describe the socio-economic changes among the Kami, Damai and Sarki communities of Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika.

### **2.1.3 Social Conditions of Dalit**

Socio-economic exclusion and discrimination have historically produced and perpetuated poverty in Nepal. The discrimination on the basis of caste is the main causes of social exclusion. Discrimination and social exclusion are the major social problems existing in the developing world. Historically, lower caste people of Nepal were ranked at the bottom of caste as well as social hierarchy by influential group. So, social problems on the basis of equal distribution of resources and access to social services are unequal. Thus, the practice of discrimination and social exclusion are rooted in our society.

The social discrimination and exclusion against Dalit is a major obstacle for socio-economic development of Dalits in Nepal. Discrimination is noticed in every field of their life like to education and public places, employment and service and sale of their domestic products, primarily the dairy products (Dahal et. al, 2002)

Exclusion may be viewed as a social, economic and political phenomenon. Women are the largest group excluded from the political process and they are constitutionally discriminated in citizenship right. Their economic and social exclusion have also been the subject of many debates in recent years. The lower caste people of both Terai (plain) and the Hill face problems of economic and political as well various ethnic groups have raised issues of political exclusion.

According to SAAPE report “caste system” maintains a rigidly vertical form of hierarchy amongst the people. By virtue of their caste position those in the lower condition often find themselves discriminated in political, economic and social decision making, while a few high caste people historically maintain a position of dominance (Mohanty, 2013). The exclusionary process institutionalized by the “caste system” is one of the principle reasons behind inequality and discriminatory practice in Nepal. The low caste groups, Dalit, are denied from the access to education, health, public resources and other mainstream, socio-economic necessities. So, they are in vulnerable condition.

Unequal distribution of productive resources, agricultural land in particular, declining of agriculture production, increase in population, lack of access to modern technology on production, market influenced economy, migration and displacement of people due to unemployment and conflict are the main factors exacerbating of social exclusion.

According to ESP report, 'the Dalit who constitute around 16 percent of total population do not have a single position of policymaking status in bureaucracy, army or police. Instead of these, *Brahman* and *Kshatriya*- the high caste group-constituting around 29 percent of total population, control 77 percent of bureaucracy and senior position in army and police, 67 percent of state constitutional bodies and 63 percent in legislature. This figure shows the discrimination as well as exploitation of lower caste in decision making and high position (Kisan, 2000).

#### **2.1.3.1 Demographic Status of Dalits**

The fluctuation in definition results in fluctuation of total caste/ethnic groups included in Dalits that creates difficulty in identifying the exact population size of Dalits (Dahal, 2010) also in population census, Dalits are not easily segregated with a number of reasons like many family names of Dalits are similar to other groups and respondents themselves do not want to report as Dalits. Therefore, the reliable data on population size of Dalits is lacking. The total population of 12 Dalit groups as enumerated in the census of 2001 was 2,472,566 or 10.9 percent of the total population of Nepal. Kami ranks the highest in number among the Dalit groups. In the Terai, the Chamars are the highest of the minority groups (less than 0.02%).

#### **2.1.3.2 Educational Status of Dalit**

The literacy rate and educational attainment of people of Nepal was very low up to 1950. After the overthrow of Rana regime in 1950 gone access to formal education, particularly the western system of education to all groups, including the Dalits in Nepal (Dahal et al., 2002). Literacy rate of Dalits compared to the non-Dalits and national level is very low. According to 1991 census, literacy rate of Dalits was 22.8, which was nearly half than the national level (CBS, 2011). The literacy rate of Dalit women (12.0%) was found to be poorest compared to the same of Dalit men (33.9%) (CBS, 2011). The condition was found severe in Terai than in Hills and Kathmandu

valley. Similarly, the educational attainment of Dalits is also a wretched example with almost, person having school leaving certificate (S.L.C.) level education among 7 literate Dalits (CBS, 2011).

**Table 2.1: Lowest Literacy Rate of Ten Ethnic Caste Groups 2011**

Ethnic Caste/Groups	Literacy Rate %
Mushahar	7.3
Dom	9.3
Patharkata/Kushwadia	13.2
Binga/Binda	14.8
Kamar	15.2
Chamar/Harijan/Ram	19.2
Dushad/Pasi/Paswan	19.6
Tatma	23.1
Nuniya	23.2

Source: CBS, 2011.

The most deprived groups in terms of education are the Terai Dalits or Untouchables. Of them, the lowest literacy rate is that mushahar followed by Dom. Following them are groups such as patharkata/Kushwadia (Janajati) and Beingal/Binda (Hindu groupa water acceptable community of the Terai) This again followed by the Terai Untouchables groups such as chamar paswan and Tatma.

### **2.1.3.3 Caste Based Social Discrimination**

It is often reported that the prevalence of traditional Hindu Caste model in it's fundamental form is the basis for discrimination against Dalit. However, discrimination is even found in the Janajati people. The Dalit groups themselves practice discrimination that includes non-acceptable of water and food and even untouchability.

The caste based discrimination is noted in the everyday life of people and this is equally noted in the government office corporations and NGOs. The other behavioural results of discrimination are many with subsequent effect on the social economic and political life of Dalits. In general this discrimination has been resulting in their poor status in every walks of life and participation in socio-political decision making (CBS, 2011).

#### **2.1.3.4 Gender Perspective**

Women are more suffered than men within the Dalit society. As the Dalit society is systematically integrated in the patriarchal model of the Hindu caste structure; their social and economic status is much lower to that of males. Likewise, the health and nutritional status of Dalit women is pathetic. The political participation of Dalit women at the village, district and national level is much lower to that of the Dalit males.

##### **2.1.3.4.1 Economic Condition of Dalit**

Commonly, the term Dalit, we presume oppressed and exploited groups in the society by the high caste. This assumption is not wrong regarding the situation of Dalit in terms of educational status, caste based discrimination and other sphere of social exploitation. In this section, the economic condition of Dalit in Nepal is reviewed from the various sources (Neupane, 2010). Dalits as a whole the poorest community in the Nepalese society. The size of landholding of Dalit is small. Landlessness is acute among the various Dalit groups and this is more so among the Tarai Dalits. Many sources found that almost half Dalit population have food deficiency and a significant portion of these groups of people produced food grains sufficient only for less than three month in a year.

The annual income of Dalits is also the lowest in comparison to other high caste group. Their expenditure on clothing, education and medicine are found to be the worst. A large majority of Dalits depend on the traditional agriculture. Non-agricultural activities are limited. The caste based traditional and occupational works such as blacksmithing; leather (cobbling) works and tailoring etc have been simultaneously substituted by the availability of modern ready made materials. There are no efforts to explore market to support their traditional skills. They are bound to depend upon the so called high caste and Janajati families for survival by making annual contact of their service in the form of tradition Bali Khan system with low bargaining power.

#### **2.1.3.4.2 Health and Condition of Dalit**

The health condition of Dalit is virtually no existent. The life expectancy of Dalit is much lower (50.8% years) than the national average (57 years) Infant mortality is much higher (116.5 per 1000 live birth) compared to the national average. Nutritional status of both male and female are poor and many women suffer from a number of disease (Neupane, 2010).

The Dalit population as a whole is least aware of the new legal code of 1963, the constitution of 1990 and international laws protecting the rights and empowerment of downtrodden and oppressed people. There documents ensure the equity and rights to access the opportunity and resources. The national political parties have no specific schemes to uplift political participation of Dalit. The political participation of Dalit as a whole is low. Their representation of village, district, and the national level government is rather insignificant compare to their population size (Kisan, 2000).

#### **2.1.3.5 Traditional Social Discrimination and Exclusion in Nepal**

Socio-economic exclusion and discrimination have historically produced and perpetuated poverty in Nepal. The discrimination on the basis of caste is the main causes of social exclusion. Discrimination and social exclusion are the major social problems existing in the developing world. Historically, lower caste people of Nepal were ranked at the bottom of caste as well as social hierarchy by influential group. So, social problems on the basis of equal distribution of resources and access to social services are unequal. Thus, the practice of discrimination and social exclusion are rooted in our society.

The social discrimination and exclusion against Dalit is a major obstacle for socio-economic development of Dalits in Nepal. Discrimination is noticed in every field of their life like to education and public places, employment and service and sale of their domestic products, primarily the dairy products. Exclusion may be viewed as a social, economic and political phenomenon. Women are the largest group excluded from the political process and they are constitutionally discriminated in citizenship right. Their economic and social exclusion have also been the subject of many debates in recent years. The lower caste people of both Terai(plain) and the Hill face problems of

economic and political as well various ethnic groups have raised issues of political exclusion (Mohanty, 2013).

Unequal distribution of productive resources, agricultural land in particular, declining of agriculture production, increase in population, lack of access to modern technology on production, market influenced economy, migration and displacement of people due to unemployment and conflict are the main factors exacerbating of social exclusion.

According to Action Aid report, the “caste system” is under the twin pressures of modernization and the market, wherein Brahmins and Kshatriya -higher caste - translated their traditional power into better opportunities and position according to modernization and market, but Dalit are impoverished and alive in vulnerable condition. With modernization, resources have been homogenized into numbers. Thus, complex resources that people control and access when homogenized into their monetary income offer has no insight into processes that disempowered people, limit their agency, resources and thereby impoverish them. In Nepal, modernization exploited the marginalized people and their indigenous knowledge, skills, physical labor and other resources are all reduced into parley monetary, contractual exchange trivialized and underpaid (Kisan, 2000).

According to Bhattachan et al. (2003), out of the 200 existing practices of caste based discrimination, 81 are discrimination in different field which includes: 18 related to occupation, 11 to educational institutions, 10 to political rights, 14 to governmental policy and programmes, 7 to government and NGOs offices, 13 to development programmes and 8 to religious and cultural activities. This figure indicates the main forms of discrimination: denial of entry, denial of services, denial of access to common resources, denial of kinship and social relationship, denial of participation, forced labor, dominance, atrocities, social boycott, and attitudinal untouchability.

If we look back to the ancient history, we find that in the Vedic period choosing and sanctioning of occupation restriction were not existing, but later gradually restricted stricter rules enjoined on the choice of occupation, had almost become rigid that particular caste, where to follow particular occupations, that any change in this respect was totally forbidden; but in every respect, such a departure was clearly recognized as an exceptional practice, only to be pursued when the traditional calling failed. There

again, the choice of possible alternatives was itself closely regulated, no free choice was granted in this respect, by law (Caplan, 2010).

The autonomy of occupation in actual operation at the beginning of the 19th century was accompanied by a staunch belief that almost every one of the larger number caste and occupation which was its own, in traditional and hence the heredity occupation of the member to abandon which in search of another was at least not proper, if not actually sinful (Cox, 1994). This caste and traditional occupation practice is rooted to the traditional belief of Hindu “caste system”. So, Dalits are discriminated in occupation and forced to continue their traditional occupation which are stigmatized by the society on the sphere of economic as well as social respect.

There are two reasons to maintain the traditional occupation of Dalits: one is that some occupation such as gold-smith is lucrative and tailoring is much in demand. The other reason is that poor Dalits such as Doms and Badis have no other option than to continue their traditional occupation to make their living (Bhattachan et al., 2003). Most of the occupations of Dalit in rural economy are not lucrative because of barter system and exchange economy (Bali system). On the other hand, these occupations were occupied by non-Dalits in urban areas (Bista, 1991).

## **2.2 Review of the Previous Studies**

A number of scholars and researchers have carried out the studies of various caste ethnic groups from different angles, including socio-economic status changes, however, there are very few literatures about Kami caste group on the relevant topic. Here researcher has tried to introduce some pertinence literature about Kami caste groups, to which some invaluable words organized by many scholars to know about the Kami in reality.

Neupane (2010) carried out the detail study of different caste groups categorized into different blocks/ladders viz. Brahmin, Newar, Kirant and Dalit to shed the light on the contemporary socio-economic condition directly based on the caste orthodox. In the same way, Neupane also states that the Dalits including Kami, have been excluded from access into different institution of government as well as private organizations.

He also has tried to give some inventory notes and data about the caste and ethnic groups including Dalits such as Kami, Damai, Badi etc.

Horfer (2009) studied about the Nepalese code of 1854, in which caste hierarchy system was imposed by Janga Bahadur Rana, healthy institutionalized in strict sense to which even untouchable peoples shadow remains polluted and impure so that upper caste people live far from body and shadow contact with untouchable people. The study found that among the untouchable castes, Kami remains high caste so that hierarchy system exists among untouchable groups too. Sexual intercourse, marriage, eating food, entering into the home of Kami are prohibited to each other of untouchable caste groups.

According to Sagar (2010), under the topic of statement of Janauthan Pratisthan on the occasion of World Conference Against Racism 2001 gives the description about division of Nepalese society into two blocks i.e. the touchable and untouchable dichotomy in which the touchable group not only dominate and discriminate but also suppress deprive oppresses against Dalits, in the name of caste hierarchy, purity and impurity. He also blames the government which enable to do something more than anything in order to tranquility and relevant identity of similar cultural background people through the implementation of certain commitments of conglomerate prospective. Rather government still contradict unfolds certain bias provision against the Dalits to institutionalize discrimination confinement etc.

Pokhrel (2010) stated that open economic and political system provides opportunities to the Kami people to come out from their traditional occupation. The study found that development process combined with declining traditional occupation, population growth in the village and opportunities for work elsewhere the main causes of social transformation among the Kami people. The study showed that many Kami people of Melamchi Valley were involved urban skilled labor in Kathmandu.

Reviewed literatures show different dimension of social change in Nepal and elsewhere. Past literatures on Dalit in general, they are basically focused on caste based discrimination and untauchability. However, many of them are little concerned on how Dalits' social relations with non-Dalit have been changed over the years.

Then gradually a number of native as well as foreign anthropologists carried out large scale and systematic study of Nepalese society and culture based continuing till now as well. Some of the foreign and native anthropologists and sociologists have also carried out the study focusing the low caste people and their unheard exploitation from the high caste people.

Dahal (2010) studied about the effect/influence of the critical concept of modernization in the micro-social institutions of Nepal, create not only positive influence. The study also gave the clear view of the origin of modernization and third world countries always prone as a victims to implement the different imported strategies of modernization (from West-America, U.K. etc.) achieve of twice fold socio-economic growth rate like western countries did, but ostensibly result is not positive and expected on behalf of the third world countries like Nepal, however self sufficient, independent, backward and conventional micro level socio-economic institutions get into trouble after the adoption of all exotic modern culture i.e. lead to the dependency towards the advanced institutions. But in order to accelerate and innovate of technology and development ways indispensable get into influence and change the micro level as well as macro level institutions. Culture is very tentative and flexible from single end over of development strategies of modernization could be sufficient to change of public behavior which is constantly changing.

Caplan (2010) mentioned the relation of interrelationships and tendency in between priests and cobblers (Brahmin and Sarki) that are existent in a Hindu society of western Nepal. Moreover, Caplan highlights the changing patterns of social like with conflicts among them.

Srinivas (2010) as profound of Sanskritization theory analyzed the upward mobility of untouchable caste of south India with as in the direction of twice born castes. It was the first presentation as well as application of socio-cultural change occurring among untouchables (Coorgs) of south Asia. Similarly, in 1972, he gave a sound definition of sanskritization with some revision in earlier concept and presented other examples of imitative changes among the untouchables of India.

Parajuli (2011) undertook the brief study on Kami people of Baglung VDC, about sanskritization process initiated later period of imposed form of legal code 1854 B.C.,

and geared up after establishment of democracy 2007, and alternatively been close relation and living together within the same community with upper caste groups like, Brahmin, Chhetries, Kami people tried to claim upper caste group's status to have upper prestigious, in different ways i.e. imitation, modification, avoidance etc.

Where as, Rao (2011) stated the following reasons for the decline of the traditional occupation as, the ardent of industrialization almost put an end to the guild system and the traditional skills of Indian artisans. Indian cotton, silk and calicos could not be sold in England due the competition from the factory made goods. The British terrific policy was also against the Indian interests. Indian market became flooded with cheaper British goods. Indian hand-made good and lost the markets in the competitive economic race. By 1880 the decline of handicraft was an accomplished fact; many artisans had to find an alternative means of livelihood. They were forced to become agriculturist or to sell their skills as labourers in new industries, Magarlway or mines started by British capital. Indian had been reduced to a colonial agrarian appendage of British. Not only in India in other countries also had wherever industrialism spread had traditional skills declined.

The previous study did not mention the livelihood condition and occupational changes of different caste including Kami, Damai and Sarki communities. In the present study and discussion focus will be the significant changes of socio-occupational institutions of Kami, Damai and Sarki communities and raising of development strategies and modern concept on the occupational castes like Kami, instead of continuity of conventional ways of life adopt and imitate other culture too.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Selection of the Study Area**

Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika is situated in the Lamjung District of western Development region. This municipality is formed with the combination of Jita VDC, Tandrang Taksar VDC, Surya Pal VDC and Ramgha VDC of Lamjung district. Tandrang Taksar VDC is transformed into Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika ward number 3 and 4 where majority of dalits are residing there. According to the census (2011), the total population of this VDC was 6,009. Among them 2,658 people are male and 3,351 are female. The total number of households in the VDC was 1,155. There are three Dalit castes living in this VDC, these are Kami, Damai and Sarki. Dalit comprises about 20 percent population of these wards. Dalits are discriminated by high caste and excluded from the society. They follow their traditional occupation and culture which setup many years ago. Recently their occupation and means of subsistence are felt to have been displaced by modern economy.

This study will be based on Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika ward no. 3 and 4 of Lamjung District where dense of Dalits population could be seen. I have chosen this area where we could changing strategies of Dalits in term of traditional occupation, and adopted new way of life. The rationale behind selection of this district as well as the wards is because there is high prevalence of land issues and concentration of target group of research and researcher has a close relationship with the community of Nagarpalika which is important considering the natural and precision of the data used for the study.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This research mainly designed to investigate current situation of ancestral and traditional occupation of Dalit and its continuity and change. The study is based on descriptive research designed.

### **3.3 Nature and Source of Data**

The present study is based on primary and secondary data. The secondary information is derived from census report and other related documents. The primary data are collected from the first hand information gained from the field. Quantitative as well as qualitative methods are utilized in this study. Sample survey of Dalit households has been employed to collect quantitative data whereas qualitative information are acquired from the observation and key information from interviews with selected Dalit people.

### **3.4 Universe and Sampling Procedure**

A total number of household in ward number 3 and 4 of Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika have been selected for this study. 155 household are selected from the two wards of Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika. Among the total respondents, 76 households are from Kami, 51 households are from Damai, and 28 households are from Sarki. The sampling frame is based on the Dalit population of study area. Sample is drawn separately for each caste, by purposive sampling method and according to population size of Dalit in selected ward.

Despite the interest of applying scientific method in sampling procedure, the situation of that time is unfavorable and the office of the Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika which has still been remaining closed and could not be available list of total households and apply random procedure to select sample. The population of Dalits of Madhya Nepal Nagarpalika is based on the record in the Central Bureau of Statistics. And the number of unidentified Dalits in that data is 528 in which the population of Kami is larger than other Dalit. So, in this research, more questionnaires have been dealt with the Kami respondents. This accidental survey means the exercise of the precise questionnaire with the people of that cast which is encountered where it prevails.

### **3.5 Data Collection Techniques and Tools**

#### **3.5.1 Household Survey**

The household survey is conducted in order to gather qualitative and quantitative facts about socio-economic aspects of dalit community toward changing pattern of

traditional occupation. The questionnaire has focused on the objective of the study and the primary data has been collected from the selected wards. The respondents are requested to fill up the questionnaire or have filled up by the researcher when the respondent is unable to fill up the questionnaire himself.

### **3.5.2 Key Informant Interview**

The information is collected from key informants using the semi or unstructured interview method. The local leader, teacher and aged people are the key informants. School children, school teacher, local leader, age old people are the key informants for the interview.

### **3.5.3 Observation**

To find out the real number of the changing pattern of traditional occupation, the researcher visited the VDC. The qualitative and quantitative information has been recorded during the direct observation of the selected area.

## **3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation**

The collected data are analyzed and interpreted on the basis of research design. After completing the field survey, collected data during field work were edited and tabulated as per the need of report mirror. Moreover in order to make the report more precise, figures and charts have been enclosed with this report. Similarly, chapter-subchapter have been divided.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics

This chapter deals with the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of sampling population in terms of sex education attainment, marital status and occupation.

##### 4.1.1 Sex Composition

Table 4.1 shows that out of total Kami population, 41.5 percent are males and 58.5 percent are females. Likewise, out of total Damai population, 47.9 percent are males and 52.1 percent are females. And out of total Sarki population, 42.7 percent are males and 57.2 percent are females. In total Dalit (Kami Dami and Sarki) population, 43.7 percent are males and 56.3 percent are females. The average family size is 4.34, 4.1, and 5.4 for Kami, Dami and Sarki respectively.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of Sample Population According to Sex**

Sex	Kami		Damai		Sarki		Total	
	No.	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Male	140	41.5	102	47.9	65	42.8	307	43.7
Female	197	58.5	111	52.1	87	57.2	395	56.3
Total	337	100	213	100	152	100	702	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016

##### 4.1.2 Literacy

Table 4.2 shows that out of total Kami population, 29.3 percent are literate and 70.7 percent are illiterate and out of total Damai population 43.8 percent are literate and 26.2 percent are illiterate. Likewise, out of total Sarki population, 36.3 percent are literate and 63.7 percent are illiterate. Out of total Dalit population, 35.3 percent are literate and 64.7 percent are illiterate.

**Table 4.2: Distribution of Population aged 5 Years Above According to Literary Status**

Literacy	Kami		Damai		Sarki		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Literate	79	29.3	75	43.6	45	36.3	199	35.3
Illiterate	191	70.7	96	55.8	79	63.7	366	64.7
Total	269	100.0	172	100.0	124	100.0	565	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016

#### 4.1.3 Educational Attainment

Table 4.3 shows that, out of total Kami literate population, 46.8 percent have passed primary level of education, 27.8 have percent passed lower secondary level 17.7 percent passed in secondary level, 5.1 percent passed +2 and above level of education. Likewise out of total Damai population, 37.7 percent literate population 41.4 percent have passed primary level education 25.3 percent have passed lower secondary level, 17.8 percent passed have secondary level, 9.3 percent have passed Higher Secondary level and 6.7 percent have passed +2 and above level education. Likewise out of total literate Sarki 22.6 percent population 44.4 percent have passed primary level education, 37.7 percent have passed lower secondary level, 13.3 percent have passed secondary level, 2.2 percent have passed in higher Secondary level and 2.2 percent have passed +2 and above level education. It is very low with comparison to National Level 65.1 percent.

**Table 4.3: Distribution of Education Situation 5 Years Above**

Educational Attainment	Kami		Damai		Sarki		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Primary (1-5 grade completed)	37	46.8	31	41.7	20	44.4	88	44.8
Lower secondary (5-8)	22	27.8	19	25.3	17	37.7	58	29.2
Secondary (9-10)	14	17.7	13	17.3	6	13.3	33	16.6
High secondary (11-12)	4	5.1	7	9.3	1	2.2	12	6.0
B.A. and Above	2	2.5	5	6.7	1	2.2	8	4.0
Total	79	100.0	75	100.0	45	100.0	199	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016

#### 4.1.4 Marital Status

Table 4.4 shows that out of total Kami population, 44.6 percent are married, 50.9 percent are unmarried, 2.6 are widow/widower, 1.1 percent are separated/divorced and 0.7 percent are unknown. Likewise, out of total Damai population, 54.0 percent are married 44.2 percent are unmarried, 1.2 percent are widow/widower and 0.46 percent are separated/divorced and out of total Sarki population, 45.2 percent are married, 50.8 percent are unmarried, 1.6 percent are widow/widower; 2.4 percent are separated.

Out of total three Dalit (Kami, Damai, and Sarki) population 47.7 percent are married, 48.8 percent are unmarried 1.9 percent are widow/widower, 1.2 percent are separated and 0.4 percent are unknown.

**Table 4.4: Distribution of Marital Status of Household Population**

Marital status	Kami		Damai		Sarki		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Married	120	44.6	93	54.0	56	45.2	269	47.7
Unmarried	137	50.9	76	44.2	63	50.8	276	48.8
Widow/widower	7	26.0	2	1.2	2	1.6	11	19
Separated/divorced	3	1.1	1	0.6	3	2.4	7	1.2
Don't know	2	0.7	-	0	-	0	2	0.4
Total	269	100.0	172	100.0	124	100.0	565	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

#### 4.1.5 Occupation

Table 4.5 shows that out of total Kami population, 7.8 percent engage in agriculture, 13.3 percent engage in cast occupation, 2.6 percent engage in business, 1.8 percent engage in daily wage, 21.2 percent are engage in household work. 4.8 percent unemployed, 2.6 percent dependent, 1.1 percent physically weak, 25.6 students, 0.7 percent engage in government/ non governmental jobs, and 16.4 percent are doing job in India.

Likewise, out of total Damai population, 4.0 percent population are engage in agricultural, 19.7 percent engage in caste occupation, 1.7 percent engage in business, 1.7 percent are engage in daily wage, 19.2 percent engage in household work, 4.0 percent unemployed, 2.9 percent dependent, 2.3 percent physically weak, 29.6 percent student, 2.3 percent engage in government/ non-government jobs, and 12.2 percent engage in jobs in India, and out of total Sarki, 13.3 percent engage in agriculture, 4.0 percent engage caste occupation, 1.6 percent engaged in business, 1.6 percent engage in daily wage system, 17.4 percent population are engage in household work, 2.4 percent unemployed, 1.6 percent dependent, 30.6 percent student, and other rest of 25.0 percent engage in job in many parts of India.

Out of total three Dalit population (Kami, Damai and Sarki) 8.3 percent engage in agricultural, 14.2 percent engage in caste occupation, 2.7 percent engage business, 1.7 percent engage in daily wage system, 19.8 percent engage in household work, 4.0 percent unemployed, 2.4 percent dependent, 1.2 percent physically weak, 27.9 percent student, 1.0 percent engage in government/non government jobs and 16.9 percent population engage in job in many parts of India.

**Table 4.5: Distribution of Occupation Situation aged 5 Years and Above**

	Kami		Damai		Sarki		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Agricultural	21	7.8	7	4.0	19	18.3	47	8.3
Caste occupation	41	15.3	34	19.7	5	4.0	80	4.2
Business	7	2.6	3	1.7	2	1.6	12	2.1
Daily wage	5	1.8	3	1.7	2	1.6	10	1.7
Household work	57	21.2	33	19.2	22	17.4	112	19.8
Unemployed	13	4.8	7	4.0	3	2.4	23	4.0
Dependence	7	2.07	6	2.8	2	1.3	15	2.1
Physically week	3	1.1	4	2.3	-	-	7	1.2
Students	69	25.6	51	29.6	38	30.6	158	27.9
Government and Non-government Service	2	0.7	4	2.3	-	-	6	1.0
Doing jobs in India	44	16.4	21	12.2	31	25.0	96	16.9
Total	269	100.0	172	100.0	124	100.0	565	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

#### 4.1.6 Extra Income

Extra income means the income which is made through extra work besides the main occupation such as casual labour, household activities, seasonal jobs and so on. The Dalits like Kami, Damai, and Sarki are used to making extra income by utilizing their leisure time besides their main occupation in terms of wage. They are busy with their main occupation when there is maximum work. However, when there is no occupational work to do most of them go out in search of new jobs to make an extra income. Some of them go to India and most of them drive to the city areas. Moreover, the head of the family usually grants the domestic responsibility to the second person in the family and goes out to look for a new source of income. However, the head returns back to home when in the good season of the traditional occupation. The income earned in this way is termed as an extra income.

Table 4.6 shows that out of total Kami respondents, 38.15 percent have extra income and 61.84 percent do not have extra income. Likewise, out of total Damai household, 58.82 percent have source of extra income and 41.17 percent do not have extra income and out of total Sarki respondents, 17.85 percent have source of extra income and 82.14 percent do not have extra income. Out of total Dalit (Kami, Damai and Sarki) 41.29 percent have source of extra income and 58.70 percent respondent do not have extra income.

**Table 4.6: Situation of Extra Income of Sample Households Population**

Categories	Kami		Damai		Sarki		Total Household	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Have Extra Income	29	38.21	30	58.8	5	17.8	64	41.3
Do not have extra income	47	61.8	21	41.1	23	82.2	91	58.7
Total	76	100.0	51	100.0	28	100.0	155	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

#### 4.1.7 Source of Extra Income

Table 4.7 shows that out of total Kami, respondents 41.4 percent earn wages as their source of income and 58.6 percent earn their income from service. Likewise, out of total Damai respondents, 16.6 percent earn wages as their source of income and 73.3 percent earn their income from service and 10.0 percent earn from business. And out of total Sarki respondents, 40.0 percent earn wages as their source of income and 60.0 percent earn from service.

Out of total three Dalit (Kami, Damai and Sarki) respondents, 14.06 percent are wage earners, 81.3 percent are service holders and 4.6 percent engage in business which is their source of income.

**Table 4.7: Situation and Source of Extra Income of Sample Household**

#### Population

	Kami		Damai		Sarki		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Wage	12	41.4	5	16.6	2	40	9	14.06
Service	17	58.6	22	73.3	3	60	42	81.3
Business	-	-	3	10.0	-	-	3	4.6
Total	29	100.0	30	100.0	5	100.0	64	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

#### 4.1.8 Situation of Food Sufficiency

Table 4.8 shows that out of total Dalit respondents, 10.9 percent have sufficient food and 89.1 percent have insufficient food. Out of total Kami population 9.2 percent have sufficient food and 90.8 percent have insufficient food. Likewise out of total Damai, 11.7 percent have sufficient food and 88.3 percent have insufficient food and out of total Sarki, 14.3 percent have sufficient food and 85.7 percent have insufficient food.

**Table 4.8: Situation of Food Sufficiently of Sample Households Population**

Sufficiency status	Kami		Damai		Sarki		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Sufficient	7	9.2	6	11.7	4	14.3	17	10.9
Insufficient	69	90.8	45	88.3	24	85.7	138	89.1
Total	76	100.0	51	100.0	28	100.0	155	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

#### 4.1.9 Duration of Food Sufficiency

Table 4.9 shows that out of total Kami respondents, the food is sufficient only three month for 11.5 percent, six month for 17.4 percent, nine month for 34.7 percent and seven month for 36.2 percent. Likewise, out of total Damai respondents, the food is sufficient only three month for 15.6 percent, six month for 17.7 percent, nine month for 22.2 percent and eleven month for 44.4 percent. In the same way, out of total Sarki respondents, the food is sufficient only three month for 12.5 percent, six month for 41.6 percent, nine months for 29.1 percent, and eleven month for 17.4 percent.

Hence, out of total three Dalit (Kami, Damai and Sarki) respondents, the food is sufficient only three month for 13.0 percent, six month for 17.4 percent, nine month for 31.8 percent and eleven month for 37.7 percent.

**Table 4.9: Duration of Food Sufficiency of Sample Household Population**

Duration of food insufficiency	Kami		Damai		Sarki		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1 - 3 months	8	11.5	7	15.6	3	12.5	18	13.0
3 - 6 months	12	17.4	8	17.7	4	16.6	24	17.4
6 - 9 months	24	24.7	10	22.2	10	41.6	44	31.8
9 – 11 months	25	36.2	20	24.4	7	29.1	52	37.7
Total	69	100.0	45	100.	24	100.0	138	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

#### 4.2 Situation and Forms of Traditional Occupation

Excluding the ownership of land, the other major means of livelihood of Dalits is the sale of their traditional caste occupation. Historically, Dalits have been practicing their traditional caste occupation and selling it to their clients to make a living. For example, Kamis not only make new agricultural tools and household utensils such as

sickles, knives, axes, hoes, spades, plough tips, and nails but also repair them when needed. A goldsmith or Sunar makes gold or silver ornaments as demanded by their clients. The Kamis are basket weavers who make a variety of storage baskets and floor mats from bamboo. The Chunara, a blacksmith group of far-western Nepal, makes utensils from wood. In the Damai group, both men women are tailors who sew clothes for their clients both in cash and kind. The Sarkis are leatherworkers who make shoes and other products from the skin of dead animals such as cattle and water buffaloes. The Badis are also potters who make different kinds of earthen-ware pots, etc. particularly they make good earthen pipes for smoking purposes. At the same time, Badis are singers and dancers and some Badi girls and women practice prostitution to make their living. The Gaines sing songs with their traditional instrument, *Sarangi*.

Historically Dalits have been practicing their traditional occupation. Kami work in their Aran and making agricultural tools and repair them when they need. Likewise, Damai have been sewing cloths and Sarkies have been doing leather work. Out of total Dalit respondents, 51.6% engage in traditional occupation. Out of total Kami respondents, 53.9% engage in traditional occupation, likewise 66.67 Damai engage in traditional occupation and 17.85% Sarkies engage in their traditional occupation. Above all three Dalits have been practicing their traditional occupation and selling their goods to clients to make a living. Table 4.10 shows that out of total households, 49.0%, 32.9%, 18.0% are Kami, Damai and Sarki respectively. Among Kami households, 53.9 percent engage in their traditional occupation, 27.6 percent engage in agricultural work, 6.6 percent engage in agricultural labour, 2.6 percent engage in government and non government jobs and 9.2 percent engage in different occupations. Likewise, out of total Damai respondents, 66.7 percent engage in their traditional occupation, 13.7 percent engage in agricultural, 7.84 percent engage in government and non government jobs. 5.8 percent engage in agricultural labour and 5.8 percent engage in other different occupation. Out of total Sarki respondents, 67.8 percent engage in agricultural, 17.8 percent engage in traditional occupation, 7.2 percent engage in agricultural labour and 7.2 percent engage in other different occupation.

In traditional occupation mainly 66.7 percent Damai are involved in their traditional activities. This research has found that Damais are the ones who maintain their caste based occupation because the sewing occupation is going up day by day where 17.8 percent Sarkies are involve in their caste based occupation. Decreasing involvement in caste based occupation is mainly due to the fact that, for example blacksmith are hared hit by the availability of factory-produced from implements, Damais by the availability of ready-made clothes, and Sarkies by the availability of cheep footwear. More than 67.8 percent Sarkies are involved in agricultural.

**Table 4.10: Distribution of Households who Engage in Different Occupation**

Caste	Agricultural		Traditional Occupation		Agricultural Labour		Service		Others		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No	%	No.	%
Kami	21	27.6	41	53.9	5	6.6	2	2.6	7	9.2	76	49.0
Damai	7	13.7	34	66.6	3	5.8	4	7.8	3	5.8	51	32.9
Sarki	19	67.8	5	17.8	2	7.2	-	-	2	7.1	155	18.0
Total	47	30.3	80	51.6	10	6.5	6	3.8	12	7.7	155	100

Note: Other category includes: casual labour, katwal work, wage labour,  
Source: Field Survey, 2016.

#### 4.2.1 Learning Traditional Occupation from Various Sources

Most of the Dalit respondents, who engage in traditional occupation, learnt skills from their ancestor. Table 4.11 shows that out of total Dalit, 76.3 percent learned traditional skills from their parents end 3.7 percent from their relatives. Out of total Kami household, 92.7 percent learned Skill from their parents, and other 7.3 learned from their relatives. Likewise out of total Damai and Sarki respondents all the respondents learned skill from their parents.

**Table 4.11: Distribution of Respondents According to the Source of Learning of Traditional Skills**

Caste	Parents		Relatives		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kami	38	92.7	3	7.3	41	100.0
Damai	34	100	-	-	34	100.0
Sarki	5	100	-	-	5	100.0
Total	77	76.3	3	3.7	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

#### 4.2.2 Duration of Involvement in Traditional Occupation

Table 4.12 shows that out of total respondents, 78.7 percent engage in traditional occupation whole year, 21.4 percent respondent are doing traditional occupation less than a year because their customers are few in comparison to the others. Among total Kami respondents, 78.04 percent engage whole year, 21.9 engage in less than a year. Likewise, out of Damai respondents 82.4 percent respondents engage in whole year, other 17.6 engage less than a year, and out of total Sarki respondents 60.0 percent are busy in whole year, other 40.0 are busy less than a year. Rest of the time they engage in wage labour and own farms for their livelihood.

**Table 4.12: Distribution of Household, who are involved in Traditional Occupation Whole Year and Less than One Year**

Caste	Whole Year		Less than Year		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kami	32	78.04	9	21.9	41	100.0
Damai	28	82.4	6	17.6	34	100.0
Sarki	3	60.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
Total	63	78.7	17	21.3	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

#### 4.2.3 Specific Occupation, Income and Mode of Payment

Main source of income of Dalit circumscribe by high caste people on the Bali system and their wage is not fixed. It depends upon the high caste people. Table 4.13 shows the traditional occupation, their income, and mode of payment.

**Table 4.13: Specific Occupation by Income and Mode of Payment**

Occupation	Kami	Damai	Sarki
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Traditional caste specific occupation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Black Smith make and repair home appliances as well as agricultural equipments</li> <li>) Rest of the time they do as a agricultural labour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Sewing cloths</li> <li>) playing musical instruments for different occasions like, marriage ceremony, parties etc</li> <li>) Agricultural labour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Leather works</li> <li>) Plough land</li> <li>) Wage worker</li> <li>) Agricultural labour</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Income from traditional occupation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Payable in Bali system annually 3-5 muri 5-10 muri mixed grain some cloths</li> <li>) Some ready food and other goods in special ceremony</li> <li>) Pay in cash for new equipments as raw materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Payable in Bali system annually 3-5 and 5-10 muri mixed grain</li> <li>) Some ready food and cloths in special ceremony</li> <li>) For playing musical instrument Rs. 100-200 per some day in special occasions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Wage worker Rs. 80-150 per day</li> <li>) For plough they get Rs. 70-100 per day</li> <li>) If they work Nibek, they get one pathi rice per day and some</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Modern job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Police, army, peon Watchman, portar</li> <li>) Most of the Dalit going to India</li> <li>) Doing as a labour, work in India Hotel guard etc.</li> <li>) Earning 50-200 Rs. per day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Police, Army, watchman, parter</li> <li>) Most of Damai going to India doing as a labour like, guard, pot cleaner, etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Police, Army, Watchman porter, House cleaner, guard, etc in India private Sector.</li> </ul>

Source: Based on in-depth interview, 2016.

Most of the three Dalit (Kami, Damai and Sarki) households have hard life because their annual income is very low from their traditional occupation. Most of the respondents are living in joint family therefore, they need more food and money for survival. Most of the young family members are going to India and do labour work there to manage food and money for their family members.

#### 4.2.4 Tools

Each Dalit respondents have their own types of equipments which are necessary to give continuity to their occupation. These separate types of equipment are given below.

**Table 4.14: Distribution According to Tools Used when Respondents Making Goods**

Kami	Damai	Sarki
Ghan, Air pressor, Pump, Chhino, Hotro, Flashi, Rati, Sanaso,	Sewing machine Interlock machine, Iron, Kaichi, Siyo Dhago, Khuttai Kal, Inch tape	) Leather (Sewing) Machine ) Kaichi, Dahage ) Bruss, Choe die

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

#### 4.2.5 Source of Raw Materials

Kami when they are doing their traditional work, mostly they need *Goal* and Iron to make and repair household equipments. They are totally dependent on forest to bring *Goal*. If they need to make new equipments they have to buy iron from the market and make new equipments according to their customers order.

Sarkies make shoes (ladies and gents) and repair them when they need. Sarki use to buy leather and other necessary raw materials from the market and make goods and sell them to the local customers.

#### 4.2.6 Mode of Payment

Table 4.15 shows that out of total respondents 37.4 percent work in Bali system, 14.2 percent in wage and 48.4 percent engage in jobs and others wage system.

Out of total Kami respondents, 47.36 percent engage in Bali system, 6.6 percent in business and wage system, and 46.0 percent in jobs and others. Likewise, out of total Damai respondents, 43.13 percent work in Bali system, 23.5 percent in business and wage and 33.4 percent engage in jobs and other sector. Out of total Sarki respondents, 17.8 percent engage in business and wage and 82.2 percent engage in jobs and other sector.

**Table 4.15: Distribution of Households, who engage in Bali System**

Caste	Bali System		Wage		Job or others		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kami	36	47.4	5	6.6	35	46.0	76	100.0
Damai	22	43.2	12	23.5	17	33.3	51	100.0
Sarki	-	-	5	17.8	23	82.2	28	100.0
Total	58	37.6	22	14.2	75	48.5	155	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

#### 4.2.7 Income from Bali System

There is a system prevalent in the traditional occupation of Dalits in which the Dalits are agreed to be paid monthly or yearly for their continuous service to their owners in terms of various works or activities such as manufacturing instruments like sickle, axe, knife; tailoring cloths and other domestic works. In this system, the Dalits are paid in terms of grains or food in stead of the cash according to the agreement reached between them and their customers. The grain or the food which is paid to the Dalits by their customers in terms of their agreement is termed as "Bali". Besides that, the Dalits like Kami, Sarki and Damai are also paid by their customers in the special occasions like Dashain and Tihar. Such type of system prevalent in the traditional occupation of the Dalits is termed as Bali system.

Table 4.16 shows that out of total (Kami and Damai) respondents 1.7 percent get 3 muri mixed grain, (1 muri = 60 k.g.) 56.89 percent get 5 to 8 muri, and 41.38 percent get 8 to 10 muri mixed grain annually from their customers. Sarki respondents are not engaged in Bali system. Out of total Kami respondents, 2.7 percent get 3 to 5 muri mixed grain annually, 58.3 percent get 5 to 8 muri and 38.8 percent 10 muri annually.

Likewise out of total Dami respondents 54.5 percent get 5 to 8 muri mixed grain and 45.4 percent get 8 to 10 muri annually from their customer houses.

**Table 4.16: Distribution of Respondents Annual Income from Bali System**

Castes	3 to 5 muri mixed grain		5 to 8 muri mixed grain		8 to 10 muri mixed grain		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kami	1	2.7	21	58.3	14	38.8	36	100.0
Damai	-	-	12	54.5	10	45.4	22	100.0
Sarki	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1	1.7	33	56.8	24	41.4	58	100.0

Note: 1 muri = 60 kg.

Source: Field Survey 2016.

### 4.3 Drop out from Traditional Occupations

Table 4.18 shows that out of total respondents, 48.4 percent left their traditional occupation. Out of total Kami respondents, 46.0 percent are not undertaking their traditional occupation. Likewise, out of total Damai respondents, 33.4 percent already left their occupations and the corresponding figure for Sarkis is 82.2 percent.

**Table 4.17: Distribution of Dropout Situation Household of the Respondents**

Caste	Drop out		Engaged in Traditional occupation		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kami	35	46.0	41	53.9	76	100.0
Damai	17	33.4	34	66.77	51	100.0
Sarki	23	82.2	5	18.8	28	100.0
Total	75	48.4	80	51.6	155	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

### **4.3.1 Reasons for Dropout**

Caste based occupation is the major means of livelihood for Dalit but it has been gradually disappearing over the years primarily due to the three reasons. These are as follows.

1. They themselves think that their occupation has lower social prestige and demeaning society.
2. Many young educated Dalit boys and girls do not want to follow their fathers' foot steps.
3. They are finding difficulty to compete with the open market which are goods depending upon the needs of the customers.

### **4.3.2 Caste Based Untouchability**

There is no record as such from which the authenticity of the origin of the cast system in Nepal can be traced. The difficulties arise because of two interrelated factors i) The history of Nepal itself and ii) the heavy reliance on fragmentary and legendary sources to trace the origin and to define the present legacy of the "caste system" in Nepal. The argument here is that the influence of specific belief and contemporary caste behaviour in Nepal cannot be simply assessed from those sources of vedic and Mahabharat periods.

The caste-based discrimination is very much alive even today, though the caste discrimination is more flexible in the eastern region compared to the western and the far-western regions. The caste based discrimination of dalits only is found not from the high caste Hindus and the indigenous nationalities also but this kind of discrimination is equally observed within the Dalit groups even today.

The sentiments expressed in Hindu fundamentalism in the context of Nepal Society has started relatively recent in the history of Nepal. The genesis of "caste system" can be traced more accurately from the rein of king Jayasthiti Malla in the context of Kathmandu valley with the introduction of the old legal code 1854 in the context of Nepal as a whole. The other related question in this context is how certain groups of people are treated as Dalits or untouchables in Nepal. If the present Nepali Hindu

system belongs to the larger Pan-Hindu modes of Great Tradition of India, then so called Dalits today must be the group of people of that broad Hindu category. In other words, the Nepali Dalit model in itself is an offshoot of larger Hindus Indian model who came to Nepal along with other caste Hindus with their traditional caste occupation. At the same time, some high caste Hindu groups also became Dalits over the years because of the caste expulsion model practiced in the Hindu system until 1963. In brief, Dalit or untouchability is a more complex topic than has been discussed in the literature and thus demands more serious thinking and research in the future.

#### 4.4 Effect of Market Economy On Traditional Occupation

##### 4.4.1 Selling

Table 4.18 shows that out of total respondents, 16.7 percent are selling their goods in the market. Other rest of 83.7 depend on the Bali system.

Out of total Kami respondents, 12.2 percent are selling their products in the market. Likewise, out of total Damai respondents, 8.8 percent are selling their goods in the market and out of total Sarki respondents, 100 percent are selling their goods in the market.

**Table 4.18: Distribution of Respondents, who are Selling their Goods in the Market**

Caste	Sell in the market		Do not sell in the market		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kami	5	12.2	36	87.8	41	100.0
Damai	3	8.8	31	91.2	34	100.0
Sarki	5	100.0	-	-	5	100.0
Total	13	16.7	67	83.7	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

#### 4.4.2 Market Situation

At present, the market situation of the caste occupation is booming not so well because the qualitative, cheap, credible, and a variety of model products play the significant role in order to have the good market place as far as the matter of local products concerns, it is the local people who consume the local products. Moreover, the rural Dalits who are embracing their caste occupation produce and distribute their local products on the basis of the local consumers of their locality. In addition, their business is found to have been moving at risk due to the import of the external goods. To sum up, the market situation of the caste occupation is found to be narrowing by-day-day.

#### 4.4.3 Area of Selling Market

**Table 4.19: Distribution of Respondents who are Selling their Goods in Different Sector**

Caste	Local Market		District Head quarter		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Kami	3	60.0	2	40.0	5	100.0
Damai	2	66.6	1	33.3	3	100.0
Sarki	1	20.0	4	80.0	5	100.0
Total	6	46.2	7	53.8	13	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

Table 4.19 shows that out of total respondents, 46.2 percent are selling their goods in local market and 53.8 percent are selling their goods in district headquarter. Out of total Kami respondents, 60.0 percent are selling their goods in local market and 40.0 percent are selling their goods in district head quarter. Likewise, out of total Damai respondents, 66.7 percent are selling their goods in local market and 33.3 percent are selling in district headquarter, and out of total Sarki respondents, 20.0 percent are selling their goods in local area and 80.0 are selling in district headquarter.

In the study areas from selected wards other caste (Magar) are doing sewing occupation. Damai respondents said that they don't effect their sewing occupation especially Magar who are doing occupation focusing ladies items only.

#### 4.5 Respondents View about the Competition of Readymade Goods

Table 4.20 shows that out o total Kami respondents, 36.5 percent said that they need special training, 48.7 percent said that they have to follow scientific method and 14.6 percent said that they need to produce new models day by day. Likewise, out of total Damai respondents, 41.2 percent said that they need to take latest training 20 percent said that they need to produce new model day by day. And out of total Sarki respondents, 20 percent said that they need training and percent said they need to produce scientifically to compete with the readymade goods.

**Table 4.20: Respondents View about the Competition of Readymade Goods**

	Kami		Dami		Sarki		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Need new training	15	36.5	14	41.2	1	20	30	37.5
Need to scientific production	20	48.7	-	-	4	80	24	30.0
Production of metal day by day	6	14.6	20	58.8	-	-	26	32.5
Total	41	100.0	34	100.0	5	100.0	80	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

##### 4.5.1 Effect on Local Products by Readymade Goods

The preference of all types of customers to the ready-made goods has become natural as they are cheap, of a variety of models, and produced by latest technological machines. It takes much time and much labour to produce local goods; but the income can't be made in the same proportion, because of the cause of cheap market proportion, because of the cause of cheap market price of the ready-made goods. For instance, we should pay the tailor 275 rupees in order to sew a paint whereas we can get ready-made Chinese goods ranging from 275-350 rupees in which a ready made cloth paint can be purchased. Similarly, shoes, sandals and other ready made goods are booming the market. Because of this reason, the negative effect on local products

is found to be increasing day by day. Due to the same reason, the caste occupation of the Dalits has been appearing to have been existing in crisis. These Dalits (Kami, Damai, Sarki) have been pursuing their caste occupation on compulsion. Despite their compulsion, the number of escapees or dissidents is increasing day by day. They mention the fact that (it is quite difficult for them to afford to conduct their family life and also to maintain the fulfillment of their basic needs out of their caste occupation) their caste occupation has been hardly sustaining the fulfillment of their basic requirements. To sum up, it seems that the production of the ready made goods has badly affected the production of the local goods.

#### **4.5.2 Reason for Low Selling of Local Products**

- a. Customer wants to buy readymade goods, because readymade goods are more fashionable and cheaper, in comparison to local products.
- b. Customer can choose so many models in readymade goods, which are available in the market.
- c. Readymade goods are easily available as much as customers want to buy.
- d. There is small market to sell local products.
- e. Businessmen also want to sell readymade goods because they can get more in comparison to local goods.
- f. Due to scarcity of modern skills and technology, local products are fixed in models: readymade goods are always coming with in new models day by day so customers what to buy new one.

#### **4.5.3 Competition Situation with Readymade Goods**

Basically there is not strong way to compete with the readymade goods with unskilled manpower and ancient technology. Field survey of 2015 data shows, those who are following traditional occupation are not satisfied with their own occupation. Still they do not have any alternative way to improve their occupation because of low education status, scarcity of money and modern technology. The majority of respondents want to move another sector for their better livelihood. Yet there is no supervision from the government level to improve their traditional occupation. Out of total respondents, only 15.61 percent engage in traditional occupation, with in this some respondents also want to set another way.

#### **4.5.4 Expectation from the Government Level to Improve their Occupation**

- ) It is necessary for the government to introduce the local products as a national identity.
- ) Local production yields every individual and their family to become self dependent by increasing their income. Assuming the fact that the whole nation will be self-dependent if every family becomes rich and self dependent. Various types of training from the side of the government in skill development for traditional occupation seems necessary.
- ) It seems necessary to inspire and galvanize their zeal in their caste occupation by systematizing the process of market management.
- ) Since the imported goods are controlled by the foreign government, it will be necessary to depend on them in the future. Considering the fact that the local products are the evergreen major things whereas the imported foreign goods are just an overflow of the flood, it is seriously an important fact to pay a due attention towards the caste occupation.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

This study aimed to find out the socio-economic situation of Dalits and forms of their traditional occupation finding out the situation of the Dalits perceivably their traditional occupation on existing discriminatory practice of society and effect on traditional occupation by market economy and means of livelihood was the main objective of the study. Major findings of this study are as follows:

- ) A total no. of 702 populations from the 155 households were enumerated by the survey. Among them 307 are males and 395 are female.
- ) Out of total respondents 51.6% respondents are involved in traditional occupation.
- ) 30.3 percent respondents are involved in agricultural work.
- ) 6.4 percent are involved in agriculture labour.
- ) 3.8 percent are involved in government and non government service
- ) 7.7 percent are involved in service in India and other service.
- ) Out of total (Kami, Dami, Sarki) 80 respondents, 76.2 percent respondents are learning their traditional occupation from their ancestors and 3.7 percent are learning from their relatives.
- ) Out of total 80 (51.6 percent) respondents, 78.7 percent respondents are doing their traditional occupation whole year and 21.2 percent are doing their occupation less than a year.
- ) Mainly Kami respondents, make and repair home appliance as well as agricultural equipments rest of time they do as agricultural labour.
- ) Damai respondents are sewing clothes and playing musical instruments for different occasions like, marriage ceremony and parties.
- ) Sarki respondents doing leather works and rest of the time they do wage workers and agricultural work.
- ) 47.3 percent Kami and 43.2 percent Damai respondents engage in Bali system.
- ) 46.1 percent Kami, 33.3 percent Damai, and 82.2 percent Sarki respondents are dropout from their traditional occupation.

- ) 12.2 percent Kami, 8.8 percent Damai, and 12.2 percent Sarki respondents sell their products in the market.
- ) 40.0 percent Kami, 33.3 percent Damai, and 80.0 percent Sarki respondents are selling their products in district head quarter.
- ) Out of total 43.7 percent are males and 56.2 percent are females population.
- ) Among three Dalit 38.2 percent are literate and 61.8 percent are illiterate.
- ) Out of total three dalit (Kami, Damai and Sarki) population, 48.14 percent are married and 49.0 percent are unmarried.
- ) Majority of respondents perceive that they don't like caste based untouchability.

## 5.2 Conclusions

This study is limited to the study of traditional occupation of three Dalit (Kami Damai and Sarki) and effects on traditional occupation by market economy and means of livelihood. The national scenario of Dalits is similar to study site, whereas Dalits are mostly disadvantages groups. They are socially excluded, economically deprived and in vulnerable condition. Despite their talent and skills they have compelled to do their traditional occupation because they do not have any alternative occupation for their livelihood. As rests of them are in process of social change, they have been experiencing new government policies, system of modernization against the traditional exchange system. All these have influenced the Dalits' socio-economic system and change the pattern of substance economy to some extent to be adaptive in these change setting and range of economic activities, exposure and mobility found the study area.

It has cumulative effect on political, economic and other sphere of development paradigms. Our cultural identity and indigenous skills are the most momentous clue for betterment of our socio-economic condition. So, we have to recognize our indigenous skills and ability. But occupational discrimination is embodied in the hierarchical "caste system". Most of the Dalit respondents said that traditionally it is required to follow their respective caste based occupation. Many Dalits in study area are still maintaining such traditional occupation for two reasons. These are as follows:

1. They do not have strong any alternative source of earning.

2. Some occupation such as gold-smith and tailoring is lucrative and much in demand.

The generation gap between old and new generations are opposed to follow their traditional occupation because the prevalent practice of caste based untouchability, low wage and social discrimination are the main cause of bequeathing their traditional occupation. Similarly, most of the Dalits of study area engage on Bali and traditional, caste based occupation.

Most of the respondents perceive the positive attitude to follow on caste based occupation. Some respondents are going to be changed their caste based traditional occupation. The kind of change towards the development is really a good sign for their better adaptation. Raising their status in social hierarchy and increasing their economic condition is absolutely better than the past. But there is still a great sense of urgency to aware them for their cultural heritage of the past. So, we have to conclude that it is not necessary to continue their traditional occupation, but their native skills should be improved for their livelihood rather than bequeathing their traditional occupation. So, it is necessary to modernize their traditional skills and there is an urgency to eliminate caste-based untouchability and other forms of caste-based discrimination.

- ) There is lack of clear definition on Dalits, which itself is a serious constraint for identifying the Dalit problems and issues in Nepal.
- ) One of the serious data gaps in research is about their traditional occupation.
- ) The first and foremost need of the time is to conduct a baseline survey with nationally representative sample to identify the Dalit problems and issues.
- ) Except for changing their family names like the high caste family names in some cases social mobility is virtually lacking among the hill Dalit groups even today. In fact, some of these Dalit members are attempting to hide their own identity as Dalits in recent years and creating more confusion within the Dalit groups .Among Dalits, the level of literacy rate and sharply decline educational attainment in higher level, especially for the female have serious constrains in over all Dalit empowerment.

- ) The other serious constraint for the Dalit empowerment is the prevailing caste based discrimination. They are discriminated by the high caste and indigenous Nationalities in many areas of their social, economic and political life.

### **5.3 Suggestions**

Based on the thought and practices study of these groups we can sum up that Dalits are economically, culturally, socially, politically deprived. Their traditional occupation is in transitional phase, that they neither take up nor leave.

Here are some recommendations made for the promotion of their traditional occupation.

Traditional occupations are the tradition of Dalits as well as indigenous knowledge from generation to generation. So, these cultural heritage needs to be preserved and promoted. Dalits face a number of problems in the variety of social and institutional contexts. Therefore, the general policy, alternative and recommendation are made here considering the core theme of social discrimination and exclusion regarding their traditional occupation.

- ) Improve the level of education of suppressed Dalit people. Elimination of all forms of discrimination against Dalits and bring Dalits into the main national stream of development.
- ) The traditional skills of Dalits are to be modernized and separate cooperate of such Dalits services should be established to improve their collective bargaining power.
- ) Poverty alleviation should be made the basic principle of Dalits' upliftment at all level.
- ) Bali system should be transformed in Cash System.
- ) Their productions should be access to the market.
- ) Government should provide them Technical Training to improve their occupation.

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