

## **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Change is a universal and continuous phenomenon which is found in all societies at all times. The present study is an attempt to observe socio-cultural changes among Tharu. The focus is given on the Tharu community of Ratnanagar municipality-18, Bachhauli village of Chitawan district tried to look at the community in relation to surrounding resources and environment in a changing context from sociological perspective. Hence this study intends to investigate and analyze how the Tharu have witnessed and experienced socio-cultural, life cycle rituals and environmental changes over the past few years and how they have developed adaptive mechanism to adjust in such a changing situation.

The notion of change dates back to early human civilization. In the beginning man had nomadic life and lived in jungle. Later on man started to settle permanently and formed social group and community. The concepts of nation, law, education, technology, religion etc are developed in the society. Every change led to new circumstances which again in change led to a next. Such changes are continuing and continue forever (Beattie, 1964)

From the above definition, it can be said that in the field of social development people practiced their everyday life and made different discipline as a culture, for continuing their cultural practices they developed or change their new discipline for easy life such as act of education, law, old technology replaced by new one in the field of agriculture, health, security, transport, dress, life cycle rituals etc. Such changes are continuing and continue forever.

Anthropologically if we analyze Nepali culture, it can be divided into three major types, i.e. group culture, regional culture and national culture. Group culture is the culture adopted by ethnic groups as their traditional culture such as Gurung culture, Newar culture, Tharu culture etc. Regional culture is the culture adopted by the inhabitants of specific geographical regions; the hill culture and plain culture. Nepali culture is the national culture in which culture of ethnic groups is integrated. It means local or ethnic cultures always show their identities but when these cultures unified in national integration, they create the national culture. There may be problem and difficulty to study on single ethnic group for perfect study. (Gaige, 1975)

It is concluded that cultural changes refer to innumerable aspect of life. Each ethnic group and caste people have his/her own specific culture, language, social norms, social organization, customs, myths, moral, values and traditions. Nepali society presents a composite picture of various national cultures representing all three ecological regions: the mountain, the hill and the terrain.

Tharus are mostly found on foothills of Chure and Siwalic to lower Himalyans ranges. This region used to be densely forest area stretching from eastern to western Nepal with only scattered patches cultivated land. The whole region is also known as Tarai, meaning the plain land area. Thus Tharus are found along the Terai of Nepal and also some part of North India. The Tharus along with Darai, Manjhi, Rajbansi, Dhimal and Chepang are indigenous to the Tarai region of Nepal. Vast majority of the Tharu population is backward and deprived of mainstream of development. (Krauskopff, 1999)

Thus, Tharus are one of the backward indigenous people settled in the Terai region. Tharus are basically agricultural peasant. Due to development of tourism in study area and settlement of migrated people from different culture and modernization process in social life lead Tharu people towards adaptation in changing environment. They get social and cultural change in various aspects such as education, agriculture, decision making, marriage system, dress pattern, social norms and behavior etc. Consequently the enrollment of Tharu children in schools increased, they use new technology in agriculture, joint family going to change in nuclear family, decisions making of women involvement are increased, and they like modern dress etc.

Therefore this study attempts to investigate socio-cultural change of Tharu people of Bachhauli village in Chitawan district and tries to observe the change in social life, cultural traditions. The changes are viewed by observing their life cycle ceremonies, feast and festivals, cultural practices, marriage system and dressing patterns etc in the past and present. This study intend to investigate and analyze how the Tharus have experienced socio-cultural changes over decades and how they have developed adaptive mechanism to adjust in such a changing situation.

## **1.2 Statement of the Study**

Various ethical groups have inhabited in Chitawan district. Among them Tharu is one ethnic group. This ethnic group has its own culture; tradition and social beliefs, by excluding the Tharu culture, the study of Nepalese culture will not be completed.

The problem of the present study is to investigate the way of life of the Tharu and to document the major socio-culture; as well as changes in marriage system that has occurred as a result of the process of modernization and migration.

Similarly, Tharu people have been exploited through generations but they could not protest against all these exploitations due to their simplicity. Likewise, total social, cultural and traditional behaviors or way of life of these people are changing gradually, with taking into consideration about this reality, the present study aims to tracing the Tharu living style with major emphasis on finding out the socio-cultural and marriage system changes. Tharus have modified their traditional life style. They have faced problems in the new setting. So, this study will attempt to find out the attitude towards the present way of life and problem they have been facing in new setting.

In this context, it is necessary to find out the root cause for the change in the Tharu society. Although they have changed their traditional life style such as marriage system, their life cycle rituals is still the same as it was in the past. It is to be studied as to why such condition is prevailing. Moreover, the problem of the study is to find out:

- i. To what extent their organizations, clans, family and marriage system has changed?
- ii. What are the factors responsible for change?

So the main problem of the present study is to seek answer of the above- mentioned questions.

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

Generally, this study objects to find out socio-cultural change of Tharu community of Ratnanagar Municipality -18, Bachhauli of Chitwan district. Particularly this study has the following objectives.

- i.) To analyze the present marriage system of Tharu people.
- ii.) To study the socio-cultural change in the various sphere of Tharu people.
- iii.) To find out the factors responsible for the rapid socio-cultural change in Tharu community.

#### **1.4 Rational of the Study**

A fundamental characteristic of Nepal is the ethnic diversity. Different ethnic groups are living in different regions of Nepal and they have their own cultural identity, which differ from each other.

Different scholars have conducted research on the ethnic groups of Nepal such as Magar, Tamang, Rai, Chepang, Bote, and Tharu etc. in many aspects (economic, educational, health, cultural, and so on). But very little study has been done in socio-cultural change of this ethnic group.

The study area is Ratnanagar Municipality -18, Bachhauli village of Chitawan district. The rational of the selection of the study area is as follows: The Tharu people living in this area are not studied by any researchers till now. The researcher is also the permanent resident of the same village, which help to establish the rapport for deeper study of the Tharu people.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Origin of Tharus

There are many controversies about the origin of Tharus. Scholars have to be able to come to a definite and clear conclusion regarding the origin of Tharus. Some scholars have to derive their origin through etymologies and some tried to trace their origin through a legend.

In Nepal's Tarai today, there are various groups of people that are included under the ethnonym Tharu. Tharus in Nepal's Tarai have not been a homogenous group of people in terms of their culture, language and politico-economic situations although they now claim a pan Tharu ethnic identity. However in spite of the intra-ethnic-group variations in certain social and cultural aspects, most of Tharus in various parts of the Tarai in Nepal seem to have gone through similar experiences in relation to their access to land and other vital resources in their own homelands (Guneratne, 2002)

Tharus are originated in Tarai and are the most probable oldest indigenous people. (Gurung, 2006).

Ghimire, (2052) argues that Eastern Tharus say "Paschimaha" to those who live in western region and vice-versa to "Prubaha" to those who live in eastern region. In Tharu myth, there is neither Southern nor Northern history of migration. They moved about human civilization neither from North nor South, but it could be connected with very ancient branch of Mongolian stock.

Tharus are believed to be the aboriginal people of the Tarai region on Nepal and India. The earliest mention of Tharus as an ethnic label is found in a 11<sup>th</sup> century geographer's description of an area called Tirhut –today's Mithila in eastern Tarai (Krauskopff, 1999).

A legend indicates their origin from Rajasthan in northwestern India. According to this legend, Tharus came from the Thar Desert of Rajasthan in India and hence the name Tharus. Most of them sincerely believe that they came from Rajasthan in India at the time of the Islamic invasions, Tharus who lived in Chitawan are called Chitaune Tharus. They have patriarchal system, which is different from the Tharus of western Nepal. According to old persons, they are the descendents of Rajput Chhetri (Bista, 1982).

When Muslim invaders captured Rajputana and murdered men and women of royal courts, the princess and many other royal women attendants fled away into the forest of Terai. The royal women living inside forest for many years accepted their male servants as a new husband, the offspring of these Rajput women and their low caste servants became Tharus. Decedents of these Rajput women that were born out of the liaisons between the Rajput women and their servants giving birth to the breed known as the Tharu (Gautam and Thapa; 1994). This derivation seems to be a pure hypothesis, which serves only trace their point of origin to the south.

Some writers have stated that the Tharus migrated from the Thar Desert in between 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century. They further opined that Tharus are the descendants of Rajput women and their servants of Chitourgarha Rajasthan, who fled away during Muslim invasion. Perhaps it may be some groups of Rajput and their families might have fled Chtouragarh and settled in the jungles of Tarai. Like- wise, it may also be some people migrated from somewhere nearby Thar Desert. But it is ridiculous argument that all the descendents of Tharus fled form Chitouragarh and such marriage gave birth to the tribe called Tharus. We have some findings provided by authors which help us to conclude that Tharus are neither migrated from Thar desert not the descendant of Rajput women and their servants. Some scholars visited Rajasthan to trace their Rajput origin, but completely failed in their endeavor. It means that Tharus had not migrated from Thar Desert. (Singh, 2006)

Of all the ethnic groups that form the Nepalese nationality the Tharus is one. Though they are one of the most primitive races inhabiting Nepal, nothing can be said with historical accuracy as regards their origin. Their origin is still obscure, whatever theories may have been advanced as regards their origin, and there is no doubt that they are the aborigines of Nepal. (Shrestha and Singh, 1987)

## **2.2 Socio-cultural Change**

Land and social change in Nepal is a study of the changing relation between members of an indigenous tribal population in Himalayan region and the Hindus who have entered their region during the past two centuries, following its incorporation into the kingdom of Nepal. (Caplan, 1970)

Lowe, (2001) and INSEC, (1992) on the basis of personal stories collected from many Tharu Kamaiya and ex-Kamaiya men and women reveals how once the land owning Tharus slowly turned into landless people. His study corroborates the earlier story common in research report and studies that Tharus were gradually alienated from their land by Pahari people and other elite within the past 100 or 200 years.

Guneratene, (2002) Tharus in the Tarai of Nepal are known to have been a community dependent on agriculture for making a living. That is, Tharus are known to have been mostly involved in agriculture as their primary economic activity. This is an irony in the face of the fact that majority of the Tharus have also been landless people in recent years.

Mishra, (2058) said that people, society and social relationship going to change and reconstruct by nature. There is far relationship between individual, group, society and social connections. When any change occurred in one then spontaneously happening in another too so that nature of individual is neither in a static form nor in the society. The relationship between husband wife, parents and child along with family, kinship, neighbors, village, society, nation and the world etc all are changeable along the time not in constable. All they are determined by historical phenomenon. Further he said that the level and volume of social changes are integrated with cause and affect relation. Causes of any change in any level affect to another level for change.

Pathak (2003) has studied the socio cultural and economic change among Kumal community. He has focused on the environment impact of economic activities and livelihood strategy in changing situation of Kumal. He has also clarified that how the social organization motivated to the children to go to school and they also motivated to the elder go to night class. Due to development of road, post office, health post and school their way of life is changing as time go on.

Boker, (1999) identified of Chitwan Tharus that the problems of the landless workers and small-scale farmers are similar and although the landlords of both groups (Tharus and Migrants) are regarded as equally privileged, this socio-economically related classification of Terai population is hardly recognized. The ethnic classification, the dichotomy between autochthonous and immigrant population groups, is what the Tharus especially attach importance to. This strong ethnicity of the Tharus is, however being eroded. Link may ethnic groups that have been

integrated into a Hindu society and are being Hinduized the Tharus have also accepted the Hindu ideal. The various institutional relations resulted social and cultural change of Tharus.

Chaudhary, 2064 B.S., Hill originated propel migration into Terai has impact on indigenous Tharus on internally displaced of Tharus from their land. Beside this, he stated about population pressure, deforestation, marginalization and destruction of wildlife's, problem of landlessness, pollution, out migration, problem of supply and development, problems of rights and resources. However, he did not provide any evidences about social and cultural impact of Tharus.

Fisher, (2013) has addressed that with the changes in Volunteers themselves including their involvement in various stages of globalization process many of the changes that have taken place in Nepal would have happened regardless of the presence or absence of the Peace Corps. Changes in education, agriculture, tourism and politics were inevitable.

Due in part to malaria eradication in the Tarai and increased availability of modern health services, resources now have to be shared among over 30 million people, compared to barely 10 million when we arrived in Nepal in 1962. The tremendous strides made by many can be send in the salutary changes in social indices such as literacy (sharply increased) and poverty (dramatically reduced), but their traditional world no longer carries the heft it once did, while many of the benefits of the modern world are still beyond their reach.

KC, (1995) has concluded some changing patterns of Tharus of Surkhet in her study. She found the changes in dressing patterns, especially in ornaments, structure of houses, educational status, and health condition and in family type. She also mentioned that slight change has occurred in the political participation. Their language is also influenced by Nepali language. The occupational diversification has been observed towards government service, wage labour, construction labour and low level technicians other than agriculture.

Culture is constantly undergoing in accruing to environment and due to this transformation. It is constantly being adapted to external force but once it is developed, the influence of the natural environment begins to decrease. Besides the various aspects of culture are also undergoing development and some internal adaptation among them consequently being necessitated (Kumar, 1997)



Shrestha and Singh, (1987) writes the different places in which they have settled have had some influence on their language and their tribal characteristics: the language and the ways of living of the Tharus in Nawalpur, for instance, are somewhat different from those of the Tharus living in Morang in eastern Nepal and Rajpur in western Nepal.

Due to the infiltration of people from all directions a prosperous community began to grow and people as the different background of languages, culture and ethnicity began to develop here a common life style, with a common language and culture. This perhaps accelerated the process of Nepalization much faster than at the initial phase. The process of Nepalization in the Terai began with the setting of hill people in that region. The process of Nepalization in the Terai was vehemently opposed by the more sophisticated plain Hindu culture of Terai, but the plain tribal of Terai have yielded to the presence of aggressive hill culture which have converted them into a Hindu follower (Upadhyay, 1999).

### **2.3 Life Cycle Rituals and Festivals**

Chaudhary, (1999) has studied the socio economic and cultural change of Eastern Tharus. He found the changes in many traditional aspects of life of the Tharus, particularly in marriage system, religious belief, family system, farming practices, dresses, ornaments and language. Previously, various types of ornaments and a lengthy and expensive party were essential for their marriage. But now they have reduced their expenditure by minimizing materials and party process. Traditionally, the Tharu people did not practice inter caste marriage but now days there are some cases of inter caste marriages.

Festivals, religion and social customs are major aspects of socio- cultural and economic life of the Tharus. Their ceremonial customs as they practice provide them a sense of confidence, comfort and sense of socio-religious security, social feeling and social solidarity. In the meantime the unproductive expenses in such ceremonial customs increase their indebtedness. (Panthi, 1998)

Tharus in Dang have their own type of culture. Their festivals are a part of Tharu culture. Due to the contact with other outside people as well as Hindu emigrates from hill, Tharu culture has been highly influenced by Hindu culture. Their festivals have socio-cultural importance and have undergone some significant changes. Such as food habit, dress patterns, way of observing various festivals and way of living. (Sharma, 1985)

Tharu have customs and traditions of celebrating the festivals and enjoying them. Tharu celebrate Dashai, Tihar, Phagu Purnima, Maghi Sankranti, Tij etc. A Maghi festival is the most important festival of Tharu. In this festival, they do not work before three or four days for the celebration of Maghi festivals. Only they make drink and enjoy in that festival. They ate a lot of varieties of food. Some Tharus take a fast on that festival they do not take anything in Maghi festival. The whole night they dance and sing. *Maghi* festivals take place nearly five days. *Holy Purnima* festival is held from the *Falgun Purnima*. It goes on for month. They do not work in a whole periods of festival. Tharus man and women drink a lot of wine. They spray color in that festival with each other. In the early morning they bath in the river and go to worship in the field in the day of *Hari Sayani Eka Dashi*. They pray to god for good harvest. They pray to earth, dig with a spade and worship to god that day they do not plough. Their oxen are free. They believe that if they plough by oxen on the next birth they would be the same. (Chhetri, 1998)

Tharus, in general, practice their own tribal religion which consists of worshipping a number of spirits and some Hindu deities which have been incorporated. Tharus in the east Terai, who have been living in closer contact with high caste Hindus, employ Brahman priests to perform a number of Hindu religious ceremonies. Brahmin priests are also employed to conduct wedding and other domestic '*Puja*' ceremonies.

Almost all the Tharus living in the eastern districts of Sarlahi, Mahottari, Saptari, and Morang, cremate their dead while most of those in the middle and western district, bury them. As with all other societies in Nepal, the Tharu community is undergoing tremendous changes. There is a wave of reform among educated young Tharus. They have changed their food habits, reformed their religious practices and introduced modern education. There is Tharu organization known as the Tharu welfare society, which provides hostels in Birgung for school children and students of both sexes. It has also made an effort to publish information about Tharus. This society encourages education among the Tharus of the interior regions and teaches them clean habits, such as not keeping chickens and pigs inside the house. Some have given up pork emulating the habits of high caste Hindus.

## **CHAPTER- THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Selection of Research Site**

There are altogether eight V.D.Cs and eight municipalities in Chitwan district. I select Ratnanagar Municipality ward no. 18, Bachhauli village because I born here. As a citizen of this place I acquainted with the people, society, culture and changes among them. During my childhood till now there are various changes occurring here which I observe myself and that always hint me to know the changes and its cause, therefore the selection of research site is my choice. Ratnanagar-18, Bachhauli village is one of the tourism areas, though it is in backward in many aspects so the present research work is conducted in Ratnanagar-18, Bachhauli.

This village is situated between two rivers namely Bhudi Rapti and Dhungre Khola. There is Khairani municipality in its east direction and Bharatpur municipality in its west, and Chitwan National Park in its south and Bharatpur municipality in its north direction. The major population of this area is occupied by Tharu people. This area falls under the Buffer Zone areas of the Chitwan National Park. It has a large number of multi-castes, multi-ethnic groups and migrants from the hill region. It has 286 households with a total population of 1575 among them 832 are male and 743 are female. Among these households most of them represent Tharu community. I visited the Bachhauli community and collected basic information which is required for my research. Bachhauli community is accessible by motor able road and this area is 17 km distance from the district head quarter, Bharatpur. There are not done such kinds of study over here up to now. That's why I thought that this area is very good for research.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study was based on the data collection from the field with the help of fieldwork method as described. A descriptive and analytical research design has adopted to analyze and interpret the quantitative and qualitative data collect from the concerned field.

The study is based on descriptive as well as analytical research design which may be considered as suitable and appropriate for the analysis of this research work. This study is analytical because it makes attempts to examine the process of social and cultural change

of Tharu people of Bachhauli village. This study is also based on descriptive because it has attempted to describe the natural conditions of study area, the cultural process and change in different sphere with an emphasis on life-cycle ceremonies, family kinship, religion and economic condition of Tharu.

### **3.3 Sampling Procedure**

The nature of this research was analytical and descriptive. It explores many aspects of socio-cultural change and the factor of socio-culture change systematically and explains them in rural societies. For this study, proportionate random sampling technique has used by the lottery system to select the respondent because it was not possible to interview the entire Tharu household. The study area had covered about 75 households among 286 households of this municipality.

### **3.4 Nature and Sources of Data**

This study was based on both primary and secondary data but most of the data was used in the study are primary in nature. The primary data was collected through various methods such interview, observation, household survey etc.

#### **3.4.1 Primary data collection**

#### **3.4.2 Secondary data collection**

##### **3.4.1 Primary Data Collection**

Field survey is the basic source of primary data. Data was collected from the field work with the help of questionnaire with personal interview, key informant interview and observation. Response of sample respondents was regarded as the major source of field information.

##### **3.4.2 Secondary Data Collection**

The secondary data was collected from books, journals, reports and research paper, articles, magazines, newspapers and government official records and other relevant literature and library. They were used as secondary sources of data to meet the objectives of the study. Quotes from knowledgeable persons of the area and the ethnic group were taken as the secondary sources.

### **3.5 Universe and Sampling**

Total Tharus households are the units for the study. There are 286 households in the Ratnanagar Municipality -18. 75 household's head were sampled from whole population by simple random sampling by lottery method was followed after preparation of total population list. Because it was not possible to interview the entire Tharu household for collection the information of past and present changing situation for the study because of the limits of time, resources, expert manpower and proper implication of the study.

### **3.6 Techniques of Data Collection**

The data for the present study was generated from the following tools and techniques.

#### **3.6.1 Interview Schedule**

Interview schedule was used to collect the important data for fulfill the research study. Both structured and unstructured interview were used for quantitative and qualitative data collection. Structured interview was used to get the basic information such as population structure, ethnic composition, land and livestock holding, forest resources utilization pattern etc. about the Tharu people. Likewise unstructured interview was used to collect data about the history of their culture, tradition, marriage system and customs of the past and the present change of socio-cultural life of Tharu people. This technique was equally used to collect the people's attitude towards the change. In addition to this, it was also used to collect data about ethnical history, process of change in life ceremonies, rites and rituals.

The leader of the Tharu community or the command personalities in the community such as Tharu Gurau, intellectual persons of the Tharu society, school teachers, members of NGOs and social workers were consulted to obtain qualitative data using unstructured interview. The information was related with their main festivals, religion, marriage system and life style.

#### **3.6.2 Observation**

The information on method of different working activities of daily lifestyles such as birth ceremony, death ceremony, marriage ceremony, house structure, dress, ornaments, songs etc were collected by means of observation such as participant and non-participant were applied

during the time of information collection which was family stays, rapport building housing visits etc.

### **3.6.3 Key Informants Interview**

Some of the primary information was obtained through key informant interview for their historical background, present practice and its effect. The key informants were old peoples of Tharu community, local school teachers, chairman of the mother group, and a member of Nari Bachhat Samuha etc.

### **3.7 Data Presentation and Analysis**

The collected data was edited and coded in tabular form. Both qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed and interpreted presenting in figure as far as possible and necessary. Statistical tools were used for quantitative data and descriptive method was used for qualitative data collection through various techniques in the field. The analyzed data was also presented in tables.

### **3.8 Limitation of the study**

Every research study have own limitations. So this study also had some limitations. This study was fulfill the master degree dissertation paper so it was limited by time and budget. This study aims to focus the socio-cultural change of the Tharu community of Ratnagar municipality ward no.18, Bachhauri, Chitwan. This study is limited only in Bachhauri village on 75 House Hold which is the small part of the whole Tharu community. This study may not reflect the socio-cultural change of whole Tharu community of the country. The information in this study was based on the data collection by the researcher. This study intends to focus only socio- culture changes of Tharu community of Bachhauri. Other caste and ethic group were strictly excluded in this research.

## **CHAPTER – FOUR**

### **GENERAL OVERVIEW ON THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGE**

#### **4.1 Location**

Bachhauli was a VDC which is merged into Ratnanagar Municipality ward no. 8 in Chitwan district. It is most important tourism area called Sauraha of Chitwan where most of foreign and Nepali tourist people arrived to visit. It covers 18 sq. km. area. It is situated between two rivers namely Bhudhi Rapti and Dhungra Khola. It lies south from Ratnanagar and Khareni west from Kumrose and north from Padampur and east from Ratnanagar. Major population occupied by Tharu in this village. This village falls under Buffer zone area of Chitwan National Park. Sauraha the main tourist centre area of Chitwan National Park lies within this village. Most of visitors always gathered there to visit Chitwan National Park. The park belong to this many types of wild animals such as wild elephants, tigers, rhinoceros, panther, bear, deer etc. This village has a large number of multi caste and multiethnic migrants from the hill region.

#### **4.2 Population/Ethnic Composition**

##### **4.2.1 Population Structure of Ratnanagar Municipality**

The population of Ratnanagar Municipality of Chitwan district is 69851 among them male is 33256 and female is 36595. Tharu people in Ratnanagar Municipality is the second largest population contained 12357 among them 5936 are the male and 6421 are the female population which are the 17.69 percent among total caste population. The table below show detail description of population by caste wise distribution.

**Table No. 1: Population Distribution of Ratnanagar Municipality**

S.N.	Caste	Male	Female	Total	Present
1.	Brahmin	10829	12292	23121	33.10
2.	Tharu	5936	6421	12357	17.69
3.	Chhetri	4003	4691	8694	12.44
4.	Tamang	2258	2431	4689	6.71
5.	Newar	2129	2366	4495	6.43
6.	Sarki/kami	1561	1802	3363	4.81
7.	Magar	921	1104	2025	2.89
8.	Gurung	916	1087	2003	2.86
9.	Damai	554	652	1206	1.72
10.	Darai	422	466	886	1.26
11.	Kumal	426	405	831	1.18
12.	Sanyasi	346	398	744	1.06
13.	Gharti	243	251	494	0.70
14.	Chepang	184	195	379	0.54
15.	Rai Limbu	108	125	233	0.33
16.	Musahar	114	101	115	0.30
17.	Yadav	50	33	83	0.11
18.	Other	2256	1787	4043	5.78
<b>Total</b>		<b>33256</b>	<b>36595</b>	<b>69851</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: CBS, 2001

According to key respondent's information, decades ago Tharu is the largest population group in the study area but due to frequent settlement of migrated people from hill region, the population of Tharu people decreasing day by day in front of them. Now Tharus are the second largest group in Ratnanagar Municipality.

#### **4.2.2 Population Structure of Bachhauri Village**

Bachhauri has 286 households with the total population of 1575. Among them 832 are male and 743 are female. But I made detailed study of only 75 households. This community is also not exceptional from the Nepali society in respect of son preference, which has become the main



reason of the population growth in the community. Detailed population structure of the community under study is given in the table below:

**Table No. 2: Population Distribution by Age and Sex of the Sample Households.**

S.N.	Age (year)	Population			Percentage		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	0-5	45	42	87	52	48	15
2	6-15	84	57	147	60	40	24
3	16-45	150	132	282	53	47	47
4	45-60	34	31	65	52	48	11
5	60 above	10	8	18	56	44	3
	Total	323	270	593	54	46	100

*Source Field survey, 2016*

Population of the 75 households is 593 including 323 (54%) males and 270 (46%) females. Among which 15 percent are 5 years of age 24 percent population are 6 to 15 years of age, largest population is 47 percent which is 16 to 45 years of age, 11 percent people are 45 to 60 years of age and only 3 percent people are above 60 years of age group. Data also reflects that male population (54 percent) is greater than female population (46 percent).

### **4.3 Family Structure**

From my observation it is found that the average size of the family is 5.4 people per family in the study area. Minimum family size I found is of three members and maximum size is of 9. The size of family is small because most of the family of that area is nuclear type but the population growth is high. Modernization has affected the family structure of the study area. Tharu people are also attracted towards the nuclear family and are following this family structure. Family structure of the study area is given below in the table.

**Table No. 3: Structure of Family in Study Area**

<b>S.N.</b>	<b>Structure of Families</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Nuclear family	54	72
2	Joint family	21	28
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2016*

The table no.3 above shows that 72 percent of the respondents are used to live in nuclear family. And 28 percent respondents are lived in joint family. It shows that most of the families attracted toward joint family.

Tharu people used to live in joint family in the past. But these days, most of the Tharu people like to live in nuclear family rather than joint and extended families. When daughter in-laws join the family, they have to face various problems and they want to live separately. Due to these reason, Tharu of today like nuclear family. Members of nuclear family feel satisfaction and happiness in their family life. Few numbers of old generations like to live in a joint family. They argue that there will be easy to solve their family problems in joint family and can easily do a lot of domestic works. Joint family helps to increase the agricultural production. But reality is that, Tharu people of the study area are interested to live in nuclear family. Therefore, it can be said that living in the nuclear family in Nepal is becoming a common trend.

#### **4.4 Environmental Aspect**

Generally, land, forest and water are important natural resources of Nepal. Most of the population of the study area depends upon and for its subsistence production. People of Bachhauli seem environmentally conscious.

##### **4.4.1 Energy Consumption**

Most of the villagers show serious concern about environmental problems. They are sensitive towards the effect of environmental degradation. They are conserving forests by forming community forest user groups. They have done community plantation and are conserving it. They do not go to the forests for grass cutting and fuel wood collection except for the public open days. Some of the rich persons have installed biogas plants. There is the facility of electricity and telephone in the village. Table below shows the energy consumption pattern of the respondents.

**Table No 4: Energy consumption patterns of the respondents**

S.N.	Fuel category	Households	Percentage
1	Firewood	19	25.33
2	Firewood +biogas	36	48
3	Firewood +kerosene	7	9.33
4	Firewood+ Bhuse chulo	13	17.33
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2016*

Above table no. 4 shows that about 25% use firewood, 48% use biogas and firewood, 9.33% use firewood and kerosene and 17.33% people use firewood and Bhuse chulo. Thus, firewood users are found in large number in the study area because people have easy access to the firewood. Households having lands have planted trees (fruits, bamboo and fuel wood) and some fodder.

According to the respondents the people of Bachhauli with in decade they used to consume biogas it can be said that this is the part of a change. Decades ago people were using firewood, firewood +kerosene, and bhuse chulo. Firewood supplied from local community forest and National park. Now a days people are not only depended on firewood but they used to replaced by biogas.

#### **4.4.2 Settlement Pattern and House Structure**

Settlement is also an indication in Nepal of the ethnic compactness of the different communities. The settlements of Tharus are generally situated scattered and gathered from other settlements of migrant people.

Though, the settlements of Tharus in Chitwan are in compact in nature and most of the houses are build closely but the clustering of houses have no any particular direction as other migrant people. Due to population increase in the settlement areas, it is now going to be insufficient for the construction of new houses.

In the study area, the houses of Tharus are made up of mud and thatched roof slopping toward two sides. The houses are found to be only one floor and small windows. The sizes of the houses are very small and narrow because of tradition and poverty.

Most of the Tharu people make two or three yards for different purpose. Biggest one is used for sitting, gossiping, sleeping and receiving guest and other purposes. Small huts are used as kitchen or temple. They make other small huts for pigeon, hen and goats. They keep their houses very neat and clean. Following table shows the housing structure of sample households.

**Table No. 5: Structure of Sample Houses**

<b>S.N.</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Household</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1	One storey brick house with cement plastered roof	20	26.67
2	One storey brick house with zink roof	35	46.67
3	One storey bamboo and mud plastered with tile roof	12	16
4	Two storey brick house with cement plastered house	8	10.66
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2016*

Out of 75 houses, 10.66 percent houses are differently built than the common nature, i.e. these are concrete building, one storey brick house with Zink roofs are 46.67 percent, one storey bamboo and mud plastered and their roofs are covered with tile sheets are 16 percent.

Decades ago almost people had one storey bamboo and mud plastered with grass and tile roof but now days grass roof cannot be seen in Bachhauri village it means they wanted to change their house structure according to income. Duration of grass roof with mud plastered wall are not in durable so people had to repair every within 5 years but in recent they used the brick with cement plastered wall with zinc roof that are durable till many years.

#### **4.4.3 Health and Sanitation**

Most of the Tharu people are aware on the good health and sanitation. They keep their house and surroundings very neat and clean. Most of them smear the floor daily, some are twice or thrice in a week. They regularly take bath and wash clothes. They are aware about the clean drinking water and using toilets. But some of the landless Tharu people do not have toilet.

#### **4.5 Economic Aspect**

##### **4.5.1 Agricultural Land Holding**

In an agricultural country like Nepal, land is considered as the symbol of economic well-being. Land is one of the most utilized natural resource in the study area. Since the most natural

resources are inseparable (not separable) from the land, it is the basic resource of the people in Bachhauli.

Type and quality of soil are major concerns of farmers and they invest a great deal of labour to maintain and enhance it. Land is generally classified as “Bari” (dry cultivated land) and “Khet” (paddy cultivated land) on the basis of types of crop cultivated and irrigation facilities. People of the study area own not more than two and half Bigha land at a maximum. Following table shows the landholding pattern of sample households.

**Table No. 6: Land Holding Pattern of the Respondents**

<b>S.N.</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>percentage</b>
2	Less than 5 Kattha	7	9.33
3	6-10 Kattha	15	20
4	11-15 Kattha	10	13.33
5	16-20 Kattha	30	40
6	21-30 Kattha	3	4
7	2 Bigha	7	9.33
8	More than 2 Bigha	3	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2016*

Among the households who own land, highest percentage (40 %) has 16-20 Kattha of land and 9.33 % people have less than 5 Kattha. Similarly 20 % have 6-10 Kattha, 13.33% have 11-15Kattha and more than 9.33 % have 30 Kattha-2 Bigha. Only 4% household has more than 2 Bigha.

Due to frequent division of the agricultural land in Tharu families, they have low land areas remains and it goes continuously per year. Consequently the poor Tharu families cannot maintain their daily life with low land agriculture and depend on rich landlords. Low land owner people who work as *Adhiya*, in rich farmer’s land is a one option and another is that they want to go nearer city and foreign country for maintain their daily life.

#### 4.5.2 Livestock

Only those people, who take agriculture as the primary occupation, are rearing domestic animals. They keep oxen for the ploughing purpose and their wastes are used as fuel for cooking. Few families have are rearing cattle, buffalo, goat and pig etc for home consumption. Most of the families are rearing birds like chicken, ducks and pigeon for the purpose of meat. They do not have to keep animals for commercial motive.

There is good irrigation facility. They use chemical fertilizer but it loses the soil quality and productivity of the land. So the production of their land is not sufficient for the whole year. Those who cannot produce sufficient crop from their land they involved in other activities also.

#### 4.5.3 Occupation

In the study area, the main occupation of the households is agriculture and most of them work as farmers in the field and farms. Those who do not possess enough land for survival, work as wage labour in agriculture or as tenant. People here do not have to face hand to mouth problem. But, at the same time they are also not very well off.

Few youths are found going out of the village in Middle East and third countries for employment. Few respondents found engaged in business, daily wage labour, agriculture labour, 'Mistry', service etc. Among 75 respondents 65.33 households are primarily depended on agriculture, 13.33 households as the wage labour and 14.66 in business and 6.68 in service.

**Table No. 7: Occupation of the Respondents**

S.N.	Occupation	No. of Respondents	Present
1	Agriculture	49	65.33
2	Wage labour	10	13.33
3	Business	11	14.66
4	Service	5	6.68
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2016*

People here seemed busy all the season. During cultivation and harvest seasons they are busy in fields and during off-season they are busy working as labour business etc. Most of the people are involved in saving and credit groups. This resource has made them stronger in financial matter

and easy access of finance for income generation activities. They practice traditional agriculture. They do not have access on the modern farm equipments or improved seeds fertilizer. But, in recent time, some Tharu of the rich group have started using chemical fertilizers, improved seeds, tractor, thresher etc.

#### 4.5.4 Resource Mobility

In the case of resource mobilization it was found that most of the resources are not generated there. So they mostly depend on outside for many resources. They buy construction materials, medicines, clothes, utensils, chemical fertilizers, machinery goods, kitchen materials such as salt, sugar, spices etc. Some of their agricultural products are sold in the outside market.

In these days community cannot live on isolation so they have to interact with other community. People of Bachhauri go to Tandri, Parsa, Bharatpur bazaar and Narayanghat to sell their product and to purchase the necessary goods. They go to Tandri and Bharatpur for health treatment. They go to native area, Birganj in Parsa district and Kathmandu city and abroad for employ

#### 4.5.5 Decision Making

The elder male member of the family makes most of the decision but they consult with female or his wife before taking any decision. Generally other members of the family do not take part in decision making process. Elder male member of the family guide all the family members and all members respect him.

**Table No. 8: Decision Making Power in Tharu Families**

S.N.	Decision Making Power of	No. of Families	Percent
1	Male only	50	66.66
2	Female only	10	13.33
3	Both of them	15	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The table no.8 above clearly shows that Tharu families are male oriented 66.66 present families is ruled by male. 20 percent families are ruled by both male and female and only 13.33 percent families are ruled by female only. it can be clearly said that Tharu families are male oriented family. Maximum decision making in the family through the male.

#### **4.6 Village Polity and Change**

This community seems little bit aware about the political situation of the country. Party politics do not mean much to the locals. They care about the people, who can do something for their betterment and the community. There are women members in the ward committees, but they seem just passive members. It is mostly men who are actively involved in politics.

They are peace-loving people and always prefer peaceful co-operation and coordination. Previously, there was different type of political system in the study area. To mobilize the Tharu village co-operatively and effectively and to solve the village common problem and to apply their traditional norms, customs, belief, rule, law and regulation, selected a person, called village head (Mukhiya or Chudhari). The headman of the village plays the role of leader who is assisted and followed by the villagers. The head man was selected by head of the Tharu household. The head man if unfit for leadership can be removed by the approval of the household head. The headman functions as a priest, administrator, judge and guard of the village.

But now the situation has changed. That system is gradually changing. They have started to participate in political organization e.g. ward politics. The importance of headman is decreasing and substituted by chairman of ward and head of the ward. In the past, Tharu people did not go to the court or police office to settle the disputes. Every dispute was settled in their village. They were afraid of police or judge of the burial body outside their society, because of the fact that they did not know the legal system and procedure. Now most of the cases in the village reach to ward office, court and Police Post.

#### **4.7 Social Relationship with other Caste and Ethnic Group**

The major ethnic groups of the study area are Brahmin, Chhetrie, Chepang, Newar and other lower caste as Sarki, Damai, and Kami etc. In the past, the Tharu people did not have any relationship with ethnical communities. That is why; there was no any such group of communities near them.

After the eradication of malaria, huge number of people of hill community started to settle in this area. They gradually came into contact with the people of other ethnic groups.

At present, the Tharu people of the study area have good relation with all the ethnic groups. They are bound to keep good relation with Brahmins, Chhetry, Magar, Chepang Kami and Damai and



other ethnic groups. Although, these ethnic groups are culturally self-perpetuating that they have their own institution, which helps them to identify themselves from each other. In wider economic and political context, they are interdependent. Systematic interdependence emerged from people's interaction with each other and natural environment where they have been living.

The people of Brahmin/Chhetry communities and Tharu community are mostly involved in agriculture. So there is a huge competition between these two ethnic groups for lands occupy and the Tharu people are losing their land gradually in this competition. As a result, Brahmins, Chhetry are becoming the land lord. So the Tharu community has compulsion to maintain the relation with them in order to solve hand to mouth problem. Some of them are business man and skilled workers also. Hence, the people of Tharu community are bound to keep relation with other ethnic groups. Especially they have great compulsion to maintain good relation with Brahmin and Chhetry.

#### **4.8 Educational Status**

Literacy and educational qualification attained by the population is important indicator of social development. Literacy rate of Tharu people is increasing day by day. But they do not help and guide their children at home because most of the elders are not so much literate. The children have to help in household work in the morning and in the evening. Tharu girls and boys are good in studies in the beginning days. But as they reach class seven or eight, the dropouts increase because of the growing household responsibilities and low economic status is also one reason. Some years ago most of the Tharu girls married before reaching class 9 or 10. But now days the early marriage system is not practiced much. Girls are also reaching at the high level educational. Before, the Tharu people were unaware of education. They did not want to educate their children. But these days, due to the establishment of school in the study area and influence of other ethnic groups, they have started to send their children to school.

More than 78.82% population is literate in the study area. Overall, 89.76% males and 78.82% females are literate. Female illiteracy is higher than male.

**Table No. 9: Literacy Status of Sample Households**

Literacy Status	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Illiterate	25	10.24	50	21.18	75	15.62
Literate	219	89.76	186	78.82	405	84.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2016*

Among the literate population 46% have primary level of education, 26.66 %, 17.28 % and 9.14 % have attended lower secondary, secondary and higher level of education respectively.

**Table No. 10: Educational Attainments of Sample Households**

S.N.	Educational Status	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1	Primary level	86	39.27	104	55.92	190	46.92
2	L. Secondary	63	28.77	45	24.20	108	26.66
3	Secondary	46	21.00	24	12.90	70	17.28
4	Higher level	24	10.96	13	6.98	37	9.14
<b>Total</b>		<b>219</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2016*

From the above table no.10, it is observed that in the level of educational attainment, proportion of female is higher than male at lower secondary and higher-level category, whereas in other category male percent is higher. However, it is observed that the literacy status of men and women in the study area are better than the national level. It may be because of more facilities of school, college, non-formal educational program, awareness of people about education.

Decades ago Tharu parents did not want to send their daughters for higher education. But in recent they follow the manner of other migrated people in one hand and another is the more facilities available of higher educational institutes in the study area.

#### **4.9 Religion Belief**

Tharu society is impressed by superstition. They believe that god does the creation of human beings. They believe in legends. Religion tends to reinforce Tharu ethnicity. The Tharu

perpetuate their traditions by adherence to their ethnic religion beliefs. Religious affiliation reinforces Tharuism a feeling of being Tharu and thus different from non-Tharus. Thus their behavior is patterned by religious belief and their joint participation in religious norms makes them a more cohesive group. Most of the Tharu people believe in Dhami who is supposed to help protect people from attacks by witches and from diseases and possession. The Tharu believes in *Dain, Chudal, Bhut, Pret* and *Boksi*. Tharu think that they always attempt to conceal the fact that she has the ability to cause trouble to others. The *Dhami* try to protect people from these evils.

The study area is more religious. Hinduism is the religion followed by different ethnic/caste groups. However, they follow their different cultural practices. Following is the glimpse of faith of the respondents in study area.

**Table No.11: Faith on Dhami/Jhakri of the Respondents**

<b>Faith on</b>	<b>No. of Beliefs</b>	<b>Not beliefs</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dhami/Jhakri	30	45	75
Percentage	40	60	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The table no. 11 above shows that 40 percent people in the study area have faith on Dhami/jhakri it means that they believe in invisible spirit such as bhut, pret, bokhsi, chudal etc. and there are the people who haven't believed in such spirits. According to the respondents decades ago in the study area mostly people believed in invisible sprit but during these years now days mostly haven't faith on such belief system.

Most of the Tharu people believe in animism and worship spirits. Some, however, do not have any concept of religion and a few are gradually adopting the dominant Hindu system. Tharu's traditional worshipping method and deities and spirits are gradually in the process of modification due to many factors such as dependency on other group, mass illiteracy, poverty and close contact with Hindus. Adoption of Hindu religion by some rich Tharus is also due to belief that it helps to identify with more prestige. In most cases the Tharus are open-hearted to adopt the Hindu culture and religion. In fact the Tharu religion is dynamic in its character as well as in its form.

The Tharus have adopted the Hindu ideal as an unattainable goal. They can be seen to abandon things they regard as impure such as hog breeding or to introduce typical Hindu *Pujas*. I found some of the Tharus special cultures like, *Pitre Aunsi*, *Godana (tattoo)* distinct from others.

Rich Tharus, while trying to upgrade their social status, have been adopting the Hindu way of religious life. They no longer want to be linked to the tradition of the poor class Tharus. The Tharus from prosperous and educated families try to direct their people towards change and higher standards. They did not use to save money for future emergency. But now a-days, they have adopted economical habits which encourage the reduction of different expenditure.

#### **4.10 Language**

Tharus of Bachhauli speak Tharu language, this language falls under Indo-Aryan group. The alphabet of this language is written as in Devnagari. Tharu language is fourth largest language of Nepal (Census 2011). It is the second largest language of Ratnanagar municipality. But the language is somewhat different from the other part of the country.

#### **4.11 Life Cycle Rituals**

##### **4.11.1 Birth ceremony and Change**

After baby is born the placental is placed on a nanglo (bamboo tray for cleaning food gains) above a cloth. Some of the placental is based in the form where the mother lives and a fire is built above the pit where placenta was buried. The fires warmth is supposed to benefit the mother. For eleven days the mother should not touch any object. There is no particular system its celebrating in naming. But the child and mother are bathed for purification. The whole house is purified on that day by spreading cow dung on the floor. Mostly in the 11<sup>th</sup> day the name month, situation, character etc. of the baby such as Phirala, Sanichara, Mangara, Pukhana etc.

Previously, they did not go to hospital for check-up and delivery but now pregnant women have started going hospital. Baby's mothers were kept at the bed placing on the floor of the house after the delivery but now they sleep on the bed. In the past most of them believed in *Dhami/Jhankri*. Now Tharu people are attracted towards small family so they have started to use family planning devices.

In the past, they gave name according to birthday, month, and situation but now days due to the influence of other culture, Tharus have left to give such name and would prefer to give common Hindu names.

### **Change in Birth Naming ceremonies**

In the Tharu community baby is born that time they gave name according to birth day, month, tithi but now a days due to the influences of other cultures. Tharu have left to give such name and would prefer to give common hindu names like Hari, Arjun, Binod, Sagar, Sita etc and they started invite Brahmin priest in the naming time and that function is organize in the eleventh day of the birth.

### **4.11.2 Death Rites**

Tharu people also observe death rite like other Hindus of Nepal. In Tharu community, rituals related to death differ according to the age of dead person. If they died person is unmarried, the death ritual is completed within 5 to 7 days. Other rites are performed by the sons. Death ceremony is completed by *Kantha* (priest).

When a man dies, the dead body is kept in the yard on a mat. The head of dead body is always place towards north. The dead body is covered with a piece of white clothe. All the kin offer white clothes to the dead body and after that they make a *Chita* (a thing made up of bamboo to carry the dead body) and is taken to the riverbank in *Chita* by sons and other kins of the dead person.

When they arrive at the 'Ghat', the body is untied, stripped of the clothes except a small peace and laid on the earth placing the head towards north and some ghee is poured over the dead body. And after that eldest son fires the pyre moving three times with flaming torch, which has been, used for fire the pyre. Then, all the *Malami* take bath in the river and return to the house. On that day, nothing is cooked at the deceased house. Neighbors of the dead person carry some food for the family members. Next day, they perform the rituals called *Dudhmukh*. That day, all the kin and relatives take milk, rice and curd etc and they make rice pudding and offer to all the *Malami* and other relatives and neighbors.

On the third day, the ritual called *Head Sanche* is performed. This ritual is performed by the priest on the riverbank offering *Pinda* of flour to the deceased and money is given to the priest in the name of dead person.

They have to perform death rituals until 13 days. Specially, who gives fire to the dead body does not have to eat salt and oil. He has to wear white clothes and live separately. He is not allowed to touch others.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> day *Dashi* is performed. All the kin and son in-laws also have to cut nail and hair. But son of the dead person cut hair and nails on the 12<sup>th</sup> day. On that day, all the relatives and neighbors are fed with curd and beaten rice.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> day, all the relatives and neighbors are invited by giving betel nut. This day is called *Terha*. Meat is compulsorily served on that day. All the participants including priest are fed variety of food. Various types of gift like clothes, bed-sheets, utensils, gold and so on are given to priest for peace in the name of dead person. This is known as *Baitarni Dan*.

Thus, death rituals of 13<sup>th</sup> days are completed. Up to one year, they have to remain in *Barakhi*. In this period they do not have to perform wedding and other ceremony.

Annual funeral ceremony is performed after one year that is called *Barkhi*. On the eve of *Barkhi*, they should not eat meat. The person, who remains in *Barkhi* up to one year, has to cut hair and take bath in the river and should wear new clothes. After that priest performs the rituals at the funeral house. In this ritual, mainly the *Pinda* is worshipped with flower, colors, money etc by all the family members and worshiped for the decease to get place in the heaven. Then the *Pinda* is left over on the river. Priest is fed *Bhoj* and given *Dan Dakshina*. In the evening, all the relatives and neighbors are invited and offer them a feast. At night they sing songs and dance. That dance is called *jhumhra*. Before dance they sing *Bhajan* and *Kirtan*. Thus, whole night without sleep, they complete the funeral rite.

### **Change in funeral activities**

In Tharu community the funeral activities is also gradually change. When a person was death than after many people were gathered in the house but now days only some neighbors and relative gather. The member of malami goes in less number. In the present time most of death would brought to Devghat for cremation activities. Because of the facilities of transportation and other change they invite Brahmin priest.

## **4.12 Festivals and Changes**

Tharu indigenous people entertained with many festivals in every year. Every festival is major aspects of people's life. Tharu peoples celebrate Maghi, Faguwa, Jitiya, Soharai, Pitri Aunsi, Khichara, Dashain and Jitia were the most often mentioned festivals.

### **4.12.1 Maghi (khichara)**

The maghi festival is celebrated on the first day of Magh in every year. In the last of push the Tharu man and women go for fishing early in the morning. In the festival they eat fish and meat. On the previous day night, they eat different variety of foods and drink alcohol and they pass whole night singing and dancing. At the last day of push they cook chick and eat in the next day. At the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Magh all family member is bathed before eating the chicher. Some Tharus male and female go to sister and daughter in Maghi and enjoyed with festival. From 2/4 days before, they do not go for work. But in the poor family they manage it shortcut and give priority for work. They don't want to leave their wage and work of labour.

### **4.12.2 Phaguwa**

The colorful festival of holy is called 'Phaguwa' in Tharu language. This festival is one of the most important festivals in the Tharu community, celebrated for 3 days and has its unique features. It is celebrated every year on the full moon day in the month of April. During the festival, all youths of the village get together and burn a chir temporary shed made from mustard straw- at night in their farmland that is called samit in their language. Before burning a chir, the mukhiya (a man respected as a leader in the Tharu community of village) worship the holy god inside the shed by sacrificing chicken, egg and bread. As the shed starts burning the Tharu people began to play a holy dance in front of the burning shed. In the following morning, all the people gather around the shed performing a dance with stick, dampu and Dholak (a traditional musical instrument). Finally, all the participants take a time as blessing from the ash of the burned Chir and bathe in the river.

People involvements in this festival are decreasing during from some years. Tharu people used improperly alcoholic drinks and disturb the participants in holy dance and songs that is not the norms of this festival.

### **4.12.3 Jitiya**

This festival is celebrated in the month of *Aaswin*. This is similar to the *Teej* festival. This is celebrated for three days. In this festival, Tharu people worship Jitbahan god, Jitbahan is made by two different words where jit means victory and bahan means vehicle. All the married women celebrate this festival taking two days fasting. They do not drink water in the fasting. They specially wish for their husband's long life and welfare and also wish for family progress. This fasting is compulsory for the newly married women. Married daughters are invited in their *Maiti* at the previous day. They eat different variety of foods as *Dar* at mid-night. After that, they worship to the god, then they eat fruits, sweet, and fish etc. second day they sing songs and dance for the whole day and make fun. In the evening, they gather at the 'Mandap' and myths at that time male are absent there and perform *Puja*.

Next day, the things, which were used for the worship of god, are buried on the ground. Then they take bath and again worship to their household god. Only after that, they take meal. Thus they celebrate this festival in an enjoyable manner.

### **4.12.4 Soharai (Tihar)**

Soharai (Tihar) comes after sixteen days after Dashain festival and Tharu people are celebrated for 3 days. On this festival they worship goddess Lakshmi- goddess of wealth for richness and fortunes and Yamaraj king of hell for long life of the brothers. In this festival, the Tharu community makes bread from rice flour and gives a name corresponding to its structure. In the middle of the yard, they make a bamboo pillar decorated with colorful flowers and hang an umbrella. The households head start worshipping by offering chicken, bread and raksi (a homemade wine from rice). In this festival they also decorate their cattle especially cow and ox and feed a liquid mixture made from white ground sacred grass, rice husk and salt, cooked the day earlier.

### **4.12.5 Yamosha**

Yamosha (pitri Aushi) is a festival to remember the deceased ones. It is celebrated after the seventh day of the jitiya festival end is called yamosha in Tharu language. The festival is specially celebrated in the remembrance of the departed soul in Tharu community. In the morning of the festival day, the Tharu community clean their yard with the mud mixed with cattle dung. A wooden mat known as park is placed in the yard and two small pieces of green



grass is placed on it. This they consider as pitri (departed soul) and as worshipped in remembrance of their deceased family members. On this day, the family member of kash (a dried grass having religious significance) in their hands.

#### **4.12.6 Yasari Barna**

During this festival in Tharu society which is celebrated in Ashar (june/ july). No one is supposed to work. Women are not allowed to set foot in the fields or vegetable gardens for three days. A puja is performed for the village well. When it is over no water may be drawn.

#### **Changes in Festivals**

Human society is dynamic and it is changing gradually. Change is the law of nature, which is changing with certain rules. Likewise, the feast and festivals are the parts and partial of society which are automatically change, likewise, the feasts and festivals of Tharu people are not an exception of this rules.

There have been some significant changes in the festivals of Tharu people. It is because now a-days they do not observe their festivals according to their tribal rules and they have started to observe Hindu festivals too, as Hindu people observed.

Due to the contact with high caste Hindu people and influence of Hindu people, Tharu festivals have undergone some changes. For example previously they used to observe every festival in an expensive way. They do not perform their daily activities from many days before any festival. Now, they invite only few relatives. But previously they used to invite many people and they had their own special type of dance and song called *Jhumhra Nach* and *Rasdhari* which are now disappeared from their culture. Before, they did not take *Tika* from their sister in the forehead in the *Tihar* festival. Now, they take it.

#### **4.13 Cultural Activities and Changes**

The Tharu of this study area are modifying themselves in various aspects of their life. Such modification can be observed significantly in terms of cultural practices. Because of accepted the few cultural values, which they did not have in the past. They have accepted these traditions with preferences and practicing commonly at present.

#### 4.13.1 Dress

Dress of Tharu community is very simple. The male members of Tharu generally put on *Kamij* and *Dhoti*. Chitaune Tharu wear the *Aanchara*, *Kharki* and *Cholia*, Sari *cholo* etc. Old women do not wear *cholo* (blouse). The young unmarried girls wear *Cholo*, shirt, skirt etc.

In recent days, the Tharu man have began to wear the modern waistcoats, shirts, paints, *paijama*, t-shirts, jeans etc. Tharu culture is disappearing day by day. Women wear saris, maxis, *kurta salwar* etc and girls wear t-shirt paint, *kurta*, skirt etc. new generation do not like their traditional dress and ornaments.

#### 4.13.2 Ornaments

Tharu women like ornaments as in the case of women of other tribes. On their ears, Tharu women wear the *Top*, *Kanful*, *Mudwari* and at the upper part of the ear they wear *Utrana* made up of silver and gold. On their nostril is a *Nathiya*, *Phophi* and *Thosia*. On their arms is bangle-like ornaments *Churi*, *Matha* and *Tadiya* which are made of silver or gold. The fingers on the hands are decorated by rings. The most attractive use of ornaments made by Tharu women is on the neck, where they hang *Haar* or *Hansuli* and *Chakati* They wear *Tika* on their forehead. *Godna* (tattoo) is worn on the anklets. They wear *Gadhula*, *Pauju* and *Pairi* in the leg.

Most of the women do not put on traditional ornaments. Women of new generation want to wear light and small ornaments in new design.

#### 4.13.3 Food and Drink

The rice is the main food of the Tharu people. Rice, pulse, vegetables, pickle, bread are their daily diet. In the morning they usually take puffed rice, beaten rice or fried rice cooked one night before, at the noon they take fresh rice and at night same food is taken. Tharu people do not serve the food to the guest without fish or meat. They consume more fish, meat and alcohol called *Jand Raksi*. The kind of meat they eat consists of chicken, pork, pigeon, duck, tortoise he-goat etc. They take breakfast, lunch and dinner in a day. In each meal rice is the main food.

According to the respondents of study area, they have gradually given up their foods and drinking. In the past, they made some variety of food but now they make different variety of foods according to the taste. In breakfast also they used to take rice of previous day. But now they take other things instead of rice. They reduce to drink alcohol.

#### **4.13.4 Song and Dance**

The *Jhumra* dance is a special dance of Tharu people but now it is no more in existence. They sing song and dance in different ceremony and festivals. The song and dance is also according to the situation. In the time of farming they sing *Barmasa* song and dance using traditional musical instruments *Tabala*, *Dugi*, *Dholak*, *Tamora* etc

Now a day, most of the boys and girls have started dancing and singing like other Hindu people they dance in Nepali and Hindi songs. Previously they have their own special type of dancing clothes but now they have given it up. They dance in a group but without special type of dancing clothes.

#### **4.14 Factors of Changes**

When a society comes into contact with the external factors, the sign of change is observed. Development is possible only through change. A change is not the matter to occur over night. It is also not easy to bring about changes in human concepts, beliefs and mentality. For this, years and years of efforts may be needed. Some change may occur automatically. But so far the concept is concerned; there is the need of changes in different aspects by different factors.

##### **4.14.1 Economic Condition**

The poor economic condition has been one of the features for change in Tharu festivals because the poor people are not able to afford much for the celebration; naturally they have to cut down the expenditure and so on. And at the same time the duration of festivals has also been shortened. Except some important festivals like *Tihar*, they do not observe other festivals for many days, but for only one day because of economic and time factors.

##### **4.14.2 Migration**

Secondly, contact with Hindu people has also encouraged change in the activities of Tharu people. Due to the contact with outside people there has been change in their activities such as way of living, dress pattern, food habit and celebration of festivals and pattern of observing the festivals. Previously, the Tharu people of the study area were isolated. Hence, they have their unique type of way of life. But after the eradication of malaria, hill people migrated to this area and influenced the life of Tharu people. So we can say that the migration is one of the major factors for socio-cultural change.

#### **4.14.3 Technology**

Technology has affected the traditional culture of Tharus. Musical instruments of Tharu people which are used during the time of festival have also undergone some changes. Previously they only used *Dholok* but now they have also started to use other musical bands. They started to use advanced technology in their field such as tractor, chemical fertilizer, and improved variety of seeds.

#### **4.14.4 Education**

Education is an essential factor for development of society. It also helps to achieve upward mobility. Education brings consciousness and plays vital role in developing knowledge and skill of people. Thus education becomes a source for socio-cultural change.

#### **4.14.5 Physical Facilities**

Physical facilities are other major factors of this type of change. Due to the transportation facility they also started to go outside and started to practice different ways of life. With the facility of communication they can gain the knowledge of the activities of the other part of the country. Facility of health change their treatment system, help to decrease population growth by providing family planning and contraceptive facilities in the village. Because of the irrigation facility, they are able to produce three crops a year.

#### **4.14.6 Social Organization**

Different types of organization are present in that community such as political, social, governmental and user groups. Ward is responsible for changing their traditional judging system. Health Post is another factor of change to their traditional treatment system. Agriculture center changes to their traditional agricultural system by providing improved seed, animal, knowledge of chemical fertilizer by giving knowledge of high yielding crops, fruit and vegetable to the Bachhauli people. Social organization makes aware them about sanitation, drainage and effect of environmental degradation. Saving credit group and users group provide them loan for hand pump establishment, toilet construction and to run income-generating program.

#### **4.14.7 Urbanization**

Many people of that area go to other places for seeking the job and labor in the factories, hotels and companies. Some Tharu people are involved in small businesses, small shops. They change

their fooding pattern, dress and ornaments. It is the effect of modernization, which is another responsible factor for change.

#### **4.14.8 Sanskritization**

They have taken up some tribal feasts and festivals and started to observe other Hindu festivals. Their festivals also are changing in the same ratio. Whenever they are in contact with hill people, they gradually adopt the hill Hindu culture and change the mode of celebration of their festivals. Sanskritization is one of the important factors for socio-cultural change of the study area.

#### **4.14.9 Nepalization**

Nepalization is one important factors of the socio-cultural change. The influence of Nepali language has gradually resulted in the loss of their own mother language. Some 30 years ago most of the women of that community could not speak Nepali, but these days, most of them can speak Nepali language. It has easy to bring them in national main stream.

#### **4.14.10 Westernization**

It is another major factor of socio-cultural change of the study area. Most of them changed their traditional dress patterns and now they have started to wear modern types of dresses like waistcoats, shirts, pants and shoes by male and *saris, maxis, lungi, cholo* by women and girls wear *Kurtha, shirt* and *frocks* there were not their traditional dresses. Media and urbanization are responsible factors for change in modern dress habits. They have to go to the near urban centers for various purposes. From the contact with urban people they adopt the urban people's clothing pattern.

#### **4.14.11 Deforestation**

The construction material for their traditional skill is facing greater problem. By the shortage of that material their traditional skill are going to disappear. They cannot collect timber for house, sheds construction, bamboo for *Dhadia* (an equipment making for fishing) construction, edible plant for vegetable, medicinal plant for medicine, firewood for cooking, fodder for domestic animal. The people of that area cannot go to river and stream for fishing, forest for hunting and animal grazing. It is the effect of deforestation.

#### **4.14.12 Political Mobilization**

Political mobilization is also responsible factor for the social-cultural change of the Tharu community. Changing political situation of the country has made Tharu people little bit aware about development of the country, rights and responsibilities of them for their own society. Political mobilization has made people to think in a new way for the betterment of their life.

## CHAPTER - FIVE

### CHANGE IN MARRIAGE PRACTICES AMONG THARU COMMUNITY

#### 5.1 Marriage

Marriage is recognized as one of the most universal and most important social institution of human society. After getting married the boy and the girl can enter the family life and they are socially as well as legally permitted to have sexual relationship and to establish consequent and correlated socio-cultural and economic relations with one another.

Tharu used to do child marriage in the past and when the daughter becomes adult, only then they send her to her husband's house. A couple use to marry twice between themselves. First marriage was called *Biha* and second was called *Gauna*. In case of marriage, Tharu women are more free than other community women and other important aspect is that in married couple female is aged than male.

Generally, there are different types of marriages found among the Tharu people:

1. *Magi biwaha* (Arrange marriage)
2. *Prem Biwaha* (love marriage)
3. *Bidwaha biwaha* (widow marriage)

Mainly above-mentioned forms of marriages exist in Tharu community. Among them, Tharu people prefer arranged marriage rather than love marriage.

##### 5.1.1 *Magi Biwaha* (Arrange Marriage)

Marriage, in consultation with family members and relatives is called arrange marriage. This type of marriage is conducted according to the religion and family rituals. This is the most common form of marriage in Tharu community. Though child marriage is on the verge of decline, neither of the concerned couple is more than 19/20 years of age. As the couple has not developed decision making ability, they have to rely on their parents' choice. Besides, all the expenses are borne by the parents; they take it for granted that it is their responsibility to select the best suitor for their child. Tharus live in joint family. The decision of the senior most members is ultimate. He retains all the prosperity and makes decision pertaining to all the family members. The younger members of the family do not normally dare crossing his decision. The rebellious attitude towards the decision is looked down upon by the rest of the family as well as

society, so, no matter what form the marriage is of, the consent of the parents is a must the marriage beforehand. But this is only as for as it goes.

**Table No.12: Opinion of Respondents about Decision Making in Arranged Marriage**

SN	Decision making by	Respondents	Present
1	Parents only	70	93.33
2	Parent & son/daughter	5	6.66
Total		75	100

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

The table no.12 above shows that 93.33 percent parents decided about marriage without the permission of their son/daughter. Only 6.66 percent parents make decision with the consent of their son/daughter. In arranged marriage son/daughters have to accept the decision of parents without any hesitation.

First, the parents of the bride start searching for the suitable boy through their relatives or a mediator. When the boy is selected, the girl's parents go to the boy's home and talk with his parents, on this occasion, the father of the bride gives a certain amount of money to the boy. After few days the boy's parents go to see the girl and repeat the same thing. Only this time, the amount of money given to the girl is almost double. In spite of performing the above mentioned ceremony, the marriage sometimes does not take place. In such cases, the girl's side repeatedly invites the boy's side. If they do not accept the invitation, the marriage is considered cancelled and attempts are made elsewhere. If none of these happens, both of side decides to invite the Brahmin priest to fix the date of marriage.

Now days in Tharu society it can be seen that drastically changed occurred. The boy/girl meets directly or indirectly with each other and when they like each other, then their parents starts to talk between each other and fix the relation of marriage. The situation of parents' decision is going to decrease day by day.



### 5.1.2 Love Marriage (*Prem Biwaha*)

This type of marriage takes place when both boy and girls like each other. This type of marriage was not found before. The young generation of Tharu people is practicing this type of marriage. This type of marriage is effective among the Tharu people who are not able to arrange the formal marriage. This type of marriage is not considered good although, it is acceptable in the society of Tharu people. At present, love marriage is getting popular day by day among urban and educated youth, The main feature of such marriage is the freedom from such bandages as caste, wealth, rationality etc. the law has fixed the age even for this as 21year's for the boys and 18 years for the girls at least respectively as the marriage caused by immature love may result in to breakup of the relationship .The similarities in philosophical needs bring together the two marriage partners and leads to greater affection.

Love marriage is differing from arranged marriage. In love marriage both the boy and girl have freedom to select their life partner. In recent days parents also accept the choice of their son/daughters. The following data shows the opinion of respondents about decision making between parents and son/daughter.

**Table No. 13: Opinion of Respondents about Decision Making in Love Marriage**

SN	Decision making of	Respondents	Present
1	Parents only	0	0
2	Parent & son/daughter	45	60
3	Son/daughter only	30	40
Total		75	100

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

Table no. 13 above shows that opinion about decision making in love marriage decided by parents is not acceptable. Selection of partner by son/daughter accepted by parents is 60 percent and selection of partner by son/daughter only (not accepted by parents) is 40 percent. It means that acceptance of love marriage directly or indirectly accepted by parents in recent days. All the marriage functions celebrated as arranged marriage in the family but if the love marriage is not regarded by parents the couple celebrated their marriage in the temple among some relatives.

At last, marriage is the foundation stone of social and family life. It is also a symbol of social acceptance of the newly married couple. It is one of the chief social needs in order to regulate the social needs in order to regulate the social life and balance the size of the family by reproducing offspring.

### 5.1.3 Widow Marriage (*Bidwaha Biwaha*)

Widow marriage is an important aspect of the Tharu society. There is no restriction in widow marriage in Tharu community. Widow is allowed to get re-married. In the past, younger brother in-law used to get married with his widow sister in-law. But now a day, due to the influence of other Hindu castes, this practice is no more in use. Widow marriage is well approved in very few communities of Nepal; Tharu community being one of them. It is not only approved, but is well reputed as well. To arrange marriage for a widow is considered a sacred task. Even our civil code has granted the provision of widow marriage. The widow, in Tharu community is not suppressed like other Nepalese communities. She is free to opt between staying at the deceased husband's house or marry again. In case the widow is too young to live as one, her parents and elders themselves start persuading her to marry again. If she disagrees, she can openly do so, if she remains silent, it is taken as her the proposal of the marriage of a widow is brought forward by the members of her maternal home only as such proposal, if made by her dead husband family members thought that they detest the widow's presence, also it seems that they want to deprive her of her share of property, such proposal, if made by the maternal side of the widow, is they grumble at the beginning for the sake of formality, normally accepted by the dead husband's family members. However, occasionally, the expectant groom himself makes the proposal to the parents of the widow.

**Table No.14: Opinion of Respondents about Decision Making in Widow Marriage**

SN	Decision making by	Respondents	Present
1	Parents	75	100
Total		75	100

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

The widow marriage often decided by parents but sometimes it is celebrated in regard with parents and daughter.

The restrictions about widow marriage are that a widow can-only marry a widower, not a bachelor but a widower can marry either a widow. In case of re-marriage, the widow can take the children of her former husband (if any) with her. Such marriage is performed not at home, but at temples with simple ceremonies and feasts.

## **5.2 Determinants of Marriage**

Caste endogamy is the ultimate determinant of marriage in Nepal. Even the most advanced, urbanized or westernized people hesitate to cross this barrier and marry the partner of some other caste, and Inter cast marriage is still looked down upon. Present laws belonging to the some castes have relaxed this barrier in the name of linguistic similarity. It is bit inconvenient due to the difference in language though Brahmin and Kshytries found marital relation in different regions i.e., these belonging to hill do not hesitate to marry their children with ones from Terai the lower castes, who are less socially dynamic, still lack this tendency.

Though in Nepal the commercial aspect is less influential in marriage than in India, the importance of financial status of either party in marriage or its significance as one of the most determinates cannot be denied. Generally the marriage takes place between the families of the equal social status and economic prosperity. The virtue and personal ability of the groom tends to compensate if the above mentioned conditions are lacking. If a boy is poor, but seems capable of rearing the family because of his personal talent, the parents of the girl do not hesitate to give the daughter away to him. His future prospects such as hid chances of being successful. His share of the ancestral property etc. is the factors which add some opinions in his favor.

Among different Nepali communities, the ones who belong to Awadhi, Bhojpuri, Tharu and Maithili communities are very much conscious of the economic aspect of marriage. The girl's side there must pay the amount of money that was agreed upon prior to marriage or demanded by the boy's side during the marriage. The amount may range from few thousands to hundreds of thousands. This amount, popular dowry depends upon the economic prosperity of the boy's family, their social status and personal attainment of the boy. It is a common social evil, which

after result into break up of husband, wife relationship. Whereas the less suitable girl's get married to much better's boy's then they deserve, the virtuous girl's either married to less suitable place or remained unmarried due to these monetary aspect.

### **5.3 Changes in Marriage System**

Marriage system in Tharu community there is no similarity between various communities, They have difference regarding the rites and rituals of marriage the Tharus of the east and the west do not perform marriage ceremony in the same manner, the main reason behind there are the regional, linguistic, economic and cultural differences, the Tharus of urban community are found to be much more modernize in this regard for ex- in the past, betel nut was distributed as a symbol of invitation. But now the card system is popular. Similarly, to solemnize the marriage the Tharu Brahmin was a must but now any Maithili priest can do so as well as Brahmin furthermore, The marriage ceremony is performed without any Brahmin priest, at all instead the presence of the wise and elderly people is required.

In the marriage according to tradition, the bride's male kin, including her father would come for the bhoj, eat it, and leave. There were no other ceremonies or rituals associated with this event. Today, in many instances, a Hindu puja presided over by a Brahman priest has been introduced, which precedes the eating of the bhoj itself. The culmination of this new ritual is the application of tika onto the groom by his father-in-law. The interpolation of caste-Hindu ritual into Tharu marriage practices is new innovation again reflecting the influence of the Brahman contact society. The expenses of a marriage were borne mostly by the family of the groom, while today. Both families share equally in the burden.

For collecting the bride, a group known as the bariyat would leave from the groom's household. According to traditional practice, the groom himself did not go. Instead he sent his representatives, consisting of two women and three men. But this system is not to change; now the groom goes with his Bariyat. Once the bride arrives in the village of the bride, it stays, not in her house, but in that of another in the past. This custom appears to be less widely observed today, particularly in the context of marriage performed according to Hindu rites. The numbers of Bariyat also decrease today.

In the past during marriage, the family of bride would send a pot of wine for to secure her from the attack of other with the bariyat. Now the child marriage, unbalance marriage and polygamy are in decreasing manner. Now most of them accepted the arranged and love marriage instead of chori, forces, widow.

### 5.3.1 Marriage Practices in Tharu Community

From the long ago the Tharu people celebrating the traditional marriage system called arranged marriage which have cultural and religious valued in Tharu society. But by the time of the interval some young people attracted towards love marriage. The following table shows in detail of marriage types and involved families.

**Table No. 15. : Number of Families involved in Marriage Types**

S.N.	Marriage Types	Involved Families	Present
1	Arrange marriage	60	80
2	Love marriage	13	17.33
3	Widow marriage	2	2.67
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field survey, 2016**

In the table no. 15 above data shows that there are different types of marriage system among of Tharu families, arrange marriage is in the highest number that is 80 percent, it means this much families involved in arranged marriage ceremony and there is less number for love marriage among 75 households which is only 13 or 17.33 percent and 2.67 percent Tharu families involved in widows marriage.

The table shows that because of the changing time, people have followed the new custom and culture in the modern society. Love marriage in the society accepted by the people gradually in these days.

Above discussion about the different types of marriage practiced by the Tharu people of Bachhali shows that Tharu people generally perform arranged marriage system. Now most of them accept love marriage instead of *Chori*, forces etc. Tharu people started to give emphasis for dowry system in the past. The family of bride would send a pot of wine to secure her from the attack of others with the *Bariyat*. But this system is not in practice these days. Now a day's child marriage, unbalance marriage and polygamy are decreasing.

Now, the Tharus people of the study area have started modern practice of marriage. Previously, wedding ceremony, it took 3-4 days but now days, all rituals of marriage are performed in a day. They also have given up traditional musical instruments and use *Band Baja* in the wedding. The groom used to wear *Dhoti, Kurtha* in the wedding ceremony but now days; they go with suit, shirt, and pant. Before, women did not go in *Bariat*. At present women also join *Bariati*.

Due to their changing socio- cultural as well as economic condition, they are bound to bring changes associated with expenditure for the marriage ceremony. In the past, they used to invite all the neighbors. But at present they invite only selected people and relatives. A significant change can also be observed in their wedding party. These days the size of the party is relatively small and items of meals seemed ordinary. Besides this, they have give up so many rituals and process followed in the wedding ceremony. Some of the marriage system is found to exist in traditional form. But some fundamental changes are also occurring.

#### **5.4 Changing Factors of Marriage Practices**

##### **5.4.1 Education**

Education is a ladder of modern society to reach at the summit of the civilization and it provides an integrated way of life. Through the educational ladder people can distinguish the good and bad aspect of social milieus all over the world. In this context the people of Bachhauri village have been facilitated with education from the very beginning. Hence though the majority people of the study area are illiterate (and however some of them) those who are young are literate. The schools were established three decades before and the educational impacts in the society are gradually associated. Meanwhile, some changes can be observed within the social milieus hence, due to the educational factor. There are some changes on marriage system of Tharu community such as age of getting marriage, selection of partner for own shake, decision for their own life style. In this regard we can regard educational factor as a main factor for the social and cultural change.

##### **5.4.2 Transportation and Communication**

Transportation and Communication are two other factors in the changing process of marriage system of Tharu, through the transportation and communication one society or person knows the

situation of another societies. Similarly, the development of means of communication and transportation has brought directly or indirectly cultural changes in the village Bachhauli

This village is situating in tourist area not so far from Bharatpur Head quarter of Chitwan district. So there are facilities of communication. They use telephone, mobile, radio, television for entertainment and communicate their relatives who are far from them. They use radio, television to listen and see news and other activities. Before 5 years they have to go other place for it, because at that time there was no any telephone or mobile. But now in this village there are much of the facilities for communication such as mobile, telephone, net or cyber facilities etc. So we can say that this village has many facilities of communication which brought some changes on marriage system.

According to the informants, through the transportation and communication they have gathered information about the process of social reform. Likewise through these means they got chances to interact with other ethnic groups and obtain some knowledge comparing with their actual situation. Due to transportation facilities people get married not only their own village but far from them too. So, they can borrow some social and cultural practices form there which brought some changes on marriage system.

### **5.4.3 Interaction with New Immigrants**

Long ago as an isolated group the Tharu in Chitwan district. Practiced their own customs and rituals. Mean while, according to respondent when other people migrate to settle in their territories. Similarly, after the Hindus specially "Brahmin" and Chhetri" were encouraged to settle in territories. Hence, the new immigrants have played main role in the undergoing change in culture and customs of Tharus. Interaction with new after interaction with other cast group The interaction between other groups of people became main factor to bring change in Tharu marriage practices as well as patterns.

## **5.5 Changing Patterns on Marriage Practices**

### **5.5.1 Changing on Seasons for Marriage Ceremonies**

According to the elderly person, Tharu marriage could be organized throughout the year regardless of any prohibition on some specific months. But the Tharu respondents of the village Bachhauli are found moderate agreement regarding the prohibition of marriage ceremonies in the

month Pus, Chaitra and Kartik. The prohibited months in Tharu community is due to the influence of Hindu people. In the Hindu religion these months are regarded as illuck month and inauspicious for marriage.

### **5.5.2 Age Pattern of the Bride and Groom**

The age of bride and groom is an important component of studying the marriage practices of any ethnic groups. The Tharu respondent in village Bachhauli in aggregate are found consistent views regarding the age of the groom. On average the age of groom for getting marriage comes 20-35 years. On the contrary the average age of bride is practiced now days. In Tharu marriage is also satisfactory, which is 18 years. There were 30 respondents who mentioned the age of a Thaur girl to become marriage able when she is at the age of 18 years. There were 45 respondents who mentioned that the age of a girl in village practice who get marriage when she is at the age of 20 years.

### **5.5.3 Changes on Rites and Rituals of Marriage**

Changes can easily be observed on rites and ritual of Tharu in Bachhauli now a days and two decade ago. At present day changes have been rapidly occurred than it was two decade ago the undergoing change since two decade has gradually been increasing than the preceding year. According to the respondents of the Bachhauli village the changes in marriage practices within the Tharu community is obvious whereas few of the respondents don't agree with the opinion that there is changes in all aspects of rite.



## CHAPTER -SIX

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 Summary

The fundamental objectives of the present study are to analyze the present socio-cultural change of Tharu community of the study area in the various spheres of life and to find out the factors and forces responsible for the rapid socio-cultural change in Tharu community. Population of the 75 household is 593 including 323 (54%) males and 270 (46%) females. Average family size of the study area is 5.4 people per family. Main occupation of the study area is agriculture. During cultivation and harvest seasons they are busy in fields and during off-season they are busy in labor, business and technical work.

Student enrollment is increasing day by day in the schools. But as they reach to secondary level, the dropout ratio increases. Most of them are aware of keeping better health and sanitation. They are aware of clean drinking water and use of toilets.

Most of the people do not face hand to mouth problem though they do not possess enough land. Tharu farmers are rearing domestic animals but their waste is used as fuel for cooking. They have not been able to produce as much as they can. They use chemical fertilizer but it loses the soil fertility and productivity decreases year by year. Those who cannot produce sufficient food work as *Aadhya*, and *Thekka* in rich farmer's land and are involved in other activities.

Tharus used to live in joint family in the old days. But after the migration of hill people to their village, they were influenced a lot by their culture and tradition. They started to live in nuclear families. Most of the Tharu women are involved more in household works than in productive works. They are not aware about women right. They are still living in a dominant position. But now days they are associated with in many saving and credit groups. So they have access and control over monetary matters.

Tharu people of the study area are organized and enjoy many festivals. They celebrate many festivals such as *Tihar*, *Jitia*, *Yamosha*, *Holi /Faguwa* and *Maghe Sankranti* etc. Due to poor economic condition, contact with other people and development of modern technology, Tharu feast and festivals have undergone significant change.

Tharu people have different song and dance according to ceremony and festivals. *jhumra* dance is an especial dance of Tharu people but new generation Tharu do not perform this type of dance. Some of the Tharu songs are *Birhuni*, *Barmasa* but now days young people used to listening popular Nepali and Hindi songs. Food habits, dress pattern and ornaments adjusting by modern fashion and way of observing various feast and festival and way of living are changing day by day.

Tharu practice their own traditional tribal religion worshipping number of deities. They believe in evil spirits. Tharu's traditional worshipping method and deities and spirits are gradually in the process of modification due to many factors such as dependency on other group, mass literacy, poverty and close contact with Hindus. Adoption of Hindu religion by some rich Tharus is also due to the belief that it helps to increase their social status.

Rice is the main food of the Tharu people. Rice, pulse, vegetables, pickle, and bread are their daily diet. They take breakfast, lunch and dinner in a day all the meals include rice. They consume more fish, meat and alcohol called *Jand Raksi*. They do not serve the food to the guest without fish or meat.

The main social life-cycle ceremonies are birth, marriage and death rites Tharu of the study area celebrate these ceremonies in accordance with their culture. Previously, they gave name of their children according to birth, day, month and situation etc. But now a-days, Tharus are no more giving such name and would prefer to give common Hindu names. Now the child marriage, unbalanced marriage and polygamy are in decreasing trend. Arranged marriage is favorable for most of them. Now days some of them attracted towards love marriage. Tharu people prefer arranged marriage rather than other types of marriage. In case of marriage, Tharu women are free than other community women and other important aspect is that in married couple female is aged than male.

The funeral activity is also gradually changing in that community. In the past, mostly the eldest son carried the dead body to the *Ghat* but now the entire son, daughter carry it. Previously, they used to organize feast to the relatives and neighbors every day for 13 days. Thus, they had to spend money in large amount. But at present they generally organize feast at 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup> days. Now they do not spend much money like before. They use to perform ritual activities in

simple way. The main causes for all this change are their economic condition and influence of other ethnic groups.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

Tharu is one of the indigenous tribal groups of that area. They are dominated in all sphere of life by high caste. Economically they are also poor. They have their own tradition, language, norms and culture. Traditionally, they were depended upon the agriculture that was only for subsistence. Due to low level of agricultural production and small sizes of land holding they have to depend on other economic activities such as small trade, wage labor, junior technicians etc.

There are some special socio-economic and socio-cultural traditions practiced by them. Due to assimilation of settlement of migrants Tharu people aware for their development. Their thinking pattern and social organizations are going to change. The way of worshipping village deities, belief in spirits have changed, habit of wearing typical dress pattern also lunched in modern styles however cluster type of settlement patterns distinctly differ from other ethnic groups.

Some gradual changes have been found in Tharus activities. The traditional social organization of Tharu community is gradually changing in accordance with the situation, time and place. The change is found in the sphere of marriage, family, kinship, religion, village polity, economy, life cycle ceremonies etc. However, Tharu people have preserved some of their traditional customs. At the same time, they have adopted western culture to some extent. Due to economic hardship, they have considerably minimized their expenses during the observance of rite and rituals and other ceremonial activities.

Continuity of changes in Tharu community has been seen. The speed of change is high and rapid. The responsible factors of the change are economic factor, migration, education, technology, physical facilities, social organization, modernization, westernization, urbanization, political mobilization and deforestation. Influence of other caste, development of infrastructure and communication are also responsible for change.

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## Appendix - I Household Survey Questionnaire

Name of respondent.....

Age..... sex ..... Religion.....

Marital status: Currently married/Never married/Divorced/Separate/Widowed

Educational status: Literate ( ) Illiterate ( )

### 1. Household information

S. No.	Age	Gender	Literate	Illiterate	Level of Education	Remarks
1	0-15					
2	16-30					
3	31-45					
4	46-60					
5	60 above					
Total						

2. What is your parents' occupation?

3. What is your occupation or present source of income?

- a. Agriculture    b. Wage labour  
c. Business      d. Service      e. others.

4. If any change, why do you leave parents' occupation? Do you feel any discrimination in your employment?

5. Do you have your own farming land? Yes/No

If yes how much land do you have?

(In Bigha ....., Kattha..... and Dhur.....)

6. When did you start to use modern technology in agriculture?

.....

7. Types of Family

- i) Nuclear family    ii) Joint family,    iii) Extended family

8. What are your sources of drinking water?

- i) Well                      ii) Modern tap

9. What is your main festival?

- i) Maghi                      iii) Yemosa (Pitri Aaunshi)  
ii) Holi                        iv) Others

10. Types of marriage performs

- i) By stealth                      ii) by consent  
iii) Love marriage              iv) others

11. Has there been any inter – caste marriage in your family? Yes/No

If yes, with which caste.....

12. How much money does your family spend on marriage?

.....

13. Do you support the prevailing system of child marriage? Yes/ No

14. What are the responsible factors in the undergoing changes of marriage practices?

.....  
15 Which months are favorable for marriage?  
.....

16 Are there any changes on dress, ornaments, rite and ritual? Please state them if there are any and their extent of changes.  
.....

17. Are you involved in any types of groups/program? Yes / No

S. No.	Name of the Group	Nature of the Group	Your Position
1			
2			
3			

18. What type of relation do you set up with other caste?  
.....

19. Who does the decision in household matter?

- a) Only by male
- b) By both male and female
- c) Only by female

20. Is there a toilet in your house? Yes / No

If yes, what is the type of your toilet? .....

21. Do you have information about family planning? Yes / No

22. If your family be sick, where do you consult primarily?

- a) Dhami
- b) Health center

23. What fuel do you use to cook in your home?

- a) Fuel-wood
- b) Bhuse chulo
- c) Biogas
- d) Kerosene
- e) Others

24. Do you have felt any difficulties to maintain daily life?  
.....

25. What are the main problems you think in your community?

Food /Sanitation /Health/ Education /Shelter /Road /Electricity / Others specify.....

26. What is your aspiration level of education for your children?

- a) No
- b) Secondary
- c) Just literate
- d) Primary
- e) H. education

27. How many of your children go to school? a) Boys b) Girls

## Appendix – II

### Name of the Key Respondents

- 1) Jhinak Mahato (Old person in the village)
- 2) Bikana Mahato (Traditional Healer)
- 3) Chhanu Ram Chaudhary (School Teacher)
- 4) Ninuri Mahato (Sedeni)
- 5) Jagar Nath Mahato (Social Worker)