

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

### 1.1 General Background

Nepal is beautiful country with its mosaic of cultural and ethnic diversity. There are 101 different caste and ethnic groups according to the census 2001. Most of the social groups have their own unique mother tongue which adds the extra beauty in its diversified nature. There are 59 Nationalities and other are caste groups. More broadly in the current situation, there are four major social groups namely; Aryan, Janajati, Madhesi and Dalit.

Among 59 ethnic groups, Limbu is also one of them with richness in culture. The Limbu also known as the Kirats are one of the Nepalese history. Nepal distinguishes from other nations over the world. The ethnic groups are scattered so, the diversity has maintained its to unify by late King prithivi Nrayan Shah and his heirs united and ruled within its current territory since around 1768 A.D. The ethnic diversity is known as by the distinct social behavior and culture of each ethnic or caste group. Change is universal truth, everything is not constant so, change is internal within one group are taking place incessantly. Every society is changing structure in each section their social or cultural life.

Every society needs to change so change is inevitable regarding any matter or non-matter. This is the cases that happen in all the caste or groups and also in Limbu community to regarding marriage. May be it is because of increasing cash income, state policy, intensifying capitalism, migration or any other internal dynamics such as competitive nature of human desire of new things, idea or manner jealousy. Marriage pattern in Limbu community is undertaking dramatic changes since many years ago.

Being marriage a rite of passage, it may be the changes are limited within the material or non-material aspects; this has been an interesting research. It is

not limited within one's family, community or society, but sets linkage between two king groups which entails number of concerns. So, change in way of performance, adoption and omission of some section of whole process including other material or non-material aspects. Point out tiny symptoms in value of marriage. Therefore the present study on Limbu marriage is an attempt to diagnose the changes which has taken place in marriage aspects in past and present as well as its traditional custom aspects. So it is an attempt to find out through an intensive research task.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Among the existing patterns of marriages, some are monogamous, some are polygamous, and some are homosexual. Even in the above marriage practices, bisexual monogamous is one which is mostly practiced in all the societies, and so is in the Limbu community. Ecological and geographical variations there are varying in culture and during the causes of time there are some changes of culture. Because culture is always dynamic its nature and identity. Prior to the arrival of Hindu groups from the eastern and western parts of the mid-hill, the hills were inhabited by a number of Tibeto-Burman speaking tribal groups. When Hindu immigrants' people arrived in mid-mountain region then they remained culturally Hindu. But mid-hill of Nepal we find most of the Tibeto-Burman cultural groups, they have little contact with Hindu. In this regards, we can say that there are ethnic variation in Nepal with their cultural complexities.

One of the important socio-cultural institutions in the Limbu community is their marriage system. The traditional Limbu society, does not allowed practicing the inter-caste marriage and within blood groups; marriage is restricted within six generations of the same clan/linage. Due to the modernization processes, however to, this society is facing a lot of problems in the traditional marriage system. Education and process of urbanization are

plying a vital role encouraging the love marriage and inter-caste marriage in recent years. The typical Limbu culture and marriage pattern has been little studied. Therefore, this study aims at understanding the change and problems that are occurred in the traditional culture and marriage system of Limbu community of “Eshibu”.

In Caplan’s sample (1966:239; 1970:84) of 172 marriages in Ilam, It was noted that 58.7% were arranged (magi bibah) while 21.5% were by theft or elopement (chori bibah). The .....Remainder was wife absconding (jari bibah) or 19.8%. By now, apart from exceptional cases, these group practices arrange marriage. Young generation is attracted to love marriage.

While performing ceremony, even in an arrange marriage, a lot of things have changed in 'rit' [An action that must be performed when celebrating or doing a ritual or rites of passage e.g. Saimundri (In Nepali Kanyadan) in wedding]. The changes are seen in 'rit' as well as, other material aspects over a period of time. The changes have gone through since 60 years before rapidly. The causes of changes may be internal as well as external; to which has been discussed in detail.

So my research questions are:

1. What is the culture of Limbu People?
2. What are the marriage practices followed by Limbu People?
3. What are the changes that have taken place regarding ‘rit’ performance?

### **1.3 Literature Review**

#### **1.3.1. General Acquaintance**

"Marriage is traditionally conceived to be a legally recognized relationship, between an adult male and female, that carries certain rights and obligations. However, in contemporary societies, marriage is sometimes interpreted more liberally and the phrase 'living as married' indicates that for many

purposes it makes no sense to exclude cohabitation" (Gordon (ed.), *Oxford dictionary of Sociology (1998)*). But marriage is not only an instrument that sets up relationship between a male and a female, but it is also the institution which plays vital role in maintaining the social order and stability. Some Western scholars are pessimistic in this regard. "Much recent sociological research, both in Britain and America, has been concerned with the growing fears that marriage as an institution is in decline. These fears stem from two roots, the first being concern for increasing marital breakdown and subsequent divorce and second the fact that marriage is going out of fashion with more people cohabiting and even rearing children outside matrimony." (*Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (1998)*). (Ed). Gordon Marshall).

Nepal is multi ethnic country. Similarly, from the very beginning the life Style, language and cultural traits have given the racial and ethnical identity of its inhabitation in terms of their ecological region. Every ecological region contains various geographical units and various culture, language of various ethnic groups. Nepal is a model of diverse culture of the world. Numerous foreign and native scholars have made their study on the different types of culture of Nepal. After 1950, numbers of foreign scholars have done ethnography focusing the ethnic people in Nepal.”

There is a rough analogy between the step-like geographical structure of the population, since there are noticeable differences in the physical and cultural character of the inhabitants of the high Himalayan region, the middle range and the flat low land.” (Haimidorf 1975:88) Almost of them are in the form of ethnography which help to view the life ways, their geographical locations, rites, rituals etc .Rex L. Jones and Shiley Kurz Jones (1967) have thrown a light on the ethnography of Limbu society principally focusing in the social role of women in Limbuwan.

They intensively go through marriage divorce. They write “we have intended simply to present an ethnographic description of the social understand it during our field research” (Jones and Jones 1976:130). More over they have done intensive description of wedding ceremony, divorce and other life cycle but do not intensely turn to the determinants of marriage.

Not also done ethnographic as well as other diagnostic studies, although this does not mean that before 1950s. Such works are not mean done at all, such works were mostly done by few foreign diplomats and military officers but their concern was principally ethnography. A considerable numbers of words about Kirat is found Limbu is a major group of Kirati people, while Limbu is a dialect group among other different dialect groups within Limbu ethnic group Iman Singh Chemjong has written in 1967 named History and culture of kirat people. Chemjong has described extensively about kirat origin, diversity, historical evolution, nature ceremonies festivals. Dor Bahadur Biasta (1967) in his book people of Nepal has mentioned about the marriage while explaining the descent inheritance. His description is flat but not of individual dialect group like Limbu. Nevertheless, Bista has described some steps of rites of marriage Kulung Rai.

After Bista, Suiyoshi Toba has written a book in 1993, namely. Rites of passage: an aspect of Rai culture. In this, Toba has tried petty deeply to describe about marriage as well as birth and death rites but not in Limbu. Tanka Bahadur Rai also has been successful to tell about life ways of kirat people by publishing kirat Bhumi ra keratin Janjeevan (1996)

Madhusudan Pandey (2007) has described in his book, Nepal ka Janajatiharu, marriage practices in a few sentences but not about Limbu.

All of these contributions are important; they have not paid much attention towards changing patterns and practices in marriage. Thus I will try to fulfill before the lack of research problem.

Regarding, changing marriage pattern, a book 'Invitation to love' by Laura Athans is very much important. On the basis of field study of west central Nepal, he describes how the things are research to love and marriage and change take place.

As a whole my research task will explain principally the causes of changing marriage practices both in latent and manifest form

#### **1.4 Objectives**

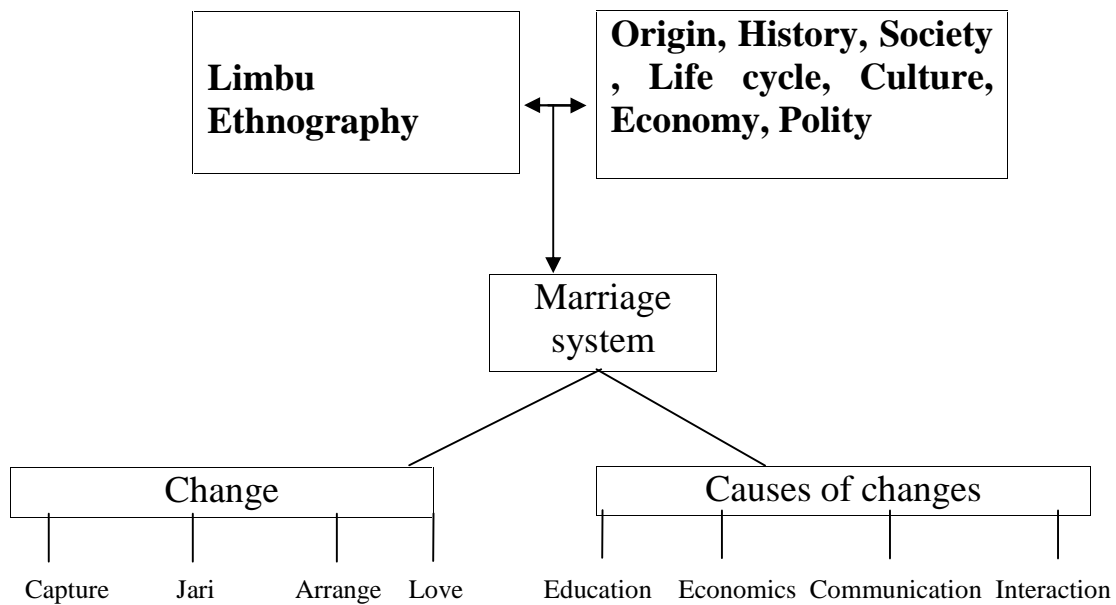
The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To prepare an ethnographic profile of Limbu culture.
2. To document Limbu marriage practice system; and
3. To explain the causes of changes taking place in Limbu marriage practices.

#### **1.5 Conceptual Framework**

Continuously evolving activities, be it economic, interaction between cultural groups, inevitability of adopting subsistence activities, and principally development activities and infrastructures influence people's life ways as well as meanings of things. Marriage is one of the various institutions of society; its patterns, meanings, functions interact with the other parts of society. The changes in other institutions naturally influence the marriage patterns. The change in material aspects and non-material aspects simultaneously evolve side by side.

## The Following Figure shows the Framework of Study



### 1.6 Rationale of the Study

By now, Nepal state is in critical and transitional period. All the social groups are fighting for their original identity. On the other hand, changes in any original form are inevitable and maintenance of its original form for ever is a myth.

Things changes obviously and inevitably. So will be the case regarding original ethnic identity. The identities are also time related and are defined relatively.

So, this study reveals that identity is not absolute but is defined relatively. Such scholarly studies should be done frequently and warm up the ethnic, non-ethnic people and also the state. The result of such scientific research contributes to the society, state and all the concern people.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Research Methods**

This chapter discusses a set of methods, which were employed to accomplish the research objectives. It contains selection of the study area, questionnaire design, research design, source of data, data collection procedure and data analysis and interpretation procedure. The study is basically an ethnographic and descriptive approach of the Limbu community living in Eshibu, terhathum.

Since this is my sociological study, observation, sampling method is applied stratified and purposive, unobtrusive measure and interview were administered. All the above mentioned methods clarify that research was descriptive and ethnographic in design.

### **2.1 Research Design**

This research applies descriptive and ethnographic methods. It attempts to describe the marriage system within a Limbu community. This study also tries to describe the changing pattern of marriage system in Limbu people. It describes the marriage practices of Limbu people in Eshibu VDC, Terhathum.

### **2.2 Field Selection**

The research area is selected on the basis of traditional Limbu tole in Eshibu VDC Ward No.1 chosen for detail interview. This village is chosen for research because this is my mother's birth place. Where is inhabited homogeneous Limbu.

Considerable number of Limbu has engaged in foreign employment. This village is undertaking rapid changes regarding construction of development infrastructure including a mosaic of various activities. So, changes are taking



place rapidly in their life style. Some HHs has access to foreign employment, but most depends on local subsistence activities.

Some features of the field;

- Largely homogenous Limbu Group.
- High use of pure mother tongue in communication.
- 3 years ago motor road was constructed which passes through the village by dividing almost in two equal segments. And since early 2008, the road has been connected with the Dharan Dhankuta high way and ultimately with Mahendra highway.
- Probably, being this village the main field of the study has a variety of people with different occupations.
- The village is five hour far away from H.Q Myanglung.

### **2.3 Universe and Sampling**

The VDC consists of 1200 population of Limbu with 400 households against the 945 households' and 4495 population of the whole VDC. This research was selected Ward No. 1 Eshibu VDC, Terhathum. The method of data collection is purposive for household sampling.

**Table 2.1 Household Survey**

S.N.	Tole	No. of households	Sample
1.	Mathillo tole	20	13
2.	Bich tole	20	14
3.	Tallo tole	20	13

### **2.4 Questionnaire Design**

Questionnaire was designed to obtain two types of information. In the first section, contains information on personal identification of the respondents and the second section contains marriage system related questions.

## **2.5 Sources of Data**

This study was based on primary data collection using systematic stratified and purposive sampling. The secondary data were used as complementary which were obtained from census reports, journals, previous research report bulletin, books, survey reports and other official reports.

## **2.6 Data Collection and Procedure**

First of all the researcher explained the purpose of the visit to the respondents. After that he explained the details about the purpose of the research and selected the respondents. Ethnographic method in this study generates qualitative data on social structure and Limbu culture and marriage system and may also generate a few quantitative data. Using the method of field observation the researcher was observe, listen to and converse with informants in as free and natural an atmosphere as possible. The assumption is that the most important behavior of individual Limbu people in group is a dynamic process of complex interaction for Limbu culture and marriage system and consists of more than a set of facts statistics or even discrete incidents. The strength of this kind of method lies in the observation of natural behavior of marriage system in real life settings. The researcher was understood that setting and the nature of social structure, its traditions, values and norms of behavior. While conversing with the marriage system questionnaire and the key informants, a check list has been developed and used.

## **2.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedure**

All the collected primary data have been coded first and the coded data were entered into the computer and analysis was made using percentage and simple calculations.

## **2.8 Limitations**

This research will be confined within the “Limbu culture and Marriage system” types and meanings among Limbu. Similarly, field will be Limbu in Eshibu Village of Eshibu Ward No.1, Terhathum district. No other cultural group will be studied. Moral ethic will be considered during the study period so that any type of biasness, unnecessary stimulations, emotional excitement and communal fragmentation may not appear within and outside the community.

## CHAPTER THREE

### **Area and People**

This chapter is to give a brief introduction about Terhathum district then Eshibu VDC where the Limbu people are inhabitants.

The study area is mid-hill eastern part of Nepal. The study area Eshibu VDC is situated in the eastern part of Terhathum district of head quarter, Myanglung. The people of study area are very social and simple. They are similar with Mongolians. Their behavior is very familiar with other people.

### **The Setting**

#### **3.1 Location and Environment of Terhathum**

Terhathum district is surrounded on the east, west, south and north. This district is situated in the west from Dhankuta, east from Taplejung, south from Sankhuwasava and north from Panchthar. It covers mid-hill land of Koshi zone. This is divided into three parts by Khorungwa and Koyakhola River.

Terhathum, the most eastward mid-hill district of Nepal lies between  $86.35^{\circ}$  to  $87.4^{\circ}$  longitudes and  $26.66^{\circ}$  to  $26.30^{\circ}$  latitudes. Its total area is 679 square kilometers. The land surface is elevated from the sea level from 1200 meters to 800 meters. The climate here is, thus sub tropical and temperate. The average temperature varies from  $30.5^{\circ}$  to  $5.2^{\circ}$  c in summer and winter season respectively.

The total population of the district is 1, 14,128 (55,541 male and 58,587 female) (primarily report of census 2001 CBS) different ethnic groups live in Terhathum district characteristics. As other districts different religious groups e.g. Hindu, Buddhist, Islam, Christians are living in this district as well. This district is linked by the Mahendra high way which is popularly known as the Mahendra Rajamarga.

### **3.2 Eshibu VDC**

This village is situated in the eastern part of the district. This village is situated in the west from Samdu and east from Simle village. Eshibu village is situated at the height of 1250 Feet from sea level. The total population of the Eshibu VDC is 4,495 (2,105 male and 2,390 female) primarily report of census 2001 CBS. Topographically, this village also can be divided into two parts. The highest part lies above the height of 1200 to 1300 from the sea level and lowest part is lies above the height of 800 to 1200. In these two parts, in the first highest level there is no residential as well as agricultural land. In this highest level there is pasture and steep slopes. In the lowest level there are also no residential places and agricultural land. In the lowest area, there is also meadow and jungle. And steep slopes area. Such as this village people residence and agriculture area is situated in mid-line.

### **3.3 Lake and Pond**

There are small ponds and lakes. Well is used as in the form of drinking water and small ponds are used as in the form of fish farming and for animals.

### **3.4 Soil**

In this village there are two types of soil gray and stony are founded this village. Basically, in this area the people cultivated everything in their soil but in the high yields these soils are sandy and black and low temperature. So, there is not cultivated paddy.

### **3.5 Climate**

The climate of Eshibu is not so different than that of Terhathum district. The climate of Terhathum district is mention earlier. Therefore, the re-searcher has not tried to explain the climate of Eshibu in this section.

### 3.6 Natural Vegetation

In the Eshibu V.D.C. we can find there small forest. Subtropical type of vegetation is found in the area trees like Sal (shoren robustu) Khair( Acacia catchen) Pipal (ficus religiosa) Laligurans (rhododendron) Bambo, abundantly founds such as, grass like khar and Babio also grows in the area which is used to make thatched roof and ropes respectively.

### 3.7 Fauna (Birds and Wild Animals)

In this area we can find small forest various kinds of faunas are available in Eshibu V.D.C. The common fauna available in this area such as: Tiger, Bear, Fox, Jackal, Deer, Boar, and Dove, Crow, Sparrow, Nightingale, Eagle, and other birds.

### 3.8 Population Characteristics of Eshibu VDC

Eshibu V.D.C. has the population of 4495 people (2100 male 2395 female). The ward wise male female population composition is shown by table.

**Table 3.2**

#### **Ward wise Distribution of Population**

Ward no.	Total house	Male	Female	Total
1	60	120	180	300
2	80	300	410	710
3	75	250	380	630
4	80	250	400	650
5	71	205	205	410
6	64	205	215	420
7	72	340	415	755
8	79	300	320	620
9	74	1970	2525	4495

Source: CBS 2001

### 3.9 Distribution of Population on the basis of Ethnic Groups

Eshibu V.D.C. is inhabited by heterogeneous group. Now we can see the

nature of distribution of population by ethnic groups in the field area.

**Table 3.3**

**Ethnic Group Wise Population**

Ethnic group	Male	Female	Total
Limbu	520	680	1200
Tamang	314	320	634
Kami	15	25	40
Sarki	10	12	22
Damai	21	24	45
Kshetri	1200	1300	2500
Brhmin	20	23	43
Any other	5	6	11
Total	2105	2390	4495

Source: CBS 2001

**3.10 Social Relationship with other Ethnic Groups**

Previously, the Limbu people do not have any relation with other people. It was because previously there were not any such groups of people near by them. After the Gurkha conquest the Limbuwan of the mid-hill eastern of Nepal the new comers of people started to settled in this area. Gradually, there came various sorts of reasons to be contact with each other. Previously to some extent man was independent. Gradually man became dependent it is there result of invention of modern tool and technology. Hence, consequently Limbu people came in contact with other people.

Now a day, they have relation with all the ethnic groups for their survival. The Limbu people are bound to keep relation with Brahmin, Chhetri, Tamang, Rai, Kami, Sarki, Damai and other ethnic groups of their area for their survival. The reason are their poor economic condition, uneducated limbu people, marriage, business and to fulfill the other daily necessities such as tailoring. The Brahmin and Chhetri is the land lord people so they must kept relation with them for land, where as some are business and other

are skilled workers. So the Limbu people are bound to keep relation with other ethnic groups.

It is natural that man himself is not sufficient for his survival. He must have contact and co-operation with others. So the Limbu people are also not exception to this social relation is a mechanism of that provides strength by means of which man can fulfill his needs and wishes of daily life.

### **3.11 Village Polity**

From the very beginning of human civilization such and every society, community as well as states has its own type of government body. It may be tribal committee village development committee provincial regional or central government. We know that many ethnic groups have their own tribal political institutions. Limbu ethnic group is also not an exception to it, previously the Limbu people have their own state and political institution called kirat state (palo kirat and wallo kirat) which was formed on the basis of heredity. Hang is like a king which is ruled by him kirat states of people. So he has the power controlling the socio-cultural problems of Limbu people. Previously, did not prefer to go to the court or police office to decide the case because they believe that the village problems should be solved in the village. So the village council or the honorable or the respect person “subba” was the important persons for it. Previously, they were also unknown about the legal procedures so, they don’t go to court or the police office and tried to solve the cases at their community level.

Present day the political system has been totally changed in the Limbu community the less women are participate in the political institution. According to collected information it came to be known that they do not participate more in the political activities. The level of local political participation is very low. From the political point of view Brahmins and Chhetris are the successful person in this area. But however, there is good



relationship between village polity and Limbu people. But some time events of conflict between Limbu people and non-Limbu people are also noticed now consequently, they are influenced by village polity. So they are very much conscious in social as well as economic right and development of the village. Previously they were unknown about the process of Nepalization but at present they are against of the process. They think that stress on education and economic development of the group is prime need for them the current issue is they claim that the separate state for the Limbu people.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### **Limbu Culture**

The word Limbu means an archer, bearer of bow and arrows. The Limbu people of the,

kirant confederation. Their ancestral and original stronghold known as pallo kirant as well as Limbuwan spans from Arun River in Nepal to the kingdom of Sikkim in the east. In Nepal Limbus live and work in the districts of sankhuwasava, Terhathum, Dhankuta, Taplejung, Panchthar and Ilam. Their scripture is called Mundhum. Phedangba, Shamba and Yeba-Yema are their sacred specialists. They celebrate the dance festivals of kelang popularly known chyabrun (Two-sided drum) and Yarak (paddy dance) as major events. Limbu have their script called Srijunga. There are many books written in the limbu language. Their faith is enriched in the evergreen Cynodondactylon (dubo) grass and rocks. They cremate their dead. The population of the limbu according to the census of 2001 is 359,255.

The Limbu ethnic group is considered a branch of the ancient Kirat community. They are the indigenous people of the land area comprising east of the river Arun extending to Sikkim and to the northern part of west Bengal. The area inhabited by Limbus was called pallo kirat in the early times and was called limbuwan until recently. At the time of Prithivi Narayan Sha's invasion of the Limbuwan, there were ten different states ruled by 10 Limbu kings. It is said that the Limbus of today are the descendents of these ten Limbu (Vansittart, 1991:107). The main areas inhabited by Limbu today are the districts of Sankhuwasava, Taplejung, Terhathum, Pachthar, Dhankuta and Ilam. They are now also found living in large numbers in Sunsari, Jhapa and Morang districts.

The term, 'Limbu', in Limbu language means 'one who carries bow' or 'bow carrier' (Chemjong, AD1948:33). Limbu are also called Yakthung.

According to the population census of 2001, the population of Limbus is 359,379. Limbu has their own language, which is called 'Yakthunbapan'. They have also their own age old script. The script is called kirat Sirjanga. A number of books have been published in the Limbu language.

Limbu have their own distinct culture. Kelang (Chyabrunge dance or drum dance), Yalang (Dhan Nach or paddy dance), and Yemalang (bijwani dance or female shaman's dance) are some of the Limbu dances. They also have their own unique songs called hakpare, palam, etc. They have their own religion called kirat Dharma, often known as Yuma samyo. They are basically worshipers of nature of animists (Subba, BS2058).

Mundhum is their holy scripture. Tagera Niwa phuma or Yuma is the prominent goddess and there are several other gods and goddess. Among them Nahngma is the goddess of the primitive war- a culture in which Limbus take pride (Sangat, 1996). Phedngama, Samba, Yema and Angsi are the sacred specialists who perform religious functions and lifecycle rituals. Limbu bring in people of other tribes and communities to their dynastic lineage by completing a special formality called Chokpung or socialization (Chemjong, 1966:70-74). Limbu have deep allegiance towards a sacred grass cynodono dactylon and stone and witness involved in the process of adjudication according to Limbu practices are cross-examined by asking them to take oath by touching dubo (cynodon dactylo) and stone (Subba, 1998:42). Limbus, traditionally, bury their dead and mourning is observed for four days for male and three days for female. Attendance of close relatives is compulsory on the final day of mourning for clearing up of the death-related pollution. Limbu in general, marry within their own community.

Boys are at liberty to choose a girl and girls are equally free to decide whether to spend life with the boy in question or not (Jones and Jones 1976). Cross -cousin marriage is not allowed in Limbu culture. The practices of

Limbu culture, the inspiring spirit, besides the Mundhum of good and evil spirits, the kirat people believe in oracles. They believe in the inspiration of god's spirit in human body. When a person is inspired by the good spirit of god, he or she will be senseless for a while and when the sense returns, he or she will begin to speak oracles. He/she prophecies the good or bad results of sickness or of protects of any man or woman who consults him/her. He or she recites all the Mundhums of the past days in his/her oracles. These oracles encourage people to do good work for the benefit of the others. They give good advice to people who believe in and direct them how to proceed to good path. They instruct people to use medicine for the recovery of sicknesses. They do not advise blood sacrifice; on the contrary, they instruct them to be pure in spirit, body and in their work. When the god's spirit goes away from his or her body, he or she will fall asleep for a while, but cannot remember what they had said before. This culture can be compared with the Delphi oracles of the Greeks or Yavans in ancient Greece, where the priestess after chewing the sacred bay and drinking water from the sacred took her seat on the tripod and uttered oracles. Another one practices in Limbu community. The tantric feat in kirat Mundhum, there is also another kind of Mundhum called the Phungwa Changma and Phungwa Lemma. In such Mundhum, an expert priestess sings or recites the whole story of the creation of flower, its uses and compares such inanimate objects to human life in such a way that she particularizes the mentality of a certain man a way that of the stage of that particular flower. She then diverts the stage of that flower from freshness to a withered condition. While she is doing this act of diverting, the particular man who is compared to that particular flower becomes slack and loses consciousness. Then finally when the priestess refreshes the flower, the man comes back to his senses and becomes fresh again.

The priestess, who knows such occultism, can also practice such magic to command a tree to drop down its leaves on the ground and again to put them back on the tree. This culture of animism of the kirat people seems to have started a very long time back. The spirit of envy and jealousy is another belief system of Limbu community. The Mundhum mentions that when the mankind was in the stage of animal's life and there was no sense of family relation, at that time, a brother and sister became consorts. When her husband died, she became the wife of her own son. The son also died, she became the wife of her own son. The son also died. So, the ghosts of both the husbands became the evil spirits of envy. And anger and jealousy and is called, "Nahen". All of the above mentions are practices in Limbu.

#### **4.1 Origin and History**

This chapter briefly describes origin and histories of Limbu people in Eshibu VDC ward no. 1. There are included the religion, culture, kin group, language and social organization.

There are several theories concerning Kirant ethnic origin. Some speak of coming from Tibet, while others insist that Kiranties have always in these hills of Nepal. Dor Bdr. Bista (1980:33) cited that, "one of the old Kiranti religious text" the "kirant ko veda" indicates that at least some of their ancestors and ancient "Rajas" came from Tibet". Whatever may have been their places of origin, Kiranties have been associated with the history of Nepal for thousands years (Bista 1980:33). Nevertheless, most of the native or foreign scholars regard that the Kiranties are the indigenous people of Himalaya and Mid-hill Nepal. Hence, on the basis of physical structure and patterns of language they are closely related with the people of Tibet than indo-Aryan originated people. Some words and cultural patterns are similar to the Tibetan people than others. Thus, whether they came from Tibet or not, they are "first settler" of the Himalayan and mid-hill regions of Nepal.

In this regard, among the Kiranti ethnic groups Limbu are the main ethnic group of eastern mid-hill region of Nepal. But, it is regard that, during the course of time there are some cultural and language differences among the Kiranties ethnic groups. Because of the settlement in different ecological setting, there are varying in cultural patterns and language of mid-hill region of Nepal. But some words and cultural patterns are commonly practiced among the kiranti people. They are physically similar and they seem “clan” in Nepal. Mr. chandra Phombo of the study area their ancestor came from Tibet as a nomadic people and they were the first settler of this areas. Then he showed a written document about the origin of the Phombo of the study area. The document was written by Tatuwa Rai who was a ruler of that area. The majority of the people of the study area are Phombo but their origin is not clearly mentioned on that provided document.

In my research time that dissertates precisely cites the general account of origin on the basis of written document which is provided to dissertate during the field work. The younger brother of King Des Rai of “Singmonggod” was fled after the palace agitation to eastern part of Nepal. He had three sons named Hangdo Hang, Thekemba and Kalu Rai respectively. They were remained in Sadam Tar (Dhankuta district and at the bank of Tamor river) after the death of their father. There after, they decided to be dispursed from that place to their place of choices. Before dispured, they erected three stone poles as symbol which is still erected on the bank of the Tamor River in Sadam Tar. They remained different places for a long time and after the 12 generations of Hangdo Hang Mr. Chandra phaombo was permanently remained in “Eshebung” (a kind of tree). He had two sons named Nugen Hang, Prithidhar respectively. Among them Nugen Hang went to reside Phuwantapa (a close village of Eshebung) and Prithidhar remained in Eshebung and all his generations are still residing in Eshebung and all his generations are still residing around these areas. During the 21 generations

“subba” tatuwa was a powerful authority or king of this area. Then after 1831 A.D. or the invasion of the shah ruler into Limbuwan mr. Tatuwa was the first to receive a royal decree of these area or he got a “Shubhangi Killa” (certain territory) by shah rulers. All of the Limbus in Eshebung village except five households is the generations of Tatuwa. Long ago some were migrated from Eshebung to Phuwatapa. All above mentioned places are normally closed from each other. But now a day, Eshebung is called Eshibu. Not only that, they have their own culture, language, scripts and some books are written in this script. All are depending on agricultural production and they keep goats, sheep, buffalo, pigs for milk and meat. Finally they have their own culture, religion and language which are the result of the interaction with their environment.

#### **4.2 Religion**

Religion is a part of culture each and every where a society of the world does have its own religious tradition. The religious of every ethnic group is interring woven with their cultural processes. Limbu are rigid in their religious beliefs. Each and every part of their own religion, they worship their own type of gods and goddess which are not worshiped in Hindu religion they worshiped in Hindu religion they worshiped and their own gods and goddess. Limbu people believe on social service or they believe on others welfare, as well as live in traditional way of life is their religion. Limbu people consider the role of religion in wider sense. They think please and miseries are directly related with the religion. They believe on home deities, village deities the soul of dead man and their ancestral deities Theba Smang and Yuma Samang. Their religious holy book is called “Mundum” like “Bible” and “Kuran”.

The term Mundum can be glossed as “oral tradition” an ancestral knowledge, or more generally traditional way of life (Ganszle(2002:31). In this way, its

major feature is orality which is unique characteristics of the ‘Mundum’ as a

whole. However the Mundum is interpreted by scholar in a number of ways.

The word Mundum means power of great strength and the

Kirat people of east Nepal it to be a true, holy and a powerful scripture.

(Imansingh Chemjong, 2003)

Imansingh chemjong is a well-known home scholar of books and articles on Kirat and Kirati culture.

According to his

interpretation, the term Mundum (documented as the the term Mundum a Nepalese influence term) is concerned with the strong power and Kirat’s

Belief system of limbu community. According to Sajip Mundhum, the spirits are two classes: the good spirit and the bad spirit

**The good spirit:** both the classes of spirit are powerful and invisible, yet they believe that the first class or good spirit is the creator of the second class or bad spirit. The first class spirit is the good spirit, which is believed to be the supreme and the most powerful spirit of knowledge and wisdom and whom the Mundhum addresses by the name of Niwafungma. It means the mine of knowledge and wisdom.

When the spirit comes down to earth the help mankind, people regard him as their grand mother and call her Yumasmang. Now the god Niwafungma loved human beings so much that he sent Heem Samang, a good spirit look after the prosperity of the house of mankind; Thoklung Samang to look after the health of mankind; Nehangma Samang to give good energy and ambition to mankind; Theba Samang to guide mankind an the time of war; Pung Samang to look after the good production of the field; Khambu ling Samang to guide the first class priest who does not kill and offer blood at the time worship and Okwama Samang to guide the second class priest who sacrifices birds and animals for the recovery of the sick person. Every time the priest or priestess recites Mundhum, the word “Samang” means the spirit of god.

**The bad spirit:** the second class spirit is the evil spirit which is less powerful than the good spirit of god. The head of the evil spirits is called the Tamphung Samang which means the spirit god of the forest. It has the freedom to move and work as it likes; but when he does injustice to mankind, the good spirit god Niwafungma contols him. Because, the latter spirit is the Queen and creator of all the other spirits. Niwafungma or Yuma Samang is the only spirit god, who is omnipresent, supreme and eternal. It was he, who created the rest of the spirits and other powers of fire, wind and water.

But Tamphung Samang being the head of evil spirits causes a lot of trouble to mankind through the other subordinate evil spirits. All sorts of diseases are the results of the mischief of the evil spirits. They always dwell in bad and dirty places and trouble to mankind. The spirits both good and bad are actually invisible, yet the kirat people personify them and treat them and if they are living beings and try their best to pacify them by prayers and sacrificial offerings.

The kirat priests never use medicine for the treatment of sick people unless they are directed by the good spirit god in their dreams for its use. If the evil spirit does not get satisfaction from the humble prayers and sacrifices, the priests burn chilly rags and other dirty things in order to drive them away from their presence.

When a priest prepares an altar with a view to destroy such evil spirits, then no member of the house where such performance takes place, should work in the field for eight days. Neither should any member of the family go on journey within that period. The priest prepares a place of such function in a secular place and never allows anybody to go there. If anybody happens to go there by mistake, he is punished with double amount spent in the performance of the function. If they do not do so, they believe that a worst type of epidemic will occur in the village. As the priest recites the Mundhum, he attracts such evil spirits in the place prepared for their welcome as gods and when they assemble, the priests uses such power over them that all of them are destroyed then and there only.



holy scripture. It is true and can be accepted to certain extent. In this interpretation, the Mundum is really principal scripture of Kiratis who settled in eastern part of Nepal. But the scripture means the holy writings of a religion or the holy book of a religion. We can be said that the Mundum is the holy books of a religion.

We can conclude that the Mundum is the oral tradition of Kirat is which is practiced as an ancestral knowledge or traditional way of life and it is believed that it is full of strong power. The most interesting issue found in the Mundum is that it as an oral tradition which is transferred from generation to generation orally.

According to chemjong (2003) the Mundum is of two types, viz, Thungsap and pesyap. The Mundum is divided into two parts. The first is called Thungsap and second is called pesyap Mundum. (Chemjong: 2003).

The Mundum is of two types which is not the true. Both Thungsap and pesyap are Mundum. It is not necessary to make division or categorize as types.

The Thungsap Mundum is the original one and came from the very words of mouth till the art of life writing was introduced and was referred to as the oral Mundum in books..... the Pesyap Mundum is a written book about religion. It is divided into four parts. They are Soksok Mundum, Yehang Mundum, Sapji Mundum and Sap Mundum. (Chemjong: 2003).

Chemjong(2003) as mentioned above claims that the Pesyap Mundum a written book about religion is in fact also oral tradition on practice because there was no real book at the time when the Mundum came into being.

The Soksok contains the stories of creation of the universe, the beginning of the man kind, the cause and effect of the sins, the creation of evil scripts; etc. ...the Yehang Mundum contains the story of the first leader of mankind who made laws for the sake of improvement of human beings from the stage of animal life to the enlightened life and ways to control them by giving

philosophy on spiritualism .... So according to Sapji Mundum the spirits are if two classes ... the good sprit and the bad spirit... (Chemjong: 2003)

Religion in Limbuwan differs from area to area and from group to group, but generally centers around the propitiation of local deities, spirits of the dead and numerous gods and goddesses. The belief and rituals differ considerably from either the Hinduism or the Buddhism of the other castes and groups that immigrated to the area. Limbu worship a number of gods and goddesses that are not worshiped by the other castes. The high god of the Limbu is called Tagera NiwaPhunma, which may be translated simply as “knowledge” Tagera Niwaphunma is identified by the Limbu as the Bhagwan of Hinduism, the supreme body of knowledge or the creator of the world Tagera Niwaphuma is seldom worshiped by ritual ceremony. Since, he is really life’s force. He presents himself man is the anthropomorphic avatar of Yuma Samang or “Grandmother Spirit” to whom numerous rites and ceremonies are dedicated. The Limbu people worshiped the gods and goddesses in their own ways. Mainly they worship the god Theba samang and Yuma samang.

They establish their home deities into the house. Into this home deity they also worshiped of Yuma samang and Theba Samang in the form of home deities. The Limbu people believed that if they forget to worship of home deities they make any mistake in the worship of home deities they must suffer from certain kinds of sorrows and bad things. All the deities they worship of some specific times. The Limbu people beside this deity they worship of Akwanama, Mouwatapma, Dungdunge and Chakhoba in the form or home deities, the form of home deities worshiped are differ from other castes.

They believe that worship of village deities is not important not only for the household but also for the whole villagers. From the worship of village deities they found salvation from all sorts of sorrow and hazards. Worship of

village deities if their co-operative worship of village deities. In the worshiping activity, they use of chicken, pig, orange and other flowers for sacrificing of the gods. They worship Yasokeni (kumayak and kusayak) and other deities in the form of village deities by establishing of their status in the village.

Limbu people also consider the soul for dead man as god and worship it. When a woman pregnant she must be saved from the intrusion of dead mans soul. For her make she should not go outside alone in the night. They also suggest the pregnant woman not to stay alone in darkness of the house. Where a man is dead she is prohibited to go outside from the house. And she should not make any murder during that pregnant period if she did her baby will destroyed. They believe that, if a man who lays by committing suicide his soul may provide trouble to their people. They offer item as liked by him Samtakkhong is their dead soul got. To get well being from dead soul, they worship Samtakkhong.

In the study area now a days Limbu people do not worship their all deities. It is because of their poor economic condition they have no daily leisure for worship of all their deities. They also have cut down worshiping expenditure and items needed for the worship on the basis of information available they have not changed some of the important auspicious worship occasion in various economic activities the duration of worship has been cut down dramatically within the period three decades.

**Distribution of Population on the basis of Religion**  
**Table 4.4**

Religion	Total	Percentage
Hindu	2725	60.62
Buddhist	570	12.68
Kirat	1200	26.69
Total	4495	100

Source: Field survey 2008

The above table shows, most of the populations were followers' Hindu religion in Nepal. In the study area, majority of the population were seen to be Hindus. More than 60.62% of the people, they are Hindu. In the study area of Eshibu VDC ward on. 1 inhabitant's homogeneous Limbu people, 26.69% of the people they are kirat and 12.68% of the people they were followers of Buddhist religion.

### **4.3 Kin Group**

In the world people of all societies are bound together in groups by various. The most universal and the most basic of these bonds are based on reproduction and inherent human drive, which is called kinship in sociology and social anthropology.

The desire for reproduction gives rise to two kinds of bonds. Firstly, there is the bond between parents and their children and that between siblings I.e. children of the same parents. The first kind of bond, which arises out of a socially or legally defined marriage relationship, is called affinal kinship and the relatives so related are called affinal kin. The affinal kin are not connected to each other through blood, which is the case with relatives of the second kind enumerated above who are called consanguineous kin. The relationship based on blood ties is called consanguineous (same blood) kinship (Majumdar and Madum, 1956:98). Two types of kin group consanguineous and affinal are found in every human society. Two types of kin groups are most popular among the Limbu people of the study area. In their language consanguine kin group is known as Subba and affinal kin group is known as kutumaba. They face their kin group from parent's side. The Limbu people of the study area have both descriptive as well as classificatory terms of refers to their relations such as Amba( father) amau ( mother) Phungaye(uncle) thebaye( mother's father and father's father).

According to the information collected it has come to know the limbu are the descendent of Tibeto- Burman and their clan (gotra) is Kanshi. Within this there are five groups such as Phombo, chongbang, Yonghang, and Cheliphung. But they lives use themselves Limbu by their last name. These people are clan and lineage exogamous. Therefore they do not seek a marriage partner with their clan and lineage.

#### **4.4 Festivals**

In the study area Limbu people celebrate feast and festivals various in their own way. Some of the festivals are following types:

##### **4.4.1 Yakwa Tongnam(Worship of Land)**

In the time of Yakwa tongnam Limbu people celebrates the festivals in group of worshiping the land. In the Eshibu V.D.C. different kinds of rituals are performed by Limbu. The people of Limbu worshiping land for the purpose of danger from flood, earth-slide and starvation. They also believe that the fertility power of land can be increased. “kirant Yakthung Chumlung” has decided to celebrate the festival in “Baisakh Purnima. There is a kind of belief system of that people shouldn’t plough their land on the former and later day of the festivals. Because, the day after tomorrow is the right time to start putting seeds. According to “Imanshing chemjong” the festival is celebrated in the memory of King Ubahang’s victory of south Tibet and North India. At last it can be stated that this festival is the meeting point of religion, culture and history by reconciling the myth and modern history. Mainly this festival is known as showing seeds, when they finished celebrating Tongsing festival and than they start to show.

#### **4.4.2 Siksapa Tongnam(A Festival Worshipped to get rid of Starvation)**

This festival is celebrated at the month of Srawan to make people get rid of starvation.

In this festival, all the people by hanging steel plats and “naglo” attempt to make the starvation (famine) escape from their home. They believe starvation will take to its heel if they follow it with “Ranke” to the direction of the west. They also threaten the starvation by performing different types of rituals. According to the “kirant Dhrmasastr” “mundhum” this festival is started in the regime of “Manghang King”.

#### **4.4.3 Balihang Tongnam**

This festival is celebrated in the month of “kartik”. In the legend of “kirant Race” there is a story. There was a very kind “Bakihand’. People were found of him. But when he declared that the time of his death was near, people were grief-stricken. Finally, they rescued their king from death by worshipping their king with light at the night of the “Aunsi” in the month of “kartik”. So, this festival is celebrated in the memory of that day.

#### **4.4.4 Chasok Tongnam**

This festival is celebrated when people are ready to harvesting the crops which are nearly ripened. In the study area Limbu people celebrate this festival by worshipping and giving thanks to “Tagera Niwafungma” and also taking permission to eat those crops. The Limbu people don’t eat the nearly ripened crops without worshipping “Tagera Niwafungma”. This festival is the festival of gratefulness. Limbu people became grateful to ‘Tagera Niwafungma’ who, according to them, lets crop grow.

#### **4.4.5 Kakfekwa Tongnam**

This festival is celebrated to welcome the New Year in the month of ‘Magh’. Limbu people celebrate this festival by wishing their happy, peaceful and prosperous near year. They clean their house in the early mornings, who after bathing celebrate the New Year by exchanging their happiness by offering delicious meals to their friends and relatives.

To sum up, the festivals included above are unique to preserve the dignity of Limbu Race by assuring the authenticity religiosity and unique racial identity of the Limbu in eastern of Nepal.

#### **4.5 Language**

Language is a means of communication. Though in the study area found Limbu people speak bilingual language. They speak Limbu, a Tibet Burman language and Nepali. For example in their own language: Chwa means water, Theba (grandfather) Yuma(grand mother) amma( mother) amba(father) kocho( dog) pu( bird) tak(meal) me(fire) maki( maize) ya(paddy). Such type of word they speak in study area.

**Table 4.5**

**Distribution of Population on the basis of Their Mother Tongue.**

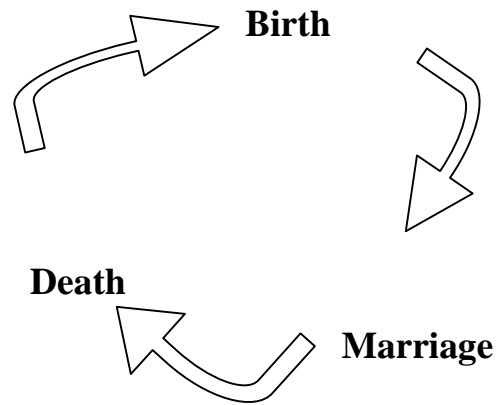
S.N.	Mother tongue (language)	Total	percentage
1	Nepali	2900	64.51
2	Limbu	1100	24.47
3	Tamang	495	11.01
		4495	100

Sources: field survey 2008

The above table shows that about 64.51% are speaking Nepali language, about 24.47% are speaking Limbu and about 11.01 are speaking Tamang.

In this way Nepali language is most of the people used in the study area and than other second language.

## 4.6 Life Cycle



Man is social as well as cultural being. From cradle to death man celebrates many ceremonies which are called Sankara in Nepali culture. Right from the day of his birth man must enter into several Sanskara without performing Sansakara; a man could not be getting Moksyia. The ceremonies which man celebrate or observe have their own unique cultural significance in the social tradition. The ceremonies which the Limbu people of Eshibu celebrate or observe are discussed below.

### 4.6.1 Birth Ceremony:-

#### 4.6.1.1 Sapok Chamen( Stomach Ceremony)

This ceremony held during pregnancy. Stomach ceremony has two stages- set of sacrifices performed in day light in the forest to give strength to woman in labor and ritual that takes place at night in the woman's natal home. In the study area Limbu people believe that woman who dies in child birth or children who die before they reach the age of two become evil spirits who are giving to attacking close woman relatives in child birth and new born infants. The victim of such attack became sickness and sometimes dies.



During the “stomach ceremony” Phedangma (priest) try to trap these spirits and bar them from harming mother or child.

The pregnant woman her family and two priest enter the jungle in the morning before eating rice and three offerings are made to eight different deities. The first priest offers one egg and pair of fish to the god of fire asking for strength during child birth. Warokma samang, (a large water pond deity) is then given one rooster, one hen, one pig, ten oil candles, and ten leaf plates filled with tiny fried bread, four pairs of tiny bamboo container filled with fermented grain and water and four pairs of dried fish. The offering is elaborate because during the sixth month of pregnancy that deity has taken one of the woman souls (if the water pond god can not be persuaded to give back the stolen soul, the woman will die in labor.

The animals are cut and phedangma (priest) begs the god to return the soul. Warokma samang replies that he can not unless his friend Kotsokuwa samang is pacified as well. An offering is then presented to this god. One egg laying hen is released in jungle. After this, the woman’s soul is released. Lesser offerings are made to five more gods whom the priest (phedangma) asks to grant the woman’s strength; health and easy labor. When all ritual ceremony performed god have been duly approached, the meat, rice and liquor are prepared and served to everyone. Then the phedangma (priest) holds out the woman’s shawl and calls to her soul, “come with us and well take you home. Where have you gone? Where have you been? What trouble have you suffered lot and no one came to take me back”. When he hears of the soul’s hardship the priest weeps and says, “We didn’t see you leave. Yesterday we said to come, but we didn’t see the road. Now we’ve come to take you. Get up; now, let’s go.” The soul enters the woman’s shawl and the priest puts into a basket, covers it home, accompanied by all those present. When they reach her house, the phedangma places the basket on a rug and tells the soul, “we have come; now sit, baby”.

It is the first phase of human life when a pregnant woman begets a child a helper or mid-wife is employed which is called 'Yangdang kevongma' in limbu term. The yangdang kevongama cuts the placenta of child which is call nal. The pregnant woman must sleep in a mat until she completes the duration of pregnancy pollution when placenta is cut down they kept the baby in the pathang( shawl) and they touch this pathang to the Dhara(tap) and worship of tap by using Achhetta(rice) and the baby is kept all the side to show him this earth.

The Limbu people do not observe this pollution till very long days. According to the situation of their home and baby as well as the mother they observe the pregnancy pollution. They usually observe 3-4 days. In the day of becoming pure, they need a priest (phedangma) and yangdang kevonma (nal cutter). Phedangma spread the pure water in the house. They clean the all house at that day and in this way became pure.

#### **4.6.1.2 Yangdangphong (Name Putting Ceremony)**

This ritual performed after the birth of child. There is certain day of name giving in this community. After, 3-4 days performed Yandangphong ritual, for son 4 days and 3 days for daughter. They follow some rules for putting the name of the new born baby. Mainly the name must be based on birth day month and any type of evident. That is to say they gave name to the child according to the born time and situation and mother. For example, if a new born child is born in the month of Ashad the name may be Asharu or born in the day of somabar the name may be Sombari. But now a day, some Limbu people gave name to the new born baby by arranging ceremony and seeing calendar and gave modern name.

#### **4.6.1.3 Takchamma (Weaving)**

This ceremony takes place at the same time of Yangdangphong. In this ritual they prepare delicious meal for child and feast. The feast is first phedangma, mother, father and other relatives. In this ritual the phedangma of the new born baby has great important role perform. For the first time to eat the rice pudding is given to the baby by the phedangma and other persons. Finally finished all ritual performs and then served feast other invited guest.

#### **4.6.1.4 Changwa Lekma (change dress)**

This ritual is observed in the conduction of when the boy and girl are going to get married. This ceremony may take place in any day before the marriage. For this ceremony they need Phedangma. Phedangma arranges all worship activities and gave mantra to the boy. For the girl they give pathang (shawl) put on in her head after this ceremony they became marriage ceremony.

Ethnography studies different races and cultures. Ethnographic method in this study generates qualitative data on social structure and Limbu marriage system and may also generate a few quantitative data. Using the method of field observation the researcher has observed, listen to and converse with informants in as free and natural an atmosphere as possible. The assumption is that the most important behavior of individual Limbu people in groups is a dynamic process of complex interaction for Limbu marriage system and consists of more than a set of facts statistics or even discrete incidents.

The strength of this kind of method lies in the observation of natural behavior of marriage system in real life setting. The researcher has understood that setting and structures its traditions, values and norms of behavior. While, concerning with the marriage system questionnaires and the key informants, a check list has developed and used.

#### **4.6.2 Marriage**

Marriage is a social institution which differs from place to place and ethnic groups to groups and at the same time the type of marriage also differs. Theoretically speaking three types of marriage system have been found existing in the world.

These are as follows:-

1. monogamy
2. polygamy
  - I. polygyny
  - ii. Polyandry

In the monogamy marriage system there are single man and single woman. Under the monogamy one man marries one woman at a time. Another one marriage system is polygyny marriage system there are one person and many marriages whereas in polygyny system one man has two or more wives and in polyandry marriage system one man or one wife and many husbands. Thus the Limbu of the eastern hill region of Nepal can not be discriminated from the marriage variations. The dissertation found basically the arranged marriage but prior to this formalized betrothal all boys and girls who have reached puberty stage will love each other through an institution known as the “Dhan nach” in Limbu term but arranged marriage without courtship each other through “Dhan nach” and marriage by capture and love are also prevalent in the study area.

#### **4.6.3 Death Ceremony**

Limbu people observe death ceremony like other people of Nepal. They bury or fire the corpse. If a child is dead before coming to ten they bury and they don't observe death pollution too. Besides this according to the age they observe death pollution from 3-4 days.

In the Limbu community, elder son is important to observe funeral rites for four days. After that anybody may be able to observe the funeral rites.

When a family member dead, they gave bath and wrapped with a white shroud and put coin on forehead and put into a wooden coffin “Khong” in Limbu term and covered with, “khuk” in such a way that the face of the corpse can be seen from outside. The head of the corpse exposed and be sheltered with a kind of cap or hat or umbrella ‘Saklip’ in Limbu term. After that they call to all the community people and relatives. People offer money to the dead body after that they made “Chedhap” (katro) ( the bamboo made thing to carry the dead body) and carry to the burring ground by taking the name of God “Niwafungma” by all the member of funeral procession and procedure the sound of “kelamo pero” ( go to your way). They must carry shovel and Kang (a clay pot) with them. The male member used to go together with the funeral procession where as female precedes their procession. After, while for the burring ground spreading liquor. When the funeral procession reaches in the corpse is too buried. Before this buried period all women are return at home. The ground digs a hole if the corpse is too buried. In buried process they light the lamp on the head of corpse and round three times for women and four times for men. They made pyre for man 11 steps and 9 steps for woman. If the corpse should burn they bring wood and slept the corpse in the sore of river when the head north side and kept soil for three times by the man who is the funeral man and burn with mustard and oil. After finishing the burning activities the funeral man took bath and cut his head and returns to the home. When they reached at home all funeral processor spread ashes and touch fire burning.

The mourning should be observed for four days for man and three days for woman. The living members of the house of deceased person should not take salt, oil, ginger and chilly within the mourning period. On the fourth day or third day, all the relatives and friends of the deceased person should assemble in his house and purify the living members of the house of the deceased person who remained impure because of the death of one of the

members of their house. The Phedangma(priest) should explain the assembly, the name and address of the deceased person and the cause or disease and the treatment of the sickness and the failure of recovering from it. He should request the people that it was due to the will of god “Niwafungma” that such and such person had died. He was no more among them. His death has made every member of his family very sad and impure. They had been forbidden from talking, working, mixing with their other people and taking salt, oil, ginger and chilly or any kind of spices. They were in great trouble and request the gentlemen present to kindly purify them from that day onwards so that they would be free to move or talk or work or eat or drink as usual.

#### **4.6.3.1 Death Feast**

First of all they prepare varieties of food, meat, liquor and spices for dead soul.

At this time the Phedangma (priest) should address and ask the assembly. “Listen to you gentlemen! I hear that such and such person of your village is dead and gone from among you. Is this true or not? The assembly should answer “yes, yes! He is dead and gone from among us. We know about his illness and we tried our best to cure him. But, it was by the will of god Niwafungma, his period of life is completed and therefore, he is dead and gone from among us. He has been separated from us forever.” The priest “has he been put into the lap of his forefathers in heaven or not? The assembly “yes, yes! He has been accepted into the lap of his forefathers in heaven.” The phedangma “has he not faced any kind of obstacles on his way to heaven by the evil spirits of hogs and fowls”? The assembly: “no, no! He has not faced any obstacles of the evil spirits of hogs and fowls on his way to heaven. He was the son of god, the son of the sun, and the son of Moon. So he directly went to heaven where god and his forefathers live.” The

phedangma: “then he is dead and gone and is no more among us. When he has been accepted by his forefathers in heaven, then will you purify his living relatives and set them free from the bondage of impurity? The assembly: “yes, yes! We will purify them! We will make them free from the bondage of impurity! From today onwards, his living relatives are all pure. They are no more in the bondage of impurity. From today, they are free to talk, work, to eat everything as usual. They are free to mix around with all. Their friends and relatives give them best wishes. Let god Niwafungma save them from any sort of distress and calamities in future!” The priest: (turning towards the impure members) “from today onwards, you are free from all kinds of impurities. All the gentlemen who have assembled here today made you free and pure as they are. You can now take salt, oil, and ginger, chilly as usual. You are free to talk, move and work as usual. The practices of greeting which had been closed for many years and will be resumed from today.

(He will then ask them to bow down before all the gentlemen present for the function) The purified persons will bow down before the phedangma and all the people of the assembly.

They will then serve meals to all the people present and thus the living relatives of the deceased person will be purified. They however, are prohibited from attending celebrations like singing or dancing or rejoicing in any function for one full year. After all this performing they take feast. They made in the death feast varieties of meat, spices, beer and meal for the guest and relatives.

## **4.7 Social Organizations**

### **4.7.1 Family**

Family is a group of member united by the ties of marriage blood or adoption, interacting intercommunicating with each other in their respective social role of husband and wife mother and father, son and daughter, brother

and sister creating a common culture. During the field visit two types of family were found in community i.e.; and joint.

Among the Limbu of Eshibu only 40 households were selected for the present study. Observation was made on the family types prevailing which are categorized in table.

**Table 4.6**

S.N.	Types of family	No. of family	Percentage
1	Nuclear	3095	68.85
2	Joint	1400	31.14
Total		4495	100

Sources: field survey 2008

Above this table shows the majority of the people were nuclear and than joint family. About 68.85% of people living nuclear and 31.15% were joint family system. According this table, 68.85% people prefer to live in nuclear family set up.

In the past, most of the people in the Limbu community used to live in the joint family system.

#### **4.7.1.1 Nuclear Family**

The nuclear family consists of married couple and the unmarried children. In the nuclear family system there is no system of economic co-operation between the brother as well as the nuclear family is always free from the control of the elders. The houses of the study area are of two or three stories built of stone and with thatch roof. All houses are colored by white and red clay. Some houses are larger than the average houses of the village. Among the 40 sampled households of Limbu people it has been found 68.85% households or families under nuclear family system. So, it can be said that the Limbu people prefer nuclear family system rather than other. Nevertheless, the dispersant regards that family and households are



synonymous term and its cultural activities as marriage reproduction and property inheritance.

#### **4.7.1.2 Joint Family**

The joint family is a group of brother families living together in which there is a joint residence kitchen and property. The joint family consists of males having a common male ancestor, female offspring not yet married and women brought into the group by marriage. All of these people might live in a common household or in several households near to one another. In any way so long as the joint family holds together its members are expected to contribute to the support of the whole and to receive from it a share of total product. All family members either live in single houses or each family member occupies a separate house of his or her own and the houses are clustered together within a family compound that is called a feature of joint family.

The joint family two or more married brothers live together with or without their children it is called a joint family system. Among the 4 households of Limbu people of Eshibu V.D.C. it has been found 31.15% joint families prevailing in the study area. Finally we can say that the Limbu people don't prefer to live in joint family system. In the joint family system which is observed is found that in joint family system the married brothers have their parents and unmarried brother and sister as the members of that family.

#### **4.8 Changes in Family System**

Before the days the Limbu people used to live in joint family. But at present, they prefer nuclear family rather than joint family system. It is because of changing socio-economic reasons. This type of family is also practiced in other ethnic groups of Nepal. Hence it can be said that living in the nuclear family in Nepal is becoming a general trend. The main causes which are

responsible for bringing nuclear family system into practice are the system of residing separately after marriage decreasing economic condition the tradition of living separately for happy life, quarrels among the wife of married brothers, unequal love of father in-law and mother in-law to the daughter in-law having a good earning capacity of some brothers wealthy parents of married brother's wife.

Due to stated above causes the system of joint family is decreasing day-by-day and the system of nuclear family is increasing.

In fact the nuclear family system the family member is low. So they can feel happiness in family life and prefer living in nuclear family when a boy gets married he starts to live separately taking his due parts ancestral property.

#### **4.9 Economic Activities of the Study Area**

Everywhere, every person has to adopt one type of occupation for livelihood. Such as, the people of Eshibu are also adopting several types of occupations for livelihood.

Mostly the people of Eshibu are adopting agriculture cottage industry, business, animal husbandry, foreign employment and other

#### **4.10 Economic Condition**

This section deals with factors related to the economy of the Limbu community of Eshibu V.D.C. As in other Nepalese village, the subsistence system is of marginal type so that it hardly helps to solve the hand to mouth problem. Previously when these people came too settled there by clearing forest and their agro based economy was supplemented by hunting, gathering was their traditional as well as earlier occupation. Now a day, they are mainly based on agriculture, animal husbandry business, wage earning, cottage industry, foreign employment and other private or government services. This discussed below.

#### **4.10.1 Agriculture**

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood of Limbu people of Eshibu. Basically land is divided into two parts.

1. Bari (pakho or dry unirrigated land)
2. khet(kheti or irrigated land)

The Bari land is gently sloped and also plain. This type of land is easily ploughed by the help of Oxen. The major crops are maize, millet, wheat, mustard, oils and pulses are cultivated according to the season. In Falgun they plant maize and srawan they plant millet. In magh they plant wheat and mustard oil and harvest in jeshth and ashad.

The khet land is flat and low and is considered as moist fertile land. During the monsoon this type of the land can be irrigated so paddy and wheat are cultivated. Maize is also cultivated in such land. In magh and falgun plant wheat and maize and harvest in baisakh and jestha. In ashad they plant paddy and harvest in kartik and marga and again they plant wheat and maize. Truly speaking they did their agricultural works during the year. But some time they get free from agriculture.

Technologically, speaking they are still in traditional agriculturist. But however, now a day they have also started to use chemical fertilizer and improved of seeds for purpose of high yields. According to, obtain information the land which, Limbu people have previously decreasing at present. The causes of decreasing their land are.

In the early part of the eighteenth century, the present boundaries of Nepal included a number of relatively petty chiefdoms. This situation obtained until King Prithivi Narayan Sah of western Nepal, the ancestors of Nepal began a series of conquest that was to lead to the centralization of power and the formation of the present state of Nepal. His military campaign to take over Limbuwan began in the 1760 and ended with the conclusion of a treaty

with the Limbu chiefs in 1774. By the terms of that treaty, the Limbu agreed to the prohibition of cow slaughter and allowed the immigration of Hindu castes into their homeland. They in turn were allowed to keep ancient customs govern themselves as they always had and maintain their traditional land rights. During the nineteenth century many changes resulted from heavy immigration and population growth. Hindu immigrants especially the high-caste Brahman and Chhetri began to out number the indigenous tibeto-Burman speaking Limbu. Because of numerical superiority and the favoritism they enjoyed from the Hindu monarchy high caste Hindus gradually imposed many feature of their way of life on the Limbu and at the same time and erosion of long-established Limbu land right began. Two land tenure systems have existed in Limbuwan during the past two hundred years – the Raikar system which applies largely to the Hindu immigrants and the kpat, which concerns the indigenous Limbu. Raikar is a freehold tenure system meaning that if an individual acquires ownership of a piece of land he may sell or rent it at will to any fellow citizen but it can not be sold or leased to a foreigner without the governments or the kings permission. Although Raikar land can be owned by any citizen of Nepal regardless of ethnic or caste affiliation few Limbu owned land under the Raikar system until recently.

The kpat system is a form of “communal” ownership. Land classified as kpat ultimately belongs to the limbu people and can not be sold or alienated permanently to a non-limbu, regardless of his caste of citizenship. Limbu who own kpat land may sell or transfer it only to other Limbu. This system is similar to that pertaining to land on American Indian reservation, that land too, is group affiliation. Because of the land right protection accorded they by the 1774 treaty, the Limbu were able to occupy a special position in Nepal in relation to other peoples. For many years they governed Hindu immigrants who settled on kpat land. Early in the nineteenth century, land in

Limbuwan was plentiful. Hindu immigrants had but to ask local Limbu headmen for a portion of land to them on a long term basis at a minimal fee. The headmen would collect taxes from the limbu and non Limbu within their jurisdiction, impose fines, settle disputes and pass laws on immigrants who settled in their territory.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hindu immigrants were becoming increasingly dissatisfied. They out numbered the Limbu, had filled the lands more efficiently and productively than the owners and now desired outright ownership. The central government granted Hindu demands Limbu protests that the action violated established treaty rights. Much kiptat land was converted to Raiker tenure and as a result Limbu headman lost their jurisdiction. Hindu immigrants continued convert new lands into Raikar tenure until 1901, when the Limbu threatened to revolt. The government then decided to uphold the 1774 treaty and decreed that further alienation of kiptat lands the non-limbu would be prohibited. By this time since many Limbu were heavily in debt to the Brahman and Chetri they continued to lease to the Hindu on a long term basis.

The basis of long term lease became very complex. The Limbu could not sell kiptat land but continued to lease it through mortgage. It is estimated that 70 percent of all kiptat land owned by Limbu families today is mortgaged to the non-limbu. In the Limbu form this mortgaged land in exchange for some of the crops. The Limbu, who supply the capital have thus become tenants on their own land.

Most of Limbu people mortgaged their land with the Brhman and Chetri. The mortgage is passed on to their sons and grand sons. Furthermore, the mortgage principal is increased each time the Limbu owner needs extra money for a wedding, a funeral or other obligation. Frequently they borrow this money from Brahman and Chetri mortgage and the loan is lacked on to

the existing mortgage principal. Land that went for a thousand rupees, because of repeated loans over the generation.

In present day most Limbu do not have enough land to maintain their families and are hopelessly in debt to high caste Hindus. So, traditional land kipat lost finally, the landholding capacity of Limbu people came to decrease. The decreasing of production is also from the reason of insufficient irrigation, natural hazards that is to say unfavorable calamity condition. Their cultivation is based on the seasonal rain. If the rain became unfavorable, they yield decreased, due to, the lack of land holding capacity. Some of the Limbu people are migrating in other places such as Hill area to terai. According to information obtained out of forty sampled households 80% households have their own land for their livelihood and other 10% households cultivate other land on the basis of sharing of crops 10% households have no their own land and share other land for their subsistence.

According to field survey most of the sampled households have their own land for their livelihood. But now a day their population is increasing day-by-day. So for the purpose of the sufficient food, grains/ they must do their agricultural work scientifically and traditionally and they must left habit of over expenditure and should able to adopt the family planning contra septic and should think to save their grains and food for the next generation.

#### **4.10.2 Business**

Some Limbu people are engaged in business, yet they used to sale their agricultural production such as rice fruits, vegetables, cardamom and other things in the market and buy cloths and other things for the daily use. According to field survey some Limbu people are shopkeeper and Beautician. But some of the Limbu people are engaged in business of some sorts of goods for their subsistence, yet most of the Limbu people are

engaged in agriculture so their main source of subsistence is agriculture rather than the business. Business is their subsidiary occupation now a day.

### 4.10.3 Animal Husbandry

Another source of subsistence of Limbu people is animal husbandry. it is due to fact that animal husbandry is an important not only their economic boost up but also cultural and nutritional point. But due to deforestation in their occupation is decreasing day-by-day. The growth of population in the area the forest is cut down for the purpose of agricultural land and settlement. The people of Eshibu V.D.C. keep livestock primarily in fulfilling the necessities of meat, milk and compost manure some people have made family income by selling milk.

In addition to these oxen are used to plough and chickens, pig and goats are kept for meat and sold for the cash income. Table no. 9 shows detail in the following.

**Table 4.7**

#### **Types of Domesticated Animals in Limbu Community of the Eshibu VDC**

Types of the animals	Own	Adhiya	Total
Cow/ox	4	-----	4
Buffalos	1		1
Goat	12		12
Hen/duck	7		7
Pigs	2		2

Sources: field survey 2008

The above table shows that out of the people domesticated animals 12 are goats which are higher in the number. Numbers of the hen/ducks are found 7 of their own basis for meat and household income. They own one buffalo in the basis of milk and milk product and also for meat. This is economically

benefits for the local people. Cow and oxen are 4 in number. Oxen are important for plough the land. The cows are tamed for the purpose of milk and manure. Pigs are 2 in number for meat and households income.

#### **4.10.4 Wage Labor**

Even though the subsistence pattern of the Limbu people depends on agriculture, wage is another source of income in peak agricultural season. Due to the important source of income, men and women even children under age 16 years in poor families involve in wage labor. In agriculture, wage laboring includes plough the field, transplanting paddy, harvesting paddy, millet and maize. Basically the women are engaged in paddy planting and harvesting and male plough and digging the field as lived labors.

The Limbu people prefer to work within as well as outside the village as daily wage labor. They work to repair and build the houses as a carpenter and mason during winter, if it is necessary mostly thatch roof repair is done in the winter. Agriculture terraces and stone fences are built and repaired when the need arises and other work permits, especially before and after monsoon which does considerable damage to terraced fields and retaining walls. In agriculturally slack season, men engaged minor activities such as rope making, repairing equipments. Whatever the women earn money from the local wine. According to the local people everyday about 300 bottles of alcohol is consumed by the Limbu people. During the study period researcher has seen many women with bottle in the local shops from where the alcohol is sold.

#### **4.10.5 Cottage Industry**

Cottage industry is also one of the main sources of income in Limbu community. In the study area many of the members are involved in cottage industry. In this community have operating one rice mill by Chandra



Phombo where from maintain his daily basic needs. Among the cottage industry women are involved in weaving and knitting where from maintain their basic needs.

#### **4.10.6 Foreign Employment**

Number of youth Limbu people engaged in foreign employment. In the study area mainly depends on agriculture for their subsistence. But now a day, their sources of income is foreign employment and Limbu people maintain their life from this income. Table no. 10 shows detail occupation of the household.

**Table 4.8**

#### **Occupation of the Sampled Household**

Occupation	No. household	Percentage
Agriculture	15	37.5
Small Business	2	5
Wage labor	3	7.5
Govt. sector	1	2.5
Private sector	1	2.5
Cottage industry	6	15
Foreign employment	7	17.5
Any other	5	12.5
Total	40	100

Source: Field survey 2008

Of the 40 households, only 37.5% of the household heads are fully dependent on agriculture, 5% are in small business, 7.5% are in wage labor 2.5% are in government sector, 2.5% are in private sector, 15% are in cottage industry, 17.5% are in foreign employment and 12.5% are any other. More than 63% of the households have changed their traditional occupation such as agriculture.

#### **4.11 Educational Condition of the Study Area**

The person of Eshibu V.D.C. is not lagging behind in the attainment of their

education. At present in this village there is one secondary school, one lower secondary and some primary as well as boarding schools. The people of this area are not aware of education. Moreover people able to read in this village. This is quite higher before 12 years. Table no. 5 gives detail of educational condition of the study area.

**Educational Attainment by Sex in Limbu Community**  
**Table 4.9**

Educational level	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Unable to read and write	5	2.5	20	10	10	12.5
Able to read and write only	18	9	15	7.5	33	16.5
Primary	35	17.5	38	19	73	36.5
Lower secondary	17	8.5	20	10	37	18.5
Secondary	10	5	13	6.5	23	11.5
Higher secondary	5	2.5	4	2	9	4.5
Total	90	45	110	55	200	100

Source: field survey 2008

The table shows attainment by sex in Limbu community of Eshibu VDC. The total number of students in different level of school is 200. Among them, 12.5% of people have been unable to read with 2.5% of males 10% of females. About 16.5% of people have been able to read and write 9% people of males and 7.5% of females. About 36.5% of students have been attaining primary school with 17.5% of males and 19% of females. About 18.5% of people have been attaining lower secondary school with 8.5% of males and 10% females. About 11.5% of students have been attaining secondary school with 5% of males and 6.5% of females. There is about 4.5% of people have been attaining higher secondary school with 2.5% of males and 2% of females.

The less number of females involvements in school is that they look after their younger siblings to work in agriculture and get less priority in education. The higher percentage in primary level is due to free education

system in primary school. In Limbu community of Eshibu VDC the poor economic condition has affected the attainment of education.

#### **4.12 Health**

Eshibu V.D.C. lies in Terhathum district where health services and other facilities are not available in proper manner. People living in these villages have less access to the health facilities. They do not get proper treatment even in case of emergency. There is inadequate supply of safe drinking water. The village people have the practice of open defecation. The housing condition is poor and ill ventilated. The Limbu people are facing all these problems.

In this village, there is sub-health post after the one and half hour of walk. There is mission hospital about 5hrs walk at the capital city at Myanlung. This hospital is well equipped for the surgical and medical treatment but is very expensive so that, these Limbu can not afford for the treatment very few of them use the services of this hospital. The health status of people is greatly determined by many factors such as the way of condition, supply of safe drinking water, state of personal hygienic, health know-how and sanitation which is very poor in Limbu village.

**Table 4.10**  
**Illness and Mode of Treatment Followed by Limbu People**

Types of services	No. of the household	Percentage
Dhami /Jhankri /Dewari	7	17.5
Sub-health post	25	62.5
Hospital	8	20
Total	40	100

Source: Field survey 2008

The above table shows that 40 of the households, among them 17.5% of people go to the Dhami, about 62.5% of people go to the sub-hospital and 20% of people go to the hospital. The most of them do not want go to the hospital. It is due to the lack of the knowledge and the education.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **Limbu Marriage System**

Limbu culture is a unique culture where arrange marriage and love marriage is two kinds of marriage system found in the study area. Unlike Tamang and some other castes have got married in same blood but in Limbu have there is no tradition marriage between a boy and girl from the same blood. In other words Limbu culture also adopts the scientific fact that the person from the same blood or the persons from the same ancestral group and heredity should not be allowed for marriage. Which is occurs in Tamang and Gurung community. The traditional convention of Limbu culture held that a person (boy or girl) should cross twenty years for marriage. In this ways Limbu culture also avoids and discourages the child marriage system.

In the study area, Limbu marriage system free to match-making. It is scientific in the sense of that Limbu culture discourages the marriage between two persons from the same blood. It also avoids child-marriage system.

In the study area there are different rituals to be followed under the arrange marriage systems which are as follows:

### **5.1 Historical Accounts of and Early Limbu Marriage before Practicing Arranged Marriage**

The courtship pattern already mentioned, on proceeding chapter. Here, the disserting only mentions about the historical account of marriage which is based on the old informants of the study area. During the course of time there have been fluctuations on the historical accounts of Limbu marriage patterns.

According to the respondents, before intervention of new immigrants into Limbuwan Limbu did not practice arranged marriage but they practice only

capture and love marriage. There were no any “match makes” to attract girl for marriage. These who were marriageable they could agree each other for marriage through the ‘Dhan nach’. Long ago “Dhan nach” was only a courtship institution within the Limbu community. When a girl would be agreed to flee-away with her potential husband and leaving her natal house she used to put four pieces of stocks into the hanging PEKO on the corner of the kitchen. And, if a girl did not appear in the house for couple of days then her parents used to look at “peko”, and if they got four pieces of sticks they thought she has already gone to the house of potential son-in-law. The boy fled-away the potential bride to his house and when they reached in the house the potential bride used to stand holding the main pole of the house then all members thought that she is the new daughter-in-law in their house. Peko and the main pole holding position of the new girl were the symbolic items for marriage between two youth. On the basis of four pieces of stick the brothers of the girl or bride party used to go to look for their sister. The team of party is called “yokthawa” in Limbu term and when they found their sister they used to offer a gift, a Fangna and Rs. 500 by the groom side. The offered goat is that, used to slaughter without separating the body and head. The half of killed goat toward backward portion was fried and served to those”yokthawa” in the groom’s house in a grand honor. On the following day of party, the residual portion of killed goat towards the bride side, Rs. 150 and a Fangna were packed into the “Dhakar” (a big bamboo basket) and took back to the girl’s natal house by those “yokthawa” themselves. These items were called “yokthawa” rites. The first person who involved in fleeing away the girl from her natal house used to call ‘Ingalapa’. But the marriage ceremony may have practiced earlier than they came-across with “yokthawa” or offered the returning of ‘yokthawa’ from groom’s house. After the completion of marriage used to go to bride natal house to make a payment called “charkalam”. The groom used to go in a group and the leader



- (c) Yokthawa :- A goat, a Lota and Rs. 500 with some liquor.
- (d) Sunauli :- As regard as bride price it dependent on the economic status of the groom and on the bargaining capacity of the bride's parent. Even there was general tradition by which they used to pay Rs.8-40 and total gold for "sunauli".
- (e) Saimundri :- Rs. 5 for the completion of marriage.
- (f) Dera nakma :- Rs. 5 and one bottle liquor.
- (g) Suvaja :- Rs 5 and one bottle for "subba".
- (h) Pantawa :- Rs. 5 and one bottle requesting to talk with them about rites.
- ( I ) Pansungwa :- Rs. 5 and one bottle requesting them for conclusion.
- ( j) Singkhokpa :- Rs. 200-500 as a fine for the bride's sister if the bride getting marriage prior to her eldest sister.
- (k) yongsingmabung :- Rs. 5 and a bottle wine for these who were presented that exact time.

All of the above mentioned rites are listed according to the respondents of the study area. They told that there were more than these rites but they could not mention to the disserting. Through the ages the undergoing changes on rites still continue, but the volume of the various rites and "sunauli" under going change in a small volume than that period. Thus the fluctuations have been appeared within the marriage system of Limbu then and now.

## **5.2 Arrange Marriage**

This is their traditional marriage. This kind of marriage was considered to be a holy marriage. The Limbu people of study area practice such type of arrange marriage but now a day practice also love marriage. There are

various formalities in arrange marriage. At first when a boy of family attains the age of puberty then the father of the boy use to send two or three people to look for a marriageable girl for marriage. The whole members are called “ingmiba” or “Menchya inglapa” in Limbu term. They use to take porter with them. Most of the Limbu use to go next districts as well as next places for bride than their own village.

Firstly, they go to their relative house and ask them about any marriageable girls. After studying the feasibility of the potential bride, they use to go to the girl’s house to make arrangement with the girl’s parents. If the bride party or parent agrees they ask for sunauli and rupauli. When the make all kinds of agreements the head man of the group should be read to give “sunauli” and rupauli” to the girl’s parent at the movement of interring into agreement and the groom party should provides some liquor to the girls parents and other relatives.

According to an old respondents of the study area approximately, the arranged marriage has been started from 80 years before and during that time the amount of sunauli 4-30 Rs. It was increased in 50 Rs. 1950 A.D. and it has gradually increased up to Rs 10,000 and gold by the end of 2050 B.S.

When the potential grooms party and the potential brides party came to the agreement on that exact tome if there is groom he should bent- down the senior relatives of the bride with the payment of one or two rupees. They ascertain the marriage date before returning to their house. If the groom is not presented during entering into an agreement and if the Ingmiba is junior to groom the Ingmiba should not perform all. Duties for the groom, if the Ingmiba is not junior than another person of the party should perform all duties for the groom. Before two or three days of the marriage date a group under Ingmiba use to go to bring bride to the house of groom accompanied by 15-100 relatives girls of the bride among them 5-8 may be the brothers of her, are called Lokandi in Limbu term. When they arrive at approximate to



the groom's house, they signal by firing guns and from the groom's house to some persons go to well-come Lokandi with guns and liquor. The persons reach and come across with Lokandi a couple of guns are opened as a symbol of grand well-come and they feed all liquor to the Lokandi. This, the well-come rite is called Lokandi in limbu term. As they arrive near the groom's house they should stay for a night at the temporary hut. When they arrive to the hut, on that exact time they do not sit at that temporary hut until the "langbewachinma" rite is made. In this rite groom's parent should pay a goat and some money they do and they are served by Tongba with spicy. First time, they show the goat to the Lokandi and goat will be served to them. This is the third rites after agreements between two families. On the wedding day, the bride is taken a bit distance away from that temporary hut to a particular place, where the Lokandi make-up the bride, called "Behuli lukaune tahun" but Rs. 100-150 to "Lokandi" requesting them to get up from that place and to take the bride to "Behuli Lukaune thaun". This rite is called "uthauni" in limbu term. In addition to that the groom's party should give the bride's dress for the bride and some money for the own sisters of the bride called "Didi bahini pherauni" rite. When Lokandi reaches to the "Behuli lukaune thaun", then a bit later the groom's party opens a couple of fire and on that exact time the parent should feed curds to the groom in the house. Before, this the groom is dress in white and garland of flowers is around his neck cap is also decorated with a feather of peacock and flowers. His entire forehead displays a Tik. After that, the groom a junior brother and Janti will be ready to go to the "Behuli lukaune thaun". Janti should take a couple of "kalas" by two virgin girls, two bottles of liquors and some fried meat with them. When the groom goes to bring bride with marriage processes he should stay on "doli" or horse and a junior brother of the groom should unfold an umbrella above groom's head. On this occasion Limbu dancers play the large double-headed drums called "chyabrunng"(Dhol) and tailors play "Baja"

and “sanai” followed by the processors and the bride groom. When Janti reaches to the “Behuli lukaune thaun” they should put two bottle liquor and some fried meat just in front of the Lokandi or the dancers with “chyabrung” play their instruments around the bride party and guns are opened with great enthusiasm. On that extract time the bride is expected to bow and touch the feet of the bride groom with her forehead. The liquor of the bottle and fried meat are ritually thrown elsewhere. It is not eaten but it is offered to the god of forest (sangdang in limbu term) demanding required help to break obstacles during wedding ceremony. After that, all of them come to celebrate wedding party usually at rain-feed maize field. The bride and her all friends (lokandi) take participation in the party but they do not have any eatable foods until the groom do first. The bride and groom should sit together bride on left side and groom on right side. After having wedding party they come into the groom’s house there which is covered by white cloth from yard to the door on which the bride and groom need to walk. The entry of new bride to the souse is followed by groom and bride is guided by groom’s sisters or mother inside the house.

When they enter into the house the betrothal starts in the evening under the guidelines of Limbu priest called “phedangma” or that extract time they are served beer in bamboo or wooden container called “Tongba” and spicy dishes are served with the “Tongba”. All guest and “lokandi” sit facing to the center part, a “Nanglo banana’s leaf “Tella lasm” two folded leaf of banana (laik) coin (uparung chemma), Sindur( a red wedding powder), ‘Thakhong manghong’ (two folded leaf of banana lanced one above one), a vase of flowers water and uncooked rice baked-meal are placed next to the rice. Then the bride and groom are instructed to sit closer to one another and the left knee of bride and similarly the palms are placed on the summit of knees and palms a couple of chicken are placed. The pyramid placement of knees, palms and chicken is illustrated below:

Chickens

Palm groom

Palm bride

Knee groom

Knee bride

Thus the “phedangma” starts betrothal ritual calling the name of bride and groom with the stanza of “Mundum”. The “phedangma” holds the chickens one in each hand and begins to address the bride and groom. He instructs them to remain faithful to one another to obey rules and custom of limbu marriage. Thereafter, the groom puts Sindur, the red wedding powder, on the bride’s forehead repeatedly for three times. He then proceeds to kill the sock and hen drop the blood drips on a folded leaf (Tkhong Manghong in limbu term) in front of the bride and groom. Meanwhile the “phedangma” divines the blood and sees into the future of the marriage or the future of the spouses. After performing the betrothal duties all of the “Lokandi” and presented people should pronounce the term ‘churero’ after “phedangma”. The ‘churero’ term is the meaning of the completion of betrothal activities. The limbu wedding ceremony is characterized by the “chyabrung” dancers who provide most of the entertainment which involves numerous complicated steps and movements in circle are a purely Limbu art form (chemjong 1966:85-88). The ‘chyabrung’ dance imitates various animal dances such as the cock dance, the Turkey dance, the pigeon dance, the buffalo dance, and the monkey dance. Thus, on the exact time of the betrothal all of the ‘chyabrungs’ flutes and trumpets are played and guns are opened with great enthusiasm.

Just after putting the “sindur” on the forehead of the bride, the groom should be given a coin to the bride under the guidelines of “phedangma”. On that exact time, the groom should be paid an oath giving the metal coin to the bride. The groom says “if I do any unwanted activities you should control me with help of this coin. At the last, the “phedangma” instructs to new

couple to eat nine pieces of meat on a plate, the groom starts eating some pieces at the every first instance and the remaining pieces by bride. The fowls are blocked and cooked and a bit it is offered to all the people present. Then, finally, the bride should bow- down on the foot of her husband to honor him as a husband. On that morning, the bride begins to clean the house and sweep the courtyard as a hard worker. Then after showing her abilities the bride prepares for the final ritual in the courtyard. Hence, the bride and groom sit side by side as they did during the previous night. Then first the “Phedangama” and then after the tailors bless them throwing “phulpati” (mixed of rice and flowers). The tailors throw the “phulkpati” at a particular place and the groom puts it on “pathang” of the bride and is knotted in. thereafter bride pulls to the groom requesting to sit beside her. Thereafter they both stand up and enter into the house. The groom leads the bride along ladder takes her to up stories of the house where the store room is. When they get store room the bride should put all of these collected “phulpaties” into the store room of the house. During that time, the tailors assemble and begin to play their instruments and the “chyabrungr” dancer’s dance in circle and enter the house shouting, beating their drums and stopping their feet. They dance first around the main pole, repeatedly three times, of the house blessing to bride and groom as well as all family members of the house. On that exact time the family member should offer one or two bottle liquor and Rs.10-500 for the dancers. Finally, the groom and latter bride should honor the all senior relatives of the groom respectively. The bride should honor the eldest sister-in-law and mother-in-law putting her forehead on their foot. However, she should honor to all grand parent-in-law, parent-in-law and elder brother-in-law bending towards floor from the close distance and gradually get up doing “sewa” (namaste). Before her respect she should put five rupees on the ground just in front of the respect persons. This is regard as a introduce process between new member of the family as well as lineage.

After completion of the above activities, all of the invited guests and “lokandi” do participate in the feast. After the grand feast of the morning the bridal party departs for their home loaded with gifts of liquor, beer, a thigh of pig or buffalo, rice and money. They are accompanied by mediator called “sardar”. They should pay “Mesolang” or “Vyaslang” rite to the bride parent during that exact time. In this rite they should pay a thigh of pig and a thigh of buffalo, liquor on a wood container with some other pickles, Deranakma, pantama, suvaja, pansingma, sewamama, and Rs.1000 or one pair cloth to the bride’s parent. “Vyaslang” rites are taken to the bride’s natal house as the clue of the every killing pigs and buffalo is thigh in the ceremony. These things are packed into a “Dhakar”. The “menchema” rite is also included in the “samache pherauni, paid to Lokandi”, which consist of money amounting Rs. 10,000 and gold. This money is paid for the trouble of the Lokandi and is distributed among them. Samanche phudong or menchena rite is consisting of a thigh a buffalo, Rs. 500 and three pathi wines for Lokandi. All “lokandi” leave the groom’s house asking permission to go. All the processes mentioned above are the items of arranged marriage of Eshibu Village. The following procedures are followed by Limbu people:

### **5.2.1 Sanchep**

It is the first rituals where the parents of the will-be bridegroom inform their relatives about the coming marriage of their son. The parents do this work by differing either vegetable or non-vegetable meal. The traditional basket called (parengo) is used to distribute the meal. In return, the relatives also provide some financial or material help.

### **5.2.2 Mechin Nakama**

In case of asking hand of a girl, there is the traditional meeting between the guardians of the boy and girl. If they agree the boy with his relatives goes to

the house of girl. Here the boy's relatives offer wine and some other delicious meal to the relatives of girl. The relatives from the girl side accepted that wine and meal, it is the symbol of accepting to give the hand of the girl. Then the date of marriage is fixed. This ritual is called Menchin Nakma in limbu term.

### **5.2.3 Kumma Thakna**

When the hand of the girl is given to the boy then there is a tradition that boy's side should give some money Rs. 10,000 and gold to the girl side. It is called 'sunauli and rupauli'. It is not the selling of the girl but it is a wise action in a sense that if the boy divorces his wife after the marriage the girl will survive her life using this money. This amount of money is kept safely by the parents of the girl. This ritual is called 'Kumma thakna' in limbu term. At that time Limbu priest decides all processes.

### **5.2.4 Symbo Salam**

The bridegroom with some of his relatives goes to the house of bride 2/3 days before the marriage day. After the sitting of a day in bride's house, the bridegroom returns his house with bride and the female relatives of her called Lokandi 20-50 female and male are also involved.

### **5.2.5 Lamalak**

When, the relatives of the bride and bridegroom leaves the house, bride with "lokandi". The relatives of the bridegroom also go to bring them. They wait in the appointed place with couple of guns. They play also music with their traditional musical instrument called "Chyabrung" (dhol). This ritual is called Lamalak in Limbu term.

### **5.2.6 Lamlama**

This ritual is done in the first day of marriage in bridegroom's house. In this day, the bride is full of ornaments, jewelries and traditional wearing. On other hand, bridegroom also gets dressed with the appointed traditional cloths. Then the bridegroom moves to the place of bride with his relatives and two virgin girls with kalas. The environment becomes blissful. At the approximate time opened gun and playing music. Then the bride and bridegroom exchange their garlands in front of the relatives.

### **5.2.7 Takma**

This is the ritual to welcome the bride in bridegroom's house. The bride is brought to the house of bridegroom either by horse or on foot. The entering of bride in bridegroom's house is accompanied by the banging of the gun and the 'Chyabrung'. In this process of bride's enter into the house of bridegroom various rituals are performed. Among them, "meckam", 'Futhong', and ingme are famous.

After the entering of the bride into bridegroom's house, the relatives of the bride engage themselves in the safe return of Lokandi. The group of Lokandi is farewell with many gifts and provisions.

### 5.3 Marital Status of Limbu People

The marital status of population is given in the following table:

**Table 5. 11**  
**Marital status and age Distribution of population by sex**

Age group in years	Unmarried		Married		Re-married		Divorced		Deserted		Widow/widower		Total by sex		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	F	M	M	F	
4 years below	4	6											4	6	10
5-9	5	7											5	7	12
10-14	7	8											7	8	15
15-19	12	13	-	6									12	19	31
20-24	7	8	4	12									11	20	31
25-29	5	3	5	8				1					10	12	22
30-34	2	2	7	5	1								10	7	17
35-39	-	-	5	3					1				6	3	9
40-44	-	-	4	5							1		4	6	10
45-49	-	1	3	4	1								4	5	9
50-54	-	-	2	2	1						2	2	5	4	9
55-59	-	-	5	2	1						1	1	7	3	10
60-64	-	-	1	2							1	1	3	2	5
65-69	-	-	2	1								1	3	1	4
70 above	-	-	-	-	2						2	2	4	2	6
Total	42	48	38	50	6		1	1	1		7	7	95	105	200
100.0 %	21	24	19	25	3		0.5	0.5	0.5		3.5	3.5	47.5	52.5	100.0

Source: fieldsurvey2008



Analyzing the data by sex, 38(19%) males and 50(25%) females were married. There were 6 (3%) females they married under the age of 20 years. There some unmarried males 14 (14.74%) and female people 13 (12.38%) who belonged to the age group of twenty and above. There was one unmarried females found in this sample whose age was 47 years. She was living with her parents. The above table shows that people sued to get married between 20 to 34 years.

There are 6 (3%) remarried males but no remarried female was found. Out of, 6 four people remarried due to death of their first wife and two remarried because their wife went away with another man. There was not a single male who was divorced, but there was one divorced female whose age is now 27 years. She married at the age of 18 and has one daughter. They were living in her maiti (parent's house). She doesn't want to disclose the cause of divorce. One male deserted who is now 38 years. His wife was living with her mother's house. She did not return back since 5 years. No female is found deserted in the study area. Out of the total population, 7(3.5%) widowers and 7(3.5%) were widows.

#### **5.4 Love Marriage**

The boys and girls who are reached up to puberty age they love through the "Dhan nach" and escape to the boys house directly. "Dhan nach" is a courtship institution of Limbu ethnic group and it is made specially carnivals and usually weekly markets. Most of the marriageable boys and girls use to make their love through the "Dhan nach" and sometimes they used to flee from the market or carnivals, the girl's brother use to go to look for elsewhere. And if they find out their sister in the potential groom's house then they make agreement between two new affinal families.

These days, the love marriage is also becoming popular in the Limbu society as well. Table below suggests the fact. Attitude towards love marriage in sampled household is given below.

**Table 5.12**

**Attitude towards Love Marriage**

Attitude toward love	No. of respondents	Percentage
Positive	66	84.62
Negative	12	15.38
Total	78	100

Sources: field survey 2008

Out of 78 respondents, 84.61% respondents are in favor of love marriages, and 15.38% are in against of love marriage. This suggests that love marriages are getting popular in the traditional Limbu community as well.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Changes Taking Places in Limbu Marriage System

This chapter deals with changes taking places in the marriage system of Eshibu VDC ward no.1. Terhathum.

The traditional institution of marriage is the arranged system in Limbu society. The arranged marriage system is prior consent of respective parents of a boy or girl had gained a confined popularity in this village. Due to course of time the “Chori” or love method has now gained a confined popularity in this village and as a result of that the marriage by agreement between the parents of marrying parties is increased. However, the method of getting potential bride through “Dhan nach” is remained the most popular of Limbu marriage then and now.

Now a days, love marriage is gradually increased because the arrange marriage has a bargain point to borrow “sunauli” by the potential brid’s parents.

#### 6.1 Selection of the Bridegroom

In the past, while selecting a bridegroom, only land and wealth of the boy’s family were considered. At present, people are considering education qualities of the bridegroom and occupation. Another one thing is that greatly change in self selecting bride and bridegroom. In the past, bride and bridegroom are selecting from parents side.

**Table 6.13**

#### Qualities Required for Marriage for Boys

Preferences qualities	No. of respondents	Percentage
Physical attractiveness	6	7.05
Occupation	56	65.88
Education	11	12.94
Family background	9	10.58
Wealth	3	3.52
Total	85	100

Source: field survey 2008

Regarding the qualities of marriage required for the boy, a majority of respondents 65.88% gave top priority on occupation, 11 respondents 12.94 on education, 6 respondents 7.05% on physical attractiveness, 9 respondents 10.58% on family back ground and another 3 respondents 3.52% on wealth.

## 6.2 Dress and Ornaments

In the present days, the bridegroom prefers the western dress such as shirt and suits and the bride wears expensive sari, cholo, shawl and ghumto instead of her traditional dress.

In the past, bride wear a samyangfung (gold flower on the forehead) Marwari(ear ring) Dhungri( put on the nose). But now a day, bride wear Sirbandi (put on the fore head) Pinjada( ear ring ) Jhamke phuli ( put on the nose) instead of her traditional ornaments.

## 6.3 Age

In the past, people were married at early age because they were not educated. They were fully dependent on agriculture. In the study area, one couple got married with her husband at the age of 12 at that time, her husband age was 14 in the present day the age of the boy and girl has gone up not less than 20 for the girl and 25 year for the boy at the time of marriage. The following table shows detail for age at marriage.

**Table 6.14**

### Preferences for Age at Marriage for Boy and Girls

Age group	Boys	%	Girls	%
20-25	28	49.12	85	96.59
26-30	27	47.36	3	3.40
31-35	2	3.50	-----	-----
Total	57	100.0	88	100.0

Source: field survey 2008

28(49.12%) of respondents consider that the age at marriage for the boy to be 20-25 years, 27 respondents (47.36%) consider to be 26-30 years only two respondent (3.50%) suggest 31-35 years. Similarly, 85 respondents (96.59%) consider the best age at marriage for the girls to be 20-25 years old and only 3 respondents (3.40%) consider being 26-30 years for girls.

#### **6.4 Feast**

Now a day, most people prefer in the urban area the party bhatiyar(Buffy dinner). People are competitive with each other in feast as the Buffy dinner. So, they are spending more money for organizing party than in the past. This changing custom is putting a lot of pressure to the poor limbu families. But in the Bhatiyar (party) in conventional way. So, still now feast in rural area.

#### **6.5 Baja**

Now a day, most people prefer the modern musical instrument known as band baja during marriage. The traditional limbu baja chyabrung dances are disappearing in marriage.

#### **6.6 Marriage Procedure**

In limbu marriage procedure are changing to some extent than in the past which is as follows:

Sunauli and rupauli: in present day people are paid a lot of money for sunauli and rupauli than in the past. In the past days paid for bride side 8-80 but now a day 10,000 and gold so that it is gone up competitive way. In the study area found some people do not receive Sunauli and rupauli from the bridegroom's side.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### **Summary and Findings**

Nepal is multi-ethnic country with many ethnic and caste groups with different language, customs and cultures. Limbu are claiming to be original inhabitants of the mid-hill of eastern Nepal which is called Limbuwan.

Traditionally, Limbu marriage system was capture, jari, arrange and now a day love marriage. The Limbu people used to consider land as wealth at the time of selecting the bridegroom before the days. At present, they consider education, occupation and family background as wealth while selecting bridegroom. At present, a lot of changes are observed in ritual of marriage system with the Limbu community. For instance, they have started spending more money in different rituals of marriage i.e. in Sunauli and rupauli, marriage procession, charklam, feast and Fahag. At present, some people do not receive Sunauli and rupauli from the bridegroom's side. For this they have to manage sunauli and rupauli themselves.

In this paper an attempt has been made to study the marriage system of the eastern mid-hill ethnic group which is the Limbu community, of Terhathum district, residing in village 'Eshibu' in ethnographic perspective.

Their beliefs, customs, cultural values, cultural patterns and norms are undergoing change from traditional types. There are two types of family namely nuclear and joint. There are more nuclear families and less joint family. Today marriage systems are mostly arranged and love monogamous and patrifocal. Consanguineous kinship and affinal kinship are important kinship of the study area. Either Hindu or their own, all festivals are celebrated by Limbu of the study area and foods and drinks are adopted by them. Both traditional and modern types of dress and ornaments are found in village 'Eshibu'.

The life cycle ceremonies are different from other racial groups. But some patterns are normally closed among indigenous groups. Limbu have their own priest (phedangma) in Limbu term and all of the society can also be described through ethnographic and descriptive. This study shows general account marriage system and its changes on pattern of the Limbu in Village 'Eshibu'. A few cultural pattern of Limbu are still primitive and few changes can be observed through modern ages. It has less me to the general conclusion that the changes of economic insufficient and the intervention of the new cultures into their territory rather than factors.

The Limbu are having their relationship through their common language and common culture. The physical and cultural similarities are found within the Limbu of Limbuwan. Because of the multi-ethnic groups of different ecological regions the culture of Nepal is mixture of various types. The cultural variation is the cause of ethnic variation. The environmental factor and the new immigrant's culture shape the Limbu culture of the eastern mid-hill region of Nepal.

In this dissertation only the Limbu of the village 'Eshibu' are observed for the present study. Some of the Limbu of this area have still adopted the primitive type of life style and cultural values. But most of them have been changing their traditional types of dress pattern religious ceremonies and various cultural patterns such as marriage system. Limbu of village 'Eshibu' are being conscious from the extravagance trended that pushes them the month of extreme poverty. Nevertheless, after Gurkha conquest and the arrival of new immigrants there have been undergoing changes in culture and their life styles. And, due to the abolition of Kipat land they are poor and that has brought them a positive and proper consciousness about land.

### **Objectives**

The main objectives of the study are.

1. To prepare ethnographic profile of Limbu and their marriage system.
2. To find out changes taking place in Limbu marriage system; and
3. To explain the causes of taking place in Limbu marriage system.

### **Research problem**

Ecological and geographical varieties as well as there are varying in culture and during the causes of time there are some changes of culture and marriage system of the study area. Because culture is always dynamic its nature and identity. Due to the modernization process, however to, this society is facing a lot of problems in the traditional culture and marriage system. I am interested to test my hunch whether rural common people have shaped cast/ethnic consciousness as reflected in urban intellectual and political apparatus or not. I mean whether the formation of ethnicity is genuine cultural and political interest or beyond it. Change is also considered threat for identity. Another aspects of ethnic group I want to be clear is whether socio-cultural and livelihood strategies changes cause loss of identity and threat existence or they provide new outlets for shaping identity and existence in new manner. Limbu, the largest ethnic group in mid-hill eastern part of Nepal has long history and culture, but they have not been properly recorded. Despite their unique way of life and categorization as a highly marginalized and economically backward ethnic group, they failed to attract attention of both native and foreign researchers. I chose limbu because of their marginal space on academic documentation, in other word relatively pure ethnic group. The causes of changes may be internal as well as external; to which has been discussed in detail.

So my research questions are:

1. What is the practice of culture and marriage in Limbu society?
2. What are the types of culture and marriage in the Limbu culture and marriage practice?



3. What are the changes that have taken place regarding “rit” performance?

### **Research Methods**

The present study was based on field survey in order to fulfill the specific objective of the study and ethnographic and descriptive design is applied. A combination of purposive sampling methods has been adopted. There were 60 households in Eshibu VDC ward no. 1, and 40 respondents were selected in interview. Both primary and secondary data were collected, for the collection of data questionnaire, interview, observation, key informants and check list used. Secondary data have been collected from the available literature. Data have analyzed descriptively. In this study both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected. Qualitative information has been tried to interpret and quantitative information has been demonstrated by the means of percentage.

### **Main Findings**

- Most of the Limbu people came from the Tibet according to the key informants.
- Most of the Limbu people under the “Mundhum” because of the Mundhum guides to the Limbu people into purification.
- In the study, the Limbu people have their own language, culture, and script and typical life cycle ceremony.
- In the study, most of the people do not worship their all deities because of their poor economic condition and they have not leisure time for worship.
- There are two types of family system. Most of the Limbu people (68.85%) have nuclear family and (31.14%) have joint family.

- Traditionally, the Limbu community lives in the joint family but now a day, 8.33% people are living in the joint family and 91.66% are living the nuclear family in the sampled population. So that majority of people prefer to live in nuclear family than joint family. In limbu community, inter-caste marriage was not acceptable in the past.
- The main causes which are family system into practice are the system of residing separately after marriage decreasing economic condition, and the tradition of living separately for happy life.
- Limbu people have distinct ceremonies, which are differ with other ethnic people of Nepal.
- Most of the people of Eshibu (64.51%) speaks Nepali language. In the study are (24.47%) peoples are speaks Limbu Language and minority (11.02%) speaks Tamang language.
- In the study area, the Limbu culture and marriage system is gradually changed. The traditional marriage was capture, arrange love. Present day love marriage is increasing gradually in the study area were found.
- Most of the people get married between 20-34 years.
- Most of the Limbu people followed monogamy marriage.
- The unique characteristics of Limbu marriage are :
  1. Neglect dowry system
  2. Accept sunauli (bride price)
  3. Boys have right to choice bride.
- Now days, higher age at marriage is encouraged. Most of the people prefer the age at marriage between 20-25 years. People get married at the age of 20-25 years in the Limbu community.
- There is only one unmarried female was found in the sample, whose age was 47 years.
- In the sample area, there was not a single male who was divorced, but there was one divorced female whose age is now 27 years.

- One male deserted who is now 38 years. His wife was living with her maiti (natal home). She did not return back since 5 years.
- In this study, 3.5% widow and widowers were found.
- 3 cases of inter-caste marriages were found in the study area. Now days inter-caste marriage in this community is increasing slowly.
- In the study, majority populations were seen to be Hindus. More than 60.62% of the people they were Hindu, 26.69% of the people they were Kirat and 12.68% of the people they were followers of Buddhist religion.
- The Limbu people observe death ceremony 3 days for female and 4 days for male.
- After the death of 3 days and 4 days Limbu people organize death feast. In this occasion they prepare of food, meat, liquor and spices for death soul and than serve meals to all the relatives and people of the deceased person will be purified.

### **Direction for Future Research**

The over all findings of this study do not cover the situation of Limbu marriage system of all places in Nepal. The study, there conducted in marriage system primitive, traditional and modern types of culture to with different to help understand over all the Limbu culture of the village “Eshibu”.

Because of limited time researcher could not cover overall the following information in the study area so, following direction should be need for the future research.

1. Information from the site of different of other places and compares Limbu system need to be further studied and explored.

2. This kind of micro level research and study could not get detail information so, bring causes of change in cultural patterns in limbu marriage system need to be further studied and explored.
3. The conservative Limbu people do not care about the education and civilization. So, minimizing “extravagance” behind the causes of extravagance find out the reality.

## **Conclusion**

This study has focused in the nature of the marriage system of limbu ethnic group in the village “Eshibu”. This study have been confined by the various factors in which the interaction with the new immigrants and the Gurkha conquest in the Limbuwan are the main factors for the cultural changes within the study area. It can be said that the culture and undergoing change among any primitive types of cultures are found.

The researcher found that the few people of the study area are followed the traditional cultural norms, values and belief on supernatural powers. They are still following the traditional rite and ritual payments in marriage. They do not still want to break the traditional types of rituals and customs.

Many years ago, to a large extent Limbu practiced the capture and Jari marriage followed by than the arranged and love marriage. It was due to the economic burden and them courtship through “Dhan nach” institution. But today the love marriage is prevalence than other types of marriage systems.

The Limbu people of village “Eshibu” aware them to stop their extravagance attitude during the marriage. Because, the extravagance attitudes and unnecessary payments of rites and rituals was the main cause to be poor of the Limbu of the study area. Hence, according to the respondents, now a day neither they take “sunauli” not offer. But a few people are still taking and offering the “sunauli” and other rites. In this regard some changes have been occurred in the marriage patterns. Because of the interaction with another

ethnic groups and the economic insufficiency compelled them to change their marriage system than before. And other hand the modernization, educational era has played a great role in the cultural change. There is modern concept on the marriage system of the study area while the limbu have not followed the marriage system of another caste but they are only modernizing their culture traits or patterns with their own culture.

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## Annex I

### The terms of Limbu words and its meaning

1. Dhan nach – a kind of dance (paddy dance)
2. Ingmiba- a team which goes in search of potential of the bride
3. Langbewa chinmma- a rite paid to the fellows of the bride
4. Lamlakwa- a rite paid to the party of the bride(usually to well-come by offering liquor)
5. Lokandi- a fellow team of bride during marriage ceremony
6. Menchya- a female youth
7. Mundhum- a powerful scripture of Limbu
8. Phedangma- a Limbu priest
9. Lamjong- to get marriage by capture(usually by force)
10. Didibahini pherauni- the money paid to the sisters of bride during marriage ceremony
11. Fungna- a vessel in which drinking water is served
12. Faael- a bamboo made circular utensil used in kitchen, threshing works
13. Peko- a small bamboo made basket hovering above the kitchen of Limbu
14. Sinkhokwa- a penalty paid by groom to the brides elder sisters for marrying her yonger sister before her
15. Saimundri- the final payment of marriage
16. Tongba- a wodden container serving alcoholic beverage in Limbu families (usually drunk through pipe)
17. Thangben – a male youth
18. Yokthakwa- a rite paid to the brother of the bride
19. Samtakkhong- meal for dead soul
20. Amba- father



21. Amma- mother
22. Theba- grand father
23. Yuma- grand mother
24. Samang- deity
25. Phungaye- uncle
26. Hajira- arrange marriage
27. Chyabrun- double headed drum
28. Sangdang- offered to the god of forest
29. Tella- leaf
30. Vyasalang- a leg of buffalo (which is paid for bride side)
31. Sewa- greet
32. Dhakar- a basket made of bamboo
33. Menchuma- woman
34. Sunauli- a bride price for marriage
35. Dera nakma- asking shelter
36. Yongsingmabung- siting time
37. Pantawa- talking time
38. Pansungwa- final talking
39. Charkalam- four steps
40. Tagera Niwafungma- a great knowledge
41. Balihang- name of king
42. Yakwa- land
43. Siksapa- starvation
44. Chasok- offer
45. Kakfekwa- new born
46. Sanchep- basket
47. Menchin nakma- asking girl
48. Kumma thakna- requesting mother
49. Symbo salam- provide

- 50.Lamlama- guiding
- 51.Takma- receive
- 52.Samyang fung- gold flower
- 53.Khuk- cover
- 54.Saklip- umbrella
- 55.Knag- spade
- 56.Churero- finished
- 57.Chokpung- origin place
- 58.warokma- water pond god

## Annex II

Household survey

1. District .....

VDC/Municipality: .....Ward No.....

Name of the Respondents .....

Caste/Ethnicity.....

S.N.	Name	Relationship with household 01	Sex 02	Material status 03	Education 04	Occupation 05	
						Primary	Secondary
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

01	02	03	04	05
01-Grand Father	01-Male	01-Married	01-Unable to read and write	01-Agriculture
02-Grand Mother	02-Female	02-Unmarried	02-Read	02-Business
03-Father		03-Divorce	03-Primary	03-Wage labor
04-Mother		04-Seperate	04-Lower Secondary	04-Private sector
05-Son		05-Never	05-Secondary	05-Govt Sector
06-Daughter		06-Widow	06-Higher Secondary	06-Cottage Industry
07-Grand Son			07-Campus	07-Foreign employment
				08-Student

### Annex III

Survey Questionnaire

Date:  
Household No.

Caste:  
Ward No.

1. Name of respondents .....
2. Do you speak your mother tongue?  
Yes/No
3. Do you have script of own your language?  
.....  
.....
4. Where is your origin place?  
.....  
.....
5. Is there any folk tale, legend about your origin?  
.....  
.....
6. What are the rites of passage?  
.....  
.....
7. What are the festivals you celebrate?  
.....  
.....
8. How is nomenclature celebrated?  
.....  
.....
9. How is food initiation celebrated?  
.....  
.....
10. What is the pattern of marriageable practice?  
.....  
.....
11. How are they performed?  
.....  
.....
12. What types of apparels and ornaments are worn by Limbu people?  
.....  
.....
13. How is death ceremony celebrated?  
.....  
.....

14. Do you celebrate those festivals in the conventional way?

.....  
.....

15. To whom you visit for healing when you feel illness?

a. Hospital b. Dhami, Jhankri, Dewari c. Self treatment.

16. What do you think about marriage system?

.....  
.....

17. What are the different rite payment in a marriage before practicing an arrange marriage system in this village?

.....  
.....

18. When did you marry? .....year.

19. How did you marry?

.....  
.....

a. from parents b. self c. any other

20. What do you think about inter caste marriage?

a. positive b. Negative c. Any other

21. What is the accepted generation gap limits required to enter into a marriage relationship between one's clan relatives?

a. From Father side b. From Mother side

22. What type of marriage system in your society?

a. Monogamy b. polygamy c. any other

23. Which age is suitable for marriage?

For male .....year      Female.....year

24. Do you want to soon marry your daughter?

Yes      No      any other

25. Are you use priest in your marriage?

Yes      No

26. Is there any child marriage in your society? If so why?

27. Is there any change conventional marriage in your society?

Yes      No

28. What do you think about marriage?

a. Necessary b. Contract c. Traditional rule d. Any other

29. Do you think marriage is necessary?

30. If so why marriage is necessary?

- a. Continuity of consanguine
- b. For co-operation in old age
- c. For economic sharing
- d. For sexual satisfaction
- e. Any other

31. What do you think about arrange marriage and love marriage?

32. Which one practicing in your society?

.....  
.....

33. What do you think second marriage?

.....  
It is necessary?

Yes      No

34. What do you think about dowry system?

.....  
.....

35. What do you emphasis in dowry system?

a. Cash b. Land c. Any other

36. How do you feel unmarried women in your society?

.....  
.....

37. What are the different rite payment in a marriage before practicing an arrange marriage system your society?

.....  
.....

38. What are the responsible factors in the undergoing changes of marriage patterns?

a.                      b.                      c.                      d.

39. What types of different rites are paid during a marriage ceremony?

.....  
.....

40. What do you think toward stopping extravagance and unnecessary rites?

.....  
.....

41. What are the best remedies to check and extravagance on Limbu marriage?

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

42. Are there any changes on rite and ritual? Please state them if there are any and their extent of change.

- a. Not changed
- b. Slowly changed
- c. Significantly changed
- d. Completely changed
- e. Any other

43. What are the necessary provisions of goods made during the betrothal process? Please mention the list of goods and their respective quantities.

- a. Goods
- b. Quantity required

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

44. What types of musical instruments are played during a Limbu marriage in this village?

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

45. At last do you like to share anything other than our overall conversation?

## CHECK LIST

Name:

Address:

Name of the village:

District:

1. How many peoples follow the conventional marriage pattern in your society?  
.....  
.....
2. What are the causes of change in conventional marriage pattern in your village?  
.....  
.....
3. Is there marriage practice within a kin group? If so, with what type of kin is practiced?  
.....  
.....
4. Is dead body restricted to touch by other caste people?  
.....  
.....
5. Do you wear the original ornaments and apparels till these days?  
If not, why?  
.....  
.....
6. Are the male and female equally free to choose their fiancé?  
.....  
.....
7. If there is not equality in mate selection, what is the female status in this matter?  
.....  
.....
8. What are the causes of change in marriage system in your village?  
.....  
.....
9. What do you suggest for minimizing extravagant, unnecessary and lavish style in the celebration of rites?  
.....  
.....



**KEY INFOMANT**

1. Where did your forefathers come from?  
.....  
.....
2. When did your forefathers started to inhabit in this village?  
.....  
.....
3. What type of the customs is being practiced among your community during birth, weaning, marriage, and death ceremony?  
.....  
.....
4. What are your original dress patterns?  
.....  
.....
5. What are the different festivals you celebrate?  
.....  
.....  
.....
6. What is your religion?  
.....
7. How do you name a child?  
.....
8. What are the main problems in your community?  
.....  
.....
9. How theses problems came?  
.....  
.....
10. What types of programs do you aspect from the government?  
.....  
.....
11. Why do your members spend more money on alcoholic drink?  
.....  
.....
12. Which language is used as a means of communication?  
.....
13. Which pattern of marriage you like the most?  
.....  
.....
14. What is the period of mourning?  
.....  
.....
15. What do you think about Dhaan Naach?  
.....  
.....
16. Do you have any comment and suggestion in changing marriage system in Limbu society?  
.....  
.....

