

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Nepal is a mountainous country situated in the south of central Asia. It extends about 885 km from east to west and 193 km from north to south. Nepal is a landlocked country. The border of Nepal is adjoined on the west, east and south with India and on the north with Tibet of the Republic of China. Its area is 1,47,181 sq. km. It is located between 26° 22' and 30° 27' north latitudes and 80°4' and 88° 12' east longitudes (CBS, 2003).

Geographically the country can be divided into three broad regions stretching from the east to the west. The high Himalayan region is covered by snow. The hill consists of Mahabharat and Churiya ranges and the Terai is plain and supposed to be a granary of Nepal (The store house of grain) (SAUD, 2005).

For thousand of years the Nepelese hills have served as a kind of refuge for various religions, culture, and ethnic groups (Sharma 1989:139-68). Toni Hagen (1971) justly remarked : “Few countries exhibit such social, ethinical, linguistic and cultural diversity within such a small compass as Nepal so that the country may rightly be called the ethnic turn-table of Asia.” Thus, today Nepal is a cultural mosaic, undoubtedly a pluralistic and multicultural society, even if the terms on which different groups coexist have to be renegotiated (Gellner 1997).

Dalits are one of the occupational caste group. Dalit are those caste which are group who are economically, politically, socially back and categorized untouchable. Kami, Sarki, Damai, Gaine, Badi, Parkis Dom and Halkhor Pode, Kapali and Chame etc. are some of the dalit of Nepal and categorized as untouchables in society. Dalits traditional occupations are culture or identity of nepelese society. It has contributed a lot for civilization of nepelese society. According to Dahal (2002), it is noted that the main economic activity of majority of dalit is wage labour. In addition to this, the cast based traditional work is also important economic activity for Dalits for their survival. Even today many dalit are living in rural area of Nepal where the system of Bali and Khan is still prevalent. One of the major source of livelihood of dalit is to involve in their traditional caste occupation. Kami (black smith) make utensils, gold smith or Sunar makes golden or silver ornaments, Parkis are basket weaver, Damai are tailors who sew clothes for their client and play Panche baja in some occasion, Sarkis are

leather worker Dom and Halkhor are sweeper who cleans public street and bathroom and so on . Historically various services of dalits are utilized in the context of ongoing relationship between a client and artisan. The services to client (high caste group) are known by different names in different parts of Nepal such as Bali Ghare Partha (Eastern) or khalo-partha (Western) and khan system (Terai). Despite the disappearance of this occupation, this is one of the major means of livelihood even today. Majority of the population in Nepal is of Hindu.

Caste system is the basic foundation of the Hindu society which is based on Varna system. In Varna system different caste groups and individual interact and interdependent upon each other. Brahman (priest), the Kshatriyas (warrior or administrator), the Vaysha (traders), Sudra (labour) and the untouchable are four primary social classifications on Varna system. Total population of dalit in Nepal is 13% .This study is focused in Damai specific group among Dalit. The total population of Damai according to census 2011 is 4,72,862. which is 1.78% of the total National population. Damai are best known for their musical tradition who are untouchable occupational caste of professional musician and tailors. Damai's origins as a caste are concomitant with the development of their musical traditions. The name Damai is said to come from the Damaha (kettle drum) used in Panche baja and Naumati baja ensembles. These caste were specified for the high born societies and are always been exploited by high born societies.

Likewise, Since the 1950's modernization theory was in its peak. The general meaning of modernization is to be modern adopting new style instead of traditional way to be modern is as similar as to lead oneself through the path of development. Modernization theory postulating that The United States and Western Europe are in the highest level of development and should be emulated by other societies, especially developing and the third world societies. In the context of Nepal the country is exposed to global level. As a result, the nation is moving on the way of modernization. Before which political change, people have no rights to speak against the Rana Regime. Nevertheless, in the democratic system, modernization have started to spread through the country. People were changing their perception as well as their life style and level of thinking. But it was reality due to the top down development policy. There was less effect on the people of grass root level more effected group was occupational cast and ethnic group from all sides. Dalit are one of the occupational caste group which are becoming victim of urbanization, westernization

and modernization. These caste groups are forced to give up their traditional occupation in the changing context as it could not fulfill their basic needs. They are facing various social and economic problems. The caste-based occupation is disappearing gradually as unfavourable socio-economic practices rooted against Dalits in Nepalese society due to country Hindu-based civilization. Consequently, youth people should be encouraged to continue the traditional occupation. Therefore, the state should take special initiative to encompass Dalit caste-based occupation in modern globalized economic structure. They have lost their indigenous and traditional occupation. It has made them neither fully modern nor supported their indigenous way of life. In this context from a sociological point of view, it is necessary to find out the main cause for changing the traditional occupation.

They live both in Terai and Hill areas. The major Damai groups live in the Terai and Hilly area. In Nepal, the major three occupational castes are *Kami*, *Damai* and *Sarki* which are traditionally artisans. These three castes have their specific castes work in the village, *Damai* are the *tailors*, they sew and mend the clothes of the villagers. And *Damai* beating the *Panchebaja* in the main ceremonies like birthday, *bibah Pasni* etc. *Sarkis* are the leather worker, who make and repair the shoes. Lastly the *Kamis* are the blacksmith or gold smiths of the villages. The blacksmith forge and repair all kinds of farm implants and households utensils. All the untouchable castes the *Kami* occupy the high position with the traditional hierarchy. The *Kami* (Blacksmith) and the *Damai* (tailors and musicians) for examples, regard bodily contact with each other is polluting. The same is true of sexual intercourse between the *Kami* and *Damai*. A *Kami* doesn't allow a *Damai* to enter his house and would never accept *Bhat* (rice) or *Pani* (water) from him (Hooper, 1976: 110).

Nepal is a multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic nation. When we go back throughout the Nepalese history, we can find that syncretism of various cultures, languages, regional, castes and creeds. It is a model of mosaic society in a real sense. Nepal is a garden of a number of castes and ethnic groups. According to the constitution of 1990s of Nepal explicitly declares Nepal is a Hindu kingdom but now Nepal is a secular country. On the other hand it allows to practice traditional religious ways in the form of religious impartiality. (SAUD, 2005). It is a widely recognized fact that the economic changes can play an important role to change the structure of the society. Due to the materialist world as well as the market economy which has penetrated each and every corner of our society. Dalits have undergone considerable

and significant changes. This has help to bring number of changes in the socio-cultural pattern of the Nepelese society. Thus has resuited to bring changes in the traditional occupation among the Damai rapidly. So it is very important to understand and investigate the nature and the pattern of such changes which will help to understand the Damai in their natural and changing sitting .

The subject of sociology is the study of human social relationship within a group. I have chosen the caste *Damai* and their traditional occupation because it will try to describe the cause and effect of aborting their traditional occupations, like tailoring and beating *Panchaibaja*. This dissertation also tries to explore the interrelation between the *Damai* people and other different caste groups with the help of subsistent mode of life of those people and their alternative strategies of survive.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nepal is a very rich country in terms of caste, language, culture, traditional and natural resources; although, ethnic groups and occupational caste groups are changing their traditional occupation due to the economic problem. There exists ethnic diversity in the hilly region of mid-mountain region. Brahmins and Chettries are the major population and other so many occupational caste groups like *Kami*, *Sarki*, *Damai*, *Gaine* and so on exist. Dalit occupies 15-20 percent of total population of the country. They are suffering from the caste based discrimination. They were ranked in a lower grade of vertical social hierchy. They have been marginalized from various social and economical opportunities. Due to open market and industrial production, traditional occupation of the dalit were threatened and couldnot continue further. They have the smallest or marginal land holding. They are economically deprived, socially oppressed and politically excluded in the development process (Gurung 2006). These occupational caste groups usually settled surrounding with higher caste groups. In order to meet their basic needs, they are dependent on the people of other castes especially the higher caste . In the context of *Damai* people, at research site, there are also so many problems as like others. Still now bad traditions (untouchables) and customs have existed . These people are less participated on the nations mainstream. Although, their major profession is agriculture tailoring and beating *Pancheibaja* is the assistance occupation, which is in losing condition. According to the present constitution of Nepal, the government has taken the specific action program for

uplifting in the present constitution of Nepal. But in fact, this strategy doesn't adopt in practical, numerous seminars are held on the name of underprivileged community but targeted people are unknown and are not benefited. So, *Damai* people are diverted from their traditional occupation tailoring and beating *Panchebaja*. That is why, this study is focused on some major socio-economic issue and condition of occupation that is the major element for adopting strategies of *Damai* at "Baglung municipality ward no. 6" in Baglung district. There is a caste system in Nepal, 'untouchable' access to economical, educational and political power is limited. Nepal's mainstream political social and cultural life is dominated by high caste Hindu groups (Hofer, 1976, 205-7)

Now a days village area is changing day by day because of the urban effect i.e. process of modernization and westernization. A number of development activities initiated for the perspective of commercial development and progress that also prolongs to increment of sophisticated change of *Damai* people. Many studies of economic change in South Asian revealed that the development has lead only to worsening of the position of the lower caste (*Caplan: p: 1972:90*) after restoration of the democracy many people have raised voice for the self, identity and awareness. Owing to growth of economic, commercial and industrial activation, development intervention and urbanization, a sizable number of hill Dalit are shifting their primary sources. Emperical studies on occupational mobility, perception of dalits towards their own traditional occupation satisfaction is still unanswered by them. Thus to summarize, this study has mainly focused on searching the answer to these research questions.

1. What traditional skills do still exist among these damai of baglung ?
2. What is the main basis of livelihood among damai ?
3. What do damai people feel about on own traditional occupation ?
4. What is the respondent's perception towards their occupational shift ?
5. What necessities the change in traditional occupation ?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to find out the patterns of occupational shift among *Damai* of Baglung Municipality ward no.6 . The specific objectives of this study are as follows :

- To trace out the traditional occupation of *Damai* people and to assess the factors that fostered shifted in their occupation .
- To examine the alternative strategies adopted by *Damai* for better livelihood .

1.4 Significance of the Study

Damai caste is relatively underprivileged community which is affected by the westernization and The modernization. So, they were left their occupation and struggled the alternative strategies for subsistence. This is the main problem for sociologists and anthropologists. As the study about these occupational caste groups who are fewer in number, it has become academically more important that can be listed.

- It is expected that this study will be able to provide concerned parties with information and suggestion that can be very useful in formulating appropriate policies regarding the marginalized group of *Damai*. Thus ultimately it may help to make the provision for long run of traditional skills of the concern group
- Changing occupational is found to be one of the biggest human problems not only in urban society but also to every corner of the country. This study will help to know the present trend of occupational changes among the *Damai*.
- Traditional Occupation is a important and reliable means for the fulfilment of the local needs and major way for the survival of life. The traditional occupations of *Damai* people are tailoring, beating Panchei baja. But nowadays these traditional professions have been neglected by them and followed alternative options. So, this research will analyze about the fall and rise situation of these traditional occupations.
- Native and foreign sociologists/anthropologists have done a lot of study regarding different ethnic groups of Nepal but occupational caste groups like *Damai* have been neglected till now. This present study will help to understand about *Damai* community to some extent.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

As no study can be free from limitations and also from shortcomings. This is also not exceptional one. Our data would be generated from the field study (Baglung

Municipality, Baglung) allow to measure only within the short area. Therefore, the study suffers from the following major limitations.

- The study is based on a Baglung Municipality, ward no .6 Baglung. Therefore the finding may not be generalized to the district or national level.
- The study is focused on the *Damai* people and recent change in their traditional occupation so the context would be centralized as regards.
- This present study has some limitations. First the researcher is a student and he has constraints such as time and resources. It is a mini research work prepared in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of sociology/ anthropology. The study will be focused on the social cultural, economic and traditional occupational aspect of the *Damai* people. It will not be an in-depth study. Due to constraints, to generalize the findings of this study for other parts of the country may not be fully practical because the sample which researcher has taken may not have features of representative of the other areas.

6.1 Definition of the terms

Dalit : According to Verna system, communal name for water not accepting caste and whose touch requires sprinkling water.

Occupation : Those activities run by using strength, which provide services and production.

Damai : One caste among dalit community ,whose traditional occupation is tailoring and playing panchai baja.

Traditional occupation : Those source of livelihood activities that has been followed by successive generation.

Patron client : Giving / taking kind instead of cash (food stuff) transaction for providing services between higher caste and lower caste.

Jajamani system : It is a social caste system where there is exchange of goods and services between landowning higher castes and landless service castes . It was an economic system where lower castes performed various functions for upper castes and received grain in return.

Bali Partha : An annual contract of wage between service provider and receiver in kind .

1.7 Organization of the study

According to the nature of the study, this study has been divided into six chapters. This study begins with introduction and ends with summary, conclusions, recommendations. The first chapter covers introduction of the study, statement of problem, objectives of the study ,significance of the study, limitations of the study, organization of the study and meaning of the terms used in this study. Relevent literature has been reviewed in chapter two, which deals with the theoretical overviews and the review of related literature.The third chapter includes the research methods adopted in this study and fourth chapter presents the socio-economic and demographic background of the study site. Similarly chapter five is about traditional occupation and recent changes. Likewise, the last or sixth chapter includes the summary, finding and conclusion. At the end of this thesis reference,the interview schedule and picture used in this study are presented.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with selected previous studies. Some books, research reports, dissertations and papers are reviewed in order to support the present day. Even one ethnic/ caste group was not thought as a competition to others. Every person is identified to himself as a Nepali. They were interrogated on the path of national interest. This is the reason that's why Nepalese ethnic/ caste groups were more suitable, subject for sociological and anthropological study. So many native and foreign scholars have done number of research studies on different ethnic groups of Nepal. But there are very few scholars have focused on occupational caste group like *Damai*, There were no any in -depth study about the causes of declining condition of tailoring and beating *Penchaebaja*, *Hudkely* dancing that come together with the name of *Damai*. Due to the lack of sufficient studies of this caste group, the researcher attempted to study about this occupational caste to some extent. To meet the objectives of the research, some books, and articles related to present studies have been reviewed on this chapter. In this way, there are many racial, religious and social, untouchables in Nepal. The major cause of the untouchables in the caste system is attached with the sense of high and low.

2.1. Conceptual Overview

Caste discrimination and untouchability existed in the Nepalese society is a kind of social evils. These are really unscientific, unfair, illegal and inhuman custom applied to poor people by aristocrats. So untouchability and the matters like caste discrimination, labour division, class struggle, religious conflict, domestic conflict are found not only in Nepal but are also found in every countries of the world .Only difference is that it has existed somewhere in the name of caste and somewhere in the name of occupation. As punishment, some people were kept in lower level as the lower caste people or untouchable. *Damai* are tailors and sew and mend clothes . Besides this they beat *Panche baja* in some major occasion and also practice agriculture . Historically, they are economically depend on their clients for livelihood and used to provide their service to their clients through traditional *Jajamani* system such as *Bali partha*.

Dalits are socially oppressed, economically deprived and politically excluded. The worse scene is the public relationship or attachment with one another. Much of the cases been found that the so-called high caste people attitudinal untouchability such as if one sees dalit (kami) early morning it is inauspicious or if one is a dalit teacher, children of high caste group will not attend the school, dalits are not allowed to enter into the temples, although they are not legally prohibited. They can't use the same water tap, well which other people use. They have to use separate one. Even they are not allowed to enter hotel, restaurant and canteen in public places. They should clean the utensils themselves. They are supposed to clear the dead animals, clothes of corpses and so on. If they don't perform such tasks, they should be punished severely. The case of exploitation and discrimination over dalit is ignored in police administration. It is seen that higher caste people are not punished in such case. Even today, inter-caste love affair is rejected in the society. Mainly dalit young boys and girls have to suffer from physical attacks. In this way various types of exploitation and discrimination to dalit people are found in Nepalese society, (Darnal 2058). Changes in Nepal's state and social structure, along with the rise of mass media, continue to impact the lives of Damai musicians and the music that they play which is their traditional occupation. According to the damai music scholar Ram Saran Darnal, the demise of the patronage system, while in theory a step toward greater social equality, has had a significant economic impact on the Damai. With their major source of income from musical events removed, many Damai have adopted other, more lucrative professions. Some have become full-time tailors, leaving their villages for Kathmandu or other larger cities.

New legal code 1963, Constitution 1990 and Interim Constitution 2007 all have treated everybody equally before the law and have ended the discriminations on the basis of castes at least in written form: however, it is still strong in practice. Religious primacy in state ruling has been eliminated constitutionally by the interim Constitution 2007 declaring the state as secular. New economic opportunities such as foreign employment, government and private jobs, business etc have de-linked dalits from their patrons i.e higher castes. Similarly the government's systematic five year plans development has been giving priorities to dalits which have helped them enter into the new world values and thinking. Western education system based on modern value system has been accessible to dalits and has increased their literacy rate significantly, which has made ground to question caste system and hierarchy. More

important, Maoist's campaigns against untouchability and caste discriminations have strongly threatened the caste system and hierarchy. And now caste neither encompasses ritual power nor economic and political power. All these changes have played a vital role in reducing the relevance and legitimacy of the caste system and have encouraged Dalits to exercise economic and political power rather than ritual power. Likewise, these people were badly cheated by the government policy maker and the different organization concerned to them. Foreign employment helps in the increment of per capita income, increase in literacy rate or educational status helps in social mobility and in the access to different resources and services. Inclusiveness, government policies, seat reservation in the civil service, army, police service were the social behaviours to change the traditional occupation by the occupational caste group of Nepal. The conceptual framework of the study is given below.

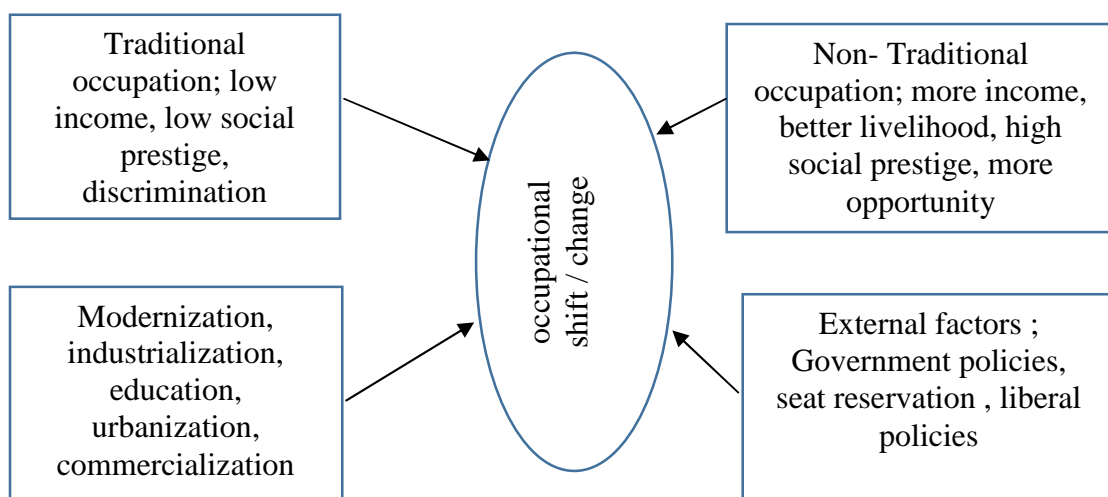


Figure. 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Similarly, modern trend of culture is also found to be responsible to the shift of traditional occupation by the Dalit people. Commercialization, development of technology produce goods at low price affordable by all. They could not develop skill according to changing environment, entry of other caste group in such occupation is also the major cause for changing their traditional occupation. Thus, dimensions for the shift from traditional occupation are society and culture.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Modernization theories are macro concepts with a universal orientation intellectually derived from the analysis of social change of Weber and Durkheim (Western, 1984:-

41-49). It is an innovative approach developed in Europe at the first time in the name of Renaissance, the age of reason the industrial revolution. Modernization concept covered large scales development issues and has determined development theories. The term of modernization itself is a vast subject matter. The topic modernization is made of inquiry that gives more scope for understanding of indigenous perspectives (Chenes, 1991 quoted from Khadka).

Modernization theories rightly worked out importance of values and attitude for process of socio-economic change. However, it is misleading to believe that traditional values and traditional economic only have to be replaced by so called modern values and modern economic to achieve development on the country, critics of modern approach hold that traditional values and attitude might even accelerate development in specific socio economic context (Bongartz, 1992)

Modernization is the synthesis of old and new ways as such varies in different environment. Modernization brings change, which may very well product not only benefit but also conflict, pain and relative disadvantage. Modernization must be thought of as a process that is simultaneously creative and dislocation and suffering modernization means there fore adopting new ways at life, the consequences of which do not necessarily lead to a bitter life for all the individuals involved. Modernization would be viewed as a process involving the interaction of many factors, so that more than one aspect of an individual's behaviour must be measured in order to determine his status on the modernization continuum (Roger, 1969: 15)

According to the encyclopedia of sociology, modernization is a model of industrial development worked out by W.W Rostow that is applied on development strategy for third world countries. According to Rostow, who developed his scheme from an analysis in the industrial revolution in Britain and it is possible to identify all societies, in their economic dimension, as laying within one of five categories. He argued from evolutionary concept starting that all societies must pass through five fixed stages. The traditional society, the pre- condition for takes off the drive to maturity and the age of high mass consumption (Rostow, 1971: 4). All societies according to Rostow, as traditional societies whose productive resources are largely devoted to agriculture and value system are fatalistic. During the period of precondition, the idea of economic progress is perceived as possible and goods education broadens, enterprising individuals and a suitable infrastructure, specially in the government do develops. It take off, the third stage, growth becomes a normal

condition. Investment rate increase substantially, and a favorable, political climate emerges, finally technological maturity follows, in which the society has the versatility to produce anything it chooses. According to pasted view, underdevelopment societies have to follow the same process that developed nations have experienced. The problem with his, approach was that not all societies pass through same sequence in the way.

2.3 Review of the Previous Studies

The dalits were officially called Achhute or untouchable until 1951 .They now call themselves dalit or oppressed. Dalit society research had started in the recent decade. Writing about them started only at 1950s in the south Asia. Various foreign scholars including anthropologist and sociologist came to Nepal to undertake various studies about the dalits of Nepal. As a national culture, the Nepalese culture incorporates many particular groups such as Sherpa, Gurung, Magar, Damai, Tharu, Dhimal, Sarki, Bishwokarma etc.To make study on all ethnic groups in a research project will be very difficult. In this regard, only a few sociological and anthropological studies on untouchables have been made in our country Nepal.

Very few studies have been made on Traditional occupation of *Damai* castes of Nepal. Detail study and research work are not done about the *Damai* People in Nepal. The researcher can hardly find book written on traditional occupation of *Damai* people of Nepal in common. Though some article books are available written on some particular caste only. Therefore, detailed studies are not found here, but still some sociologists, and anthropologists have given some information in their study. Similarly research works are found about individual caste of the *Damai* as a caste study in a particular area of Nepal. The studies aren't found actual condition of whole *Damai* or *Dalits*. These studies show them as very poor people and people of very low social status. (Bista, 1996) in his book people of Nepal has given some account of untouchables. He has put them in occupational castes and has given a few description of some Terai untouchable castes.So an attempt has been made for a further study on damai people in this research. The study will basically try to focus on the traditional occupation of damai people and recent changes.

Gurung (1989) has given a detail ethnographic pictures about chepang, a minority group of Nepal in his book. He has traced a continuity and changes about chepang

regarding their social, ecology, economy, religion, family, marriage and kinship systems.

Gautam, R. and Thapa Magar, A.K. (1994) have traced about some untouchable caste of Nepal. Badi, Dom, Gaine, Kami, Muahar Sarki, Holkhar etc. untouchable castes are tried to described in their book .

Caste bound occupation does not provide fulltime employment to the most of the dalit people and they are bound to take other jobs. The highest frequency occurs in the wage labour which is also a major occupation of the majority of Dalit people. It also explains the occupational caste group donot possess limited, but also poor quality of land, (Pant, 1987)

Dalit groups are skilful in their traditional occupations. But due to lack of resources and access to finance, it is becoming increasingly difficult to them to make a living on the sole income out of their artisan (NND SWO 2005).

Jailab Rai has done an ethnographic study of Sarki people in Naubise VDC of Dhading district. According to him socio-economic condition of of Sarki people in the study area is very worrying in comparison to that of the other groups in the same area. A research conducted by by Khagendra Sharma, Mrs. Gyanu Chhetru and Miss Sita Rana (1994), on "A modest study of the current socio-economic situation of the lowest status caste and tribal communities in Nepal " has shown all types of problems of untouchables . In this study, they have identified caste-based discrimination and related matters of untouchability.

Rao (2001) stated the following reasons for the decline of the traditional occupation as , the ardent of industrialization almost put an end to the guild system and the traditional skills of indian artisans. Indian cotton, silk, and calicos could not be sold in England due to the competition from the factory made goods. The british tariff policy was also against the indian interest. Indian markets become flooded with cheaper british goods. By 1880 the decline of handicraft was an accomlishe fact. Therefore many artisans had to find an alternative means of livelihood. Not only in india, in other countries wherever modernization and industrialism spread, traditional occupations declined .

A research was conducted by B.K Parajuli (2011), on " Gender Perspective in Trditional Occupation among hill dalit of kaski " .The study was conducted to find out the condition of the continuity and change in the traditional skill and technology among the hill *Dalits* of Nepal. It has mainly aimed at finding out the perception of

the occupational caste groups towards the traditional occupations. In the contemporary Nepalese society the traditional occupations and social relationships are changing rapidly, in this connection, it is very enviable to investigate the nature and the pattern of such overwhelming change. Without understanding these changes, it is not viable to develop realistic framework that aims at mainstreaming and uplifting the *Dalit* population in Nepal. At the end, he concluded that, Nepali *Dalit* women are doubly oppressed in terms of caste and in terms of genders, their participation is essential to the success of the conserving the traditional skills.

In afro Asian journal of social science volume 5,no.5.2 Quarter II 2014 written by Bankim Chandra Mandal tries to find the effect of globalization and its effect on dalits. He found that under the globalization, the socio-economic conditions of the vast majority of the dalits are going from bad to worse, rather than improving and , they are forced to change their livilihood..

Nepali, (1965), in the book "The Newars " has given an ethno sociological study of the Newars, a Himalayan community of Nepal. The book has given a well ethnography of Newars in different aspects.

Caplan (1970), has studied a village of eastern Nepal, where he studied the changing relation between members of indigenous tribes: Limbu and the high caste Hindu group, the Brahmins.

According to Caplan (1972), the study on " Priest and Cobbler " is an example of social change in a Hindu village of western Nepal about the untouchable. Although untouchable consider themselves Hindus, they are not served by Brahmin priests and indeed are considered as being outside the formal Hindu hierarchy by members of their castes. Untouchables are, however, necessary to participate in the proper functioning of the caste system since they provide service which clean upper caste people are precluded from performing.

Parajuli (1999) in his article in journal of political science stated the way of disappearing the traditional occupation ,as modern kinds of occupations are replacing the traditional occupation pattern in Pokhara, the socio-economic background of the respondents determines the change of occupation, the selection of occupation is being governed by modern value rather than by traditional value and migrated people are more occupationally mobile in comparison to residents of Pokhara city .

In a research "Problem and Prespective of Panchai Baja players, a case study of Damai community of kaski district done by Prem Bahadur Nepali , it is said that the

process of modernization and industrialization has replaced most of the caste based tradition occupation. He further added among the traditional occupation, the Panchai baja is a part of Nepalese culture and these musical instruments are played by Damai. But panchai baja is in deplorable condition because of caste hierarchial system, untouchability and inhuman behavior of higher caste. The research study attempts to analyze the impact of Panchai baja in Nepalese society and the economic condition of the Panchai baja players. The total of 63 Damai households have been selected for the field interview using judgement sampling. Focus group discussion, key informant interview tools are also used in the study. The study has carried out an intensive field survey in Pokhara Municipality and Bharat Pokhari VDC of kaski district and found 35% of the respondents said that Panchai baja should be preserve and government should initiate proper plan and policies to preserve Panchai baja while 25% said that the civil society is concern to preserve and promote it.

In a report prepared by Yam Bahadur Charmakar on " Dalit skill , technology and their perspective: a sociological study of baglung distrect Bhimpokhara VDC and Baglung municipality " it was found that various factors like increased competition,changing taste of clients, lack of link to the market, lack of individual capital, ineffective legal provisions ,social prejudice against their caste and occupation are affecting traditional skill and professionalism of dalit . The skill and art of dalit people are gradually diminishing as they are not receiving proper support from the nation.

kumar Neupane 'sargam' studies about the Musician of central Nepal . His study is basically oriented on the social and traditional way of patronage among the Dalit Cast-the Damai Musicians. The study is important to understand the social interaction and social transformation of Damai musician in central Nepal. These musician castes have been making their livelihood through music making for patrons. However, social contour of the village are becoming blurred, its population has acquired a shifting character and lineages and families has become greatly dispersed. There are many effects of modernization and economic liberalization upon Dalits and artisan caste in central Nepal. Some of these musician castes completely displaced from their traditional occupation due to the modernization. These musician caste accepts 'Bali' (harvest grain), the traditional system of rewards. The Bali can be grains, wheat, maize, potato, uncooked rice or any crops that patrons harvest. The patronage can be either in cash or some textile gift in some especial ceremony and ritual. The Damai

musician accepts Bali throughout the year counting the head of the patrons' family. Open economic and political system provides opportunities to the musician caste people to come out from their traditional occupation. To some content, social transformation can be seen as reflection of development procedure combined with declining traditional occupation, population growth in the village and for work elsewhere. Patron-client relationship between the musician caste and other castes is decaling because of low pay system in a traditional balighar system. These musician castes are now changing their profession, not exactly out of music but the mood of performance and professionalism. To survive, it is very hard for them in a traditional way of patronage so they migrated to the town and established musical band with some of the musicians of their own community.

Some,foreign writer has tried to write about untouchable caste but they all are not ethnographic study.Macdonald (1975) has written a book in which he has written about some untouchable castes.

Although, special books are not available, some dissertation/thesis of master's degree of T.U have written on untouchables

Chhettri (1985) has prepared a thesis on "Gaine" a singing people of Nepal .

Subedi (1995) has written on his thesis " Badi" an untouchable caste whose traditional profession is prostitution.

Sah (2005) has prepared a dissertation on "Chamar" a leather working people of Nepal and Yadav (2005) has also written on the "Mushar" a cat eating people of Nepal .

Similarly in the context of modernization, *Regmi* has studied the impact of modernization of *Parjapati* caste living *Bhaktapur* district in her M.A thesis dissertation (impacts of modernization on occupational caste Group (2002) and concluded that impacts of the modernization was pushing their traditional occupation and indigenous culture aside. Rudra bahadur Nepali has studied about the changes in the traditional occupation of kaskikot VDC of kaski district among sarki community. According to him social development and modernization have considerably influenced in the traditional caste based occupations. He also found that Sarki are bound to change their traditional occupation as other occupations are profitable to them compared to that of traditional ones.

Thus from the above literature review it is seen that studies have been done to show the social, cultural, econocmic, discrimination and condition of dalit.To some extent

studies have been done to show the changing livelihood of dalit and cause of change in their traditional occupation. But the detail studies about Damai community, their traditional occupation and recent changes has not been done. Social structure is based on the economy, so with increase in the economic condition, production pattern is also changed which forces the occupational caste group to change their traditional occupation. This is only possible due to modernization, globalization and industrialization. But such studies has not been done in detail.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Several techniques and methods have been used for the collection of various data and information required for this study. This chapter concerns with the method which was used by researcher on the time of study period.

3.1 Selection of Study Area

Baglung municipality ward no. 6 of Baglung district is selected as the study area. Baglung is fully a hilly district and is completely rural area of Dhaulagiri zone of the western development region (WDR). There is one municipality in Baglung district. Baglung municipality is located in hilly area. The research site was selected purposively. It is recognized fact that the economic change can play decide role to change the structure of a society or group . Modernization, Castism has penetrated each and every corner of the society. This has brought up different level of social and economic changes. In this process the traditional occupation and the social relationship are changing rapidly. So it is important to study the pattern of change in the traditional occupation inorder to develop realistic framework that aims at main streaming and uplifting the dalit population in Nepal. There have been very few ethnographic studies on the hill people of western development region (WDR) such as *Damai*. So, this study primarily focus on the *Damai* people and recent change in their traditional occupation.

Most of the *Damai* people of Baglung municipality are native. They are not outsider. They are scattered in different places but larger number of their population is in ward no. 6 in Baglung municipality. Young generation are diverting from their traditional occupation. They are giving up their traditional occupation . More often they like to go abroad for the foreign employment. Few of the damai people are still continuing their traditional occupation inspite of various circumstances in this area . Besides this researcher is one of the inhabitanats of this municipality. This will be very helpful to understand social setting ,ways of life and to have social contact. Data collected from the selected area will be more reliable which help in the justification of the research. That is why I have selected this area for the study .

3.2 Research Design

The major emphasis of this study is to analyze and explore the causal factor for the changing occupational pattern among the Damai. This study mainly provides descriptive and ethnographic information on Damai people and their traditional occupations. Descriptive and explanatory research design has been used to describe the changing factor for the occupational shift and other phenomena related to Damai people, their work and life. This dissertation will try to describe the different occupations adopted by Damai people of Baglung municipality for the existence in the present situation and it also explains the effect of modernization and technological situation on the community. It describes the social, economic mechanism and occupations of Damai people.

3.3 Nature and Sources

Primary and secondary data are used to study about the Damai community, their traditional occupations and recent changes. Primary data will be collected from census studies, schedule interviews, observations, and key informants. Primary data and information will be extensively utilized as the main source for this research work. The secondary types of data will be collected from published books, articles, journals, and ethnographic studies from related literature of the municipality of Baglung. This secondary information is helpful to check the validity and reliability of empirical data.

3.4 Universe And Sample Population

Baglung municipality ward no.6 of Baglung district consists of 45 households. All the households have been selected for this study. According to my field research, there are 205 Damai people and 45 households in that ward. These households have been considered as the universe of this study. All the households have been included to collect data and information for this study.

3.5 Data Collection Tools and Techniques Used

To meet the above-mentioned objectives, the study required data from multiple sources. The primary and secondary information will be used as well as various techniques will be applied like questionnaires, schedule, key informant interviews, census studies, and group discussions will be conducted to carry out qualitative and

quantitative data. Quantitative data are mainly collected from the questionnaires schedule, key informant and qualitative data from the census study .These sources helped to get a better understanding of the subject matter. These tools were helpful for collecting information about Damai community and about their traditional occupation. The following methods were applied for the study.

3.5.1 Questionnaire schedule

In the first phase, household enumeration was conducted. All the households in the universe were enlisted on the basis of house number given by baglung municipality. A semi-structured survey was conducted in the selected households of the research site. Local level facilitators who had more knowledge about their locality and researcher herself were intensively involved in the whole survey. A total of 45 households only from the damai castes were selected for household survey. Direct (face-to-face) interview was applied for information collection. The already developed questionnaire was asked in each selected households. Both open-ended and close ended questions were developed for collecting detailed information about the research topic. A detail of households survey questionnaire was given in Annex. Households provided a convenient place where people can be contacted to be interviewed. A large number of household surveys also allowed for cross validation of the results. From the survey, it became easy to know the condition of traditional occupation before 10 yrs and now. It also helped to know what necessities the change in traditional occupation.

3.5.2 Key Informants Interview

Knowledgeable persons from the *Damai* community who were not currently involved in playing *Panchai Baja and tailoring* and some non-dalits who are involved in politics, education and different professions had been interviewed as key informants in order to obtain social discrimination, social exclusion, condition of their traditional occupation in the past and now and importance of *Panchai Baja* in Nepalese society . Checklist was developed and administered in the interview (Annex-3). Three interview was conducted. One with the head teacher of primary School, second with the youth involved in business and the third with the social mobilizer from the damai community .The purpose of interview is to find out the condition of traditional occupation, occupational mobility, perception on the occupation and difference in the

social behavior when continuing the traditional occupation and selecting the non traditional occupation.



Photo : 3.1. Interview with key informant

3.6 Reliability of the Information

The information obtained from survey questionnaire was assumed to be accurate given that no biasness was done during the survey. Both male and female respondent were included in the survey. Oftentimes, to check for accuracy of the data, same questions were asked in key informant interview. Extra emphasis has been given to maintain the objective of the data and avoid data error by comparing them with different sources. Interview with key people familiar with the study aspect and the area was followed by direct observation helped in determining the accuracy of the information obtained from the field to ensure that the data being obtained were reliable and could be used for interpretation.

3.7 Problem of Field work

During the field work researcher had to face a lot of problems. It was very difficult for researcher to meet the respondents in time as they are involved in other non traditional occupation to make their livelihood. Researcher had to visit them frequently. Many of the respondents are illetrate and old .Hence relatively more time was consumed in taking interview with them. It is also become difficult to collect the information on income they earn and the possession of the immovable property.

3.8 Data Processing and Analysis

After the collection of data , specific methods/techniques have been proposed and analyzed in accordance with the outline laid down for the objectives of research. All the data are analyzed both qualitatively as well as quantitatively .The raw data have been mainly edited , recorded and scrutinized before transferring into computer . Simple statistical tools like frequency and percentage have been used for the presentation of data . Likewise figures, diagram, tabulation and graphical representation will also been made . Qualitative data will be managed and analysed descriptively. Suitable photographs taken during field visit will also be inserted for better illustration and reinforcement and the evaluation aspects of the report. The quantitative output will be interpreted and verified by the qualitative information .The data have been categorized and tabulated on different table and analyzed on the basis of subject matter. Before analysis, the finding, editing, coding and classification of data are done. The physical factor such as demographic feature, population structure, age, sex, structure, education, structure etc. will be descriptively analyzed.

CHAPTER-IV

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA

4.1 Introduction of the Study Sites

4.1.1 Geographical location

Baglung district is one of the seventy five district of Nepal . It lies in Dhaulagiri zone, western development region of Nepal. Baglung is the administrative headquarters of baglung district and Dhaulagiri zone which is a major business, financial, educational and healthcare centre for the people of Kali Gandaki valley. It is mostly known as city of bridges and is also famous for its map which is similar to the map of Nepal. It's location is from 28°16'to 28°26' Northern latitude and 83°36' to 83°60' Eastern latitude. Baglung district is bordered Parbat in the east, Rolpa and Rukum in the west and Pyuthan and Gulmi in the south and Myagdi in the North. The total area of baglung district is 1784 square kilometer. There are three parliamentary constituencies, 13 ilakas, one municipality and 59 VDCs.

The district is linked to national transportation by Pokhara-Baglung Highway. There are about 29310 inhabitant (census 2011) in baglung.The annual population growth rate is 3.03%.The total population damai in the baglung municipality is 1126 including 495 male 631 female .

This study covers an area of ward no.6 of Baglung municipality. It is about 8 km. from the baglung bazar and is to the south west of baglung Bazar. Dhikichaur, pala VDC, mulpani and Ramche are to its north west,east and south respectively. After the establishment of baglung municipality in the year 2054, various development infrastructure created an easy access to come in contact with the urban people.

4.1.2 Climate

The study site enjoys warm summer and mild winters.Rainfall is heavily effected by the monsoon and most of it occurs during the month of june through September. Rest of the year is mostly dry and sunny. The temperature ranges from 19.1°c to 26.6°c. High above 35°c and low below 0°c are rare.It is situated at the altitude of about 1020 m(3350 ft) from the sea level .

4.1.3 Natural Resources

Generally, land, forest, minerals, stone and water are important natural resources of Baglung Municipality. Most of the population of the study site depends upon land and forest for its subsistence production. Forest and land are assisting livestock sector with feed/fodder. In the same way forest resources are important and facilitating the people with timber and non-timber forest products. Similarly, water is another important resource coming from water wells and small streams. Most of the low land areas are irrigated by water.

4.1.4 Population composition

Total population of Baglung is 268613 with population density 150 per square metre (census 2011). The study site Baglung Municipality occupies the area of 23 square kilometers.

Table 4.1 Distribution of population of study site

Ward no	Households	Total population	Male	Female
1	1082	3743	1766	1977
2	2111	7332	3552	3780
3	1562	5426	2525	2901
4	542	2112	1019	1093
5	506	2076	923	1153
6	276	1156	498	658
7	320	1430	595	835
8	293	1238	551	687
9	324	1356	580	776
10	306	1372	606	766
11	526	2119	941	1178
Total	7848	29360	13556	15804

(CBS 2011)

Its total population is 29360 including 13556 male and 15804 female. Bharmine, Chhetri, Newars, Magar, Sunar, Kami, Sarki, Damai are some of the castes living in the Baglung Municipality.

The table above shows that ward no. 1, 2, 3 are highly populated whereas ward no. 6 is less populated. The number of females is more than that of males due to higher birth

rate of females. This high birth rate is due to poverty and low literacy rate in the study site.

4.1.5 Caste/Ethnic Composition of baglung municipality

Baglung municipality is multicultural municipality. The beauty of this area is the settlement of the different group of people in the study site. This fact can be seen from the table below.

Table 4.2

Situation of Caste Ethnic Settlement of Baglung Municipality in percentage

Ward no	Bhramin	Chettri	Newar	Magar	Dalit	Other	Total
1	21.6	19.2	1.3	19	30.4	8.5	100
2	33.1	21.9	15.8	11.3	10.7	7.2	100
3	8.7	26.4	22.0	20.9	14	8	100
4	46.3	8.3	20.8	15.5	5.7	3.5	100
5	33.6	37.5	0.2	0.4	25.8	2.5	100
6	33.9	29.2	-	0.1	36.8	-	100
7	44.1	8.8		0.1	46.8	0.3	100
8	50.7	34.1	-	-	15.1	01	100
9	22.3	13.8	0.4	25.2	38.4	-	100
10	74.5	14.9	-	4.5	5.0	1.1	100
11	42.1	29.7	4.2	7.2	9.8	7.0	100
Average	34.8	22.5	7.8	10.3	20.3	4.3	

Source: Nagar profile 2070

Baglung Municipality is inhabited by heterogenous caste/ethnic group. This municipality is dominated by Bhramin(34.8%) followed by Chettri (22.5%), Magar (10.3), Newar (7.8%), dalit (20.3%) and other (4.3). Among the dalit, the population of Damai people in the study site is more in comparison to others.

4.1.6 Family size

A group of members living together under the same roof and sharing the same kitchen is known as a family. Family is the fundamental unit of social organization. Family

size is another important variable which effects the direction of mobility. Household size of the respondents have ranged from minimum of 4 to a maximum of 8 members, the average being 5.5 members. It is generally believed that larger the family size, lower would be gross as well as the upward occupational mobility and vice versa. Father, mother along with their two children is said to small family while the family with more than two children is called large family. Small family remain happier than an large family. In the sameway the nuclear family or elementary family is a term used to define a family group consisting of a pair of adults and their children and a family with more than two parents is said to be joint family. Information about the types of family is given below

Table 4.3 Types of family

Types	No of households	Percent
Nuclear	40	53.12
Joint	5	46.88
Total	45	100

Source: Field survey, 2015

Table 4.5 exhibit the fact that among 45 households of Damai 40 house family are living in the single family. It is found that they preferred single family to be economically independent and not to become burden to their parents any longer. This shows that new generation of Damai want to live in nuclear family .

4.1.7 Age and Sex Composition

Age and sex are the important factors of population composition which determine several demographic and socio-economic conditions. Age is an important demographic variable which provides the information of the people of different age groups at a particular period. Moreover, it shows the number of economically active people and the number of dependents. During the period of interview with the respondents, the largest percentage of the respondents were from the age group of 1-10 years, which has been followed by the age group of 31-40 years and the least were from the age group of 60 and above. This facts shows that the number of dependents in the study site is more than economically active people which indicates the poverty rate in the study site. Hence the Damai people in the study site needs either to change

their existing traditional occupation for better earning or to continue their occupation. Table below shows the age composition of the study area.

Table 4.4 Age composition

Age Group	Male Number	FemaleNumber	Total Number	Percent
1-10	21	28	49	23.90
11-20	16	14	30	14.63
21-30	14	18	32	15.60
31-40	20	24	44	21.46
41-50	15	12	27	13.17
51-60	10	6	16	7.80
60+	4	3	7	3.41
Total	100	105	205	100

Source: Field survey 2015

4.2 Economic structure

Damai are considered as one of the main disadvantaged group. Most of the Damai even today are poor. Even though many of the Damai carry on with their caste based and service oriented traditional occupation as well as agriculture work. The significant return on the service they render and landlessness have made them face appalling poverty. Simultaneously, the process of modernization and industrialization has replaced most of their caste-based occupations. If the long achieved skill of the Damai are properly accumulated and strengthened, it can emerge as a potential capital for the nation.

Caste system is undoubtedly an obstacle for the economic prosperity of Damai . Eventhough untouchability is fading from the urban milieu and among the educated, the principle of heredity in occupation has been segregating them from the socio-economic mainstream of the country. There is not yet full and free access to Damai to have an alien profession beyond their heredity occupation. This sort of psychological restriction is not conducive for the upliftment of the backward people.

In the study site, generally the main source of economy in agriculture activities. As there is a lack of industrial development most of the people of this ward are farmer.

Rice, maize, millet, wheat, barley, potato etc. are the main crops of this area. Similarly, fruits like orange, guava, banana, lemon etc. are produced which help to meet the requirement of the people of Baglung bazar to some extent.

4.2.1 Occupation

In Damai community, agriculture and caste based occupation were found as the main occupation upto few decades ago. From the third five year plan when the government had given special privileged to this community for the abroad employment and occupational structure has been changed since then. This had been proved by the data collected from the field. Occupational distribution of the respondents is given below in the table.

Table 4.5 Occupational distribution of the Households

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Agriculture	6	13.4
Labour	6	13.4
Foreign employment	20	44.5
Traditional occupation	7	15.5
Others	5	11.2
Total	45	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015

According to the table above about 16 percent of the respondents were employed in caste based occupation (Tailoring and beating Panchae baja) and the majority of the respondents had reported that the household heads main occupation is foreign employment which is about 45 percent, 13.4 percent of the respondents main occupation is agriculture and wage labour each. The collected data clearly signify that foreign employment and wage labour are the main source of income of this community in ward no 6 of Baglung Municipality.

4.2.2 Ownership of land

As Nepal is a country of an overwhelmingly agricultural based economy, the primary resource of economy of the people is land. Therefore, it is necessary to look at ownership of land to understand the extent of basic economy of Damai population. The landless people are mostly the untouchable groups such as kami, sarki, Damai and

Gaine (Caplan 1972). Respondents in the study area have been found that they have very low access on land. It is the indicator of the poverty. Due to this fact they are compelled to give up their Traditional occupation and to seek an alternative job for the fulfillment of their family requirement. About 56 percent of the households have land less than 1 ropani and only 11.1 percent have land more than 1 ropani. The following table shows the land ownership pattern of the respondent.

Table 4.6 Land holding pattern of the study site

Land categories	Frequency	Percent
Landless	15	33.4
Less than 1 ropani	25	55.5
More than 1 ropani	5	11.1
Total	45	100

Source : Field survey 2015

4.2.3 Food sufficiency status

Paddy, maize, millet, wheat, barley, potato etc are the main crops grown in the study area. From the study of land holding pattern it is seen that they have very low access on land and they have to suffer from food deficit. Among dalits, Sarki and Kami have relatively better position in food of their own as they only work on others' land (Sharma 1994). Only few families can meet food requirement around the year from their land and its yield. Out of 45 households, 42 or 93.3 percent households in the study site had food sufficiency below 9 months. About 34 percent of the household respondents have no land. This fact shows that in order to fulfill the family requirement either they have to continue their occupation or to seek the alternate jobs. The following table shows the insufficient food of Damai people in the study area.

Table 4.7 Food sufficiency at Households by month

Sufficiency	Households	Percentage
No land	15	33.4
Up to 3 months	14	31.1
3-6 months	8	17.7
6-9 months	5	11.1
9 months and plus	3	6.7
Total	45	100

Source : Field survey 2015

4.3 Education

Education is one of the fundamental means for all for alleviating poverty and bringing improvement in the standard of living through different socio-economic activities. Literacy enhances access to information that may be necessary to conduct various essential activities in daily life and work. In the past, the schooling system was based on the *Varnasharam* model during *Vedic* and post- *Vedic* period as well . There was deliberate denial of schooling to Sudras .Education helps to break the darkness of ignorance and bring the people into the light of right path. However due to the traditional perception in the society, most of the low caste people and the girls have been deprived to educational opportunity.

Table 4.8

Education status of the respondent Households

Level	Male		Female		Total	
	No	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Illiterate	20	21.5	30	32.25	50	35.71
Just Literate	25	26.88	10	10.75	35	25
Primary	35	32.25	4	4.30	34	24.28
Secondary	10	10.75	2	2.15	12	8.57
Higher Education	2	8.6	2	1.7	4	6.42
Total	93	100	47	100	140	100

Source : Field survey 2015

Table above shows the education status of the respondents in the study site. The respondents were deprived from the access of the higher-level of education due to various reasons. Data shows that dropouts are high after completion primary level in the school. Only 6.42 percent of the respondents obtained higher-level education, out of which 1.7 percent is female about 36 percent of the respondents are illiterate and 25 percent were able to read and write. Poor economic condition of the house and caste discrimination are the major factors for low education status of the respondents of the study site.

CHAPTRE-FIVE

CURRENT SITUATION OF OCCUPATION, RECENT OCCUPATIONAL CHANGE AND ITS CAUSE

Traditionally, the Damai of the study site were employed mostly in the tailoring and beating panche baja. In return these people get the 'Bali' in a year for the work they performed to the people. In addition to these they are also involved in agriculture, wood work, etc. This chapter is mainly focus to unfold the cause for recent occupational change and current situation. It is also centered on why traditional occupation tend to change? And what are occupations they are adopting instead of that?. To analyze this this chapter is further divided into several sub chapters .

5.1. Current Situation of traditional occupation in the study site

Traditionally, the Damai of the study site were employed mostly in the tailoring and beating Panche baja. In return these people get the 'Bali' in a year for the work they performed to the people. In addition to these they are also involved in agriculture, wood work, foreign employment etc. The feudal nature of the caste system prevents *Dalits* from leaving their prescribed work. Despite having mostly the same culture and religion as the dominant/majority group, *Dalits* are not allowed to profess and practice their ritual/religious practices freely. They are forced to occupy their traditionally assigned work. Another tradition occupations have been gradually disappearing primarily due to various reasons; they themselves think that their occupation is of lower social prestige and has low demand; many young educated *Dalit* boys and girls do not like to follow their fathers' foot-step; and they are finding difficulty in competing with open market which is supplying various types of similar goods as per the needs of customers and their productions can not compete with other industrial productions. According to Dahal (2002), it is noted that the main economic activity of majority of *Dalit* is wage laborer. In addition to this, the cast-based traditional work (such as black smithy, leatherwork, tailoring, etc.) is also the important economic activity for *Dalits* for their survival. One of the major sources of livelihood of *Dalit* is also to involve in their traditional caste occupation. Historically, *Dalits* have been practicing their traditional caste occupation and selling the products

to their clients to make a living. In *Damai* community, both men and women are tailors who sew clothes for their clients both in cash and kinds .In the study site many of the respondents have discontinued the traditional occupation and and envolved in other non –traditional occupation. Very few respondents are found continuing the traditional occupation . Table 5.2 shows situation about the continuity of playing *Panchai Baja and tailoring*. It is very pitiable condition because the number of playing *Panchai Baja* is going to be disappeared. Out of the total respondents only 15 or 33.3% respondents are continuing playing Baja and 30 or 66.7 percent respondents are discontinuing playing *Panchai Baja*. Similarly,12 or 26.6 percent of respondents are continuing their traditional occupation tailoring while 33 or 73.4 percent of the respondents are discontinuing tailoring.

Table : 5.1

Distribution of Respondents on current situation of traditional occupation

Occupation	Category			Percent		
	Continued	Discontinued	Total	Continued	Discontinued	Total
Tailoring	12	33	45	26.6	73.4	100
Beating panchai Baja	15	30	45	33.3	66.7	100

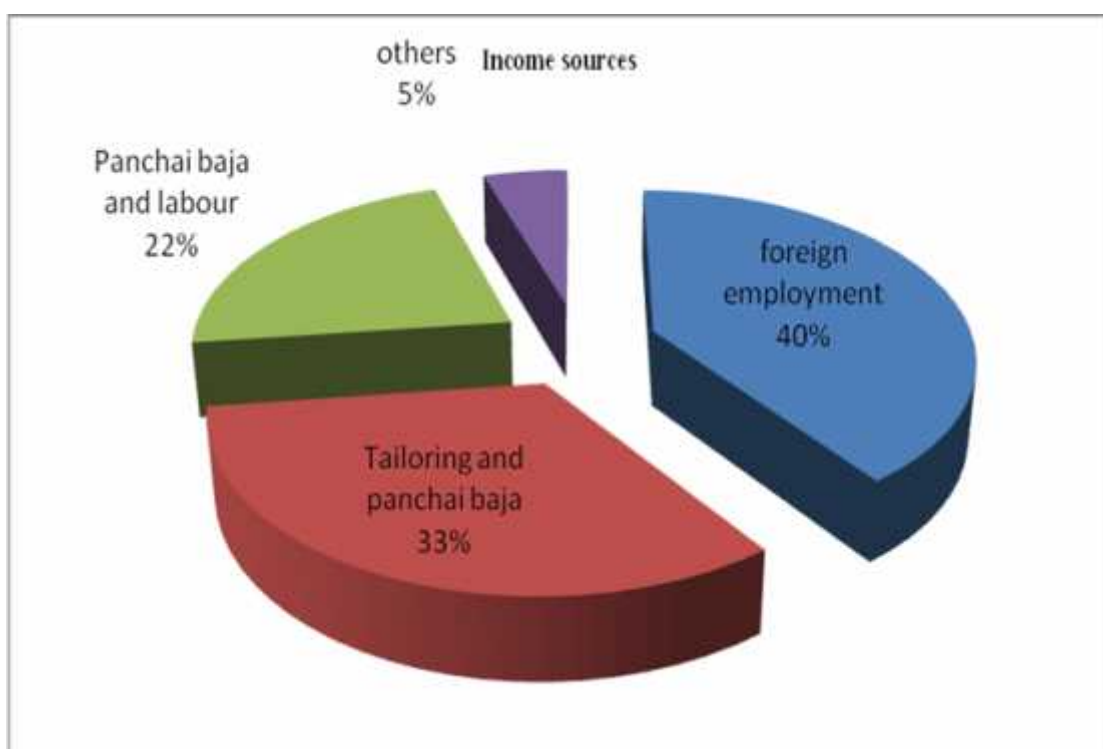
Source: Field survey 2015

It shows that coming generation is not attracted towards their traditional occupation. According to the respondents their family members are not interested in their traditional occupation. They reported that their occupation is threatened by modernization, encroachment and coming generation is not ready to follow the occupation because of untouchability, castism, and discrimination. They reported that playing Baja and tailoring are caste based occupation so it easily recognized as *Damai* and if they are shifted in other sectors nobody knows about their caste, so it encourages them to uplift their socio-economic status in the society.

Similarly in a interview with the respondents, 33 percent i.e 22 households head income source is playing baja and tailoring , 22 percent i.e 10 household heads respondents reported that their income source is playing baja and labour, 40 percent of the respondents reported that their income source is remittance while 5% earned from

other sources. Playing panchai baja is seasonal they are invited in especially time schedule to play baja. Therefore, it is insufficient for their sustain life so they are following other occupations along with Playing Baja and tailoring. Some respondents reported that slowly their children have started to go abroad for jobs/ service. Whose children are in abroad they forced their parents not to follow their traditional occupation. The source of income of damai people from their occupation is given below in the pie chart

Figure 5.1:
Source of income of the households in the study site



Source: field survey 2015

5.2. Income from Playing Baja and tailoring

Caste system is undoubtedly an obstacle for the economic prosperity of *Damai*. The *Damai* are invited to play musical instruments in various social and ritual occasions by their clients. They get cash with kinds from their clients but their income is heterogeneous, in a team, generally, nine players are there and a leader who manages and controls the team during the Playing *Baja*. The leader distributes their wages according to their skill. He has a little more wages than other does. similarly . *Damai* are engaged in sewing and repairing clothes which they take as ancestral occupation. They serve their *Bistas* by making and repairing clothes during social functions and

special ceremonies like wedding. They are mobilized according to the interest of their Bistas. Over our discussion with them, they told that Bistas the only means of their survival. They are their Fapeko Baliare. They are subsistence income of their Bistas. They have no courage to modernize their occupation. They want Bali converted into wages, but they fear that their Bistas will discontinue providing them bali and they will find it difficult to survive. The food or wage obtained from their client is very less in order to fulfill their necessity. Income of the majority of the respondent from playing baja and tailoring per day is Rs 400 which is very less in order to fulfill the requirements. Only about 8 percent of the respondents have income of Rs 800. This fact also suggests that economically these people are not strong and are leaving their occupation and are engaged in other occupation where they can make more money and get more satisfaction. The income of *Dama* in study area is presented in the figure below.

Table: 5.2

Distribution of Respondents by Income in a Day by traditional occupation

Income	Frequency		Percent	
	Baja	Tailoring	Baja	Tailoring
400.00	10	10	31.25	31.25
500.00	7	8	21.87	25
600.00	7	6	21.87	21.87
700.00	6	5	18.75	18.75
800.00	2	3	6.25	9.37
Total	32	32	100.0	100

Source: Field survey 2014

5.3. Reason for the Continuation of Traditional Occupation

Playing *Baja* and tailoring are caste-based occupation of Nepal. Many of the *Damai* carry on with their caste based and service oriented traditional occupation as well as agricultural work, the insignificant return on the service they render and landlessness have made them face appalling poverty. There are various reasons to continue Playing *Baja* and Tailoring. The table shows the causes to continue *Baja* and tailoring.

Table 5.3

Distribution of Respondents Causes to continue traditional occupation

Categories	Frequency		Percent	
	Baja	Tailoring	Baja	Tailoring
To preserve our culture	7	5	11.1	7.8
Better income	3	10	4.76	15.87
As being a <i>Damai</i>	10	10	15.87	15.87
For interest	10	5	15.86	7.80
Having skill	12	15	19.04	23.80
No option	21	18	33.33	28.57
Total	63	63	100.0	100

Source: Field survey 2015

Mixed of opinions were found to continue it. 11.1 percent respondents reported that they were continuing Playing Baja to preserve their culture. 15.87 percent respondents have followed it as being *Damai* because it is caste-based occupation. Near 16 percent respondents reported that they began to play it as their interest. 19 percent respondents reported that they play *Panchai Baja* having skill and 33 percent respondents reported that they had no option so playing *Baja* has become compulsion for them. Similarly in case of tailoring about 15.87 percent of the *Damai* people reported that they are continuing their traditional occupation because of having better income and as being *Damai*. Very few about 8 percent of the respondents said that they are continuing the occupation because of interest. There is not yet full and free access to *Dalits* to have an alien profession beyond their heredity occupation. This sort of psychological restriction is not conducive for the upliftment of *Damai*.

Case study 1 : Mr. A wants his children in non- traditional occupation

Mr. A is one among those who had adopted the traditional occupation as the main livelihood. He is 55 years old and a permanent resident of baglung Municipality ward no.6. He has 4 sons out of which 3 were employed in the foreign employment and rest is driver. Through Mr. A the study is able to analyse the situation and perception on traditional occupation. He is a constant companion during field visit

and it is his house where I started my field visit. His economic conditions were very poor. He reported that he is not satisfied with his occupation as he is hardly able to fulfill the family requirements.

He had reported that the high caste people of the society had never treated him as equal to them, which has always realized him of being low caste. He also said that he has no alternatives of choosing the job because he does not possess skill on other occupation.

According to him, due to poverty, industrialization, modernization, castism traditional occupation are disappearing, he further says that the globalization also has made effects on the traditional occupation. The young people are copying the global patterns of living and the occupation which is also responsible for the disappearance of traditional occupation. Through Mr. A the study is able to analyse the perception of on tradition.

He opines, "if we are able to expand our occupation and commercialize our products, believe me we are going to get much respect and money. Through our occupation, we do not earn much economically and all the crops we collect does't last longer than 3 months. It depends much on social, political and other involvement apart from traditional occupation that help to get adjusted little easily on other community members. He does not want his sons to follow his traditional occupation. He wants his children to be employed in some better government job and other non traditional occupation so that they will not be discriminated in the name of caste.

Therefore, the collected fact shows earning from traditional occupation cannot help to manage household more than 3 months in a year. Castism and Practice of untouchability still exists within the community. So traditional occupation holders do not want their children to follow the same occupation.

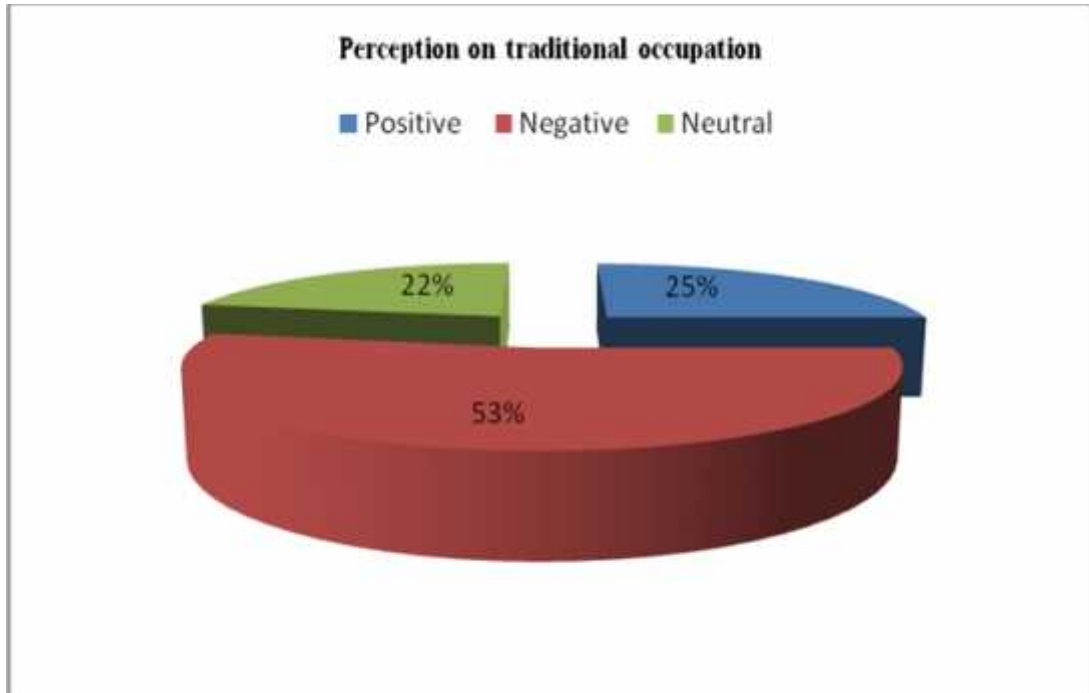
5.4. Perception on Traditional Occupation

Because of their position at the bottom of a hierarchy-based system, *Damais* are one of the deprived groups of the lower castes. Even today, most of them are condemned to live more or less in a subjugated condition. Yet, they are not outside the system. Rather, they may even be kept forcibly 'within' the system. On the other hand, the

ideology of racism totally alienates those who are bio-socially demarcated as the 'other'. The 'ruling races' can accomplish such domination through a blatant exercise of power. Moral or religious arguments have little scope in racial discourse.

Figure 5.2

Perception on traditional occupation of the respondents



Source: Field survey 2015

Above pie chart shows the perception of the respondents on their occupation. Out of the forty-five respondents, 10 or 22 percent reported that they have positive perception on their occupation because it is culture of Nepal not only *Damai* so they are proud of on their occupation. But majority of the respondents about 53 percent reported that they had negative perception on their occupation because of caste discrimination and untouchability They also reported to preserve *Panchai Baja* is not response only of *Damai*.

5.5. Feeling of being Damai

The *Damai* name is taken from the large kettledrum, which characterizes the band, the *damaha*. The *Damai* extremely depressed social status, being outcaste of society, from whom food and water may not be accepted, and contact with who demands ritual purification. Despite their untouchability, the *Damais* are indispensable to Nepalese society as both tailors and musicians, and in the later capacity, they assume an

auspicious quality (1990 Tingey). The following table shows the feeling of being *Damai*.

Table 5.4
Distribution by Respondents as their Feeling

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Being discriminated	12	26.7
Being dominated	9	22.0
Having lower status	8	17.8
Humiliation	12	26.7
Having higher	4	8.8
Total	45	100.0

Source: Field survey 2015

This table has showed the perception and feeling of *Damai*. It is a psychological restriction of *Damai*. Out of forty-five households, 26.7 percent respondents reported that they felt of having discrimination and they felt as inferior human beings because those people who come into contact with them require ritual purification. As per social, code the so-called untouchable communities requiring water-sprinkling purification. 22 percent respondents reported that they feel of having dominance. They told that the higher caste call them by giving nickname and very inferior words. 26.7 percent respondents felt that they have humiliation feeling as being *Damai*. They told that if they were higher caste they would be higher in social, economic and political status. Due to the caste system, their opportunities are bound and they are compelled to stay within limit areas. Only about 9 percent respondents felt that they are higher than others are because they have the skill of tailoring and capacity of playing *Panchai Baja*, which is used in social ceremonies by higher caste. They also feel *Panchai Baja* is cultural norms and values as well as property of the nation. The Key-informants reported that the *Damai* feel themselves as inferior and humiliation as being *Damai*.

5.6 Problems of Panchai Baja Players and tailors

Caste and caste-based discrimination remain a central feature of life and social interaction in Nepal, *Damai* are invited to play *Panchai Baja*. During that time, they

had to face barriers and obstacles. The table shows the problems of *Pachai Baja* players.

Table 5.5 Distribution by Respondents of Problem in Playing *Baja*

Categories	Frequency*	Percent
No food in time	18	28.6
No fixed time	14	22.2
Fighting	15	23.8
Domination	9	14.3
Not specify	7	11.1
Total	63	100.0

Source: Field survey 2015

*Frequency of the respondents are higher than the sample size, since the question was of multiple response type.

The players are forced to play *Panchai Baja*. Out of sixty-three respondents' 18 or, 28.6 percent respondents reported that they do not get food in time. The higher castes compel them to play *Panchai Baja*. 22.2 percent respondents reported that they had no fix time and 23.8 percent respondents reported that they are badly beaten by drunkard and *Damai* were victims of targeted attacks. 14 percent respondents reported that they were dominated and discriminated by higher caste. It shows that the condition of *Panchai Baja* players reasons to leave *Baja*. They also reported that they had to feel inferior as being human. During the playing time, they were forced to play continue without taking rest and food. Income from playing is also insufficient for their livelihood. They reported that the new generation is conscious and influenced by modernization and urbanization. Therefore, they are not interested to follow their traditional occupation.

Table 5.6 Distribution by Respondents of Problem in tailoring

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Competition	14	31.2
Lack of economic source	15	33.3
Domination	11	24.4
Not specify	5	11.1
Total	45	100

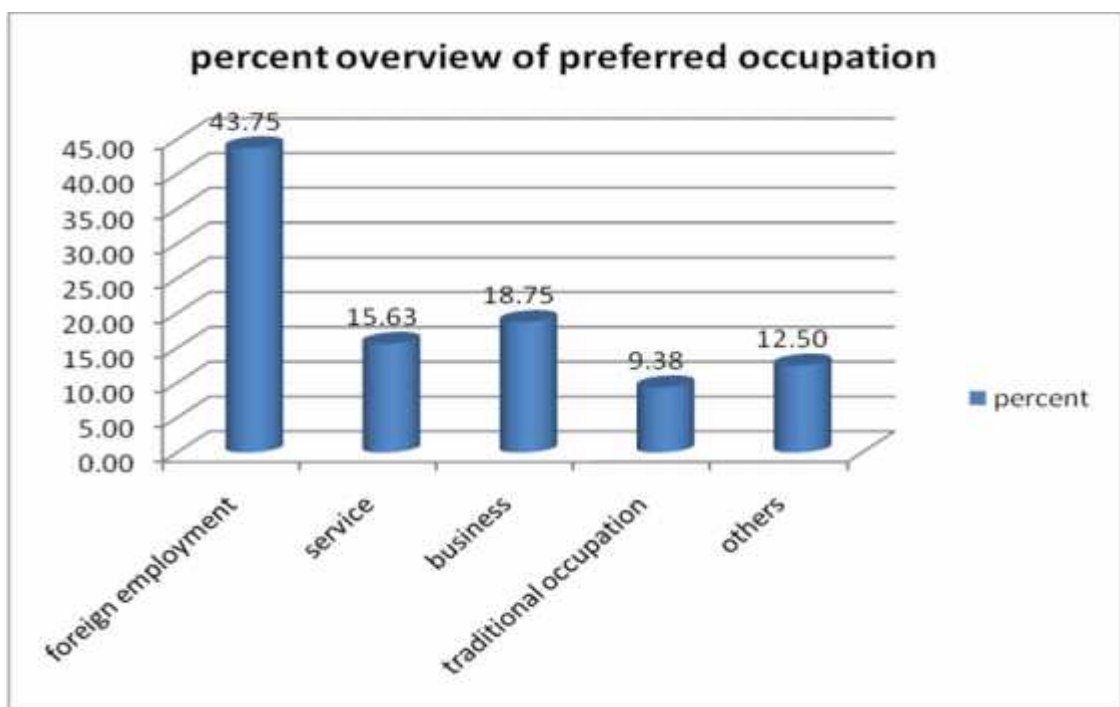
Source: Field survey 2014

From the field survey it was seen that 31 percent of the respondent suggest that main problem in tailoring is competition due to modernization and industrialization, 33.3 percent of the respondents said that damai are badly suffering from economic crisis due to landlessness and poverty. About 24 percent of the respondents said that domination is the main problem of traditional occupation. Thus economy ,modernization are the major cause for disclining of traditional occupation.

5.7 Preferred Occupation and the Reasons

Professions traditionally adopted by the dalits are looked down by others in the community.They are forced to take up certain new professions.This study had shown that very few respondents were involved in traditional occupation.The young generations do not like to follow or to learn the traditional skills.The case is more found to the literate people who do not like to glue in the old traditional occupation. That is why; they were more often likely to be mobile from their traditional occupation.When the researcher had interviewed to the respondents the following facts were discovered for the preference of new generation.This has been shown in the bar diagram below.

Figure 5.3 : Preferred Occupation of the respondents.

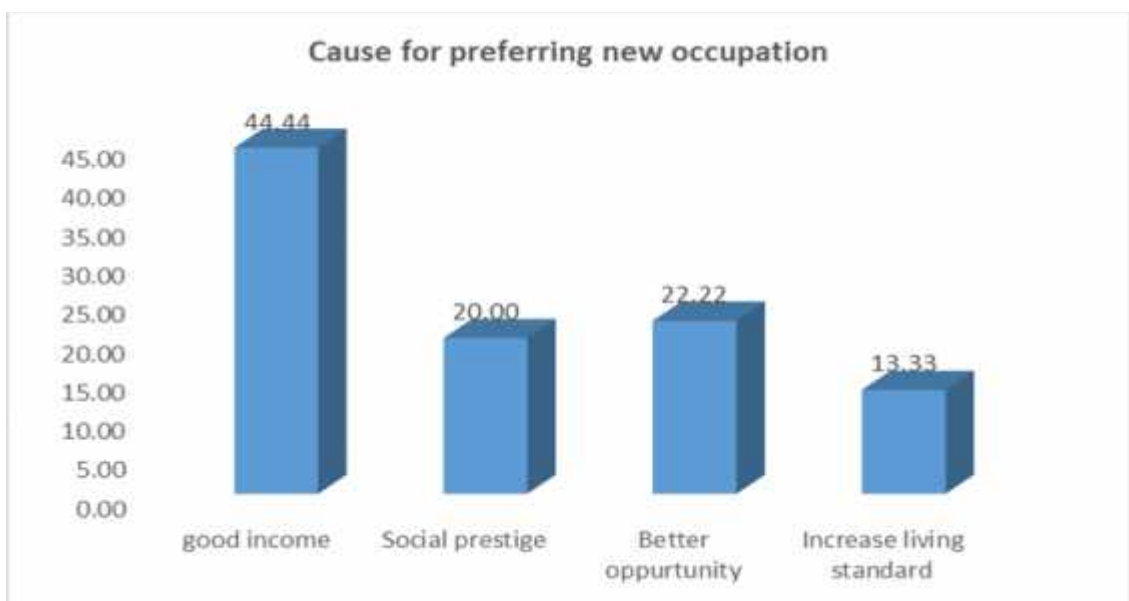


Source : Field Survey 2015

From the above bar diagram it is clear that majority of the respondents(43.75%) preferred foreign employment as a preferred occupation for better earning. Percent of the respondents that prefer the occupation service, business and others are 18.75%,15.63% and 12.5% respectively. Very few respondents (9.38%) prefer their caste based occupation. Thus the collected data demonstrates that most of the damai like to work in foreign country for better earning. These people normally wished to prefer the occupation that had higher social prestige, good earning, greater opportunity and that bring equality in the society.

Figure 5.4

Cause for preferring new non-Traditional occupation in percentage



Source :Field survey 2015

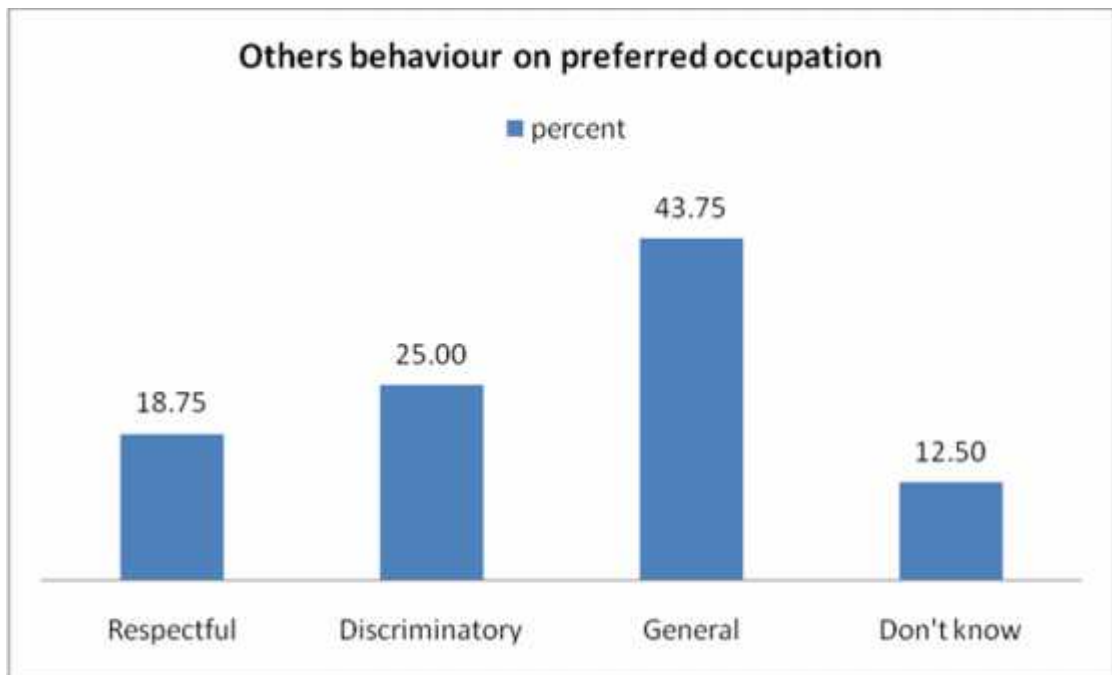
Above Bar diagram shows the reasons why the Damai people in the study site prefer new non-traditional occupation. Most of the respondent said that good income is the main reason which is about 45%. Likewise 20% of the respondents said that they prefer non-traditional occupation due to Social prestige. Better opportunity and to increase the living standard are other reasons for shifting into new occupation. Case study with the people in the study site also shows that in non-traditional occupation there is good income , social prestige and more opportunity and more exposure which help in increasing the living standard of the Damai people. It is widely recognized facts that the traditional caste based occupation are in the declining trend. The younger generations slowly or rapidly shift to new occupation.

5.8 Other's Behaviors in Preferred Occupation

Among the respondents of the study site a question was asked to know the attitude of other towards the adoption. The pie chart below shows the behavior of others in relation to the preferred new non traditional occupation.

Figure 5.5

Others behavior on preferred occupation



Source :Field survey 2015

Bar diagram above highlights the behavior of other communities tends to be general or normal is stated by the majority(43.75%) of respondents. 18.75% of the respondents reported that it is rather respectful and 25% in the study site still feel discriminatory. Lastly 12.5 percent of the respondents responded that they donot know. This situation further trigger to gradual wipeout of the traditional occupation in the present. Not only this, prefer new non traditional occupation had helped them to adjust easily in the changing senarion of the society and help them to meet the daily requirements of the daily livelihood of their family members.

Case study 2 : Mr.B. in Government job

Mrs. was born in baglung and completed his +2 education. She works in Municipality as social mobilizer. He has many friends. Her fathers in law is in traditional occupation. She has less experiences of social discrimination in social functions and

social gathering but her parents, brothers and sisters, husband have different experiences that the community people treat them differently. Due to this he can compare how she is treated differently that other

She says occupation, income , exposure are some of the factors which determine the social respects.She doesnot want her children in traditional occupation.Working in government sector has made me more confident, more forward.I don't have to face discrimination in the name of caste when I was in the work.But the moment when I comes to the village, she reliazed of being low caste.

Thus from the above case study it is clear that damai youth in non traditional occupation had different and better experiences than other in the traditional occupation.

5.9 Reasons for Changing traditional occupation

The widespread practice of untouchability, discrimination and atrocities as well as violent reaction by the higher castes are to be found in their continuing belief and faith in the sanctity of the institution of caste and in untouchability. The traditional Hindu social order continues to govern the thought process and behavior of the large majority of Hindus in rural areas. According to the occupation division, *Damai* are tailors and musicians. *Damais* are considered as one of the disadvantaged group within *Dalit* because they are considered as lower caste than *Kami* and *Sarki* Simultaneously, the process of modernization and industrialization has replaced most of their caste-occupations. These people have become helpless to make up for the loss by adapting to new enterprise or entrepreneurship. If the long achieved skills of the *Damais* are properly accumulated and strengthened, it can emerge as a potential capital and cultural practices for the nation. Now these traditional occupations are replaced and going to change due to various reasons. *Damais* are also considered as lower caste and due to untouchability they feel humiliation and fade.

Table 5.7

Distribution by Respondents of Causes for Changing traditional occupation

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Not getting honor	16	35.6
Castism	13	28.8
Dominated by higher caste	8	17.8
Low income	8	17.8
Total	45	100.0

Source: Field survey 2015

In the table above 35.6 percent respondents reported that they did not get honor for traditional occupation. They had to stay outside even they are not provided mat to sit which reflect the dignity/respect of panchai baja players. Higher caste people think that Playing Baja is caste-based occupation not a culture of Nepal. So 28.8 percent respondents reported that new generation did not follow it because *Damais* are regularly segregated away from public facilities in the name of the caste. They were ranked in a lower grade of vertical social hierarchy. This castism is psychological restriction for Damai. 17.8 percent respondents reported that as being dominated, therefore, their children did not follow playing *Panchai Baja* and to continue tailoring.

5.10 Reasons for Disappearing Panchai Baja and tailoring from damai community.

Dalit are forced to continue in traditional occupations although it is culture of the nation. A true picture of *Damai* occupation as they are the victim of industrialization and modernization as it is displacing their traditional occupation by making them a labor and porter. Because of small land holding size and least educated people, modernization of their traditional skill is the single most alternative for strengthening their economy in coming days. No any special interventions have been brought by the state and other non-government sector to modernize traditional occupation of *Dalits*. Discrimination and social exclusion, which are rooted in the socio-economic structure, applies differently to Dalit laborers to self-employed persons. Changes in

Nepal's state and social structure, along with the rise of mass media, continue to affect the lives of *Damai* musicians and the music that they play. One the respondent expressed his inner feeling of causes to disappearing *Panachai Baja*. He reported that why other stakeholders do not think *Panchai Baja* is property and culture of Nepal.

Table 5.8

Distribution by Respondents of Disappearing traditional occupation

Categories	Frequency	Percent
Encroachment	8	17.8
Castism	11	24.4
Impact of modernization	12	26.6
No protection	8	17.8
No patronage	6	13.4
Total	45	100.0

Source: Field survey 2014

Out of forty-five respondents, 11 reported that *Damai* are leaving their traditional occupation because of untouchability in the name of castism. 17.8 percent respondents reported that the *Panchai Baja* disappearing due the encroachment, 26.6 percent reported it is due to impact of modernization while 17.8 percent said it is due to no protection from government, NGOs and INGOs. Encroachment has become one serious problem. In addition to *Damai*, other caste or ethnic groups have involved to play *Panhai Baja* (see photo). In Pokhara and in some other district some of the ethnic group have formed group to play *Panchai Baja*. These group has become more popular than *Damai* community as they are able to satisfy their client. The demand of *Panchai baja* in the recent days has dramatically increased but the *Damai* community whose traditional occupation is playing *Panchai baja* are in shodow of the newly formed group. Likewise in tailoring also, *Damai* community has to face various problems. Entry of other caste group in this profession make them difficult to compete with them. These are some of the factors that help in the disappearance of the traditional occupation of the *Damai* community.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, FINDINGS CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary and findings

This study has centrally focused on the traditional occupation and recent changes among the damai people of baglung municipality ward no.6 of baglung district. The specific objectives of the study are as follows :

- To trace out the traditional occupation of *Damai* people and to asses the factors that fostered shifted in their occupation .
- To examine the alternative strategies adopted by *Damai* for better livelihood .

Basically, this is an academic study but it has yield important information which can be very fruitful in formulating various policies regarding the traditional occupation and recent changes among the Damai community. The study mainly focused on the traditional occupation and causes or the factors that fostered shifted in their occupation. The traditional occupation of Damai people are tailoring and playing Panche baja which is an important economic activity. In course of study, traditional occupation, their involvement and the cause for mobility in occupation and alternative strategies adopted by them has also been given focused. During the study, the literatures on work, occupation and dalit studies has been reviewed. In the same way, literature on Damai occupation in Nepal and the cause for change also have been reviewed.

All the dalit in the study site can't be included in the study due to limited resources, time, budget, manpower etc. The study will try to explain the effect the modernization and industrialization on the traditional occupation through descriptive and explanatory research design. The main emphasis of the study is to analyze and explore the casual factor for the changing occupational pattern. Very few of the Damai people are found involved in the traditional occupation in the study site . They are diverted more than other people. Hence, all the households (45) are considered as the universe of this study and has made census study. The total population frame was 45 households for the reliability of the data. Various techniques like observation, key informant interviews, group discussion are conducted to carry out qualitative and quantitative data. Primary and secondary information has been incorporated for collecting

information of target group. The above data collecting tools were devised carefully in order to ensure their validity.

Both male and female respondent were included in the survey. Oftentimes, to check for accuracy of the data, same questions were asked in focus group discussion and key informant interview. Extra emphasis has been given to maintain the objective of the data and avoid data error by comparing them with different sources. Focused group discussion further was believed to support the fact finding operation in the field. Interview with key people familiar with the study aspect and the area was followed by direct observation helped in determining the accuracy of the information obtained from the field to ensure that the data being obtained were reliable and could be used for interpretation. The collected data have been arranged manually and analyzed by using computer program SPSS while qualitative data have been arranged manually and analyzed descriptively. Results of quantitative data analysis have been shown by using various tables, charts and diagram .

Among the dalit , Damai are one of the occupational caste group. They perform the work of the upper caste people. Traditionally they play Panchai baja and mend and sew clothes of their client. Sometimes these caste group are hired for agriculture work in the field. But these days the Damai people were leaving their traditional occupation and adopting new jobs. The government policies, social attitude, modernization, education etc. are found to be the main factor that fostered shifted in their occupation. Besides the fact the low income generation is also the base for shifting the occupation.

During the study, it has been explored and explained the importance of occupational caste to Nepalese society as well as various findings were been made; the major findings are listed below.

- Damai are tolerating a type of social torture and harassment in different ways.
- The major source of livelihood among the Damai of Baglung Municipality ward no.6 of Baglung district is wage labour and foreign employment, which is 37.5 percent as reported by the respondents.
- Very few just 15.5 percent of the respondents in the study site are found following traditional occupation.
- It has been found that society is not only cause of decreasing the importance of traditional occupation of Damai, but also the increase competition, social

prejudice against their caste and occupation, lack of individual capital, government policies are also equally responsible for the disappearance of traditional occupation .

- The people who are continuing their traditional occupation knew the skill of playing panchai baja and art of tailoring from their parents at the age below 16 years.
- About 80 percent of the respondents want their coming generation to go abroad for better earning as well as to raise their social status rather than to continue their traditional occupation .
- Modernization and industrialization has penetrated to every corner of the society. This had made easy access on required goods in low price, increase the competition among their groups which made the damai people to struggle a lot to sustain in the society. Their livelihood and specialized occupation is now being replaced by global capitalistics production .
- Average family size of the respondents is 5.5 which is comparatively larger. This shows that they experience greater poverty.
- They couldn't make more money from the traditional occupation and are unable to sustain their family. Hence they are bound to search other new non-traditional jobs. 44.5% of the respondents households main occupation is foreign employment .
- Study site still experience caste base discrimination. According to the survey about 26.7 percent of the respondents expresses that the discrimination in the society is found in the different ways. Similarly 26.7% of the respondents feel humiliation for being Damai.
- literacy rate in the study site is very less. Parents had paid less attention in the study of their children. Parents who have other means of earning other than traditional occupation sent their children to school. Only 6.42 percent in the study site has gained higher level education. About 38 % in the site are illiterate. lack of adequate education and employment the livelihood of Damai are either dependent on traditional occupation which is about 33 percent as reported by respondents or other non-traditional occupation .
- In the discussion with Damai people, they said that traditional occupation must be modernized for the better and higher earning, otherwise the traditional

occupation will disappear. So the government needs to urgently take adequate steps to promote and preserve the unique role of these people and for realizing their full potential.

- Poverty, no alternatives as they lack skill in other works, compulsion to feed the large family members are some of the reasons given by the respondents who are still continuing their generation.
- Likewise competition among the groups, lack of capital, low income, casteism, untouchability are some of the reasons given by the respondents who are engaged in other non-traditional new occupation.
- Various problems in traditional occupation is also one of the causes for changing the traditional occupation. Out of 45 respondents 18 said that they will not receive food in time while playing Panchai baja. Similarly 22.2% said that there is no fixed time. Encroachment, no regular work, poverty and modernization are other causes for changing the occupation.
- There is poor attraction in the traditional occupation since perception on traditional occupation among Damai people is not positive. 53 percent of the respondents have negative perception and only 22 percent of the respondents have positive perception.

Finding revealed by the Case studies(1 and 2)

The reasons for continuing traditional occupation (case 1) were as follows;

- Poverty
- Compulsion to feed the family members
- No other alternatives since one lacks skill in other works

The reasons for the preference of new occupation (case 2) were as follows;

- Caste based discrimination as customary practices.
- Low income of the parents
- More opportunity, more earnings and more social exposure and
- Hard and rough with traditionalism in the caste based occupation

6.2 Conclusion

Nepal is a multicultural society having more than one hundred caste and ethnicity groups. According to censuses 125 castes and ethnic groups have been recorded. Among them *Damai* is one group which is lower caste and traditionally they play *Panchai*

Baja and tailoring. This study has attempted to analyze the traditional occupation of damai community and recent changes due to impact of modernization. The *Panchai Baja* which is a part of Nepalese culture and tailoring are traditional occupation of damai however; it is in deplorable condition because *Damai* in Nepal are facing a powerful combination of social discrimination and violence that enforces their second-class status. *Damais* are Hindus by hereditary practice and culture, and, very surprisingly, therefore Hindus have been oppressed and discriminated by the Hindus themselves.

The income presently earned by the respondents performing different occupation besides the traditional one is an undeniable significant component of the village economy. Majority of the household of the respondents in the study site couldnot satisfy their basic needs by adopting traditional occupation. Besides these they have to face various discrimination in the name of caste , torture and harassment. So they are compelled to choose the alternative occupation for the fulfillment of their needs and for better adaptation in the society. Respondents in the study site find themselves to be the most disadvantaged groups in the Nepalese society. They have no complete food security in the sense of access to the nutritious food and their living standard is also very low. Basic problem of Damai is untouchability; due to which they always feel inferior. Different social practice, low income earning, low social prestige, modernization had forced Damai to seek a new means of livelihood. The non-traditional occupation help them to be free from the caste base discrimination and the case of low earning. Non-caste base occupation adopted by them provide them more opportunity, social prestige, more earning which has been an important economic option to maintain sustenance which has to raise the standard of living of the respondents as well as it contributes to fulfill immediate needs and family requirements. Adoption of changing occupational patterns has been a survival strategy among the Damai of the Baglung Municipality.

There is a close relationship between changing occupational pattern and various aspects of opportunity structures. Education, size of family, occupational prestige has brought countable changes. Education has direct bearing on gross and upward occupational mobility. Occupational prestige has important bearing on the dissatisfaction with the present occupation. Lower the prestige the greater is the dissatisfaction to their traditional occupation. The one with other means of occupation

are respected, or rather not much dominated when it is compared to his traditional occupation holding counterparts which relates with caste system profession.

Modernization process has directly hit the traditional occupation of Damai people. It is well known fact the Damai have historically specialization in the production of all kinds of households good, clothes and agricultural production. But modernization and industrialization is adversely impacting their traditional occupations now and are being replaced by global capitalistics production. Easy availability of mass production goods from latest technology based industries at cheap prices has proved to be a big challenges for their traditional occupation (Sunar,2012). Damai people neither have the capacity to compete with these productions nor do they have and alternative way so far to earn their livelihood. The industrilization and modernization is demolishing their infrastructure forcing them out of their home, depriving them of their traditional way of life and work. In the study area, most of the *Damai* have no access on land for agriculture production which was not sufficient to feed their family more than 4 months and tailoring and playing Panchai baja was the alternative source of income to cope with this food insecurity situation. Also it was the traditional occupation of damai people for hundred of years. So they sale their traditional occupation to their clients for their livelihood. However, nowadays interest had decreased among new generation from which they could not make more money. The study also concluded that the more prestige, more earning, modernization, urbanization and industrialization , caste discrimination, poverty etc are are major cause for the change in traditional occupation. They have been shifting from traditional occupation to other occupation such as government, non government service , foreign employment etc. Parents are also desired their children to study upto high level and to do some official job rather than tailoring and playing Panchai baja. *Panchai Baja* is the festive and ritual music of the *Damai* tailor-musicians. Traditionally, the *Damais* supply the marriage music of the Napali speaking castes and other ethnic groups in the hills of Nepal. The *Panchai Baja* is ritual and unique musical instruments in Nepal but it is threatened by neglect and modernization. Due to the growth in economic activities and urbanization of Baglung the traditional occupations of city dwellers are being replaced by modernization.

In the name of modernization, band Baja is commonly played in urban areas. Another as being *Damai*, they are not ready to follow their traditional occupation because of castism, untouchability as well as other stakeholders of the state are also not

responsible to preserve the *Panchai Baja*. The study shows that the *Panchai Baja* players do not have any patronage from government and other agencies of the state and even they do not get any protection, during the *Panchai Baja* playing, they are beaten and sometimes *Baja* are broken and there is no any provision of compensation. Nepal is a basically agricultural country but the *Damai* do not practice any sort of agriculture due to the lack of land. Another side their traditional occupations are replaced by modernization. The young generations are attracted towards the new occupations where they are treated as untouchable. They are felling humiliated from their traditional occupation. Factories have replaced their production at cheaper price as they produce in mass scale. Those who are only involved in tailoring, can compete with other, are economically strong.

Dalit occupational caste groups are not adopting their traditional occupation as a livelihood strategy. Traditional occupation are going to disappear for ever if the state, academicians, local elites, social workers are not sensitive. It can be preserve through the combined efforts of state,co-operatives, I/NGOS and elites. Academicans, local elites, social workers and political leaders can exert tremendous influence upon local people for attitudinal change, creating awareness for dignity of labor and eliminating social prejstice or stigma attached to dalit occupational caste people. Priority should be given to the local product and artisans so their traditional occupation can be sustained.

5.2 Recommendations:

The objectives of every study and research are to find out the solutions of the selected problems. Without perfect solutions, problems cannot be solved. *Panchai Baja* is caste- based occupation; however, it has become a part of Nepalese culture. Especially, higher castes think that it is an occupation of *Damai*. Therefore, they neglect to preserve it. For preservation of Panchai Baja and tailoring following are recommended.

- Caste-based occupation must be made nationalized and give top priority to the caste based occupation.
- Caste-based occupation should be treated as a matter requiring the introduction and effective implementation of laws that will hold the perpetrators of abuses responsible for their actions, and ensure adequate

compensation for the victims. The special and stringent legislation should be enacted with the mandatory provision for implementation of all state policies as well as provisions.

- Policies should be effective and practical for which feasibility studies could be conducted.
- Public awareness should be aroused about the importance of *Panchai Baja*. Otherwise, mere policies cannot play role. Public should be aware about these provisions and about concerned.
- Caste barriers have been removed to a great extent and there are instances of inter-caste mobility. If one would observe the process of social change and mobilization in Nepal
- Similarly, the government should establish training centre in different parts of the nation and *Panchai Baja* players should be appointed as instructors.
- Some rules, which can be easily applied in the community, should be established about the preservation of culture mindfully.
- *Panchai Baja* competition should be held in regional and national level, which encourage the *Panchai Baja* players to preserve the *Panchai Baja*.
- Government and government personals should give priority to *Panchai Baja* on the rituals, social ceremonies, and culture programs.
- Consult with local *Damai* groups on further positive steps that can be taken to end social and economic discrimination against *Damai* and help to preserve *Panchai Baja*.
- The local units of different political parties, NGO's and IGO's should play the role in bringing the people of different castes together for preservation *Panchai Baja*.
- The provision of playing *Panchai Baja* in the star hotels and restaurants should be made compulsory rather than other *Baja*.
- To root out the deeply rooted caste discrimination and feeling of superiority existing in the mind of the so-called "high" caste or dominant community in Nepal, it is imperative to ensure the representation of *Damai* in all governance mechanisms which help to make policy for preservation of *Panchai Baja*.
- Skills of *Panchai Baja* players should be recognized by Central for Technical Education and Vocational Training, they can get job in different institutions.

- Partially-*Damai* musical groups should have an opportunity to adopt the sound of the *Panchai Baja*, including it in the composed flock song featured on Radio Nepal and in Nepal Television music videos.

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Annex-1

Survey Questionnaire for traditional occupation of damai people and recent changes

Name of the Respondent-----:

Name of the household head: -----

Address: VDC/Municipality----- Ward No-----Tole-----

1.1 Household head: Male/Female

SECTION A: SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

S.N.	Questions	Coding Categories	Code
101	How old are you?	
102	What is your sex ?	Male Female:	01 02
103	How many members of family are living together now?	
104	Do you have some land?	Yes,..... No,.....	01 02
105	If yes, please give the details about the size of landholding.	Khet Barri House tend Others	01 02 03 04
106	What is your educational status of ?	Illiterate..... Just illiterate..... Literate..... If literate: No schooling..... Primary..... Secondary..... Higher education.....	01 02 03 01 02 03 04

107	What is the main source of income in your family?	Service Panche Baja playing Tailoring..... Remittance (Income earned from migrant members) Pension..... Other(specify).....	01 02 03 04 05
108	How is the food sufficiency (months) from your farm production in a years?	Below 3 months 3 to 6 months 6 to 9 months 9 to < 12 months	01 02 03 04
109	How do you manage your deficit food for your family?	Playing Baja Tailoring Farm labor Remittance	01 02 03 04

SECTION B: TRADITIONAL OCCUPATION

201	What are the traditional occupations of your family?	Playing Panche Baja Sewing cloths Others...	01 02 03
202	What is remuneration system?	Cash Foods/ Grains.....	01 02
203	How much do you earn played Panchai Baja and tailoring in a day?	300 to 400 400 to 500 500 to 600 600 to 700	01 02 03 04
204	Is it sufficient?	Yes No	01 02
205	Are you called in any social activities	Yes	01

	(meeting, marriage ceremony/ decision-making)?	No	02
206	What the problems have you faced in playing baja?	No food in time No fixed time Fighting Dominance Not specify	01 02 03 04 05
207	What the problems have you faced in tailoring?	Competition Lack of economic source Modernization Castism	01 02 03 04

SECTION C: PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE OCCUPATION

301	Have you get any differences between playing and non-playing baja?	Yes..... No.....	01 02
302	What do you feel of being of Damai?	Having domination Being lower Humiliation Having higher	01 02 03 04
303	Is there any organization/ agency involved in carrying out any activity for there promotion of your traditional occupation?	Yes No	01 02
304	Who must preserve the traditional occupation ?	Government Project Civil society Political parties	01 02 03 04
305	What are the causes to disappear the Panchai Baja?	Encroachment Castism Impact of modernization No protection	01 02 03 04

		No patronage	05
306	What is your perception on occupation?	Positive	01
		Negative	02
		Neutral	03

Name of interviewer:

Place of interview:

Date of interview:

Annex-2 Check List for Key Informants interview

Name of the informant: -----

Address: - Village/ Municipality-----Ward No. -----

Tole / village: -----

Age -----Sex:- Male/ Female:

Issues for discussion:

1. What is difference between you and Damai?
2. Should the caste system be existed or abolished?
3. Should Panche Baja be preserved or not?
4. Is it importance in Nepalese society?
5. Why is Damai changing their traditional occupation?
6. Are we responsible to preserve it?
7. What should be done to preserve it from government and our side?
8. What changes do you find in the traditional occupation of damai in the last five years?
9. In you opinion,what is the main reason for not continuing their traditional occupation?

Name of interviewer:

Place of interview :

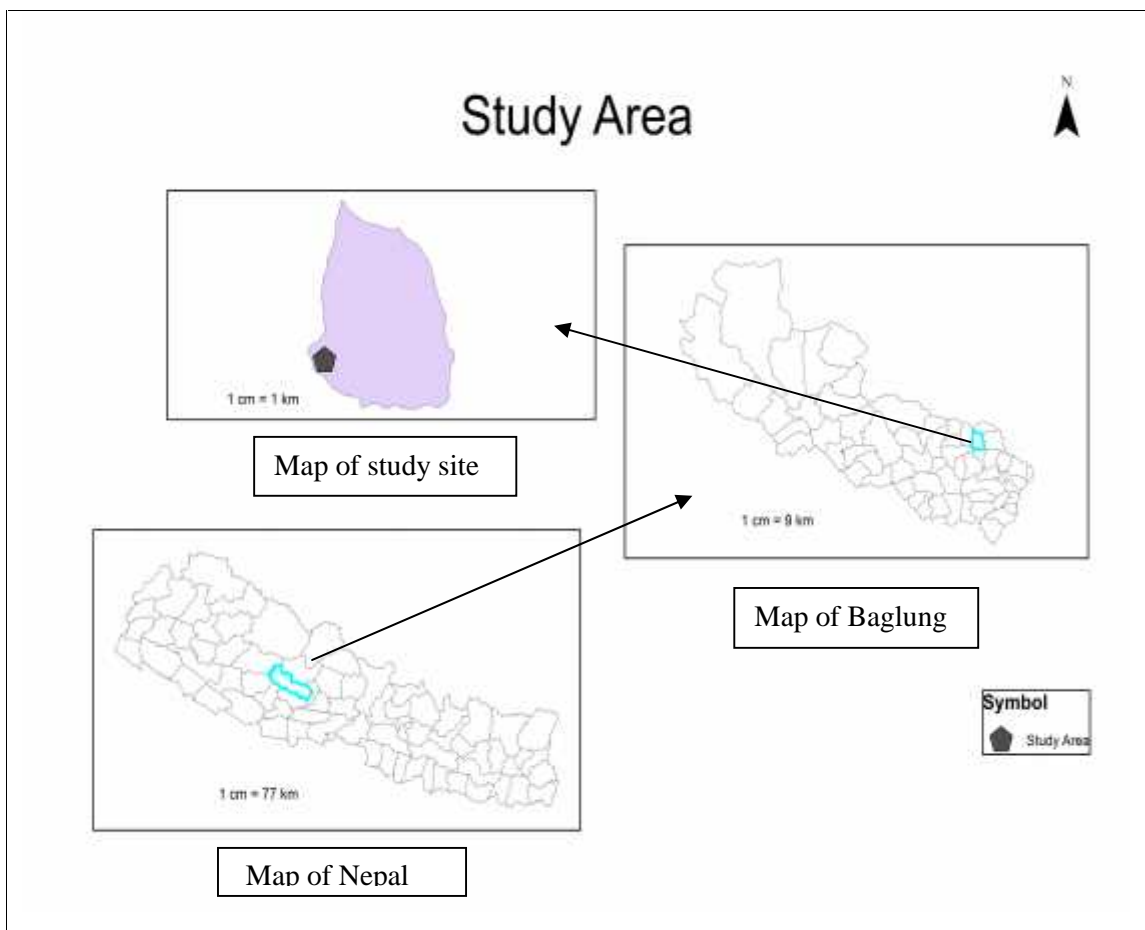


Photo 7.7 : Map of the study site .

