

CHAPTER- I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Nepal is a small country in the map of world, the surface diversity along with her extensive biodiversity, unique socio-cultural structure and life style and rich heritages of civilization have all rendered this land of ancient legend like a collection of wonders into immensely beautiful and consecrated. Nepal is a multiethnic, multilingual multi-religious and multi-cultural country. So, late King Prithvi Narayan Shah had said, “Nepal is a garden of four castes and thirty six sub-castes”. This statement reflected that Nepal was the common land of different caste/ethnic groups and it also indicated the unity in diversity of our glorious history. According to census 2068 B.S. , there are 125 caste/ ethnic group people are living in Nepal (CBS, 2014). All those ethnic groups people have own socio - cultural as well as economic practices since long ago which are getting changes according to changing of time and period in world. This study has given emphasis to explore the changes in socio- cultural practices of Gurungs community of eastern Nepal.

Gurung is a ethnic group of Nepal. The origin place of Gurung is southern slopes of Annapurna Himalaya in western- central Nepal. Their traditional land extended from Gorkha district east through Lamjung and Kaski to Syangja district , all in Gandaki zone. Gurungs are migrated in different parts with the changing of time and socio- economic situation of them. Within their historic homeland, the Gurung community is sub- divided into Western, Central and Eastern sections. Nowadays , they are found all over the part of Nepal and other countries of the world (Bista, 2004).

There are no reliable sources of origin of hill ethnic group Gurung of Nepal. Gurung is derivative a word ‘grong’ which meaning is the agriculturist. It can be said that initially most of the Gurungs were involved in agriculture. So, actually the name of caste of them is derived from the occupation of them. According to Iman Singh Chemjong , a well known Limbu ethno- historic (1967),the Gurung migrated in Nepal in 7th century as a cavalry , When Tibet first historian king, Sronngtsen Gampo, occupied Nepal. Their socio-cultural ,linguistic and biological characteristics are more closed to Tibetan. There was Tamu State (Gurung Rajya) in Gandaki region in 15th century but it was merged in greater Nepal (Pandey, 2008).

Gurung community has their own distinct culture, customs, social traditions, songs, dances and dialect. Their culture is unique and they perform their different cultural practices from birth to death according to Gurungs culture. They have a very interesting dance tradition. They used to have two types of dance, sorathi and ghado. But, the sorathi is dying out (Bista, 2004). Gurung shares the 1.97% population of total population of country according to census 2068 B.S. (CBS, 2014). Terhathum district is one of the districts of previous Limbuwan, but it is a multiethnic, multicultural, multi-religious and multilingual district in these days. According to census 2068 B.S, thirty four caste/ethnic groups people are living there, among them Gurung is one. Their settlements are found in Iwa, Hawaku, Sankranti VDC in eastern part of district (Aatharai area), Srijung, Morang, Pauthak VDC and Myanglung municipalities in middle part (Phedap Area) and Laliguras municipalities and its surrounding in western part (Chhathar area). As an ethnic group, Gurung has the name and fame because of having cultural uniqueness and brave history of their ancestors. But socio-economic status of Gurung people who are living in Terhathum district is not so well. They are culturally dominated by other ethnic groups.

Culturally this district is very rich. There are many religious and historical sites in different areas of the district which are the identities of this district but their status are not recognized in country. This district is a multiethnic district where around thirty four caste/ethnic groups' people are living there (CBS, 2014). They have own cultural and mother tongue but most of them are dominated by Nepali language and going to disappear soon. This is the important land of limbu cultural and civilization but such valuable limbuwan history is also in danger of extinction because of lack of knowledge in new generation and lack of effort for the promotion and preservation of them (Sharma, 2014). It is believed that Gurungs are not the origin community of this area. They were migrated in this region during time of unification of Nepal by late king Prithvi Narayan Shah. The origin place of Gurung is Gandaki region and they reached to the eastern part of Nepal involving in unification campaigning. Later they settled there and scattering in different places (Bista, 2004). They could not continue their culture and gradually begin to disappear due to influence of other culture. They lost their mother tongue as well and dominated by other languages and culture. As a result socio-economic backwardness is seen in the life style of them.

Iwa VDC is located in the eastern Corner of Terhathum district. It is nearly 39km far from the district headquarter myanglung bazaar. According to census 2068 B.S. the total population of this VDC is 3362 and households' number is 701. Among the nine wards of this VDC only in three wards (5,6 and 7) Gurungs settlements are found (CBS, 2014). They partially follow the Gurung culture because they lost their origin culture. Most of them living in this area do not have knowledge about their mother tongue and following other languages. The present culture of them influence by Brahaman , Chhetri and Limbus. The socio-economic condition of them is not so well. Literacy status of Gurung is very low and involving in subsistence type of farming. They rears animals like cows, buffaloes, sheep, goats etc. at their home but not in great flocks. Some of them are surviving by doing wages labour. Although, living in same area, there is variation in the living standard of Gurung community and the level of social participation of Gurung is also low in this area.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Actually, Gurung communities of Iwa VDC of Terhathum are minority caste groups. The cultural status of Gurung is miserable in this area. Gurung culture is rapidly dominating by other caste group. They are losing rapidly their cultural identity and rituals customs day by day and they have no proper knowledge about their mother tongue and their culture is in danger of extinction because of lack of knowledge in new generation and lack of effort for the promotion and preservation of their culture. They lost their mother tongue as well and dominated by other languages and culture. There is no provision and mechanism to teach the Gurung language for new generation. The government has not touched and adopted the national planning policy and programmes to such community. The economic condition of Gurung of this VDC is not well . Agriculture is the main source of living of them but they do not have sufficient land. Similarly, they do not have knowledge about the potentiality of soil for the type of crops. So, all over the place they cultivate same type of crop which do not provides sufficient production. They are following traditional farming system and equipments such as wooden- plough, hoe and spade and oxen are used to plough the land etc. They are deprived from the modern agricultural facilities like improved seeds, fertilizers, insecticides and modern instrument etc. So, the agricultural production is very low. Governmental agencies are also not providing technical as well as other required supports to the farmers. They have not proper technical skill knowledge

about modern agricultural production. Governmental agencies are also not providing technical as well as other required supports to the farmers. As a result, economic condition of Gurung community is being vulnerable as well as miserable, which has the ill impact on family, society as well as nation.

The educational status of Gurung of this area is quite low. Culturally, they do not give much priority for education rather than agricultural and other works. Most of the children are deprived from modern and quality education facility because their parents could not afford the cost.

1.3 Research Questions

The following are the research question in the study:

- a. What is the social- economic practices of Gurung community?
- b. What are the major issues and problems regarding the socio-cultural practices of Gurung Community?

1.4 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to find out the socio-economic and cultural practices and changes among Gurungs community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum district, Nepal. The following are the objectives of the study.

The key objectives of this study are:

1. To examine the socio –economic practices of Gurung community.
2. To explore the cultural practices among Gurungs.
3. To analyze the changes in socio- cultural practices among Gurungs.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This Study helps to contribute to explore the problems of socio-economic and cultural practices of Gurung community, other communities, as well as nation. This study also helps useful for the comparative studies with other ethnic groups of the same area and Gurung community of other area as well. It is also an effective means to change and develop the economic, social and cultural practices of the country. However, socio economic condition has negative impacts on different sectors in the family, society and nation such as marital disruption, decrease in agricultural production, family contracts which will create long terms problems in the days to come in Nepal. Therefore, it also helps for effective formulation of the policies in

order to facilitate socio-economic strategies. In addition, this study is helpful to guide in planning and policy making of their stakeholders like social workers and academicians, INGOs and NGOs. Furthermore, this is helpful for the teachers, experts, community members, students and researchers.

1.6 Organization of the Study

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction of research study, the chapter two is literature review on Gurungs, the third chapter explains the research tools and techniques used in the study. The fourth chapter described and analyzed about the social cultural practices and changes among Gurungs of study area. The quantitative data are tabulated and explained in descriptive way. And the last five chapter contains the summery and conclusion. Finally, the dissertation is ended with the appendixes and references.

CHAPTER - II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review is a process of analyzing the existing information of related subject where includes the studies of history and we get new idea in respective field. It is very important part of research which provides the foundation of the study. It is a critical and evaluative account of what has been published on a chosen research topic. Its purpose is to summarize, synthesize and analyze the arguments of others. It should reveal similarities and differences, consistencies and inconsistencies and controversies in previous research. It provides an excellent starting point for researchers beginning to do research in a new area by forcing them to summarize, evaluate, and compare original research in that specific area. It ensures that researchers do not duplicate work that has already been done (University of Guelph, 2004).

Sharma (2014) has described as regarding the name of this district that there were seventeen mounds (hills) during Limbuwan ruling period in past. After the unification of this area into greater Nepal, the tax of land of this area was collected from Dhankuta. Later among seventeen hills, thirteen hills were separated and by establishing a separate tax office at Myanglung started to collect the tax of land since 1952 B.S. Late king

Mahendra divided the country in 75 districts in 2018 B.S. and these 13 hills were separated as one district and as named as Terhathum district.

Thapaliya (2013) has described about how the Limbuwan came under the administration of Nepal in her article that there were six districts in previous Limbhuwan but some claimed that nine districts located in eastern part from Arun river fall in Limbhuwan in nowadays. As contemporary of the Malla King of the valley and Baise and Chubise states of Karnali and Gandaki regions, Limbu ruled in this region. The Limbu Kings were called "Hang". During the time of unification of Nepal, Gorkhali attacked to the Limbhuwan as well but they could not defeat them completely. So, a negotiation was made between Gorkhali and Limbhuwan that as it Limbhuwan accepted the supremacy of Gorkhali and they also promised not to intervene with Limbhuwan culture and social system. So, Limbuwan came under the Gorkha administrative system after 1831 B.S.

Caplan (2000) has analyzed the socio-economic and political situation of Nepal. He stated in his book "Land and social change in East Nepal" that Limbu began to take money from Brahmin specially to maintain the cost of their cultural activities and gradually they began to depend upon Brahmin in economic aspect. Later they lost their Kipat as well. After, unification of Nepal, many other ethnic groups people also were migrated in this area and Limbu were gradually changed into minority.

Bista (2004) described in his book 'People of Nepal' that the origin place of Gurung is southern slopes of Annapurna Himalaya in western- central Nepal. Their traditional land extended from Gorkha district east through Lamjung and Kaski to syangja district, all in Gandaki zone. Gurungs are found in kaski, Parbat, Syangja, lamjung, Tanahu, Manang and Gorkha dostricts. Secondary centrer of Gurungs concentration are in kathmandu Valley and the Nepal's far east.

Ragsdale (1990) expressed in his article 'Gurungs, Goorkhalis, Gurkhas:' that within their historic homeland, the Gurung community may be sub- divided into Western, Central and Eastern sections, or the may be classified as highlander Lekhalis and lowlanders.

Gurung (2007) explained regarding the civilization of Gurungs. With the references of Gurung chronology, he claimed that their ancestors came from kannoj. In Gurungs language, tamuqwi, Gurungs are also called 'Tamu' which is a cognate of a Tibetan word. Etymologically, tamu is horse-riser, if not horse header. These

cognates have been accepted as indication that the Gurungs are the descendents of Tibetan ancestors who migrated to central Nepal many years ago for better socio- economic possibilities.

Iman Singh Chemjong , a well- known Limbu ethno- historian (1967) , stated that the Gurung migrated to Nepal in 7th century as a cavalry, when Tibet first historical king , Srongtsen Gampo, occupied Nepal. Their socio- cultural, linguistic and biological characteristics are more closed to Tibetan. According to him, the Gurungs are one of the “seven tribes ” of northern Tibet. They appeared in central Nepal as mercenary troops (already having the name “ Gyarung ”) under Shah leaders from Yunnan. Nine Gyarung officers established a federation of small village- centered states in the Gandaki region, thereafter named Gya- rong , or “ nine chiefs ”. So they are called Gurungs later.

Ghale (2008) stated in her book ‘ Adibasi Tamu ke veda’ regarding meaning of ‘Tamu’ that ‘ Ta’ means above and ‘mu’ means Aakash (Sky). She claimed there that Gurungs ancestors were well-civilized with holy thought but the Gurungs culture has been degrading due to influence and interference of Brahman and Kshetri.

Ragsdale (1990) explained that the Gurung economy is diverse .Military service and sedentary agriculture (including wet rice cultivation and various dry crops such as maize and millet) have become the main pillars of their economy, replacing once exclusive reliance on highland herding, hunting and swidden agriculture. Long distance trade has always played a major part in the Gurung economy. Though their role as middle men in Nepal’s Tibet trade is no longer prominent, new avenues have opened military service outside Nepal. Bista (2004) stated about the economic and social life of Gurungs that the rearing of sheep is a main ethnical occupation of Gurungs. They keep sheep for meat and wool. Each village has two or three flocks of sheep depending on its size. One flock usually consists of 200 or 300 sheep. During summer they take their sheep up to the higher alpine pastureland and bring them at low land or basian to graze in winter. He described more about the economic and social life style of Gurungs that there was the tendency of exchanging of domestic required goods like salt, food grains and vice versa with ghee in Gurungs community. Some Gurungs made trips taking ghee and wool product to the border regions, both India and Tibet to exchange goods. According to him the most important source of Gurung family income is from the pensions and salaries of those who become soldiers. A great majority of Gurungs join the India and British

armies and go to various parts of India, to Malaysia, and to England. A small number join the Royal Nepal Army (Nepal Army now) . Only an significant few take any other kind of paid employment.

Ragsdale (1990) claimed that Gurung involvement was in salt trade with Tibet and rearing of yak and sheep before expansion of Gorkha state. Gurung served in Gorkha's army and they were attracted from northerly, higher altitude settlements where pasturelism and trade were important, to jagir (land grants) given them for their service to Gorkha state. Later they continued in Nepalese army and that became the economic source of their family. After Sugauli treaty the recruitment of Gorkhas began in British army and later in India army as Gorkhas' regiment where most of Gurungs got priority due to their simplicity and honesty which contributed to bring significant improvement in economic condition of Gurungs community.

Gurung (2011) described about the traditional socio-economic condition that the traditional occupation of Gurungs is animal husbandry, including the raising of sheep and hunting. However, after settling in the lap of the Annapurna and Machhapuchhre mountains, they began to farm and cultivate land hundreds of years ago. The Gurungs raise sheep by moving the sheep to higher altitudes during summer and to lower altitudes during winter. They have shepherds to look after the sheep collectively. Nowadays, another major occupation of Gurungs is employment in foreign army, and the earnings from foreign military service have become the basis of the economic system of Gurungs. The traditional occupation of Gurungs is also engaging in trade to Tibet and to India.

Pandey (2008) has stated about the economic activities of Gurungs in his book ' Nepalka Janajatiharu' that Agriculture is main occupation of Gurungs. Gurungs who do not go out in search of army service stay at home to look after their fields. According to seasons, they cultivate the crops and some are involving in animal husbandry as well. They grow the crops like maize, Paddy, millet, potato etc. Gurungs are brave and honest in their duties. Many Gurung villages boasts many young men in Gurkha regiment of British and India armies and huge money imported by them in Nepal which supported to rise the economic status of them.

Moisala, (1985) described about the economic life of Gurungs that the economy of the Gurungs are mainly based on agriculture, animal husbandry and services in the army. They grow rice, wheat, maize, millet and potatoes. The terraced farming is the norms. They also derived their subsistence from sheep breeding for

meat and wool. While sheep herding they use fierce mastiffs (sheepdogs). Most of the Gurung families have, however, an important source of income; the pensions and salaries of the family members who are in the army. Among them, there still exist the legendary fighters of British Gorkha Regiment, who were honored with Victoria Crosses for their bravery.

Gurung (2011) has analyzed about the reason of low educational status and *lahure* culture of Gurung community in his article that a *lahure* occupies a high social status in the Gurung community. The pro-*lahure* socio-cultural circumstances encourage the Gurung young men to recruit in the British Gurkha Army instead of achieving higher education. Every year a significant portion of Gurung young men attempt to recruit in the British Gurkha Army and only a few of them get success. The preparation process for the recruitment and the consequences caused by the failure in the recruitment adversely affect the higher studies of the Gurung youths. British Gurkha recruitment may be one of the important reasons for the less representation of the Gurungs in the higher education of Nepal. He added that the drop outs percentage of non-Gurung students at TU is 35% while that of the Gurung students is 54%. Similarly, the drop outs percentage of non-Gurung students at PU is 29 % while that of Gurung students is 46%. These data show that the drop out percentage of Gurung students is higher than non-Gurung students.

The Human Development Report of 2004 shows that 57.61% of Gurungs are literate, 1.98% have passed up to S.L.C. and equivalent, 1.62% have passed up to certificate level and equivalent and only 1.07 are graduates and above (UNDP, 2004: 175 cited in Gurung, 2011). These data show that the educational status of Gurung is poor and there is less representation in higher education.

Gurung (2005), in his baseline study, explores the status of Gurung of Pokhara in higher education. He has compared the enrolment, performance and drop out of Gurungs with non-Gurungs. He found that the enrollment and result of Gurung students in different faculties of Tribhuvan University and Pokhara University is comparatively low than the non-Gurung students.

According to Ragsdale (1989), it is the pass certificates which enable Gurung youth to join the army. In his study, he found that when the New Education plan of 1974 introduced new primary level examinations which acted as a barrier to keep less academically qualified students from passing out of the primary schools, the circumstances of the Gurung society altered the result to meet their expectations. Ragsdale's

research shows that the Gurungs of 1980s and earlier perceived education just as a qualification for becoming a *lahure*. Today, to become a British *lahure* one needs to be sound educationally too. From 2005 onwards, those who have passed S.L.C. are only eligible for recruitment. For this reason, Gurungs have given priority for education these days at least up to S.L.C.

Gurung (2011) described about the negative impact of *lahure* system in education that the socio-cultural circumstances encourage Gurung youths for the recruitment. So, many Gurung youths are attracted in British Gurkha army. The involvement of Gurung youths in the British army, the preparation process, social value of *lahure* and other *pro-lahure* and foreign employment culture are the major causes of under representation of Gurung in the higher education. Beside the negative impact, the children of the *lahure* are benefited in attaining better education which is a positive impact of the recruitment. But only few of them have been successful to establish themselves as good educated professionals and many others are left behind. So, the recruitment has more negative impact than positive. With the change in time, there are also some changing scenarios. There has been growing awareness about the higher education among the Gurungs.

He added to make clear the reason for low educational status of Gurung community that there is a close relation between British Gurkha recruitment and higher educational achievement of Gurungs. Due to the high income, life long pension and other facilities, the youths are attracted to the British Gurkha army, rather than attaining higher studies. The socio-cultural circumstances also encourage them for the recruitment. Gurung society is characterized by an expensive life style and high cultural expenses. So, a British *lahure* receives a higher social value than an educated professional when the value is determined on the basis of economy. The preference for a *lahure* discourages the young men from attaining higher education. An educated professional receives enough social value only when he is successful to establish himself at the top level. If such social value was given to all Gurung youths during the initial period of their study, then the situation of higher education among the Gurungs would have been different.

Bista (2004) has explain about the religious and cultural practice that the early Gurungs religion was animistic and shamanic, akin to the Pre- Buddhist Bon religion of Tibet. Their main deity is their Kul (Ancestor). They venerate and worship the spirits of their ancestors and they believe that those who have

led a good life are reborn as human beings after they die. Their patron deities are phailu (manakal) , Lu (nagdevata) and Simu (prakritidevata). These deities are worshipped twice a year. The basic philosophy of Gurungs religion is to gain merit. In order to gain merit, they distribute gift to the Lamas, Brahmans and food and clothes to poor people. They also plant trees and construct rest places , temples , roads and bridges. Their priests are Ghyabre, Pojyu and Lamas. Historically , Gurungs are Buddhists and most of the Gurungs are following Bouddha religion nowadays and Lamas are their priests. Gurungs have own unique culture where they observe different ceremonies from birth to death. They have incorporated many Hindus elements into their religion and society. Besides their own patron deities, Gurungs worship Hindu god and goddesses, visit Hindu temples, pilgrimages and holy shrines and celebrate Hindu festivals. The incorporation of Hinduism has significantly changed the social values of Gurungs towards the development of caste concept and status hierarchy in the Gurungs community.

Gurung (2011) explained about the socio- cultural tradition of Gurungs that the Gurungs are very colorful, happy and flirtatious people. A caste hierarchy divides the Gurung community into ' char jat' and ' sor jat', group of four and twelve clans respectively. They are distinctly endogamous groups , however, are strictly exogamous clans. Traditionally they prefer cross- cousins marriage. Among some Gurungs, a small amount of compensation may be necessary if one wishes to avoid cross- cousins marriage. The parallel cousins marriage is , however, strictly prohibited. They also have a tradition of ' Rodi' , a club of boys and girls of similar age group where dancing and singing is performed. This institution gives them ample opportunities to know, understand each other and develop love and affection. The environment in the Rodi is very flirtatious. The whole function is guided and held in the supervision of an adult. The Gurungs have very interesting dance tradition. They perform Sorathi, Ghado, Ghatu and others on one or many occasions. The dancing season generally starts on Shri Panchami day (On the fifth day of bright lunar fortnight some day in January or February) till the day of Chandi purnima.

Gurung (1999) has explained about the cultural practices of Gurungs that the Gurungs are mainly animists or followers of the Bon religion. Their oral text is called Pye (Uthan) and their traditional religion is known as Pye-ta Lhu-ta. The Gurungs later came to adopt Buddhism. Some Gurungs of eastern Nepal have also been influenced by the Hindu religion. However, the Gurungs celebrate their feasts and festivals and carry

out the ceremonies and practices related to worship, birth, death and marriage in accordance with the Bon and Buddhist religions. Lhosar is the main and the biggest festival of Gurung. It is also said that the Gurungs in the past used to practice human sacrifice in a ceremony known as Pade held every three years .

Gurung (2011) Traditional dress of the Gurungs includes a short blouse tied across the front and a short skirt of several yards of white cotton material wrapped around the waist and held as if a wide belt. The Gurung women wear a cotton or velveteen blouse tied at the front, and a sari of printed material usually a dark reddish color. Their ornaments include gold and coral necklaces, gold earrings and nose rings and bangles.

CHAPTER – III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter mainly focused on research design, nature and sources of data, site selection , sampling , methods of data collection, analysis and presentation of data and limitation of the study .

3.1 Rationality of the Selection of Study Area

Iwa VDC is located in the eastern Corner of Terhathum district. It is nearly 39 km far from the district headquarter myanglung bazaar. According to census 2068 B.S. the total population of this VDC is 3362 and households' number is 701. Among the nine wards of this VDC only in three wards (5,6 and 7) Gurungs settlements are found. They partially follow the Gurung culture because they lost their origin culture . Most of them living in this area, do not have knowledge about their mother tongue and following other languages. The present culture of them influence by Brahaman , Chhetri and Limbus. Gurungs are the minority community of this area and this made the research more relevant for the study. The study of such area , would help to find out the tradition and developing socio- economic and cultural practice of the Gurung community . Another important matter that Terhathum was the Limbuwan province in previous time but nowadays various caste/ethnic and religious group of people are living here. This area is also selected which shows how Gurungs are adopting in Limbuwan. So, it is very relevant area for the selection of the study.

3.2 Research Design

In this research, descriptive research design has been used with the help of various research tools and techniques. Primary and secondary data has been collected, analyzed and interpreted for the final presentation. This research design would yield more valid data as socio-economic condition of the Gurung community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum district to study the problem outlined earlier and to achieve the objective of the present study.

3.3 Nature of Data

To achieve the objectives, both qualitative and qualitative data have been used for this research. This study is mainly based on primary data collected from the Iwa VDC of Terhathum district and background information is obtained from secondary sources.

3.4 Sources of Data

Field survey is the basic source of primary data. So, data were collected from field works with the help of questionnaire, interviews and participant observation. Responses of Gurung households head were regarded as the major sources of field information.

The necessary data were collected from secondary sources like government and non-government offices, published and unpublished books, papers, research action relevant books , articles and electronic sources etc. which were related to topic of the study.

3.5 Universe and Sampling

For this research , Iwa VDC is selected with purposively. There are nine ward in this VDC but only in three ward (i.e. 5,6 & 7) Gurung households are found. In these three wards 181 households of different communities are living there but as the requirement of the objective of the study, only 48 households of Gurungs of this area were taken by applying purposive sampling method. Before going to the research field I contacted with some of the community members. I convinced them about the purpose of my study to obtain help and co- operation from them in my research work. As an insider, I am already familiar with the research field. It also helps me to adjust and collect data with my key informants.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

Both of primary and secondary data were collected for the study. The primary data were collected with the help of the following methods like, observation, household survey , interview etc. The key information were collected from head man of the community, old men etc.

3.6.1 Household Survey

The household survey was conducted to collect the require data and information for the study. A set of structured questionnaire was administered to assess the socio-economic and cultural practices of the Gurung in the study area during the time of survey. Structure questions were asked to the household heads. In the absence of household heads, other senior family members were interviewed. From the questionnaire, necessary quantitative data on family structure, educational status, occupational, marital status were collected. Moreover, the general information of each households such as composition of family on the basis of sex and age, cropping pattern, sources of income, agricultural productivity, and

personal identification of the respondents were obtained from the questionnaire. The direct observation methods has also been used to get the relevant information for the study . It has been conducted to observe the village settlement patterns, agricultural practices, dressing patterns, livestock and their various activities related to socio- economic and cultural behaviors of them.

3.6.2 Unstructured Interview Schedule

Taking interview with the respondents was the key method to collect the data basis on set questionnaire. Similarly , to collect the information about Gurungs rituals, festivals, their history and their organization etc. were interviewed with the unstructured interview schedule.

3.7 Techniques for Data Analysis and Presentation

After the collection of data from the respondents observation and secondary sources were edited and coded in tabular form. Data were collected from questionnaire, interview and secondary sources are analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitative data which were collected from the interview, questionnaire, secondary sources were presented in table and figure as far as possible and necessary. Simple statistical tools like average and percentage were also used where required. Qualitative data were collected with the help of questionnaire, interview, observation, and secondary sources were analyzed descriptively.

3.8 Limitation of the Study

The limitation of this study are as follows:

- 1) The study area is small, consisting of 48 households of Gurung community of Iwa VDC, terhathum, which may not represent the characteristics of Gurung of whole Nepal and world.
- 2) The study intended to focus only on the socio-economic condition of the Gurung community of Iwa VDC. Thus, other Gurung community outside that area are strictly excluded.
- 3) The fulfillment of the objective entirely depended on the availability of the required information both from primary and secondary sources. There may be various weaknesses and data gap due to the time, money and resource constants.
- 4) Moreover, this study is based predominantly on search for the facts. Therefore, it is based purely on empirical methods rather than building up of any hypothesis.

CHAPTER- IV
SOCIOAL AND CULTURAL PRACTICES AND
CHANGES AMONG GURUNGS

This chapter is devoted to analysis the socio- economic and demographic characteristics of Gurungs community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum district where includes the description of the status of landhoding ,

food sufficiency , occupation and major sources of living and availability of physical facilities, literacy status, age and sex composition etc. of this study area.

4.1 Distribution of Households and Population

Gurung is an ethnic group of Nepal. The western Nepal is the origin place of them where is high density of Gurung , although they are found throughout the country. These days, Gurungs are inhabiting all most all districts of eastern Nepal, like Taplejung, Panchathar, Ilam, Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Dhankuta, Bhojpur, Sankhuwasabha, Terhathum etc. There is inhabitation of Gurungs in some villages of Terhathum district but only Iwa VDC was selected for this study. The ethnical composition of this VDC is heterogeneous in nature. There is high population of Limbu community and it is followed by Chhetri, Brahman, Rai , Gurung, Magar and others. There is Gurung settlement in three wards of this VDC , i.e. ward no. 5, 6 and 7. The total households of Gurungs is 48 in these three wards and total population is 277 where male shares 50.18 percent and female shares 49.81percent. When we study the ward wise distribution of households and population in this area, among 48 households majority of them 39 households are located in ward no- 6 which is followed by 6 households in ward no-5 and remaining 3 households in ward no- 7. Similarly, the majority of population are living in ward no-6 which occupied the 81.22 percent and followed by 14.44 percent in ward no-5 and 4.33 percent in ward no-7 respectively. The statistical description of distribution of households and population ward wise reveals in table no- 4.1.

4.1 Percentage of Distribution of Sample Size of Households Population by Ward wise

Ward no.	No. of Households	Total no. Male in percent	Total no. Female in percent	Total
5	6	11.51	17.39	14.44
6	39	84.17	78.26	81.22
7	3	4.31	4.34	4.33
Total	48	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The table 4.1 shows that majority of 81.22 percent of household size is found in ward no. 6 and at least 4.33 percent of household size is found in ward no.7. Similarly, majority of 17.39 percent of female population is found in ward no. 5 and highest 84.17 percent of male population in ward no.6. But comparatively, male and female populations are similar in ward no.7 respectively.

4.2 Age Composition by Sex

The age structure of population is one of the important determining factors of the economic status of the area. The manpower supports to generate more income if there is high population in working age but high dependent age population degrades the economic situation of the country. The age composition of population of the study area is analyzed by classifying into three major categories i.e. 0-14, 15- 59 and above 60 years in this study because the population between 15- 59 years age group are assumed as economically active (working age) and remaining below 14 years and above 60 years as dependent population respectively. In three wards of Iwa VDC, among 277 Gurungs' population 61.37 percent fall in 15- 59 years age group where 63.30 percent is shared by male and 59.42 percent by female. But there is high child dependent population in this area as 28.88 percent population is occupied by children' population aged 0-14 years. It indicates that there is high fertility rate in that community. On the other side, the elder population is less comparison to the other age groups. There is only 9.74 percent population in 60 above age group. It reflects the less life expectancy and poor health facilities available and consumption of Gurung community of that study area. Similarly, there is around 39 % population are dependent adding children and elder which may affect on the socio- economic development of that area. The distribution of population by age and sex reveals in Table no -4.2.

4.2 Percentage Distribution of Population by Age and Sex

Age group	Male in percent	Female in percent	Total in percent
0-14 years	29.49	28.26	28.88
15- 59 years	63.30	59.42	61.37
Above 60 years	7.19	12.31	9.74
Total	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2016

4.3 Size of Family

Family is the basic unit of the society. It is an oldest and sovereign organization in the history of human civilization. There is great important of family in Gurung culture. Especially joint family system is highly practiced in this ethnic community. The size of family reflects the socio- economic as well as cultural aspects of society. The joint and large family system is seen popular in Gurung community of Iwa VDC. They feel more comfort while performing cultural and ritual activities and celebrating different festival in large family. Both from social and economic prospect they feel the security in life. There are 16 families having more than 6 members in a family whereas 19 families are living with 5-6 members and 13 families having members 1-4 in a family. This data reflects that the level of awareness of this community in that area is not so high because in this 21st century also they are practicing the large family system . But the preference for small and nuclear family system is increasing in latest time due to influence of modernization in new generation of Gurungs of this area. The size of family revels in Table no – 4.3.

4.3 The Size of Family

S.N.	Size of Family	No. of family
1	1- 4 members	13
2	5- 6 members	19
3	Above 6 members	16
	Total	48

Source : Field Survey , 2016

4.4 Distribution of Gurungs Households by Clan (Caste)

The distinctive structural feature of Gurung society is its dual organization into two hierarchical and endogamous strata or sub- tribes called the Char Jatn (four clans) and sora Jat (sixteen clans). Each strata incorporates a number of named exogamous patriarchal clans which in turn are segmented into lineages (Ragsdale, 1990). Sora Jat is an inclusive term for all Gurungs clans not included among the higher ranked Char Jat. The actual number of clan included under the term sora Jat is unknown. Citation exist listing them from twenty- eight to as many as ninety – seven (Pignede ,1966 as cited in Ragsdale, 1990).

The Char Jat is an accurate term reflecting the existence of four tribal categories called “ Jat ” or , in English , “ caste”. The Char Jat as a whole is endogamous, while each of the four categories is exogamous. Within each category are several patrilineal clans sometimes indentifying a common ancestor but not necessarily doing so. The Char Jat categories are named as though they were governmental positions like 1) Ghale , “ King ” ; 2) Ghotane , “ Minister ” ; 3) Lama , “ Priest ” ; and 4) Lamichhane, “ Councillor ” (Ragsdale, 1990). In Iwa VDC of Terhathum district, also the clan system is in practice in Gurung community. The Sora Jat Gurungs are not found there, so all the Gurungs inhabitants there belong to Char Jat Gurung. Among the four clans mentioned above , Ghale clan (caste) is not found there , only three clans (castes) Gurungs i.e. Lama, Lamichhane and Ghotane (called Ghonde there).There are 29 households of Lamichhane Gurung , 17 households of Lama Gurungs and 2 households of Ghotane Gurung. The each clan has also been divided into different division (Sub- clans) or lineages , although they claim their ancestor is same. There is no evidence and information in Gurung people that since when their ancestors were living there and from where they came that place but just some people verbally claim that the origin place of their ancestor was western Gandaki region of Nepal. Another important matter is that there was discrimination between ‘ char jat’ and ‘sor jat’ where ‘ char jat’ were considered as superior than ‘ sor jat’ Gurungs but such practice is getting changes and there is no discrimination among them. Table no. 4.4 revels the distribution of households by clan (caste) in Iwa VDC of Terhathum district.

4.4 Number and Percentage Distribution of Households of Gurungs by Clan (Caste) in Iwa VDC

Clans (Castes)	No. of households	Percentage
Lama	17	35.41
Lamichhane	29	60.41
Ghotane	2	4.16

Total	48	100
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Source : Field Survey , 2016

4.5 Landownership

The status of holding of land reflects the economic condition of people. Agriculture is main occupation of Gurungs people of this area and their status is measured basis on holding land. The social prestige will be high if they have control over more land but it vain having low land. The ownership on land is seen in all the households of Gurungs living in Iwa VDC, but the distribution of land is not equal in all. According to survey, majority 24 households holding the land 10-20 Ropani and it is followed by 16 households holding 20-40 Ropani land. Similarly, 4 households of this area having only land below 10 Ropani. It indicates that Gurungs people of that area have limited land. Only 4 households have land for cultivation that they have land above 40 Ropani. The legal upper limit of holding the land in hill region of Nepal is 80 Ropani declared by Nepal government but the comparison of it , holding the land by Gurungs community of this area is very less. The status of landholding situation shows the weak economic condition of them. The landholding status of households of Gurungs community of Iwa VDC reveals in table no- 4.5 as below :

4.5 Number Distribution of Landholding status of Households

Status of Landholding	No. of households
Below 10 Ropani	4
10- 20 Ropani	24
20-40 Ropani	16
Above 40 Ropani	4
Total	48

Source: Field Survey, 2016

4.6 Types of Houses

It is well known that the ownership and types of houses indicate the level of poverty or prosperity of people in society. The well housing facilities determine to the living standard of people. The Gurungs community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum , during time of research that all they have own houses in their living place. There is

not modern housing facilities, most of the houses are made with the local materials found in that area. This place is located in hill area, so stone, mud and wood are used for the construction of traditional houses. There are 30 houses made up off stone wall and tin roof and 15 houses are made with stone wall and thatched roof. The previous time the house with roof of tin was considered as prestigious but it is common these days. There is only one cemented house of Gurung in that area and two houses are made with plank wall and thatched roof. In conclusion, we can say that still Gurungs people of Iwa VDC have been deprived from well housing facilities. The types of houses and their ownership on houses is depicted in table no- 4.6.

4.6 Number Distribution of Types and Ownership of Houses of Gurungs of Iwa VDC

Types of houses	No. of households
Cemented	1
Stone wall and tin roof	30
Stone wall and thatched roof	15
Plank wall and thatched roof	2
Total	48

Source: Field survey, 2016

4.7 Major Occupation

Nepal is an agricultural country. Most of the people are farmers. In this study also a large number of economically active population are engaged in agriculture. It is the backbone of the economy of this village. According to survey, the main occupation of 83.3 percent households is agricultural but their production is not enough to sustain throughout the year. They have been following the traditional agriculture system which do not provide job throughout the year. Some of their agro-based activities are seasonal. The major food crops cultivated there are paddy, maize, wheat, millet potato etc. whereas cash crops cardamom (Alaichi), Amrisho etc. also are grown there. There are many barriers for increasing the production. There are lack of irrigation, improved seeds , fertilizer, insecticides, pesticides, improved tools, agricultural loan and technology. The abroad job is also seen another way of living of people. In this study, the major source of income of 8.3 percent households is abroad job whereas 4.2 percent households involve in business and

2.1 percent in governmental service and 2.1 percent are receiving pension respectively. The major occupation of the Gurungs Community in study area is shown in the table below.

4.7 Percentage Distribution of Major occupation of a Households

Major occupation	Percentage
Agriculture	83.30
Government Service	2.10
Business	4.20
Abroad Job	8.30
Pension & other	2.10
Total	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Besides, above mentioning occupation in table, Gurungs people of study area are also involving in other more hidden income generating activities. Some of the families are involving in producing Radi/ Pakhi (blanket) from wool of sheep which is the traditional profession of them and it supports to generate income to some extent. Similarly, most of the women of that village prepare domestic wine (Jad, Raksi) and by doing business of them contribute to generate the income of households which is taken in this area as a measurement of efficiency and expertise of women in households works. The rearing of animals is also another source of Gurungs community of study area. All most of households are rearing the animal like cow, buffalo, goats, sheep etc. and they calculate their property basis on how many animals they are rearing. The rearing of animals is occupied the significant part of their source of income. But these days, such practice of them is also getting changes because the new generation children do not like to involve in animal rearing. Increasing the trends of children in going to school, there is lacking of manpower to look after the animals and lacking of pastureland are also causes to declining the animal rearing practice of them. Most of the new generation people of Gurungs community feel hesitate to follow this profession. They are rearing only few animals, just to protect their traditional occupation.

4.8 Physical Facilities

The availability of physical facilities reflects the living standard of people of respective area. In this section, I tried to study some physical facilities available and consuming by the Gurungs community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum where drinking water, electricity and toilet are taken as the major indicators of them.

4.8.1 Drinking Water Facility

Drinking water is the most important infrastructures for the surviving of people. The health status of people is also determined by the availability of drinking water facility. In absence of pure drinking water, the health status of people could not be well and there will be high chances of spreading diseases. The consuming status of drinking water in study area is not seen well because the sources whatever they are using, not found safe. Among 48 households of study area, 42 households having pipe water tap but remaining 4 households directly use the Rivulet (Kholisa) and 2 households Kuwa for sources of drinking water which are not appropriate from the prospective of their health. There is a not alternative source, so they are compelled to use such sources for drinking water which they have been using since long period. The majority households using pipe water tap for the source of drinking water indicated that the behavior of them consuming the drinking water is improving in latest time which may support to bring changes in life style of them as well. The major sources of drinking water are shown in table no. 4.8.1.

4.8.1 Number of Distribution of Households by Major Sources of Drinking Water

Sources of water	No. of households
Pipe water tap	42
Rivulet (Kholisa)	4
Kuwa	2
Total	48

Source: Field Survey, 2016

4.8.2 Electricity Facility

As we know that the electricity is other important infrastructure which supports for the prosperity of human society. The electricity is not connected in the study area by the electricity authority of Nepal government but few households are using electricity from solar power. They use the solar energy for lighting in evening and night hour and that makes easy to study the children, domestic works in evening and charging the battery of their mobile phone. Among 48 households in that area only 28 households having solar power electricity but other remaining 20 households do not have access on it because of lack of economic capacity for affording and still they are using Tuki lamp for lighting home during night hours. It indicates the poor situation of energy consumption of them. Another significant matter is that the preference and increasing the practice of using solar- electricity is the good symptom for the improving and changing the economic status of Gurungs of this area and it supports to bring positive changes in living standard of them. Table no. 4.8.2 reveals the availability of electricity facility in study area.

4.8.2 Number of Households By Availability of Electricity Facility

Availability of electricity	No. of households
Yes	28
No	20

Source : Field survey 2016

4.8.3 Toilet Facility

The level of sanitation can be measured basis on the practice of following healthy habits of people. The availability of toilet facility is one of the indicator of good healthy practice and sanitation in village. The toilet is most for the environmental sanitation and to maintain good health of people. The proper toilet facility is not available in all households of Gurungs of study area. Some of the households of Gurungs community of Iwa VDC are using open places as toilet which is the cause of environment pollution. Among the 48 households , only 17 households have cemented toilet with toilet pan (Pakki) and 23 households have kachchi (made by local materials) toilets whereas 6 households use rivulet (kholsa) as toilet and

remaining 2 households use open place Jhadi- Jungle for toilet. It is shameful matter that even not having toilet in each household in this 21st century as well. It shows that they are not so conscious about their health and environmental sanitation and they are vulnerable of infection of different diseases. The poor economic situation also might be the behind it. But the tendency of using of toilet is increasing in this area which indicates that the changes is taking place in this community regarding their health affair. The types of toilet used by Gurungs community of study area are shown in table no. 8.4.3 as below.

4.8.3 Number of Distribution of the Types of Toilet and Households

Types of toilet	No. of households
Cemented Toilet (Pakki)	17
Made by local materials (Kachchi)	23
Rivulet (Kholsa)	6
Jhadi- Jungle	2
Total	48

Source: Field Survey, 2016

Besides above mentioned facilities, other more are required to measure the social condition of people. As a small village of hill, the infrastructures of Iwa VDC is poor which is the cause of social backwardness of Gurungs community and other of this area. Education is most for the social improvement and progress of society but there are not well educational institutions to provide quality education. There is one lower Secondary School in ward no- 6 and one primary school in ward no-5 in Gurung settlement area of this VDC. It shows that there is not easy access of people in education. Similarly, there is only one health post in this VDC which is insufficient to provide even basic health facility to the people living this area. This area recently is connected by mid hill highway and it may turn the situation of this area in coming days.

4.9 Educational Status

As we know that education has the vital role for the socio- economic as well as cultural development of the society. It is necessary to develop the education for the positive transformation of society. The educational

status is one of the major indicators of socio- economic condition of society. So, here, I tried to analysis the education status of Gurungs community of study area. The data related to literacy status reflects that the educational status of them is not well. The educational status of population above six year is included here to study where 19.92% people are illiterate. It means they cannot even to read and write. Among the 251 people above six year 80.07 % are literate. There is difference in literacy status of male and female where 87.30% male are literate and 12.69% are illiterate but female literacy is low. 72.8 % female of that area are literate and remaining 27.2% are illiterate. In latest time , the influence and attraction towards education is increasing in this community as they are sending their children in school for education. It reflects that they are aware about the importance of education. The literacy status of study area is reveled in table no. 4.9.

Table no- 4.9 Percentage Distribution of Literacy Status of People by Sex

Literacy status	Percent on Population	Percent of Male Population	Femalein percent Population
Literate	80.07	87.30	72.8
Illiterate	19.92	12.69	27.2
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2016

4.9.1 Literacy Status by Educational Level

The data related to education of the study area revels that the education status of Gurungs community is low where only 201 people of that area are literate. Among the literate people, majority of them 64.67 % fall in group of under S.L.C. It indicates that most of them dropouts school before completing S.L.C. level. 22.38% people have completed the S.L.C. level and it is followed by 9.45 % people completed +2 level. The educational attainment in upper level is quite low where only 3.38 % completed Bachelor and above level by Gurungs of this area . So , low educational status of them is one of the cause of social backwardness of this community.

Table no- 4.9.1 Percentage Distribution of Literacy Status by Educational Level

Educational Status	Percent of Percentage
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Under S.L.C.	64.67
S.L.C.	22.38
10+ 2 Level	9.45
Bachelor & above Level	3.48
Total	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2016

4.10 Cultural Characteristics

As Dor Bahadur Bista has defined, Nepalese culture is a “unity of diversity” (Bista, 1982).The cultural identities of Nepalese People are deprived from both ethnic and national back- grounds. The Gurungs are rich in their culture. The Gurungs have two simultaneous cultural identities: on the basis of their ethnic background they regard themselves as Gurungs and within the context of Nepal they identified as Nepalese (Bista, 1982 cited as Moisala , 1989).

The Gurungs traditional cultural identity has been closely linked with their ethnic identity, which has involved from their traditional society. Awareness of ethnic identity derives from contacts with other ethnic group. Interaction with other ethnic groups has aroused awareness of the Gurungs’ own ethnicity. They have constructed their cultural identity in relation to other cultures within the neighborhood (Moisala, 1989). In the cultural characteristics consisting the study of rites and ritual from birth to death, celebrating of ceremonies and festivals, religion and mother tongue etc. In this section, the outlining of Gurungs cultural characteristics has been undertaken through the study of Gurungs of Iwa VDC of Terhathum. The major culture and traditions which are practiced by Gurungs of this study area has been described here in brief.

4.10.1 Birth Ceremony (Janma Saskar)

The birth is a biological event but it has the cultural value as well. The birth of child is considered as the happiest event in Gurung community. After taking place birth of a child, a kind of untouchability period (sutak lagne) is declared in family (closed brothers) and during that period worshipping of deities , cultivating crops etc. should not be done until having naming ceremony. This practice is widely found in Gurungs community of this study area but gradually it is getting changes these days.

4.10.2 Naming Ceremony (Nwaran)

The naming ceremony is an important event in Gurungs' culture. It is done after five or seven days of birth of daughter and after nine or eleven days of son where name is given for new child by priest (Lama). After performing naming ceremony, the family and house is considered as pure and all the relatives of child's father become free to do any kind of religious and other activities. During time of naming ceremony, relatives and neighbors are invited and feeding to them where they bless to child and enjoy by singing and dancing.

4.10.3 Food Feeding Ceremony (Pasni)

After the completing five month of age of a new child , a special celebration is made called food feeding ceremony where in a special time (sait) made by priest , food is feed to new child. All the relatives and other bless to child and provide gift as well and enjoy having with delicious food during this occasion. But in this tradition some changes are being taken place in this area that they are spending huge money for celebration due to influence of modernization. Such practices of them degrading the origin culture and investing in unproductive task , the economic status of them is also being worse.

4.10.4 Chhewar (Cutting hair for first time)

This is also another important ceremony practiced by Gurung community. The special function is made to cut hair of son child for the first time. After doing chhewar only, the son is considered as adult and he will be eligible to be participated in other cultural activities. Chhewar is most before marriage and if parents of him die before doing chhewar , he will not be compelled to perform funeral activities of them as well. The boy is tied at cowshed as animal and his maternal uncle (mama) cut his hair in special time (sait) declared by priest (Lama). When his mother invites him then he goes inside the home and his maternal uncle provides special gift and clothes on that occasion. Similarly, other people also wish him for his bright future and have enjoy with delicious foods and performing dance and songs. But this unique cultural practice of chhewar is getting changes in this community that most of them do not tie to child while cutting his hair. Sometime they are telling ' Bartaband' as Brahaman rite instead of ' chhewar' which degrades the origin cultural practices of Gurungs.

4.10.5 Marriage

Marriage arrangements among Gurungs are unique. By tradition, the practice of cross-cousin marriage is preferred, but the young boys and girls are given full opportunity to make their own choice. All cross-cousins, that is both father's sister's daughters and mother's brother's daughters are possible marriage partners for a boy, but the father's sister's daughter is much preferred. It was said that there was custom to pay compensation if one does not wish to marry one's own cross-cousin in Gurung community but such custom is not found in study area. All are free to marry with the partner whoever they choose.

4.10.6 Funeral Ceremony (Mirtu sanskar)

Before burning the dead body, a special activities (Puja) is done by priest (Lama) for the peace of dead soul and according to set time (sait) by him , the dead body will be taken at the top of hill (chihandada) and put fire over dead body. The funeral shroud is always provided by a mother's brother for a male and a brother for a married female. The funeral ceremony is attended by sisters and other female relatives of deceased. The death pollution lasts for thirteen days and affects all the brothers, brothers' sons and other closed relatives who observe mourning during this time. The mourner does not eat meat or drink any liquor. After four days of death, a ceremony (syapsung) is done then the close relatives can eat salt. The final rite (pa- ye) is done at the end of thirteen days then all become free and every year they perform memorial function of their ancestor. After forty nine days of death, a special religious function is performed for the peace of soul of dead person because it is believed that the soul of dead person remains in earth till that time and only after that function (worship) the dead soul gets peace and reach to the heaven. Lama is main priest who perform the all ceremonies in Gurungs community of the study area.

4.10.7 Religion

The main religion of Gurungs is kuldharma but these days they claim that Buddhism is their modern religion. According to survey, all the Gurungs of study area follow the Bouddha religion. Before around 2050 B.S. they were Hindus but letter they changed their religion and began to follow Bouddh religion. So, still most of the rites and ritual activities of them influenced by Hindus. There is not seen religious orthodoxy among the Gurungs of this area as they practices both Hindu and Bouddhist cultural feast and

festival and worship the deities of both religion. Not only them , they worship the some deities of Kirant as well.

4.10.8 Festivals

Gurungs of Iwa VDC celebrate the different festivals .The major festivals are Dashain, Tihar, Lhosar, Maghesankranti, Buddhapurnima, saunesakranti etc. celebrated by Gurungs of this area. They celebrate all festivals, no biasness either Hindus or Bouddha or kirant community in this area which shows the religious and cultural tolerance among the people those who are living there. Except celebrating festivals, they perform special worships of various deities as well in a year. They do kulpuja (Ghardeuta Puja) once in a year which is very special worship among Gurungs community.It is performed in night hour at the secret room of top floor of house. The day of performing the kulpuja (Ghardeutapuja) , early in the morning the house is cleaned and then do not allow to other caste people for whole day to entry the house. It is said that the processing of puja should not be watched by other caste people and even prasad of puja also not to given to other. It is unknown that the kulpuja weather it is done or not by Gurungs of other places in the same way of Gurungs of this study areas are doing.

Similarly, they perform Gothalepuja (shedpuja) once in a year where they have believed that the God saves and protects the animals reared by them and spreading the animals in coming days. They scarify of cock in name of Gothale which is vow in the beginning of the year. In the same way, they perform the puja of Sagune and Durga Bhawani puja during the time of dashain . They do the worships of other more local deity and deities as well.

4.10.9 Mother Tongue

Mother is the important identity of any ethnic group which supports to protect and continue the culture of them. Gurung is an ethnic group of Nepal having own mother tongue (language) since long ago but unfortunately, it is said to be that the Gurungs of the study area do not speak their own mother tongue. All of them speak Nepali language as their mother tongue. Not only this area, Gurungs who are living all most all the places of eastern Nepal, they don't speak Gurungs language. With the disappearing of language they lost their own origin culture and most of them influenced by other culture.

CHAPTER- V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary and Findings

This study based on the socio- economic, cultural practices and changes of Gurungs community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum district. This study tried to study and analysis the current social, economic , demographic as well as cultural characteristics and changes among Gurungs community of the study area. A limited number of literatures comprising about the socio- economic and cultural practices and the origin of history of Gurung community. Iwa VDC is a small village located in Terhathum district. Terhathum is a

mountainous small district and it was a province of previous Libuwan, later it was merged with greater Nepal during the unification campaigning of King Prithvi Narayan Shah. There was not actual evidence regarding date of migration of Gurungs at that place but it is believed that they were arrived here with unification campaigning of King Prithvi Narayan Shah. The main aim of this study is to identify the major issues regarding the socio- economic and cultural practices among Gurungs community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum district.

The study is descriptive in nature. Iwa VDC is chosen as study area where 48 households of Gurungs were interviewed through household survey by using unstructured questionnaire to collect the primary data. Direct field observation is also another method to collect the data and information. The socio- economic, demographic and cultural practices of Gurungs are described in different chapters. The quantitative data are presented in tables and they are analyzed in descriptive way. General like average and percentage, the mathematical measures are also used to interpret the data.

The Gurungs' society is an ancient society, however the exact time or period of their arrival in the study area is inaccessible. They believed that, they are come from Tibet to western Nepal first, then Nepal. There is Gurungs' settlement in three ward i.e. 5,6 and 7 in Iwa VDC. The total households is 48 and total population is 277. Among them 50.18 % are male and 49.81 % are female. The age composition of population of study area is studied by classing into three categories where majority of population 61.37% fall in 15-59 age group which is followed by 28.88 % 0-14 year age group and 9.74 % by above 60 year age group. The main source of their income are agriculture, abroad job and other. Out of total Gurungs, 83.3 % are engaged in agriculture, 8 % are engaged in abroad job and remaining other in business, government service and pension and other. Maize, paddy, millet are grown for consumption and cardamom, Amrisho etc. are the cash crops of Gurungs. Besides it, they rear the animals and produce Radi/ Pakhi (blanket) and specially, female of this community are involving making and selling the domestic wine as their income source. The 24 households have land 10- 20 Ropani and it is followed by 16 households 20-40 Ropani and 4 households have above 40 Ropani and same 4 households have the land below 10 Ropani respectively.

The educational status of population above six year is included here to study where 80.07 % population of Gurungs are literate and remaining 19.92 % are illiterate. The male literacy rate is 87.30 % and female is 72.8 %. The educational status by level is also studied, where 64.67 % occupied by under S.L.C. , 22.38 % by S.L.C. 9.45% by +2 level and 3.48 % by bachelor and above. There is poor availability of physical facilities like electricity, drinking water, housing , toilet etc. There are 30 houses of Gurungs made off stone wall and tin roof whereas 15 houses are stone wall and thatched roof, 2 houses are plank wall and thatched roof and remaining one is cemented.

All the Gurungs of study area don't speak in their mother tongue, but all of them can speak and understand the Nepali language. There is no any institution or school for teaching their mother language. They celebrate major festivals like Dashain , Tihar, Lhosar, Maghe Sankranti, Buddha Purnima, Saune Sankranti etc. They follow Bouddha religion and their festival and religious ceremonies are more expensive. They have their own typical social customs regarding child birth ,food feeding (Pasni) , chhewar, marriage, funeral etc. They do the worship of different deities , like ghardeuta Puja (Kulpuja), gothale Puja , sagune puja , Durga pujan etc.

5.2 Conclusion

Nepal is a small country having cultural diversity. It is a homeland of several caste/ethnic groups of people. The difference in life style of these people, in aggregate, reflects varieties in culture. The culture, festivals, clothing and mother tongues of people differ from place to place. This study tried to study the socio-economic and cultural practices and changes among Gurungs community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum district. The following conclusions are drawn from the study of that area:

Agriculture is the main occupation of the Gurung community of study area where 83.3 % population of Gurung community are involving in agriculture but the agricultural system is not modernized , still they are following traditional ways of farming and using traditional tools and equipments which is not giving sufficient production. In the same way , there is lacking of irrigation facilities, improved seed, fertilizer, insecticide etc. So, it is difficult to sustain throughout the year. Therefore, modernization is required in agricultural system. On the other hand, in this mountainous village, people do not have sufficient land for cultivation. Cash crops like cardamom , Amrisho etc. are produced there but actual farmers do not get proper

market and they are frequently cheated by brokers. So, proper market, agricultural loan facilities should be there to uplift the economic condition of them.

Few people of this area from Gurung community are involving in non-agricultural sectors because they don't have access in other alternative professions. Similarly, the producing the Radi/ Pakhi (blanket) of their traditional profession is also going to disappeared due to influence of modernization and lacking of market. As a result, there is socio-economic backwardness in Gurung community of that area.

The literacy rate of them is also low where 19.92 % population do not know even to read and write. The female illiteracy rate is significantly high, so this is also another cause of poor social condition of them but in latest time the literacy rate is increasing in this community of study area which is a positive symptom of further improvement.

There is high child dependency ratio, it may be burden for them and that does not support for the economic prosperity of them but it may be the good sign that there would be the more working age population in future. If they would be trained and educated properly, the society will be developed soon. There is not sufficient physical facilities in this area, so the life of them is difficult. There is not proper pure drinking water, toilet, sanitation and electricity facilities. Recently, the mid hill highway connect this area by transportation which supports slightly to improve the living standard of people.

The Gurungs community of this area has been guided by traditional way yet that there is practice of joint and large family system. In this 21st century, the small family system is being popular but Gurungs community are not adopting it in practice, so significant changes are not taken place there. The level of awareness and cultural aspects are responsible behind it. So, social backwardness is remaining there. The cultural aspect of them is responsible for their poor socio-economic condition because their cultural activities are so costly and they made huge expenses to perform cultural and religious rites and rituals as they eat more items of meat and alcohol. The culture of taking alcohol sometime create fighting, scolding and violence in society. Most of the Gurungs of this area use their food crops for making (Jad / Raksi) domestic wine. In this way, they use most of their production for making domestic wine. This system weakens them physically, socially, economically and mentally. Such practices of them should be stopped to uplift their socio-economic condition. Another significant matter is that they celebrate all festivals of

both Hindus and Buddhist as well, which create more economic burden on them and degrades the economic status. In the same way, they are losing their ethnical culture and practicing the mix culture of diverse community.

Gurungs are the minor community of this area. They don't know to speak and understand their own mother tongue. So, they lost their origin culture and dominated by other culture. Due to modernization and influence of other culture, the originality of their culture is degrading day by day. In Gurungs community, there was cross cousin marriage system in previous time but such cultural practice of them is being replaced by willing marriage of new generation in these time.

The 'lahure' system is more famous in Gurung community which helps for the strengthen the economic condition of them but few people of the study area joint in lahur and most of the new generation dislike towards lahure system as well.

Beside mentioning above conclusion, some other aspects are also have role to determine the socio-economic condition of Gurungs community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum district. The hill's climatic condition of this area doesn't support to yield the agricultural production more. The available educational institutions are not sufficient to provide quality education and most of the people are deprived from health facilities due to lacking of health institutions in this area. Instead of having a lot of problems, there is potentiality of progress and improvement of them if they use the available means and resources properly. It is necessary to modernize the cultural as well as professional behavior of them. It becomes possible by giving emphasis for the development of education.

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APPENDIX

A study on socio- economic status of Gurungs community of Iwa VDC of Terhathum

Household Questionnaire VDC:

Ward No.:

Date:

Name of Householder:

Clan: Lama, Lamichhane, Ghotane.....

No of family:

No. of House:

S.N	Member of family	Relation of H.H Head	Sex	Age	Marital status			Literacy Status		Occupation	Religion	Language
					Single	Married	Age at marriage	Illiterate	Literate level			

Which festivals do you celebrate ?

- a. Dashain
- b. Tihar
- c. Lhosar
- d. Maghesakranti
- e. Buddhapurnima
- f. Others.....

1. Which special worships (puja) do you perform in a year ?

- a. Kul puja/ Ghardeuta puja
- b. Durga puja
- c. Sagune puja
- d. Gathale puja
- e. Prtri- shrada
- f. Others...

3. Do you have own land?

- i. Yes
- ii. No

If yes, how much ?

- a. Below 10 Ropani
- b. 10-20 Ropani
- c. 20-40 Ropani
- d. above 40 Ropani

4. Do you have own house ?

- I. Yes
- II. No

If yes , types of house

- a. Pakki
- b. Kachchi
- c. Slum / Hut
- d. others...

5. What are the major sources of income of your family?

- a. Agriculture(kheti-Pati)
- b. Producing Radi/ pakhi etc.
- c. Salary (.....) / pension

d. Business (Kirana, Tea, domestic wine (Jad, raksi) etc

e. Others.....

Mention major production ,

i. food crops

Paddy, maize. Millet , wheat , potato.....

ii. Cash crop

Cardamom (Alaichi),

Amrisho.....

6. Does your agriculture product supports to sustain your family throughout the year ?

i. Yes ii. No

If yes or no, how long time ?

a. Below 4 month

b. 4- 8 month

c. Above 8 month

7. Are you rearing animals ?

I. Yes II. No

If yes, what are you rearing ?

a. Cow

b. Buffalo

c. Sheep

d. Goat

e. Others.....

8. Is there drinking water tap at your home ?

i. Yes ii. No

If yes, What are the sources of drinking water ?

a. Pipe tap (pipe dhara)

b. Rivulet (kholsa)

c. Kuwa

d. Others....

9. Is there toilet In your home ?

i. Yes ii. No

If yes, what type of ?

a. Pakki

b. kachchi

c. Other.....

If no, Where do you use as toilet ?

- a. Khola/ Kholsa
- b. Jhadi/ Jangle
- c. Other.....

10. Is electricity available at your home ?

- i. Yes
- ii. No

If yes, what is the source of electricity ?

- a. Solar
- b. Water
- c. Other....

11. Are all your children going school ? (only ask to people whose children are at school going age)

- i. Yes
- ii. No

If no, Why are they not going ?

- a. School is far from home
- b. They have to do work like looking for cow
.....
- c. Poor economic status
- d. No interest for schooling
- e. Others.....
- f.