

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Change is a difference through time in the object to which it is applied. Whenever the change is appeared, it starts to show the physical, political, economical, cultural, social, moral, psychological and natural differences than the previous. Social change is a process. A process means continuous change taking place in a definite manner through the operation of forces present from the first within the situation. Change as a process is the definite step by manner through which one stage or stages merges into another.

It is very nature of culture to undergo change. In one aspect, culture is valuation. In another it is expression. Valuations change with changing experiences, whether the experience brings satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Every age has its own appraisalment of the thing worthwhile, relevant in its literal.( Maciver & Page, 2009)

Nepal has provided shelter and security for a large number of migrants from different places comprising races and represent different ethnic, cultural and linguistic background. The Aagneya, Dravid, Brachy-cephalic, Aryan and Mangol(Sharma:2039) races are the dweller of this subcontinent . The major groups, according to racial origins are Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman and Astro-Asiatic (KC1995).

Kewats occupy the rank of indigenious and touchable in the Hindu mythological founded society. Although they are minority in number, they can be found in most of the part of Nepal i.e. hill and terai. Majority are dwelling in central development region. They are shudra and their traditional occupations are fishing and boating.

Kewats are a community of boatman who live along the banks of Ganga River. Their name comes from the Sanskrit word 'kaivarta' which means the dweller of water. According to their tradition they are descend from Nishad, son of mythological king

Venu. They claim to be Suryavanshi Kshetri. The communities are also known as Keut or Keot.

According to Hutton (1963)" kewat is the fishing and cultivating caste of upper India".

The society has begot the politics and the politics has been leading the society. Nepal has a good experiences of social transformations based on the politics . The Ranacritic PM Chandrashamsher JBR who ruled Nepal for 28 years had abolished the sati system and slavery system from Nepal. Generally , the slaves were the marginalized and backward people of society. The promulgation of Muluki Ain 2020 BS has restricted the discrimination based on castes and the being the part of different types of treaty on international level of Nepal has forced her for the social transformation. The concept of globalization, liberalization, Human rights etc has brought the variety of change in Nepalese society.

Every change in man's relation to his environment means some changes in his relation to his fellows. When Kewats met with the Vedic Aryan, they were in the primitive stages of cultures so some of the kewats had given up their traditional occupation and taken to agriculture ( Dutta, 1969). Those were not the only lasting of changes in kewats . The changing nature of time & tense has been changing the dimensions of life of kewats also. So the study tries to give a descriptive picture of Kewat of Suga VDC of Mahottari district. It also tries to give social, cultural and economical changes those have occurred in Kewat of that area.

## **1.2 Statements of the problem**

Nepal has its own languages, cultures, religions and traditions prevalent among the people. She is one of the poorest countries of the world. According to national statistics 25% people are below poverty line. Many communities are still back warded and

marginalized from the main stream primarily and secondly there are such castes, tribes and ethnic groups who are bounded to give up their traditional occupation because they could not meet their basic needs (food, shelter, cloth etc) by doing their traditional occupation in the changing condition. Development programmes could not reach where backward and poor people are living.

Kewat people are belonging to the poor, backward and marginalized caste in Nepal. Although their traditional profession is fishing and boating and cultivating (only as a labor), they are giving up their traditional occupation because they cannot fulfill their basic needs by their traditional occupation. Very few are taking part in traditional occupation in present time.

In this context, from sociological/Anthropological point of view, it is important to find out the changes in the Kewat society. On the one hand they are giving up traditional occupation and on the another hand, their economic condition is in the same as it was in the past. It is to be studied as to why such condition is prevailing. Therefore, the problem of the study is to understand as to what extent kewat society in Suga vdc in Mahottari has undergone change. The study also seeks to study as to what extent kewats' social organization, family and marriage system have been changed and to what extent kewats have been sanskritized. Attempt has been made to know about to what extent kewats economical life has been changed and what types of facilities are gained by them. Attempt has been made to study what are their present economic condition, occupational composition, the present situation of their traditional occupation and social cultural life in this modernization and globalization world. It has also attempted to find out their new source of livelihood and whether they have benefited from the development activities in Nepal. So the main problem of the study is to seek answers of the above mentioned questions.

### **1.3 Objective of the study**

The general objective of this study is to find out the changing socio-economic status of the Kewats of Suga VDC in Mahottari district in the context of Changes in Nepalese society.

The specific objectives of the study are as follow:

- a.) To describe socio-economic characteristics of study population.
- b.) To describe the changes in socio- economic aspect of study population.

#### **1.4 Rationale of the study**

The socio- economic status of a community shows the living condition of people in that community. With the huge changes in the field of technology, communication, transportation, education and their interaction with different cultural groups, they must have undergone in certain changes. Similarly, urbanization modernization, acculturation, enculturation migration and population size have surely affected the socio-economic condition of any society. Thus, Kewats are also affected by these factors and are going to change in their substance economy, occupational composition and social and cultural patterns and life style of them of Suga VDC. It has also tried to examine their successes or failure in the changing circumstances. The information derived from this study will be useful for development plans and programs and for further study of kewats. This study will be helpful to understand about the different natures of social change which occur in social organization. It will be useful for other academicians to understand about the struggle for surviving primitive modern developed people as indigenous in the modernization, globalization and westernization world. This will be also useful to know about also that how the indigenous are being changed. Overallly, the finding of the study will be useful to understand the changing socio-economic life of kewats in Nepal.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 General Overview

Different sociologists/anthropologists both indigenous and foreign have carried out various ethnographic studies in Nepal. Among them, Bista is that indigenous pioneer scholar who has given a lot of contribution of the field of ethnographic study. His book "people of Nepal" and " Sabai Jaat ko Phoolbari "are the master pieces of literature of ethnography. He has described about a lot of ethnic groups in this book but not detailed the kewats.

Caplan (1970) has studied a village of eastern Nepal where he has studied the changing relation between members of indigenous tribes, the Limbus and the high caste Hindu groups; the Branmins.

Caplan (1972) has studied about the economic and social changes of priests or Branmins and cobblers through the conflict perspective where Caplan has focused on the life status of marginalized people of society which provides the infrastructure of understanding about the backward people in our society.

Gurung(1989),Regmi(1991),Subba(1995),Holmberg(1996),Nepali(1965)has delineated the detailed sketch about the culture, myth, norms & values of Chepang, Dhimals, Limbu, Tamang and Newars respectively which clarify, though all these above mentioned ethnics are the Nepalese ethnicity, that they all have own social structure and function.

Ortner(1978) and Subba (1989) have delineated about the Sherpa and Botemen and given clear overview of socio-cultural aspects of them also.

Seddon, Blaikie & Careron (1979) has provided the clear scenery about the changes of any society due to the infrastructure of development which are illustrated by giving the

example of the changes in Nepalese society because of the highway and how they are laborers are migrating from one territory to another.

Sharma (2037BS), Jha (1998) and Gautam &Thapa(1994) have given the ethnographic sketch of Nepal but they have not mentioned about all castes of Nepalese society. Jha has specially researched the terai marginalized but he has also excluded the kewat from his research paper.

Khatri & Dahal (2053) have enlightened of the knitting structure of Nepalese society by focusing on the history, family structure, customs and fooding etc in very interesting.

Upadhaya (2056) has mentioned about the Nepalese society and its division for the performing of their social works which were held in the Malla period. He has also focused that Branmans were appointed for the meditation, study and teaching where as Kshetri, Baisya and Sudra were appointed as conducting the nation, trade and service related activity respectively.

Shrestha and Singh( 1987) in their book 'Ethnic group of Nepal and their ways of living ' have touched the description of mostly the Himalayan and hill tribes including the Tharu and Mushahars of terai but havenot tried to attempt the other castes and tribes of terai.

Chhetri has mentioned the different types of changes in society when the economical change is occurred. He has mentioned when economical change is occurred, the people start to dignify social prestige, children education, psychological change, imitation of life of others , access to the industrial goods and luxariousness, electronic appliance, market arrival and labor migration.(CNAS, Voll. 33).

The above mentioned scholars have tried to give ethnographic pictures of different ethnic groups of Nepal. But very few works have done on the terai and its marginalized people.

## **2.2 Theoretical Review**

Society is the web of social relation which is emerged in different dimensions and forms in different time and tense. There are many sociological models to study about the such status changes, reaction with society and the result of the reaction. Structural - functional model is one of them to study, researching, analyzing and describing the society scientifically.

M. Ginsberg (in Reason and unreason in Sociology) and Radcliffe-Brown (1952) have delineated social structure by forcing on the constitution of components and smoothly regulation of it. The other term of structure - functional theory is function. The different scholars have clarified the concept of function through the various definition and description but all of these descriptions of function have the main gist on the social performances or activity.

Abraham Francis (1992) has defined the function first as social gatherings, public ceremonies, meeting, rallies etc, secondly in mathematical sense. Third as the specialized activity, duties or official roles and forth as appropriate and sustaining activity played by a unit within the context of a large whole. Merton (1968) has described function as the observed consequences for the adaptation of adjustments of a society.

Collins dictionary of sociology (2000) has meant the structural functionalism as social system and the contribution particular features of this system to maintain it. Spencer has delineated structural - functionalism by comparing the society organism and enlightened that as the function of organism with the structures of body is increased; society also takes the same adjectives and broadens its function with the structure.

Talcott parson's view

Parsons believes that there are four functional imperatives that are necessary for all systems.

1. Adoption: a system must cope with external situational agencies. It must adapt to its environment and adapt the environment to its needs.

2. Goal attainment: a system must define and achieve its primary goals.
3. Integration: A system must regulate the interrelationship of its components parts. It must also manage the relationship among the other three functional imperatives.
4. Latency (pattern Maintenance): a system must furnish, maintain and renew both the motivations or individuals and the cultural patterns that create and sustain the motivation.

Radcliffe -Brown has given the more emphasis on the structure of society and enlightened that when the structure is created, the function is emerged itself. He has emphasized on the dimensions of clanship and affinity to study the society. He quotes that the backward society is determined by the interrelationship of family, economical and political organization of society.

All the sociologist have summarized structural functionalism model to describe and analyse how society is possible and how the social order and function is maintained.

Acharya (2065) has mentioned the definition of social change by quoting the Ginsberg that social change is a change in social structure e.g. the composition or balance of its parts of the types of its organization and furthered the definition of Kingslay Davis that cultural change as cultural change embraces all changes occurring in any branch of cultural including art, science, technology, philosophy etc. as well as changes in the forms and rules of social organization.

Lapiere (1965) defines social structure as the socialization men into the cultural of their society.

### **2.3 The Kewat 'Keut'**

It has already been mentioned that there are very few sociologist and anthropologist who have studied of tribes of terai in Nepal. But almost no sociological and anthropological research has been done by both native and foreign researchers about kewat of Nepal. Therefore we have to relay on Indian literatures.



Bista (2042), a renowned anthropologist, is also silence in his book about kewat. He says only that kewats are kept as the farm guard and farm labors in terai by the landlords.

Sharma (2039) says “Aagneya has come from west in this sub- continent after the Negrito. The Aagneya has started to farm the land by digging it with spade. Now a day, they are known as Santhal and Munda etc. This Aagneya is also known as 'Nishad' in Sanskrit literatures. The Aagneya were very capable in voyage. They used to cross the sea also.

Sharma (2045) in his book 'Nepal Ra Yasaka Niwasi' has mentioned that kewat were landless peasant but the land reform act has provided the land to them and they became the land owners.

We cannot get sufficient literature about Nepali Kewats. But there are some more literature written in Indian context. Most of the writers have explained that the kewats are the Nishad and has been involving in fishing and boating. The below description of different writers presents the detail account of kewats.

In the second part of ' Ramcharit Manas ' , the writer has mentioned in chapter 'Aayodhya kand' about kewat (nishad) that when Ram (hero) needed to cross the Ganga river with his wife Sita and brother Laxman for jungle, he requested to kewat for fairing his boat(canoe) for crossing the Ganga. Kewat washed their feet and drank it. Only then let them to sit them in his boat and crossed the Ganga River.

In the holy book of Hindu mythology 'The Mahabharat' in chapter 'Aadi parv' the writer has mentioned about Kewat (Nishad) as the ferryman and fishing man through the story. The writer has also quoted that king Shantnu of Hastinapur (the ancient state of Indian sub continent) married with the daughter of the kewat (nishad).

In Google website, it is mentioned that the kewast are a community of boatman who live along the banks of Ganga River. Their name comes from the Sanskrit word 'Kaivarta' which means the dweller of water. According to their tradition, they are descend of

Nishad, son of mythological king Venu. They claim to be Suryabanshi kshatriya. Their main sub groups are the Banphar, Dhivar, Balvarma, Sorahiya, Kairata and Tiar. The Banphar considers themselves to be superior to other groups. They live in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar of India. In Bihar they are both cultivator and boatman. The communities are also known as kaut or Keot. There is a considerable differences of opinion as to the origin of the word Kewat. According to some, it is derived from the Hindi words ka for water and varta for livelihood. They are found in Bhagalpur, Darbhanga, Muzzapharpur etc. Their main Gotras in the state are the Ayudhiya, Bahiawork, Ghibihar and Machna.

R.V. Russel says in his book 'The Tribes and castes of the central provinces of India -vol. 3 (from E-library) "Kewats are taken as the non-Aryan. Concerning the origin of the name Kaivarta, there has been considerable different of opinion. Some derive it from ka, water and Varata, livelihood ; but Lassen says that the use of ka in this sense is extremely unusual in Sanskrit, and that the true derivation is Kivarta a corruption of kimvarta, meaning a person following a low or degrading occupation .This he adds would be in keeping with the pedigree assigned to the caste in Manu, where the kaivarta also known as Margava or Dasa is said to have been begotten by a Nishada father and an Ayogavi mother and to subsist by his labor in boats. He again further says that they worship Chaurasi Devi, dwells in their boats and keeps them from sinking and Hindu have started to take water since the day of the Ramayan when one kewat drank the feet washing water of Ram at the time of crossing river."

Ghurye (1979) says by giving the example of Jatak (a mythological book) that the jatak further bears testimony to the then incipient practice of naming sub-division of artisans on the basis of differences in the methods employed in carrying on the craft. Thus the fisherman who used nets and baskets were called 'kevattas'.

Blunt (1969) says that Chamaras are begotten from the union from the Nishad (kewat) husband and Chandala wife. He says about their social institution 'panchayat ' that castes

with panchayat fall into four classes in which kewat is submitted in those connected with a single defined occupation traditional or acquired. Blunt has quoted kewat as the fisherman and boatman and says that the panchayat procedure in kewat 'the offender is compelled to stand on one leg whilst undergoing examination.'

Hutton ( 1963) says in his book 'Castes in India' " kewat is a caste of cultivating and fishing of upper India and adds that the kaibarttas of Bengal , perhaps a tribe originally , were long regarded themselves as a single caste divided occupationally into Jaliya kaibartta who practiced the calling of fisherman and Haliya kaibartta who lived by agriculture. But as the latter is a respectably regarded mode of life which fishing is despised calling, in the practices arose on the part of the Haliya Kaibarttas of exacting high prices for their daughters when married by Jaliya kaibarttas while themselves refusing to marry Jaliya women. Eventually the Haliya kaibarttas broke away entirely banning all intermarriage with the Jaliya kaibartta and succeed in getting recognition as a separate caste under the name of Mahishya .The same caste probably affords another instance of the tendency of castes to split up as the kewat caste appear to have belonged to originally to the same caste as the kaivarttas, and the names were synonymous in Orissa after the two were quite distinct in Bihar and Bengal. He further says about their foodings that kewat will not eat fowl of pork, will eat crocodile and tortoise.

Dutta (1969) says "the word 'kaivarta' or 'kevarta' seems to be the sanskritized form of the word kevatta or kewatta which was probably the name of some aboriginal tribe like the Nishad, Pukka etc. whom the Aryans encountered in the valley of Ganges. The original form of the word is retained in the early Buddhist literature (e.g. Dighanikaya, Brahmajala sutta) and in Ashoka's inscription and services in modern times as the name of sub-caste of fisherman, the kewat. From a tribal name kevarta or kaivarta became a caste name of functional nature. At the time when the kaivartas were first met by the Vedic Aryans, they were in a very a very primitive stage of culture and their main occupation was hunting and fishing. Manu (x, 34) appropriately points out relationship in

race between the kaivartas and Nishads another of the aboriginal tribes of Northern India. The Mahavarta (Anushashan chapter 51 & 52) makes the two words kaivarta and Nishada synonymous. It is when a section of kaivartas advanced in culture, gave up their hunting and fishing life and settled as cultivators of the soil that their status was improved.

Dutta has revealed about the changed profession of the kaivarttas by quoting in "The original profession of kaivartta , that they were fisherman and a boatman while in later times , a section of them gave up their traditional occupation and took to agriculture."

These above mentioned literatures have given various types of description about different ethnic /caste groups. All of them are not ethnography. They are important for this study .They have given many useful knowledge's directly. Therefore, the researcher has felt a great value of these literatures during the preparation of this dissertation.

The Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 by UNO has been forcing its nation members for the respecting of all the castes and minor groups of the world because of the humanity. Such types of international declaration, the globalization, NGO/INGO, westernization, modernization, industrialization, development of science & technology and media & communication have affected the world's social structure to be converted by abolishing the social inequality and injustice. Nepal is also affected by the changes of time and tense and transformation of world society. When the social and cultural change take place in the society, the affect of these change are seen in social institution i.e. marriage, family, kinship, social behavior i.e. caste hierarchy, relation of high caste and backward caste or marginalized etc., social relation, life styles i.e. fooding system, dress, technological consuming , education, occupation and recreational methods. All above mentioned changes can not been submitted in this thesis because of the lack of time and resource and the vastness of subject matter of the social and cultural change.

So in such present changing context of society, it is tried to describe the changes on family, festival, Rites of Passage, Marriage , traditional occupation and life of economical change on studied population.

## **CHAPTER - THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter is concerned with the methodological approach adopted in the study area.

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

Suga Bhawani patti of Suga VDC is selected as the study area. It is situated in Mahottari district. It lies in the east of the district headquarters of Mahottari and has touched the Indian border. This VDC is selected because of largest settlement of Kewat in this area and the backward people are in majority and easy access of researcher. Secondly, there is no river in the surrounding of this village which has hastened in the traditional earnings of Kewat and the other castes are affected by the modernization and globalization and many of them have diverted from their traditional occupation and occupied the modern methods of surviving which might have also affected the kewats. So in such condition to know about them, become very interesting. Thirdly, no ethnography study has been carried about the Kewat in this area.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The study is descriptive as well as analytical in nature. Being a descriptive work, it does not have any formal hypothesis regarding socio-economic status of Kewats in Mahottari district. The main focus of the study is to find out and analyze the socio-economic status of Kewat of Suga VDC through the description of institution, social organization and economic condition of Kewats.

### **3.3 Sampling**

The purposive sampling method is used to quest the information about the studied population. It becomes very suitable for this study due to the small universe of Kewat community in Suga VDC .All the 16 households of Kewat in Suga VDC were included in the household survey. A household list or schedule was prepared during the survey and it was used for the purpose of eliciting information. It was not possible to visit every household members of the family; therefore the heads of household and other required members were included for the collecting of information.

### **3.4 Sources Of Data**

Although the study depends mainly upon primary data, secondary data have also been used where it was necessary. Secondary data are obtained from government's census and relevant literatures about the Kewats. These secondary information were helpful to check the validity and reliability of empirical data.

Primary data are obtained from household survey, participatory observation and interview methods. From the household survey, both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected.

### **3.5 Data Collection Methods**

The instruments to collect the necessary data are described in the subsections that follow:

#### **3.5.1 Observation**

Participant observation is the main source for obtaining primary data. The observation is used by the researcher to collect information about the settlement patterns, house structure, dresses and ornaments, social behavior and cattle holding, marriage system,

celebration of some festivals and using of electronic appliances, and psychological change.

### **3.5.2 Household Survey**

In order to get reliable and qualifiable data about socio-economic background of kewat, a household list was prepared and all the 16 households in which the household head acted as the main respondent were surveyed, observed and interviewed.

### **3.5.3 Interview**

The interview was held with Key informants who are important sources of acquiring anthropological data. Key informants are those people who know a great deal about the community under study. The guardians of Kewats were selected as key informants and were interviewed for obtaining key information required by the present study. They provides in -depth information about socio- cultural practices and economic activities and changes in the Kewat community.

### **3.6 Method Of Data Analysis**

The data obtained from field work has been analyzed by utilizing statistical tools. Important characteristics of population such as age and sex composition old and young dependency ratio, family structure, overall educational status and current involvement in education, occupation composition, source of income, their debts on various activities etc. have been calculated and analyzed in detail.

Many socio-economic characteristics of males and females among different age groups have been compared to show the trends of change in socio- economic sectors. Attitude of the respondents towards their traditional occupation are also analyzed. Different types of rituals and customs have also been analyzed on the basis of field observation and key

informants interview. The primary data have been compared with secondary data where it was necessary.

### **3.7 Limitation Of The Study**

Each and every study has its own limitations .No study can be free from short coming and drawbacks because of various constraints and this study is not exceptional one.

It was not possible to include in the study all the Kewat scattered all over the country. Thus, the first limitation is that the size of population under the study is small. Only household heads were selected as respondents. The study was focused only on changing socio-economic status of Kewat in Suga VDC of Mahottari districts.

This study is also limited by both lack of time and financial constraints. Because of the lack of much practical knowledge in research methodology, errors might have occurred in collecting information. However, efforts were made to elicit accurate information.

The main limitation of the study is that the study was conducted as a case study of small area with the primary objectives of the partial fulfillment of the master degree required in sociology; therefore, detailed research was not possible.



## CHAPTER - FOUR

### THE SETTING OF THE STUDY AREA AND POPULATION

This chapter includes the demographic characteristics of the population of the study area.

#### 4.1 Population

The total population of Nepal is 23,151,423 and the total number of Kewat is 136,953. The population of Mahottari district is 553,481 which has included of 92 castes. Kewat has occupied 1.044% of the total population of the district. (Census 2001)

The population of the study area (Suga VDC) is 5,180 among them Brahmin(32.16%), Muslim (16.31%), Nuniya(14.05%), kayastha(8.64%), Barae (7%), Kewat (3.68%), Lohar(3.28%), Dhanuk (3.01%), Kurmi (2.22%), Hajam (2.08%), Baniya(2%), Dushadh(0.016%), Chamar(1.44%), Dhobi(1.33%), Teli(0.54%), Haluwai(0.28%) , unidentified (0.1540%) and others( 0.077%). (Census 2001)

The above figure indicates that Brahmins, Muslim, Nuniya and Kayastha are dominant communities of the study area. The Kewat has occupied only 3.68%.

#### 4.2 Ethnic Composition

Mahottari district is heterogeneous in terms of ethnic composition . So the study area is not exceptional. The following table shows ethnic composition of the study area.

Table no.1

Ethnic composition of population of the study area.

<b>Caste/ Ethnic</b>	No. of HHs	Percentage	Male	Female	Total	Percentage	Average Family Size
Brahmin	276	33.69	680	685	1365	27.614	4.95
Muslim	79	9.64	342	658	700	14.161	8.86
Nuniya	123	15.01	420	440	860	17.398	7.00
Kayastha	101	12.33	242	260	502	10.155	5.00
kewat	16	1.95	56	50	106	2.144	6.67
Lohar/Barai	87	10.62	292	305	597	12.077	6.86
Dhanuk	30	3.66	84	91	175	3.540	5.95
Kurmi	18	2.19	55	45	100	2.023	5.55
Hajam	18	2.19	67	54	121	2.447	6.72
Baniya	20	2.44	60	47	107	2.366	5.85
Dusadh	20	2.44	43	60	103	2.083	5.15
Chamar	12	1.46	45	34	79	1.598	6.58
Dhobi	10	1.22	28	37	65	1.314	6.5
Teli	6	0.73	19	16	35	0.708	5.83
Haluwai	3	0.36	11	7	18	0.364	6.00
total	819	100	2444	2489	4933	100	

Source: VDC profile, 2067

The Brahmins are in the dominant status in the study area. The family size of the Muslim is the highest in the study area. The kewat consists of the only 16 households and the average family size of the kewats is 6.67. The Brahmins has the lowest household size. Studied population has occupied 2.14% of the total population which is in minority level. This minority level denotes the other role of kewats in society also. 56 male and 50 female are living in the studied population including the all aged population. They have

only 16 household in the study area. The male size denotes the failure of the concept of the sex ratio of nation.

### 4.3 Age/ Sex Composition Of The study Area

**Table No 2**

**Age/sex Composition of the Caste/ Ethnic group**

<b>Castes</b>		<b>0-5 Years</b>	<b>6-14 Years</b>	<b>15-59 Years</b>	<b>60+ years</b>	<b>Total</b>
Brahmins	M	102	220	328	30	680
	F	107	225	311	45	685
Muslim	M	114	115	98	15	342
	F	120	116	102	20	358
Nuniya	M	99	114	137	70	420
	F	105	127	145	63	440
Kayastha	M	55	65	87	35	242
	F	36	88	103	33	260
Kewat	M	14	15	25	2	56
	F	16	11	22	1	50
Lohar/Barai	M	75	85	107	25	292
	F	90	99	93	23	305
Dhanuk		20	26	35	3	84
	M	26	30	28	7	91
	F					

Kurmi		15	18	20	2	55
	M	12	11	22	0	45
	F					
Hajam	M	18	19	28	2	67
	F	16	11	24	3	54
Baniya	M	9	23	26	2	60
	F	8	16	23	0	47
Dusadh	M	4	7	30	2	43
	F	6	12	35	7	60
Chamar	M	8	12	23	2	45
	F	6	9	19	0	34
Dhobi	M	3	6	18	1	28
	F	6	8	22	1	37
Teli	M	4	6	98	0	19
	F	2	4		2	16
Haluwai	M	5	2	4	0	11
	F	2	0	5	0	7

**Source: VDC profile, 2067**

The age/sex composition shows the number of small children, number of female and male, number of dependent and active population. The grouping of (6-14) shows growing active generation of the study area. The active age group (15-49) of kewat is 44.33% in which only the 46.80% female lies. The (6-14) age group of kewats is only 24.52 % which will cause the lack of the active manpower in coming population in this community.

Instead of standard age grouping (0-5, 6-14, 15-59, 60+ ) four aged groups have been broken down with 0-5 years being the children age group some of which are involved on school, 15-59 years is taken as the active age group and the 60 + age group is taken as

the dependent population. The table no. 2 gives the age structure and sex composition of all caste/ ethnic groups in the study area.

From the census, as shown in table among the total population (4933), there are 2444 (49.54%) male and 2489(50.46%) females and the sex ratio is 98.19 .The economically most active and potential age group (15-59) occupies the greatest portion of population, i.e. 1937out of 4933 or about 40%. Children since six years of age start to join the household work. Their contribution is specially to look after small children and domestic work. In really they became economically active since that age, though it is not recognized often. Regarding this fact, the large part of the population i.e. about 71% comes under this category. That is age between 6to 59 years. In Kewat community, the number of age group 15-59 is the highest and the 60+ is the smallest.

2611(nearly 53%) of the population are aged below 15 i.e. under the category of the children. There seem to be no significant differences between number of males and females. But leaving other ethnic groups, only Kewat, the sex ratio is 112 % which seems difference than other groups.

#### **4.4 Religion, Language And Dialects**

The study area is hetero religious. Hinduism is the dominant religion followed by the different ethnic/ cultural groups. However they follow their different cultural practices they are mainly Hindus. Secondly, Islam is also followed.

Maithili language is the main language in the study area. The Kewats speak Maithili and follow their language and Maithili is used as the dialects in the study area.

#### **4.5 Educational Status Of The Study Area.**

In the study area, educational status is different by the caste/ethnic group. The following table shows the educational status of the study area.

**Table no. 3**

**Educational status of the people of the study area.**

Castes	Illiterac	General	Primar	Lower	Seconda	Higher	Total No.
	y	literate	y	Seconda		Educati	
	M	M	M	M	M	M	n.
	F	F	F	F	F	F	M
							F
Brahmin	99	80	69	125	157	150	680
	114	75	65	128	158	145	685
Kayastha	19	9	55	54	40	65	242
	35	17	52	69	62	25	260
kewat	22	11	15	6	1	1	56
	24	9	12	5	0	0	50
Hajam	9	11	15	13	12	7	67
	13	6	13	11	7	4	54

**SOURCE; The castes account, 2067.**

The educational status of the available caste shows that the Brahmin has the highest literate number because of the high population. The lowest illiterate population is in kayastha and the kewats has the 43.39 % illiterate and the remained is the literate. The literacy rate of kewats is only 56.61% which has included the general literacy, lower secondary, secondary and higher secondary etc. The higher secondary level of certificate is achieved by only one person which occupies the 0.94%.

#### 4.6 Occupation

The major source of livelihood of Nepal is agriculture. Of the total population, almost 65.70% depend on agriculture and remaining are involved in mining and quarrying(0.16%), Manufacturing(8.81 %), electricity, gas and water (1.49%), construction(2.89%), commerce( 9.94%), transport and communication( 1.63%), finance and business services (6.70%) others(1.65%) and industry not stated (0.22%) (CBS, 2001 ).

**Table No. 4**

**Occupational status of the study area.**

Occupation	population
Agriculture	65%
Business	9%
Job	4.5%
Foreign employment	9%
Carpentry	6%
Tailoring	0.5%
Technician	1.77%
Clerk	1.3%
others	3%
total	100%

Source: VDC profile, 2067.

Agriculture is the major occupation of the study area. A vast majority of the people have to supplement in with either caste based occupational work or wage labor or both. Agriculture is the dominant occupation in study area. Nearly, 65% depends on agriculture and remaining are involved in business(9%), Job(4.5%) , foreign employment( 9%). The occupation data shows due to the lack of literacy, most of the people of study area are involved in the agriculture. Second option of the occupation, in the study area , is business and foreign employment.

#### **4.7 Dependency Burden**

The dependency ratio is generally considered as a common demographic indicator used to measure the economic implication of the age structure. The population in the range (15-59 which is quite opt for the study area) is considered to be earning members and those below fifteen and above sixty as the dependents. However, the populations considered as dependent also participate in household and other activities outside the house too. But the matter of fact is that they are not generally considered as the working manpower in term of economic sense.

Among the total population, about 40% belong to 15-59 years of age group. But the majority of the population belongs to the independent population. In Kewat the total dependent population is nearly 56% in which the growing population is in huge 52.82% which will cover soon the independency. On the whole, an important aspect of this scenario is that the burden of old dependency in kewat is small. But the child dependency is greater than the old dependency.

#### **4.8 House Size And Structure**



The average family size of Kewat is 6.67 which are greater than the national average of 5.4(CBS, 2001). It is so, because the fertility rate is high in the Kewat society. All the families of the Kewats are nuclear. The highest family size is in Muslim in the study area.

#### **4.9 Settlement Pattern And House Structure**

Settlement is also an indication in Nepal of the ethnic compactness of the different communities .The settlements of Kewats are generally situated among the settlements of other castes people. Generally, the Kewat of the study area are residing in two different toles. Their settlements are compacted with the Brahmins, Dhanuk, Kayastha, pasi and Baniya. Most of the houses are made of mud and thatched roof sloping toward two sides by the using of the bamboo, straw, wood, tiles and other local materials. Later the straw or jhaanjh taanti (wall of using bamboo trellis) is plastered by mixture of mud and cow dung and the floor is covered by thin cow or oxen dung layer.

All the members of the family both married and unmarried sleep either in the kitchen or worshipping room or in the shed. Only few families have made the provision of the separate living room for the couples. Generally, they keep the kitchen and worshipping activities in the same room. They clean their house especially in the festivals.

As the size of the houses is very small and narrow because of the poverty, separated sons are also found living together cooking separate hearth. In the study area, there is a house where two family members are living together sharing one small house using separate kitchen.

## **CHAPTER-FIVE**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

This chapter of the study consists of the main part of the study. It tends to focus on the analysis and discussion of empirical data obtained from the field survey. Demographic features of the study area, socio-cultural life and economy of the kewats are analyzed in detail. The interpretation to the facts are tried to relate with immediate socio-economic condition of the study population.

#### **5.1 Socio-Economic Characteristics Of The Sample Studied Population**

This section has consisted of the context of the studied population and the house hold characteristics including the economical and social characteristics which are related to the kewats of the study area.

### 5.1.1 Income

Income is the source of running of mouth to hand. Income, in this section, denotes the following of money through different criteria in kewats. Specially the sources of income in kewats family are business, wages labor, foreign employment and rickshaw pulling.

**Table no 5**

#### **Income Status**

income amount in one month in NRS	HHS	percentage
Up to 2000	2	12.5%
2000 to 6000	7	43.75%
6000 to10000	4	25%
10000 to 15000	1	6.25%
15000 to 18000	2	12.5%
Total	16	100%

Source; Field survey, 2067.

The above income table shows that 12.5% studied populations have up to two thousand monthly income which denotes the rareness of fulfilling of basic needs also because of the large family size. The highest monthly income of them are up to 18 thousands by 12.5% households. This rank of income is obtained from the foreign employment. The 81.25% household has up to ten thousand monthly income only which can't fulfill the basic needs easily in the context of Nepalese market.

### 5.1.2 Land Holding

In an agrarian economy, the extent of ownership of land is the main indicator of relative economic status of the people. The following table gives the land holding pattern of studied populations.

**Table no. 6**

**Land Holding Patterns Of Studied Population.**

<b>Size of land (In Katha)</b>	<b>HHS No.</b>	<b>Percent</b>
landless completely	2	12.5%
land less than 5 Kattha	2	12.5%
land less than 1 Kattha	12	75%
Total	16	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2067. (Note 1 Bigha=20 kattha, 1hector=30 Kattha.)

The above table shows that all of them are landless. They have the land where they have made the homes which are donated to them by the landlord .The remained land, after the making house is used, as vein because of the unfertileness. The 75% has the land less than 1 Kattha where they are maintaining hardly the settlement .Only 12.5% has land more than1 Kattha but less than 5 Kattha. The land owning is done by them only after the democracy of 1990 AD . The land what is achieved by them is based specially on the economical status of them. They were living in the land of others or landlords. After the restoration democracy, the land lord sold their land to those kewats who were living on them.

Thus, it is appeared that they cannot survive on own land so they have to rent the land with other caste people for agriculture.

**5.1.3 Food Sufficiency**

This section includes the supplying of food from their own land .

**Table no 7**

### Food Sufficiency of household

	<b>Below 1 months</b>	<b>Below 3 months</b>	<b>Below 6 months</b>
No of HHs	14	2	-
Percentage	87.5%	12.5%	

Source: Field Survey, 2067.

The above table's shows that among the total household of Kewat, 14 households of Kewats have the food sufficiency of either 1 months or less than it also. Only 12.5% household have the food sufficiency rarely up to 3 months from their own land because of the lack of the land. They can achieve the supply of food from own land because of the nuclear family . It is cleared from the interview that the Kewat cannot depend upon own land for the surviving of life so they do different activities for the running of mouth to hand in the study area. But the alternative methods as business, service oriented labor, foreign employment which is occupied by them help in the fulfilling of foods. Their food supplying depends upon their economy now, not on their land.

#### 5.1.4 Livestock

Livestock is also an important source of income of rural population. It supports the farming activity. It is also a source of protein for people. The importance of domestic animals is not limited only to economic aspects. Some animals are socio-culturally and religiously more important in Hindu society. In Kewat society, they tame different types of domestic animals but in very few numbers. The number of domestic animals and birds is given in the table.

**Table no. 8**

#### Livestock Keeping In Studied Society

<b>Livestock</b>	<b>HHs</b>	<b>Number</b>
------------------	------------	---------------

Cow	2	2
Ox	1	1
Buffalo	3	3
Goat	7	26
Pigeon	1	6
Calf	2	2
Total	16	40

Source: Field Survey, 2067.

The above table shows that the number of livestock per household is limited. Six different types of domestic animals and birds are tamed for domestic consumption and for commercial purposes. Ox is tamed for ploughing land .Cow and buffalo are tamed for the dung and milk which provide the well economical support for the family. The pigeons and goats are tamed for the purposes of meat and earning of money also.

The number of the domestic animal is not large because of the weak economic and lack of the manpower to care it. One has to afford the large money to buy it. Thus, it is appeared that the animal husbandry, in some extent, is directly influenced by the limited landholding.

### 5.1.5 Status of Debtness

**Table no. 9**

#### **Status Of Debt In Kewats.**

<b>Amount of debt( in Rs)</b>	<b>No. of HHs</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than 1000	2	12.5%
1000-5000	2	12.5%
6000-10000	4	25%
11000- 15000	5	31.25%

16000- 20000	3	18.75%
20000+	-----	
No indebted	-----	
Total	16	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2067 Note: interest is not included in debt.

The above table shows that all of the studied populations are indebted. Only 2 households have the debt less than 1000 where as the 31.25% has the debt more than 11thousnd and 18.75% has the more than 16000. The source of their loan is the local people in high interest which they have taken either in the marriage of the daughter or in the treatment or in the death rites of the parents. One key informant told that he was not seeing any way to pay the debt and there was the possibility of the capturing of the land in few months.

## **5.2 Social Characteristics Of Sample Studied Population**

### **5.2.1 Occupation**

The Kewats are associated with the ferrymen, fishermen, carrying of BHAR and CHARDOLAN as traditional occupation. But the situation has been changed a lot. Very few of the Kewat are related with their traditional occupation because of the lack of the river in the study area, adequacy of the transportation etc. Some Kewats are still involved in the CHARDOLAN activities but they are not taking it as the main occupation. They can't survive only by this work. Therefore, they are compelled to change their occupation.

The main occupation of Nepalese is agriculture. Out of the total population, 65% are related to the agriculture (census, 2001). Likewise other people of Nepal, Kewats are also involved in the agriculture. Though the Kewats do not have their own land, they work in

other's land in study area. They take land rent and give half of the production to the land owner. In the study area, the Kewats who are involved in agriculture are better in economic condition than the others. They do the solving of foods problem by the rent agriculture.

The following table gives a glimpse of the occupational status of the Kewats.

**Table no. 10**  
**Occupational status of studied population**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>No. of Household</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1. Agriculture	2	12.5%
2. Labor	6	37.5%
3. Foreign service	2	25%
4. Service India	1	6.25%
5. Rickshaw pulling	4	25%
6. Service	1	6.25%
Total	16	100%

Source: field survey, 2067.

The above table shows that the main occupations of Kewats are labor and rickshaw pulling. Only 6.25 % are involved in service. Foreign employment is adopted by 25% and service in India is 6.25%.The involvement of the kewats mostly in labor and rickshaw pulling shows that due to illiteracy they are involved in the low level of occupation.

The main interesting matter is that none of the Kewat has taken their traditional occupation as the main occupation in study area. But they fulfill their traditional occupational as the side jobs.

### **5.2.2 Education**



Education is very essential factor for accelerating the development of any community. If people are educated, their living standard is also improved. Thus, education plays a vital role in developing knowledge and skill of the people.

In the past, the lower caste people did not send their children to school. Before the establishment of democracy in 1950, no lower caste people were given chance to enter the school education. Therefore, the majority of the lower and depressed caste people are still far behind in the field of education.

Hence, the kewat were also backward and suppressed caste. They were also deprived of formal education before the promulgation of New Civil Code 1964. Even today, they lag behind in the field of higher education. In present, the kewat of the study area have occupied only one person who has achieved the overseer's certificate. Except him no one has passed SLC yet in the kewat of the study area.

The table no. 3 shows that the educational status of the study area is various according to the caste. Kayastha are in the best position. and the kewat is in the lowest position in literacy and the total illiterate in kewats are 43.33%. Females of kewats in the study area are back in the literacy status. The higher education achiever is only 0.94% in the studied population. From this literacy rate for higher education shows that the education is valueless among the studied population. Except one candidate, No one has achieved the secondary level education which is the illiteracy of studied population.

The main causes of illiteracy are their ignorance and poverty. Although secondary education is free, they do not send their children to school because they are not aware towards education. They send their children to work for solving hand to mouth problem.

### **5.2.3 Marital Status**

The marital status denotes the living of couples in the studied population. This section indicates the social marital status of the study population. It denotes about the marital life.

Whether the study populations are in divorced life or single life or married life can be concepted from this.

**Table no 11**

**Marital Status Of Kewats**

Unmarried	couples	widow	widower	separated/divorced
45	22	10	7	-----

Source; Field survey, 2067.

The 45 people of kewats are unmarried who are under the age of 14 and the 22 couples are living with which are plotted by the both young and elder couples. 10 widows are surviving there and 7 widowers also remains which denotes that female have the more life expectancy than the male and no case was found about the separated kewats.

**5.2.4 Religion**

The religion is the social institution which is emerged to tie the society and make them to be united. It is the faith on particular thing or abstract elements. According to table no.1,83. 83% people are the followers of the Hindu mythology. They are Hindu. All the kewats follow the Hindu religion. But they worship some difference gods and goddess than other Hindu people. The kewats worship KALI, BANI and GORAIYA as their kuldeity in the study area. They also worship Ram, Krishna etc according to Hindu mythology. They put DHAJA( triangular piece of red cloth tying with mango leaves on the long green bamboo) in their courtyard as the symbol of Hanuman. They think that the pleasure and misery are directly related to gods. They have the deep faith on their kuldeity.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SOCIO - CULTURAL LIFE OF KEWATS**

#### **6.1 Cultural Life Of Kewats**

##### **6.1.1 Background Of The Studied Population.**

According to a key informant that the village was settled by one great sage SHUKDEV (an ascetic fervor and a great philosopher) of the Vedic age. It is believed that sage SHUKDEV had dug up one pond which in on the name of the same sage i.e. SHUKDEV Sara. The same sage had maintained the settle of the different types of castes to live

dependently by the fulfillment the needs of each other. There are total 17 castes in this study area.

Another key informants, from the other caste informed that the study area and the surrounding were the dense forest where different hermitages were made and the hermit like SHUKDEV and BHRIGU did the ascetic fervor and the settlement of the people were done by the same sages. Another quote is that generally the study area was in the territory of Mithila or Tirhuta State where people of the different parts of Mithila or Tirhuta had migrated with different types of serving castes to settle there. When they knew about the religious importance of the surrounding, they have made the settlement and appointed the different castes in the village according to their needs and provided the land to them. Especially it was done by the Brahmin to maintain the settlement of the other castes. They told that they had not been from India, just the national boundary has been increased and decreased. After the Mithila or Tirhuta state, their land had come under the Makawanpur and later it was won by the King Prithvi Narayan Shah and one single Nepal was made and they become the Nepali.

The Kewats were also serving castes and invited to settle there in the ancient time. They came their and changed their occupation by involving in the farming, wages labor, and other cultural work as carrying of BHAR( specially in the Brahmin and Kayastha and other castes also when any function is held in the relatives, the other relatives send the gift and the gift is carried in two baskets hanging on a stick and it is carried by the Kewat on shoulder ) and CHAR DOLAN ( a special type of the fan made of the tail-hair of the horse which is used in the marriage time.) . The Land Reform Act 2021B.S. had made the provision of the getting of the certificate of the land owner to Kewats. In other words, they have been engaged in agriculture, traditional occupation i.e. CHAR DOLAN (BHAR is already abolished) and other servicing activities.

### **6.1.2 A Legend about Their Origin**

During the field work, the researcher heard an interesting tale about the origin of Kewat from the key informants.

Once upon a time, they were also in the high castes. A woman had drunk the water which was used by a Brahmin male to wash his feet. The woman became the pregnant and the child who was begotten was degraded to the sudra. The same child became the ancestor of Kewat because he was born from the feet and the same child went at the bank of river to survive his life and became the ferry men and fishermen.

Later the same caste was appointed in the CHAR DOLAN in the marriage of Ram and Sita (hero and heroine of the Ramayana) and they got the new occupation. As they were in the attendant caste, they had occupied the carrying of Bhar in Mithila also.

## **6.2 Social Characteristics Of Kewats In The Study Area.**

### **6.2.1 Family**

Family is a universal institution. It is found in every society. It fulfills emotional and physical needs of its members. It is a biological unit composed of group of persons and Kins who are related through blood and marriage. It usually begins when the partners are married because marriage is the basis of family.

The family system is divided into three category; nuclear, joint and extended. In a nuclear family, there is a man his wife who lives together with or without their unmarried offspring. But there cannot be found completely nuclear type of family system in Nepali society.

Another types of family is joint where married children with their spouses and the children live with the parents and the third is extended family where the family in which the members of different generation such as grandparents, parents, brother, children, sister in laws, uncle and aunt live together is called an extended family. In this, two or more nuclear family live and share the same kitchen and live under the same roof.

It is generally believed that majority of families in Nepal are joint because of the culture and agriculture and the head of the family, who is usually the father, controls the family member and the property.

In Kewat society of study area, it is found that they are patrilineat families. Their descendants are traced through the line of father i.e. to sons and not the mother. Like other patrilineat society, the eldest male Kewat becomes the head of the family and control the family.

In Kewat society, family property is shared and managed equally among the sons when the family breaks up. According to the respondents the causes of the breaking up the family is the conflict between the wives of brother or the conflict between the mother in law and daughter in law or dishonesty in the earning of the family member.

ALL of the 16 households of Kewats in the study area is nuclear family.

### **6.2.2 Marriage**

Marriage is socially recognized institution for having legitimate sexual relationship between a man and a woman for the protection, upbringing maintenance and socialization of the children through establishing a family. It is a strong institution in Hindu society and perhaps in every other society. According to social rules and regulations and their belief system, types and forms of marriage varies widely. In the Kewat Society, Especially two types of marriage systems are in practice.

1. Magi Bibah (Arrange Marriage)
2. Man Khushi Bibah or Bhagi Bibah ( Love Marriage)

In the arrange marriage system, among Kewats, the initiative is always supposed to take place from the bride's side. When a girl attains full age for marriage, his father and some relatives look for a suitable bridegroom for her. A mediator, called BARTUHAR from

the girl's side goes to request for the hand of the boys to boy's home commences dialogue with the boy's parents. This is called BARTUHARI. If boy's guardians are in the mood to accept the proposal, they talk about the dowry system. But if they are not in the mood to accept the proposal, they deny. After the fixation of the dowry, they fix the date of the marriage and JANATI.

When the date for marriage is fixed, the bride and groom both are not allowed to work. They are kept safely. The paste of tumeric is plastered on bride & groom's body by their women relatives in their village at the bank of either river or pond. It is called MATAKOR (the digging of the mud which is used in marriage). The Matakor is performed in the evening one day before the marriage. The bride and bride groom are brought by their female relatives by covering their heads with lappet.

On the fixed day of wedding, the janti moves towards bride's house generally at the evening time. The women of the bridegroom's society spread the red colored paddy on the bridegrooms as the auspicious. At the time the janti plays the musical instruments. On this occasion various happy & sweet songs are sung. They also dance happily. Before reaching bride's house, the participants of the procession are welcomed by the family of bride. It is called Barat swagat.

After the welcome, the janti take the first lunch by taking the sweets and fruits which is served by the bride's side. Then, they take the meal, given by bride's side. Generally the cultural delicious things are served. The meal's standard depends on the economic condition of bride's parents.

First the bride groom is inspected by the women of the bride's side by asking the different joking questions and doing the activities. The women sing song based on the Ramayana time. The KANYADAN (donating of bride by parents) are done in which the bride groom is provided the gift. They give different things as dowry (Dahej). The gift's quality depends on the economic condition of bride's parent. After then the bride groom put sindur (Vermilion Powder) on the bride's forehead. The "Sindur Putting" is done by the

enchancing of Mantra of VEDA which is preached by the Brahmin Priest. Then the LABA CHIRAYAU is done.

Another day the JANTI takes the meal which is called BHAT KHAI (rice feeding) where the woman of bride's side sings song by using the rough words about the bridegroom's father and mother. At the time of the farewell of JANTI, the SAMADHI MILAN is done in which the father of bride and bridegroom's are covered with a shawl which is offered by the bride's father and the bride's father gives betel leaf and nut with money in the hand of bride groom's father and they embrace each other and the new clothes are offered to the bride groom's side and the farewell is finished. At the time of farewelling of bride, the relatives of bride weep and the JANATI returns bride grooms house with bride. On this happy occasion in the groom's house, all their kins and neighbors are invited to see the face of bride and all the visitors give the bless and gift to the bride. The bride is kept in the worshipping room for four days.

Then, the bride returned to father's home and she lives in father's home till the GAUNA is not done. When GAUNA (returning of bride after the maturity) is done from the bridegroom side to accept the day of the farewell of the bride by her parents and the bride is fare welled by the parents with the different gifts. Only then the bride and bridegrooms are allowed to be involved in the physical contact by being allowed to sleep together.

The another types of marriage systems prevailing in the Kewats community is love marriage but only one case of such love marriage was found in the study area. This love marriage is also the example of the inter-caste marriage in the studied population.

### **6.2.3 Kinship System**

Kinship system of the Kewat community is found to be similar to that of other communities of the region. Basically human relations can be categorized to the consanguinal and affinal. The kinship plays a significant role in human society in birth, death and so many other social and religious functions. All kinds of relations such as



through adoption of son or daughter and through friendship are found among Kewat in the study area.

Kewats, too, have an elaborate system of kinship which is based on both supposed and actual genealogical ties. Both affiance and consanguineous kinship exists among them. When a Kewat gets married, he or she establishes relationship not only with the married one. He /she establishes relationship with member of each other's family. There are also a large kin based on bond of blood .The Kewat includes nearly thirty three types of kinship which are given in annex one.

The Kinship terminology for addressing to the relatives is different in both the matrimonial relatives and patrilineal relatives.

A behavioral patter of different kin among Kewat is different. Mainly the kinship usages among the kewat are that of avoidance, joking relationship and exogamy.

A Kewat woman avoids the touching and speaking with her father in law and husband's elder brother. When she has to speak with them, she does with her face veiling with her sari. They speak only in emergency condition. Similarly, she also avoids husband's mama and Pisa. Dewar, bhauji, Nanaid, Nandoisa, sali and bahanoi have the joking relationship. They tease each other and make fun of each other sometimes. A Samadhi speak quite normally with another 'samadhi' but a 'samadhani' hides her face with sari at the sight of 'samadhi'.

#### **6.2.4 Rites of passage of Kewat**

Every body's life passes through different stages in different periods. In every stage, he performs different ritual ceremonies. Rites of birth, marriage (which is already mentioned) and death are the main rites of passage in Hinduism and these are called SANSKAR. The word SANSKAR means religious purificatory rites and ceremonies for sanctifying the body, mind and intellect of an individual so that he may become a full

fledged member of the community. These Sanskars also create an awareness of social status and privileges of the individual.

The styles of the performance of rites passage are different in every society. Therefore, there ways of performing rituals and some elaborate of these rituals and institutions are necessary to know how these are helpful in the substance of the society. And on the other hand it should be necessary to know to what extent are they preserving or changing their traditional rituals, which are maintaining the social structure of a society. The Kewats are also found performing these Sanskars according to their own culture.

### **Birth Rite**

Birth is the universal fact of human life, when a man and a woman get married; they are socially permitted to have sexual relations. After the conjugal life, they give birth to children and their social life start. Among Kewat when the members of the family know that one has become pregnant they begin to prepare for the day of delivery. They start to collect local herbs like methi, mitha and aduwa etc for preparing the medicine for feeding to the mother after the delivery. The pregnant woman is provided the proper care medical facilities also during the pregnancy. They provide the general food to pregnant woman because of the poverty.

There are some restrictions against the pregnant woman touching the dead body and to go in front of the snake and come in the ray of sun or moon at the time of eclipse. It is supposed if the pregnant women come in the contact of the ray of sun or moon, the children become GAHANPERUAA (nutrition affected or not healthy and smart). So at the time of the eclipse the pregnant woman is measured by the KHARAH I (special types and the KHARAH I is thrown). During the time of delivery, they take help of a woman called Sudeni (local old woman, who knows something about delivery but not

special health care). Who gives birth to a baby is called PARSAUTI or SURKERI and her family members and clan members observe birth pollution for 10 days in son and 11 days in daughter. The sutkeri is kept in separate house which is called SHOIRI.

Chhathiyar is performed on the sixth day of birth of living children in all the Maithili cultured society. The Kewat also perform this ceremony. This ritual is performed believing god writes the fate of the child on that day. During this night, burning (deep) lamp, a pen and a copy is kept near the bed of the baby. The baby is covered with red or yellow cloth and put on the BENA (a fan made of bamboo ) and paddy is also put .There is the belief that the fat of the baby is written by the BRAHMA using the pen and the red color which is also kept near him. On this occasion the child wears the GETHA GETHI (a special types of ornament for children made of cotton thread) and the name of the baby is put by the relatives. A grand party is organized for relatives but this depends upon the desire of family. The Maithili cultural food is prepared and fish curry is compulsion for the Sutkeri. The purification of birth pollution is performed on the 11th day. The sutkeri makes the trimming of her nail by the wife of barber. Then, she gets the bath. The houses and yard are whitewashed and the baby and the mother take the bath. The color is put in the lip of the baby. After that, the mother with baby worships the kuldeity and enter the new sleeping room.

### **Mortuary or Death Rites**

When a person dies, the dead body is cremated in any selected area especially in own land or at the bank of public pond by sons and other close relatives. At that time the dead body is tied with white cloth. All the relative and close neighbors participate in the funeral procession. First the dead body is put on the pyre and the cremated by the eldest son, (who is called KARTA) which is called the DAGBATI (putting the fire on the mouth of the dead body). If the dead body is old or adult, he /she are burned but if the dead body is a baby or child he /she is buried. The participants of the funeral process stay their till the burning of corpse. Then they return the back sides throwing of five sticks of

mango trees which are called PAANCH KATHIYA. They take the bath in pond /river by using the sesame on head. When the participants returns, they touch the fire, stone, iron and water only then other returns to their home.

On the fourth day of dying of the dead body the SARJHAPI (the covering of the burning place) is performed and the heap of mud is put on the burning place by collecting the remained unburned part of the dead body which is put in the Ganga River and a Tulsi plant is planted on that heap of the mud. Then GARUD PURAN is listened. At the tenth day the NAUH KESH (trimming of nail and tonsure by the clan members ) is performed .The women keep the cleaning of the house and keep the clan collective bath in the pond/river by weeping in the commemorating of the died. On the 11th and 12th day the religious activities is performed for the pacifying of the soul of the dead body and the feast is given on both day to the neighbors. On the 13th day the eating of fish and meat is performed.

Family member and clan members associated with deceased are also ritually polluted and the KARTA is abstained from the taking of salt and any spicy food for eleven days and on the 12th day the KARTA and PAACHAK (the helper of the Karta) take the spicy food. No worship is performed for twelve days till they are not purified. The KARTA and PACHAK wear the dress given by the SASURALI. The married daughters perform only three days death pollution.

### **6.2.5 Festivals**

Nepalese people celebrate various festivals according to their culture and tradition. Such as, they worship various gods and goddess and enjoy themselves by eating, drinking and singing. So it can be said that Nepalese people know how to live in pleasure. The festivals which Nepalese people celebrate the associated with one or the other of the divinities, held sacred either in the Hindu or Buddhist theology. The kewat celebrate festivals as other Hindus do. Dashain, Tihar, Chhath, Holi and Chaurchan etc are main

festivals of Kewat of the study area. The festivals which are celebrated by the kewats in the study are given in annex two.

### **6.2.6 Food Habits**

Every society has its own food habits. Kewats usually take two principal meals in study area. The first is taken at about ten o'clock and the second is the after the sun set. Between these two foods, they take the lunch and the light meal at the time of need. They take rice in the morning and bread (made of wheat) in the night with the pulse and vegetables. Sometimes, they take bread and rice with salt only because of poverty. The food combination depends upon the economical status of them. Many Kewat replied that they like fish and meat with rice mostly. They restrict the foods which are not allowed by the Hindu mythology. They do not cook chicken or buff or pork in their meals because they believe that the KULDIETY will be angry and they will be cursed.

The Kewat cooks different types of food in their festivals based on Maithili culture. When any guest visits to them, they cook rice, pulse, vegetables and Taruwa of vegetables, curd, sauce and Chaurari etc. The male kewat takes TAARI as liquor in exhaust.

### **6.2.7 Dress and Ornament**

The Kewats of study area wear traditional and modern dress. According to key informants, the traditional type of dresses of male Kewat are Kurta( a type of shirt ) and Dhoti ( white cloth for wearing under the waist but the cloth is not sewed) . The kewat women's traditional dress is sari, blouse and petticoat. The traditional ornaments of women in kewat community are HASULI ( a type of necklace ) , KADA (a ornament wear on ankle) JHUMAKA ( a type of earring ) NATHIYA ( a bangle structured ornament wear in nose), KANGAN (a types of bangle) , bangles and KANAUSI ( an

earring used in upper ear). But all these ornament are made of either silver or Aluminium. The male kewat wears KANAUSI also.

### **6.2.8 Language**

The language of the Kewat of the study area is Maithili.

### **6.2.9 Religion**

Religion is a part of culture. Each and every society of the world has its own religious tradition. The religion of every ethnic group is interwoven with their religious processes. Kewat of the study area is the follower of the Hindu religion. They worship gods and goddess like Shiva, Krishna, Ram, Vishnu, Durga, Laxmi and Kali etc. They worship Kali, Bani and Goraiya (the local God) as their Kuldeity. They worship their kuldeity in the particular day and on the day of the festivals. They put DHAJA ( triangular piece of red cloth tying with mango leaves on the long green bamboo) in the courtyard as the symbol of Hanuman. They think that pleasure and misery are directly related to the god so they would not like to disobey the social and cultural rules which are based on the religion. They have the deep believe on their religion and kuldeity.

## **CHAPTER -SEVEN**

### **CHANGES IN SOCIO- ECONOMIC STATUS OF KEWAT**

#### **7.1 Changes in Socio- Cultural Life of Kewat**

Change is universal process which is taking place with the changing nature of time. The concepts of democracy, human rights, modernization and globalization etc have already been using their tactics and intelligences to change the society and culture. The impacts of democracy, human rights, modernization and globalization have affected the kewats' society also and they are being changed according to effort and efficiency of their society. Change is universal fact, so socio-cultural life of Kewat is being changed gradually in the study area also.

#### **Family**

In the past, the Kewat used to live in joint family; but the joint family system is now being declined at the study area. No family live in joint family. All the families are nuclear family. The cause of breaking of joint family system is mainly economy. During the field work, it was asked to them why they liked to live in nuclear family. They replied that they liked to live in nuclear family. They liked to live in nuclear family because they liked to live with income which they earned. They had the little income and wanted to spend in own family from own hand. They did not like to give their income to others and conflict between mother in law and daughter in law. The mother in law and the daughter in law adopt the conflicting relationship also because of the unnecessary control of mother in law on the daughter in law. Now in some family, the veiling relation is being declined between the father in law and daughter in law. The family has started to maintain the quality of life which has good income. Though, they lived in nuclear family but they used to exchange of their kitchen items. But now they are limited in themselves which is the initiative steps of the nuclearness of the social relation also. The family meeting between the old ladies and contemporary candidates specially in female is also being declined.

### **Marriage**

Similarly,

marriage system is also being changed. In the past, they wouldn't have to pay the dowry. Now the bridegroom's family demands the dowry as the high castes and they have to pay it for the marrying of the daughter. The new generation is favoring to marry with them who are being introduced before the marriage. They are avoiding the child marriage. Though they are avoiding the child marriage, still they have not entered in the matured marriage. They are eager for love marriage. One case is registered about the love marriage and inter - caste marriage in the community. The persons who do the inter - caste marriage have to fine and they are boycotted also from the kewats community. The marriage's rituals are being changed. The bride groom used to go to bride's home on KHARKHARIYA ( the cultural transport which is carried by the men) at the marriage day and after marriage the bride was also carried to bride groom's house on the



MAHAPA ( same as Kharkhariya). But these traditional transportation is being declined due to the lack of manpower and availability of modern transportation system. In the place of KHARKHARIYA AND MAHAPA, they use the Jeep or car in marriage. The GAUNA system is also shortened. The Gauna system was for more than three years in ancient time because of childhood of bride but now they do the marrying of their daughter in matured age than previous so they just do the formality of Gauna which are limited in one year. The staying of bridegrooms is also shortened in in-law home due to their employment. They are very keen to spend a lot in children,s marriage for the showing of social prestige. They spend a lot of money in the maintain of the decoration of the place where the JANATI is kept to show the social status. They give the free reception party to the relatives and other social members. Now they, who have good income, join other castes reception party also with the heavy gift and they are admired in the society.

### **Rites Of Passage Of Kewats**

There is the changing process in the rites of Kewat. Due to the consciousness and imitating of the higher castes, they take the care of the mother and child in the birth right. They go to frequent visits of doctor at the time of pregnancy. They spend a lot of money in the performing of these rites. They do the religious donation in the death of elder member of family and give the feast to the caste and other friends also which also becomes the cause of enlarging of their debt.

### **Festivals**

Celebrating different festival is a character of Nepalese people. Kewat also celebrates different festivals, but the celebrating style is being changed. Now a day, the Kewat of the study area is too much affected by the neighboring castes. They prepare the different food in festivals as Brahmin and Kayastha. They try to imitate the standard of the rich

people. They have also started to celebrate the non cultural festivals as first January. The youth kewat takes the liquor in the Holi and use the new dress like white Kurta and Pajama for the celebrating of Holi. They have started to use the DJ musical sets for celebrating of Holi in the place of cultural minstrel and musical instruments. They mostly use either the Hindi music or Bhojpuri music in festivals. The kewat young lady has also avoided to sing the cultural songs on the occasion of different festivals. There is the provision of songs in every performance of Maithili cultural but the new generation wouldn't like to know about these. The kewats follow the Maithili culture. They could not mention about the starting of following of Maithili culture. They are not clarified about the adopting of this culture. They are affected by the Bhojpuri and Hindi music. They avoid to listen the cultural minstrel as ALLAH RUDAL and JHUMARA (a special type of song which is sung for the praying of local god and goddess). They do the imitation of celebrating styles of high caste by wearing dress, decorating of house and preparing of foods in the festivals.

### **Food Habits**

Their food habits are also being changed. Kewats like to eat food as Brahmins and Kayastha. They now prepare dishes like Brahmins and Kayastha. The young Kewats like to eat noodles, biscuits etc. They are making their access on the market food. Some of them have changed their routine of taking foods. The rich family takes foods for four times. They take tea with milk. One old key informant has told to researcher that he was not knowing about the tea. First, he tasted it in the marriage of landlord son who was married in India. But now they are habituated in such condition that if he does not drink tea up to 8 o'clock, he feels the headache. The fooding system of studied population is changed with the contact of the high caste contact and labor migration.

### **Dress & Ornaments**

Dressing pattern are also being changed. In real more changes can be seen in dressing pattern in Kewat community of the study area. Almost, all the male Kewats do not wear the traditional dresses. Now they wear as the Brahmin and Kayastha. The young male Kewats wear coat, shirt, paint, jacket, sweater and lungi. Kurta, suruwal, shawl, and other female garments are popular in unmarried girl, sometimes in the recent married also. They also use the cosmetic items for adorning them. But the quality of the dresses is low because of the poverty. They did not use the gold ornament due to the poverty and were not also allowed in Rana time. Now they use the gold ornament and the imported ornaments which are imported from the India made of sea cells.

## **Education**

Educational status of Kewats is being changed at the study area. Many old and adult kewats are illiterate but school enrollment is increasing gradually. Girls are also taking the education but they are limited only in lower secondary education. Now the parents are well minded about the sending of their children to the school. In the study area, one kewat boy was found to be admitted in class nine and others in the primary education. Some kewat children are admitted in the boarding school also. When they know about the success of their children in school, they are inspired. One key informant, who was rickshaw puller, has replied that when he saw the march pass of scout at the day of welcoming Indian Ambassador, he was inspired in such condition that he made the admission of his daughter who was just the age of 3 years. But this cannot be the sufficient example of the awareness of studied population. Still all are not taking education seriously. They think that the education cannot solve their education. They are affected by the higher caste educated unemployed, who had migrated for the Gulf nation. They think if the educated has also gone to Gulf nation for earning, it is better to train them about the labor so that they can earn good in gulf nation.

## **Language**

The languages of the kewats are affected by the Hindi and Bhojpuri languages. When, they communicate in mother tongue i.e. Maithili, they use Hindi, Bhojpuri and sometimes English also which are the effect of the media. In the aggressive mood, they use Hindi language. When they talk in Hindi, the proudness can be observed on their face.

Changes can be seen on the religion also. They follow the Hindu religion but the young Kewats are not interested in worshipping of gods and deities.

### **7.2 Changes In Economic And Traditional Life of Kewats.**

Change is the law of nature. The whole human society is dynamic. So it can be said that economic and traditional occupational life of Kewat is also changed under the frame of change in their society.

The traditional occupation of Kewat at the study area cannot be found easily. A lot of changes have come. More Kewats i.e 37.5% have engaged in labor and the 25% numbers are in living on rickshaw pulling. They are changing their economical condition by involving in the modern occupation as foreign employment. They are eager to solve their mouth and hand problem easily. They would not like to make the facing of same problems by their children which were faced by them in the childhood. They are avoiding the traditional occupation because they are very optimist on foreign employment.

Traditionally Kewats are the ferryman and the fisherman. Later the Kewats of the study area have adopted the carrying of BHAR and CHAR DOLAN .Due to the lack of the river the Kewat of the study area were deprived of the fisherman and ferryman though there is not the lack of pond but all the pond are the private and they have not the capacity to lease it. So they have adopted the carrying of BHAR but due to the facility of transport, the carrying of BHAR is already abolished. Now a days, on the name of their traditional occupation some Kewats have been still performing the CHAR DOLAN but it is the occasional which are done only in the son's marriage of some castes which can't be

the foundation of the joining of hands to mouth. Thus, they have moved towards the labor and other activities to survive. The good economy is achieved by the studied population because of their economical change and the way of gaining of it. After avoiding of the traditional occupation, they have adopted the modern occupying system as labor, business, foreign employment and rickshaw pulling. One key informant has told that he is very happy when he saw the prosperity of the family but a little also annoyed by the leaving of traditional occupation. He told that traditional occupation as BHAR was the method of knowing about the living styles of the people of different caste of different villages. The good economy has made the convenient life of kewats in studied area.

They have started to pay their attention towards the children education by admitting in English medium school. They think that if their children will know English language, they will get good and respectable jobs in Gulf nations. They can not be cheated by the agent of man power office. Now, they would not have to go to land lord for debt as the past. They help their poor relatives by giving the debt without any interest at the time of needs.

The economical change has facilitated the access of the studied population in the industrial goods. They enjoy in the consuming of imported clothes, watches, Beverage as coke and many items of daily uses. They use the electronic appliances. They use mobile. Some of them have been using color television and CD player. The using of mobile has helped in the updating with news which is broadcasted in Maithili language by local FM station. The awareness is spreaded among them. They are conscious about the maintaining of quality of life. The taming of livestock has made the access of kewats of study area in the market for selling of their livestock and earn good profit. The accessing in market is being increased for the purpose of consuming. They have achieved the labor migration. Most of the studied population has eager for foreign employment. The prosperity has helped them in the achieving of the health facility easily. One key informant told that the clinic doctor reach in the home of those person also who has good income. The changing economy has changed the psychology of the studied population

which can be clarified by the curious of youth about the foreign employment. When they fill up the form of passport, they do not involve in the wages labor in the village. The life of them becomes convenient because of good income.

### **7.3 Relation Of Kewats With Other Caste People**

According to Hindu caste system, the Kewats belong to sudra. So, they can get all social opportunities in the Hindu societies which are related to the service. There is the satisfactory relationship between Kewats and other castes in the study area. In the past Kewats were hired in those village mostly which has the river nearby so that ferry service can be achieved from them. As Kewats are traditionally service provider, they were kept by the landlord and Brahmin to get the attendant service. They were kept for the carrying of BHAR and CHAR DOLAN in the study area. When any marriage is held, the Kewat is kept as the CHAR DOLABA except the Brahmin because there is not the provision of CHAR DOLAN in Brahmins.

The Kewats are also appointed as the HALI (ploughman) in village and farm attendants in the study area. They are appointed as the wages labor at the time of needs. So other people are also in the close contact with Kewats. The Kewats woman gives the household service to the Brahmin and Kayastha family.

The Kewat keeps good relation with Brahmin also because when any religious activities are needed to be performed, they need priest which are fulfilled by the Brahmin.

In the democratic system a single vote is also valuable for election. So many political parties are in close contact with Kewats. In this way, the relation is being nearer and nearer with other caste people.

The above mentioned relation is maintained in the study area.

### **7.4 Status Of Kewats In Society.**

Kewats are belonged to the Hindu religion who are in the sudra groups. They are touchable. They have the resident among the other castes. As they have the weak economic and illiteracy, they are not taken as the decision maker in society. They are just taken as the attendant caste whenever anyone needs, they can appoint them as the wages labor. They are involved in different activities as playing of cards, joking etc. They have low status in the society. But the person who is literate has occupied good status in society. He has the friendship with high caste youth. The rich kewat in study area has occupied good status in society. He is asked in the family functions as marriage, death rites by their caste members. The rich person gets the satisfactory status in the village function also by being the member of the committee of that function. The awareness about the human rights of the marginalized among them has helped in the obtaining of good position in society than previous. The rich kewats can play dominant role among backward caste in society. They can be appeared as the marginalized land lord.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **8.1 Summary**

The purpose of this study was to describe changing socio-economic life of Kewats in Suga vdc of Mahottari district. It is found from the study that certain changes have occurred in the socio-cultural life as well as in economic life of kewats.

To fulfill the objectives of this study, field work was carried out at Suga Bhawanipatti of Suga vdc in Mahottari district for one month. The data of kewats were collected through observation, interview, key informants etc from the field. Some related data of other caste people were also collected. Data are intended to cover various aspect of family, marriage, and occupation and occupational mobility. The summary of the finding are given below.

#### **Socio- Cultural life of Kewats**

Among the total population of kawat, the population of male is more than female. Out of the total population, 44.33% belongs to the active age group (15-59 years).



Comparatively, the burden of child is more than that of old persons. However, overall burden of depends is more on the active age group.

## **Family**

Economically, socially and emotionally joint or extended family system was a norm in the traditional Nepalese society. But today, because of industrialization, urbanization, modernization, transportation, development of communication, education etc, the traditional type of family system is undergoing change.

The kewats society is also affected by the changing value in other societies. All the families are living in nuclear family with 6.67 family size which is greater than the national average family size according to census 2001. The family size indicates that there is the high fertility rate in kewats of the study area.

Poor economic condition, conflict between brothers, conflict between mother-in-law and daughter -in-law and conflict between the wives of brothers are some reasons behind the disintegration of joint family. But main cause is economic because more young kewats like to live in their own earns and do not want to give others. They are curious to maintain the quality of life.

## **Marriage**

Marriage is also an important institution in every society. An attempt has been made to describe various aspects of marriage among kewats society. There is a great change in marriage system. Majority of kewats do not want to follow traditional marriage system because of the high burden on the dowry but they do not like to do inter-caste marriage. They would like to that the marriage of children in nearer relatives would be good and they would not be take the debt on the name of the marriage. But they have started to adopt the modernized music in the place of traditional minstrel. They adopt the different types of modern method in the marriage system. They spend a lot in the marriage.

## **Rites of the passages**

All kinds of occasions related to events between birth and death. Such as Birth, CHHATHIYAR and death are observed according to their traditions and customs.

When a woman gives birth to a child, all members of the same clan group observe the birth pollution 10 or 11 days. A grand party is given on the CHHATHIYAR when son is begotten which proves that son is in high priority and they keep the pen and ink near the baby by thinking that the god will write the fate of the children which proves that they are more traditional on religious.

Death impurity is observed for 12 days. After death, the funeral process is done by the eldest son and performs the SARJHAPI and the unburned parts of the dead body are put in Ganga river.

### **Dress and Ornaments**

Traditional types of dresses are very rare in Young kewats. The old kewats still follow the traditional dress. DHOTI, KURTA for male and SARI, BLOUSE and PETTICOAT are the traditional dress of kawat female and the female use the KANGAN, KADA, HASULI etc ; the traditional ornament which are mostly of silver but they use the almunium's ornaments also. They have started to use the golden ornaments.

### **Education and Language**

Education can be considered as a key to all sort of development. If education is not well improved and acquired development seems quite difficult to achieve.

The general education status of kawat of the study area is not so different from national average of the other marginalized people. Except one, no one has passed the SLC. The illiteracy portion is the highest in the kawat in the study area. Because of the poverty and non-care the guardian do not pay attention about their children's education. They think that it is better to be schooled in earning than the getting of certificate. But changes are being gradually seen among them due to the free education by government of Nepal.

They speak Maithili and they use the same language as the dialects.

They do not know the Nepali except some persons but they know Hindi Very well.

### **Festivals**

Kewats celebrate different festivals by following the Maithili traditional procedure and they prepare the cultural food on the every festival. They celebrate Dashain, Tihar, Chhatha , Holi and Chaurchan etc.

### **Religion**

Kewats are Hindu and they worship all the gods of the Hindu mythology. They worship Kali, Goraiya as their kuldeity and DHAJA as the symbol of the Hanuman.

### **Food Habits**

Foods are of the different types in Kewats because they follow the Maithili fooding system which makes them to prepare different types of foods. They have started to achieve in the industrial produced foods. Generally they take rice and vegetable and bread and vegetables in lunch and dinner respectively. They eat the meat of only goat and pigeon but the young generation takes the chicken also. They do not take the beef or pork.

### **Economy and Occupation**

Although traditional occupation of kewat is ferryman, fisherman, carrying of Bhar and CHARDOLAN, now only few kewats are involved in traditional occupation i.e. CHARDOLAN in the study area. Now the main occupation of kewats of Suga Bhawani patti are the wages labor and rickshaw pulling. Some are involved in foreign employment and some are involved in the services. As the side occupation they take the attendant in anyone function when any function is held in Brahmin and Kayastha. They are shifting from their traditional occupation because it is difficult to get the work, facilities of the transport and the lack of river. Land holding size is very small. Only Few kewats have

the land for agriculture who can afford the foods for some months. No kewats have the capacity to fulfill their needs by own production. The cattle taming is very small which are also insufficiency to help in the maintain the needs of anyone. Their economy is being changed because of the foreign employment and business. They have stated to join the market for consuming industrial goods. They use different types of electronic appliances.

On the whole, it appears that kewats of the study area live in poverty and have left their traditional occupation.

## **8.2 Conclusion**

Society undergoes changes whether we like or not . Change is a universal fact. Therefore Nepali society is no exception to it. Nepal has undergone the rapid change since it opened its door to the countries in 1951AD. Several social and economic forces-exogenous as well as indigenous are simultaneously functioning to bring out the change in the structure and function of Nepali society and culture. This process of change is quite conspicuous in many caste /ethnic group including Kewats.

Kewats are in the rank of touchable and panichalne Sudra according to Hindu caste system. They are poor and illiterate. There is caste based discrimination against kewats at the study area mainly in the social function. We can see many changes in the society which has changed the view to see the sudra also. We can see the changes in their traditional organization particularly family, marriage, rites, festivals' celebrating styles, educational status and economic status which are gradually changing in accordance with time.

Family system has also been changed a lot. Majority of the kewats, now, prefer small size of family. Therefore nuclear family is being popular among them.

Traditional type of marriage is being declined among kewats. Some examples can proves about this like a kewat boy has done the inter caste marriage which are the initiative steps in the traditional marriage.

The festivals celebration is being changed than the past. They have started to celebrate the European festivals as first January also.

Though the trend about the education is being changed, still they are not forcing their children to be nominated in school. Still the education is nothing for them so they are not awaked about the status of their lives and it becomes very difficult for them to get service in society. Those who are awaked about the education have started to make the admission of their children in English medium school.

Economically speaking, the kewats, at Suga Bhawanipatti, live in absolute poverty. They have no sufficient land for cultivation. Majority of them can't produce their food requirement for more than 4 months. They depend on labor, household servant for their livelihood. Their life styles and maintaining of other social and cultural function depends on the economy. As they are capable in economy, they are forwarded towards the fulfilling of additional needs.

All kewats have shifted from their traditional occupation to other occupation such as wages labor, agriculture, rickshaw pulling, foreign employment etc but they are not able to improve their economic condition from these new types of occupations in the study area.

### **8.3 Recommendation**

As the fulfillment of partial examination, this research is done for the describing of kewats. All the aspects related to kewats are not submitted in this research due to the lack of time and resource. According to the effort and efficiency, the researcher has submitted only the changing status in socio-cultural and economic life of kewats. There are several aspects related to kewats which are not researched. Some of the aspects which can be studied and researched of kewats by others researcher are:

- ) The political life of kewats can be studied because of the kewats presence in the study area are just as the vote bank. The kewats' political consciousness and the impact of politics in kewats can be the research topics in the present political context of Nepal.
- ) The social caste hierarchy shows the position of castes in Hindu society. This hierarchy system of society shows the position of Kewats in the society and the impacts of the hierarchy system. According to the Dutta(1969) the kewats are the previous dweller than the Vedic Aryan but why they are ranked in the down than the other castes of Aryan is the another researchable matters.
- ) The inter woven of any society shows the importance of the elements in society so the presence of the Kewats in the study area has also the importance and is the new curiosity to find out their importance and their relation with other castes.
- ) The new interesting matter as other castes of Terai is dowry system which has affected the economical life of kewats also. It is the new researching matter about the kewats
- ) There are particular some social institution as panchayat system, SABHA, MAIJAN for the tying of them. The panchayat system, SABHA and the MAIJAN have their own role in controlling the Kewats society. They cannot cross the decisions of SABHA and the Panchayat system which has the importance in kewats life and it is the new matter of researcher.
- ) The religious superstitious view etc.

## ANNEX ONE

### **Some of the kinship terms in kewats are as follows:**

1. Bahnoi ( Elder sister's husband)
2. Didi ( Elder sister)
3. Sala ( wife's brother)
4. Sali ( wife's sister)
5. Sarhojini ( wife of wife's brother)
6. Bhabo ( wife of younger brother)
7. Bhainsur ( elder brother of husband)
8. Dewar ( younger brother of husband)
9. Dewarani / Diyadani ( wife of Dewar)
10. Diyadini ( wife of bhainsur)
11. Nanaid ( husband's sister)
12. Nandoisa ( husband of husband's sister)
13. pisa ( husband of father's sister)
14. Pisiaa ( sister of father)
15. Mausi ( sister of mother)
16. Mause ( husband of mausi)
17. Chacha ( brother of father)
18. Mama ( brother of mother)
19. Mami ( wife of Mama)
20. Nana ( father of mother)
21. Nani ( mother's mother)
22. Baba ( father's father)
23. Dai/ babi ( wife of baba)
24. Bhaigana ( sister's son)
25. Bhaigini ( sister's daughter)
26. Sasu (mother of husband or wife)

27. Sasura ( father of husband or wife)
28. Putauh ( daughter in law)
29. Jamai ( son in law )
30. Bhauji ( wife of elder brother)
31. Samadhi ( father of son in law /daughter in law)
32. Samadhini ( Mother of son/ daughter in law)
33. Chachi (wife of chacha)



## ANNEX TWO

### The festivals of kewats in the study area.

Festivals	Month	celebrating styles
Dashain	Asoj	worshipping of Durga, putting of Jamara. black & red spotting on the door.
Tihar	Kartik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>) Four days celebration.</li> <li>) worshipping of Gobardhan and Laxmi and bhai tika</li> <li>) Dhanteras is celebrated.</li> </ul>
Chaurchan	Bhadra	preparing of cultural food and worshipping of Moon
Holi	Falgun	celebrating by playing the Damf and singing and spreasing of Rang and Abir with family, relatives and friends.
Jitiya	10 days before Dashain	celebrated by the kewats woman by fasting for the long life of son.
Sama Chakewa	Kartik	celebrating by making the mud- icon for the betterment of brothers by sisters.
Chhatha	kartik	celebrating by the worshipping of rising and setting sun at the bank of river or pond by preparing THAKUWA and BHUSAWA and other cultural foods and fruits.

Source; field survey, 2067.

### ANNEX THREE

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

1. Household No. :
2. Full Name of Interviewee :  
Age: -                      Sex: -    Occupation: -            Education: -

3. Head of the household  
  
Name: -            Age: -    Sex: -    Occupation: -            Education: -

4. Details about the family members of the respondents:

S.N.	Name	Age	Sex	Relation to the head	Occupation	Education

5. Types of Family: -
6. How much land do you have?

Types of land	Total land	Cultivated own self	Rented in	Rented out
Khet				
Bari				

7. What do you grow on your land?

S.No.	Major types of crop grain	Production

--	--	--

8. Is the production is sufficient to meet the annual food required of the family? (a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( )
9. If the answer of question no. 8 in no., how does the family manage the food deficit months?
10. What is the major source of income of your family?
11. What are the other sources of income of your family?  
(1) (2) (3) (4)
12. What types of animals do you have?

S.N.	Types of animals	Numbers

13. What are the main sources of cooking fuels?  
(1) (2) (3) (4)
14. Are you following your caste wise occupation?  
(a) Yes ( ) (b) No ( )
15. If the answer of the question no. 14 is no, what was your past occupation?
16. What did you change your previous occupation?
17. Status of debt.

## ANNEX FOUR

### CHECKLIST FOR INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INFORMANTS.

1. Demographic feature.
  - History of Settlement in the study area.
  - History of Kewat.
  - (Ethno-historical data relating to their origin)
2. Socio-cultural features.
  - The food habits.
  - Language.
  - Life cycles ceremonies and their expenses.
3. Inter-caste relationship.
  - Between higher castes and kewat.
  - Between untouchables.
4. Caste based discrimination and related matters.
  - prevalence of caste-based discrimination.
  - Area of discrimination.
  - Attitude towards caste based discrimination.
5. Changing trends of kewats
  - occupation
  - Education
  - Social relationship

## ANNEX FIVE

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE OTHER CASTE PEOPLE OF THE STUDY AREA.

1. Household No.

2. Head of the Household:-

Name:-            Age:-            Sex:-            Education:-

3. Details about the family members of the respondent.

S.N.	Name	Age	Sex	Education	occupation	Relation To the head

4. Family Type:-

5. Do you have your land by yourself?

(a) Yes (    )                      (b) No (    )

6. Do you have rented in the land of others?

(a) Yes (    )                      (b) No (    )

7. How much land do you have?

s.no.	khet	Bari	unregistered land

8. Can you grow the sufficient food grain required for your family for a year roud?

(a) Yes (    )                      (b) No (    )

9. Housing pattern:-

10. Caste:-

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