

# **Chapter - One**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

Nepal is a hilly, landlocked and agrarian country located in South Asia between China and India. It is spread from  $26^{\circ}$  and  $22'$  N to  $30^{\circ}27'N$  and  $80^{\circ} 4' E$  to  $88^{\circ} 4' E$  to  $88^{\circ} 12' E$  in the map of the world. It covers an area of 147,181 square kilometer, which accounts 0.03% area of the world. It is small in geographical area, but it has wide range of topography that ranges from 78m to 8848m from the sea level. Broadly, it is divided into three physiographic regions based on elevation changes and ecological variations. The three regions are the Mountain, the Hill, and the Terai region, which cover 15%, 68% and 17% of the total area of the country respectively. The mountain region has the least number of households with thin population. It has only 33 persons/sq.km and the population of the region accounts only 6.73% to the total population. But the other two regions are densely populated than the mountain region. The hill is the largest region, which has the highest population also, however it has less population as compared to the Terai. The population density of the hill and Terai are 167 and 330. It shows that the Terai is the densely populated region among the three (CBS, 2011).

During the Rana regime, the country was divided into 492 Thums and 32 districts excluding 3 district of Kathmandu valley on the basis of water boundaries and important places for the purposes of effective administration and overall national development.

Badahakim (Senior Boss) used to be the powerful administrator of the district. As Rana period came to an end in 1951, the Nepalese administrative structure was also changed in 1962 by dividing into 75 districts and 14 zones. Again in 1972 the country was divided into four development regions as administrative sectors and later it changed into five Development Regions and Far Western Development Region, which contribute 23.08%, 24.69%, 19.74%, 13.01% and 9.47% to the country's total population whereas the Far Western Development Region has the lowest in order. Similarly, Mid Western Development Region is the most thinly populated region of all. The population density of the region is only 71 person/square kilometer. Thus the regions in the West have lesser population density compared to the East. Of all, the Central Development Region is the highly populated one.

Nepal, though is a small country in size, it is very much diversified culturally and socially. So, it is rich in terms of culture, language and caste/ethnicity. It is a multilingual, multiracial and multi-religious country, where there are over 126 caste/ethnic groups, who are residing throughout the country. Thus, Nepal is culturally and socially rich. It is known as a melting pot of different culture and it is also sometimes called a cradle of cultural diversity and mosaic. There are 126 caste and ethnic groups residing in Nepal. The major ethnic groups are Chhetri, Brahmin, Magar, Tharu, Tamang, Rai, Gurung and Limbus.

The population of Kanchanpur district have 82134. The population of Tharus in Kanchanpur 76,961 which is 20% of the whole population of the Kanchanpur and 5% of the population over all Tharu community in Nepal.

Kanchanpur district divided in to 19 V.D.C., 11 ilakas (sub district political regions) and one Mahendranagar municipality at the district center which has 15 wards. Forest covers some 54 percent of its area including 31 sq.km under cultivation and 20 percent of it is irrigated.

The population of Shreepur V.D.C. is made up various proportion of Brahmin, Chhetri, Tharu and Dalit caste groups. In Shreepur V.D.C., Chhetri constitute - 42%, Dalit 30%, Tharu 17%, and Brahmin 12%, Tharus are the indigenous people of this V.D.C.

According to the population census of 2011, the total population of Tharu in Nepal is 15,33,879, which is 6.75 percent of the whole population of the country and it is the fourth largest ethnic group spread across right from the East to West. (CBS, 2011) They are probably the oldest indigenous ethnic groups in Terai. They are dominant in number in Terai. The population of Tharu accounts 13.68% of the total Terai population. They have very distinct life styles in terms of Socio-cultural features. Also, they have their own languages, customs and behaviour patterns, which is very distinct from the other groups in the Terai.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Nepal is called a country of unity in diversity. According to CBS 2011, there are 126 castes and ethnic groups and 61 indigenous ethnic groups in Nepal (National Committee for Development of Nationalities, 2057). Most of the indigenous ethnic groups are economically poor and marginalized. Among them, the culture, social behavior, customs and traditions of Tharu community have been greatly influenced by Westernization, modernization and sanskritisation. As a result, their culture has now been threatened of being disappeared.

The Tharu community, though is called one of the oldest indigenous Terai ethnic groups. It has all controversial saying on its origin. A number of researchers have expressed their opinion differently about the origin of Tharu. Some said that they are from Rajputana, India. Others argued that they are descendants of Rajput women, who were sent to safer place to get rid of being victimized from their enemy. Such sayings are very common in the rural areas.

Tharu, the second largest indigenous ethnic group after Magar in Nepal is very rich in culture. But they are losing their culture and customs. Their behavioural patterns are also bring their social status up in the society. This is due to mixed culture and very little promotional effort put forth for upgrading the culture of such marginalized ethnic group from the mainstream.

Tharus are labourious ethnic groups. They work for days and night even though they are poor, but they were landlord and kings of Terai, (Krauskopff, 2000). However, their present situation is very poor and they are most marginalized. Majority of them is almost landless and tenants. They were Kamaiyas. Now they are freed from Kamaiya. Their economic and social situation is very poor. Tharus of Shreepur V.D.C., in general have the similar poor socio-economic situation and they are surviving in isolation of the development efforts. The support programme from the local and central government has not been reached to Tharu community. neither developmental study nor any special program has been planed and implemented for the development of the most marginalized indigenous Tharu ethnic group of the Shreepur V.D.C. What types of major issues of the Tharu community are emerging from the changing context and how they are facing the issues? And how they are planning to address those issues in the present context of modernization, Urbanization and Westernization. These are the major concerns that the study is focused on in the research.

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The general objectives of the study will be examine, analysis the social status of Tharu community and promote or empower the indigenous Tharu community for especially rural development and generally national development in Nepal.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To analyses social status of Tharu community.
- To know the cultural behavioral of Tharu community.
- To identify the constraints and opportunities for their social development.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Nepal is a country of diversity. According to CBS 2001, there are 104 caste and ethnic groups residing in the nook and corners of the country. Among them 59 belong to the indigenous ethnic group, (National Committee for Development of Nationalities 2057). Thus, Nepal is like a garland of many ethnic groups and castes. In this regard an old saying of Prithivi Narayan Shah relevant that Nepal is garden of four barnas and thirty six castes. All these different ethnic group have their own beliefs, cultures, traditional and behavioural patterns. So, Nepal is multi-religious, multi-ethnicity and multi-caste country. The statement religious diversity is the brain child of ethnic diversity has been true in Nepal's case. Due to the ethnic and religious diversity, we have diversity of language as well (Upadhyay 1999) Nepal is thus considered a very rich country in culture, language and life style. However it is important to national integration and development of Nepal.

In connection to this, the study on the Tharu community, who has wide spread from the East Terai to the west across the country, has a significant meaning to planner and development workers. The

similarities and dissimilarities within Tharu community could be interesting with plentiful issues for rural development research work. The study has highlighted upon the Tharu's inner caste and social system, socio-economic life and their cultural changes. Therefore the study will help to identify the issue and life styles, their social and cultural condition. The study thus by bringing the clear picture on the changing pattern and trend on social conditions of Tharu community of Shreepur V.D.C. Kanchanpur. It will help to open the reality to Tharu life and develop plan to address these issues. It is considered that the study will be reference to local institution in general and more particularly to village development committee (VDCs) for their strategic planning and execution. The researcher on Tharu and development activities will use this as references to this study. The Tharu will have an opportunity to analyze the best and will practices prevalent in their community. so that they can develop plan themselves by preserving the good ones and removing the ill ones. Ultimately, it is hoped that the study will help for the development and promotion of Tharu community.

## **1.5 Organization of the Study**

This thesis consists 6 chapters. Chapter 1 provides the introduction. This chapter gives the details on background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives and importance of the study. Chapter -2 deals the review of literature. In this chapter origin of Tharu and their social condition and were reviewed. Chapter-3 is about methodology which includes selection of the study area and its rational, research design, nature and sources of data sampling

procedure, techniques of data collection, data analysis of the study, limitation of the study. Chapter-4 is about the general information of Kanchanpur district and the study area. It gives the general introduction of Kanchanpur district and background of the Shreepur V.D.C. It also highlights upon social condition of the study area. The status of health education and population of the study area is also described in the chapter. Chapter-5 deals with social condition of Tharus. It also describes the social changes on Tharus of Shreepur V.D.C. Summary conclusion and recommendation appear in chapter-6.

## **Chapter - Two**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The history on the study of ethnic in Nepal is not so long. It starts only from the fifty's decade. Therefore, the scope of the study is limited. However, Nepali and foreign researcher have made some studies on Tharu. Among them, Dor Bahadur Bista (1967), Dr. Regmi (1978). Babu Ram Acharya (1953) did some studies on Tharu. Iman Sing Chemjong and Drona Prasad Rajaure 1978 have also carried our some study on the ethnic groups. Among them the first foreign scholar, who studied on Tharu is F.B. Hamilton (1971). Like wise Sylvain Levi gave information on Tharu in 1905.

#### **2.1 Origin of Tharu**

Different writers have mentioned the origin of Tharu differently. So, it has been received related books and magazines, which describe who they are and where they are form. Here are some of the literatures, which are reviewed to get more information on the origin of Tharu.

"The extraction of the Tharu is veiled in the haze of undocumented history. It is true that life is not permanent and history is not destiny, but it is nevertheless useful to ask, who are the Tharu?" (Meyer, 1995).

According to the population census 2001, Tharus populate the entire length of Terai of Nepal and their total population in Nepal is 1,533,879, which is 6.75% of the total population of Nepal and ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the majority order.

Prof. Dor Bahadur Bista has mentioned about the settlement of Tharu that they are probably among the oldest groups to inhabit in the Terai. They are mainly located in the Central and Western Terai

region, which is traditionally called the Tharuwan or Tharwot, which consists of forest land along the southern base of the Siwalik mountain range and south a few miles into the Terai itself. They usually live very close to the heavily forested regions. (Bista, 1967)

There are several popular stories about the origin and the racial affinities of the Tharus. Most of them sincerely believe that they came from Rajputana in India at the time of the Islamic invasions. (Ibid)

Baburam Acharya (1953) describe that Tharus belong to the Mangol, who used to speak Kirat in the hills and they (Tharu) later learned Aryan language from Mangol and thus they were formed separate group. So, Acharya claims that Tharu's orginal place cannot be beyond the Himalayas. It means Tharu's place of origin is the hills of Nepal according to Acharya.

Describing the origin of Tharu, Iswar Baral has mentioned that Rajput women of Chitalpur were sent to the northern hills with their servants to protect them from Muslim invasion in 12<sup>th</sup> Century. The Rajput women expected their husbands for long. But they did not come back again. As they did not see hope of returning their husbands, they got married with lower caste people of the area and their servants, who came along with them. Thus the offspring from their such reunion were called Tharu. (Baral, 2004 BS)

Dr. Rajesh Gautam and Ashok Kumar Thapa Magar in their book "Tribal ethnography of Nepal-1993" has described about the origin of Tharu that they were migrated form Thar desert of India. They have also mentioned that Tharus were the descendant from the liaison between Rajput women and their servants as they were fled away from being victimized from Muslim invasion in Rajputana. In the book they have also described about the physical characteristics of Tharu that they resemble the Dravidians at a glance, but they look different on closer inspection. It is cited that their facial features are of

Mongoloid kind with depressed nasal roots etc. Based on the physical features, the researchers accentuated their mongoloids.

J.C. Nesfield says "The origin is the word "Thar", which in the lowest collegial language (but not in books signifies a man of the forest, a name sprung from the language of the tribe itself, which is now for the most obsolete. An aboriginal name derived from Sanskrit is the fit appellative of an aboriginal, caste less, un-Brahmanised tribe whose customs have been only slightly, modified by contact with those of the Aryan invaders. "He continues", another tradition that after the fall of the Buddhist dynasty of Knnauj, the Tharu descended from the hills and occupied Ayodhya (only to be driven out by Raja Sri Chandra from Srinagar)".

An analysis, titled "Where did Tharu come from" Kurt W. Meyer has mentioned that Dang, Rajdarba, which is in the north East of Lucknow as referred to a publication called India's Population Census as per R.C. Sharma, was the place of Tharu. But it is cited that their physical features are similar to Mongoloid. The article thus has described about the origin of Tharus. Many stories and theories about their origin have been forwarded to highlight on their early history. It is however, been difficult task to trace exactly the history and origin of the ethnic group, who were semi-nomadic people, has different theories on the origin of Tharu.

Tharus the forest dweller. Tharu is the word derived from the Hindi word thahare means halt or stop. It is expected that they were stopped, when they were fleeing in the jungle. Similarly, the origin of Tharu is from the word tarhuwa, meaning wet or swampy land resident of Terai.

As per Nesfield, J.C., Tharu are from Thar, which means man from forest and also it indicates the status of Tharu. (Ibid)

D.N. Majumdar argued that Tharu are definitely a Mongoloid tribe. They cannot be placed in any other tribes and caste through a DNA test. Thus it is concluded on the basis of the evidence that Tharu are Mongoloid, who is successfully assimilated non-Mongoloid physical features, (Majumdar, 1942).

The "forest people" came from many regions at different times to seek peace and shelter of the jungle; the environment then molded them, over a very long period of time into groups of special people, all of them called the Tharu. (Meyer, 1995)

In his book Eastern India, Buchman refuted the often-heard claim that Tharus are descendants of Rajputs who were evicted from Rajasthan by Muslim invaders. "No Muslim historian has made the slightest allusion to the Tharus in connection to these events (expulsion by Muslims). The fiction of having migrated from Rajputana into the Terai, therefore, must have been invented by some of the clans merely to raise themselves in their own and their neighbours's estimation". (Ibid)

## **2.2 Social Status of Tharu**

The aim of the study is to study the socio-cultural and economic status of Tharu. Here are some of the literatures, which describe about socio-cultural and economic condition of Tharu, are reviewed.

Prof. Bista has mentioned about the different aspect of socio-economic and cultural life of Tharu based on his field observation. He has mentioned that Tharu has their own religion and they worship many god and goddesses. Among them, some are Hindu God and goddesses too. In the Eastern Terai, they invite Brahmin priest even in their own religious rituals as well. They use Brahmin priests in the wedding ceremony and other festivals as well. (Bista, 1967).

Negendra Sharma, in his book Nepali Janjiban, has described about the socio-cultural aspects of Tharu. He has argued in the book that Danuwar and Rajbanshi though they are considered of different groups, their names are found repeated in the family name of Tharu, which is interesting. It is guessed that the Tharus are the product of the mixed of those different groups. (Sharma, 2052)

Tharus are said to have been theoretically divided into two main categories, namely Pradhan and Apradhan. Pradhans are of six different kinds and are all considered superior in social status to the Apradhans. (Bista, 1967)

Tharu marriages are monogamous and Patrilocal. Most of marriages are early, are arranged by the parents of the couple concerned and always take place within the tribe. The marriage partner can be any body within the tribe except member of the same exogamous gotra unit. There are some call regional variations in the basic marriage patterns. Among people of modest means of there is also the practice of exchange marriage. The families concerned decide to exchange brides for their son. By doing this both the families concerned can cut down the cost of gifts, presents, dowries and other expenses. (Ibid)

In general, Tharus practice their own tribal religion, which consists of worshiping a number of spirits and some Hindu deities, which have been incorporated. The Tharu in the east Terai, who have been living in closer contact with high caste Hindus, employ Brahman priests to perform a number of Hindu religious ceremonies. Brahman priest is also employed to conduct weddings and other domestic puja ceremonies. (Ibid)

The joint family system is common in the Tharu community. in joint families the father has full authority over all members of the family. When he dies his younger brother takes his place of if there is no brother, the eldest son. However, intelligent or bright a junior

member of the family may be he can on no account act as a leader, and even a stupid man, if he is the eldest, has to be responsible for family affairs. The same principle applies among the women of the family. The mother is the highest in order of precedence, then the wife of the eldest son and so on. (Ibid)

As with all other societies in Nepal, the Tharu community is undergoing tremendous changes. There is a wave of reform among educated young Tharus. They have changed their food habits, reformed their religious practices and introduced modern education. (Ibid)

Dr. Rishi Keshavraj Regmi has mentioned about physical resource and culture in his book "Yas Short Tin Dhara" that the civilized and well-cultured community influences other community effectively during the social development process or assimilation. Dr. Regmi has indicated that Tharu community first times should have learned better and progressive culture from other community, probably more civilized and well-cultured community. Thus, they formed the elements of their socio-culture what they have learned from others (Regmi, 2035).

The important feature of Tharu society is the hierarchic relationship among the family members. After the death of the father, the eldest son becomes the chief of the family. Tharu villages are centered around a headman and village assembly, which is composed of all the household leaders of the locality. (Regmi, 1999)

Tharus religion is a complex system of beliefs and practices and based on animistic traditions. Despite their shamanistic beliefs and practices, the Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata have influenced Tharus.

Along with the dances, many of the traditions of the Tharus are disappearing. Modernization and financial necessity are forcing the

young to be assimilated into the mainstream of Nepali culture. Once always living within their communities, Tharus are now leaving their villages to earn money. (Ibid)

About Tharu, in the words of Drone P. Rajuare, "A general Tharu Mentality, who are found neither among the hill ethnic groups (Tibeto - Nepalese) nor among those of the Terai (Indo-Nepalese), makes the Tharus feel content within their own Tharu society and circumstances. This has kept Tharus almost isolated within their own localities and has made them a group relatively unknown to outsiders" (Rajure, 1997)

It is mentioned in the book that the Tharus have different sub castes or Sept (thar) within themselves. The writers have presented their social practical life, housing and settlements ornaments and wearing and their customs and rituals and marriage ceremony and festivals. (Ibid)

In the past, the Tharus were landlords and the king also. But now a days most of them are either landless or have with very minimal land. They are now the most deprived indigenous ethnic groups. They have been the victims of social, economical and political exploitation due to their illiteracy, loyalty and honesty.

Physically, and especially in facial features, the Tharus look like they stem from Mongoloid stock. They speak an Indo-brahman language. In ancient times the Tharus may be followed Buddhism but later Hinduism influenced them. During the 13<sup>th</sup> Century when Buddhism faded form North India, the Tharu's may have gradually converted to Hinduism". (Pyakuryal, 1982)

## **Chapter - Three**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter of this study research methodology has been discussed. The type of study in mainly descriptive research design. However, exploratory research design also has also been used to gather both types of qualitative and quantitative data needed for the research. The research design have been used to collect information about Tharu's social, political, educational, health and sanitation condition status of children women food habit and their housing styles. The subtitles of this chapter are placed in order as selection of site research design nature and sources of data collection, process of data analysis and limitation of the study.

#### **3.1 Selection of Study Area**

Shreepur V.D.C. of Kanchanpur district has been selected to carry out research work for the study. Shreepur V.D.C. is about 45 km far from its' headquarters Mahendranagar. The Shreepur V.D.C. is surrounded by Laxmipur V.D.C. in the east, Rampur Bilasipur V.D.C.in the west, Sankerpur and Deghatvuli V.D.C. in north and Boarder of India (U P) in south. The V.D.C. is approximately 225 fit above from the sea level and the total area of the V.D.C. is 57.62 km<sup>2</sup>. It has hot and humid type of climate through out the area since it is Terai V.D.C. of the district. The V.D.C is very hot in summer season and cold during the winter.

Shreepur V.D.C. is one among the 19 V.D.C. and one municipality called Mahendranagar in Kanchanpur district where the researcher was born and spent his whole child life. There is not facility of road transportation, telephone and electricity sufficiently.

### **3.2 Research Design**

In this study, descriptive research design has been applied mainly to called qualitative information on the social cultural educational conditions of Tharu community of the study area. And exploratory research design has also been used to called information on social and cultural changes on the studied the place of Tharu origin and demographic situation of Tharu.

### **3.3 Nature and Sources of Data**

Both primary and secondary data have been used in the study. Primary data have been collected from interview, questionnaire and field observation. A households survey was carried out to collect necessary information for the study. A structured questionnaire was developed to meet the objective of the study. The study is basically based upon primary data and also other literatures such as books journals, articles and periodicals have been used as a secondary data.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedure/Universe and Sampling**

The total population of the Shreepur V.D.C. is 18681. Tharu has the highest population in the V.D.C. among all the ethnic groups. The population of Tharu is 3689 which account 24.9 percent of the total. The total household of Shreepur V.D.C. is 2311. Whereas 329 belongs to Tharu (Shreepur V.D.C. profile, 2060). The total Tharu household of the Shreepur V.D.C. have been selected as the universe for the research. In order to make the sample more representative and reliable in the study 52 households were taken sample which is 15.80 percent of the total household. The distribution of the household ward wise in the below table :-

**Table No. 3.1**  
**Ward wise Tharu Population of Shreepur V.D.C.**

<b>Ward No.</b>	<b>Total HHs</b>	<b>Total Pop.</b>	<b>Total Male</b>	<b>Total Female Pop.</b>	<b>Sample in HHs</b>
1	7	72	32	40	2
2	95	1100	506	594	14
3	62	645	309	336	10
4	54	648	292	356	8
5	53	572	280	252	8
6	3	35	19	16	1
7	0	0	0	0	0
8	15	135	85	50	3
9	40	482	255	227	6
G. Total	329	3689	1778	1911	52

*Source : Shreepur V.D.C. Record, 2065 B.S.*

The population distribution of Tharu is not uniform across nine wards. However the V.D.C. is divided in to nine wards purposively to make the sample more representations. There is no house holds in ward no-7 and there 3 and 7 households in ward no. 6 and 1 respectively. All 3 households were sampled and 49 households were sampled from remaining wards of Shreepur V.D.C. as shown in the table above. Thus total sampled households numbers is 52.

### **3.5 Techniques/Methods of Data Collection**

To carry out the study, data were collected from the two sources i.e. primary and the secondary sources.

### **3.5.1 Primary data collection : Techniques of data collection**

#### **3.5.1.1 Interview with Key Informants**

The leaders of Tharu community or the command personalities in the community such as ex-V.D.C. chairperson, Mukhiya, school teachers, NGOs staffs and social workers consulted to obtain qualitative data unstructured interview. The information were their main festivals, religion, marriage system and life cycle ceremonies.

#### **3.5.1.2 Interview Schedule**

A survey questionnaire sheet was developed in consultation with dissertation supervisor to gather quantities H.H. data such as family size, education health and sanitation economic, social and cultural condition and their place of origin too. The questionnaire sheet had both open and closed types of questions.

#### **3.5.1.3 Observation**

Most of the qualitative information was collected through non-participant observations. It helped to observe their foot habits, clothing, housing and settlement patterns health and sanitation status different feasts and festivals, children's educational attainment and their social behaviour.

### **3.5.2 Secondary Data Collection**

Books, journals, reports and research papers, articles magazines and government official records were used as secondary source of data to meet the objectives of the study. Quotes from knowledgeable persons of the area and the ethnic groups have been taken as the secondary sources.

### **3.6 Process of Data Analysis**

The data and qualitative information collected from primary and secondary sources have been processed arranged and analyzed by using descriptive method. Quantitative data has been analyzed using simple tables average, percent, ranking and ratio. Based on the means the characteristics of Tharu community have been made clear by using explorative and descriptive methods, based on the nature of data. They would be presented in graphics.

### **3.7 Limitations of the Study**

- This study covers only the selected of Shreepur V.D.C. in Kanchanpur district.
- This study conducted in two wards with in limited framework.
- This study has been focused on social status of Tharu community in Shreepur V.D.C.
- The generalizations of this research may be applied or may not be applied for other places in some subject and some matter.

## **Chapter - Four**

### **A PROFILE OF STUDY AREA**

There is given a table below in which ward wise sampled household population, total sampled, male and female population.

**Table No. 4.1**  
**Sampled Household Number and Population**

<b>Ward No.</b>	<b>Sampled HHs</b>	<b>Total Sample Pop.</b>	<b>Male Pop.</b>	<b>Female Pop.</b>
1	2	19	9	10
2	14	168	80	88
3	10	110	57	53
4	8	72	34	38
5	8	104	55	49
6	1	12	7	5
7	0	0	0	0
8	3	35	16	13
9	6	67	33	34
Total	52	587	291	296

*Source : Field Survey, 2012*

There are 9 wards out of total wards. 8 ward were sampled from Tharu community. Total population is 587, male and female population are 291, 296 respectively from 52 households numbers.

#### **4.1 Background of Kanchanpur District**

Kanchanpur district is one of the district of Naya Muluk which was gifted by then East India company to the Rana Reime. It lies in western part of country which is bordered by Mahakali River. It is one of the developed district of far-western region. It lies in Mahakali zone and adjoining districts are respectively Dadeldhura in North, Kailali in East and India in west and South. The district spread between 28°32' to 29°8' N latitude and 80°03' to 80°33' E longitude covering an area of 1610 sq.km. It is one of the Terai districts of Nepal ranging from 53m to 466m in height from sea level. The average length in east west in 44km and North west is 34 km (DDC Profile, Kanchanpur, 2060).

The climate of Kanchanpur is tropical monsoon type having the range of temperature in between 6.96°C to 43°C. The average temperature remains about 30.5°C. The average rainfall is 1575 mm of which 90% receives at monsoon season. The relative humidity is always remain high constituting 83%.

The district politically divided into 11 Ilaka (sub political district), 19 V.D.C., and 1 municipality, Mahendranagar. There are four constitutionally elected number.

The total population of Kanchanpur district is 377899, out of which male share 191910 and female share 185989 which is 50.78% and 43.22% respectively. In total household counts 6015 and average family size is 6.28 and population growth rate is about 3.91 (DDC Profile, Kanchanpur, 2065).

It is an aboriginal place of Tharu people but after eradication of malaria the hill migrants dominant the place. Demographically large

portion (20%) of population is composed by Tharu but nowadays their socio condition is under threaten.

In Kanchanpur there are many rivers, important ones are Mahakali River, Donda, Chaudhara, Mohana, Syali etc. Kanchanpur district is rich in natural resources. The largest herd of Barasingha lies in Shuklaphant which is located in Kanchanpur district. About 54.5% of total area of the district is covered by forest including one wild life reserve, Shuklaphanta wildlife reserve.

Mahendranagar is headquarter of the district which is one of the major city of Nepal in term of trade and commerce and Gaddachowki is a transit place to India.

## **4.2 Background of Study Area**

### **4.2.1 Location**

Shreepur V.D.C. is located at east south of Mahendranagar and is at the distance of 45 km. The adjoining areas to the area are Rampur Bilasipur V.D.C. at west, Laxmipur V.D.C. at east Shankerpur and deghatvuli V.D.C. at north and India at south. The total area of V.D.C. is 57.62 sq.km.

Most of land is arable but soil type is sandy. For the irrigation purpose there is canal which is drained from Mahakali river. Mahakali irrigation project has constructed the canal which plays vital role in the agro-economy of the people of Shreepur V.D.C.

### **4.2.2 Climate**

The climate is characterized by tropical monsoon type. It is very hot and humid in summer. During day time of summer season, there blows hot air with sand which is locally called Loo. The temperature reaches upto 43<sup>o</sup>c during the summer season and minimum

temperature may falls up to 6.96c. During winter season, people feel severe cold and the climate remains foggy. The months of Feb., March and April are clean and pleasant.

The average rainfall of Shreepur V.D.C. is about 1575 mm. out of this, 90% is received at the month of rainy season.

**Table No. 4.2**

**Monthly Temperature of Study Area ( °c )**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Average</b>
January	21.5	6.9	14.4
February	24.1	8.4	16.5
March	29.4	12.2	20.1
April	39.4	17.4	25.4
May	37.5	22.2	29.2
June	36.7	24.2	31.1
July	33.4	25.1	29.3
August	33.0	24.9	29.2
September	32.5	23.5	28.6
October	30.8	18.0	24.9
November	27.6	11.8	20.8
December	23.8	7.9	15.6

*Source : DDC Profile Kanchanpur, 2065*

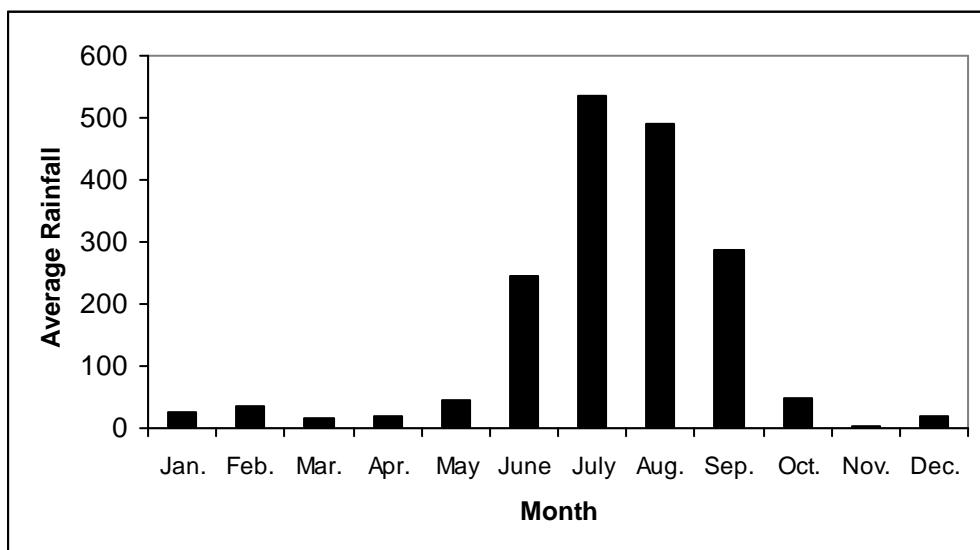
**Table No. 4.3**  
**Average Monthly Rainfall in Study Area (mm)**

Month	Average Rainfall
January	24.4
February	35.5
March	15.9
April	20.3
May	46.2
June	245.2
July	534.5
August	490.2
September	286.5
October	47.6
November	4.7
December	20.7

*Source : DDC Profile, Kanchanpur, 2068*

Average monthly Rainfall in study area (mm) is also shown in bar-diagram which is below :

**Figure No. 4.1**  
**Average Monthly Rainfall in Study Area (mm)**



### **4.2.3 Natural Resources**

Natural resources plays vital role for the development. Efficient and rational utilization of natural resources makes country wealthy, developed and prosperous. Due to diversification in climate, Nepal is rich country in water, second to Brazil. The V.D.C. has 23.3 sq.km. area which is plain and most of it is arable.

#### **4.2.3.1 Forest**

There is no such type of forest in Shreepur V.D.C. but in West side there is some part of community forest and stretch of shuklaphanta wildlife reserve. About 0.28% of total area of V.D.C. is covered by forest. In some parts there are some stretches of forest but public awareness for plantation of trees is raising. People collect firewood, grasses and litters from forest of shuklaphanta wildlife reserve. The most dominant species of trees are sal (*Shorea robusta*), sisoo (*Dalbergia sisoo*), Khair (*Acacia catechu*), Jamun etc.

#### **4.2.3.2 Soil**

The people of the place mostly depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Soil of the V.D.C. is not so much fertile. The soil is young type having more parts of sand. The soil is sandy in upper parts while it is clay loam type in its lower section. The production of rice is high in lower section while wheat is more produced in upper part of the V.D.C. upper section of V.D.C. is mostly suitable for canals, beans, pulses etc. 22.63% of total area of V.D.C. is under cultivation.

#### **4.2.3.3 Water**

Only 0.07% of total area is under the water bodies. From the irrigation canal, the water is supplied to public for irrigation purpose.

Hand pumps are major sources of drinking water. Water level is high, as water is available from 10-30 ft. So, people generally use hand pumps and tubewells for their household and farming purposes.

There are some ponds and ditches found scattered all over the place in V.D.C.

#### **4.2.3.4 Animals and Birds**

The commonly found domesticated animals are cattle, buffalo, cow, pig etc. There are tiger, jackals, monkeys, deer, fox, seen wondering sometime in judge area. Parrots, sparrow, nightingales pigeon etc. available in jungle.

#### **4.2.4 Population**

Muscle is important component which help in utilization of natural resources. The people of V.D.C. largely depend on agriculture which is of course subsistence and seasonal and the people are not fully employed. The rate of population growth is high due to the reason of rapid increase of migration from hill. The total population of Shreepur V.D.C. is 1485 out of which male are 7415 and female are 7400. Demographical composition is Brahmin 14%, Chhetri 31.4%, Dalits 14% and Tharu 24.615%. Tharu area indigenous to the V.D.C. The population growth is found to be 59.28% in 10 years interval from 1991 to 2001. The population composition of Shreepur V.D.C. shows the dominant caste is Chhetri which is followed by Brahmin, Dalit and Tharu.

The social disparity is large. The hill people are in high status while dalits and Tharu are highly dominated by the hill people. In Tharu community, the existing customs like early marriage,

disinterest toward education, engaged on agriculture as employment plays important role in determining their social status.

**Table No. 4.4**  
**Population Status of different Caste/Ethnicity in V.D.C.**

S.No.	Caste/Ethnic Group	Population	Percent
1	Chhetri	4654	31.4
2	Brahamin	2049	14
3	Dalit	2074	14
4	Tharu	3689	24.5
5	Tamang	1759	11.8
6	Thakuri	381	2.6
7	Sanyasi	365	2.4
8	Rai	186	1.2
9	Magar	84	0.56
10	Muslim	8	0.05
11	Newar	6	0.04
12	Gurung	21	0.14
13	Others	1209	8.16

*Source : CBS, 2002*

The table shows that Chhetri is the dominant caste of the V.D.C. Their number is 4654 and 24.5. Tharu (3689) ranked second and Brahamin (2049) follow the Tharu while the aboriginal Tharu ranked second with 3689 in numbers. Dalit community is in fourth ranked.

#### **4.2.5 Sex**

The sex composition in V.D.C. level is almost equal. Out of total population 14815, male shares 7415 and female shares 7400. the

social customs greatly prevailing in society. The parents have high favour on boy child over girls.

The wardwise sexual composition of population is shown.

**Table No. 4.5**  
**The Sex Composition Level in Shreepur V.D.C.**

<b>Ward</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	899	893	1792
2	899	844	1943
3	1065	1097	2162
4	489	457	946
5	669	635	1304
6	389	409	798
7	1229	1266	2495
8	462	465	927
9	1314	1334	2648
<b>Total</b>	<b>7415</b>	<b>7400</b>	<b>14815</b>

*Source : CBS, 2002*

#### **4.2.6 Education**

The education level in Shreepur V.D.C. is low which measures 45.94% and among the Tharu the educational level is very measurable. The educational infrastructure are well developed. There are two high schools, eight lower secondary and five primary school. There is two higher secondary schools and one diploma level collage. There is no provision of technical education. Due to poverty and ignorance, the literacy rate is far below than national status.

**Table No. 4.6**  
**Educational Status of People in V.D.C. (6 Yrs and Above)**

S.No.	Education Level	Male	Female	Total
1	Illiterate	1552	2819	4371
2	Read only	563	547	1110
3	Can Read and Write	352	1949	5471
4	Not Stated	0	9	9

*Source : CBS, 2002*

Analyzing the data, it is found that the rate of illiterate is mostly prevailing on women in comparison to male. There are many reasons behind this and most important one is social customs and practices. Among other, the Tharu are far behind in the sector of education. It is hard to find Tharu people who have passed SLC and above.

#### **4.2.7 Language**

The table below shows that population on the basis of language spoken.

**Table No. 4.7**  
**Population on the Basis of Language of Shreepur V.D.C.**

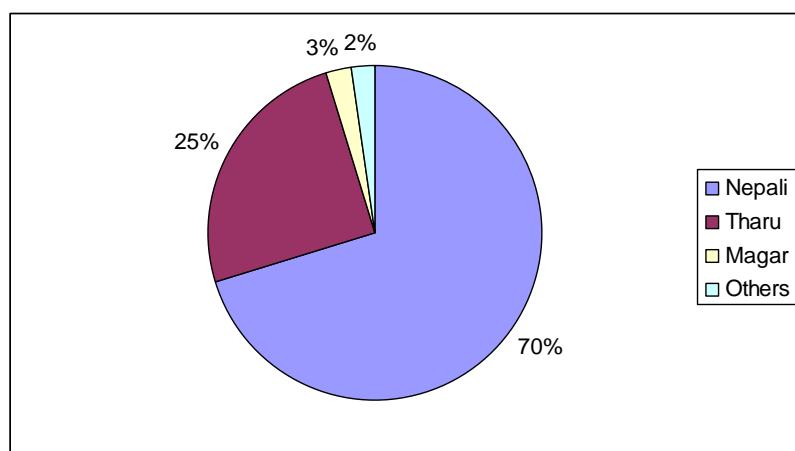
S.No.	Language	Population	Percent
1	Nepali	10432	70.4
2	Tharu	3689	24.9
3	Magar	385	2.6
4	Others	309	2.1
	Total	14815	100%

*Source : CBS, 2002*

From above tabke. It is evident that 70% of total population have mother tongue as Nepali which is followed Tharu covering population of 3689 which is 24.9% of total population. The medium of communication is Nepali and among Tharu they communicate through their own native language.

Population on the basis of language of Shreepur VDC is also shown very clearly in Pie-chat which is below :

**Figure No. 4.2**  
**Population on the Basis of Language of Shreepur V.D.C.**



#### **4.2.8 Health**

The condition of health is very poor and among them the health condition of Tharu is very poor. There is no provision of health except one primary health center. For getting health facilities, people should reach to Mahendranagar. Due to poverty and non awareness, the health among Tharu people is vulnerable. There are some private clinic which are delivering primary health services to the place. It is found that the feeding and sheltering habitat is not hygienic. In comparison to earlier days the awareness about health among Tharu is raising. Mainly Tharu of the V.D.C. mostly rely on Guruwa or traditional healers, when they fall sick and offer chicken, pig and sheep to please god and goddess in odder to recover of diseases.

Mostly, the people of V.D.C. suffer from diarrhoea, pneumonia, asthma, gastric troubles etc. Generally people avoid to go clinic for health check up but when the complexity increases then only they go for treatment.

#### **4.2.9 Economic Condition**

The people of the V.D.C. are wholly depend upon agriculture. About 95% of people depend upon agriculture for their subsistence. The average annual household income is Rs. 10,456 which is ranked in 11<sup>th</sup> position among 19 VDCs of Kanchanpur. Although the major job of the people is farming, the average household land is only 0.73. It shows the land is fragmenting rapidly which ultimately retards the agriculture production. The intensity of poverty is very high among the Tharu people.

Earlier most of Tharu worked in hill people's home as Kamaiya but after they are freed by government, they work on lands as tenants and some go to India in search of job. After the season of agriculture, most people of V.D.C. go to India for searching the source of income. There is prevailing trend of going to India to earn money in early childhood also.

#### **4.2.10 Religion**

Demographical composition on the basis of religion shows Hinduism is most dominant religion. The caste system is deeply rooted in the society and discrimination on the basis of caste is utterly due to Hindu culture.

**Table No. 4.8**  
**Population on the Basis of Religion**

S.No.	Religion	Population	Percent
1	Hindu	14668	99
2	Buddhist	117	0.79
3	Islam	8	0.05
4	Christian	10	0.06
5	Not Stated	12	0.01
	Total	14815	100%

*Source : CBS, 2002*

From above table. It is obvious that 99% people follow Hindu religion and is followed by 0.79% Bouddha people. The customs and practice practiced by elite religious person highly influenced on the people. They are found to be highly spiritual and conservative. All the festivals and ceremony are celebrated like Dashain, Tihar, Holi, New year etc.

## **Chapter - Five**

### **SOCIO- CULTURAL CONDITIONS**

#### **5.1 Social Conditions**

Many years ago, Kanchanpur is said to be unsuitable place for living because of high incidence of malaria disease very few people used to live in this area. It was considered as malaria infected area. How ever, it is believed that Tharu people were malaria resistant and they were believed to be the first dwellers of the district. Besides they were known as the only one Terai indigenous ethnic group. In connection to the people of Shreepur V.D.C. Tharu is the dominant group that counts 24.9 percent of the total population of Shreepur V.D.C. They represent to desaure Tharu those who are believed to be Indian origin are called desaure and Dangauras to those, who believed that they are originally from Dang, Desaura Tharus are closer to the India Tharu in different aspects e.g. language and clothes, whereas Dangaura Tharu have their own types of clothes and dialects. That differs to desaure's one. However it is obserd that they have very good social harmony and relationship among Tharus and other non-tharus caste and ethnic groups.

Mostly Tharus houses are built closer to others houses. They live in cluster it indicates that they have very good cohesiveness and social harmony with in their community. they have their own dialect, customs, culture and gradations which indicate that they give great importance for their families and community so that the Tharu settlement is always seen in cluster but in and around very good arable land.

### **5.1.1 Age and Sex**

Population is the human capital which plays a significant role in the development of a country or V.D.C. It depends upon the types of population V.D.C. or nation where there is more skillful population it makes greater impact in the change process of V.D.C.

During the survey different age cohort of people was interviewed. The distribution of respondent of different age cohort is shown in the table below :

**Table No. 5.1**  
**Age wise no. of Respondents**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
0-16	2	3.85
17-25	13	25
26-35	10	19.23
36-45	9	17.30
46-50	14	26.92
50 and above	4	7.70
Total	52	100%

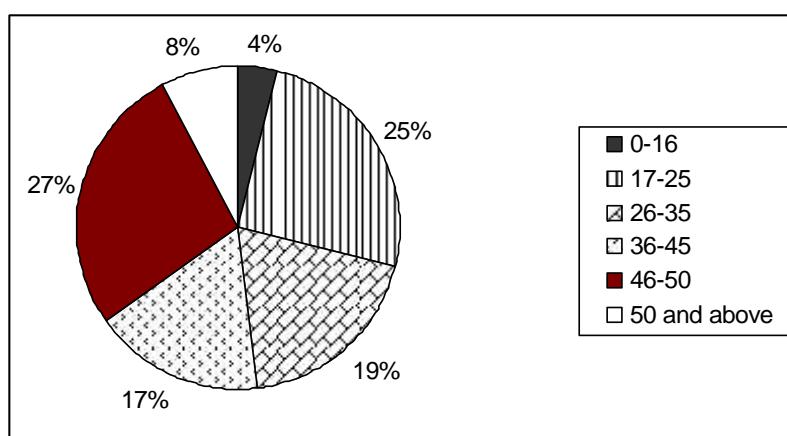
*Source : Field Survey, 2012*

During the study different age group of people were interview. Two respondents were from the age cohort of 0-16. Respondents of 17-25 years of age were 13 which is 25% of the total. There were 10 respondents form the age group of 25-35 and the cohorts holds 19.23%. There were 9 respondents from the age group of 36-45 which is the 17.30%. The highest number of respondents was 14 from the age group of 46-50 which holds 26.92%. The age group of above 50 were 4 numbers which was 7.70% of the total. 52 numbers were sampled in total.

There were 42 male respondents which is 80.55 in percent of the total respondents where as there were 10 female respondents which holds 19.23 percent.

Age wise no. of respondents is also clarified in Pie-chart which is taken below :

**Figure No. 5.1**  
**Age wise no. of Respondents**



### 5.1.2 Family Structure of Size

The joint family system is common in Tharu communities. It is found that 3-4 generations are living together in a joint family with good harmony. Tharu has a culture of patriarchal family structure. The father would be the head of families with supreme authority over all family members. After the death of the head whom the call 'Gordhuniya' the second senior male member would be the successor of the head. If there is not any second or third brother only then the leadership goes to the eldest son the second generation. The status of eldest women in a family is given high social value. The oldest women in the household handles the domestic works she hands down some responsibility to the Tethi buhari senior (daughter in law) who in turn has to be obeyed by the junior daughter in laws. (Gautam and Magar

1994) Thus, the leadership responsibility of family is delegated to the eldest daughter in law and then to the next junior in law and so on.

Mostly Tharu live in jointly family with a traditional thinking that such family system gives enough human resources for their farming. Their thought is that the bigger the number of human resources means the greater the number of the cattle and buffalo with their own family members. They have good decision of labour. Some members of the family take care of grazing animals whereas other do farming other members of the family take care of household chores and so on. Usually, women members of the family involve in 80 called light household works with in the four walls of the house. They do grinding and pounding grains and feeding their whole families and raising cattle. Thus they are proud of having their joint family system as a good system. How ever, due to decreasing land holding size and their descending economy. They go either for wage labours or agriculture laboures for their livelihood which is encouraging them towards nuclear family from joint family system such nuclear family hardly keeps animal. Also, they can farm very little as some may not have enough land to calculate as well. That is why Tharu people want to live together in a joint family and they prefer to live in cluster of their own Tharu community. So, they do not prefer to go outside of their own locality and from their own families.

Tharu community people are known as very co-operative. They give due regards to every member of a family. They have good family value system. Tharu gather together and share each other when ever they have special functions. They get equal share without any discrimination when they have special food preparations care of children is taken very much and mostly grand parents do take care of children when their parents go for work and elder brother and sisters are busy in supporting their parents. Usually, male member go to farming where as female members do the house hold chores. Similarly boys and girls supports their parents by cutting grass and collecting

firewood and litter. Overall Tharus do hard work. Men and women go hand in hand in the field-works. Men and women have equal say in house hold decision making process. It is thus seen a gender sensitive family in Tharu community.

The table below gives the scenario of the family structure of the respondents.

**Table No. 5.2**  
**Family Structure of the Respondents**

S.No.	Family Structure	No. of Family	%
1	Nuclear	15	28.85
2	Joint	37	71.15
Total		52	100

*Source : Field Survey, 2012*

The above table indicates that majority of sampled families live in joint family system. Out of the table 52 sampled families 37 (71.15%) are joint families whereas there are only 15 nuclear families. The data above shows that joint family system in Tharu community of Shreepur V.D.C. is also common.

Family size of the respondents in shown in the below table :

**Table No. 5.3**  
**Family size of the Respondents**

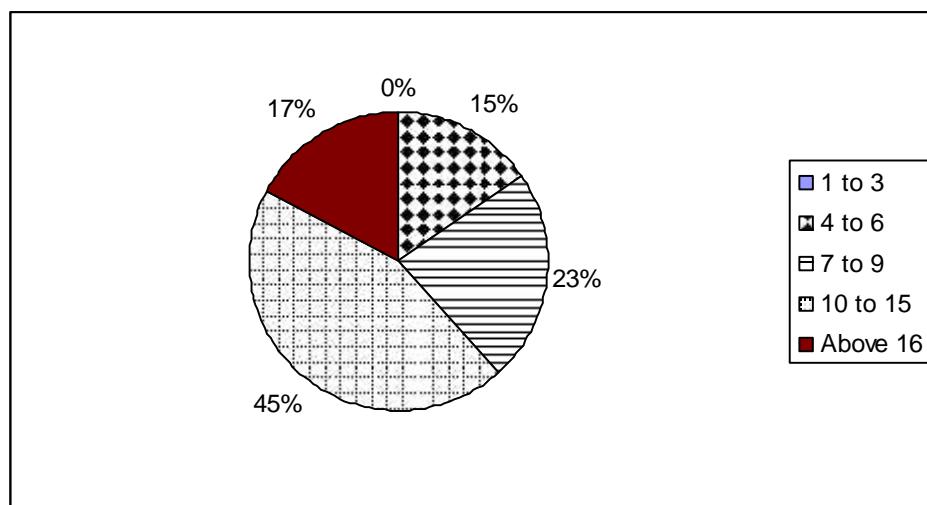
Family Members	Households	Percent
1 to 3	0	0
4 to 6	8	15.38
7 to 9	12	23.08
10 to 15	23	44.23
Above 16	9	17.31
Total	52	100%

*Source : Field Survey, 2012*

The number of household with 1-3 family members is 0. There are 8 which is 15.38% family with 4 to 6 family members. Similarly, 12 families which is 23.08% with 7 to 9 family members, 23 families which is 44.23% with 10 to 15 family members which is quite big family size then others. In above 16, there are 9 families which is 17.31%. It shows that majority of families (44.23%) have 10 to 15 family members whereas 0% families have 1-3 members and 15.38 families have 4 to 6 families members from above table, we know that there is still joint family exist in Tharu community of Shreepur V.D.C.

Family size of the respondents is also shown below in Pie-chart :

**Figure No. 5.2**  
**Family Size of the Respondents**



### 5.1.3 Kinship System

Tharu ethnic groups have strong kinship system which has made them very cohesive in social behaviours as they get together in their rituals and festivals. They have mainly two types of kinship system in their society. The relationship which exists in their society are mainly either by blood or by marriage. Thus, they have both blood and martial relationship in the society the order type of relationship which is called "Mit" fictive is also found in their society but it is not common as it is popular in the eastern part of the country. The remarkable point in their kinship system is that they do not have

discriminatory felling and practices between rich and poor like in some other caste and ethic groups. They respect and pay good regards to all irrespective of their economic status and gender. They behave rich and poor equally. It has thus made Tharu society very strongly socially bounded. This is the beastly of the kinship system among Tharu society.

The relationship established due to marriage is called affinal kinship and relationship thus related are called affinal kins. Thus, Tharus of Shreepur V.D.C. called the kinship groups/system as 'Sasrar' means affinal. The affinal kin are 'Bahunya' or 'Palohiya' for daughter in law, Bhauji for elder brother's wife. Like wise "Damda" for son in law (daughter's husband) 'Nana' for mother's father and Nani for mother's mother and 'Mama' for mother's brother and 'Mai' for mama's wife as usual words. Also 'Phuwa' for phui (father's sister) husbands.

The relationship due to blood called 'Gotyar' means consanguineous. They are 'Baba' for father, 'Dai' for mother, 'Barpa' to elder brother of father and 'Kaka' for younger brother. Babu for grandfather and budi for grand mother. Similarly, 'Chhawa' or 'Putwa' for son and 'Bahiniya' for younger and didi for elder sister and 'Bhaiya' and 'Dada' for younger and elder brothers respectively. They respect to all sorts of kins whether they are Gotyar or Sasrar.

Like in the eastern hills, some of the youngsters have few (mit) fictive kins which is a special kinship system, common to eastern Nepal especially. The fictive kin is considered very respective. Special care and attention is given to fictive kins. Such fictive kin is established among themselves and other caste groups of almost of the some age groups mostly. It is believed that the 'mit' if he or she is from Biswakarma caste would help to get ride of from prison (difficult situation) Majhi would help to cross river and ocean in trouble.

There is practice of adopting son of others of the same caste or élan if they do not have their own son. The reason of adoption is the assumption that only son can be state for their parents and helps to open the door to heaven after death of parents. The son thus adopted is called 'Bhurpelwa' or 'Bhorwa'. But it is not so much in practice in this V.D.C.

Also Tharus have strong kinship system. They take care of least five generation for affinal relationship. They think and give special relationship to affinal kin and give great importance to maternal nephew. It is most necessary to be maternal nephew in maternal uncle's house is there is any ritual and care money. Thus they have strong bond family relationship.

#### **5.1.4 Habitat (Housing Pattern)**

Tharu houses are built mostly in cluster of 10 to 20 on either side of the village lane. The general structure of the house is single storied with bamboo walls and thatched roofs. The length of the house ranges from 30-40 ft to 100-125 ft. and the breadth goes upto 20-25 ft long. Now a days, double storied houses are also seen in some localities. But they always keep their deities on the ground floor if they have double storied building the main reason of constructing single storied house is that their home god called 'Bhutwa' does not permit to construct and reside in such house (Gautam, 1994). It is observed that additional huts in every main house are also build for keeping animal and other purpose.

The residential houses are found in structure and breadth varies as per the family size. Tharu used to live in big or joint family in the past. The system of living in a joint family system is still prevalent. However, the number of joint family is decreasing due to social and economic reasons. One the whole Tharus live in a joint family system even today.

Tharu houses are made up of wood straw mud and stone. The inner and outer sides of the walls are plastered with mud. They keep their houses heat and clean and healthy compared to other caste and ethnic group of people. Similarly they have very good coloured wall with paintings of animals birds and parrots mostly.

Now a days, Tharus have started to construct a houses with bricks, cement like and corrugated iron sheet for roofing with the introduction of local technology they prefer to use small cement olike for the roofing which is cost effective and almost free from fire which is considered serious in Terai. Tharu usually have their houses rectangular in size facing either east or west by malang south and north in length. They fence their houses an outer wall with bamboo twigs or branches of other bushes and in some cases they make live fencing of decorative plants. The doors are made of wooden plants. They have windows but usually small. It is also observed that they have small holes on the walls which are used to peep outside, if they do not have window in their houses.

As they have single storied house, the interior section of the houses are divided into several rooms which are used for storing either grain or their household goods using some large clay containers. Such versels or contrainers help to protect cereals and seeds from rats insects and fire. Such rooms have neither door nor windows. But the house have usually two doors one in front and the on the back.

Usually small shed is seen around their house build for keeping their livestock such as pigs goats and cattle. They keep their surroundings neat and clean but they usually do not build toilets. They use upon field for defecation. However with the intervention of GOs and NGOs, now Tharu families have started to construct and use simple pit latrine and started to use toilets. The well to do families who are living in town area have started to build multi-storied

building with in roof but they worship their village deities, Bhuinyar before the construct such houses.

### **5.1.5 Leadership and Gender Roles**

The eldest member would be the head of Tharu family whose word is law. He is called Gardhuniya, if the chief of the household or domestic front is lady she is called hardhuniyani. The head of all families select their village representative or chietian called Badghar or mahato, who is authorized to out as the chief of village council which discusses various matters relating to the social issues e.g. welfare and development of the village. This is a land of council of elder (Gautam, 1994). Badghar plays a role of chairperson or makes a decision in panchayat. Thus he has vital role to maintain their social norms and values and make peace in Tharu community. any body whether men and women who has social and economic problems used to go to Badghar for solution or justice. He used to call a meeting after or before Kaluwa (morning meal) some times, they gather before or after Mijhani (day meal) or sometimes before Beri (evening meal). Thus they used to spend considerable amount of time in establishing social justice and Tharu culture and values in their community. Now a days Badghar role has been minimized due to village development committee (V.D.C.) officially and legally the judicial power has been shifted to the V.D.C. chair person and the role of Badghar, as the village opinion leader. Still they are socially and culturally considered as their leaders in their community. the recent V.D.C. executive body of Shreepur V.D.C. had minimum number representatives from Tharu society. Because of their lack of political awareness, the are not interested to involve in political activities.

Similarly traditional doctors who are called Grurwa are also considered as their leader. He performs rituals and religions woks in the village. In honour of the service provided by Guruwas all the Tharu families provide. Tihai (Grain as an honour or gift) to Guruwa

annually. But due to increasing level of awareness on health and education through a number of intervention the role of Guruwa seems decreasing. The role of female community health volunteers (FCHV) has been vital and influential to solve the health social and education problems at large. Similarly, gender situation and roles in the respondents families were also tried to look at the study. There were seven areas in which women roles were tried to look at in their family level. The below gives the data on the gender roles among the respondents families :

**Table No. 5.4**  
**Gender Roles Among the Respondents**

<b>S.N .</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Decision Making Process</b>			<b>Total</b>
		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Both Sex</b>	
1	Farming activity/agriculture work	17	0	35	52
2	Buying goods and daily expenses	5	7	40	52
3	Buying and selling land	13	0	39	52
4	Decision making of children's marriage	11	0	41	52
5	Children's education	10	17	25	52
6	Property right	18	4	30	52
7	To inning local indigenous social groups	23	5	24	52

*Source : Sample Survey, 2012*

In general, Tharu women have much liberty as compared to the women of other castes. They have some decision roles in the families. They can influence the family decision and have power sharing in the

families to some extent. However, they are also influenced by the patriarchal mentality at the same time. The table above shows that the role of women is not much. Still the power lies either with husband or eldest son. They have very little say in children's education and sale of land etc as presented in the table.

#### **5.1.6 Relation with Other Ethnic Group**

Tharu are known to be honest and hard working people and do not want to bother others. They concentrate just on their work only. They do not raise any unnecessary concerns on others issue. However they are friendly but straight and very social. It is observed that Tharus in Shreepur V.D.C. have very good relations with people of other castes.

As Tharus have known very receptive and supportive they have been used and exploited for years talking advantage of their receptive and untricky nature for years. As a result of it mostly poor Tharus were made bounded labour (kamaiyas) until two years back it is faind that most of the bonded labors (Kamaiyas) were from Tharu ethnic groups. Out of 35 freed kamaiya families who are resettled in siber Shreepur V.D.C. in sampled house hold. Kamaiyas used to be like servant and the landlord as a master who called sell kamaiya any point of time. Thus the social status of Tharus was found lower than that of Thakuries and Chhetri and Brahmin in general. Even today, Thakuries are greeted as Raja and Brahmin as Guru jee which signify the superiority among the society Tharus are \afraid of Thakuri and Brahmin and Chhetri people as Tharus think that they are much clever. That is why it is found that Tharus seek advice from Brahmin and Thakuri, Chhetri in Shreepur V.D.C.

However Tharus are managing their problems through the increased participation in the political mainstream. It has shown that their status has also been significantly increased which is leading toward the equitable society.

### **5.1.7 Educational (Literacy) Condition of V.D.C.**

The literacy level of Tharus in Shreepur V.D.C. is very low. Out of the total population 587 of sampled household, 306 individuals are illiterate, 50 have attended just basic literacy class. 131 house attained primary level education and only 62, 30, 8 have attended lower secondary, secondary and S.L.C. or above respectively. The details of literacy status is given one the table below :

**Table No. 5.5**  
**Educational Attainment of the Sample Household**  
**(6 years and Above)**

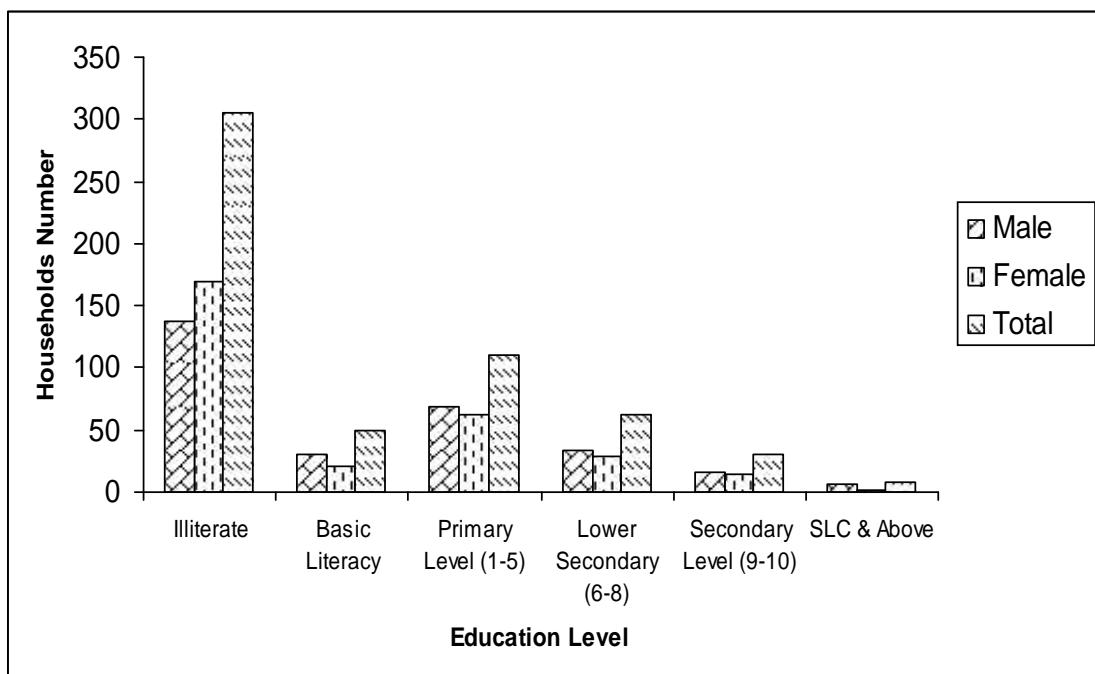
S.N.	Educational Level	Men		Women		Total	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1	Illiterate	137	47.08	169	57.11	306	52.13
2	Basic Literacy	30	10.31	20	6.76	50	8.57
3	Primary Level (1-5)	68	23.37	63	21.28	111	22.31
4	Lower Secondary (6-8)	33	11.34	29	9.88	62	10.56
5	Secondary Level (9-10)	16	5.50	14	4.73	30	5.11
6	SLC and Above	7	2.40	1	0.33	8	1.36
	Total	291	100%	296	100%	587	100%

*Source : Field Survey, 2012*

The table shows that the literacy level is though low the trend of school going children is increasing there is very few students who have attended S.L.C. and above level but there are 131 students in primary level which is highest numbers of students in sampled household. Based on data, we can concluded level of awareness on education among Tharu of Shreepur V.D.C. has been raised.

Educational attainment of the sample household is also shown in Bar-diagram from above table which is below :

**Figure No. 5.3**  
**Educational Attainment of the Sample Household**  
**(6 years and Above)**



The situation of hygiene and sanitation among Tharu families and community is very poor only 7 families have toilets and rest of the 43 (86.54%) families do not have even simple toilet among the sampled families which is shown in the table below :

**Table No. 5.6**  
**Available of Toilets in Sampled HHs**

Availability of Toilets in HHs	Households	%
Available Toilet	7 HHs	13.46
Not available toilet	45 HHs	86.54

Source : Field survey, 2012

**Table No. 5.7**  
**Literacy Status of Sample HHs Population**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Population</b>			<b>Literate</b>				<b>Illiterate</b>			
				<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>Grand Total</b>			
	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>%</b>
0-5	32	33	65	9	6	15	23.07	17	33	50	76.92
6-10	32	34	66	17	13	30	45.45	15	21	36	54.55
11-15	28	26	54	15	16	31	57.50	10	13	23	42.59
16-20	23	29	52	25	20	45	86.53	4	3	7	13.46
21-25	22	23	45	21	19	40	88.89	2	3	5	11.11
26-30	20	22	42	18	19	37	88.1	2	3	5	11.90
31-35	23	22	45	17	16	33	73.33	5	7	12	26.66
36-40	23	23	46	10	7	17	36.96	13	16	29	63.04
41-45	20	18	38	13	2	15	39.47	8	15	23	60.53
46-50	23	24	47	7	3	10	21.28	18	19	37	78.72
51-55	19	17	36	3	1	4	11.11	16	16	32	88.88
56-60	16	14	30	3	0	3	10	13	14	27	90.0
61-65	6	8	14	1	0	1	7.10	6	7	13	92.86
66-70	4	2	6	0	0	0	0	3	3	6	100
71 +	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	100
Total	291	296	587	159	122	281	47.87	132	174	306	52.13

*Source : Field Survey, 2012*

The literacy status among the samples households is still low. The table shows that the younger the people the higher literacy percent of Tharu. The oldest people the lesser the literacy percent in the sampled households. It indicates that the Tharu families have started to send their children to school. Thus the literacy percent of Tharu in increasing.

### **5.1.8 Art Language and Literature**

Tharu have their own mother tongue language, belongs to Indo-Aryan family. The C.B.S. shows that 6.5 percent people in Nepal speak Tharu dialect which sounds somewhat similar to Hindi dialect of up and Bihar of India. Language spoken by desaura Tharu is different from the language spoken by Dangaura Tharu. It is said that there are words of respect in Dangaura where as in Desaura they have direct words. How ever the Tharu accent is very soft. Most of the Tharus can understand and speak Nepali but most of the women and older people of Tharu community can not speak Nepali well but they understand Nepali fully in case of Shreepur V.D.C.

As the regional transmission service surkhet radio started to broadcast 15 minutes news daily and there are many programme of Tharu community conducted by many F.M, T.V. and radio Nepal now a days. It has played a very important and positive role in the development of Tharu language and it's cultural promotion. Tharu people used to feel backward when they speak their own mother tongue 'Tharu' and feel weak when they did not know Nepali language well. They are now proud of their own language as regional transmission program from Surkhet started to broadcast news and other various program. Now they are committed to preserve and promote their language and culture. There are few magazines published in Tharu. They are Gochali (Pandey Mathusudan Nationalities of Nepal : 2060). But they do not have their Tharu script the compose and recite poems and other literacy articles in their own languages which is a good sign for their language and cultural point of view.

## **5.2 Cultural Conditions**

### **5.2.1 Festivals**

Tharu people are very rich in culture like other caste and ethnic groups. They celebrate different types of festivals, which are common

to other people. Also, there are some festivals, which are celebrated only by Tharu community. They are proud of being Tharu and they celebrate the festivals mainly to continue their traditional and religious faith. Tharus call "**Tyauhar**" for festivals in their own language.

Some of the major festivals, which are celebrated by Tharus, are described in brief as below :

#### **5.2.1.1 Maghi (The First day of Magh)**

Maghe Sankrali (the first day of Magh) is called Maghi in Tharu language. Tharus celebrate Maghi as one of their main festivals. Tharus do not have their own separate calendar, but practically their new year begins from this day. It is their belief that the cycle of agriculture begins from the day. (Dahal : 2056). So, Tharus celebrate the festival as their New Year. It is also believed that the sun shifts from Southern Hemisphere to Northern Hemisphere from the day.

Maghi is the especial festival of Tharus that they stop working 3 to 4 days prior to the main festival day the Maghi. They eat, drink and dance mainly from the night of the last day of the Poush month and they continue to celebrate the festival for a week or so. They enjoy so much and have fun on Maghe Sankranti that no milking animals like the cows are milked. Even for a short period Tharus set their livestock free so on that they too enjoy the freedom for celebrating the festival (Gautam, 1994).

One the early morning of the maghi, they go for bathing in the river usually and most of them pay visit to Shiva temple. On the occasion those, who have new child they thank to their deity and those who are newly married ask for a new child. Also they pay their respect to senior (dhog). Brothers offer gifts to their sisters on the auspicious occasion of the big festival, the Maghe Sankranti.

In the evening of the Maghi, young boys and girls organize group dancing and singing program in every houses and collect money and rice etc from them. After taking bath the next morning, they eat a lot of meat and drink alcohol and dance for the whole day. Thus they celebrate the festival almost a week.

As Tharus believe that their agricultural activities begin from the day, agreements of the works to be done between kamaiyas and the Master in a year used to be decided on this occasion. They used either renew their contract or quit their contract and start new ones. Thus, the day was also connected with kamaiya's new choice or contract for work. Besides, they make decision on wages and land for cultivation on the day and make agreements with landlord even now.

#### **5.2.1.2      Dhurehari (Holi)**

This is one of the popular festival celebrated in Terai and in some major towns of Nepal in the memory of the day in which Holika was killed. As per the old saying, there was a demon named Hiranyakashyapu in the mythological period. He had a son named Prahlad, who was a devotee of a god. Which was against of his father's interest. He continued praying the continued in spite of his father's advice. At last his father ordered his sister to kill Prahlad putting him in her lap and sit on fire because Holika was blessed with the immunity of fire. Thus he wanted to kill his son Prahlad by burning in the fire. Contrary to the interest of his father, Holika herself got burnt due to god's blessing and Prahlad remained alive. Thus the festival is celebrated marking as the victory of truth against of the false.

The festival is celebrated by throwing coloured powder. Some times they use coloured waters as well. Tharus drink local liquor and eat meat in this occasion. Especially, young boys and girls throw coloured powder each other. Also, Tharu women gather together and visit each houses of villages and sing holi songs, which is called

"Phaguwaina". They organize feast with the money they collected from holi song.

#### **5.2.1.3 Dashain**

Dashain is the greatest festival of Hindu celebrated usually in the month of Ashwin/Kartik. Tharu also celebrate the festival Dashain. They celebrate the three main days Asthami, Nawami and Dashami, on the day of Astami, they offer pigs, sheep, goats and cocks to their god. They prepare a special dish of rice flour called Dhikri and they offer it to their deity with wine as well. After eating meat and drinking wine and local liquor, they dance of different types of dances such as badkinach, Chootinach, Dasya and Jhumra as per the great epic Mahabharat. Now a days, young Tharu boys and girls have started drama and cultural program on the occasion. On the ninth day, they remember and organize religious worship of their ancestors, which is called "Prittrahawa".

On the tenth day, Tharu celebrate Dashahara (Dashain in Tharu language) by putting white tika on their forehead and small maize seedling (Jamara) on their ears or head from the elders. Sharecropper and tenants go to landlord house with some present for the same purpose. But some Tharus do not put Tika and Jamara. However, the day is taken as an auspicious day of giving and taking blessing each other.

#### **5.2.1.4 Dewari (Tihar)**

Tihar is known as Dewari in Tharu language. Tharus do not celebrate Tihar as the Hindus do. They neither worship crow or dog, but they put on garland to cow and worship on the day of Laxmi Puja. They worship Laxmi in the night and light oil lamp or candles in doors of houses.

They celebrate Dewari by drinking liquor and eating meat and playing cards. Now a days, Tharu boys and girls have also started to

put on Tika between sisters and brothers. They have imitated Deusī Bhailo program on which they visit house-to-house in-groups for singing and dancing. Thus they have started to enjoy Dewari by singing and dancing, which they did not have in the past.

#### **5.2.1.5 Hardhwai**

This is not actually a festival, but now it is celebrated as a festival. This is actually eating a "Manna" producing a "Muri" (by eating  $\frac{1}{2}$  kg producing a quintal festival (Chaudhary, 1999). This is called Maijharo in Nepali once planting work is over. Growing rice in summer is really a difficult task for farmers. They have challenges of different types of poisonous snakes and insects all the time during the period. They have to work in the muddy soil and water day and night. The task from the seeding of rice to transplanting is very tough. Their hands and feet are scored and wounded due to hot and muddy water and soil. They find difficult to go into the muddy field due to serious wound. However, they feel very happy once they finish transplanting work and get over of it and take a long breath of peace and happiness (Ibid.)

On this occasion, all the ploughmen of the village gather their plough and agricultural tools in one-place and sacrifice animals like chicken, goat and pigs and enjoy drinking alcohol. The festival is celebrated once the transplanting season is over i.e. they keep their agricultural tools and equipment making them dry for the next year.

#### **5.2.1.6 Astimki (God Krishna Birth Day)**

Tharu call "Astimki" for Krishna Janmastami. The festival is celebrated in the month of Bhadra on the same day all over Nepal. Usually, women do not eat on the day and take bath early in the morning and draw pictures of flowers, Ravan, Krishna blowing flute and Pandavas on the wall. They call it Astimaki.

After sun set, Tharu women go to the place, where Astimaki is made and worship the pictures by lighting lamps and giving Tika to the pictures except Ravan's picture. As they finish worshiping they eat fruits and spend the night singing related to Krishna and dancing.

The next morning, they take all the flowers and other stuff and throw them into the river by lighting lamps. They prepare especial food when they come back home and enjoy the food.

#### **5.2.1.7 Aitawari**

Atwar is Sunday in Tharu language. The festival is named Atwari because it is celebrated on the Sunday of Bhadra after Tij (third day of bright fortnight in Bhadra). The day is taken as fasting day, in which men and women usually do not eat anything on the day. In the evening the worship Sun and Shankar and only then they eat fruit and drink milk. It is believed that if food is prepared with the fire producing by robbing two wooden sticks would be auspicious for them.

#### **5.2.2 Religious Functions**

Tharus are the followers of Hinduism. However, they worship both Hindu God and Goddesses and their own traditional God (Deurahar) and Ghost too. Riskikeshav Raj Regmi (1999) rightly said that Tharus religion is a complex system of beliefs and practices based on animistic tradition. Despite their shamanistic beliefs and practices, the Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata have influenced Tharus. However, some Tharus use their "Bhanja" nephew (sister's son). Besides, they are loosing their culture and traditions in Shreepur V.D.C. day by day due to the influence of Modernization and Sanskritisation. Thus, Tharu young people are being assimilated into the main stream of Nepali culture and traditions.

### **5.2.2.1 Gods and Goddesses**

Tharus have their own God and Goddesses. Though they have been greatly influenced by Hinduism, they have their own types of symbolic god and goddesses. Such as they tie small piece of red clothes, elephant and horses of clay at the top of the bamboo pole as the representation of their god and Goddesses.

#### **5.2.2.1.i Home Gods (Griha Devata)**

Tharus have their home deity, which are worshiped at their own houses. Usually, they keep their home deities (Bhutwa) in the northern room of houses. The room in which the deities are kept also called Deurahar" or Mijhari. Usually, they keep their deity in the grain-storing jar called "Bhakari". Deurahar is a human image made on a piece of leather, which is stitched onto a bag placed at a spot. The soil beneath the bad is taken the Maiya (made of clay in which Trisul shaped iron stick are put) and others are kept there (Gautam and Magar, 1994).

#### **5.2.2.1.ii Guruwa**

Tharus believe Guruwa as the most powerful God and it is believed that a man shaped leather represents it. Tharus appoint their priest as Guruwa. Their priest called Guruwa or sikha act like dhami and cast spells chants mantras and attempt to remove the effect of the bhut-pret and parallel propitiating the gods also (Ibid).

There are two types of Guruwa called Desh bandhiya and Gaun Guruwa. The Desh bandhiya Guruwa claims to have a lal mohar starting his ancestry as the family priest of all Tharu people. Desbandhiya is entitled to get some rice annually for worshipping of village God in every year. But the later one (Gaun Guruwa), who is appointed/elected for worshiping and treatment of sick people, get some days free labour in the field annually from the beneficiaries. Tharus still have so blind faith that they go to the Gaun Guruwa for

consultation for their sick persons (Gautam and Magar, 1994) said that these Guruwas are mostly male except in the Kailali area.

#### **5.2.2.1.iii Village Gods (Bhuinhar)**

The Tharu village have a village shrine, which is called Bhuinhar in Tharu language. Bhuinhar consists of several wooden carved board erected on the ground. Bhuinhar is kept almost in the center of the village. The whole village worships their God. Bhuinhar together. The main reason of worshiping the god is to prevent from any unwanted natural calamities in their communities such as flood water, draught, landslides, earthquake and any other epidemic diseases. Also, they worship the God when inhabitants of the village fall ill. Usually, they worship the God in March and August and they share the cost of all the offerings e.g. goat, chicken and pig for sacrifice. Desbandhiya Guruwa is the priest of Tharu, who worships the God twice in a year.

### **5.3. Life Cycle Ceremonies**

Tharus are widely spread in Nepal. They are from the east to west especially in Terai. There is some variation in their culture and language as their location differs. The socio-cultural situation of eastern Tharu differs from the Tharus of the west on one hand. On the other hand, the gap between Tharus and other groups of people is decreasing day by day. The reason of narrow gap among the Tharus and other groups of people is due to in and out migration process in Shreepur V.D.C. At the same time is also due to the rapid progress of development activities and interventions in the communities as well as the construction and connection of road to the places of different socio-cultures. Therefore, it is seen that the culture of Tharu is heavily influenced by the Hindu culture.

### **5.3.1 Child Birth**

Tharu people do not celebrate birth as marriage and death because they do not give important attention to birth as other groups of people give. But children are highly desired by Tharus with no discrimination between boy child and girl child.

Though, Tharu communities do not give so much importance to the birth of a son as other groups of people give they give equal importance to the birth of boy child and girl child as they take children as their helping hands in agricultural works. So, the birth rate and number of children are higher in Tharu communities than non-Tharus. However, it has been observed that some Tharu couples are aware of family planning (FP) devices and they have use of the FP means in the V.D.C.

Due to traditional belief and low level of awareness on prenatal care in the Tharu community of Shreepur V.D.C., very little advice is taken after conception, but they are refrained from hard work, which is considered harmful to the health of the pregnant women and womb. Normally, a pregnant women gives a birth at her bed room, but it is not surprising that most of the pregnant women deliver child while they are at work in the field or on the street as they work early morning to the dark mostly. They are hardly taken care during or before the delivery by trained health personnel, but the number of cases taken care by Suranya (Traditional Mid wife) is increasing in the field level, which is encouraging.

Mother and newborn child are considered as polluted and they are kept separately and advised not to be in contact with others. Therefore, usually Traditional Mid wife (Suranya) takes care of the mother and child. She takes care of child and baby for 10 days i.e. until purification. On the third day of the birth, mother is served Juwano, a special food prepared from sweets, chilli, turmeric and water. Similarly, from third day onward of the birth, their deities are

offered *Bhiu* which is a mixture of maize ground into flour and molasses and the same food is given to the delivered women to consume as holi food stuff or Prasad. Guruwa assists if there is any complication in the delivery.

Mother and child are confined in a room, where the birth has taken place until the performance of "Ghatna Karaina" (a process of making pollution free i.e. purification of the newly born child and mother). During the period, Suranya lights the fire and make the room warm and takes care of the mother. Suranya gives a special attention of the mother for her good health. She rubs the mother's body with hot mustard oil to keep warm during the confinement period. She washes the clothes of mother and child. Purification occurs on ninth days of birth if a girl child and 10 days if a boy, Suranya goes back home after bath on the day of "Ghatana Karaina" with gifts. She is usually given money and rice as gift or for the services she offered to the mother and child. Mother also takes bath and worships her home god and village god (Bhuinhar). After the completion of all these worshiping and rituals, she is purified and allowed to participate in other household works as usual.

### **5.3.2 Naming**

There is no particular time, ceremony and rule for giving name to a newborn child. There is a practice of giving name on the basis of events, festivals, days and place related to birth of a child. They name a child as Budhe or Budhi if a child born on Wednesday. Similarly, if a child is born in the month of Fagun, she is named as Faguni, likewise, they name by the name of Hindu Gods like Ramphal, Shiva etc. They name like Aitabari, Somlal, Mangal and Sukralal etc on the basis of the child born days.

Generally, Tharus do not like to be addressed by their names. So they have practice of addressing as Chaudhary or Mahato by the outsiders. But within their families for day to purpose, they are called

by the positions in their sibling hierarchy in the family. The eldest son is called Badka, second one is called Majhala, Sajhala, Kanjhala to the third and the fourth sons respectively. Chootaka is for the youngest son. Likewise Badki, Majhali/Manli, Sajhali, Kanjhali and Chhotki to the first, second, third, fourth and the last girl respectively.

### **5.3.3 Head Saving (Chhewar Karana)**

This is the ceremony of hair cutting of a son for the first time when he reaches four or five years of age. The family, who is rich and can afford, celebrates the ceremony of all sons. If a family can not afford, they celebrate at least of the first son. Family deity is worshiped and maternal uncle (Mother's brother) cut his hair by using the knife of either gold or silver. The head saving or hair cutting ceremony is usually celebrated either on Monday or Wednesday of Magh or Fagun month. The boy then bathes and wears new clothes and jewelers. He also gives some present. Likewise all the invitees give some money to the boys as gift or present and good wishes on the auspicious occasion. A feast is organized to the invitees by cutting chicken, pigs, he goats and or sheep and they also drink local liquor. No such rituals or ceremony is celebrated for the girl child.

### **5.3.4 Marriage**

Marriage has a significant place in the Tharu society of Shreepur V.D.C. The practice shows that they have arranged marriage system mostly in their community as it is socially accepted and also considered as the holy marriage. There is still practice of early marriage in the community. parents still prefer to arrange marriage at an early age especially in teens.

Besides, the arrange marriage, there are other forms of marriages in the society.

The forms of marriage adopted in the community are as follows:

- a. Arrange marriage (Maghi Bibaha)
- b. Marriage by elopement (Urhi)
- c. Leviariate and Sorrorate
- d. Bhwar Pasne
- e. Re-marriage

**a. Arrange Marriage**

Generally, there are two types of systems of fixing the arrange marriage.

- i. The exchange marriage
- ii. Bride price marriage system

**i. The Exchange Marriage**

In this marriage system family of a bridegroom must give one of its girl to the family of bride as an exchange. Tharu people believe that the system helps to establish double relation both ways. It helps to poorer families, who can arrange exchange marriage by giving another girl to the other party. If the poor family does not have any girl to offer in place of daughter in law as an exchange, the family finds difficult to pay the price of the bride. That is why Tharu community in Shreepur V.D.C. like in other places wants equal number of children boys and girls. It helps to compensate the price of bride.

**ii. Bridge Price Marriage System**

As per as marriage system of Tharu, the family of a bridegroom has to pay certain amount of money and some goods to the bride family. The act of giving money to the bride by boy's side is called "Jhangā" in Tharu community. though the system "Jhangā" is expensive, it is still prevalent in Tharu community in Shreepur V.D.C. It is difficult and a big burden especially for poorer families in Tharu community.

Generally, the age of marriage in this community ranges from 13 to 20 on average. Usually marriages take place in the month of Fagun since they consider the month better and auspicious for marriage. But marriage is also done in other months as well. The traditional method of marriage is quite unique. But, the traditional system is decreasing gradually, yet the marriage system is also not totally modernized.

As per the tradition, parents of both sides (bride and bridegroom) look for a good match of them. But, it is the practice that looking for a suitable match is the duty of bride's folk. Tharus do not marry from other groups of people. But at the same time, same clan marriage is also prohibited.

The price of bride depends upon the background of the girl and her ancestral history. The bride price is higher if she is good looking and unmarried and less if she is divorced and not good looking. However, the process of deciding the amount of money (Jhangal) depends upon the judgment of bride's father or brother. The ritual has given higher status and power to Tharu women compared to other groups of people like Brahmin, Chhetri and Thakuri.

In the process of looking a suitable candidate, girl's party or father visits the candidate's house and negotiates if though appropriate for son in law. Upon reaching to an agreement, girl's party gives some money on the boy's hand to confirm the match or acceptance of the marriage proposal as a ritual and comes back home. After that boy's party visits the girl's home to observe their future daughter in law. The party gives acceptance if the girl is liked, otherwise the money given to the boy is returned back to the girl's party as an indication of the cancellation of the marriage proposal.

Upon the acceptance of bride, bride's father or the elder member of the family gives Tika prepared from rice and curd (mixture of curd and rice) on the forehead of grooms' party and vice versa as a custom.

At the same time, the bride's father or the chief person of girl's side announces the agreement to be given the girl (name is stated) to the boy (name is stated) and others are the witness of the declaration. Similarly, the boy's father or the chief speaker of the party reciprocate the same as the mutual agreement of marriage. Such a celebration is called "Budha Dan". On this occasion, they enjoy and share their happiness by drinking liquor and eating meat and they fix the marriage date. However, some of the Tharus after the confirmation of marriage. Girl's party visits to attend marriage fixing feast at boy's house. The function is called "Bardekhwa" - (looking the boy, in which the visiting team consists of all household heads and one women from each house. They are welcomed offering liquor with meat of pig, goat and sheep. They have also a custom of visiting girl's home with some rice and dal. This event is called "Chaur Pathaina" - (sending of rice) just some days before the marriage day. They have a very good mutual support system in the community. They divide functions to be performed during the marriage ceremony. Some take responsibility of making "Chandol" - (a small cab made of cloth and fence) for carrying groom and bride. Others take responsibility of food preparation and caring of invitees and cleaning the pots called "Bhansariya".

On the day of wedding ceremony, the groom takes bath and worships to his home deity (Deurhar) and completes the ritual of worship in the direction of Gaun Guruwa, the priest. He also worships the knife kept together with Deurhar and the knife, which should be kept with him throughout the marriage. Also, he worships village deity in the Gaun Guruwa's direction too. After that the groom is decorated with Maja (a white coloured cloth worn round waist up to the ankle), curban (Pokta) - a cloth worn around the head to cover the hair and ear rings. But now a days, the groom puts on pant, shirt and cap. Then he worships home deity by offering liquor. A person who carries and takes the responsibility of the gifts (Jewelry) for the bride called "Letamawa" and walks ahead and groom follow him taking the

barchha (a big stick). Groom's brother is also decorated in the similar fashion to the groom and he walks together with him. Both groom and his younger brother are kept in the Chandol. Then the marriage procession starts with musicians walking ahead playing their instruments like madal and flutes. Some others sing auspicious (Tharu) song. If there are some Tharu villagers, who are called (parchhakki) or relatives of the groom stop the procession and welcome with liquor. As an honour and wishing for good to the groom. Tharu women put pot of full water and lamp. They are given some money for the honour and welcome they extended to the groom and the procession.

When bridegroom reaches to bride's village, they go round the temples or shrines and pay homage to the shrines of the villages. As the procession arrives to bride's house, they are welcomed and bride's father washes the feet of the groom and Leharanwa. Then the groom is brought into the Deurahar and asks him to bury the Barchha. (a big stick) and stick the knife into the ground and he worships the home deity with liquor, he brought from his house. He is served food and liquor inside the Deurahar itself. Meanwhile, the procession party is also offered food and home made beer outside the deity. They enjoy food and liquor served by the party of bride. The groom joins the party after his food and drink inside the deity room. In order to make fun and joyful moment, some friends of bride sing nasty songs and give bad names for the groom and some make bad jokes addressed to the groom for taking their friend. Also, they try to hid, the shoes and other stuff of groom as well as of his party. The groom gives money to the dancers, singer and children to make them happy. After the dinner some go for sleep while others enjoying singing and dancing throughout the night. Fiends of bride and other village girls and women also gather for singing, dancing and teasing the groom's party.

The next morning, the departure feast is organized. After some time of the feast, groom is taken into Deurahar and asked him to

worship offering liquor and comes out with a "Barchhaa" a stick buried the previous evening. He touches and rounds the Doli especially prepared cab for carrying bride and he leaves the bride's house and keeps waiting outside of his house until the bride is brought to groom's house. Before the departure of bride, she is decorated with new clothes and ornaments given by groom. Her family members also offer her gifts. The bride is not given farewell until moon does not fall though the groom leaves the bride's house earlier of the day. During the final farewell, the bride is to ride the Doli, which is beautifully decorated. The bride is given an oil lamp and a cup of poison. The reason of it is the traditional ritual, which means she is expected that she can run away with the help of lamp even in the night if the procession is attached on the way of the groom' house. Also, it is the belief that she can save her honour even by drinking a cup of poison from the possible attack on her chastity in case of failing to free from the situation.

As the people of bride in a decorated Doli bring the bride to the groom's house, some liquor is poured into the mount of Doli bearers and then they put the Doli down. Then the bride is brought to the groom, where he is waiting for welcoming. Then the bride stands next of her groom. The Bhojinya (sister in law) sprinkles some cottonseeds, mustard seeds, turmeric and parched rice and she makes both the groom and bride's head to strike. At the same time, sisters of groom come out of the house to welcome both of them with oil lamp, dubo (a green religious/holy weed), water jugs and a dhakiya knitted by women. Sisters of the groom walk round both of the groom and bride with fire of hay or straw used for thatching in an earthen pot. They put the mustard seed on the fire while walking around them. It is then poured in the eastern bottom of the doorframe, and they are asked to walk upon it and break the fire. Thus finally, the bride is asked to salute the groom and other respected relatives as well. The ritual is

called "prachhana", which is considered a very important event in the marriage.

The groom welcomes the doli bearers with liquor and thanks them after the finishing of parchhana. The groom and bride are taken to deurahar for worshipping. The groom buries the "barchha" and worships the home deity with liquor. The next day, feast is organized for the villages. They serve liquor and meat of pigs, goats, sheep and ducks etc in the feast. People enjoy by singing and dancing at night too.

**b. Marriage by Elopement (Urhi)**

it is also found the practice of getting married without the consent of their parents. The boy and girl go out of their village. In such cases, they stay outside of their area and send the message that they get married. As their parents ask them to come back home and they organize a ceremony called Prachhana as the arrange marriage.

**c. Levirate and Sororate**

in this community, they have a custom that a widow can marry with her husband's younger brother. Similarly, there is practice that a widower marries with the younger sister of his deceased wife. However, such system is not so popular among the Tharu community of Shreepur V.D.C.

**d. Bhwar Pasne**

it is also like a widow marriage of daughter in law. If there is no younger brother in the family or the younger brother is already married, then a suitable male person is looked for the widow and brought him into the home as a son and he is married with the widow daughter in law. He lives in the same family getting the status of son in the family as well as in the community. The ritual is well accepted in Tharu community.

**e. Re-marriage**

Re-marriage is popular in Tharu community. A Tharu women, if dissatisfied with her husband and family come to her natal home and refuses to go back to her husband's house and she marries with another man with the help of her parents since a divorced. Tharu women is given equally good social status. A widow marriage is also common. Similarly, if a husband is not happy with his wife, he bring second wife.

**5.3.5 Death, Deposition and Mourning**

Death is also considered as one of the major events in Tharu society. The rituals of death differ from their place of habitations. In the last moment of ill person, they give gold water i.e. water in which god is kept. They bring the dead body outside i.e. in front courtyard through east door. They take the dead body for cremation or burial on the same day if not possible they do on the next day. The dead body is always kept making the head to north and legs to south.

All the relatives and people of same lineage assemble. They make ladder like bamboo structure, which is called "Macan" in Tharu language. Some Tharu also upside down bedstead (ulto khatiya) for carrying the dead body. Seven varieties of food grains are collected which is called Satabihi. All the belongings of the dead person are tied in bundle except precious things and the bundle is kept near the dead body.

All the villagers gather at the home of the dead person, but only men take part in the funeral procession. Only sons and lineage people carry the dead body. Others carry spade, firewood, axe and belongings of the dead person and Satabihi, which is also used to throw along the way at different interval of certain distances. Prior to start the procession, the Gaun Guruwa worships the home god.

Upon reaching the gravesite, the dead body is kept making it north south direction. The head is kept in the north direction and the leg in the south. Similarly, the grave is also dug making it north south direction. Firstly, the chief mourner digs five times with the spade and then others dig the grave. When the grave is dug, the bed is made with old ones and then with the new bed sheet etc. After that the dead body is kept inside the grave making the head in the north direction and the legs in the south. While laying the dead body, it is buried facing downward if a dead person is male and upward facing if it is female. Personal belongings of the dead person together with mustard and cotton are also put inside the grave. Also, the satabhi is spread over the dead body thinking the dead person make use of those things in the next life of other world.

The eldest mourner put little soil upon the dead body by his left hand inside the grave and other follows the same action. It is known as matti giving. While filling the grave, money is also thrown inside the grave to help the dead soul so that the person can pay fare to the other world. It is also believed that the dead person should repay back the loan too. After the filling of the grave the Mecan or Khaziya are also left over the grave.

Malami (all the participants of funeral procession) bathe and return home. Similar to the burying the dead person, the pyre is made in the bank of river. Before, putting the dead body on the pyre, all the clothes are taken off except the private part, which is covered by Kaffan. Then the chief mourner with his relatives put the dead body on the pyre making the body north south similar to burial case. The chief mourner puts the log over the dead body and others follow him and insert straw and pour mustard oil and ghee over the dead body. The chief mourner puts a burning log over the dead body and ghee is thrown over the dead body. All the belongings of the dead person are thrown into the river. Also they make sure that the dead body is burnt completely. Some residuals of the bone are also thrown into the river.

Then they clean the entire tools and equipment and return home. On their way home the mourners and people of same lineage shave head and other purify by bathing before coming back home.

At the home of deceased person, all the village women come with rice, pulse and other foodstuff whereas the men come with local liquor. Thus women prepare food from the collected foodstuff for the funeral goers. Food is served first to the main mourner and others gradually. But the practice is that before eating they separate all the things including alcoholic drink and curry in the name of the deceased soul, which is called "Dudhmar" and the feast is called "Dharmbhar".

It is their custom that it is not compulsory for all the sons for mourning. Any one of all the sons can do mourning. Similarly, they have also flexibility on the duration of mourning. The mourning day can be ended the next day and can go up to 13<sup>th</sup> days. During the period, the mourner can eat rice with milk and curd, but it is prohibited some foodstuff such as salt, turmeric and oil. During the mourning period, he should not touch any body. He has to put off clothes like cap etc. Either woolen or white cotton blankets are only allowed for wrapping. He should take bath daily and cook food every morning once in a day for himself.

All the family members including the main mourner take bath on the day of purification. They smear the house with cow dung. All the utensil is cleaned. Guruwa performs funeral rituals in the Deurahar. The Guruwa offers wine and food stuff to the family god. After the completion of the funeral rituals/performance in the Deurahar, they spray every body with gold touched water for purification, but they do not drink cow urine like other Hindu people for purification. Then they eat food and drink local liquor.

### **5.3.6 Dressing Patterns and Jewelry**

The Tharus of Shreepur V.D.C. have their typical dressing pattern. Men put on dhoti, which is white in color and covers from the waist to knee and shirt. Traditionally, they used to have black and thick thread around the waist, which is called "Kardhun" in which they put on colourful thread flowers. But it is hardly seen such dresses. Every body wears shirt, pant and half paint.

Tharu women of Shreepur V.D.C. usually put on lehanga (a cloth worn around the waist to upper ankle Jamana, ghangar) and blouse. Married and unmarried women have different types of dress. A married women wears shawl (cover back part of the body from head to knee back called "Agrahan") and blouse, in which button are sewn in front, but the unmarried women have blouse with button sewn on the back portion. Tharu women wear colourful dresses during the festival, but they never use vermillion, which is used by married women of other Hindu caste. Tharu women are hardly seen of using shawl. Tharu male people do not change their dress pattern whether they are at home or outside of their house.

Both married men and women have tattooing in different part of the body. Usually, women have tattoo on their wrist to legs, where as the male usually have on the arm and they usually have symbol of Shiva. The tattooing/vaccination process is called "Tika Chhedaina".

Usually, Tharu women wear golden jewelry and brass of silver depending upon their economic condition. They wear earrings called "Chattaur" and hanging ornaments called "Jhimiliy" or "Sutiya" in the ears. They wear different nose rings known as "Phenphi" (Phuli), Nathi, and bulaki are also common ornaments see in Tharu women. Mostly Tharu women wear silver bracelets on the upper side of an elbow. It is called "Tariya" and also they have rings in finger, ankle or Kalli on legs and Tikuli on the meddle of the forehead, colourful necklace of beads, and a solver wreath called "Thosya" a brass wreath called "Sutiya" are also common in the neck of Tharu women.

## **Chapter - Six**

### **Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **6.1 Summary**

Nepal is a multi ethnic, multi lingual, multi religious and multi cultural country. Tharu is one of the caste and ethnic groups of Nepal in which it stands in forth position from population point of view they have their own type of life style and they are rich in cultural and so diversified that they differ from their inhabitation as they live throughout Terai district from Jhapa to Kanchanpur. It could be the reason that for eight and Nepali scholars have studied Tharus C.B.S. 2001. indicates that they are living in all 75 district. However, the main territory of Tharu is Terai belt more particularly the western region. That is why, the area is called tharuwan or tharuwat traditionally.

Shreepur V.D.C. lies in Kanchanpur is 32 km far from its headquarter Mahendranagar. The Shreepur V.D.C. is surrounded by Laxmipur V.D.C. in the east Rampur-Bilasipur in the west Sankerpur and Deghatbhuli in north and border of India (U P) in south. The V.D.C. is approximately 225 fit above from the sea level and the total area of the V.D.C. is 23.30 km<sup>2</sup>. It has hot and humid type of climate throughout the area and since it is Terai V.D.C. of the district. The study area is called Shreepur V.D.C. is very hot in summer season and cold during the winter.

The study is about the social status of Tharu community. a case study Shreepur V.D.C. Kanchanpur. The objectives of the study are to analyses social status of Tharu community, to know the cultural behaviour of Tharu community and to identify the constraints and opportunities for their development. Shreepur V.D.C. is the universe

of this study area and there are 329 households which accounts 3689 population of Tharu community out of them, 52 households are included in the sample in the study. Both male and females of each sampled households were respondents in the study. Descriptive and exploratory are the research design of this study and interview schedule, key informants, field observation and interview schedule ware the data collection techniques.

Shreepur V.D.C. is in backward area of Kanchanpur district where there is no market facility is not only 80 good but also not transportation and communication facilities of the study area. Agriculture practice are still traditional. They have to depend on rainwater, irrigation system is not 80 effective since there is no good sources of water except Mahakali irrigation project and ground water which are being used dhiki pump to some extent. The total population of the V.D.C. is 377899 which there are 191910 male and 185989 female, out of the total population. Most of them are subsistence farmers and wage earner. The major agricultural and products are still rice, mustard, wheat, sugarcane and lentel which has not changed much despite of the government and no Govt., NGOs interventions yet.

The education level in Shreepur V.D.C. is low which measure 45.94% and among the Tharu the educational level is very measurable. The educational infrastructure are well developed. There are two high schools, eight lower secondary and five primary school. There is a higher secondary school which is proposed to run diploma level. There is no provision of technical education. Due to poverty and ignorance, the literacy rate is far below than national status.

Tharu in Shreepur V DC has strong belief on their Guruwa who works as traditional healer. So they still we traditional herbs and medicines it is believed that they can cure snakebite also. The common disease of Shreepur V.D.C. are diarrhea, dysentery and respiratory diseased due to cold, skin disease, tuberculosis, malaria and encephalitis. There is one health centre but it is not well equipped. There is one small market which is growing faster for local product selling and to fulfill needs of locals. It is expected the rapid growth and changes of the V.D.C.

Tharu have their own leadership system every family has their leader who is mostly male and called Ghardhniya in Tharu language. His word is taken as the rule that should be followed in family. They have joint family system in which 3 to 4 generation live together usually in single stored house as they believe that this home deity Bhutwa gets unhappy if they build mults stored house. They keep Bhutwa in the ground floor even if the build more than one storied house. Mostly, tharus build houses in cluster and different cluster make one village. They have village leader called Badghar in Desacre and Mahanoy in dongaura Tharu respectively. They discuss different issues pertaining to the welfare and development of the village. Thesis the role of the Badghar it to ensure peace and development of the village. He is more than opinion leader of she village.

Tharus are nature loving ethnic group that they print different pictures of peacock, elephant, birds etc on their house-wall. They believe on god and goddesses and dead soul. They believe that natural disaster takes place if gods and goddesses get angry. Therefore, they worship their village god with the help of Desbandhiya Guruwa and prey for good fortune for the year.

They celebrate different festivals common to Hindu such as Dashain, Tihar, Holy and Maghe Sankranti. Among those festivals, Tharu celebrate maghe sankranti which they call maghi in their local language. They believe that the day is their new year and they start agricultural work from the day it is their traditional belief and practice. They drink local liquor and eat pig meat and the youth boys and girls sing maghi song and go to house for dancing and asking for money as gift which they use for organizing festivals again. They pay respect to the seniors and also for blessing and the seniors give gifts to juniors. They let their animals free on those days so that they celebrate the festival well without any worry of them. They thank that these animals also do celebrate being freed on those days.

Tharu celebrate Dashain mainly on the eighth ninth and tenth days of the festivals. Some Tharu like Hindus they keep Jamara on the first day of Dashain some does not. Some Tharus do put on tika on their forehead from their seniors and they give Jamara and flowers but some does not put on tika. They drink liquor and eat meat and enjoy the festivals. Similarly, they celebrate most of the festivals that Hindu do.

Desarue Tharus used to wear a shirt and dhoti in the past. Old people still use their same traditional dress. But nowadays most of the youths put on paint and shirt. The traditional dresses of Desarue women are Lahanga, blouse and agarm. Tharu women still use the same traditional dress. Most of them wear bongdls, bracelets, chhataur, taria and silver wreath (Thosya), and cupful beads on the neck and rings in the hand fingers. Ear rings and brass wreath which called scetia are also common.

The child's birthday is not given as big importance as other festivals. The fate of the mother and child depends mainly on the merry of suranya who is the traditional mid wife in Tharu community. she assists the mother before and after the child birth. She washes the mother's clothes and keep her warm and run warm mustard oil on her body. She takes care of cleanliness of the mother and arranges bed etc. on the third day of child birth a especial soup is prepared from chilli, turmeric, Juwano and sweets and served to the mother. Food is always served saranyo. She ashes all the polluted clothes of mother and bathes the newly born body.

One the day of purification. Soranya is offered clothes and grains as gift or salary from the family. Usually name is give on the basis of the day or month on which the child is born. They also have head shaving ceremony which celebrate only for boys when they reach 4-5 years. The ceremony starts with the hair shaving by maternal uncle with silver knife on the month of Magh or Fagun and the child is given money as gifts by all relatives.

Tharu arrange marriage system in common. They have some practices of marriage by elopement. They have different customs and rituals regarding the arranged marriage system like a practice of paying certain amount of money to bride if no girl can be given as the substitute of the bride. It is not required to pay for bridge if it is exchanged. But such customs and practices are changing, 15 percent of the sampled (52) respondents told that the traditional marriage system has been changed. Only 5 percent said that the old customs are still in practices but 80 percent of the sampled respondents said that the system is mixed of course, the marriage system is getting changed. They do not have dowry system as such but rather they have to pay either for bride or should be exchanged for brides price.

In Tharu community, all the relatives are informed the death of person, when all the relatives are gathered and rituals are done with

help of Ghar Guruwa. The procession starts carrying the corpse by the sons. Only male is allowed in the procession. Some relatives carry the belongings of the dead person and some other carry tools and equipment for digging grave the dead body is laid down making the body north south direction when it is taken to gravesite. The dead body is kept in to the grave facing downwards if the person is male and facing upward if it is female ensuring the north south direction of head and leg.

The chief mourner is required to put some soil over the dead body and than others are allowed to put the dead body and than others are allowed to put soil. Thus the dead body is filled with soil in to the grave.

All the funeral procession goes take bath to be purified and return home. The custom of Tharu is that they finish their mourning on the next day in case of agricultural season. In normal case they can extend the mourning up to 10-12 days. 95 percent of the respondents told that they follow the Guruwas advice on death ritual. It indicate that Tharus are still strongly following up of their rituals during death funeral ceremonies and mourning.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

Nepal is a country with diverse culture and language. It is a mosaic society with many castes and ethnic groups with wide range of language and cultural differences across the country. The ethnic group have their own type of life styles, tradition, cultural practices and behaviors. Tharus is the fourth largest ethnic group who is claimed that they are the possible first indigenous ethnic groups in Terai region. It has very rich culture in Nepal. Thus it has made a significant contribution in making the country culturally rich. Their

unique culture tradition handicrafts, dressing and life styles have contributed in attracting futurists. Their culture, handicrafts and their life style have also been the interest and thereby the destination for consist that is contributing to national earning.

But the Tharu themselves are socially and economical extended. There are still much to find out about Tharu as they have complex diversity across the east Terai to the west. They are still in isolated situation socially and economically. There are hardly have who passed S.L.C. from the sampled house hold (52). Neither, they have any family members in evil servants nor they have any foreign jobs expect seasonal laborers other than their traditional farming and live stock raising. However, the good sign in that there are 2 Tharu school theater among them. It has been an encouraging example to all Tharus of Shreepur V.D.C. which has militated sending children on in the school. The school enrolment rte of aged 11-19 years of children is over 90 percent which is positive indication of progressive trend in main steaming education of Tharu.

Many families do not have food security situation through out the year. Most of them are seasonal agricultural labour. Most of them can not afford to have their own two meals a day from their own products. They are still indebted. They can not treat well when they are sick. They have problem of getting citizenship. Due to low level of awareness, they are cheated and exploited by the landlord. They have problem on land tendency. They are unable to go for sealing social justice yet. There is a gap between Tharu community and the local administration. They have not been able tot the citizen as most of them do not have citizen certificate and they can not buy and sell their land without V.D.C.s recommendation. They are still not strong

enough to put forward their ideas and throughout publicity at the right time.

Tharus has unique social customs values and practices so they are culturally rich and different from others. It is their cultural heritage which makes the country richer and richer. But they themselves are getting very little out of it. Therefore it required states clear policy for its cultural presentation without descrying its originality and main streaming them in the development process. However there have been some obvious changes in cultural practices social customs and their lifestyle which has positive as well as negative aspects. Those changes are described in short as below.

Tharus' common marriage type e.g. tevirale and sororate are almost stopped as only 5 percent of the respondent told that there were some practice of thonga and bhuwar panes customs in their marriage system. Similarly, 15 percent said love and arrange types is in practice most of the Tharu families have realization that their social customs. Practices and rituals are very expensive spending more on alcohol and extravagant feasts which are at the cost of their families livelihood. The cases of alcohol in different rituals and ceremonies are getting limited. Even they are following the Hindu cultural practices inviting Brahmin priests.

With the process of such development. Tharu cultural heritage is getting lost Tharus are losing their barka nach, songs and their traditional customs. But on the other hand, they are learning others culture and languages side by side which is a positive aspects which helping to improve prospectus of cultural preservation with small

investment since they share and learn each other and diffuse to wider level of community.

The example of Hindu influences one them that they employ Brahmins as priests during their different rituals like puja and name giving etc out of 52 household respondents, 20 respondent that they use Brahmin priests in birth ceremony instead of their Guruwa. Also, they invite Brahmin when they have worship god and goddesses. They are copying the Hindu ritual, eg. Worshiping satyanarayan puja as they feel and want to demonstrate that they are like Brahmin and Chhetri so that their social status is locked better.

The practice participation of Tharu in local level bodies has been significantly progressed. There were 12 (above 24%) Tharu representatives in Shreepur V.D.C. among them there were no Tharu women representative in the V.D.C. but this is good start in social inclusion process. some ex-kamaiyas have been resettled in the V.D.C. and they are supported with vegetable gardening and vocational training to them so that their social conditions are threaded. With the interventions as govt. and non government organization with their own indigenous social groups, they are found aware of on family planning and personal health and hygiene. Level of understanding on gender equality among the respondents is fairly good that 60 percent said that son and daughter are free. Rest 25 percent said son is important where as 15 percent said daughter is more important. It indicates that the level of gender awareness is good among the respondents.

Information level on health on and hygiene among the respondents is good. They have practiced the habit of taking sick

people to the local health centre, clinics and private medical shops which are near to their door steps.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

As Tharu is the fourth largest ethnic group in Nepal it has many good social and cultural practices which have made Nepal known. They are the nation's property. Those valuable properties should be preserved by the state. However, there are some social and cultural practices prevailing among themselves and within the community needs to be addressed with thorough analysis.

Based on the study of short duration in Shreepur V.D.C. as a researcher some suggestions or recommendations are made which is useful for the change and development of the Tharu of Shreepur V.D.C.

- 1) They should projects for their secured livelihood, as it is their basic rights, not just their needs. The program should be designed and developed in a way that they are mainstreamed in the development and ensure their inclusion in the process from the beginning.
- 2) Local govt. and other different stake holders should have joint and especial package program, which should address the issues such as powerlessness. Isolation, subordination and illiteracy prevailing in the Tharus of Shreepur. Consequently, the project could support to break the deprivation trap among the Tharu community so that they know and empowered on how to get out of vicious circle of poverty.

- 3) The commitment made by the govt. at different times to combating the issue of landlessness should be functional and effective and make transparent in the participation of civil society.
- 4) Especial preservation policy should be made for the landless families and freed kamaiyas for their children's education and health. At the same time their employment and settlement should be facilitated with basic requirements such as drinking water, pit latrine (salav sauchalaya) in combination with raising awareness program.
- 5) Their traditional leaders such Garuwases, Badghariyas and mahatos should be oriented on the modern health practices and on some advocacy issues without offending their traditional beliefs values and norms and practices so that they would be helpful in promoting the behavioural changes and practices in the Tharu communities.
- 6) Tharus are very rich in their indigenous knowledge skills and craftsmanship. It should be preserved and promoted linking with vocational education so that it would be a valuable cultural products (e.g. Tharu cut etc) salable to inside and outside the country it would help to generate family and community group income. While designing the project such indigenous skills and craftsmanship should be given priority as a result, it would create self-employment opportunity.

- 7) In order to preserve and promote the culture and language of Tharu it should be broadcasted making the program diversified through local regional and national media. At the same time, awareness program should be built in 80 that they would come in to the development mainstream.

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## **Social Status of Tharu community**

## *( A case study of Shreepur V D C, kanchanPur)*

## Interview Schedule

## **PERSONAL BIO-DATA (INFORMATION)**

## **1. Name of the interviewee:**

Ward No:

Tole/Village:

Age:

Sex:

Caste:

#### Occupation:

#### **Qualification:**

**Relation:** Nationality:

## 2. Family Structures:

3. How long have you been living in this village? .....

4. Where did you migrate in? .....
5. Why did you migrate in? .....

### **SOCIAL PRACTICES IN THARU COMMUNITY**

1. What are the main types of marriage in your community?  
1. .... 2. .... 3. .... 5. ....
2. Is there any system of Dahej (Dowry) in your community?  
Yes                  No.
3. If yes what and how much? .....
4. Is there any member of your family representative in the Village Development Committee (VDC) or district Development Committee (DDC)?  
Yes                  No.
5. Does any member of your family work in the civil services or any other area other than agriculture?

**Female: Yes ..... and where if any ..... No. ....**

6. Where are your main festivals  
i)..... ii) ..... iii) ..... iv) ..... v) .....
7. To whom do you consult in the following rituals?  
i) Childbirth    ii) Marriage    iii) Worshipping    iv) Death
8. Do you know language except your language.  
i)      Yes                  ii)     No
9. If yes, which language do you speak?  
.....
10. Is there any change in your traditional dress?  
i)      Yes                  ii)     No  
iii)     If yes mentioned
11. With whom, your traditional dress are related?  
.....
12. What kinds of food most you like to eat daily?  
i) Meat and fish    ii) Vegetable    iii) Foods    iv) Others
13. How do you pass leisure time?  
i)      Singing                  ii) Talking to friends  
iii)     Playing games                  iv) Others

14. How do you manage Marriage in your community?

GENDER ROLE IN FAMILY					
S.N.	Responsibility	Decision making Process			
1	Farming activity/agriculture work	Male	Female	Both	
2	Buying goods and daily expenses				
3	Buying and selling land				
4	Decision making of children's marriage				
5	Children's education				
6	Property right				
7	Joining local/indigenous social groups				

## **Population and Health Education**

1. Which age you think appropriate for boys and girls for marriage?

2. How many son and daughter you think appropriate in family?

3. Are you familiar with the means of family planning?

4. Where do you take if any family member get sick of any diseases?

## Health post              Private clinic              Gururwa

5. Do you have toilet/pit latrine?

- #### 6. From Where do you take drinking water?

Hand pump, Tube well, Well, Other source

End