

SOCIO-CULTURAL LIFE AND LIVELIHOOD OPTIONS OF SONAHA OF PATABHAT BARDIYA DISTRICT

**A Dissertation Submitted to
Central Department of Sociology/Anthropolgy
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For the fulfillment of the Requirement of Degree
of Master of Arts in Sociology**

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This dissertation entitled “Socio-cultural Life and Livelihood Option of Sonaha of Patabhat Bardiya District” by Mr.Gauri Prasad Adhikari is prepared under my supervision for partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

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LETTER OF A PPROVAL

This thesis entitled “Socio-cultural Life and Livelihood Option of Sonaha of Patabhat Bardiya District” by Mr.Gauri Prasad Adhikari has been accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

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ABSTRACT

There has not been any research on the scattered population of Sonaha Ethnic group of Bardia, Kailali and Kanchanpur still. So, the researcher has mainly focused on socio-cultural life and livelihood options of Sonaha Ethnic group. The research will be mainly based on question that how Sonaha are continuing their original occupation of gold washing for their daily substance in their transitional environment. The researcher had selected Patabar VDC ward no.9 and 4 for study area where he had made survey on 40 households by applying descriptive research design. Although, with data collection tools like interview, focused group discussion, questionnaire, case study and census method. Sonaha has its own unique language custom and culture in spite of following some adjustable livelihood options. They do not change their code element of their culture. New generation of Sonaha are adapting wage labor, firewood selling and local wine selling although with following gold washing and fishing for their substance.

To sum up, this research will be success to record socio-cultural life which will be able to make Sonaha a recognizable in national and international level. The government and concerned institute should inspire people to protect Sonaha culture in this multi Ethnic, multi cultural country like Nepal

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CHAPTER – ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

Nepal is small country situated between china in the north and India in the east, west and the south. It lies in the southern lap of the Himalayas. On the basis of geographical divinities and altitudinal varieties it is found to have divided into three main ecological zone i.e. the Himalayan region, the Hill region and Terai region. It is a landlocked country with an area of 1,47,181 square kilometers extends Nepal, 885 km from east to west and 115 to 240 km from north to south with in a brief span of 115 to 240 km are taken from 160 to over 8848 m above sea level and through a variety of climates ranging from tropical arctic.

People according to geographical feature have been practicing different types of rituals, customs, socio – cultural values, norms and rules. Nepal is dividend into 5 development regions, 14 zones and 75 districts. The total population of Nepal as reported in the preliminary census report 2001 is 23214681 where annual population growth rate is 2.27%. The majority of the population is Hindu. Which are about 86.5%. The second religious group is Buddhist which is 7.8% only.

The Nepalese people are bounded to work very hard to meet their needs almost 75% of the production of the economy is subsistence. Nepal is a pre dominantly agrarian country where almost 81.3% of total population is engaged in agriculture which contributes only 46.4% to the GDP in 1998. Population increase has been more than 2% annually, creating the food scarcity especially in the hills and mountains. About 40% of the total populations live below poverty line as their daily earning does not meet their basic needs. Poverty has been the political Economic reality since ancient time. On the other hand the social structure of Nepal comprised of the upper and lower class the former have always exploited the latter. Beside these the joint family male cliauvinism, tradition conservatives' societal norms and values are still dominant characteristics of the majority of families in Nepal (Bhoosan, 1979).

Nepal is the country of different caste/ethnic group which unity the people of different cultural backgrounds people originated in Tibet who live in mountainous ecological belt have practices Buddhism speaking Tibeto – Burman languages and are

inter faced known as Mongolian. The people of Indian origin reside in southern part practices Hinduism, speaking Indo – Aryan language and inter faced with north Indian society and culture. The middle hill has a mixed group (Tibetan, Indian and Indigenous origin). The hill people are in fact sandwiched by Tibetan and Indian society and culture (Ijima 1977, Sharma 1982-1983).

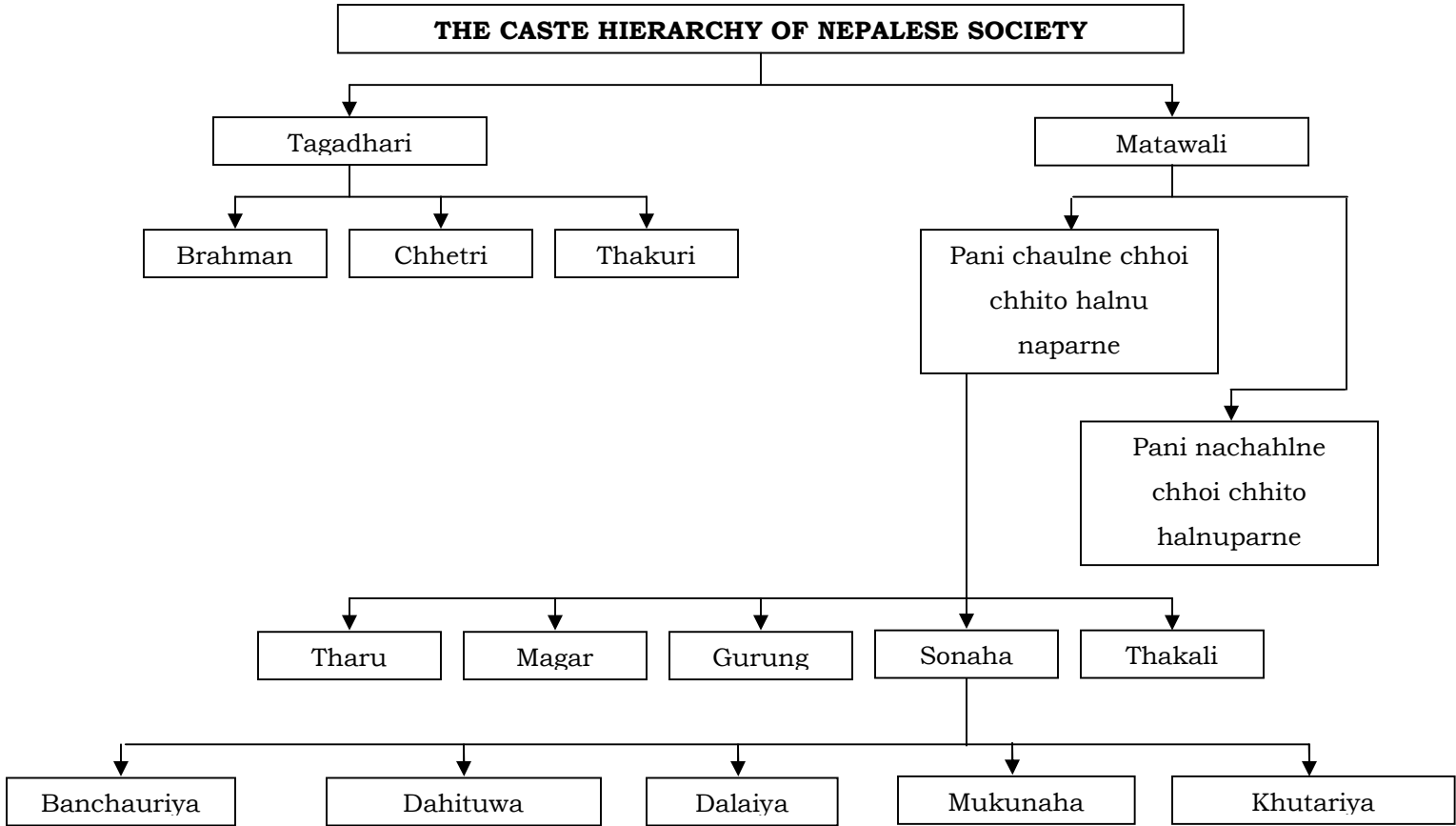
The Nepalese society is the most tolerant society in the world. Nepal has own types of long complex and diverse history. The social and cultural life of the people has origin as feature. It has allowed different religions and cultures to merge into one another. There is much religious tolerance. The people of one religion and culture freely take part in the culture and religious practice of the other. So, in the beginning of the modern period of Nepalese history King Prithivi Narayan Shah says, “Let everyone realize that it is a common garden of four varnas and thirty six castes”. It showed that the land of Nepal has been inhabited by the races shelter and security for a larger number of migrants from different races and representing different ethnic, culture and linguistic background. There are three major groups according to racial origin, mainly Tibeto – Nepali (Mongoloid), Indo – Aryan (Indian – origin) and Astro Asiatic (Bhoosan, 1979).

In terms of religion Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim and other mixed religions groups are prevalent however Hinduism is predominant. According to Hindu philosophy there are different models of caste hierarchy existing in Nepal. The first is the Hindu Varna model stratified into four groups where Brahmin is on the top followed by Chhetries, Vaisya and Shudra. The national code prescribed by Jung Bahadur Rana in 1854 A.D. classified the castes into four main categories viz. Tagadhari, matawali paninahalhe, chhoichhito Hhalnu napanne pani nachalhe, chhoichhito Haluparne Tagadhari and matawali are again further classified into various sub groups. Matawalis are divided into namasine (unsalvable) and masine (salvable) groups. Under the stratified caste system of Nepal, Brahmins and Chhetries are regarded as Tagadhari or sacred thread bearers, thus they are called high caste. Among the Tagadhari too Brahmins are at the top most ladders of caste hierarchy Chhetries rests at the second ladders of caste hierarchy. The Third position in the caste hierarchy has been occupied by those materials who use liqueur like Thakali, Newar, Gurung magar. Rai is the most all among the ethnic groups. The last or

the fourth ladder in the caste hierarchy, has been occupied by the so called untouchable backward groups of the hill and Terai New Civil Code.

The above caste hierarchy was in principles and not in practices in day to day life of the people. In Nepal, over a long period of time its own indigenous caste system has developed to encompass the different ethnic communities residing within its national boundaries. Tagadhar, Matawati and untouchable. Tagadhari wear's sacred thread and placed top of caste hierarchy. Matewali includes alcohol, drinking castes. Tharu, Sonaha, Magar, Gurung etc belongs to on untouchable caste. Untouchables or Chhoichitohalnuparne includes Kami, Dhamai, Sarki etc are placed last layer in the caste hierarchy. Although caste system has been equally abolished since 1963 A.D. with the promulgation of New Civil Code (Naya Muluki Ain, 2020 B.S.). It still exists as an important reference point of all individuals and in the fundamental social structure of Nepali society; the following figure has given Hindu caste hierarchy model and place of Sonaha in this model.

Figure 1
The Caste Hierarchy of Nepalese Society



Source: Dr. Harka Gurung, *Nagarik*, Vol. I, No. 2, Feb – April, 1999

The term ethnic group is very broad one. Different social scientist recognized that it has psychological awareness and a degree of the consciousness. These feelings may be emerged from political economical or social aspect. Sometimes, ethnicity also has connection for minority ethnic groups. Strictly speaking ethnicity denotes origin by birth or descent rather than culture and nationality (Gurung, 1989).

The term ethnic group has been used for social group, racial group, religious group, Linguistic group and cultural group also. Although, the concept of ethnic group combine both social and cultural but generally in Nepal these outside Hindu caste

structure as know by ethnic group. Sonaha belongs to pani chalaune chhoi chhito halnu napanne.

The census report of 1991 gives the first time data on ethnic and caste distribution of the Nepalese population. This report lists 60 ethnic and caste categories groups without indication as to their ethnical caste categories. The census report has divided the ethnicity and caste into a group being within or outside of Hindu caste system. The following tables gives about the information of name and number of ethnic, caste distribution of Nepal.

Religious, linguistic and Ethnic Distribution of the Population of Nepal

| Social Groups | | Number | % |
|---------------|-------------|--------|-------|
| Caste | 1. Terai | 23 | 16.9 |
| | 2. Hill | 9 | 40.3 |
| Ethnic Group | 1. Terai | 10 | 8.2 |
| | 2. Hill | 10 | 20.2 |
| | 3. Mountain | 3 | 0.7 |
| Religious | 1. Musalman | 1 | 3.5 |
| | 2. Charaute | 1 | 0.0 |
| | 3. Shikh | 1 | 0.1 |
| Linguistic | 1. Newar | 1 | 5.6 |
| | 2. Bangali | 1 | 0.0 |
| Other | 1. Terai | | 3.4 |
| | 2. Hill | | 1.0 |
| Total | | 60 | 100.0 |

Source: Dr Harka Gurung, Nagarik, Volume, No. 2, Feb – Apr, 1999

Mountain region, which lies in the north of the Mahabharat range is largely an alpine wasteland and has been a marginal area for human settlement. Sherpa, Thakali, Bhote, generally known as Bhotiya, are the dwellers of this region. They speak Tibetan language and a strong Tibetan effect can be observed. Their main economic activities are barter system, Trade pastorals animal husbandry, and shifting cultivation. They wear warm clothes and drink local alcohol to protect from cold. They eat potatoes, maize, buckwheat, apple etc.

The hill region called midland lies between the Himalayan range and Chure Hill with subtropical belt. It is so natural to find linguistic and religious diversity. They speak Indo – Aryan and Tibeto Burman language. Majorities of the people staying in this region are Bhramin, Chhetri, Magar, Tamang, Newar, Gairel, Rai, Limbu, Thakli Sarki, Damai and Kami. Their main occupation is agriculture.

The low laying tropical plains along the Indian border are known as the Terai region Tharu, Rajput, Kayastha, Maithali and Brahmin are the main caste of this region because of warmclimate they wear, light clothes and eat dal roti, Their main occupations are agriculture, business, Trade as well as industries. So Terai region has acquired greater economic importance.

Nepali culture is unique example of a religious and cultural harmony. Nepal is an abode of multi ethnic, multi cultural groups of people who have lived here for centuries and developed their own believes, customs and tradition. In other worlds, the culture of entire ethnic groups is the name of Nepali culture.

Due to the ecological and geographical variation, distribution of population in different regions of Nepal is unequal. The density of population in the Terai region is high while the hilly region constitutes middle range of population and the mountainous region is sparsely populated area on the basis of settlement pattern and geo-physical structure. These regions have been accommodating respective 47%, 46% and 7% of the total population of the country (C.B.S. 2001).

Ethnic composition of Nepalese people is also following by geographical and ecological variations. People of the Terai are Tharu, Rajput, Satars etc. literately referred to as the Madhise. Similarly people of the hills are Brahamins, Chheteries, Magar, Gurung, Limbu, Newar, Tamang etc are literallyreferred as the Parbate. Similarly, People of mountain or Sherpas, Thakalis, Gurung, Lama, Ghale etc are literally referred as Bhote or Bhotiya. Each caste/ethnic group is rich in it's own distinctive culture. Geographical barriers, illiteracy, poverty and conservative traditional attitudes are partly responsible for the preservation of various ethnic culture in Nepal. Due to the continuous interaction with other groups, they have been loosing their own culture and social identities. To cope with changing environment, they have adopted different strategies.

Sonaha are generally dark skinned people with medium height and appear somehow Aryans. Their physical feature is similar to Majhi, Bote, and Tharu People. Sonaha are strong and hard working people. Gold washing, fishing is their main occupation.

Sonaha are known as to honest and hard working people. They don't want to bother other. They don't trick and intrigue another. They concern just on their work only. They don't raise any unnecessary concern on their issue. Due to climate of Terai their skin is black. It is observed that their height is in average 5 to 6 ft.

1.2 Problem Statement

Among the minor group of people of Nepal Sonaha is one of the major groups with a distinct culture and identity. Till now, their ethnic significance is not explored clearly as other like Brahmins, Chhertri, Gurung, Magar, Newar. Sonaha are generally dark skinned people with medium height and appear somehow Aryan. Their physical feature is similar to Majhi, Danuwar, Tharu but their strong claim is own differences.

Due to their job collection of gold by processing stone and sand in the river side they are called Sonaha. According to CBS (2001), they have included either Tharu, Raji, Majhi or Sunar (one cast of Dalits) So, they are not mentioned separately. Although they are the main inhabitent of the Terai especially in Bardiya, Satti of Kailali, Bhrmdev of Knachanpur. It means there is a diverse ethnic composition having their own types of socio economic lives. So this research is an attempt to explore socio-economic profile of Sonaha community.

Many foreigners and native anthropologists/sociologists have studied many ethnic groups of Nepal. But no one have done sociological studies of distinctive ethnic group of Sonaha. Therefore it becomes problematic and it is necessary to study Sonaha people and their social and cultural aspect as well as livelihood strategies. Sonaha have unique culture. They have their own language and traditions due to lack of own script we could not find their written history, documents, literature, etc. but they have oral history unique dress and ornaments. They have unique dress and ornaments. They have unique method of fishing gold washing, farming, Sonaha follow the Hindusim on the other hand Sonaha are out of 59 listed ethnic group of Nepal. So the socio – cultural life of Sonaha is itself a problematic.

Due to mix society area the traditional way of life of the Sonaha is changing day by day. In this situation, the study is an attempt to document for ethinography of Sonaha in order to provide information particularly. In family, marriage, clan linegue, rituals, festivals, religious, economy, food habits and dress are to preserve the originality of their culture.

My study focuses on the following questions

1. What is the social and cultural condition of Sonaha at Patabar VDC of Bardiya district?
2. What types of livelihood options are found among the Sonaha people of Patabhar VDC of Bardiya?
3. What types of rituals and festivals are celebrated there?
4. Are Sonaha people successful to maintain their way of life?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Main objectives of this study are to analysis the socio –cultural life and livelihood options of Sonaha people at Patabhar of Bardiya district. More especially the study aims to fulfill the following objectives.

1. To study the socio –cultural life of Sonaha people.
2. To identify the livelihood options of Sonaha people.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Nepal is a country of ethnic diversity. There are many different ethnic groups with their own dialect and culture, which differ from each other. The socio – economic study represents the study if living body of a particular community. The social, cultural and economic study of each ethnic group of Nepal is the most important criteria to introduce Nepal with the rest of the world. In this way many people around the world desire to know about the social, culture and economic study. Socio – cultural change is continuous process. Through lot of factors contribute for this sanskritization has influenced much. King of the Kathmandu, Jayasthiti Malla and King of the Gorkha, Ram Shah make some rules that contributed to make people Hindu.

Even after the unification of Nepal, this process was continued.

The study is focused on Socio-cultural and livelihood strategy of indigenous and unidentified Sonaha community of mid western Terai of Nepal. It is extremely important of the introduction of community for Nepal as well as world.

-) This study aims to find out their way of living customs, tradition and social cultural, economic institutions which represent the living condition of particular community.
-) The study has identified the relevant information which may be more important for rural ethnic development.
-) For further study of Sonaha, it will be guideline.

Thus, the finding of the study may be helpful to highlight the livelihood option of Sonaha. It is hoped that this study will serve as influence to formulate meaningful policies, strategies, programs and projects for the upliftment of the status of Sonaha to achieve the objectives of equality and development. Similarly, this will provide database on the ethnic people which can be useful to institutions working in the field of culture and ethnographic study in Nepal. The researcher being the student of sociology also attempts to provide a systematic analysis on culture and their relationship. Therefore, it can be said that this study bears on both practical and theoretical significance in nature.

1.5 Organization of the Study

The research report has been organized and presented in way the reader and interested can have through knowledge on the topic.

This study has been allocated into seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the background of the study, problem statements, objectives and significance of the study.

Chapter two is allocated for review of literature on various books, articles and reports and documents related with ethnographic and livelihood options which are reviewed.

Chapter three includes various methods, site selection, research design and source of data census method. Techniques of data collection comprise of observation, household, interview key informant and case study. Similarly, it consists data analysis, a limitation of the study operational definition of key concepts used study.

Chapters four deals with introduction of Bardiya district and study area including the demography, education family religion, language occupation and agriculture of study area.

Chapter five deals with an ethnic identities. Introduction of Sonaha origin, history of gold collection and migration, social aspects including family clan, sub clan, marriage, cultural aspects, including religion, rituals, festivals and livelihood options as well as poverty analysis of Sonaha.

entails

Chapter six describes about livelihood options as well as poverty analysis of Sohona.

Chapter seven entails the summary, conclusion and main findings.

CHAPTER – TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the previous works relevant to this research. Some books, articles and documents related to the present study have been reviewed. In the first place general overview of the Ethnographic studies carried out in Nepal is reviewed. In the second part socio-economic, cultural aspects and cultural aspects of Sonaha people reviewed respectively.

Notion of Ethnography

Early anthropologists followed holistic approach to study human society and culture. In course of time, various approaches and theories were developed for studying human behaviors. In the field of cultural, anthropology devoted to the descriptive study of individual cultures ethnography emphasizes descriptive rather than analysis and interpretation.”

Thus, ethnography provides descriptive information on various aspects of socio-cultural life of social groups such as origin. History religion, language tradition, beliefs, festivals, rituals, social organization, occupation and educational etc. Malinowski was the first ethnographer who worked ethnographic field work from 1914-1920 on Trobriand Island which lies to the east of New Guinea as Argonauts of the Western Pacific the main theme of Argonauts of the Western Pacific is the Economic enterprises of Trobriand Islanders well regular by Kula a form of Inter tribal Exchange system.

Although Kula is essentially an Economic institution, Malinowski found it closely associated with common enterprises, socio-political organization, mythical background and magical rituals. Malinowski interprets every cultural element of native people in terms of functional unity. Universality and indispensability as it fulfills human needs (Gurung, 1990).

General overview on Ethnographic studies Carried out in Nepal

After 1950 the foreign as well as native sociologists and anthropologists have conducted research in Nepal. Initially, some missionaries and travelers Kirkpatrick (1811). Hainton (1819), Hodson (1974) and Oldfield (1890) have written about various aspects of culture and society including religion, fatalism Shamanism, rituals and like (Devkota 2001).

C.F. Haimendoft is considered to be the first foreign anthropologist to study the Himalayan people of Nepal. His book *The Sherpas of Nepal* (1964) established an ethnographic tradition in Nepal. They have adopted agriculture, trade, tourism as well as animals husbandry for their subsistence.

Hitchcock (1966) studies the Magar of Baniyan Hill and found that the population growth rate of this common was higher than the agricultural product to feed them because the land was limited and infertile. The younger males have joined the army to meet food demands of their families.

Caplan (1970) studies a village of eastern Nepal called Indreni settlement (pseudo name) in Illam District. He studies the changing relation between members of indigenous. The Limbu and high caste Hindu groups the Brahmins. Their relationships are understood in terms of their differential rights and interests in land, which is scarce commodity of that region.

Ortner (1970) has studies the Sherpa community of Khumbu region in Solukhumbu district in Sherpa through their rituals. Nyunge a four day holiday is a religious festival and celebrated once a year with fasting and performing religious action which is done toward a good rebirth. Ortner further discovered that Sherpas do indeed have an elaborated conception of pollution and their society is fairly saturated with hierarchy (Gurung, 1992).

Fisher (1985) studies in Dolpa called Tarangpur (pseudoname) to explore the changes of village which was isolated geographically, economically and politically. He found Tarangpur was engaged in two interrelated transaction with the outside world. Trade and interethnic contact (Mishra 1989). They have adopted trade due to harsh environment. They bartered local buck wheat and chinu millet for Tibetan salt and re-bartered the salt to the southern hill sellers for rice. It is declining and is being replaced by cash based and much expanded commodity circuits (Mishra, 1989).

Similarly other anthropologist attempts the ethnographic account of Nepalese culture and society e.g. Donald A Messers Chmidt (1976) *The Gurung of Nepal: conflict and change in village society*, Caplan, A. Patricia (1972) *Priests and Cobblers*, M. Baberian (1972) *Muslim in the Hindu Kingdom of Nepal*. Among the Nepalese scholars, Dor Bahadur Bista has contributed in the field of ethnographic study in Nepal.

His book "People of Nepal" 1962 is one of the master pieces of literature on the ethnography focused in majority of different ethnic groups.

Similarly, Rajesh Gautam and A.K. Thapa in the Tribal Ethnography of Nepal (1994) have also given short descriptive cultural information about various ethnic groups.

Many sociologist/Anthropologists have shown their interest in the ethnographic study which are focusing indifferent ethnic groups. Gopal Singh Nepali 1965 (The Newars) Bihari Krishna Shrestha (1971) "The Thakuries of Diyargau and Bed Prakash Upreti (1976) 'The Limbuwan today: processes and problem; contribution to Nepalese studies, Dr. Dhill Ram Dahal (1985) 'People of the Stones: the Chepangs of the Central Nepal'. Dhrona Prasad Rajoriya (1977) Anthropological study of the Tharus of Dang Deukhuri, Anthropological study of Dhimals of Nepal. Prof. Rishi Kesav Raj Regmi (1985) Anthropological study of Dhimals of Nepal Dr. Ganesh Man Gurung (1989, 1995) the Chepangs: A study in continuity and change, Report from a Chepangs village; and Dr. Ramesh Raj Kuwar (1989). Fire of Himal: An Anthropological study of the Sherpas of Nepal Himalayan Region are the Example of ethnographic studies of Nepalese Society.

A growing number of Nepali sociologists are making substantial contribution in sociological research in Nepal. Despite this massive research work very few anthropologist and sociologist have utilized sociological and anthropological theory in analyzing the social reality of Nepali society and culture (Gurung 1985).

Review of Literature about livelihood

In a broad sense livelihood denotes all the means that are needed for human being to live. People's livelihood refers not only confined to economic parameters, but also to social, economic political, physical, and ecological attributes. Where people have been living and getting their livelihood out of complex settings. Putting it sufficiently, livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for means of living (www.livelihood.org-6/22/2002) after the concept of livelihood enters into the real of academicians as well as development professorial for debates and discourses. In the late 1980s. Robert chamber and G. Convery presented it as a holistic tool for poverty alleviation. According to them, the asserts for livelihood include stores, resources, claims and also access to any of these (DFID, 2000) in 1987, the Brudtland commission also introduced sustainable livelihood (SL), while dealing with resources ownership and basic

needs, livelihood and security specially in rural areas. Similarly, the 1992 United Nation (UN) conference on Environment and Development, in Agenda 21, noted the integrative power of this concept, which offers a way of linking socio Economic and Ecological policy consideration in a cohesive policy – relevant structure (www.undp.org/sl). Its main goal is to help poor people to achieve lasting improvements against the poverty indicators they can themselves. Identify and form a baseline that they can define livelihood can be treated for short term and long term planning and accordingly it can be termed as livelihood provision, livelihood protection and livelihood promotion for short term relief and rehabilitation to ward long terms development (Timothy et. al, 2000, pp 32).

What Vedas mention for people’s livelihood

May there be timely rains

May the earth always remain

Green with food crops

May there be no miseries in country

May the intellectuals free

Secure & be free to speak

Their mind

May all the poor people became rich

Any may everybody live

Over a hundred years

(Quoted in K.P. Bhattraai, HMG/NPC, 1992)

Adequate and stable income is likely to be at high place in the priorities of the very poor. The place of residence is a point of attachment to the rural people. It not only has Economic importance, but it is also intricately embedded with prestige, pride and rootedness of culture and custom that help shape up the personality of an individual. Therefore rural people are not generally keen up on Migrating to other places in normal circumstance. They can use any of the following strategies for their survival so that they do not have to leave their native place. Stealing, begging, borrowing, casual labor, craft work, collecting common property resources, micro-cultivation, temporary seasonal

migration, family-splitting, reciprocity with relatives and neighbors, seeking patrons, and many other petty occupation (Chambers, Saxena, and Shah 1991)

Similarly in his writing, Subedi (1999) has mentioned about various forms of mobility among the ethnic groups of eastern hills so as to illustrate the livelihood strategy of the rural people. The mobility takes place for the sake of better livelihood, which is categorized broadly into two categories as: Basainsarai (migration) and Ghunphir (wandering). The researches has accounted only those which are directly related with the livelihood of the rural people. These forms of mobility are considered as survival strategies to make better livelihood. Basain Sarai takes place only after the exhaustion of all other possible livelihood strategies (Subedi, 1999).

Bishop (1990) has brought out his research on the Livelihood strategies and seasonal rhythm of the Karnali zone. He has focused on the timing as well as the vertical and area distribution of livelihood activities. Bishop presents a comprehensive and intimate account (down to the level of individual families) of how the people of Karnali have used options for trade and movement to compensate for the poverty of their local resources.

Structured as a cultural ecological analysis, Bishop's study identifies the hierarchy of economic systems in Karnali, describes the dynamics of these systems, traces their interaction through the movement of people, animals, and goods and places the area in the context of the larger developing economy of Nepal. He demonstrates clearly how population growth, curtailment of trade with Tibet, and environment, deterioration have transformed condition of ecological balance into one of serious and increasing stress.

Timalsina has studied on impact of Bhimdhunga-Lamidanda Road on the livelihood strategies of Rural people; a case study of Jivanpur VDC, Dhading District, focusing that a clear picture of rural urban linkage by the road and its impact on livelihood of rural people. He has used both primary and secondary data to analyze in the study. Finally, he has concluded his study that livelihood is a process of adapting with environment in particular space and time. There is change in any space and society if development takes place. The primary economic activities of rural people i.e. agriculture itself is undergoing noticeable change in the past. So, there is a need to improve rural

infrastructure like economic infrastructure, social infrastructure that can help to increase productivity as well as reduce poverty.

Pandey (1987) has carried out his research under Winrock international project and has gone through the livelihood of landless peasants. He has studied about the agriculture, farming, nutrition, health condition of women and children, human resources, renewable resources, food policy, animal agriculture and farming system in Nepal. By the result, the land hungry peasants started to encroach up on the forest. The small portion of land provided by government for resettlement to the migrants, which could not support them. The highest sector of employment opportunities for them was agriculture labour but its seasonal nature and the small area of farmland owned by their clients left them with limited opportunities. So, the peasant has been increasing there.

Bhattarai (2001) shows that a significant number of people from within and out of country have got opportunity for sustaining their livelihood, besides the local people. He studied the social and economic status of the Rickshaw pullers in Birtamod, Jhapa area. He analyses the working condition, working hour, earning of Rickshaw pullers, their income levels, consumption pattern and relationship between income and expenditure. He derived the conclusion that there are no such better strategies of life among the Rickshaw pullers. They spend life just on “earn and spend” system.

Sitaula (2001) studied the socio-economic situation of the forest users. He has experienced that equitable distribution of forest products is required for sustainable forest resources and improved user’s livelihood. Equity in benefit sharing encourages and enables users to manage available forest resources sustainable. It helps to improve the living condition of the users and promotes every body’s involvement in forest management. He has adopted a descriptive research design. Whatever facts have been collected is described elaborately with a view to providing an in depth understanding of the sustainable forest management practices and their impact upon the livelihood of the people. The criterion for the selection of case study households was their relationship with the forest for their livelihood.

Dahal (2001) has studied natural, economic and socio-cultural environment of the Baramus for Arupokhari Village Development Committee, ward 1 and 8 of Gorkha District and the impact of these changes on the livelihood strategies of these Baramus. He

has attempted to examine historically the changed livelihood strategies of the Baramus as well as to sketch the present situation widely. The arrival history of the Baramus reveals that they were the Kirat holders and had Kipat land in the area. He found the conclusion that the closer development has come to their area, the faster the pace of incorporating the Baramus into the process of under development and the harder is their struggle with development. So, the Barmus are forced to change their traditional way of life and to adopt the new livelihood strategy. He has applied various techniques of data collection, household survey, observation, key informant interview, focus group discussion, field note taking and unstructured interviewed.

Bhurtel (2000) has studied, the Kumals of Municipality of Pokhara Valley. He mentions that the changes in the livelihood strategies have been closely related to the changing with the natural, socio – cultural, economic environment with the day of time. People change their way of living style and strategies in order to come with the environment. The pressure of population upon the resources forces them to change their lives strategy in divorce field which causes dissimilarities among them. He further mentions that at present they have shifted there occupational to crop more appropriately and started to grow vegetation, services agriculture etc. So, the Kumals has changed their traditional pots making. This study has been simply documentary in some instance, like collection the ethnography and recording the demographic details and in most instances it has been exploratory.

B.P. Subedi and R. Pandey (2002) have done their field survey study on livelihood strategies of Rai communities in Sitapati and Makalu VDCs of Arun Valley. They have focused their study on the various livelihood strategies such as agriculture, animal husbandry, wage labour, harrowing, crediting, tourism and trekking related activities.

CHAPTER – THREE

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter describes the methods applied in the present study. These include site selection, research design, nature and source of data, methods and techniques of data collection data, processing, analysis, limitations of the study.

3.1 Site Selection

Patabhar VDC of Bardiya district is selected purposively as the study area. It covers ward no. four and nine. It is located at bank of the Karnali river.

Patabhar VDC is near to Tikapur of Kailali district and 54 km far from district headquarter Gulariya. It has no good road for transportation. But gravel road is only one way to reach there. This area is obviously populated by the Sonaha and it may be representative to study in Sonaha community. There has been not done any sociological study about Sonaha community, therefore the area is selected.

3.2 Research Design

As being a sociological and anthropological study and according to specific objectives includes descriptive and ethnographic research design. These design endeavors to explore the issues concerned social, cultural and livelihood of option Sonaha community and descriptive research these design seeks to describe the origin and history of the community.

3.3 Nature and Source of Data

In this study both primary and secondary types of sources have been employed to obtain the essential data but this study is mainly based on the primary data collected from the study and during the period of fieldwork.

The primary data have been gathered from every Sonaha household while the secondary data have been collected from different published and unpublished literature books, articles, research reports, office documents and journals.

3.4 Universe and Sampling Process

The area which is selected for this study is Patabar VDC ward no. 4 and 9. There are 40 households of Sonaha with 220 persons. All the household heads were interviewed. So, it is a holistic study of Sonaha community of that village. Among 40

household, 24 householders were in Rajipur village in ward no. 9 and 16 households in ward no. 4.

3.5 Techniques of Data Collection

3.5.1 Interview

Most of the primary types of information have been obtained through the interviews for this purpose, a semi-structured interview schedule has been employed as well.

Set questionnaires have been used for the collection of data from the household level. The questionnaires attempting together the information regarding the social, cultural and economic characteristics of the respondents like ethnicity, religion, caste, age, sex, education, marital status, family size, occupation, size of land holding live stock – holding and agricultural production 40 household have been surveyed according to the census method.

3.5.2 Household Survey

This technique is very important not only to get a general demographic pictures but also to quantitative support or even proved the picture a researcher puts forward about the society is question. Data's are on the actual number of Sonaha and number of households.

A total of 40 household and people were recorded, where 24 household were from Rajipur ward no. 9 and 16 houses from ward no. 4 (Sarkhol) were taken. The study was focused in Rajipur, Banghusra, Dakshin Rajipur and few other clusters of settlements in the surrounding area.

A household survey schedule was employed as an instrument for this purpose. It contained social variables together with the demographic ones. The social variable includes educational status, marital status, occupational trends and relational indicators. In addition, it includes variables such as state of land ownership and livestock ownership and other.

3.5.3 Observation

During the field visit, participant's observation and direct observation both made to obtain the various relevant information. Social mapping has been made and physical photographs have been taken. It was to help information about the village settlement

pattern house structure, agricultural practice, food preparation and consumption, cultural practice, rites and rituals, dressing, celebration of different festivals, decision making process and other various activities.

3.5.4 Key Informants Interview

Key informants are those people who know a great deal about the community and who have been playing different roles and processing important status under study. To get specific information 3 key informants have been selectively interviewed. 3 key informants includes social worker, politician and president of Sonaha Sewa Samaj.

3.5.5 Case Study

Case study has been used to get information on data about their expenses on different cultural practices, especially in birth rituals, Annaprasan, marriage, death rituals their feeling and thoughts about cultural practices methods of celebrating and so on. In this study some case studies have been conducted. Some parts of it should be included in key informants interview and some parts of it should be included in data processing and analysis.

3.6 Data Processing/Analysis

Data have been processed and analyzed in various forms. This study basically based on qualitative and descriptive designs both quantitative and qualitative ways of data analysis and processing have been employed. However, special priority has been given to the quantitative analysis. Moreover, in courses of data analysis various tables, charts etc have also been be properly arranged and enclosed.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

Each and every study has own limitation likewise this study too. It is no exception the research is conducted only small village of Bardiya district of Patabhar VDC ward no. 4 & 9, this study will be focused livelihood strategies of Sonaha. The limitation of the study in short terms as follows:

-) I have to face problem of language which is quite different from my language from my research language.
-) This study is conducted to fulfill the partial requirement of M.A. sociology therefore large area could not be incorporated because of certain time, resource constraints limitation.

3.8 The operational definition of the key concepts used in this study is given below:

Ethnography: In this study the ethnography is used to denote an ethnographic profile of Sonaha people of Bardiya in order to provide information particularly in the field of social aspect including family, clans, lineage and marriage; cultural aspects including religion, festivals and rituals and expenditure.

Sonaha: Sonaha are generally dark skinned people with Medium height and appear somewhat Aryan. Their physical feature is similar to Majhi, Bote, and Tharu People. Sonaha are strong and hard working people. Gold washing and fishing are their main occupations.

Study: In this study the term study means an academic research conducted as a partial fulfillment of the degree in M.A. in sociology.

People: In this study people here to indicate the Sonaha people residing in Patabhar.

Livelihood: Livelihood denotes all the means that are needed to human being to live. People's livelihood refers not only confined to economic parameter, but also to social, economic, political, physical, ecological attributes where people have been lining their livelihood out of complex setting.

CHAPTER – FOUR

INTRODUCTION OF BARDIYA DISTRICT

4.1 General introduction of Bardiya District

Nepal is a small Himalayan country divided into five development regions, fourteen zones and seventy five districts. Bardiya district lies in Bheri zone in mid western development region of Nepal. It has 31 Village development committees (V.D.C) and one municipality. The total area of the Bardiya district is about 2025 sq. km. The elevation of the Bardiya district is between 28⁰ 17' to 28⁰ 39' north latitude and 81⁰ 3' to 81⁰ 41' eastern longitude varies from 138, 1279 m above the sea level. The climate is tropical temperature maximum rainfall 423 ml per year Bardiya district is bordered with Kailali to the west Banke and Salyan to the east, Surkhet to the north and Baharaich of U.P. India to the south (Bardiya district profile 2064).

The name of district has been derived from local Tharu language where cow and ox is called “Bali Barda”. This place was good for livestock so, who had more cattle were called “Barduwa” later place derived as Bardiya. The total population of the district is 3, 82,649. Out of which 1, 92,655 are male 1, 89,994 are female (C.B.S, 2001).

Among the total population, 64.96% are economically active (Bardiya district profile 2064). Agriculture, Trade, hotel, business, wages labour, foreign employment service and cottage industries are their in final countdown occupations.

The crops produced in the district are paddy, maize, wheat, millet barley, champs, vegetable etc. Among the total population (38.15%) female and 45.73% male are literate. The main castes and ethnic groups of the district are distributed as Tharu 2,01,276, chhetri 40,681, Kami 12,875, Brahmin 36,163, Damai 2,446, Sonaha 469, Raji 340 etc. They have their own culture and religion practices among them Tharu, Raji, Sonaha, Muslim have their own language.

Bardiya is one of the four districts (Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, Kanchanpur) known as “meaning new country i.e. annexed into the territory of unified Nepal. The history behind of it is that East India company government took these four district under their sovereign during the war with Nepal in 1814 to 1816. Later Nepal government assisted the government of East India Company to control police revolt in 1857. East India company government returned these four districts back to Nepal government as a reward

for the settlement of internal conflict in India. Thus district Bardiya is a part of the returned territory known as Naya Muluk.

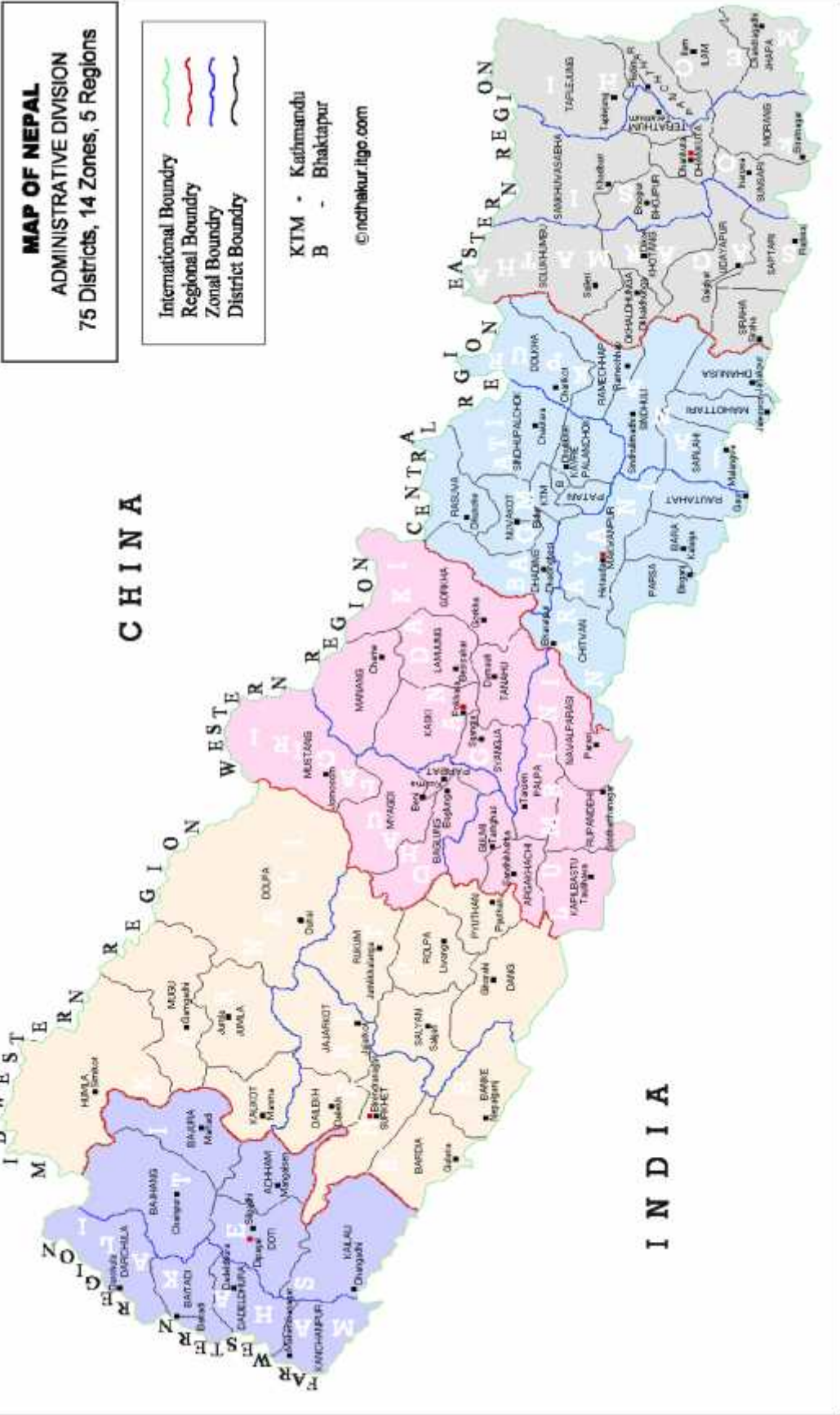
As the area was new and fertile, people migrated to the district from the neighboring location. They are mostly from Dang, Salyan, Jumla, Achham, Pyuthan, Surkhet. Later the government resettled people in Bardiya from different hill districts during Panchyat regime.

In Bardiya, there are many rivers mainly Karnali, Babai, Bheri whereas the Karnali is the main river known as Geruwa, Man Khola. Across the Kothiyaghat there are 11 VDCs which are known as Bhawara Tappu (Rajapur Chhetra) most remote area among the other VDCs. The Rajapur area (Bhawara Tappu) is important area for agriculture due to fertile land.

Bardiya is divided in 31 VDCs and one municipality called Gulariya, which is also the head quarters and main Market of Bardiya district. Similarly, Rajapur, Taratal, Basgadhi, Mainapokhar are the Trade Centers. Among them Rajapur is the biggest and it is Nagarunmukh VDC i.e. leading to be Municipality.

Rajapur bazaar is the historical place of mid western region. At the past, it was main marketing regions. Major products of Bardiya are agricultural products like rice, wheat, pulse, mustard and cotton. There are 230 primaries, 67 lower secondary and 35 secondary, 8 higher secondary schools are established. Similarly there are three campuses.

Initially, Bardiya was suffered for malaria diseases, but now a days, it becoming popular place for settlement with densely populated area. The trend of migration from the hill and other districts to Bardiya is increasing over years. It has been the habitat of many caste and ethnic groups. Among them Tharu are in bigger number followed by Brahmin and Chhetri.



4.2 Introduction of Study Area

4.1 Physical Features of Patabhar

(i) Location

Patabhar VDC lies in the south western part of the Bardiya District. The study area is surrounded by Gola VDC in the East, Dalulatpur VDC in the north. Badalpur VDC and Pashupatinagar are in the south and Karnali river flow in west part of this VDC. Seems circular in the map but is Southern, Northern and western part seem little bit triangular, while some of it's part have sloped down from north to south and from east to west, other parts have up ward slope from north to south.

(ii) Climate

The Patabhar V.D.C has tropical monsoon climate. It is very hot and humid in summer and reaches temperature up to 45 degree Celsius and also the minimum temperature remains at 27-29 degree Celsius sometimes in summer. But the weather in winter usually remains very cold. Usually it gets cold wave which makes so cold that people live get difficult especially in December and January month. It gets foggy for whole day for some weeks to months. The maximum temperature remains around (15-16) degree Celsius, whereas the minimum goes up to 45 degree Celsius. The weather remains very pleasant during October to November and February to March. It has neither hot nor cold in these months. The environment is clean so, people enjoy very much during the period. Every part of the VDC there is farming at faring period. In general, the many part of Bardiya district is known as irrigated area, Kulopani system is available many part of the district.

Natural Resources

The Resources, which are available from the nature as a gift to human beings, play a vital role in the country's development. The effective and efficient use of the natural resources makes a country wealthy and developed. Our country Nepal is also called very rich in natural resource due to diversified climate. The VDC has 19.26 square km it's total area which is plain and most of them are arable. Thus the plain and fertile land is the main natural resources of the VDC. Most of the people claim that the productivity of the VDC better than other VDC.

(iv) Forest

Though the saying “Hariyo Ban Nepal ko Dhan” is getting like myth in our country. The VDC has still very dense forest as a wild life conservation in it’s North East side. It has not only made the VDC greenery, but also it has made the environment better surrounding. Due to the availability of the forest near by, farmers collect litter for their cow and buffalo shed. There are widely used for making compost to supplement nutrient in favor of making productive land. At the same time, it supplied forest firewood and timber, which helps to increase revenue of the state.

The VDC has made significant effort to protect forest. They have established community forest also have planted along the side of their land against erosion control and flooding and it has been helpful to protect environment. The major forest tree are sal, sisau and khayar and saj etc. which are considered very good timber for quality wood. Thus the forest has been very good habitat of different kinds of animals and birds etc.

(v) Soil

Soil is the base of most of the natural resources on the one hand; on the other hand it’s formation depend on the quality of rock, climate and plant, the soil productivity depends on the availability of the micro-nutrients in the soil, which is highly influenced by prevailing climate. Due to tropical climate of Patabhar VDC, it has fertile and productive soil which has greatly influenced economy and life standard of the local people.

The VDC has sandy loam soil which is very good for agriculture and would play a vital role for enhancing the economic activities in Patabhar VDC. The major real crops grown are: rice, maize, and wheat. Other crops that are grown in the VDC are mustard, beans, potato, ladies finger, cauliflower, cabbage and eggplants. There are some fruit trees and most common are mango, lichi, guava, banana, papaya and jack fruit. Thus the VDC has very good soil far from agricultural point of view.

(vi) Water

Budhi khola, Chargaun ko Kulo, okariya kulo, are the sources of water for irrigation. Hand pumps are the next major sources of drinking water. Well water is also used for drinking as well as washing purpose. But it is not considered safe drinking water.

(vii) Mineral

According to research and investigation, it is said that Nepal is rich in minerals e.g.: iron, copper, coal, mica, gold, and other petroleum goods and gases. However, it has not been possible to exploit these minerals and other petroleum good due to lack of technology and budgetary constraints.

(vii) Animals and Birds

The common domestic animals in Patabhar are cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat, pig, etc. poultry duck and pigeon are the major birds available in the VDC. This VDC is attached with Bardiya National Park. So, sometimes National Park's animal like leopard, elephant, jackal, monkey, deer, Jar wildcat are seen wandering and come out from the Bardiya National Park.

4.2 Social Conditions of Patabhar VDC

Different individual lives together with a common and at least somewhat distinct culture in a particular territorial area from a society. There can be many types of people with different profession, attitude religions, customs, beliefs, culture, practice and languages. Nepal is well known as a garden of four barnas and thirty six castes. Bardiya is also known as a Naya muluk (new region). The society of Patabhar VDC justifies the above proverb that it is very heterogeneous communities in its structure although Tharu is in dominance over the other caste and ethnic groups.

Some of the social feature like gender disparity is visible in the VDC. Opportunities to women are limited. Still there can be seen women as second grade citizen. The existing laws and acts have not been effective to ban early marriage, polygamy, dowry system and casteism. It has made the society stratified distinctly.

Population is one of the major elements of the country. Its structure, composition and feature determine the social structure and dynamics, which plays a vital role social change process and influence in the social relationship in the community directly and indirectly. Mostly, minority groups are marginalized socially, economically and politically too. They usually have little participation in the development mainstream of the country.

According to the census of 2001, the total populations of Patabhar VDC 6006 among them 2989 are male and 3017 are female. Patabhar is one of 11 VDCs that has

high pressure of migration in Bardiya. As a result, the population growth is higher than the district growth rate. Similarly, the population density of the VDC is quite high i.e. 513.2 per square km, which is much higher than that of the district. The family size of the VDC is 5.18, which is much higher than that of the district i.e. 5-72 (population census, 2001) However, the distribution of population varies from community to community due to cultural dynamics of the community and migration in the community.

Table 1
Sex & Ward Wise Population of Patabhar

| S.N. | Ward No. | Total Households | Male | Female | Total | Percentage |
|-------|----------|------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 | 1 | 108 | 449 | 441 | 890 | 6.31 |
| 2 | 2 | 214 | 740 | 708 | 1448 | 10.26 |
| 3 | 3 | 261 | 251 | 295 | 1746 | 12.37 |
| 4 | 4 | 221 | 219 | 890 | 1709 | 12.11 |
| 5 | 5 | 135 | 545 | 567 | 1112 | 7.88 |
| 6 | 6 | 178 | 696 | 713 | 1409 | 9.99 |
| 7 | 7 | 223 | 704 | 791 | 1495 | 10.59 |
| 8 | 8 | 175 | 600 | 596 | 1196 | 8.47 |
| 9 | 9 | 415 | 1551 | 1549 | 3100 | 21.97 |
| Total | | 1930 | 6954 | 7150 | 14164 | 100 |

Source: CBS, 2001

The above table shows that mostly dense populated ward no. 9 and sparsely populated ward is 1. Ward no. lies in Bazar area (Santi Bazar). That is why it is over populated than other wards. The focal ward for this dissertation is 4 and 9.

Our study includes the ward no. 4 and 9 where ward no. 4 covers the 12.11 percentage of total population of VDC. Similarly ward no. 9 covers 21.97 % of total population of VDC.

4.3 Population on the Basis of Age and Sex

People of different age live in Patabhar VDC. The age wise population structure has a significant role in the socio- economic and political development of a society. Therefore, the age and sex wise population of the VDC has been studied and presented in the table below.

Table 2
Age Sex Compositions of Sonaha People of Study Area

| S.N. | Age | Male | Percent | Female | Percent | Total | Percentage |
|-------|-------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | <14 | 40 | 33.06 | 44 | 44.4 | 84 | 38.18 |
| 2 | 15-59 | 65 | 53.72 | 47 | 47.7 | 102 | 46.36 |
| 3 | 60+ | 16 | 13.22 | 18 | 18.18 | 34 | 15.45 |
| Total | | 121 | 100 | 99 | 100 | 220 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

There are 40 household of Sonaha living in Patabhar where population < 14 (under fourteen) is 38.18% of the total population. Population from age 15 to 59 years is 101, which is 46.36% of total population. Population of total people of age above 60 is 26, which is 15.45% of the total population. It indicate that population of age (15 - 59) is high in Sonaha community. All together 80 sonaha's households are their in this VDC.

4.4 Health

The health conditions of the rural people in Nepal is affected by different factors such low level of awareness, illiteracy, lack of proper hygiene and sanitation beliefs, customs and the prevalent socio-cultural practices, values and norms. Due to such reasons, the prevalence rate of diseases in Nepal is one of the highest in the world.

Like other places, people of Patabhar VDC are also pre- occupied with traditional belief and many other blinds faiths. They believe on superpowers, god and goddesses. Mainly, Tharu, Sonaha, Magar, of he VDC rely on Guruwas or traditional healers when they fall sick and offer cock, duck, Pig and goat etc. To please, god and goddesses in order to recover or get rid of the diseases they go to health post and hospital for treatment only if their Guruwas and witch doctors did not cure them. Mostly the people of the VDC suffer from Diarrhea, Bronchitis, Meningitis and Encephalitis. They provide primary health care services by holding Gaun Ghar. Clinic and Khop Kendra(Vaccination campaign) five times in every months. Similarly, they organize awareness session on maternal and child health care, nutrition education program and hygiene and sanitation. The role of female health volunteers has been significant in bringing such behavioral changes in the community.

4.5 Educational Condition of Sonaha of Patabhar

Study by Gold Washing

Chameli Sonaha, 19

I am student of grade 12 at Amar Sahid Dasarath Chand Higher Secondary School at Rajapur. Since early childhood my hobby was to achieve higher education. My goal was to do better for the Sonaha community and Sonaha people. During my holidays I go to river bank for gold washing with my other sister. We all collectively wash the gold. After collecting the gold we sell it at local market (Rajapur). We use that money for buying our books, cloths, some time it is used for paying school Fee. I am worried about my further education after completion of certificate level, and I am looking for a donor who can help me for my higher education. I pray to god to provide me an opportunity for higher education.

- By Field Observation

The literacy level of Sonaha in Patabhar is very low. Out of the total population (220) of sampled 130 individuals are unable to read and write. 24 individuals can only read, 60 individual (24.59%) attended primary level education and only 8 persons have attended secondary level education. Only 2 person (0.89%) individual have involved in intermediate education.

Table 3
Education Level in Sonaha Community

| S.N | Educational Categories | Male | | Female | | Total | |
|-----|--------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| | | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| 1 | Unable to read and write | 42 | 31.34 | 50 | 58.13 | 92 | 41.81 |
| 2 | Read only | 18 | 13.43 | 6 | 6.97 | 24 | 10.90 |
| 3 | Read and write | 16 | 11.94 | 4 | 4.65 | 10 | 4.54 |
| 4 | Primary | 20 | 14.92 | 13 | 15.11 | 33 | 15.00 |
| | Lower Secondary | 15 | 11.19 | 9 | 10.46 | 24 | 10.90 |
| 5 | Secondary | 5 | 3.73 | 3 | 3.48 | 8 | 3.63 |
| 6 | Intermediate and above | 3 | 2.23 | 1 | 1.16 | 4 | 1.81 |
| | Total | 134 | 100 | 86 | 100 | 220 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

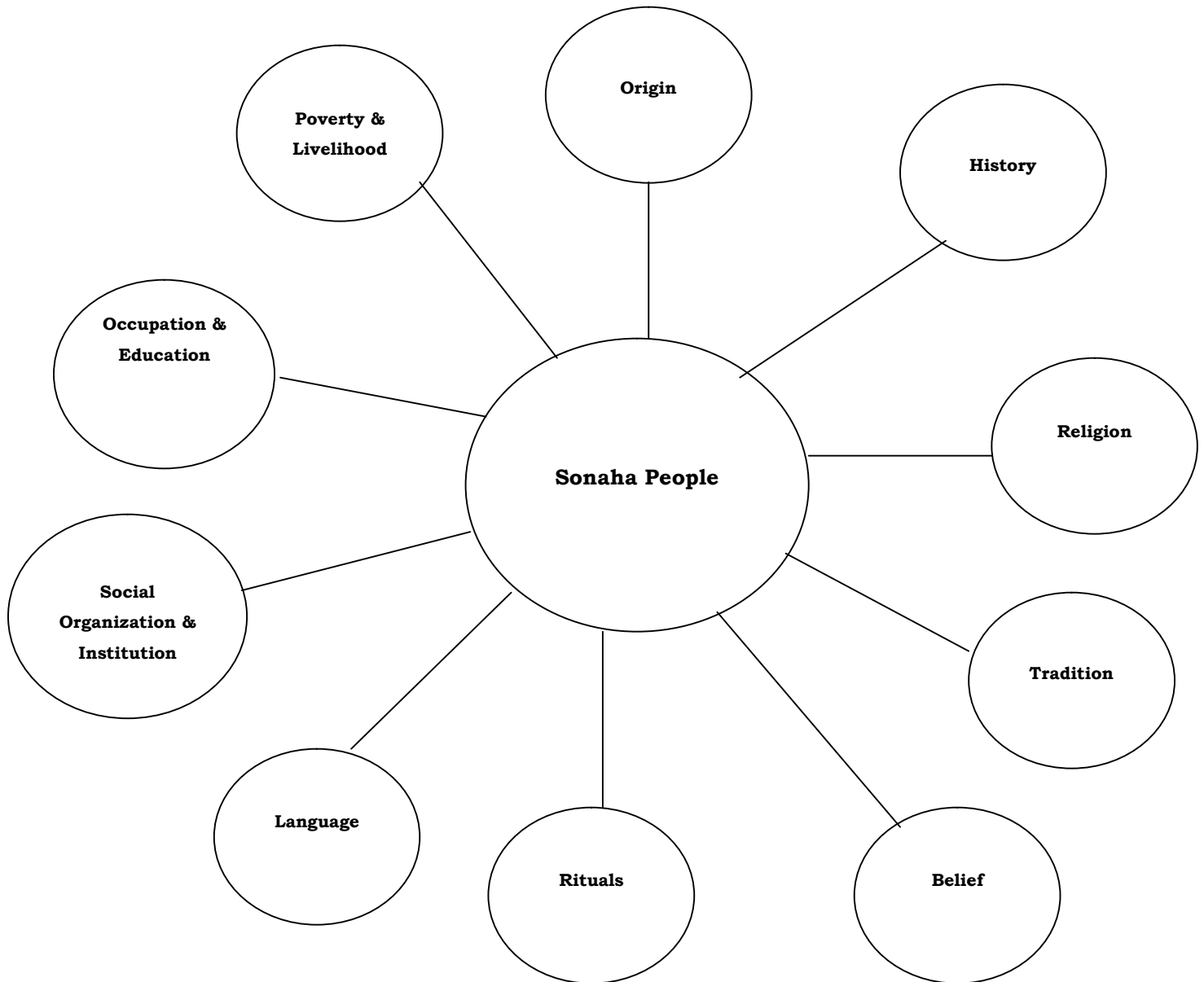
The table shows that there literacy level is low; through the trend of school going children is increasing. The table shows that younger people have higher literacy percent. The past generation has lesser the literacy percent in the sampled households. It indicates that Sonaha families have started to send their children to school. The above table 3 shows the educational attainment by sex in Sonaha community of Patabhar mostly 31.34% male and (58.13% female are unable to read and write. 13.43% male and 6.97% female can only read. 15% have been attending in primary education. 3.63% have been attending secondary level and only 1.81% are I.A. and above.

Above sceneries shows us slowly Sonaha are understanding importance of education. Before some years Sonaha forefathers were not interested to send their children to school the main reason is their higher illiteracy and poor economic condition. But nowadays, the Sonaha younger generation knows the benefit and values of education. Similarly due to the awareness of education new generation's attraction toward education is seen.

CHAPTER – FIVE
SOCIO-CULTURAL LIFE AND LIVELIHOOD OPTIONS OF SONOHA
PEOPLE

This chapter deals with Sonaha people concerning about ethnic identity, origin history, trade and business, clan, family, marriage, migration, social organization as well as rituals, festival and social cultural conditions.

Figure: 3



Ethnographic Figure of Sonaha

5.1 Origin & History

Till now, there are not any authentic written documents about the origin of Sonaha people of Nepal. The researcher questioned some of the Sonaha of other villages such as Himalipur and found that they don't have any clear-cut ideas of their origin. They identify themselves as Sonaha, where some belonging to the Majhi group and proudly claim that they have been known as Sonaha from time. However, they do agree that they have some relation with the Majhi. No anthropologists of Nepal have clearly mentioned about the origin of this ethnic group. Without enough evidence, to include Sonaha in the Majhi fold is only objectionable and unacceptable. Sharma (2039) has grouped these people within the Tharu fold. Sonaha (Sundhuwas) who mostly scattered in western region practicing gold panning activities. Sonaha themselves do not accept these statement belonging to Tharu fold. Some similarities and characteristics are seen among Tharus and Sonahas. On the other hand, there is dissimilarity in the Tharu and Sonaha.

It is believed that Sonaha's home land is Simrongadh earlier but later in 14th century they spread and migrate to different parts. Analysis of Janaklal Sharma, (2042). Sonaha are near to Majhi, Danuwar and Tharu. They came to Nepal from Sindhu region of India. According to Bal Krishna Pokharel analysis (2026) mid region of India is there main origin land. Similarly Kalamdin Dhakal says, due to fight of Aryn and non Aryn Majhi went to jungle in ancient time.

According to the Majhi's river edge life mythology in ancient time, for being sage of large attack they crossed the river through mid hilly region. Enemies were regularly come to attack, and they cross the river but enemies did not cross the river so they fell secure and safe in this river edge and settled there.

Study of their languages, lodging, fooding, dressing we guess that they slowly migrated to Northen side from the river or ocean of India and Bangladesh. There is also Sunduwa in Majhi ethnic so it may be that Sonaha derived from the Sunduwa in ancient time. In spite of the sameness of facial and physical structure with Aryan, they claim that they are like or same to Aryan division. In language, they are shown like Tharu (Kathary+Hindi mix). However, there linguistic study is remain or matter of research. Looking as Aryan by their facial and physical structure, they claim that they are as chhetri (Chaulagain 2063). Shown as Tharu by their appearance and residence and Majhi

by their job and livelihood activities, Sonaha is marginalized unique ethnic group. They do not accept themselves as Majhi, Raji or Tharu. Due to their job of collection of gold by processing stone and sand at the river side, they are called Sonaha. They work at river side for fishing and boating so their residential area is bank of the rivers. It is a subject matter of research that there is not evidence found of about the origin of Sonaha. Within t Majhi ethnic group, there is another group called “Sundhuwa” later who would be derived as Sonaha but they don’t accept it, their claims is about their own identity.

5.2 Mythical argument about gold washing

In the past Sonaha used to do Majhi’s work. They used to do fishing at river and boating profession. Once at night, a long line of gods were going for the marriage, came to the river edge and they requested their ancestors to cross the river with in boat.

Old (civilly) generation of Sonaha crossed them the river with boat. After that the bridegroom being happy wanted to give some reward and gave gold in their hands, but at that time some pieces (elements) of gold lost or spread in the sand. At that time god also suggested them that the giants were coming behind us and they might give torture to them, so leave the place immediately, then they (Sonaha) left that place and next day morning they come for searching the lost gold by filtering the sand. That’s why they claimed them as Sonaha.

5.3 Physical Feature and Behaviors

Sonaha are generally dark skinned people with medium height and appear somewhat mongolized their physical features are similar to Majhi, Bote and Tharu people. Sonaha are strong and hard working people. Gold washing, fishing is their main occupation. They do not want to bother other. They do not trick and intrigue other, they concern just on their work only. They do not write any unnecessary concern on their issues. Due to the climate of terai, their skin is black it is observed that their height is in average 5 to 6 feet.

5.4 Religion, Belief and Tradition

Religion is a part of the culture and also belief and practice. Every society has been bounded with religion, the specific guidelines of their life span although the Sonaha call them Hindus. They don’t have any clear cut concept of the religion. They accept the existence of such forces in the form of spirits benevolent and malevolent, which control the daily activities of their lives. Rationally, their religious belief can be divided into

aspects firstly, it is ethnical in character and secondly, it recognized such forces that control the material world.

They assume that religion for them is to look after the family and not to betray any one. Slaughtering animals and telling lies is sin, but however, it is not anti sacrifice animal to divinities and sprints. In this way. It is not also sin to catch fish because it is their profession. They can't think much about rebirth but believe that people go to heaven after death.

This community believes that all the opportunities, misfortunes and diseases are caused by sprits their partial religions life revolves around activates of pacification and propitiation of these sprits by performing various rituals.

Religious covers way of life. It is meant to bring order harmony and civility in society with a view to forming ideal life every religious humanitarian attitudes and rituals life are extremely emphasized.

Table 4
Religious compositions of Sonaha Study Area

| S.N. | Religious | Total Households | Percentage |
|-------|-----------|------------------|------------|
| 1 | Hindu | 35 | 87.5 |
| 2 | Christian | 5 | 12.5 |
| Total | | 40 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Above table shows 87.5 percent Sonaha follow the Hinduism. Similarly 12.5 percent Sonaha follow the Christianity. Due to the contact of other ethnic groups and migration of different places to places they are accepting the Christity. Hinduism is the original religion of Sonaha.

5.4.1 Gods and Goddesses

Sonaha have their own Gods and Goddesses, though they have been greatly influenced by Hinduism, they have their own types of symbolic god and goddesses. According to their clan they worship different gods like Banchauriya worship the Bhawanidev, Makunaha celebrate the Pal Kumari, Khutaniha worship the Nath Baba.

5.4.2 Relation with Other Castes

Sonaha are known as to be honest and hard working people and do not want to bother other. They do not do trick and intrigue other. They concentrate just on their work only. They do not raise any unnecessary concerns on other issues. They are friendly, but straight and very social. It is observed that Sonaha in Patabhar have very good relations with people of the other caste.

5.5 Social Customs and Rituals

It is well known that Sonaha are very rich in culture. They have different types of customs, rituals and practices. But their rituals and practices are very expensive. Now they are realizing the extravagance of their culture and customs that they want to modify slowly without loosing the core value of their culture. They think one of the contributing factors of poverty among their community is the extravagance in different ceremonial functions which make them stop from their traditional practices and started to adopt the Hindu way of life. Usually, Sonaha community used to give less significance to child birth ceremony to marriage ceremony and death as culture. As a result the fate of the mother and child used to be in higher risk. But with the influence of the health facilities at community level and awareness movement on health by different stakeholders, they have started to take care of new born child and mother by taking them to near by health workers and keep them neat and clean. They have started to use safe deliver kit and go for regular consultation of health workers during pregnancy. The practice of child marriage and polygamy has been reduced. Number of girl child in the school is increasing. Similarly, the habit of spending money on daughters has been increased. As a result the number of girl students has been significantly increased in the school which is the very good sign of increased awareness about education.

5.5.1 Child Birth

At the period of giving birth of baby Soraniha is called (Soraniha: An experienced old woman who knows about pregnant). After the birth of baby take bath and first milk of mother is thrown. Till 3 days Kahar is given to mother. (Kahar: Mixed soup of floor of rice, lawing, nuts and pipal masala) 4th day meat and rice is given to eat. After 3rd day soraniha kept the name of children according to day. Month, place, festival name of the baby is also kept. 6th day of baby soraniha is called for delicious food. Varieties of food

are cooked (Local wine, fish, meet etc). After food some pots, clothes, money is given to Soraniya as gift. In these way Birth rituals of Sonaha is celebrated.

5.5.2 Naming

There is no particular time, ceremony and rule for giving name to new born children. There is a practice of giving name on the basis of events, festival, and day and month places related to birth of child. The name a child is kept Budhe or Budhi of a child born on Wednesday. Similarly, if child is born in the month of Falgun she is named as Faguni. Chaitya is in Chait.

5.5.3 Head Saving

This is the ceremony of hair cutting of a son for the first time when he reaches 3 years of age. The boy wears new clothes and Jewelers. He also gives some present. Like wise all the inviters give some money to the boys as gift or present and good wishes on the auspicious occasion.

5.5.4 Marriage

Marriage has a significant place in the Sonaha society of Patabhar society. The practice shows that they have arranged marriage system mostly in their community as it's 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.

Beside, the arrange marriage, there are other forms of marriages in the society. The forms of marriages adopted in the community are as follows:

- a) Arrange Marriage (Maghibibaha)
 - b) Marriage by elopement
 - c) Re-marriage
- a) Arrange marriage: Generally there is exchange systems of fixing the arrange marriage:
- i) The Exchange Marriage: In this marriage system, family of a bridegroom must give one of its girls to the family of bride as an exchange. Sonaha 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 do not have any girl to offer in the place of daughter in law as an exchange, the family finds difficult to pay the price of the bride.

- b) Marriage by elopement: It is also found the practice of getting married without the consent of their parents. The boy and girl run away from 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 Pracharna as the arrange marriage.
- c) Re-marriage: Sonaha does not marriage with same clan. They marriage with different clan like Mukunaha marriage with Banchauriya. Among Banchauriha and BanChauriya marriage is not possible. Re-marriage is popular in Sonaha community. A Sonaha woman, if dissatisfied with her husband and family, come to her natal home and refuses to go back to her husband house and she marries with another man with the help of her parents since divorced Sonaha women are given equally good social status. A widow marriage is also common, similarly if a husband is not happy with his wife, he brings second wife, so, polygamy is also existed.

5.5.5 Process of Marriage of Sonaha Community

In this community, arrange marriage and exchange marriage is practices (Exchange marriage means to get daughters-in-law-daughter should marry with daughter in-law's brother). At first step of marriage with 2 and 3 bottle of local wine, some relatives of boy go to the house of girls if dialogue is in positive way or if guardian of girls agree for the proposal that wine is distributed to all others then they return back to home. It is the first step of marriage. Second step of marriage is known as "Chhake Daru". After some months of 1st step it is practiced. Seven men of boy side go to Bride's home with (a garland of flower, full pot of local wine), among them one man becomes father of groom but original father of groom does not go. After reaching the home of girl plate of wine is exchanged among both Sambdhi (father of girls and father of boy) then marriage day is fixed. Mostly marriage is done in the month of Mansir.

At the fixed day of marriage, relatives of groom go to the Bride's home to bring her. When they reach the near of Bride's home. Some relative Bride comes to meet them and on the road they make fair. Side of the groom take enjoy of fire. After those relatives

of girl's side blocked the way for side of boy. Both of them fight and must be wined by groom or groom side people. It is not a real fight but it is just for fun.

At night leg of the Groom is washed and dancing and drinking program starts. Next day men of the Groom side go to the river side they take bath there they eat rice and meat of hen there. At the home of Bride they make up to bride and become ready to go there is one interesting things that Groom do not put sindur on head of Bride. In other caste or ethnic group sindur is put by Groom. Here sister of Bride put sindur on Bride. In this way every one return from house of Bride and when Bride and Groom reach at the Groom's house sister of the Groom Bluck the door for newly couple. But after giving some gift by both newly marriage function is celebrated.

5.5.6 Dressing pattern and Jewelry

The Sonaha of Patabhar VDC has their typical dressing pattern. Men put on dhoti Bheguwa which is white color and cover from the waist to knee and shirt. Traditionally, Sonaha women, usually put on Lehanga (a cloth worn around the waist to upper ankle Jama, 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 "A Grahan") and blouses, in which button are sewn in front, but unmarried women have blouse with button sewn on the back portion. Sonaha women wear colorful dressed during the festival, both married men and women have tattoeing in different part of the body. Usually, women have tattoo on their wrist to legs where as the male usually have on the arm. Usually, Sonaha women wear silver jewellerty in ear due to their economic condition.

Kali Maya Sonaha

Yearly, 3, 4 months regularly we wash the gold. But we are not able to wear gold – Jewelries, this is the matter of surprise you can asked me why? Hungery stomach doesn't give this opportunity. By selling the gold we have to fulfill our stomach.

5.7 Habitat (Housing Pattern)

Sonaha houses are built mostly in cluster of 10 to 20 on either side of the village lane. The general structure of the houses in double storied with bamboo or (Khariya) and thatched roofs. The length of the house ranges from 10-20 ft to 20-30 fit and breath goes up to 15-20 ft long. Nowadays single storied houses are also seen in some localities.

Sonaha houses are made up of wood, straw mud and stow. The inner and outer sides of the walls are plastered with mud. They keep their houses neat and clean and healthy compared to other caste and ethnic group of people.

Sonaha usually have their houses rectangular in size facing either east or west by making south and north in length. The doors are made of wooden planks. They have windows, but usually small. It is also observed that they have small hole on the walls which are used to peep outside. Interior sections of the house are divided in to several rooms, which are used for storing either grain or their house hold goods using some large clay containers. Such rooms have neither door nor windows. But the house usually one doors in front.

Usually small shed is seen around their houses built for keeping their livestock such as goats and cattle. They keep their surrounding neat and clean, but they usually do not built toilets. They use open field for defecation.

5.5.8 Festivals

Sonaha celebrate different kinds of festivals including worship of clan god and ancestral as religious ceremonies. On one hand it provides entertainment with drinking gambling, playing, making fun and eating delicious foods on the other hand gives information about the history, culture and religious. It also creates 'we feeling as ethnic group, clam group, problems with each other. They have their mutual relationship, interpedently their mutual relationship and they have unity, integration, harmonies co-operative and solidarity among them. Following are the major festivals of Sonaha.

a. Bhajahar

(Bhajahar means holiday for female). After the full moon of the Baisakh this festivals is celebrated especially this is the festival of female. At this period two and a half day male must do every household work. Female get totally rest even she should not cook food also. Interesting matter of this festival is that female should not touch anything if she touch means it is religious impure. Male of every house should manage everything outside and inside work.

b. Gangadasahara

Especially this festival is related with children. After full moon of Jestha this festival is celebrated. At this festival male children who have passed the 3 years are cutt

their hair by their mama at riverside where their hair is weighed with milk of cow. The mama (Maternal Uncle) has to cut the hair of children. Cut hair is collected within Tapari (A Type of plate which is made by leaf of sal). A small chicken is also kept with hair. That Tapari is kept inside two legs of children then thrown it in to river. After this every one take bath in river, while they return from river and take (Bhoj - Bhatar) as well as dance at home.

c. Asaripuja

After the full moon of Asar Sonaha celebrate this festival. This is the community festival while celebrating this festival one male and one female from each house gather at fixed place (Badghar house). A chicken is compulsory from each house. Puja is celebrated for happy, progress and wishing all and whole Sonaha community. At the end of puja flesh of chicken is divided into two parts. One part is eaten by gather people and other part of flesh is divided according to household equally.

d. Gauriya (Main Festival of Sonaha)

This festival is taken as the end of poison snake. Especially it is the main and important festival of Sonaha. The festival is celebrated in open place a swing (ping) is kept at open place. This festival is started on the day of fullmoon of Shrawan. But the day of panchami is more important. At this day some delicious food are cooked chana, poori, sel etc. At this festival, boys make pataoki (patauki looks like snake) which is made by leaf of Banana. It is the symbol of snake. And girls make Gudiya (Doll) which is made by pieces of cloth. Girls make house of mud and pots (by skin of insects). Taking enjoy boys and girls play. At the same day of panchami Badghar (Head of the community) comes at the place where swing has been kept with rice, seven diya and some money. Everyone keeps the Guriya at swing after that everyone goes the river side boys play the patanki. After reaching the riverside girls give the delicious food their own Gudiya and remain delicious food is distributed to all. Guriya and Patauki are kept in one Tapari and that Tapari is kept in middle of river while river take the Tapari at own direction from the edge of river boy throw the stone on that Tapari. According to believes of Sonaha that Guriya is come back as a Beautiful Butterfly.

e. Holi

This is the second important festival of Sonaha. It is celebrated till 3 days. Before starting the holi all Sonaha gather at the home of Badghar. At this festival tree of the Simmal play important role. By taking (five Diyas, light, sweets, rice, some money, seven pieces of red and white clothes) people go to jungle to bring simmal tree. When they reach the jungle they choose one tree of Simmal. Before to pluck it they move around 7 times by the help of everyone and it is plucked. Plant of Simmal is symbol of holi and that tree is brought from southern side of the village and kept in middle of village. According to their own height, boys and girls keep stick with simmal tree. At the evening stick is burned. Next morning dust of fire, Dubo, rice and water is kept in one pot. In this way first Tika is given to god, later Tika is distributed to all the people. At the day time, everyone playsss Holi with colorful abir. Next day of holi Purnima everyone collect money rice and meat it is eaten as a common Bhoj.

5.5.9 Language

Linguistic study of Sonaha has remained yet, but it looks like mixed of Tharu Kathariya and Hindi. The Sonaha have their own language called Sonaha language. The Sonaha of study area migrated about 200 years ago. Because of mixed society they are speaking their own language in daily life.

Table 5

Language pattern of Sonaha by Nature of Speaking

| S.N. | Particular | Total | Percentage |
|-------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Speak and Understand | 196 | 94.09 |
| 2 | Cannot Speak but Understand | 19 | 3.64 |
| 3 | Cannot Understand | 5 | 2.27 |
| Total | | 220 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The table ensures that 94.09% people can speak and understand their own language but 3.64% people neither speak nor understand. Due the mix society new generation of Sonaha community are living less important of their own language at

school and government office Nepali language is compulsory so they give importance to Nepali language rather than Sonaha language.

5.6 Social Organizations

5.6.1 Family Structure and size

Family:- The family is a group defined by a sex relationship sufficiently practicing and enduring to provide the procreation and upbringing of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood adoption constituting a single household interacting and inter communication with each other in their respective social roles of husband and wife. Mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister creating common culture (quoted in Shrestha, 1986).

In the study village there are 40 households for the present study. Data were collected by the help of questionnaire on the family types. These families are categorized and presented in table below:

Table 6
Family Structure of Sonaha

| S.N. | Particular | Total Households | Percentage |
|-------|------------|------------------|------------|
| 1 | Nuclear | 28 | 70 |
| 2 | Extended | 10 | 25 |
| 3 | Joint | 2 | 5 |
| Total | | 40 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The above table shows that majority of people are in nuclear families (70%) and few people are in extended family (25%). Minority people are in Joint family (5%) that is in. The trend of increasing towards nuclear family in Sonaha community is also like that of other ethnic groups.

- ❖ Nuclear Family: Nuclear family consists of married couple with or without their unmarried children. In the nuclear family system, there is not system of economic co-operation between brothers. Out of 40 households of the Sonaha people 70%

households are under the nuclear family system. It means Sonaha these prefer nuclear family system in these days.

- ❖ Joint family: In these types of family, parents, grandfather, grandmother, brothers and unmarried sisters live together they have common property. In the study area 2 household out 40 that is 5% are in joint family. They told in interview that there were more joint families found years ago. In present days brothers like to separate after marriage. These types of family trend is decreasing.

5.6.2 Extended family: - An extended family consists of parents, grand parents, uncles (fathers brothers) their wives and children. It is a big family. Only 25% families are practicing this type of family system.

5.6.3 Kinship System

The relationship established due to marriage is called affinal kinship and the relatives are called affinal kins. In this kinship group like as “Sasarar” means affinal. The affinal kins are relation started from to side for daughter in law – for elder brother’s wife. Likewise “Damad” for son in law (daughter’s husband) “Nana” for mother’s father and “Nani” for mother and “Mama” for mother’s brother and “Mai” for mama’s wife are usual words also “Phuwa” for Phuphaju (father’s sister's husband). The relationship due to blood is called “Gotyar” means consanguineous. They are “Baba” for father “Barapu” for grand father Baraba for elder brother of father, “Kaka” for young brother of father,, similarly Chahwa for son and Bahiniya for younger sister and Didi for elder sister dada for elder brother respectively. They respect to all sorts to all kins whether they are Gotiyar or sasrar. As sonaha have strong kinship system, they take care of at least five generation for affinal relationship. They think they give special relationship to affinal kin and give great importance to maternal nephew. They have strong bond relationship.

5.6.4 Leadership and Gender Role

The eldest member would be the head of the Sonaha family, whose word is law. The head of all families select their village representative or chieftain called Badghar who is authorized to act as the chief of the village council, which discusses various matters related to the social issues e.g. welfare and development of the village. This is a

kind of council of elders. Badghar plays a role of chairperson and makes a decision in Panchayat. Thus he has a vital role to maintain their social norms and values and make peace in Sonaha community. Any body whether men or women, who has social, family or other types of problems, use to go to Badghar for social justice. He uses to call a meeting, that meeting makes a decision that is valid for everyone. Every year, Sonaha select the Badhgar. Similarly, traditional doctors who are called Guruwa, are also considered as their leader. He performs rituals and religious work in the village. In general, Sonaha women have much liberty as compared to the women to other castes. They have some decision making roles in the families.

CHAPTER-SIX

LIVELYHOOD OPTIONS OF SONAHA PEOPLE

Main focus of this unit is to discuss about the livelihood assets used by Sonaha people that make their living. Livelihood assets are the core elements for people to make a living. People require arrange of assets to achieve outcomes positive livelihood. Though there are numerous assets, sustainable livelihood approach identifies fine core assets namely; human, social, natural, physical and financial up on which livelihood are built. Livelihood assets are not equal for all but they are carrying out the same activities in the same place. These livelihood assets differ from individual to individual as well as from place to place also determined by the nature of working place.

6.1 Human Capital

Human capital represents the skill, knowledge, ability to labour and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives. Human capital appears in the generic framework as livelihood assets that are a building block or means of achieving livelihood outcomes. It's accumulation can also be an end in itself. As well as being of intrins value human capital (knowledge and labour or the ability to common labour) is required in order to make use of any of the four other types of assets. It is therefore necessary, though not on it's own sufficiency for the achievement of positive livelihood (DFID; 2002)

In this study, in terms of human capital, only skill to particular work and their education has been discussed.

6.1.1 Literacy and Education

It is the most important factor to enrich human capital, which provides knowledge about different sectors to make a living. So, it is also necessary to discuss about the educational status of Sonaha.

Table 7
Education Level in Sonaha Community

| S.N | Educational Categories | Male | | Female | | Total | |
|-----|--------------------------|------|-------|--------|-------|------------|--------------|
| | | No | % | No | % | No | % |
| 1 | Unable to read and write | 42 | 31.34 | 50 | 58.13 | 92 | 41.81 |
| 2 | Read only | 18 | 13.43 | 6 | 6.97 | 24 | 10.90 |
| 3 | Read and write | 16 | 11.94 | 4 | 4.65 | 10 | 4.54 |
| 4 | Primary | 20 | 14.92 | 13 | 15.11 | 33 | 15.00 |
| | Lower Secondary | 15 | 11.19 | 9 | 10.46 | 24 | 10.90 |
| 5 | Secondary | 5 | 3.73 | 3 | 3.48 | 8 | 3.63 |
| 6 | Intermediate and above | 3 | 2.23 | 1 | 1.16 | 4 | 1.81 |
| | Total | 134 | 100 | 86 | 100 | 220 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The table shows that human capital of Sonaha from educational prospective is very poor. Among them, only small proportion of respondent was enrolled in school but only few respondents found who have completed.

In the time of field survey, they expressed such educational status as “Saahi Grna Matra Aaunchha” (able to signature only) and this was not learned through any formal education.

During the field work, it was found that poor economic condition was the main cause of being deprived from receiving formal education for young groups land economic as well as social norms and values were for elders.

6.1.2 Additional Skill

It was found that all of them are engaged in some kind of work but they don't have equal human capital. Some of them are more skillful to weaving Jal, Chaudi (instruments which are used in fishing). Some of them making local wine for sales, some people have skill for making Dudi, Sinauta etc. such additional skills are also the main income generating sources to make a living. Their daily earning is determined by such additional skill. They were different in the level of earning among those having additional skill and those who don not.

Additional skill and income

Bekhari Sonaha 45, he has extra skill to repair, and make Jal, chandi, and making Dudi, in addition to gold washing. Due to this skill he earns more than his colleague. He added that this skill also helped him to balance daily earning in the time of rainy season.

Above expressions concluded that due to the additional skill, all the respondents do not have equal income. Some times their additional skills also help them to reduce the economic vulnerability caused by seasonality.

6.1.3 Income Generating Assets

In the case of Sonaha, they do not have any machinery instruments. All instruments seems very simple but have a significant role to generate monetary value. Main instruments used by Sonaha are given in the table.

Table 8
Main Instrument of Sonaha

| Particular | Quantity | Price Rs. |
|------------------|----------|--------------|
| Dudi | 1 | 5000 |
| Chawana/ Sinauta | 1/1 | 2000 |
| Jal | 1 | 3000 |
| Parat, Kuto etc | 1, 1 | 2000 |
| Total | 5 | 12000 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

In depth interview, field survey 2008 they have managed all the instruments in such a way that could easily be carried to another place. The average worth of total instruments lies between (Rs.10, 000 to Rs.15000). When these instruments are bought once, it is not necessary to reinvest. If they make or buy once, it works 5/6 years.

6.2 Land Ownership (Land and Tenants)

To discuss about the physical assets, it is also necessary to discuss about their physical property of permanent residence. Few of them have their small cottage.

“Jaha Rat Tyha Bhat”

(Wherever night there is rice)

Ganga Ram Sonaha (105)

I was born in 1960 B.S. at Guptipur, I married with Chotani Sonaha while I was 30. She died 20 years ago. I am with my son and spending boring life during I have nostalgia past days were Romantic, environment was also romantic. My hobby was hunting, Jamindar (local landlord) used to call me for hunting around us there was jungle. We used to kill various wild animals rarely I used to go for washing gold. We used to make field for farming by cutting the forest. Thinking that we have to pay land tax to the government. We used to leave that land and started deforestation again for new farm. In this way we used to go place to place. I have memory of wage labour while British. Indian company; I used to supply the Nepali wood through river; I also remember that revolution of congress and battle of Rajapur. Janamukti sena of congress and armies of Rana. At that time we used to sell gold per toal Rs. 10. previous free life was so good but now-a-days only memory of past days I have. My life partner’s death really shaked me. I am felling solitariness with out her. This narrow life is so painful for me. Curing past there was not fixed of night and rice where ever we get good place we all settle there; we did not think about permanent life.

Land is considered not only as the means of agricultural production and livelihood among the Sonaha of Patabhar VDC. But it is also taken as a symbol of social status and prestige. Land is valued in Sonaha communities that it is taken as a social security.

The distribution of land is unequal. Most of Sonaha have either little or no land but there are some Sonaha, who have more than (15 kattha) of land.

The table below shows that status of the land holding and ownership of the Sonaha people of Patabhar VDC.

Table 9
Status of land ownership of sampled Household

| S.No. | Amount of Land | No of family | Percentage |
|-------|----------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 | Landless | 11 | 27.5 |
| 2 | 1-4 (Kattha) | 19 | 47.5 |
| 3 | 5-9 (Kattha) | 7 | 17.5 |
| 4 | 10 and above | 3 | 7.5 |
| Total | | 40 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Each family of study area has been holding very small size of land (refer table 9). It also shows that they have a very hard livelihood as they reside in very small plot of land. This result has occurred due to the redistribution of the land as the time of separation of their married son or sons. There people also draw loans from the landlords (mainly Brahmins, Chhetres) at a high rate of interest at the time of the food shortage. They cannot pay the loans back within the fixed time. As a result, they are forced to sell their land to the landlord at a low price.

6.3 Financial Capital

Financial capital denotes the financial resource that people used to achieve their livelihood objective. The definition which is used here is not economically robust so that it includes flow as well as stocks and it can contribute to consumption as well as production. However, it has been adopted to try to capture an important livelihood building block, namely the availability of cash or equivalent that enables people to adopt different livelihood strategies. Financial capital is probably the most versatile of the five categories of assets (DFID: 2002).

Magiram Sonaha said that Armies, the staffs of Bardiya National Park do not give permission for fishing and gold washing within the National Park area. “Once they had arrested me while I was fishing at National park area, they kept me 4 days at their barrack they gave me tourcher after paying the Rs. 5000 they released me”.

6.4 Social Capital

There is much debate about what exactly is meant by the term social capital. In the context of sustainable livelihoods framework, it is taken to mean the social resource upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihood objectives. Social capital is the most intimately connected to transforming structure and process. Social capital like other types of capital can also be valued as a good in itself. It can make a particularly important contribution to people sense of well being (through identity honor and belonging). Social capital can be used in negative as well as positive ways. (DFID, 2002). In the case of the Sonaha people livelihood strategies adopted by them are also shaped by the status of their social capital. So, it is necessary to discuss.

In the study area, there was one formal social organization of Sonaha on the other hand they are tied on a strong informal social network and use to as important tools to sustain their occupation within their working places. They have their own territory of working place. Though they are in cluster or disperse from they are tied up in a social network within their own occupational community. This social network becomes strong when any new Sonaha tries to enter their territory. For anew Sonaha to share such territory requires social relationship (must be neighbor friend and relative) with them. If all the members agree the new comer will be able to use this place, they don not agree, he has to create his own work territory in new place. It is concluded that social linkage and relationship within own occupational community are important factors for them to sustain their living.

6.5 Natural Capital

Natural capital is the term used for the natural resources stock from which resource flow and services (e.g.: nutrient cycling, erosion, protection) are useful for livelihoods which are derived within the sustainable livelihoods framework. The relation between natural capitals is very important to those who drive all or part of their livelihoods for resource based activities. However, it's important to go way beyond this. None of us would survive without the help of the key environment service and food production from natural capital (DFID2002). By the nature of work they are using pure natural resources is river area by sitting in such far many people (By selling fish, by selling gold). In return, they earn economic sources on the other hand, by the nature, all

the places do not have equal portfolio for them to generate more income. The places where flow of people is high produce more work and result more income. Similarly, place where people flow is very low produced few work and result will be low income. Due to lack of social capital nature of working places, all of them do not have equal access to these locations they are compelled to spread different rivers and part of rivers.

6.6 Physical Assets

Physical capital comprises the basic infrastructure and produces goods needed to support livelihoods. Infrastructure consists of changes to the physical environment that help people to meet their basic needs and to be more productive. Usually, essential component of infrastructure for sustainable livelihoods are affordable transport secure shelter and building adequate water supply and sanitations affordable energy and access to information. Lack of particular types of infrastructure is considered to be a care dimension of poverty. The livelihood approach therefore focus on helping to provide access to appropriate infrastructure that enables poor people to achieve their livelihood objectives (DFID2002).

In this study livelihood of Sonaha is viewed in the rural context. So, some assets such as income enhancing assets, shelter and facility are discussed within permanent residence their living permanent resident also shaped by their physical property.

6.7 Occupation

Main occupation and first occupation of Sonaha is gold washing. It is believed that they have immune power of the malaria disease so that they survived from the deadly disease when there was no medicine. One respondent said that due to harmful mosquito's bite we learned boating, fishing and gold washing. No of person engaged in income generating activities form each household.

6.7.1 Gold washing

Gold washing activities can not be found practiced by the people of other socio-cultural groups except from Sonaha. They stated to work from the month of Asoj to Jestha. Sonaha take this job as their permanent sources of income. The sonaha's study area has categorized the rivers on the basis of the collecting quantities of gold. Although Gheruwa, Karnali, Mahakali rivers produce quality of gold. Gold washing work takes place in the bank of the Karnali River.

6.7.2 Initial instruments to collect gold

Dori/Duri: It works to filter to raw sand, stone. It is 5-7 ft long wooden Dudh. The process of gold filtering putting in Dudh is called 'Kamaitri'.

Sinauta: The wooden plate like 'pan' leaves. The instrument of the collected gold to filter. The process of gold filtering is called 'gold Hethari'.

Sachin: Stone and sand digging wooden stick.

Chawana: A kind of instrument to filter wood stone and sand which is made by bamboo stick or piece by joining string.

Yodhana: bucket (Dechhi / parat)

Bhurki: A small put made by mud in which gold put and kept in fire

Suhaga: A kind of chemical that use for putting gold in Bhurki.

Suruwa: An instrument to light fire.

Pata: Salako pat (leaf of sala)

At first we should dig up the mixture of stone and sand and put it in Dudhi. Sonaha make 5-7 ft long wooden Dudhi for filtering gold. Dudhi means the long wooden piece by picking inside there is open one side. It put upon stone by sloping in the river edge. The sand, where gold mix is filled in 'Yodhana' (Deckchi, Parat) and put in Chhawana and by putting in slope in Dudhi it flower by pouring water. By such flowing, large stone piece, herbs and wooden pieces remain upper side of Chawana and the sand along with gold reach to the Dudhi. Again, water pour in the Dudhi's sand and water flow the sand to open place through the slope Dudhi. It goes continuously until the total gold separate from the sand.

We don't know that sand has gold until the filtering process end. Until that time they filter the sand only depending in guess. If there is gold the small elements filters or come up and this filtered things or elements put in Sinauta (a kind of wooden plate) from Dudhi and the soil mixed with gold lost or finished. At last the gold take to home mixed with Suhaga put in fire, the becomes a pure gold now we can use various propose.

6.7.3 Fishing

Fishing, the second main income sources of Sonaha, is the primitive types of subsistence. As hunting and gathering food was the culture of early stone age, fishing took, it's place as the culture from the late stoneage. From the time, fishing has been

considered as one of the sources of income and vitamin. Divodern societies have been practicing it with modern advanced technology. A big quantity of fish is caught even in the biggest ocean. But Sonaha of patabhar are still fishing with their primitive methods fishing is an interesting game and practiced by all age group of people and by sex science the Sonaha are traditionally engaged in fishing and possess a vast knowledge of fishes. Asala, Bam B hot, Baghi, korpe, Jalpur Sohar, rewa etc. are the major varieties of fishes which are caught in the rivers. Different methods are implemented are employed to catch fish. Methods and tools different from season to season. Mainly, the Sonaha, apply the following techniques.

- Lons Tructing a trip Jal.
- Using nets
- Using hooks.

6.7.4 Wage Labour

To over come from the economic difficulties most of the Sonaha of the study areas prefer to sell their labour either by going to near by fields to work as laborers where the wages are very low or by going to nearby to ownship, where they work as non skilled laboures but get higher wages than in the villages. In the study area, the bote people highly practice wage labour because it is easily available and it does not require special skill. The skilled laborers get higher wages beside, this they collect fire wood from the Jungle and bring it to Rajapur to sell. They get more than rupees 80 for a load. Person from the study area have got the opportunity to work as peon in government school.

6.7.8 Availability of food

The staple food of Sonaha is Dal, Bhat and meat & fish, so they use mostly rice in their daily meal. While they have shortage of rice they use other grains such as wheat and maize etc. for their daily meal. Most of the Sonaha are poor and marginalized and they work whole year on gold washing. Even they do not get enough food to feed twice a day to their family in the whole year. During the survey it was found that over 90% families have food shortage. Mostly, they have such food shortage in July to September. During such period they borrow money for buying grains for their livelihood. As they have food shortage in those, most of them have borrowed loan either from neighbors'/relatives or local money lenders.

The other major reason of food shortage is the population growth which exceeds the growth rate of production in the VDC per unit land production has not been increased whereas number of mouth has been increasing day by day. Instead the productivity of land is deteriorating day by day. The social practice and behaviors are also equally contributing to food shortage in Sonaha ethnic groups as they have big feasts, festivals and marriage ceremony in which they expand extravagantly more on wine. Once they have enough food for just few months they forget the food scar city and start making wine and expend more on unproductive sectors such behavior in Sonaha community has aggravated the food in security situation among them.

As Sonaha were known as very receptive and supportive, they have been used and exploited for year taking advantage of their receptive and unstricky nature for years, the social status of Sonaha was found lower than that Thakuries and Chhetri and Brahmin in general. Even today, Thakuries are greeting as raja and Brahmin as Babu, which signify the superiority among the society.

6.8 Income and expenditure

Table 10
Occupational wise annual income

| S.N. | Occupations | Income | Percentage |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------|------------|
| 1 | Gold washing | 15,000 | 50.84% |
| 2 | Wage labor | 6,000 | 20.33% |
| 3 | Fishing | 5,000 | 116.94% |
| 4 | Agriculture | 2,000 | 6.77% |
| 5 | Firewood collection | 1,500 | 5.08% |
| Total | | 29,500 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

While chatting informally with different people on various occasions, the researches own observations have corroborated Bahagi Ram Sonaha's account on household level expenditure pattern household level economic discipline has not been found similar among different household. Quantitative information was collected from 40 households when it was realized that having grossly estimated figures was not sufficient to comprehend the annual income and expenditure pattern among the study all the 40

households due to the limitation of time. Therefore, only 2 hours holds were randomly selected considering the nearness of the researcher's host family's house so as to get information on weekly basis over the period of time. Sonaha are culturally accustomed to drink alcohol and they spend more than 10% of the food expenses on alcohol and tobacco. Such habits obstruct them save at all and cost heavily on health too. As they cross 45 years of age according to the key informants they begin to suffer more health complications than those that do not consume alcohol and tobacco. Consequently, their meager income goes waste on due to ill health they get deprived from working any more for the livelihood of their family members.

6.8.1 Income from Livestock

The livestock that is sold to get money is included in income. If not for sell but for consumption for family is include in the wealth.

Table 11
Number of live stock and poultry in Sonaha community

| S.N | Types of livestock | No of live stock | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|
| 1 | Goats | 40 | 14.98% |
| 2 | Pigs | 7 | 2.621% |
| 3 | Chickens | 178 | 66.66% |
| 4 | Cows | 10 | 3.74% |
| 5 | Sheeps | 32 | 11.98% |
| Total | | 267 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The Sonaha of Patabhar are not found to be interest much in animal keeping because to keep livestock. They need own farm it is not available as well as these are not enough grazing land. They also keep hens, ducks, sheep and goat for their festival. But generally it is found that they have not yet attraction in this occupation in order to improve their economic condition. Causes of disinterested in livestock, lack of land, enough grass and pasture and from the livestock also. They are not in beneficial. Sonaha people are not attracted by livestock.

6.8.2 Fishing

Most of the Population adapting non-agricultural activities for their livelihood. Some of the strategies were found to be common among all the households. Various member of the same household have been engaged in different activities for supporting livelihood as a matter of strategy. They get engaged in various activities. It was frequently reported during various interactions with the research in course of his study that people of the study area have devised various livelihood strategies different activities were found prevalent. (1) Gold washing (2) fishing (3) wage labour (4) some live up on the brewing of home made alcohol (5) many households in the studied village operate small land holding. So one of their livelihood options in rearing goats and keeping poultry bird (6) some people are obliged to resort to collect and sell fire wood to arrange two derisory meals.

Table 12
Expenditure Pattern in Sonaha People of Bardiya

| S.N. | Items | Estimated Total Cash In (Rs) | Percentage of Total Expenditure |
|--------------|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | On Food (Paddy, Maize, Wheat, Pulse, Oil) | 15,500 | 45.42 |
| 2 | Kerosene, Salt, Sugar, Smoking, Etc. | 5,000 | 14.61 |
| 3 | Clothes | 5,000 | 14.61 |
| 4 | Education | 3200 | 9.35 |
| 5 | Feast And Festival | 3000 | 8.77 |
| 6 | Healthcare | 2500 | 7.30 |
| Total | | 34,200 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Above the table 10 shows that the annual total approximately expenditure is 34,200. The data show that food grain, education and other are also included in the expenditure of the total expenditure 45.42 percent of the amount is collected through their own use of food grain. They spend 14.61 percentage of the total expenditure for purchasing for kerosene, salt, sugar etc. similarly they spend percent of income for their

clothing 14.61 percent of expend is done for education of children. 9.35 in the feast and festival (Jad and Raksi) also and 7.30 percent of expenditure they use their health care.

Ultimately, as a per household expenditure of Sonaha in Patabhar have Rs.30200 per annual and per person annual expenditureRs.4225.80 whereas the gross average income per household is Rs.2633.80 per year and per person income is Rs.3413.60 per years.

Thus, this above mentioned analysis clearly indicates the annual deficit/budget, which is supplemented by loan, borrowing, credit purchase. They borrow money to solve the problems and the money with high interest. They have no objection for high interest. The above analysis shows that Sonaha community of Patabharn are socially and economically deprived.

Poverty and livelihood situation analysis

“Definition of Poverty by the Study Area Poor”

As defined and characterized by the poor people themselves in the study area, their stark features could be summed up as; those who cahn’t afford two square meal a day; those having no more there patched or tattered clothes to cover their body. Those who posses very tiny temporary huts in dilapidated conditions; those who have home stead to agricultural landholding what so ever, those who have high illiteracy, few poultry birds and no dependable work opportunity; those who have been abandoned by their spouse; and those who have been historically deceived, manipulated and marginalized by the state.

Source: Field Survey, 2008

In general, poverty can be defined as a state of economic, social and psychological of deprivation occurring among people or countries that is lacking sufficient ownership control or access to resource to maintain minimum standard of living (World Bank 1980). Implying that poverty means more than low income it is a state in which opportunities and choices are most basic to human development which are denied to lead alone, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of life living freedom dignity, self respect and respect for others (UNDP,1997). This concept of

poverty is not just an economic phenomenon. It is related to wider social, cultural and political spheres.

Human being needs resources to survive. These resources may be land, water, money, skill, organization, Knowledge etc. organization also greater sources and means like wise political and social traditions are also important ones. It might be different things what standard of living one wishes or lives one needs these various resources to survive poverty is the lack of these sources or disproportionate, combination of these resources (Mishra in Vikash, Vol. 12, 1998).

Nepal's level of income (US \$ 210 per capital) is one of the lowest in the world; more than half of the population survives on less than one dollar a day (ADB, 1997). Income is the source for livelihood and life without it is different. The lack of money is not only poverty but also the lack of opportunity and capacity to earn it. Sonoha are poor because they lack strong determination against the bad aspect of health, education and culture of this society. How much money can one earn depend on ones capacity and courage and his/her satisfaction depends on ones self expectation. For this reason, poverty should not only be reviewed through money but also through individual capacity, courage and independence.

Poverty is a multidimensional and multifaceted phenomenon. The term has been defined in a number of ways by various scholars, planners and academicians. The national planning commission (NPC) has broadly defined poverty into two categories based on Income and Consumption.

The concept of poverty is not easy to define as it comes in two models absolute poverty and relative poverty. When we talk about the absolute poverty that suffers from condition of life, it is defined as the inability to obtain the minimum necessities for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency. Two thirds of the world's absolute poor live in Asia and especially in south Asian countries. Poverty is concerned with multidimensional problems. The nature of poverty problem is determined by various socio – economic, characteristics in the society such as family size, land holding pattern, educational status, occupational income etc. In the present study the nature of poverty and it's relation with other variables are taken into consider ration, regarding this problem. It is known that poverty has a strong co-relation with socio – economic factors.

Absolute poverty:

Absolute poverty line is that kinds of income level which is required to purchase basic needs bundle of goods and services essential for survival and social existence. Absolute poor are those whose income level isn't sufficient to maintain a minimum standard of living.

The FAO (1972) standard has been followed in the study area according to this standard to this standard 2256 calories per capital per day is required and net consumption of 605 grams cereals and 60 grams pulses which provides 2042 calories and 214 calories making together 2256 calories.

Definition of the poverty by the study area Sonaha as defined and characterized by the poor people themselves in the study area their stark features could be summed up as: these who can't afford two square meals a day: those having no more than patched or tattered clothes to cover their body, those who possess very tiny temporary huts in dilapidated condition, those who have high illiteracy, few poultry birds and no dependable works opportunity, those who have been historically deceived, manipulated and marginalized by the state.

Don't ask me what poverty is because you have met it outside my house. Look at the house and count the number of holes. Look at the utensils and the clothes I am wearing. Look at everything and write what you see. What you see is poverty.

Bhekhari Sonaha

6.9.1 Nature of Poverty:

Nature of poverty is determined by the socio economic structure of the village (Dahal and Shrestha, 1987). Poverty is multi – sectoral concern studied has shown that poverty has been an important abstract of development. Poverty also stands as the main hindrance on the way to progress and prosperity on Sonaha community.

Different writer and researcher express several views on poverty. Most of them, however state that rural poverty is characterized by a small land holding, low income and subsistence oriented approach to agriculture when some one takes about the poverty problems in Nepal. It implies rural poverty and it has a link with land ownership as, it is the most important source of rural income and status. But land is distributed in a highly unequal fashion which generates social inequality in Sonaha community.

Different poverty related to socio – economic factors like occupation education level, land holding and so on is also essential to be scrutinized while talking about it. Socio-economic characteristics of the area and their relationship are mentioned in this analysis.

6.9.1(i) Family size wise income among Sonaha people

The determine factors of income level and a cause of poverty is family size. There may be positive or negative relationship between income level and family size. If all the family members are skilled and employed there is unemployed and unskilled. There is negative relationship. Family size and income level both are co-related.

Table 13
Family size wise income

| S.N. | Family size | Income (in Rs) | Percentage |
|-------|-------------|----------------|------------|
| 1 | Nuclear | 21,000 | 26.58% |
| 2 | Extended | 27,000 | 34.17% |
| 3 | Joint | 31,000 | 39.24% |
| Total | | 79,000 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The above table shows that as the family size increase the mean per capital income to decrease. There is negative relationship between family size and income level.

It is clear that in the case of large family size there is high dependency ratio few income earners, so the mean per capital income is low. Usually large family means large number of old and children who are non-income earners at the pattern of consumption. It is clear that in large family their mean per capital consumption is comparatively low. It is clear that large family size is a main leading factors to poverty.

6.9.1 9(ii) Level of education among Sonaha people

It is clear that population are illiterate in the study area. In reality, education is the backbone of development that paces the way to the employment and income because education and skill go together Limited skill means employment opportunities insufficient education can be serious causes of individual poverty, their income level are generally lighter than that of just.

Table 14
Educational Wise Income

| S.N. | Education Categories | Annual income (in Rs) | Percentage |
|-------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1 | Unable to read & write | 12,000 | 12.42% |
| 2 | Read only | 12,500 | 12.93% |
| 3 | Read and write | 12,900 | 13.35% |
| 4 | Primary | 14,700 | 15.21% |
| 5 | Lower secondary | 16,500 | 17.08% |
| 6 | Secondary | 20,000 | 20.70% |
| 7 | Intermediate & above | 28,000 | 28.98% |
| Total | | 96,600 | 100 |

Source:- Field study, 2008.

From the above table it is found that who are illiterate their annually per capital income is low. Who have primary education and their per capital income is Rs.14, 700 to Rs.16, 500. Similarly lower secondary level and their per capital income is Rs.3, 000. Annual income of up to primary household is higher in comparison to illiterate, literate and up to secondary household level. Education plays an important role to avoid poverty so illiterate. Literate persons have different options, new ideas. They can easily understand the new environment. They can easily adopt the new skill and can choose multi options for economic income. So, education and income is closely related. Additional skill also plays the vital role to increase the income.

6.9.1 (iii) Land holding pattern among Sonaha people

Land plays a vital role to increase the income in under developing countries which are especially rural area. Generally the larger the size of land holding the higher the income level and lower the incidence of poverty. In the context of the study area the land holding size of Sonaha is very less. That size also has been decreasing over years as the families separate. On the other hand at previous generation of the Sonaha did not give important on land. Later there is traditionally unequal distribution of land through the land reform.

The following tables examine the relationship between the size of land holding and the income level of the poor.

Table 15
Land holding & income among Sonaha people

| S.N. | Size of land | Income | Percentage |
|-------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| 1 | Below 1 Kattha | 1,500 | 6.12% |
| 2 | 1- 5 Kattha | 4,000 | 16.32% |
| 3 | 5 -10 Kattha | 7,000 | 28.57% |
| 4 | Above 10 Kattha | 12,000 | 48.97% |
| Total | | 24,500 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The above table show that people having 10 katthas and above 10 katthas per capital income is comparison to other is higher. It also shows that there is positive relationship between the sizes of land holding. People who have below 1 kattha have annually income Rs 1,500. Similarly who have (1-5) kattha those have average annually Rs. 4,000. Those have (5-10) kattha in average people have annually income Rs 7,000. Similarly Rs. 12,000 above data show that 10 kattha have higher mean per capital income in comparison to other. It also shows that there is positive relation ship between the sizes of landholding income level is also higher.

6.9.1 (iv) Employment status of Sonaha

The basic determinant of income and poverty level is employment. There is direct or positive relation between income and employment but inverse relationship between poverty and employment. Population in a community are fully employed their income is high and the existence of poverty is lower. In the other hand if the people are employed, their income is low and there is high degree of poverty. So unemployment is a factor leading to poverty.

Table 16
Occupational wise annual income

| S.N. | Occupations | Income | Percentage |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------|------------|
| 1 | Gold washing | 15,000 | 50.84% |
| 2 | Wage labor | 6,000 | 20.33% |
| 3 | Fishing | 5,000 | 16.94% |
| 4 | Agriculture | 2,000 | 6.77% |
| 5 | Firewood collection | 1,500 | 5.08% |
| Total | | 29,500 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The profession of every household or individual is highly affected their income level. Being the main occupation greater percentage of people in the study area depend on gold washing with in 5 months (Asoj, Kartik, Masnir, Falgun, Chaitra) they have to wash gold. Due to the less quantity of gold in river and low rate of selling gold or lack of proper market. The Sonaha people could not get benefit from it. From the table 13, it is clear that 50% people depend on gold washing and this annual income is Rs. 15,000. There are not able to manage money from gold washing.

Case Study

Livelihood strategies of Kali Maya's Family

Kali Maya has seven family members, husband, three sons, one daughter in law one grand son and herself. Her grandson is very young and her youngest son studies in grade seven. She wakes up early in the morning at about 5:30, provides foods and fodder to one milking cows and goats. Her husband milks the cow, her sons and daughter in law go to river side for gold washing after her break fast. At about 9:30 am she serves the meal to her youngest son who goes to school after having it. After it she clean cow shed. Her husband takes the cow and goats for grazing out for some time. Usually at 11 o'clock, they have lunch together some times, her eldest son and daughter in law eat lunch at bank of river which is taken by their neighbor. After returning from the school her youngest son helps his father by grazing goats and cow.

It is a cold winter hence at about 5 she starts to prepare the evening meal her husband milks their cow and feed the cattle son come back from gold washing about 6 pm but her

daughter in law already home at 5 o' clock and helps her in household works. All the family members have gathered at home by 6:30 then Maya serves meal to her husband and sons. Then, she and her daughter in law take their meal. They all retire early to be ready for the next day.

Many household of Rajipur (ward no. 9) spend their time more or less in the same pattern as that of Maya. But, several factors contribute to a great extend for the differences in the livelihood strategies and working patterns of the households. i.e. Family structure, education status, income level age and gender. Seasonal variations also make significant differences with in a single household. Here, a case in point in Maya's family is given to show how the household members of the family utilize their day. It depicts the concept of livelihood in a rural society which is intertwined among the different activities of the family members.

6.9.2 Root causes of poverty

In the context of the study area, it has been observed that the dearth of several factors play a vital role in shaping the fate of the rural poor, i.e. land, food, income, education and opportunities. Beside poverty, education and other factors behind the state of poverty and livelihood at large in the rural area. It is very difficult to distinctly categorize all the elements that effect rural poverty and livelihood, as they are very intricately embedded. However the researcher has tried to analyze the main factor in what follows.

6.9.2 (i) Land holding pattern

Sonaha are virtually land less people. Most of the people don't have land even for making house.

In the agricultural society like Nepal where land has been the sources of all sustenance, social security, positional power on the other hand, it is believed that land is one of the main and off better livelihood. Land holding pattern of Sonaha is as follows.

There is general assumption that the rural economy is based on agriculture and most of them are dependence on it. In fact this is not the case, at least it was not found so in the study area. (See table: 10) out of 40 households. 11 household (27.5%) Sonaha are landless. 47.5% Sonaha have under (1-4) kattha land and 17.5% Sonaha have (5-9) kattha. The largest landholding was found to have 10 kattha and above at (7.5%) percent study

area. The size of the land holding is very important with regard to livelihood. In order to meet the year round needs of food pattern of land holding Sonaha don't have enough land for farming. At the previous generation did not give importance on land because these were many resources for their livelihood. There were enough fish gold was also found every where. That's way Sonaha did not think about land. It was also easy to wash gold rather than farm.

6.9.2 (ii) Unemployment

There is no gainful employment opportunity in the Sonaha village. These are no income generating activities to engage them. But such activities are season for the rest of year a size able manpower of the hard working Sonaha community remains. They are mostly either unemployed of underemployed.

Low income

As daily wage earners with no asset or saving them wholly depend on the wage labour, they receive though they substantially contribute to the labour force of the village. They have no bargaining capacity and they have remained context with what is offered the wage. Mostly there is no sufficient for their two square meals. Wage payment in cash is equally small, which they spend on food with nothing left in hands. Naturally this situation leads to in datedness. They borrow money for social and family purposes. In the first place, any amount even the smallest amount is too big for them to manage which compel them to take loan.

6.9.2 (iii) Lack of Opportunities for formal education

Illiteracy is one of the major causes of their miserable plight. Leaving one or two cases here and there, Sonaha are a community of illiterate people so they improved and complicated their life. Ignorance and lack of education take step against any thought for providing social justice to Sonaha or minority groups. It is true that they have been victims of various kinds of tradition caste system, landlordism, religious and economic in equalities and host of such traditions and social practices. However they lack of access to educational opportunities. As result of inter a of several economic, political, social, cultural, religious and psychological factor they cannot take benefit from institution and opportunities for them up socially, culturally, politically and also economically,

politically, and also economically. It also needs to be integrated with income generation, various skills, their accessibility and convert once.

6.9.3 Food production and food deficiency

In the study VDC there is irrigation facilities for year round cultivation. But due to insufficient land agricultural land can't meet year round food requirement for their family member from their land holding alone. As well they don't have idea of off season farming similarly lack of market they are not using cash crops.

Table 9 shows that 95% of the households can't afford to feed their family member for the whole year from the production of their landholding. Table 15 suggests that from among the 40 study householder 60 percent (24) households were considered as the poorest. They could not afford to have only enough for 3 months. Only 5 percent (2 hhs) could afford to have provided food for their family for one year. Landlessness and year round food in sufficient we considered by the participation on focus group discussion as the most important criteria to identify poverty in the study area. Table 17 gives disaggregated information on the household agriculture production in the study area. The high production was found only 2 (hhs). Their production is sufficient for above 9 months. These sceneries suggest that lack of proper amount of land or due to landless situation of Sonaha. On the other hand Sonaha do not have habit of farming. Similarly, for farming agricultural instruments are required due to the poor condition of Sonaha. They are unable to maintain agricultural instruments.

6.9.4 Role of the State toward Sonaha People

In the democratic state, the state has a role of core taker of all the caste/sub caste, their religion, culture, language and many more. It has been scribed from 9th 5 year plan of the state. But even Sonaha caste has not seen included till CBS 2001. Being a citizen of the state, they are fully deprived from their rights that the state must present. They don't have sufficient land to depend on it. State has shown little bit pity towards them by providing citizenship card. In the case of education within 1 km of their settlement a government school has been established but Sonaha children are few in number. Regarding the health facilities they believe in traditional medicines although health post

is within 3 km distance so far no program has been launched by the local governments to uplift their livelihood.

According to Krishna Sonaha, by the declaration of Bardia National Park, they have been deprived from their long traditional work. This is why; they are again being pushed behind the state. If they would continue, they would be caught and given physical torture. The park administration declared some land punishment in the case of meet.

After the Jana Andolan of 062/063 some awareness has been seen among the Sonaha caste. They raised their voice putting their demand to the Park administration later it was accepted by them and only for temporary period (3 month) they were given permission to run their traditional work.

In this way, in the concept of democratic country, all the citizens pain, cry is mostly heard by the state. The equality social justice, freedom of occupation is the main motto of the state. Although, stated priority is to improve the citizen's quality of life, to generate more income in there livelihood but it has been seen false in the case of Sonaha. The different programs like awareness art oriented program should be given priority to Sonaha by the state.

6.9.5 Role of the NGO toward Sonaha People

To motivate the people participation of employment is the NGO's role but in the case of Sonaha people it seems less.

The local NGO Jana Bikash Manch (JBM) has given rights regarded Training in 2061V.S. and also Middle Area Development Program has also provided Goats to uplift their incomes in there livelihood the NGO provided solar lamp in 20 hours of Sonaha.

The main motto of NGO seem to uplift the livelihood empowerment people but in the case of Sonaha it doesn't seem so, even a single question about their main need has not fulfilled. The Sonaha people wishes to continue their indigenious work by use of tools improved by the time. They don't like to rear goats rather they want to washing goal and fishing freely.

CHAPTER - SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 SUMMARY

Field study was carried out in Sonaha Gaun with the goal of describing and explaining the socio – culture and livelihood options of Sonaha people of Patabahar VDC of Bardiya district. Many foreign and native anthropologist/sociologist have studied many ethnic groups of Nepal but no one have done sociological studies of distinctive ethnic group of Sonaha, therefore, it became matter of research as well as necessary to study Sonaha's socio – cultural situation and livelihood options.

They have unique culture with own language and traditions. Lack of their own script, we could not find written history, documents, literature etc. Main objectives of the study were to study socio – cultural life of Sonaha people is to identify the livelihood options of Sonaha people as well as demonstrate relationship between cultural and livelihood options adopted by Sonaha people of the study area.

The Sonaha of Nepal is scattered almost mid western part of the country and settled mostly on the bank of the rivers following their traditional occupations and bearing their cultural trains. This dissertation is mostly focused on the Sonaha community of Patabhar V.D.C of Bardiya.

Descriptive research design was adopted for the research work. Traditional method & data collection adopted by sociologists and anthropologists such as field work and participate observation, unstructured, interview structured questionnaires were used for the collection of primary data and they have been analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Field work was done during October to December.

The main objectives as stated above are to explore their socio-culture system and livelihood options of unique ethnic group of Nepal

Sonaha are the indigenous people of Nepal. Sonaha has been defined as a man who washes the gold at the bank of river.

The Sonaha people like to live in nuclear family rather than other types of families, Viz, joint or extended families. Previously, according to their traditional they used to live in joint families but now social and economic causes are the main forces for family disorganization.

The Sonaha people locally called “bhoj” for marriage. Marriage are mostly arranged monogamous and party Local marriage takes places within castes, endogamy and gotra exogamy, now, they don’t expand much in the marriage ceremony which was done previously.

The study area of Sonaha people are tied with kinship system. Manly, they have two types of kinship system. Viz consanghineous kinship, affine kinship. Most of them are Hindu by religion they worship all Hindu gods and deities and celebrate all Hindu festivals. They adopt common foods and drinks in the same way as adopted by other. Matwalis of the country Traditional as well as modern types of driers and ornament are found worn by the people of study area. They have their own types of dance.

Although, they have their own Sonaha language most of they use it. Their native language is going to be disappeared due to long term socio-cultural interaction with non-Sonaha people. Since they give low value to education most of them are illiterate. They can only sing their names. Few children are being sent to school.

They observe the various types of life cycle ceremonies such as birth, nwuron, “Bhat khuwai” hair cutting, marriage, death ethnic group of people practice. In most of the ceremonies there is a priest (Guruwa). As we talk about the village polity they have their own person who leads and control institution is called “badghar”. He is the head man of the village and controlled the power of community.

In this scientific age, most of them believe in Dhami, Jhankri, Guruwa for the treatment when they fall ill. Now, they have slowly changed their attitude towards the method of treatment.

The Sonaha people of study area live on Gold washing economy. Due to low level of agricultural production and small size of land holding, they have to depend on other economic activities. Such as animal husbandry, wage labour, fishing, wood selling

service etc for their survival among 40 households not evens agricultural productions. So, these people possessed a hard life and miserable economic conditions. The Sonaha people have a good relationship with other caste people such as Tharu, Sunar, Brahmin and kshatry

Main Findings

1. Many foreigner and native anthropologist/sociologist have studied many ethnic groups of Nepal. But no one has done sociological studies of distinctive ethnic group of Sonaha.
2. Sonaha are generally dark skinned people with medium height and appear somehow Aryan. Their physical feature is similar to Majhi, Danuwar and Tharu.
3. Sonaha have unique culture. They have their own language and traditions lack of own script we cannot find written history document literature etc.
4. Sonaha are the indigenious people of Nepal scattered Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts.
5. There are dozens different clans within the Sonaha such as Mukunaha, Banchauria, Jhabariya, Gilaha, Larmariya, Dahituwa, Ahira, Berhawa etc.
6. According to their clan they worship different gods and goddess like Bhawanidevi, Pulkumari Nath baba.
7. At the time of giving name on the basis of events, festival, name of days, name of month related to birth of children.
8. Arrange marriage as well as exchange marriage is practices within the community; most of the marriages are done in the month of Mangshir.
9. At the marriage groom doesn't put sindur on the head of Bride in place of groom; Bride's sister puts sindur on her head.
10. There was not relevant evidence found of the origin of Sonaha, 27.5% Sonaha are Hindus and 12.5% Sonaha are christain at study area.

11. Generally, sonaha make double storied house with bamboo or khariya and thatched roofs. The length of the house range is 10 – 20 ft and breath goes to 15 – 20 ft long.
12. Sonaha celebrate different kinds of festivals like Bhajahar, Gangadarahara, Asaripuja, Guriya, Holi among them Guriya is the major and main festival of Sonaha.
13. Bhajahar is the festival for female. After full moon of the Baishak, two and half days females (even female don't do household work).
14. Holi is second important festival of Sonaha. It is celebrated till 3 days. Simmal Tree plays major role at this festival.
15. 95.7% Sonaha speak and understand Sonaha language, 3.63% cannot speak and understand and 2.27% Sonaha understand Sonaha language.
16. 70% Sonaha have had nuclear family 25% have extended family and 5% joint family.
17. The head of all families select their village representative or chieftain called Badghar who is authorized to act as the chief of the village council.
18. 41.81% Sonaha are unable to read and write, 14.54% Sonaha are unable to write only 15% Sonaha have got primary education, 10% Sonaha have got lower secondary education. Similarly, 3.63% Sonaha have got secondary education and 1.81% Sonaha have passed SLC and above.
19. 27.5% families are landless, 47.5% Sonaha have 1 to 4 kattha and 17.5% Sonaha have 5 to 9 kattha. Similarly, 7.5% Sonaha have 10 and above kattha (it means most of the Sonaha haven't enough land for farming).
20. 50.84% of annual income from gold washing and 20.33% annual income from wage labour, 16.94% income from fishing and 6.77% income come from Agriculture and 5.08% income form firewood selling.

21. 60% of income is used from food 14.61% income is used for clothes, 9.35% of income is used for education and 9.77% of income goes on feast and festivals. Similarly, 7.30% goes on the health care.
22. It is seen that degree of high education those who has those annual income is also high. Similarly, who have high amount of land those people have high rate of income.
23. Cause of poverty among the Sonaha people is low rate of education, small landholding pattern unemployment, and formal education.
24. Food production capacity of Bardiya district is high but lack of enough farming land Sonaha facing 9 months food deficiency (their own production is able for 3 months).
25. Gold washing, fishing, wage labour, local wine, and selling, wood selling , livelihood options of the sonaha people. .

7.2 Conclusion

Though, Sonaha people are grouped under Aryan stocks, they possessed socio-economic and cultural system adopted from the Aryan and belong to matwali are some special socio-cultural and economic features or traditional of rite and other ceremonial activities practiced by them. They are still from the industrial and advanced society. Their thinking and social organization are still traditional; the way of worshipping their kuldevta and village deities. Fishing by nets, making chhatri, making gold washing instruments etc. habit of wearing typical dress pattern and cluster types of settlement patterns distinctly different them. Actually, they are not agriculturists who possess a large size of land because of the extreme pressures of population growth. No household out of 40 household can meet it's expenses on it's social; and cultural obligation including ceremonial expenses with it's agricultural products and savings that's why they cannot fully depend on agriculture to maintain their households. So, they support themselves, working as agricultural, labours non skilled as well as fishing, gold washing, activities etc. In this modern age by the interactive with the people of other ethnic groups a continuous change has been occurring in their socio-cultural life i.e. most of them have

totally changed their traditional dress patterns and life style they have started toward modern types dresses like shirts, pants and shairs. The habit of speaking their mother tongue is due to economical hardship they have considered to minimize their expenses during the observation.

Direction for the Further Research

The following points should be considered for further research concerned with the preceding research.

On the basis of the findings of the study the following recommendation has been presented to uplift the socio-economic condition of the Sonaha community of Patabar of Bardiya.

1. This research could not cover all the Sonaha people. Therefore in further research it is necessary to study all the Sonaha people of every mid western and far western part in the country.
2. Status of Sonaha woman could be the subject of the further research.
3. Children situation among Sonaha community maybe the subject of further research.
4. Soci-cultural changes among Sonaha community could be study.