

CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Anthropology is a holistic study of people, cultures and their activities. Anthropology also borrows theories, concepts and methods from other sciences such as-geography, history, economy, biology, etc. Scholars have developed various theories and perspectives to understand and explain human society and culture. In the decade of 1950s cultural ecology became a popular theory to explain interrelationship between human culture and ecology.

The concept “ecology” is borrowed from biology. It was Ernest Haeckel, 1869 who coined the word “ecology”. Julian H Steward had borrowed the term ‘ecology’ in anthropology. Cultural ecology is the study of interactive relationship between culture and its environment. Human beings have been surviving over thousands of years with environment. People developed various adaptive strategies to cope with environment. Culture is a strategy of adaptation by which people became success to survive in a particular environment.

There is interactive relationship between human and environment. People developed the culture according to the natural environment. On the other hand, natural environment is badly affected by the human behaviour. Hence, human ecology is developed for the scientific study and analysis between people and their environment. Human ecology is broadly defined as the study of human interactions with the environment. It focuses on these functional and structural features of human cultural behavior that facilitate their coping with environmental change and stressful condition (Moran, 1990).

Adaptation is the central concept in ecological studies and also is the process by which man and environmental relationships are established (Hardesty, 1977). Therefore, the process of adaptation is that process by which man can survive in their surrounding environment. To study the adaptive process, it is necessary to understand the relationship between cultural techniques that people employ in their attempts to cope with constraints in the natural environment and the natural processes which are affected by those techniques because human societies adapt their natural environment through culturally structured activities. This activities and natural processes interdependent and have a dynamic relationship in response to the other's influence and accordingly human beings modify their cultural strategies as growing population adjust to the environment (steward,1955,Bennett,1976 and Rambo: 1983).

In various parts of the world, human social cultural practices are not similar. It is the cause of different adaptation process with different natural environmental condition. In the process of adaptation with specific natural environment, the culture is developed. Veena Bhasin (1989) argues that geographical features may be a major cause of cultural distinctiveness. Different ecological features are responsible for economic arrangements made by the population. There is intimate relationship between ecology and culture. Specific cultural characteristics are mentioned by ecology. Each community has its own survival pattern; such pattern is partly determined by environmental conditions and partly by socio- cultural system (Hardesty, 1977). Julian Steward emphasized the study of the ways in which environmentally adapted subsistence systems may shape population and settlement density, social structure and institutions, belief system and other aspect of culture. The explanation for cultural variation could be found in the adaptation of societies to their particular environment (Steward, 1955).

At the present time, people are depending upon the natural resources. There is maximum human exploitation of the natural resources due to the highly growth of

population. Natural environment is badly affected by the human intervention and every aspect of human life is in danger due to the unsuitable environmental condition, for example, global warming, climate change etc. Nowadays, scarcity, hunger, disease and natural calamities have appeared in the world. Much of the earth still lags seriously in production technology and there are far too many millions suffering from daily hunger in the lagging societies and far too many even in the advanced ones. The competitive rules of modern economic works to the exploitation of the less advanced by the inventively aggressive in our present world. Political nationalisms carried to excess provoke the cruel specter of modern war. Too many societies lack the means to check the great growth in their populations, growth that threatens their own future livelihoods. To all these old cultural problems is now added the modern one of the serious danger of ecological imbalance of the earth ecosystem (Spencer and Thomas, 1987).

Nepal is a small country but here are various ethnic groups, religions, culture and geographical areas. People practice animal husbandry as well as agriculture. Forest, pasture land and cultivated land are very important resources of Nepalese people. But, due to rapid growth of population, increasing rate of competition for limited resources like land and forest and different government policies to use and allocate, these resources have affected the every aspect of natural environment of Nepal (Shrestha, 1991 cited by Bhattari, 1995). Because of increasing pressure on limited natural resource, there is a crisis of food, fuel, fodder, timber, wood and herbs in the hill and mountain regions.

Commonly, it seems that indigenous ethnic groups of all over the world are living in particular geographical area for a long time. They have become success for survive continuously in their environment because they have developed various adaptive strategies to cope with their changing environment. We can't separate the indigenous people from the nature because they fulfill their needs from the nature. Therefore,

cultural ecological perspective is suitable to interpret social cultural system of ethnic group.

The 'Yakkha' is an indigenous group of east Nepal. Shankhuwashava and some part of the Dhankuta is the motherland of Yakkha people. Yakkha people are very close with the nature. They worship the nature as God. This is a human ecological study of Yakkha people, their culture and adaptation process with their natural environment. The main focus of the research is to explore the cultural activities, local environmental knowledge, land use practices, resources management and utilization, traditions, customs, occupation and adjustment practices with changing socio-cultural and environmental conditions.

This present study aims at answering the following research questions:

1. Who are the Yakkhas?
2. What types of cultural behavior, attitude and beliefs do they have vis-à-vis nature?
3. How Yakkha people have been adapting with their changing environment?
4. How do the environmental factors contribute to shaping the life-style of the Yakkhas?
5. What types of indigenous knowledge do they have to resource utilization?

1.2 Objectives of the Study

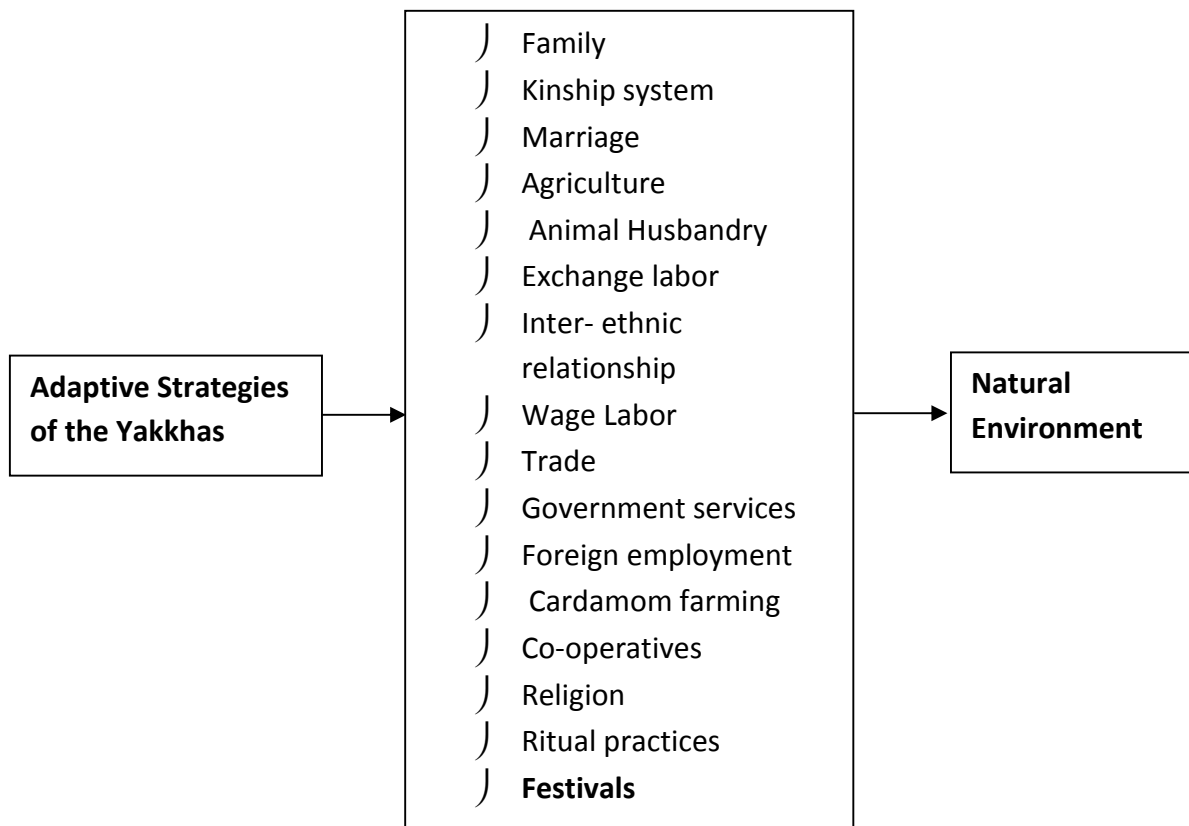
The general objective of this study is to find out the inter-relationship among nature, culture and adaptation process of Yakkha community in their particular ecological condition. The specific objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To find out the relationship between cultural system and natural environment of Yakkha community, and
2. To explore the adaptation of Yakkha community.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

This research is broadly based on human ecological theoretical framework. There is interactive relationship between human and environment. People cope with the specific natural environment through culture. So the culture is a means of adaptation. Adaptation is the central concept in ecological studies and also it is the process by which man and environment relationship are established (Hardesty, 1977). The conceptual framework of this study is given below (see figure 1):

Figure: 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study



The above conceptual framework shows the adaptation of the Yakkha people through culture with their natural environment. The Yakkha people have developed various material and non- material culture which are closely related with nature by which they are adaptating with their specific natural environment.

1.4 Importance of the Study

There are very few studies about the indigenous Kirat Yakkha people. In this condition the research will be a contribution for the yakkha people. It helps to identify the cultural practices, norms, values, and customs of the Yakkha people how they are surviving in their changing ecological condition. This study will help to understand the Yakkhas' cultural system which is closely related with the natural environment. It also helps to understand indigenous knowledge and practices to manage and utilize the natural resources. Hence, the findings of the study may be helpful to planners, policy makers, and donors for the development of the Yakkha community. Academically, this research is an investigation of the relationship between Yakkha cultural system and ecological condition. So it helps to establish a tradition of human ecological study among the Yakkha and facilitates further study on the same group.

1.4 Organization of the Study

The presentation of the dissertation has been divided into seven chapters. The first chapter presents the statement of the problem which mainly discusses the meaning and the concept of the ecology, adaptation and the adaptive strategies. Similarly, it presents research questions, objectives, importance and theoretical framework of the study. Chapter two discusses a brief theoretical discussion about the human ecology. Various books, and other related materials are reviewed. Similarly, the chapter presents some ecologically focused anthropological study in Nepal. Chapter three presents the research methodology and various methods of data collection and analysis. Chapter four presents the physical settings and analysis. Chapter five

presents the relationship between culture and natural environment as well as demographic features, education, and history. Chapter six presents adaptive strategies of the Yakkha people. Finally, chapter seven presents the summary and conclusion of the whole study.

CHAPTER - 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, a brief analysis is presented on the theoretic approach for the study of the human-ecological relationship. Yakkha people are nature worshipper. They worship the nature as god. The cultural practices of the Yakkha people are influenced by the natural environment. Hence, cultural ecological approach of ecological anthropology has been discussed in this chapter. Some similar studies on indigenous ethnic groups are also reviewed.

2.1 Theoretical Review

There are different theoretical approaches to understanding the man-environment relationship. Human ecology is a scientific theory to the study of human interaction with environment. Since ancient period, there have been attempts to explain relationship between environment and human behavior. The ancient Greek philosophers Aristotle (284-323 BC) and Barren de Montesquieu (18th century) had interpreted the man-environment relationship. An American geographer Samul Huntington has studied human interaction with environment. However, the first theoretical approach for the study of the relationship between man and environment is “Environmental Determinism” or “Environmentalism.” It was developed by Fredrick Retzel, Ellen Sample and W. H Holmes etc. According to them, environment determines the culture or environment plays a key role in determining human affairs. It means that all aspects of human behaviour and culture are determined by

environmental influence (Hardesty, 1977). In the beginning of the 20th century, the theme of environmental determinism has been replaced by the emergence of “Environmental Possibilism”. The first advocate of this approach was Franz Boas. He stressed that origin of specific cultural features and pattern are generally found in historical tradition rather than environment. He argued the idea that the environment was a primary base of culture (Hardesty, 1977). According to Kroeber, environment does not directly determine specific cultural development. The presence or absence of environmental factors place limits on such development by either permitting or forbidding their occurrence.

Cultural Ecology is developed as a mutual relationship between cultural system and ecology. Julian H Steward (1955) was the first advocate for the study of cultural ecology. The most important contribution of his “method of cultural ecology” was the recognition that environment and culture are not separate but are involved in dialectic interplay... or what is called feedback or reciprocal causality (Hardesty, 1977). Steward defined cultural ecology as the process of adaptation by which the nature or society and unpredictable number of features of culture are affected by the basic adjustment through which man utilizes a given environment (Netting, 1977). His study of the Shoshone indigenous of North America helped him propound a new concept of “cultural core”. The cultural core consisted of the economic sectors of society, those features that are most closely related to subsistence activities and economic arrangements. The “method” of cultural ecology then involved the analysis of

1. The interrelationship between environment and productive technology.
2. The interrelationship between ‘behavior’ patterns and exploitative technology, and
3. The extent to which those ‘behavior’ patterns affect other sectors of culture (Steward, 1955, cited by Hardesty, 1977, p. 9).

Steward introduced the term “cultural core” to describe those aspects of culture most closely linked, at the functional level, to the natural setting. These for him were the primary focus of study. Steward also distinguished salient environmental features which have a bearing on cultural patterns, such as the kinds of animals in the environments of hunting bands and the techniques used to hunt them, where this has a direct effect on group size and social organization. He admitted that ‘secondary’ features of culture might be determined to a great extent by purely cultural-historical factors, but saw a privileged place for the study of subsistence and economic aspects in the development of society. In this respect he was a more sophisticated thinker who attributed a virtually monocausal determining role in the unilinear evolution of culture to levels of energy use (Russel, 1992)

Steward’s culture core did not include many aspects of social structure and almost no ritual behavior. Neither of these were considered to be significantly related to environment. Furthermore, Steward excluded from cultural ecology the study of biology, stating that “culture rather than genetic potential for adapting, accommodation, and survival, explains the nature of human societies” (Hardesty, 1977).

Marvin Harris is another anthropologist who also applied the cultural ecological model of J. Steward. But he modified the approach as “Techno-environmental determinism”. His assumption was that technological means of adaptation to the environment is the prime mover of culture and is determined by the relationship between technology and environment. Harris asserts that culture should not only be understood from emic perspective but it should also be interpreted from etic perspective. Harris had studied about the Indians’ sacred cattle by the both emic and etic perspective. Religiously the cattle are treated as sacred. But these cows are actually extremely important to the economic welfare of the poor peasants for helping them to make maximum use of scarce resources of their environment. Therefore, he

concludes that the religious belief must have been caused by techno-environmental factors.

In the decade of 1960s, American ecological anthropologist developed ecosystem-based model. This model was propounded by Andrew P. Vayda and Roy Rappaport. They suggest that instead of studying how culture is adapted to the environment, attention should be focused on the relationship of specific human population to specific ecosystem (Rambo, 1983). In their view, human population interacts with both living and non-living organism in their local ecosystem. They have attempted to demonstrate how the religious rituals practiced by the Tsembaga people of New Guinea function to maintain their population in balance with the available resources of their environments.

Rappaport's 'pig for the ancestors' (1968) is perhaps the classic example of ecosystem concept used in an ethnographic account. Rappaport's book can be epigrammatically described as a study of the ritual regulation of the ecosystem and the ecosystemic regulation of ritual amongst the Tsembaga of New Guinea (Russel, 1992).

Orlove (1980) has developed actor based model in human ecology. According to this model, ecological study must be focused on individual decision-making characteristics rather than culture and population. He has assumed that individual constantly makes choices about how to extract available resources while coping with environmental hazards (Bhattari, 1995). In the case of human society, environmental adaptation is seen as occurring not as the result of natural selection on the culture or social system level but rather as the result of the outcome of thousand of individual decisions about how best to interact with the environment. Individuals are assumed to be making choice constantly about how to exploit available resources while coping

with environmental hazards. Those who choose less wisely will be selected against (Rambo, 1983 cited by Dhakal, 1994).

Anthropologists have been using a biological concept the 'Ecological Niche' to understand the relationship between human beings and natural environment. A niche is defined as a distinctive life style of an organism usually defined by a unique use of resources. It is a position in food web and share of available limited energy and nutrients separating ecological population. It defines as set of resources within an ecological system that is essential to the group's survival and is measured by subsistence variety. Barth [1956] was the first anthropologist to employ the concept niche as a part of more general experimental approach with specific concepts drawn from animal ecology. The 'niche' of human group is not static but changes with the process of adaptation. The human ecological 'niche' changes in the same way, a change that is brought by social and cultural means. Technological innovation, a new political alliance, a new labor union- all are ways of changing the relationship of a human group to its physical and social environment and therefore of changing the 'niche' (Hardest, 1977: p, 120)

Human Adaptation:

All human beings have used adaptive techniques in order to adjust with resources available from the environment (Ellen, 1982). Adaptation is the process of creating beneficial relationships with the environment by means of behavioral, physiological and genetic/demographic changes. It is a dynamic process because neither the organism nor its environment are constant. New problems are continually arising and new relationships established to provide solution (Hardesty, 1977). Adaptation also denotes the coping mechanisms utilized by organisms during their lives (Bennett, 1996). The study of human adaptability i. e. human ecology, focuses on those functional and structural features of human cultural behaviour that facilitate their

coping with environmental change and stressful condition (Moren, 1990). The evolutionary process only those species which could cope with the natural environment survived (Darwin, 1859, cited in Bhattra).

According to Conklin (1954), adaptation is the process of self regulation, self preservation and race perpetuation by means of which living things are enabled not only to remain alive but also to adjust things themselves to varied environment conditions. Bennet (1976) defines the concept of adaptation as 'the coping mechanism that human display in obtaining their wants and adjusting their lives to the surrounding milieu'. Barth (1964) says that in human adaptation, cultural factors such as system of politics, property and demography are vitally involved as is the more commonly considered technological factor. Hence, one must consider either the role of culture in settlement patterns and land use practices or the role of the socio-cultural and economical factors such as shared local knowledge and belief, social organization of labor management and distribution of resources, marriage and production customs, lifestyle preferences, and other factors that can significantly affect resource use patterns while analyzing various adaptive strategies of a human group (Stevens, 1993).

From the above description, we can say that, to understand the human cultural activities and adaptation process, it is necessary to understand their ecological condition. People develop the survival techniques according to the environmental condition. Culture is a means of adaptation by which people success to survive in a particular environmental condition. It has been various studies about the relationship between human and ecology applying different theoretical perspective. In the course of time, various theories and approaches have been established. They have developed with some specific features. But of course they are not free from the weakness. If all the ideas from different theories are combined, it may be a complete vision to explain the man- environment relationship.

2.2 Studies in Nepal

Nepal is composed of numerous ethnic groups living in varying ecological environments. Since 1951, Nepal became a fertile field of anthropological studies. Various ethnographic studies have been conducted in Nepal. There are a few ecologically focused anthropological studies dealing with people, culture and nature. Generally such studies have focused on the study of man-environment relationship in terms of subsistence pattern, adaptive strategies, demographic and environmental degradation.

Furer- Humidor [1975] and Stevens (1993) have studied the Sherpa's of Khumbu region. Furer- Humidor (1975) is considered to be the first foreign anthropologist to study the Himalayan people of Nepal. He has studied the Sherpa's of Khumbu region in Solukhumbu district. He has shown that though the environment was very harsh, they have practiced agriculture, trade as well as animal husbandry for their subsistence as complimentary occupations. He has described in his famous book 'Himalayan Traders' how the Sherpas of Himalayan region have developed tourism as alternative strategy for their subsistence under the changing circumstances of political economy and natural environment of and the neighboring state.

Stevens (1993) has studied the Sherpas of Khumbu region from the cultural ecological perspective. He has done a study on subsistence and environmental change of Khumbu of Solukhumbu applying regional approach to understand the adaptive strategy of the Sherpa. He has examined the past and present subsistence strategies, patterns of settlement and seasonal movement, land-use practices and techniques, local environmental knowledge, social institutions and household decisions through which Sherpas have prospered in their high-country homeland. He has tried to show how a people's historical subsistence strategies relate to the ecosystems within and from which they gain their sustenance. He has explored about the way of life and how

Sherpas not only survive but thrive in a difficult environment. How they cope with the constraints of life on the roof of the world and exploit the unique opportunities of their mountain realm.

Naomi Bishop (1998) presents the tradition, adaptation and change among the Yolmo people of Melamchi valley. The author mentions between 1971 and 1993 the Melamchi economy continued to shift away from agro- pastoralism and a subsistence economy and toward a dependence on circular migration and cash. Bishop argues that transhumant practice has gradually decreased since 1990s and people people began seasonal migration to India. The establishment of the National Park in the Yolmo land restriction on traditional subsistence activities that supported animal husbandry is responsible for the decline in transhumant activities in Melamchi.

Thomas E. Fricke (1993) has studied the Tamang of Timling from the cultural ecological perspective. He has focused on the adaptive process of the Tamang with the demographic approach. His concern is to explain how birth, marriage and death determine the adaptive mechanism of the household. He dealt with the annual subsistence cycle, demographic process of fertility and population expansion and household development cycle of Timling people.

The primary occupation of the Timling people is agriculture as well as animal husbandry. In the past, they were involved in trans- Himalayan salt trade and agro- pastoral activities. After 1959, when China took over Tibet, the Timling people changed their trade relation to the Trisuli market. Because of the population growth, they expanded the agricultural land and developed multi- crop system. Timling people used various techniques to control the growth of population Such as late marriage, long time breast feeding, less sexual relation between husband and wife, etc. Because of low fertility and high mortality, the Timling population is constant.

Augusta Molnar (1981) carried out a study about the economic activities of Kham Magars from ecological perspective. The author has tried to show that how the Kham Magars are successful to cope with geographical complexity by using various strategies. The author focused on four Kham magar communities (Thabang, 6500 feet, Lubang, 6800 feet, Taka, 7200 feet, Maikot, 8000 feet). All of these communities mainly depend on herding and agriculture. However, there are differences in economic strategies among them. The available natural resources and harvesting strategies make differences. According to the author, Taka and Mikot have a greater access to northern pasture land but Lubang and Thabang have no easy access to northern pasture land due to the change in pasture land rights and changes. So Taka and Maikot are suitable for the livestock and the environment of the Thabang and Lubang is suitable for farming.

The people bring their herd to graze according to the weather. In winter, they bring their herd to the low land and in summer they bring to the high land. Due to the growing population, the Magar people used to go out for seasonal labor. To save from the separation of the land, they encouraged their sons to go to army. The author has organized the main constraints for adaptation of Kham Magar, access to pasture land, trade pattern, seasonal labor availability, cultural attitude towards animal husbandry and education. The constraints have determined the adaptive process of the four communities.

Lionel Caplan [1970] has studied a village of eastern Nepal called Indreni cluster in Ilam district. He has examined the changing relation between Indigenous tribes the Limbus and Hindu high caste Brahmins. Their relationships are understood in terms of their differential rights and interests in land, a scarce commodity in that ecological area.

In 1982, Dahal studied the same area with different approach. He observed the interrelationship between population and resources. He analyzed the population size and growth, resource availability and changing pattern of adaptive strategies of individual households and also the community level of the people of Pipalbote cluster. He has observed population growth over time and grain deficit in the cluster. He found that the people of Pipalbote were moving toward prosperity, not poverty. This happened mainly due to the alternative economic strategies [cash crops cultivation] developed by those people in the course of time.

Ephrosine Daniggelies (1994) in her article “*Jangal Resource Use: Adaptive Strategies of Rais and Sherpas in the Upper Arun Valley of Eastern Nepal*” explains that how culture affects a population’s interaction with its environment in order to examine nutrition and foraging in subsistence agricultural and pastoral societies as adaptive strategies.

Her research is based on two ethnic communities, the Khumbu Sherpa and Kulung Rai. He studied to understand differences in the knowledge use and management of forest resources and looked at responses to problems of food security. These populations live within the newly established Makalu- Barun National Park and Conservation area in northern Shankhuwasava district. Basically, Khumbu Sherpa and Kulung Rai both peoples are heavily dependent on forest resources. During the Anikal (hunger period), the people are heavily dependent on food from the jungle. Rais depend more on jungle food resources than Sherpas. They have own indigenous knowledge to use and manage jungle resources. More than 70 minor forest resources are collected and identified to date. A total of 34 are consumed by the local people, 33 are eaten by livestock, 18 have medicinal values, 5 serve religious and ceremonial purposes and 3 are bartered and traded. They use the flower, leaf and roots for their food. They use wild greens, bamboo shoots, mushrooms, sisnu (Himalayan nettle), etc for food. Various kinds of Jaributy (herbs) are used by the local people to treat

illnesses. For example, Chiraito (*Cwertia chirata*) is frequently used by local people to treat colds, coughs, fever, and stomach ailments. Jungle resource is also the income source for the people such as Malingo, Chiraito, Kutki (*picrorhiza scrophulariaeflora*), a medicinal root, lokta (*Daphne bholua*), the bark of a plant used to make paper also provide a source of income.

G M Gurung (1995) in his book "Report from Chepang Village: (society, culture, and ecology, 1995) tries to show how the environmental factors contribute to shaping the life- style of the Chepangs. He also shows how the present environmental degradation has made adaptation and survival of the Chepangs difficult.

The Chapangs have developed suitable criteria for settlement as part of their adaptation to local surroundings. Most of them attempt to settle only in place where cultivable land, drinking water, springs, pasture and forest resources are available. The settlement is then conditioned by certain consideration met by the ecological condition. Likewise, adaptability is reflected through a particular kind of house design which primarily serves to overcome severe winters. Most of the houses do not have windows for ventilation due to the cold wind. The food culture of the Chepangs can be explained in relation to eco- system of the area. They collect many forest products such as gittha (*Dioswrea sativa*), bhyakur (a kind of creepers) and Bharlang (the root of which is eaten). The food tradition has been developed in accordance with the ecology of the land. Curry is prepared from bats, crabs and larva and pupae of bees and hornet is another interesting cultural food item for the Chepangs.

Chepangs have had a deep affinity with the environment for generations. The forest provides them with firewood for fuel, timber for shelter, leaves for manure, raw materials for making baskets, ropes, bags, etc. They consume a lot of firewood comparatively in winter season due to the severe cold of the hills. They collect varieties of medicinal herbs from the forest.

In recent years, encroachment on forest for cultivation and increased extraction of fuel wood, timber and fodder to fulfill the survival imperatives of the growing Chepang population has accelerated the process of slash and burn cultivation is widely prevalent among the Chapangs and is one of the main causes of deforestation. As deforestation has been occurring rapidly, meeting of the basic needs of the Chapangs like food, fuel wood, timber and fodder has increasingly been difficult. The growing scarcity of these things has seriously affected their livelihood.

The ecology of Chepang region has been in transition since the construction of the highways. New economic resources and relations have been developed along with these changes like handicrafts, bee-keeping, wage labor, etc.

Chhetri (1987), in his article *“Migration, Adaptation and Socio- Cultural Change: The Case of the Thakalis in Pokhara”*, analyzes the adaptation process, cultural community and change among the migrant Thakalis in Pokhara. He tries to show the extent of changes taken place in the socio- cultural institutions, values and norms of the migrant Thakalis in Pokhara and the corresponding adaptations.

Thakalis are migrated to the Pokhara from Thak Khola surrounding the Kali Gandaki River in the district of Mustang in Dhaulagiry Zone in west Nepal. In Thak, the Thakalis had a mixed economy consisting of agriculture, pastoralism and trade. In the past, the Thakalis were, in fact, acting as a link in the barter trade between Nepal and Tibet bringing salt and wool from Tibet in exchange for cereals. The political change in Tibet presumably provided the Thakalis with the much needed time for adaptation to the new economic realities and the search for a new economic niche in the hill and the tarai region to the south. In fact, Pokhara is the nearest market center for the hill people in the region. Thakalis who are well known for trading and business skill have thus found Pokhara one of the better places to resettle. The role of the family and relatives is seen to be important in the process of migration as well as adaptation.

Generally, the migrant families living in an urban area tend to motivate their relatives to move to the place of their new settlement.

From the migrant's point of view, adaptation is a two way process-it involves on interaction between the immigrants and the host society. In this process, both parties undergo adaptational changes. Second, the process of adaptation may not necessarily lead to the assimilation of the in-migrants in the host culture and society. Migration is not isolated event and is generally associated with some kind of economic, social and cultural change to which people make an adjustment and or adaptation. When the Thakalis community migrated in Pokhara, some adaptational changes took place. The author observes that migrant Thakalis are preserving some aspects of their indigenous culture with some adaptational changes (Chhetri, 1987).

Occupationally, the Thakalis in Thak were an agro-pastoral community. But they were also involved in the salt, wool, grain, and barter trade. Their primary occupation before migration was agriculture but today 80% of the migrant Thakali families in Phokara have taken to business as their primary occupation. The financial problems which were solved with relative ease with the help of relatives or other Thakalis in Pokhara. The help was mostly in the form of rotating credit. This association, through a community of the *Dhikuri* in Thak, has also been subject to adaptational change. The traditional *Dhikuri* system had a welfare motive to provide economic support to needy Thakalis. But now in urban areas, it serves the interest of businessman rather than the poor and needy ones. Membership in the Thakali *Dhikuris* used to be opened only to Thakalis in the past. But now it has opened to others (Chhetri, 1987).

The Thakali in Phokara are all members of the Pokhara Thakali Samaj Sudhar (PTSSS) or Phokera Thakali Social Reform Committee, which is an institution parallel to the "13 Mukhiya" system back in Thak. The associational clustering of the Thakalis through this institution has enabled them to adapt to the new ways of life.

Thakali are a close- knit and very cohesive group of people. This community makes effort to make adaptation at group level.

All the above mentioned anthropological studies are focused on human ecological perspective. It has helped to establish a tradition of human ecological study in Nepali context. The ecological condition and cultural practices are distinct in different parts of Nepal. So, it is necessary to study about the man- environment relation with new vision because the present ecological condition has changed. The new ecological constraints are appearing and new man-environment relationships are established. Hence, the researcher focuses on different adaptive strategies of the yakkha community in their contemporary environmental condition. This all literature review helps to understand the application of the theory and apply in another similar community.

CHAPTER - 3

RESEARCH METHODS

In this chapter, a brief discussion of the research methodology has been presented. Specifically, it presents the rationale of the site selection, sampling procedure, nature and sources of data, different tools and techniques of data collection and method of data analysis followed.

3.1 Rationale of the Site Selection

Tamafok Village Development Committee (VDC) of Sankhuwasava district is selected for this research. The reason behind the selection of this area is that, it is the main residential area of Yakkha community in Shankhuwashava district. The people of the area still maintain the traditional indigenous socio-cultural practices.

3.2 Nature and Sources of Data

The nature of the data is more qualitative. Specially, the study is based on people's behavioral pattern and their way of life. The study has included both primary and secondary sources of information. The primary data were collected through participant observation, structured and unstructured interviews, and group discussion. Secondary data were obtained from books, published and unpublished articles and research reports etc.

3.3 Sampling Procedure

There are many VDCs where the Yakkhas are settled in Shankhuwasava district. Tamafok VDC is purposively selected as the study area. The 'universe' included 219 households of the study area and 100 sample households were randomly selected from the universe. Besides these households, key informants were selected purposively for gathering the qualitative data including local leaders, religious priests,

school teachers, farmers, etc. 20 key informants were purposively selected. And three representative households were purposively selected for intensive case studies.

3.4 Techniques of Data Collection

The data were collected by the followings techniques:

3.4.1 Structured Questionnaire:

Some of basic information like population structure, family size, land and cattle ownership pattern, household income, occupation was collected by using the questionnaire

3.4.2 Participant Observation

Participant observation is one of the most important data collection techniques of the anthropological research. On the absence of this technique, Anthropological study is not complete without its use. By this technique, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The method helped to understand the social process and it's relation with natural environment of the Yakkha people. The researcher had stayed one month for the field study. By the participant observation, the researcher found their behavioral pattern, settlement pattern, natural resources, agricultural practices, their way of life, their each and every important function like various rituals, feasts and festivals, village meetings, and assembly, etc. For the case study, the researcher stayed in the three different local Yakkha houses to observe their life pattern, food habits, rituals and other social life. Basically, it was used to find out the adaptive strategies and environmental relationship of the Yakkha community.

3.4.3 Key Informant Interview

Key informant interview was the important tool to gather the information. Mainly, the interviews were unstructured. Both qualitative and explorative data were collected. This instrument has used to gather information on cultural practices, religious belief, ethnic history, norms, values, rituals, Yakkhas perception about the environmental change, their belief system concerning nature, their knowledge on wild plants of medicinal value, natural resource management and utilization, their indigenous knowledge, and so on. Such kinds of interviews were conducted with people of different age, sex and socio - economic backgrounds. The interview was based on some particular and specific issues and problems.

3.4.4 Group Discussion

Group discussion technique was employed to discuss some general topics like management of the local worship, establishment of the private primary school, the village development, etc. Group discussion was held with the villagers in their local meetings, management of the teacher, labor contribution, monthly money collection from every household, protection of the scared worship place, etc.

3.4.5 Case Study

The case study is one of the most important methods for the anthropological research. “Case study is a method of exploring and analyzing the life of social unite, be that unite a person, a family, institution, cultural group or even entire community” (P V Young, 1998).

Some of the representative households of the Yakkha community were selected to describe the adaptive strategies and the man-environment relationship in the given ecological condition. A single household is regarded as the adaptive unit, that is, how a single household is coping with the natural environment? It may reflect the adaptive

process of the whole society. Three different representative households are presented for the case study (See Annex).

3.5 Data Analysis

The data do not speak for themselves. The researcher should make them meaningful. Analysis is a continuous process of reviewing the information as it is collected, classifying it, formulating additional questions, verifying information and drawing conclusion. Analysis is the process of making sense of the collected information (Theis and Grady, 1991, cited by Uprety, 2008).

Basically two kinds of the data (qualitative and quantitative) were collected through the use various methods and techniques. All the collected quantitative data are presented in tabular form. These included population structure, age-sex composition of the households, size and structure of the household, household's income, number of cattle and so on. The next important data are qualitative data. For the meaningful generalization of the unorganized qualitative data, I made systematic and thematic classification in other words all the collected qualitative data were thematically categorized. Then, the categorized data are described and interpreted.

.3.6 Limitations of the Study

Every research has its own limitations. This research is not exceptional one. This research has been conducted primarily with the objective of the partial fulfillment of the Master's Degree requirement in Anthropology. It has covered a small area for the field study. The findings of the study may not be wholly generalizable to Yakkhas living in other parts of Nepal. However, it most efforts have been made to accomplish the research objectives.

CHAPTER - 4

THE SETTINGS

This chapter presents the introduction of the study area. It has focused on geographical condition, natural resources, and development activities of the Tamafok VDC.

4.1 Location

Shankhuwasava district is located east-north part of Nepal. It is a hilly region. It is located between $27^{\circ} 17'$ north latitude and $87^{\circ} 20'$ to east longitude. Sankhuwasava district is bounded by Taplejung district in the west, Bhojpur district in west- south, Dhankuta district in the south, Terahatum district in the south- east, and Tibet of China border in the north. The district comprises a total area of 3480 sq, km with 33713 households comprising 174453 of population. Yakkha, a prominent ethnic group of this district, is selected for the study.

Tamafok VDC is situated in southern part of the district. It is located between $27^{\circ} 12' 34.3''$ north latitude and $87^{\circ} 22' 56.8''$ east longitude. It is surrounded by Terahatum district in the east, Mamling VDC in the west, Madi-Mulkharka VDC in the north and Dhankuta district in the south.(see map). Tamafok VDC has a total area of 62 sq.km (approx.) with 6549 population (VDC office Tamafok, 2010). The village under study is located on the northern belt of the VDC. There are 219 households of the Yakkha in this village.

4.2 Topography

The VDC is located in the high hill region of the Shankhuwashava district. It is covered by grazing land, flat terraced, wet land, and forest area. The altitude ranges

from 3000 feet to 8000 feet above the average mean from sea level. The area is sloppy. The bottom of the VDC, Maya river is located. The VDC starts from Maya river bank. The upper and lower belts are covered by the community forest. There is a dense settlement in the lower belt. The yakkha settlements are spread out between 4000 and 7000 feet from the sea level. The lower and middle part of the VDC is mainly the agricultural area and the upper belt is the forested land with grazing opportunities.

4.3 Climate

The VDC has mixed type of climate due to the altitudinal variation. The upper belt of the VDC has cold climate. But comparatively the lower belt of the VDC is warmer.

4.4 Natural Resources

The important natural resources are land, forest, and water in the study area. All of the Yakkha people of the study area depend on the land, forest, and water for their survival. But, due to the increasing pressure of population, these resources are becoming scarce.

Land:

Land is one of the most important and utilized natural resources in the study area. Most of the Yakkha people depend on the land resource. Agriculture is the basic livelihood strategy of the yakkha people. More than 95% people of the village are involved in agriculture. Although the study area is a hilly region but the flat lands are also available here. The soil is fertile. Lands are generally classified as Khet (wet land), Bari (terrace up- land), and Alaichi Bari (cardamom cultivated land). Wet land is used for paddy cultivation. Dry land is used for millet and maize and the sloppy land is used to cultivate cardamom.

Forest:

Forest is also the other important natural resource of this area. It is the main source of obtaining fuel, fodder, and construction materials for the villagers. People also obtain medicinal plants and wild foods from the forest. Both private and community forests are found in the field area. A traditional forest called 'Daskat' is also found in the area. Mainly, the indigenous yakkha people depend on their private forest for the firewood and fodder. Various kinds of trees are found in the study area but mainly the yakkha people use Utis (*Alnus Nepalensis*) and Patle (*Quercus Lanceaefolia*) for firewood and construction materials. The private forest is covered by Utis and community forest is covered by Patle and others.

Water:

There are many rivulets and streams such as Maya river, Kekhwa, and Kengbuwa but the yakkha people are not able to utilize them sufficiently. There is sufficient water for irrigation and drinking. The Yakkha people use two kinds of water sources for drinking. One is natural tap and the other is managed tap. The streams of the drinking water are available everywhere. In the monsoon season, a lot of new streams appear. They are useful for irrigation. A lot of fishes are available in the rivulets. The Yakkha people practice fishing in these rivulets for their own consumption and sometimes, they sell it in local market.

4.5 Development Condition

Comparatively, Tamafok VDC is under the shadow of the development. The minimum basic development infrastructures are available here. There is one higher secondary school. There is a 'kachchi' (seasonal) road in the field area. People walk up to 'Mudesansare' for one and half hour to get transportation. Although, the Kachchi road was constructed before 4/5 years but still it has not been changed into

an all – weather road. The electricity and communication are available there in the study area. There are health post, police station, and communication facilities

CHAPTER - 5

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL SYSTEM AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF YAKKHA COMMUNITY

In this chapter, the inter-relationship between the cultural system of the Yakkha people and their surrounding environment are discussed in detail. Demographic features of the study area, socio-cultural feature, rites de passage, religion, agriculture, and animal husbandry are described and analysis relating with immediate ecological condition of the area is presented.

5.1 Demographic Features

5.1.1 Population

According to the latest census conducted in 2064-2065 B.S. by “ Rastriya Saksharta Aviyan”, the population of Tamafok VDC is 6549 of which 1369(48.39%) are females and 3380(51.62 percent) are males. There are 1235 households in the VDC. There are 315 Yakkha households in the Tamafok VDC.

5.1.2 Age Structure and Sex Composition

There are all together 219 households of the Yakkha in the study area. Among them 100 were selected as sample for the study. The total population of the sample households is 577. This population is divided categorically into five age groups which are shown in the following table.

Table No. 1. Age Structure and Sex Composition of the Sampled Households

Age group	Male	Female	Total	Percent
0-4 years	25	23	48	8.32
5-14 years	58	58	116	20.11
15-39 years	131	114	245	42.47
40-59 years	59	58	117	20.28
60 +	29	22	51	8.84
Total	302	275	577	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

From the table 1, it can be seen that out of total population, 52.34 percent are males and 47.65 percent are females. Male population is more than female population. The economically most active and potential age group is 15- 39 which occupies a greatest portion of population, i.e. 245 out of 577 or 42.47 percent of the total. There is no significant difference between the number of girl child (0-5) and the boys. The adult males are surviving more than adult females, generally, 0- 14 and 60 above as group population is called dependent or consumer population. The age group 15- 59 is called economically active or productive population which is 362(62.74%) out of the total population. However, the Yakkha children start to join household activities from the age of six. The boy, who is over six, goes to collect the fodder and firewood and the girl helps her mother in household activities. Obviously adaptation process is affected by the number of workers/ consumer groups. Here, we can see that dependent or consumer population is less than economically active or producer population. Hence, it has been easy to maintain their livelihood.

5.1.3 Household Size and Structure

The average family size is 5.77. The household size of the area ranged from 2 to 14. In some of the cases, the property is not divided but the family members are separated. The percent distribution family size is shown in the following table, which includes even those residing outside.

Table No. 2. Number and Percentage Distributions of Family Size of the Sampled Households

No. of family	No. of household	Percentage
1-2	3	3.0
3-4	28	28.0
5-6	42	42.0
7-8	16	16.0
9-10	5	5.0
11-12	3	3.0
13+	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2010

From the table 2, it can be seen that out of hundred sampled households the largest portion 42 households (42%) have 5-6 members. Twenty-eight households (28%) of the total have 3 to 4 members. There are only three households which have more than 13 members. Similarly, three households have 1 to 2 members.

Generally Yakkha people of the field area like to live in the nuclear family. Only a few households are joint ones. The family size of the Yakkha people may be shaped by the ecological circumstance. Due to lack of sufficient landholding, they prefer to live in nuclear family than extended family. A lot of young Yakkhas have gone out of

the country to earn money. In nuclear family, the members are free to sell their labor for the better earning and the earning may be used in proper way without dividing among other members.

5.1.4 Educational Status

Total population of the Tamafok VDC is 6549. Out of them 4829(73.73%) with 2625(40.08%) males and 2204(33.65%) females are literate and 1837(28.05%) with 745(11.37%) males and 1092(16.67%) females are illiterate. (Rastriya Saksharta Aviyam, 2064- 2065).

Table No. 3 Educational Status of the Sampled Household Population

Educational Status	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Illiterate	28	72	100	23.75
Primary(1-5)	110	68	178	42.28
Secondary(6-10)	101	80	181	42.99
SLC	25	24	49	11.63
Higher(12+)	3	10	13	3.08
Total	267	254	521	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2010

Table 3, shows that 100(23.75%) with 28(6.65%) males and 72(17.10%) females population of the sampled households are illiterate. 178(42.28%) with 110(26.12%) males and 68(16.15%) females population have primary education up to 5 class. There are 181(42.99%) with 101(23.99%) male and 80(19.00%) females have up to secondary education. Among 421 population, 49(11.63%) with 25(5.93%) males and

24(5.70%) females have passed SLC, and only 3 males and 10 females total 13(3.08%) population have higher education.

Form the above description, poor higher educational status of the Yakkha people is clear. Most of the youth generations are going abroad to fulfill their basic needs. Of late, there is increasing educational awareness.

5.2 Socio-Cultural Features

The people: The Yakkha Kirati

Kirat or Kirati means people with lion Nature. It is composed of two words. 'Kira' = 'Lion' and 'Ti' = 'People'. It is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Kirataa' found in the 'yajur Veda' describing the 'handsome mountain people and hunters in the forest.

The word Kirat has wide meaning. It indicates the civilization. The Kirat is a corrupt form of Kiriya, Kiryat or Kiriyat which means a fort or town in Moabite language of the Mediterranean region. When their number increased, they built many forts and towns and called them Kiriya-hime, Kiryat-Yarim, Kiriyath-arba, Kiryat-baal, Kiryat-hujro, Kiryat-sanna and Kiryat-sapher which indicates the meaning of the town of fort of the forest, or the town of the god Baal, or the town of the residents of the town of palm trees. The residents of the above noted town started calling themselves, 'Kereti' which later on became Keretite or the Kerite tribe. The ancestors of this tribe as identified, came to Nahor; the younger brother of Abraham, a resident of Ur in Babylon. He belonged to the Semitic family. When the Hebrew people under the leadership of Mores invaded their country, they were defected and expelled from their natural land. The Kirati people then led a nomadic life and spread towards the eastern and north-eastern countries. In 2400 BC, a branch of which came to Mesopotamia or the Assyrian country, intermingled with the Ashur people and formed one nation with them. Later on, they migrated to Northern India and the Himalayan region via Media

and Nisa of Northern Persia with the title of the Kirat-Ashur tribe. (Chemjong, 2003). At the present time, Kiratis are inhabited in Himalayan region of the Indian continent and they are the ancient indigenous groups of Nepal.

Historical Background:

Specially, four indigenous groups (Rai or Khambu, Limbu or Yaktumba, Yakkha or Yakkhaba and Sunuwar or Koech) of east part of Nepal proudly claim that the term 'Kirat'. They are proud to be a Kirati. Among them, the indigenous Yakkha is one of the progeny of Nepal's pre-historic Kirat dynasty of around 100 BC. Today the Yakkha motherland is considered a patch among the historic Kirat region. The Yakkhas are distinct indigenous people of Nepal. They have their own language, customs, traditions, original history and their own ancestral geographical territory.

Scholars have different opinions regarding the origin of the word 'Yakkha'. It is claimed that the ethnonym 'Yakkha' as per the conqueror Aryan's Sanskrit grammar had been spelled in the Aryan-Hindu mythologies as 'Yaksha'. But the word 'Yakkha' of Kirat language was written as 'Yaksha' in Sanskrit. In the ancient Sanskrit writing language, the latter 'sha' used to write in the place of the later 'kha'. The later 'ksha' is made of two later. The one is the half later of 'ka' and another is 'sha' or 'k'+ 'sha'='ksha'. (Durgahang, 2002).

The Buddhist writers refer to other Yakkha principalities besides Alavaka. The Yakkha principality was situated on the bank of river Ganges. The Mundum mentions that, the Yakkha Kirati people resided for twelve generations. After twelve generations, one branch migrated from the Indo-Gangetic plains to the Himalayan region and the other branch to Lanka or Ceylon to the south. It is a fact that the research scholars have found the aboriginal tribe of Lanka or Ceylon with the name of 'Yakho' similar to the Yakkha tribe of Kirat people of east Nepal. (Chemjang, 2003).

The word “Yakkha” is originated from the “Yaksha”. In Yakkha language, Yaksha means hut or house. In the beginning, the Kirati people used to lead a nomadic life. Among them, the yakkhas were the Kirati group who first built the house to live in and started to live in permanently, they may have come to be known as Yakkha.

Around the 4th century AD the Kirat King Gasti was defeated by the Lichhavi King Nimikh. The Kiratis were displaced to the east from Nepal valley or east from the Kathmandu and they established again many small forts as states. The areas inhabited by the Kirat people known as Near Kirat - between Banepa and Likhu River. Middle Kirat between Likhu and Arun River and the Far Kirat east from the Arun River. The area was traditionally known as 'Sixteen Khambuwan' and 'Ten Limbuwan'. The far Kirat area, the east of the Arun River was divided into "Seventeen Thum". Among them, the "Panch Khappan", 'Panch Majhiya' and "Das Majhiya' area were regarded as the traditional areas of the Yakkha. Far Kirat is known as Limbuwan because of the dominance of the neighboring Limbu tribe in the area. The Hindu Aryan King, Prithivi Narayan Shah of Gorkha from 1769 to 1775, in the name of so-called national unification of Nepal, destroyed the traditional bases of Kirati land.

The Yakkhas were known by the titles of 'Dewan', 'Jimi', and 'Majhiya'. Dewan, Majhiya, and Jimi were the title of officer similar to 'Rai' and 'Subba'. The shah kings (specially, Prithibi Narayan Shah) had given the ownership of land and the authority of the local administration as well as the responsibility of collecting taxes from the land to the local headmen in Kirat region. The Yakkha headman was called the Majhiya, Dewan, and Jimmawal. The Khambu headman was called 'Rai' and Limbu head man was called 'Subba'. Later, the honorific title became the collective name.

5.2.1 Consumption Pattern

The Yakkha people of the study area are dependent on agriculture. They produce most of the foods from their fields. The major crops of the area are mainly maize,

millet and paddy. People in the area also produce vegetables like potato, pumpkin, cucumber, bean, etc. They depend on maize, millet and paddy for their daily food consumption but the production of the paddy is not sufficient for a year. At the time of scarcity, they borrow the rice from the neighbour as “Paicho.”

Home-made beer (Jand-Chuwa) is a fundamental component of Yakkha community. They widely use it for Tiffin. They mainly, consume it in morning, afternoon and evening. But when they feel thirsty or hungry, they drink it in any time. The visitor is welcomed by giving Chuwa (Beer, Jand). Chuwa (Beer) is very popular in the area because it is easy and can be prepared in a short span of time. "Chuwa (Beer-Jand) is very effective to drink at the time of thirsty. Chuwa (Beer) is also the standard refreshment for laborer.

There is another drink frequently consumed specially at the weddings which is called 'Tangwa'. The fermented millet is put in a pot and it is sucked through a bamboo pipe. Most of the Yakkha's Tungwa pots and pipe are made of bamboo. When a guest visits a family, he/she is welcomed by giving Tungwa and meat. Home-made beer of millet is compulsorily required for Yakkha's religious and cultural rituals.

Alcohol (Raksi) has an important place in Yakkha culture. The Yakkha people drink alcohol in the morning and evening. Especially they use alcohol at the time of festivals. When they feel tired after the day's hard work, they drink a glass of alcohol for relaxation. Especially, the Yakkha people of the study area consume more alcohol in winter season than in summer to keep their bodies warm.

The Yakkha people of the field area consume meat from two sources, which is hunting in jungle and domestication of animal. They like all types of meat like pig, buffalo, goat, chicken, etc. Their favorite meat is pork because of its softness. In the past, Yakkha people used to eat beef, but Hindu favored state and Law (Muluki Ain) prohibited to kill the cow. After Maoist arm conflict the young generation of Yakkha

people have started to eat beef. Fishing and hunting is another source of meat in the area.

There is another popular food in Yakkha community, which is called 'Kinama'. Kinama is a dish made of boiled soybean which is mashed up and put into a pot to ferment. It could be stored for many months. In the field area, dairy products are very rare. They use pig's fat as oil. The Yakkha people in Tamafok do not produce ghee, but they make oil from mustard.

5.2.2 The Settlement Pattern

The study area is sloppy and two rivulets flow in two sides. The bottom of the village is Maya Khola (river). The study area starts from Maya river bank. The upper belt of the field is comparatively cold and sloppy and has harsh climate than the lower belt. The Yakkha settled areas are divided into three parts. There are Tona (upper), Mona (down) and otemma (plane). The field area is spread out between 4,000 and 7,000 feet from the sea level. There is dense settlement in the lower belt of the village than upper belt because of plain and fertile land. This is suitable for the agriculture.

The Yakkha House

The houses of the Yakkha are generally made by stones and mud with rectangular shape. It has two floors and painted with white washed and red clay. There are two doors made of heavy planks of wood. The main door is situated at the front side of the house. And another is side door. It contains wide square yard in front of the house. Most of the houses are with tin roof in the field but we can get there many old houses with tile, which is the sign of wealthy. Some houses are with grass thatch. There is a wooden Baranda (railing) about two feet wide all around the upper floor. The Yakkha house is decorated with maize cobs hung in a fringe along the eaves of the house. There is a porch in front of the house with wooden shutters. There are two benches on

two sides in the porch. This bench is used as bed at night if visitors came to stay. The porch is decorated with woodwork painted green and red. There is framed photo of the families, relatives and friends hanging in the wall above head level. The walls are decorated by sticking filmy poster and postcard. In winter seasons, it is very cold. The porch is very useful to be protected from the cold because the porch is closed by the wooden shutters. There is a central pillar in the Yakkha house, which is very scared. It has symbolic significance. Upstairs is used for the storage of food- grains and the family members sleep there. There is a small wooden shed in-front or beside of the house in which goats, firewood, fodder and rice pounder are kept. There is a pig's stone-walled or wooden pen at the back side or beside of the house.

The Kitchen

There is a separate kitchen, which is attached outside the house. But some are separated from the house, which is situated in front of the house. Some households are still using kitchen inside the house. Most of the households have used smokeless stove (Sudhariako chula). Above the cooking area, there is a hanging wicker shelf which is used for drying pieces of meat and other things.

Traditional Yakkha House

The traditional houses of the Yakkha are made of wooden pillars which is called 'Tande Ghar'. The walls are made of bamboo covered with mud. It has one floor. The ground floor is used to keep domestic animal, fodder, firewood, rice pounder and so on. Upstairs is used to live. These houses are very comfortable during the summer season. It is safe from the harmful insects, wild animals and earthquakes too. Now days these houses are going to be disappeared.

Mythical Influence to Build the House

There is a cultural rule to build the house, especially in the Linkha Yakkha community in the study area. The main entrance of house of the Linkha should not face east. There is a myth concerning this cultural proscriptioin.

Once upon a time, the Linkha had a competition with the sun (god) to see who was the most powerful. They decided to put holes in hundred rocks and tether 100 oxen to these all in one night. Linkha told, "before the cock crows, I will do it". If Linkha wins the competition, the sun has to move according to the order of Linkha. If loses, he never builds the house facing the sunrise. If sun wins the competition, he would lead to the world. So, they set to work quickly. Linkha started to put the holes in the rock and tether oxen continuously. Ninety nine were completed. Linkha put hole to the last rock quickly and tried to tie the last ox but he couldn't because the last ox started to run here and there. He tired to catch and tie but he could not. At that time, the cock crowed and he lost the competition. Linkha could not complete his task. Therefore, Linkha houses are not being built facing east.

5.2.3 Dressing pattern

The Yakkha people have their own traditional dress. It has made them distinct from other groups. Mainly, the Yakkha society is an agricultural society. They grow cotton in their field. The cotton is used for making cloth by weaving them on a spinning wheel. The Yakkha women who traditionally weave cloth like 'dhaka' use to make cap, muffler, *daura suruwal*, girdle, multi colored sari, blouse and other types of clothes. The cloth is made of various colors by using the leaves and the bark of trees. There were many Yakkha women involved in traditional occupation until a few years ago but now days only a few are involved in this occupation. They have given up their traditional practice of growing cotton.

The Yakkha males wear their own traditional dress like *daura suruwal* and a girdle around the waist with carrying a *khukuri* (knife), cap and head band. The Yakkha womens wear multi-colored sari, girdle, and blouse. They wear *sunko ful* (a round flat flower made of gold) on the head, earring, *dhungri* on the ear, *Bulaki*, *phuli* or *Dhungri* on the nose, *Naugedi*, *kantha*, *chandrahari* on neck, golden or silver bangles on wrist as the types of jewelry. But now days the Yakkha people have been influenced by modern fashion. The traditional dress is worn only on the occasions and festivals like Ubhouli and Udhouli. There is still Yakkha language in practice. The main factor of the dress change is more access to the foreign employment. When the Yakkha males return from the foreign countries, they bring outlandish clothes for their families. So they forget to wear their traditional dress. The other factor is the easiness to access the imported readymade clothes. The old generations are still wearing their traditional dresses but new generations are forgetting them. In the field area, the Yakkha males wear half-pant and half T-shirt in summer season. But in winter, they wear woolen clothes. The Yakkha women cover their heads by *Dhaka* muffler.

5.3 Rites de Passage of the Yakkha

The rites de passage is the life cycle stages of the individual. But it presents the characteristics of the whole community. They performed it in a different way according to the different community. They are guided from specific norms and value. And they are related with the natural environment. Here is presented all of the ceremonial events like birth, marriage, death of the Yakkha, which are closely related with the environment.

5.3.1 Mechchha Chyang

It is the worship of pregnant women and unborn babies. When Yakkha women become pregnant, a ceremony is performed to raise the morale of the mothers and for

the good health of the babies in the wombs and the mothers. It is also a psychological encouragement for the pregnant mothers. It is believed that this ceremony will help to have successful deliveries without any complications. The Yakkha people believe that the pregnant women must not cross river, hills and should not do hard labor. For the ceremony, a number of items are required such as banana leaves, Utis (*Alnus nepalensis*), a type of mass that grows on trees (Yangben), ginger, an egg, a hen, a gourd with hole (Khukhu), warm clothes for the baby, Kokro, oil, spice, ghee, nutritious foods, etc. The ceremony is performed by their religions priest like, “Manghangba”, “Chhamba” or “Bijuwa”.

5.3.2 Birth

When a child is born among the Yakkha, the umbilical cord is put on a silver coin and cut with a clean and sharp knife. The umbilical cord is put in a bamboo pipe and placed on a tree which gives the milk like khiro/ kabro. It is believed that if the umbilical cord is kept on such type of trees, the mother gives abundant milk. The house where the baby is delivered is considered ritually unclean for three or four days. The mother is given hot, nutritious and energy giving food to eat. Some days later, the piece of skin on the navel previously cut with knife is dried up and put in a small silver box. It is tied around the child's neck. It is believed that by doing this, the evil spirits will not harm the child and the child will be brave and courageous. Among Yakkha, the purification ceremony is performed four days after birth for the male child and three days for the female child.

5.3.3 Nwaran

The Nwaran is a name-giving ceremony. It is also a purification ceremony. On the fourth or third day after the delivery, the ceremony is performed. On the morning of the ceremony, the house is cleaned and purified by sprinkling water by Titepati (*Atremisiya Vulgaris*). On the particular day, relatives and neighbors especially

elderly women are invited to give name to the child. The invitees bring chicken, cooking oil, rice, spices and clothes for the mother or the child. The invited women wash the child, rub oil, tie thread on the wrist, and ankle, put silver bangle on the wrist, pierce the ear and put a vest on the child. Then, the elder woman gives the name to the child.

Before naming the child, the eldest women in the group addresses the gathering by saying, “The newly born has come amidst us and has lit up the house, the courtyard and the village. The population in the house has increased and this has made all of us happy. Let the sun and the moon also see the child, let the air and the water also see the child”. At the time, some food is fed to baby. Then, it is proclaimed that we have seen the child, seen its body, seen its activities and have come to know it and recognized it. Blessings are offered to the child saying that the child will be known and recognized by its name. Let the child grow up quickly and become intelligent and wise by being called by its name. All those gathered extend good wishes to the health of the child and mother. After giving the name to the child, the invitees are welcomed and farewell is given after serving the prepared food.

5.3.4 Marriage

Marriage is a natural process. It gives the continuity to the gene and helps to fulfill the sexual desire. Marriage is an institution of the society. Its type and forms are different according to the rule and regulation of the different society. The Yakkha people have their own marriage practice. The boy and girl are asked about the marriage and they are given full freedom of acceptance or rejection of any marriage proposal. Those with whom one is related for seven preceding generations are not considered eligible for marriage. The Yakkha are having had marital relationship with the Limbu and Rai from the past. The Yakkha people practice arranged as well as

love marriage. In the past, there was the practice of forced marriage but it no longer exists.

Arranged Marriage:

Arranged marriage is the common among the Yakkha community. In this type of marriage, when a boy reaches marriageable age, the family starts looking for a suitable girl. After finding the girl, the family decides to ask for the girl's hand. A go-between or intermediary who is called "Samdangya" in Yakkha language plays an instrumental role who is knowledgeable about the relationship between the families and also about the ancestry of the families. The boy is sent to the girl's house with Surkepang (a wooden pot used to keep liquor) and Rs. 5. The boy's intermediary meets girl's intermediary (Limdangya) who can talk with the girl's parents and request to put the marriage proposal to the girl's parents. The go-between from the girl's side goes to the girl's house by putting forth the marriage proposal. If the girl's parents like the boy, they ask the daughter. If the daughter gives permission, girl's parents and relatives are greeted with four bottles of liquor from the boy's side. The greeting also establishes new relationship and the date of the marriage are decided upon. According to the Yakkha custom, the girl's parents take from the boy's side money and gold, as 'Sunauli' and 'Rupauli'

At the fixed date of the marriage, the groom, the go between and two or four persons go to the bride's house to bring the bride. Then the bride comes with her friends and her parents to the groom's house. The bride and her procession are accompanied by musicians. When they reach near the groom's house, the bridal procession fire shots from a pair of guns. The bride and her relatives are kept in a temporary shed made of bamboo built near the groom's house. The groom's side offers them Tongwa and pickle.

The invited people are generally offered buffalo or goat meat. At that time a question and answer session occurs. The horn and the tail of the goat or buffalo are decorated with flowers and the elderly persons from the groom's side pose to the go-between and other from the bride's side various questions jokingly. Then the invited guests are offered Tongwa and meat. Next day at 3 or 4 o'clock, the clothes and jewelry to be given to the bride from the groom's side are handed over through the go-between to the bride. These clothes and jewelry along with the bride are taken to a nearby Chautari (resting place). At the same time, the groom is also prepared for the marriage ceremony. The groom wears a white *Daura suruwal*, *Dhaka Topi* (cap), head band, girdle, a garland of flowers and a silver or a golden necklace is put on the neck. The groom is taken to the bride, musicians play drum (kei) and a pair of muzzle-loaders are fired in the air when procession reaches the place where the bride is waiting, the groom and all the procession are offered Tika of rice mixed with curd. The bride moves around the groom three times pouring clean water from a kalas. The bride put a garland of flowers and grass on the groom's neck and touches the groom's feet with her forehead.

After the bride and groom arrive at the courtyard of the house, those from the groom's side shower the bride and the groom with Tika. Then the groom's parents and relatives put Tika to the groom and bride. The groom's mother gives a plate of curd, first to the bride to drink and then to the groom. Then the bride is made to bow down and touch the main door of the house with her forehead, following which the groom's mother and the groom hold her on two sides and take her inside the house. At the time of the bride entering the house, the main door is scrubbed with clay and water and two pots full of water are put on both sides of the door. Titepati (*Artemisia Indica*) and flowers are struck on the mouth of the pots.

After the marriage party is over, the groom is blessed by elderly Yakkha or the shaman 'Manghangba'. During the ceremony to bless the groom, the relatives wish for

the happy married life of the couple, wishing that the groom and the bride share the same thought, feelings and desires and they remain together all their lives. The relatives wish that the couple grow like dubo (grass), increase like banana tree, remain sustainable and long living like the Khaer tree, enjoy the cool shades like the Bar (*ficus benghalensis*) and Pipal (*ficus religiosa*). The relatives also wish for the birth of children and for the continuation of the lineage. After the blessing of the relatives, the rice mixed with curd as well as dubo (grass) given to the groom as a sign of auspiciousness is wrapped by the groom's friend in the piece of cloth worn by the groom. Later the rice mixed with curd and dubo are handed over to the bride and the bride puts it in her wrap.

After the blessing ceremony, *Lagan* ceremony is performed. The things required for the ceremony are two pairs of banana leaves, a pair of cock and hen, Tongwa, liquor, the rib or leg of a pig, water in a pair of jugs and home made beer in two gourds with the mouth of the gourd covered with banana leaves. All these and other food items required for the ceremony, including the pipe of the bamboo used for drinking Tongwa are put on a Nanglo (a basket made of bamboo). Inside the house, the groom and the bride along with a few relatives are made to sit around the fire. Then, all the doors are closed and two boys or boy and girl from two different clans hold their hands together and circle the winnowing and the fire four times. They also sing the song blessing the newly married couple.

At the time of *Lagan* the groom's friend makes the groom strike a cock on the tail four times and makes the bride strike a hen on the tail three times. The 'Manghangba' asks in a loud voice that the people outside the house to be ready for the *Lagan* (Such as, whether the musicians are ready or not and whether guns are ready or not). When the 'Manghangba' finally receives an affirmative reply, he announces the *Lagan* ceremony. He announces the name and the clan of the groom and proclaims that from today, the clan of the bride has been conjoined with the clan of the groom. As the

Manghangba announces the marriage ceremony, a cock and a hen are struck one after another. Then the blood of the cock and the hen is poured on the banana leaves as ritual sacrifice. Then the groom puts sindur (vermillion powder) on the bride's head and puts a *Pote* (necklace) on her neck. Then the bride touches the groom's feet with her forehead.

After the all ceremony of Lagan is over, the groom goes to the bride's house with pig (hongdrup), liquor, Fewaling (a bag made of bamboo with meat), pickle, bread, dry rice etc. It is called *Rit Bujaune*. The groom takes extra gifts for the different persons like, bride's mother, relatives, the elders of the bride's village, etc. When the groom with the procession reaches the bride's house, he is stopped at the gate of the house. The two persons guarding the gate and posing as strangers and act as comedians and put questions to the groom and his procession. The general questions would be: who are you? Where are you from? Where do you want to go? etc. The go-between replies that they have come from a so and so place referring to an imaginary place and they request to open the path giving some gift like a bottle of liquor and a Fewaling (pirengo) with meat and at last they open the path. When the path is open, the groom and his procession request for a place to stay for the night. The two sides engage again in slapstick humor for some time. After some time, the go-between gives a bottle of liquor and pickle made of meat in a bamboo basket. After that, the bride's side jokingly gives permission to stay for the night. Thereafter, the groom and the procession are seated in a temporary shed made of bamboo near the house and offer them *Tongwa* and pickle of meat and drink from the bride's side.

The next day, a buffalo is beheaded and its meat is offered to the guest with *Tongwa* as a mark of respect. There is the practice of the bride's side inviting all the relatives and villagers in the village to partake of the gift like the food items which are brought from the groom's side. On the occasion, the groom is introduced to all the relatives from the bride's side. Re. 1 coin is put on some flowers or leaves and the grooms are

greeted by the senior and the groom greets the junior. This ceremony is undertaken to introduce one another and to establish new relationship by changing the old relationship that may have existed in the past between the groom and others. After the ceremony, the groom returns to his house with the bride who is accompanied by her younger sisters and friends.

Love Marriage:

When the Yakkha boys and girls reach marriageable age, they can meet each-other in markets, fairs, other occasions and can fall in love. Then the boy persuades to elope with her. This is known as “love marriage” and it is also known as “stolen marriage”. The marriage is known as stolen because no one from the girl's relatives is aware of the marriage and their permission is not sought for the marriage.

When the girl is taken home, upon reaching the path near the boy's house, one of his friends goes to the house to inform. Jugs of water with flowers and leaves are put on the both sides of the main door of the house to welcome the bride. When the girl reaches the house, she is asked about her all family background and is also asked whether she is ready for the marriage or not. If the girl enters the house with the help of boy's parents, family members, relatives and neighbors, then all those present are offered liquor and home- made beer at the groom's house. This is possible if the prior preparations have already been made. This kind of marriage is similar to the ceremony for arranged marriage. But sometimes the marriage feast on the occasion of love marriages is not undertaken on the same day but is undertaken after the days, weeks, or months following the elopement. This is a large feast where all the relatives and acquaintances are invited. After the girl elopes with the boy, there is also the practice of the girl's relatives going to the boy's house to inquire about whether the girl is ready for the marriage or not. Two persons either the girl's uncle or brother come for the inquiry to the boy's house. They are offered in the boy's house with meat

and *Tongwa*. They ask the boy and girl about their consent regarding the marriage. They also meet the groom's parents to talk about when the groom will return to the bride's house with gifts on the decided date.

On the designated day, the groom along with his bride comes to the bride's house with various gifts. On the day, relatives and neighbors are invited. The groom's side provides the feast for those invited at the bride's house. The love marriage also ends up similar to that of arranged marriage. If the marriage ceremony and the feast following elopement are performed in the groom's house before those from the bride's side come to inquiry about the elopement, a leg of the buffalo or pig and liquor is taken by two persons to the bride's house. Only if the bride's parents agree the marriage and agree to receive gifts, the marriage ceremony is performed like arranged marriage.

Bagdata Ritual:

The entire religious custom associated with the daughter's husband's family is known as 'Bagdata'. The practice of Bagdata is mandatory with regard to married daughter. If the practice has not been performed even following marriage in the case of the death of the women, all the necessary rituals related to her death have to be performed by her parents from that side. Therefore, only after the daughter gives birth to children or when it is felt that she is permanently settled and will not leave her husband is the practice of 'Bagdata' performed among the Yakkha people because if the woman leaves her husband after the 'Bagdata' has already been performed her parents have to ask for 'Bagdata' from her previous husband or have to give her 'Bagdate' once again. Thus, the married woman's parents have to forsake all the items given as dowry previously. Therefore, the 'Bagdata, is given only after it is believed that the marriage is secure and the woman will not leave her husband.

On the decided date, the daughter with her husband, her children and some elders from her husband side come to her parent's home. The daughter brings a pig and liquor which is distributed among the relatives and neighbors. On the occasion, her close relatives gift her as dowry pots, pans, clothes etc. There is the general practice of giving the equivalent of materials necessary for one family. The gifts are part of the daughter's wealth and do not have to be divided in the family.

The daughter and son-in-law put a bottle of liquor and money before the daughter's parents and put forward their request. The son-in-law says that "on so and so year, month, and date had come to you in-law's house and following the kindness of you in-laws and consent and agreement of your daughter. I had married to your daughter. The newly married family with the blessing of the in-laws is believed to be functioning smoothly. They are to be blessed with children soon. So we look forward to receiving the love and blessing of you in-laws in future, I request for the Bagdate." After such request, according to Yakkha tradition, the daughter, thus transferring all the responsibilities that have to be undertaken following her death to her husband's family.

5.3.5 Death Ceremony

The Yakkha people strongly believe in spirits and supernatural power. When somebody becomes ill, they worship to the Kul Deuta (clan deity) of the household. In the Yakkha society, the dead person's body is buried in the ground. When someone dies in the village the gun is fired to inform the villagers. A bamboo mat is sprinkled with water, washed with gold and purified and the death body is laid on the mat. The clean water is sprinkled on the body and clothes are put on the dead person. The coins are put on the dead person's forehead. A new bamboo is cut for the dead person and a sort of a ladder is made to carry. The two long pieces of bamboos are joined for carrying the dead body. If the dead person is a male, four smaller pieces are joined

and if she is a female three smaller pieces are tied, and a new white piece of cloth is torn and put as an umbrella to cover the head of the dead person. After putting the dead body on the bamboo, the body is decorated with flowers (except marigold). Metchengfung (a kind of flower) is necessary to put on the dead body. Before to take the dead body for burial, the dead person's daughter-in-law takes a *Mana and Pathi* (a vessel used for measuring grains) and goes through the motion as if she is pouring grains from the *Mana* into the *Pathi*. She does this four times if the dead person is a male and three times if the dead person is a female following which the *Mana* and *Pathi* are put inside the house.

When the dead person is taken for burial to the jungle, a man walks ahead carrying a white flag on a bamboo stick along with some paddy and some coins in a white handkerchief. The paddy and coins are dropped on the path. This is done so that children are not frightened of the dead body and the spirit of the dead body does not cause suffering in the house. After the dead body is taken away the house is cleaned and scrubbed from inside to outside of the house. When the dead body is brought in the jungle, it is moved clockwise around the burial site four times if the dead person is a male and three times if the dead person is a female. Then, the pit is dug and stones are laid on the floor of the pit above which the dead body is put. After putting the body, the shaman *Manghangba* calls for all the living souls to return. Before to fill the corpse, a ladder is made by a small branch of a tree and put to the head corner of the corpse. Then the corpse is filled from the leg side. If the dead person is a male, four layers are raised above the pit and if female, three layers are raised above it. On the top of the layers, if the body is a male four stones and if female three stones are put by arranging them in a line. At the time of filling, the ladder made of a small branch of tree is pulled slowly. It is believed that, if somebody's soul left in the grave, it comes out by this ladder. Finally, the burial site is fenced with the branches and thorns of wild berries. This is done so that the soul of the dead does not cause

suffering among the living. When the funeral procession is returned home, on the path, some distance from the funeral site fire is lit and all those in the funeral procession jump over the fire and clean water is sprinkled on the procession with a Titepati (*Artemisia indica*)

In the Yakkha society, the purification ceremony is performed after three days of female and four days of male. On the morning of the purification ceremony following the end of the period of abstention, relatives from the same clan gather in the house of the dead clean and scrub the house. The relatives from other clans are made to cook the meat of chicken by mixing it with cooking oil, lettuce, ginger and salt. All the meat along with rice is put on a winnow, alongside which *Tongwa* and a drinking pipe are also put. Following which a shaman or an elder from other clans calls the sprite of the dead. The main door in the ground floor of the house is closed and the household members and relatives offer the food items to the dead. Then again offer the food items to the dead in a quite, clean and pure nearby place outside the house, following which clean water is sprinkled on all with Titepati. The Yakkha people believe that the touching of meat, salt, oil and nettle is purifying.

Generally, *Barkhanta* ceremony is performed on the day of the purification. Due to work or various other reasons, all the necessary rituals are not completed. There is also the practice of undertaking the ceremony after 15 days or 45 days in some places. If the *Barkhanta* ceremony has to be performed on the day of the purification, all the relatives and neighbors in the village are invited to the ceremony.

On the day, the *Manghangba* or elder from different clans separates the path between dead soul and living soul, it is called *Farak*. Various items of food, fruits, liquor and home made beer and so on are put on the leaf plates. *Sambafung* (a kind of flower) is necessary for *Farak* ceremony. When everything is ready, the shaman or elder calls for the spirit of the dead saying that our illness could not be cured even after

treatment by the shaman or the doctor. The shaman or elder calls for the dead soul to go to across the seas to heaven and stay there without any worries saying that the living relatives have as far as possible offered all the items in the name of the dead. Then the respected elders speaking in unison declare that things have been purified, following which all those attending the ceremony repeat in a loud voice that they have all been purified. Then, the son of dead putting tika on the forehead of daughters, female relatives, nephews and nieces and giving them money, clothes as gifts and the dead person's son put on new cap as well as new clothes.

In the night the shaman 'Chhamba' performs another ceremony according to Kirat *Munthum*. It is known as '*Miwa Tukma*' (wipe the tears). It is the ceremony to wipe away the tears of pain and sorrow. The ceremony is undertaken in the courtyard of the dead person's house where a bamboo is struck. The place of shaman is decorated with the leaves of Kaulo (*machilus gammian*) and Ghungring (a kind of plant). For the *Miwa Tukma*, clean and pure water is put in a copper pot and boiled. *Kaulo* is dipped in the water and the water is sprinkled from the Kaulo plant to the family member on their side as well as back. The men are sprinkled with water four times on the front and back and women are sprinkled three times on the front and back side. After *Miwa Tukma*, the shaman performs the ceremony according to the *Munthum* bidding farewell to the spirit of the dead. The shaman recites from the *Munthum* and while doing so throws a silver coin in the air. If the situation is shown as evil, the shaman undertakes to ameliorate the situation according to the *Munthum*. This is especially wished for the good health of the household members and other living relatives. During this, the shaman's assistant makes a figure symbolizing the spirit of the dead. The figure is made of the branch of a banana leaf, cotton and *kaulo's* leaf and tied with thread. The figure is held in both hands one by one and shaken before being put on the plate by all those attending the ceremony. This is done four times by man and three times by woman, and then the shaman's assistant cuts it with the knife.

Then, a ceremony is performed to be safe from the suffering of dead spirits which is known as '*Graha Katne*'. For the ceremony, the shaman puts banana leaves in the courtyard of the house and makes figures on it with maize flour. A type of plant '*Ghungring*' is sliced with a knife and made into a flower like design and tied with thread. After cutting and splicing the design, the banana leaves spread in the courtyard of the house are divided into two pieces. Then the family members of the dead jump over the banana leaves. The men have jump over the four times and women three times. While they are jumping, they throw *satbiu* (grain like maize, rice, lentile, wheat etc). At the same time, *Chhamba* or his assistant cuts the place where they jump. When men and women jump for the last time, incense sticks made of maize flour are lit in the burning coal are kept in the courtyard. Thus, with all these rituals, the death ceremony of the Yakkha people is completed.

Different kinds of plants like Titepati, Kaulo, Ghungring, Dubo, different kind of flowers like *Metchengfung*, *Sambafung*, etc, are required in the rituals. Banana leaf, leaf plate are required each and every ceremony. Bamboo and its crafts such as, *Chitra*, *Kakro*, *Perengo*, *Tongwa*, etc, are required on each and every ritual of birth to death ceremony. Agricultural production and domestic animal are also required each rituals. In this way, the riyual performances of the Yakkha people are impossible on the absence of the ecological things.

5.4 Religious Background

The Yakkha people practice *Kirat* religion. *Manghangba*, *Chhamba*, and *Bijuwa* are the religious specialists of the Yakkha. The Yakkha people worship to the water, land, forest and their ancestors. They believe that the deities live in the jungle, on mountains, and rivers, and in the house. They perform their religious practices by reciting the '*Munthum*'. The word *Munthum* represents the oral tradition on which Yakkha indigenous practice is based (Russell, 1992). The Yakkha people practice two

kinds of worship. The one is household worship and other is local or collective worship.

5.4.1 Household Worship

There are some household spirits which concern with domestic space such as *Pangchyang*, *Oaame* etc. Some spirits are brought in the house by women's marriage.

Pangchyang:

Pangchyang is a distinctive ceremony of the Yakkhas that shows and maintains their original identity. Every Yakkha households have to perform it compulsorily. In the Yakkha society, the house is the symbol of mother. Pangchyang is the metriclan worship. The Pangchyang is associated particularly with illnesses such as goiter and deafness. Propitiation of the Pangchyang is said to be necessary not only for the health and well-being of household members but also for abundant crops, animal production and human fertility.

The ceremony is generally performed once a year. It is considered appropriate to perform the ceremony on Tuesday of the month of Bhadau (August-September). Seven or eight pieces of banana leaves, leaves of Bilaune, the branches of Cimali (*Vitex Negundo*), two gourds, *Tongwa*, home made beer, a baby pig whose tail has not been cut or porcupine chicken, *Cchunge* (a small bamboo pipe), lettuce, ginger, egg, chuletrol, etc are required for the Pangchyang ceremony. A small decorated house is built. Then the Manghangba recites from the Munthum and performs the worship.

Oaame:

It is a worship of the central pillar of Yakkha house. When Yakkha build a new house, they perform the Oaame worship. It is believed that the worshipping of the

central pillar protects the house and household members. Nearby the main pillar in the ground floor of the newly built Yakkha house a pit one foot deep is dug. Ginger, lettuce, Dubo (cynodon dactylon), Titepati (Artemesia Vulgaris), a baby pig, banana leaves, etc, are required for the Oaame ceremony. The shaman Manghangba wishes for the peace and happiness of the family by the Munthun. In the middle of this recital, the pig is sacrificed in the hole. After the sacrifice is offered once, it is not necessary to repeat when the ceremony is performed in the future again. At the time in future in the place of sacrifice, a pair of fish is buried in the hole and the ceremony is performed.

Saya Pokma:

It is the worship of the head of the family to raise the morale and the prestige of the household head. It is a psychological encouragement of the household head to face and overcome the difficulties of life. The ceremony is performed wishing for the good health and the prosperity of the household head. If the household head is male, a cock is used and if the household head is female, a hen is used for the ceremony. The ceremony of 'Saya Pokma' is performed twice a year at Ubhauri and Udauri. A cock or hen, a pair of banana leaves, ginger, rice, a jug with clean water, knife, bowl, two gourds, a cup or a wrap are required for the Saya Pokma ceremony.

The ceremony is either performed by the Manghangba or household himself. After putting all the items, the Manghangba or himself recites the Munthum. After this, the household head or someone senior in as to him or her sprinkles clean water and is sacrificed by beating the chicken. Then some drops of the bloods are put on the banana leaves. Finally, the sacrificed chicken is cooked and the meat is offered to all those attending the ceremony.

5.4.2 Collective Worship

There are some local Poojas in the Yakkha society such as Uchyang and Chasuwa. All the Yakkha people from the village gather at one place and collectively offer worship to them.

Uchyang:

The word 'Yuchyang' is made of two words, 'Yu' = 'Area' and 'chyang' = 'God' or 'Worship'. Hence, the meaning of the Yuchyang is regional worship. All the Yakkha people who live in the same area gather at one place and worship the nature. It is also known as 'Ubhauli'.

Yakkha society is an agricultural society. They depend upon agriculture. Good agricultural production depends upon good weather. Hence, Yakkha people worship the nature. They pray the nature to get the good support of the weather for planting their crops and to save their crops from the storm, wind, hailstone, landslide, flood and insects.

On the morning of the Yuchyang worship a representative from each Yakkha household compulsorily gathers at a particular place near the jungle outside the village. They bring some amount of rice and money from each household. Then they perform the *Samsari* puja praying the gods and goddesses of the world for the well-being of all of humanity. There are different places of worship. These places are smeared with clay and some stones are washed with water and tied with thread around it and put on the place of worship. Then small branches of Patle (*Quercus Lanceaefolia*) and Titepati (*Artemesia vulgaris*) are struck in the place of worship. After making the place of worship, the Manghangba performs the Sansaru Puja. Then egg, chicken and baby goat are sacrificed. After performing all the worship, they

partake on food and return home. Specially, the Sansari Puja is performed for the anticipation of god rain.

In the afternoon of the same day, the villagers again gather at another place to perform the Yuchyang. A Tharo (a small tree) is struck on the open place where the different caste is not permitted to enter the area. They believe that if different caste enters in the scared place, the god and goddess will angry and natural disaster may come. A representative from each Yakkha household in the village compulsorily goes to the place of the Yuchyang ceremony with rice, home- made beer and money. During the Yuchyang ceremony, a pig, a pair of chicken, four eggs, four gourds, and twelve banana leaves are put on the ground. By sacrificing eggs, chickens and the pigs, they pray for the well- being of all. Now-a- days, the Yakkha people celebrate the Yuchyang as a festival.

Chasuwa:

In the Yakkha language, 'Chasuwa' means 'let's taste it' or 'eat it'. It is also known as 'Udhauli'. The first produced grain of the year is eaten only after first offering to the god of nature and the ancestors. It is believed that the offering of food shows respect towards the ancestors, keeps the god happy, provides good harvest and brings prosperity. If some body eats the newly harvested crops without first offering it to the god, his mouth gets disfigured, suffers from stomach pain or it badly affects to the body.

On the day of Chasuwa, a branch of the particular types of plant is struck in the courtyard of the house. It shows that the household is engaged in the Chasuwa. A bamboo mat, eight pairs of banana leaves, four gourds full of clean water, four gourds of home- made beer (Jand), lettuce, ginger and Tongwa are required for the Chasuwa ceremony. A cock and a hen, and egg are sacrificed to the deity during the ceremony. After performing the Chasuwa ceremony, all the participants are going to partake of

the food. Now-a- days, the Yakkha people celebrate widely the Chasuwa as a festival of the villages and towns. By gathering all Yakkha people in a particular place of worship the Chasuwa or Udhauli festival is celebrated by performing the Kai Lak (chyabrubg dance).

Ten Tamma:

Ten Tamma ceremony is performed to wish for the abundant growth of crops. In lieu of giving protection of the human beings, animal, weather, prosperity is given thanks to the goddess Ragirangma (Goddess of Nature). The Ten Tamma ceremony is performed after the ripening of crops. It is performed in the month of September / October. The ceremony is performed collectively with the gathering of all the Yakkha people in the village. Specially, they worship the sources of the water. By making different groups, they walk around the village carrying knife, sword, stick in their hand and protect the area. Banana leaves, jand, alcohol, rice, ginger and gourd are required around the main place of the worship. When the ceremony is being performed in a particular village, singing, dancing and playing musical instruments are prohibited in the village.

From the above description, it can be said that without ecological things, the worships of the Yakkha people are never become complete. Agricultural harvests and animal sacrifices are offered to the gods and goddess. Many wild plants and leaves are required in their worship. They worship and offer sacrifice to the forest god 'Sikari'. They always worship to the natural forces like river, rivulets, water, land, and wind, as gods. They worship the home, central pillar of the home, stone, trees, well, tap and so on. In this way, the religious worships of the Yakkha people are rooted from the nature.

5.5 Agriculture

Agriculture depends upon the land types. The land is divided according to the access of water. The Yakkhas of Tamafok have three kind lands. They are classified as 'Khet' (wet land) where there is the easy access of water for irrigation. They cultivate paddy and wheat in khet. Bari (dry upland terrace) is the place where maize, millet, and potatoes are cultivated. Third kind of land is sloppy, which is covered by Uttis (*Alnus Nepalensis*) tree where they cultivate Alaichi (*Amomum Subulatum*). Mainly, the low lands are suitable for paddy cultivation due to the warm weather and easy access of water sources for irrigation. The upper belt of the area is not suitable for paddy cultivation due to the cold weather. In the middle of the area, millet and maize are produced in a good amount. The crops are cultivated according to the environmental condition. The crops should be planted in a right season. The following table shows agricultural cycle of the study area.

Table No. 4 Seasonal Crop Calendar of Major Crops

Crops	Particulars	Bai	Je	Asa	Sra	Bha	Aso	Kat	Ma	Pau	Marg	Fal	Cha	
Maize	Upper belt	Land prepn.									-			
		Planting										-	-	
		harvesting					-							
	Lower belt	Land prepn.										-		
		Planting												
		harvesting			-	-								
Millet	Early millet	Preparing nursery beds	-											
		Planting			-									
		Harvesting						-						
	Late millet	Preparing nursery beds		-	-									
		Planting				-	-							
		Harvesting								-	-			
Paddy	Upper belt	Preparing nursery beds	-											
		Planting		-										
		Harvesting							-					
	Lower belt	Preparing nursery beds		-										
		Planting			-	-								
		Harvesting								-				

Maize:

Maize is planted on both upper and lower belt of the study area. On the upper belt, it is planted in Fagun-Chaitra and harvested in Bhadra. On the lower belt, it is planted in Fagun-Chaitra and harvested in Aashad-Srawan. So, on the lower belt, the maize is ready to harvest prior to the upper belt due to the warm weather.

Millet:

There are two types of millet plantation, one is early plantation and the other is late plantation. For the early plantation, the nursery bed is prepared in Baishakh, planted in Aashad and it is harvested in Kartik. For the late plantation, the nursery bed is prepared in Jestha-Aashad, planted in Srawan-Bhadra and it is harvested in Mangsir-Pous.

Paddy:

The paddy is transplanted on the upper and the lower belt of the study area. On the upper belt, the nursery bed is prepared in Baishakh planted in Jestha and harvested in Kartik. On the lower belt, the nursery bed is prepared in Jestha, planted in Aashad-Srawan and harvested in Mangsir. So the paddy of upper belt is ready for harvest prior to lower belt paddy.

5.6 Animal Husbandry

Animal husbandry is also influenced with the environment in the study area. Mainly, the Yakkha people of the study area keep cows, oxen, goats, and pigs. Buffaloes are rarely raised. They keep only few cows and buffaloes due to the lack of grass and

grazing lands. All the forest areas are covered by Alaichi farming. There is not sufficient fodder for the big animals like buffaloes and cows.

Generally the Yakkha people of the study area keep a pair of oxen. But some households practice *Pate* system. In the *Pate* system, one household keeps only one ox and another household also keeps only one ox and they plough them by sharing each other. The Yakkha people of the study area are not interested in dairy production because they consume jand more than tea. They use oil or the fat of pig more than ghee to cook curry. They use milk rarely for tea.

Pig is the favorite domestic animal of the Yakkha people because it is easy to keep and it grows fast. It is also a favorite source of meat because it makes them satisfy than other meat. There is no single household without pig. The pig has been an identity of the Yakkha people. Pig is also sacrificed to the gods and goddess. Another popular animal is goat. Every household of the Yakkha people keeps some goats. Both animals are easy to keep because small amount of the fodder is sufficient to feed them. They also keep some chicken in their homes. The chicken and eggs are required for every ceremony of the Yakkha people.

Due to the lack of fodder it is difficult to keep big animals so they practice *Pate* system. The size of animal husbandry has decreased due to lack of grazing land and fodder. They keep only small animals like goats and pigs. Similarly, their rituals practices have forced to keep some particular animal like chicken because they practice animal sacrifice. Hence, it is clear that the nature of animal husbandry is determined by the environment.

CHAPTER - 6

CHANGE AND ADAPTATION

This chapter presents the discussion and analysis on cultural adaptation, technology, inter-ethnic relationship, economic adaptation, forest resource and adaptation, foreign employment: an alternative for adaptation, Alaiichi farming: new strategy of adaptation, and tea plantation: new economic possibilities of the study area.

6.1 Cultural Adaptation

Human societies adapt with their natural environment through culturally structured activities. The people of Nepal live in different natural environments and have developed different types of material and non-material cultures. This section of the chapter deals with some cultural practices and changes according to the change in their immediate ecological situation.

6.1.1 Settlement

The settlement pattern of the Yakkha people is closely related with the immediate ecological condition. At the present time, the houses of the Yakkha people are made of stones, mud, wood, tiles, tin, paddy straws, bamboos, etc. The walls are made of mud and stones, and doors, windows and pillars are made of wood and roofs are made of tins and tiles.

The traditional houses of the Yakkha people were made of big wooden pillars, bamboos, mud, paddy straws, etc. These were called 'Tande Ghars', or 'Yaksas'. The walls of the traditional houses were made of bamboos and mud, and roofs were made of paddy straws. About 60-70 years ago, most of the Yakkha people had 'Tande Ghars' in the study area. Those kinds of houses were comfortable to live and keep the animals. But nowadays they have disappeared. The main cause of disappearance of these

houses is the lack of particular trees like Sal (*Shorea robusta*) and Champ (*Michelia kisopa*). Comparatively, those trees are strong than others. Many trees were required to build the 'Tande Ghars' for the pillars. In the past, there was sufficient forest and limited population. But later due to the growth of population, the numbers of households are increased and the size of forest is decreased.

Another cause is cold weather of the study area. The 'Tande Ghars' were comfortable during summer season but in winter season they were uncomfortable due to the coldness. The traditional Tandi Ghars still exist in some Yakkha villages out of the study area. Comparatively, the weather of those places is warmer than the study area. So, they left slowly to build the 'Tande Ghars' and started to make 'Bhui Ghars'. Comparatively, less wood is needed to build the 'Bhui Ghar' than 'Tande Ghar' and it is also warmer.

6.1.2 Religion and Ritual Practices

Belief in supernatural power or belief in invisible power and its worship is called 'religion'. From anthropological point of view, religion is a man made non-material culture. It is a psychological rule or law by which the social crime is controlled. The religion believes on invisible power or god. It talks about heaven, hell and sin. So, religion controls to the crime by showing the fear of hell or sin. The Yakkha Kiratis worship the nature as a god. They worship the natural things like water, land, stone, forest etc. They believe that nature is only one of the great power of the world which gives life and death. The Yakkha people have their own distinct religious practices. The Yakkha shamans 'Manghangba', 'Chhamba', and 'Bijuwa' perform their rituals by their religious philosophy called 'Munthum'. The ultimate aim of such practices is entirely attached with the well being of the society. It gives them psychological support.

The Yakkha people are non-Hindu tribal group, but they practice some Hindu festivals such as Dashain and Tihar. After the so called national unification of the country by Prithivi Narayan Shah, all the traditional religious practices and identities of the indigenous people like Yakkha Kirati have been destroyed. The state imposed Hindu religion among indigenous community. As a result, the indigenous Yakkha people also started to practice Hindu religion in their own indigenous way. In the period of Dashain festival, they used to sacrifice goats, buffaloes and pigs to the Hindu goddess Durga. But after 2046 B.S. the practice has declined due to relative religions freedom. Nowadays, the Yakkha people are giving up the Hindu religious practices. They practice again their own Kirat religion and festivals like Chasuwa (Udhaul), and Yuchyang (Ubhaul).

The Yakkha people practice animal sacrifice in every ritual and worship. Especially they sacrifice chicken, eggs, pigs, goats, and buffaloes. At the time of marriage and death rituals, they use meat, alcohol and home made- beer (Jand) for consumption. These rituals are very expensive. But in some part of the study area, the Yakkha people have stopped to use meat and alcohol during the death ritual. Although they perform all the ritual activities by reciting the Munthum but in the feast, they totally use vegetarian dishes. According to them, it is cheaper than non-vegetarian dishes.

In the past, the Yakkhas were land owner. They had a lot of land and animals. 'Majhiya' was the headman of the Yakkhas and non- Yakkhas too. They compared the ritual performance with their prestige. So, they used many animals and larger amount of alcohol. But later they could not continue it due to poverty.

The Yakkha people of the study area performed various worships. The worships are performed not only for the gods to make them happy but also considered as the ways of adaptation. Those worships have many functions in the Yakkha society. Most of the time, they engage in their work. Therefore, they want to be refreshed from the

exhaustion which is possible from the religious worships. Worship is a kind of picnic. On the day of worship, they collect some amount of money and rice from every household. They gather in a particular place where the worship is performed. Some bring pots for cooking. Goat, chickens and some eggs are bought by the collected money. Then, the worship is performed. After sacrificing goats, chickens and eggs meat is prepared for cooking. The rice is cooked. They talk and share their problem with each other. They talk each other, by jokingly. After preparing the food items, all the participants partake in food consumption. Food items are served as per the personal preferences of the people present. In this way, the worship helps them to be refreshed due to entertainment.

The worships are also a kind of economic institution. People collect some amount of money from every household. They spend that money for buying animals for sacrifice and the saved money is again invested among community members at cheap interest rate. The money should be returned at the exact date. There is a rule which psychologically forces them to return the money at the exact date. They believe that, if someone does not return the money at the exact date, it harms him because the money is collected in the name of god.

6.1.3 Entertainment of Yakkha

Chavak Lak (Rice Dance):

It is a cultural dance of the Yakkha people. There is not any exact time to perform this rice dance. It is performed at market place, fair, festivals and marriage ceremony. The dance is said to have originated during the harvesting of rice. Over the time, the dance came to be performed on the other special occasions too. The dance is performed only with those relatives who are not directly related through blood and descent. The young boys and girls stand in a circle holding their hands and move their feet forward and backward in the circle. During the dance, a song is sung which is known as

'Palam Git'. The young boys and girl come to know each other and after being attracted there is the possibility falling in love. Hence, the dance is not only for the entertainment but also a good beginning of the marriage.

Kai Lak (Chyabrung Dance):

Kai or Chyabrung is a cultural instrument of the Yakkha people. It is a hollow piece of wood covered with animal skin on both sides. It is played by carrying on the shoulder. People move their feet and hands with the rhythm of the Chyabrung. Both male and female participate in the Chyabrung dance. It is a group dance. The dance is performed on the auspicious occasions or festivals. Specially, it is performed during the marriage ceremony. All the Chyabrungs are gathered at one place in the village and played accompanied by dancers. There is the practice of going from one village to another to perform the Chyabrung dance. The dancers are welcomed with food and drinks. It makes the good relationship between one village and another.

Yaksighum:

It is a kind of night club for entertainment of the Yakkha people. The young and adult people are gathered in a house and entertain. This is called 'Yaksighum'. In the Yaksighum, somebody sings, tells the story and shares the jokes each other. Somebody performs Dhan Nach. All participants are allowed to speak and do what they want. The young boys and girl may fall in love after regular meetings in the Yaksighum. They can teach the skill from this place too. Generally, all participants bring some food items with them. They eat those food items by sharing each other. But nowadays it has disappeared from the Yakkha society due to the effect of modernization, lack of time, and scarcity of the youth.

These all activities are the source of entertainment for Yakkha people. It makes them refreshment. It also keeps solidarity among the members. As a whole, it is the way of

adaptation for the Yakkha people. But some practices are gradually changing according to the changes in their immediate ecological situation.

6.2 Technology

Every human society employs techniques in order to appropriate resources from the environment. Each technique is a combination of material artifacts (tools and machines) and the knowledge required to make and use them. (Smith: 1986, cited by Bhattarai). Every society has developed tools and technologies to exploit the natural resources. The tools and technologies of a society are related to the cultural practices and life-styles of its members.

Yakkha society is an agricultural society. They exploit the land resource. The oxen are required for the agricultural activities and they domesticate cattle. The Yakkha people have developed some simple tools and technologies for the agricultural production such as Halo (plough), Kodalo (hoe), Dande (harrow), Phyaure (long-handled levelers), etc. As well as sickle, knife, and axe are used to harvest the agricultural production and cut the firewood, fodder and so on. The Yakkha people of the study area exploit the natural resources using by human and animal power. Hence, the Yakkha people of the area are fulfilling their subsistence with their simple technology.

6.3 Inter - ethnic Relationship

Although the study area is a homogeneous society, all the area was the 'Kipat' of the Yakkha people in the past. Later, some ethnic and cast groups entered and settled in the Kipat land of the Yakkha people. They used to pay some goods like ghee, crops and money to the Majhiya (headman of the Yakkha) for using their Kipat land. After the eradication of Kipat system, the Yakkha people lost their Kipat land. The major

ethnic and caste group of the study area are Yakkha, Chhetri, Gurung and the occupational caste group like Kami and Damai.

To find out the interdependence between and different ethnic groups, it is necessary to analyze interaction of people through their participation in various production system, that is by analyzing how they exploit their respective niches, interacting with each other, in order to adopt in the natural and cultural environment (Bhattra, 1995). This section discusses the ethnic relationship among Yakkhas, Chhetris, Kamis, and Damais. They are interdependent in wider economic and political context.

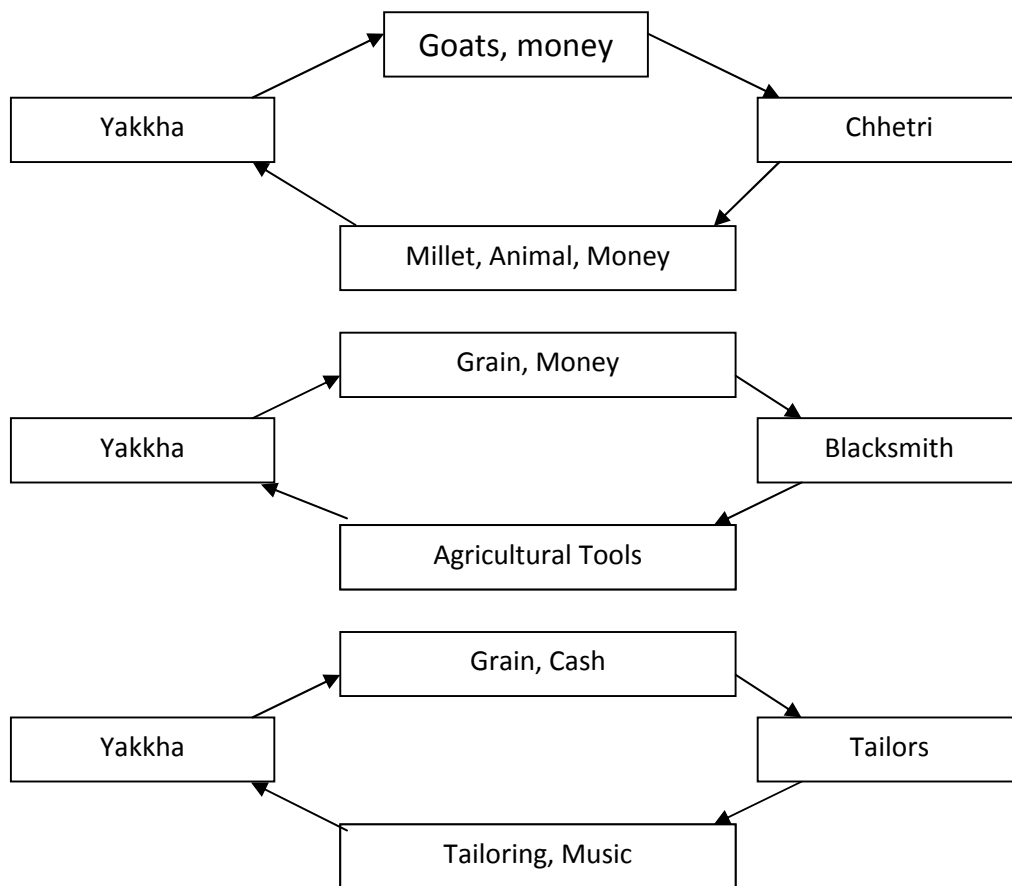
The residential area of the Chhetri and Gurung is upper belt of the study area. They are near from the forest area. The residential area of the Yakkha is lower belt of the area. Chhetri, Gurung and Yakkha all are the agriculturalists and almost all are involved in agriculture and animal husbandry. The Chhetri people produce millet and maize and they domesticate buffaloes. The Yakkha people buy millet and buffaloes from the Chhetri for consumption. Chhetri people also buy goats from the Yakkha people.

Throughout Nepal, in Hindu and non- Hindu villages alike, each artisan was involved in what is known in the hills as a Bista and in the Terai as a Juga, an arrangement whereby peasant households could call on the artisan for his special skills, as needed, and whereby the artisan households were assured of a payment, after harvest in the form of a fixed amount of grain, thereby guaranteeing a basic subsistence from year to year (Seddon, Blaikie and Cameron, 1979). The artisans like blacksmith (Kami) and tailor (Damai) are the integral part of the village economy. Similarly, the Yakkha people of the study area also depend on Kami (Blacksmith) for frequent repair of their agricultural tools like sickle, knife, axe, hoe, etc. They are mostly paid in cash. Damai (Tailor) are also related with Yakkha people. The Yakkha people keep relation with Damai for tailoring and music. Damais work in “Bali system” with Yakkha

people. But Bali system is disappearing gradually. The production of readymade clothes makes them difficult to compete with their traditional payment system to secure their livelihood.

There is interdependence among different ethnic and caste group in the study area. All those caste and ethnic groups exploit the same ecological niche. Therefore, the relationship of competition also exists among them to exploit natural resources and political power. Hence, different ethnic and caste groups are maintaining relationship in order to survive in the given ecological setting.

Figure: No. 3 Enter-Ethnic Relationship



The figure shows the exchange pattern among different ethnic/caste groups. They are inter-dependent each-other. The exchange pattern has made them easy to adapt in their specific environment.

6.4 Economic Adaptation

The economy depends upon the mode of production. It is an infrastructure of the society. The subsistence activities of the Yakkha people are agriculture, animal husbandry and some small business.

6.4.1 Agriculture

As in the other rural part of the country, agriculture is the main subsistence of the Yakkha people. Most of the people are engaged in agriculture in the study area. So the agriculture is the main productive activities of the Yakkha. Paddy, maize, millet, potato, and soybean are the major crops grown in the study area. Green vegetables such as cucumber, spinach, garlic, onion, and Ginger, etc, are grown for their own consumption.

Paddy is the main crop which is transplanted in the field where irrigation is available. The paddy is transplanted in Ashadh, Shrawan and harvested in Mangsir. It takes long time for nursery bed preparation and planting. Mainly, the paddy is transplanted in the low land of the village. A great number of labors are required for the paddy cultivation. There is difficulty to arrange the labor because almost all of the Yakkha people cultivate paddy in their field at the same time so they practice 'Parma' (exchange labor) system. They produce the paddy for their own consumption.

Maize is other important crop of the field area. Maize is cultivated in upland. All of the Yakkha people in the study area cultivate the maize in their upland. Maize cultivation is popular in the study area because it has multi-purpose utility character.

It requires less labor arrangement. The maize is used for food as rice. Pop corn is used for Tiffin. It is used to make home- made beer and the maize flour is also used to give to the domestic animals as fodder. Almost all of the Yakkha people of the study area use chemical fertilizer for the maize production. Although, they also use animal manure but due to the small number of animal husbandry, it is not sufficient for the production.

Millet is the major crop of the Yakkha people. They heavily depend upon the Millet. It has also multi-purpose utility character. The Yakkha people make an important and necessary food from the millet which is called Jand (home-made beer) and Raksi (alcohol). The Yakkha people consume the 'Jand' as Tiffin in the morning, afternoon and the evening. They can consume any time if they feel thirsty and hungry. The 'Jand' made of millet is compulsorily required for their religious and cultural rituals. The solid part of the 'Jand' is given to the pigs. The millet flour is used for making bread and food.

Soybean is another popular crop of the Yakkha community. A popular food 'Kinama' is made from the soybeans. It is used to eat as 'pickle'. The soybean is also fried to be eaten as snack. Green vegetables are grown during winter season. Pumpkin, cucumber, gourd, radish, and beans are grown during summer season. They grow the green vegetables for their own consumption. Some people also sell them for cash.

6.4.1.1 Cropping Pattern

The Yakkha people practice the mixed cropping system. It is the best management of the limited land. Due to the growing population, they have very limited land. They grow different types of crops on the same land at the same time. They grow as many crops as possible for their livelihood. It is an adaptive strategy of the Yakkha people in their limited land. The following are the major patterns of inter-cropping practiced by the Yakkha.

- Maize + Bean + Soybean + Millet
- Maize + Potato
- Paddy + Pulses
- Maize + Millet
- Maize + Cucumber + Pumpkin
- Maize + Green vegetable

In this way, such inter-cropping practice helps them to have more grain on the some land at the same time. The Yakkha people keep their domestic animal, in their field for compost fertilizer. But nowadays the number of cattle has decreased due to the lack of grazing land. The animal manure is not enough for the production. So, they have started to use chemical fertilizer in their fields.

6.4.1.2 Land Resource

The land is one of the most exploited and utilized natural resource. It is a main resource in agricultural society like Yakkha people. The Yakkha people heavily depend on the land resource. In the past, the Yakkha people had their own communal land. It was known as 'Kipat' land. Kipat was thus a form of communal landownership under which each person has a right to exclusive use of a particular pieces of land but where his rights to dispose on the theory that the land belong to the chief or to a tribe (Regmi, 1977). They had sufficient land resource for the agricultural activities. The Kipat land was non-taxable land. They could use that Kipat land freely. After the penetration of the non- Yakkha people like Chhetri, Bahun, and Gurung in those areas, the people gave them the kipat land on mortgage. But later non- Yakkha people took most of the Kipat land on mortgage. One the other hand, the government also encouraged the non- Yakkha community to be settled in the Kipat land of the Yakkha. In 1986, government converted to the Kipat land of the Yakkha people into the Raikar (taxable land). But the Yakkha people were unable to

pay the tax of the Kipat land to the government. On the other hand, they did not get their mortgaged land from the non-Yakkha community. It was the good opportunity for the non-Yakkha community to register the Kipat land in their own name. In this way, the Yakkha people lost their all Kipat land.

Land Holding:

Almost all of the households of the Yakkha people in Tamafok VDC have some amount of land. Agricultural land is generally classified on the basis of irrigation facilities and the types of crops cultivated. Khet (wet land), Bari (dry land) and Alaichi Bari (cardamom cultivated land) are the main land types as classified traditionally by the Yakkha people. On an average, a family possess 8.60 ropani of Khet, 4.74 ropani of Bari, 5.17 ropani of Alaichi Bari.

Paddy is cultivated in Khet (irrigated lowland). Among 100 sample households selected for the study, 7 of them have no wet land. Ganga Ram Koyongwa Yakkha who has 36 ropanies of wet land has the largest amount of Khet in the study area.

Maize, millet, and green vegetables are cultivated in Bari (dry upland). The major part of the production comes from Bari. Every Yakkha household has some amount of dry land which is the major means of production. Most of the Yakkha people depend on the Bari for their livelihood. Among 100 family of sampled household, Bharat Bahadur Linkha Yakkha is the largest Bari holder who has 20 ropanies of Bari.

There is also some sloppy land which is covered by Utis (*Alnus Nepalensis*) trees, where Alaichi (cardamom) is cultivated. Among 100 families of sample households, Lakha Man Koyangwa Yakkha has 57 ropanis of Alaichi Bari. He is the largest cardamom land holder of the study area. Among 100 families of sampled households 22 of them have no Alaichi Bari.

The Yakkha people practice Adhiya (share- cropping) system in the field area. Under the Adhya system, the farmer agrees to farm a piece of land from its owner on half crop share basis of each harvest. Mainly, paddy land and cardamom lands are taken for share- cropping in the study area.

Table No. 5 Land Holding Pattern among Sample Households:

S N	Land Holding (in ropani)	No of Household	percentage
1	Land less	5	5.0
2	Less then 10	32	32.0
3	11 - 20	37	37.0
4	21 - 40	16	16.0
5	41 - 60	7	7.0
6	60 +	3	3.0
7	Total	100	100.0

Source: field survey, 2010

Table 5 shows that among one hundred sampled households five households are land less. Thirty two households have land, less then ten ropani, thirty seven households have land in – between eleven to twenty ropani, and sixteen households have land in – between twenty one to forty. Seven households have land in – between forty one to sixty and only three households are big land holder owning more then sixty ropani.

Table No. 6 Status of Food Sufficient of Sample Household:

S N	Month	No. of Household	percentage
1	Less then 3	13	13.0
2	3 - 6	44	44.0
3	6 - 9	32	32.0
4	9 - 12	11	11.0
5	Total	100	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2010

Table 6 clearly shows that among 100 sampled houses only 11 households are self-sufficient in grain production. Thirty two households have grain to fulfill only 6 – 9 months. Forty four households have grain to fulfill 3 to 6 months and thirteen households have grain to fulfill only 3 months.

From the above description it seems that almost fifty percentage of the Yakkha households produce grain to meet only six months. So, they maintain their food deficit problem by selling animal, selling cardamom, remittance, and pension. The landless Yakkha people are maintaining their livelihood through selling wage labor, share- cropping, bamboo craft making etc.

The people of the study area are divided into six sub- clans. They all exploit the same ecological niche and practice similar type of strategies for adaptation. However, there is little difference of land holding pattern. The following table presents the land holding possession by different sub cast of Yakkha of sample households.

Table No. 7 Land Holding by Different Sub-Clans of Yakkha

S.N.	Sub-clan	No. of households	Landholding (in ropani)				Without Khet	Without Alaichi Bari
			Khet	Bari	Alaichi Bari	total		
1	Linkha	48	354	219	159	732	4	9
2	Chhala	22	275	124	113	512	-	2
3	Koyongwa	20	158	73	181	412	1	7
4	Limbuhim	4	33	23	8	64	-	2
5	Khamyang	4	24	21	52	97	1	1
6	Honghongba	2	16	14	4	34	1	1
	Total	100	860	474	517	-	7	22

Source: Field Survey, 2010

Note: 20 Ropani = 1 hectare

Table 7 shows that, among 1851 ropanis of agricultural land of 100 sampled household, 860 ropanis of land have been covered by Khet. Among 1851 ropanis of 100 sampled households, 474 ropanis of agricultural land been covered by Bari. 517 ropanis of land have been covered by Alaichi Bari.

Among 100 sampled households, 48 households are Linkhas who own 354 ropanis of Khet out of 860 ropanis. Similarly, Linkhas own 219 ropanis of Bari. Among 100 sample households, 20 households are Koyangwa who own 181 ropanies of Alaichi Bari which is the largest amount in the study area.

Hence, we can see that there is little difference of land holding among different sub-clans of Yakkhas although they all are exploiting the same ecological niche. The land holding is the indicator of economic status of the Yakkha people of the study area.

6.4.2 Animal Husbandry

Mainly, the Yakkha people of the study area keep cows, oxen, goats, pigs, buffaloes and chickens etc. About seventy years ago, they heavily depended upon the animal husbandry. They kept the cows and buffaloes in a great number. There was the practice of seasonal movement of the livestock. They had sufficient communal grazing land (Kharka). Kharka was their Kipat. They domesticated the cows and buffaloes for milk, card and ghee. But, after the eradication of the Kipat, the government took over the communal grazing land of the Yakkha people in the name of government forest or community forest. As a result due to the lack of grazing land, the number of cows and buffaloes decreased. Nowadays the Yakkha people of the study area keep few cows, goats, pigs, and chickens. Buffaloes are rarely kept.

Animal husbandry is the integral part of agriculture. To keep cow means to expect oxen from them and manure for agriculture. The oxen are used for ploughing the land. Some Yakkha people give animals to others for raising without transferring ownership. They are given on half share system locally called 'Adhiya' system. The domestic animals contribute additional income to the Yakkha people. Domestication of the goats and pigs are the good economic income for the Yakkha people in the study area. Goats are kept not for their own consumption but for the income purposes. But sometimes they sacrifice the baby goats to their local deities.

Pig is another popular and important domestic animal of Yakkha people of the study area. The pig has made an identity of the Yakkha Kirati. Domestication of pig is not only for their own consumption but also for a good income. The pig plays an important role in socio-economic as well as religious life. The pig grows faster than

other animals, so it is good for income. Generally, male pigs are castrated and reared up until one or one and half year old and they are sold out for Rs. 5000 to 7000. The female pigs are reared for giving birth of baby pig. The female pig gives the birth to the baby pig 5 to 10 at once time. A baby pig is sold out for Rs.1500 to 2500. The pigs are sacrificed and offered to the local and family deities on various festivals and ceremonial occasions of the Yakkha people in the study area. They necessarily keep some chickens in their household. There is no any single household without chickens. These are kept for economic as well as religious purposes. Chicken and eggs are required in every religious ceremony for sacrifice. Specially, they keep chickens for their own consumption.

The number of livestocks raised by the sample household of Yakkha is shown in the following table.

Table No. 8 Types and Number of Livestock Raised by Sample Household

Types of animals raised	Number	Percentage of total animals	No. of households raising particular animal	Percentage of the h.h. raising the particular animal	Average holding
Cows	72	12.92	53	53%	0.72
Oxen	113	20.28	62	62%	1.13
Buffalo	10	1.79	9	9%	0.1
Goats	225	40.39	79	79%	2.25
Pig	137	24.59	95	95%	1.37
Total	557	100	–	–	5.37

Source: Field Survey, 2010

Table 8 shows that 53% of sample households have raised cows, 62% households have oxen; 9% households have raised buffaloes, and 79% households have goats. The average holding of animals is 5.57. There are all together 557 animals raised by sample households. Out of 557 animals, there are 72 (12.92%) cows, 113 (20.28%) oxen, 10 (1.79%) buffaloes, 225 (40.39%) goats and 135 (24.59%) pigs. Among 100 sampled households, 38 households are without oxen and 12 households have one ox only.

There are few cattle and buffaloes due to the lack of grazing land but comparatively, more goats and pigs are raised than cattle or buffalo. Because it requires lesser quantity of fodder to the goats and pigs than cows and buffaloes.

6.4.3 The Subsidiary Economy

The agricultural production is the main source of income as well as animal husbandry of the Yakkha people of the study area. Income from the agricultural production is not enough to maintain the household. Due to the increasing population, the land has become scarce. Extra income is needed for the annual expenditure like clothing, salt, oil, iron implements, soap, etc. The main subsidiary source of economy of Yakkha people are generally wage labor, bamboo craft, small trade/ business, and government services.

6.4.3.1 Wage Labor and Bamboo Craft Making

The members of poor households which have inadequate land holding work as wage labor for wealthier Yakkha people of the study area during peak agricultural season. Usually, agricultural work is done on wage labor basis in the study area. The agricultural wage laboring includes ploughing the field, scraping the walls of the terraces, transplanting crops, and harvesting the crops. Generally, a male Yakkha earns Rs. 150 to 300 and women Yakkha earns Rs. 100 to Rs. 200 per day. There are

other non-agricultural wage labor opportunities too such as house building and repairing, and cutting firewood.

Bamboo craft making is also another source of income of the Yakkha people of the study area. During the off- farm season, they engage in bamboo craft making activities. The bamboo is used for making different kinds of basket like 'Doko', 'Thunse', 'Dalo', 'Nanglo' and bamboo mat like Chitra. They sell them in the local market and in the village. Sometime they exchange them with grain. (See case box 1)

Case box I: Livelihood Strategy of the Poor through Wage Labor and Bamboo craft

Hari Parsad Linkha Yakkha has only 10 ropani land and five members are in his family. His agricultural production is not enough to maintain the household. Their agricultural production has supported them only four months of the year. So wage labor and bamboo craft making is most important source of income for his household maintenance. He has kept one cow and one goat as Adhiya (sharing). He has not any oxen for plough the field. So, he borrows the oxen to plough the land and instead of that he returns wage. He engages in both agriculture and non- agricultural wage labor. In off- farm period when there is no high demand for agricultural wage labor, he engages in bamboo craft making. He makes different kinds of bamboo basket and bamboo mat (chitra). He cut the firewood and brings fodder from his own private forest. They need 90 bhari of firewood for a year and a bhari of fodder and half bhari of firewood are required for a day. (See the detal summary of this case study in annex

6.1.3.2 Small Trade / Business

The economic condition of the Yakkha people is poor because they hesitate to sell their own agricultural production. Instead of selling them, they like to distribute freely among the neighbors. Yakkha people have some their traditional business like selling alcohol and home made- beer, Kinama (fermented boiled soybean), Duna-Tapari (leaf plates), etc. Some Yakkha households keep shops with small hotels. Consumer goods as well as tea and alcohol are available in the shops. In the past, they were dependent on the Basantapur and Mudesansare markets for their daily consumer goods but nowadays it is available in their own village. The Yakkha people are not interested

about the trade and business but opportunities for trading and businesses have grown with commercial development of Basantapur and Mudesansare markets.

6.4.3.3 Government Service

The increasing awareness towards education in recent year is helping them to adopt new economic strategies for their survival. Nowadays the Yakkha people are attracted toward the government services. Among 100 sampled households, 5 Yakkha people are working as school teachers. Out of five, two are males and three are females. The school teacher earns about Rs. 11,000 per month which is relatively high amount of cash. It is a permanent source of income. But except the government service, they also engage in agricultural activities, animal husbandry and trade too. (See case box II)

Case box II: Livelihood Strategy of Educated through Government Service

Mr. Magman Linkha Yakkha, occupationally he is a teacher sa well as farmer, social worker and writer too. Although, his father was British Gurkha army but he did not give continue to his father's occupation. Due to the increasing awareness toward the education, he is attracted to the government service. He seems always aware to grab the new opportunities for his better survival. Now he is living in ward No.6 near the VDC office and high school with his family. He had migrated there where he is living now. The main reasons behind the migration are quest for facilities, lack of firewood and fodder, and business purposes. He has bought a piece of land. He domesticates some animals like pigs, and goats. They have their own private forest to cut the firewood. They need 120 bhari of firewood for a year and half bhari of firewood for a day. One bhari fodder is needed for a day. 2000 liters water is required for a day. Selling alcohol, selling cardamom and teaching are there sources of income. (See the detail summary of this case study in annex No. 1, 2)

6.4.4 Economic Institution

The Yakkha people of the study area have established some savings and credit co-operatives. They have formed small groups in their community and collect same amount of money on monthly basis and save them in their collective fund. They use that collected fund in cheap interest in a circular form.

Some popular co-operative groups are: (I) Jordhara Kisan Samuha; (II) Jordhara Mahila Samuha; (III) Khibulang Mahila Samuha; (IV) Simhadabi Samuha; (V) Kholitar Samuha; (VI) Panglung Samuha and; (VII) Bagale Tole Samuha etc.

These all are the strategies of economic adaptation. It has been easy to solve the financial problem through regular savings and investment.

6.5 Forest Resources and Adaptation

There are three types of forest resources available in the study area these are: (I) community forest; (II) private forest, and (III) traditional forest

1. Community Forest:

The community forest is located on the top and bottom of the study area. In the past, it was the Kipat of the Yakkha people. It was free for all the Yakkha members. They managed and conserved themselves with their own rules and regulations. But after the eradication of the Kipat land, the government claimed the forest and prohibited the free use. But later the government gave the authority to the local community to manage and use. But more non-Yakkha people are settled near the forest area. The non- Yakkha community are benefited more than indigenous Yakkhas.

There are some rules and regulations of the community forestry to use the timber and fodder. The community forest is opened in Falgul, Chaitra and Baisakha to cut the timber and firewood by paying some amount of cost. But collecting of the dried and

dead branches of the tree is free. Similarly, Rs. 5 should be paid per one cattle for the fodder. But Yakkha people are not interested with the community forestry because they fulfill their needs by their own private forest although they depend upon the community forest for timbers for the house construction.

2. Private Forest:

The private forest has been covered by Utis (*Alnus Nepalensis*) trees. The private forest has not exact location. Almost all of the Yakkha households have some amount of the private forest. Cardamom is cultivated in the private forest. Most of the Yakkha people depend upon their own private forest for firewood, timber and fodder because it is nearer than community forest. The households which do not have private forests buy trees from the neighbor household for firewood.

3. Traditional Forest:

There is a protected traditional forest which is called 'Daskat' forest. It is a kind of religious forest. It is located in western part of the village. There is a social rule to protect the 'Daskat' forest. It is not allowed to cut the forest resources like firewood, timber, and fodder. If anybody breaks the rule, he/she will be socially boycotted, but it may be used for the collective purposes.

Forest has always been an inseparable part of subsistence activity of the people which not only provides firewood, timber, herbs, and grazing lands for livestock but also helps protect the natural calamities such as soil erosion, landslides and flood (Bajracharya: 1983, cited by Bhattarai). The Yakkha people of the study area are heavily dependent on the forest resources. The livelihood of the Yakkha is directly or indirectly related with the forest resources. Forest provides the Yakkha people like timber to make windows, doors, pillars, and furniture for the housing purposes, farm implements and tools like plough, harrows, long-handled levelers as well as various

forest products like fruits, honey, bird, wild animals, bamboo shoots, mushrooms, herbs, etc.

The agriculture is impossible without animal husbandry. The animal husbandry is integral part of the agriculture system of Yakkha people. But the number of livestock depends upon the availability of forest resources. The forest provides grass and fodder for animal. The organic manure of animal dung contributes to the productivity of the land. Agricultural production is the main sources of the Yakkha people for their livelihood.

The Yakkha people manage the wild foods at the time of food deficit. Some of the wild plants and fruits consumed by Yakkha people as supplementary foods are mushroom, Sisnu (*girardinia pulmate*), wild yams, niguros, Aiselu (berries), Katus, etc. Medicinal plants from the forest are also important. They use various wild plants for medicine. For example, the bitter leaves of Chiraito are used to treat fever. From the long interaction with the forest resources, the Yakkha people of the study area posses valuable knowledge about the forest products and their uses.

Table No. 9 Some Forest Plant Species Used by the Yakkha People in the Study Area

S.N.	Use	No. of Species
1	Firewood	25
2	Timber	15
3	Medicine	20
4	Food	25
5	Ritual	25
6	Animal feeding	16
7	Erosion control	4

Source: Field Work, 2010

Table 9 shows that the forest resources are helping them to survive in the ecological constraints and difficulties. Their indigenous knowledge is helping them to recognize the various forest plant species to use for the household purposes. From the all above description, it is clear that the forest has played a vital role for the adaptation of the Yakkha people. The forest provides not only timber, firewood, and herbs but also helps to grow the agricultural production which is the main source of the Yakkha people for their livelihood.

6.6 Foreign Employment: An Alternative for Adaptation

Foreign employment is a good source of economy of the Yakkha people of the study areas. A person earns about 15 to 20 thousand per month in Qatar, similarly about 10 to 15 thousand per month in Malaysia. Almost all the households of the study area have some members working in the foreign country. Among 100 sampled household, there are working fifteen members in Qatar, ten in Malaysia, six in Dubai, six in Saudi Arabia, three in Afaganisthan, one in Kuwait and one in Bahrain. Going abroad has become a culture for the Yakkha community of the study area because every Yakkha male has gone abroad at least once in his life period. Mainly, most of the Yakkha people are working in the Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Dubai, and also in Malaysia. They have been attracted toward the foreign employment for a very long time which can be Judged from the reports of Kirati migration to India and Sikkim after the invasion of Prithivi Narayan Shah (Regmi 1978,).

External labor and army service are the traditional forms of migration, caused by ecological necessities and can be considered as the way of coping with the food gap in the mountain and hill regions of Nepal (Dahal, 1999). The Yakkha people of the study area are attracted by three types of foreign employments. The first target is British army, second is Indian army and the third is in Gulf countries. The recruitment

for service in the British Gorkha army is the traditional employment and economically important. British Gorkha enrollment is the first target of the youth of Yakkha community. The reason behind the attraction in the British army recruitment are good salary during the service, good pension after the service and welfare support and health care services. Their second target is the Indian army recruitment, although in terms of income it is second best to them. Most of the old Yakkha men are British and Indian ex- serviceman. Among 100 sampled households 9 Yakkhas are Indian ex-servicemen and two are British ex- serviceman. The Indian army is more common source of employment than British army. The pension for a retired regular soldier from the Indian army is Rs. 6000 per month and from the British army is Rs. 20000. After their retirement from the service of India or British army, they come back in their own village and give the continuity to the traditional agricultural occupation. (See the case box III)

Case box III: Livelihood Strategy of Yakkha through Foreign Employment

Mr. Tula Ram Chhala Yakkha is an old ex- serviceman of Indian army. He had joint it in 2012 B.S. and retired in 2030 B.S. when he retired from service, he did not like to move out from his native place, but he bought some land and gave continue to the agriculture. Relatively, he has more amount of the land which he had managed after the service of Indian army. He is an old man (Budouli) of the area so he has high prestige in his area. He arranges regularly the local pooja. For the pooja, he collects some amount of the money from every household and spends to buy some chickens or baby goat or pig which is needed for the sacrifice. Now he has six members in the family. Agriculture is his main livelihood strategy but his agricultural production is not support them for a whole year. At the time of food deficit, he manages it by his pension. Cardamom farming is also a good source of the income for his family. He cut the firewood in his own private forest. It needs 100 bhari of firewood for a year and half bhari of firewood for a day. (See the detail summary of this case study in annex No. 1. 3)

In the case of Yakkha people, the state land policy is a major cause to go to the foreign. But population growth, lack of education, and lack of economic opportunities in the village are also other factors. Foreign employment has become an alternative adaptation for Yakkha people. It is closely related with the source of livelihood. Agriculture is the main strategy for adaptation of the Yakkha people. Agriculture depends upon the land holding. In the past, the Yakkha have their own Kipat so the lands were sufficient for the agricultural production. The agricultural production was sufficient for their livelihood. But in the name of land reform, the government eradicated and claimed the Kipat of the Yakkha. On the other hand, due to the increasing population, the size of land holding started to be decreased. In this situation, their livelihood was difficult to be supported by the agricultural production alone. So the youth Yakkhas started to be recruited for service in the British Gorkha army and Indian army. The remittance from the British Gorkha services helped their livelihood. Although still the Gorkha army recruitment is the most desirable occupation among the Yakkha. But nowadays British army recruitment has become difficult due to the strict educational examination. So nowadays the youth Yakkha males are attracted to new destination of the employment like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Malaysia, Bahrain, Afghanistan, etc.

Seasonal migration to the India for wage labor is also another source of income of the Yakkha people. A person earns Rs. 200 to 400 per day. Mainly, their destination is the hill side of north-east India like Assam Nagaland, Sikkim etc. They go to India seasonally for 2-3 to 6 months a year. They go to the India to find employment in a wide range of activities like wood-cutting, agricultural labor, house construction and so on. They bring some money from the seasonal migration and fulfill their financial problems.

In this way, the Yakkha people are taking opportunities of the foreign employment for a long time. It is helping them to survive in the given ecological setting through

the financial support. Hence, foreign employment has become an alternative adaptation of the Yakkha people of the study area.

6.7 Alaichi Farming: New Strategy of Adaptation

Cardamom farming is a newly started cash crop developed by the Yakkha people in the study area. Alaichi is a kind of plant which needs shade of Utis tree in which it survives and produces fruits. Irrigated lands are better for cultivation of the Alaichi. It is harvested by using a special tool in September and processed by smoking in a kiln. The Alaichi cultivation had started in Madi Mulkharka across the Maya river about 30 years ago. The culture had diffused to Tamafok later. They recognized the value of the Alaichi and started to cultivate.

The Alaichi farming has become a supplementary source of economy for their subsistence of the Yakkha people. They are getting a good economic income from the Alaichi farming. The price of a mound (40kg) is Rs. 15000. Comparatively, it is a higher price than other crops like rice or maize. As described by Dahal (1985), the cash value of cardamom is 300% greater than rice and 500% greater than Maize (Russell, 1992).

Cardamom farming is also a best utilization of the land. They have intensified the uncultivated land into Bari for the growing of cardamom. In other words, they have cultivated the Alaichi in those lands where paddy or maize farming is not possible. (Such as sloppy land and both side of the rivulets). Due to the increasing value of cardamom they have begun to give up the paddy cultivation and started to cardamom cultivation. Alaichi farming is a popular farming of the Yakkha people in the study area. Among 1851 ropanis of land of 100 sampled households, 517 ropanis (27.76%) land have been covered by cardamom cultivated land (see table No.7) The poor Yakkha people, who have not any cardamom cultivated land practice sharing

cardamom farming. There is also the opportunity for wage labor at the harvesting time for the poor Yakkha people.

The economic income of the Yakkha people has increased due to the Alaichi farming. The forest size has also increased. The increased cultivation of cardamom over the previous 30 years has important implications for forest cover because the shade requirements of the crop has led to the planting of Utis (*Alnus repalensis*) trees. Most of the study areas have been covered by the cultivated forest. The expansion of the forest size is becoming the most useful to the Yakkha people as a source of timber, firewood, and fodder. Due to the increasing forest, the frequency of hunting has also increased in the recent years. Hence, on the one hand, they are getting a good income from the cardamom. On the other hand, they are also getting good income by selling the timber.

But nowadays, most of the cardamom plants have started to die. So the production of the cardamom is decreasing in the study area.

6.8 Tea Plantation: New Economic Possibilities

The Yakkha people of the study area have started to plant tea as cash crop. They have planted tea at higher altitude areas by cutting the forest. They have planted tea on a trial. Some Yakkha households have planted it in their private land. But it has not been considered as an income-earning opportunity. They produce some amount of tea and distribute to all the neighbors for testing. They are getting success on tea farming. They hope that it will be a good source of income in the future.

CHAPTER - 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDING

Human ecology is the study of human interactions with the environment. The adaptation is the central concept in ecological studies. It is a dynamic process because neither the organism nor its environment are constant. New problems are continually arising and new relationships are being established to provide solutions. This is a human ecological study of indigenous Kirat Yakkha people of eastern Nepal. The objectives of this study are to find out the relationship between the cultural system and the natural environment and explore the adaptation of the Yakkha community. Basically, different models and theories developed by various scholars in different periods of time for studying particular human groups have been reviewed. The universe included 219 households of the study area and 100 sample households are selected from the universe. Here both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected through various techniques and they have been analyzed using both descriptive and statistical methods of the analysis.

Tamfok village of the Tamafok VDC of Sankhuwashava is the study area. Average household size is 4.96. The total population of 100 sampled households is 577 with 302 males and 275 females. The average family size is 5.77. Among the total population, the age group between 15-39 occupies the greatest portion that is 42.47%, about 28.43% of the population are aged below 14 years and 8.84% above 60 who are generally considered dependent or economically inactive population. Among 100 sampled households, 6.65% males and 17.10% females are cannot read and write. 26.12% males and 16.15% females' population have the primary education, 23.99% male and 19% female have up to secondary

education, 5.93 % males and 5.70 % females population have passed SLC and total 3.08 % male and female population have higher education.

Socio- cultural feature of the Yakkha community is largely shaped by the given environment. They prepare different varieties of food by the agricultural production. They use to consume Jand (home- made beer) for Tiffin. It is more effective to kill the thirst. They drink Raksi (alcohol) for relaxation and in winter season they consume more to keep their bodies warm. The houses of the Yakkha are generally made by stone and mud with tine and tile roof. There is a porch in front of the house with wooden shutters which is very useful to be protected from the cold. The traditional Yakkha houses were made of wooden pillars. Many trees were required to build the traditional “Tande Ghar” for the pillars. In the past there were sufficient forest and limited population but later due to the growth of population the number of households increased and the size of forest started to decrease. So, in that changing ecological condition, the Yakkha people developed a new housing strategy and started to build the house using by mud and stone.

They use to worship to the pregnant women’s and her unborn babies. The purification and name- giving ceremony is performed four days after birth for the male child and three days for the female child. Arranged marriages and love marriages are the common among the Yakkha community. After the daughter gives birth to childrens “Bagdata” ceremony is performed among the Yakkha. It is a transformation of the all responsibilities of the religious customs of the daughter to her husband’s family. In the Yakkha society the death purification ceremony is performed after three days for female and four days for male. Yakkha people are non- Hindu tribal group but the state imposed the Hindu religions like Dashain, and Tihar. But they celebrate Dashain and Tihar in their own indigenous way. Nowadays, they are giving up the Hindu religious practices and have started to practice their own Kirat religion and festivals like Chasuwa

(Udhauli), and Uchyang (Ubhauli). “Manghangba”, “Chhamba”, and “Bijuwa” are the religious teachers of Yakkha. “Pangchyang”, and “Oaame” are the household worships and “Uchyang”, “Chasuwa”, and “Ten Tamma” are the collective worships. These all are closely related with the natural environment. Different kinds of plants like Titepati (*Artemisia vulgaris*), Kaulo (*mechilus gammieana*), Ghungring (a kind of plant), Dubo (Bermuda grass), different kind of flowers like Metchengfung (a kind of flower), and Sambafung (a kind of flower) are required in the rituals. Banana leaf, leaf plates of Sal (*Shorea Robusta*) are required each and every ceremony. Bamboo and its crafts like Chitra, Kokro, Perengo, Thunse, Doko, and Tongwa are the integral part of the Yakkha people. Forest provides them timber for house construction, farming implements and tools, firewood, fodder as well as various forest products like fruits, honey, wild animal for meat, bamboo shoots, mushroom, herbs etc.

There is interdependence among different ethnic and caste groups like Yakkha, Chhetri, Gurung, Kami, and Damai in the study area. All are the agriculturalists and almost all are involved in agriculture and animal husbandry. The Chhetri people produce millet and maize and they domesticate buffaloes. The Yakkha people buy millet and buffaloes from the Chhetri for consumption. Chhetri people also buy goats from the Yakkha people. The exchange pattern among different cast/ ethnic group has made them easy to adapt with their environment. They are maintaining relationship in order to survive in the given ecological setting. All those caste and ethnic groups exploit the same ecological niche. Therefore, the relationship of competition also exists among them to exploit natural resources and political power.

Agriculture is the main livelihood strategy of the Yakkha people. They cultivate the crops according to the environmental condition. The same crops are transplanted at the different times. They use simple technology for the agricultural production like plough, hoe, harrow, sickle etc. paddy, maize, millet,

wheat, potato, and soybean are the major crops grown in the study area. They practice the mixed cropping system. In the past the Yakkha had a lot of communal Kipat land and the agricultural productions were sufficient for their livelihood but later in the name of land reform, the government converted the kipat land into the Raikar (taxable). On the other hand, due to the population growth the size of the land started to be decreased. In this situation, their livelihood was difficult to be supported by the agricultural production alone. So the Yakkha people developed new survival strategies. Animal husbandry is not only the supplementary to agriculture but also the source of economic income of the Yakkha people. They use to keep only a few cows and buffaloes because all the forest or grazing lands are covered by cardamom farming. There is not sufficient fodder and grazing land for the big animals like buffalo and cow. Mainly, they keep some goats and pigs. They are easy to keep because small amount of the fodder is sufficient to feed them. Agricultural production and domestic animals are also required in each ritual.

The main subsidiary sources of income are generally wage labor, bamboo craft making, small trade / business, and government services. The increasing awareness toward the education in recent year is helping them to adapt with new economic strategy for their survival. The Yakkha people have developed some saving co- operative in the study area. It has made them easy to solve the financial problem. Foreign employment has become an alternative adaptation for the Yakkha people. Almost all of the Yakkha households of the study area have some members working in the foreign country. Most of the old Yakkha man are British and Indian ex- serviceman but New young generation are attracting to the new destination of the employment like Saudi, Kuwait, Malaysia etc.

Cardamom farming is a new started cash crop of the Yakkha people of the study area. It has been supplementary for their subsistence. They are getting a good

economic income from the cardamom farming. The increased cultivation of Cardamom over the previous 30 years has important implications for forest cover because the shade requirements of the crop has led to the planting of Utis (*Alnus Nepalensis*) trees. They are also getting a good income by selling timber. The Yakkha people have started to plant the Tea as a new cash crop. They have planted Tea on a trial.

7.2 MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

Based on the empirical findings, a few conclusions have been developed as follows:

(I) The whole cultural system of the Yakkha people is closely related with their immediate ecological condition. Their cultural system helps them to interact with nature for their livelihood and survival.

(II) Land is the principal resource for the livelihood of the Yakkhas but the limited land holding pattern among them is the consequence of the past unjust state land policy and growth of population.

(III) Commencement of the new survival strategies is the cultural response of Yakkhas which are triggered by the inadequacy of the income from traditional agriculture based on limited landholding.

(IV) Despite the fact that different social groups have exploited the same ecological niche in a competitive way, their inter- relationship is indispensable for their livelihood and survival in their natural environment.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX - 1

1.1 Case Study of Hari Prasad Linkha Yakkha

Hari Parsad Linkha Yakkha has only 10 ropani land and five members are in his family. His agricultural production is not enough to maintain the household. Their agricultural production has supported them only four months of the year. So wage labor and bamboo craft making is most important source of income for his household maintenance. He has kept one cow and one goat as Adhiya (sharing). He has not any oxen for plough the field. So, he borrows the oxen to plough the land and instead of that he returns wage. He engages in both agriculture and non- agricultural wage labor. In off- farm period when there is no high demand for agricultural wage labor, he engages in bamboo craft making. He makes different kinds of bamboo basket and bamboo mat (chitra). He cut the firewood and brings fodder from his own private forest. They need 90 bhari of firewood for a year and a bhari of fodder and half bhari of firewood are required for a day.

Summary

1. Household Composition

S.N	Relation to Head	Age	Sex	Education
1	self	48	M	Illiterate
2	wife	49	F	Illiterate
3	soon	18	M	Literate
4	soon	7	M	Illiterate

5	daughter	4	F	Illiterate
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2. Animal Husbandry

S.N	Animal	Number	Remarks
1	cow	1	Adhiya
2	goat	1	Adhiya
3	pig	1	
4	chicken	3	

3. Land Possession

S.N	Type Of Land	Quantity
1	Khet	6
2	Bari	4
3	Alaichi Bari	-

4. Production

S.N	Types of Crops	Quantity	Praise
1	rice	4 muri	Rs. 4000
2	millet	2 muri	Rs. 2000
3	maize	2 muri	Rs. 2000

1. Source of Income:

- Wage Labor
- Bamboo Craft Making

2. Consumption of Jand and Raksi:

- 7 Mana of Jand

3. Consumption in Special Occasion

- Dashain:-

Meat:	Rs. 2000
Jand:	10 pathi
Raksi:	5 bottles
Rice:	25 kg

-Tihar:-

Rice	15 kg
Jand	5 pathi
Raksi	2 bottles

-Maghe Sankranti:-

Jand	4 pathi
Raksi	2 bottles

-Saune Sankranti:-

Jand	2 pathi
Raksi	2 bottles

5. ANNUL EXPENDITURE:

S.N	Particulars	Quantity	Approximate cost
1	Rice	50 kg	15000 per year
2	Salt	10 kg.	3000 per year
3	Oil	18 liters	2070 per year
4	Cloth	-	5000 per year
5	Spice	-	180 per year

4. Agricultural Labor for a Year:

Rice:

- Planting	20
- Harvesting	10

Maize:

- Planting	10
- Harvesting	5

Millet:

- Planting	15
- Harvesting	10

1.2 Case Study of Magman Linkha Yakkha

Mr. Magman Linkha Yakkha, occupationally he is a teacher as well as farmer, social worker and writer too. Although, his father was British Gurkha army but he did not give continue to his father's occupation. Due to the increasing awareness toward the education, he attracted to the government service. He seems always aware to grab the new opportunities for his better survival. Now he is living in ward No.6 near the VDC office and high school with his family. He had migrated there where he is living now. The main reasons behind the migration are quest for facilities, narrow place, lack of firewood and fodder, and business purposes. He has bought a peace of land. He domesticates some animals like pigs, and goats. They have their own private forest to cut the firewood. They need 120 bhari of firewood for a year and half bhari of firewood for a day. One bhari fodder is needed for a day. 2000 liters water is required for a day. Selling alcohol, selling cardamom and teaching are there sources of income.

Summary

1. Household Composition

S.N	Relation to head	Age	Sex	Education
1	self	39	M	Literate
2	wife	35	F	Literate
3	son	14	M	Literate
4	son	11	M	Literate
5	daughter	10	F	Literate

2. Animal Husbandry

S.N	Animal	Number
1	Goat	2
2	Pig	5
3	chicken	10

3. Land Possession

S.N.	Types of Land	Quantity
1	khet	6
2	bari	13
3	Alaichi bari	9

3. Production

S.N.	Types of Crop	Quantity	Price
1	Rice	7 muri	Rs. 7000
2	Maze	3 muri	Rs. 2000
3	Alaichi	60 kg	Rs. 20000

4 Source of Income:

- Teaching
- Selling Animal
- Selling Alcohol
- Selling Cardamom

5 Consumption of Jand and Raksi in a Normal Day:

- 1 Pathi of Jand
- 1 bottle of Raksi

6. Consumption in Special Occasion

S.N.	Occasion	Jand	Raksi
1	Dashain	12 pathi	12 bottle
2	Tihar	12 pathi	12 bottle
3	Maghe Sankranti	4 pathi	4 bottle
4	Saune Sankranti	4 pathi	-
5	Uvouli	4 pathi	3 bottle

7. Annual Expenditure

S.N.	particulars	quantity	Approximate cost
1	Rice	480 kg	15000 per year
2	Salt	24 kg	480 per year
3	Oil	60 litres	2700 per year
4	Sugar	30 kg	2400 per year
5	Cloth	-	10000 per year
6	Medicine	-	5000 per year
7	Spices	-	5000 per year

8. Annual Worship

S.N.	Puja	Rice	Jand	Money
1	Sansari	1 muthi	-	Rs. 10
2	Debi Puja	1 muthi	-	Rs. 10
3	Uchyang	1 mana	1 mana	Rs. 15

9. Agriculture Labour Required for a Year:

- Maize:

- Planting 10 people
- Harvesting 5 people

- Cardamom:

- Weeding and Harvesting 30 people

1.3 Case Study of Tula Ram Chhala Yakkha

Mr. Tula Ram Chhala Yakkha is an old ex- serviceman of Indian army. He had joint it in 2012 B.S. and retired in 2030 B.S. when he retired from service, he did not like to move out from his native place, but he bought some land and gave continue to the agriculture. Relatively, he has more amount of the land which he had managed after the service of Indian army. He is an old man (Budouli) of the area so he has high prestige in his area. He arranges regularly the local pooja. For the pooja, he collects some amount of the money from every household and spends to buy some chickens or baby goat or pig which is needed for the sacrifice. Now he has six members of the family. Agriculture is his main livelihood strategy but his agricultural production is not support them for a whole year. At the time of food deficit, he manages it by his pension. Cardamom farming is also a good source of the income for his family. He cut the firewood in his own private forest. It needs 100 bhari of firewood for a year and half bhari of firewood for a day.

Summary

1. Household Composition

S.N.	Relation to head	Age	Sex	Education	Remarks
1	Self	76	M	Literate	Pensioner
2	Wife	70	F	Illiterate	-
3	Son	41	M	Literate	-
4	Daughter-in-law	35	F	Literate	-
5	Grand Daughter	12	F	Literate	-
6	Grand Son	6	M	Illiterate	-

2. Animal husbandry

S.N.	Animal	Number
1	Oxen	2
2	Goat	4
3	Pig	2
4	Chicken	10

3. Land Possession

S.N.	Types of Land	Quantity
1	Khet	29
2	Bari	3
3	Alaichi Bari	10
4	Chiya Bari	7

4. Production

S.N.	Types of Crops	Quantity	Price
1	Rice	15 muri	Rs.22500
2	Millet	3 muri	Rs. 4200
3	Maize	2 muri	Rs. 3400
4	Wheat	10 pathi	Rs. 600
5	Cardamom	100 kg	Rs. 36000
6	Soybean	2 muri	Rs.3200
7	potato	15 pathi	Rs. 1200

5. Source of Income:

- Pension
- Selling Animal
- Selling Cardamom

4. Consumption of Jand and Raksi in a Normal Day:

- 1 pathi of Jand
- 1 bottle of Raksi

6. Consumption in Special Occasion

S.N.	Occasions	Jand	Raksi	Rice
1	Dashain	2 muri	30 bottles	
2	Tihar	1 muri	10 bottle	2 pathi (for sel roti)
3	Maghe sankranti	10 pathi	1 bottle	1 pathi (for sel roti)

7. Annual Expenditure

S.N.	Particulars	Quantity	Approximate Cost
1	Rice	600 kg	Rs.18000
2	Salt	120 kg	Rs. 2400
3	Oil	120 liters	Rs.14400
4	Clothes	-	Rs. 5000
5	Spices	-	Rs. 500

8. Agricultural labor Required for a Year:

- Rice:

- Planting 8
- Harvesting 4

- Maize:

- Planting 4
- Harvesting 3

- Millet:

- Planting 20
- Harvesting 3

ANNEX- 2

Questionnaire for Household Survey

1. Household No. :

2. The Respondent:

Name: Age: Sex: M/F

Occupation:

3. Head of the Household:

Name: Age: Sex: M/F

Occupation:

4. Numbers of the Family Members:

5. Detail about the Family Members:

S.N	Name	Age	Sex	Relation to Head	Education	Occupation	Remarks
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							

6. How much land do you have?

S.N.	Types of land	Quantity(in ropani)			Remarks
		Owned	Rented-in	Rented-out	
1.	Khet(wet land)	Owned	Rented-in	Rented-out	
2.	Bari(terrace land)	Owned	Rented-in	Rented-out	
3.	Pakho(uncultivated land)	Owned	Rented-in	Rented-out	
4.	Others				

7. What do you grow in your land?

S.N.	Major types of crops	Production(in muri)	Remarks
1.	Paddy		
2.	millet		
3.	wheat		
4.	buckwheat		
5.	maize		
6.	others		
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

12. Is the food production sufficient?

a) Yes

b) No

- If yes, do you sell the surplus?

a) Yes

b) no

- If no, for how many months is your household food deficit?

a) 2 months b) 3 months c) 6 months

13) How does the family manage in the food deficit?

a) Wage laboring ()

b) Selling livestock ()

c) By taking loan ()

d) Others ()

14) What types of animal do you have?

S.N.	Types of animals	Number	Remarks
1.	Cows		
2.	Ox		
3.	Buffalos		
4.	Goats		
5.	Pigs		
6.	Others		

15. Do you sell the livestock?

a) Yes

b) No

- If yes, how is your yearly income by the selling the livestock?

a) Rs.

16. Do you practice the seasonal movement of the animal?

a) Yes

b) No

- If yes, when and where?

- Ans.....

17. What are the other sources of income of your family?

a) Agricultural production ()

b) Animal husbandry ()

c) Trade ()

d) Governmental job ()

e) Non- Farm income ()

- Liquor Sale ()

- Herb Sell ()

f) Remittance ()

ANNEX- 3

2. Check lists for the Key Informants:

Name: _____ Age: _____

Sex: _____

Address: _____

Social status: _____

- History of settlement in the study area
 - What is the traditional name of the village?
 - Is Tamafok village the traditional place of the yakkhas?
- History of migration of various ethnic and cast groups.
 - Has anybody migrated from this village?
 - Has anybody migrated to this village?
 - Reason for such migration?
- Ethnic history
 - Who are the yakkhas?
 - Where did they come from?
- Clan organization
 - Who were the ancestors of the yakkhas?
 - How many sub-clans are existed in the yakkhas?
 - How is the marital situation among the clan group?
 - How is the relation among the sub-clan?

Socio- Cultural Features:

- About the consumption pattern

- What they eat as a normal food?
- Does there exist any traditional food?
- What do they use to prepare the food?
- About the Settlement pattern
- What types of house do they have?
- What types of materials do they use to build the house?
- How is the interior design of the yakkhas house?
- About the dressing pattern
- Do they have any traditional dress?
- What are they made from?
- Life cycle ceremonies:
- Who are the participants in all those occasions?
- What type of interaction and material exchange pattern occurs among them?
- Annual poojas(worships) and religious works:
- What types of annual or regular poojas are there?
- Who are involved in such occasions?
- If there any relation of such poojas with immediate ecological condition?
- What are the socio-cultural, religious and economic institution are existed in the community?

Inter- ethnic Relation:

- What kinds of relation exist between other cast/ethnic groups?
- What kind of exchange pattern occurs between them? Like labor, material etc.
- What kind of socio-economic and cultural changes are taking place due to such interaction?