CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Socio-economic condition refers to that condition through which we can assess the overall status (social & economic) of a particular community or an ethnic group. The study of socio-economic condition reveals the genuine picture of the people being studied in a particular area. It covers a wide range of socio-economic aspects like economy, occupation, income, people's level of education, family system etc. Through the analysis of these aspects we can know the socio-economic condition of a particular community or an ethnic group. In fact, socio-economic condition is generally a vague concept, however, the researcher has endeavored to make a simple analysis of aforementioned aspects in order to complete the proposed study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Sikkim, the tiny and beautiful state of the India union, is located in the Eastern Himalayas. It is bounded in the West by Nepal, Tibet in the North, West-Bengal (Sate of India) in the South, and by Bhutan in the East. Thus, despite its small size, it has three international boundaries with Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet.

Sikkim is somewhat rectangular in shape, stretching 113km. from North to South and 64 km from East to West. On the world map, it lies between the latitude of 27-28^o North and longitude of 88-89^o East. It has an area of 7096sq km. with the population of 540,493 as per the latest census 2001¹. For the administrative convenience, this small state has been divided into four district viz. North district, South district, East district and West district. Each district has its own district headquarters. For the North

-

¹ Census Department: Government of Sikkim 2001

district, the headquarter is at Mangan, for South at Namchi, for West at Gyalshing and for East at Gangtok. Gangtok is also the state capital of Sikkim.

Sikkim is a junction of different ethnic groups having their own way of lives. Among them, Limboo is an important ethnic group of Sikkim. However, there is no authentic record to prove that Sikkim is the land of T-song (Limboo). But, it may be claimed that they are the oldest inhabitants of Sikkim because, several references can be found on different literatures about the Limboos. Limboos have their own language, which is based on Tibeto-Burman language and has its own script. Limboos are sparsely populated in all the districts of Sikkim. But the West district has got maximum concentration of these people. About 45% of the total Limboo population is found in the west district alone. This study primarily focuses on the Limboos of Luchok-Salangdang Gram Panchayat Unit.

The settlement pattern of Limboo in the study area are clustered and dispersed type. Especially in Nalboo Goan, their settlements are clustered because of their traditional communal affiliations. The socio-economic status plays vital role in their life and activities. Generally Limboo villages are situated on the slopes of hills and are known as bustee. The houses have generally, rectangular ground walls raised upto 5 feet to 6 feet and above that wall is another storey with a rectangular roof with winged flaps at the two narrow sides. The ground walls are of stone which are well plastered with mud or cement and the roof is covered with tin. Beside this, there are few buildings. One and two storey houses are quite common in this village.

Agriculture is the most important sources of income of Limboos. They are generally mixed farmers such as, agriculture and horticulture. Mixed farming or occupation is the main characteristics of almost all Limboo people. Their primary occupation is agriculture with horticulture and livestock rearing. Mostly Limboo are small and marginal farmers and their economic conditions in general are far from satisfactory. Very small number of Limboos is in government service. Similarly, very few number of Limboos have carried on other type of jobs such as, business, trade and NGOs. Both of these figures are negligible. The Limbo women are also involved in various economic activities such as, sale of local 'wine' and 'Jand' (made out of maize and millet). But, they are not so efficient as compared with the other women doing the same business. Besides this, they are also involved in farming activities, cattle rearing etc. in order to supplement their household income.

The social structure of Limboo is distinct. They are found in several groupings of clans. There are 16 major clans and 218 sub-clans among the Limboo in Sikkim². The marriage ceremony is preferred within their own community, as far as possible, excepting own clan and blood relation. The system of marriage is quite different form other community because they have a distinct culture and own faiths. Most of the acceptable marriage is arranged but now-a-days this sort of marriage is getting rare.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study is mainly based on the socio-economic condition of the single ethnic group i.e. Limboo of Sikkim, particularly that of Lungchok-Salangdang GPU. The Limboo have their own traditional culture and

-

² Anghohang, K.S., Gaunjee Thar, Hangpang 1978

social organization. But all these have been disappearing and changing in these days mainly due to modernization. As a result, the whole traditional way of life of the Limboo people is changing. Changes can be seen on their family type, marriage and language. This study has attempted to document an ethnographic picture of Limboo people in Sikkim, particularly family, marriage, economy, Religious and life-cycle ceremonies which may contribute to preserve the state culture in general and Limboo culture in particular. Apart from this, the Limboo are the oldest inhabitants of Sikkim, without knowing their social structure and economic conditions, the status of Sikkimes people is incomplete. This sort of study is essential to know the social-economic condition of the people. The present study also intends to find out why they have become economically poor and what is their status in the society and in the state.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The basic objectives of this study was to conduct socio-economic survey among the Limboo people of Sikkim, particularly that of the Limboo people of Lungchok-Salangdang GPU of west district to find out their socio-economic status. The main objectives of this study were as follows:

- To identify the existing socio-economic condition of Limboo of the study area.
- ❖ To find out interaction between Limboo and other community of the study area.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study of socio-economic status of each ethnic group is most important for introducing itself to the outside world. Likewise, the study of socio-economic status of the Limboo people in Sikkim is also

important for introducing these people to other community. From this kind of study we can know that a particular community is developed or underdeveloped. Apart from this, this research study might be helpful for those who intend to carry out similar type of study in future.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

Like any other social research, this study is also bounded by some limitations. The following are the main limitations of the study:

- ❖ Firstly, the study area is small, only a single community group i.e. Limboo has been selected. So, this study may not represent the Limboo of the entire Sikkim.
- Secondly, due to the shortage of time and resources this study has been confined to a selective aspect of Limboo economy and society.
- ❖ Thirdly, it is a preliminary exploratory research study, it has not tried to test any working hypothesis. It is purely empirical and descriptive in nature.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Various writers, both indigenous and foreigners have carried out various ethnographic studies in Sikkim. Some of the relevant studies have been reviewed in this chapter. Most of these reviewed studies have focused in the demographic behavior, socio-economic and cultural heritage of Sikkimese people.

Datta (1991)³, writes in his book that, "the present population of Sikkim is primarily composed of Lepchas, Bhutais, and Nepalese. Beside these castes, there are several tribes normally enumerated as Kiratis, among them the Limboos, Sherpas Tamangs, Rais, Magars, Gurungs are important ethnic groups of Sikkim. Mainly Limboos are enumerated as Hindus, though some Limboos are still found as animists in the interior part of Sikkim". They believe that they are the indigenous people of Sikkim. In fact, they are believed to have been immigrants, and are identified with a region covering Eastern Nepal and Western Sikkim, traditionally called Limbuwan. Though Limboos are regarded equal by other middle caste Nepalese, yet they are not completely assimilated into the Nepali caste hierarchy. At present, the Limboos want to retain their own identity because they have their own language and traditional culture.

Chemjong (1967)⁴, in his book 'Kirat Itihas' states that "Limboo, belong to Kirat tribe. The word 'Kirat' is derived from 'Kirat', 'Kiryat' or 'Kirjath', which means a fort or town in Moabite language of Mediteranean regions. When the population grew, they built many forts

³ Datta Amal, Sikkim, Since Independence, Mittal Publication New Delhi, 1991

⁴ Chemjoni Iman Singh, Kirat Itihas (The History of Kirat) in Nepali

and towns which, are called 'Kiriat-hime', 'Kiryat-yarim', Kirjath-araba' in that religion. Later this world become Keretite or Kerite tribe. In this way the word became 'Kirat' tribe was developed and slowly the Kirat tribe migrated towards eastern region of the world, during 1049 B.C. The origin of Kirat people of Nepal and North Eastern India begins from the combination of three races such as, the Khambonbas or Khambos, the Tansangthas or the Mongols, and the Munaphens or the Chinese". In this book he also noticed the culture and customs of Limboo.

Subba (1989)⁵, wrote about the marriage system between Kirati people. He noticed that "Rai, Limboo, Yakkha, Magar, Gurung are Kirati people. The marriage between three groups, Limboo, Rai and Yakkha is not treated as an inter-caste marriage. Because, these three Kirati groups never bothered much about caste status as their counterparts like, the Gurungs and Magars". They still have more pride in their own traditional culture than the Hindu culture. He also compared the Limboo of different places such as Darjeeling, Nepal and Sikkim. He also noted that "Sikkim and Darjeeling are socially much more complex than Nepal. Several ethnic groups reside in single village in Sikkim, whereas in Eastern Nepal the system is reversed. Only one or two ethnic groups are found in a single village".

Subba (1997)⁶, writes about the socio economic condition and cultural activities of Limboo of Sikkim. This book also attempts to collect the facts and the historical records of the Limboo people. Moreover, he also writes about the customs and traditions, festivals and auspicious days of Limboo people. He points out that "Limboo is one of the ethnic groups

⁵ Subba, T.b. Dynamics of Hill Society. Mittral Publication, Delhi 1989.

⁶ Subba, J.R. The Limboo of the Eastern Himalayas: with special Reference to Sikkim. 1999.

that has distinct culture, customs and traditions". He also mentioned that the "Limboos are one of the original inhabitants of Sikkim because the Limbuwan teritorry extended from Arun river in the west to Teesta river in the East". So that, he added, "the west, south and apart of north district of Sikkim belong to Limbuwan territory". Regarding culture, customs and traditions, he mentioned that Limboo have distinct and different customs than other caste group. The Limboos have a distinct religion of their own, which is known as "Yuma Samyo". Yumaism believes on several dieties and divinities.

Rishley (1894)⁷, writes in the Gazetter of Sikkim that "Limboo are the oldest and original inhabitants of Sikkim after Lepcha community. Because their traditional culture and customs are, to some extent, similar with lepcha". He also stated in this book that "In ancient period the Lho-Men-Sum treaty was signed between Lepcha, Limboos and Bhutia. This treaty makes them together as 'Lho' means father, 'Men' means mother and 'Sum' means son. So, the main point to sign this treaty was to create good relationship between them". In this book, he writes that "Limboos are the immigrant from Tsong province of Tibet. So in this view, Lepcha and Bhutia call them Tsong and Limboo themselves call Yakthamba. 'Yak' means fort and 'Thumba' means defender of forts". He also mentioned the traditional method of performing religious rituals and marriage system in Limboo community.

Review of above literature shows that most of them are related to the origin of Limboo in Nepal and Sikkim. This study deals with socio-economic as well as interaction of Limboo people with other people of

_

⁷ Rishley, H.H. (1894) The Gazetter of Sikkim. A government of Sikkim Publication

particular area. The above reviewed literature only shows the emergence of Limboo in Nepal and Sikkim. The specific study is not available.

Officially, Lepchas are the aboriginal of Sikkim. But the above reviewed literatures show that the Limboos are also the oldest inhabitants of Sikkim. So this study is related to the status of Limboo community in Sikkim.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with methods adopted in the study. Methodology is the main guidenline for any research work. Reliability of the study can only be established with scientific research methodology and procedure.

3.1 Research Design

The research design for this study is of descriptive type. The descriptive research study aims at describing the present state of affairs. In descriptive study we describe recent phenomenon in detail by answering "what is happening or what has happened". Hence, the present study aims at describing the present socio-economic condition of the Limboo people and their interaction with other people.

3.2 Selection of the study Area (Rationale)

For the present study, Lungchok-Salangdang Gram Panchayat Unit was selected. It lies on the South-western part of West district. The study area, being the researcher's own village, was easily accessible and that helped the researcher to conduct field survey quite easily and it also helped the researcher to know some aspects of the Limboo's social & economic life on his own. Considering his convenience, the researcher opted for the very area.

3.3 Census Method

Census method has been applied in order to study the entire Limboo population of Lungchok Salangdang Gram Panchayat Unit (GPU) which consisted of just 88 households. Census method is a method which is applied when the study area is small where house to house survey of total

population is possible. Therefore, the study included 100% of Limboo households in the study area. One senior person from each household was consulted as the informant to fill up the structured questionnaire.

3.4 Nature and Source of Data

This study was based mainly on primary datas collected at GPU level. Other supporting and background information were collected form secondary sources.

3.4.1 Sources of Primary Data

Field Survey was the basic source of primary data, so the datas were collected from the field work with the help of structured questionnaires. Responses of the Limboo household head have been regarded as the major source of field information.

3.4.2 Method of Collecting Primary Data

A detailed field survey was conducted and Limboo household heads of five wards were consulted. There was a large variation of Limboo population in the study area. All Limboo households in the designated wards have been studied.

3.4.3 Data Collection Tools

In order to collect the required and relevant primary data from the Limboo households, the following tools were used.

a) Questionnaire

A set of structured questionnaires were used to assess the socio-economic condition of the Limboo in the study area. Household heads were administered those questionnaires. In the absence of heads, other knowledgeable family members were interviewed.

b) Observation

The overall objective of the present study was to identify and describe the present socio-economic condition of the Limboo people and to study their interaction with other people, so observation was one of the basic techniques of data collection. Settlement pattern, housing condition, irrigation facilities, agricultural crops, livestock rearing, land types and other village activities were carefully observed so as to document the condition of village life and to acquire qualitative datas.

c) Field Diary

Another important tool to collect data was from field diary. A field diary was maintained to record necessary information observed during the field survey.

3.4.4 Secondary Source of Data

In order to complete the proposed study the secondary data has played an important role and without this, the research study would have remained unfinished and untouched. The secondary data has been collected form the Gram panchayat unit office, Government offices and other related departments.

In addition to this, different books and reports related to socio-economic condition of the people in Sikkim have been used. Hence, the relevant

literature, whatever and wherever available, were studied and the required information have been extracted.

3.5 Presentation and Analysis of Data

The datas collected through various techniques in the field were analyzed descriptively. To explain some quantitative data simple statistical tools such as average and percentage have been used and the datas are presented in tabular form. The collected datas were classified and tabulated to make them more clear and scientific.

CHAPTER FOUR PHYSICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL SETTING

4.1 Physical setting

4.1.1 Location

There are 43 Gram Panchayat units in the West district and out of these, only Lungchok–Salangdang GPU, located in the south western part of the district has been selected for the present study. This Gram panchayat unit is more or less rectangular is shape. It has an area of 392.1860 hectares⁸. Apart from few flat lands, the general landscape characteristics of the study area is marked by steep slopes. There are five wards in this GPU. The boundaries of different wards are mostly marked by streams, forest and roads.

4.1.2 Climate

Climate varies from place to place due to altitude. In the study area the climate is of warm temperate type. The maximum temperature recorded during the month of June to August varies between $20^{0}\text{c}-27^{0}$ c. The winter months remain comparatively cold with temperature ranging between 6^{0}c to 12^{0}c . Other months have moderate climate condition. The study area receives heavy rainfall during summer months and comparatively less or sacanty rainfall during the winter months. Rainfall is unevenly distributed, about 80% of the rainfall occurs during the summer monsoon and rest of the months receives relatively low rainfall.

 $^{^{8}}$ Land Revenue Department Statistical Profile 2000 government of Sikkim

4.2 Population

The population of the Lungchok-Salangdang GPU is composed of the members of different caste groups. The total population of the Lungchok-Salagdang GPU is 2100⁹. It can be known from this figure that this GPU is densely populated. Population density differs from place to place due to topography and climatic conditions. There is high concentration of population in the middle part than the upper and the lower part.

The major caste groups inhabiting this GPU are Bahauns, Chettris, Limboos, Rais, Bhujels and other few STs and SCs. In terms of ranking Chettris come first followed by Bahauns, Limboos, Bhujels respectively.

4.3 Economic Activities

4.3.1 Agriculture

Agriculture is the most important economic activity of this area. Due to hilly area and rugged terrain feature there are only few flat lands to cultivate on with an ease. However, the people have managed to convert hilly area into cultivatable land by practicing terracing. In this way now the farmers can cultivate on about 60% of the total area and other remaining areas are covered with forest.

Agriculture is carried out by almost all households in this area. It is the primary sources of income. The people in this area practice mixed farming. Maize, millet and paddy are the major crops of this area. Some people also cultivate cash crops-ginger, orange etc.

_

⁹ Census Department: Government of Sikkim 2001

4.3.2 Livestock

Livestock rearing is also an important source of income and the people of this area keep domestic livestock only for their own needs. But, now-adays commercialization of livestock has begun in this area. Now people are spending their money in poultry farming, they are taming goats in large number for business purposes. They rear cattle either to meet with their demands or self-use. Each household involving in agriculture keep a pair of oxen for ploughing of their land. Hindu people such as Brahmin, Chettris and Newar do not raise the animal like pig. The Limboos and others keep this animal including other animals like cow, buffalo, goat, sheep, oxen etc.

4.3.3 Other Activities

Besides agriculture and livestock rearing, the people of this GPU are involved in other various activities. Some are in government services and some go for labor work. There are few government contractors and few in NGOs. Altogether, the people of different castes practicing different professions are found herein.

4.4 Transport and Communication

Transport and communication play a vital role in the process of development of an area. This area is nearly developed in terms of transport and communication. Roads are connected from every part of the GPU to the local market. There is a pitched road that dissects the GPU into two halves. There is another newly constructed unpitched road that runs through the lower part of the GPU making end point at the river Rammang.

The study area is well-off in terms of communication. Almost all households have access to communication system of any kind. Apart from internet, people of this GPU are availing the available communication system like telephone, F.M, Radio etc. Regarding this sort of communication there is quite easy to exchange messages.

4.5 Population Composition of the Limboos

The study of population composition is considered to be very important because it shows the economic, social, educational, employment and other conditions of the society. Different types of population composition, which are generally studied are sex composition, educational composition, martial status etc.

4.5.1 Sex Composition

Sex composition is an important factor of population composition, which determines several demographic and social characteristics. The balance of sexes affects the social and economic relationship within a community. The two sexes play partly contrasting and partly complementary role in the economy and society.

Table 4.1: Sex Composition of Different Wards in Lungchok-Salangdang Gram Panchayat Unit

Name of ward	Ward no.	Male	Percent (%)	Female	Percent (%)
Upper Lungchok	1	70	24.6	66	26.5
Lower Lungchok	2	25	8.8	16	6.4
Nalboo, Gown	3	120	42.1	89	35.7
Upper Salangdang	4	33	11.6	46	18.5
Lower Salangdang	5	37	12.9	32	12.9
Total	-	285	100	249	100

Source:- Field Survey, 2010

The above table no. 4.1 shows the sex composition of Limboo people in different wards of Lungchok-Salangdang GPU, West Sikkim. It is clear from the table that the male population is more than the female population in the area. The total number of male population of Limboo is 285 (53.4%) and female population of Limboo is 249 (46.6%) out of total population.

There are five wards in Lungchok-Salangdang GPU. There is a large variation of Limboo population in each ward. Some wards have sparsity of Limboo population while other few have got dense population. Out of total 5 (five) wards, only ward no. 4, i.e. Upper Salangdang has greater number of female population and remaining 4(four) wards have surpassed male over female population.

4.5.2 Marital Status

This study tries to show the marital status of single community i.e., Limboos of Lungchok-Salangdang GPU. The following table shows the marital status of Limboo people in the study area.

Table 4.2: Marital Status of Limboo in Lungchok Salangdang GPU.

Marital Status	No.	%	Male		Female	
			No.	%	No.	%
Unmarried	177	33.1	95	33.3	82	32. 9
Married	270	50.6	140	49.1	130	
Widow/widower	65	12.2	39	13.7	26	
Divorcee	-	-	-	-	-	-
Separated	22	4.1	11	3.9	11	4.5
Total	534	100	285	100	249	100

Source:- Field Survey, 2010

The above table shows that the married people are higher in number than the unmarried people in the study area. Out of total population, there are 50.6% married people and 33.1% unmarried people. In comparison between the married people of both sexes, females are larger in number than the males. There are 52.2% married females and 49.1% married males. Similarly, there are 33.3% unmarried males and 32.9% unmarried females. Out of total population, there are 12.2% widows/widowers and 4.1% separated persons. The study area interestingly lacks divorcee. Out of male population (i.e. 285), there are 13.7% of males as widowers. Similarly out of female population (i.e. 249), there are 10.4% females as widows. Apart from widows/widowers, 3.9% males and 4.5% females are living separately form their spouse but have not got legal dissolution of their marriage.

The above table indicates that the percentage of married females are more than the males because, most of the females intend to get married soon due to social compulsions. But now-a-days, this sort of practice is getting rare, and females are quite free to make decisions regarding their marriage. In the field of marriage parents leave the children on their own wish. So, this sort of figures indicate that they themselves want to marry soon.

4.5.3 Educational Composition

Education is the qualitative indicator of the social-economic development of any community and nation or state. It not only helps the individual for personal development but also provides knowledge and skills that gravitates a community towards the nation building process. In the study area, most of the aged Limboos are uneducated. So, they do not known

the need and value of education. But, the new generation of the Limboo people are conscious about the need and value of education.

Table 4.3: Educational status of the Limboos in the study area(5 years and above)

S.N.	Level of Education	No. of Pop ⁿ .	%	Male	%	Female	%
1	Graduate and above	11	3	7	3.5	4	2.5
2	Senior secondary	26	7.2	12	6	14	8.6
	(10-12						
3	Secondary	41	11.4	22	11.1	19	11.6
	(9-10)						
4	Junior high school	63	17.4	36	18.1	27	16.6
	(6-8)						
5	Primary (1-5)	102	28.2	57	28.6	45	27.6
6	Literate only	46	12.2	25	12.6	21	12.9
7	Dropouts	73	20.2	40	20.1	33	20.2
8	Total literate	362	100	199	100	163	100
9	Illiterate	82	18.5	37	15.7	45	21.6
	Grand total	444	-	236		208	

Source: Field Survey, 2010

The table 4.3 shows the educational attainment by sex (Above 5years) in the Limboo community of Lungchok Salangdang GPU. The total number of literates who attended different levels of educational institutions was 362. Among them 28.2% have been attending primary school, 17.4% have been attending Junior High School, 11.4% have been attending secondary level, 7.2% have been attending senior secondary level and only 3% are at graduate and above level. Apart from these figures, there are two categories, namely 'Dropouts' and 'Literate Only' which are also

assimilated into the literate groups. Out of 362 persons, 12.2% were found to be literate only. 'Literate only' means those who can read and write in any languages of Sikkim, with understanding in Nepal. Similarly, 20.2% were found to be 'drop outs'. Some of them have left the school either after completion of primary level or Junior High School level due to economic reasons. In the comparison between males and females in terms of educational attainment, the former have suprassed the latter at every level of education. The total literacy rate of the study area is 81.5%. The male literacy rate is 84.3% and female literacy rate is 78.4%. The total illiteracy rate of both sexes is 18.4% of which males constitute 8.3% and females constitute 10.1%

From the above analysis it can be said that the Limboo people, apart from aged people, in the study area are more or less educated. Their attitude regarding the need and the value of education has been changing. During the field work, the researcher asked them about the type of education they prefer for their children. About 45% preferred engineering, 15% preferred medical science and about 12% preferred computer science for their children. And other remaining people preferred other types of education for their children. This figure and their preferences indicate the changing attitude of the Limboo people in the study area.

4.6 Settlement Pattern of the Limboos

Generally Limboo villages are situated on the slopes of hills, and are known as bustee. There are many village or bustee in a panchayat unit such as Lungchok, Salangdang, Dara Goan, Nalboo Goan, Lungyam etc. Two or three such bustee form a ward. There are five wards in the Lungchok –Salangdang GPU. The settlement pattern of the Limboo community is of disperse type in each ward because the bustee or villages

are mixed up of different ethnic groups. But, particularly Nalboo Goan has clustered type of settlers. The major population of Limboo community are found in this village. This is due to Limboo's communal affiliation and as indegeneous settlers. Other places such as upper Lungchok, Lungyam and Dara Goan have found disperse settlement.

4.6.1 Housing Pattern

The Limboo's residential pattern and types of houses are traditional. Literally, dwelling house of Limboo is known as Khim in Limboo language. Besides the dwelling houses, there are other huts such as granary, farm house, granary —cum-guest house etc. The cattle shed, piggery shed, goatary shed or fire wood sheed etc. are often found few yards of the main dwelling house.

The Limboo houses have generally rectangular ground walls raised upto 5 feet to 6 feet and above that wall is another storey with a rectangular roof with winged flaps (Laphy) at the two narrow sides. The ground walls are of stone, which are well plastered with mud or cement and the roof is covered with tin (G.I sheet). The floor of the houses is generally made up mud or wooden planks. In the study area one and two storey houses are quite common. Multi storey houses are rarely found among the Limboos in the study area.

On the whole, it may be said that the Limboo houses are well designed and placed with separate rooms allocated for guest, kitchen and bed rooms. They take adequate care of sanitation and hygienic problems while constructing their houses. Each house has separate toilet and bathroom with running water.

4.6.2 The Village

Usually, in the study area, the Limboo villages are found in the slopes of the hilly areas. In the general layout of the Limboo villages, systematic planning is not found. It is often found that some villages are stretched wide on the hills and some are stretched on the plain area like a straight line.

Basically, the study area is situated on the high hill slopes. Mostly in the hilly area there is terraced field and the number of houses are built on this terraced field known as buster or village. Due to terraced field area, the village is made up of ten to fifteen houses in minimum. So the small block consists of ten to fifteen houses. There are numerous villages such as Nalboo Goan, Dara Goan, Lungchok, Lungyam, Salangdang etc. These two or three villages consist a ward.

CHAPTER FIVE

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

5.1 Structure of Family

Family is the basic and universal institution. It fulfills various needs of the members of the society. In addition, it performs several functions including continuity, integration and change in the society. It is generally believed that the majority of the families in Sikkim are joint in nature, but in the study area both type- joint and nuclear families were found.

Table 5.1: Family structure of Limboo Community in Lunchok - Salangdang GPU.

S.N.	Types of family	No. of Household	Percent (%)
1	Nuclear family	52	59
2	Joint family	36	41
	Total	88	100

Source:- Field Survey, 2010

Table no. 5.1 shows the family structure of Limboo people in the study area. Out of 88 households as surveyed by the researcher, there were 59% of Nuclear families and similarly, 41% were joint families. Nuclear type of families were larger in number than the joint families in the study area.

Limboo society is patriarchal society like any other society in Sikkim. Father is the head of the family who makes decision of all kind and all other members have to abide by his decision.

5.1.1 Size of Family

It is known that people in the rural areas consider more children as a blessing. A women does not establish herself with her husband and as inlaws until she gets children, especially, males. In the existing sociocultural set-up, therefore, children play a vital role in avoiding fraction between husband and wife, and between other members of the family.

Table 5.2: Size of Families of Limboo People in the Study Area.

Size of family	No. of household	Population	Percent (%)
2	4	8	1.5
3	7	21	3.9
4	7	28	5.2
5	11	55	10.3
6	23	138	25.8
7	14	98	18.4
8	12	96	18
9 & above	10	90	16.9
Total	88	534	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

The average size of the family of the Limboo people in Lungchok-Salangdang GPU is 6.1 persons. Nearly 80% of the respondents had families of 6 or more persons and 20% families had less than 6 persons. Keeping in view of comparatively low agricultural income of Limboo people in the study area, it is necessary to take an immediate and effective steps towards family planning. Because this figure of family is curse for the Limboo people in modern age.

5.2 Family Planning

Population growth is the serious problem of the state, which is affecting the efforts of the Government for the betterment of the people. The balance between the birth rate and the availability of natural resources for subsistence seems to be deteriorating due to imbalanced population growth over the past few years. Therefore, an immediate action is needed to curb this problem. In this regard, family planning seems to be effective.

5.2.1 Knowledge and Attitude towards Family Planning

Family planning is the basic factor for the reduction of fertility. It depends on the size of the family. This Panchayat unit is out of reach of family planning facilities. Only educated persons have tried to limit their family size. On the other hand, uneducated persons have not used any means of family planning. If the number of children are high, the Limboo people intend to do family planning but, most of the people are denied access to this sort of facility. Educated people want to do family planning only after they get male child. It means they are also not serious about family planning.

About the knowledge and attitude towards family planning they have heard from the media only. In this regard very few number of people are aware of unnecessary increase in their family size. When the researcher asked about this, they answered that if they do not want to have children they control by themselves.

Table no. 5.3 Reasons for not Practicing Family Planning

Reasons	Family	Percentage
Do not know	27	30.7
Have no male child	38	43.2
Childless	4	4.5
Do not like	13	14.8
Want daughter	6	6.8
Total	88	100

Source:- Field Survey, 2010

The above table shows that 30.7% of Limboo people did not know about family planning, 43.2% had no male child; that's why no family planning, 4.5% were childless, 14.8% did not like family planning, and only 6.8% wanted daughter and did not opt for family planning. So, this study reveals that the highest percentage of respondents have no male child and lowest percentage of respondent is not practicing family planning because they are just childless. However, in totality, the knowledge and awareness of family planning seems to be minimum among the Limboo people in the study area.

5.3 Social Customs and Traditions

Limboos are one of the major ethnic groups of Sikkim, who have been inhabiting since time immemorial. They have their own customs and tradition evolved through centuries and are leading distinct way of life.

5.3.1 Religion

Religion is a belief system. It is any set of beliefs that fulfills certain functions in an individual's life. It is a means of providing social cohesion in a community. Religion is a part of culture. Each and every society in the world has its own religious tradition. The religion of every ethnic group is interwoven with their cultural process. Limboos are rigid in their religious beliefs.

Yuma Samyo

Limboos are one of the ethnic groups of Nepal, west-Bengal, Assam and Sikkim. The Limboo of Sikkim have a distinct religion of their own which is known as 'Yuma Samyo'. Yuma Samyo believes that the life is a continuous flux of instability and changes depending on righteous deeds and relation with Almighty Goddess Tagera Ningwaphuma. The

adherents of Yuma Samyo belive that they have to earn Karma through compassion, generosity, love, affection to all the living beings. Yuma Samyo adherents believe that whenever we harm others, we are directly harming ourselves, and whenever we bring them happiness, we are bringing ourselves future happiness. Whenever we act negatively, it leads to pain and sufferings; whenever we act positively, it eventually results in happiness.

The Limboo people believe that god is almighty and benevolent deity. Yuma Sanyo (Yumaism) of Limboo community has its own way of performing rituals, healing diseases and illness, and preventing misfortunes. Every religious rituals are performed by priests known as Phedangmas. These are the resource persons of Limboo cultural, traditional and oral literature. "Historically, the Limboos recognize nine type of Phedangmas. They differ in their costumes known as Sama; their role in the religious functions in the community; worship methodology as curers, healers and offering to supernatural beings. One of the basic concepts of Yuma Samyo is the recognition of "Yet-Cham-Thim" (yet=eight, Sam/Cham=souls, Thim-tradition), which means that each person has eight souls and the Phedangmas are the soul specialists" 10.

Yuma-Samyo, the religion of Limboo, is a unique religion having distinct features. It also believes in reincarnation of human beings which according to Yumaism, depends on good Karma/ good actions. During the field work, the researcher had asked the respondents about the significance of religion in their lives and their devoted towards religion, about 65% of the respondents replied that they were totally denoted to their religion because they had accepted it as a legacy of their forefathers,

Subba, J.R.(2005) – The Concept of Life after Life and Funeral Practices in Yuma Samyo Tradition. First Edition Sikkim Yakthung Mundhum Saplopa, Gangtok, Sikkim

which has been in practice since time immemorial and 35% of them replied that their religion provided them with some moral values pertaining to daily life, which was the very essence of sound judgment or sound reasoning behind practicing Yumaism.

5.3.2 Culture

Culture is the main backbone of the identification of Limboo community. Limboos people practice distinct culture which completely differs from other ethnic group of Sikkim. They practice different types of festivals and entertainment.

Limboo people are rich in their folklore and because of their distinct folklore they have their own identity among diverse ethnic and racial group of people in Sikkim. Due to the strong faith in Yumaism, the traditional customs still survive in Limboo community. Limboo folklore is understood through all kinds of oral artistic expression including common transmitted traditions, myths, festivals, customs, song, dances and stories etc. The folklore of Limboo includes, music, (Hakpare Samlo, Palam Samlo, Nisammang Sewa Samlo), dances (Yelang, Kelang), Arts etc. All are important to the Limboo people but most popular dance is kelang (Chayapbrung dance).

During the time of field survey, the researcher gave them (respondents) three options- Chayabrung dance, paddy dance and Mundums, and asked about their choice of dance, they replied that all of them are equally important because, according to them, these are the main causes of identification of Limboo in the society as having a distinct culture.

5.4 Life Cycle Rites

5.4.1 Birth

The birth of a new baby in a house is the occasion of happiness for the family. In the Limboo society, the birth of a child is considered as a gift of god. When the child is born, they perform the name giving ceremony (Yengdang Phongma) in four days in the case of a male child and three days in the case of a female child. Limboo people observe birth pollution in the period between the birth of a child and name giving ceremony. Usually phedangma (religion priest) officiates the name giving ceremony. "Mother of the child takes a bath in warm water early in the morning and the baby is also cleaned properly. Wadum Pakwa (water of the seven springs) or, Chirakphek Chwa (water in which gold has been washed) is sprinkled in and outside the house and to the members of the family through a small bunch of flowers for purification" Religious priest (Phedangma) performs purification, they pray the Supreme divinity Yuma and other guardian deities for the protection of a new family member.

The literal meaning of Yandang Phongma is to "hang a cradle", and is a ritual purification of the mother, the baby, the house and the close relatives, and name giving ceremony.

5.4.2 Marriage

Marriage is an institution which admits man an women to a family life. Social customs or laws specify as to whom, how and when one should marry, and these differ from society to society and from one group to another. Limboos have no caste system in their community. The marriage

_

¹¹ Subba, Chaitanya. The Culture and Religion of Limbus. Hatauda, Kathmandu 1998

system is preferred within the circle of their community avoiding own branch and relatives. The marriage is restricted within the relations form three generations of mother side and no one should break the blood relation from father side. In the course of performing Mekkam Thim (Marriage ceremony), Phedangma (Priest) places great emphasis on the union of two souls and respect, support and love for each other. The instruction of Mundhums are strictly followed even today.

a) Types of Marriage

Basically two types of marriage namely arrange marriage and love marriage were found in practice in the study area. This study found that the people having done arranged marriage were larger in number than those who had love marriage. About 75% of the respondents had done arranged marriage and only 25% had done love marriage. Similarly, they also supported the same kind of marriage for their children. Limboo society is male dominated society and each and every decisions are made by the household head or father. So, their children have no freedom to choose their spouse on their own. But this sort of practice is disappearing slowly in the course of time due to modernization. Because 25% of Limboo population stands as evidence. The least group of respondents were free to choose their partner on their own or even they could do love marriage to their will.

5.5 Death Rites

Death ceremony is the last in life cycle ceremony and is also the sorrowful ceremony. Death ceremonies of Limboo people are marked distinctly in comparison with neighboring Hindus and other community because, Limboos believe and follow Yuma Samyo tradition. According

to J.R Subba, "if someone dies a natural death, there are several rites of various stages"¹².

When someone dies a natural death, a floor in front of the main door is cleaned to keep the dead body facing westward. The bamboo stretcher (chedhap) is prepared to place the dead body. After some ritual performance at house, the Phedangmas (priests) start the funeral procession and the death body placed in bamboo stretcher (chedhyap) is taken to the graveyard. They keep the dead body on the ground placing the head westward. When diging gets completed and before placing the death body in, Kham-Ingma ritual is performed by phedangma (priest). He puts one rupee coin on the leaves of caulo placed in cross position in the coffin and declares that he/she has purchased the piece of ground¹³. After the Kham-Ingma ritual, the death body is placed into coffin with head facing west. Sam Loopma ritual (taking out the soul) of the dead person takes place. In the course of performing this ritual, the plates and silver coins are taken out and kept in a small piece of white shroud. Sam-Sama (giving away the soul of the dead person to the ancestors) ritual is performed after the completion of funeral procession. This ritual is done in the house of dead person. A pair of chicken (hen and cock), an egg and Toongba are required to perform this ritual¹⁴. Kha-Uma is the final rite of death ceremony. All the relatives and participants of the funeral procession are invited. At last Minkwa Sangma ceremony is performed by Samba (priest). The literal meaning of Minkwa Sangma is to wash out the tears or stains of tears from the face and this ritual symbolically indicates the total separation of death soul and forgetting the deceased person.

Subba, J.R. Op. Cit, FootnoteSubba, J.R. Op. Cit. Footnote

¹⁴ Subba. J.R. Op. Cit. Footnote

The period between funeral procession (Chesama) to rite of Minkwa Sangma, the same clans (thar) people do not indulge in entertainment because, they are in pollution. After the completion of these rituals they can have entertainment such as marriage ceremony, paint their houses etc.

CHAPTER SIX

ECONIMIC CHARACTERISTICS

This chapter deals with factors related to the economic characteristics of the Limboo people in Lungchok-Salangdang Gram Panchayat Unit. This includes the land and food production, occupational pattern, land ownership, animal husbandry and annual income of the Limboo community.

Land is the important resource for the subsistence among the Limboos in Lungchok-Salangdang GPU. People's economic and social status is determined by the amount of land they hold.

6.1 Occupational Pattern

The Limboos of Lungchok Salangdang GPU are engaged in different occupational activities. The study of economic activities remains incomplete without its reference to occupational pattern. The occupation of an individual refers to his/her type of work. The occupational pattern of a society is the product of a number of related factors when the primary resources are utilized on a commercial scale. It generates diversification of occupational structure. The occupational pattern of the Limboo people is determined by many activities. Table 6.1 shows the sources of livelihood of the Limboo people in study area.

Table 6.1: Sources of Livelihood of Limboo people in the study area (15 years and above)

S.N.	Source	No. of population	Percent (%)
1	Agriculture	177	83.5
2	Laborer	14	6.6
3	Government jobs	7	3.3

4	Carpenter	3	1.4
5	Business	4	1.9
6	Handloom/Handicraft	4	1.9
7	NGOs	3	1.4
	Total	212	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

The above table shows that the majority of the Limboo people in the study area have agriculture as the basic source of their livelihood. It seems that they totally depend on agriculture for their subsistence and in case of failure of crop production they have to face a grave situation. Out of total working population (apart from students and children below 5 years of age) 83.5% have agriculture as their main occupation, 6.6% work as labors only 3.3% are in government jobs, which is relatively low as compared with the people of other community. Similarly, 1.4% work 1.9% business 1.9% carpenter, are in sector. are in as handloom/Handicrafts and another 1.4% are in NGOs. It is observed from the above datas that very little number of Limboo people are in technical line and business sector, while the majority of them are found as agriculturist.

6.2 Size of Farmland

The occupational pattern indicates that majority of Limboo households depend on agriculture. The amount of land owned by the household indicates the economic and social status of Limboo people. The possession of land is greatly valued, not simply as a factor of production but also as a regular source of income. The table below shows the land holding size of the Limboo people in the study area.

Table 6.2 Distribution of land holding size

S.N	Area in 'Acre'	No. of Household	Percent (%)
1	Less than 1 Acre	40	45.5
2	One to two Acre	29	32.9
3	Two to three Acre	13	14.8
4	More than three Acre	6	6.8
	Total	88	100

Source:- Field Survey, 2010

The above table shows that out of total 88 households 45.5% have small size of farmland i.e. less than one 'acre'. 32.9% have medium size of farmland i.e. one to two acre. 14.8% have farmland of two to three acre and only 6.8 have more than three acre farmland.

The above figures indicate that the Limboo people of Lungchok-Salangdang GPU have comparatively less amount of landholding size than the people of other community.

6.3 Land Ownership

Land ownership is the most important indicator of economic condition. In the study area, there are three types of land ownership. They are owned and operated, tenancy and land rented out. The table below shows the type of land ownership.

Table 6.3 Distribution of types of land ownership

S.N	Types of landholding	No. of Household	Percent (%)
1	Owner-cultivator	29	32.9
2	Owner cum tenants	49	55.6
3	Owner-cultivator cum land rented out	10	11.5
	Total	88	100

Source:- Field Survey, 2010

In the above table 'owner-cultivators' are those who cultivate their land by themselves with the help of family members or hired labors. Similarly, 'owner cum tenants' are those who cultivate on their own land and also on other's land. On the other hand, 'Owner-cultivators cum land rented out' are those person who have more than two or three 'acre' land. They cultivate on small part of their land and other remaining land is rented out either in cash or in kind. In this GPU 32.9% of Limboo households are 'owner-cultivators', 55.6% are 'Owner cum tenants' and only 11.5% of Limboo households are 'Owner-Cultivators cum land rented out'. From this figure it can be said that due to unequal distribution of landholding size the majority of Limboo households are compelled to cultivate on the land of other people to meet their requirements. In this study area all Limboo households own land but its size differs largely form one another.

6.4 Agriculture

Almost every Limboo household depends upon agriculture for its survival and for source of income. Agriculture is the main source of income for their livelihood. But, agricultural production is not sufficient for the fulfillment of their needs. Both sexes equally participate in agricultural activities. But, their participation seems less worthwhile as they face many problem relating to the cultivation of their lands. Their farmlands are not well connected to canals and other type of irrigation facilities. They also don't have any idea about scientific farming, nor they have ample access to high yielding varieties of seeds. So, the production of their land has remained comparatively low than other adjoining areas.

6.4.1 Agricultural Practice in the Study Area

The agricultural activities of the Limboos are largely regulated by seasonal cycle. Almost every household in the study area are involved in agriculture. The major crops are paddy, maize, millet, wheat and potato. Generally, Limboo people in the study area classify cultivatable land into two categories-

- 1. Pani khet (wet land)
- 2. Sukha bari (Dry land)

During summer season (June- July) paddy is cultivated in Pani Khet (wet land) and wheat, buckwheat and potato are cultivated in winter season. Maize and millet are usually cropped during winter season. Apart from this, Limboo people also grow broom grass on dry land for fodder and as a cash crop.

6.4.2 Farming system

Limboos have little idea about the improved agricultural practices. They use traditional method of agriculture. They commonly use the tilling of land by means of plough employing bullocks. Immediately after the harvesting of crops, animals are placed on their land in order to graze and fertilize the area. Only few number of Limboo people place the animal in cattle shed and they carry manure to their fields. Many households which do not have animals take manure from neighbors and they also use chemical fertilizer.

6.4.3 Crop Production

Generally, Limboos are small and marginal farmers and their crop production is also low. The table given below shows the annual crop production of Limboo households in the study area.

Table 6.4 Annual crop production of Limboo Community

S.N.	Quantity	No. of households						
	Production	Paddy	Maize	Wheat	Pulses	Potato	Ginger	Millet
	(in kg)							
1.	Less than	-	7	4	66	2	-	2
	100 kg							
2.	100-200	13	10	10	13	7	3	10
3.	200-300	17	15	32	-	13	13	18
4.	300-400	12	19	-	-	17	39	14
5.	400-500	19	23	-	-	30	21	25
6.	500 above	7	14	-	-	19	3	19
	Total	68	88	46	79	88	79	88

Source: Field survey, 2010

The above table shows the annual crop production of Limboo community in Lungchok-Salangdang GPU. The major food crops of the study area are paddy, maize, potato, wheat and Millet. All 88 households cultivate maize, potato and millet. Out of 88 households, only 68 households produce paddy, 46 households produce wheat, 79 households produce pulses and 79 households produce ginger, which is the most important cash crop in the study area.

The quantity of food grains, apart from paddy, is nearly enough to fulfill the daily needs of the Limboo people if they do not use their food grains in making "jand" (local beer). Limboos make "jand" by millet, maize and wheat rather than using them for food item. Even though all have their own land, they are unable to fulfill their other needs from agriculture production.

6.5 Food Sufficiency

The poverty of people or state is determined by the level of food production and consumption. This study tried to find out whether the annual production of food grain was sufficient to meet the daily requirement of Limboo households throught the year. Table no.7.5 shows the food sufficiency status of Limboo community in the study area.

Table 6.5 Food Sufficiency Status of Limboo Community

S.N.	Food sufficiency	No. of Households	Percentage
1.	Up to 3 months	39	44.3
2.	3-6 months	18	20.4
3.	6-9 months	15	17
4.	9-12 months	10	11.5
5.	Surplus	6	6.8
	Total	88	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

The table 6.5 shows the food sufficiency status of Limboo people in Lungchok- Salangdang GPU. It shows that their crop production is not enough for their family. So, in order to meet their requirement they have to borrow from somewhere. 44.3% of Limboo people have food sufficiency for 3 months only and 20.4% have food sufficiency for 3-6 months. Similarly, 17% of them have food sufficiency for 6-9 months and 11.5% have food sufficiency for 9-12 months. Out of total population, only 6.8% have food surplus. They make up their food deficiency by borrowing cash or kind from their relatives and neighbors.

6.6 Livestock

The Limboo people have various secondary occupations. Among them livestock rearing is one. From economic point of view, livestock rearing is good for the Limboo people. Because it is not a seasonal activity and can yield or earn income throughout the year. Limbooos rear all kind of domestic animals in good number. Animal husbandry forms an important subsistence activity in the hills. Men, women and children participate in this activity. Among the domesticated animals, Limboo people of this area keep cows, poultry, piggery, goats, buffalos and sheep. In addition to this, oxen are kept for ploughing. The output of animal production is mainly consumed for family purpose and some productions are marketed through co-operative societies in the village. They usually keep large number of poultry birds and pigs because they fetch good amount of money when sold. So, Limboo community rear cattle in order to maintain the economic condition of household so that their burden on other commodities can lessen.

6.7 Division of Labour

There are no hard and fast rules for division of labour in Limboo community. The Limboo people are mostly agriculturist. They are generally mixed farmers, growing agricultural and horticultural crops with livestock rearing. Agriculture may be regarded as their principle source of income for supporting livelihood. Men and women equally participate in agricultural activities and sometimes, children or students support their parents in the field. But, jobs like going out to sell their products, collecting fodder and rearing their children and all kitchen works are done by women. Limboo women are engaged in and outside their house. On the other hand, Limboo men do not indulge themselves in

the household activities like cooking, washing clothes, dishes, rearing children etc, all of them are done by females. Limboo males keep themselves busy at work outside their household in their fields and other physical works. It seems that they have quite balanced work division in their community.

6.8 Annual Income of Limboo Community

6.8.1 Source of income

Income is the major factor to know the economic condition of Limboo in the study area. To examine their economic condition their source of income was investigated. The respondents could not say their exact income. They were asked about various sources of their livelihood. The total annual income derived from different sources was calculated in terms of money. Table 7.6 shows the sources and annual income of the Limboo people in the study area.

Table 6.6 : Sources and Annual Income of the Limboo People

S.N.	Source of Income	No. of Household	Amount in IRs	Percent (%)
1.	Agriculture	88	3500	19.1
2.	Livestock sale	47	1500	8.2
3.	Cash crops	sh crops 49 2500		13.7
4.	Business	4	1200	6.6
5.	Wage labour	7	400	2.3
6.	Govt. job	7	9000	49.5
7.	Other	3	170	0.6
	To	otal	18,270	100.00

Source: Field survey, 2010

The above table shows that all Limboo households are engaged in the agriculture. But, agriculture seems to bring lesser income than the Govt. jobs. On the other hand, cash crops (ginger, orange, broom grass) are high value crops and generate higher income than any other food crops. The Limboos who are engaged in the govt. jobs earn higher income and enjoy higher status in society. Out of 88 households only 7 have govt. employees. In terms of income from business, the figure is not satisfactory. The obvious reason is their inexperience. Income from livestock is also not satisfactory. The Limboo people in the study area rear large number of livestock but most of them use their products within their household for self consumption. So, they are deprived of larger amounts from the sale of livestocks and their product. The condition of wage earner and people involved in other physical labour is very miserable in terms of their annual income. Their income is comparatively low than the people of other Limboo households. This situation has deteriorated the economic condition of entire Limboo community. These households having relatively low amount of annual income often spend their hard earned money on drinking local beer and "jand". This further creates havoes in their household and their community.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INTERACTION WITH OTHER NON-LIMBOO PEOPLE

Society is composed of different ethnic group. Limboo people are living together with diverse ethnic groups having distinct cultural traditions and social customs and are exposed to various religious practices, particularly Hinduism and Christianity. However, they follow the way of Yuma-Samyo tradition, which has a distinct cultural identity of its own. This chapter deals with the interaction and interrelationship of Limboo with other people of the society. Limboos are engaged in three types of interactions, namely social interaction, religious interactions and economic interactions.

7.1 Socio-Culture Interaction

Each and every ethnic group has their own socio-cultural activity. In order to know their socio cultural interaction, marriage ceremony and death ceremony, labor interaction and other cultural activities are important.

a) Marriage ceremony and death rites

When Limboo people perform marriage ceremony and death rites, they invite their neighbors and relatives whether they belong to higher caste or lower caste. Their status in the society is the same as that of Chettri or Bahaun or Gurung etc. Social discrimination still exists in society but Limboo people take it in an easy manner. The researcher had asked them about inter-caste marriage, whether they prefer their children to engage in inter-caste marriage or not, 62% of them accepted inter-caste marriage and 38% did not accept it. Those who opposed inter-caste marriage said that they want to continue their tradition. More than half of the Limboo

people are influenced by modernization because they want to change their traditional social customs. Only less than half of Limboo people did not want to accept inter-caste marriage because they said that religion, culture and language make hard to adjust them in society. Moreover, they added that the inter- caste marriage increases quarrels inside the house. But there is no hard and fast rule to restrict inter-caste marriage.

Regarding death rituals, Limboo people perform this ceremony in various stages. The people of other community also participate in initial stage, that is funeral procession and the last stage that is purification from pollution. In between these rituals, various stages are there which are performed by themselves in associations of Phedangmas (priests). At the final stages of death ceremony they invite each and every people who were present in funeral procession. It is noted from the study that when Limboo people perform marriage and death ceremonies, they invite all caste, ethnic people irrespective of any religious and cultural background.

b) Labour and Barter system

In order to know socio-cultural interaction, labour interaction and barter exchange system is important. Because this shows whether the people of one community interact with the people of other community. The labour is divided into two groups i.e. wage labour groups and non-wage labour groups. The wage labour group depends upon earnings from wage for their food and other requirements, and non wage labour groups are those who are not dependent on their wage, but they want to exchange labour with other community. So, labour interaction exists among each and every caste/ethnic people in the society. There is no social discrimination about the exchange of labour because the higher caste people go to lower caste people for the exchange of labour and vice versa.

In the study area, most of the Limboo households are indulged in agriculture. Their economic conditions are far from satisfactory and due to this they are essentially involved in exchange of labour with the people of other community because most of them cannot afford to pay wages. In this way, they carry on their agricultural activities in the study area.

The goods exchange system (barter system) is also important factor for the study of socio- cultural interaction with other people. In the study area Limboo people exchange different goods with the people of other community. They exchange salt, oil, rice and other agricultural tools. This sort of system exists only in rural area and it is the making of good relationship with other people. This kind of system solves the need of essential items in daily use, which are not easily available in near market or they cannot afford when it is needed.

c) Other Cultural Activities

The Limboo culture and customs are based on Yuma- Samyo tradition, which is very distinct than others. During the field work, the researcher had asked them whether they face any obstacles to the performance of their cultural traditions from the people of other community; they said that other community people appreciate their cultural activities for being so unique. Similarly, the researcher had also asked about their views regarding the cultural traditions of other community, and they said that they have nothing to interfere in other people's culture and tradition. They just appreciate the culture and tradition. So, each and every group of people in the study area appreciate the culture and tradition of one another. This study reveals that there is good relationship and interaction between different communities.

7.2 Religious interaction

Religion plays a vital role in the interaction of the people coming from different communities. In the study area different types of religious groups are found such as Yuma Samyo, Hinduism and Christianity. Each religion differs in terms of their principles and place of worships. Hindus have temples, Limboos have Manghim and Christians have church as their place of worship and offering prayers to their gods. In order to know the religious interaction, the researcher asked them whether they like to invite other people while performing religious ceremony about 96% said that they invite the people of other community. Similarly, they also said that they are not denied to go and join the religious ceremony of other people but about 4% of the Limboo people neither invite nor go to the religious ceremony of the other community. The main reason was that they just don't like to go.

7.3 Economic interaction

It is one of the most important indicators of interaction of the Limboo people with other community in the study area. In the study area, almost every Limboo households are involved in agriculture. They practice mixed farming, with livestock rearing. But their agriculture production can't meet their daily needs as production is relatively low due to several factors. They do not have canals and other irrigation facilities in their farm lands. They are totally dependent on rain water for irrigating their lands. They also don't have ample access to high yielding varieties of seeds. Due to these reasons their production is very low and this has greatly affected their economic condition. Consequently, they have to borrow loans from other community people to sustain their daily needs.

In order to know the economic interaction of Limboo people with other community, the researcher had asked a question that "which type of loan do you want to borrow and from whom?". They answered that they take loan either in cash or in kind. Mostly, they would like to take cash but, sometimes they take in kind also. They said that they take loan from money lender, relatives and neighbors. They also told that, they choose one rich person as a permanent money lender and whenever they need money they go to him. In this way they solve their daily requirements. This study reveals that there is a good relationship between Limboos and other community people.

CHAPTER EIGHT SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Summary

This study is based on the socio-economic condition of Limboo people in Sikkim, particularly that of the Limboo of Lungchok-Salangdang Gram Panchayat unit, west district. There was no such kind of study in the specific area in previous days. The present study attempted to highlight on socio-economic aspects and interaction of Limboo community with other people.

According to field survey, these were 534 Limboo populations in 88 households in Lungchok-Salangdang GPU. There was more male population then female population. Out of total population 285 were males and 249 females. Similarly, married population was higher in number than the unmarried. Out of 534, 50.6% were married and 33.1% were unmarried. Other remaining 12.2% and 4.1% were found to be widow/widower and separated respectively. The percentage of married female is higher than the married males. Out of total females population (i.e. 249), 52.2% were married and out of total male population (i.e.285), 49.1% were married. Females intend to get married soon due to social compulsions. But, nowadays, this sort of practice is getting rare due to changes in the attitude of Limboo people and this change may be attributed to the impact of modernization. Educational status shows the literacy rate of the study area. As far as the researcher's findings are concerned, apart from aged people, the Limboo people in the study area were more or less educated. Their thinking regarding the need and the value of education has been changing. Out of 362 literates, the primary level contributes the highest percentage i.e.28.2% and the graduate and above level constitute the lowest percentage i.e. only 3% out of total literates. Apart from this, the number of drop outs is considerably high i.e. about20.2%. This may be due to their poor economic condition. Primary level education has got maximum number of population because of free and compulsory primary education as guaranteed by the government of India. Males have exceeded females in terms of literacy rate, and females have exceeded males in terms of illiteracy rate. But nowadays female education is increasing day by day and they are also getting support from every corner and every side.

Both types of family structures – nuclear and joint, were found in the study area. Out of 88 households 59% were nuclear families and 41% were joint families. The average family size of the Limboo people in the study area was 6.1 persons. Nearly 80% of total families had 6 or more persons in family and nearly 20% had less than 6 persons in family. The majority of families had 6 or more persons due to unavailability of family planning posts in the study area. In the study area, very few number of people use contraceptives and other means to control the size of family.

Limboo people have distinct culture and customs, which differ from other community. The culture and customs of the Limboo people are based on Yuma-Samyo tradition. Yuma Samyo religion believes on different deities and divinities. Their rituals and customs are performed by Phedangmas (priests). Limboo people perform birth and death ritual quite differently from the people of the other communities. Limboo people practice both types of marriage – love and arranged marriage and only one- fifth of them had done love marriage. But this sort of practice has been disappearing and younger generation has started to practice love marriage in this GPU.

Most of the Limboo people are engaged in agriculture, because agriculture is the basic source of income. Besides this, they also practice livestock rearing. Most of the Limboos have small and marginal land holding size. The production from their land is not possible to meet their requirements, so they have to depend on other people.

Limboo people are very loyal and kind people in the society. Because they have to depend upon the people of other community. They interact with other people in each and every field such as economy, culture, religion etc. They have no idea about social discrimination while performing their cultural and religions activities. There is a good relationship between Limboo people and the people of the other community in the study area.

8.2 Conclusion

Limboo is one of the oldest inhabitants of Sikkim, who has inhabited since time immemorial. From the study it can be said that they are the aboriginal of Sikkim. Because, West, South and parts of North District were the retaining parts of Limbuwan Territory. There are several ethnic groups found in Sikkim, among them Limboo is also one of the major ethnic groups.

Our society is male dominant society. In this study area, it was found that the Limboo females are dominated group in the society. Each and every household activities are handled by female and hardly few males support household activities. The children, especially, females help their mother in household work. On the educational status, the highest percentage was found in primary level because of free and compulsory primary education. But, the number of female participants is lower than the male participants. Because females are rather neglected in terms of education

Land is the major resource of Limboo livelihood. Almost every Limboo household own land and they cultivate different food and cash crops like maize, millet, wheat, paddy and potato. Limboo people also cultivate cash crops, like ginger, orange and broom grass. From the study, it has been noticed that the Limboo people have small land holding size and due to this, their production is low which is further affected by some factors relating to their farmlands. They don't have canals and other irrigation facilities in their land and they are also deficient in high yielding varities of seeds. These all factors have caused low productivity of their land, resulting into food deficiency which is mainly due to making of "jand" (local beer) and "raksi" (whisky) from food grains. But 'jand' and 'raksi' are required in every religious rituals of Limboo community and without this religious rituals could not be performed. During the field survey, it was observed that if they do not misuse food crops by making 'jand' and 'raksi', their food sufficiency level will be raised.

The Limboo people are distinct ethnic group because, they possess their own religious and cultural faiths. This study has focused on the interaction of Limboo with other people and their socio- economic condition. It was found that Limboo, being loyal and kind to other community, have good relationship with other people out of their community. They interact with other people for many reasons, and among them economic reason is pivotal. Besides economic interaction, religious and socio- cultural interactions were also found.

Limboo people are agriculturist. They practice both agriculture and horticulture side by side. Apart from this, they also rear cattle for their economic betterment. Apart from agriculture, very few Limboo people

are in other occupation such as Govt. jobs, business etc. The persons having govt. job enjoy high status in the society.

Lastly, it may be concluded that the majority of the Limboo households were found in poor economic condition by observing their living standard, housing pattern, food sufficiency etc. they accept their poor status and try to improve their condition as much as they can.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anghohang, Khagendra Singh. (1978). Gaunjee Thar Hangpang (Gaunjee Clans of Hangpang) in Nepali. Taplejung, Nepal.
- Chemjong, Iman Singh. (1967). Kirat *Itaihas (The History of Kirat)*, in Nepali. First Edition, Published by A.I.K.Y.C. Darjeeling.
- Census (2001). Census Department of Sikkim (INDIA), Government of India.
- Datta, Amal. (1991). *Sikkim since Independence*. Mittal Publication, New Delhi.
- Department, Land Revenue. (2000). Statistical Profile, A Government of Sikkim Publication, Gangtok, Sikkim.
- Rishley, H.H. (1894). *The Gazetter of Sikkim*. A Government of Sikkim Publication.
- Subba, Jash Raj. (1999). *The Limboo of the Eastern Himalayas: With special Reference to Sikkim*. First Edition. Sikkim Yakthung Mundhum Saplopa, Gangtok, Sikkim.
- Subba, T.B. (1989). *Dynamics of Hill Society*. Mittal Publication, Delhi, India.
- Subba- Jush Raj. (2005). The Concept of Life after Life and Funeral Practices in Yuma Samyo Tradition. First Edition. Sikkim Yakthumg Mundhum Saplopa, Gangtok, Sikkim.
- Subba, Chaitanya. (1998). *The Culture and Religion of Limbus*. Hatauda, Kathmandu.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Socio-Economic Condition of Limboo in Sikkim: A Case Study of Lungchok-Salangdang GPU of West District.

General information about household data.

Date:	State:
Name of H.H:	Dist:
Caste:	GPU:
Age:	Ward No.:
Sex:	H.H. No
Religion: .	

1. Composition of family on the basis of Age and Sex

S.N.	Name of	Relation	S	ex	Age	Education	Mar-	Types	Occ-
	the	to the					ital	marriage	upation
	person	head	M	F			Status		
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									

3. If 'yes', kindly men	If 'yes', kindly mention the land area in 'acre'							
a) Wet land ()	b) Dry la	and () c)	Others ()					
4. How much of cultiv	How much of cultivated land do you have? Please include both the							
land you have giver	land you have given for cultivation and other land that you are							
cultivating.								
Types of landholding	Wet land	Dry land	Other					
	(in acre)	(in acre)	(in acre)					
i) Owned and operated								
ii) Tenancy								
iii) Land Rented out								
5. How much income	5. How much income and from which source did you have last year?							
Source of Income Amount in Rs.								
i) Business/Trade								
ii) service(Govt.) of (Priva	ate)							
iii) Wage labors								
iv) Income from members	living away							
v) Agriculture Production (excluding cash crop)								
vi) Cash Crop								
vii) House rent								
viii) Livestock								
ix) Others								

b) No ()

2.

Do you own land?

a) Yes ()

6. Information about Agriculture.

	0.		11411011 6	T			3 5111		a:	0.1
Cro	ops		Maize	Rice	Pulse	Orange	Mill	et Wheat	Ginger	Other
Ar	ea (in a	acre)								
Cro	opping	5								
sea	ason									
Pro	oductio	on (in								
qui	intal)									
Pro	oductio	on(in								
Rs	/quinta	ıl)								
	7.	Has th	ne produ	ıctivity	y of you	ır hand be	en in	creased or	decreased	d in
		the las	st two y	ears?						
		a) Inc	reased	()	b) Decreas	ed () c) (Constant	()
	8.	How i	is your i	food sı	ıfficien	cy?				
	Up to	3 mon	iths 3-	6 mon	ths	6-9 mon	ths	9-12 mont	hs Sur	olus
	9.	If the	food is	not su	fficient.	where do	o you	borrow fro	m to mee	et
		9. If the food is not sufficient, where do you borrow from to meet your requirement?								
		a) Neighbour () b) Relation ()								
		c) Money lender () d) co-operation ()								
	10.									
			-		-	_)		
	11.	a) Yes () b) No () If you have not practiced family planning, why, give reasons?								
	12.	What aspects of traditional customs and culture of Limboo you like								
		most?	,						·	
		a) Cha	ayapbru	ng dar	nce () b) D	han N	Naach ()	
			al Tradi					`	•	
	13.						for y	our childre	n?	
						-	•	e marriage		
			al traditi				,	0 -	` '	
		-, -10		(,					

total

14.	Do you want to separate your sons after marriage?						
	a) Yes () b) No ()						
15.	How much devotee towards religion?						
	a) Extremely () b) Moderately () c) Not at all ()						
16.	What is your opinion about the significant of religion?						
	a) For penance () b) To diminish sin ()						
	c) To learn moral values ()						
17.	What type of education would you prefer for your children?						
	a) Engineering () b) Doctor () c) Law ()						
	d) Science () e) Arts () f) Others ()						
18.	In order to earn money do you go for labor work?						
	a) Yes () b) No ()						
19.	Would you like to exchange labor work between other people?						
	a) Yes () b) No ()						
20.	Do you invite other people when you are performing any ritual						
	ceremonies in your family?						
	a) Yes () b) No ()						
21.	If 'No', why? Give reasons.						
22.	If yes, in which ritual ceremony you would invited more people?						
	a) Marriage () b) Death rituals () c) Both ()						
23.	If somebody, out of your community, is performing religious work						
	in your village, would you like to join them?						
	a) Yes () b) No ()						
24.	Mostly which type of loan do you want to borrow?						
	a) Agriculture loan () b) Project Loan ()						
	c) Poultry () d) Others ()						

25.	Where did you bo	rrow from?		
a) Re	elatives			
b) No	eighbour			
c) M	oney Lender			
d) Ba	ank			
e) Co	o-operative			
f) Ot	hers			
26.	Why did you born	ow that amount or cash? Kindly mention the		
	reason.	- · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
27.		on inter-caste marriage?		
28.	•	do inter caste marriage?		
	a) Yes ()	b) No ()		
29.	If 'No', why? Giv			
30.	•	iage good for future generation?		
	a) Yes ()	b) No ()		
31.	Does it create goo	d relationship between family members?		
	a) Yes ()	b) No ()		
32.	Are the Limboos i	n terms of following association influenced by		
	other groups?	· ·		
		b) Culture () c) Linguistic ()		
33.		y obstacles to the performance of your cultural		
	traditions from people out of your community?			
	a) Yes ()	b) No ()		