

# **CHAPTER-ONE**

## **INTRODOCTION**

This section presents the socio economic status of Chepang in the study area of Nepal. The chapter tries to assess the socio-economic status of Chepang in the study area.

There are many ethnic groups and castes with different languages, religion and culture in our country . The major ethnic groups of Nepal are Gurung, Magar, Tharu, Tamang, Rai, Limbu, Kumal, Dhimal and Chepang is one of the marginal ethnic groups among the other cast ethnicity in size. Chepang people are living in the mountain. Chapangs have suffered from the poor livelihood condition, illiteracy and comparatively backwardness as compared to the other ethnic group. Chepang usually live close to the forest of hill. The major home land of Chapag is Chitwan, Gorkha, Dhading and Makawanpur. Their settlement are in the height of 1000 to 2400 meter from the sea level , Chepang believe that they belongs to kirati group of people ,they have their distinct language. They speak the language, which is quite different language from that of Tamang, living very close to them. (D .B. Bista)

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Nepal is a small landlocked country situated in between India & china and having a versatile socio-cultural history. India lies South, West and East of Nepal and the China lie in the North. The total area of Nepal is 147181square kilometer, the highest peak of the world , Mt. Everest lies in Nepal, which is our major identity. Geographically Nepal is divided into three ecological zones: Mountain, Hill and Terai.

#### **General Background of Chepang**

Nepal is multi cultural and linguistic country. One can find a lot of indigenous people or tribes in Nepal. They have inhabited Nepal for thousands of years but

unfortunately they are still marginalized and they are still living in primitive stage and unable to meet their basic needs (foods, clothes and shelter etc). Though it is 21<sup>st</sup> century, there are so many ethnic groups who are suffering from hand to mouth problem and living in miserable conditions in Nepal. The major ethnic groups of Nepal are Gurung, Magar, Tharu, Tamang, Rai, Limbu, Kumal, Dhimal, Chepang etc.

Among them Chepang is an ethnic group, having their own tradition and culture, who live in the hilly region. They have poor economic condition, illiteracy and backwards as compared to the other ethnic groups. The Chepang inhabit in remote and disperse contour of Makwanpur, Chitwan, Gorkha and Dhading . They claim that they belong to Kirati group of people. They have their own distinct language, which belong to one of the Tibeto-Burman strains like the Kusundas, the Chepang are mostly dependent on hunting, and forest fruits. Their subsistence economy is based on forest resources. They are emerging as horticulturists also. Being landless, 95% of them search for foods. Today it is stated that they become landless mostly due to the lack of documentary evidences to claim land ownership. They also had a system of communal ownership of land till the first half of the 19th century. Their family priest is called Pande. It is felt that their religion and culture are influenced by Tamang .

Less than 15% Chepang are literate and almost 90% of them are leading life under poverty. These days, there are some projects run for Chepang, but are not becoming really effective so far. School enrollment, ratio of school going children is still very low and dropout rate is very high. The census 2001 has revealed that the population of Chepang is 52237. Today Chepang prefer themselves to be called as Praja , however , in the society , they are known as Chepang .

Chepang, who live in the Central Region of Nepal, are known as Chyobany or Chewang . Under the Chepang Development Program, they are also known as Praja .In their language, 'Che' means dogs and 'Pang' means arrow (Dhungel ,

2051) . Because they are primarily hunters and they hunt with the help of dogs, bow and arrows, they are known as Chepang. Also, as ‘Chyo’ means the top of the hill and ‘Wang’ means stones in the language of the Chepang, it implies that those living in hill and in caves full of stones have come to known as Chyobang. According to the legend of the Chepang , the Chepang are said to be child of queen , who gave birth to her child on a stone and disappeared after leaving the child there(Praja, 2056 BS ) .

The Chepang believe that their fore father lived in the cave of rocks. In their language ‘Wang’ means rock and ‘cheap’ means cave. So the word Chepang developed from these two words. There is also another myth that they believe to be the generation of sage Chaywon (Rishi). The ‘Chaywon’ word afterwards came to be as ‘Chepang’.

Some other Chepang say that Chepang and Kusunda have same origin as Thakuries .Kusunda are still in their primitive age. Only a few have been reported to settle permanently and begun cultivation but the remaining others, gather food and hunt in the forest. They live in cave or in temporary huts in the forest of the Southern parts of Gorkha and Tanahun districts. They are believed not to exceed number over a few dozen.

The dwelling of Chepang in pre-historic times was in Sunathali of Dolakha district. The Chepang have their own language, which belongs to the tibeto-Barman family.According to Schafer and Toba,the Chepang language of Thami and Hayu(Dhungel,2051 B.S).

At present, the Chepang are found in Makwanpur, Chitwan ,Gorkha and Dhading districts. A few families of Chepang have also settled in the plains of Bara and Parsa districts. The population of Chepang in the census of 1991 was about 36,000, it is 52,237 in the 2001 census.

Chepang are living in primary stage of poverty and back warded community of the nation. Chepang are god fearing honest ethnic groups. Their life is intimately connected with forest. So their present feature is imbalanced between man and nature, Chepang are suffered from natural phenomena like

deforestation and landslide, their inhabitation, low productive steep hills is the main causes of poor socio economic status of Chepang.

Hunting, fishing, collecting of edible shoots and roots are their traditional occupation. Weaving basket and other item of bamboo etc are also their occupation-([www.nefin.org.np](http://www.nefin.org.np))

Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC is in miserable condition, they are socially, economically, politically backwarded. Their major production, grain supports their feeding only for 3 to 6 month. Forest product like "GITHA" and "VYAKUR" support the remaining days of the year.

Government of Nepal has organized 'Praja' {Chepang} development program 2035.B.S. In order to develop social economic condition, besides this many NGO / INGOs are conducting several types of program to change the life style in Praja Jati.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Nepal is a multiethnic, multi-linguistic, multiracial and multicultural country. Every ethnic group has its own economical, social, religious, and cultural beliefs. Their cultural activities has own type of important role in the national cultural and national building activities. Thus it is impossible to develop country by separating this ethnic group from the national stream.

The Chepang of Shaktikhoor VDC is in miserable condition, stated in different publications and reports published in previous. Though many development programs has been organized and many NGOs and INGOs are working to uplift Chepang , still today they are facing many problems like landslide , lack of drinking water , agricultural loan , deprived of education , transportation problem , health problem etc. Another main problem to uplift this group is that Chepang do not feel free themselves to come in contact with other people.

In this context, the study attempts to document ethnography of Chepang in order to provide the information particularly in the field of socio economic

condition such as source of income, need of education, health, security, drinking water, marriage process, dress pattern, kinship, food habit, religion and life style. In order to obtain this information, the study will be field oriented and based on questionnaire. This study focus on condition of socio economic and occupational pattern in the study area .

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to find out the life status of Chepang in Shaktikhor VDC in Chitwan. Whereas, specific objectives are as follows.

- I. To examine demographical characteristics as background characteristics of Chepang.
- II. To find out the socio-cultural and economic condition of Chepang.
- III. To analyze the living practices of Chepang.

### **1.4 Rational of the Study**

This research provides the recent trends of socio-economic status of Chepang community. So this research may help for those organization, working on Chepang community to prepare the appropriate program to uplift the socio-economic condition of Chepang. It is necessary to find out the facts and figures minutely about the community before launching the activities. Thus, it is assumed that the study contributes to plan new programmes and activities for the community welfare to Non government organizations and other related agencies. In addition of this the research study may help to VDC programme planning process and might helpful to the government as a reference document. Nepal has diverse culture; it is quite essential to focus on economic development of various ethnic groups. Among the many ethnic groups, Chepang are quite back warded one. So it is necessary to identify the Chepang in national standard and to uplift them in their economic and social condition. This study would be helpful as a literature to

the forth coming researchers and those who are interested to know about this tribe. Further more the study, itself a precious document to the Chepang community to know about their socio-economic and demographic condition.

### **1.5 Limitation of the Study**

The research is conducted to fulfill the dissertation purpose first. Due to the constraints of time and resource, the descriptive study is the only option. Only socio cultural and economic practices are the focus points of the researcher. This study is confined with socio-cultural economic condition and living practices of Chepang community in Shaktikhor VDC, Chitwan district only. The study is carried out based on the limited universe of the population. Thus the results drawn from this study represent the selected area only. This conclusion may not be generalized to the whole Chepang community in all over the country. But the inference might be valid to some extent to those Chepang, who have a similar geographical setting and similar settlement.

## **CHAPTER-TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, the related literatures have been reviewed. The reviewed literatures are books, journals, seminars papers, newspapers clippings and yearly publication related to the study.

#### **2.1 Review of Related Literature**

There is scarcity of the literature about the Chepang in Nepal. Research and studies on this indigenous group are limited in both number and scope. There are few ecological related anthropological studies, which deals with people culture and nature. Whatever there is also a confine to anthropological sphere? There is absence of studies on the socio economic condition in the sociological perspectives. After the restoration of democracy in 1951 foreigner as well as Nepalese scholar began to study on the different field of Nepal. Especially, when the sociology course was started to teach in TU in 1981, it provided the further more encouragement to the scholar to study about Nepal and Nepalese society.

A few studies have undertaken regarding the Chepang. Some of the foreign scholar and Nepali sociologist have studied about them. Some of the reviewed important literature and its concerned issues of this study have presented as follows.

Hodgson (1848) was the first scholar, who wrote about the Chepang, he mentioned the Chepang as the primitive in habitant of Nepal. He further (1857) writes the Chepang rely more on food gathering and hunting than on agriculture. They expect more from their bows and arrows than from the plough sphere. To earn money, to make a proper house and to live, to wear clothes, and to get education are thing which are just being introduced in to Chepang society.

Bista (1965) was first anthropologist to make the preliminary study into verity of ethnic groups of Nepal. In his ethnographic survey of Nepalese people; in one of his books "People of Nepal" he has given some description on aspect of the socio economic of Chepang. He has also made an attempt to bring them to light through the journal 'Nepal Digest' 1972 giving some details on their origin ,beliefs, customs, and their economic life .

Among the Nepalese scholar Ganesh Man Gurung (1995) wrote on socioeconomic aspect where he discussed about three major instruction viz. Family, Marriage and kinship of Chepang and combines together the culture and recent change in recent structure aspect. Family and marriage are long tradition are in the study of sociological and anthropological field. The family of the Chepang is the bio-social, socio-economic, and socio-ritual, unite of social organization. He categorized the family pattern of Chepang as nuclear joint family. As he described of the marriage system of Chapang, he address the marriage fulfill the basic needs of human by providing security and it is important for family affairs. All together he mentioned the Chepang kinship and their blood relationship. His book on the topic 'village administration aspect' deals with the leadership of the community. If the leadership is traditional conservative, the speed of the progress will be slow and mentioned about the traditional organizational control of Chepang community and their village administration with their political participation and emerging leadership pattern. On the topic 'development program' he described the progress of the activities done to solve the basic problem of Chepang.

The study done by CEDA T.U. on Chepang (Socio-Economic Progress Survey of Chepang 1975) is a significant contribution which includes their socio economic characteristics mainly the welfare programs taken up for their uplift.

Rai (1985) has presented the economy of Chepang of central Nepal as very poor. He has studied their agriculture tools and technique and their living standard. They are exploited economically, politically and socially by their neighbors, Mr. Rai pointed in his study.



Roboli (2000) has carried out a study on Chepang. The study has particularly focused on the form of equity practiced in Chepang community. She also have described about the two Chapang festivals. She also wrote about the dowry system. The parent of the bride should provide her with a dowry, usually in the forms of animals, hens, goats, pigs, water buffalo, or cows and Chyuri (Bassia Butyracea).

Krishna Prasad Poudel, Department of Geography Education, Tribhuvan University, and Kathmandu, Nepal have studied on Chepang. His study 'RESOURCES AND LIVELIHOOD IN THE CHEPANG' COMMUNITY, NEPAL' examines the issues concerning to resources utilization and Management, in a Chepang Community, considered as marginalized indigenous hill- tribal community by HMG-Nepal recorded only 52,237 total number in 2001 census. They followed the traditional systems of activities. Chepang are extensively reported with affix various adjectives. They were the newly shifted cultivators from the stage of food gatherers, seems comparatively inefficient land managers to their neighbors. Earlier they were primarily dependent on natural food stuffs by hunting and gathering. Illiterate, Abject poverty and poor health are some of the common characteristics. Infrastructure improvement, formal education, awareness, capacity building, income generation, agro forestry, agriculture improvement and so on are the common agendas of huge investment made from the national revenue and donors assistance in the name of development during the last couple of decades. But, Chepang' livelihood and conditions have been hardly turned off.

[www.manang.com](http://www.manang.com) stated about Chepang as these backwards ethnic community belongs to well defined traditional area in the south of Dhading, the west of Makwanpur and east of Chitwan along the steeper slopes of Mahabharat range of the mid-Nepal. Very few of these hunting tribal people started deriving subsistence from agriculture. Otherwise, hunting, wood collection etc. has been their foremost living subsistence. Though, they are economically backward,

they have a rich and unique cultural tradition. With the increasing encroachment of the forest (their main living recourse) by themselves and other communities alike, these people lately started working in the development projects in the areas as hard labors. Physiologically mongoloid featured Chepangs (& Kusundas) resemble the Kirantis (the Rais and Limbus) but their lineage to them is yet to be confirmed. The site further stated that Chyuri (an indigenous fruit) is their favorite fruit. A Chepang family not owning a Chyuri tree is considered as poor and generally looked down upon.

Thus, although there are some scholar and researcher who have studied on the Chepang from different angles in different situation and places but there is no separate literature and publication on the socio economic status of Chepang people in Chitwan.

## **CHAPTER-THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Exploratory as well as descriptive research design has been performed for the research. The research provides somewhat qualitative, where as social and economic prospects of Chepang will be analyzed in descriptive way.

#### **3.2 Rational for Selecting the Study Area**

Chepang is an indigenous and one of the back warded communities of Nepal. Chepang are distributed mainly in Chitwan, Makawanpur, Dhading, Gorkha and Tanahu district. Chitwan is the main district where as Chepang reside in. The research has selected the area because there is not good and thorough study conducted in this community with respect to the socio economic condition. This study is focused on the homogeneous rural community of Chepang, thus Shaktikhor VDC has been selected purposively for the study.

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

In the study, both primary and secondary sources are adopted to collect the qualitative and quantitative information and data in the study.

- I. Primary Data: The interview, observation, etc agglomerated during the field works are the primary data that has been generated.
- II. Secondary Data: The information about Chepang from hard or soft copy of scholarly journals, books, reports, from varied sources are used as the secondary data for the study.

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

The total no of HH are 1378 in Shaktikhor VDC .Among them, the total Chepang household are 396. Among 396 households of Chepang, about 15% i. e. 60 households are selected by random sampling method. The respondents are

head of the household. The Universe of the study is based on the Chepang community of the study area i. e. 396 household.

### **3.5 Data Collection Tools and Techniques**

The following tools and techniques are pursued to collect the data in the study:

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaire Survey**

To generate the accurate data from households survey of Chepang community, structured, semi structured and unstructured questionnaire are prepared and ask to the respondents to collect data about socio-economic condition, occupational status, and their relationship with other people of the study area.

In addition of this, during the research period, we talked with some of the key informant like VDC secretary, representative of Chepang related organizations, and other local organizations to receive the additional information about their socio-economic behaviors and practices.

#### **3.5.2 Observation**

Each household selected in sampling has been visited and observed. The data are recorded while observing the household environment, economic status, occupation, social status etc. In the observation, we are trying to find out the qualitative information about their living status, settlements, dress patterns, habits, food habits etc.

### **3.6 Method of Data Analysis**

The collected data so far as is properly gathered, edited and coded for further processing. After the properly editing and coding, the data are subjected to various applicable statistical measures. The questionnaire data collected so far are analyzed via the simple statistical method. Depending upon the qualitative data gathered, simple descriptive method is applied to analyze the qualitative data.

## **CHAPTER- FOUR**

### **AREA AND PEOPLE UNDER STUDY**

This chapter deals with geographical location and climate of the study area, settlement pattern, natural resource, forest, population, cast /ethnicity, linguistics, and social hierarchy.

#### **4.1 Geographical Setting and Climate of the Study Area**

Chitwan belonging to the central development region is one of the district of Narayani zone. Geographically, the district is boarded by 6 Districts. Nawalparasi, Tanahu, and Gorkha in the west; Makawanpur, Dhading, in north Parsa and Makawanpur in east and India in the South. The District has been elevated in different height ranging from 150 to 1500 from the sea level. The climate of the District varies from tropical to mid temperate type depending upon the geographical variation.

The major rivers of the Districts are Narayani, Rapti, Budhirapti, Rewa, Lothar etc. The major hill of the Chitwan is Chure, Someshor pahad, Siraichuli etc.

Chitwan district is main district, where Chepang reside in. The study area i.e Shaktikhor VDC is one of the VDC of chitwan district. It is located in the northern east part of the district . This village is surrounded by Jutpani, Siddi, Dahakhani ,and Kaule village development committee.

The climate of this VDC is similar to the hilly region. Having a hill area it has dominated by monsoon type of climate, there is no metrological station; thus, there is no accurate data for climate.

The total population of Shaktikhor VDC is 7419. Among them 2575 are Chepang . The total Chepang household is 396 in this VDC.

## **4.2 Settlement Pattern**

The settlement pattern signifies not only the physical composition of the certain ethnic group but it also represents social-economic and cultural aspect of the family. The settlement pattern of the Chepang of the study area is found typical. The settlement is still surrounded by forest in upper hill and areas not easily accessible. The settlement of the Chepang people have scattered not clustered, they have no any particular direction for settlement as other ethnic groups but it is found that majority of the Chepang are settled either in stream or river side or near the jungle.

## **4.3 Natural Resources:**

In Nepal, Forests are the main natural resources for the people; the study area is no exception for this fact. Most of the population in the study area depends upon land and forest. However, those sources are used for their daily use and are yet to manage properly to make its maximum use line with the management and avoid lot of pressure on it as it is now for the sake of future use of it. Moreover, the limited and unproductive land has to be under cultivating by arranging measures of checking soil erosion and landslide.

## **4.4 Forest**

People live mainly in forest beside the land such as fuel. Fodder and timber for construction are the main source for every household. Almost all the habitants are surrounded by forest. According to the information of Chitwan DFO office, about 3000 Bigha land is covered with jungle. It is observed and found that the major forest here is of Sal, Sishau, Simal, Chilaune, Utsis and Harro-Barro etc.

#### **4.5 Population of Chitwan District**

The science of the population that is called demography represents a fundamental approach to the understanding of human society. Without knowing the complex inter-relationship among fertility, mortality and migration, the real understanding of population and society is not possible. According to the census 2001, The total population of Chitwan is 468699 where as 231857 are male and 236842 are female. The total number of houses is 1378 in Shaktikhor VDC among them, total the total households of Chepang are 396. The total population of Shakikhor VDC is 7419. Among them 2575 are Chepang.

#### **4.6 Caste/Ethnicity**

Among the various characteristic of the society, Caste/Ethnic component is the main component, which directly or indirectly effect the development of the society. Various groups are living in Chitwan District. According to the population census 2058, 80 shorts of caste/ethnic group live in this district and the majority of the population is Tamang (47.34%) followed by Brahman (14.98%), Kshetri(10.56%), Newar(6.81%), Magar(4.56%), Chepang(3.91%), and remaining percentage by others (DDC,2066).

Administratively, Chitwan is divided into 36 VDC, and two Municipality, among them important destination of Chepang are Korak, Kabilas, Kaule, Chandivanjyang, Shaktikhor etc. They are scattered in almost 36 VDCs and two Municipality of Chitwan District. In the Shaktikhor V.D.C Tamang is the predominant group and second group is Chepang. Beside them Brahman, Kshetry, Magar, Kami are the common groups in the study area (DDC, 2066).

#### **4.7 Social Hierarchy**

Chepang have hierarchical system among them. They have some division and subdivision in the community as Sumpraja, Dutpraja and Ghartipraja. Sumpraja is called higher among them and Ghartipraja is called lowest in their community.. They have restriction on food and their social activities. Recently, their hierarchy is gradually disappearing and do not have restriction on food and social activities. Chepang have no economic class or groups. Nevertheless some kind of hierarchy in the society is prevalent.

Most of the Chepang are Hindu in the religious aspect. But they are looked down comparing to the other Hindu communities like Bramhan, Kshetry etc. They have equal status with Tamang, Gurung in the hierarchical system of Nepalese people. Cooked foods by Chepang are not accepted by Gurung and Tamang and restrict to enter in their house as untouchable caste. Their treatment would be untouchable to them but they are not untouchable cast. They worked as a servant in Brahman's, Kshetry's house.. The Pande's or Purohit's status is higher in the Chepang community because they believe in religious affairs.



## **CHAPTER- FIVE**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **5.1 Demographic Characteristics as Background Characteristic of Chepang**

This Chapter deals with the age, sex composition, marital status, forms of marriage, structure of family etc.

##### **5.1.1 Age & Sex**

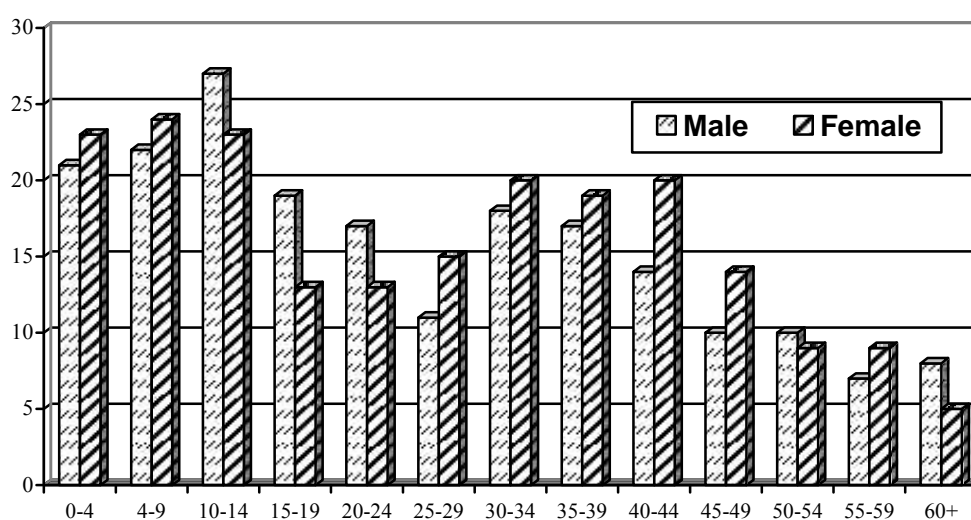
Age is ascribed status related to roles, responsibilities, prestige, and societal expectations from its member which gives them certain rights on the basis of their age .UN has defined age as “the estimated or calculated interval of time between the date of birth and date of census, expressed in completed solar year” (UN, 1967).It has also recommended that information on age should be collected in the census by enquiring the day, month and year of the individuals concerned. The term sex refers to the biological differences between male and female through which society assign different role or set of roles to them but the conception towards the distribution of roles and right varies from society to society.

**Table No. 5.1: Distribution of Sampled Population by Age and Sex**

Age group	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Percent	No	Percent	No.	Percent
0-4	21	10.44	23	11.11	44	10.78
5-9	22	10.94	24	11.59	46	11.27
10-14	27	13.43	23	11.11	50	12.25
15-19	19	9.45	13	6.28	32	7.84
20-24	17	8.45	13	6.28	30	7.35
25-29	11	5.47	15	7.24	26	6.37
30-34	18	8.95	20	9.66	38	9.31
35-39	17	8.45	19	9.17	36	8.82
40-44	14	6.96	20	9.66	34	8.33
45-49	10	4.97	14	6.76	24	5.88
50-54	10	4.97	9	4.34	19	4.65
55-59	7	3.48	9	4.34	16	3.92
60+	8	3.98	5	2.41	13	3.18
Total	201	100	207	100	408	100

*Source: field survey 2010*

**Figure No. 5.1: Distribution of Sampled Population by Age and Sex**



*Source: Table No. 1*

The above table and figure shows the age sex composition of the total population of sampled HH in the study area. Data shows that among the total population, near about half percentage i.e 49.30% are male and about 50.70% are female. Similarly the percentage of active population is about 62.5% of the total population. We can observed in the above table that about 3.20% of old age dependency and about 34.30% of child dependency in the study area.

**Table No. 5.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age and Sex**

Age group	Male		Female		Total	
	No	Percent	No	Percent	No	Percent
20-30	2	3.63	-	-	2	3.33
31-40	25	45.45	-	-	25	41.66
41-50	18	32.72	3	60.00	21	35.00
51-60	8	14.54	2	40.00	10	16.66
60+	2	3.63	-	-	2	3.33
Total	55	100	5	100	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

The table shows the age sex composition of the respondents in the study area. Here we can observe that about 8.33% of the total respondents are female and more than 90% are male respondents. Likewise, majority of respondents are of age group 31-50 years.

### **5.1.2 Marital Status**

It is established by the society to control and regulate the sex life and closely connected with the institution of family. In fact; family and marriage are complementary to each other. Marriage is an important social institution, which admits man and women in a family life. In the Hindu culture there are various types of marriage. The Chepang are also not far from this marriage variation. The research found basically the arrange marriage in the Chepang community of the study area, inter-cast marriage is prohibited. They follow the

monogamous and practical system of marriage. Therefore the Chepang community generally follows the customs of marriage by mutual agreement.

### **Forms of Marriage**

Every society has developed distinct and particular procedure in the formation of family. The forms of marriage observed in the study area can be illustrated as follows;

**Table No. 5.3: Distribution of HH by forms of Marriage**

Forms of Marriage	No	Percentage
Monogamy	46	76.70
Polygamy	14	23.30
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

The table no.7 shows that 23.30% Chepang practices polygamy. Their ancestor through polygamy determines high status in the community, but now they don't divorce or eloped to the other man as in the particular cases they do second marriage. Traditional marriage customs of Chepang is gradually disappearing.

### **5.1.3 Structure of Family**

The structure of our family is not only differs from the structure of the Western society but also from the structure of the East-Asian society.

The structure of family in the study area can be observed as

**Table No. 5.4: Distribution of Family by Structure**

Structure of family	No of HH	Percent
Joint	45	75.00
Nuclear	15	25.00
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

The practice of joint family system is still prevalent in Chepang community of Shaktikhor VDC. About 75% follow the joint family system and rest 25% are following nuclear family system.

These results can be generalized as people from 2 or 3 generations live in the same family in Chepang community. 'The bigger the family, the better the efficiency in works' is the concept of most people in Chepang community.

## 5.2 Socio-Cultural and Economic Condition of Chepang

Socio-cultural economic aspect is a major field in a society that influences various aspects. This Chapter deals with the economic characteristics of respondents on the heading of occupation and secondary occupation, size of land holding, annual income and expenditure of Chepang etc. and socio-cultural aspect under the heading educational status, health and sanitation, family planning, drinking water etc.

### 5.2.1 Occupation

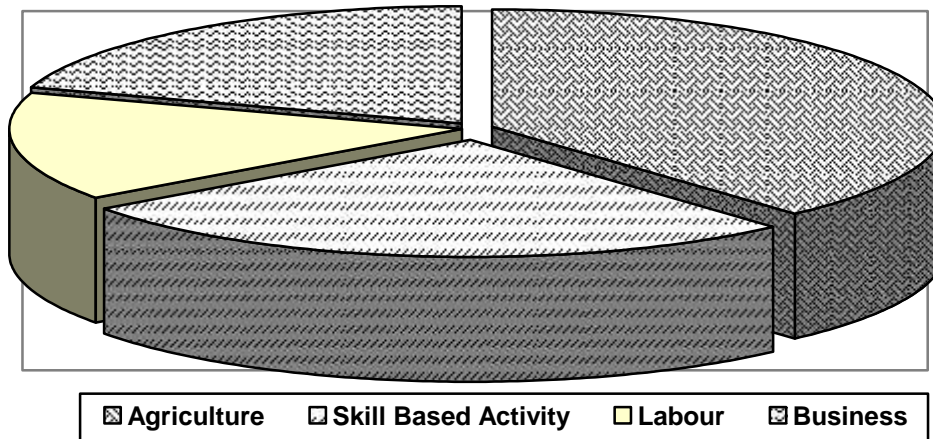
Occupation directly related to the personality development of an individual and socio-economic status in the community. The Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC is engaged in different occupational activities. This table provides the information about the primary occupation.

**Table No. 5.5: Distribution of Respondent by Occupational Status**

Occupation	No of HH	Percent
Agriculture	23	38.33
Skill based activity	16	26.66
Labour	9	15.00
Business	12	20.00
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

**Figure No. 5.2: Distribution of Respondent by Occupational Status**



*Source: Table No. 5*

Agriculture is a main occupation of the study area. Chepang spend most of their working hours in agricultural activities and it is a family enterprises in which all member of the family involves and works as a functional unit. The data reveals that about 38.33% of Chepang households are involving in agriculture as a main occupation.

Likewise, the Chepang have also other occupation in skill based activities. The Chepang make several types of basket, ropes mats, Namlo, Theki(pot of wood). These households production have helped them mostly to fulfill domestic needs. Nevertheless some of the basket (doko, dalo) ropes, theki, namlo are sold in the market and to other villagers too. The above table reveals that about 26.66% of Chepang HH are engaged in these types of skill based activities which they are following as their occupation.

To talk about the business in the study area, some are engaged in making home wine and selling everyday. This portion of respondents comprises about 20%.

Chepang who have their own sufficient land to feed them throughout the year, they work in their land but those who have not sufficient land, they cultivate on others lands as a tenant and some work as a collie. We have categorized them as labor here and this portion comprises 15% of the total respondents .

## **Animal Husbandry as Secondary Occupation**

Animal husbandry is secondary occupation of Chepang community in the study area. It provides subsistence for Chepang people .They are keeping cattle in Adhiyan and collect the wild food from forest .Animal husbandry is an indispensable with agriculture farming also. Buffalos and cattle are kept for milk, manure and as plough animal. They keep cows in large number than the buffalos, as buffalos are comparatively expensive to purchase than cows. Most of poor households of Chepang community are farming small animal like chicken, goat, pig etc for consumption and money for emergency expenditure.

### **5.2.2 Size of Land Holding**

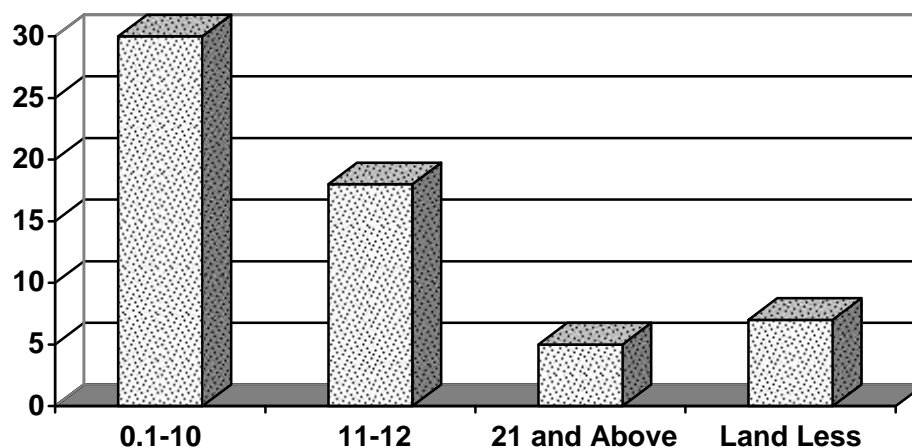
The occupational patterns indicate that majority of Chepang households depends on agriculture. Therefore the size of farming land and land ownership are the main indicators of economic status of Chepang. The possession of land is greatly valued; among the Chepang of Shaktikhor .It is valued not simply as a factor of production but as continuous source of income and security. On the other hand it is an index of social status and prestige.

**Table No. 5.6 Distribution of Respondents by the Size of Land Holding**

Land in Ropani	No. of households	Percentage
0.1-10	30	50.00
11-20	18	30.00
21and above	5	8.30
Land less	7	11.70
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

**Figure No. 5.3: Distribution of Respondents by the Size of Land Holding**



*Source: Table No. 6*

Out of total 60 households, half of them i.e 50% have small size of farming lands between 0.1to 10 Ropanis .around 30% have medium size of farming land between 11 to 20 ropanies. And only about 8.30% have higher size of farming land above 21 Ropanies where as around 11.70% houses are land less. In this way there is no satisfactory size of land holding in the Chepang community of Shaktikhor VDC. It illustrate that majority of Chepang households have small size land between 0.1-10 Ropani

### **5.2.3 Annual Income**

To illustrate the further economic characteristics of the Chepang, their annual income was investigated. The respondents were unable to say their exact annual income .So various source of livelihood were asked and the total annual income derived from different source calculated in terms of money. There was no other important income source to them than that of agriculture itself. The other income source what they do have is nominal and minor or not sufficient for their livelihood. Besides agriculture income there is other side income through wage labor, animal husbandry, and business etc. All these are not considered as good part of income as agriculture income source. But these sources of income are supposed to contribute subsistence of Chepang.



**Table No. 5.7: Estimated Annual Income of Households from Different Sources**

Income in Rs.	Number of households			
	Agriculture& Livestock	Wage labor	Skill based activity	Business
Less than 5000	-	-	10	-
5001-10,000	16	5	4	7
10001-20,000	2	4	2	5
20001-30000	3		-	-
30,001-40,000	2	-	-	-
40,001-50000		-	-	
50,001 and above		-	-	-
Total	23	9	16	12

*Source: Field Survey, 2010*

The table shows the estimated annual income of the each house holds of Chepang from different sources. The major source of income of Chepang people is agriculture.

#### **5.2.4 Estimated Annual Expenditure of Chepang**

The expenditure depends on income of the family . If income is high , expenditure can also be exceeded for additional needs and wants .Family expenditure remains balanced only when expenditure could be determined on the basis of income .

To illustrate the further income level of Chepang Community in the study area, annual expenditure of Chepang is estimated . Total annual expenditure is derived from different source calculated in terms of money.

**Table No. 5.8: Estimated annual Expenditure of Chepang**

Expenditure In Rs.	No of house holds						
	Food grain from own land	Food grain purchase	Jad & Raksi	festival	Clothi ng	Educat ion	Health
Less than 2000	-	-	24	-	19	35	50
2001-5000	7	29	36	29	18	23	5
5001-10000	9	18	-	20	14	-	5
10001-20000	8	7	-	11	9	-	-
20001-30000	15	6	-	-	-	-	-
30001-40000	11	-	-	-	-	-	-
40001-50000	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
50001-60000	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
60001-70000	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	60	60	60	60	60	58	60

*Source: Field Survey, 2010*

Above table shows that the Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC spend their more income in food grain either it is own production or purchased . It is interesting that Chepang spend almost equal amount of money for education as of jad and raksi even low for health.

Thus above mentioned analysis clearly indicates the annual deficit budget, which is supplemented by loan borrowing, credit purchased. They borrow money to solve the problem and the money with the high interest. They have no objection for high interest. The above analysis shows that the Chepang community of Shaktikhor is socially and economically deprived.

### 5.2.5 Educational Status of Respondent:

Educational status is one of the most important indicators of socio-economic development of the people in any country. “Education is the human right with immense power to transform. Its foundation rests the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development (Annan, UNDP, 1999)” Education enlightens human beings; It helps one to judge between right and wrong. Thus, socio-economic and political status of people is related with education.

The better education one has the better choice are open. In every society, education plays a vital role in creating society well off. Literacy status had often been used to denote “How the society is educated?” during the study; an analysis was made on this issue too. The quality of education provided by the educational institute of that area primary, lower secondary and secondary school are regarded as enters of education, for the poor people, The only way of acquiring education is either formal or informal education system of government.

Lack of education is the barrier of socio economic development of a community and nation. It is a major weapon to uplift the poor condition of the weaker people of the society if it is made available to these weaker people. The Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC, are illiterate in majority.

**Table No. 5.9: Educational Status of Chepang**

Response	No	Percentage
Illiterate	36	60.00
Primary level	18	30.00
Secondary level	4	6.70
Higher	2	3.30
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

Above the table no.9 shows that about 60% of respondents are illiterate. In addition, 30% had the educational status of primary level. Likewise only 6.70% have secondary level education and just 3.30% have the higher education.

The most important resources of any country is its' citizens. But they must be well-educated, trained and motivated to carry out various works .Education is vital for human beings. It promotes awareness and contributes to all round development. Education teaches skills and good behavior. It makes able to lead a quality of life, but it is seen that most of the Chepang are deprived of education.

Before some decades, the Chepang believed that there was no use of education for their children. They did not need education to look after their agricultural and other traditional economic activities. So at that time they did not send their children to the school. But now a days in the younger generation of Chepang knowing the benefit and value of education and the active role it can play in their over all life, they have considerable interest in education. The Chepang are more becoming conscious to send their children to school. Now their children are capable of reading and writing.

**Table No. 5.10: Interested to Send Children to School**

Responses	No.	Percent
Interested	52	86.70
Not interested	8	13.30
Total	60	100

*Source: Field survey 2010*

Above table no.10 shows that among the total respondents 86.70% Chepang are interested to send their Children in school and 13.30% are not interested to send their children in school because of their poor economic condition and traditional attitude.

### 5.2.6 Health and Sanitation

Health is wealth. For the health facility, different institution is providing positive impacts to society and nation. This VDC is little bit far from urban area .There is one health center and they get treatment in the health center. Some time health volunteer visits there. Many of the traditional healers are common for curing illness of any kinds for them.

**Table No. 5.11: Treatment Pattern of Illness in Chepang Community**

Service provided by ;	House holds	Percent
Guruwa (witch doctor)	18	30.00
Health center	14	23.30
Both	28	46.70
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

It is seen from above data that about 23.30% households go to the health centers to get the desire treatment where as 30% go to the Guruwa and rest 46.70% take the health service provided by both.

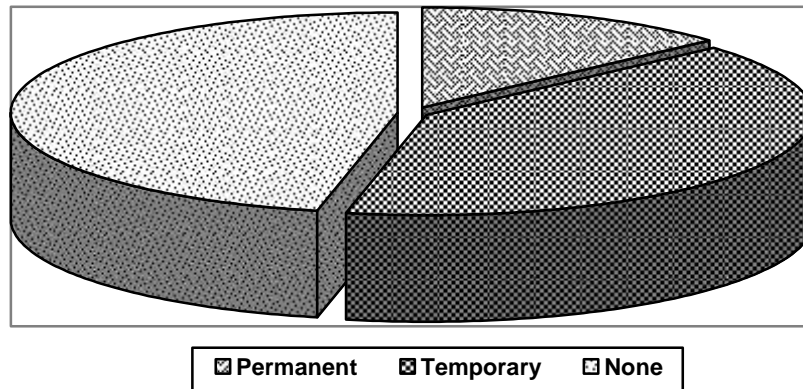
This information reflects that the health condition of Chepang community in the study area is deteriorating day by day in the absence of proper health services . They have not been able to achieve desired improvements in peoples health .It may be due to the lack of education, awareness and widespread poverty , they prefer to go to witch doctor (dhami , jhankri ) in stead of seeing or going to doctors .

**Table No. 5.12: Sanitation Condition (Toilet) of Sampled Households**

Types of toilet	Respondents	Percent
Permanent	8	13.30
Temporary	24	40.00
None	28	46.70
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

**Figure No. 5.4: Sanitation Condition (Toilet) of Sampled Households**



*Source: Table No. 12*

The table and figure show that sanitation condition on sampled households, Out of 60 respondents only 8 house holds i.e. 13.30% have a permanent toilet and 24 households i.e.; 40% have a temporary toilet and 28 households i.e.; 46.70% do not have toilet. From this shows the poor condition of sanitation in Chepang community.

### **5.2.7 Family Planning**

The most problem of Nepal is population pressure. This is affecting the efforts made of governments for the betterments of the people. The family planning services have been extended in Nepal since 2016 BS mainly through the NGOs.

Since then different types of contraceptives have been made available to the clients. For examples new device have been introduced. Intra uterine device has been developed. The family planning program of governments is lurching slowly in village. Some Chepang men have undergone vasectomy operation and some of the Chepang women have under gone laparoscopy operation. Few of the man and also women use other means of contraceptive for temporary family planning. The knowledge and awareness of family planning seems to be minimum among the Chepang of the study area.

**Table No. 5.13: Distribution of Respondents by Using of Contraceptive Device and Method**

Devices and Method	No	Percent
Condom	2	3.30
Pills	3	5.00
Vasectomy	3	5.00
Laparoscopy	1	1.70
Not any device	51	85.00
Total	60	100

*Source: Field survey 2010*

Above table no 5.13 shows that out of the 60 respondents, 3.30% are using condom and around 5% have oral pills. On the other hand about 5% of the respondents implemented permanent method of contraception i.e vasectomy and about 1.70% have undergone to laparoscopy .Most of the respondents ( 85%) have no use of any device or method of contraception .

### **5.2.8 Drinking Water**

Drinking water is one of the most important basic needs of human beings. Nobody can survive without water .It is as important as air . Until now only one third of the population of Nepal are provided with the drinking water facility.

In this context, sources of drinking water in the study area are assessed.

**Table No. 5.14 : Sources of Drinking Water**

Sources of water	No of households	Percentage
Private tap water	12	20.00
Public tap water	31	51.70
Others	17	28.30
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

It is found that most of the households (51.70%) get water from public tap water. Around 20% depend on private tap water and remaining 28.30% depend on others sources like piped water , *kuwa* etc .

Health of the people may not be sound due to the lack of pure drinking water .It is seen in the study area that no one is paying attention to the quality of water too.

### 5.2.9 Language

The Chepang have their own dialect, which is related with Tibet burman. Most of the language speaking in Nepal is from Tibeto-Burman, comparatively, Chepang language is backed as compared to other ethnic language. They are not conscious about their own language. Thus it is not developed; the language is different from each other even in the different places of Chepang community. It is distinct with the home and community. Chapang language is close to Newari, gurung, Magar, Thami, Thakali, Sherpa language.

**Table No. 5.15: Respondents Familiar with Their Own Language**

Response	No of respondents	Percentage
Familiar with own language	27	45.00
Un familiar with own language	33	55.00
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

Above table no. 5.15 Show that around 45% espondent are familiar with their own language and rest 55 % are not familiar with their own language. It is seen that the elder Chepang only speak their own language but the younger ones speak the khas and Nepali language. It is also observed that they speak mixed dialects too.

Because of the social problems existing in the community, many local and ethnic dialects and languages are under shadow and some of them are even vanishing.



### **5.2.10 Religion**

Though religion is a highly personal thing, yet it has a social aspect and social role to play. It has been powerful agency in society and performed many social function. It is observed in the study area that Chepang believe in the super natural power as mountain, rivers, trees and land. It is most important for every HH and village community of Chepang to cultivate friendly relation with such super natural power .In study area, Chepangs are worshipping some deities and practices that are closely related to their life ceremonies, seasonal festivals and agricultural practices .Chepang practices their own tribal deities, who consists of worship of number of spirits and some Hindus deities such as Ram, Krishna, Shiva, Devi, etc. On the basis of their practices it is hard to categorize them in to one particular religion of Nepalese context. The ritual performance of Chepang community in Shaktikhor VDC is similar to Hindu God and Goddess. They have belief that God had created the earth.

It is found during the study that Chepang community in Shaktikhor VDC believe following God and Goddess ;

1. Bhumi Pooja
2. Gaidu Pooja
3. Aaitabare Pooja
4. Kul Pooja
5. Nwagi Pooja

### **5.2.11 Festivals**

The Chepang observed many festivals, which are influenced by Hindu religions like Dashain, Tihar (Dipawali) and saune shankranti are the most important festivals for the Chepang. The Chepang of the study area traditionally celebrate Maghe Sakranti too. On that day, they eat fruits, boiled roots, and sweet potato which are prepared before that day.

They also celebrate Dashain Festivals, Which is greatest of Hindu. Most of the Chepang are Hindu in Shaktikhor VDC. These Chepang celebrate the festivals

very simple way. They immolate the pigs and buffalo during the festival. The buffalos are slaughtered on the saptami (seven day of dashain) but the pigs are scarified on the astami (8<sup>th</sup> day of dashain) in the study area.

Most of the Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC doesn't put Jamara. The poor Chepang take buffalo by sharing in the group. On the day of Dashain, they put tika from their relatives. The son in law and brother in law or daughter or sister bring goat or hen to their parent's house as a gift for tika. In return, parents give some money to them. Depawali is also celebrating in Chepang community. They worship the goddess Laxmi; do gaidupuja and vhai tika in Tihar. Their other cultural activities are similar to Bramin and Kshetry in Dipawali.

#### **5.2.12 Means of Communication**

The state of communication was very poor at previous time in Nepal . Nowadays, the remote places are also connected by mobile phone, wireless, CDMA, satellite and sky phone. We can communicate almost from every where in Nepal to any places in the world through telephone or internet .There are many community and local media station all over the country .Government and private TV, radio and FM station transmit varieties of informative and entertaining programs all gay long .People have been able to communicate, gather information and get entertainment from these programs.

In this context, means of communication in the study area has been observed;

**Table No. 5.16: Means of Communication**

Means of communication	No of HH	Percent
Mobile phone	23	38.30
Radio	31	51.70
Television	6	10.00
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

From this table we found in the study area that about 38.30% respondents exchange information with their relatives, friends, and counter parts within the country through mobile phone. Likewise, 10% respondents have TV in their house and most of the respondents i.e. 51.70% listen to news and obtain information from radio.

From this, it can be said that though electricity and means of communications has been a part of modern life, the Chepang community of Shaktikhor VDC is still in exception in this case. Their day to day works have not been well facilitated by these electrical communication gadgets like computers, fax, telephone, internet etc. Wide network of communication in Chepang community of Shaktikhor VDC can be seen low.

### **5.3 Living Practices of Chepang**

Living practices of Chepang, deals with the types of crop produced for livelihood, sources of income, food sufficiency for living, farming system & gender participation in Chepang community, housing Structure of Chepang, off farm & farm activities, traditional skills and uses etc.

#### **5.3.1 Types of Crops Produced for Livelihood**

The Chepang produced mainly two kinds of crops. The rainy season crops are Maize, Millets, Ghaiya, Junelo, Kaguno, Beans, Soyabeans, Pumpkins, Chilly, Cucumber etc and the winter season crops are Wheat, Barely, Mustar, Tobacco, Ginger etc. In the study area of Shaktikhor VDC, agricultural system is very primitive type. They lived along the hillside of VDC and cultivated crops in Pakho or *Khoriya*. They planted maize, millet, and phapar (black wheat) Nowadays Chepang of plain area have started new tools and technology for agriculture. Every Chepang of study area use the chemical fertilizer and improved seed. The Chepang produce paddy and other crops also. Before two years, they planted maize only in the summer season but now they produced maize in the winter season too.

### **5.3.2 Sources of Income**

Income is fundamental way for fulfilling the needs and wants of family. If family income is high , daily needs can be easily fulfilled .For the happiness and welfare of the family , there should be maintained balance between income and expenditure by determining priority of expenditure in accordance with the income source.

The subsistence farming system of the Chepang people of the Shaktikhor VDC is a marginal type, so they hardly solve their hand and mouth problem. The subsistence agro based agriculture doesn't cope the year around hand to mouth so it is culminated by the gathering. Even today they subsist 4-6 month in the year by forest resource.They have marginal arable land so they are unable to solve the food problem. Most of the Chepang are gathering Githa, Vyakur , Tarul, leaves, and other forest resource also .

Here we observed different sources of income in the Chepang community of study area;

#### **A. Kitchen Gardening**

Mostly Chepang houses have kitchen garden surrounding the house. In the kitchen garden, they grow leafy vegetables, chilly, radish, bean, cucumber etc. They grow tomatoes, ginger, garlic, turmeric etc. Some Chepang cultivate potato also in the kitchen garden. All these vegetables are produced only for household consumption. In the rainy season, shortage of green vegetables is occurring. In the crisis, they eat food (*dhido*, boiled rice etc.) only with chilly and salt.

#### **B. Chyuri Tree**

It is seen that there are enough trees of Chyuri in the forest of the study area. In the study area, the number of Chyuri trees per household is about 6. Chepang

of the study area have sufficient Chyuri tree. Fruits of Chyuri trees are also the primary source of income of Chepang. If the Chepang have not food grain, they eat only fruits of Chyuri for sustain their livelihood. They make ghee from seeds of Chyuri. The ghee is used for eat and also used to make soap. They purchase salt, oil, clothes, spices etc. by selling the ghee of Chyuri seeds. Mostly Chepang have their own Chyuri trees. It is supposed that those Chepang people are comparatively richer, who have more trees of Chyuri.

### **C. Cottage Industries**

Chepang have some small and traditional cottage industries. In the non-farming season, they are engage in cottage industry. Hands make all the products, which they produce from cottage industries, or all the industries are handicraft type. They make *doko*, *dalo*, *thunse*, *bhakari*, *mandro* etc. from split cave of bamboo and nigalo and sale it in market or exchange it with crops. Likewise, they make fishing net and javi (a kind of bag) from puwa and nylon rope, namlo from jute of bhorla, kucho from amrisho and ghum from bamboo and leaf of bhorla. Chepang get the raw materials from forest to make these products. But, now a day, Chepang such occupation is bringing to an end slowly due to deforestation or more encroachment of forest.

### **D. Hunting and Fishing**

Chepang are more experienced in fishing. The male Chepang are going to the forest and river for hunting and fishing respectively. They hunt the wild animals by bow and for fishing; they use fishing net or fishhook. Hunting and fishing are also them to sustain their livelihood. They go to fishery at morning and engaged in fishing till evening. They are also expert in hunting. Until a few years ago, they hunt wild animals, but now a day they cannot hunt wild animals due to order of law.

### 5.3.3 Level of Food Sufficiency for Livelihood

The label of food production and consumption determines the poverty of people or nation. During Study period, it was tried to find out whether the annual production of food grains was sufficient to meet the daily requirement for one year by cultivating their own land. The farming lands are dividing and going in small pieces where as the population is growing rapidly. In this section it is tried to show the level of food sufficiency from own agriculture production.

**Table No. 5.17: Distribution of Respondents by Level of Food Sufficiency**

Food sufficiency in month	No. of household	Percent
Zero month	7	11.70
0-3	15	25.00
3-6	19	31.70
6-9	8	13.30
9-12	6	10.00
Surplus	5	8.30
Total	60	100

*Source: Field survey, 2010*

The table no. 5.17 shows that 11.70% households are landless; they have to dependent other source of income. About 25.00% of households have food sufficiency for 3 months by their own production. Like wise only 31.70% of households have food sufficiency for 6 month, around 13% of households have food sufficiency for 9 months. Similarly just 10% of households produce adequate quantity of food grain for one year and there are 8.30% households, who have some surplus food.

It is also observed the food deficient households compensating their needs by earning from wage labor, agro labor, pottering lone borrowing and credit purchased. Whatever they grow in the field can just support their food problem. Therefore, agriculture has no direct economic value except for subsistence. Thus, may be every year, the Chepang community falls victim of the cycle of poverty.

### **5.3.4 Farming System and Gender Participation**

Formerly modern techniques were completely unknown to the agriculture sector of those poor people. The system of the agriculture production is traditional and primitive. Then physical as well as manual labors of the peasants are more important than the other means. Therefore all the family members of peasants irrespective of sex have to be engaged in agriculture work. Only some of the agriculture work has been divided into two sexes.

The division traditionally two type's general specific. In general category the work is usually allocated to one sex that could be done by either sex such as shedding of paddy. Such delicate skill full works are generally supposed to be done by women but there is no harm of social objection or criticism if that are done by both sex.

One specific division of work particularly allocated to one sex could not be done by another sex such as plough the field. It was allocated to men and it could not be done by women, any violation of such division brings many difficulties in the society. But average contribution and participation of the women is no less than that of man.

Male and female problem, different activities and traditionally male and female are engaged in an outdoor and indoor activities respectively. Chepang women have to spend their time in collecting firewood, food, water, gathering forest resources and so on because Chepang women are in a better position to contribute much to helping and supporting the agriculture activities of their male. They are petty landlords but the agricultural productions are less and it is not sufficient for even nine months. The Chepang work hard for their substance. For the Chepang who live in the hilly area, monkeys cause considerable harm for their crops.

They are depended on food gathering and fishing for at least three to six months in a year. They also collect the vegetables and different foods from the forest. For Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC, the most important fruit tree is Chiuri, which is considered to be their wealth. They eat it and sell in the market.

Before some decades, they collected the seed of chiuri for oil to use for cooking and selling in the market.

**Table No. 5.18: Farming, Off farm & Food Style Activities**

S.N	Respondents	Description	Remarks
1	Farming activities	Rice, Maize, Millet, Potato, Cerials, Cattle, goat, pig, poultry, Badel, Sheep, Chiuri, Ghaiya, Junelo, pumpkin, Kaugno, Ginger, Sama etc	
2	Off farm activities	Doko, Namlo, Theki, Nanglo, Mat, Rope, Damlo, shayakhu, Dalo, Bhakari, Chalno, ghum, amriso kucho Mandro, Halo, Hunting and fishing, Fire wood collection, and others bambos handicrafts.etc	
3	Food style	Githa, Tarul, Vyacur, Leaves, Flowers, Dhido, fruits, Ato, Roti, Rice, Meat, Jad, Local Raksi etc	

*Source: field survey 2010*

### **5.3.5 Housing Structure**

Chepang Residential pattern and types of houses are traditional. Their houses are made of stone and clay. The Chepang houses are small and narrow. The houses are two stored and have no separated room. One storied make one room. They use the upper one for their bed room and the lower are used for the kitchen.

The size of the Chepang houses is 5 to 7 meters long and 4 to 5 meters wide in average. The roofs are conical. Most of the houses are built on rectangular side. The door is placed in the middle of the front wall. The windows are also in the middle of the front wall or any side on the wall of the stone walled house. But wooden houses have no windows. The front side of the houses attached the Verandas. Verandas are very useful for the guest and their daily fictional life.



The front of the house has also a courtyard. It is very important for their cultural activities. Some Chepang keep their animals in the side of the veranda. Their house looks very rough and dirty because they do not clean the house and surroundings properly. The Chepang Scrub the house only in the particular function. They paint their house and wall with the red mud in the festivals.

The hearth is located in the middle or in one corner of the lower storied. Therefore inside the house it looks dirty and black because of smoke. The Chepang sleep around the hearth to make their surrounding warm in the winter season. Now days, the Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC are trying to keep their houses and surroundings neat and clean. The buildings patterns of the houses are changing day by day as Bramhan and Kshetry.

**Table No. 5.19: Distribution of Housing Structure**

S.N	Description	Number of households	Percentage
1	Traditional	45	75.00
2	Modern	15	25.00
	Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

Above the table no. 5.19 shows that out of 60 respondents 45 i.e. 75% reside in traditional houses and 15 i.e. 25% reside in modern houses. This bar shows that most of houses are traditional type.

Most of the HH are traditional and using traditional structured House. It is due to low economic condition and lack of awareness. And another factor is cast based dwelling system existed in the community. Nearly 7 people are using a common room; environmentally it is not sound and recommended in terms of personal health.

### **5.3.6 Skills and Their Uses for Livelihood**

Most of the Chepang follow their traditional skills besides agriculture to earn for their living such as from bamboo they make baskets, in Nepali it is called

*doko, dalo, bhakari, soli, chalana, sibring, furlung, nanglo* etc. It is seen in the observation that Chepang are mostly involved in weaving rope, leaf umbrellas, straw-mat, *namlo, damlo* etc, which is seem as their traditional skill among the Chepang community. They also make agricultural tools such as ploughs. They even make hunting tools such as bow, arrow, and trapping net etc. they also produce their homemade wine called *jad in Nepali*.

Nowadays some of the Chepang have introduced new skills in their daily life for their living from sewing and weaving, carpentry, masonry and bee keeping. In general, skills of Chepang in study area can be distributed as follows;

**Table No. 5.20: Distribution of Respondents by Skills**

Skills	No. of respondents	Percentage
Traditional	42	70.00
New learnt	18	30.00
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey 2010*

Above the table no. 5.20 shows that out of 60 respondents 42 i.e.; 70% are involved in traditional skill and 18 i.e.; 30% are involved in new learnt skill. It shows that Chepang are engaged in various skill works, they are not limiting in their traditional skill but the study clearly indicate that though they have learnt new skills today's also most of the Chepang are engaged in their traditional skills.

### **5.3.7 Food and Drinking Habits**

Specially, the Chepang people in Shaktikhor VDC are non vegetarian. They eat grain for three to six month of the year and subsist on roots, fruits and their forest production for the remaining of the year. Their staple food is Dhido and boiled maize and millet with pulse and other vegetable soups. Their other foods are maize, millet, Kaguno, Sama, and black white. But they take rice in the festival and ceremonies. They depend on fruits, roots, leaves, and wild vegetables available in the forest. *Niuro, Sisno, Tanki, Koirala, Githa* are a bit

bitter in the taste but they make it edible by boiling with the ashy water and wash it. They eat fish, pork, mutton, chicken, and meat of buffalo.

Even though the Chepang of Shaktikhor have started to earn by the vegetable production such as cucumber, bitter gourd, pumpkin etc, still they are in miserable condition and are forced to practice subsistence always. But they are tackling hard in every aspect to their hard life to live. So far as the Chepang of study area are concerned, they drink alcohol, smoke cigarette, bidi, and surti in their daily life.

### **5.3.8 Dress Pattern**

The Chepang fore fathers wear traditional dress. The male Chepang used the changa and the female Chepang used punga, which is colorful clothes but change is non color clothes. But now the male Chepang wear *Dhoti, Bhoto, Daura, Kachhad, Pheta* because of changes, and female Chepang wear sari, *Cholo, Patuka, and ghalek*.

It is found in the study area a few oldest Chepang are wearing their traditional dress but most of the Chepang are wearing their modern dress as Bramin, Kshetry do. They wear shirt, pant, slipper, cap, vest etc. The female wear sadi, blouse, etc. The School girl wears shirt, Frock and ribbon etc. Now a days, the new generation of Chepang (male or female) have no visible distinction between them as compared to Bramin Kshetry. We can find the Chepang of the Shaktikhor VDC are rapidly changing in about their dress patterns.

### **5.3.9 Birth**

The Chepang do not have religious activities during pregnancy period. But after the birth of child they have some ceremonies like name giving, food introduction and hair cutting which are related to Hindu religion. After the birth of the child they perform name-giving ceremony. If the child born is boy, they perform this ceremony on the 12<sup>th</sup> day and if the child born is girl they perform

it on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. They observe the birth pollution within that period. They sprinkle the water mixed with cow's urine (gahuntpani) around the house for purity. Then the parents give name to their baby and ties yellow thread around baby's waist and leg for his/her prosperity and good health.

During the polluted period the mother of the newborn baby is not allowed to touch here and there. Some Chepang invite Pande (Prist of Chepang) to purify the house and to give name to the new baby.

### **5.3.10 Hair Cutting Ceremony**

Chepang perform this shaving ceremony when the male child reaches at the age of twelve. The boy's maternal uncle is invited to shave the head of the boy. The hair of the boy is shaved by his maternal uncle without the small tuft on the top of head. The maternal give some money and new clothes to the boy. The parents give party to the maternal uncle and relatives on this occasion, his parents and other put Tika on his forehead and they bless for his long and happy life. Nowadays, Chepang do not celebrate the hair cutting ceremony because of their poorness . so it is disappearing.

### **5.3.11 Death Ceremony**

Every living being had to face an unavoidable event of life that is death. In fact, death' is certain in every life. Chepang accept the death term with the belief of new life after their death. The soul of man transfers the new life and goes to the heaven with their parent's activities of life. The unique tradition of the Chepang community is that they put gold water in the mouth of the dead body and put some money in the pocket.

This is done in order to help the dead body's soul to pay fees for crossing the rivers to reach the heaven. They offer grain, wirer pots, spade, axe, and tobacco in the funeral ground for the dead body. These implements help the soul to go to the heven. The pregnant women, animal and other cast people should not

touch the dead body. They believe that if the animal and non Chepang touch the dead body, it causes the harm for family of cadaver.

When some one dies, they cremate the dead body beside the river. The eldest and younger son mourns for 13 days after the death. The man, who mourns, shaves his hair, mustache, beard and eye brows. He wears a white scarf, doesn't speak to or touch any body and eats boiled rice and ghee for 13 days then he wears white dress provided by mother's brothers. A brothers sons or husbands brothers sons does this in case if there is no son of deceased men or women respectively.

The brothers and close family members also observe death pollution and mourn for 13 days by abstaining from eating salt, meat, millet, pulse, mustard, oil, milk, and curd (Bista, 1965)

On the 13<sup>th</sup> day, they perform a funeral ceremony leaded by pandey. In the funeral ceremony, pandey request to join the group of other dead soul with in their family. He offers a bowl of boiled rice and wine. The family invites all the funeral precisionist, relatives and their villagers and gives boiled rice meat and home made wine. The visitors also bring some beer with them. The married sisters and daughters bring a goat and bottle of wine each.

They give a gift some rupees in return for whoever brings the presents of goats and wine. The funeral is done in the name of dead person.

The Chepang ancestor of Shaktikhor VDC buried the dead body in the hill. But, now days, they started to cremate the dead body in the hill. The mourning continues for the five days for the child, But for elder ones the mourning last form 13 days, Their son purifies the death pollution on that day they sprinkle "Sunpani" and "Gahutpani" in low to brother in low.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

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

#### **6.1 Summary**

Nepal is a country of different ethnic groups, which unify the people of different origins and different cultural backgrounds their live of more than 62 ethnic casts throughout the country. Among them Chepang is also an ethnic group of Nepal.

Chepang usually reside in hilly region. They are living in poor economic condition, illiterate and backward as compared to other ethnic group of Nepal. Chepang are living in primary stage of poverty. Chepang are taken as honest ethnic groups. Their life is intimately connecting with forest.

This study has been carried out to find out the socio economic status of Chepang community of Shaktikhor VDC, Chitwan District. The specific objectives of the study are analyzing the living practices of Chepang and finding out socioeconomic condition with socio cultural and demographic Characteristics of Chepang explore income and employment potentials in relation to mobilization of their skills.

The study is based on descriptive research design because it tries to describe living condition, socio-economic condition and cultural and demographic aspect of Chepang. Both primary and secondary data have been used in this study and in the case of nature of data both qualitative as well as quantitative nature of data were used. Households is taken as unit of the study and from the total 396 Chepang households that is universe of the study, around 15% i.e. 60 households have been selected as sample of the study by using simple random sampling with the nine different places of Shaktikhor VDC.

The primary data for the study were collected through the interview schedule and observation. Finally the gathered data have been first classified on

quantitative and qualitative basis and analyze in descriptive and statistical way by using simple statistical method like average mean and percentage.

This study is carried out in Shaktikhor VDC of Chitwan. The total households number of the Chepang are 396, among them about 15% (60 in number) households have been selected for the study. The study shows that socio economic status of Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC is in miserable condition. They are poor economically and deprived socially .They engaged in farm as well as off farm activities.

About 38.33% of Chepang households are involving in agriculture as a main occupation. Such as Rice, Millet, Maize, Potato, Cereal, Pumpkin, ginger etc, and about 15% are engaged in labor. Animal husbandry such as farming goat, pig, poultry, Cow, Buffalo etc. is secondary occupation of Chepangs in the study area.

Among the total population, near about half percentage i.e 49.30% are male and about 50.70% are female. Similarly the percentage of active population is about 62.5% of the total population. We observed about 3.20% of old age dependency and about 34.30% of child dependency in the study area.

The settlement pattern of the Chepang of the study area is found typical. The settlement is still surrounded by forest in upper hill and areas not easily accessible. Most of the HH are traditional in structure .Out of 60 respondents 45 i.e. 75% reside in traditional houses and 15 i.e. 25% reside in modern houses. Nearly 7 people are using a common house.

The subsistence farming system of the Chepang people of the Shaktikhor VDC is a marginal type, so they hardly solve their hand and mouth problem. The subsistence agro based agriculture doesn't cope the year around hand to mouth so it is culminated by the gathering. The different sources of income in the Chepang community of study area are Kitchen gardening, Chyuri Tree, Cottage industry, Hunting and fishing etc.

About 11.70% households are landless and; they have to dependent other source of income. About 25.00% of households have food sufficiency for 3 months by their own production. Like wise only 31.70% of households have food sufficiency for 6 month, around 13% of households have food sufficiency for 9 months. Similarly just 10% of households produce adequate quantity of food grain for one year and there are 8.30% households, who have some surplus food.

Most of the Chepang follow their traditional skills besides agriculture to earn for their living .About 70% are involved in traditional skill like weaving of *doko, dalo, bhakari, soli, chalana, sibring, furlung, nanglo* and 18 i.e.; 30% are involved in new learnt skill like sewing and weaving, carpentry, masonry and bee keeping .

The practice of joint family system is still prevalent in Chepang community of Shaktikhor VDC. About 75% follow the joint family system and rest 25%are following nuclear family system.

It is seen that most of the Chepang are deprived of education .About 60% of respondents are illiterate .In addition, 30% had the educational status of primary level. Likewise only 6.66% have secondary level education and just 3.33% have the higher education .

Information reflects that the health condition of Chepang community in the study area is deteriorating day by day .Only about 23.33% households go to the health centers to get the desire treatment where as 30% go to the Guruwa or witch doctor and rest 46.66% take the health service provided by both.

The sanitation condition is poor in Chepang community of study area .Only 8 house holds i.e; 13.33 %have a permanent toilet and 24 households i.e.; 40% have a temporary toilet and 28 households i.e.; 46.66% do not have toilet.

It is seen in the study area that no one is paying attention to the quality of water, most of the households(51.66%) get water from public tap water.



Around 20% depend on private tap water and remaining 28.33% depend on others sources like piped water, *kuwa* etc .

Wide network of communication in Chepang community of Shaktikhor VDC can be seen low .About 38.33% respondents exchange information with their relatives , friends , and counter parts within the country through mobile phone .Likewise, 10% respondents have TV in their house and most of the respondents i. e 51.66% listen to news and obtain information .

Agriculture is a main occupation of the study area.The data reveals that about 38.33% of Chepang households are involving in agriculture as a main occupation,about 26.66% of Chepang HH are engaged in skill based activities , about 20% are engaged in making home wine and selling .

There is no satisfactory size of land holding in the Chepang community of Shaktikhor VDC.Majority of Chepang(50%) households have small size land holding between 0.1-10 Ropani, where as around 11.66% houses are landless.

It is found that the Chepang of Shaktikhor VDC spend their more income in food grain either it is own production or purchased.

## **6.2 Conclusion**

Given the complex social structure of Nepal, it is also equally true that there are discriminations against weaker groups within each minority group. For example, "low caste" Chepang are suppressed and oppressed by "upper caste" Chepang. Also, some indigenous nationalities are relatively suppressed and oppressed by advanced and rich indigenous nationalities. The bottom line, however, is that no matter where all these minorities are, they are all suppressed and oppressed by nationally dominant groups. As long as national domination continues, this in-group domination may not be effectively weeded out. Therefore, one cannot think of any change overnight but at the same time, one cannot wait too long.

Chepang people are considered Hindu Sanskritized group because they have been celebrating all Hindu festivals. The main objective of the study is to examine the socio economic status of Chepang people of shaktikhor VDC of Chitwan District. The literacy rate is low with less percentage of literate female. Most of them do not know the importance of education. The alternate works are more beneficial and give quicker returns than the education. So the illiterate persons have adverse affect on their socio-economic condition. They utilize their indigenious skill to fulfill their domestic requirements since the skill of these people do not pay significant role to bring change in their economic status.

The Chepang of the study area has some traditional skill of making Naglo, Doko, and Namlo by selling these products in local market and from wage labor they are able to supplement their subsistence to some extend. The Chepang of shaktikhor VDC had their own ways of performing birth, marriage and death ceremonies. But the basis concepts of performing lie cycle ceremonies are according to Hindu religion.

### **6.3 Recommendation**

To uplift the socio-economic status of Chepang community in study area, following recommendations are put forward;

- ) There should be special kinds of incentives to the children of this tribe for education. Regular class for adult education is required to conduct which would be one step push forward for the adult of this community. That will give the incentives to their young children too.
- ) The implication of small farmer program would be fruitful for Chepang in the study area.
- ) Government should provide some low interest loan for livestock and agricultural production .Government should focus on income generating activities like goat farming , bee keeping, vegetable farming etc
- ) Proper vocational guidance for mobilization of internal resources is required.

- ) Special program for Chepang in the health and employment sector should be allocated. Priority must be given to its' public health and management of pure drinking water as an important infrastructure.
- ) It is needed to develop and implement programs to give the place to Chepang in mainstream. Such programs need to be focus on preservation and promotion of intangible cultural heritage such as folk literature , language , religion and traditional healing practices , abolition of practices related to cast based resettlements , income generating activities etc.
- ) There is a great need for research in documentation on various aspects of Chepang. Research is needed to be inputs to planners, policy makers, donors and right-based activists. Both internal donor and Government of Nepal should provide financial help and support to organization of Chepang for research and documentation on the important issues they have identified.

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## Appendix-1

### Questionnaire on Socio Economic Status of chepang in Shaktikhor VDC,Chitwan

1. Name of Respondent:-

Age:-

Sex:-

Educational status:-

Marital status:-

Religion:-

2. Family Background:-

S.N	Age Group	Male	Female	Total
1	0-5			
2	5 to 15			
3	16 to 60			
4	60 and above			

3. Sources of drinking water?

{A} Private Tap water

{B} public Tap Water

{C} well

{D} Others

4. System of Medical treatment.

{A} Hospital

{B} Traditional Medicine

{C} Both

5. Do you go to the health center/ health worker?

Yes/ no

6. Number of family member

{A} smoking.....

{B} drinking alcohol.....

7. In which family do you live?

{A} nuclear

{B} joint

8. What is your major occupation?

S.No.	Particular	Primary	Secondary
1	Farming		
2	Fishery		
3	Wage labors		
4	Animal husbandry		
5	Servant		
6	weaving mates and ropes		
7	Others		

9. Type of house

(a) Modern (b) Traditional

10. Which type of marriage do adopt?

(a) Poligamy

(b) Monogamy

11. Which treatment pattern do you take?

(a) Dhami jhakri

(b) Health Centre

(c) Both

12. What type of toilet do you have?

(a) Permanent

(b) Temporary

(c) none

13. Which contraceptive device do you take?

(a) Condom

(b) Pills

(c) Vasectomy

(d) Laparoscopy

(e) Not any device

15. Means of communication

- a. TV
- b. Radio
- c. Mobile phone

15. What is your main language?

.....

16. What is your Secondary Occupation?

.....

17. Do you have your own land?

- (a) Yes
- (b) no

18. How much land do you possess?

- a] Landless
- b] 0.1-10 Ropanies
- c] 11-20 Ropaines
- d] 21 and above Ropaines

19. Food Sufficiency.

- (a) 3 months
- (b) 6 months
- (c) 9 months
- (d) 12 months
- (e) Excessive

20. What are your alternative sources of food?

.....

21. Livestock Information:

S.No.	Types	Own	Sharing basis	Total
1	Cow ,oxen			
2	Buffalo			
3	Goat			
4	hen, ducks			
5	Pig, wild bore			
6	Others			

22. Do you think it is compulsory to send your children to school?

Yes/no



### 23. Income Level:

Income in R.S	Numbers of households				
	Agriculture	Wage	Service	Skill	Business
Less than 5000					
5001-10000					
10001-20000					
20001-30000					
30001-40000					
40001-50000					
50001-above					

### 26. Expenditure

Expenditure InRs.	No of house holds						
	Food grain from own land	Food grain purchase	Jad& Raksi	festival	Clothing	education	Health
Less than 2000							
2001-5000							
5001-10000							
10001- 20000							
20001- 30000							
30001- 40000							
40001- 50000							
50001- 60000							
60001- 70000							
Total							

### Check List

- 1) When and where did you and your Fore Father come in this village?
- 2) Do you have own traditional dress pattern?
- 3) What mother tongue do you speak?
- 4) Do you have your own Food habit?
- 5) Do you take rest once a week?
- 6) Do you have your own job?
- 7) What do you do in leisure time?
- 8) What is your main occupation?
- 9) Do you have land?
- 10) How much do you earn in one month?
- 11) Any other noticeable culture and tradition in your community?
- 12) Indicate the type of customs, which is being a practice in your family during birth, marriage and death ceremonies?
- 13) What type of program do you wish with government should implement for the upliftment of your community?

S.N.	Problem	Reason	Needs
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Thank you very much for your kind and hospitality.