

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Nepal is a multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-ethnic country. The census report of 2001 shows that there are 103 ethnic groups and 93 languages including one unknown category spoken in Nepal (CBS, 2002). South Asia has a rich multicultural tradition (Schiffman, 1996). Every South Asian Country is multilingual, multireligious and multiethnic in the sense that two or more languages, religion, castes are in regular use on the national scene of government, political, educational and the military (Ferguson, 1996). According to Ferguson, in most urban centers and at the boundaries of language areas, large numbers of individuals are actively multicultural.

Multilingualism, multi-religion and multiethnic castes in South Asia have been in practice for generations, and they were recognized in the third century. Ferguson (1996) claims that no other region of the world has had such a long-continued pattern of socially accepted, governmentally institutionalized multiethnicity. And, the tradition of multiethnicity has been in continuous existence for over 2000 years. Owing to this, Nepal has a long-standing tradition of multiethnic culture, and has placed a great deal of emphasis on the transmission of culture through it (Schiffman, 1996; Ferguson, 1996).

King Prithiwi Narayan Shah founded modern Nepal by unifying dozens of small, and feudal states during the 18th century. At that time he proclaimed that his kingdom was the garden of the four casts and thirty-six sub-casts. Thus, it is said that Nepal is a common garden where all kinds of flowers could bloom.

According to Bista (1991), Nepal is a heterogeneous society with a complex ethnic mixture of linguistic diversity that has been the pedigree of the nation. In this context, Eagle (2000) highlights that Nepal is a meeting point of great cultures of Asia. She argues that Nepal's ethnic, racial and linguistic diversities are obvious because by location it is at the crossroads between India, Tibet and Indo-China. Considering

Nepal's geo-physical positioning, the multilingual realities are evident in the country. Thus ethnic diversity is the key characteristic of Nepal.

The caste system of Dalits in South Asian nations has historical roots. Caste culture and religion as dominant ideologies tended to legitimate the subordination of Dalits into hierarchy and social immobility. The loss of their lives had been brought under critical scrutiny for the legalization of basic change.

Caste is a unique system so far as its cultural criteria are concerned, and it shares certain features with other systems of social stratification so far as structural criteria are concerned. The caste system is an inviolate system, hence closed and organic in nature. Inviolable systems are found in simple societies or in relatively insulated enclaves of complex societies.

The foundation of Hindu society is the caste system, which divides the society into four strata in a hierarchical basis. Each caste in the hierarchy is allocated a separate function and ritual status based on the principle of purity and pollution. A higher caste is always considered as pure and having high ritual status in relation to a lower caste. The occupation, ritual, diet, traditions, customs and practices of the castes are governed by the principle of purity and pollution. Generally, the caste occupying the top position in the hierarchies are more Sanskritized than the caste in the middle regions of the hierarchy and this has been responsible for the Sanskritization of the lower castes. Not only are the differences in the status in the caste hierarchy present but also the system of untouchability as well. Dalits, the lowest rank of the caste hierarchy are treated as an untouchable that is their touch (Water, food) is not accepted by the higher castes. (Shrinivas, 1996)

Similarly, the Old Legal Code, (1854) defined the group as *Pani Nachalne Chhoi Chhito Halnu Parne*, meaning "those groups from whom water is not accepted and whose touch requires sprinkling of holy water to purify them". National Dalit Commission has listed twenty two Dalit castes living in Nepal. Out of these twenty-two castes, only five castes Gandharwa, Damai, Sarki, Badi and Biswokarma are found inhabiting in hill regions and are termed as Hill Dalits. However, only three Dalit castes, Bishokarma, Damai and Sarki are found in Shree Krishan Gandaki VDC., Syangja.

Nepalese culture is a mixture of many particular local groups such as Brahmin, Chhetri, Gharti, Newar, Magar, Bote, Damai, Sarki, Bishwakarma etc. To examine the socio-economic status of all ethnic groups in a research area would be very difficult for the availability of resource and time. Hence, this present study tries to focus on the socio-economic status of the Sarki people of Krishna Gandaki V.D.C. Syangja district.

The Sarkis belong to the lower caste and they were migrated from India at the beginning. In other words, they are known as Chamars. According to Hindu Caste system, they belong to the rank of untouchables. Although they are in minority in the total population, they can be found all over the country. In Hindu religion, they belong to Sudras and their traditional occupation is leather work. So far as their status is concerned, Sarkis and Chamars have the same social and occupational status. But the Sarkis mainly live in mountains and Chamars live in the Terai and the inner Terai (Mahato, 1993)

Gautam and Thapa, (1994) have shown a short ethnographic glimpse of the Sarki in the book "Tribal Ethnography". In this book they stated, "*The Sarki are an occupational tribe and can be found in most areas of Nepal, due to their profession, they are as widely spread out as their kinsmen, Kami and Damai.*"

Sarki people belong to one of the poor classes in Nepal. Although, their traditional work is leather work, they are giving up traditional occupation because they cannot fulfill their basic needs by their traditional occupation. Very few and seldom, they take part in leatherwork for several reasons.

1.2 Statements of the Problems

It is well documented that the socioeconomic status is the catalyst of change and an important indicator of development. Socio economic status of a person contributes to his work and other activities. It is one of the determining factors of development. Nepal is one of the poorest countries of the world. According to the CBS (2001) 38 percent people are below the absolute poverty line (10th Plan 2059). Education, occupation and economy influence the family size, raring, bearing, of children. Ultimately, it may help improve overall condition of the family. It can be seen that high caste people are given a high rank in caste-based society like in Nepal while

Dalits are considered as a second-class citizen. As a fact, Dalits are highly dominated people in Nepal. Discrimination between people by caste still prevails in higher rates in Nepal. Its influence has stemmed Dalits from obtaining job opportunity and other opportunities in the society. There are still number of social, cultural, economic and traditional practices, which are less supportive to over all development of Dalits. Their voices are not heard, their work is not valued and their future is dependent in so called high caste people. The following are the serious problems of Dalits concerning the lower socio-economic status.

-) Sarki community is highly influenced by Hindu culture.
-) Poverty and ignorance are critical issues among the Sarkis.
-) Lack of awareness and education are major issues that affect their life.
-) These wide range of problems concerning to the socio economic status of Sarkis have left them in the corner of the society.
-) Voices of the Sarkis are not heard and their work is not valued.
-) There is less participation of the Sarkis in politics, public affair and social sectors.

At present the Sarkis being a group of Dalits are raising their voices for bringing themselves into the main stream for nation building. Therefore, it is very important to look at the issue with a view of social discrimination and segregation.

In this connection, there are such castes and ethnic groups are bound to live under socio economic pressure. The Sarkis in Nepal belong to one of the poorest and backward Dalit castes in Nepal. Their traditional work is leatherwork, which is considered as a low class work. It is not valued and also it is very difficult for them to survive in this job. Due to this, they are giving up their traditional occupation now.

As per general perception, the socio-economic situation of the Sarkis is very miserable and they have been marginalized, back warded and deprived from the past times. The economic backwardness to the Sarkis has led them socially minorities. The Sarkis of Krishna Gandaki VDC are no in exception in this regard. They have less land, low income and they are leading the live of minority. So, an attempt has been made to study the socio-economic status of the Sarkis. Thus, this study has mainly focused on searching the answers to these research questions.

-) What is the socio-economic and cultural status of the Sarkis in the community?

-) What is the level of education of Sarki of Krishna Gandaki VDC?
-) Are Sarkis treated equally as other caste people ?
-) What are the effects of poverty on Sarkis of the Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC?
-) What kind of attempts have been made by Sarkis for their own upliftment?
-) What is the health condition of the Sarkis in the study area?
-) What about the health condition of the Sarkis in the study area?
-) What type of socio-economic problems the Sarki community is facing?
-) How is the condition of traditional occupation of the Sarkis ?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

the general objective of this study was to examine the socio-economic status of Sarkis of Shree Krishna Gandaki V.D.C. of Syangja District. But some specific objectives of this study were also formulated and they are enumerated as follows:-

-) To find out the general socio-economic status of the Sarki Community.
-) To analyze the social and economic problems of the Sarkis of the study area.
-) To analyze the occupational change of the Sarki Community.

1.4 Operational Definition of the Terms

Terms which have been used in this study have been defined as below:

-) **Sarki:** This refers to the members of occupational caste whose traditional occupational is making and repairing leather goods (cobblers).
-) **Caste/ Ethnicity:** A system of social inequality in which people's status is permanently determined by the birth based on their parent's ascribed characteristics.
-) **Socio-economic Status:** This refers to the position of the sarki community in society, which is determined by various social and economic variables such as education, social discrimination, occupation, material possession, type, and size of the family and the extent of social participation.
-) **Social discrimination:** In this study social discrimination refers to the deprivation of sarki community in participating and involving in different social and cultural activities.

-) **Poverty:** In this study poverty refers to the economic poorness of Sarkis, their traditional occupation and income they earn which is not sufficient for the survival of the family.
-) **Traditional occupation:** The occupation that is inherited by Sarkis as a specific caste group in the study area traditionally.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

This study is an academic research, which is conducted for the partial fulfillment of a degree of masters in Sociology. The research has been conducted within the Chapa-7, and Sarki Danda-2 of Shree Krishna Gandaki V.D.C., Syangja district. This study mainly deals with socio-economic status of Sarki community, their economic problems and relation of Sarkis with other caste and interrelation. It is undertaken within the boundary of certain time, budget and other resources. The study is limited to the Sarki Community i.e. shoemakers. Small sample size is taken so that it cannot represent the whole Sarki community. Therefore, the finding cannot be generalized. It has not included the views and thoughts of all Sarki community. The findings of this study are helpful just for understanding the socio-economic characteristics. The research is based on both qualitative and quantitative data.

1.6 Rationale of the Study

Untouchability, discrimination, segregation are regarded as social evils. These are the obstacles for the development of the country like Nepal. In fact, the eradication of untouchability has been the major slogan of political activist, Sociologists and human right activists because the norms and values of human rights should be respected to create environment for equality, Justice and peace. Injustice, discrimination and segregation may cause dissatisfaction among people. As a result, dissatisfied faction of the society may cause revolt. In the same way, revolt may cause violence, murder and destruction which can never be acceptable in civilized society. Therefore, this study has tried to find out the causes of discrimination, segregation and injustice practical with the Sarki community. Therefore, the study is expected to be helpful for anybody interested in these field especially economic, social and educational aspects of Sarki community in the society. It will be very significant as gives detail information about Sarkis and about their social, economic and educational life. This field research on socio-economic and cultural structure of Sarkis will be quite helpful

to uplift them from their defenorating status. It will also be useful for making policy, plans and their implementation for empowering and uplifting socio economic status of the Sarkis of Nepal.

This study will also provide some guidelines on how the socio economic status of Sarkis will be uplifted. What type of problems and assistances will be needed for the betterment of their life? Furthermore, the findings of the study will be helpful to reveal the core cases of their backwardness. Moreover, this study will assist as an access for those who are interested to have a look on Sarki community and their genuine socio-economic hazards.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This dissertation has been divided into eight and some preliminaries containing approval sheet, acknowledgement, table of content, abbreviation, list of tables and figures, maps, photographs, etc. The first chapter describes the background, statement, objectives, rationale, limitation and organization of the study. The second chapter deals with the literature review including theoretical perspective while third chapter deals with methodology of the study with sub chapter like research design, universe of sampling, data collection and nature of data. The fourth chapter deals with the general feature of study area and fifth chapter describes the socio economic status of Sarkis. The sixth chapter defines the socio-economic problems of Sarkis. Chapter seven includes occupational change and its cause and impact. Chapter eight includes summary, conclusion and recommendation. The bibliography and appendices are given at the end of dissertation.

CHAPTER – II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Focusing Sarki community and their socio-economic status, this chapter discusses the relevant literature available on different aspects of the Sarkis such as social discrimination, low paid occupation, their involvement in development activities and their overall status in the society. This chapter deals with theoretical overview related to structural functionalism, division of labour and social stratification. It also reviews empirical studies on the Sarkis and their socio economic status. Many scholars have propounded various theories for sociological and anthropological research.

2.1 Theoretical Overview

2.1.1 Structural Functionalism

Structural functionalism means the social structure and, systematic adjustment among the parts of social structure in a society. A society is always dynamic and active. So it is studied from different perspectives. The theory which studies the adjustment of the functions of the social organs and social structure is structural functionalism. (Acharya, 2060)

According to Collins Dictionary of Sociology (1995), Structural Functionalism is a theoretical approach in which societies are conceptualized as social system and particular features of social structure is explained in terms of their contribution to the maintenance of these systems. For example, religious and ritual are explained in terms of the contribution and it makes to school integration.

Similarly, Francis (2000) mention that the Structural – Functional perspective also seeks to delineate the way in which the different structures are coordinated and integrated to preserve the unity of society as a complete system.

Structural Functionalism has been viewed differently by different scholars. In this regard Strauss (1963) said that "social structure is difficult to define with precision and clarity. It could mean so many things to so many people. It touches upon the borderlines of many disciplines. For example, Sociology defines its concept and

meaning; Anthropology describes the structure of a given society and its relations between parts; religion provides the interpretation for the background of its values and norms, and history traces the origin of the process of its evolution in all its different forms. Thus, the term social structure many one of the most famous theoretical anthropologists of on time refers to a group of problems the scope of which appear so wide and the divination so imprecise that it is hardly possible for a paper strictly limited in size to meet them fully.

In the same way, Spencer, (2001), has compared the society with human body structure. As there is interrelationship among different parts of the body for existence, there should be unity among different units of social system. Only with the help of the united role and its function, the society can remain in existence.

Similarly, Malinoski, an individualist, functionalist, sociologist and anthropologist (2000) has described about individualist functionalism.

In this regard Durkheim (2001), focused on society rather than an individual. His most outstanding works is 'The Division of Labour'. He is known as societal functionalist because he believes that all the behaviours and activities are done by an individual directly affect the whole society.

Brown (2001), has also given his views on structural functionalism. He is also known as structural functionalist because he believes that the process of organization and inter-relationship among different units within it, and social structure should be studied to understand the society.

Merton (2000), has viewed structural functionalism in this way. The elements of society or culture not only functions but dysfunctions too. The function only can't be dynamic but it might be motionless as well.

Modern sociological theory has been profoundly influenced by functional analysis, which became enormously popular at the turn of the century. Functional analysis is not new theory; it has a long history in both the natural and social sciences. It was borrowed heavily from biological science, especially the social extension of the many analogies between society and organism. Although the early organism with its emphasis on almost total integration of parts with the whole is now abandoned, its

theoretical consequences persist in such central concepts as structure and inter-relatedness of elements. Functionalism is simply a view of society as a self-regulating system of inter-related elements with structured social relationships and observed regularities.

Magill (2000), said that a theory which focuses on the way the various parts of society and works together maintain stability and order in the social system as a whole.

2.1.2 Division of Labour:

In general, division of labour means the work divided into different occupations requiring specialization. A distinctive characteristic of the economic system of modern societies is the development of a highly complex and diverse division of labour (Turmin, 1989).

As there was no labour division in the ancient time, men went for hunting and gathering food, and women would be busy for household works, looking after the children. Durkheim, in his book, has called it the age of hunting and gathering. At that time people worked together in the society. As the society was civilized, the society became complex and diversity occurred in human needs and desires. As a result, the need of division of labour was realized for social product. In 1893 he published his French doctoral "thesis, the division of labour in society". Durkheim based his analysis in the division of labour in society on his conception of two ideal types of society: Mechanical Solidarity and Organic Solidarity (Adhikari, 063).

I. Mechanical Solidarity:

Mechanical Solidarity has a relatively undifferentiated social structure, with little or no division of labour, tend to occupy very general position in which they perform a wide variety of tasks and handle a larger number of responsibility people in primitive were all engaged in similar activities and had similar responsibilities hunting and gathering age.

II. Organic Solidarity:

A society characterized by organic solidarity is while together by the differences among people, by the fact that they have different tasks and responsibilities because

people in modern society perform a relatively narrow range of tasks. They need many other people in order to survive.

According to Rue scheme year (1994), one important difference between mechanical and organic solidarity is worth mentioning. Because people in societies characterized by mechanical solidarity are more likely to be similarly to one another in terms of what they do. There is a greater likelihood of competition among them. Similarly, societies with organic solidarity differentiation allows people to co-operate more and resource base activities.

Similarly, Karl Marx (1845), pointed out that division of labour is another structured component of capitalism that comes under Marx's scrutiny. Marx and Engel traced the origins of the modern division of labor to the early family, "where wife and children are the slaves of the husband."

Marx (1869), gave the most basic view of the division labor and it was set forth in his distinction between the owners of the means of production and those produce them. Who must sell their labor- time to the owners in order to survive more specifically, Marx was interested in the tendency to structure work so that people are forced to specialize in ever more minute tasks.

Weber, (1990), refused to reduce stratification to economic factors (or class, in wipers terms) but saw it as multidimensional. Thus, society is stratified on the bases of economic status and power on resulting implications is that people can rank high on one or two of these dimensions of stratification and low on the other. People who shared situation are a possible, and sometimes base, bass for action by the group.

Accordingly, people are of untouchables or ritually lower castes. They have low status because of their association with polluting activities, such as skinning dead cattle. This means that none of the clean castes will take food or water from them and will avoid physical contact whenever possible. Although, untouchables consider themselves Hindus, they are not served by Brahmin priests and indeed, are considered as being outside the formal Hindu hierarchy by members of clean castes. Untouchables are however, necessary to the proper functioning of the caste system. Since they provide services which clean-caste persons are precluded from performing

Not all the untouchables in this area perform their traditional occupations, indeed, the majority earn a living through farming their own lands and working for others as unskilled labourers. Those who still do work as functionaries are often bound to clean-caste families in a more or less permanent Jajmani-type relationship. On the whole, untouchables from the lowest economy as well as social and ritual, stratum of the society have been segregated. (Caplan, 1972)

2.1.3 Social Stratification

The unequal level or the structure of the society determined on the basis of power, prestige, wealth, caste, occupation, gender and religion is called social stratification. Social stratification is a kind of system, which divides the society into higher or lower class. Every society determines the level or class for its members on the basis of income, occupation, property, caste, religion, education, race and post etc. It decides the outline for different divisions for the members in the society. So, social stratification is such a division which determines the social status of every member in the society (Magill, 1996).

In Encyclopedia, there are four major attempts to formulate a general theory of social stratification.

2.1.3.1 Dimension of social stratification:-

) Functionalist Perspective

The functionalist perspective on social stratification propose is inevitable in society and is therefore universal in nature. Generally, functionalist scholars have argued that stratification is both necessarily desirable to ensure that difficult and important positions will be filled by individuals capable of fulfilling the duties associated with such positions.

Social stratification was developed from sociological concerns about social inequality and social classes. In this regard, the most important contribution is in presenting the view that stratification or inequality is patterned into societies. These patterns of inequalities must be viewed in relation to value and beliefs, social institutions, laws, norms, and patterns of power. Functionalism theory, in the United States more often associated with Talcott Parsons, is a theory that is most concerned with how societies

maintain order. Functionalist theorist has tended to stress stability, consensus and integration in society (Rothman, 1994).

) **Marxist Perspectives**

Social stratification is the hierarchical arrangement of social groups. Marxist Perspectives generally regard modern society as being divided primarily into two classes: the bourgeois and the proletariat – on the basis of property ownership or non ownership of property.

Marx (1969), said that classes were economically determined by the difference between the owner of the means of production and the non owners' direct producers. In his words, "there is always a direct relation between the owners of the conditions of production and the direct producers which reveals the innermost secret, the hidden foundation, of the entire social edifice".

) **Weberian Perspectives**

The pioneering German sociologist Max Weber showed how different layers and ranks in capitalistic western societies are defined by people's skills, credentials, market relationship, and property ownership – and by other determiners of stratification such as status and party. Weber rejected Karl Marx's view that the class conflicts inherent in capitalism were simplistic and could be resolved by socialism.

The term "Social Stratification" is an imperfect analogy because it suggests that different layers of society representing its identifiable groups are like the stacked strata in geological formations (Weber, 1990).

In all societies, at least some scarce resources are distributed unequally. Thus, it could be said that some form of social stratification exist in all societies, in a sense these patterns of stratification can be thought of as ranking system within societies. People can be ranked on the basis of how much of the society's scarce store of scarce resources rank high; those with a small share rank low. (John. E. Farley,).

Murry (1961), has expressed his views about social inequality or stratification in this way. "Stratification is a horizontal division of society into higher and lower social units." When our society was divided according to labour division, Brahmins started

to do praying and to settle on plain and cultivate land. As a result, they were introduced as higher caste people in the society. Similarly, Dalits were supposed to do dirty work, so they were regarded as a lower class in the society. Even their respect and prestige were of low level. Due to the division of labour in the society, the Sarkis are known as a lower caste so far.

Social stratification means the arrangement of any social group and society into hierarchy of position that are unequal with regard to power, property, social evaluation and psychic gratification. Social stratification refers to the division of society into layers or strata. When we talk of social stratification, we draw attention to the unequal positions occupied by individuals in society. Stratification by gender and age is found in all societies. In the larger traditional societies and in industrialized countries today, there is stratification in terms of health, property, and access to material goods and cultural products (Turmin, 1989).

The most important theory of social stratification was presented by Karl Marx "the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggle. Class struggle arises due to division of society into classes having opposite interests. Each class supports particular class consciousness giving rise to class conflict in classes having opposite interest." (Marx, 1969).

Similarly, Social stratification refers to a phenomenon that exists in all complex society the hierarchical ranking of groups of people according to such criteria as a relative economic wealth, political power, and social honor (Margill, 1990).

The factors that bring social stratification in the society are:

- I. Caste
- II. Property
- III. Gender
- IV. Class

Caste

According to Encyclopedia of Sociology, caste refers to a hierarchical system of social control, with each subgroup assigned with a ranked status depending on its origin and religious strictness.

Caste system in Hindu religion is Verna based system, which has brought social stratification in the society. The concept of caste is very old concept, which has been ended legally, but it is in practice even today. It has influenced our society very much these days as well. Caste determines the role and status of a person immediately after his birth. In other words, caste determined by birth, and culture of a person is discriminated on the basis of Gotra, Verna, social relation, wedding, feeding etc. It causes inequality and diversity in the society. Due to caste system, some people are known as of higher caste immediately after the birth and some people are of lower caste forever although they work for the betterment of the society, (Adhikari, 2063).

Majundar and Medan, (1958), defined caste as a closed class. According to them, caste is a specific type of social structure based on the norms of religion and division of stratification. It has been mentioned in the ancient religious book that Brahmins were born from the mouth of the god, Chhetri, Vaishya and Sudra from hands, thigh and feet respectively. In this way, the four castes: Brahmin, Chhetri, Vaishya and Sudra were determined immediately after the birth.

Similarly, Nepalese sociologist Prayag Raj Shurma (1977) defined caste as a social concept. According to him, in Hindu community, every member of the society has been divided into different levels on the basis of Verna system. Social stratification that depends on caste system and the levelwise structure of the society in Hindu religion can be shown as below:

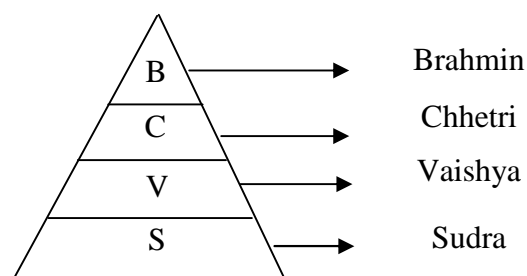


Fig.1: Structure of Traditional Hindu Society

According to the structure, Brahmins were ranked in the higher position, and Chhetri, Vaishya and Sudra were in the second, third and fourth position respectively. So, Sudras were supposed to be from lower caste. According to this division of caste, different occupations were determined for them. For example, Brahmins were supposed to read and write and be priest, Chhetris were created to serve and protect

their community and their country, Vaishya to be businessmen and Sudras were to serve the people of all castes, (Sharma, 1977).

Population, Ethnicities and Languages of Nepal

The population of Nepal is 23, 151, 423 and the current estimated population growth rate is 2.3 percent per annum. The total fertility rate is 4.1 per woman. Nepal's infant mortality rate as of 2002 (estimated) is 64.1 per 1000 live births, and life expectancy at birth as of 2001 (estimated) is 59.7 years. The literacy rate in the country is 53.74 per cent. The female literacy rate is just 39.67 per cent (CBS, 2002). Considering Nepal's low level of social indicators, the critical issues of Dalits are poverty and inadequate infrastructure (Eagle, 2000).

Nepal is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of its human heritage, culture and natural resources. There are more than 101 distinct caste/ethnic groups in Nepal, (CBS, 2002: 72-73).

According to Skutnabb-Kangas (2000), people's cultures have correlation with their languages and occupation, even if the relationship is not one -to-one. In this sense, Nepal's multicultural features correlate with its multicasts realities. People's cultures and castes are all embracing. According to Bista (1991: 12), although there are certain areas of Nepal that are strongly associated with particular ethnic groups, they are extensively scattered across Nepal's entire length and breadth.

Society and Religion

Religious faith and hierarchical caste culture shape the lives of most people in Nepal (Fuller, 1997). The major religions in Nepal include Hinduism (79%), Buddhism (10%), Islam (4%) and Kirat (3.5%) respectively. Also, the people who believe in other faiths include Christian, Jain, Sikha, Bahai and others, (CBS, 2002).

Hinduism and Buddhism are intermingled owing to the influence of Tantrism and Shamanism in Nepal. Both Hinduism and Buddhism are believed to have been practised in Nepal for more than 2000 years, (Rana 1998). These religions have contributed significantly to shaping people's life and culture. Many aspects of these religions are localized, and have blended with natural phenomena.

Although the caste system is not the bottom line of native Hinduism or Buddhism, it has influenced the Nepalese society, (Bista, 1991). Bista notes that the caste principles that are being practised in the country are a foreign importation. In Bista's opinion, it is a new phenomenon in Nepal. He claims that the caste culture is supported by a small number of people, (ibid: 29). Yet, these people are very influential and have played a major role in augmenting the process of hierarchization in the Nepalese society. The population of Nepal has been influenced by the caste culture and has been a force to influence the rest of the population in the country.

The caste concept entered Nepal for the first time in the beginning of the Lichchavi era. However, it was first formally introduced in the Kathmandu valley during the Malla rule (14th century). At the advice of the Maithili Brahman from India, king Jayasthiti Malla (1295 – 1382) divided the people of Kathmandu into 64 occupational castes, (Rana, 1998). While dividing the caste, the king took the manusmriti as a guiding principle. It appealed to the Malla king because it could help him establish the social stability and preserve the Malla kingdom, (Bista, 1991). Also, the Maithili Brahman's advice was taken seriously to keep the family genealogies pure by preventing marriage alliances with other castes, (Acharya, 2002). The caste system at the later stages caused a vertical cleavage and hierarchization of the people across Nepal.

According to Bista (1991: 28, 43), the classical Hindu caste hierarchy consists of five primary classifications: the Brahman (priest), the Khasriya (warrior and administrator/ruler), the Vaishya (merchants/ business people), Sudra (labourers) and Achhut (untouchable/ polluted). Although the caste system first became a part of Hindu social stratification, it gradually penetrated into other non-caste people like Tamang, Newar, Rai and others.

The caste system was initially introduced on the basis of people's inherited occupations. However, later, it developed into a caste hierarchy. Eventually, it created caste barriers such as clean-caste and water-untouchable-caste, (Bista, 1991).

Yet, at present, urbanization has contributed to developing a new form of hierarchization in society, resulted from power, wealth and position. Most indigenous people and disadvantaged communities are placed under the low-caste hierarchy

because they hardly possess these characteristics. On the other hand, those who have power, wealth and position have high status regardless of their caste backgrounds.

There is a high degree of gender discrimination in Nepal. Women's role in the national politics and bureaucracy is extremely limited. Women literacy rate is very low, below 40 %, whereas male literacy rate is more than 60% (CBS, 2001). Women participation in education, particularly from disadvantaged communities, is very low (NPC, 1998; PIP, 1999; MTR Report, 2002). As per 1996 statistics, only 59% of school-going age girls attended schools, (PIP, 1997). According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (2002) and Department of Education (2006), the percentage of girl-students enrolled in primary schools is less than 45%. In schools, out of 97,879 teachers, the percentage of female teachers at the primary level is 25 %, (CBS, 2002: DOE, 2006; MOE, 2005).

Although 93 % of women are considered to be economically active in agriculture and forestry, the number of female-headed households is less than 15%. This shows that women's economic contribution to family income has not been recognized yet, (CBS, 2002).

Economy and population

Nepal's economy is based on agriculture. About 90% of the people in Nepal are engaged in agriculture. Tourism also makes a significant contribution to Nepal's economy. Nepal's industry is still underdeveloped. Nepal's hydro-power has great potential for its economic development. Nepal is very rich in natural resources including forest, water and land. But these resources are either under utilized or are at risk of being destroyed, (NPC, 1998).

The topography of the country has affected the economic development and has hindered the process of social transformation. Nepal has to spend a huge amount of money on building infrastructures for transportation, electricity, telecommunication, health and education. Despite Nepal's development effort, public service systems are primitive. A majority of people do not have access to essential services, (NPC, 1998). There is heavy dependence on Indian market for the supply of essential goods. People's standards of living are extremely low. Nepal's per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated (revised) to be US \$ 249, (CBS, 2002).

In search of better life, people have moved from remote villages to the accessible areas of the country. In search of getting jobs, many people have even gone to India or elsewhere to fulfill their needs. A large population of the country is thus engaged in the job market outside Nepal. Tourist trade is a key area for employment and is a potential source of earning foreign currency in Nepal.

Nepal used to be a virtually closed society until the 1950s. In the past, people were confined to their villages. Traditionally, people used to practice the barter system in rural areas of the country. Yet, since the 1950s, Nepal's economy has taken a new turn. After the inception of in-country migration and increased contact with the outside world, people entered into the market economy. The in-country migration from the north to the south, mainly from the hills to the Terai increased rapidly during the second half of the 20th Century. About 88 % of the hill migrants, who spoke mainly Nepali as their mother tongue chose the Terai as their destination, (Gurung, 1997).

2.2 Empirical Overview

2.2.1. Historical Overview

As social evils, caste discrimination and untouchability existed in the Nepali society are really unscientific, unfair and illegal. It is very inhuman custom applied to poor people by aristocrats. So, it has made the Indian society aggressive for 3000 years. Not only it has developed as untouchability but the matters like caste discrimination, labour division, class struggle, religious conflict are not only found in Indian continents but are also found in every continents of the world. Only difference is that it has existed somewhere in the name of caste and somewhere in the name of occupation. As punishment, some people were kept in lower level as the lower caste people or untouchable. In this way, some people become untouchable in the society forever, (Sharma, 2001).

Untouchability and discrimination are the main characteristics of Verna system for Dalits to be exploited and hated socially and culturally. Geographically, Dalits live in complicated areas. Dalits are not allowed to enter into the temples, although they are not legally prohibited. They can't use the same water tap, well which other people use. They have to use separate one. If they have no separate well or tap, they have to ask

for water with higher caste people. If they touch the water pot or food of higher caste people, they have to bear hateful behavior and punishment. Even they are not allowed to enter hotel, restaurant, and canteen in public places. They should clean the utensils themselves. They are supposed to clear out the dead animals, clothes of corpses and so on. If they do not perform such tasks, they should be punished severely. Even today, Dalits are not permitted to enter the house of higher caste people. It is very difficult for Dalits to get rooms in the cities. They should address the higher caste people very respectfully. The case of exploitation and discrimination over Dalit is ignored in police administration. It is seen that higher caste people are not punished in such case. They have to perform their funeral in their separate cemetery. Even today, inter-caste love affair is rejected in the society. Mainly Dalit young boys and girls have to suffer from physical attacks. In this way various types of exploitation and discrimination to Dalit people are found in Nepalese society, (Darnal 2058).

In the regard of the origin of Verna system, Verna system was not experienced in the human society before Christ, 'Abesta' in the contemporary religious book of 'Rigveda' in Iran. According to this book, there wasn't Verna system in ancient Iran. When they came to India 3000 years B.C., they brought their religious book (Abesta) with them. In Valdik age, there were only two castes: Aryan (civilized one) and Non Aryan (uncivilized). Later on, those civilized Aryans were divided into three groups, Brahmins, Chhetris and Vaishyas according to their labour division. The clash between Aryans and Non-Aryans took place and Non Aryans were defeated in the clash. As Non-Aryans disobeyed the king and Brahmins, another new group was born which was called 'Sudra'. In this way, there were Brahmin, Chhetri, Vaishya and Sudra as Verna system. Gradually, they fell under the grip of caste exploitation. Eventually, they were kept in the lower level as lower caste people or untouchable people in the society, (Upadhya, 2049).

In Verna System, Sudhras were called untouchables but it was not limited only to them. Even those people became untouchable who had blood or sexual relation with Sudhras, those who were involved in dirty occupation, and who were punished by the state. In the same way, the process continued and with the extension of Hindu state, Verna system was created and every caste was divided into four groups: Brahmins,

Chhetris, Vaishyas and Sudras. Those people who fell in the lowest level were declared as the people of untouchable, (Ambedkar, 1889).

Dalit caste groups represent one of the major structural fragments of Nepalese society, which were influenced by Hindu religion. Hindu caste hierarchy is based on the Verna System, which comprises four major castes namely Brahmins, Chhetriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. Brahmins comprise priest and religious teachers, Chhetriyas Kings, warriors and aristocrats, Vaishya comprise compraders, merchants and Sudra comprise servants, (Ghurya, 1961).

Castes are generally divided into four major hierarchical ranked groupings, Brahmins at the top, then Chhetriya and Vaishya and Sudra at the bottom. Untouchables are kept inside Verna system unlike in India. However, the functioning was grouped according to Old Legal Code. Ghurya, (1961), has presented the model of hierarchy as below:

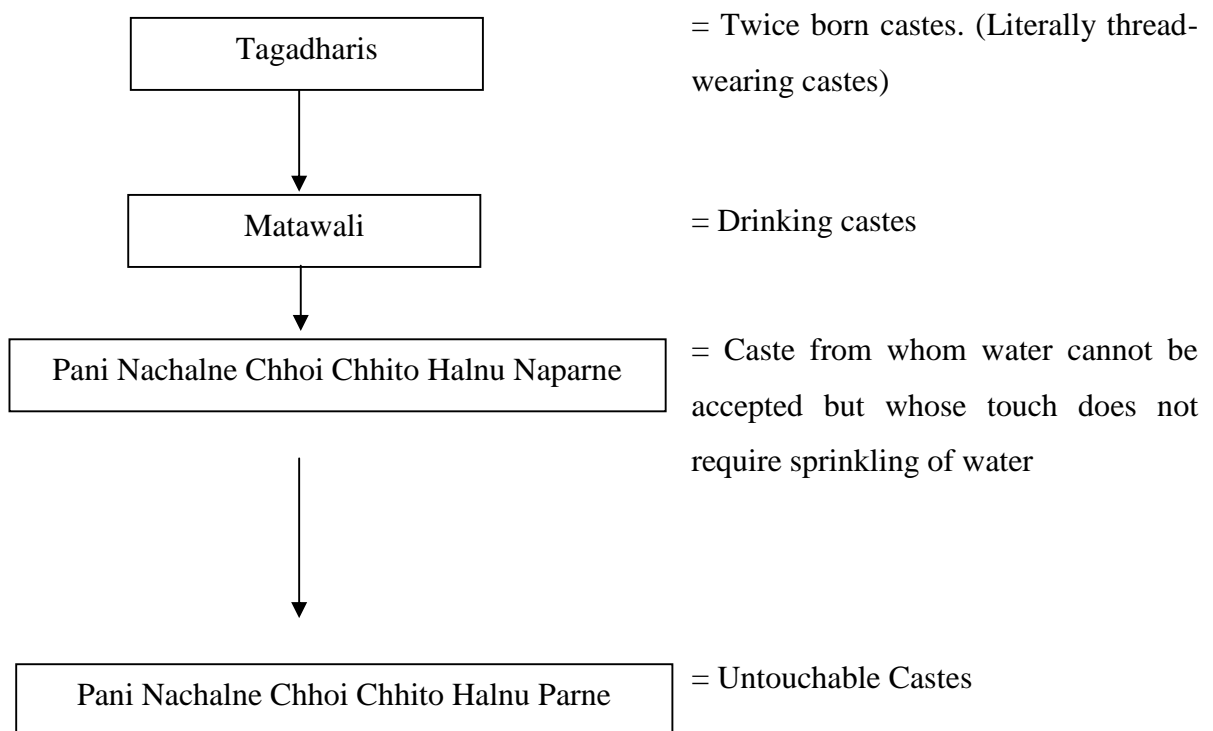


Fig 2: Model of caste Hierarchy

The '*Tagadharis*' occupy the apex position in the caste hierarchy. Below '*Tagadharis*' or the twice-born caste, all the Nepal's ethnic groups under the name of '*Matawalis*' have been placed. The *Matawali* castes are regarded as equivalent to the '*Sudra*'. There are two groups of *Matawali*, those belonging to the unenslavable '*Namasine*' and those belonging to enslavable '*Masine*'. Below *Matawali* and *Pani Chalne Chhoi*

Chhito Halnu Naparne i.e. non-untouchable castes. At the bottom of the ranking there are *Pani Nachalne Chhoi Chhito Halnu Parne* caste i.e. untouchable castes, (Sharma, 2004).

Nepali, (1965), in the book "The Newars" has given an ethno sociological study of the Newars, a Himalayan community of Nepal. The book has given a well ethnography of Newars in different aspects.

Gautam and Thapa (1994) wrote books on "Tribal Ethnography" which are also excellent references of ethnography. These books have trussed about some untouchable caste of Nepal. Badi, Dom, Gaine, Kami, Musahar, Sarki, etc. Those books attempt to describe untouchable castes are tried to describe in those books. The Sarkis is an occupational tribe and can be found in most area of Nepal due to their profession, they are as widely spread out as their Kinsman, the Kami and Damai.

Similarly, Bista (1996), is the most indigenous pioneer, scholar who has contributed a lot to the field of ethnographic study. His book "People of Nepal" is one of the master pieces of literature on ethnography. He has described about a lot of ethnic groups in this book. He has stated, "Brahmins rank highest in the caste hierarchy and along with Chhetri that formed a majority of the influential wealthy people of traditional Nepal. They are also the most widely distributed through out the country. Nepali, an Indo-Aryan language is their mother tongue and has been adopted as the state language. in Nepali is also the mother tongue of the small number of occupational castes. The Damai (Tailor), Sarki (Cobber), Kami (Blacksmith) and Sunar (Goldsmith) caste and such other castes found in the country speaking Nepali Language as their mother tongue.

Caplan (1970), has studied a village of eastern Nepal, where he studied the changing relation between members of indigenous tribes: Limbu and the high caste Hindu group, the Brahmins.

According to Caplan (1972), the study on "Priest and Cobbler" is an example of social change in a Hindu village of western Nepal about the untouchable. Although, untouchables consider themselves Hindus, they are not served by Brahmin priests and indeed are considered as being out side the formal Hindu hierarchy by members of

their castes. Untouchables are, however, necessary to participate in the proper functioning of the caste system since they provide service which clean upper caste people are precluded from performing.

Nepali (1999), M.L is a pioneer researcher to caste ethnography. According to him, most of the Dalits have their traditional occupation due to which they are also known as the occupational castes. For example, Smiths make farm tools, kitchen utensils and work as rock-cutter, Damais (tailor) sew clothes and play musical instruments popularly known as Panche Baja, Sarkis (cobbler) make leather goods like shoes, horse saddle and case of Khukuri, Gaine (singer) sing songs for entertainment and Badi of western Nepal entertain the landlords during marriage and other auspicious ceremonies. These days the Badi women are also found to have been involved in the prostitutes.

According to Mahato (1993), the Sarkis belong to the lower down caste and they came from India at the beginning. In other words, the Sarkis are called Chamars. According to Hindu caste system, Sarkis belong to the rank of untouchable. Although they are in minority, they can be found all over the country. They are treated as Sudras and their traditional occupation is leatherwork. In Hindu religion, Sarkis the and Chamars have the same social and occupational status. But Sarkis mainly live in the mountains and Chamars live in the Terai and the inner Terai.

2.2.2 Modern Overview

The world has entered in the 21st century which century is supposed to be the age of democracy and socialism but the social condition of our country is still suffering very much from inhuman customs such as caste discrimination and untouchability. In fact, these customs are against the law, religion and humanity. These are really unfair and exploiting from social and economic point of view. Such customs are social evils of the society. Unless these are removed from the society, the country can not be developed properly. The fact has been clear by its past history as wall.

As a national culture, the Nepalese culture incorporates many particular groups such as Sherpa, Gurung, Magar, Damai, Tharu, Dhimal, Sarki, Bishwokarma etc, To make study on all ethnic groups in a research project will be very difficult. In this regard, only a few sociological and anthropological studies on untouchables have been made

in our country Nepal. There's no sufficient sociological and anthropological research about Sarkis, one of the untouchables. So an attempt has been made for a further study on Sarki people in this research. The study will basically try to focus on the socio-economic status of Sarki people in Nepal.

According to Singh and Shrestha (1978), it is very difficult to estimate the population of Dalit caste group. One estimate puts the number of Dalit people at 13.09% out of the total population of 23151423. This means that the total number of Dalit population is 3030067 in which *Kami* occupies the largest group with 29.57% and *Halkhar* (Mettar) occupies the smallest group with 0.12%. Dalit woman comprises 51% of total population. Dalits are discriminated against on the basis of caste and untouchability. Not only are they discriminated by higher caste people, but also by the people of same caste. Dalit women suffer much more than Dalit men.

A famous correspondent and economist Dr. Hari Bansh Jha (2005) explored the complex religious, social and economic factors and mentioned that these factors have not only sustained discrimination against the Dalits but sometimes increased exploitation despite legal reform outlawing the practice of untouchability.

Similarly DNC (2003), Dalit is defined as the different caste groups which are economically exploited, socially disadvantaged, politically marginalized away from education and kept in religious and untouchable ethnic community. Basically there are four kinds of *Dalit*; *Hill Dalit*, *Terai Dalit*, *Mountain Dalit* and *Ethnic Dalit*. Among hill Dalit, *Kami*, *Damai*, *Sarki*, *Gaine* and *Badi* are major. Among Terai Dalit, *Dusadh*, *Musahar*, *Chamar*, *Dom*, *Halkhar*, *Banter*, *Khatwe*, *Tatma* are some of identified. Among Newar Dalit, *Kasai*, *Pod*, *Chime*, within ethnic Dalits, there are *Newar and Mountain dalits* as well, (INSEC, 2053). The division is according to the geographical distribution and cultural background of the Dalit caste groups.

Untouchables may not use the wells in the village, although they have access to the springs. They may not enter the house of the high caste; indeed they may not even sit at the doorway, (Caplan, 1972).

Caste bound occupation does not provide full time employment to the most of the Dalit people and they are bound to take other jobs. The highest frequency occurs in the Wage Labour which is also a major occupation of the majority of Dalit people. It

also explains that the occupational caste groups do not possess limited but also poor quality of land, (Pant, 1987).

The Dalits or "untouchables" of Nepal are the poorest people. They have a per capita yearly income of just \$39 against the national average of \$250. In life expectancy, literacy and all other standards of living they fall far below the norm. The Dalits suffer from various forms of discrimination in society, from being barred entry to temples and access to public water resources and being the occasional victims of outright atrocity. Modern manufacturing methods are eliminating the market for many of their traditional occupations such as blacksmith, cobbler and tailor are forcing them to depend on agricultural and manufacturing jobs such as brick making, (Jha, 2005).

A research conducted by Khagendra Sharma, Mrs. Gyanu Chhetri and Miss Sita Rana (1994), on "A modest study of the current socio-economic situation of the lowest status caste and tribal communities in Nepal" has shown all types of problems of untouchables. In this study, they have identified caste-based discrimination and related matters of untouchability.

According to them, an untouchable teacher in Kailali district had sent away from his village to Dhadadi, the district headquarter on deputation because he ordered students of higher caste and untouchable caste to sit together in the luncheon provided under the nutrition food program. The school management and school supervisors were satisfied with his teaching quality, but the headmaster being a Brahman did not accept this value and influenced the District Education Officer against the teacher. Because of this case, later the luncheon program itself was dropped. It is really a heart touching event happened to the school system

One-day conference held in Kathmandu on "Nepal's constitution and rights of Dalit people. It concluded that due to extensive poverty, illiteracy and superstition, community has not been developed. Therefore, Dalits are compelled to adopt traditional, unproductive caste-based occupation from which exploiters are greatly benefited and Dalits have become bankrupt. If they reject the traditional job like ploughing, playing drums, carrying Doli etc., they have to be punished bitterly. They have to face insecurity of life. Even, caste plays a vital role in getting a job. Because of their lower status, Dalit people can't get job. In any competition between Dalit and non-Dalit, Dalits are always kicked out. In this way, Dalits are deprived from many kinds of opportunities, (Bishwokarma, 2053).

Dalit NGO federation (DNF) was established in Nepal in 2055 B.S. A social change commission was formed under DNF. It has been involved in various tasks for the upliftment of Dalit such as publishing the journal, leaflets, magazines, books and conducting seminars through out the country. These are very effective for the social change and social discrimination, (Anonymous, 2056).

Besides this, Dalit Sewa Samaj (Dalit Welfare Society) and Utpidit Dalit Munch have been formed and they have been doing various researches in the field of social change of Dalits. All these have become examples for the study of untouchables down caste. (Anonymous, 056)

The above mentioned examples show that there is so much discrimination against the untouchables and it is necessary to conduct research on this issue. But unfortunately it has not been fully addressed and it is not addressed unless the real situation of Dalit isn't identified. As a result, the exploitation and discrimination against untouchables remain forever.

Although special books are not available but some dissertations of Master's Degree of T.U. have written on untouchables, have reviewed for this study.

Chhetri (1985), conducted a research on "Gaine: a Singing People of Nepal". It was carried out in Kaski district and Thapa, (1995) wrote on "Gaine: of Dang District". Similarly, Sharma and Subedi (1995), wrote on "Badi: an Untouchable Caste" whose traditional profession is prostitution.

Above mentioned writers have not study/conducted research on the socio-economic status of Sarki people of S.K.G., Syanja and feeling that the research plan and programme for the upliftment of this community also need detailed study of every aspect of their life. All these things prepared the researcher to carryout a search about the Sarkis.

The present study has been carried out to provide a general ethnography of Sarki people of Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC focusing on Sarkis of Danda –2 and Chhapa–7. Secondly, it has also identified and systematically analyzed the diverse aspects of socio-economic status seen in a little indigenous community of Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC. Syanja District.

CHAPTER – III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study mainly focuses on the Sarkis in Shreekrishna Gandaki VDC. It has employed a broad framework and tried to apply a more holistic approach to fulfill its objectives. This section discusses research methods employed to accomplish the study objectives.

This chapter mainly discusses about the research methods adopted in this study, primarily this section of the study includes the ground of selection of the study site, research design, nature and sources of data, universe and sample selection, data collection techniques (i.e. interview schedule, key informant interview, focus group discussion, observation, secondary information) and data analysis procedure.

3.1 Research Design

This study was based on ethnographic research. The study was descriptive as well as analytical in nature. Being a descriptive work it did not have any formal hypothesis regarding socio-economic status of the Sarkis in Syangja District. The main focus of study was to find out the socio-economic status of Sarkis of Shree Krishna Gandaki V.D.C. through the description of institution, social organization and economic condition of Sarkis people.

3.2 Selection of the Study Area:

A few ethnographic studies have been carried out especially in low western hill caste people such as Sarki, Damai, Sunar, and Bishwokarma, etc. So very limited research findings are available related to these societies. This has been so, because indigenous sociologists and anthropologists have carried out researches on the western people but these researches are not similar to the Sarki caste ethnicity. Sarki people are predominantly the inhabitants of Shree Krishna Gandaki V.D.C. It is an important task to find out how people are developing their socio-economic condition, especially their perception, attitude and behavior towards shoe medal making which will be an important contribution to the field of home ecology as well as in Rural Sociology. Hence, this study aims at fulfilling the gap in the field of Sociology/Anthropology. The researcher herself is a permanent resident of this area. Having a good interaction

with these Sarki people; it was easier be easy for her to conduct research. So, this background is the base for the selection of study area.

Ward No. 2, Sarki Danda and ward No. 7, Chhapa of Shree Krishna V.D.C. of Syngja district were selected as the study area for the present research work. The area although is common for different ethnic groups, Sarkis are distinct than others in their traditional work and cultural practices and profession. There are some people involved in other traditional work and other wages and Business.

3.3 Nature and Sources of Data

In this study two types of data were used which are as described below:

3.3.1 Primary Data

The major source of data for this study was primary data, which were collected through household survey with the help of questionnaire prepared prior to field visit. Besides household surveying, observations, key informant interview and focus group discussion were also taken as the source of primary data collection.

3.3.2 Secondary Data

To make the study more precise secondary sources of data were also used for the study. Secondary data were collected from different reports, such as books published and unpublished documents from libraries and institutions. Syangja district development committee profile, VDC profile, different journals, published and unpublished dissertations and other relevant literatures were consulted to facilitate the task of envisioning the research work.

3.4 Universe and the Sample Size

The main objective of this research is to study the socio-economic status of Sarki people of Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC of Syangja district, Gandaki Zone, Western parts of Nepal. Altogether there are 9 wards in this VDC where total household are 1328 and total population is 12480 (VDC profile 2006). This VDC is the homeland of several castes and ethnic groups. The 67 households of Sarki people out of 174 household of Dalit people of this VDC have been selected for the study. The data have been taken from every household for the study.

The data has been shown in the table 1:

Table 1: Universe and the Sample Size

Ward No.	Household	Total People	Total Dalit household	Dalit people	Sarki household	Sarki people
1	113	1213	20	120	-	-
2	115	1174	58	549	39	225
3	166	1630	1	11	-	-
4	121	1124	-	-	-	-
5	113	1145	-	-	-	-
6	116	1534	34	204	-	-
7	179	1580	38	411	28	176
8	260	1935	15	90	-	-
9	145	1145	8	48	-	-
	1328	12480	174	1433	67	401

Source: The office of Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC, 2006

3.5 Techniques of Data Collection

The successful result of any study depends on its techniques, which are used for data collection. Hence, for every study the data collection technique is the most important to obtain reliable information. This study adopted the traditional sociological and anthropological fieldwork method and techniques for data collection. They were household survey, personal interview, observation, focus group discussion and questionnaire.

3.5.1 Household Survey

Household survey was conducted to collect the primary data using both structured and unstructured questionnaires prepared prior to the field visit. Questionnaires were filled by the researcher asking the related questions and collecting answer of the questions from the respondents.

3.5.2 Observation

Observation is the basic anthropological tool for the collection of qualitative data in fieldwork. The sample observation was used by the researcher to supplement the information obtained from the questionnaire and observation checklist of the dress pattern, food habit, settlement, ceremonies and feast and festivals had been used to fulfill the targeted objectives. This long interaction with the community provided the researcher with abundant knowledge about Sarki community. To know the view of

the families of about the unsociability about Dalit community, group discussion was conducted.

While making analysis and interpretations of socio-economic condition, attempts have been made to show the living standard of Dalit people, especially Sarki people in Shree Krishna Gandaki V.D.C. of Syangja district. The researcher had tried to show their problems, which would be really useful to solve them and to uplift them from their previous status.

3.5.3 Focus Group Discussion

To analyze the direct and indirect causes of socio-economic backwardness of the Dalit people of VDC, focus group discussion had been conducted with one school teacher, five household heads, two socially deprived people and one local sarki leaders and one social worker in the community.

3.5.4 Key Informant Interview

Interview is one of the most important media to collect the reliable data for the research work. So, interview had been taken as a major tool for this purpose. One of the oldest members, a teacher, a shoemaker and an intellectual person from Sarki community had been interviewed.

3.5.5 Methods of Data Analysis:

After collecting the data, they were analyzed using different statistic statistical like bar diagram, pie chart and frequency table for quantitative data and for qualitative data, descriptive method was used.

3.6 Tools of Data Collection

Different tools had been used to collect the primary as well as secondary data. The available data for the research were collected by using following tools:

3.6.1 Questionnaire Schedule

Questionnaire is one of the important tools for this study which had been used to know the detail about socio-economic situation and problems of Sarki community, their family background, household heads and local leaders.

CHAPTER - IV

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY AREA

This chapter presents physiographic and socio-economic condition of the study areas; Shree Krishna Gandaki Village Development Committee Syangja district. Generally it deals about the geography, climate, soil and other natural features of the study area. Moreover the unit explains briefly about the population, caste and ethnic composition, literacy status, and other socio-economic attributes of the study area.

4.1 Physiographic feature of the Study Area

a. Location

Nepal is divided into 5 development regions, 14 zones and 75 districts. Syangja is one of the hilly districts out of the 75 districts of the country. Syangja lies in the mid hill region of western development region of Nepal. The district lies at 83⁰27" to 84⁰46" east longitude and 27⁰22" to 28⁰13" north latitude. The height of Syangja district is 366 meter to 2512 meter from the sea level. The map of the study is shown in appendix A to B. It is bordered with Tanahun district in the East, Gulmi and Palpa in the South. The district comprises a total area of 1164 sq. k.m. The total population of the district is 3, 17,320 and the literacy rate is 57.20%. So, the average literacy rate of the district is 66.32%, (District Profile of Syangja, 2001).

Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC, the study area of this research project, is one of the model VDC of Syangja district which is situated in the western part of Nepal. It is located in 65 km far from the District headquarter Syangja. The VDC is bounded by Jagarta Devi VDC in the East, Birga and Harmichaur VDC in the West, Nibuwakhark VDC in the South and Yamagha VDC of Palpa district in the South. In the north of this VDC a beautiful stream called Aandhikhola follows, one of the most important rivers of Syangja and Nepal. Kali Gandaki follows in the South of this VDC. The river Kali Gandaki separates Gandaki and Lumbini Zone: and Syangja and Palpa districts respectively. The altitude of the VDC is about 366 to 1100 meters from the sea level. The total land area of this VDC is 19.74 sq. km. The land covered by this VDC is 3.61% of Syanjja district.

b. Climate and Soil

The area of Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC ranges tropical to subtropical monsoon with hot and wet summer as well as cool and comparatively dry winter. Temperature reaches about 36 degree Celsius maximum in early summer, while minimum temperature during winter probably does not decrease much below 11 degree Celsius. The annual average rainfall is 1400 milliliters. Basically, the soil found in the area is black, sandy, red and rocky, etc. The black soil is the main source of high agricultural production of the area. Farmers produce different types of crops in the VDC. For example, paddy, maize, wheat, grains, vegetables and fruits, potatoes, mustard and ginger are the main production etc in the VDC.

4.2 Socio-economic characteristics

a. Population and household

Total population of the district is 3, 17,320. Out of which 1, 43,619 are males and 1, 73,701 are females. Among them, there are 2596 households with total population. The population of SKG is 11452. There are 2596 households with total population out of taken 5894 male and 5558 are female, (CBS 2001). The distribution of population in shown in table 4.2.

Table 2 : Ward wise population composition of SKG VDC

Ward no.	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Total	Percent	Total house Hold
1	379	6.59	435	7.73	840	7.67	162
2	338	5.93	394	7.09	732	6.39	149
3	1033	17.73	755	13.58	1788	15.61	631
4	314	5.33	415	7.43	729	6.37	148
5	266	4.51	393	7.07	629	5.49	143
6	563	9.55	664	11.95	1225	10.70	187
7	620	10.52	749	13.48	1363	11.90	269
8	1108	18.80	398	16.88	2045	17086	399
9	1240	21.04	823	14.81	2063	18.01	508
Total:-	5894	100.00%	5558	100.00%	11452	100.00%	2596

Source: - District Profile of Syangja, (2001).

Table 2 shows that during the period of national census 20001, Kali Gandaki "A" Hydro Electric Project was under the construction in Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC. At that time the number of households and population of this VDC were more. But after the completion of the project, most of the workers had gone back to their respective

places, so the number of population has been decreased at present. Demographic data at this VDC which is taken recently from field survey are shown in the table No.3.

Table 3 : Ward wise population in Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC

Ward no.	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Total	Percent	Total house hold
1	615	9.99	598	9.59	1213	9.71	113
2	560	9.25	614	9.85	1174	9.40	115
3	803	13.04	827	13.27	1630	13.6	166
4	590	9.43	534	8.57	1124	9.00	121
5	572	9.14	573	9.27	1145	9.17	113
6	775	12.39	759	12.18	1534	12.29	116
7	801	12.80	779	12.50	1580	12.66	179
8	950	15.19	985	15.81	1935	15.50	260
9	584	9.34	561	9.00	1145	9.17	145
Total:-	6250	100%	6230	100%	12480	100%	1328

Source: - Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC Profile, 2006.

Table 3 reveals that the total household of the Shree Krishna Gandaki is 1328 and total population is 12,480, in the ward no. 7 or 2. According to VDC profile, ward no 8 has highest population and ward no 4 has the lowest population.

b. Caste/ ethnicity composition of population

It was observed that people of different caste/ethnic groups have tendency to live in cluster in their community. However, table 4 below shows that people from different groups were also found to be living together in the study area. Dalits were found to be the most deprived community group in the study area. Dalits are considered as low caste and so-called untouchable community in Nepal by higher caste, and is the victim of caste-based discrimination. Traditionally, Dalits have been treated inhumanely as untouchables, a category abolished by law in 1963 but still the practice exists in rural areas and in the study area too. Dalits frequently live in a swamp of illiteracy, exploitation, marginalization and absolute poverty and above all, caste based discrimination.

Table 4 : Population Compositions by Caste and Ethnicity

Cast/Ethnic Group	Household	Total Population	Percent
Brahmin	686	7134	57.17
Chhetri	7	50	0.40
Magar	410	3156	27.69
Newar	41	372	2.98
Gharti	6	54	0.43
Bote/Majhi	9	65	0.52
Damai	15	100	0.80
Kami	56	659	5.28
Sunar	14	83	0.67
Sarki	67	401	3.21
Other	17	106	0.84
Total	1328	12480	100.00

Source: Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC profile, (2006)

Table 4 explains that the highest population of Shree Krishna Gandaki is of Brahmins (57.17%) and the second highest population is of Magars (27.69%) followed by Kamis (5.28%), Sarkis (3.21%), Newar (2.98%), Damai (0.80%), Sunar (0.67%), Majhi (0.52%) and Ghartis (0.43%) respectively.

Table 5 : Ward wise Caste/Ethnic Group distribution

Ward No.	Caste/Ethnic Group	Households	Percent
1	Brahmin, Magar, Sunar, Newar, Damai	113	8.51
2	Brahmin, Magar, Kami, Sarki	115	8.66
3	Brahmin, Gharti, Damai	166	12.50
4	Brahmin	121	9.11
5	Brahmin, Magar, Newar	113	8.51
6	Brahmin, Kami, Sunar, Magar	116	8.66
7	Brahmin, Chhetri, Magar, Sarki, Damai	179	13.48
8	Brahmin, Magar, Gharti	260	19.58
9	Brahmin, Bote	145	10.99
Total		1328	100%

Source: - Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC Profile, (2006)

Table 5 explains ward wise distribution of caste/ethnicity in the VDC. Mostly the Sarkis were found in wards 2 and 7. In this VDC the Brahmins have dominated the other ethnic groups in population and in other aspects also. The Sarki is also one of the united ethnic castes in the VDC.

There are different types of ethnic groups found in Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC. For example, Brahmins, Chhetris, Magars, Newars, Gartis, Botes, Kamis, Sunars, Damais and Sarkis found in this VDC.

4.3 Language and Religion

The other ethnic groups such as Magar, Newar, Majhi living in this VDC generally speak their mother tongue and speak Nepali language for communicative purpose. But other caste people speak Nepali exclusively. However, Nepali is spoken for official use. Magars, Newars and Majhis use their mother tongue only in their family or community. There's no facility for them to read and write in their mother tongue and the number of the speakers of these language seems to be decreasing slowly. Their mother tongues are confined to their family and community whereas Nepali language is spoken every where as national language. The Sarki people of this study area speak Nepali as they have no their own mother tongue.

In the study area there are mainly two religious groups; one is Hindus and another is Buddhists. Brahmins, chhetris, Magars and Dalits are Hindus and people of other ethnic groups are Buddhists. While very few people are Muslims and Christians. Mostly, Hindus of the study area celebrate; Dashain Tihar, Teej, Maghe Sakranti, Srawani Sakranti, Chandi Purnima, etc. The table below shows the distribution of population of the VDC based on religion.

Table 6 : Distribution of Population on the Basis of Religion

Religion	Population	Percent
Hindu	9234	80.63
Buddhism	2090	18.25
Islam	44	0.38
Others	84	0.73
Total	11452	100

Source: - Statistical Office Syangja, (2001)

Table 6 shows that the majority of the people of this VDC follow Hinduism. Only a few people follow Buddhism, Islam or Christian.

4.4 Economic Activities

The people Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC have adopted various types of occupation like agriculture, animal husbandry, services, business, tailoring, wage labour, carpentering, constructing house, house maker shoe making etc. Out of all occupations they gave more preference to agriculture. As Nepal an agrarian country,

so the majority of them depend on subsistence agricultural economy. The farmers grow various types of crops like paddy, maize, soybean, wheat, millet and grains. Beside these, they also produce different kinds of vegetables such as potato, tomato, cauliflower, onion, green vegetables, fruits, etc., and cash crop like: vegetables, fruits, etc.

Table 7 : Agricultural Statement of Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC

Agricultural	Household	Percent
Only field	69	10.12
Livestock	61	8.94
Hens	10	1.47
Field and livestock	99	14.52
Livestock and hen	17	2.49
Field, livestock and hen	426	62.46
Total	682	100%

Source: District Profile, Syangja, 2001

Table 7 represents the agricultural and non-agricultural households. It is found that majority of households (62.46%) followed both the occupations of agriculture and animal rearing. The households involving in non-agricultural occupation were 955 which is shown in table 8.

Table 8 : Occupational Statement and Non-Agricultural Households

Occupational statement	Non-Agricultural household	Percent
Industry	15	1.57
Business	192	20.10
Transport	28	2.93
Service	551	57.69
other (Occupation non identified)	169	17.69
Total	955	100%

Source: District Profile, Syangja, 2001

Table 8 reveals that according to census 2001, Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC comprises 2596 households in total. The 682 households out of the total households involve in agriculture. Among them 69 households are fully involved in farming and cattle farming, cattle farming and poultry farming are 426.

Similarly, this VDC comprises 955 households involved in other occupation except agriculture; the 551 households are engaged in service, 192 in business and 15 in industry. The number of households involved in other occupation in 169.

Agricultural cycle begins from Baishakh/ Jestha (April/ May) when maize is sown in Baishakh they sow paddy in dry field and in Ashadh/ Shrawan they plant paddy in irrigated fields. Wheat is harvested in Baishakh (April), maize is harvested in the month of Bhadra/ Ashwin (August). Pulses, vegetables, fruits are also other sources of income in that area. But the farmers have to wait the rainfall for the irrigation in the field.

The method of cultivation is still traditional i.e. they plough the fields through plough and yoke, farmers use the compost and animals dung manure. Some of them have started to use chemical fertilizer and improved varieties of seeds. Because of newly constructed irrigation canals in the areas, people have got some opportunity to increase their productivity.

4.5 Major source of Income

About 75% households of Shree Krishna Gandaki are engaged in agriculture as the major source of income. Only 12% households are involved in national or international employment, 5% households are in business and 8% people are completely dependent on physical labour for a living or as the major source of income.

Table 9: Statement of Family Income of Shree Krishna Gandaki

Source of income	Household	Population	Percentage
Agriculture	996	4560	75
Service/job	159	729	12
Business	66	305	5
Wage labour	106	486	8
Total	1328	6080	100%

Source: - VDCs Profile Shree Krishna Gandaki, (2006).

Table 9 Protays the major source of income of the people in Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC which proves Syangja as "The economic backbone of Nepal is agriculture." It has been made clear by the occupational statements stated in the table above. The total number of households involved in economic activities is 12480 and its 75% households are engaged are engaged in agriculture, 12% in employment, 5% in business and 8% in labour work earning a living respectively.

4.6 Educational Institutions of Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC

According to field study altogether 15 educational institutions are there in this VDC. Among them 13 are governmental schools where as 2 are private. There is one multiple campus situated in Mirmi, two higher secondary schools, six secondary, and seven primary school.

4.7 Serviceable Offices of Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC

The VDC office of Shree Krishna Gandaki is situated in ward no. 7. The sub-health post office, sub-post office and co-operative office are also situated in the same ward. The following organizations, and afficies are situated in this VDC:

Table 10 : Serviceable offices of Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC

Ward No.	Name of office	Male	Female	Total
	1.Kali Gandaki "A" Hydroelectric project, Beltari	128	9	137
3	2. Army force	200	0	200
	1. VDC office	3	1	4
	2. Sub-health post	2	1	3
	3. sub-post office	0	2	2
7	4. Co-operative institution	1	1	2
	1. Electric distribution sub-center	8	0	8
8	2. Boat operating co-operatives	9	0	9
	Total	351	14	365

Source: Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC Profile, (2006).

Table 10 reveals that although non-formal education and literacy programs are needed to carrying out, institutions having such objectives are not opened in this VDC. Even the existing institutions are not able to conduct district programs for Dalits.

CHAPTER – V

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF SARKIS

This chapter opens with the study and discussion about the socio-economic characteristics of the Sarkis and their households. While studying the socio-cultural and economic aspect of the society or a social group, numbers of factors should be accounted for. In order to understand the Sarki's socio-economic condition as well as their relative status, economic mobility, individual status has high influence in their lifestyle. These factors identify the level of their recognition in the society. This chapter tries to present the overall socio-economic status of Sarkis of the study area.

5.1 Social Status of Sarki

There are Sarkis in two wards of the VDC ward no. 2 and 7. There are 67 households in the two wards which were focused on the study. Household survey was conducted in each Sarki household. The study is primarily based on the data collected from the survey. In this sub-chapter the socio-cultural and economic status is described in detail as far as possible and presented in the following ways.

5.1.1 Population Distribution by Age

The total population of Sarki was 401 and which included 67 households. Out of the total population there were 194 (48.38 %) males and 207(51.62 %) females.

Table 11 : Age Structure of Sarki Population

Age	Male	Female	Total	Percent
0-5	21	25	46	11.47
6-14	55	65	120	29.92
15-60	112	111	223	55.61
60+	6	6	12	3.0
Total	194	207	401	100.00

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Table 11 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the Sarkis by age group. The highest percentage of Sarkis (55.61%) belonged to the age group of 15-60 and the lowest percentage of Sarkis (3.0%) belonged to the age group of 60 and above. The data revealed that most of the Sarki population belongs to the productive age group.

Out of the total population 401, only 6 males and 6 females were found above 60 years of age.

5.1.2 Family Size

The census of 1952/54 defined formality as one which comprises of families or group of individuates or individuals sharing the same kitchen. It conforms to the definition recommended by United Nations, which status that the concept of "household" is based on the group, for providing the selves with food or other essentials for learning. (United Nations: 1969)

Table 12 : Family Size of the Surveyed Households

Family Size	Household	Percent
2-3	6	8.95
4-5	25	37.31
6-7	18	26.86
8-9	12	17.91
10-11	3	4.47
Above 11	3	4.47
	67	100

Source: - Field Survey, (2008).

Table 12 reveals that most of families have the size of 4-5 family members (37.31%). The data also reveals that most of families of the Sarki community is larger in size. One of the reasons of the large size of the families is the because of sufficient unawareness of family planning methods of the respondents.

5.1.3 Household Head by Sex:

The household head was defined as the person who takes decision on household activities. Table 13 defines that in Nepalese society there is still domination of male in decision making; women would be household heads only when there were no elder men to be the household head. The table below shows the household head by sex in the surveyed households.

Table 13 : Household Head of the Surveyed Households

Household Head	Respondents	Present
Male	52	77.61
Female	15	22.39
Total	67	100.00

Source: - Field Survey, (2008).

According to the field survey as it is presented in the table above 52 households (77.61%) were headed by males and 15 households (22.39%) over headed by females. It shows that there less were households headed by females.

5.1.4 Education

Education is an important factor for development in every aspect of life. If education is not well-acquired and imparted, development seems quite difficult to achieve. In the Sarki community no one has obtained more than high school level degree. Most of the children were found to have left school before secondary level education.

Regarding the educational aspect of the Sarki people of the study area, the rate of literacy has been found very low. Previously i.e. before 10/12 years Sarki children were not sent school but at present Sarki children are found going school. Now a days, they want to send their children to school in comparison to the past as a remit, at present the literacy rate of Sarki has increased. Among the Sarkis of study area, most of the elder men and women are not literate. It may be due to the lack of educational opportunities in their young years.

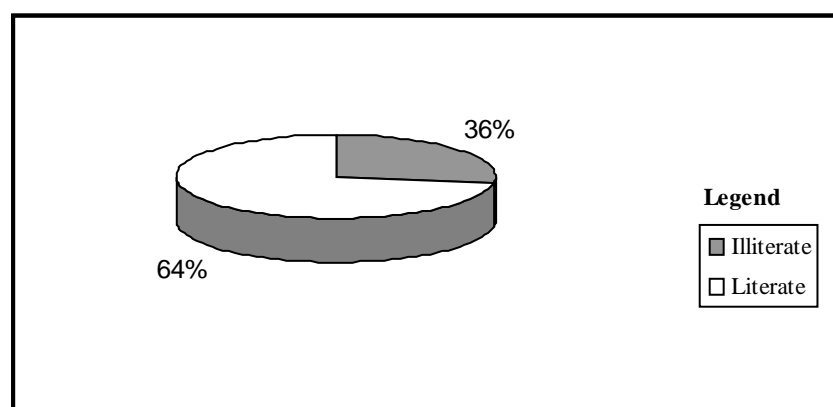


Fig.3: Literacy Status of the Members of the Surveyed Households

Source: Field Survey, (2008)

Figure 3 indicates the level of education of the Sarki community in the study area. The level of education in the study area is more satisfactory. 64% people were found literate and only 36% were found illiterate. The percentage of male literacy was 51.0% whereas female literacy was 49.0%, which shows that male were well literate than females.

The education status of the surveyed households is further illustrated in the figure 4.

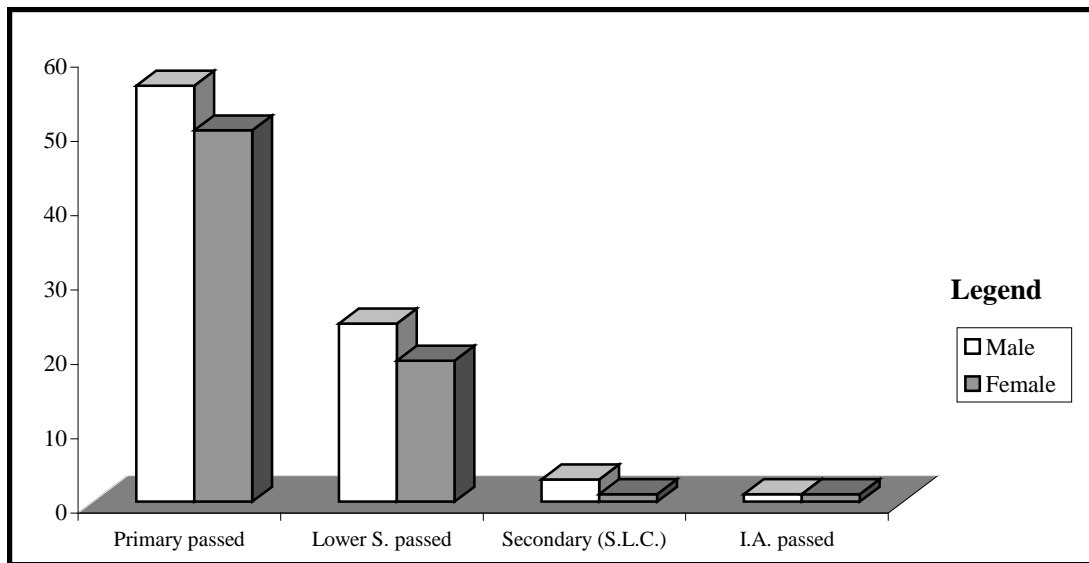


Fig. 4 Educational Status of the Respondents

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Figure 4 shows that literacy rate of Sarki people has grown and reached to 64%. However, the indication of growth is not satisfactory because still 36% people are illiterate. Among literates, 56 males and 50 females have passed primary level, 24 males and 19 females have passed lower secondary level, 3 males and 1 female have passed S.L.C. and 1 male and 1 female have passed I.A. At present, the literacy condition of the study area is satisfactory and the literacy rate seems to be increasing gradually in recent years.

5.1.5 Health Status

It is believed that health is life and health is wealth as well. It means that health is the most important thing in our life. The health status of a group of people can be measured in number of ways. Here the status is tried to measure in the awareness and practices of the Sarkis in health related behaviors. The behaviors or practices are; the

use of toilet, practice of family planning, type of health counselor and sources of water and its purification method.

Use of toilet

Using closed area or toilet is an important indicator of the awareness about the health issue. In Nepal many health problems are associated with the improper use and practice of toilets. Here is a table below that shows the frequency of the households using toilets (pakki and kachhi) and having no permanent pit latrine.

Table 14 : Toilet Users

	Toilet User		Non user	Total
	Pakki	Kachhi		
Household	7	19	41	67
Percent	10.44	28.35	61.19	100

Source; Field survey, (2008).

Table 14 clearly shows that only 26 households have toilets. Out of them only 7 households have Pakki concreted toilets, whereas 19 households use Kachhi (ordinary) toilets. Out of total 67 households, 41 houses do not have their own toilets. Most of the time they use open area and forest for toilet.

Family planning Practice

Practice of family planning: both permanent and temporary are viable options to reduce the rate of birth or pregnancy. The method of permanent family planning is vasectomy and mini-lap. Similarly, the practice of temporary family planning includes the use of condom and other contraceptives vaccines or tablets. The table below shows the practice of family planning among the Sarkis.

Table 15 : Family Planning

Types of Family Planning	Male	Female	Total	Percent
Permanent	5	3	8	4.51
Temporary	12	35	47	26.55

Source: Field Study, (2008).

Table 15 indicates that people of the study area are not very conscious about family planning. Only 5 males and 3 females have done permanent family planning and only 12 people used temporary means of family planning. Among them 12 are males. Sarki people don't want to have family planning or to use means of family planning. They are afraid of permanent family planning thinking that they might be physically weak and can't work hard. They also believe that temporary means of family planning are also harmful to health, they might weaken their body. As they don't want to use means of family planning and husband and wife mostly remain together, so the rate of childbirth in Sarki community seems to be very high. Especially, the health condition of Sarki women is very miserable. Due to regular pregnancy and hard work, the health condition of woman is in miserable condition. Most of them are suffering from the problem of prolapsed. Due to their poverty and lack of proper treatment, they are compelled to live an ill and weak life. Both the rate of birth and infant mortality seems very high in Sarki community.

Type of Medical Counselor

Another important way to measure the health status in rural area is the type of counselor. It is the people's awareness about the present health issue and his/her sensitive about the health problem which determines their appropriate counselor. In traditional Nepalese villages the local doctors (Dhami Jhankris) were popular. Now doctor or health assistant or medical persons are highly preferred. Table below shows the Sarkis practice on counseling.

Table 16 : Types of Medical Counselor of the Surveyed Households

	Doctor	(witch-doctors)	Other	Total
Household	41	16	10	67
Percent	61.19	23.88	19.92	100

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Table 16 clears that due to satisfactory rate of illiteracy the trend of visiting doctors (61.19%) was found better whereas patients visiting witch doctors like Hami and Jhankaris (23.88%) was less. This data also indicates that people were health conscious and frequently visited doctors in case of their sickness.

Source of Water and Water Purification Method

People's awareness and practices about the drinking water is also an important indicator about their health status. In the study the quality of water was measured in two ways; one was source of water and another was the method of water purification. Here is a table that shows the sources of water that the surveyed households avail water.

Table 17 : Sources of Water

Source	Household No.	Percent
Tap	20	29.85
Pond	47	70.14
Total	67	100.00

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Table 17 reveals that the source of water the Sarkis use was mainly from the pond (70.14%) and only 20HHs (29.85%) fetch water from the tap. Only two main sources of water were found in the study area and people generally take used water from pond, which may not be safe for drinking purpose. The table below shows the method of water purification by the Sarki's of the study area.

Table 18 : Methods of Purifying Drinking Water

Description	Household No.	Percent
Boiled Water	8	11.94
Filtered	2	2.98
Medicated Water	3	4.47
Natural	54	80.59
Total	67	100.00

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Table 18 clearly explains that majority of the families used natural method, (80.59%) of purifying water. Only few households used scientific methods of purifying the water because most of them didn't have the practice of water purification.

In general, the health condition of Sarki people was not so good. They were not so cautious so much about their health. Economically they were poor and they were found to have a poor diet and most of them were suffering from different kinds of diseases. They were deprived of getting proper treatment. They still had practice to visit Dhami/ Witch doctor for general medical problems. Majority of Sarki households didn't have their pit-latrines. As a result, communicable transmitting diseases seem to be spread easily. According to the information obtained from the participants or respondents, Sarki's life is shortened because of the hard work and lack of adequate required medical facilities and lack of balance. However, the condition seems to be improving in recent years.

5.2 Economic Structure

Economic aspect is one of the most important aspects, which determines the social and other aspects of an individual. To understand the economic status of the surveyed household occupation, land holding, animal husbandry, food sufficiency, etc. are analyzed.

Although agriculture is the main source of livelihood in the study area, shoe and madal making, wage labour, ploughing, job, carpentry, and business were other alternative occupations followed by the Sarkis in the study area. Primary crops grown in the study area were paddy, wheat, maize, millet, oilseeds, cereals and vegetables. The animals reared in the area were buffalo, cow/oxen, goats, hens and pigs.

5.2.1 Major Occupation of the Sarki Households

The traditional occupation of the Sarkis of the study area is leather work or making shoes and madal. Most of young people do not like their traditional work or leatherwork, they do not know about other occupation, some young people are satisfied with work of leather. There are seven young men working with leather. They are making shoes.

**Table 19 : Occupation Distribution of the Respondents
(Economically active Population)**

Main Occupation of Sarkis	Male	Female	Total	Percent
Shoe Making	7	-	7	3.13
Agriculture	45	48	93	41.70
Business	4	-	4	1.79
Service/Job	12	3	15	5.38
Wage Labour	30	49	79	35.42
Carpenter	6	-	6	2.69
Ploughmen	19	-	19	8.52
Total	125	93	223	100

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Table 19 shows that the majority of the population of the total 67 households engaged in wage labour, (35.42%) and agriculture, (41.70%). Very few people have business (1.79%), carpentry (2.69%), shoe/madal making, (3.13%) and moderate population were involved in service, (5.38%) and ploughing (8.52%). There were many men and women who lived on wage labor. Mostly women were both agricultural and non-agricultural wage labor.

5.2.2 Land Holding Pattern:

In the context of Nepal, the extent of ownership of land is the main indicator of relative economic status of people. It has also social significance in rural communities of Nepal. Both quantity and quality of land determine the economic and social status of an individual or his/her family. The Sarkis in the study area owned 221 ropani land in total. The distribution of the total land among 67 households is presented below.

Table 20 : Land Ownership Pattern of Sarki

Land Group	Household no.	Percent
Landless	4	5.97
Less than 3 Ropani	38	56.72
3 Ropanit to 5 Ropani	16	23.88
More than 5 Ropani	9	13.43
Total	67	100.00

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

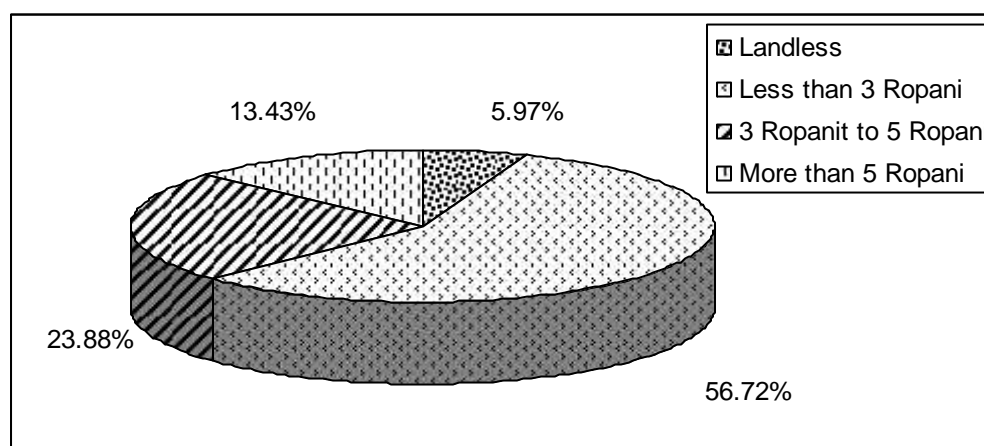


Fig. 5: Land holding Pattern of the Sarkis

Source: Field Survey, 2008

On an average, the Sarkis of the study area has 3.50 ropani land. The table shows that most of families are poor and they have very limited land. Among them, 38 families have less than 3 ropanis land (56.72%). Only 16 families have 3-5 Ropani, (23.88%) of land whereas 9 families have more than 5 ropanis (13.43%) of land. Due to their limited land, most of them have to depend on others' land for living. Only 5.97% of households (4) were found landless. Most of the land the Sarkis owned had no irrigation facilities and they had to rely on monsoon.

5.2.3 Food Sufficiency

Food sufficiency is concerned directly with landholding in a given village. The large land lords who store food were generally the people of high status and have sufficient food for their livelihood whereas, people who hold less land suffer from food deficiency and were considered as the people of low status.

Table 21: Food Sufficiency of the Respondents

Food Sufficiency Month	No. of H.H.	Surplus	Percent
Below 3	47	0	70.15
3 to 6	11	0	16.42
6 to 9	5	0	7.46
9 to 12	4	0	5.97
Total	67		100

Source: - Field Survey, (2008).

Table 21 clears that the Sarkis of the study area are suffering seriously from the food deficit problems. This area is one of the food deficit areas of VDC. Among 67 households, 70.15% of families grow the food for up to 1-3 months, 16.42% families grow food for 3-6 months, 7.46% families grow food for up to 6-9 months, and 5.97% families grow the food for 9-12 months.

According to the field survey, most of the Sarki families grow food for 3 months. They have very limited land which is not productive and fertile. They do not have their own land, so they hire others land. Most of them work for other caste people. Basically they survive on their physical labor. Thus, they have to seek the wage labor and other means of source of income to survive. The women generally do work in the agriculture fields with the high caste families to solve food problem in their family.

The major crops produced in this area were mainly paddy, wheat, maize, millet. Other crops produced in the study area were oilseeds, cereals and vegetables. Crop production in the study site has not been made wide due to insufficiency of land to the Sarkis and lack of plot agricultural knowledge. Agricultural product in the study area is quite low amount. They grow different crops and grains but the product is not sufficient. The main crops grown by them are paddy, maize and millet. Field survey has shown that 20.4% people produce maize and 6.68% produce paddy.

5.2.4 Livestock Rearing

Although agriculture is the main source of occupation of the people some traditional occupations were also carried out livestock as a supplementary of agriculture. Besides, the major occupations animal rearing is also regarded as the main alternative occupation of the study area. The primary animals reared in the study area were buffalo, cow/oxen, goats, hens and pigs, etc.

Livestock is also an important source of income of rural people. It supports the farming activities. It is also a source of promoting for people. The importance of domestic animals is not limited only to economy but is socio-culturally and religious very important for Brahmins and Chhetris.

In Sarki society they raise different types of domestic animals. Most of households they have hens, buffaloes, goats, pigs etc. The frequency of the livestock is given below.

Table 22: Livestock Rearing

Cattle	House holds	No. of Cattles		Total	Percent
		Self	Adhiyan		
Buffaloes	41	56	9	65	21.24
Cow/Oxen	8	11	0	11	3.59
Goats	34	45	15	60	19.60
Hens/Duck	60	150	0	150	49
Pigs	20	16	4	10	3.26
	163	278	28	306	100.00

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Table 22 reveals that cattle farming is one of the most important sources of income of Sarki people in the study area. Most of them keep buffaloes, goats, hens and duck. Only a few households keep cows, oxen and pigs. It shows that they keep buffaloes to produce milk and dung. They rare goat, hen/duck and pig for meat and egg. They rare cow/ox for milk and for ploughing field.

5.2.5 Housing condition

Housing condition is also an important indicator that reflects the relative economic condition of people in the rural areas of Nepal. The better the house, the better the economic condition of the particular family. Normally, in the rural context the rich people have RCC with good condition house or they may have tin roof. Similarly, the less rich people may have tin roof and poorly maintained house. And poor people may have thatch roofed houses.

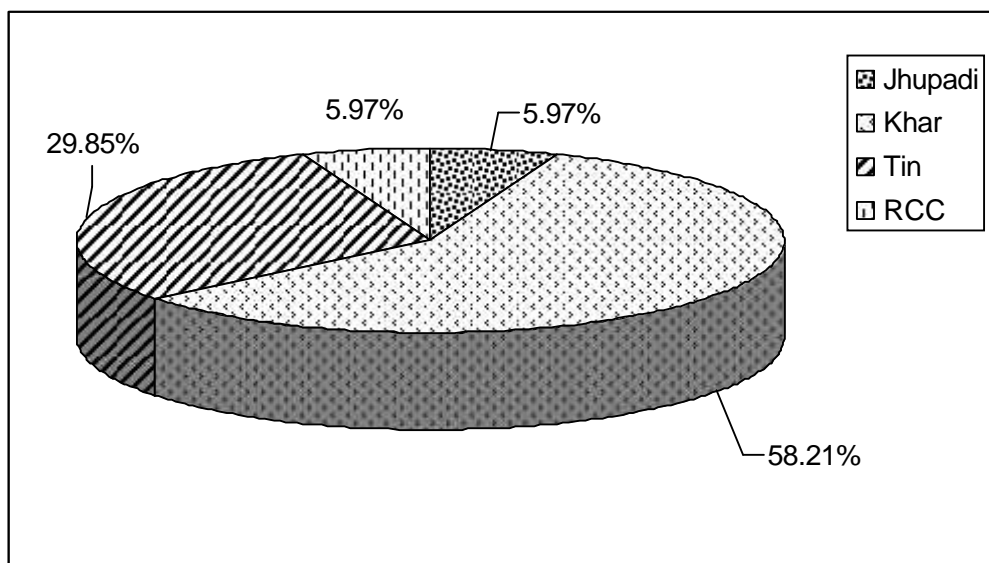


Fig. 6: Housing Condition of the Sarkis.

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

The house of the Sarkis of the study area is made up wood, mud, grass, concrete, etc. Only houses of the Sarki people are very small huts and thatched with Khar (dry grass). They want to keep their houses neat and clean but the researcher has found that these days because of the increasing number of family members it is hard to keep neat and clean. Out of the 39 house roofs are made of Khar and 20 households roofs are made of tin and 4 houses are made of concrete.

There are only 4 RCC buildings whereas only 4 houses are Jhupadi or huts. Among 67 houses, 39 houses are thatched roof and 20 houses are of tin-roofed. Because of the poor economic condition of the Sarkis people, only few people live in tin roofed or RCC houses.

CHAPTER - VI

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF THE SARKIS

This chapter mainly deals with the social and economic problems faced by the Sarkis in the study area. It also highlights the causes of the problems and inter relation with other caste groups. The information on economic problems faced by the Sarkis and their interrelation with other caste has been analyzed in this chapter. The findings have given a general overview of their economic problems. In the context of present world economics is the most important aspect in the daily life of human community. There is no doubt that life is impossible without economic. At present, the situation of the whole Nepalese Dalit people (Sarki) are becoming victim of poverty and discrimination.

6.1 Social Problems and their Causes

In general, the social hierarchy of the study area is determined by caste. Dalit, which is recognized as a lower caste group according to the Hindu orthodox, is in minority. Dalits are still discriminated to some extent based on their caste status and they are deprived from the access to different social and economic opportunities.

People in the study area can be broadly categorized into two groups, as either privileged or underprivileged. Privileged groups are relatively better off socio-economically. Generally, they belong to rich caste/ethnic categories such as Brahmins, Chhetris, Magars and Newars. Under privileged groups were the Sarkis, Sunars, Kamis and Damais. It was also found that privileged group dominates the underprivileged group in the study area due to their poor economic condition, the privileged group dominates the underprivileged.

Data from discussions and interviews have reflected that the major social problem of the study area was caste based discrimination and domination. The Sarkis of the study area are socially oppressed and discriminated by their Brahmin/Chhetri/Newar/Magar counterparts. Still in some public places they are treated as untouchables. They can not sell milk in public collection centres, they can not sit with the people of other caste people in the traditional tea shops. Similarly they are not allowed to visit the temples in the local areas. Likewise, Sarkis including other dalits, have limited access

to the social networks and public organizations or CBOs. The privileged group or people have leading the CBOs in the village and have wider access to the public or community resources or decision making process.

Table 23 : Oppression by Upper caste/ethnic group

Caste/ethnic group	Brahmin	Chhetri	Magar	Newar
Extent of oppression	high	High	Less	Very high

Source: Field Survey, (2008)

The focused group discussion with the Sarkis of the study area shows that the Newar highly oppressed the Sarkis. Then in second position Brahmin and Chhetri oppressed them. While Magar people oppressed them less. They faced oppression or discrimination and domination during collection water in public taps, milk collection centre, tea shops hotels and is higher caste people's home.

There were different causes of the problem of discrimination and domination of the Sarkis in the study area. Some of the causes of the problem are religious, cultural, social and economical. Untouchability between lower caste and higher caste people is one of the hindrances for social and economic development of the Nepalese society. For the existence of such socially dead habits, historical, classical and religious norms and values have played a vital role in Nepalese society. These afflicted people are not newly poor; they were economically and socially dominated from the classical time. Feeling of untouchables is not rigid as it was in the past in the society but the Sarkis have still adaptation problems. First of all, they are Sudra and their work. They eat beef although it is odd in the other hand; they eat the meat of dead cow. So, their behavior is odd, other caste people hate because of this behavior. The other caste people do not like to give them equal status as themselves. Therefore adaptation is being difficult for them in the society.

As the consequence of middle aged aristocracy and slavery, the ethnic discrimination and untouchability has not been eliminated even today in the scientific age of 21st century. Due to such customs like discrimination and untouchability, those ethnically afflicted people are not able to involve in any social works. Some of them who are involved seem to suffer mentally as well as physically. They are compelled to suppress their capacity and talency inside themselves. They have not got chance to

use their talency and capacity for any creative work. Due to the feeling of Untouchability and discrimination, the people of higher caste do not want their social upliftment. They can't run tea-shop, hotel and other many business because of the being lower caste. They are not appreciated although they do some important work. Instead, there may be conspiracy not to give them a chance to do any important work. Due to such practices, Sarki people are compelled to confine themselves into their own occupation, labour or to remain jobless. So, social aspect is also one of the major causes of economic backwardness of Sarki people.

According to the Hidnu scriptures, "It is believed that Shudra is not allowed to do reading and writing, good virtues and recites mantras." Our society has followed the same belief for a long time. Even after state law 2007 (Muluki Ain), Sarki people couldn't enjoy the opportunity for education until state law 2020. They couldn't get the opportunity to develop the public awareness. There were some educated people but they couldn't contribute for the society and social development because of the attacks by higher caste people. At present educational condition is found to be improved but there has been many obstacles to carry out in practical life. In fact, such will be remaining in existence until there is awareness in the whole class. There will be no way out for their problems until such practices are in existence. It is reasonable that as they are uneducated, their economic condition is weak, poor and miserable.

The behaviour of the Sarkis others behavior and practices are also responsible for the problems. Those causes are: conflict, inter-group conflict, humiliation for their own occupation, misunderstanding, use of alcohol, smoking, useless expenditure, lack of good sanitation, poor diet, etc. have made them poor and weak in themselves.

6.2 Economic Problems and their Causes

Economic status of a person or household is an important indicator which indicates not only the economic aspect but it has wider impact on social aspect of an individual as well. In general, the economic condition of Dalits especially Sarkis' was miserable. They were found as the poorest people of the village. There were different reasons of their poverty.

The major reason of the poverty among the Sarkis were of the study area is underemployment. Most of the Sarkis involved in agriculture but they lacked their

own land. It was the major occupation of the 41.70 percent of the surveyed household. The data had shown that only 13.43 percent of them have more than 5 ropani land. Likewise, 5.97 percent household can produce crops sufficient for their household requirement. It shows that most of the Sarkis involved in agriculture but it was not enough to sustain their lives. Beside agriculture, they had to involve in other occupations like; goat/chicken raising, wage labour, carpentry, construction works, etc.

Discussion with the local key informants had reflected that another reason of their poverty was the declining condition of the traditional occupation especially shoe making. More than 50 percent households used to involve in leather work before 20-30 years ago. However, the involvement was gradually declined after the expansion of distributive markets in Galyang and Waling bazaars of Syangja. Shoe and other materials produced from factory were able to attract the customers and there was decline of the traditional products of the Sarkis. Ultimately they had to reduced their products and cut their work in harsh condition. At present the demand of the traditional products was gradually going up but the new generation was not ready to follow the occupation. Their concept towards their own occupation is not positive and most of young generations feel hesitated to involve in their traditional occupation. According to youths in the study area, they have avoided their traditional occupation because they felt themselves lower grade of people while continuing the traditional occupation.

Table 24 : Income Sources of Sarki Community

Income sources	Income (Rs.)	Percent
Shoe making	115500	7
Agriculture	89500	5
Service/job	287500	18
Wage Labour	580500	35
Livestock	164700	10
Business	126300	8
Carpenter	97000	6
Ploughman	187000	11
Total	1648000	100

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Similarly, it was observed that another reason of Sarkis' poverty was their practice of high expenditure and less saving practices. They didn't care to balance between

income and expenditure. The money they earned from their occupation was spend on purchase of good grains, cloths, medicine, education, festival, etc. It was generally observed in the study area that they eat enough and have good food, and spend much when they have, and when they have nothing left and they go on dry. They didn't have practice of saving. They spend what they earn. Therefore, they needed to get loan from moneylenders at high interest in sudden and casual circumstances and miseries. And on the other hand, they were forced to take loan even in general condition for a living. This community has different sorts of earnings such as: shoe marking, agriculture, service, wage labour, livestock, business, carpenter and so on. Among them, wage labour is the most important earning source. The second position of the earning of the service group. Similarly, the third rank is of the ploughmen occupation, (Table 24). Thus, the annual income from different sources of the total 67 households is Rs. 16,48,000/- and each household makes income of Rs.24,597/- annually. The annual income of per household was very low in the comparison of expenditure.

Table 25: Types of Expenditure

Income sources	Income (Rs.)	Percent
Food	2228000	51
Clothes	500000	11
Education	500000	11
Health care	450000	10
Festival	600000	14
Other	150000	3
Total	4428000	100

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

The annual expenditure of per household was Rs.66, 089/- whereas the income is only Rs.24, 597/-. The major sources of their income are livestock and agriculture. Besides these, shoe making, job, business, carpentry and plunging are minor sources of their income. The annual expenditure of the total 67 households was about 3 times more than annual income. There was big gap between annual income and expenditure. The total annual expenditure was Rs.44, 28,000/- whereas the income was only Rs.16,48,000/-. Each households made the expenditure of Rs.66, 089/- annually whereas the income was only Rs.24, 597/-. Out of total expenditure, 51% was spent for food. It clearly shows that the major problem for them was to join hand and mouth as the largest part of expenditure was made for food. They only make the expenditure

of 11% on clothes, 11% on education, 10% on healthcare, 14% on festival and 3% for others. The expenditure for education seemed to be very low. They give less emphasis for health care too. As a result, the educational and health condition of Sarki people had become worse. They consume more alcohol and meat for celebrating, so their expenditure is higher for celebrating festivals. The earning of the whole year was nearly spent for celebrating festivals and other expense of the year was maintained by taking loan at high interest. Due to such circumstances, the amount of debt of Sarki people was higher.

Table 26: Debt (loan) Situation of Sarkis

Nature	No. of Household	Percent
Bank	5	7.47
Money lender	20	29.85
Their relatives	7	10.45
Firm (organization)	25	37.31
Self Standing	10	14.92
Total	67	100.00

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Sarki people of the study area take loans from moneylenders rather than from bank. The data from field has shown that out of 67 households, 37.31% households take loan from moneylenders. Although the rate of interest is very low with banks, only 7.47% households deal with banks. According to them, it is because they have to deposit family land but they don't have enough land to get enough loans from the banks. So, they don't want to take loan from banks although interest rate is low. And on the other hand, their land is meadow and barren, and the banks refuse to have their lands deposited. The process to get loan from bank is very long and difficult but it is very easy to obtain loan from moneylenders when they need. They state that they are involved in co-operative firms at present. They do saving and take loan from the same co-operative firm while necessary. Due to this facility, the number to take loan from moneylender has become very low, only 20 households take loan from them but most of them deal with co-operative firms. The self-standing households number who do not take loan is only 10 i.e 14.92% out of total number.

In this regard, it is clear that the source of income of Sarki people is very limited, and employed in their own country or foreign country also get the job of low status (level) and they don't get good salary. As a result, the amount of their expenditure seems to be very high in comparison of their income/earning.

Out of total population, only a few people are involved work in their economy. Similarly, the number of people who work in their own land is also very few. It is because they have no enough land. Most of the land that was possessed by Sarkis was barren and less-productive. So, most of the Sarkis depended on wage labour for living. There was also discrimination on wage between male and female. A man could earn Rs.120 - 200 whereas a woman only could earn Rs.60-80 in a day. Many of them were not found in cattle farming because of their limited land and grassland. They seemed to keep some hens, goats, pigs etc. and only a few families seem to keep cows and buffaloes. But it was seen that those cows and buffaloes were not for milk production. They kept calves of cows and buffaloes as well for mention it.

CHAPTER - VII

OCCUPATIONAL CHANGE AND ITS CAUSE AND IMPACT

This chapter is mainly concerned with the changing pattern of traditional occupation of the Sarkis of the study area and subsequently the cause and effect that fostered the occupational mobility. To analyze the pattern and causes/effects, this chapter is further divided into several sub chapters. The sub-chapters include the following headings: the traditional occupation of Sarkis shifting the traditional occupation, factors for the less popularity of the traditional occupation and traditional occupation that are getting disappeared.

7.1 Traditional occupation of Sarkis of Shree Krishna Gandakai VDC

According to Srinivas (1962), each caste is traditionally associated with a separate occupation, though agriculture is common to all castes from Brahmins to untouchables. Traditionally the Sarkis of Shree Krishan Gandaki VDC were shoe and *madal* maker. In return these people get money and crops. Beside this, they were found of involving in other works as: agricultur related works. Table 23 is enlisted to get the clear picture of the traditional occupation of the respondents of the study area.

Table 27 : Major Traditional Occupation of the Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Agricultural work	5	7.5
Shoe making	34	50.7
Madal making	14	20.9
Labour/construction work	9	13.4
Carpenter	5	7.5
Total	67	100.0

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

As the table 27 clearly demonstrates 50.7% and 20.9 % of the respondents reported doing leather related work as their traditional occupation. In this occupation they used

to manufacture and repair shoes and madal. Similarly 13.4% of them reported labour or construction work and remaining 5% each them involved in agriculture as their traditional work (their grandfather's occupation). In agriculture work, it includes working in the agricultural field as '*hali and bause*'.

As the agriculture was the major occupation of the people of Shree Krishna Gandaki, the Sarkis of the village had relatively higher opportunities to work in agricultural activities.

7.1.1 Involvement in Traditional Occupation

Since the last decade, there is gradual and continuous change in the occupational pattern of the village. Though the traditional occupation of the Sarkis is shoe making and madal making, however, the new generation was going far from it. Even though due to the gradual change in the socio-political scenario of the state and the advent of education had made these group to realize their status in the society. So the young generation is found detracting from the traditional occupation. When they follow the traditional occupation, it ranked low in the society. So they started some new occupation. The given table 24 shows the numbers of respondents family members involved in the traditional occupation.

Table 28 : Involvement in Traditional Occupation

Member Engaged	Frequency	Percent
1 person	3	4.47
2 person	2	2.98
No one	62	92.55
Total	67	100

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Table 28 clearly virtualizes that 89.6% of the respondents had reported that no one from their families is involved in the traditional occupation. Whereas only 7.4% of the respondents had reported that one of the family member is involved in their traditional occupation. Similarly, 3% of the respondents had reported that two of the member from the family was involved in traditional occupation.

Similarly, respondents were asked about the knowledge towards their traditional skills. They had reported that the following fact shown on the figure 7.

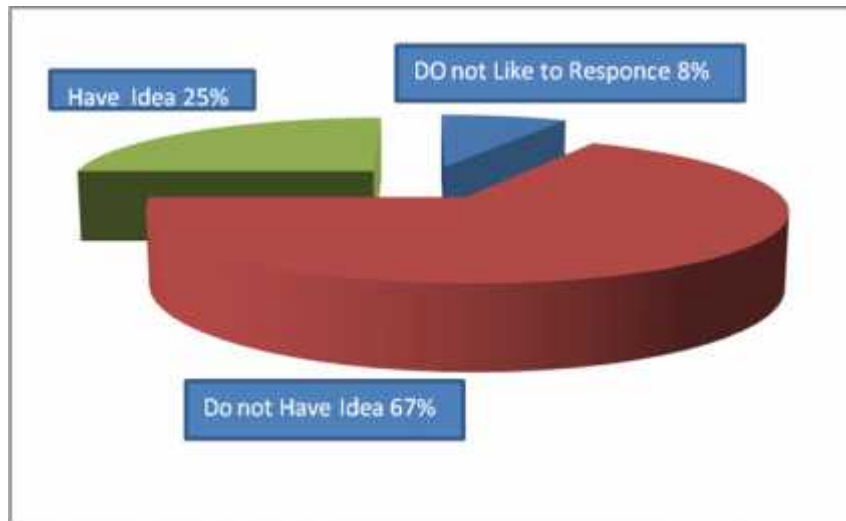


Fig: 7, Knowledge of Traditional Occupation

Source: Field Survey (2008).

Figure 7 shows that 67% of the respondents had reported that they do not know the traditional skills. Whereas, 25% had reported that they know their traditional skills. Similarly, 8% of the respondents had not liked to response the question.

From the above fact ,too, we can assume that majority of the people from this had shifted their occupation and other wanted to shift it. They also had reported that, in the modern period one should adjust him/herself with modern skill for the survival. Even though 16% of the respondents had reported that they had learn this skill from their own father and 3.3% from their grandfather.

7.1.2 Reason for Continuing Traditional Occupation

While in the field work, researcher had observed the Sarki community in Shree Krishna VDC and collected data from indirect method about the continuation of 'traditional occupation'. It was observed that people of the larger family size and with low earning capacity were found to have continuing their traditional occupation.

The researcher had asked to the respondents about the view towards the reason for continuing the traditional occupation. The multiple responses have been found that has shown in table 25.

Table 29 : Reason for Continuing Traditional Occupation

Reason	Frequency *	Percentage
Good income	2	28.6
It is quite easy to follow	2	28.6
To give continuity to tradition	2	28.6
Lack of alternative	1	14.2
Total	7	100

Source: Field Survey, (2008)

**Frequencies of the respondents are higher than the sampled size, since the question was of multiple response type.*

Table 29 is the responses of those who favor the continuation of traditional occupation. 28.6% of the respondents had reported that the continuation of own occupation will help for self-dependence and to the communal identity. Likewise, 28.6% of them had reported for the continuation of tradition and cultural norms. And one respondent or 14.2% of the respondents had reported that due to the lack other means for the survival.

7.2 Changing the Traditional Occupation

There are different kinds of traditional occupations, which are related with different caste groups. Most of the traditional occupations are declining from the society day by day. Although the Sarkis are providing different types of services to the people of other ethnic/castes, such as shoe making, madal making, agricultural, and other construction related works. Now only few people are found involving in that occupation (see table 30). In case of the study area, only 7 persons are engaged in the traditional occupation (see Table 19). The main aim of the present section is focused on inter and intra- generational occupational mobility among the Sarkis and preferred occupation for future generation.

7.2.1 Inter and Intra-generation Occupational Mobility

In order to the study of inter-generation occupational mobility, it should be examined if the occupational position of an individual is influenced by that of his father. Particularly in this community, occupational positions are sometime “inherited” through ascription. As the concept of occupational mobility, the table below refers to

change in the occupational affiliation in four generations namely of grandfathers, fathers, respondents and their sons as well as shifts in occupations within the span of life time. A future attempts will also be made to determine the magnitude and direction of occupational mobility at each generational level.

Table 30 : Inter-generation Occupational Shift in four Generations

Generation	Occupation					
	Shoe making/madal making	Shifting Occupation				
		Carpenter	Agriculture	Labour	Service/ Job**	Others
Grandfather	48(71.6%)	5(7.5%)	5(7.5%)	9(13.4%)	-	-
Father	20(29.9%)	5(7.5%)	15(22.4%)	22(32.8%)	3(4.5%)	2(3.0 %)
Respondents	7(10.4%)	6(9.0%)	17(25.4%)	21(31.3)	12(17.9%)	4(6.0%)
Sons*	3(5.3%)	2(3.5%)	3(5.3%)	5(8.8%)	14(24.6%)	30(52.6%)

Source: Field survey 2008

* *May be more than one son in one family not all sons are employed. So this study includes the elder son of the family and his own occupation was recorded.*

** *Including foreign employment*

From Table 30, it is clear that out of 67, 71.6% of the grandfathers were engaged in traditional occupation namely shoe making and, madal making work. 7.5% of the grandfathers were engaged in agriculture, including farming, *Halia* and *Bause* etc. Only 13.4% people were engaged in labour. The majority of the grandfathers were engaged in traditional occupation. Only 7.5% grandfathers who were engaged in other types of occupation such as carpenter and so on. At the level of fathers' generation, the occupation moved from the traditional and started in service or job including foreign employment. The trend of foreign employment rapidly increases in the level of respondents and the rate is continuing in the fourth generation. It can be inferred that there is a gradual shift from traditional to modern occupation in general and parental occupation in particular from one generation to that of another.

7.2.2 Preferred Occupation and its Causes

This study had shown that very few respondents were involved in traditional occupation. The young generations were not liked to follow or to learn the traditional skills. The case is more found to the literate people as they do not like to glue in the

traditional mode of production. That is why they were more often likely to be mobile from their traditional occupation. When the researcher had interviewed to the respondents, the following facts were discovered for the preference of new occupation. This is has been shown in the below table 27.

Table 31 : Preferred Occupation for Future Generation

Preferred Occupation	No of Respondents	Percentage
Agriculture	6	9.0
Service	18	26.9
Business	9	13.4
Foreign Employment	28	41.8
Others	6	9.0
Total	67	100

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

Table 31 makes clear majority of respondents (41.8%) preferred foreign employment as a preferred occupation for earning their livelihood for future generation. Out of 67, 26.9% of the respondents intended to see their children getting success as a service holder and educated persons. Because of low income and low status in the society they have been oppressed and suppressed by upper castes. If they can get good education and services, they can also earn satisfactory income.

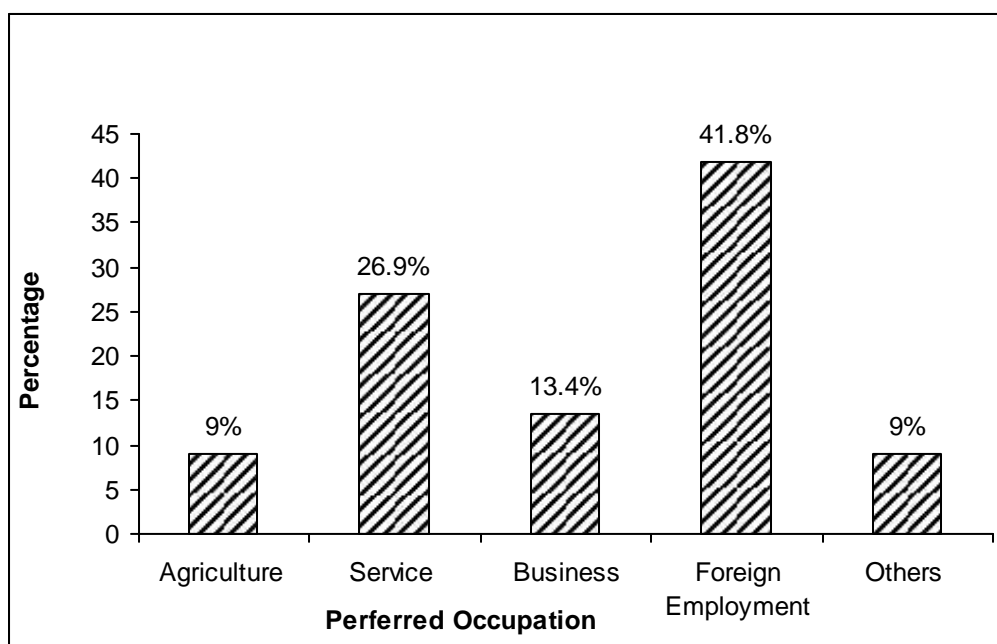


Fig: 8, Preferred Occupation for Future Generation.

Source: Field Survey, (2008).

13.4% respondent expressed preference for business for their children. This preferred business is related to groceries, fancy and so on. 9% respondent preferred agriculture as an occupation. Therefore, the collected data demonstrates that most of the Sarkis liked to work in foreign country for better earning. These people normally wished to prefer the occupation that had higher social prestige, good earning, greater opportunities, and equality in the society.

7.2.3 Reason for Changing Traditional Occupation

Modernization and western system of education has great significance to every society. Most of the people want to come out from the traditional practices which they see as the major obstacle to get modernization and change their ways of living. They wanted to acquire all sorts of modern life. Traditional occupation among the Sarkis has become less popular that is due to many reason. The reason can be summarized from the given Table 27.

Table 32 : Reason for not Adopting Traditional Occupation

Reason	Frequency*	Percentage
Low income	38	44.2
Less preference of traditional products	18	20.9
Lack of resource	8	9.3
Lack of interest	3	3.5
Lack knowledge and skill	14	16.3
Low social status	3	3.5
Discriminatory behavior	2	2.3
Total	86	100

Source: Field Survey, (2008)

**Frequencies of the respondents are higher than the sampled size, since the question was of multiple response type.*

With the help of the above table, we can discover that the traditional occupation is getting unpopular among the Sarkis of Shreekrishna VDC. 44.2% of the respondents had reported that one earns very less preferred from it. That is some time even unable to meet the basic needs of the family members. Likewise, 20.9% of them had marked that the traditional products are less preferred by the people (customers). Whereas 14% of them had reported that they do not follow the traditional occupation, due to the lack of knowledge and skill needed for the work. The 3.5 and 2.3% of the

respondent had reported that it marked to low social status and it is the main basis for the discrimination among the society respectively. The causes for the unpopularity of traditional occupation are less income, high competition to the factory products, etc. It is also found that due to lack of resources the traditional occupation is getting unpopular. Most importantly is the caste base discrimination, which still exists in the society. That helps the youth to reluctant from their traditional occupation.

And to move in search of new occupation, that will provide them higher social status and respectable position in the society. Beside this fact, Sarkis were found of shifting the occupation for the better earning and higher saving. Therefore, majority of the respondents are attracted towards foreign employment. Similarly, these groups had reported that they have least chances to get the better job in the country. They further reported that the lack of resources is a prominent base to shift the occupation. Traditional skills and knowledge were also been getting disappear, due to the lack of interest by the youth.

CHAPTER - VIII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter has summarizes the whole study, sketches the conclusions and makes some recommendations for future improvements and advancement in socio-economic status of the Sarkis, their economic problems and relationship of the Sarkis with other caste people. From the analysis and discussion of above information: the summary, conclusion and recommendations are deduced and presented as follows:

8.1 Summary

Shree Krishna Gandaki VDC ward no. 2 and 7 is the study area where there were 67 Sarki households and 401 population (194 males and 207 females). The larger number of households (39) and population (225) was in ward no.2 of the VDC. The percentage of population occupied by the Sarkis in the study area was 3.21%. There were mainly ten caste/ethnic groups living together in the VDC. The Brahmins (57.17%) were dominant in the study area whereas Ghartis (0.43%) was in minority. In the study site only 22.39 percent females headed the household whereas the males headed the remaining households i.e 77.61%. Most of families have the size of 4-5 family members (37.31%). Families of Sarki community were larger in size due to unawareness of family planning methods. They were not found conscious about the health status.

The Sarkis are considered a low caste and so-called untouchable community in the study site by higher caste, and is the victim of caste-based discrimination. Traditionally, here have been treated inhumanely as untouchables in the society. The level of education in the study area is more satisfactory. 64% people were found literate and only 36% were found illiterate. The percentage of male literacy is 51.0% whereas female literacy is 49.0%, which shows that males, were well literate than females. Although agriculture is the main source of livelihood in the study area, shoe and madal making, wage labour, ploughing, job, carpentry, and business were the other alternative occupations followed by the Sarkis in the study area. Primary crops grown in the study area were paddy, wheat, maize, millet, oilseeds, cereals and vegetables. The primary animals reared in the area were buffalo, cow/oxen, goats, hens and pigs. Among the total 67 households, majority of people were engaged in

wage labour (35.42%) and agriculture (41.70%). Very few population of people have business (1.79%), carpentry (2.69%), shoe/madal making (3.13%) and moderate population were involved in service (5.38%) and ploughing (5.52%).

The Sarkis were found to be the most deprived caste group in the study site. Sarki people have the cultivable land of 221 Ropani in total and average per family land holding is 3.50 ropani. Most of families are poor and they have very limited land. Among them, 38 families have less than 3 ropanis land (56.72%). Only 16 families have 3-5 Ropani(23.88%) of land whereas 9 families have more than 5 ropanis(13.43%) of land. Due to their limited land, most of them have to depend on others' land for living. Only 5.97% of households (4) were found landless. There are many men and woman who live on wage labor. Mostly women were involved in wage labor. The Sarkis of the study area are suffering seriously from the food deficit problems. This area is one of the food deficit areas of VDC. In average the Sarkis families of study area produce the corns only for 3.5 months per year, about the 67 households 70.15% of families grow the food for up 1-3 months, 16.42% families grow up to the food for 3-6 months, 7.46% families grow food the for up 6-9 months, 5.97s% families grow the food for up 9-12 months. Agricultural production in the study area is quite low. They grow different crops and grains but the product is not sufficient. The main crops grown by them are paddy, maize and millet. Among them maize (20.40%) was grown by large group of households and paddy (6.68%) production was very less. The annual income from different sources of the total 67 households was Rs.16, 48,000/- and each household makes income of Rs.24, 597/- annually. The annual income of per household is very low in the comparison of expenditure. The annual expenditure of per household is Rs.66, 089/- whereas the income is only Rs.24, 597/-.

Sarki people don't want to have family planning or to use means of family planning. Because of their poor economic condition, they can't have nutritious food and they may become physically weak and on other hand, they are compelled to work hard. They are afraid of permanent family planning thinking that they might be physically weak and can't work hard. They also believed that temporary means of family planning are also harmful to health, they might weaken their body. As they don't want to use means of family planning and the husband and wife mostly remain together, so

the rate of childbirth in Sarki community seems to be very high. Especially, the health condition of Sarki women is very miserable. Sarki people of the study area take loans from moneylenders rather than from bank. Out of 67 households, 37.31% households take loan from moneylenders. Although the rate of interest is very low from banks, only 7.47% households deal with banks. According to them, it is because they have to mortgage family land but they don't have enough land to get enough loans from the banks. So, they don't want to take loan from banks although interest rate is low. And on the other hand, their land is meadow and barren, and banks refuse to have their lands deposited. The process to get loan from bank is very long and difficult but it is very easy to obtain loan from moneylenders when they need. They state that they are involved in co-operative firms at present. They do saving and take loan from the same co-operative firm while necessary. Due to this facility, the number of the Sarkis to take loan from moneylender has become very few low, only 20 households take loan from them but most of them deal with co-operative firms. The self-standing households number who do not take loan is only 10 i.e 14.92% out of total number.

The major socio-economic problems of the Sarkis of the study area were analysed. The study has reflected that the Dalits in general and Sarkis in particular were deprived from the access to different social and economic opportunities. Caste based discrimination and domination was the major social problem of the Sarkis of the study area. Another problem was their limited access to the social networks and public organizations or CBOs. There were different causes of the problem of discrimination and domination of Sarkis in the study area.

Due to the feeling of untouchability and discrimination, the people of higher caste do not want their social upliftment. They can't run tea-shop, hotel and other many business enterprises because of being untouchable. They are not appreciated although they do some important work. Sarkis' own behavior and practices were also responsible for the problems. Those causes are; conflict inter-group conflict, humiliation for their own occupation, misunderstanding, consumption of alcohol, smoking, useless expenditure, lack of good sanitation, poor diet, etc. have made them poor and weak in themselves.

In general, the economic condition of Dalits especially Sarkis' was miserable. They were found as the poorest people of the village. There were different reasons of their

poverty. The major reason of the poverty among the Sarkis of the study area was underemployment. Another reason of their poverty was the declining condition of the traditional occupation especially shoe making. More than 50 percent households used to involve in leather work before 20-30 years ago. However, the involvement was gradually declined after the expansion of distributive markets in Galyang and Waling bazaars of Syangja. Their practice of high expenditure and less saving practices was also responsible for their poverty.

The traditional occupation of the Sarkis is leather related work. Since last 30 years they are gradually shifting their occupation and attracted by modern skill to maintain their livelihood. Now only seven (10.4 %) household continue the occupation and 89.6% has adopted other occupations. The few numbers are continuing the occupation, because it is relatively a good income, easy to follow, and they want to continue the occupation.

Analysis of inter-generational occupational change also shows that the Sarkis of the study area are gradually changing their traditional occupation from one generation to another. It can be inferred that there is a gradual shift from traditional to modern occupation, in general and parental occupation in particular from one generation to another.

The survey reveals that the majority of respondents (41.8%) preferred foreign employment as a preferred occupation for earning their livelihood for future generation. Out of 67, 26.9% of the respondents intended to see their children getting success as a service holder and educated persons. Because of low income and low status in the society, they have been oppressed and suppressed by upper castes. If they can get good education and services, they can also earn satisfactory income.

The causes for the unpopularity of traditional occupation are less income, high competition to the factory products, etc. It is also found that due to lack of resources, the traditional occupation is getting unpopular. Most importantly is the caste base discrimination, which still exists in the society. That helps the youth to reluctant from their traditional occupation.

8.2 Conclusion

Various socio-economic problems had made Sarkis of the study area poor and deprived. Their problems are rooted in the present condition of untouchability, caste-based discrimination and the decline of the importance of their traditional occupation.

Although, economic aspect in life is considered to be most important, economic condition of Dalit (Sarki) is still found very weak, poor and miserable. Untouchability between lower caste and higher caste people is one of the hindrances for social and economic development of the Nepalese society. Due to the feeling of untouchability and discrimination, the people of higher caste do not want their social upliftment. They can't run teashop, hotel and other many business enterprises because of being untouchables. They are not appreciated although they do some important work. Instead, there may be conspiracy not to give them a chance to do any important work. Due to such practices, Sarki people are compelled to confine themselves into their own occupation, labour or remain jobless. So, social aspect is also one of the major causes of economic backwardness of Sarki people. For the economic backwardness of Sarki people, they themselves are responsible in some extent. Their tolerance and wise behaviors may help to improve their economic status in many affairs but, the conflict among themselves, discrimination, humiliation for their own occupation, misunderstanding, consumption of alcohol, smoking, useless expenditure, lack of good sanitation, poor diet etc. have made them poor and weak in themselves.

Sarki people of selected study area have been found being involved in their traditional occupation for the products invented by modern science and technology. So, their occupation seems to fall down slowly. Their concept towards their own occupation is not positive and most of young generation feel hesitated to involve in their traditional occupation. According to youths in the study area, they are going far from their traditional occupation.

8.3 Recommendation

On the basis of findings of this study some suggestions are made which will provide the issue that could advance the forthcoming studies. It is hoped that this suggestion will initiate planner, policy makers and local development officers to design

appropriate and effective policies and programs regarding the upliftment of Sarkis and their status within the household and local level, major suggestions are as follows:

-) The study area is victimized by high rate of people's unawareness due to which the Sarki's social awareness is lacking behind. So, the concerned authorities must introduce programs for raising awareness to the Sarkis.
-) The major crops grown in this region is food crop. So, emphasis must be given to the cultivation of cash crops along with vegetable and fruit cultivation.
-) Dalits especially the Sarkis need special concern for their livelihood and empowerment. So, skill development and cash earning programmes should be launched in their community. Dalit empowerment programmes including the projects that help improve their traditional occupation of making shoe and madal will help improve the livelihood of some of the Sarkis of the study area.

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15. What do you grow on your land?

S.N.	Types of Major Crop/ Grain	Product (Pathi/ Muri)
1.	Paddy	
2.	Wheat	
3.	Maize	
4.	Millet	
5.	Crops of oil	
6.	Cerelece	
7.	Vegetable	

16. How many livestock do you have?

Cattle	Cow/Oxen	Buffaloes	Goats	Pigs	Hens
Numbers					

17. Is the production sufficient to meet annual food required of the family?

a) Yes () b) No ()

18. How many months does the food you produce sustain your family?

Below 3	3 to 6	6 to 9	9 to 12	Surplus	Remarks

19. What do you manage the shortage of food?

- a) By taking Loan
 b) Raise and sell animals
 c) From labour with the village.

20. What is your major sources of income?

- a) Farming ()
 b) Job/Service ()
 c) Wage labour ()
 d) Ploughman ()
 e) Business ()
 f) Livestock ()
 g) Shoes making ()

21. What kind of working condition do you have?

- a) Jhupadi ()
 b) Khar Roofed ()
 c) Tin Roofed ()
 d) RCC

22. What is your annual expenditure?

S.N.	Item	Amount in (Rs)	Remarks
1.	Food		
2.	Clothes		
3.	Education		
4.	Health care		
5.	Festival		
6.	Others		

23. Do you have toilet?

- a) Yes () b) No () c) Pakki () d) Kachi ()

24. Where do you go for treatment if you get sick?

- a) Doctor ()
 b) Dhami - Jhankri ()
 c) Other ()

25. Why do you think that your children often get sick?

- a) Due to under nutrition ()
 b) Due to many children ()
 c) Due to lack of health care ()

26. Do you have any idea about family planning ?

- a) Yes () b) No ()

27. Are you using any means of family planning?

- a) Yes () b) No ()

28. Which one method have you been using?

- a) Temporary () b) Permanent ()

29. How many members in your family are using means of family planning?

Family Planning	Male	Female	Total
Temporary Method			
Permanent Method			

30. Why do Sarki people get married so early?

- a) To follow the relation ()
- b) Because of lack of public-awareness ()
- c) To fulfill the responsibility of the family. ()

31. What is your traditional occupation?

.....

32. How many members of your family involve in the traditional occupation at present?

- a. 1 person () e. 5 persons ()
- b. 2 Person () f. 6 persons ()
- c. 3 Person () g. 7 persons ()
- d. 4 person ()

33. Do you know your traditional occupation i.e shoe making and madal making?

- a. Yes () b. No ()

34. If yes why do you continue the occupation?

- a. Good income ()
- b. Easy to follow ()
- c. to give continuity to tradition ()
- d. No alternative ()

35. What was the occupation of your past generation?

- a. Your father's (.....)
- b. Your grand father (.....)

36. What kind of occupation do you prefer for your future generation?

- a. Agriculture ()
- b. Service ()
- c. Business ()
- d. Foreign employment ()
- e. Others ()

37. If you are not continuing traditional occupation, what are the reasons?

- a.
- b.
- c.

38. What are the social and economical problem facing family by the Sarkis of in your community?

Social problems

.....

Economic problems

.....

Appendix - 'B'
Questionnaire for Interview

1. What caste do you neighbors belong to ?
.....
2. How do you feel yourself for being a Dalit?
.....
3. Is there discrimination and untouchability among Dalits?
.....
4. What caste among Dalit should be respected by you (Sarki People) ?
.....
5. Is there any difference in untouchability among Dalit and other caste people
.....
6. In what places are you not allowed to get entry?
.....
7. What is the relation between Sarki people to others caste people?
.....
8. How do higher caste Dalit people behave to lower caste people?
.....
9. What are the causes that you are back warded in economical aspect in comparison to other caste people? What are the causes that made the Sarkis economically backwarded in companisim to other caste people?
.....
10. What are the socio- economic problems that you have been facing?
.....
11. Do you want to say something to uplift your socio-economic status?
.....

Appendix - 'C'

Some photos related to the research are given below:



The study area



An old man making madal



The researcher collecting data from her informants.



The researcher asking questions with respondent



Observation of shoe making process



Shop of the shoe maker