

## Marginalizing the Yakkha: A study of the Yakkha ethnic community in Eastern Nepal

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**Abstract:** Nepal, a Himalayan state, has a diverse topography, including cultures, languages, religions, and ethnicities. Yakkha is one of the listed indigenous nationalities of Nepal and mostly live on the eastern hills of the country. It is different from Rai and Limbu in the context of language, culture, and territory. To consider this, the Nepalese government provides a distinct identity to Yakkha although most people are still unaware of Yakkha and ask whether Yakkha is Rai or Limbu. Still, the Yakkha is kept under Rai even on websites and people are confused. Besides, some original Yakkha themselves write Rai, Dewan, and Limbu as their caste. They are also forgetting Yakkha languages and cultures. So, this article attempts to clarify the identity of Yakkha who is living in the eastern hills. There is much research conducted about indigenous communities by national and international researchers, but very little literature is available regarding Yakkha; as a result, the identity of Yakkha is in transition and it is marginalizing. Still, the ethnic organization has been working for 29 years ago but its tasks are not satisfactory. So, this article attempts to clarify the identity of Yakkha, who is living in the eastern hills of Nepal. Moreover, this paper also tries to portray the causes of the marginalization of Yakkha in Nepal. Mainly, this paper is prepared from the data from a field survey conducted in 2014. In-depth interviews, field notes, and field observation were the main methods adopted to collect the data. In addition, the previous study reports, reports of various censuses, books, and research reports were also equally applied to fulfill the research objectives of this paper. Nowadays, in Nepal, various ethnic groups are raising their voices to establish their identity; however, the Yakkha is not so active. That's why the identity of the Yakkha is marginalized due to internal and external causes. The researcher found that the less practice of speaking Yakkhas' mother tongue by Yakkha themselves, documentation errors, and lack of research works and publications are the main reasons for marginalizing Yakkha in Nepal.

**Keywords:** Kirat, Yakkha, Thums, Dewan, Panch Khapan, Panch Majhiya, Das Majhiya.

## 1. Introduction

Nepal is home to a mosaic of cultures, languages, ethnicities. Nepal, occupying the central section of the Himalayan has become the theatre of the Caucasoid-Mongoloid interface. Their contact zone, which runs at a tangent from north-west to south-east is an expression of geographical factors and historical processes. Due to their routes of migration, the Mongoloid (*the Kiranti*) are more numerous in the east while the Caucasoid (*the Khasa*) predominate in the west. Another interesting aspect of ethnic distribution in Nepal is the vertical zonation of ethnic and caste settlements. High mountain areas throughout the northern part of the country are inhabited by the *Bhote* early as well as recent migrants from Tibet. In the Hills, the temperate zone is generally occupied by Mongoloid tribes and the sub-tropical zone by the Caucasoid caste (Gurung, 1996).

The term *Jaat* and *Jati* were very common social expressions that are used to denote the people of Nepal. Prithivi Narayan Saha, the founder of modern Nepal, described Nepal as the garden of four *Varna* and thirty-six *Jaat*. The two common terms *Jaat* and *Jati* need to be distinguished, while the former refers to caste groups of Caucasoid features and the latter to ethnic groups of Mongoloid features. Numerous subdivisions and sub-groups within these two

broad categories make the social identity of Nepal the garden of numerous caste and ethnic groups (Bista, 1991 quoted by Linkha, 2014). Nepalese society is divided into different caste groups. The caste system is characterized by social inequality and a rigid system of ascriptive hierarchy. The whole caste system is based on the principles of pollution and purity. This principle of pollution is the main social rule of society. It is legitimized by the value of the Hindu cultural system (Nepali, 1965).

The government listed 59 castes as indigenous nationalities in Nepal. Out of 59 castes, Yakkha are also listed and treated as indigenous groups in Nepal. Much research has been conducted on the issues of indigenous communities. However, there is very limited research related to Yakkha communities. So, most people think that Yakkha is a sub-caste of Rai or Limbu. This caste has its traditional territory, cultures, and languages, which are different from Rai and Limbu. However, till now most people are interested in knowing whether Yakkha is Rai or Limbu. During historical periods, Yakkha have given their identity as distinct castes and addressed them differently like Rai and Limbu in historical documents. Ancient *Kasya Rukka*, *Tamrapartra*, and *Lalmohar* of different dates are witnesses of this. But in the medieval period, they were unknowingly mixed up between Rai and Limbu. As a result, the identity of Yakkha and traditional ways

of living are going to be lost. So, this short paper reflects reality and the genuine issues attempted to explore through this paper. Now, the issues of indigenous people and identity are turning to be burning issues in Nepal but unfortunately, the Yakkha is the opposite.

## 2. Methods and Materials

This paper is based on a qualitative research method, and data were collected from primary and secondary sources. Before the field survey, a rapport-building session was conducted to establish the relationship with key members of the Yakkha community in the Sankhuwasabha and Dhankuta districts. In-depth interviews and field observation were two methods applied for the data collection in 2014.

Secondary data were collected through books, journals, and reports. Most of the historical documents regarding the origin and development of Yakkha and other Kirat people have been used. Besides that, demographic data from CBS and other reports has also been used. Both descriptive and analytical methods were used for data analysis in this paper.

## 3. Results and Discussions

### 3.1 Brief Introduction of Yakkha

Among the different community groups, Kirat is also one of the major ethnic groups in Nepal. Around 157 B.S., the Kirat King Gasti was defeated by the Lichhavi, who had come from Baisali, India. After the defeat with Lichhavi, Kirat people were displaced to the east from Nepal's (Kathmandu) Valley. So, the eastern land from Kathmandu, where Kirat people are living, is known as the Kirat region. The Kirat Region was traditionally divided into three parts such as near Kirat (*Wallo Kirat*), it is land between the Sunkoshi River and *Likhu Khola*. Middle Kirat (*Majh Kirat*), land between Likhu Khola and the Arun River and the Far Kirat (*Pallo Kirat*), is situated east from the Arun River up to the Mechi River and western watershed areas of *Singilila Mountain* (Sharma, 2039). Especially, four indigenous groups (Rai or Khambu, Limbu or Yakthumba, Yakkha, or Dewan and Sunuwar) of Nepal are proud of themselves for claiming the term 'Kirat'. Different scholars have different kinds of opinions about Kirat in Nepal. Although the above three ethnic groups putting the Kirat word in the name of their ethnic organizations, like *Kirat Rai Yayokhha* (Rai), *Kirat Yakthung Chumlung* (Limbu), *Kirat Yakkha Chhuma* (Yakkha). Who were and who are Kirat? This debate has been done longer and it continues. Vansittart (1915) stated that the Khumbus, Yakkas and Yakthumba form the Kirat group. But in the present context of Nepal, Dhimal, Hayu, Jirel, Limbu (Yakthung), Rai, Sunuwar (Koinch), Thami and Yakkha ethnicities themselves claim that they are Kirat and descendants of ancient Kirat of Nepal (Siddiqui, 2016).

Among the above Kirat groups, Yakkha is also one of the oldest castes in eastern Nepal. A myth of the origin of Yakkha says 'Once upon a time, Kirat people were farming of *Resham* (silk) and *Resham* was called '*Kerata*' at that time, and one time the whole '*Kerata*' was dead. Then, some of the Kirat people migrated to hilly areas, and some of the people migrated to Terai. Finally, those who settled in Terai called Koche, Meche, and Dhimal and who settled in Hills called Rai, Limbu, and Yakkha (Shrestha, 2042). This myth has proven that Yakkha is a distinct caste under the Kirat groups. And he further said that, in Limbuwan, there are

settlements of Yakkha people, too. Mostly, Yakkha lives in Sankhuwasabha and little in Dhankuta, Terhathum, and Ilam. They are called Dewan also.

The word 'Yakkha' originates from the "*Yaksa*". In Yakkha, *Yaksa* means hut or house. In the beginning, the Kirati people used to lead a nomadic life. Among them, the Yakkhas were the Kirati group who first built the house to live in and started to live permanently; they are known as Yakkha (Yakkha Rai, 2010). Scholars have different opinions regarding the origin of the word 'Yakkha'. It was claimed that the word 'Yakkha' was pronounced as *Yakha-Yaksha* according to Sanskrit grammar. In ancient Sanskrit, the letter '*Sha*' (*Petfaro Sha*) was used to be written instead of '*Kha*' (*Kharayo Kha*). The '*Ksha*' (*Chhetri Che*) is made of two letters: one is the half letter of '*Ka*' and another is '*Sha*' or *K+Sha*. Therefore, this is strong evidence of Yaksha as the ancestors of Yakkha (Yakkha Rai, 2059). According to the Yakkha-Nepali-English Dictionary, The Yakkha is etymologically related to the word '*Yakma*', which means to stay for the night. The dictionary states that the Yakkha are the indigenous people of Mongoloid stock who regard the '*Yaksalen*' and its adjoining areas of the '*Tin Thum*' as their traditional homeland. The Yakkha, an indigenous nationality group of Nepal, have protected their original identity, language and culture over time. The language, cultures, customs, traditions and way of life, as well as the land of the Yakkha, are ancient and historic (Kongren, 2007).

The book '*Mechi Dekhi Mahakali*' (From Mechi to Mahakali) 2031 part one published by the Ministry of Information and Communication discussed on population and living way of Sankhuwasabha district. According to the book, Rai, Limbu and Yakkha are the dominant castes in the district. Yakkha is also one of the castes of Kirati. Sometimes, they are called Dewan too. Culturally they are similar to the Rai and Limbu, however; it is nearer to Rai than Limbu. Yakkha women wear a unique dress that is called '*Mekhling*'. It was made from wild vegetation like a nettle (*Sisnu*). They use different languages as well as different dress so, Yakkha is a distinct caste among the Kirat.

The Yakkha has been conferred the titles of "Dewan", "Rai" as Khambu, "Subba" as Limbu and "Mukhiya" as Sunuwar. Very first, Punyamalla (King of Jumla) used the Rai word in 1337 AD. But he used to symbolize a king, not for the tribe and conferred (Yakkha Rai, 2010). Then King Prithivi Narayan Saha used this title (Rai) to denote local administration after merging the Kirat region, after unification in 1831 B.S. Beside it, he also used 'Subba' to denote the Village headman of Limbu. The Yakkha headman was called *Majhiya*, Dewan, and *Jimmawal*. In Darjeeling and Sikkim 'Dewan' is used as a synonym of Yakkha. They have given the ownership of land and the authority to collect taxes from the land. After passing time, such a title was used to denote an ethnic community. As a result, Rai, Subba, and Dewan are regarded as distinct ethnic groups in the present time. But actually, these all are titles which are mentioned above.

According to Sharma (2039 B.S.) Yakkha is the descendant of traditional Yaksha. The cultures of Yakkha are similar to Rai and Limbu although they are near with Rai. He has emphasized distinguishing Yakkha from Rai and Limbu and he also stated that Yakkha has their language.

At first, Yakkha word is used in the period of Girbana Yuddha Saha dated 1887 B.S. in *Kasya Rukka* (Historical order) stating that

'Aage Arun Purba Mechi Pashimka Rai, Limbu, Subba, Yakkha, Majhiya'.....Then it was used in 1888, 1891, 1895, 1904 Kasya Rukkas respectively (Shrestha, 2042). There is a common thing in all documents 'Yakkha is living in *panch Khapan*, *Panch Majhiya* and *Das Majhiya*' in the east of Arun River. Inhabitants of *Panch Khapan*, *Panch Majhiya*, and *Das Majhiya* are Yakkha and Limbu (Mabuhang, 2070). So, the *Panch Khapan*, *Panch Majhiya*, and *Das Majhiya* areas are regarded as the homeland of Yakkha since ancient times.

3.2 Traditional Land (Territory) of Yakkha

Historically, Nepal was divided into different units. Out of various units in Nepal, the east from Kathmandu are divided into Near Kirat (Land between Sunkoshi to Likhu Khola), Middle Kirat (Land between Likhu Khola to Arun River), and Far Kirat (East from Arun River up to Mechi River) (Sharma, 2039). Again, the far Kirat was divided into different *Thums* and called Ten Limbuwan and Seventeen *Thums*. *Thums* are historical places for administrative purposes. Out of these *Thums*, the *Panch* (Five) *Khapan*, *Panch* (Five) *Majhiya*, and *Das* (Ten) *Majhiya* are considered as Yakkha land (Kongren, 2007). Now, the *Panch Khapan* and *Panch Majhiya* area falls under the southern part of the Sankhuwasabha district and the *Das Majhiya* area is in the far-southern part of the Sankhuwasabha and Northern part of Dhanktua District. Therefore, these *Panch Khapan*, *Panch Majhiya*, and *Das Majhiya* areas are regarded as the traditional land of the Yakkha. *Panch Khapan* and *Panch Majhiya Thums* belong to the Sankhuwasabha district and *Das Majhiya* is located in both the Sankhuwasabha and Dhankuta district at present. However, in *Das Majhiya*, most of the areas belong to Sankhuwasabha and only a few areas are coverage in Dhankuta district.

*Panch Khapan Thums* comprises the whole Panch Khapan Municipality and some wards of Chainpur Municipality (Former VDCs are Syabun, Jalajala, Wana, Siddapokhari and Siddakali), *Panch Majhiya Thums* consists of the previous three VDCs i.e. Chaipur, Kharang and Baneshwor and now some part of the

Chainpur Municipality. Similarly, former VDCs of Mamling, Tamaphok, Ankhibuin (now Dharmadevi Municipality), Madimukharka of Sankhuwasabha, and Chanuwa and Dandagaun (now some wards of Mahalaxmi Municipality) of Dhankuta district are now included in *Das Majhiya Thums* (Mabuhang, 2069).

3.3 Demographic status of Yakkha and distribution

Yakkha has started to register as a distinct caste only since the 10<sup>th</sup> National Census in 2001. Before that, they were registered as Rai or Limbu or others. The Yakkha ethnicity was listed as a distinct ethnicity after the establishment of its ethnic organization namely Kirat Yakkha Chhumma on 31 December 1994. After its establishment, it was registered in the district administrative office of Kathmandu dated 19 December 1996. Then it formally started to advocate for a distinct ethnicity in Nepal. Then, its first national general assembly was held on 8-10 November 1997, at Mudesanichare, Sankhuwasabha, and it had one of the most positive impacts on the Yakkha community. Till now, this organization has completed its 6<sup>th</sup> National Assembly. Since the very beginning of this organization, it has continually advocated for the empowerment of the Yakkha community as well as its identity. Unfortunately, the government did not register Yakkha as separate indigenous nationalities in 1997, but other 61 ethnic groups were registered as indigenous nationalities for the first time. Then, *Kirat Yakkha Chumma* requested and given pressure to the government the register as indigenous nationalities. At the same time, the government was working to prepare the act for the development of indigenous nationalities, and finally, the government ratified the act and established the National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities in 2001. According to that act, Yakkha and the other 58 ethnic groups were registered as indigenous nationalities since then this act has been implemented and the Yakkha ethnicity also identifying as indigenous nationalities. The number of Yakkha seems to highly fluctuations, sometimes it is higher and sometimes it is lower. The causes still need to next researched however, the following table 1 shows the changing pattern of the Yakkha population in Nepal.

Table 1: Distribution of the Yakkha Population in 2001, 2011 and 2021

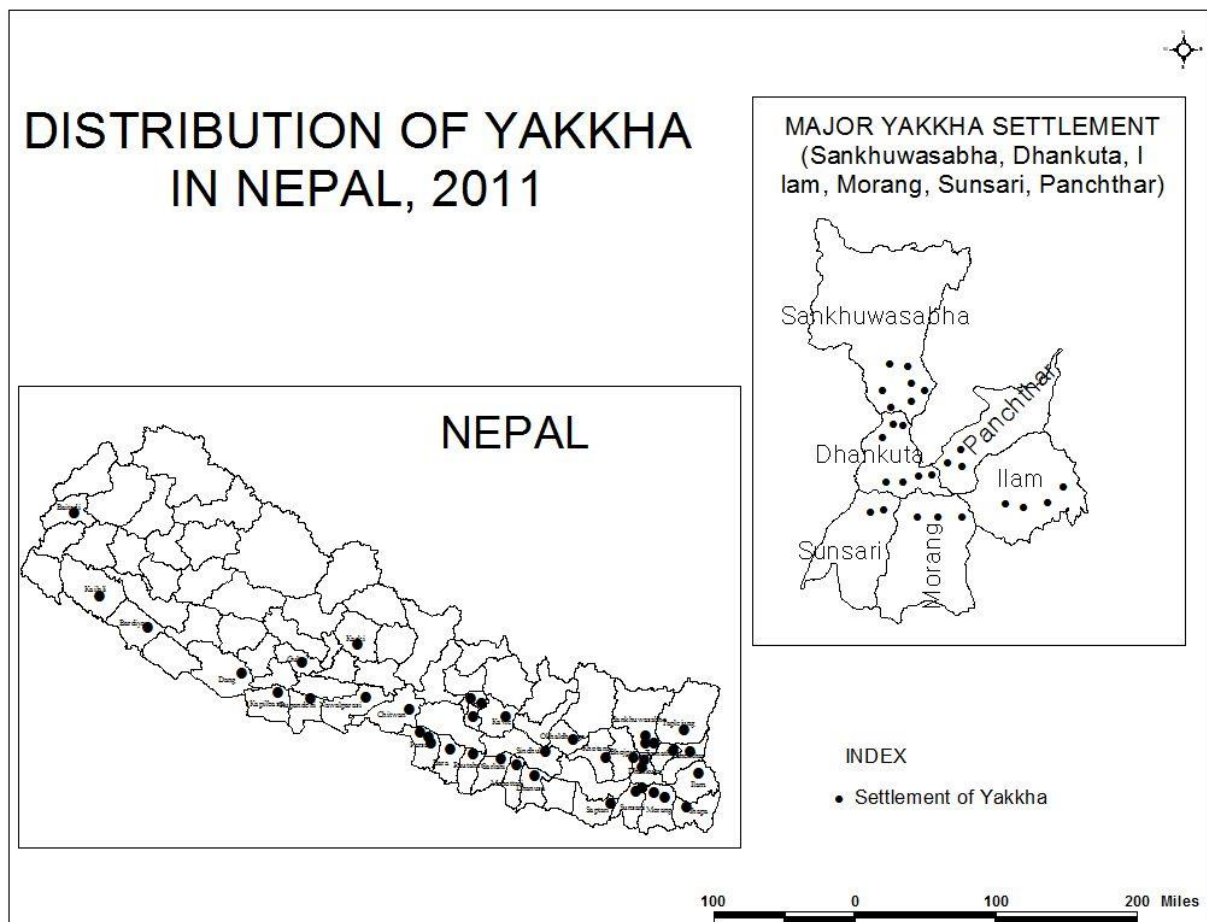
S.N.	Name of Districts	Yakkha Population in various censuses		
		2001	2011	2021
1	Sankhuwasabha	7001	7189	5752
2	Dhanktua	4973	4969	4344
3	Ilam	1287	1682	1308
4	Morang	922	1137	1698
5	Panchhar	627	660	471
6	Sunsari	416	1062	1730
7	Jhapa	384	512	672
8	Parsa	289	2581	0
9	Teplejung	204	263	235
10	Terhathum	180	191	180
11	Bara	14	1119	77

12	Rautahat	140	646	0
13	Dhanusha	58	247	0
14	Rupandehi	47	230	90
15	Bhojpur	0	249	0
16	Kathmandu	146	264	367
17	Lalitpur	45	142	229
18	Bhaktapur	12	23	20
19	Other Districts	258	1179	278
<b>Total</b>		<b>17003</b>	<b>24336</b>	<b>17460</b>

Source: Kongren, 2007; CBS, 2013; National Statistics Office, 2023

The above table shows that the distribution of Yakkha is highly concentrated in the eastern Hills of Nepal. However, more than 70% of the Yakkha used to live in Sankhuwasabha and Dhankuta districts in 2001, but this figure decreased in both the 2011 and 2021 censuses. This indicates that the Yakkha are migrating from the eastern Hills to the eastern Terai districts. Similarly, in Central Terai (i.e., Bara and Parsa district), there were only 2% in 2001, but in 2011, 15% of the Yakkha were living there; however, in this recent census, there is no record of Yakkha in those locations. So, it will be the next part of research why these kinds of numbers come out in government data. What was wrong there? The academicians need to think about it seriously. In 2001, the Yakkha were scattered in 44 different districts in Nepal (Kongren, 2007); however, they were only comprised in 34 districts in 2011 (CBS, 2013). In 2011, the Yakkha were living in 2 mountainous, 15 hilly, and 17 Terai districts. But, in 2021, the Yakkha is limited only to 22 districts (NSO, 2023), which drastically decreases the distribution of Yakkha as compared to the previous censuses. Moreover, the Yakkha population has also decreased significantly in this recent census. The Yakkha people are not satisfied with this number because of the unprecedented decrease in their population. So, they are requesting the government for again verify the population of Yakkha and also demanding logical answers regarding how the data of the population has decreased so hugely, that it is questionable.

Map 3.3: Distribution of Yakkha in Nepal, 2011



### 3.4 Marginalizing Yakkha

The identity of the Yakkha is highly in dilemma; as a result, they are marginalizing day by day. Some causes of vulnerability and marginalization for Yakkha are given below:

#### 3.4.1 Documentation Error

Traditionally, *Panch Khapan* and *Panch Majhiya* were the ancient homelands of Yakkha community. But most of the Yakkha people of such historic places use Rai as a caste in their entire documents for instance in citizenship, academic credentials and other legal documents. They don't have any evidence as Yakkha, according to their documents. Except for *Panch Khapan* and *Panch Majhiya* areas of Sankhuwasabha district, the original Yakkha of Muga, Ghorlikharka, Pakhribas, Chungmang, Arkhaule Jitpur, and Dhankuta Municipality also write Rai as their caste; as a result, the number of Yakkhas seems fewer than the real population.

Besides *Panch Khapan* and *Panch Majhiya*, some of the Yakkha people write Dewan in some places, like Madimulkharka in Sankhuwasabha, Bodhe, Kuruletenupa (Chaubise) in Dhankuta district and some of the eastern Terai. In addition, some years ago, Dewan also demanded a distinct indigenous ethnicity and formed central as well as district committees in different parts of eastern Nepal. Due to these causes, it will be very difficult to have the entire document corrected for those who want to write Yakkha as their caste. So, it is a prime cause to loss the identity of the Yakkha.

#### 3.4.2 Language and cultural mismatch

The Yakkha language is also in the situation of morbidity, mostly in *Panch Khapan* of Sankhuwasabha district, Ghorlikharka, Muga, Pakhriabas, Chungmang (Pakhribas Municipality at present), and Dhankuta Municipality of Dhankuta District. Only limited-aged people can speak the Yakkha language in *Panchkhapan* of Sankhuwasabha district, but it is extinct in Ghorlikharka, Mugh, Phkhribas, Changmang, Arkhaule Jitpur, and Dhankuta Municipality of Dhankuta district. So, the distinct languages are important points to be indigenous nationality as per the act of Nepal but the practices of speaking the Yakkha languages are miserable. Moreover, the next point to be an indigenous nationality, every ethnic group must have their own cultures and traditions. In terms of Yakkha, the cultures and traditions of Yakkha ethnicity are mismatched with Rai and Limbu, as a result, the Yakkha are forgetting their traditions and cultures and these all fact making the Yakkha in marginalizing.

#### 3.4.3 Lack of sufficient research

Many kinds of research are conducted on the issues of other indigenous people living in Nepal. Researchers from Nepal and foreigners have also poured their efforts into studying different ethnic groups in Nepal. However, very little research has been conducted about Yakkha. It has been more than 29 years since the establishment of its ethnic organization, namely, *Kirat Yakkha Chhuma*, but no single research has been conducted till now. However, some individuals have done limited research only to fulfill their academic requirements for a master's degree. This is the era of research, and most of the knowledge has emerged through the research. It assessed the previous truth as well as its support for the validation of knowledge. But either Nepalese scholars or foreigners have given their attention to research the issues of Yakkha, except some limited foreigners did their research for instance Russel (1992) and Schackow (2015). Similarly, there is

also a lack of scientific publications. So, the Yakkha community is not a global issue of research and it is still not recognized by outsiders. Considering these facts, the identity of Yakkha is in the process of dilemma.

#### 3.4.4 Biasness of Anthropologists and Academicians

A large number of studies regarding the ethnicity of Nepal have been conducted by prominent anthropologists and academicians, but they forgot to include Yakkha. They always thought that Yakkha was Rai or Limbu; as a result, they kept Yakkha under the Rai or Limbu ethnic communities. So, it creates a dilemma for policymakers as well as readers in Nepal and abroad as well.

Famous anthropologist Bista (2030 B.S.) published '*Sabai Jatko Fulbari*' (Garden of Whole Flowers) where he described 22 various castes living in Nepal, but he forgot to include Yakkha as a distinct community. He briefly discussed Yakkha under Rai and mentions that "now Yakkha is recognized as Rai; however, they were called Dewan before this". Similarly, he again wrote another book entitled 'People of Nepal' in 1967. He again discusses Yakkha under Rai in this book, too. In this book, more or less, he has attempted to describe the Yakkha as distinct from Rai and Limbu. According to him, Yakkha is living in Terhathum district, but actually, very few numbers (only 0.8% out of the total population) of Yakkha are living in that district and his claim was not right. These two books are very popular regarding the study of the ethnic composition of Nepal because this might be the first research-oriented book in Nepal to cover such huge content. After this, most of the other book writers used these books as references. However, he shows the map of Yakkha territory in major Kirat groups and their regional centers in his popular book entitled 'Fatalism and Development' in 1991. The next legendary person in Kirat history, Imansingh Chemjong wrote a book named 'History and Culture of Kirat People' in 2003, and he also did not mention about the Yakkha ethnicity. He mentioned that there are similar aboriginal tribes in Ceylon with the name '*Yakho*', similar to the Yakkha tribe of Eastern Kirat in Nepal.

#### 3.4.5 Lack of self-awareness

In most areas, original Yakkha themselves do not expose their identity as Yakkha due to feelings of humiliation due to the smaller population and need more elaboration to outsiders like what is Yakkha? Is it Rai or Limbu? Oh, Yakkha, is it a sub-ethnicity of Limbu? In this situation, they want to protect themselves from these kinds of unnecessary questions so, they hide their identify as the Yakkha. Interestingly, they were given their identities as Rai, where the communities are dominated by Rai, and Limbu, where the communities are dominated by Limbu in anciently. At present, they know their original identity as Yakkha; however, they cannot be exposed. Mainly, they feel proud to be a Rai or Subba because traditionally, these two titles have designation and they have some power too. So, they do not want to change themselves to Yakkha due to a lack of awareness. Yakkha of Muga, Pakhribas, and Chungmang from Dhankuta, and Mawadin from Sankhuwasabha district, are examples of this context. They have written Rai as a caste since ancient times.

#### 3.4.6 Inactiveness of ethnic organization

*Kirat Yakkha Chhuma* is an ethnic organization of the Yakkha ethnic group. It was established in 29 years ago and now it has conducted its sixth general assembly, which shows *Yakkha Chumma* has at least six new central committees at the central



level. Similarly, in most of the eastern districts where the Yakkha are living, district committees and local committees are also in existence. These all have certain responsibilities for the development of their own Yakkha ethnicity, but these organizations could not work properly according to the aspirations of the Yakkha community. These organizations could play a vital role in the empowerment of the Yakkha people. Besides this, it is necessary to organize a dialogue with the Kirat Dewan Society for its validity and other governmental agencies for the improvement of the Yakkha community. However, these ethnic organizations have not played a positive role in it. Therefore, the real identity of Yakkha is being shadowed and the Yakkha ethnicity is not included in the mainstream of research and development.

## 4. Conclusion

Yakkha is one of the listed indigenous groups of Nepal, and its traditional land is the southern part of Sankhuwasabha and the northern part of the Dhankuta district. But now, the Yakkha are scattered in different districts of Nepal due to migration. However, the dominant population is still living in the Sankhuwasabha and the Dhankuta districts, which cover more than 50% of the total population. The Yakkha community has its own territories, languages, cultures, and traditions, but still, there are questions about whether Yakkha is Rai or Limbu from outsiders. Till today, most people do not accept it as a distinct ethnic group. In ancient times, we found Yakkha words widely used in different historical documents, like *Kasya Rukka* and *Lal Mohar* of eastern Nepal. If there were no Yakkha communities in existence, they would not use these words. So, this is strong evidence that Yakkha is an indigenous community in eastern Nepal.

There are many causes for Yakkha to be marginalized in Nepal. Some causes are internal and some are external. Internal causes exist within the Yakkha community, and the Yakkha community may overcome these causes through research, self-initiation to preserve its history, cultures, and traditions and lobbying with the government. Similarly, external causes are out of community control, and the Yakkha community may not control them. So, the roles and responsibilities of ethnic organizations, namely *Kirat Yakkha Chhumma*, are more important than individuals. Awareness-raising within the Yakkha community, carrying out scientific research, dialogue with the government are some examples of genuine works to be done. The third-largest Yakkha district was Parsa (2581) according to the national census (2011), but this was still questionable. There are neither district committees nor local committees of the Yakkha Chhumma, but how they have written Yakkha as caste is questionable. Similarly, the Parsa and Bara districts of Nepal did not belong to the land of Yakkha. Hence, it is not clear whether they are real Yakkha or operational mistakes by officials. The Yakkha were reported in two censuses continuously in 2001 and 2011, and it has created more mystery. But the census which was recently conducted in 2021, there are no data on the Yakkha ethnicity again, so, how is possible? It needs scientific research to solve this problem. The case is not only in Parsa but also in Bara, too. In this case, *Kirat Yakkha Chhumma* should attempt to find the reality with the help of scientific research.

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