Source: Official Website of Jammu and Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir Map Showing Leh - Ladakh
Kashmir Region
Afghanistan
Territory ceded by Pakistan to China in 1963; claimed by India
Northern North-West Frontier Province
Siachen; Aksai Chin
Glacier
Line of Actual Control
Srinagar Jammu and Kashmir
ISLAMABAD Islamabad Capital Territory
Himachal Pradesh
Pakistan
India
Jammu and Kashmir

50 100 Kilometers

Source:- Official Website of Jammu and Kashmir

Political Map of Jammu and Kashmir showing the Actual and disputed boundaries
CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM OF RESEARCH:

Change is the law of nature. In sociological sense, change implies an alteration either in the structure or function of a social system. A social system unlike a physical or biological system is open and its structure is subject to both intrinsic and extrinsic changes. It is well recognized that social structure of a group, community or society does not remain static but it is dynamic, constantly moving and changing to acquire a new equilibrium. A social structure of a group or a community is based on its network of interpersonal relationship among the actors in a setting and their relationship gets distributed to constitute a pattern which is relatively stable and enduring. However, these patterns of relationship do change either through alteration in the existing roles of various actors or by substitution of new roles by modernization, process of industrialization and urbanization. Indian society, which is marked by traditional ties of age, sex, religion, caste, language and territory, has been under the influence of such modernization forces in the different regions of the country, some of which are isolated more than others. One such region is Ladakh, in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Of late, this region has been exposed to the outside world and as consequences of that many social and cultural changes have appeared on the surface. This research study shall focus on such changes along with their cause and consequences.

In the sociological and anthropological literature, there is not much of work done on Ladakh as large number of scholars who wrote about Ladakh were mainly the colonial administrators, casual visitors, travelers or missionaries who went there not with the purpose of writing about them but they were more interested in travelling or missionary activities rather than knowing about the social, cultural, economic and political life of Ladakhis. Since the time Indian government started promoting tourism in 1974 region has undergone various changes in its economy, polity, administration and social changes. These social changes have led to consequent changes in the life of Ladakhis. The reason for selecting this region is that an in-depth work on Ladakhi social structure and social
change among them has not so far been emphasized in earlier studies. As such, the present study tries to capture the nuance of these changes as reflected in the institutional structure of Ladakhis in the contemporary scenario. Needless to mention, this work has neither undermined the role of history in shaping the present, nor has it ignored the insight provided by the earlier works. This chapter introduces the Ladak in the broad scenario besides providing the various perspectives on the concepts such as social structure and social change, review of literature, aims and objectives and methodology of the study.

LAND AND PEOPLE OF LADAKH

Himalayas have always held a special fascination for western travelers, expeditions and Indians from other regions of the countries. Identification of Ladak became well known among the Indians after the famous bollywood film ‘Three Idiots’ popularized it while among the international tourists it is a place better known as ‘Broken Moonland’ or ‘Mini Tibet’ for its serenity and spiritual communication. Ladakh region lies between Karakorum and Himalayan ranges, occupying a large area in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, which has been geographically isolated from Indian sub-continent for long time for its location and harsh climatic conditions. Made up of two administrative districts - Leh and Kargil, Ladakh covers a total area of about 86,904 square kilometers. But our focus in the study lies with Leh district which is the main town with the majority of Buddhist population. So wherever, the term Ladakh is used in the study, it is to be taken as synonyms to Leh district.

Ladakh has historical importance as the trading gateway between Indian plains on one side and countries like Kazakhstan, Tibet, Armand, Persian and China on the other. The items exported from the region primarily comprised of wool, sulphur, borax and dry fruit. This trade route was better known as Central Asian Silk Trade route until the partition of Indian subcontinent. The withdrawal of British power from India in 1947 resulted in immediate hostilities between India and the newly carved Pakistan. From 1948, the Ladakh region has become a vulnerable and strategic tract for India, as Pakistani forces marched into the region in early 1949. Then in 1962, China invaded India and occupied the eastern and north-eastern parts of Ladakh, known as Aksai Chin. Then, again in 1971
India and Pakistan went for war and then finally we had the Kargil war of 1999. All of these wars made Ladakh a strategic location having a large population of the Indian army stationed there. Inspite of a tense border situation both with China and Pakistan, Ladakh provides a very striking example of a culture and a society which is subjected to very strong influences, including those from plains of India in the form of army and administration, and that of Muslim influences from Jammu and Kashmir as traders, Tibetan impression of their religion and finally western influences, mainly manifested through tourism. Inspite of such strong influences, Ladakh still remains one of the few abodes of the Tibetan Buddhism in the world.

The demographic profile of the Ladakh region comprises a multiplicity of races, faiths and culture. Allied ethnically and geographically with the Tibet region of China, the area has a predominantly Lamaist Buddhist population. The dominant form of Buddhism practiced in eastern and central Ladakh is mainly the ‘Gelukpa’¹ and ‘Drukpa’² orders of Mahayana Sect. It is believed that Buddhism reached the region around the 2nd century, when Kashmir was a part of the Kushana Empire. Under the King Kanishka, many Buddhist inscription of that period have been discovered in the region. Religion from then onwards has been playing a dominant role in the social structure of Ladakhis and it is believed that Ladakhis are strongly religion ridden in their lifestyle. Daily demeanor for them begins with lightening of the oil lamps before the family altar to follow the Buddha eternal philosophy of impermanence and compassion. But what plays significant role in their lives is the institution of monastery. There is a monastery near every large village in Ladakh. Monasteries are seminaries for monks where they are facilitated with religious training and education. Large number of persons who are spared by the family (atleast one member of the family) mainly the youngest son join the monastery at the age of four or five and after 30-40 years of meditation and study, they qualify to become a lama (monk). No important events are undertaken without the consultation of Lama, be it

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¹ Gelukpa is also known as the Yellow Hat sect, is a school of Buddhism founded by Je Tsongkhapa (1357–1419), a philosopher and Tibetan religious leader. Its most influential figure is the Dalai Lama. Allying themselves with the Mongols as a powerful patron, the Geluk emerged as the pre-eminent Buddhist school in Tibet since the end of the 16th century.

² Drukpa is a branch of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism founded in western Tibet by Drogon Tsangpa Gyare Yeshe Dorje. It is considered to be one of the Sarma or "new" schools of Tibetan Buddhism and sometimes called either Drukpa or "Red Hat sect".
building a house, sowing or harvesting seasonal prayers for success or various
ceremonies related to marriage, birth and death etc.

Nature and pattern of family and marriage system had a strong bearing on economic
structure of Ladakh as it was reflected in Fraternal polyandry and inheritance by
primogeniture that were common in Ladakh until the early 1940s when these were made
illegal by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. These two systems in past reflected
the values of people’s dependence on the scarce land for their subsistence and their will
as not to carve out land in ever decreasing portions. In traditional Ladakhi family system,
there was peculiar practice of **khachen** and **khang-bu** which guided the law of
inheritance and residence at that time. However, in contemporary Ladakhi family system
we can see changes taking place in this system, after marriage, couple can take up
patrilocal or matrilocal residence. The common form of marriage is called **Pagma**, where
there is practice of patrilocality. Other form of marriage is **Magpa**, where boy after
marriage stays with girl’s family and leaves his paternal residence. Then there is
voluntary elopement and bride abduction practiced as a way of acquiring mates. Bride
abduction is one of the common ways of marriage. Ladakhis are overridden with the
concept of coexistence and cooperation, whatever be the occasion, they help each other.
At the time of birth, death or any family function, all the work is done by specific
families called as **Phasphun**. These families may not be related to each other through
blood.

The only mode of cash in ancient times was trade. Traditionally, Ladakhis were
dependent upon subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry. Though they have been
changes in the economic system but subsistence farming is still practiced by the large
population of Ladakh. Unlike the only existence of subsistence economy in Ladakh till
recently, region has now dual sector economy based upon traditional subsistence farming,
mostly in rural areas, and another one, that is a market based economy in urban-areas.

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3 **Is the main house which holds most of the family’s land. Eldest married son with his wife and children lives in the khachen**
4 **Is the small house, and have all the family’s land and usually old members of the family mainly old parents with their unmarried children live there.**
5 **Phasphun is a social group composed of a few families whose members are not related through blood and marriage.**
Due to extreme climatic conditions, Ladakhis pursue only one agricultural season in the year. In addition to subsistence agriculture, there were others who were engaged in Tourism. Tourism, is a major contributor to Ladakh’s cash economy that has brought clear economic benefits. Tourism was introduced in 1974 and hence onwards it has acquired a wide recognition as an important industry in the district in view of its potential for creation of employment opportunities and generation of income on a large scale. A pertinent question to ask is how far the tourism industry has made a direct bearing on the socio-economic scene of the district. It has provided employment to people engaged in the related sectors like transport, hotels and catering service, cottage industry etc. Another area, to which it has brought changes in Ladakhi life, is militarization. Economy got impetus through the deployment of military and Para-military forces in the region. Though they were placed for security reasons but heavy military network has brought in better transportation, health and education facilities and generated employment for the local people in large number.

Politically, Buddhists have been demanding Ladakh’s separation from Jammu and Kashmir and protection of their identity as a Union Territory status. Buddhist’s believe that it is their identity and region that intersects to marginalize and politicize the concern for them within the state and nation. The people of Ladakh for long have been complaining that the region has been neglected by the Central and State governments, but their demands have not been met till today. After series of protests in 1989, Ladakhis have been allotted with Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) which came into existence in 1995. LAHDC has been allotted with powers for economic development, taxation, planning and land use. Community power structure in Ladakh is based on the traditional local institutions of governance that is Goba system. A Goba (village headman) performs functions such as to maintain land holding records, collecting land revenue, settling village disputes etc. Other than Goba system, Ladakhi political institution of Panchayati Raj was introduced in 2001. The first Panchayat elections in the region were held in May 2001 and after a break then in summer of 2011.

A feature of Ladakhi society as shown in various existing literature, is the high status and relative emancipation enjoyed by women that distinguishes it from the rest of the Muslim
dominant state and many other parts of India. Women in Ladakh enjoy greater mobility and economic autonomy that has given them better status. Women are more active in social gatherings and participating at community functions such as marriage, festival, birth celebration etc.

With a brief background about the place and people of Ladakh, we are now ready to take into account the various theoretical perspectives which can help in understanding change and continuity in the social structure of the Ladakh.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE: THEORIES AND PERSPECTIVES

The present section is devoted to the formulation of the theoretical framework on whose premises the whole inquiry is to be conducted in the Ladakhi social structure. The purpose of theoretical framework is not to limit the scope of inquiry, but to assist in the generation and analysis of the data. The theoretical framework developed here seeks to relate certain important concepts like ‘social structure’ and ‘social change’.

Social structure, the concept which originated in United Kingdom, has different connotations and meanings for different scholars. Its biological connotations are visible in the work of Herbert Spencer, where society is contemplated as an organism, the parts of which are interdependent and thereby develops a structure that is analogous to the anatomy of a living body. Emile Durkheim drawing on the analogies with Herbert Spencer opined that different social traditions played a role in confirming the functional integration of society and the incorporation of those diverse parts into a unified and self-reproducing whole. In this context, Durkheim distinguished two forms of structural relationships; mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. The former describes differentiated parts united through a shared culture; the latter describes interdependence.

The famous Structural-Functionalist, A.R. Radcliffe Brown, pioneer in the field of the study of social structure defined it as “an arrangement of parts or components related to one another in some sort of a larger unity”(Brown.1952;190). According to Brown, Social Structure is an arrangement of interpersonal relationships, which are primarily dyadic in nature such as the relationship between the king and his subject, between husband and wife etc. According to him, the components of the social structure have
necessary prescribed role for each other, the continued existence of the one element is 
dependent on that of the others and for the society as a whole, which is seen as an integrated, organic entity. If equilibrium is disturbed, it is re-established by certain controlling mechanism, by means of social control. Thus, Radcliffe Brown believed that equilibrium model for society is essential. Evans-Pritchard (1951) asserted that the study of social structure should not include dual interpersonal relationships which are, to a great extent, short-lived in nature but must take into account the more stable perpetual relationships between groups that endure over time.

Unlike Radcliffe-Brown, Talcott Parsons did not work on primitive societies, but endeavor to devise a theory that was applicable for large and complex societies as well. For Parsons, the social structure is fundamentally normative as it embraces norms, roles, and institutions that are components of the social structure on different levels of complexity. While social theorists, like Robert Merton and others, believed that the social structure consists not only of normative model but also of the disparities of power, status, and material privileges, which provides different opportunities and preferences to different members of society. In complex societies these inequalities define different strata, which form the stratification system, or class structure of the society. This leads to a contemplation which is contrary to structural functionalism that is, certain norms in a society may be recognized, not because of any general agreement about their moral value, but because they are made obligatory to the population by those who have both the interest and the power to do so. The most influential theory of this type has been Marxism.

Marxist perspective is one of the most comprehensive accounts on social structure provided by Karl Marx, who related political, cultural and religious life to the mode of production, an underlying economic structure. Marx argued that “in the social production which men carry on as they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society-the real foundation, on which legal and political superstructures arise and to which definite forms of social
consciousness correspond. The mode of production of material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being determines their consciousness” (Marx. 1964:51). This phrase expresses the Marxian view that the economic base (structure) substantially determined the cultural and political superstructure of a society. This Marxian capitalist society model, has met with several criticisms. The distinction between material structure and non-material superstructure continues to be reflected in sociological textbooks as the distinction between social structure and culture. Where social structure refers to the ways people are interrelated or interdependent; culture refers to the ideas, knowledge, norms, customs and capacities that they have learned and share as members of a society.

Another essential approach in the sociological field is that of Claude Levi-Strauss’s, Structuralist perspective. It examines the underlying, unconscious regularities of human expression that is the unobservable structures that have observable effects on behaviour, society and culture. He holds that social structure has nothing to do with empirical reality but it should deal with models which are built after it. Thus, he says that social structure ‘can by no means be reduced to the ensemble of social relations to be described in a given society’ (Strauss. 1958). Levi-Strauss build up theories pertaining to the underlying structure of kinship systems and myths. The structure does not determine the concrete expressions, but the structures that generate the varieties of social and cultural forms ultimately reflect, according to Levi-Strauss, basic characteristics of the human mind. He has tried to differentiate between social structure and social relations. According to him, social relations comprise of the raw material out of which the models making up the social structure are built. What kind of model can be termed as a structure? There are certain pre-conditions for the model. These are as follows:-

- The structure which is a model must exhibit the characteristics of a system which also includes several elements. The idea is that it is whole so that a change in one part will affect the others.
- For any given model, there should be a possibility of ordering a series of transformations resulting in a group of models of the same type.
• The element of predictability that is, how the model will react if one or more of its elements are submitted to certain modifications.

• Finally, the model should be so constituted as to make all the observed facts immediately intelligible.

Besides this, Levi-Strauss also used the concept of binary opposition to distinguish relationships. Thus, Levi Strauss made a departure in analyzing a reality.

The criticisms launched against structural functionalism, Marxism and structuralism indicate that the concept of social structure is problematic. Yet the concept of social structure is not so easy to comprehend as it articulates ideas of continuity, regularity and interrelatedness in social life. The British sociologist Anthony Giddens has proposed the term "structuration" to express both dynamic and ordered view that social life regulates. Giddens highlighted the duality of structure and agency, in the sense that structure and agency cannot be conceived apart from one another. This permits him to argue that structures are neither independent of actors nor determining of their behaviour, but rather sets of rules and competencies on which actors draw, and which, in the aggregate, they reproduce.

Within the broad framework of above given theories and other general features of human society, there is an enormous variety of social forms between and even within societies. ‘Structure’, for instance, does not essentially suggest lack of change. There are parts of structure that are initiated by dynamic processes. Several theories have been developed to account for both social structure and change. Both are central theoretical concepts of the social sciences and act as complementary characteristics of social life, where one refers to permanence, continuity while other one talks about dynamics and changeability on the other. Since about 1965 there has been a shift from ‘structure’ to ‘change’ in social theory. Though the emphasis on change focuses at different levels such as, social dynamics in everyday life, short-term transformations and long-term developments in society.

Such appraisal have induced different theories pertaining to the nature of social structure which were discussed above and theories on social change that will be discussed in the following paragraphs.
SOCIAL CHANGE: THEORIES AND PERSPECTIVES

Sociologists often assume that human beings have natural tendencies to show alterations where individuals have adapted themselves to these environments. Social changes are those changes which describe how culture and societies have developed and changed over period of time. Such changes provide an understanding for the relationship between technology, developmental plans and social systems, their values and how and why they change over a period of time. Social change broadly means any change in social relations. It is phenomenon present in all societies. The observation of social change depends on the time span studied, most short-term changes are negligible when examined in the long run. The social theories on change explain how people relate to each other and the surrounding environment and have sound purpose and their primary focus is on explaining the process of change.

Several ideas of social change have been developed in various cultures and historical periods. The concept of progress, however, became the most influential idea, especially since the 18th-century Enlightenment. Social thinkers like Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot and the Marquis de Condorcet in France as well as Adam Smith and John Millar in Scotland advanced theories on the progress of human knowledge and technology. Progress was the key idea in 19th-century theories of social evolution. The early evolutionary theory of social change assumed that all societies develop from simple, small scale beginning into more complex industrial and post-industrial societies.

As Auguste Comte, in his ‘Law of Three Stages’ remarked that mankind progresses from a theological stage, which is conquered by religion, through a metaphysical stage, in which abstract speculative thinking dominates, and to end with positivist stage, where scientific theories based on empirical research rules.

Unlike Comte, Herbert Spencer, linked social evolution to biological evolution, where organism and society follows the same universal, natural evolutionary law: “a change from a state of relatively indefinite, incoherent, homogeneity to a state of relatively definite, coherent, heterogeneity” (Spencer, 1864:216). In other words, as societies grow in size, they become more complex; their parts differentiate, specialize into different functions, and therefore, become more interdependent. Anthropologists such as Morgan
categorized them from "savage" through "barbarian" to "civilized." Morgan classified societies on the basis of the level of technology, or sources of subsistence, which he connected with the kinship system.

The work of Durkheim and Weber marked a transition from evolutionism towards more static theories. Although the significance in long-term social change never disappeared, it faded to the background, especially from the 1920s until the 1950s, when functionalism, highlighted an interdependent social system. From the 1960s and 1970s there was a revival of social change. 'Social evolution' was swapped for the more general concept of 'social change'. While the Evolutionary Theory became discredited once anthropological work started publishing and portrayed the diversity of change in modernizing societies, that is when school of structural-functionalism came into existence.

Structural functionalist like Parsons opined society as consisting of interdependent parts which work jointly to maintain the equilibrium of the whole. In other words, changes occur but structures within society change or emerge to compensate. He has given four different ways to deal with change. 1). System maintenance, that helps in restoring a previous pattern of equilibrium, 2). Structural differentiation, where increasing differentiation of subsystem units into patterns of functional specialization and interdependence. 3). Adaptive upgrading, new mechanisms of integration, coordination and control are developed to incorporate the integrative problems by having structural differentiation. 4). Structural change where least common change is seen, with regard to key features of the system, for example, basic cultural values, goals, distribution. However, Marxist perspective purely believes in the transformation of society. Marx argued that the potential for change was built into the basic structures of society, the relationships between social classes, are produced largely by internal contradiction and conflicts which brings revolutionary transformation of the society, for example, from feudalism to capitalism or from capitalism to socialism. Conflict is foundation of change, it destroys old orders and creates new ones. Any settlement of conflict is only temporary and each restructured system carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction. This give rise to a dialectical theory where Marx believed that social development was a dialectical process; the transition from one stage to another which was preceded by fall of
existing society and intensifying class struggle. Change is, therefore, ongoing until crisis situation is arrived at and transformation proceeds.

Neo Marxist differs from the Marxist on the source of conflict. They are less deterministic about outcomes and believe in that of not simple total system transformation or revolution, but contradictions could lead to reaffirming of dominance, or gradual reform and piecemeal changes. Unlike Marxism which perceives a utopian society with no conflict in the end, Neo-Marxists are anti-utopia.

However in case of India, theoretical growth of sociology has been profoundly influenced by the western sociological development. Some of the most talked about concepts of social change in India was build up by sociologists who were clearly oriented to the structural-functional method. Yogendra Singh (2000:139) writes “Indian sociologists have been more concerned with the processes of social accommodation and adaptation rather than with abstract theory building, so much in evidence in Western sociology, past and contemporary. Most sociological writing in India tends to be substantive rather than theoretical.”

Sociologists till early 1920s studied the village communities, caste and family structure. We thus find continuity in a theoretical formulation about change in Indian sociology at that point of time. During the later half of the twentieth century, Indian sociology and social anthropology became essentially empirical. Mann’s survey of a Deccan village is the beginning of a new orientation in the Indian Sociological analysis (Mann 1921). M.N. Srinivas work was the first systematic attempt to define the processes of change taking place in Indian society. His concepts of Sanskritization and Westernization are the two types of sources of social change. As Srinivas defines Sanskritization;

as the process by which a ‘low’ caste or tribe or other group takes over the customs, rituals, beliefs, ideology and style of life of a high and, in particular, a ‘twice-born’ (Dwija) caste. The Sanskritization of a group has usually the effect of improving its position in the local caste hierarchy. It normally presupposes either an improvement in the economic or political position of the group concerned or a higher group self-consciousness resulting from its contact with a source of the ‘Great tradition’ of Hinduism such as pilgrim centre or monastery or proselytizing sect (Srinivas.1966:65-66).
The process of social change in India has also been examined through the approach of Robert Redfield of ‘Little’ tradition and ‘Great’ Tradition. Redfield’s frame of analysis has been applied to analyze the Indian reality of social change by Milton Singer, Mckim Marriot and their associates (Singer 1959, Marriott 1955). This means that there are conceptual schemes about social change but no theories (Singh 2000:179). The theoretical and conceptual schemes of social change in India have so far remained limited to formulation of ideal types. There is all urgent need, therefore, to study social change in Indian sociological context.

After analyzing the various theories on social structure and change, we can conclude social theories aren’t instruments or tools by which people can examine societies and cultures; they are themselves ‘culture’, the products of the life experiences and locations and cultural milieu of their proponents. They rely on perspectives and are open-ended. In other words, they are metaphors for societies (Beilharz 1992). Nevertheless, social theory is important because it attempts to address the human conditions in change. Theories generalize, but this does not mean that they should totalize or systematize. They offer a way of operating in the world, helping us clarifying norms and values, political and economic understanding and the relationships of these things. The above two vital concepts in social science, ‘social structure’ and ‘social change’ particularly in the field of sociology and cultural anthropology are often conceived of as polarized concepts, however, the relationship between the two concepts is more complicated. Social structure, for example, cannot be conceptualized adequately without some recognition of actual or potential change, just as social change, as a more or less regular process, is structure over time and is inconceivable without the notion of continuity. Both concepts, in the end, can contribute to a fuller understanding of society, its pattern and patterns of change.

One way of explicating social change is to show causal connections between two or more different set of factors. Different thinkers have brought out different factors for these changes. Many of them have considered psychological, physical, biological, technological and cultural factors for ongoing changes in any society. Following are some of the factors visualized for triggering social change.
FACTORS OF CHANGE

• Technological innovations
According to several theories of social evolution, technological innovations are regarded as the most important determinants of societal change. The social significance of such technological breakthroughs with the introduction of the plough in agriculture, introduction of various industries and the development of the computer and Media is indeed evident. Ogburn states:

That technology is considered a source of social change is indicated by various expressions often heard. Gunpowder destroyed feudalism. Railroads created cities. The steam engine increased divorces. The automobile is moving the department store and supermarket to the suburbs. The airplane reranked the great military powers… (but) to explain how invention cause social change is not a simple task (Ogburn.1922:12).

• Economic processes
Technological changes are often considered in combination with economic processes, including the formation and extension of markets, modifications of property relations and changes in the organization of labour. Materialist theories represent the "logic of industrialization" thesis by the U.S. scholar Clark Kerr, which states that industrialization everywhere has similar consequences, whether the property relations are called capitalist or communist.

• Ideas.
Other theories have emphasized the implication of ideas in the causation of social change. Comte's law of three stages is such a theory where ideas play a significant role. Weber regarded religious ideas as central in contributing to economic development or stagnation. According to his controversial thesis, the individualistic ethic of Christianity, and in particular Protestantism, partially explains the rise of the capitalist spirit, which brought economic dynamism in the West.

• Political process.
An important factor for social change is collective social action by large numbers of people. Sometimes such action take the form that it is often connected to the formation of a new social movement. It is only when the state is not able to fulfill its basic functions of
maintaining law and order and territorial integrity that revolutionary groups have any chance of success. This in itself might be regarded as a potential cause of social change. Weber called attention to this factor in conjunction with his concept of "charismatic leadership." The charismatic leader, by virtue of the extraordinary personal qualities attributed to him, is able to create a group of followers who are willing to break established rules.

- **Natural environment**

The Natural environment has a strong influence on the culture and social structure of a society. Changes in the natural environment may vary from climatic ones to those caused by the spread of diseases. Changes in the natural environment may be either independent of human social activities or the result of these activities. Deforestation and erosion, air pollution, and the exhaustion of natural resources belong to the last category, and they in turn may have far-reaching social consequences such as urban-rural migration.

- **Demographic changes**

Increasing or decreasing Population density represents demographic form of social change. Any significant decrease or increase in population size or growth rates may affect or even disrupt social life and assimilation of cultures. A population that grows too slowly or even declines in numbers faces the danger of extinction. A population that grows too large puts impossible demands on resources. The result, as it has so often been seen in history, may be mass migration, usually resulting in cultural diffusion and sometimes in wars as the migrants invade other territories or may stimulate urbanization.

Each of these factors is a possible determinant of other ones; none of them is the only determinant. Moreover, social processes are often intertwined to such a degree that it would be misleading to consider them separately. For example, there are no sharp and fixed borderlines between economic and political processes, or between economic and technological processes. Technological change may in itself be regarded as a specific type of cultural or conceptual change. The causal connections between distinguishable social processes are a matter of degree and vary over time.
Within societies there are structures which are inherently resistant to change, they can be considered as being social continuities. Institutions like the family, the marriage and religion are subject to change, even though they represent social continuity. There has always been family as a foundational institution for society and the primary agent of socialization. However, the composition of family has changed in recent years, leading to different kinds of families and different socialization experiences for their members. The same ideas can be applied to marriage and religion, economic and other aspects of social life.

The relevant aspects of the theoretical framework and various factors given above will be suitably analyzed in relation to the processes of change as observed in the social structure of Ladakhis, along with the continuities. To know what theoretical framework that would fit into the present study, Ladakhi social structure is examined in depth and to identify the relevant theoretical framework. To move forward let us assess the existing research or literary writings on Ladakh and find the gaps to place the present research vis-a-vis the existing ones.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

For being isolated due to extremely harsh climatic conditions in the trans-Himalayan region, it has remained out of focus of social scientists. It was only during the British Raj that the century long socio-culturally isolated region attracted the attention of British travellers, officers and mountaineers who had studied Ladakh’s physical as well as social features. Among the first ones were Moorcroft, Trebeck, Cunningham and Francke etc.

Travelogues and Travel Diaries

Moorcroft and Trebeck (1841), describe vividly their journey to Ladakh and their stay in Ladakh for six months, when Moorcroft was on his way to Tibet to get special breed of horses for East India Company. His description about Ladakh relates to its geography and about its political relationship with others as significant.

Cunningham, (1854) had visited Ladakh in 1846 and 1847 and his book investigates and provides us with a full and first accurate account of Ladakh, including its geography, mountains, rivers, lakes and springs, roads, climate, produce, commerce, government, people, history, religion and language.
Datta (1973), has discussed Ladakh history and has given brief sketch about religion as well as the administrative structure of Ladakhi state. He has principally discussed the political events and also shown how Lamaism is deeply connected with trade and administration of the country. He also describes the influence of religion in politics and has attempted to review Dogra's conquest and invasion of Ladakh and Baltistan. He reveals that Ladakh throughout its history has preserved its tradition and continuity in its structure.

Francke (1977) has explored the dialects, customs, folk-lore, ethnology, and archaeology of western Tibet which is today's Ladakh. He has profusely illustrated, and through illustrations and maps vis-a-vis the text makes everyone familiar with the different phases of the history of the western Tibet.

Bedi (1977), Sumi, Masato and Hassain (1977), Chopra (1980), Wahid (1981), Pallis (1998), Harvey (2000) Bora (2004), Bhasin (2006) Koko Singh (2006), Weare (2009) all of them have tried to introduce Ladakh, its land, people, history, climate, and their culture including art and craft and vocations. All of them have tried to touch all aspects of Ladakh from their point of view. They have given account of very first travellers to Ladakh, about various dynasties that have ruled Ladakh, its physical features along with their language, food, religion and industry. They have given more importance to religion and various monastic festivals of Ladakh. These books are somehow talking about the same things and narrate the story of Ladakhi culture in similar manner.

Jina and Omachikpa (1994) have chosen to describe this isolated region which has preserved the typical geography, rich art, architecture, lifestyle and tradition. They have administered the changes and the related activities that have manifested due to increased visits by foreigners. Apart from this, they have assessed the recent political scene and mountaineering activities taking place in Ladakh. They have also mentioned various Central and State government plans and projects that have led to employment among Ladakhis.

Lt. Gen. Chibber (1998), in his book “Pakistan’s Criminal folly in Kashmir” has narrated the complete story of bravery shown by the three dedicated men Brigadier Sher Jung Chand, Colonel Prithi Chand and Colonel Chewang Rinchen in Ladakh. He narrates the
whole story of accession of Jammu and Kashmir. He briefly discusses the geography, historical background, trade route, and monasteries of Ladakh.

Kaul (1998), has discussed the geographical profile of Ladakh, its history, political, cultural, religious, economic and social life and the impact of modernization on all these aspects. He believes that the major popularity of T.V. and mass media have brought these changes and inculcated in Ladakhi youth, the European lifestyle. Though he had tried to discuss each aspect but he had missed other forces of changes as he had only stressed on the impact of modernization. It would not be right to take modernization as a sole force for the changing patterns in Ladakhi socio-cultural life.

Kapadia (1999) has discussed his experience as trekkers to the highest passes and peaks of trans-Himalayan. Along with his experience, he also describes the geographical profile of Ladakh and Nubra valley. His book provides the valuable record of travel and exploration of this region and its vast history, he tells us about the major rivers in Ladakh, Zangskar and Karakorum. He has discussed how Ladakh for tourists and Ladakh for trekkers and climbers are two different worlds. He narrates that how Pangong Lake and Tso mo Riri Lake change colour every hour with the sun shining on them and it is a lifetime experience to walk across the valley of Ladakh, Zanskar and Kishtwar over High Mountain passes which is like attaining Nirvana. He briefly narrates how Leh, the headquarters of Ladakh, is at the crossroads of Asia and in the past it has been the central place of Ladakh besides being an important trade route. To him, Ladakh till recently has not lost any of its charm. He describes Nubra which is accessible through highest motor able road as the paradise for tourists. His book, based on his several visits to different areas of Ladakh, Zanskar and east Karakorum, tells us how to proceed about fort trekking and climbing peaks. He has given maps, sketches, photographs tables of road distances and trek routes. His book is an exhaustive reference work on this area. His experience in Ladakh takes one through a journey of transformation of this region from an ancient civilization to a tourist destination.

Van beek, Bertelsen, Pedersen (1999), in their edited book based on proceedings of the colloquium of the International Association of Ladakh Studies held at Aarhus University, presents the 27 articles on Ladakh’s history, architecture, religion, politics, education and gender issues. Certain articles of which will be discussed in detail.
Gompertz (1928, reprint 2000), is the one of the first accounts of the Ladakh’s society covering important aspects like its land, people, Buddhism, various monasteries and village life.

**Ethnographies and literature on social aspects of Ladakhis.**

Rizvi (1979), had spent nearly 15 years researching Ladakh’s extraordinarily complex pattern of trade and its impact on the region’s economy. She has used documentary sources to flesh out history of various trades, but it is her use of the techniques of oral history that gives a sense of immediacy to her accent. Her interviews with about 80 elderly Ladakhis and others who were personally involved in one trade or another, bring the human element to the fore, showing how vital the traders contribution responsible for the self-reliance of Ladakh’s economy in the pre-independence period. Further what was such an involvement in trade significant to their lives and those of their families. Writing with grace and sympathy for her informants, as well as with impeccable scholarship, she has brought vivid life of a world, now vanished but existing till a mere half-century ago, in which traders transverse the trails and passes of trans-Himalaya on foot, taking up to three months for a single expedition, driving their caravans of horses, mules, camels, donkeys or even sheep, laden with salt, barley, wool, silk, tea, carpets and opium. It will be essential reference for all travellers, trekkers, mountaineers and historians as well as social scientists.

Ribbach (1986), (translated from German by John Bray), he has talked about Ladakhi society and culture through a semi-fictional character. Ribbach was a Christian missionary who had visited Ladakh for missionary activities but he collected information on the life and customs of people. His work is all the more important because so much has changed in the 95 years and so.

Osmaston and Denwood (1995) edited book, “Recent researches on Ladakh” comprises of presentations given by scholars from various parts of world in the proceedings of the fourth and fifth International Colloquia on Ladakh held in Bristol, U.K. Out of 25 papers presented only 19 have been covered by Osmaston of the fourth proceeding. Topic of their presentation varied from each other. Some discussed the factual topics of Ladakh history, its nutrition and health, while others tried to give the glimpse of Ladakh as to how it was a century ago. Some of them described the Ladakhi art, fort and *maiterya*, a
huge statue of future Buddha, (thought to be 10000 years old and is in its ruinous condition) requiring urgent need of conservation. Some recorded the Muslims history in Ladakh, while to others there has been a rise in social and economic problems due to ‘development’ in Ladakh. Also difficulties have been faced by the young generation as they have shown respect to the old traditions and the long for western lifestyle. Religion, rituals and myths in Ladakhis society and Buddhist education in the present day Ladakh has also been discussed in the book. Lastly, social psychologists have analyzed the stress arising among the Ladakhis due to monetization, inflation and competition in some of the papers.

Fifth proceeding of the International Colloquia was held in School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and was covered by Philip Denwood. This proceeding was to mark the 150th anniversary of the death of Alexander Cosoma de Koros, the Hungarian scholar, who mainly studied Zanskar and Ladakh. This proceeding mainly covered all topics related to Alexander, ladakhi history, anthropology, and Ladakhi art. Some tried to discuss the early period of Tibetan studies in which Csoma’s played an important part. While other had drawn present situation in Csoma’s homeland, in Romania.

Crook and Low (1997), explores the Tibetan buddhism from within the viewpoint of its exemplary practitioner, the yogins of Ladakh. They had tried to study the way of life of the hermits of Himalayas, their philosophical understanding of daily life and their meditational practices.

Srinivas (1998), in her book has discussed the contrast and parallels between two social groups namely Buddhists and Muslims in the two villages of Nubra valley in Ladakh. She has studied, in brief, their family structure, occupation and household. On the other side, she discusses the pathways of language and communication in a culture, not as a linguist but as a sensory. She has also seen and felt the experience of the priest of the temple becoming an oracle and speaking in the voice of God. She has tried to understand the relationship between the linguist’s forms and body. However, she nowhere discusses about forces which have led to any kind of changes in the villages of Ladakh.

Hodge (2000), has investigated and highlighted her opinion about the Ladakh of her first visit in 1975 and the Ladakh of now. The first part of her book illustrates that in earlier times people of Ladakh were contented. In the second part of the book she has examined
the Ladakh after tourist invasion and economic development. She has voiced her opinion against multinational corporations that are responsible for most of the socio-cultural problems in Ladakh. She describes that how with the contact of western industrial world Ladakhi ancient culture has been endangered and infected. She challenges to redefine concepts of development and progress. Apart from examining the Ladakh of then and now she has also projected sustainable solutions that may help in preserving cultural integrity and the physical environment.

Mann (2002), in his study discusses the mounting changes occurring in Ladakh covering the diverse spheres. He has studied various dimensions of Ladakh upto 1971 and thereafter upto 2001. According to him, development of media, highways, tourists, NGO’s and traders have penetrated into almost all areas of Ladakh that had led to various changes. He has placed extra stress on tourism industry and neglected other factors. He has just mentioned these factors in his book but has failed to explain these factors in detail as to have brought about change in the cultural, ecological and political dimensions.

Aggarwal (2004) in her book provides ethnographically rich account of the border politics. She moves beyond conventional understandings of the conflict which tend to emphasize geopolitical security concerns and religious essentialisms to consider how it is experienced by those living in the border zones along the Line of Control. She focuses how the shadow of war affects the lives of Buddhist and Muslim communities in Ladakh. The book has an impassioned call for the inclusion of the region’s cultural history and politics while holding discussions about the status of Kashmir. Aggarwal brings the insights of performance studies and the growing field of the anthropology of international borders to bear on her extensive fieldwork in Ladakh. She examines how social and religious boundaries are created on the Ladakhi frontier, how they are influenced by directives of the nation-state and how they are shaped into political struggles for regional control that are legitimized through discourses of religious purity, patriotism and development. She demonstrates vividly the ways in which these struggles are enacted in particular cultural performances such as national holidays, festivals, rites-de-passage ceremonies, films and archery games. By placing cultural performances and political
movements in the center stage of Ladakh, she rewrites the standard plot of nation and
to erode the balance of power between monks and nuns. Despite
the obstacles of being considered impure and inferior, nuns engage in everyday forms of
resistance to pursue their ascetic and personal goals. A richly textured picture of the little
known culture of a Buddhist nunnery, the author offers moving narratives of nuns
struggling with the Buddhist discipline of detachment. Its analysis of the way in which
gender and sexuality construct ritual and social power provides valuable insight into the
relationship between women and religion in South Asia today.

Research Articles on Ladakh

Puri (1982) in his article ‘Route of Ladakh Integration’ talks about how Ladakhi felt
uneasy as a part of Jammu and Kashmir state ever since its annexation. He talks how
region has been denied its status in state and nation discourse. He raises the issue that
Ladakh’s symbolic of integration of ethnic groups, in particular of the peripheral regions
with a national identity. That is, a logical inter-regional and intra-regional intermediate
links that should strengthen Ladakh with the rest of state and nation.

Chatterji (1987), in her article ‘Development prospects in Ladakh’ mainly examines the
changes in the traditional economic system. She talks about how traditional human
interaction with the environment and how they are traced in linkage between them. She
finally talks about measures and policies towards development concerning the cropping
pattern and other economic activities. In her article she had missed the whole concept of
social change that has taken place in Ladakh having these developmental prospects. Her
essay falls short of various other aspects such as examining changes in religion, polity
and women of the region.
Bertelsen (1997), in his article ‘Protestant Buddhism and social identification of Ladakh’ provides a rich historical background of the social and political activism among the Buddhist, to understand the process of social identification of Ladakhis.

E.Hay (1999) in her article “Gender, Modernization and Change in Ladakh” examines how Ladakh’s modernization is affecting the household structure and especially, women’s lives. She talks about how women’s work is increasing, while their perceived household contribution is decreasing and diminishing their access to household resources. Her analysis may be true in certain cases but it should not be taken as generalization for Ladakhi women. There are women who are coming out in public sphere and achieving greater heights in economic, education and social sphere, so her analysis where she says that modernization has increased women’s workload, diminished their mobility, curtailed their decision making and access to power may not hold true for all the cases.

Van Beek, (2000) in his article ‘Beyond Identity Fetishism: “Communal” Conflict in Ladakh and the Limits of Autonomy”, has given extensive and detailed material in the form of documents and letters which allow us to trace back the political process since 1930s, leading finally to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill development Council Act of 1995. The article deals with the relationship between two communities Buddhist and Muslims within the Leh district and have concluded that Buddhists had played communal card for presenting their demands. Martijn Van Beek (2000) model emphasizes too much on Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA), a semi political organization. Further most of his approach does not pay enough attention to the importance of development and other institutions that are affected by the religion.

Mehra, Prins and Wieren (2003), in their article ‘Risk, Mediatation and Change’ in a trans-Himalayan agro pastoral system describes the diversity and dynamism of social, agricultural and livestock husbandry practices in a traditional mountain production in Spiti. He describes how agro pastoral production represents the range of practices that strives to maximize production while considering environmental risk. He talked about how barter based system economy until two decades ago has rapidly changed by a cash-based economy. Authors have given quick glimpses about the social change brought by economic process but in-depth work on social change brought by cash economy has not been touched.

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Crook (2007) in his article “Psychology, Buddhism, and Sustainable Development” suggests that a major reason for continued environmental decline is due to concentration of our attention upon physical manifestation of the development process and making adjustments to our structural, technological and institutional systems. Further, the emphasis is on how modern development process had engendered fundamental cultural and psychological changes in our belief and value system. He talked about increasing consumerism and culture of materialism. He also talked about replacing new modern consumerist ethics by following Buddhist traditional beliefs and principles, which might be helpful in achieving human mental and emotional balance. He argued that the Ladakh’s self reliant agriculture, sense of community purpose and interdependence may act as model of subsistantable development for the rest of world but the fact is that recent modern development in Ladakh has brought in feeling of materialism and selfishness. Crook believes that Buddhist psychology and indigenous philosophy of life based upon personal happiness through inner development provides an alternative to the culture of consumerism. Crook failed to talk about various ways of subsistantable development which can act as a model for Ladakhis, besides how few Ladakhis are facing a dilemma to leave the subsistence agriculture and livestock for new cash economy.

Dawa (2007), in his article ‘Building a culture of peace in Ladakh’ talks about how Ladakh’s conflict and disharmony has grown in recent past due to exposure of the region to outside world. He had tried to propose a strategy for building a culture of peace in Ladakh whereby he believed that suitable peace curriculum should be developed between Muslim and Buddhist communities. Along with proposing a model of a culture of peace, he had also raised questions on women’s role in politics and role of education system in Ladakh. There is lack of indepth analysis about women role in politics and role of education.

Saraf (2007), in his article “Buddhist Political Activism After 1988” tries to examine the various forces that lead to 1989 political agitation among the Buddhists of Ladakh. Further how they have gained Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council after agitating over the undue share given to them in the Muslim dominated state of Jammu and Kashmir has been highlighted. Like Van Beek (2001) and Bertelser (1999) also talked about Ladakh Buddhist Association’s (LBA) role in attainting the Hill Council for...
the region. He observed that the LBA has changed its role and restricted itself to social and religious activities and according to him leaders of the LBA should be satisfied with having achieved the LAHDC. His article falls short of the in-depth analysis how LBA has not restricted itself to social and religious activities but has grown as a strong semi-political organization with religious heads involved in it. It would be wrong to say that LBA is satisfied with the LAHDC as they have been still protesting for their demand of Union Territory Status for Ladakh.

Ahmed (2009), in her article “Why are the Rupshupa Leaving the Changthang” talked about the migration trend of Changpa towards Leh city. Various reasons given for leaving the region are lack of education of children, inadequate medical assistance, a breakdown of the joint family system, a decrease in pasture and a desire to attain a better standard of living. She also talked about difficulties faced by the people in the region and how people of Changthang hoped that with opening of tourism, they could earn from it to have betterment of their livelihood. However, almost all the earnings are appropriated by travel agents from Leh and other parts of country, leaving behind local people in the same condition in which they were.

Morup (2007) in his article “Kharnak Nomads Leave Changthang” and Humbert-Droz in his “Threats to Ladakh’s Biodiversity Priorities for Action” throws light on how fragile ecosystem of Changthang is already endangered as a consequence of tourist activities in the region. Both of them talked about the Biodiversity Strategy and Action plan, which aimed at bringing together all sectors of society concerned with the conservation of Ladakh’s natural heritage. They believe that the plan has not been implemented as efficiently as it should have been to conserve the region. According to them, the key priority should be to limit the tremendous impact of tourism on the fragile mountain ecosystem. They believe in promoting conservation and wide use of rich resources of Ladakh. For this, a timely and sustained action should be taken.

On the basis of the review of studies as outlined above it can be clearly mentioned that initially studies carried out in Ladakh, were mainly in form of travelogues, missionary writings and travel dairies, as scholars conducting such studies were mainly the colonial administrators, casual visitors, travelers or missionaries who went to Ladakh not with the

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6 The people of the Changtang are nomadic pastoralists, they are known as 'Changpa'.
purpose of researching about them, or for codifying their customs and tradition, but, they were more interested in travelling or missionary activities rather than learning about the social-cultural, economic and political life of Ladakhis. It is quite surprising that anthropological works on Ladakh have been few. A few ethnographies worth mentioning are Aggarwal’s work “Beyond Lines of Control” (2004), Van Beek study of “Identity Fetishism and the Art of Representation: The Long Struggle for Regional Autonomy in Ladakh”, and Gutshow work “Being a Buddhist Nun”. Therefore, much of in-depth sociological and anthropological work is still to be done in the context of Ladakh. Moreover, there is no comparative account of rural-urban scenario and gaps to be filled in other facets of contemporary social structure such as social stratification pattern, marriage arrangements and family institutions which are in transition. Also status of women and power structure in terms of political setup also need to be highlighted. These gaps in the studies will be examined in the context of the present study to focus on the Ladakhi culture and on analyzing the social structure of the people inhabiting in the region. The present study has thrown light on the urban and rural areas of Leh block namely Leh (urban) and Sku Markha (rural) village. The study is comparative in nature and analyses the various changes taking place in these areas with the view to throw light on the different factors that have led to certain changes in the social structure of the two areas (rural and urban). Further, there has not been any significant sociological research conducted in Sku Markha till now which is not connected by road so far.

PROPOSITIONS OF THE STUDY
Social system and culture has never been static. There are various factors responsible for the changes occurring in the nature and degree of these patterns. As stated earlier, Ladakh region is isolated from the remaining parts of our country. Infact, during the winter months due to heavy snowing, it remains practically cut off from the other areas of our land. However, ever since, this region had opened itself to Indian as well as foreign tourists because of its serene beauty, enchanting environment and unique culture, predominantly inhabited by people belonging to Buddhist religion, it has undergone many changes. Leh district which is the hub of various activities in whole of Ladakh might have witnessed large number of changes in its socio-cultural life due to various reasons.
As a consequence of tourist induced market economy, people of this region especially in Leh and few villages have gone in for many new occupations thrown open to them by the tourist industry, who were earlier dependent upon the subsistence economy. Despite changes observed in the occupation structure and income level of the families, slow development of the region led to Buddhists perception of being neglected by the rulers of Jammu and Kashmir State of which it is a part, has led to demand for a separate state. However, the efforts of the Buddhists of the region ultimately culminated into the formation of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), which became responsible for the development of this area. Many development initiated by Hill Council through various schemes and projects has resulted into ushering of prosperity of the area both in villages and the urban area. But these economic developments, though have brought about betterment in the way of the life of people, yet institutions such as family and marriage have not been subjected to much changes, more or less, these remain intact in nature and form, with a few modifications observed in the form of nuclearization of some families, though preference is still given for quasi-joint family setup and lesser marriage ceremonies. Moreover, women in this part are emerging as potential empowered persons. In the light of above, we can make an attempt to have the following hypotheses of the study for verification purpose.

- There is a shift from subsistence agriculture to tourist induced market economy.
- There is interplay between religion and polity to have political autonomy.
- Development initiated by the Autonomous Council has led to changes in the way of life of people in the rural and urban areas.
- Changes in the economic substructure lead to the change in other superstructure like religion, polity, family and marriage.
- Despite economic changes in the region, due to “cultural lag” phenomena the social institutions such as family and marriage, have more or less remained intact, with a few modifications in the family pattern and marriage ceremonies.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

In the absence of a contemporary in-depth study on the Ladakhis, the present one is an attempt to understand the very basics of what constitutes the Ladakhis ‘way of life’ in the present scenario. Its objective is to study the structural elements of Ladakhi society by
highlighting the interrelationships among various institutions. This takes us to a Berger statement where he says “institutions like family, religion, political and education and economic system channel human experience and activity in much the same way as instincts channel animal behavior” (Berger.2011). They are the basis of structure, ideas and customs, around which life in a society is organized. The above statement helps us to understand that these institutions are basic to an individual around which life in a society is organized. Since social structure term is a very broad concept therefore the main aim of the study is to delineate the following principal institutions of the Ladakhi social structure that is family, marriage, economic and political religion and status of women. The prime objective of the study is to analyze the continuity and change in above substructures.

1. To examine the Socio-Demographic and Economic profile of the respondents of Leh District
2. To highlight the change and continuity in the Ladakhi social structure comprising of institutions such as family, marriage, economic, religion, political, and the status of women and to identity the various factors responsible for such a change*.
3. To suggest the policy formulation for the development of the people of Ladakh.

*As stated earlier that the social structure is a broad concept, therefore, present research is an endeavour to throw light on
❖ Change and continuity in family (structure, function)
❖ Marriage (nature, ways of acquiring mate, rituals, types of marriage)
❖ Economy (traditional, modern)
❖ Polity (understanding the local level political structure)
❖ Religion (rituals, ceremonies)
❖ Status of women (within and outside family, participation in local governance)
In the family institution, family structure and function, no doubt, are the main focus but residence and inheritance have also been emphasized. Further, the types of marriage pattern, the decision making process in the selection of spouse, marriage rituals and divorce and its causes have also been taken into account. Understanding of types of
family and the decision making process with the spouse have been helpful in understanding the interpersonal role relationship within a Buddhist family.

In the economic institution, the relationship among the traditional subsistence economy and environment conditions comprise one part of the discussion, while the other part focuses on how there has been a shift in the economic prospects of the Ladakhis. What are those new sources of income? Further various development plans have been discussed and how these plans have affected the economic lives of locals.

While studying the religion of Ladakhis, various beliefs and practices have been focused that are intimately connected with the habitat, religion and its role in various aspects of the social institution. Besides studying religion and its role, its interplay with polity has also been analyzed. In case of political organization of the Ladakhis, the role of the traditional Chief in maintaining the social order has been dealt with. The traditional and present local political system (Panchayati raj) has also been analyzed.

The status of women is studied on four basic parameters, that is, economic, educational, extent of political participation and their role in decision making process within the household and outside household.

To sum up, the present study attempts to discuss the social institutions of Buddhists not in a full quantifiable form but whatever appropriate, ‘Narrative’ have been added to supplement the qualitative data so that the reader can find the local essence of Ladakhi life.

**UNIVERSE OF STUDY**

Since the purpose of the study is to examine change and continuity in the contemporary social structure of Ladakh, as such to study the change and continuity in the social structure, 1974 was taken as the base year because in 1974 Ladakh was opened to outside world for the first time. For the present study, the locale of the study is Leh district of Ladakh. Leh district is further divided into nine blocks (see Table on Page No 30)

Leh block is purposively selected as it the only block with both urban and rural population in whole of Leh, Ladakh district. Out of these 21 wards and 24 villages, ward no. 1 was identified as urban and most developed and Sku Markha village as rural and less developed in the Leh block respectively. Ward no. 1 was purposively selected out of all 21 wards.
LEH DISTRICT

9 Blocks

Kharu  Khaltsi  Nyoma  Durbuk  Leh  Nubra  Saspol  Panamic  Chuchot

(Only Urban)

21 wards

Ward No. 1

Sku-Marka Village

24 Villages
on the basis of the population belonging to Buddhist identity. It was the only ward with Buddhist population, as the present study cover Buddhists population. Whereas Sku Markha was chosen on the basis of development, it is the remotest village in the Leh block, in the sense that the village is not connected with motorable road. Moreover, there is neither bank nor post office. There is no college, government high secondary school, hospital or general market and the level of infrastructure is very poor. The village did not have basic facilities like electricity and telephone till recently, it was in 2010 that the government provided villagers with the satellite phone whereas there is still no provision for electricity. The most striking feature of Sku-Markha is its literacy rate which is 34.19 percent according to 2001 Census. The 2011 Census for Markha was still not available in the Leh Statistics office.

Block Leh is the oldest block of the district, which was established in the year 1954. The block comprises of 24 Census/revenue villages which are divided into 16 Panchayat Halqas for grassroots development. The rural population of the Block is 32933 souls as per 2001 Census, of which female population is 15150. The area of block as per revenue village paper is 16288 hectares of which cropped area is 3816 hectare. The people of the block are mostly engaged in Agriculture (Vegetable production) and Animal Husbandry (Milk Production) for which there is a good market. All the villages of the Block are connected with metalled motorable road except, Sku Markha, Chilling Sumdha and Rumbak. Besides there is internal road connectivity in almost all the villages, which connect the hamlets of the village. The telephone facility is available in all the villages except Sku Markha, Chilling Sumdha, Rumbak, Umla and Ney. In the Block there is one Degree college, one polytechnic college, 3 Higher Secondary Schools, 9 High schools and 66 other education institutions run by the State government and 3 reputed educational institution run by the Central Government, namely Central Institute for Buddhist Studies (CIBS), Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) Leh besides number of private institutions run by different NGOs and societies. In the Block there is one Government hospital namely Sonam Norbu Memorial (SNM) hospital.
SAMPLING FRAME

The total numbers of households in the ward No 1 are 192 and the total number of households in Sku Markha is 98. Due to time constraint and being a single researcher, it was difficult to interview all of them. So 50 percent of the total households of ward No 1 were taken which comes out to be 96 and all the household of Sku-Markha were studied as they were already less in number. So the total sample size came out to be 194 along with few case studies. While this sample is not representative of the urban and rural Ladakh, the intention is to gain an in-depth understanding of the experience of a small group of participants, rather than to have general understanding of the larger group experience. When we apply the yard stick of religion to the respondents of our study, we purposively selected those respondents who belong to the Buddhist identity as it becomes easier to compare people from same identity in studying culture or their social structure.

METHODOLOGY AND FIELD EXPERIENCE

My interest in the subject started, when I first read about Ladakh in the newspaper as a famous tourist destination among the foreigners. More than its landscape, it was their distinct culture that fascinated me. While reviewing thoroughly the available literature on Ladakh, it became a starting point for a deeper theoretical insight into its social structure. I, became further aware of the scientific literature which largely neglected the in-depth study of social structure and changes in it. It was a tough challenge to know and write about them and covering the different institutions of Ladakh's social life, the aspect of changes that have occurred in various dimensions. I applied longitudinal approach, of doing a field work for more than one year in another culture. Keeping this in mind, I started my fieldwork among the Ladakhis. I went to Ladakh in the summer of 2009 from June to October, then again in summer of 2010 from May to August and more recently in 2011 from the month of May to September for better understanding of their culture. During these periods, I have got closer to people. Since I do not belong to the Buddhist community and neither to Ladakh region, the first problem which I encountered was that of language. People in Ladakh speak Bodhi as a medium of conversation. The first thing
I did was to look for a Buddhist household to stay with them and learn their local tradition and daily customs. I stayed with the same Buddhist family each time I visited Ladakh, and adopted their way of living, eating, praying and more so learnt their language. This was one of the ways of carrying on a participatory observation, not only I participated in their daily routine but I went with them to fields helping them in agricultural operations. From helping them in sowing in the field to watering of field and harvesting, I did all. Rapport with the people is truly crucial in the fieldwork. As a researcher, I was observing their traditions but as a person they had included me as one of the family members in their household. Such techniques are crucial and it urges a researcher to take up a dual role of an outsider and an insider. One has to constantly oscillate between these two roles in such a meaningful way that they are able to produce the insight into the local conditions of socio-cultural existence (Thapan, 1998). Other than this, I participated in marriages, festivals, birth celebrations and various other ceremonies. Festivals and marriages were good source of information as one can observe many instances at the same time with different people. Observation of various religious festivals paved the way for understanding the religious organization. Not only it helped me in understanding the external religious structure but it helped me in understanding myself. In participatory qualitative research, value is placed upon the individuals experience as much as the need for generalizing things within a larger social sphere (Maguire1987:112).

Along with “participant observation” sociological methods such as interviews and case study method were also conducted as primary tool of data collection. A detailed interview schedule which was prepared before hand with both open ended and close ended questions proved helpful in the field. The field research intends to elicit participant situated knowledge based on interpretation of their own experiences, necessary to understand and analyze the culture. Although the prolonged field study in Ladakh helped in understanding the various processes with some indirect responses given by the respondents, I got certain interested information which I could bring together to a basic understanding of the situation. Structured interviews always created a formal kind of
atmosphere and the people sometimes got bored and tired of answering. So informal interviews were conducted to get the better insight. As it was difficult to interview different members of the family, so the head of the household was questioned as he/she is well informed and usually the senior most member in the family and can give better information. Apart from data collection through interview schedule some exclusive unstructured interviews with the help of guideline questions were also conducted. These interviews gave me useful information on the changing structure. Where ever it was difficult to carry out interview in English and Hindi, Questions for interviews were carried by my Ladakhi friend Stanzin Otzer, primarily in Ladakhi and then he would translate them to me in English or Hindi. Wherever possible, these interviews were tape recorded and transcribed, but where this was not possible, I took notes and then discussed the information with the interviewee to assure that his/her views were accurately recorded. Along with the primary data, secondary sources were of great importance as without understanding the past, it would have becomes difficult to understand the process of social change and continuity. Secondary sources included survey reports, Census report, gazetteer, statistical information, research papers, articles and literature on Ladakhi culture in printed form and on web.

Fieldwork inculcated in me a sense of maintaining continuous relationship with the people and the land of Ladakh. It is a never ending process. Whenever I left the field the family members would see me off to airport, asking me to come back soon. Such a kind of personalized rapport was very helpful in understanding the intricacies of social relationship among the Ladakhis.

CHAPTER SCHEME

Present study consists of seven chapters. Apart from an introductory and conclusion chapter, each chapter deals with an objective. Following is the detail account of chapter scheme of the study:
Chapter 1 – Introduction
The first chapter introduces the Ladakh, its land and people besides providing the various perspectives on the concepts such as social structure and social change, review of literature, aims and objectives and methodology of the study.

Chapter 2 - Socio-Demographic profile of the Leh District and the Respondents.
The first part deals with the physical setting of the area and the general characteristics relating to its socio-economic structure, while the second part deals with the socio-demographic profile of the selected respondents.

Chapter 3 - Change from Subsistence Agriculture to Market Economy
The purpose of this chapter is to give a brief overview of the economic condition of Ladakh including subsistence agriculture and cash economy. This chapter also gives a brief outline of the factors for slow economic process in the region and discuss various other developmental programmes as inputs for progress.

Chapter 4 - Interplay between Religion and Society: Influence of Buddhism in Ladakh.
The purpose in this chapter is to present firstly, an overview of the religion in Ladakh, and secondly, to study religion and its role in society. Along with this, I have tried to present an account of contemporary religious and political practices in Ladakh, which may help to understand the processes involved in the intercommunion between religion and politics.

Chapter 5 - Change and Continuity in Family and Marriage Structure
This chapter has been devoted to study a general overview of the family and marriage system as they exist for the Buddhists in Ladakh currently.
Chapter 6 - Status of Women in Ladakh

The status of women is studied on four basic parameters, that is, economic, educational, extent of political participation and their role in decision making process within the household and outside household.

Chapter 7 - Summary and Conclusion

The present chapter summarizes the study and provides a discussion of the overall findings of the research.