

A Study on Socio-Cultural Aspects and Practices of Chendebji Village Bhutan



Chimi Dema¹, Dr. P Baburaj²

ABSTRACT: Chendebji village under Tangsibji Gewog, Trongsa Dzongkhag is a receptacle of diverse cultures. The village is known for its historical sense and the folktales. The socio-cultural practices are almost similar to other villages but they have their uniqueness in certain aspects. Moreover, modernization has exposed Chendebji to the external world and with the coming of Buddhism, there are several improvisations made to the socio-cultural aspects and the Bon practices. However, it has changed with time. Thus, the researcher explored the diverse sociocultural aspects and practices of Chendebji and studied the untouched, improvised and lost sociocultural aspects and practices of the village. The population consisted of 100 participants hailing from Chendebji. The researcher used mixed-method research, integrating structured survey questionnaire and semi-structured interview. Further, the researcher analysed the data using Descriptive and Narrative analysis. Thus, the researcher found the unique culture of Chendebji village even with the transition from then to now.

KEYWORDS: Chendebji, Folk tales, Culture, Improvisation, Modernization, Aspects and Practices

INTRODUCTION

Chendebji is a small village with 34 households under Tangsibji gewog, Trongsa dzongkhag, almost 149 kilometres away from the capital, Thimphu. Chendebji village is recognisable by its cluster of traditional houses and the yellow roof of its lhakhang on the far bank of Nikkha Chu (LonelyPlanet, 2017). The village is known particularly for the 19th century large stupa located below the highway almost three kilometres from Chendebji village. Further, it was a stopover for Royal caravans during the reign of the second king. People in the village, are bound by their distinct tangible and intangible socio-cultural practices, such as Bon and Buddhist values and practices; wearing of sheep and cows hide over Gho and Kira; cuisines such as ‘Khuley’(Bhutanese pancake), ‘kabchi thub’ (wheat flour porridge) and ‘Churu’ (euglena); social relationship; sharing of responsibilities; bamboo weaving; folklores; Mangdip Language, infrastructures and farming. Even with the touch of modernization, they have been practicing and preserving those from time immemorial, since it provides identity, allow them to be in harmony with the physical environment, enhances the ability of self-guidance, help them make their own decisions and protect their interests (Maathai, 2009). However, these important aspects and practices are altering due to the passages of time. It is not a different story for Chendebji village under Trongsa Dzongkhag, since the village practices its own unique socio-cultural aspects and practices with the modernization. Nevertheless, certain socio-cultural aspects and practices are improvised and some are lost with the influence of modernisation. Thus, with the survey and interview of 100 participants, the condition of socio-cultural aspects and practices of the Chendebji village in the modern epoch such as the untouched, improvised and lost aspects and practices of the village were explored.

Common Bhutanese socio-cultural aspects and practices have been the focus of the researchers. Their studies were centred to the significance of common socio-cultural aspects and practices of Bhutan such as the national language ‘Dzongkha’, dress ‘Gho and Kira’ and the festival ‘Tshechu’. However, the various unique aspects and practices of the individual village were unexplored and Chendebji village is not an exception. Certain aspects and practices of Chendebji village were exposed to the outer world by two eminent researchers. In 2002, Dr. Sonam Kinga focused on three aspects and practices of the village, such as Lhabon celebration, the appointment of Chipoen and the historical details of the village, with his paper, In modern times, with the impact of various external influences, it becomes the need of the time to maintain the culture. Culture is the way of life where people share a common language, religion, cuisine, social life and arts. Williams (1958) stated that culture is made of two separate components, the whole way of life and the arts and learning. Bhutanese culture provides national identity and security as said by National Assembly Speaker Jigme Zangpo, “As a small land-locked nation surrounded by two of the largest and most populous countries in the world, our Kings saw in our culture the key to our survival as a nation and our well-being” (Palden, 2017). The Cultural identity of any country is based on the diversity of cultures such as shared values and the practices, which are different from one place to another. Bhutan is also not an exception in the definition. Therefore, to maintain the unique national identity, it is a must for any nation to preserve the shared values and the social practices, for which the citizen must firstly preserve one’s local

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or village culture. With the preservation and the promotion of the local cultures, the national culture is taken care. It is very clear from the policy document of *The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan*, that every effort will be done to conserve and preserve local arts, customs and knowledge, as is evident with the *Section 3, of Article 4* “Culture” (The Constitution of the kingdom of Bhutan, 2008).

Bhutanese culture is a significant tool to maintain national identity. Bhutanese culture and tradition are called ‘lamlug-sol’ and are significant in terms of national identity and security in the absence of military might and economic power (Phuntsho, 2015). Realizing the importance of the culture, His Majesty the Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck included ‘Preservation and Promotion of Culture’ as one of the four pillars of Gross National Happiness. The culture of Bhutan serves as the national identity as it protects the sovereignty even with the modernization and the people are and must be aware of its significance. According to the former Home Minister Lyonpo Damcho Dorji, “We need to maintain our unique identity and preserve our culture and tradition, which is every Bhutanese citizen’s sacred responsibility to safeguard the security and sovereignty of our nation” (Kuensel, 2015).

Each village in Bhutan is nurturing certain common tangible and intangible socio-cultural aspects and practices. The intangible culture such as ‘ley Jumdrey’, ‘tha-damtshig’ and ‘dompanga’ are the shared values in Bhutan. The concept of ‘ley Jumdrey’ and ‘tha-damtshig’ is that good begets good and “the dompa-nga”, consists of five common Bhutanese undertakings such as do not kill, do not take what is not given, do not lie, do not consume intoxicants and avoid sexual misconduct. In addition to the shared values, Bhutanese culture has tangible shared practices such as wearing national dresses, Gho and Kira, which were made compulsory by 1990s. The national dress ‘Gho’, a knee-length robe tied at the waist by a cloth belt known as the ‘Kera’ is for men and ‘Kira’, an ankle-length dress, clipped at the shoulder with ‘koma’ and tied at the waist with ‘Kera’ is for women. Giant phalluses are painted outside the houses, on the walls or miniature of phalluses are placed on the top of the door or hung by the roof, to represent Drukpa Kinley, the Divine madman, which is believed to ward off evil spirits (Pommaret & Tobgay, 2011). In addition, the annual rituals and rituals for the sick, birth, death, the start of a new life or journey, and rituals for all the beings are prevalent. Rice with local cheese and meat curry and ‘jaju’ (souplike vegetable curry), dried vegetables spiced with chilies and cheese, butter tea and locally brewed wine ‘ara’ are the unique Bhutanese cuisine. Moreover, the archetypes such as houses, temples and Dzongs; and celebration of Tshechu are akin. However, certain socio-cultural aspects and practices such as religious rituals, worship of the local deity, farming and animal raising, cash-crops, social relationship and folklores differ due to the geographical location of the villages.

The Cultural identity of Bhutan is based on the diversity of cultures such as shared values and the practices, which are different from one village to another. As stated by Dorji, Choden & Roder (2013), “In mountainous Bhutan, geographical isolation has helped in conserving local cultures and traditions in isolated pockets”. Thus, the geographical location of the villages in Bhutan, which is divided by either mountains or rivers and additionally with the lack of modern facilities such as roads, bridges and the telecommunication isolated the villages, encouraging the villages to form their own socio-cultural aspects and practices. There are 20 Dzongkhags, 205 gewogs and 1044 Chiwogs and 4391 villages in Bhutan (National Statistics Bureau, 2017). Importantly, every village has certain uniqueness in its sociocultural aspects and practices, making every village distinct from one another, though some of the aspects and practices are similar. These distinct aspects and practices are important since it contributes a sense of comfort and belonging, brings the families together, enables people to reconnect with friends, provides a forum to highlight role models and celebrate the things that really matter in life, and it offers a chance to say “thank you” for the contribution that someone has made. It also reinforces good qualities such as freedom, faith, integrity, good education, personal responsibility, strong work ethic, and the value of being selfless. Further, it highlights the principles of one’s founding fathers; celebrate unity in diversity; it serves as an avenue for creating lasting memories for families and friends; and it offers an excellent context for meaningful pause and reflection (Sonnenberg, 2015).

Bhutanese socio-cultural aspects and practices are altering with modernization. Modern epoch in Bhutan started in the 1960s during the reign of the third king, His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuk. Bhutan was one of the last nations in the world to embrace modernity and launch the process of modernization; and with the modernization, arrived secular, urban, industrial and technological advancement (Phuntsho, 2013), which is one of the significant tool leading to the changes of socio-cultural aspects and practices of Bhutan. According to Ura, Alkire, Zangmo & Wangdi (2012), “Culture is not only viewed as a resource for establishing identity but also for cushioning Bhutan from some of the negative impacts of modernization and thereby enriching Bhutan spiritually”. Due to modernization, Bhutanese culture is altering as Phuntsho (2015) stated, “The traditional animistic and Buddhist beliefs are now being replaced by modern scientific knowledge, local values and practices by national and global values and trends, vernacular languages by English”. Therefore, preserving culture with the modernization is vital to protect the national identity.

With the commencement of modernization, especially with the road connection, the telecommunication and the technological advancement, the isolation began to decline. According to Khan (2017), “Modernization symbolizes a process which indicates the adoption of the modern ways of life and values”. Bhutan started to take its first steps toward modernization in the 1960s when the third King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck opened the doors of his kingdom to change (Knaster, 2008). In recent years,

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the pace of change has accelerated. Earlier, the Chendebji people were disconnected from the external world but now, it is a village with advancement. The people of Chendebji walked or rode horses to travel and trade but in 1968, the Wangdue to Trongsa highway was constructed and was completed in 1970 making the travel and trade easy. Then in 2005, 70kW run-of-river micro-hydro power plant and transmission was constructed, providing electricity to the village (World Access to Modern Energy, 2015). Before electricity, few houses used solar energy and gas lamps, especially during celebrations and rituals. With the coming of the electricity, people started buying television as they were provided with Bhutan Broadcasting Service channels. However, families with modern children are now buying Dish TV, to get access to different foreign channels. In addition, mobile services were introduced in the village towards the beginning of 2008 and later in 2016, with the construction of Tashicell tower at Drangla village, under Trongsa Dzongkhag, the internet reached the village. With these technological advancements, people were exposed to the external world and then to the western culture, via social media which is one of the significant causes of cultural changes. As per Phuntsho (2015), media such as television and the internet have brought foreign language and foreign cultures to the doors of Bhutanese youths. Minorities with the freshness and spirit try the foreign culture and language, blending the Bhutanese culture with the foreign culture or completely discarding Bhutanese culture and going after the foreign culture.

Modern development not only brings challenges to the local culture and traditions but also helps in improvising the practices, which are orthodox. Marxian theorist 'Dkarl Marx' has argued that economic development brings pervasive cultural changes (Baker, 2000). If the cultures do not change with time, people will not appreciate it leading to the extinction of the culture. In order to preserve the culture in the developing world, culture and modernization should walk like the two feet of a traveller. With the coming of modernization, people have presented the Bhutanese culture and practices in the way the people would love, getting positive responses. Being orthodox and simply focusing on the culture will hamper the country's development and drowning in the development will erase the name of the country. Therefore, to exist in the developing world people must enhance the relationship between culture and modernization. For instance, once extinct 'Tshoggham' has presently gained global appeal and has penetrated even the mainstream western societies since the new brand of Tshoggham boots is with comfortable soles (Phuntsho, 2015). Similarly, for all the rituals and celebrations, people of Chendebji used to serve varieties of meat but after 2008, the monks of the village with the Tshogpa and people decided to replace meat items with local and imported cheese and other vegetable items. It was mainly practiced, with the initiative of His Holiness the Je Khenpo in banning the sale of meat during auspicious days and months in the Bhutanese calendar to save animal lives, in 2002 (Pelden, 2018). Thus, Socio-cultural aspects and practices need to be improvised, to make the tradition comfortable and relevant, for its survival in the modern epoch.

Bhutan as a small nation share certain common socio-cultural aspects and practices but due to its mountainous location isolating the villages in the past, every village has certain aspects and practice different from others. Chendebji village is a receptacle of diverse cultures. Modernisation has exposed the village to the external world and with the coming of Buddhism, there are several improvisations made to the socio-cultural aspects and the Bon practices. In addition to the improvisation made for its survival, certain aspects and practices are lost and some are at stake since Chendebji culture is solely oratory. Although Dr. Sonam Kinga and Dr. Jadkar Dorji exposed the history, language and certain religious practices, yet the practices that are untouched, improvised, and extinct, or at the stake of extinction are unexplored. Therefore, this paper intended to record the unrecorded and explore the unexplored distinct socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village, which are unharmed, well preserved and in existence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher has found limited research conducted on the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village. Thus, it gives scope for the researcher to explore the topic under study in depth.

Chendebji, the valley of cypress, under Tangsibji Gewog, Trongsa Dzongkhag is a receptacle of diverse cultures. The name of the village 'Chendebji' is the combination of 'Chenden' meaning cypress, and 'bji' ground or valley (Kinga, 2002). Historical sense and the unique culture are the identities of the village. The socio-cultural practices are almost similar to other villages but they have their uniqueness in certain aspects. Certain aspects and practices of Chendebji were exposed to the outer world by two eminent researchers, Dr. Sonam Kinga and Dr. Jadkar Dorji in 2002 and 2011 respectively. The former through "A brief history of Chendebji village and lhaBon celebration" exposed the 'LhaBon' celebration, certain Bon and Buddhist practices, appointment and the roles of Chipoen and the historical details of the village (Kinga, 2002). Whereas the later conducted research on "Hen Kha: A Dialect of Mangde Valley in Bhutan", focusing on the Mangdep language, which is also the language of Chendebji village (Dorji, 2011). However, these researchers did not explore the socio-cultural aspects and practices such as cuisine, dress, some of the Bon and Buddhist practices, social relationships, arts, animal raising, farming and folklores. In addition, the effect of modernization such as modern education, improvisation of religious practices, life with technological advancements and the effects of modernization has not been discussed.

Dr. Karma Phuntsho presented the condition of Bhutanese culture in the modern epoch through his article, "The cultural construction of Bhutan: an unfinished story", in the year 2015. He was the first Bhutanese to earn a doctorate at Oxford and was educated as a traditional monastic (Varvaloucas, 2017). The significance of the culture in the absence of military and economy power, and with the negative and disrupting influences of modernization was raised by stating, "Our future sovereignty as a nation-

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state will continue to depend upon the articulation of a cultural imperative that asserts our distinctive Bhutanese identity” (Phuntsho, 2015). The main concern was on how the Bhutanese will think, feel, speak, dress and relate after 50 years at the current pace of change. The paper reflected the importance of local sociocultural aspects and practices. As per the article, the national assets lie in the rich cultural and linguistic diversity caused by geographical segregation such as mountain or river. However, the diverse cultures are dispersed and fragmented due to internal migration caused by better modern facilities such as roads, schools, media and workplaces, as it leads to the fusion of different cultures. The traditional cultures, the bulwarks against influences of modernisation, are now eroding with the small minority group of the main practitioners consisting of the elders in the specific localities, who are diminishing each day. Thus, modernization has led to gradual acculturation and boiling frog syndrome. In addition, Dr. Dkarma Phuntsho in his article presented the importance of improvisation of the culture for its survival in the changing time, by giving examples of the proliferation of the new brand of tshoglam boots with comfortable soles and Zhungdra performance at the popular *Drukstar* contest. According to Phuntsho (2015), a single factor such as citizenship, religious faith or political allegiance does not define the cultural identity as cultural identity is made up of the myriad small things including the beliefs, place, profession, community, family, dress, food and leisure activities. The article does not present the complete sociocultural aspects and practices of the nation and any of Chendebji village. However, it exposed certain socio-cultural aspects and practices such as the Bhutanese values, dress, arts and language; the effect of modernization on it and the need for its change to survive with the changing time.

Dr. Jason Hopper, in the paper published in *The Druk Journal*, “Beyond cultural preservation: contemporary art and identity in Bhutan” presented the idea of most modern Bhutanese being in a cultural limbo, having relinquished the old but not fully reached the new. To the researcher, being modern and Bhutanese is important but the relationship between modernity and tradition seems limited since modern

Bhutanese are what Dr. Dkarma Phuntsho calls the ‘diachronic conundrum’. The focus was on the need for improvisation of culture to walk with the modernity since focusing too much on preservation risks presenting a false dichotomy between tradition and modernity and risks dismissing the creative work of Bhutanese who engage with a changing society while staying true to their roots. Though the researcher presented the effect of modernization and the need for improvisation of culture, the focus was only on contemporary art. In addition, the researcher did not discuss any of the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village (Hopper, 2017).

Mr. Sangay Chopel in 2012 researched on “Cultural Diversity and Resilience” centring to most of the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Bhutan. The research assessed the strength and relevance of various aspects of culture in Bhutan such as sense of identity; language; participation in various cultural activities, such as sports, festivals, and songs and change in values, beliefs, norms, core values, and customs; and. In addition, through the survey conducted in 2007 and 2008, the researcher made the an attempt to see whether Bhutanese culture as a whole is capable of upholding and developing itself in spite of challenges. In the first phase, survey was conducted in nine dzongkhags and later in the remaining eleven dzongkhags.

Thereby, covering all the 20 Dzongkhags and it included 1300 respondents. The research revealed that 92% of the respondents could understand and speak their first language very well and 86.3% reported the importance of maintaining Bhutanese traditions. Significantly, all of the respondents strongly agreed to the values of ‘thadamtshi’ (loyalty). Further, 81.7% agreed that most people have become more materialistic,

43.5% agreed that they have become more selfish now than in the past and 61% reported that ‘Driglam Namzha” is getting stronger in the past 12 months. The respondents gave more importance to customs than on gender issues. In addition, 89.7% agreed that the local festivals are getting vibrant, signifying the strength of the Bhutanese culture to grow in spite of challenges from other cultures. It is also evident that most of the respondents observe ‘duezang’ by visiting auspicious palces such as lhakhangs, ‘nyes’ and chortens. The researcher also found that the level of importance accorded to learn folk tales and participation in local festivals was relatively lower in Thimphu than other dzongkhags. Moreover, the influence of foreign music is not strong as more respondents listen to Bhutanese songs than Nepali, Hindi, English and other songs (Chopel, 2012). Thus, the researcher covered almost all the socio-cultural aspects of the nation, in line with modernization but did not centre to local culture of Chendebji village. Moreover, 1.5% (19-20) of 1300 respondents’ mother tongue was ‘Henkha’, the Mangdep Language spoken in parts of Trongsa and Wangduephodrang, which includes Chendebji village, but the respondent’s identity is not definite.

However, Dr. Sonam Kinga and Dr. Jakar Dorji exposed certain socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village in particular. In 2002, His Excellency Dasho Dr. Sonam Kinga, Former Chairperson of the National Council of Bhutan, researched on “A brief history of Chendebji village and lhaBon celebration” with the interview of five villagers. The researcher focused on the ‘Naktshang’ since it is associated with Yab Tenpi Nyima, the father of Zabdrung Ngawang Namgyel who commanded the local deity ‘Gyelp Dungle Dkarpo’ also known as ‘Kuntu Zangpo’ to safeguard the village. ‘Naktshang’ is also associated with the monarchs especially, His Majesty Ugyen Wangchuck and His Majesty Jigme Wangchuck and with the treasures of the village such as ‘Chorten’, ‘phurba’, ‘conch’, a volume of ‘Gyatongpa’ and some other relics of Yab Tenpi Nyima. These treasures are used to prevent the natural calamities such as hailstorm, and natural accident to the people; and with the naming of the household in the village such as Nagtshang, Togto(on the top), Pogtoteng (on the hill), Drongtey (starting point of the village), Zaga (water reservoir)

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and Tsigpuding (on the wall). In addition, the procedure for the appointment of 'Chipoen', village herald and his active roles were reflected along with Bon and Buddhist religion, where the focus was on Bon practices such as LaBon celebration, construction of a small stupa-like monument near every household in honour of 'Nagas' and the festivals dedicated to the 'Nagas'. The researcher even mentioned the eradication of Bon practices such as live sacrifices of roosters, pigs and sheep with the insight of Buddhist values. The study was centred to the history, certain Bon and Buddhist festivals, LhaBon celebration and the appointment of Chipoen. Nevertheless, most of the distinct socio-cultural aspects and practices such as the cuisine, dress, social relationships, art, animal raising, farming and folklores were unexplored. In addition to this, the effect of modernization such as modern education, improvisation of religious practices, life with technological advancements and the effects of modernization was not discussed. The research was based on the interview of five insiders, thus the answers provided by them may be limited, subjective and bias. The number of households in 2002, when Dr. Sonam Kinga conducted his research was 22 but presently it has reached 34. Moreover, the names of the certain households that were originally in 'Henkha', were translated in Dzongkha. For instance, "Geypai-Drowa" and "Lhagang-Drowa" have been translated as "Geypai- Tsawa" and "Lhagang-Tsawa" (Kinga, 2002). Finally, the details provided on the Bon and Buddhist religion were limited.

Dr. Jagar Dorji researched on 'Hen Kha: A Dialect of Mangde Valley in Bhutan'. 'Hen Kha' also known as 'Nyn Kha' or 'Nga Ked' is spoken in parts of Trongsa and Wangduephodrang districts and Van Driem and the School of International Languages (SIL) classified the language as Tibeto-Chinese, Himalayan, Tibeto-Burman and Tibeto-Kinauri. 'Henkha' is considered the backbone of our culture but the challenges brought along with the processes of modernisation are placing the language in jeopardy, as there is a growing shift towards other, widely used languages. In Mangde gewog, each dialect is usually referred to by the name of the village in which it is spoken. For example, in the Tangsibji Gewog it is known as 'Tangsibjee Kha' or 'Ngkhapai Kha' and in Chendebji as 'Chendebji Kha', leading to the abandonment of the general term 'Hen Kha'. "As per 1991 study conducted by the Dzongkha Development Commission of the Royal Government, the term Hen Kha might have become obsolete, though the language is used" (Dorji, 2011). The language is spoken in the west of Mangde Chu, such as Pang, Bemji, Kaba, Daba, Sinphu, Chela and Drenzhi under Nubi Gewog; Chendebji, Nyala, Drangla, Tshangkha, Tangsibji and Kela under Tangsibji Gewog; and in Changra, Tang-je, Eusa and Trashy Dingkha in Dragten County. Additionally, there is closer social and economic association since the 'HenKha' speakers are said to raise sheep for wool, meat and manure. Additionally, according to Van Driem, Hen Kha has lexical similarities with other languages of Bhutan. 75 to 77 % of its words are lexically similar to Bumthang Kha, 69 % resembles the language of Kurtoe, 65 to 78 % similar to Khen Kha and 60 % with Dzongkha. However due to Rural-urban migration and resettlement, use of English for trade and education, and start of a new family from different regions are the effects of modernization that lead to the decline of the usage of language. The researcher has presented the detailed information of the 'Henkha' language, which is also the language of Chendebji, bringing in the technical details and the effect of modernization on language. The research was only centered on one aspect, the language. Further, the researcher being a speaker of 'Henkha', has explored the language but did not collect the view of other speakers, thus the details may be subjective and biased. Moreover, the details may be one-sided and limited (Dorji, 2011).

These researchers have presented the tangible and intangible culture of Bhutan and its significance for the national identity and security. In addition, the latter two researchers have focused especially on the Chendebji village by exposing its glorifying history, Bon and Buddhist practices, the appointment of Chipoen, design of the village and the language 'Hen kha'. Even with these papers, the maximum of the socio-cultural aspects and practices have been left out such as the cuisine, dress, Bon and Buddhist festivals, social relationships, arts, animal raising, farming and folklores. Furthermore, the effect of modernization such as modern education, improvisation of religious practices, life with technological advancements and the effects of modernization has not been discussed. Importantly, the certain details presented by Dr. Sonam Kinga are not valid since the research was conducted in 2002 and the information was collected from limited participants based on interviews. Thus, the responses may be subjective and limited. Further, the research conducted may be biased since certain researchers have carried out the research based on personal experience. For example, Dr. Jagar Dorji as the speaker of the 'Henkha' language has explored without including other participants. However, the present research on, "A study on the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village" is authentic since it includes 100 participants rooted to the village. The research sample also includes participants from different backgrounds and participants living, both in and away from the village, to include the details of the socio-cultural aspects and practice from different perspectives.

AIM

The aim of this research is to analyse the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the Chendebji and to discover the present condition of the village's culture and tradition.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research are to:

- examine the unique socio-cultural aspects and the practices which are untouched even with the development of the village

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- identify the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village which are improvised over the period of time
- evaluate the factors leading to the deterioration of the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village maintain the uniqueness of the village, even with the impact of modernity?
2. What are the influences of religion on the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village?
3. What are the factors affecting the deterioration of the traditional cultural practices of Chendebji village?

HYPOTHESES

1. The socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village maintain the uniqueness of the village.
2. The certain improvisation in socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village are influenced by the change in the existing religious practices.
3. The deterioration of the traditional cultural practices of Chendebji Village is due to the impact of modernity.

Significance of the study

With the advent of modernization, Bhutanese culture experienced certain changes. Therefore, the study traced the condition of socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village in the modern epoch. The findings of the research are relevant since the data were collected from the participants who have experienced and lived with the socio-cultural aspects and practices for more than 60 years and those who have seen the effects of modernization. Around two studies have been conducted on some of the sociocultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village, such as 'lhaBon' celebration, language and historical details but certain distinct aspects and practices have been left. However, this paper explored the unexplored and recorded unrecorded aspects and practices. Moreover, the study will benefit the future of those aspects and practices since the research will archive the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village, which is oratory. The study as a whole can be used for further research and reference by anyone who wishes to conduct research on similar areas.

METHODOLOGY

This section elaborates on the research setting, population, sampling, research design, research instrument, data collections, method, and Combined Data Analysis procedure. According to Rajasedkar, Philominathan & Chinnathambi (2013), "The procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology".

Research setting

The setting of the research is Chendebji village, under Mangdi gewog under Trongsa Dzongkhag. Chendebji is a small village with 34 households and approximately 200 people. It is almost 149 kilometres away from the capital. Similar to some of the villages in Bhutan, the village is recognised by its cluster of traditional houses and the yellow roof of its lhakhang on the far bank of Nikkha Chu (LonelyPlanet, 2017). Further, it is surrounded by mountains, used by the people for the wild products in the past and that provides fuel and raw materials for their art.

Population

Data on the socio-cultural aspects and practices were collected from the participants rooted to Chendebji. The targeted population was aged 18 and above. A total of 90 villagers responded to the structured survey questionnaire and 10 participants, who have been living in the village for more than 60 years were chosen for the semi-structured interview. The researcher chose the participants based on the proximity and centrality of the village and the researcher. Thus, the total population of this research consisted of 100 participants.

Sample

Sampling is vital for research since it determines the accuracy of the research. There are techniques for sampling populations grouped under Probability and Non-probability. However, the researcher used Non-probability Sampling, unlike Probability which is based on randomization, it is "more reliant on the researcher's ability to select elements for a sample" (Singh, 2018). Further, the researcher focused on Purposive sampling, since the researcher sampled with a purpose in mind and had one or more specific predefined groups based on the purpose of the research (Trochim, 2006). The population of 100 participants was divided into two main groups, Group 1 for the survey questionnaires and Group 2, the interview.

Group 1 if further divided into three groups, Group A, Group B and Group C. 'Group A' consisted of 30 participants who have lived the longest and experienced the socio-cultural aspects and practices (60 and above). 'Group B' consisted of 30 participants aged between 18-39 to see the influence of modernization on the socio-cultural aspects and practices. 'Group C

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consisted of 30 participants aged between 40-59, to balance between the earlier two groups. After the survey, the researcher interviewed 10 participants.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Mixed method research was used to study the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji.

According to Creswell (2009), "Mixed method research is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms". This design was chosen since this approach comprises of both quantitative and qualitative data, assimilating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. The rationale for integrating both types of data is that neither qualitative nor quantitative data are sufficient in itself to address the perceptions and details of the situations. The combinations of qualitative and quantitative approaches provide a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone (Creswell, 2014).

Research Instrument

The researcher conducted the research using the Explanatory sequential mixed method. According to Creswell (2014), "Explanatory sequential mixed method is one in which the researcher first conducts quantitative research, analyses the results and then builds on the results to explain them in more detail with qualitative research". The researcher used a quantitative method followed by qualitative method involving detailed exploration of the topic under study.

DATA COLLECTIONS AND METHOD

i. Structured Survey questionnaires

In the quantitative phase, the survey questionnaire was used to collect data. According to Trueman (2019), "A questionnaire is a series of questions asked to individuals to obtain statistically useful information about a given topic". Further, questionnaires are a significant tool as it helps to make a statement about the respondents. O'Leary (as cited in Quad, 2016) suggests some obvious strengths for this instrument as administering a questionnaire allows the researcher to generate data specific to their own research and offers insights that might otherwise be unavailable. Further, the questionnaire can reach a large number of respondents, represent an even larger population, allow for comparisons, generate standardized, quantifiable and empirical data, generate qualitative data with open-ended questions and be confidential and even anonymous. A Structured questionnaire (close-ended) was used which contained dichotomous questions and Likert Scale Questions. Talikoti (2019) stated that "Dichotomous question is a question which can have two possible answers" and the researcher used it to trace the details of the respondents such as gender. Personal details of the respondents such as their age and location were also collected. Importantly, the Likert Scale was used to collect the respondents' opinions on the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village. As per Joshi, Kale, Chandel & Pal (2015), "Likert scale is applied as one of the most fundamental and frequently used psychometric tools in educational and social sciences research". Likert scale is a set of statements (items) offered for a real or hypothetical situation under study. Participants were asked to show their level of agreement (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) with the given statement (items) on a metric scale. Here all the statements in combination reveal the specific dimension of the attitude towards the issue, hence, necessarily inter-linked with each other (Joshi, Kale, Chandel & Pal, 2015). Since the participants consisted of both literate and illiterate population, the researcher read and explained the questions and the options to the illiterate participants and fill the survey questionnaire form as per the given responses. However, the literate participants independently filled the form by themselves.

ii. Semi-structured interview

The data collections in the qualitative phase were based on in-depth semi-structured interviews with the participants. DeFranzo (2011) stated that Qualitative Research is primarily exploratory research that is vital in gaining an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop hypotheses or ideas for potential quantitative research. The purpose of this phase was to explain and extend the results of the first, quantitative phase. Here, the semi-structured interview was used. As per Doyle (2018), "A semi-structured interview is a meeting in which the interviewer does not strictly follow a formalized list of questions". The researcher developed questions on socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji and the effect of modernization. Depending on how the participant answered, the researcher asked follow-up questions to gain a more in-depth understanding. The face-to-face interview was used to explain the questions and provide instant feedback to the respondent, capture verbal and non-verbal cues and capture emotions and behaviours (DeFranzo, 2014). The researcher recorded the responses.

Combined Data Analysis procedure

The data collected in the quantitative and qualitative phases were analysed. The researcher used MS Excel 2016 to analyse the data. For the reliability of the survey questionnaires, Cronbach's Alpha (α) was used. As per the Institute for Digital Research and Education (2019), "Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. It is considered to be a measure of scale reliability".

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Calculating and reporting Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency reliability is imperative while using Likert scales.

$\alpha = \frac{nr}{1 + (n - 1)r}$	<p>α = Cronbach's alpha n=number of observations r-average correlation coefficient (Gliem & Gliem, 2003)</p>
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The reliability coefficient of +1 is the maximum, >.90- very highly reliable, .8-.89 is highly reliable, .7-.79 is reliable, .6-.69 is marginally/minimally reliable and <.60 is unacceptably low reliable. According to the Institute for Digital Research and Education (2019), “.70 to +1 is considered “acceptable” in most social science research situations”.

Then the researcher used *Descriptive Analysis* and *Narrative Analysis* to analyse the data collected from the interview. The descriptive analysis enables the researcher to generate descriptive information from the raw data. Loab, Dynarski, MsFarlan, Morrid, Reardon & Reber (2017) said,

Descriptive analysis characterizes the world or a phenomenon by identifying patterns in data to answer questions about who, what, where, when, and to what extent. Descriptive analysis is data simplification. A good description presents what we know about capacities, needs, methods, practices, policies, populations, and settings in a manner that is relevant to a specific research or policy question. Whereas Narrative analysis is

“used to analyse text that may come from a variety of sources including transcripts from interviews, diaries, field notes, surveys, and other written forms. Narrative analysis often involves reformulating stories presented by people in a different context and based on their different experiences” (CIRT, n.d.).

Thus, the desired results were achieved through the above scientific methodological analysis.

Findings

Firstly, the findings revealed the unique socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village, which is still untouched. The result obtained from two methods presented socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village that mirrors the past, even with the touch of modernity. This is historical for the nation since it has its connection with both religious and secular history of Bhutan. Dr. Sonam Kinga's paper on 'A brief history of Chendebji village and LhaBon celebration' presented the history of the village, which is vital for the nation's history. Further, the infrastructure, production of bamboo materials and Bon practices such as 'LhaBon', 'Lhasoe', 'phogo' and 'Eueney' are still intact. Significantly, the social relationship between the people is maintained and the role of 'Chipoen' is still practised today. The 'Churu' (euglena) is still prepared and consumed.

Secondly, the findings revealed the improvised socio-cultural aspects and practices. The respondents said that though the vegan items had replaced the animal sacrifices, the practices are still the same.

Thirdly, the findings also present the impact of modernisation. According to the respondents, the life of the people has enhanced due to modernisation. For instance, in the past, they had to guard their farms against the wild and domestic animals for 24 hours but the solar fencing has alleviated their work.

Communication and transportation became easier due to mobile and road connectivity.

On the contrary, modernization has affected certain aspects and practices of the village. People have found their entertainment in their phones and television, thus the practice of storytelling has declined. Further, due to the easy import of materials from other countries, the culture of weaving woollen clothes and knitting bamboo materials are declining. Likewise, with the easy migration to other places for better opportunities, the family with mix culture is increasing, which leads to the gradual decline of the people rooted to the village's culture. The respondents of the Semi-structured interview said that their children face difficulties in speaking Henkha and preserving the village culture since they are not exposed to the village culture. R₉ stated,

“My children and grandchildren come home, once a year. My children and I communicate in Henkha but with my daughter, I speak in Dzongkha since she is from the East. When it comes to my grandchildren, we speak in Dzongkha. My son is aware of the village culture but my daughter-in-law and my grandchildren are not”.

Thus, it is evident that the culture of the village is at stake. Similarly, Dotji (2011), in his paper “Hen Kha: A Dialect of Mangde Valley in Bhutan” found that the number of Henkha speakers has declined due to rural-urban migration because the families do not speak 'Henkha' once they are out of the community. In addition, the age-old tales and the myths of the village are declining due to lack of the practice. R₁, R₂, R₇ and R₁₀ stated that people are more towards mobile phones

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and television. Even, the old people find entertainment in the BBS 2 (Bhutan Broadcasting Service channel 2), which presents the traditional and modern performances.

Further R₄ stated,

“Children nowadays are lost in their mobile phones either watching videos or playing games. My 2 years old grandson, stops crying when he is handed a phone. Sometimes my children, who have become parents, are educated spill the tea or burn the curry watching television”.

Thus, R₄ stated that the people are not only forgetting the age-old culture but they are losing the rapport within the family. Furthermore, certain socio-cultural aspects and practices have extinct. The age-old traditions of producing wooden and earthen materials have extinct along with the raising of sheep, pigs and horses.

The next section critically analyses the findings responding to the research questions.

Critical analyses of the findings in regards to the research questions

Research Question One

How do the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village maintain the uniqueness of the village, even with the impact of modernity?

Religion is the root of Chendebji's culture. According to Wangchuk (2017), “The influence of religion is highly visible in everyday life as it permeates every aspect of life in Bhutan”. The shamanistic practice of Bon existed in Bhutan from time immemorial. Before Buddhism, local people practiced Bon religion that focuses on prosperity and fertility of a community; worship of local deities; sacrificing animals and offering bean curd, flowers or milk (Tashi, 2011). Even today, people of Chendebji practice Bonism along with Buddhism.

According to Dem (2019), “According to oral tradition, the spread of Bonism is a preZhabdrung tradition where animals were sacrificed and offered to nature”. The respondents stated that they practice ‘Bondkar’ such as ‘Phogo’, ‘LhaBon’, and ‘soe-kha’. ‘Bon-dkar’ is for the prosperity and fertility and the worships without animal sacrifices, whereas Bon nag includes magic, poison and negative deeds to others and the animal sacrifices (Crcao, 2014). Further, the obligation to fulfil family traditions prompts people to practise Bonism (Dem, 2019). According to R₁, even after the coming of Yap Tenpai Nima and his teachings, people continued with the Bonism, including the animal sacrifices. However, with the decree from HH the 70th Jekhenpo, the Bon practices have been improvised, whereby the practices became vegan. According to *Dkarchung(2011)*,

“Buddhism provided a common ground for diverse cultures of different factions of the society, as the integration of existing culture took place. Consequently, Buddhism laid the foundation of Bhutan's unique cultural heritage, pertaining to arts, architecture, literature, social structure, and its institution”.

‘Lochoe’, the annual ritual is a significant Buddhist practise in the village. Though the ritual is conducted similarly, yet the meat items had been substituted by dairy products and vegan items.

Furthermore, the village is known for the Chendebji Chorten. The Chorten is the replica of

Boudhanath Stupa, in Nepal and is named after the village. As per R₄, working with the prophecy of 2nd Gangtey Trulku, Drup Zhidha the disciple of Gangtey Trulku built it in the 19th century for the protection from Ngyla Duem and for the harmony in future. Drup Zhidha and Her Highness Ashi Kezang Choden Wangchuck constructed the ‘Mani Dangrim’ and small Chorten respectively.

The village is known for its shared responsibilities and unity. The village has the custom of appointing Chipoen. According to Kinga (2012), *Chipoen* of Chendebji was equal in rank to a *Nyikem* (a high official who has been awarded red scarf by the king) especially during the reign of His Majesty

Jigme Wangchuck”. 98% of the respondents stated that the very important role of a Chipoen is taken and enjoyed by every household, despite the origin of the family thereby sharing the responsibility. The respondents said that the rituals and programs of the village are coordinated by Chipoen, whereas the head of the family along with with the other member coordinate rituals for their individual family. The traditional roles of Chipoen are still continued but with the start of democracy and the appointment of Tshogpa, the administrative work is now taken by the Tshogpa

When it comes to the houses in the villages of Bhutan, the most striking feature of a Bhutanese house is the window assembly, known as a ‘rabsel’. There are various styles, but it is typically a timberframed structure, which wraps around three sides of the upper floors jutting out over the lower storey. It incorporates the windows and has an elaborately carved cornice feature (Batesjenc, 2014). There are three local temples in the village namely Naktshang, Toktong and Mangi-lhakhang (common temple). Out of the three temples, the common temple is built in the design of the temples found in Bhutan, whereas Toktong and Naktshang are inside the local residence. As per R₁₁, the local deity of Naktshang is Gaychen Kintu zam and the specialty of the temple is the ‘Machoenm’, which is a prayer book that is read to invoke rain and sun. The treasure (ter) of the temple is a ‘Dungdkar’ and is blown when the people experience hailstone and heavy rainfall to change its direction. The next temple ‘Togtong’, is the resident for the local deity ‘kencho-zatshen-rao/dranso’ and it is believed that when the locals have to travel or do special work, they receive the blessing to acquire luck. R₈ stated that if one travels with the blessing from these temples, they are saved from

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misfortunes. Until today, nine lamas have come from Toktong and each of them has served as the Lama of Wangdue Gonpa under Sephu Gewog,

Wangduephodrang. The family of Naktsang is believed to be the family of great Dupthob, Gomchey Gyeltshen Ddkar (white) and Naktsang links the village with the country's history.

There is no gender discrimination in the village. The household comprises of both patriarchy and matriarchy. The marriage system of Chendebji is unique. R₄ said that the bridegroom, after the marriage, could stay in either's house. Additionally, in the case of property, both the house and the land is given to the one who has given more time and services to the house despite the gender, as a reward for the hard work. R₂ said that currently there is a mutual understanding between the siblings and the land is divided equally but the house is given to the one staying in the village. However, in most cases, the sibling studying and working outside gives both land and house to the one who stays in the village.

The government takes initiatives in maintaining the culture of the village. R₉ stated that, after the construction of the new bridge, the old bridge is preserved as a monument. Further Naktsang and Togtong, get funds from the Zhung-dratshang for its maintenance.

Research Question Two

What are the influences of religion on the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village?

People in the village practice 'Lhaboen', 'pho-go', Eueney and Annual Ritual for their wellbeing. R₁ shared that 'Lhaboen' is conducted on the 10th month of the Bhutanese calendar to bring long life and wealth in the community. Dralhapangdoe is performed to protect and have prosperity in the nation.

'Lhasoe' pleases the local deity for different purposes such as birth, illness and during the appointment of Chipoen. 'Phogo' is conducted on the 17th day of the 7th month and 11th day of the 1st month of the Bhutanese calendar in the field, for the better yield and 'Euneay'(rituals for the prosperity) for the wellbeing of the village, people and animals. R₄ stated that the specialty of the annual ritual is that, the owner serves the whole village from morning porridge to midnight singing and dancing. Further, one of the old men narrates a poem 'khatam' with delicious words, explaining the success of the day, the importance of the day, the hospitality of the house owner and finally the blessings for the house. For these programs, animal sacrifices were a crucial part. Usually sheep and chickens for the deity, pigs or cows to feed the crowd and chickens for the new mothers. However, these animal sacrifices are completely stopped and thus, people are happy with the changes.

The present Chendebji Primary School was established in 1968. 25 students were taught Dzongkha for 3 years followed by teaching Basic English. There was only a teacher named Tshering Gyeltshen who stayed in the village. After the completion of the primary classes, they were transferred to Sherubling School, Trongsa. However, the number of students declined and school was closed for a few years, however, in 1988 the school was reopened with new structures upon the royal command. Now there are 4 teachers and 45 students and they are taught the entire subject inclusive of English, Maths, Dzongkha, Science and Social studies.

The location of the cattle shed is unique. Like all the Bhutanese, the villagers used to keep their cattle on the ground floor but with the numerous health campaigns, they relocated those to a distance. The shed is about 900 meters away from the house. As per the findings, it has helped the people to stay clean and get the recognition as the clean and model village. Further, because of its cleanliness, the Tshogpa then got the opportunity to visit foreign countries.

People practiced a barter system where they exchanged local produce with other necessary items from Wangduephodrang. R₄ shared that the people used to carry their products on their back and later in the 1960s the village was connected with the road. They started growing potatoes as the cash crop. Now they grow bucket, barley and wheat and some they even produce lime but the whole village gives more importance to potato.

The cuisine of the village includes 'Khuley', 'Kahchi thup', 'Puta', 'dango' and kaptang.

These cuisines are similar to Bumthaps. However, as stated by R₈ the village is known for its Churu (euglena). During the reign of the 2nd and 3rd king, the people used to pay it as tax to the court for the royal consumption. It grows during the 7th to 10th month of the Bhutanese calendar.

The 'Chipoen' of the village coordinates 'Churu' collection thrice a year, whereby a member from each house went for the collection, which is later made to a circular shape, dried and is given as tax. Now the 'Churu' collection is not compulsory but it depends on the will of the people. However, 'Churu' collection has become a culture and a special item in the village. People manage time to collect it and store it. They sometimes gift the people who work outside the village and the visitors.

Research Question Three

What are the factors affecting the deterioration of the traditional cultural practices of Chendebji Village?

Earlier, the Chendebji people were disconnected from the external world. R₄ shared that people walked or rode horses to travel and trade but in 1968 the Wangdue to Trongsa highway was constructed making the travel and trade easy. The establishment of a 70kW run-of-river micro-hydro power plant and transmission line in 2005 has benefited the people shifting from traditional lighting methods. The mobile network connectivity enhanced the communication of the village from 2007.

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The history, tales and myths of the village are unique but as stated by R₁, the practices of narration are replaced by social networking sites, mobile phones and television. As shared by the respondents, people in the past used to wear Chari Gho and Kira (black woollen dress). Those Gho, Kira and hides were worn for medicinal benefits as stated by R₅ that these woollen products were and are still considered to have medicinal values since it helps to heal the skin rashes, nerves and osteopathy, and helps to regain the health of a new mother. However, due to development people were exposed to pants, shirts and easily available Gho and Kira from other countries. Thus, as per the finding, these local dresses are on the verge of extinction.

The people of Mangdi inclusive of Chendebji speak 'Mangde-bi-kha', which is also known as 'Henkha'. Rural-urban migration for jobs and better life is a serious problem for the socio-religious and cultural values and due to change in places, many young people are not being able to speak their mother tongue fluently or at all. Additionally, they have little knowledge of the social and religious practice.

According to Phuntsho (2017), "The cultures of youths differ from their parents and hugely diverge from their grandparents". Further, the migrations have encouraged mix-culture marriage. As per R₁, the children of the migrated parents and belonging to mix culture are not aware of the language and the culture of the village.

Bamboo knitting has been a tradition of the village. R₄ stated that the people, they go in the forest and carry bamboos on their back. Earlier, when people were not exposed to the modern roof they knitted roof and even wall for their animal hut. Additionally, they knitted baskets to carry manure and grasses and baskets to store their materials. They even made flute, bow, and arrow with the bamboo. They practiced those for their consumption but later they started doing business. However, with the increase in demand, there was a problem with the availability of the bamboo. Recently, the restorations of bamboo groves have made people revive the culture, especially for personal use. Further, the practice of producing earthen and wooden utensils are considered time-consuming and difficult, thus it has been substituted by the imported utensils.

CONCLUSION

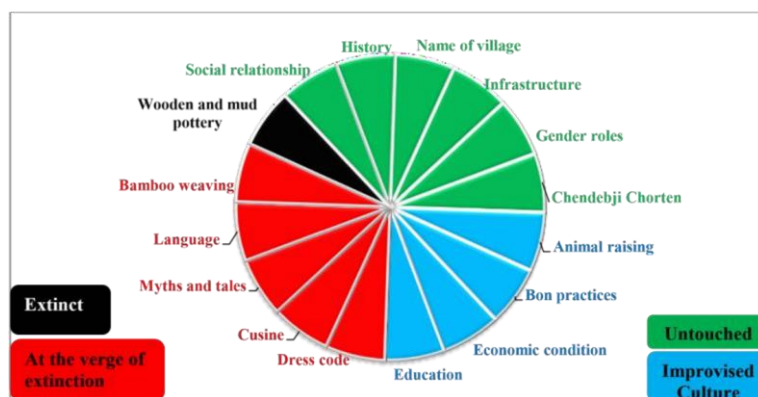


Figure 1: Present condition of the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji

Socio-cultural aspects and practices of a village are important since it not only preserves the village's uniqueness but also helps the nation to stand on its own. The nation preserves all these multicultural of different villages since it helps to retain the sovereignty of the country. With the start of modernisation, the country was exposed to the outside world. Further, the connection with the other nations has helped Bhutan to break the fence of isolation. The coming of modernisation has not only enhanced the life of the people but also has led to the change and decline of the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village.

This study concludes that the socio-cultural aspects and practices of Chendebji village are unique. During the baseline data collection from the people of Chendebji using survey questionnaires and semistructured interviews, it was found that modernisation of the country has a great impact on it. Though certain socio-cultural aspects and practices are untouched, some have been improvised for its betterment. However, certain aspects and practices are being forgotten due to the availability of modern facilities and lack of continuity. Moreover, Buddhism has improvised traditional Bon practices. The result revealed the extant conditions of the sociocultural aspects and practices of the village.

The findings revealed that;

1. the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village are unique but some are extinct and some are on the verge of extinction. However, some are untouched and improvised.
2. the history, dress, cuisine, language, social relationship, infrastructure, religious practices, farming, myths, and tales are unique.
3. Village's name is associated with 'Chenzi' mountain facing the village but with the time, it is getting replaced with the big cypress tree located in the Chendebji Primary School.
4. the village is significant for both religious and secular history of Bhutan since Yap Tenpai Nima, the father of Zhabdrung Nawang Namgyal, blessed it.

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5. the people practice both Bonism and Buddhism.
6. the Bon practices such as 'Phogo', 'LhaBon', 'Dralha-pang-doe', 'Lha-soe', and 'Eueneay' are modified aligning to Buddhist practices where the people abreact it with pride and happiness.
7. 'Lochoe' the significant Buddhist practice is practised beginning with serving of 'doem' for the good fortune and success and ends with 'khatam', a poem narrated by an elder describing the hospitality of the owner, success of the day and blessings for the future, followed by singing and dancing till the dawn.
8. Animal raising, especially animal sheltering is unique. Animals are raised for dairy products and farm works. Further, safe sheds are located in their farms almost 900 meters away from their homes, identifying the village as "Clean and Model village".

Significantly, use of animals for farm works is gradually replaced with machines.

9. Chendebji Chorten not only provides protection to the village but also helps the village to preserve its tales.
10. Modernization has provided easy access to foreign products such as ready-made Gho and Kira and the packaged food. Thus, people opt for those, instead of the age-old culture of wearing the woollen Gho and Kira and eating indigenous wheat, bucket, barley and millet flour and euglena (churu). The people wearing traditional dresses such as 'Chari Gho and Kira', 'Tera Nakai', 'Tari' and 'Chakhap' are just one. Further, one woman practises weaving woollen clothes and the age-old cuisine such as 'khuley', 'puta', 'dango', 'kaptang' and 'Churu' are replaced with rice. Thus, the dress and the cuisine of the village are at risk.
11. the tele-transportation connectivity of the village has lifted the socio-economic level of the people and thus connects themselves to the outside world.
12. the mixed-culture marriage and external migration have forced the decline of 'Henkha', dress, and mythical pride of the village.
13. Similarly, television and social networking sites and apps have replaced the age-old tradition of sharing tales and myths, therefore posing a risk to oral tradition.
14. since the workloads are shared by the technologies, people get enough time to interact with others that creates an arena to socialize and maintain the social relationship.
15. Education started with monastic education followed by modern education in the village.

Most of the people have at least basic education either from monastic or modern schools.

16. the age-old tradition 'appointment of Chipoen' is continued even after the start of democracy. Though 'Tshogpa' of the village does the administrative works, Chipoen coordinates the age-old practices such as 'Churu' collection and Bon practices.
17. there are no gender issues in the village. Both males and females share household and farm work. Importantly, both have the freedom of speech and thoughts and rights for the property.
18. the infrastructure of the village is similar to other villages. However, the two local temples 'Naktshang' and 'Togtong' make the infrastructure unique. Both are with the design of a typical Bhutanese house but the top floor is used as the temple. Thus, it functions as a temple as well as residence and is vital for the village and the country. Further, the new constructions are aligned to traditional design and technique, other than the commercial buildings and the hotels, which are built with modern equipment but are with traditional design and paintings.
19. the tradition of producing earthen and wooden utensils is extinct since the collection of the raw materials and production process was time-consuming and tiring. Further, the imported plastics/steel utensils and electronic appliances that were available and cheap forced to leave the culture.
20. the tradition of weaving the woollen dress, weaving bamboo items and producing lime powder is on the verge of extinction. There are only two families who produce lime, one woman who weaves woollen clothes and a man who weaves bamboo items as their profession. It shows that the number has drastically declined since these practices are time-consuming and expensive.

5.1 Recommendation

The most significant recommendation this research makes is to retain the unique sociocultural aspects and the practice of the village that can be conducted by recording it. Doing so, it encourages people to know the importance of their socio-cultural aspects and practices and help the future researcher.

According to Dem (2019), the idea and practice of one's own culture is usually the obligation to fulfil family traditions.

To maintain the uniqueness of the village, which lies in the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village, the recommendations from the findings are;

1. The socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village that is oratory should be visualised and recorded for the preservation of its uniqueness and for future use as well.
2. The government should continue funding 'Naktshang' and 'Togtong' for renovations.

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3. The government should develop a strong policy on the preservation of the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village. For instance, the traditional wooden bridge is preserved upon the issuance of an official order.
4. The people of the Chendebji village had been burning worn-out traditional materials and selling the old traditional item when they get good prices. Thus, the old traditional items such bamboo utensils, 'sipa'(container), 'tari'(woollen black Kira), 'Chari'(woollen patterned Kira), Kira, weaving materials, earthen pots, animal hide bags and mats, woollen bags and 'Dapa'(wooden plates and bowls) should be preserved for the future generations, researchers and academician.
5. The improvised Bon practices should be promoted.
6. The people should be oriented with their culture and its significance.
7. The construction of animal shed away from the village should be continued to maintain hygiene and to retain the title of 'Clean and Model village'.
8. The role of Chipoen (herald) should be continued because it not only has historical references but also supports the village in coordinating the village programs and activities.
9. The media house could broadcast some of the specific features and culture to the outer world.

5.2. Research limitations

Chendebji village is under Mangdi gewog, Trongsa Dzongkhag, 439 kilometres away from Yonphula Centenary College. Thus, data collection and revisiting was time-consuming. Further, the researcher needed constant travel for the research. Moreover, most of the participants were less literate and they were not able to fill the survey questionnaires by themselves, thus the researcher had to explain every question, personally. Since the survey forms included the Likert scales, it was difficult to explain and receive responses as per the scales (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree) but the researcher was able to make it possible.

Since the socio-cultural aspects and practices of the village have not been recorded, the responses collected from the participants could be subjective and open to interpretations. Further, there is the possibility of misinterpreting the questions by the respondents and the responses given by the respondents may not be truthful.

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