

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The tradition of discrimination based on caste, race, birth, sex, occupation, and untouchability is still ubiquitously practiced in Nepalese society. Due to it, about 3 million *Dalits* have been deprived of exercising their fundamental rights as enshrined in the Constitution and international human rights instruments (Katwal, 2006). The term *Dalit* itself is a politically coined word, meaning "the poor and oppressed person " (Dahal et.al, 2002). In the context of South Asia, *Dalit* is a common term used to address culturally, economically and socially marginalized individual or communities. The proposed bill on *Dalits* in Nepal forwarded by National *Dalit* Commission to the Lower House of Parliament for approval has defined the term '*Dalit* ' as "those communities who by virtue of atrocities of caste-based discrimination and untouchability, are most backward in social, educational, political and religious fields, and are deprived of human dignity and social justice" (Dahal et.al. 2002).

According to Dahal et.al. (2002), the term is also understood as untouchables or *achhut* or the term connotes in the sense of Old Legal Code of 1854, "*Pani na chalne, choi chhito halnu parne* (caste from whom water is not accepted, and whose touch requires sprinkling of holy water). National *Dalit* Commission 2060, formed under the HMG, has identified 22 different *Dalit* communities Gandharva (*Gaine*), *Pariyar* (*Damai, Darji, Suchikar, Nagarchi, Dholi, Hudke*), *Badi, Biswakarma* (*Lohar, Sunar, Kami, Aod, Chunara, Parki, Tatma*), *Sarki* (*Mijhar, Charmkar, Bhul*), *Kalar, Kori, Khatwe* (*Mandal, Khanka*), *Kakaiya, Khatik, Chamar* (*Ram, Mochi, Harijan, Ravidas*), *Chidimar, Doom* (*Marik*), *Tatma* (*Tati, Das*), *Dushad* (*Paswan, Hajara*), *Dhobi* (*Hindu, Rajak*), *Pattharkatta, Paasi, Bantar, Musahar, Mestar* (*halkhor*), *Sarbhanka* (*Sarwariya*).

Dalit category includes what one may call artisan or occupational castes- cobbler, tailor, leather worker, washer man, sweeper, laborers, weaver, metal worker, and so on. Their major source of livelihood is from sale of their traditional caste- based wares. They have been practicing their traditional caste occupation and selling their products to their clients to make a living. Engaging in these activities was considered to be polluting to the individual who performed them and this pollution was considered to be 'contagious' by the higher caste people. The *Dalit* population is caught in a vicious cycle of poverty (90

percent of all *Dalits* live under the national poverty line) due to infringements on their entitlements, brought about by caste based discrimination. Although the untouchability and discrimination on the basis of caste was formally abolished or outlawed by the 1963 New National Code, Constitution of Nepal 1991, and Parliamentary Declaration of 2006 in the form of untouchability freed nation, it prevails widely in Nepalese society even now (Nepali, 2008).

According to ILO (2008), the consequences of inaccessibility to socio-economic and political rights are manifested in various sectors of development. *Dalits* are far worse in all indicators of well-being - education, employment, health, political participation, etc. Access to material and non-material resources is restricted and at times barred, leading to deficiencies in both basic needs and opportunities for self-advancement. Many live in extremely difficult circumstances of persistent food insecurity, inadequate shelter, and poor sanitation. They often lack sufficient land. Even though the *Dalit* population constitutes an 8-25 percent of the population, they own only 1 percent of the nation's arable land.

Land has been always central to the economic and political power in Nepal. Land not only supports majority of Nepali for livelihood activities, it also has other economic benefits such as it can be rented out or can be mortgaged. Therefore, it is considered important even to shield against many types of shocks, especially financial shocks. Hence, the more land one has, the richer one is. Land ownership, in other words, measures prosperity or destitution.

In such scenario of Nepalese society, *Dalits* who have less or no land often make the bottom layer of social strata of the society. The size of land alone is not important all the time. The fertility of land and its location vis-à-vis economic and political centers determines land prices. Therefore, who controls what kind of land is equally important. Of those, who own some land mostly own low quality land. The nature and type of land availability in different geographic belts in Nepal are different and they support different farming systems. According to CSRC (2003), most *Dalits* are land less. Of 13 percent *Dalit* of national population, 70 percent in the Terai and 22 percent in hills are landless (CSRC, 2003) even if their other alternative major source of livelihood is agriculture. Agriculture and non-agricultural wage laborers was also common to *Dalits*. *Dalits* caste based occupation, wage labourers, share cropping (*adhiya*), jobs are their coping strategies for

food insecurity. Though they have small number of livestock, it is contributing for their household economy.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Dalits are considered as one of the most disadvantaged group because the process of social stratification and job distribution in the past has resulted in their present socio-economic plight and their entire and perpetual backwardness. Hence, most of the *Dalits* even today remain poorest of the poor. Even though many of the *Dalits* carry on with their caste based and service oriented traditional occupation as well as agricultural work, the significant return on the service they render and landlessness have made them face appalling poverty. *Dalits* have very little or no access to land. Landlessness means the situation of a person who is dependent on agriculture but has no land in his/her name or family member's name. There is unequal distribution of land where less number of people own large number of land and larger group of people own less land. The bottom 47 percent of land owning households own 15 percent of total agricultural land with an average size of less than 0.5 hectare (ha), while the top 5 percent occupies more than 37 percent of land. Food self-sufficiency is much lower among the *Dalits* and other marginal groups than among Brahmans, Chetris and Newars from their productivity and yield as they don't have their own land and even if they have, the size of the land they own is very less. Due to this, their socio-economic condition is miserable. They are unable to avail of the credit facilities of different formal financial institutions and on the other hand due to inconsistency of their jobs, they suffer in education attainment, don't have sufficient structures to cope with shocks. Therefore, they take up many professions as an alternative source of income for their sustenance. These alternatives supplement the family income. Most of the *Dalits* in the study area are found involved in wage labor. But, there is also found unfair wages to the tenants/ laborers. There is also no standardization of wage rates. Males and females are paid different rates of wages. Formalizing the wage rates and paying equal rates to male and female for equal work is another area of agrarian reform.

The major research questions are as:

-) What is the socio-economic and livelihood situation of *Dalits* of Geta VDC?
-) What is the household level food security of *Dalits* with respect to land holding size?
-) What is the household living standard of *Dalits*?

1.3 Rational/ Justification of Study

The empirical and valid finding on livelihood insecurity and social vulnerability of *Dalit* and socially excluded groups in relation to land resources will reflect ground realities of the landless and poor people. This study may assist planner, policy makers and implementing agencies to formulate strategies and take measures on behalf of this diverse deprived community. Thus it can add a milestone in the way of sustainable development. Moreover, this study is qualitative and exploratory; it will be helpful in identifying the factors responsible for their social exclusion from the mainstream of development as well Nepalese society.

Due to lesser number of valid and reliable studies related to land resources, the land right advocacy couldn't influence the policy maker and planners in spite of pertinent issues. This gap will be reduced via this study. By helping to formulate the strategies, this study will speed up the land movement.

1.4 Research Objectives

General: To examine the socio-economic and livelihood conditions of *Dalits* of Geta VDC in Kailali district.

Specific:

- i. To examine the socio-economic situation of *Dalits* of Geta VDC.
- ii. To assess household level food security of *Dalits* with respect to land holding size.
- iii. To find out household living standard of *Dalits*.

1.5 Limitations

-) The analysis is based on responses of the sample respondents.
-) The study was carried out in wards 4 and 5 of Geta VDCs of Kailali district. Therefore, the findings may be generalized to similar conditions only.
-) There was a time and resource constraint while conducting the research.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Meaning of some major terms has given below which makes readers easy to read and understand.

Ailani Land: The land owned by government without private ownership but cultivated by an individual.

Private Land: Private land refers to land with legal certificate identifying their possession of land.

Access to Land: It refers to ownership and possession of land which offers full utilization and enjoyment of land that determines socio-economic status. This is also related to the access to forest resources.

Land Tenancy: This is the mode cultivation in which one uses other's land for farming in exchange of certain cash or benefits.

Socioeconomic Status: It refers to position that an individual or family occupies in society, with respect to various social and economic variables viz., level of income, caste, education, occupation etc.

Livelihood: The livelihood is a way of living, ways of earning food, clothes, and shelter and sustaining life by earning cash.

Caste based occupation: The term can be defined as the traditional occupation followed by different castes for their livelihood.

Living Standard: It refers to status of respondent's income, expenditure, education, consumption, facilities like drinking water, electricity and toilet, house type, health, etc which shows whether it is high, medium or low in that environment.

1.7 Organization of Thesis

This study consists of all together five chapters. The first chapter includes the introduction including background, statement of problem, rational/ justification of the study, objectives of the study, organization of the study, limitation and definition of terms.

The second chapter mainly covers the review parts of different literatures. This consists: General overview of the literatures on definition of *Dalits*, their types. On theoretical literature, sustainable livelihood framework including vulnerability context, livelihood

assets in terms of social, physical, natural, human and financial capital, livelihood strategies, and livelihood outcomes. On contemporary research, it included situation of *Dalits*, land availability in the context of Nepal, different land acts and their amendments, agricultural productivity and effect on economic performance after distribution of land assets, done by different organizations and researchers. Conceptual framework is also included in this chapter.

The third chapter consists of the methodology, adopted for this study. It includes study site, research design, sampling design and procedure, data collection instruments and techniques, data analysis and interpretation, and ethical considerations.

In the fourth chapter, the data collected from the field survey are presented in tables, figures, qualitative descriptions and case study then analyzed in sequence of objectives wise like socio- economic and livelihood conditions, food security with respect to land holding size, and house hold living standard.

Finally, the chapter five focuses on summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

At the end, references, questionnaires and some photographs of the study site are given.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Defining *Dalit*

According to Devkota (2005), the term *Dalit* literally means a person emerged from a swamp. The *Dalit* are treated as inferior in the society because of the caste system and which has been a stumbling block on their socio-economic and cultural development (Tamrakar, 2003). As the Hindu religion has classified the castes into four groups as *Brahmin*, *Kshetria*, *Vaishya* and *Shudra*, the lowest group in that hierarchy, *Shudra*, has been termed as *Dalit* or untouchables. According to Hindu religion, one has to purify with gold treated water if s/he touches a *Shudra* (Devkota, 2005).

The *Uppchhit, Utpidit ra Dalit Barga Utthan Bikas Samiti* (Ignored, Oppressed and Dalit Group's Upliftment Development Committee), formed under the ministry of Local Development, has identified 23 different Dalit communities *Lohar, Sunar, Kami, Damai, Kasai, Sarki, Badi, Gaine, Kusule, Kuche, Chyame, Chamar, Dhobi, Paswan (Dushad), Tatma, Batar, Khatbe, Musahar, Santhal, Sattar* and *Halkhor* (Dahal et al., 2002).

The National *Dalit* Strategy Report cites a list of 205 existing practices of caste-based discrimination, which they lump into nine broad social categories: 1) Denial of entry into a house, hotel/restaurant, temple, etc; 2) Interference in religious service, where the wearing of the sacred thread is not permitted, worship conducted by *Dalits* is not acceptable and so on; 3) Access to common resources, such as using a water tap, pond, etc., is denied; 4) Denial to participate in public activities or entry into public places, such as a religious event, government function, etc.; 5) Forced labor or discriminatory practice of labor such as barter payment--often insufficient--with food grains instead of cash, forced labor, bonded labor or being required to dispose of dead animals; 6) Dominance of *Dalits* in behavior such as jadau system (practice of paying obeisance to a higher caste person); 7) Atrocities, such as higher incidence of rape; 8) Social boycott--if a high caste Hindu marries a *Dalit*, he or she is boycotted from society; and 9) Attitudinal untouchability, such as if one sees a Kami caste member in the early morning it is considered inauspicious, or if there is a *Dalit* teacher, children of high caste groups will not attend the school.

In National *Dalit's* Commission (2005), "The present constitution of Nepal not only bans discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, gender, caste etc, it further states "no person shall, on the basis of caste, be discriminated against as untouchable, be denied access to any public place or be deprived of the use of public utilities; any contravention of this provision shall be punishable by law".

2.2 Review of Theoretical Literature

2.2.1 Sustainable Livelihood Framework

The SLF is the core of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and serves as an instrument to investigate poor people's livelihoods by visualizing the main factors of influence. Like every model, the SLF is a simplification and does not represent the full diversity and complexity of livelihoods.

In its simplest form, the framework depicts stakeholders as operating in a context of vulnerability, within which they have access to certain assets. Assets gain weight and value through the prevailing social, institutional and organizational environment (policies, institution and processes). This context decisively shapes the livelihood strategies that are open to people in pursuit of their self-defined beneficial livelihood outcomes. In other words, the framework provides a checklist of important issues and sketches out interrelationship, while it draws special attention to core influences and processes and their multiple interactions in association to livelihoods (Kollmair et al., 2006).

2.2.1.1 Vulnerability Context

The Vulnerability Context forms the external environment in which people exist and gain importance through direct impacts upon people's asset status. It comprises trends (i.e. demographic trends; resource trends; trends in governance), shocks (i.e. human, livestock or crop health shocks; natural hazards, like floods or earthquakes; economic shocks; conflicts in form of national or international wars) and seasonality (i.e. seasonality of prices, products or employment opportunities) and represents the part of the framework that lies furthest outside stakeholders' control. Not all trends and seasonality must be considered as negative; they can move favorable directions, too. Trends in new technologies or seasonality of prices could be used as opportunities to secure livelihoods (Kollmair et al., 2006).

Dalits are treated as untouchables and according to CSRC (2005), most of the land tillers are from *Dalt* communities due to which they are living vulnerable lives.

2.2.1.2 Livelihood Assets

According to Kollmair et al. (2006), people require a range of assets to achieve their self-defined goals, whereas no single capital endowment is sufficient to yield the desired outcomes on its own. DFID has adopted five different assets. They are as follows:

(i) Human Capital:

In the context of the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) it is defined as, “Human capital represents the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives”. At the household level it varies according to household size, skill levels, leadership potential, health status, etc. and appears to be a decisive factor - besides being intrinsically valuable - in order to make use of any other type of assets. Therefore, changes in human capital have to be seen not only as isolated effects, but as well as a supportive factor for the other assets.

(ii) Social Capital

In the context of the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) it is taken to mean the social resources upon which people draw in seeking for their livelihood outcomes, such as networks and connectedness, that increase people's trust and ability to cooperate or membership in more formalized groups and their systems of rules, norms and sanctions. Quite often access and amount of social capital is determined by birth, age, gender, class or caste and may even differ within a household. For the most deprived, social capital often represents a place of refuge in mitigating the effects of shocks or lacks in other capitals through informal networks.

(iii) Natural Capital

Natural capital is the term used for the natural resource stocks from which resource flows and services (such as land, water, forests, air quality, erosion protection, biodiversity degree and rate of change, etc.) useful for livelihoods are derived. It is of special importance for those who derive all or part of their livelihoods from natural resource-based activities, as it is often the case for the poor stakeholders, but also in

more general terms, since a good air and water quality represents a basis for good health and other aspects of a livelihood.

(iv) Physical Capital

Physical capital comprises the basic infrastructure and producer goods needed to support livelihoods, such as affordable transport, secure shelter and buildings, adequate water supply and sanitation, clean, affordable energy and access to information. Its influence on the sustainability of a livelihood system is best fit for representation through the notion of opportunity costs or 'trade-offs', as a poor infrastructure can preclude education, access to health services and income generation. For example, without irrigation facilities long periods are spent in non-productive activities, such as the collection of water - needing extra labour force that could be of use somewhere (or would be a time resource to go to school).

(v) Financial Capital

'Financial capital' denotes the financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives and it comprises the important availability of cash or equivalent that enables people to adopt different livelihood strategies. Two main sources of financial capital can be identified:

- Available stocks comprising cash, bank deposits or liquid assets such as livestock and jewellery, not having liabilities attached and usually independent of third parties.

- Regular inflows of money comprising labour income, pension, or other transfers from the state, and remittances, which are mostly dependent on others and need to be reliable. Among the five categories of assets financial capital is probably the most versatile as it can be converted into other types of capital or it can be used for direct achievement of livelihood outcomes (e.g. purchasing of food to reduce food insecurity). However, it tends to be the asset the least available for the poor, what makes other capitals important as substitutes.

Dalits are found in very petty condition when judged them from the livelihood framework which is due to the discrimination they are facing in a community. They are still unable to come out from that swamp which can be seen from this research though this research does not cover all the components of the DFID livelihood assets.

2.2.1.3 Livelihood Strategy

Livelihood Strategies comprise the range and combination of activities and choices that people undertake in order to achieve their livelihood goals. They have to be understood as a dynamic process. People combine activities to meet their various needs at different times and on different geographical or economical levels. Their direct dependence on asset status and policies, institutions and processes becomes clear through the position they occupy within the framework. A changing asset status may further or hinder other strategies depending on the policies and institutions at work. It is important to keep in mind that poor people - as a heterogeneous group with conflicting interests - compete (for jobs, markets, natural resources, etc.) and that their livelihood strategies might counteract the livelihood outcomes in a finite and therefore highly contested environment (Kollmair et al., 2006).

The livelihood of *Dalits* is miserable due to their landlessness. Landlessness describes a person who is dependent on agriculture, but has got no land in his/her name or in the name of any other of his family member. The main economic activity for the majority of *Dalits* is as wage laborers. In addition to this, caste based traditional work such as iron smithy, leatherworks, tailoring etc are also important economic activities pursued by the *Dalits* for their survival (Nepali, 2008).

2.2.1.4 Livelihood Outcomes

Livelihood outcomes are the achievements of livelihood strategies, such as more income (e.g. cash), increased well-being (e.g. self-esteem, health status, access to services), reduced vulnerability (e.g. better resilience), improved food security (e.g. increase in financial capital in order to buy food) and a more sustainable use of natural resources (e.g. appropriate property rights). Outcomes help us to understand the 'output' of the current configuration of factors within the livelihood framework; they demonstrate what motivates stakeholders to act as they do and what their priorities are. They might give us an idea of how people are likely to respond to new opportunities and which performance indicators should be used to assess support activity. Livelihood outcomes directly influence the assets and change dynamically their level (i.e. the form of the pentagon), offering a new starting point for others strategies and outcomes (Kollmair et al., 2006).

This research had included some of the components from the above framework which helped to understand the socio-economic and livelihood condition of *Dalit* of Geta VDC.

2.3 Contemporary Research

2.3.1 Situation of *Dalits*

According to National Population Census (2001), the total *Dalit* population in Nepal is 3,030,067 with 1,500,367 males and 1,529,700 females. *Dalits* are the poorest community in the country. *Dalits* are particularly more vulnerable socially and economically due to lack of information, low level of literacy and access to relevant services (NDC, 2005). The social as well as economic status of *Dalit* is explained below from data provided by different sources.

(i) Education

The overall literacy rate of *Dalit* was 22.8 per cent in the 1991 census; lower than the Indigenous Nationalities, the other high caste Hindu groups and the national average (39.6%). The male literacy was 33.9 percent compared to only 12.0 percent of the female literacy rate. The literacy rate of Hill *Dalit* is much higher, 27.0 percent compared to only 11 percent of the Tarai *Dalits*. The male literacy rate of the Hill *Dalit* is above the national average (40.2%). The lowest literacy rate among the *Dalits* is that of the Musahar (4.2%) and the highest is that of the Gaine (31.1%). The educational attainment of *Dalit* (primary, secondary, SLC and Intermediate and above) is only 14.6 percent compared to 28.6 percent of the national average (Dahal et al., 2002).

(ii) Gender

According to Dahal et al. (2002), women are more sufferers than males within the *Dalit* society. As the *Dalit* society is systematically integrated in the patriarchal model of the Hindu caste structure, their social and economic status is much lower to that of males. Likewise, the health and nutritional status of *Dalit* women is pathetic. The political participation of *Dalit* women at the village, district and the national level is much lower to that of the *Dalit* males as a whole.

(iii) Land-Ownership and Food Sufficiency

According to CSRC (2005), the large groups of people have been landless just because few people hold huge area of land. The situation of being excluded from land ownership has made these people deprived from participation in development mainstream and enjoying

one's fundamental rights. 217,675 families, out of total 42,53,000 families in Nepal, have no piece of land to build a shelter, majority of them are agriculture labours and extremely poor who do not have other options for shelter and livelihood. Likewise, 802,615 agriculture families do not have land for cultivation, and work for landlords. Most of these landless tillers come under *Dalit* communities who are living vulnerable lives. These people's poverty is directly related with the access to land.

Though the Terai is considered the granary of Nepal, the percentage of landless people is found to be highest in the Terai. In other words, the landlessness is more prominent in the Terai *Dalits* than the Hill *Dalits* in the Terai. They are mostly the untouchable groups, such as the Chamar, Batar, Mushahar, Dushad and Dom. In the Hills, the landless people are mostly the untouchable groups such as the Kami, Sarki, Damai, Gaine, and Badi. Of the total 9.7 per cent population of *Dalits* in Dolakha, only two per cent *Dalits* were found landless. The *Dalits* as a whole occupy the poorest position in the Bungkot economy. On an average, a *Dalit* household owns 15 ropani of land and only few households own cultivable land for producing paddy. *Dalits* in Terai are approximately synonym to landlessness. This is because of two reasons: i) many *Dalits* settled themselves in the land of big landlords of the Terai, and they were used as labourers to farm their land; and ii) because of their relaxed culture (drink, enjoy life), they hardly put pressure to save their earnings to buy land. Even if some Tarai *Dalits* own little land, it is either infertile for agriculture production or occupied by the house itself. The average landowning per household among the *Dalit* group is 2.46 ropanis of Khet (irrigated land) and 4.5 ropanis of Pakho (dry up land). The untouchable has the lowest proportion of cultivated land (3%) compared to other groups like Tagadhari and Matawali. They found that the extent of land shortage is the highest among untouchables (64%) compared to Tagadhari and Matwali (Dahal et al., 2002).

Tenant-cultivated lands are found to be less productive. Cultivators are not very enthusiastic to invest in others land. Similarly, large area of land remains fallow due to dual ownership and absentee ownership. The legal wrangling over ownership further leads to lack of investment for productivity. Similarly, it is generally the less fertile land which is given out to others for cultivation. The process of dividing the land between tenants and owners are rather slow. Six years after the policy of abolishing dual ownership has been promulgated, out of 2, 88,261 registered tenants, ownership of tenant-cultivated land have been settled in the case of 6340 (2.19%) cases only by the end of financial year

2058/059. The number of unregistered tenants is double that of the registered ones (CSRC, 2003).

Among the total of 5,162 (99.6%) respondents in a survey conducted by Dahal, who responded on food deficiency/sufficiency issue, the food deficiency as a whole was reported by 3,686 or 71.4 percent of total respondents. Of them, food deficiency was reported highest by the untouchable (49.6%), followed by the Tagadhari (31.6%), Matwali (13.8%) and others (5.1%). Food deficiency of *Dalits* by geographic region shows that a highest proportion of *Dalits* in Terai has food deficiency (46.4%), followed by Hill (43.3%), whereas a least proportion of *Dalits* living in mountain has food deficiency (10.3%). This is little anomaly in the data quality considering the fact that agricultural land available for cultivation is minimal in the Mountain region (Dahal et al., 2002).

About 9 percent is under tenancy system of the total cultivable land (21%). Owing to small holdings of farms, there is a chronic problem of food insecurity at the house hold level. About 51 percent of households having a hectare of land face food insufficiency. On an average, 60 percent land holdings were not able to meet their own food requirements from their production. (Adhikari, 2006)

(iv) Health Condition

According to Dahal et al. (2002), data reflecting the health conditions of *Dalits* is virtually non-existent. The life expectancy of *Dalit* is much lower (50.8 years) than the national average (57 years). Likewise, the infant mortality is much higher (116.5 per 1000 live births) compared to the national average of only 79. Nutritional status of both the male and female is poor and many women are suffering from a number of diseases, including the sexually transmitted diseases. The Human Development Index of *Dalit* populations as a whole is lowest (0.239) compared to the national average (0.325).

(v) Economic Condition

Dalit as a whole is the poorest community in Nepali society. According to the survey conducted by Dahal et al. (2002), the average land-owning per household among the *Dalit* group is 2.46 ropani of khet (irrigated) land and 4.5 ropani of pakho (dry up land) land. Landlessness is acute among the various *Dalit* groups and this is more so among the Terai *Dalits*. About 50 percent of the *Dalit* households surveyed had the food deficiency. Where, 21 percent of *Dalit* households produced food grains for less than three months, 19.5 per

cent for 4-6 months, and 15.4 percent for one year and 5.1 percent produced surplus good grains.

According to the survey, 37.7 percent of *Dalit* households owned the thatched roof houses, followed by brick/stone wall and thatched roof (24.8%) and brick/stone wall and tin/slate roof (22.0%) houses. Only 1.8 percent of *Dalits* owned the concrete house.

The mean annual income of *Dalits* is lowest compared to Matwali and high caste groups. Likewise, the expenditures on items such as clothing, education and medicine are found to be lowest among *Dalit* groups. Statistically, more than 54 percent of the population do agriculture followed by service (15.7%), non-farm wage earning (14.2%) and farm wage earning (6.1%) and others. Business is one of the areas where the involvement of *Dalits* is very low. However, the main economic activity of majority of *Dalits* is wage labour. In addition, caste- based traditional work (such as black- smithy, leatherwork, tailoring etc) is also the important economic activity of *Dalits* for their survival but it has been gradually disappearing over the years primarily due to three reasons: i) they themselves think that their occupation has lower social prestige and demeaning socially; ii) many young educated *Dalit* boys and girls do not like to follow their fathers' foot-steps, and iii) they are finding difficulty in competing with the open market which is supplying various types of similar goods depending upon the needs of the customer.

It is interesting to note that a highest proportion of *Dalits* do agriculture in the Mountain region, followed by the Hill and the Terai. Very few Terai *Dalits* do agriculture in the Terai because many of them are simply landless. The data suggest that the *Dalit* females are more engaged in agriculture and farm wage earning than the *Dalit* males in all geographical regions. In contrast, *Dalit* males are more engaged in service and non-farm wage earning than the *Dalit* females. This suggests that *Dalit* males are more active in economic pursuits outside home than females.

The forced labour cases, which *Dalits* have to do, are: a) continual of traditional caste-based occupation, b) bonded labour (Bali Ghare and Haliya system), c) work with no wages or little wages, d) dispose off dead animals, e) carry dola (hammock) and f) prostitution. It seems that many of this information are either exaggerated or problematic without understanding the context of *Dalit* society itself and the Nepali society in general.

Historically, many *Dalit* families are dependent on high caste/janajatis for their livelihood by selling their traditional skills and it is not the forced labour (Dahal et al, 2002).

The laborers do not have fixed time of work, and mostly are exploited by the landlords. There is also no standardization of wage rates. Males and females are paid different rates of wages. Formalizing the wage rates and paying equal rates to male and female for equal work is another area of agrarian reform (Adhikari, 2006).

2.3.2 Land Availability and its Distribution

Nepal, having 1, 47,181 square kilometers area, has diverse geographical structures. Out of the total area, only 20 percent or 31, 79,000 hectare of land is suitable for cultivation. Terai area occupies 17 percent of total land, in which 49 percent is suitable for cultivation. The Mountain (hill) region occupies 63 percent land, and only 40 percent of this land is fit for agriculture. Similarly, the Himalaya region covers 20 percent of total land of which only 11 percent is suitable for husbandry. Based on the land tenure system before 1952, area under Raikar, Birta, Guthi and Kipat were 963,500 (50.0 %), 700,000 (36.3%), 40,000 (2.0%), 77,000 (4.0%) ha. And, Jagir, Rakam etc collectively occupied 146,500 ha (7.7 %) (Regmi, 1999).

About 51 percent of households have a hectare of land and face food insufficiency. On an average, 60 percent land holdings were not able to meet their own food requirements from their production (CBS, 2003). In 2001/02, 74.75 percent households had land less than 1 ha land, and they occupied 38.88 percent of total land area. A large chunk (44%) of land was in the holding (households) having 1 to 3 ha land. About 0.76 percent households had more than 5 ha (0.65% had 5-10 ha holding and only 2.04 % area in more than 10 ha and 0.3 % had more than 10 ha), and they had occupied 14 percent of land area (8.2% by 5-10 ha holding and 5.8% by more than 10 ha holding). In Nepal 67 percent of the country's 10.15 million farmers own an average of 0.29 ha each and together account for less than 18 percent of agricultural land. On the other hand, the big landowners, who each hold an average of 8.4 ha, together control 37 percent of agricultural land (Rizal et al., 2006).

2.3.3 Different Land Acts and their Amendments:

Adhikari (2006) reviews various Land Acts and their Amendments. These are active in regulating and managing land resource in Nepal. The following are major ones: Land Acquisition Act 1977; Land Act 1964; Birta Abolition Act 1959; Land Revenue Act 1977;

Trust Corporation (Guthi) Act 1976; Land Survey and Measurement Act 1963; Range Land Nationalization Act 1974; Jodha Land Related Act 1964; Rapti Dun Development Related Act 1971; Ukhada Act 1964; and Forest Act 1992. Of these, Land Act 1964 was the main regulation that was meant to have major impact on land distribution and management, and its amendments were done in different periods (first in 1966, second in 1969, third in 1982, fourth in 1997, and fifth in 2002, and sixth in 2004).

Land Act 1964 for the first time provided that a family would be permitted to own not more than 16.75 ha of land in any part of the country, in addition to prescribed area for residential purposes. Section 22 of Land Act, 1964 has excluded some fixed ceiling provisions. Under the veil of this provision, many instances have been manifested of having hidden the land in excess of the fixed ceiling in name of different industries keeping them fallow. This act also imposed ceiling on tenancy holding on various regions. The tenants could till up to 2.68 ha of in Terai and inner Terai, 0.5 ha in Kathmandu Valley and 1 ha in hill regions. Along with this act, other legal instruments like Guthi Corporation Act, 1976, Birta Abolition Act, 1957, Land Measurement Act, 1962, Land Revenue Act, 1977, Land Acquisition Act, 1977 also deserve specific issues in land management (Adhikari, 2006).

States efforts on land reform was devised and launched. But, only 1.5 percent of agricultural land was distributed (The World Bank, 2006), and it could not reach to actual landless people. Hence, it can be inferred that there was no effective implementation of land reform in Nepal. But, in other parts of world, land reform was successful to bring social and economic changes in agrarian society such as in Japan and Vietnam on one hand; and land reform has further escalated land conflict resulting violation of human right such as in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

2.3.4 Indicators for Nepal Living Standard

According to CBS (2004), there are various indicators to analyze the living standard and each indicator included different components. One of the objectives of this research is to analyze household living standard of *Dalits*. But this research covers only some of the components to analyze the living standard.

Agriculture:- Characteristics of household head; number, area and size of agricultural holdings; land fragmentation and farm size; land tenure; distribution of agricultural

households; major crops; improved seeds; chemical fertilizers; agricultural equipments; and livestock raising.

Consumption:- Construction of consumption aggregate: food consumption, tobacco consumption, selected non-food expenditures, expenditure on education, consumption on durable goods, consumption of housing, consumption of utilities; distribution of nominal per capita consumption; distribution of household consumption by expenditure category.

Income:- Construction of income aggregate: farm income, wage income, non-farm enterprises income, non-agricultural rental income, transfer income, value of owner-occupied housing, other income, total income, items omitted from income aggregate; levels, sources and distribution on income.

Employment status: - Activity rates and unemployment rates; underemployment; activity status during the previous year; main sector of employment; incidence of child labor.

Wage employment: - Wage employment by main sector; distribution of non-agriculture wage employment by industry; basis of wage payment; daily wage rates.

Non-farm economic activities: - Non-farm enterprises and their distribution by industry; ownership, registration and hired labor; revenues and expenditures; duration of operation.

Remittances and transfer Income:- Remittances received by households; donor and source of remittances: number of remittance by source, size of remittance by source, work activity, donor-recipient relationship, donor's age, means of transferring remittance; remittance share in income.

Household loans: - Household with loans; source of loan; years of borrowing; purpose of loan; collateral for loan; average amount of loan.

Adequacy of consumption: - Food; housing; clothing; health care; schooling; income.

Government services:- Health; education; drinking water; electricity; road; post office; telephone.

This research covered components such as livelihood activities, income range, sources of income, regularity of income, livestock, facilities, education status of family members, saving, loan, monthly expenditure etc. under living Standard.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The research primarily deals with the socio-economic study and livelihood condition of *Dalit* of Geta VDC in Kailali district. It explores various issues such as land, farm productivity and livelihood activities of the *Dalits* in order to analyze their socio-economic condition, food security and living standard.

In an agriculture based economy like Nepal, where the majority of the people are involved in agriculture based activities, *Dalits* living in Geta VDC of Kailali district are no exceptions. In order to determine their socio economic and livelihood condition, particular aspects related to land needs to be given certain consideration. Land ownership is a key variable that acts as a determinant of *Dalit* community's participation in agriculture related activities. It is important to acknowledge the extent to which *Dalit* families own their own land to cultivate, rent out to others or keep as collateral in financial institutions for loan purpose. It is also important to explore the level to which *Dalits* are forced to work in other's land as a reason of no ownership. The type of land that the *Dalits* hold, whether it be Private land or *Ailani* land also needs to be analyzed properly as it reveals useful insight to the study of the socio-economic and livelihood condition of *Dalits* in the area under study. Similarly, access to land for various purposes is equally vital to understand the level of power that *Dalit* families can exercise over the use of land. Access to land resource i.e. whether they can sell them or not or whether they have full access to do whatever they like to do with that land or not, is an important indicator of different ways in which *Dalit* families can use the land to sustain their livelihood. For example, Ownership of *Ailani* land as opposed to private land provides less scope for *Dalit* families to use land in whatever ways they wish to, such as the use of land for collateral purpose. This is because *Ailani* land does not provide land certificate.

Finally, the amount of land holding or ownership of *Dalit* families is significant in understanding whether or not it is adequate to fulfill the needs and requirements in accordance to the family size.

Land holds huge significance in an agriculture driven community and as a consequence, the measurement and analysis of land productivity bargains equal weight. Land productivity determines the amount of production per hectare of land and thus is a measurement of production effectiveness. In order to analyze the land productivity, the types of farm production is given special focus. The types of crops produced can be categorized as rice, wheat, mustard, pulse and maize. The various types of crops cultivated needs to be evaluated along with the quantity of production. However, the productivity of these crops may vary along with variations in the quantity of inputs.

In order to understand the livelihood condition of the *Dalits* in Geta VDC of Kailali district, the occupation or the activities in which they are involved is the prime consideration for analysis. The number of *Dalits* and their family members employed in agriculture, agricultural wage labour, domestic worker and other unskilled non-agriculture labor needs to be examined. These are significant indicators of the socio economic conditions of the *Dalits*. The level of income varies among the different members of the *Dalit* families due to the different types of occupation or activities in which they are involved. The income range of the *Dalit* families is an important determinant of the amount of disposable income which they can spend in different areas such as food, education, health and clothing. The amount of money spent in these areas directly reflects their livelihood condition.

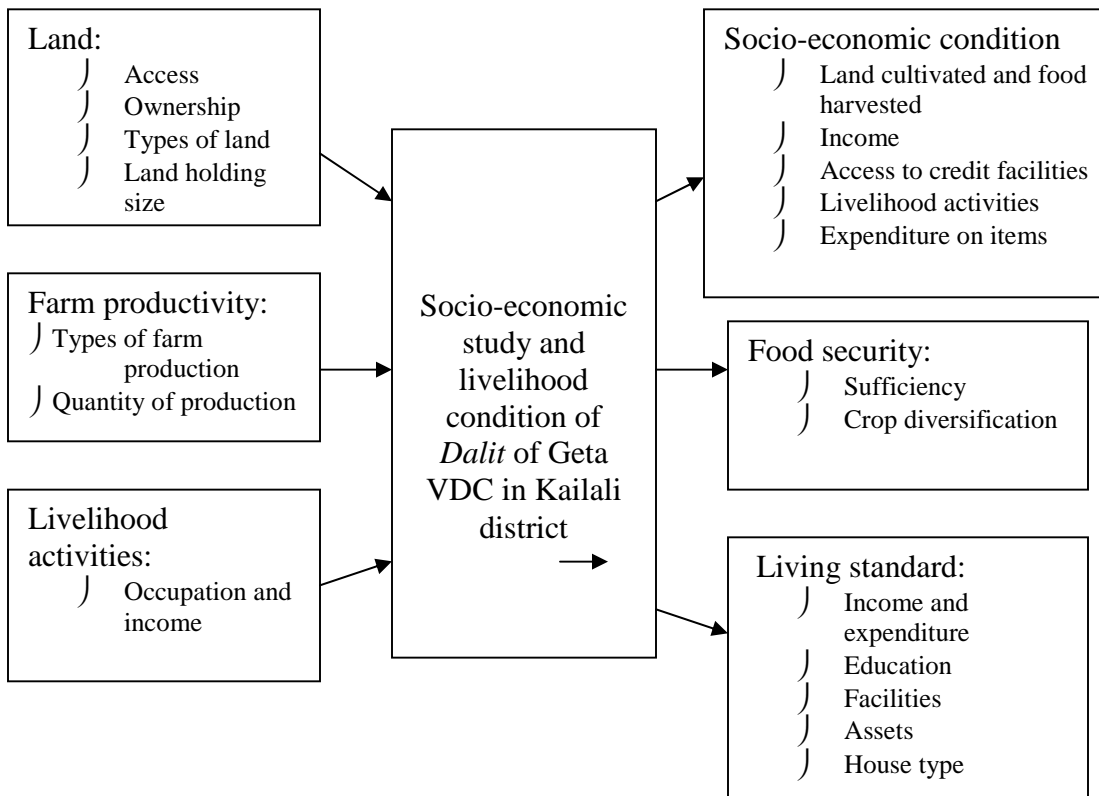
These factors aid in the determination of the socio economic condition, food security and their standard of living of the *Dalit* community at Geta VDC of Kailali district. In determining the socio economic condition of *Dalit* families at the area of study, information regarding the various influential aspects such as amount of land cultivated and the types of different crops harvested, income and expense level, the different types of livelihood activities in which the *Dalit* families are involved and their access to credit facilities or loan needs to be analyzed.

Information regarding the food security condition of the *Dalit* family can also be obtained through the study of sufficiency and crop diversification. Food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Further information regarding crop diversification is also obtained. It can be observed as to

whether or not the *Dalit* families have spread the risk of failure by not specializing in any one crop solely.

Finally, the overall living standard of the *Dalit* community can also be envisioned through the analysis of their income and expenditure, level of education, facilitated provided or used, assets possessed and the type of house they reside in. this is diagrammatically presented as below:

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework on socio-economic study and livelihood condition of *Dalit* in Geta VDC of Kailali district.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Site

Ward 4 and 5 in Geta VDC of Kailali district from the Far Western Development region was purposively selected for the research. The rationale behind selection of this district as well as the wards is because there is high prevalence of land issues and high concentration of target groups of research.

3.2 Research Design

The research design was descriptive types. Descriptive research design facilitate for describing or explaining qualitative as well as quantitative nature of data about the socio economic study and livelihood condition, household level food security with respect to land holding size, and their living standard associated with these resources.

3.3 Sampling Design and Procedure

Two wards of Geta VDC i.e. ward 4 and 5 from Kailali district were selected purposively. There were a total 104 *Dalit* households in ward 4 and 5, among which 66 households were taken for the purpose of enumeration. All *Dalit* households living in ward number 4 and 5 were the universe for the study and the sampling size was 66. Lottery method was used to select 66 respondents from a total of 104. This was the most appropriate method as it reduced response error and improved sampling efficiency. Sample size was 66 not more and not less than that size, because the universe was homogeneous in nature and this sample size was enough for generating the required data.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument and Techniques

The qualitative and quantitative data were collected for the study to show the relation between other related field and policies. The analysis mainly based upon primary data. It has own types of techniques, tools, data collection sources and process.

Data collection instruments: The major data gathering instruments was interview schedule, semi structured interview. It consists of both close ended and open-ended questionnaires.

Data collection techniques: Various techniques were employed for gathering information for this study, as any single method was insufficient to gather the information. Primary as well as secondary sources of information were employed. The data collection techniques are described as follows:

3.4.1 Primary Source

Household survey: Household survey was carried out by administering structured and semi structured questionnaire. There were 66 households covered in the survey.

In-depth interview: In-depth interview was carried out with those landless people who were facing hardship due to higher level of food insecurity.

Field observation: During the period of study, action and behavior of the actual respondents in land resources were observed and relevant information was gathered in interaction with them.

Case study: Few representative (typical) cases were also included in the study.

3.4.2 Secondary Source

An extensive desk study was made for the collection of secondary data in the related field. It involved a wide range of material such as books, statistical reports, annual reports, district and village development report, district profile, policy and plan documents, previous research findings and other published materials and official records of INGO, NGO, GOs. Apart from the library research, internet browsing was also done.

3.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis was done through descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics like graphical distribution, frequency distribution, pie chart, cross tabulation and standard deviation were employed. All these were done through computer software packages i.e. Microsoft Excel 2007. Whole documentation was done through use of analyzed data and secondary information in successive stages.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

The collected data and personal opinion were not exposed/ displayed in any conditions, which could suffer/obstacle the related respondents or negative impact for the particular

society. All types of data were used with justification of its reliability. The sources were quoted for used primary and secondary data. The respondents were properly explained about the purpose of study and their consent was taken before beginning the interviews.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter focuses on the findings of the study. The data collected during the study are well analyzed using descriptive statistics and are presented in this chapter with the help of figures, charts and tables.

4.1 Study Area Description

4.1.1 Geographical Location

Ward 4 and 5 of Geta VDC lies in Kailali district. Kailali district is in Seti Zone of Far Western Development Region. The district, with Dhangadi as its district head quarters, covers an area of 3235 kilometre square and has a population of 616,697. The district has two municipalities, namely: Dhangadi and Tikapur.

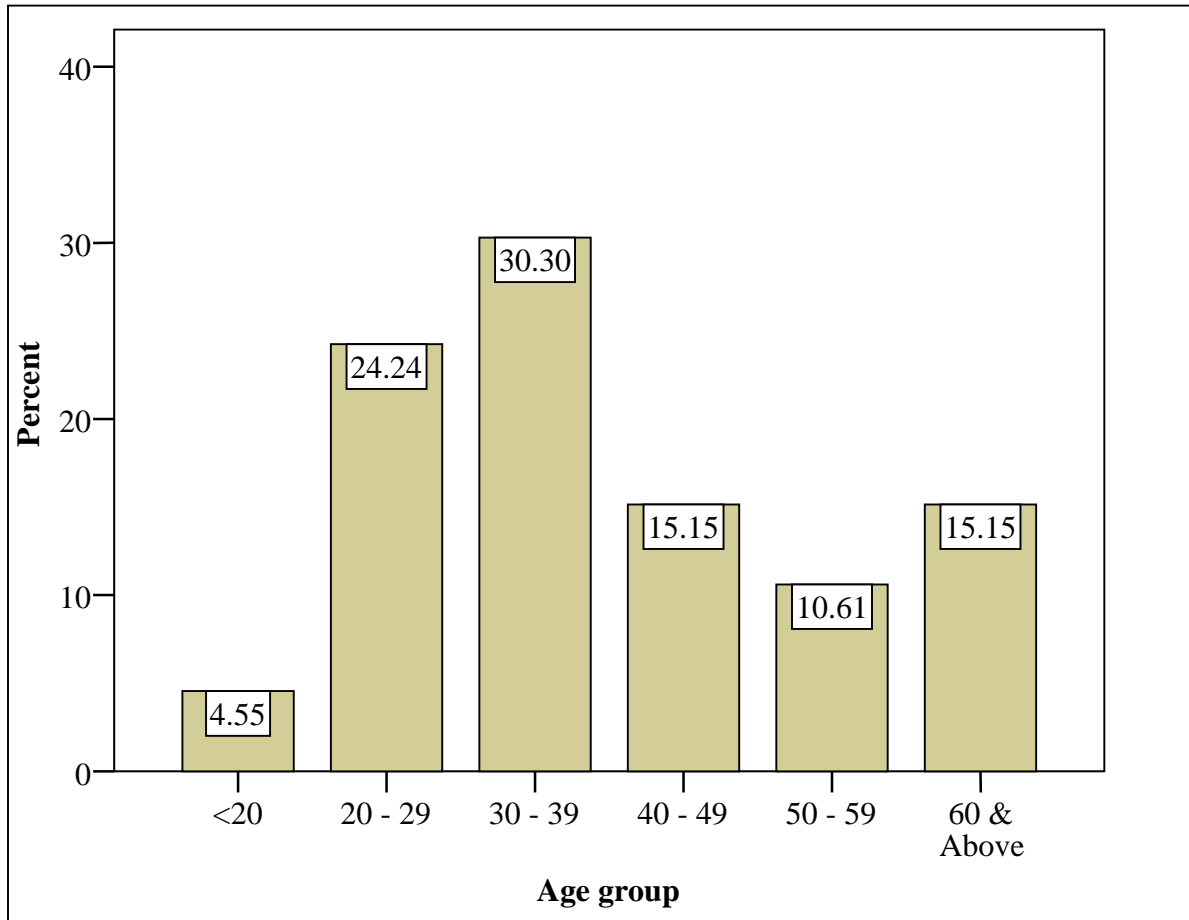
4.2 General Characteristics of Respondents

4.2.1 Age

Age is very often considered as one of the indicator of maturity and experience. Therefore, people with advanced age are considered appropriate to extract information about particular issues. Aged people have seen so many changes and therefore are liable prospects to extract certain facts that aid in the analysis of particular concerns. In this study as well, many respondents are well advanced in their age.

Figure 4.1 displays the age groups of respondents. According to the figure, the highest numbers of respondents i.e. 30.30 percent belonged to 30-39 age groups, followed by 24.24 percent of respondents of 20-29 age groups. 15.15 percent respondents were in the range of 40-49 and above 60 years and 10.61 percent respondents were in the range of 50-59 age groups. The least numbers of respondents i.e. 4.55 percent were less than 20 years.

Figure 4.1 Distribution of respondents by age group



4.2.2 Sex

Gender is an important aspect for any kind of study. The sex division of respondents shows the participation of each sex in the concerned area. Though balanced or equal participation of both sexes is appreciated, it is less likely to get such balanced representation. On the other hand, given the socio-cultural milieu of rural areas of Nepal, males are always likely to be forming the lion's share of the total respondents. This is more evident as shown by the Table 4.1.

The Table 4.1 displays that male overwhelmingly dominated the total number of respondents. In total, male constituted 78.8 percent whereas female constituted only 21.2 percent. However, in ward wise study, ward four showed stark differences of gender imbalance than that of ward five. In ward four, 35 (85.4%) number were male whereas

male constituted only 17 (68 %) in ward number five, whereas female constituted only 6 (14.6 %) in ward number four and 8 (32 %) in ward number five.

Although, the number of male respondents outnumbered female respondents in every ward, such a gender composition was not the intention with which the research was conducted as the respondents in the survey were picked in a random practice, without any biasness towards either of the gender.

Table 4.1 Distribution of respondents by sex according ward number

Ward Number	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
Four	35 (85.4)	6 (14.6)	41 (100.0)
Five	17 (68.0)	8 (32.0)	25 (100.0)
Total	52 (78.8)	14 (21.2)	66 (100.0)

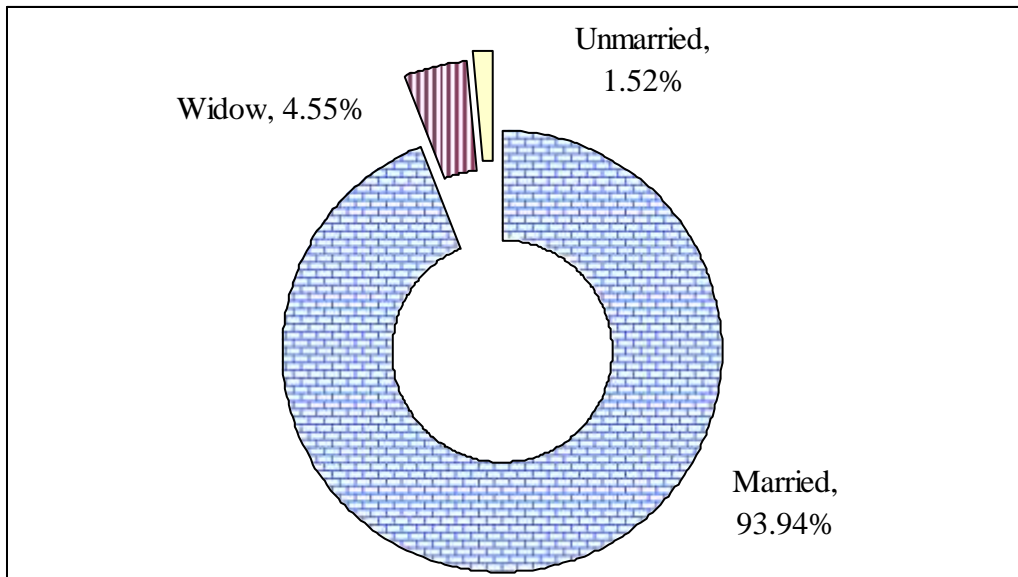
The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.2.3 Marital Status

The marital status of the respondents undertaken during the survey is yet another socio-cultural characteristic that requires analysis. Figure 4.2 reveals that excessive number of respondents were married whereas unmarried and widow categories constituted very low portion of the respondents. As displayed, almost 94 percent respondents sampled were married whereas widows were only 4.55 percent, followed by unmarried respondents who made the least contribution in total i.e. 1.52 percent (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Composition of respondents by their marital status.



4.2.4 Religion

Religion is one another prospect that requires close scrutiny as it is a catalyst that determines an individual's way of living and therefore has a direct impact on their living standard. Religion incorporates values, norm and culture that depict an individual's lifestyle and work life. All the sampled respondents taken for the research from both ward 4 and 5 are Hindu.

4.2.5 Education

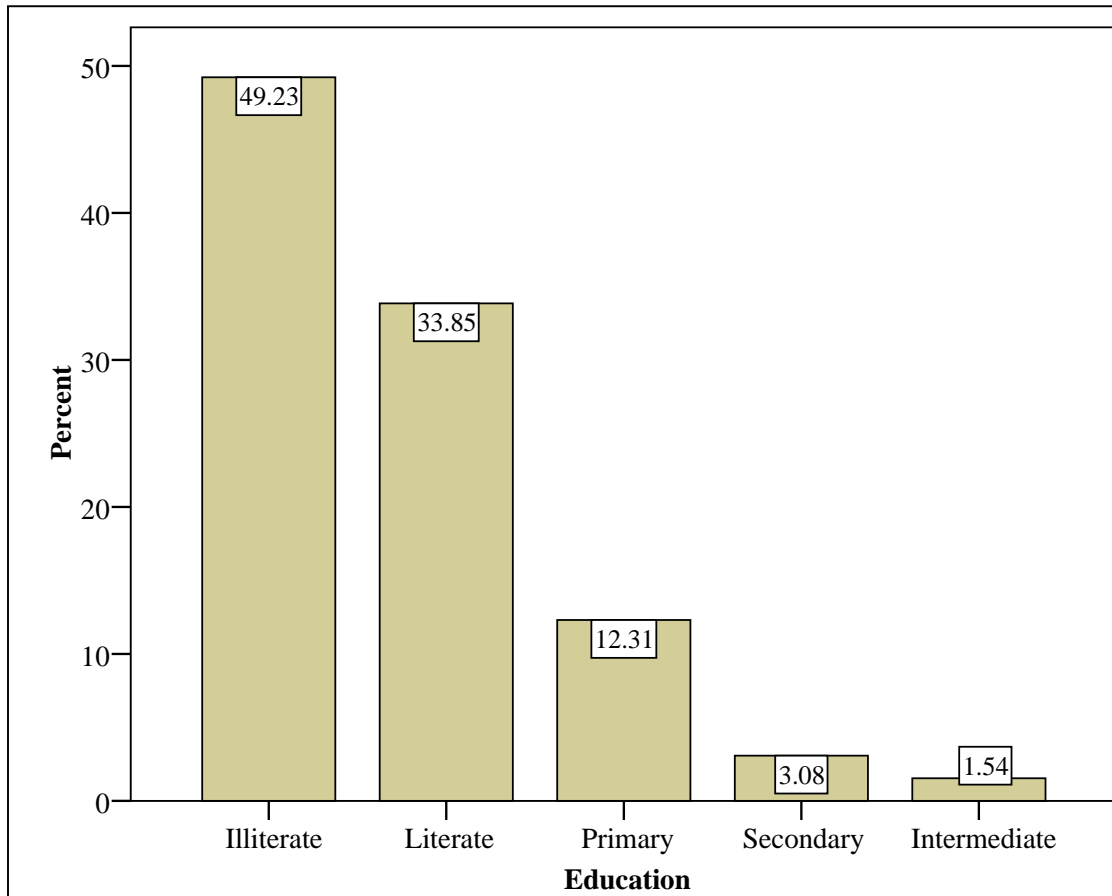
The education of the people is the strength upon which the nation grows and flourishes. It determines the quality of a country's human resources i.e., knowledge, skills, expertise, experience which are vital factors in livelihood analysis. Therefore, educational status of a respondent holds great significance in determining his or her potential as now and in future for undertaking or carrying out activities that aids in uplifting his or her work life, economic welfare and consequently, the standard of living. It is only through education that individuals are exposed to career opportunities, and thus shall be empowered to choose their choice of occupation and enhance their knowledge and skills in areas where they are good at.

Figure 4.3 shows that the majority of the respondents i.e. 49.23 percent were illiterate, followed by literate respondents who made up 33.85 percent of the total respondents. A percentage of 12.31 had attained primary level education whereas only 3.08 percent had

acquired secondary level education. The minority of the respondents i.e. 1.54 were intermediate.

This is a painful scenario for the *Dalit* communities under the study as it is only through education that *Dalit* families can uplift their present living standards and become equals with the more prominent members of their society. With illiteracy marching steeply to such a height and only few of its members participating in achieving intermediate levels of education, more light must be shed into formulating and implementing education centered awareness programs.

Figure 4.3 Distribution of respondents by their education level



4.2.6 Occupation

Nepal is undoubtedly an agriculture based economy where agriculture is the main source of income for majority of the population. Similarly, the main occupation of *Dalits* and

their family members is also related to agriculture. Although agriculture has many prospects, the benefits that the Nepalese economy can reap through it are still to be realized. The research has revealed that majority i.e. 62.1 percent of the total respondents mentioned agriculture as their occupation, followed by caste based occupation i.e. 22.7 percent. It was found that 10.6 percent of respondents were involved in labour whereas 3 percent of the respondents were involved in service. One respondent was a beggar. It is evident from the survey results that for majority of the *Dalit* community, agriculture is their primary or even their only source of living. They are highly dependent on agriculture and in order to raise the living standard of the majority of the *Dalit* families, the agricultural sector of the economy has to be made more efficient through agriculture based professional advice, trainings, technology enhancement and many more.

Following agriculture next is caste based occupation with the second highest number of respondents involved in their own traditional jobs that was passed on to them by their fathers and forefathers.

Table 4.2 Distribution of respondents by their primary occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Agriculture	41	62.1
Caste Based Occupation	15	22.7
Labor	7	10.6
Beggar	1	1.5
Service	2	3.0
Total	66	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

However, in the case of secondary occupation, the research showed that the majority i.e. 56.1 percent of the respondents were involved in labour followed by agriculture i.e. 25.8 percent of the respondents. 9.1 percent of the respondents sampled were involved in caste based occupation. The minority i.e. only 1.5 percent of the respondents were involved in business.

Table 4.3 Distribution of respondents by their secondary occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Agriculture	17	25.8
Business	1	1.5
Caste Based Occupation	6	9.1
Labor	37	56.1
Total	66	100.0

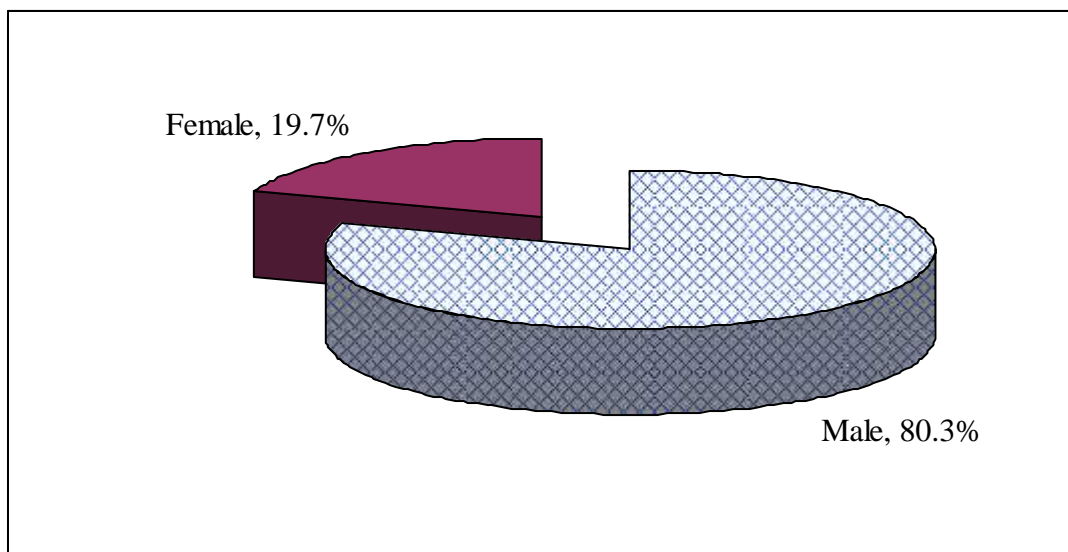
Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.2.7 Head of house

Nepal is a patriarchal society, whereby male are looked upon and act as the head of the household. They are considered as the household's bread winner, whereas, women are held responsible for looking after the internal household activities and chores. To put it more bluntly, men are held responsible for looking after the external affairs outside the house and women's activities are within the confinement of the household. Thus, this makes Nepal a male dominated country. The sole reason for such a consideration may be due to the fact that males are the ones who earn and look after the expenses of the house. Alternatively, even if women freed themselves from the household chores and set off to bring earnings into their home, the situation still would remain the same. This is more evident as shown in the Figure 4.4.

The Figure 4.4 shows that in total, male as a head of the house was 80.30 percent where as only 19.70 percent constituted female.

Figure 4.4 Distribution of respondents by sex as of household



4.3 Land

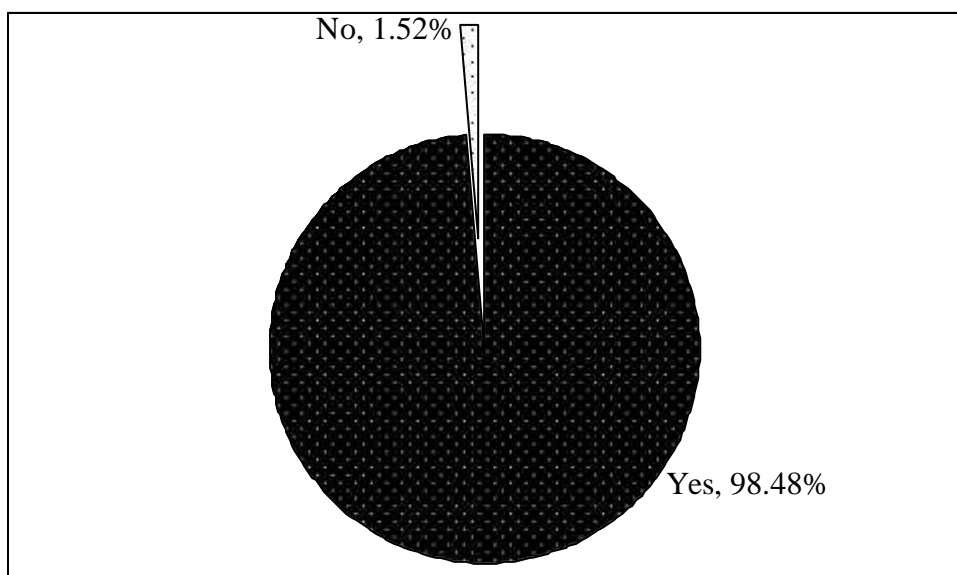
4.3.1 Land Ownership

Land is the primary source of livelihoods for those whose main occupation is farming. Therefore, land holding and ownership becomes important to those people. The amount of land owned is associated with the food sufficiency of those people. Higher amount of land owned implies higher amount of food harvest. On the other hand, the amount of land possession also measures the wealth of a family. The legally recognized ownership of land is shown through the possession of land certificates and shields against many shocks, particularly financial shocks.

However, the sampled respondents did not have much land under their possession. To worsen the situation, many of them did not have land certificates.

Figure 4.5 shows that 98.48 percent of the respondent owned the land where as 1.52 percent of the respondents did not have any land of their own.

Figure 4.5 Distribution of respondents by land they own



The Table 4.4 shows that the majority of respondents i.e. 35 owned *Ailani* land and 27 respondents had private land and agreed that they had full access to that land they owned now. But 3 respondents had both *Ailani* and private land.

Table 4.4 Distribution of respondents according to their land ownership

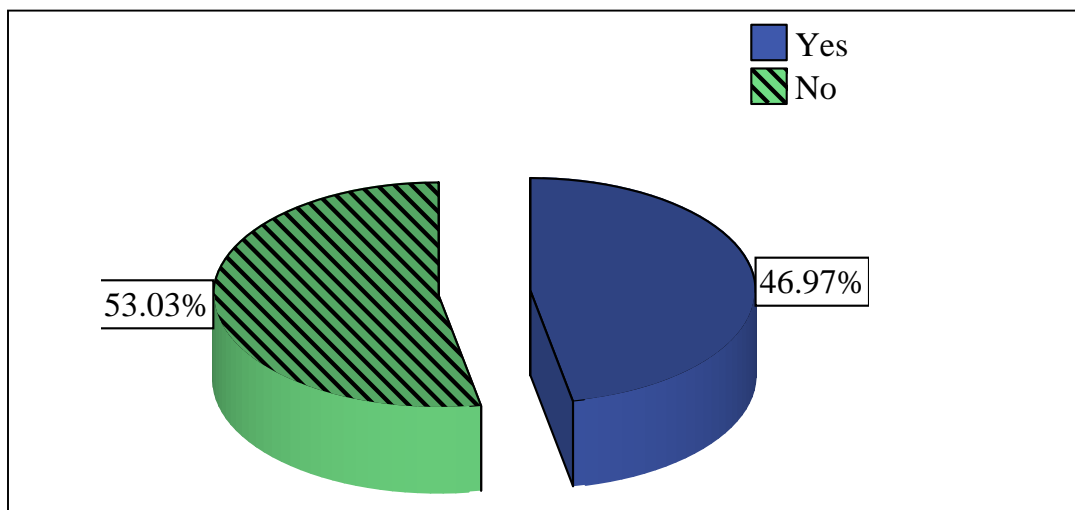
Types of land owned	Number of respondents
<i>Ailani</i>	35
Private	27
Both <i>Ailani</i> and Private	3

Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.3.2 Land Received

After the Land Reform Act (1964), *Dalit* who didn't have any land got some land. Among the total respondent 53.03 percent received land from the implementation of Land Reform Act or from Squatter Commission whereas only 46.97 percent of the respondents had not received from the Land Reform Act or Squatter Commission.

Figure 4.6 Percentages of the respondents by land received from Land Reform Act or Squatter Commission



4.3.3 Size of Land Owned

Land is considered the major productive resource in the rural areas. The size of a land holding determines the economic well being of a family. Since traditional methods of farming are the predominant skills of the *Dalits*, available land would be of crucial importance for their livelihood.

The average land owned by the respondents in the study area was 0.17 ha. However, 0.51 ha was the maximum amount of land owned by the respondent.

Table 4.5 Statistical summary of amount of land owned by respondents

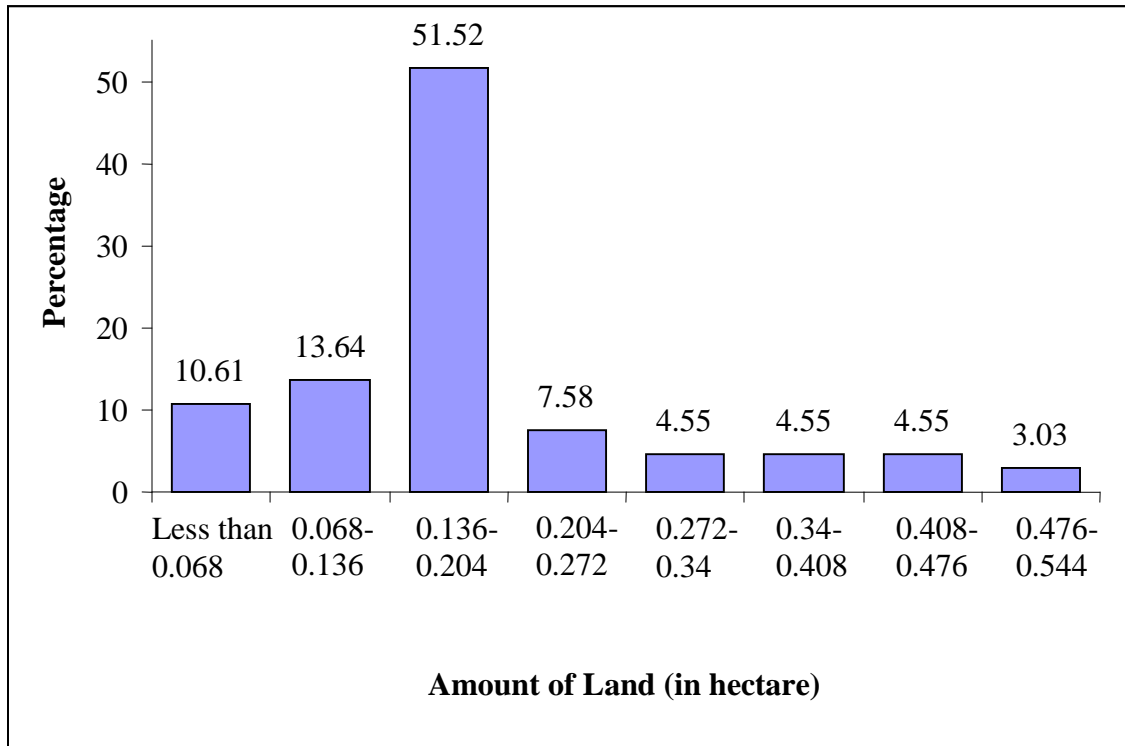
Statistical Measures	Value
Mean	0.17
Minimum	0.0
Maximum	0.51

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Figure 4.7 displays that out of the total respondents, highest 51.52 percent of the respondents owned 0.136-0.204 ha of land, followed by 13.64 percent of the respondents owned 0.068-0.136 ha of the land. About 10.61 percent owned less than 0.068 ha, whereas 7.58 percent owned in the range of 0.204-0.272 ha of land. The second least number of the respondents i.e. 4.55 percent each owned 0.272-0.34 ha, 0.34-0.408 ha and 0.408-

0.476 ha of land. The least number of the respondent i.e. 3.03 percent owned largest amount i.e. 0.476-0.544 ha of land.

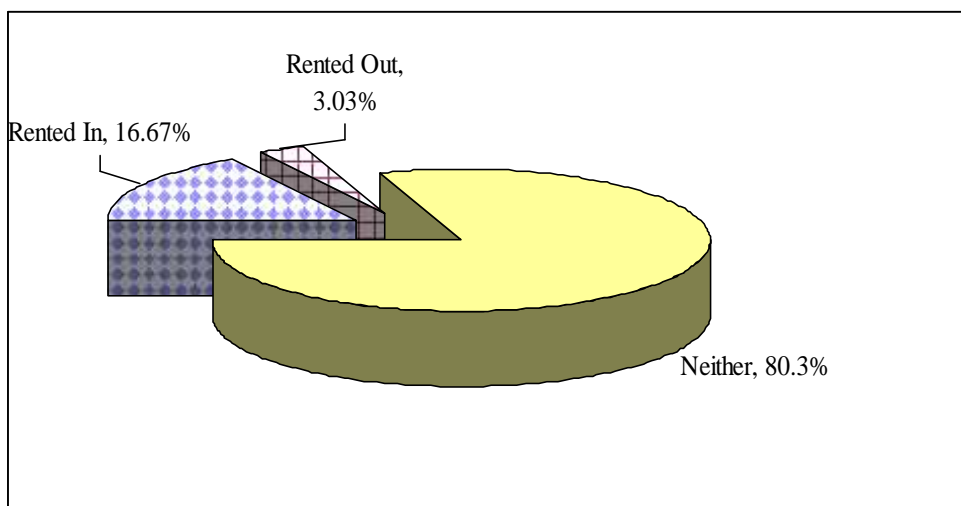
Figure 4.7 Distribution of respondents by amount of land owned



4.3.4 Land Renting

Out of the total respondents, the lowest number of the respondents 3.03 percent rented out land. Even though the respondents those who rented out land were very few, the average rented out land was 0.255 ha. It was primarily because the respondent's family members had gone to India to adopt other non-farm occupations as well as for other job opportunities. Therefore, there was no one to work in the land they had. Hence, they had to rent out their land. Whereas 16.67 percent of the respondents rented land because the land they owned was not enough for their living so they had to work in other's land, the average land that was rented in was 0.257 ha. The highest number i.e. 80.30 percent neither rented-in nor rented-out land. This shows that they were involved in other form of occupation to earn their living.

Figure 4.8 Distribution of respondents by land renting



Average rented-in land: 0.257 ha

Average rented-out land: 0.255 ha

4.4 Food Security

4.4.1 Livelihood Sufficiency from Land

People are more dependent on agriculture for their livelihood security in the rural areas. For livelihood security from agriculture, people should have enough land so that the production is high and hence sufficient for the whole year. But in the case of *Dalits*, they have very less land and the land they own are also not good/ productive as they mostly possess not-irrigated land or upland.

According to Table 4.6, the majority i.e. 97 percent of the respondents responded that the land they were holding did not fulfill their livelihood requirements or living standard at household level and only 3 percent respondents responded that their land holding size full filled their livelihood requirement.

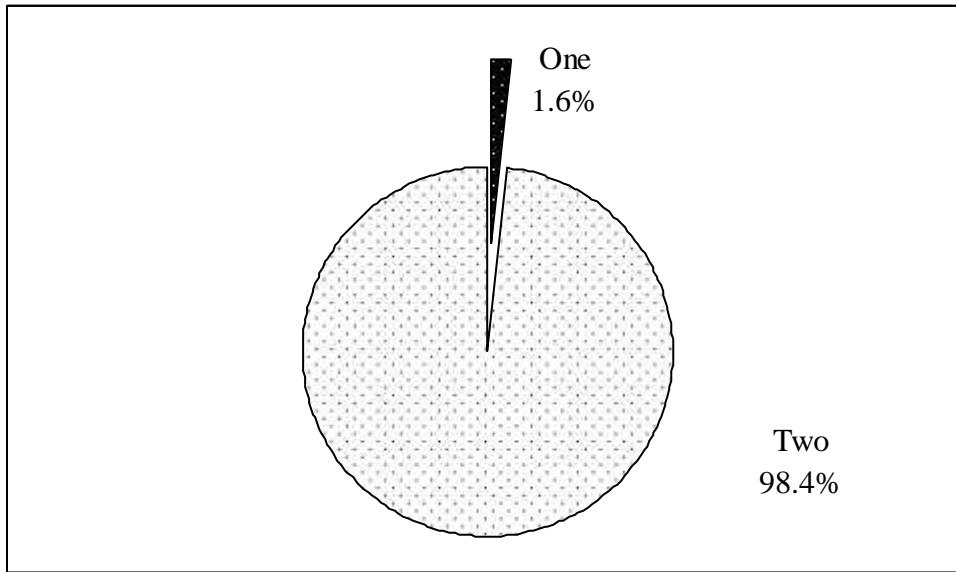
Table 4.6 Distribution of respondents according to fulfillment of their livelihood requirement with their land holding size.

Sufficiency	Frequency	Percent
Yes	2	3.0
No	64	97.0
Total	66	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The Figure 4.9 shows that out of total respondents, huge number i.e. 98.4 percent of the respondents produced 2 crops in a year whereas less i.e. 1.6 percent produced only one crop in a year.

Figure 4.9 Distribution of respondents by number of crops in a year



4.4.2 Productivity

The crops produced in an appreciable quantity in a year are rice, wheat, mustard, pulse and maize. But the productivity of these crops varies due to the variations in the quantity of inputs.

It has been found that as many as 59 numbers of respondents cultivated rice annually in the area 11.016 ha. They produced 35.84 metric ton/ha in that area and the productivity was 3.2534 metric ton/ha. Similarly, 55 respondents cultivated 15.167 metric ton/ha wheat in 8.772 ha and the productivity was 1.729 metric ton/ha. However, there were 19 respondents to cultivate mustard. It is 0.390 metric ton/ha in 1.445 ha and the productivity was 0.2699 metric ton/ha. In contrast, 9 respondents cultivated pulse crop (lentil) in total area 1.054 ha and the productivity was 0.2381 metric ton/ha. The lowest 7 respondents cultivated 0.31 metric ton/ha maize in 0.493 ha and the productivity was 0.6288 metric ton/ha. However, according to national productivity data, the productivity of rice, wheat, mustard, pulse crop (lentil), and maize of 2006/2007 was 2.557 metric ton/ha, 2.156 metric ton/ha, 0.736 metric ton/ha, 0.871 metric ton/ha, and 2.091 metric

ton/ha respectively. Hence while comparing the productivity of ward 4 and 5 with national productivity data, except rice, other like wheat, mustard, pulse crop (lentil), and maize had lower productivity.

Table 4.7 Statistical summaries of productivity of crops

Crop	Number of respondents	Area (hectare)	Total Produced	Productivity Metric ton/ ha	National Productivity Metric ton/ ha (2006/2007)
Rice	59	11.016	35.84	3.2534	2.557
Wheat	55	8.772	15.167	1.7290	2.156
Mustard	19	1.445	0.39	0.2699	0.736
Pulse Crop (lentil)	9	1.054	0.251	0.2381	0.871
Maize	7	0.493	0.31	0.6288	2.091

Source: Field Survey, 2008.

4.4.3 Food Sufficiency

Food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (WFS, 1996 as cited in Rural Reconstruction Nepal, 2003). If the WFS definition is accepted, the food insecurity situation is one of the most serious problems faced by *Dalits*. They are struggling to feed themselves and their families. Year round, food self-sufficiency was for them the most important priority.

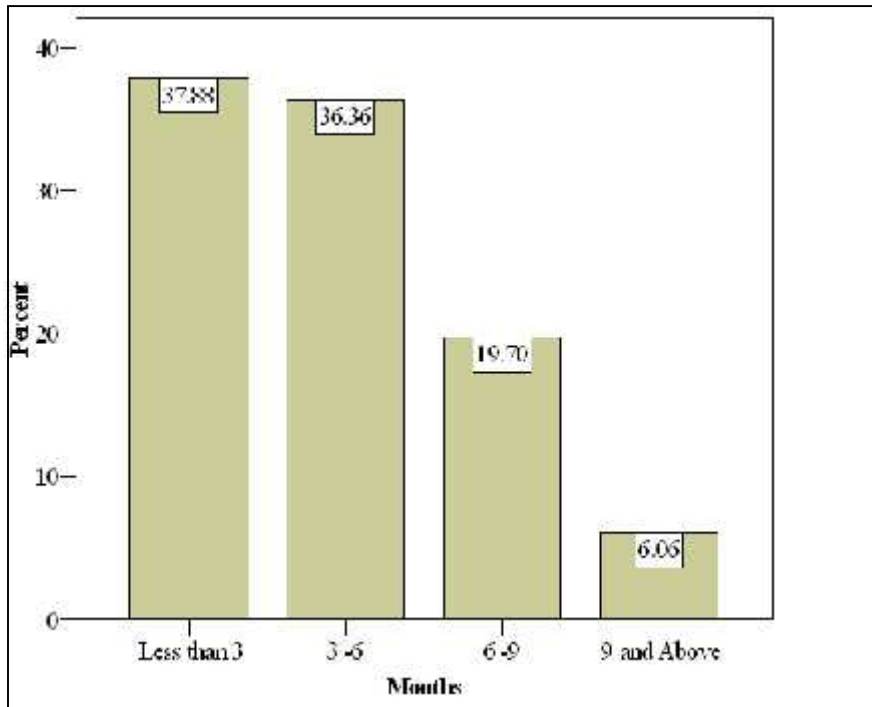
At the household level, inadequate access to food is primarily due to poverty. Poor household do not have means to secure the food they need. They suffer first and most when food supplies fall or food prices rise. In rural areas, household food security is most often determined by food availability and prices, which are commonly related to agricultural production, and by incomes, determined by both farm and non-farm employment opportunities.

Figure 4.10 shows the food self sufficiency situation for *Dalits* of the study areas. The result shows that 37.88 percent had food enough for less than 3 months from the production of their own farm followed by 36.36 percent who had food enough for 3-6

months only. About 19.70 percent respondents had food enough for the range of 6-9 months whereas the least number of the respondents i.e. 6.06 percent had food enough for 9 and more than nine months from their production.

The above data reveals that from their own production, they do not have food security due to their smaller land holding size which means that in order to ensure food security; they have to look for alternative occupation too.

Figure 4.10 Distribution of respondents by food self sufficiency



4.4.4 Required Size of Land

In the Table 4.9, out of 12 respondents having number of family members less than 4, 7 of the respondents believed that they required 0.17-0.51 ha of land to ensure livelihood security of the family. Similarly, 2 respondents expressed their requirement for 0.51-0.85 ha land to serve the same purpose. Whereas, each of the 3 respondents remaining believed that they require 0.85-1.19, 1.19-1.53, and 1.87-2.21 ha of land respectively.

Alternatively, out of 27 respondents having number of family members 4-7, highest 11 respondents mentioned that they required 0.51-0.85 ha of land followed by 10 respondents mentioning 0.17-0.51 ha of land. Similarly, 5 respondents said that according to their

family size, they required 1.19-1.53 ha of land whereas only one respondent said that he required 1.87-2.21 ha of land.

Out of 16 respondents having 7-10 numbers of family members, highest 8 followed by 3, 2, 2 and 1 respondents require 0.51-0.85, 0.85-1.19, 0.17-0.51, 1.87-2.21 and 1.19-1.53 ha of land respectively to ensure livelihood security of their family. Similarly, out of 5 respondents having 10-13 family size, each 1 respondent believed that they required 0.51-0.85, 0.85-1.19, 1.19-1.53, 2.55-2.89 and 3.23-3.57 ha of land respectively. Whereas, in the case of 2 respondents having 13-16 family members, 1 respondent said that according to his family size, he required 0.85-1.19 ha of land but the same other 1 respondent believed that 1.87-2.21 ha of land was enough for their family. There was only 1 respondent having 16-19 family size who believed that 0.51-0.85 ha of land was required to ensure livelihood security of their family.

Table 4.8 Cross tabulation of number of family in a single house and the size of land required as mentioned by the respondent to ensure livelihood security of their family

Family Size	Required size of land (In hectare)							Total
	0.17-0.51	0.51-0.85	0.85-1.19	1.19-1.53	1.87-2.21	2.55-2.89	3.23-3.57	
< 4	7 (58.3)	2 (16.7)	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	-	-	12 (100.0)
4 - 7	10 (37.0)	11 (40.7)	-	5 (18.5)	1 (3.7)	-	-	27 (100.0)
7 - 10	2 (12.5)	8 (50.0)	3 (18.8)	1 (6.3)	2 (12.5)	-	-	16 (100.0)
10 - 13	-	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	-	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	5 (100.0)
13 - 16	-	-	1 (50.0)	-	1 (50.0)	-	-	2 (100.0)
16 - 19	-	1 (100.0)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (100.0)
Total	19 (30.2)	23 (36.5)	6 (9.5)	8 (12.7)	5 (7.9)	1 (1.6)	1 (1.6)	63 (100.0)

Note: The figures in the parentheses indicate percentage.

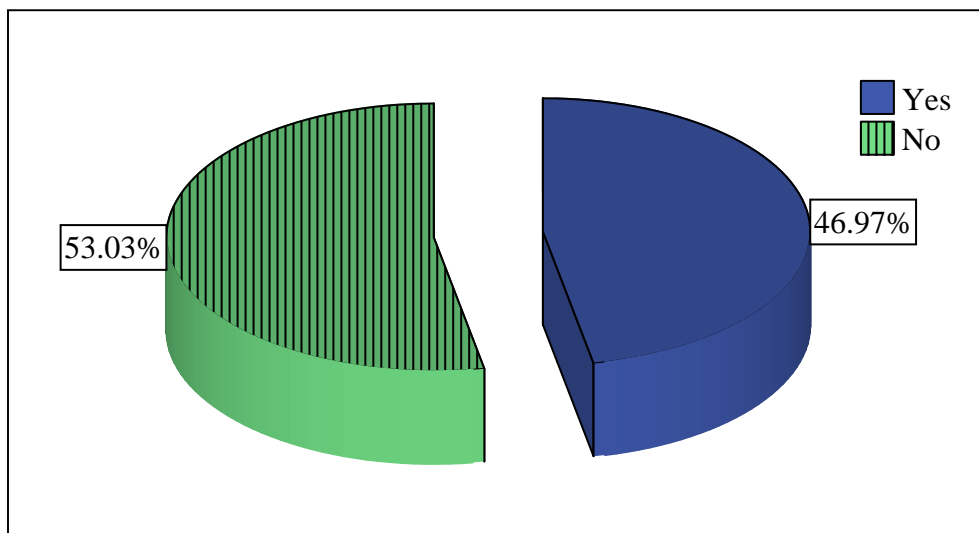
Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.4.5 Working in Other's Land

From the Figure 4.10, it is clear that majority of the respondents had food that was enough for only few months from their own production. Hence, for their food security, they needed to look for other occupation as well as work in their own farm or in other's land.

However, in the Figure 4.11, 46.97 percent of the respondents worked in other's land whereas 53.03 percent of the respondents did not work in others land. Those who worked in other's land were engaged in farming activities primarily during the season of rice cultivation, wheat cultivation and others.

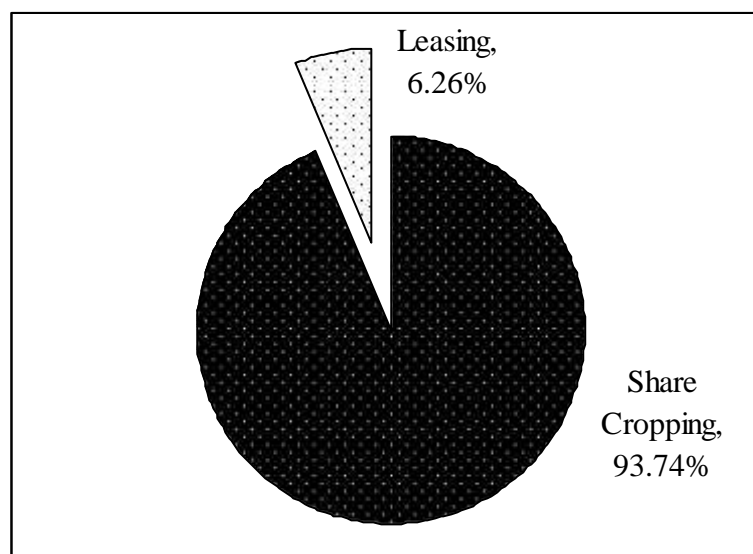
Figure 4.11 Percentage of respondents working in others land



4.4.6 Type of Land Tenancy

In the study area observed, land tenancy existed. In the overall scenario, the lowest 6.26 percent of the respondents practiced leasing/renting the land. They rented others' land for years. Alternatively, they paid money for using that land. The highest numbers of respondents' i.e. 93.74 percent practice share cropping. In share cropping, both the land owner and the tenants shared everything like seeds, manure, produced crop but they didn't have to share for water as tenants had to use water in their own cost.

Figure 4.12 Distribution of respondents by land type tenancy



4.5 Living Standard

4.5.1 Livelihood Activities

The main occupation of *Dalits* and their family members is related to agriculture. As there are different types of agricultural system in existence in the rural areas of Nepal, the nature of involvement of *Dalits* is also varied. It was found that the *Dalits* and their family members were employed in agriculture, agricultural wage labour, domestic worker and other unskilled non-agriculture labor. Both male and female members were involved in different activities available in the village other than agricultural wage labor.

Lack of money, insufficient income and not-owned-land can sometimes act as disincentives for farmers to cultivate the land for continuing farming. Therefore, besides agriculture, unskilled labor is a major employment opportunity. However, employment opportunities were limited due to difficulty in traveling (in terms of cost and distance) and competition with Indian laborers. The following Table 4.11 provides detail about the employment and occupational status of *Dalits*.

The study reveals that majority of respondent's families members i.e. 51 percent were wage labour followed by farm activities i.e. 26 percent of respondents. Similarly, 14 percent of the respondents were involved in caste based occupation whereas only 7 percent were involved in service. The minority 1 percent respondent was involved in business whereas same 1 respondent fulfilled his/her living by begging. The total numbers

of respondents were 66, but here, total number is shown 100 and it is because some respondents had opted more than one occupation at times.

Table 4.9 Distribution of respondents by family members' occupation

Activities	Number	Percentage
Farming	26	26.0
Service	7	7.0
Off-farm Labours	51	51.0
Caste-based Occupation	14	14.0
Begging	1	1.0
Business	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

Note: The total number exceeds the respondent number due to multiple responses.

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Even after involving in different livelihood strategies in both farm and off-farm activities, still *Dalits* from the study area were not able to do well and fulfill their livelihood requirements. Hence, their socio-economic condition was still very low, which can be supported by the following case study 1.

Case study 1: Livelihood of Him Bahadur B.K.

Him Bahadur B.K, aged 41 lived in wards 4 of Geta VDC of Kilali district with his other 4 family members. He had schooling up to grade 5. His primary occupation was blacksmithing and secondary was wage labour. He used to make agricultural tools like curved knife and harrow. To make these tools, he needed coal which he had to buy and another was fan to give air while heating the tools in fire He received that fan from IUCN before he migrated from Garchera to Terai (Geta), thinking that their socio-economic condition will be better. He used to take NRs.5 for making curved knife and NRs.10 for harrow. His income from that occupation was Rs.1000 to NRs.1200 in a month. He was the only one involved in that occupation in that ward. However, the income he was earning was not enough to support his family members. Therefore, he and his wife had to look for alternate source of livelihood i.e. wage labour. They used to get Rs.100 each but it was not a regular source. They had 0.068 ha of land in which they had made one thatched roof

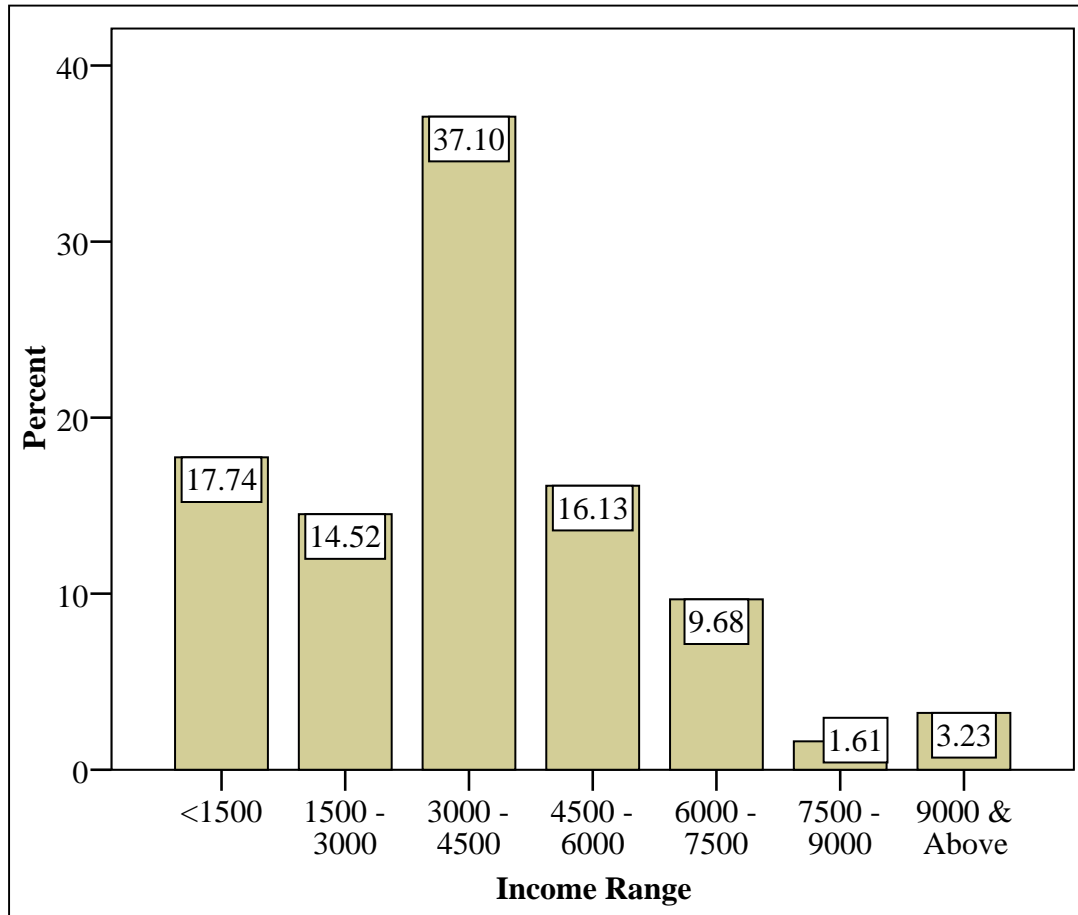
house and in remaining land, they cultivated rice and wheat in a year. The total production of rice was 40 kg and wheat was 30 kg in a year. Whatever they earned, the larger amount of it was spent on food and remaining on cloth, health and education for their children. Although he used different livelihood strategies to sustain his family, his socio-economic condition was not good as according to him, some time he had to face the worst situation such as when he couldn't provide meal to his family members. This showed that his living standard was also very low.

In the study area what I have found that, connected to ward four, there was Ex-kamaiyas settlement. The situation of both group Ex-kamaiyas and *Dalits* were similar. Both group had very less land and were poor. But different organizations working on Kamaiyas are providing them with different trainings so that they can go for different livelihood strategies to sustain themselves. Whereas living near same ward, *Dalit* communities were overlooked. Due to their lack of appropriate training/ skill they hardly get work as well.

4.5.2 Income Range of Family

The study shows that there was a vast difference in income of some respondents. Figure 4.13 reveals that the majority 37.10 percent of respondent's earnings ranged from NRs.3000-4500 per month followed by 17.74 percent of respondents who earned less than NRs.1500 per month. About 16.13 percent of respondent's income ranged from NRs.4500-6000 per month and 14.52 percent of respondents earned NRs.1500-3000 per month. Similarly, 9.68 percent of respondent's earnings ranged from NRs.6000-7500 followed by 3.23 percent of respondents who earned NRs.9000 and above. However, whereas only 1.61 percent of respondents had income ranges from NRs.7500-9000 per month. The average income of respondents was NRs.3475.18 per month. However, the maximum numbers of respondents earned NRs.3000 per month. The maximum income was NRs.11000 whereas the minimum was NRs.500 per month. The poverty line at US \$ 1 per day per person is a level often used for making international comparison. The average income of the respondent's family was less than US 2 dollar. Usually a family comprises of more than 1 member which means that a single member in a *Dalit* family is earning less than the poverty line at US \$1 per day per person. This indicates that they are under poverty line.

Figure 4.13 Distribution of respondents by income per month



4.5.3 Sources of Income

Table 4.10 shows the percentage of respondent's source of income. It reveals that nearly half (48.35 percent) of respondents were involved in daily wage labor inside Nepal followed by 20.88 percent of respondents who were also involved in daily wage labour but in overseas. They basically went to India, especially Bombay, Delhi as well as in other cities of India. Caste based occupation was another important source of income of *Dalit* in the study area, where 13.19 percent of respondents were involved in this field. Most of them were tailors and some were blacksmith. Due to their illiteracy and minimum education status, they did not get job in government and other private organizations. Therefore, for very few numbers i.e. 5.49 percent of respondents, source of income were service. Agriculture, being one of the main occupation, 4.40 percent of respondent's income was from the sale of agricultural produces (grains), whereas same 4.40 percent of respondent's source of income was from the sale of livestock and its products. There were

2 respondents whose other source of income was pension whereas lowest 1.10 percent i.e. only one respondent had a shop as his source of income. These data show that most of the respondents were involved in wage earning because they didn't have any other alternatives such as adequate land to cultivate and due to their illiteracy, they seldom get other job.

Table 4.10 Distribution of respondents/ their other family members by sources of income

Sources	Number	Percentage
Sale of agricultural Produces(Grains)	4	4.40
Sale of livestock & its product	4	4.40
Service	5	5.49
Pension	2	2.20
Daily wages (In country)	44	48.35
Daily wages (Overseas)	19	20.88
Shop	1	1.10
Caste-based Occupation	12	13.19
Total	91	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 4.11 shows that, on an average, income from grains was NRs3262.50 but the maximum number of respondents earned NRs.2125. The minimum amount earned from grain was NRs.2125 whereas maximum was NRs.4400 in a year. It is observed that from livestock, respondents earned NRs.4000 on average whereas the maximum number of respondents earned NRs.2000. Further, the minimum income from livestock was NRs.2000 in contrast to maximum which was NRs.6000 in a year. Moreover, average income from service was NRs.34066.67 but the maximum numbers of respondents had NRs.5000 income. Additionally, the minimum income of respondents was NRs.1200 and maximum was NRs.96000 in a year. Respondents who generated income from pension got an average NRs.7000 but maximum numbers of respondents had NRs.2000. The minimum pension they received was NRs.2000 whereas the maximum they got was NRs.12000 in a year.

As from Table 4.10, we can see that most of the respondents were wage labor, both within the country as well as in other country. From labor within the country, on average, respondent's income was NRs.32845.63 but the maximum number of respondent earned NRs.36500 from labor in a given year. The minimum wage was NRs.4800 and the maximum

wage was NRs.73000 in a year. Whereas in overseas, the respondents earned NRs.26362.47 from labor but the maximum number of respondents earned NRs.24000. The minimum wage of respondent was NRs.3429 and the maximum was NRs.84000. A vast difference is observed between the minimum and maximum which was basically due to the fact that some works were confined to only certain season as there was the trend of working in others land too, whereas, some respondents worked as labor every month in both farm as well as in off farm. Table 4.10 shows that there was only 1 respondent who had a shop, so the average, minimum and maximum earning was same i.e. NRs.9125 in a year. Respondents in a caste based occupation, which was a major source of earning of *Dalits*, on average, earned NRs.38283.33 but the maximum number of respondent earned NRs.36000. In contrast, the minimum numbers of respondent earned NRs.14400 whereas maximum earned NRs.54750.

Table 4.11 Statistical summaries of income of the respondents from different source (NRs./ year)

	Grains	Livestock	Service	Pension	Labour (in country)	Labour (Overseas)	Shop	Caste-Based Occupation
Mean	3262.50	4000.00	34066.67	7000.00	32845.63	26362.47	9125.00	38283.33
Mode	2125.00	2000.00	5000.00	2000.00	36500.00	24000.00	9125.00	36000.00
Minimum	2125.00	2000.00	1200.00	2000.00	4800.00	3429.00	9125.00	14400.00
Maximum	4400.00	6000.00	96000.00	12000.00	73000.00	84000.00	9125.00	54750.00

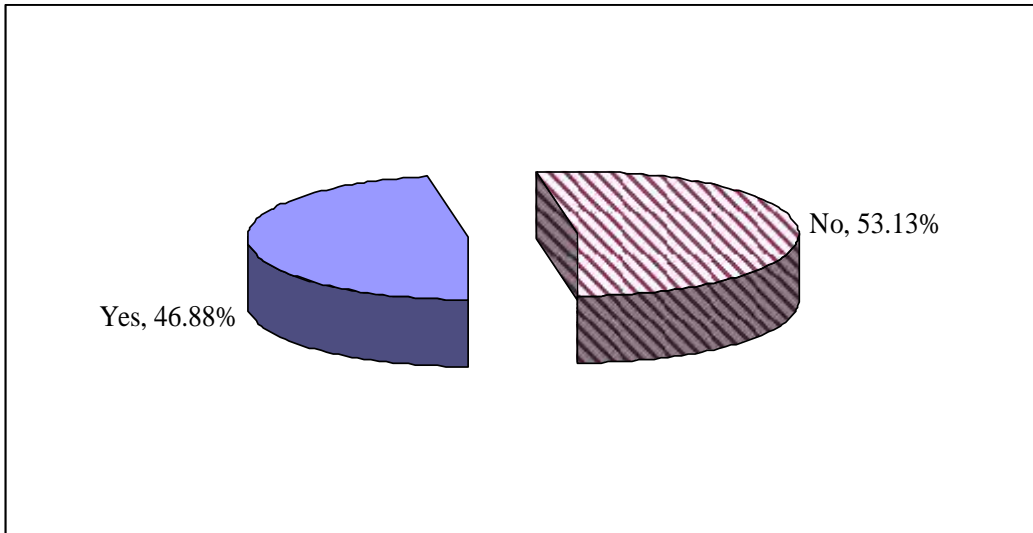
Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.5.4 Regularity of Income

Figure 4.14 reveals that nearly half i.e. 46.88 percent of respondents agreed that the income they were earning was regular throughout the months. Whereas, 53.13 percent of respondents said that the income they were earning now was not regular. Their incomes were highly dependent on seasons. In certain seasons, works were available and they received income accordingly but in times when there was no work available, as a result,

they didn't get income as well. Therefore, they didn't have a stock of money in their hand regularly, and even if they did have, it would be no more than NRs.150.

Figure 4.14 Distribution of respondents by regularity of income

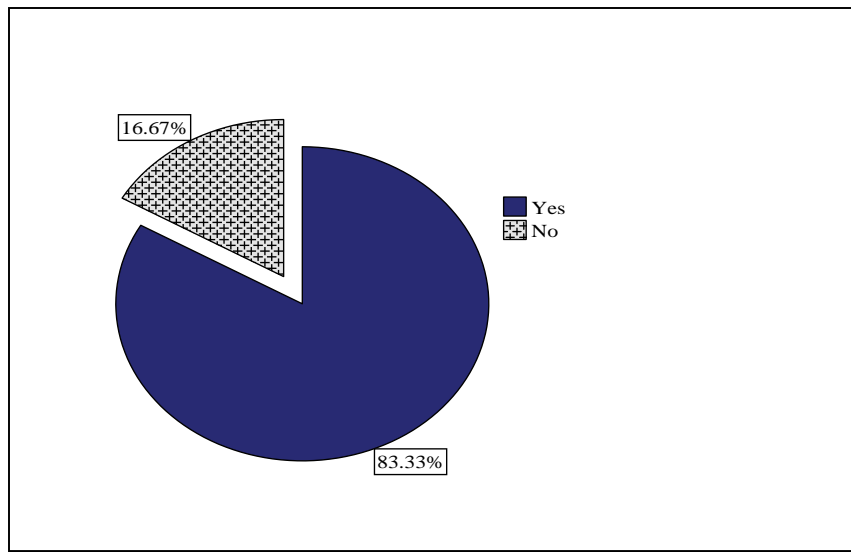


4.5.4 Livestock

Livestock constitutes a major component of assets in the rural farm households. The uses of livestock are manifold in the farms. Livestock provide manure to agricultural field on one hand and improves nutrition level as well as income level of the people on the other.

Out of total respondents, 83.33 percent raised livestock for different purposes where as only 16.67 percent did not possess any livestock.

Figure 4.15 Percent of respondents' livestock holding



The statistical summary of livestock holding pattern of the respondents is summarized in the Table 4.12. The total number of respondents who had kept livestock was 55 but the number was shown 110 in Table 4.14, it was due to multiple responses. As the table shows, respondents were likely to keep livestock like goat, ox, cow, buffalo, calf, and hen. Out of total number of respondents who kept livestock, highest 30 percent had cow, 21.82 percent had ox, followed by goat i.e.20.91 percent, 12.73 percent had buffalo and 7.27 percent each had calf and hen respectively. The maximum numbers of respondents had 2 oxen, 1 goat, 1 cow, 1 buffalo, 1 calf and 1 hen. The maximum number of hen holding was 24 by respondents, each goat, cow and buffalo were 4, ox was 3 and buffalo was 1 whereas the minimum of each goat, ox, cow, buffalo, calf and hen holding was 1 by the respondents.

The main purpose of keeping cattle was for drafting animal power and farmyard manure production. Goat was kept for cash income, meat purposes as well as for home consumption. Agriculture was one of the occupations they were involved in for their livelihood. *Dalits* who had ox were found working in others land along with those who did not possess one. Buffalo were also kept for fertilizer purpose. As shown in table, maximum number of respondents had cow. There were different reasons for keeping cow in their house. Cows served the purpose of milk, fertilizer, or as an asset, for sale or as a belief in Hindu religion, where cow is considered as Goddess "Laxmi". Calf was also kept for the same purpose as cows were kept. However, female buffaloes were kept for milk production. Sometimes, farmers met their cash requirements by keeping non-milking

buffaloes and later selling them as milking buffaloes. In rural areas, farmers reared mostly local breeds of hen for local consumption. *Dalits* kept hens to meet their cash requirements by selling the eggs and meat, and for home consumption as well.

Table 4.12 Distribution of types of livestock holding pattern of respondents (N= 55)

Livestock Type	Respondents		Livestock		
	Frequency	Percentage	Mode	Minimum	Maximum
Goat	23	20.91	1	1	4
Ox	24	21.82	2	1	3
Cow	33	30	1	1	4
Buffalo	14	12.73	1	1	1
Calf	8	7.27	1	1	4
Hen	8	7.27	1	1	24
Total	110	100			

Note: The total number exceeds due to multiple response.

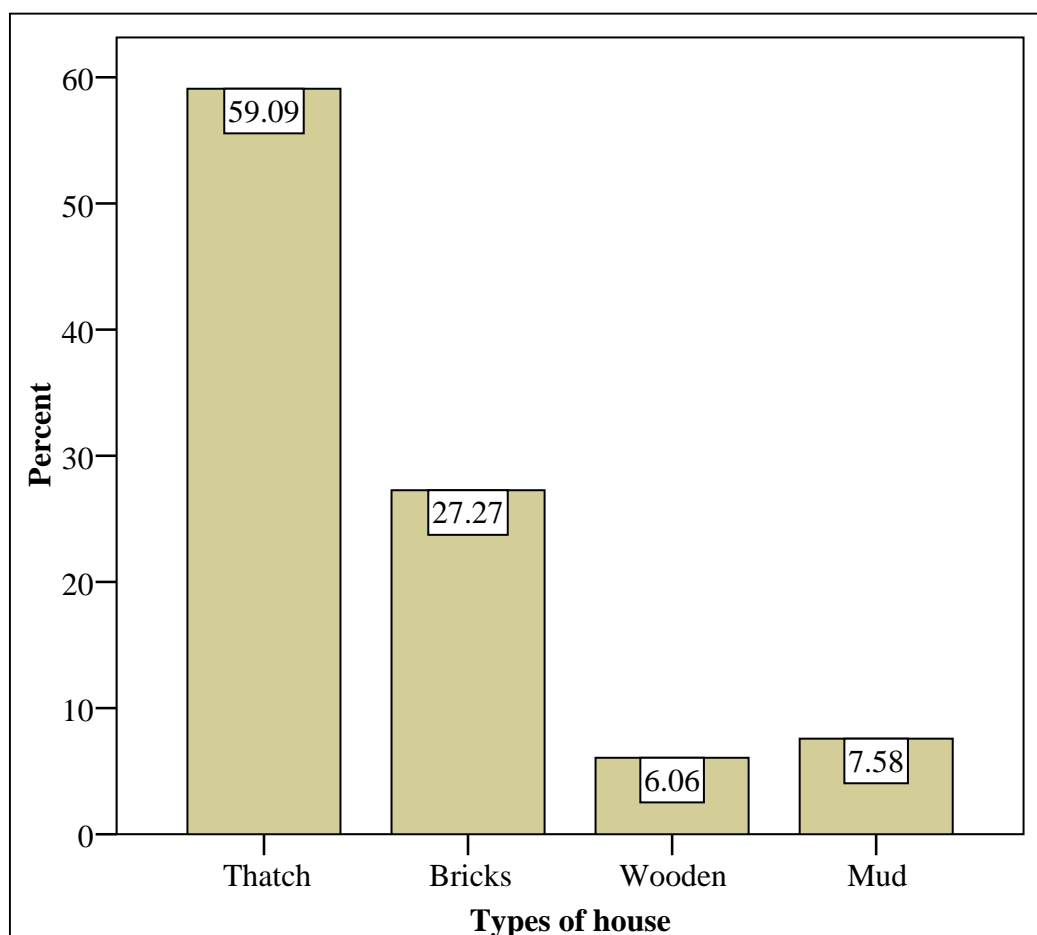
Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.5.5 House Type

A suitable abode is the basic right of all citizens. Human beings always attach the importance to house because it provides heaven, protection and safety against all the odds. Therefore, it is a common human nature that everyone wants to have a cozier house. It is under this argument that the structure of a house is also one of the indicators for the economic status of a family. Well-furnished house, therefore, implies to the better economic status and vice versa.

A question was, therefore, asked to each respondent about the house types. All had their own houses. However, the types of houses differed in quality and construction materials used. The result shows that majority of the respondents had house with thatched type. Nearly three-fifths (59.09%) respondents had thatched type houses, followed by 27.27 percent made of bricks. But 7.58 percent respondents had houses made of mud and only 6.06 percent respondents lived in house made of wood. No respondent owned a concrete house. Though many of the respondents liked to have concrete houses, they had to be satisfied with their existing house structure because of financial constraints. This reveals that financial status of the respondents, on average, was weak if house structure was taken as one of the indicators of financial status.

Figure 4.16 Distribution of respondents by their house types.

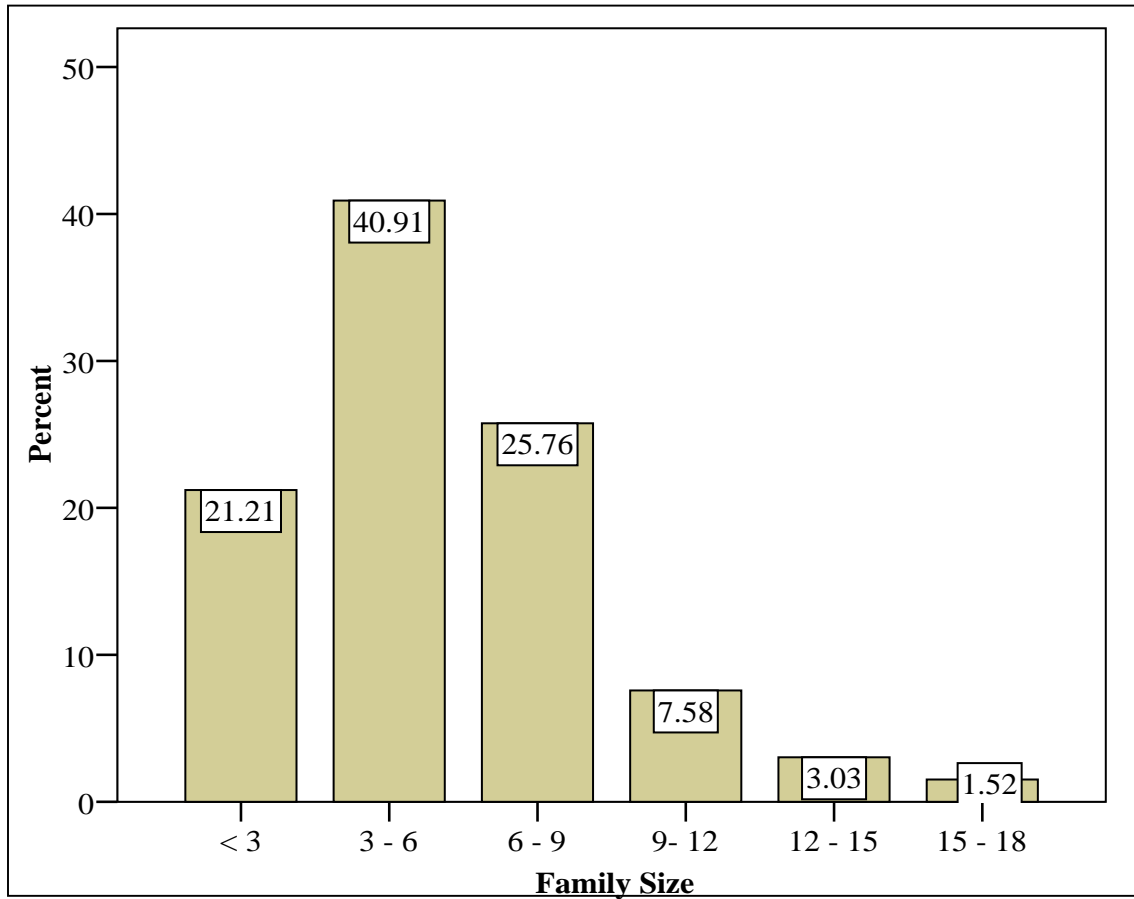


4.5.6 Family Size Living in a House

In the farming profession, family is the chief source of labour. Therefore, family with larger number of members always tends to cultivate larger size of land. In addition, the large family size reflects the diversification on both income and expenditures. The family size of respondents is heterogeneous.

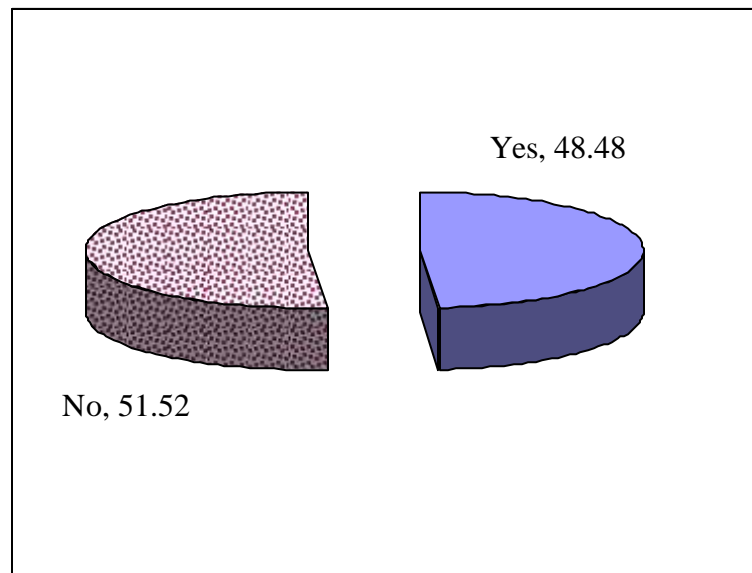
Figure 4.17 displays the respondent's family size living in a house. According to the figure, the highest number of respondents i.e. 40.91 percent had 3-6 people living in the same house, followed by 25.76 percent respondents having family size of 6-9 living in the same house. Similarly, 21.21 percent had less than 3 families size and only 7.58 percent had family size in the range of 9-12 living in the same house. But 3.03 percent of respondents had family size living in a same house as 12-15, whereas the lowest 1.52 percent of respondents has 15-18 family size living in a house.

Figure 4.17 Distribution of respondent's family size living in a house



From the Figure 4.17, different respondents had family sizes ranging from smallest less than 3 to largest 15-18 living in the same house. This reveals that, there was the possibility of feeling congested for larger family, living in the same house. Figure 4.18 also displays that 48.48 percent of respondents felt that their house was congested, where as more than 50 percent i.e. 51.52 percent of respondents did not feel the same way.

Figure 4.18 Percentage of respondents by house congestion



4.5.7 Facilities

4.5.7.1 Electricity Facility

Electricity facility is one of the basic items that indicate social well being in the rural areas. Table 4.15 shows that majority 74.2 percent of respondents did not have access to electricity where as only 25.8 percent of respondents had access to electricity.

Among those who had access to electricity, all of them used electricity for lighting; 41.14 percent used for TV and 5.88 percent used to run motor for water also.

Table 4.13 Distribution of respondents by access to electricity

Electricity	Frequency	Percent
Yes	17	25.8
No	49	74.2
Total	66	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.5.7.2 Toilet Facility

None of the respondents had toilet facility in their home. They went to field, near river or other open area for defecation.

4.5.7.3 Drinking Water Facility

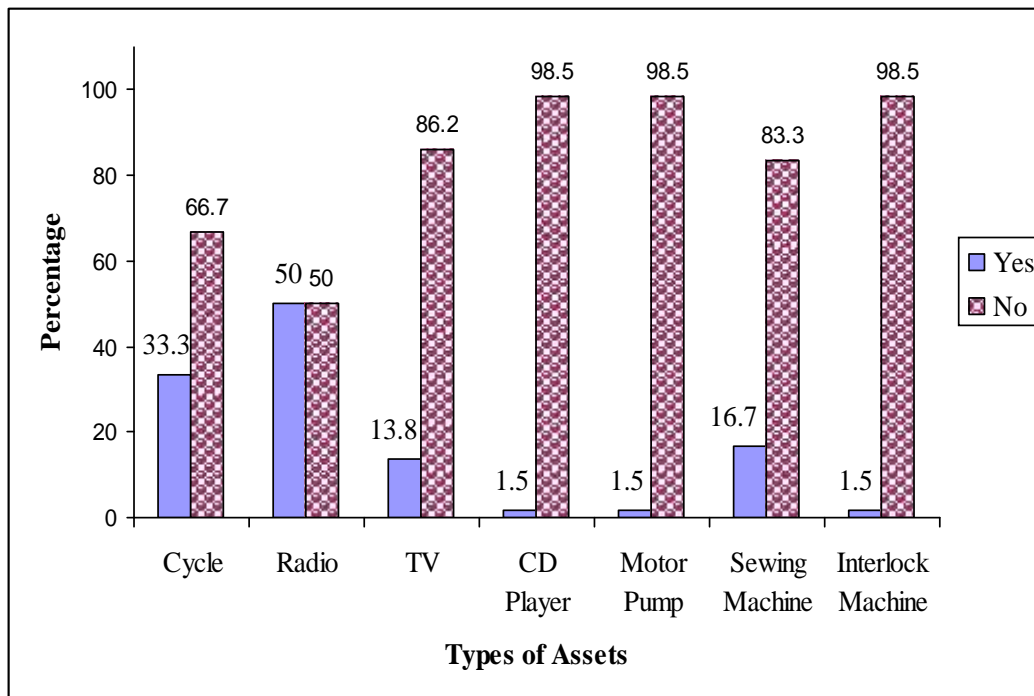
For access to drinking water, all the respondents in ward number 4 of Geta VDC had hand pump in their house whereas in case of ward 5 they didn't have that access.

4.5.8 Possession of Physical Assets

Physical assets mainly comprises of Cycle, radio, TV, CD player, motor pump, sewing machine and interlock machine. Figure 4.19 show that half of the respondents had radio followed by 33.3 percent who had cycle. However, 16.7 percent had sewing machine whereas 13.8 percent had TV. Three respondents had one CD player, one motor pump and one interlock machine each.

Majority of the respondents (82.2 percent) did not even possess TV whereas 83.3 percent of respondents did not have sewing machine. Moreover, 66.7 percent of respondents did not own any cycle whereas, half of the respondents did not own any radio.

Figure 4.19 Distribution of respondents by their asset types



4.5.9 Education Status of Family Members

Education facilitates as well as dictates the present and future living standard of the *Dalit* families. The state of growth or decline of an economy is a reflection of the rise or fall of the education level of the population and in particular the development of the infrastructures that facilitate the overall rise in the literacy level. From the survey, it was observed that out of a total of 154 respondents, a majority 108 respondents had their family members having attained at least a primary level schooling, which accounted to the highest percentage of 70.13. From the survey undertaken, it is evident that there was a falling trend in the educational level thereafter in accordance to the toll of family members participating in each subsequent level. The number of family members who had attained a lower secondary standard education dropped steeply to 30, reflecting a mere 19.48 percent. The statement can be reflected by the survey result which shows a dramatic decrease in the number of respondent family members along with the rise in the education level. The number of family members having attained Secondary, Certificate and Bachelor level education was 12(accounting to 7.79 percent), 2(accounting to 1.30 percent) and 2(accounting to 1.30 percent) respectively. The result mocks the true state of education not just in a typical *Dalit* family but in the country itself. Such a depressing result is a consequence of the lack of adequate income of the *Dalit* family to support the education of the children, who are forced to work to prevent their families from drowning into the pool of poverty. It is the reality of hardship and poverty that prevents these families from sending their children for higher education although they are aware of how essential education is to the growth and development of mankind.

Table 4.14 Distribution of respondent's education of Family Members

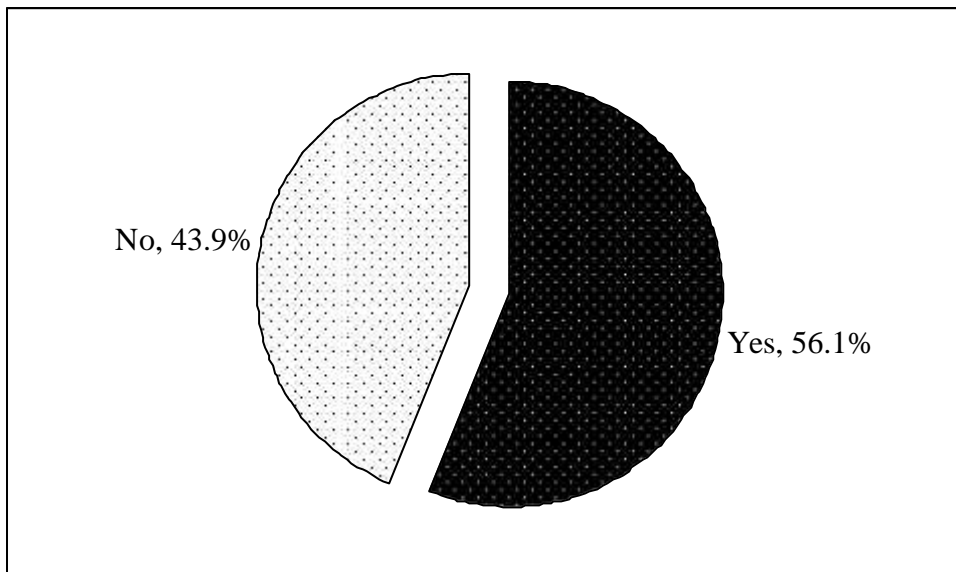
Academic Level	Number	Percentage
Primary	108	70.13
Lower Secondary	30	19.48
Secondary	12	7.79
Certificate level	2	1.30
Bachelor and Above	2	1.30
Total	154	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.5.10 Saving

Saving is a habit which is recently incorporated even in the poor sector of the Nepalese society since the past few decades. Saving is that percentage of an individual's income which remains unused after fulfilling all the necessary expenses. It is the amount of money kept aside with the anticipation of future expenditure or emergencies and is used for precautionary purpose and not for transaction purpose. In order to unveil the saving habit of the *Dalit* families in the study area, a question was asked whether they save money or not from their earning. The result shows that a majority of respondents (56.1%) saved from their earning but the remaining 43.9 percent did not save any at all. This reveals that saving habit among the *Dalit* families had not been properly inculcated as instead of realizing varied saving amounts or different percentage of income level being saved, it was observed that 43.9 percent of the respondents under survey did not save at all, amazingly not even a single penny. This reflects the uncertainty of the *Dalit* families' future economic welfare as the survey shows that they may not be prepared for future contingencies that may result in their economic downfall.

Figure 4.20 Percentage of respondents by saving

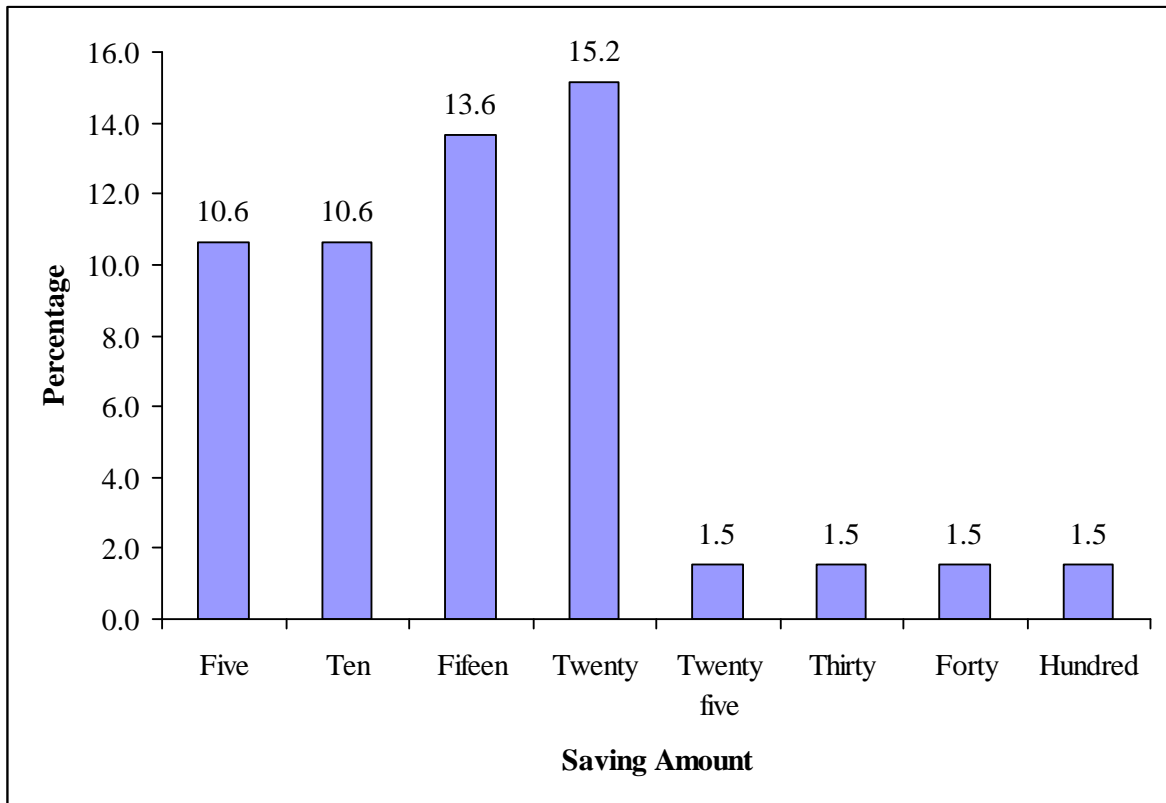


4.5.11 Saving Amount

Figure 4.21 reveals that people from the study area tend to save money from lowest rupees five to highest rupees hundred per month in different cooperatives from their village. According to figure, the highest 15.2 percent of respondents saved twenty followed by 13.6 percent who saved fifteen per month. 10.6 percent respondents saved

five whereas same 10.6 percent of respondents saved ten per month. The least numbers of respondents i.e. 1.5 percent each saved twenty five, thirty, forty and hundred every month. The average saving of the respondents was 9.62 per month.

Figure 4.21 Distribution of respondents by their saving amount per month (NRs.)

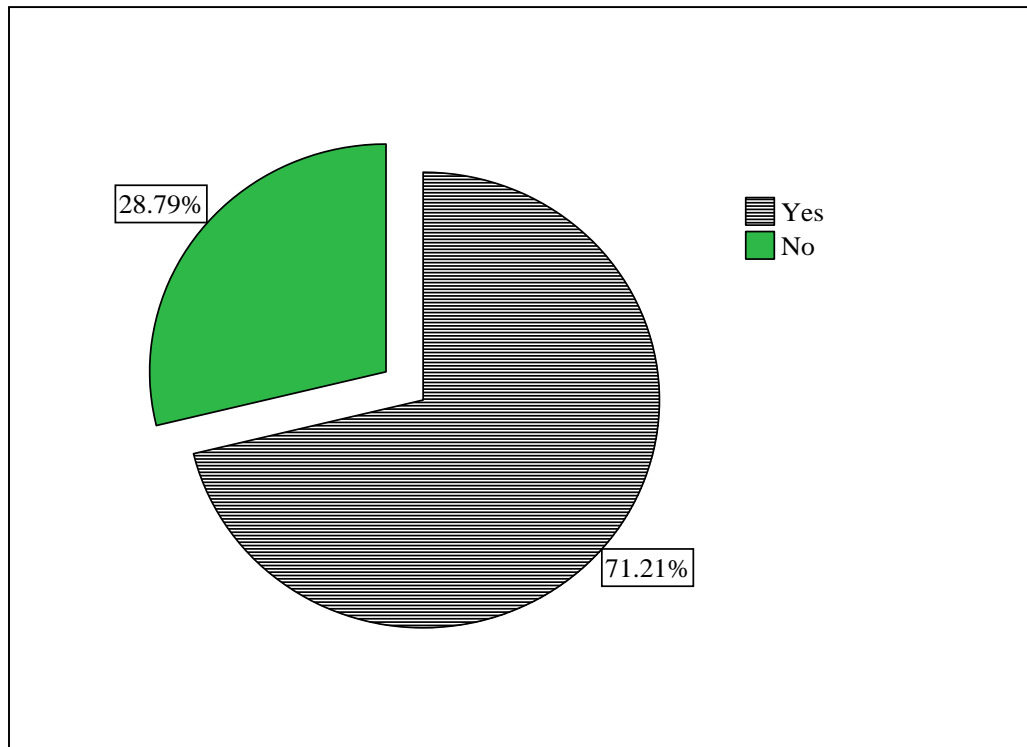


4.5.12 Loan

Farming requires investment to increase the production and productivity. To use the modern tools for farming, to supply the irrigation facilities and to level the surface of land, all requires sufficient amount of money to be invested. However, farmers may not have sufficient saving to do all of these things. Hence, there are services of formal institutions like Banks, cooperatives and financial institutions and also informal sources, which will bridge this gap between investment and saving. They take loan not only for land but also for other purposes like business and other personal reasons. It is with this argument that a question was asked to the respondents as to whether or not they take loan.

The study shows that the majority of respondents i.e. 71.21 percent took loan whereas a few 28.79 percent had never taken loan neither from formal nor from other informal sources.

Figure 4.22 Percentage of respondents by loan



People take loan for different purposes in their difficulties. Village money lenders, the Rural Development Bank (RDB), and other commercial banks, cooperatives, family and friends, and their own group saving funds are the major sources of loans for *Dalit* groups. It was observed that most of the households borrowed money from RDB, cooperatives and finance for farm production and other business. Out of the total number of respondents who had taken loan from formal loan sources, highest 33 (55.9 percent) had taken loan from cooperatives and only 1 (1.7 percent) took loan from RDB whereas same 1 (1.7 percent) took loan from Finance. Interest rates in formal source were 12 percent -15 percent in a year whereas in informal source 15 percent 60 percent was taken.

However, in case of informal source of loan, out of total number, 24(40.7 percent) borrowed from informal sources. They borrowed loan from village moneylenders, family, and friends mainly for home consumption like food, clothes, festivals, loan repayment, livestock, business, medical treatment and other purposes.

Table 4.15 Distribution of respondents by types of loans sources

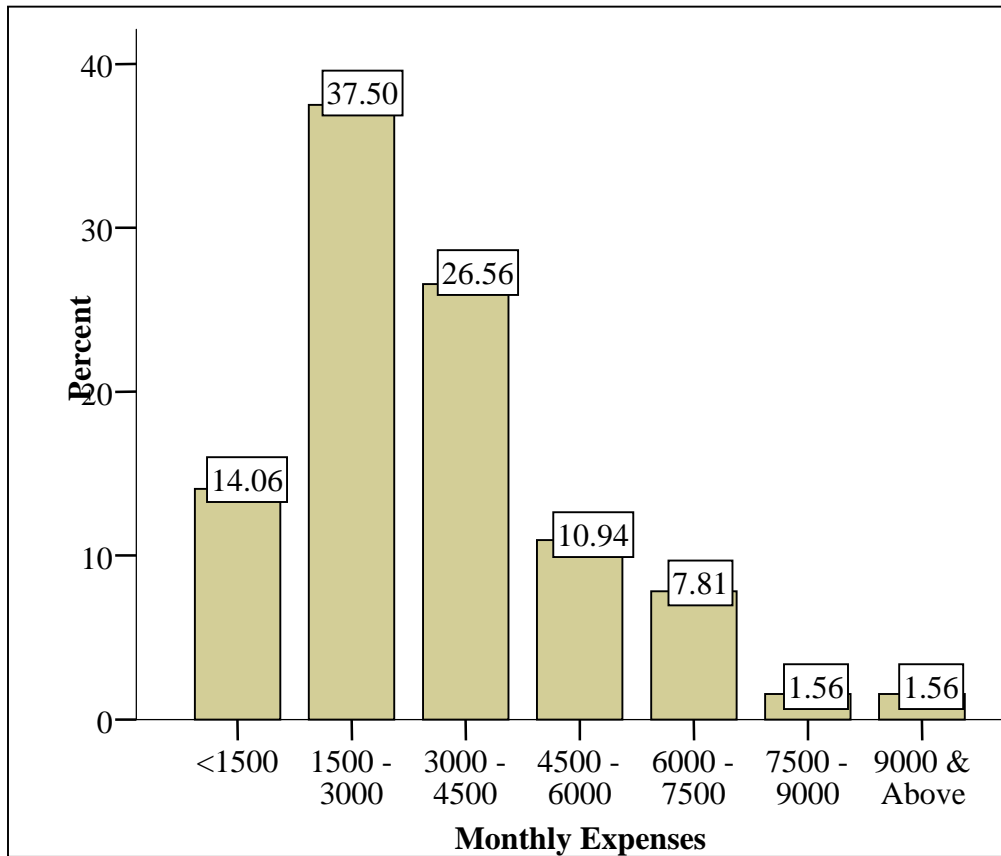
Type of Loan Source		Number	Percentage
Formal	RDB	1.0	1.7
	Finance	1.0	1.7
	Cooperatives	33.0	55.9
Informal		24.0	40.7
Total		59.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.5.13 Monthly Expenditure

In Figure 4.23, 37.50 percent of respondent's monthly expenditure ranged from NRs.1500-3000 followed by 26.56 percent of respondent whose spending ranged from NRs.3000-4500 every month. Less than NRs.1500 was spent by 14.06 percent of respondents; where as 10.94 percent of respondents spent NRs.4500-6000 every month. However, 7.81 percent of respondents spent NRs.6000-7500 every month and lowest 1.56 percent of respondent spent NRs.7500-9000, whereas, same 1.56 percent of respondent spent NRs.9000 and above. The average expenditure was NRs.3060.94 but the maximum number of respondent's expenditure was NRs.2000 per month. The minimum expenditure was NRs.500 whereas maximum was NRs.9000 in a month.

Figure 4.23 Distribution of respondents by monthly expenditure



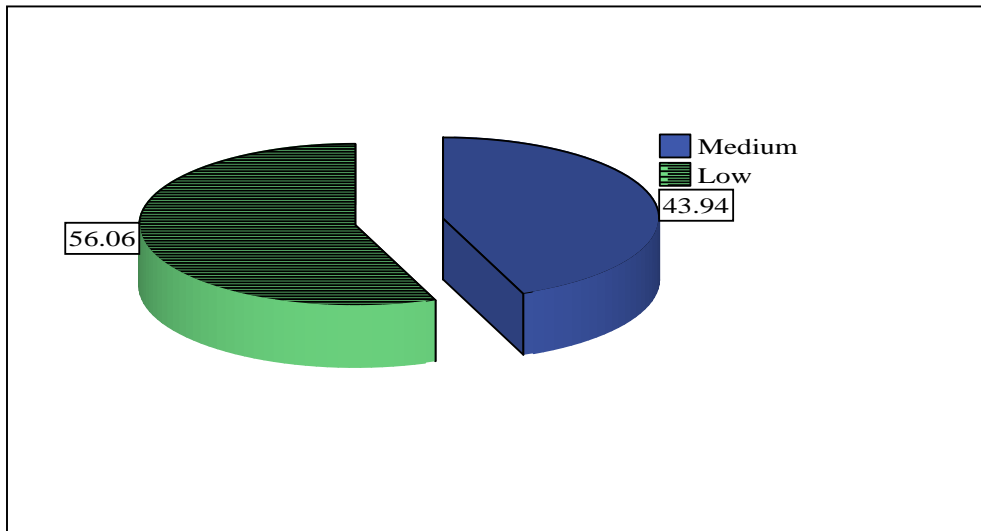
4.5.14 Living Standard

In the study area, a question was asked about their level of living standard in that environment. The finding shows that more than 50 percent i.e. 56.06 percent of the respondents had low living standard whereas remaining 43.94 percent of respondent status of living standard was medium.

The reasons given by the respondents as to why they considered their living standard being low can be summarized as the size of the land they owned was very little and to make the situation worse, the type of the land they owned was *Ailani* which couldn't even be kept as collateral for loan purpose. Additionally, it was difficult to survive hardly 2-3 months from their own production. They were unable to send their children to school. They had to look for other source of income for survival like wage labour which was also not regular. Hence, sometimes, they even had to skip meal in the case when they did not get work. Alternatively, some respondents regarded their standard of living as medium considering that although they also had less amount of land for cultivation, they did not face the

extreme of poverty to the extent that they had to skip their meal. They even possessed livestock, although in limited number. Some of them being involved in caste based occupation had the opportunity to gain regular incomes.

Figure 4.25 Percentage of respondents by living standard



CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

Dalits are considered as one of the most disadvantaged groups because the process of social stratification and job distribution in the past has resulted in their present socio-economic plight and their entire and perpetual backwardness. Hence, most of the *Dalits* even today remain poorest of the poor. Even though many of the *Dalits* carry on with their caste based and service oriented traditional occupation as well as agricultural work, the significant return on the service they render and landlessness have made them face appalling poverty. Therefore, the main objective of this study was to examine the socio-economic and livelihood conditions of *Dalit*, their household level food security with respect to land holding size and their living standard.

Two wards of Geta VDC i.e. ward 4 and 5 from Kailali district were selected purposively. There were a total 104 *Dalit* households in ward 4 and 5, among which 66 households were taken for the purpose of enumeration. All *Dalit* households living in ward number 4 and 5 were the universe for the study and the sampling size was 66. Lottery method was used to select 66 respondents from a total of 104. This was the most appropriate method as it reduced response error and improved sampling efficiency. Sample size was 66 not more and not less than that size, because the universe was homogeneous in nature and this sample size was enough for generating the required data.

The data were collected from both primary sources: household survey, in-depth interview, field observation, case study and key informant interview; and secondary source books, statistical reports, annual reports, previous research findings, internet browsing etc. The analysis was done through descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics like graphical distribution, frequency distribution, pie chart, cross tabulation, and standard deviation were employed. All these were done through computer software packages i.e. Microsoft Excel 2007.

Of the total respondents, 78.8 percent were male and 21.2 percent were female. Nearly one-third (30.30%) of the respondents were of 30-39 age group. By education level, highest numbers of respondents i.e. 49.23 percent were illiterate followed by 33.85 percent

literate. For three-fifths of the respondents (62.1%), primary occupation was agriculture followed by 22.7 percent who were following caste based occupation.

Out of total respondents owning land, 55.88 percent owned *Ailani* land and 44.12 percent owned private land. Only 46.97 percent respondents had received land from Land Reform and Squatter Commission. The largest 51.52 percent respondents owned 0.136-0.204 ha of land and 0.51 ha was the maximum amount of land owned. Out of total respondents 16.67 percent rented in and only 3.03 rented out their land.

From their own production, only 3 percent respondents said that it fulfilled their livelihood requirement. The major crops produced in study area were rice, wheat, mustard, pulses and maize whose productivity were 3.2534 metric ton/ha, 1.7290 metric ton/ha, 0.2699 metric ton/ha, 0.2381 metric ton/ha and 0.6288 metric ton/ha per hectare respectively. Only 6.06 percent had food enough for more than 9 months. When asked how much land they required to fulfill their livelihood, 19 respondents said 0.17-0.51 ha, 23 respondents 0.51-0.85 ha, 6 respondents 0.85-1.19 ha, 8 respondents 1.19-1.53 ha, 5 respondents 1.87-2.21 ha, 1 respondent 2.25-2.89 ha and same 1 respondent believed 3.25-3.57 ha of land. Among those *Dalit* respondents, 6.26 percent practiced leasing and 93.74 percent practiced share cropping.

Largest 51 percent of respondents family member were involved in labour, 26 percent in farming and 14 percent in caste based occupation. Maximum 37.10 percent respondent had earnings ranging NRs.3000-4500 every month but only 46.88 percent respondents earning were regular. Out of total respondents, 83.33 percent respondents had raised livestock like goat, ox, cow, buffalo, calf and hen. Highest 59.09 percent had thatch house followed by 27.27 percent having bricks, 6.06 percent wooden and 7.58 percent had mud house. Three to 18 family members were living in one house. Altogether, 48.48 percent respondents had difficulties living with larger family in same house as space was not enough for them. About facilities like electricity, only 17 (28.8 percent) had access, where as none of the *Dalits* had toilet in their house. Talking about physical assets, they had cycle, radio, TV, CD player, motor pump, sewing machine and interlock machine. Largest 108 respondents family members had attended only primary level and only 2 had attended bachelor and above levels of education. Due to the irregularity of income, only 56.1 percent of respondents saved from NRs.5 to 100 on monthly basis. However, they took loans from both formal (59.3 percent) such as RDB, finance company and cooperatives and

informal (40.7 percent) such as money lenders, families and friends. Their minimum monthly expenditure was NRs.500 whereas, maximum was NRs.9000 but the largest 37.50 percent respondent's expenditure ranged from NRs.1500-3000 per month. Their major expenditure was on food highest (65.52 percent), education (15.65 percent), health (11.76 percent) and clothing (7.66 percent). When the question was asked on their living standard in their perspective, highest 56.06 percent said it was low and only 43.94 percent said it was medium.

5.2 Conclusions

In an agrarian society like Nepal, land is one of the determining factors for socio-economic conditions or land is a symbol of broader socio-economic status (a major source of livelihood, power, prestige etc.). It ensures socio-economic security. Socio-economic condition of *Dalits* in all dimensions, such as sources of livelihoods, size of land holding, food security and other is at lower level. *Dalits* are nearly landless or synonymous to landless which means their natural capital according to SLF is not good as the land they own are very little. According to the findings of this research, majority of the *Dalits* have *Ailani* land and other have private land. Even if they don't have ownership in the *Ailani* land they are possessing, they have access to it. It is only that, due to the lack of ownership, they could not keep those lands as a collateral or mortgage in bank in case they wanted to take loan.

Moreover, due to the smaller land holding size and also because the land they own are also either near river or non-irrigated, it results into lesser production of the crops. Therefore, majority of their own production lacked food security. Most of the respondents had food sufficiency for 3 to 6 months only. Therefore, it is clear that the land they had were not enough for their livelihood. Hence, they used others' land under different tenancy mode and also worked as labors in both on farm as well as off-farm. The wages they earned were also not regular. Therefore, they were unable to fulfill their basic needs such as education, health, food, clothing and other facilities. According to them and findings of this research, sometimes, they even didn't get chance to have their meal in case they didn't get work and unable to get loan from both formal as well as informal sources. This can reveal that their condition was very pitiable.

Their other major livelihood strategies for supplementing the income was from their traditional caste based occupation so it can be said that on one hand they were richer in

human capital and on other hand they lacked in other occupation to compete in the market. The other human capital was their education status which was also low due to their lack of proper income source. But, they were trying their best to give their children education due to which there was a hope that with this human capital, in future they will have better work opportunity. In the study area what I have found that, connected to ward four, there was Ex-kamaiyas settlement. The situation of both group Ex-kamaiyas and *Dalits* were similar. Both group had very less land and were poor. But different organizations working on Ex-kamaiyas are providing them with different trainings so that they can go for different livelihood strategies to sustain themselves. Whereas living near same ward, *Dalit* communities were overlooked. Due to their lack of appropriate training/skill they hardly got work as well.

There are a number of socioeconomic constraints for modernization of *Dalits* caste based occupation. On the one hand, it is not in position to compete in global market and it has no good economic return. On the other hand, it is not considered as a prestigious, profitable, dignified job or occupation due to socio-cultural factors imbedded with Nepali Hindu Caste System. Hence, this occupation is gradually disappearing due to shifting to other occupations. Therefore, they were more attracted to go to India as they didn't have enough money to go other than that place.

Hence, due to their limited source of income and higher expenditure, only few numbers were able to save some of money which showed that their financial capital was also low. It was also found that they kept livestock like goat, ox, cow, buffalo, calf, and hen for different purposes like for their livelihood, as an assets and other religious belief. In the name of physical assets, they had a house but none of the respondents had concrete house. Only half of the population had access to drinking water where as the other half didn't. In case of toilet facilities, none of the *Dalit* respondents had access to such facility. But talking about means of transportation, they had cycles and other assets like TV, sewing machines, who were involved in caste based occupation, and so on. This shows that they had access to only a minimal physical capital, natural capital, financial capital and human capital which did not show their good living standard. But due to their access to education, there were chances of gaining social capital. They were aware of their right and were found involved in local NGOs working for their rights. This was helping them to increase their networking.

5.3 Recommendations

Following are the suggestions made after the study.

1. NGO/INGO may emphasize on increasing social capital and human capital of *Dalit*. This will increase the livelihood options of those people.
2. State or other NGO/INGO should take special efforts for alternative sources of livelihoods. Specially, modernization of *Dalits* caste based occupation is one of the single alternative strategies for ensuring livelihoods security.
3. There are some positive provisions for *Dalits* in education sector, but very less in recruitment and participation in decision-making bodies. So, it is necessary to ensure their socio-economic condition. The socio-economic status really paves the way for the overall advancement of *Dalits*.
4. Everyone should help in creating an environment in which *Dalit* themselves can develop as able citizens who can secure their own rights.

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ANNEX A
Questionnaire

Interview Schedule on Master Thesis on “Livelihood analysis of *Dalits*” in Geta VDC of
Kailali District, Nepal

Serial Number:.....

Socio-Personal Details

Name:..... Sex: Male/Female Age:

District:..... VDC/Municipality:Ward no:.....

Settlement/Tole:..... Marital Status: married/unmarried/widow/divorced

Religious affiliation: Hindu/Muslim/Buddhist/Christian

Household heads: Male/Female

Level of Education (attainment):

Illiterate/literate/Primary/Secondary/Intermediate/Bachelor/Master

Occupation: Primary Occupation: Agriculture/Business/Caste Based Occupation/ Specify (if any).....

Secondary Occupation: Agriculture/Business/Caste Based Occupation/ Specify (if any).....

1. Do you have land?

Yes..... No.....

2. What types of ownerships do you have on land?

a) Personal property/Raikar b) Guthi c) Specify (if any).....

3. If the land is not your personal property, than do you have full access and control over that land?

Yes..... No.....

4. Have you received any land due to land reform (1964) or any sukumbasi ayog (Squatter Commission)?

Yes..... No.....

5. Why so?

.....

6. How much land do you have?

..... (in local unit like Kattha, Hal, Muri)

Please convert it into standard unit (Hectare-Ha)

7. Please categorize given land on different basis and also mention area.

Rented in	Rented out

8. Do your land holding size fulfill your livelihood requirement or living standard at household level?

Yes..... No.....

9. How do you utilize these lands?

.....

10. Which crops do you produce in a year?

a). Rainy crops:

b). Summer crops:

c). Winter crops:

11. Productivity of the food items produced in their farm:

Items	Production in kg (x)	Area (y)	Productivity (x/y)
Rice			
Wheat			

Maize			
Mustard			
Pulse crop			
Total			

12. What is the situation of food security with your own production?

.....months in a year

13. How much land do you need to ensure livelihood security of your family?

.....

14. Do you work on others land?

Yes..... No.....

15. If yes, what types of land tenancy system do exist here?

a) Share Cropping b) Leasing /Renting c) Mortgages d) Specify (if any).....

16. Mention the features of existing land tenancy system?

Types of Land Tenancy	Features
Share Cropping	

17. How do you share harvest/products between land owner and tenants?

.....

18. How do you share inputs (costs) between tenants and land owners?

.....

19. What livelihood strategies do you adopt?

Farm activities:

.....

.....

Off-Farming Activities:

.....

.....

Traditional caste based occupation (Listing):

.....

.....

Coping strategies (in case of deficit...)

.....

.....

20. Do you have livestock?

Yes..... No.....

21. If yes, please mention the types of livestock, their number, and purpose of rearing in the following table.

Types of Livestock	Number	Purpose of Rearing
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

22. What types of houses/buildings do you have?

a) Thatch b) Bricks c) Wooden d) Specify (if any).....

23. How many family member share single house?

.....

24. Have you any view about your congested sharing of single house by a large number of family members?

.....

25. Do you have access to electricity?

Yes..... No.....

26. What is use of this electricity (purpose)?

a) For lighting b) Specify (if any others).....

27. Do you have access to drinking water?

Yes..... No.....

28. Do you have access to toilet facility?

Yes..... No.....

29. What is level of education attainment of family members?

Family members	Educational attainment						
	Illiterate	Literate	Primary	Secondary	Intermediate	Bachelor	Master

30. What are physical assets do you posses in your households?

Physical Capital	Number
Radio	
TV	
Cycle	
Vehicle	
Others	

31. What is the situation of income security (NRs. /month)?

.....NRs. /month

32. What is level of living Standard based on local perception?

a) High b) Medium c) Low

33. What are bases or criteria of each category based on local perception?

High	Medium	Low
.....
.....

34. What is main job for your livelihoods?

a) Service b) laborers c) Specify (if any).....

35. If you are laborers, where do you work?

a) Farm b) Off farms

37. Do you save cash or money regularly?

Yes..... No.....

38. If yes, how much do you save monthly?

.....NRs/ month

39. Do you take loan?

Yes..... No.....

40. If yes, what are sources of loan?

a) Formal b) Informal

41. What might be among the formal source? (Please do tick marks)

a) Agriculture Development Bank

b) Rural Development Bank

c) Finance company

d) Specify (if any others).....

42. What is interest rate from formal source?

.....%

43. What might be among the informal sources?

a) Neighbors b) Relatives c) Land lords d) Specify (if any).....

44. What is interest rate of loan from informal source?

.....%

45. What are major sources of cash earning?

Sources of income	Yearly NRs.
Sale of grains	
Sale of livestock	
Services	
Pension	
Sale of Vegetables	
Wage Labour in other country	
Other income generating activities	

46. Is it regular? (Why and how)?

.....

47. What is amount of expense in a month?

.....

ANNEX B

Respondents involved in cutting firewood.



Maize Field



House of respondents



Interview with respondents

