

CHAPTER - ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Nepal is a geographically, biologically, socially, culturally and caste diversified country. In the Globe of world, Nepal is located between 26⁰22" to 30⁰27" North longitude and 80⁰4" to 88⁰12" Eastern latitude. Total geographical area of the Nepal is 1,47,181 square kilo meters. Average length of the country is 885 km east to west and the average width of the country is around 193 km from northern Himalayan region to southern plains.

Nepal is very rich in terms of forest resources and biodiversity. "Green forest is the wealth of Nepal" (Hariyo Ban Nepal Ko Dhan) was a popular slogan in Nepal before 2036 B.S. because forests, the renewable natural endowments of Nepal were and still are important for the country, state and the people. Till 1950, the commercial exploitation of hard wood from the Terai forest was a major source of revenue for the state. It is one of the important natural resources of Nepal for its socio-economic development and people's livelihood. It is the main source of firewood, timber, litters and animal fodder. A vast majority of the population, about 90 percent of total, is directly involved in managing forest as part of their everyday life. Especially, the hill farmers of Nepal are mostly dependent on the forest for firewood, timber, fodder and leaf litter for daily household use. The forest resource has made a significant contribution to economic and social development of the country.

At the beginning when the size of population was small as compared to the vast area of forest, felling of trees cannot produce any adverse effect on environment and the socio-economy. The rapid growth in population resulted multifarious impact. The rapid socio-economic changes in Nepal have placed a new demand on forest resources. People are cutting trees for expanding their agricultural land. So Nepal's forests are gradually disappearing causing a major ecological crisis.

Nepal's forest is decreasing (approximately by 35 – 29 percent out of the total land area of 1, 47,181 sq. km of Nepal) in both quantity and quality over the last two decades. Considering the rapid declination of forest, then NG implemented many forest programs since 1978 to date, The Community Forestry and Forestation Division (CFAD) were initiated in 1979. Nowadays the community program is received highest priority in the forestry sector in Nepal. Thus sustainable use of forest resources has become a great

concern in Nepal for socio-economic development as well as ecological balance of the region.

Community forest is the control, management and use of forest resources by the villagers for their own benefit of the society as a whole. It aims to ensure equitable access to forest products without over exploiting the forest resources. A community forest is the section of national forest that is handed over to a group of user households for control, proper management and sustainable use for the group benefit. The villagers can either use the products or sell them without damaging the forests. The income derived from the sale of forest products will go the Forest User Group's fund. Decision about the management of forests resources within the community forest is made by the user's committee. The forest department gives only technical and financial support.

After the handover of National Forest to local people, they have the full authority to use, protect and manage the forest in their own way so that they have the full authority to use, protect and manage the forest in their own way so that they can fulfill their basic needs for firewood, timber and other forest products in a sustainable manner. Although, the forest resources offered livelihood security and earning opportunities for many people in the hills, the aspect of women's participation in community forest management remain an important issue because women are basically the collectors, managers, and users of the forest in the rural society.

Community forestry in Nepal devolves management and use rights of forests to local groups of users. Access to forests is important because they are central to farming systems, and more than 80 percent of Nepal's population of 23 million is dependent on agriculture (CBS 2005). Fuel wood supplies over 75 percent of the country's energy requirements. Moreover, forests play a critical role in the agro ecological cycle of cropping patterns, animal husbandry, and forest products that sustains agricultural production.

Community forest in Nepal was formally introduced in 1978 AD. Community forest has been defined as "Control, protection and management of local forest by local communities known as user groups." The main objective of the community forest is to achieve sustainable forest resources by converting accessible national forests into community forests in stages. It aims to ensure equitable access to forest products without over exploiting the forest resources. A community forest is the section of national forest

that is handed over to a group of user households for control, proper management and sustainable use for the group benefit. The villagers can either use the products or sell them without damaging the forests. The income derived from the sale of forest products will go to the FUG's fund.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There are 123 Community Forest User's Groups (CFUGs) in Doti District and the overall condition of community forestry has been improving, the issue regarding the women's participation in community forest management is still a valid point for further elaboration.

Almost every rural household in Nepal is dependent on wood for cooking and heating, and on forestland for feeding their domestic animals. The infinite variety of combinations of culture, caste, personalities and traditional forest management practices found in Nepal produces unpredictable results. This means that an effective forestry solution from one area can not automatically be applied to another situation without adaptation. Having such a major concern in the appropriate forest management, a community forestry intervention was a very effective way to reach out the mass population of Nepal. Our social-nerve and system has shaped women as the final and ultimate users of forest product. The management of firewood, fodder, litters, etc. has been managing by women. For enhancing the present management system and to achieve sustainable management of the women's role cannot be overestimated especially in rural Nepal. Especially women are the most caretakers, users and direct beneficiaries of forest. They spent most of the time to collect forest product like fuel wood, grass, leaf litter, fodder and other non timber products; they can also earn some cash by selling different types of forest products. Although women are the main stakeholders of forest they do not have wide access on decision making which eventually favours them. District Forest Office is trying to monitor CFUG on social and technical areas by filling simple monitoring form in once in a year in every CFUG but it is not comprehensive and scientific for exploring the ground reality especially on participation and decision making. Active participation is one of the important indicator for finding out the women's status, that affect on decision making whereas the status of women on decision making process would support to ensure the significant role of women in every community forest user groups. This study is being undertaken mainly for the above-mentioned purpose.

In the context on women's participation in CF user group Participation and decision

making process only since few years back. Women users face several difficulties, particularly lack of faith in their own activities, effective penalty, enforcement and delay in effective forest management works. Similarly insufficient resources cannot meet the demand of women. In male dominated society females are always dominated by male for their participation in CF user group and decision making process.

A micro level analysis of women's participatory approach in development efforts must be placed emphasis. By promoting self- dependence of the people and mobilizing active participation of women in managing forest resources is vital. In this context, to examine the women's role in community forest management and development including their constraints and management are the major problems of the study.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to find out the status of women, their Participation and role in decision-making process of Thapla community forestry of silgadhi in Doti District.

The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the socio-economic status of women in CFUG.
2. To analyse existing situation of women's participation and their role in decision making.
3. To document the benefits of CF and benefit sharing on women.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study is based on the participation of the women in CFUG and its management. Because women are the active users and members of most of the community forests .Thus, women are playing an important role in sustainable development of community forests. However, their role is neither properly identified nor explored. This study has attempted to explore and analyze the women's role in community forestry for its sustainable development. Further, it also highlighted some problems and constraints on maximum female participation community forestry and focuses on possible ways for solving it.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

This study basically attempts to access the participation of women in decision making process and their role in community forestry. This study is based on and limited to the Thapla forest users group of Silgadhi- 3, of doti District. Thus, study will focus on the

theoretical and practical aspect of women's status in CFUG and their role. The conclusion and findings of this study might not be generalized and applicable to the other parts of the country. Almost all the studies have some sort of limitations and this study is not an exception on this fact. So this study has some limitation as mentioned below.

1. This research is concentrated only one CFUG among many CFUGs in Silgadhi-3 of doti.
2. This research has done by student researcher for the partial fulfillment of the requirement of M.A. degree in rural development. So he has limited economic source, limited time and limited human resources for the extensive study.
3. In this study only simple statistical tools have been used to analyze the data collected.
4. The respondent were women only who participated in committee meeting, CFUG meeting and other community forest activities.
5. The outcomes and recommendation of the study may not be applicable to all cases all over the nation.

1.6 Organization of the Study

This thesis paper has been divided into six chapters. The first chapter deals with the introductory part of the study in which the researcher has tried to explain some basic facts about the introduction of community forestry in Nepal, its emergence and development etc. Also this chapter explains something about the role of women in CF management, objectives of the study, and significance of the study as well as limitation of the study.

Literature reviews have been gathered in chapter two in which some of the literatures regarding concept and development of CF in Nepal as well as its growing popularity has been elaborated. Basically this chapter is concentrated on forest situation in Nepal in past and at present, how the concept of CF emerged to protect and best exploit the forest resources for the benefit of local people. Also this chapter explains something about the importance of community forestry in Nepal where the majority of the people have dependency on forest resources in one or another way. Some literatures regarding people's participation to manage and exploit the natural resources have been reviewed including the forest resources. And at last, some literatures related to women's Participation in CF management have been reviewed in this chapter.

The third chapter basically focuses on the methodology of the study. In the beginning, an

attempt has been made to describe the study district itself including its geography, population, infrastructure, climatic situation that can explain a brief overview of the study district. Right after that a quick description has been presented on the study site that is located in Silgadhi Municipality of Doti District. The research design that had been adopted during the study has been explained in the chapter as well as nature and source of data has been put here. At the end of the chapter, the universe as well as sample selected for the study has been explained.

In fourth chapter of the study, tabulation and data analysis has been made based on the primary data collected during the research as well as secondary data collected with the help of various secondary sources. Some tables namely major benefits that the users get from the CF; women's role in CF management; participation of women in CFUG and CF executive committee; factors affecting the active participation of women; how often women participate in CFUG meetings and at last key informant's view on women participation in CF activities have been presented in this chapter. Some other statistical tools like pie-diagram and percentage etc have been used to analyze the data.

The chapter five factors affecting in peoples participation in Community forestry user group [CFUG]. There are several factors, which are responsible for the active participation if people in community forestry program. These factors are classified as social cultural factor, Economic factor and other related factors.

At the end, chapter six deals with the Summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study in which conclusion, Summary and recommendations are presented in different sub-headings.

CHAPTER - TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Forest Situation of Nepal

The first scientific measurement of Nepal's forest resources often called the "1964 Survey" was carried out at the beginning in 1963 by the forest resource survey office of the department of forestry assisted by the United State Agency for International Development (USAID). The result of the 1964 survey must be regarded as rough estimates at best. This survey was based on aerial photograph taken over a 15 years period 1953 to 10 1967 and adjust by strip photographs covering ten percent of the surveyed area. The main objective of the survey was to assess the area of Nepal's forest.

M. B. Wallace (1997) said that based on the result of the 1964 survey, the total area of the forest (excluding the high Himalayan area) was estimated to be 6.4 million ha., these were 1.8 million ha in Terai and 4.6 million ha in hills. 1,88,00 ha reduced the forest of Nepal during the period of 1978 to 1986 which comes 0.5 percent annual rate during this period. The master plan for forestry sector (1998) described in regard of deforestation causes in Nepal that increasing numbers of people and their corresponding needs of fuel wood, fodder, food, and timber are prime factors of deforestation.

According to Forest Department 1997, since 1978 Nepal Government has been implemented community forestry program and the Master Plan for the Forestry Sector, 1998 has placed it as major program in forestry sector. There were 61 percent (35, 61,600 ha) of the total forests of Nepal under potential community forests.

The Master Plan for the Forestry Sector, 1998 primarily aims to supply forestry related basic needs, firewood, timber and fodder and to conserve environment and genetic resources. The Plan set up the physical targets of the Community and Private forestry program includes firewood, timber and fodder production by establishing community and private forests through public participation and distribution of improved stoves.

According to Forest Rules (1995), Government forests are being handed over to the forest user groups as community forests with the constitution and operational plan. Forest Department has produced Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Community Forestry. The Guideline allows field staff to work closely with the local community in identifying forest users and support to prepare constitution, preparing operational plan, handing over the responsibility of managing community forests, implementing the plan

and review.

According to W. J. Jackson, Shrestha, K.B. (1995), the operational planning processes are divided into four phases, investigation, negotiation, implementation, and review. After collecting social biophysical about the local forest, field workers and forest users negotiate to prepare operational plans. According to Forest Department (1997), the community and private Forest Division of the Department of Forests reports that 3,45,914 ha of forests has been handed over to 5,277 forest user groups which include 5,52,034 households as beneficiaries by July 1997.

2.2 Evolution of Community Forestry Concept

Community forestry Programs is being implemented in Nepal over the last two decades covering 74 districts. In the present context it is the most focused and prioritized program of the forestry sector. Various donor agencies are providing financial and technical assistance to community forestry program through the government of Nepal.

Community forestry is an approach to forest management intended primarily to benefit the local users of forests. The main objectives of the community forestry program is to involve and participate community members in the conservation and management of natural resources in a sustainable manner in-order to fulfill the daily requirements of fodder, forages, bedding materials for animals, firewood and timber. The community forestry program is aimed at community development and particularly at meeting the household needs of firewood, fodder and timber. Irrespective of socio-economic status of the community members those who are traditional users of forest and are willing to manage it are regarded as legal forest users and the forest area adjoining the settlement is formally handed over to them.

Despite of fulfilling the basic household requirement from the forestry, it has also been encouraged to user groups to generating income from the sale of forest products. In this program, all the activities are carried out by the forestry users group through its long term forest operational plan. Operational plan for forest management is prepared in consultation with district forest office. Community forestry user groups are needed to be registered in the district forest offices under the community forestry act. The legal hand-over of the community forestry to users group is undertaken after the legal registration process is completed. Moreover, after the legal registration of community forestry user groups these groups are independent legal institutions for managing community forest

resources according to the needs of the users. As institutions, forestry users group should have their own goals, plans and activities to fulfill the needs, with monitoring and evaluation as a crucial function to assess progress and make plans accordingly.

According Gurung,D.K. (1987) The Forest Nationalization Act (1957) led to the shift of the ownership and control of forest resources from the people to the government and accelerated the loss of bio-diversity. Maharjan,S. (1997) said that In order to empower the FUGs to manage community forests on an equitable and sustainable basis, the government has introduced progressive New Forest Acts (1992) and By- Laws(1995). The planning and development of community forestry is a complex process governed by socio-economic, political, ecological, technical and administrative factors.

N. Kazi Shrestha and Charla (1997) Britt opines that Community forestry in Nepal is a model program for the forestry sector throughout the world. According to M.R. Maharjan (1993), Community forestry was the control and sustainable management of local forest resources, by those who use these resources in multidimensional ways for their welfare on an equitable and sustainable basis.

According to Deepak Bajracharya (1983), People need fuel-wood for cooking and heating, poles fencing and timber for house construction etc. In the same moment, they also need to clear forest land for producing food grains as rice, millet and maize and fodder for livestock. K. K. Gurugharana (1990) opines that the demand of such forest products excess the supplying capacity of the forest due to the diminishing regenerating process of the forest due to heavy pressure of population over it.

Gurugharana also opines that changing perceptions of the parameter of community forestry activities in Nepal have emerged in four main phases – to date: firstly, in terms of realizing the primacy of people in relation to management interactions with forest and trees; Secondly, through acknowledging the importance of the farm forest cycle of resource generation and use in meeting basic needs for household subsistence strategies; thirdly, by recognizing emerging income generation activities, and the need for equity in distribution and remuneration between individuals, households, and markets; and fourthly, by endorsing steps to increase communication between forest users, and to use new emerging forest user networks as platforms for communicating new ideas, disseminating information, sharing productive material and collectively voicing concerns about resource related policies and activities.

According to Development Alternative Nepal (1992), indigenous forest management systems have become the basis for the present day community forestry program. Officially, Community Forestry program has launched in 1979/80. All the 75 district forest offices prepared the District Management Schemes in 1988/99 to fulfill the requirement of the master plan, the objective of the plans were to increase productivity of the forests. In 1994/95, many of the offices revised the updated and prepared five-year plan; these objectives can meet basic needs and reducing poverty, which come under socio-economic goals of sustainable development. Based on field experience, Jackson and Ingles (1995) suggested introducing planning at the range post level. The authors mentioned that the aim of the range post planning is to link the capacity and interest of local people with national objectives for forest development.

The Community Forestry Program in Nepal is an innovative program being used by HMG to build capacity within communities to manage local forests in a sustainable way for their own development. In this program there is a direct link between community development and forest conservation.

2.3 Importance of Community Forestry:

Some of the important features of community forestry policy are as follows:

- All the accessible forests can be handed over to users (no area limit)
- The forest user groups (FUGs) have to manage the forest as per the approved constitution and operational plan.
- Any National forests suitable to be converted into community forest (CF) will not be assigned to other such as leasehold forest.
- District can use surplus funds in any kinds of community development works.
- The FUG can fix the price of forestry products irrespective of government's royalty.
- The FUG can plant long term cash crops without disturbing the main forestry.
- FUG can transport any forest products simply by informing the DFO.
- FUG will not be disturbed by political boundary while handing over the forests.
- The FUG can establish forest based industries.

(Adopted from Joshi, 1997)

2.4 People's Participation

People's participation is the most essential feature of community forestry. It is the principal aim of community forestry to involve people in all stages from decision making to harvesting. Similarly, if goods and services derive from forest resources are made available for people, especially rural poor in and around the forest; these people in turn

are expected to cooperate in forest protection and management measures. The technique of using participatory rural appraisals to assist for widespread application in Nepal. By using these techniques when conducting investigations, the fieldworker will gradually develop a positive relationship, the villagers.

By involving the users in all stages of information gathering, the collected information is more likely to be relevant to the needs of the users and hence useful for the preparation of the operation plan (Bartlett and Nurse 1991). Thus, Community forestry development project is basically structured for local participation. Although, social forestry is the active participation of local communities in planning and managing local forest resources, there is no attempt from the party of implementers to improve opportunities and minimize constraints to people's effective participation in this sector. To promote participation, a deep study of cultural, historical, political and other socio-economic determinants of the people's participation is indispensable (Koirala 1992). Rural People's perception of social forestry, cost and benefits of social forestry is prerequisite for the study of popular participation.

2.5 Women's participation in Community Forestry

The study focused towards women in community forestry is not commonly found in Nepal. Women's indigenous knowledge even more than of man with respect to species and uses largely unrecognised. In Nepal, women collect 84% fuel wood and carry several tonnes of fodder for each buffalo and cattle every year. In Bangladesh, women spend an average of three to five hours a day for collecting and carrying wood only (FAO; 1994).

The Master Plan of Forestry Sector policy, 1988 recommended that at least 33% of women's representation in the CFUG committees is the most; the 1989 policy document spoke of "the maximum possible" women's representatives, which open the forum to accommodate more than 33%. The 1990 revised master plan of the forestry sector policy (draft) recommends, "Women who made the daily management decisions should represent at least one half of the members of the user committee in CF development programme. Gender bias is a worldwide phenomenon, but it is especially pernicious in the third world, where most of women's activities take place in the non-wages economy for the purpose of household consumption.

Involvement of women is crucial for the success of community forestry. Women are the major collectors of various forestry products such as fodder, grass, fuel wood, edible fruits/foods and others from the forests. Therefore, it is they who suffer most if the policy

formulated is against their interests and daily practices and they might need to bear several socio-economic consequences. It is likely, for example, that they would suffer the social and economic consequences of deforestation most directly, as they need to spend more time and walk longer distance in search of their essential forest products (Kayastha 1991)

Active participation of poor, women and disadvantage groups in decision-making is critical for effective community forest management and equitable benefit contribution among the users. Strategic procedure such as compulsory involvement of poor, female, disadvantage group in planning and decision-making process needs to be designed and promoted to ensure their proper representation and help them to realize their authority, responsibility and accountability (Kanel and Kandel 2004). In contrary, there are some common assumptions for not involving women in community forestry activities (Hughes 1994). Some of them are:

-) Women are illiterate and ignorant.
-) Women lack the capacity to make decisions.
-) Women are destroyers of forest.
-) Women belong in private sphere, not the public.
-) The division of labour within the society defines women's ability.
-) Women are dependent on others.
-) Women need protection.

The main organ of gender sensitivity is the equal participation and benefit sharing of male and female in each decision-making (Regmi 2061). Community Forestry has developed a platform for leadership development to many rural women, which supports to increase women's participation in the decision-making process (Gentle 2003). Due to lack of and effective support service mechanism, the importance of biodiversity of conservation has not reached up to the users Nepal. There are evidences that, the decision-making process in community forestry has been controlling by few wealthier households (Gentle 2000). In Community Forestry almost decisions are made in the monthly meetings, in which women are only in physical attendance. Almost all decisions are reached with consensus by discussion, and if consensus can't be reached, the majority takes the decision though the voice of female is forbidden (Humagain 2003).

CHAPTER - THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Brief Description of Doti District

Doti District is one of the hilly districts of Seti Zone of Far-Western Development Region in Nepal. This district is surrounded by Acchham district in eastern part, Dadeldhura and Bhajang in west, Kailali and Surkhet in South and Bajura district in North side. Its district headquarter is Dipayal which is located almost in center of the district. The total area of the district is 2025 square kilometer. The district extends between latitude of 28°54' to 29° 28' North latitude to 80° 30' to 81° 14' east Longitude (Source: DDC Profile, Doti)

According to District Demographic Profile of Nepal (CBS, 2001), this district comprises 208954 population among them 104784 are males and 104170 are female. Total numbers of households in the district is 40,869 and average household size is 5.10 whereas population density is 175 per square kilometer. The literacy rate of the district is 55.90 percent whereas male has 67.01 and female 46.72 percent. (Source: DDC Profile, Doti)

3.2 Study Site Description:

Silgadhi Municipality-3 lies in district head quarter of Doti. There are 75 Households in this ward. The population of the ward is 4158 and among them 2105 women and 2053 men. Health and sanitation status is also fine in this Ward. (Source: DDC Profile, Doti).

There are five CFUGs comprising 376 households as CFU in Silgadhi Municipality. Some households do also have membership in more than one community forest but the number of duplication is very few. Five CFUGs have 124.48 Hectare of forest area, which is 1.604% of total handed over areas of Community forest of the district.

Table 3.1 All details of CFUG in Silgadhi Municipality

S.N	Name of CFUG	Ward no	Member	Date of issue
1	Thapla CFUG	3	85	2049/08/03
2	Pakari CFUG	14	113	2051/01/14
3	Tikha dada CFUG	7	128	2052/03/32
4	Uditola CFUG	13	128	2052/03/32
5	Dwarikhola CFUG	6	123	2053/03/27

Source: [Annual evaluation report of community forestry in Doti 2011]

By using simple random sampling method, Thapla community forest user group of silgadhi Municipality is selected for the study. Thapla Community Forest (CF) lies in

Baghkhod of the Municipality- 3 that was formed in 2049/08/03 BS with the initiation of local people including community leaders. There is a forest management group called Thapla Community Forest User's Group (CFUG) and is responsible for management and development of the forest. They have a written constitution for the CFUG and all the 75 HHs of the ward are the members of CFUG. There is an executive committee having 12 women members. The total member of this group is 85 among them women members are 50 and men members are 35. The total area of this forest is 26.5 hector. Among 85 members 7 are dalits, 17 are janajati and other 61 are upper cast. [Source: Field survey 2011]

The major natural resources in the Municipality are land, forest and water among them land is the major one. According to the Municipality record, more than 60 percent of the population is engaged in subsistence agriculture and livestock rising. The rest 40 percent of the population is engaged in government jobs, school teachers, overseas jobs, business and study. Since land is the major resource they exploit, most of it is used as either *khet* or *bari* or public land. Food grains like paddy, wheat and maize are cultivated in the *khet* whereas maize, mustard, vegetable and beans are cultivated in the *Bari* as major crops. Most of the public land is either used for grazing or community forest from which the community people get fodder, firewood, grass etc.

Forest can be categorized as private and public forest. Some of the rich people in the community own their private forest land whereas majority of the people depend on the public forest that is managed by the community people as community forest.

In Silgadhi municipality, almost all households have drinking water supply system between two-three household there was established public water tap with the initiation of some local leaders with the help of District Drinking Water Office and municipality. some peoples uses dhunge dhara for drinking and irrigation purpose.

There are altogether 2 Secondary schools within the ward. There is only one District Health Office in the Municipality from where people get primary and simple health care and visit the Dadeldhura and dhangadhi in case of major illness. There is one District Post office in the Municipality and telephone mobile and email, internet facilities are available in this Municipality. People are getting cable television facility from a local businessman with the help of which people watch national as well as international television channels. Health, Sanitation and communication are also fine in this municipality.

3.3 Research Design:

Exploratory as well as descriptive research design is the key of this field study. The research also shapes into qualitative with questionnaire survey, key informants, anecdotal references, and personal communications primarily the management. Similarly research shapes into quantitative through the data generated from questionnaires survey.

3.4 Nature and Sources of Data:

On the basis of nature, both qualitative and quantitative data were agglomerated. The

- I. Primary Data: The interview, direct observation, schedule etc agglomerate the data during the field work are the primary data.
- II. Secondary Data: The information about community forest from hard or soft copy of scholarly journals, books, reports from varied sources, District Profile are the secondary data during the study.

Research methodology determines activates to achieve the main objectives of the study. To make this study more valuable and reliable research methods were adopted. This study was based on simple descriptive and exploratory research design.

3.5 Data Collection Tools and Techniques

3.5.1 Universe and the Sample

This study is conducted in Silgadhi Municipality-3 of Doti District. There are altogether five CFUGs among them one CFUG was selected for research purpose which consist of 75 households and 85 members. The interviewer's selection process is the purposive simple random sampling techniques and select considering different economic class. One household will be selected from each rich and pro-poor household category. Two households will be selected in case of poor and medium economic class by considering the more frequency on these categories. Along with household data collection, all CFUG's executive committee members are invited for separate meeting and complete separate questionnaire among the committee members. Moreover, some cluster level focus groups and key informants discussion are also conducted purposively for data collection and verification.

3.5.2 Data collection methods:

In any study of the process of data collection plays a very important role, without this, no study can be laid forward. The applied data collection techniques are the framework for

accurate result. A close casual link is maintained with all the households taking part in this research.

Both primary and secondary data are used in the study. Primary data will be taken as follows:

- 1 Interviewer survey
- 2 Field Observation and review
- 3 Key informant interview
- 4 Focus Group discussion

Likewise, secondary data was collected from various published/unpublished materials, government line agency and Municipality office. Much emphasis was given to the primary data.

Interviewer Survey

Socio-economic data of total users, like caste and ethnic composition, land holding and food production, educational status and occupational status were collected through field survey. In the case of field survey, present condition of forest, applied forest management operation (thinning and pruning, fire line construction) was observed. Participation of women and their activeness in the meeting, fire wood storage, fire wood consumption and fodder collection were also observed.

Focus Group Discussion

The certain focused groups of women including low caste and marginalized users were gathered for the discussion. Focus group discussion helps to collect primary data for the study.

Key Informant Interview

Staffs of district forest office, Municipality members, DDC member and other users were the key informants for the study. The discussion was made on status of women, lower caste and other general user's in participation of forest management, decision making process and benefit sharing.

3.6 Study design process

Separate qualitative and quantitative questionnaire are developed for interviewing with CF general female user member and CF executive committee members. These

questionnaires are prepared by mostly focusing on the existing status of representation of women in CFUG's executive committee, degree or level of participation of women in user group's level and existing status of women on decision-making. There are visible distinctions on questionnaires developed for user's group member level and executive committee's member's level. Very general questions are prepared for CF user's group member's interview by considering their less exposure on community forestry's issues especially on the importance of active participation and decision making. The following 2 sets of questionnaire use in field base level and sets A, 7 question and sets B, 19 questionnaires for participation/information and 11 questionnaires for decision-making are designed for the general female member level.

3.7 Data Analysis and Discussion

As mention above, the study incorporated different types of data from a wide variety of sources. The study has mainly captured qualitative and quantitative data from the both user's executive committee and general user group's level. In many cases, multiple sources are used for the same questions in order to triangulate and verify the results. Collected data will be analyzed by using percentage and quantitative methods and compared with qualitative responses among each other. The majority of qualitative data are derived from CFUGs formal and informal meetings focusing with different caste group, female and key informants. Some qualitative information are also recorded during household interviews, averaging the common sharing of each respondents on the similar issues and reviewing the available CFUG's records.

Additional source of information including journals, DFO extension documents, DDC's information documents, personal communication with officials and available literature are also reviewed before analyzing the data. Different data are collected from each CFUG's documents such as financial and training records, meeting minutes, forest management records, forest operational plan and constitution, records of revolving fund and its mobilization, etc.

CHAPTER – IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETAION

The primary data collected from the field was tabulated in the first stage. Based on the data tabulated, other statistical tools like percentage, pie diagram etc were used to analyze the data. Finally, on the basis of the tables and pie charts detail analysis was done at the end.

4.1 Major Benefit that the Users Get from this Community Forest

Thapla Community Forest is the main source of forest recourses to the people of ward number 3 of silgadhi Municipality in Doti District. They are managing this forest as community forest for last ten years. Before it was managed as community forest, people used to have many problems to fetch fodder, firewood etc. During the course of study the researcher was interested to know the main benefit that the members of CF are getting from the forest. All the household heads of 75 houses were interviewed in this regard and were asked what the main is benefit you and your family is getting from this community forest. The table below shows the details of responses of the respondents.

Table 4.1
Ethnic Compositions of Forest User Committee

S.N	Ethnic caste groups	Male	%	Female	%	Total	Total %
1	Brahaman Chhetri	25	29.41	36	42.35	61	71.76
2	Janjati	7	8.23	10	11.76	17	20
3	Dalits	3	3.52	4	4.70	7	8.26
	Total	35	41.17	50	58.82	85	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 4.1 shows that, in forest user committee member shown that Dalit male are 3.52% and dalit female are 4.70%. Janjati has only 20 percent among them male participation 8.23% and female Participation 11.76% Brahaman, Chhetri has also larger seats i.e. 71.76 percent (male 29.41% and female 42.35%). However the women participation has been increasing but i.e. only from Brahman and chhetri community. Dalit female participation

is also poor in Thapla forest user committee.

Table: 4.2 Major Benefits of the Community Forest

SN	Particular	Number of Respondents	Percentage
01.	Fodder	25	29.41
02.	Firewood	30	35.29
03.	Building Materials	10	11.76
04.	Tree, leaves and litters	14	16.47
05.	Others	6	7.05
Total		85	100

Source: Field Survey 2011

From the above table, it can be analyzed that majority of respondents (35.29%) revealed that they have easy access to firewood from the community forest. The second majority (29.41%) of the respondents are of the opinion that they are benefited by getting fodder from the community forest. Likewise 16.47 percent of the community people are benefited by tree, leaves and litters, 11.76 percent of the people are benefited by timber for building materials and finally 7.05 percent of the community people are benefited by others. The above result has been shown in a pie chart below to make it easier to understand.

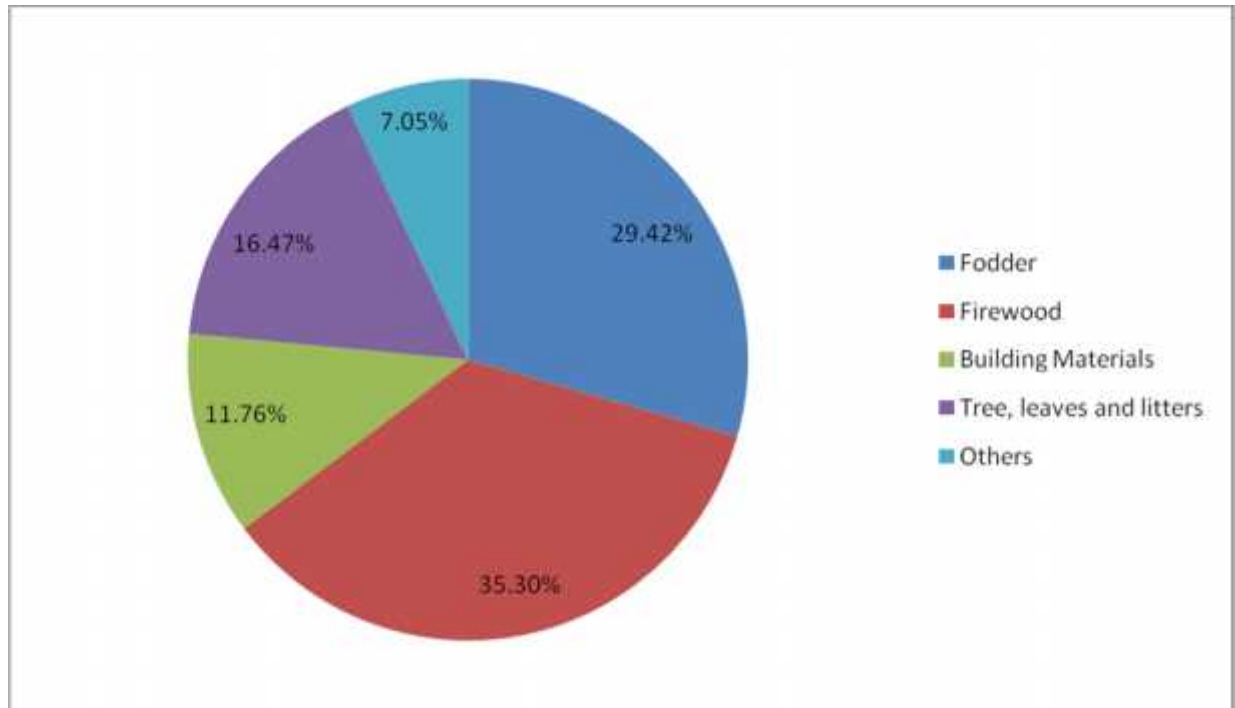


Fig 4.1: Major Benefit that the User are Getting from Community Forest

Source: Field Survey 2011

4.2 Women's Role in Community Forest Management

Traditionally most of the communities in Nepal believe that women have limited role within the household chores and any activities outside the house are the responsibilities of male counterpart in the family. But during recent years may be because of educational development around the corners of the country and women's exposure to outer world through media, the traditional role of male and female has drastically changed. Women have moved out from the limited arena of household activities and come to the public sphere. They are involved in many social activities like politics and other activities.

In the changed context of the rural community, the researcher was particularly interested to get some in-depth insight about the changing role of women in public sphere like community forest management. All the 85 respondents/household heads including male and female (35 males and 50 female respondents) were asked several questions regarding the role of women in various steps of CF management. For example, the respondents were asked who has the major role in nursery preparation, which has the major role in seedling plantation, thinning, cleaning, guarding the forest etc. The responses received from all the respondents have been tabulated below.

Table: 4.3 Women's Role in Community Forest Management

SN	Description	Male	Female	Jointly	Total
01.	Nursery Preparation	20[23.52%]	30[35.29%]	35[41.17%]	85[100%]
02.	Seedling Plantation	25[29.41%]	35[41.17%]	25[29.41%]	85[100%]
03.	Thinning	35[41.17%]	12[14.11%]	38[44.70%]	85[100%]
04.	Cleaning	28 [32.94%]	18[21.17%]	39[45.88%]	85[100%]
05.	Guarding Forest	37[43.52%]	13[15.29%]	35[41.17%]	85[100%]

Source: Field Survey 2011

While asking the question of major role during nursery preparation, majority of the respondents (41.17 %) said that male and female have equal contribution to perform this activity jointly where as 35.29 percent of respondents said that female have the major role while nursery preparation and 23.52 percent of respondents revealed that male have the major role in this activity. From the above discussion we can summarize that nursery preparation is the joint activity most of the time.

Regarding seedling plantation, it was found that 29.41 percent of the respondents said that male have the major role to seedlings plantation. During thinning process, majority of the respondents (44.70%) revealed that male have the major role in this activity. Likewise, during cleaning process, it was found that male have the major role. 32.94% respondents said that mainly male are involved in cleaning process and while asked to all respondents about the major role of guarding the CF, majority of the respondents (41.17%) revealed that it's the responsibility of male.

4.3 Participation of women in CFUG and CF Executive Committee

There are altogether 85 members in the study area of Thapla Community Forest of Silgadhi Municipality-3 in Doti District. Out of 85 members 50 were the female and rest 35 were male members. It is obvious that the number of women in the group is 50 that is 58.82 percent of the CFUG members were the female.

There is a committee called community forest users executive committee having 12 members. The number of women members in the executive committee has been tabulated

in the following table.

Table: 4.4

Participation of women in CFUG and CF Executive Committee

SN	Description	Executive Committee	CFUG
01.	Number of Females	7[58.33%]	50[58.82%]
02.	Number of Males	5[41.66%]	35[41.17%]
Total		12[100%]	85[100%]

Source: Field Survey 2011

From the above table it was known that out of 12 members in the executive committee of Thapla Community forest User's Group, 7 members (58.33% of the total members) were the female members and rest 5 members (41.66% of the total members) were the male members and out of 85 members in the CFUG 50 members (58.82% of the total members) were the female members and rest 35 members (41.17% of the total members) were the male members. From this scenario, it can be concluded that women have major participation in the decision making mechanism.

4.4 Factors that Affect the Active Participation of Women

During this research, an effort was made to identify the major factors that would be helpful or hindering for active participation of rural women in community forest management. An attempt was made to ask all the 85 members that what would be the major factor that motivates the active participation of women in community forest management. The responses received from all the 85 members have been tabulated as follows.

Table: 4.5 Factors that affect the active participate of women

SN	Description	No. of members	Percentage
01.	Education	32	37.65
02.	Family Support	18	21.18
03.	Social Support	16	18.82
04.	Personal Willingness	12	14.12
05.	Others	7	8.24
Total		85	100%

Source: Field Survey 2011

While asking a question what would be the major factor that would be helpful to promote the participation of women in the CF activities, the majority 32(37.65%) of the members said that education has the major role to make anybody confident that is equally implies to the women. Based on the information received from the key informants, more women are educated these days compared to past time. They have developed confidence to participate more in the public sphere. According to the members the next major factor that helps women to participate in public sphere is the family support. In this context out of 85 members 18(21.18 %) members revealed that family support has the vital role to promote women's participation in public activities. Likewise 16(18.82 %) of the respondents said that social support is the major factor that promotes women's participation in public activities like CFUG activities, 12(14.12 %) of respondents said that person's willingness has the major role that helps him/her to participate in the public activities and at last 7(8.24 %) of the members said that there are other factors that guide one to participate in the public activities. For more clarification the data has been presented in a pie chart as below.

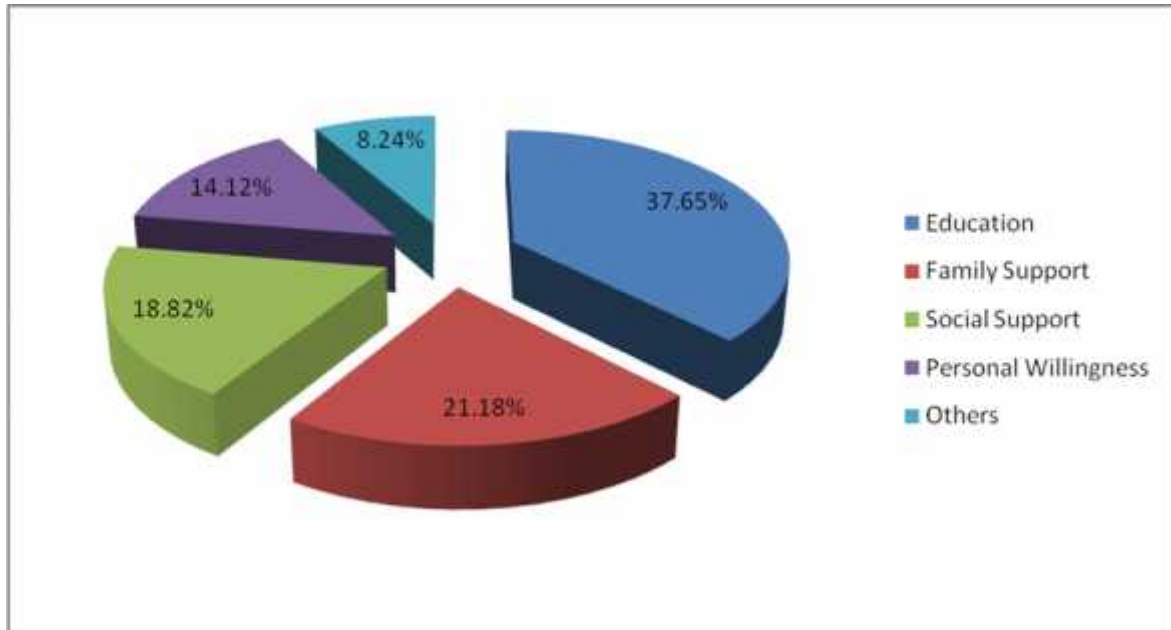


Fig.4.2: **Factors that affect the active Participation of women**

Source: Field Survey 2011

4.5 Committee Meeting

Generally, committee meeting is held regularly once in a month. If members feel necessary, a meeting is being held more than regular meeting. When a meeting is called, it is usually the secretary or the chairperson who informs other members. Usually meeting is called on Saturday. The implementation of forest operational plan is also guided by forest user committee.

4.6 How often Women Participate in CFUG Meeting

In order to find out how often women members of the CFUG participate in meetings? A question was asked to all the respondents of the study. There was a kind of mixed response from the respondents for this question. Majority of the respondents said that women are the most regular attendance of meeting while others said that it was not true. It has been tried to tabulate the responses received from the respondents in order to make it clearer.

Table 4.6: How often women participate in the meeting

SN	Description	No. of Respondents	Percentage
01.	More Frequently	63	74.53
02.	Less frequently	13	15.53
03.	Occasionally	8	9.94
Total		85	100

Source: Field Survey 2011

From the above table it is seen that majority of the respondents 63 out of 85 respondents (74.53% of the total) said that women participate in various meetings related to CFUG quite frequently. Very few i.e. 15.53 and 9.94 percent of the respondents revealed that women have less frequently and occasional participation respectively in the CFUG related meetings. From the above figure we can conclude that women have very much active participation in the CFUG meetings in which they participate quite frequently.

4.7 How Women Participate in CFUG Meeting

During the course of research in the community, the researcher tried to dig out how actively women participate in CFUG meetings. In Nepalese society it's a prevalent phenomenon that women are good listener instead of active participants in any outdoor social activities. Also, in some communities it is thought that women should not speak outside the family and we can see male dominance in outdoor affairs. Being a female, the researcher was particularly interested how much women are empowered and how much they can put their voice in community affairs. All the 85 respondents were asked a question that how women participate in CFUG meetings. Four options were given to the respondents and were asked to choose the options. More than one option was chosen by the respondents in this question. The following table shows the details of the responses received from the respondents in this regard.

Table 4.7: How Women Participate in the CFUG meetings

SN	Description	No. of responses	Percentage
01.	With active discussion	15	30
02.	With making suggestion	20	40
03.	With decision making	11	22
04.	As a silent observer	4	8
Total		50	100

Source: Field Survey 2011

From the above table it is found that majority of the responses (20 out of 50) revealed that women have the suggestive role during the CFUG meetings. The second majority of the responses (30%) revealed that women participate in the CFUG meetings with active discussion. The third majority of the responses (22%) revealed that women participate in the CFUG meetings with decision making role and the rest 8 % of the responses revealed that women participate in such meetings as a silent observer.

From the above data we can conclude that women have major role in discussion as well as providing suggestion rather than decision making during the CFUG meetings. It does not mean that women do not participate in decision making activities but they do more suggestive and discussion role during the meetings than that of decision making role. The above data has been presented in pie diagram for more clearance.

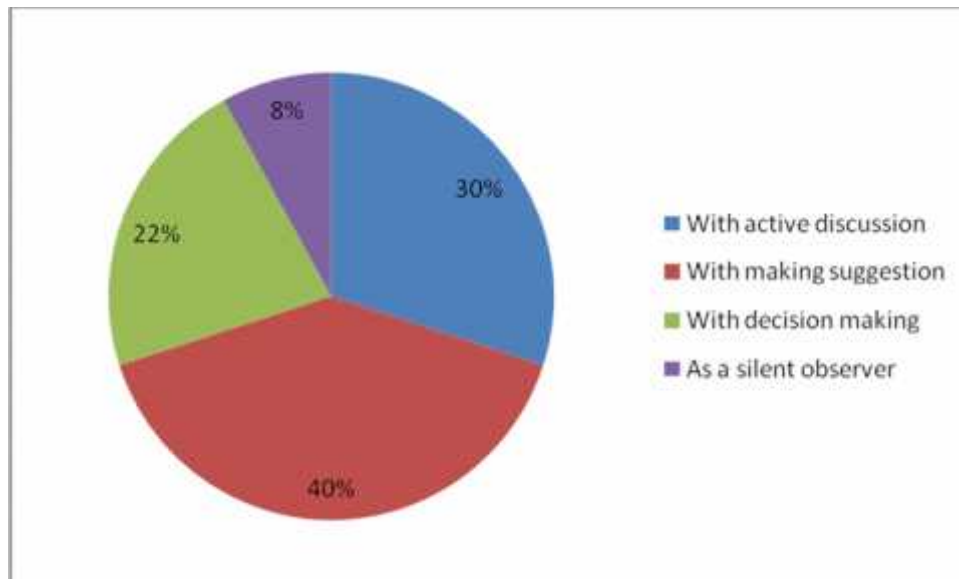


Fig.4.3: How women participate in the CFUG Meeting

Source: Field Survey 2011

4.8 Key Informant's Views on Women Participation in CF Activities:

During the course of the study, the researcher conducted some focus group discussions with the key informants available in the community to dig out the in-depth of community dynamics in community activities especially such kind of natural resource management activities i.e. community forest management. During the key informant's interview, very interesting ideas and thoughts were revealed that were useful to understand the community dynamics in the rural parts of the country. Specially, this technique has been used only for informants (members of executive committee, teachers, advisors of CF, political leaders, DFO staff etc.) of different age group.

Some of the facts that were revealed from the key informant interview have been listed below:

- 1 The male members of the committee try to give more and more chance to women to participate in CF activities. They give more priority to female members. But according to them, women do not show much interest in the activities. It may be due to lack of time, load of household works etc.
- 2 The income of CF is spent in the management of the forest and some money is spent in giving loan to the needy people. According to the key informants the priority is given to the women. Most of the women take loan for the purpose of agriculture, micro entrepreneurship, goat rearing etc.

- 3 The management of forest has been drastically improved after the female's participation. The encroachment and other illegal activities are stopped in these days.
- 4 Women are more illiterate than male in the study area. Illiterate women have problems to read and write the rules, regulations and minutes of the CF meeting. Due to the illiteracy they have problem to learn forest management skills also. Illiteracy is one of the major obstacles of participation.
- 5 Involvement of women in child rearing, feeding household members and livestock and agricultural works makes them busy. If they participated in meeting and other development activities, they have to leave their household works. So, lack of time is also major obstacles for women's participation.
- 6 Females feel a kind of humiliation; they feel less competent than male counterparts while discussing, decision- making and forest management activities. Such kind of inferiority complex has hindered the women from active participation in the community forestry.

From all above sayings, we can conclude that above mentioned any single cause is not responsible for the low participation of women in CF management activities in the study area. The combinations of all of the causes are main problems for women participation.

Also during the focus group discussion (FGD) with the key informants some positive as well as negative views of the participants towards women's participation in the CF management were noted. The researcher has listed those comments in to two groups as positive and negative views towards the women in the community that would be interesting to know.

Positive views of local people about the role of women are as following:

- 1 Women are helping the men to manage community forest.
- 2 Women have very cooperative role with forest watchman to rear forest.
- 3 Women are strict to respect and follow CFUG rules and regulations
- 4 Women can be active if they have chance to do something.
- 5 Women participate in CFUG meetings and they share their ideas actively.

According to the key informant's view, there are some local people who have somehow negative comments towards women's participation in the CF activities. They think that women cannot play effective role in community forest management activities. Some of

those views collected during the time of research have been listed below:

- 1 Women do not want to participate in CF meeting.
- 2 Women have no idea and ability to manage forest.
- 3 Women don't care about public concerns.
- 4 It is not a duty of women to attend meeting and be active in social development activities.
- 5 Women have no creative roles even they have chance to do something.
- 6 Women do not have wider vision to manage public affairs.

4.9 FACTORS AFFECTING IN PEOPLES PARTICIPATION IN CFUG

There are several factors, which are responsible for the active participation of people in community forestry program. These factors are classified as socio-cultural factor, Economic factor and other related factors.

4.9.1 Socio-Cultural Factor

Social factors include age group, family size and structure, cultural practices, gender and social value and norms.

4.9.1.1 Age

From field study, it is revealed that the respondents below the age of 25 years are young generation users who are mostly busy in their study. They have limited time to contribute in community forestry activities. They only contribute their free time for community Forest activities. Treasure position is occupied by a student of age 18 in present user committee. Most of the respondents with the age between 25 to 40 years were busy in their professional jobs and also contribute their free time to community forest activities. The respondents between ages 40 to 60 years are one whose participation and contribution in community forestry is found higher than other age group users. Users above 60 years age are unable to contribute due to their physical weakness.

4.9.1.2 Family size

Family size is another responsible factor in participation. It was revealed from field study that respondents with larger family size are participating in most of the activities. Such households have managed to send one representative from their house. Sometime small family size have faced problem in sending their representative from their household

during community forestry activities as they are occupied in their own jobs.

4.9.1.3 Gender

In Thapla community forestry, no gender discrimination was found in community forest activities, but they hesitate to travel outside without family members and their permission. Sometimes, they do not get permission to go out in tour and travel.

4.9.1.4 Caste Discrimination

Caste discrimination is another factor of affecting in people participation. Dalits always feel uneasy to participate with other dominant caste groups.

4.9.2 Economic Factor

Economic factor includes size of agriculture land, livestock and nature of occupation. Economic level within Brahman community is more or less similar in Thapla community forest. They have no great difference in farm size and livestock number where as Janjati, Dalit and other community have less farm land and no or less livestock. This factor is especially affecting on participation of Dalit and Janjati in community forest management. They argue that they do not need fodder and grass, as they have no livestock. Therefore they do not participate during benefit sharing of fodder and grass.

Nature of occupation is also affecting on participation of users. Service holder respondent said that they have no time to involve in guarding of forest. However, they are participating on group meetings and assemblies, if activities are organized during holidays. They again argue that they are unable in participating as free respondents because of their job in government and non-government organizations. Dalit and Janjati are poor; they work as a wage labor so they can't attend meeting and other activities of some day avoiding their work. Some businessman is also not getting time for participation in community forestry.

4.9.3 Other Related Factors

There are some other factors that affect in people participation. They are self-consciousness, government support, participation in decision making, rule of forest user group etc.

Attitude, education, awareness and interest plays important role in developing self consciousness in a person. Most of the uneducated and poor respondents think that decisions made by educated users are always good and thus support their decision. Thus, majority of the executive members are selected from the educated people of the

community.

Another important factor that affects people's participation is government support. Government officials are supporting Thapla forest user group which helps to enhance their participation. Forest user group organized one community forest management training for them and requested technical support from the district forest office. The district forest office provided such support. Participation in decision making is directly connected with the participation in benefit sharing and implementation of the decision made.

CHAPTER - V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

By the end of the research study, the researcher came to a list of interesting facts about the CFUG management and role of women in this context. The major concern of the researcher from very beginning of this research was to identify some facts that play major role in participation of women in decision making issues. Also the researcher was keen to dig out some facts about the changing role of women in the public area. However, there are some points that came as the findings of the study during the study of Thapla CFUG that have been listed below:

- 1 The major benefit that the community people are getting from the CF is availability of firewood in their proximity. Almost 35.29 percent of respondents took it as the major benefit of CG followed by fodder that was responded by 29.41 percent of the respondents.
- 2 Regarding the role of women in CF management, 45.88 percent of the respondents revealed that male and female have an equal contribution in CF management activities.
- 3 Regarding the participation of women in CFUG and CF executive committee, it was revealed that 58.83 percent of women are directly participating in those committees. It can be concluded from this fact that still women have more participation in such decision making positions compared to their population ratio in the community.
- 4 While digging out the major factors that affect the active participation of women in such activities, were education and family support.
- 5 One interesting fact that was found during the study that women are the one who are the most punctual in various meetings etc that was supported by 74.53 percent of the respondents. It means that women have more sense of responsibility compared to men in the community.
- 6 While asking about the role of women in the meetings etc, it was revealed that they have more suggestive role than any decision making role which was supported by 40 percent of the respondents. But at the same time it was also revealed that women participate in active discussion.

5.2 Conclusion

Forest is one of the major sources of rural livelihood in Nepal. It is the sources of food, firewood, timber, fodder, leaves and litters etc. The rapidly increasing population growth and its subsequent effects on natural resources particularly forest resources has been noticing since long. For the better management and enhancing the forest resources the concept of community forest was emerged during 1970s in Nepal. The community forest is the forest handed over the local community on which they have the full authority to use, protect and manage community forest in their own way so that they can fulfill their basic needs for firewood, timber and other forest products in a sustainable manner. Forest is managed and used mainly by women in rural Nepal and their role is increasing in their society. Thus, the ultimate managers and users of the forest are women.

Thapla Community Forest lies in ward number 3 of Silgadhi Municipality of Doti District. It was formed on 2056 and 85 households are directly involved at present within this CF whose economic activities are subsistence farming with livestock. This community forest is used mainly for firewood, fodder, grasses, leaf litter, and timber. The forest products are collected for domestic purposes: general rules for using forest products are outlined in the FUG constitution and forest operational plan. Women's participation is important in almost all aspects and activities of community forest management. The female members of the Thapla CFUG Executive Committee are actively participating in the meetings and other activities of the CF. They are punctual also than the male. But only 22 percent of women's participation is still less participation in the decision making mechanism where as national census suggests that the male-female ratio is almost fifty-fifty.

The location of the FUG committee, size of the community forest area, issues of gender equity and participatory orientation play a vital role in the nature of women's participation in CF management and decision making process. The process of forming FUG and executive body plays important roles on the degree of women's participation.

When a rural woman became the member of FUG Committee then her new role will be started. Groups meet to discuss community forest rights and responsibilities. Women's participation also depends upon how many villagers understood the rights and authority of the FUG Committee members. The frequencies of meeting, assembly and people's

participation also affect the women's participation.

The level of supports given to the women by male counterpart determines the participation of women. Poor attitudes of male towards female made the situation worse. Traditional norms, powers in decision making roles and benefit sharing also affect their participation. Thus, the greater the support from family, greater would be the chances of active participation of women in CF management.

Educational status of people plays a key role for better involvement of women. High educational status of the women, higher would be the participation of the women. The outcome of the study suggested that education has the vital role in active participation of women in public activities like CF management.

5.3 Recommendations

Since this research was a part of academic fulfillment of the study, it was also an interesting opportunity for the researcher to get some interesting facts as well as in-depth insights of the community dynamics in rural setup. As this study was focused on women's role and decision making process in CF management, the researcher was particularly interested on what types of factors are basically responsible to influence the participation of women in public sphere like CF management issues. By the end of study, after series of discussion with the community people, empirical facts that were collected during the study as well as some focus group discussions with some key members of the community, the researcher came up with some recommendations that would be useful for policy makers, development activists as well as those people who are fighting for empowerment of women.

1 **Educate the women:** Education of women was found as the major factor that played major role in participation of women in public arena. As the level of education among women is still very poor compared to men, it has become a major factor that is affecting women to come out of the house. Because of lack of education, women have less confidence to deal in public activities. Once a woman is educated, she educates a whole family and that is a major tool for her as well.

2 **Compulsory legal provision:** There should be some compulsory legal provision that compels the community organizations to participate women in certain percentage in community activities. For example if there is a legal provision of at least 50 percent of women participation in CF activities, women's participation would automatically

increase.

3. **Special provision for women:** Government should made special provision about women's' participation in CF related policy and programs.

4. **Motivation and awareness:** Women should be motivated to take part in community forestry activities by increasing level of awareness, so that the management of CF becomes more effective.

5. The participation of women in executive committee and CFUG is very low. So, special provision should be made in constitution of CF about women's participation in CF and women's representation in executive committee.

6. **Social encouragement:** The women mainly played supportive role in the CF meeting. They should be encouraged to take important role in the meetings by giving them more knowledge about CF management process.

7.

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