

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Nepal is a small Himalayan kingdom with comprising of land area 1447181 square kilometer. Its location on the earth is 260 22' north to 300 270 north latitude and 800 4' east to 880 12' east longitude. From east to west length of the country is 885 km. with coverage north to south widen of 193 km. administratively there are five development regions, eastern, middle, and western, mid western and far western regions.

Although Nepal is small in its size, the unique topography and diverse physical land escape, it is ecologically divided into three regions. The high mountain or Himalayan region, the hilly region and terai region. Most of the land approximately 49% of the total area of Nepal is covered by the vegetative parts and 29% of them are forest type. Nepal is predominantly an agricultural country with over 86% of the total population living in the rural areas. However their livelihood is strongly supported and assisted by the forest and resources from the forest since the time immemorial. Before 1957 it was said that "*Hario Ban Nepal Ko Dhan*" but prove has become only in paper. Due to the over deforestation, encroachment of forest for cultivation, illegal supply of forest timber, miss use of timber and non timber forest products (NTFPs). According to the government forest is decreasing at the rate of 1.7% annually (HMG/N, 1999).

Participation has become a 'buzzword' in every development discourse and become an umbrella term for a supposedly new style of development intervention in many ways (Oakley, 1991). Participation includes people's involvement in decision making process, in implementing programmes, their sharing in the benefit of development programmes and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programme (Laski, 1989 cited in Oakley and Marsden,

1984). The word 'participation' and 'Participatory' appeared for the first time in the development jargon during late 1950s (Rahnema: 1992) over the years, the notion of participation has an exercise of empowering rural people, has gain wider support (Oakley et al: 1991). The philosophy of a 'people based' development "from below" assumes that participation is not only an end in itself but also a fundamental pre-condition and tool of any development strategy. The failure of past development strategies is fundamentally linked to the absence of the missing ingredient of participation. Participation is viewed as a 'people centered' approach and places people at the center of any development discourse because it is seen as a strategically important (Oakley and Marsedn, 1984). The population of a village or an area, or any group of people, having some common interests (such as residence, kinship or religious affiliation) is known as community. Therefore, community participation is an active process by which beneficiary or client groups influence the direction and execution of development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish (Paul, 1987 cited um Oakley 1991). Therefore, community participation through the perspective of rural development should be viewed as an active involvement of people in decision making process so far it affects them (Uphoff and Cohen, 1979 cited in ibid).

The perception, that community participation is inevitable in forest management and development has gained widespread recognition in most parts of the world. The local community has the basic knowledge of factors responsible for the degradation of natural resources and can apply indigenous means of protection and management (Bannet, 1991 cited in Manandhar, 1993).

Community forestry is the social concept and its main theme is that forest should be managed by local people for their own benefits. To give this theme in a solid shape, The Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation (MFSC)

prepared and implemented another Forest Act. 1993. And forest regulation 1995 under the frame work of Master Plan for the Forestry Sector (MPFS).

In this context, Nepal's attempt to encompass the ingredient of participation in development has been reflected in the forestry program. Formal forestry program was initiated with financial assistance from the World Bank and other donor funded projects in which groups of local people called ' Panchayat at the beginning and later forest user group (FUG), together with the district forest officer (DFO), were involved in the management of forest. Local participation was emphasized in 1970 by decentralizing authority of forest protection and utilization of local government organization as Panchayat protected forest.

The Master Plan for the Forest Sector (MPFS) of Nepal was laid in 1989 AD by the government in order to achieve people's participation in forestry development with the objective of fulfilling the basic needs of people from forests and increasing food production by conserving and managing the forest resources but the concept of participatory forestry was involved in Nepal after 1990s with the revolutionary changes in the forest policies. The forest regulations of 1993 framed community forestry policy in Nepal.

Community forestry is defined as the situation where rural people develop and manage forests as common property to support their farms and households economics (Nepal-Australia Community Forestry Project, 1996). It is perceived as a small scale village level forestry practices where decisions and actions are made on a collective basis so that community people can interlink forest with their social life. Community Forestry Program is based on partnership between local people and government and is one of the nationally prioritized forestry programs in Nepal. The main objective of this program is to achieve forest resources by converting accessible national forest into a community forest. Although this program is ranked to be the most successful, a bulk of development critiques suggests that large number of Dalits in the Terai area of

Nepal is deprived from having access to forests. Nepal is hardly alone among the numerous countries worldwide that have allowed both historical and contemporary factors to perpetuate the gaps between haves and have-nots. Discriminatory practices deeply rooted in Nepalese culture for centuries which have perpetuated both practices of untouchability and exploitation of the backward community. Although the National Code of 1963 abolished the cast system, it remains alive in practice in many rural areas of Nepal. Dalits are religiously discarded, socially oppressed, economically exploited, politically suppressed and educationally deprived. Due to all these reason, they remain backward and far from modern development initiatives. The status of Dalit's in the study area is not far from the reality. In such scenario, it is imperative to question whether the participation of Dalits in community forestry program is reality or rhetoric.

2. Statement of the Problem

Forest is a renewable natural resource. Forest products are the basic need of village people. People depend on forest for products such as leaf, litter, firewood, fodder, timber, thatching materials, medicinal plants and materials for religious ceremonies. Local people's involvement in the forest management activities has been acknowledged as main strategy of the forest policy of Nepal for sustainable and effective management and conservation of the forest (Chhetri et al, 1992). At the same time, poverty alleviation has become the development agenda. Nepal's efforts for the poverty alleviation have been reflected in its periodic plan. The ongoing tenth plan, too, emphasizes the forest as a major sector to reduce poverty.

Despite the various legal reforms and policy initiatives, the exclusionary practices of development and the discriminatory caste-based practices still continue to touch the rural scene. Lack of pluralistic composition of governance and the diverse multi-ethnic caste-ridden nature of Nepal and its

stratified socio-economic structure posed particular challenges in uniting varied interests to make coherent collective claim and development (Nepal Human Development Report, 2004). Various literatures shows that, Dalit are exploited by the rich people and so called upper caste and they are marginalized in forest resource management, decision making process and benefit sharing and income distribution. In community forestry, programme, participation of the Dalits can not be ignored or excluded. Dalits are also the active Users and members of the community forests. The participation of Dalits people should be both qualitative and quantitative. Though the Dalit people are playing important role in sustainable development of community forests; their role is neither properly identified nor explored. This study tries to analyze the role Dalits in community forests. It accesses the participation of Dalits in community forestry management. It also highlights the constraints on maximum participation of Dalits in community forestry and focuses on possible ways for solving the problems faced by Dalits in community forestry. So, the researcher was interested to do research about this topic to know the real status of Dalits in Tulsipur Municipality of Dang District. In this context following questions are addressed in this study.

- * What is the socio-economic condition of Dalit households of CFUG members?
- * Who are the real users of the forest product?
- * What is the ratio of the Dalits and non-Dalits in CFUG members?
- * What is the status of Dalits members of CFUG in decision making process?
- * Are the Dalits really benefited or not by Community Forest Programme?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to find out the participation of the Dalits in community forestry management. The other specific objectives are as follows:

- i) To analyse the socio-economic characteristic of the Dalits household population of the CFUG members.
- ii) To evaluate the participation of Dalits in CF management process.
- iii) To analyse the status of Dalits in decision making and benefit sharing process.
- iv) To identify the problems of Dalits in active participation in CF program.

1.4 Rational of the study

CF is the major government programme of the forestry sector in Nepal. The aim of CF is to uplift the socio-economic life of the poor by managing the forest resources. Therefore, it is one of the important variable cultures for poverty alleviation. Dalits people in rural society of Nepal are important components of the community Forestry program and their participation is vital. In the past these groups of people were almost always ignored in the decision making process. Until and unless they involved in community forestry and decision making process, the objective of the CF programme can not be achieved. The CF policy encourages their participation but this is not enough for active participation.

Many studies in Nepal (Chhetri and Pandey, 1992, Collect, Cohen and Norman 1976) argued that people's participation in forest management is a crucial to the success of forestry programme. However, there has been less study about the Dalit people participation as well as the role of organizations and agencies to FUG. This study attempts to fill this gap by considering on

Dalit participation and factor relation to decision making and benefit sharing in forest management. Result of this study may help to concerned rural people in the development field and help to gain more information for the students of rural development, GOs, INGOs, Donor Agencies, Planner, Policy Maker, Social Activator and further researchers to plan similar project better.

1.5 Definition of Key Concepts/Variables

The researcher has used some of the concepts/variables in the study to clarify the readers.

Community forest: A forest area handed over to a group of people entrusted to manage, use and protect under the provision of forest act and forest by-laws.

Dalits: The communities, who by virtue of atrocities of caste-based discrimination and untouchability, are most backward in socio-economic, educational, political and religious fields and are most backward to live in human dignity and social justice. They are treated as untouchables and are occupational caste. In the study area, Damai, Kami and Sarki are taken as Dalits.

Upper Caste: The upper caste includes Brahmin, Chhetri and other ethnic groups.

Interest Group: The households who depend on the forest for subsistence and who are recognized by other users as having the principle responsibility for forest management.

Forest User Group (FUG): A group of forest users of a particular forest area. Members of a FUG assume rights and responsibilities for using and managing the local forests as per an operational plan developed by the FUG and approved by DFO.

Range Post: Range-post is a geographical area in a district administered by the forest ranger.

Operational Plan: It is formal document prepared and followed by the FUG in which over all functioning process is documented. It can also be termed as a work plan.

People's Participation: People's participation is the involvement of people in the substantive and procedural process of assessing monitoring and evaluating the project and activities that affect and benefit them. In other words it is the intended beneficiaries' involvement in decision making process is called "People's Participation".

User-Group Assembly: It is a gathering of the people, who are the direct beneficiaries of the forest to discuss or prepare a plan or to discuss forest management activities.

Beneficiaries: Those people who directly benefit from project activities are called "beneficiaries".

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Despite the importance of the topic, the research could not include some of the variables due to resource and time constraints. As this study is a partial fulfillment of the requirement of master's degree, there may be short-comings that would have debarred the present study to be a study one. The study is not free from the following short-comings.

- * The findings of the study are localized to Gairakhali CF of Dang district.
- * The findings of the study may not be generalized to the wider area.

1.7 Organization of the study

This dissertation has been divided into seven chapters. The first chapter includes introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, its significance, definition of the key variables used in the dissertation and limitation of the study etc. Similarly the second and third chapters briefly deal with literature review and research methodology of the study respectively.

The fourth chapter mainly deals with introduction of the study area and demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Dalit household population and CFUG Dalit members. The fifth chapter for the study is mainly devoted to analysis and interpretation to assess the participation of Dalits in CF management, decision-making and benefit sharing. Similarly, the sixth chapter describes some of the hindrances for Dalits. On the basis of information gathered by the researcher during study from respondents and key informants and literatures, the seventh chapter includes summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER -II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of literature is an integral part of a research undertaking to enrich knowledge. Literature review has helped the researcher to clarify the concepts and formulated new ideas and better ways of looking at the study topic. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to review various forest related issues, policies, problems and solution related to community forestry management system. The dissertation benefited from the contribution made by many scholars, institutions and researcher's who have devoted their time to study forestry issue of Nepal. This chapter has been organized as:

2.1 Origin of Community Forestry Programme and its Definitions

The concept of CF crystallized somewhat in the late 1970, with the release of the landmark FAO publication foresting for local community development (FAO, 1978). In this community forestry was defined as "..... Any situation which intimately involves local people in forestry activity" (FAO, 1978). According to FAO, community forestry departed radically from all previous conceptions of what forestry was about in that it centered on the idea of people participation-getting local population to plan and execute their own projects on a self help basis. This meant providing them with the advice and inputs needed to grow seedling to plant, manage and protect their own forest resource and to extract the maximum benefit from these resources. Community forestry is dedicated to the idea of increasing the direct benefits of the forest resources to the rural poor (FAO, 1983). Community forestry is the control and management of forest resource by the rural people, who use them especially for domestic purpose and as an integral part of their farming system (Glomour et al, 1991).

CF programme began in Nepal as a problem solving strategy in the late 1970s. The problems to be addressed were of two major types. First, deforestation and deteriorating condition of the forest in the country were believed to be critical and community forestry programme was identified as a strategy to combat such problems. Community plantations and handing over the authority for the protection and management of local forests to the communities (called forest users Groups) have been the means of achieving this goal. Second, people were alienated from forestry due to the Private Forest Nationalization of 1957 and it was realized that this could pose problems for any conservation efforts in the country (Chhetri 1999).

In the 1970s, the community forestry development programme introduced the concepts of *panchayat forest* (PF) and *panchayat* protected forest (PPF) with the purpose of handing that the protection and the management of the forest to the people. In the 1980s, decentralization regulations were introduced in the forestry sector to further establish and foster local peoples and local organizations participation in the management and development of PF and PPF. In 1990, the end of Nepal's *panchayat* system of government brought a change in the status of PF and PPF. Today, the term community forestry is used to refer any forest under user group protection and management (Chherti, 1992).

In the beginning, community forest emerged in response partly to the failure of the forest industry development model to lead the socio-economic development and partly to the increasing rate of deforestation and forest land degradation in the third the third world. Indeed, it was recognize that these problems were interrelated and actually exacerbated by traditional approaches to forestry where little attention was given to relationship between the foresters and rural poor (Gilmour and Fisher, 1991). But now a day it is taken as an integral part of development process.

Forest form an integral part of the farming system for the majority of the farmers in the hills of Nepal. Life become unsustainable with out tree and forest products like leaf litter, grass and leaf fodder for their animals, firewood for cooking and timber for agriculture implements as well as construction work. Except for timber, other forest and tree products mentioned about are required by an average farming household on regular basis (Chhetri 1992). Forestry for local community development is a new people oriented policy whose objectives are to raise the standard of living of rural people and involve them in decision making, so it is about rural people for the rural people (FAO, 1978).

In order to maximize the benefits from community forestry it is vital to ensure that the implementation process used to lead to an effective empowerment to the actual user of the forest. Special care need to be taken to ensure that the poor and other disadvantage groups are not made absolutely worse off during any community forestry intervention exercise (Bartlett, 1991)

Forest is an integral part of *Dalits* such as *Kami*, who is dependent in forest for getting charcoal. Chhetri (1994) viewed that user group favour the idea of allowing the *Kamis* (blacksmith) with drans (anvils or workshops) to obtain charcoal from the forest. The rational is that their services are essential for the rest of the villagers, irrespective of their caste status. If the *Kami* do not get charcoal they can not make or repair the agricultural implements of the farmers. However, they are deprived from getting the chance from the community forest in equity basis.

Community forestry is a strategy of rural development. Its aim is to improve the socio-economic condition of the people and help to poverty alleviation and rural development through forest resource management/utilization. Chhetri and Jackson (1994) include the community forestry is a viable strategy for rural development in Nepal. Similarly, Chhetri (1994) explain that the community

forestry programme being implemented in Nepal is essentially a strategy adopted to bring about socio-economic change and development in rural societies through interventions in regard to the management of forests.

Community forest is for the benefit of local people, the primary user of the forest specially these who are dependent on forest products to meet subsistence needs. The majority of rural people in Nepal depend on forest to support their agricultural and livestock system forest provide fuel wood for cooking and heating, timber for building, furniture, fodder and bedding for livestock and leaf litter for compost and a range of other non-timber products. After the implementation of community forestry these products are equally distributed to all the members and people have started getting different training opportunities as well as they come in contract with different NGOs and INGO. This contact helps them in planning for poverty alleviations, through income generation (Goutam, 2001).

Community Forestry has been defined as 'small scale, village level forestry practices where decisions and actions are made on a collective basis and where the rural population participate in planning, establishment and harvesting of forest crops and receive a major proportion of the socio-economic and ecological benefits from the forest. Community Forest is a process of socio-economic change that requires continuous participation of the community in planning, implementing and problem solving. And it is a bundle of activities which generate a supplementary flow of income to the community by utilizing either unutilized or ill utilized land' (Kayastha, 1991). Similarly, community forestry has been defined as 'the control and management of forest by the people who use them (Gilmour and Fisher, 1991). The Forest Act 1993 defines community forest as any part of national forest which is handed over by a DFO to 'a users group in the form of community forest as prescribed entitling to develop, conserve, use and manage the forest, and sell and distribute the forest

products independently by fixing their prices according to the work plan' (HMG/N, 1993).

Not only has the sustainable management of the forest resource, CF programme has been able to change the CFUGs status. Pokharel (2004) examine that CF has become instrumental in increasing natural, social, human, financial and to some extent physical capital (quoted in Bhandary 2004, The Kathmandu Post).

2.2 Participation

Participation has been a catchword for development experts, students of development studies and likes. It was mainly the United Nations and its affiliated organizations strategy that pushed the participation during the Second Development Decade in the seventies (Bongartz and Dahal, 1996).

The word Participation has been defined in different perspective with regard to rural development process. Participation includes people's involvement in decision making process, in implementation programmes, their sharing in the benefit of development programme and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programme (Laski, 1981 cited in Oakley and Marsden, 1984).

The philosophy of a "people based" development "from below" assumes that participation is not only an end in itself but also a fundamental pre-condition for and a tool of any successful development strategy. The failure of past development strategy is fundamentally linked to the absence of this missing ingredient participation. Most people would agree that increased participation is a "good" thing. it is put center stage now because it is seen as strategically important (Oakley and Marsden 1984).

Any development programme can be successful by the active participation of local people. Success will depend to a high degree on identifying measures to stimulate the active participation of the millions of small farmers and landless people who daily use forest and trees to meet their needs (World Resource Institute, 1987 cited in Oakley et al, 1991).

Oakley include a typical set of objectives of forestry programme designed on the basis of greater people's participation

- To involve people in forestry activities and provide the basic needs for forest resource by increasing the production of fuel wood, fodder, timber and polis.
- To promote self-reliance among hill communities through active participation on the management of their forest resources.
- To reduce environmental degradation and conserve soil and water resource (Oakely, 1991).

The government of Nepal has come forward to note that "people's participation in the development of the forestry sector involves giving full authority to rural people to plan and initiate their own programme. Unless the rural people, men and women participate in the management and conservation of forest, the situation of forest in the country will continue to deteriorate" (HMGN/WECS, 1995 cited in Chhetri 1999).

For the sustainable development of the community forest, the participation of local people is crucial factor for the establishment and management of community forest but this is often narrowly defined as the voluntary contribution of certain projects (Cohen and Norman, 1976). However, conceptually people's participation includes their participation identifying needs, decision making, implementation, benefit sharing, evaluation.

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 to 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 with conduct for wide spread application in Nepal. By using these techniques when conducting investigations, the fieldworker will gradually develop a positive relationship, with 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 part 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 a prerequisite for the study of popular participation.

Nepal has successfully implemented community forestry programme with the participation of the local people. Forest committee is formed by user groups to take the responsibility of protection, plantation and conserving natural forests. People's participation is essential in all stages of decision making; planning and sharing benefits. They show ample interest in nursery and planting works. According to one study, it has been found that private planting is the most

successful component of the community forestry programme. It is obviously due to the fact that individuals plant trees on their fertile land and take care to grow them. Even the poor enthuse in participation programme because they can freely collect fuel wood and fodder from the community forests and save their time for earning wage (Kayastha: 1991)

2.3 Women's Participation

Involvement of woman is crucial for the success of community forestry .women is the major collectors of forest product such as fuel wood, fodder and fruits, grass etc. They cook and do most of domestic works. Therefore, it is they who suffer the social and economic consequences of deforestation, most directly having to spend more and more time and walk longer distances in search of this essential forest product. However they should not be consider in isolation and total community participation should be effected (Kayastha: 1991)

If the forests are to be successfully managed by local users, then woman must participate, they are responsible for collecting most of the fuel wood, fodder, leaf compost and bedding, as well as controlling grazing. They also provide much of the labour for nurseries and tree planting. The men, on the other hand generally take care of cutting and selling timber, and of administrative decisions about the forests.

Women have worked successfully on both anixed and all female forestry committees in Nepal. Village men and women, and professional foresters generally agree that women are capable of doing committee work or of learning how to do it.

2.4 Caste System of Nepal

Nepal has been described as a Hindu kingdom and Hindu polity, not necessary a Hindu cultural pluralism within a hierarchical caste system where the practice of untouchability has become the fundamental practice of social stratification of power (NHDR, 2004). Khanal (2002) point out that the various castes in the Hindu society divided into a hierarchy where Brahmins have the highest and untouchables have the lowest ranking. The sense of superiority conjoined with the law of untouchability is much exaggerated and manifested in the rural part of our country. In Holton's view, the origin of untouchability is partly racial, partly religious and partly a matter of social custom.

2.5 Dalits in Nepal

Although the term 'Dalit' is used extensively in different reports, studies, definitions and day-by-day dialogue, understandings differ as to its definition. The literal meaning of Dalit in Nepali dictionary is "the person who is suppressed". In the context of South Asia, Dalit is a common term used to address culturally, economically and socially marginalized individuals or communities. Dalits are the occupational castes and are treated as untouchables in the context of Nepal. The proposed Bill on Dalits in Nepal forwarded by the National Dalit Commission defines the term 'Dalits' as "those, who by virtue of atrocities of caste-based discrimination and untouchability, are most backwards in social, economic, educational, political and religious fields and are deprived of human dignity and social justice.

2.6 Forest and Tenth plan

The tenth plan (HMG/NPC, 2002) has emphasized on forestry sector to support national objective of poverty alleviation by ensuring people's participation needed for sustainable development of management of forest, plant resources,

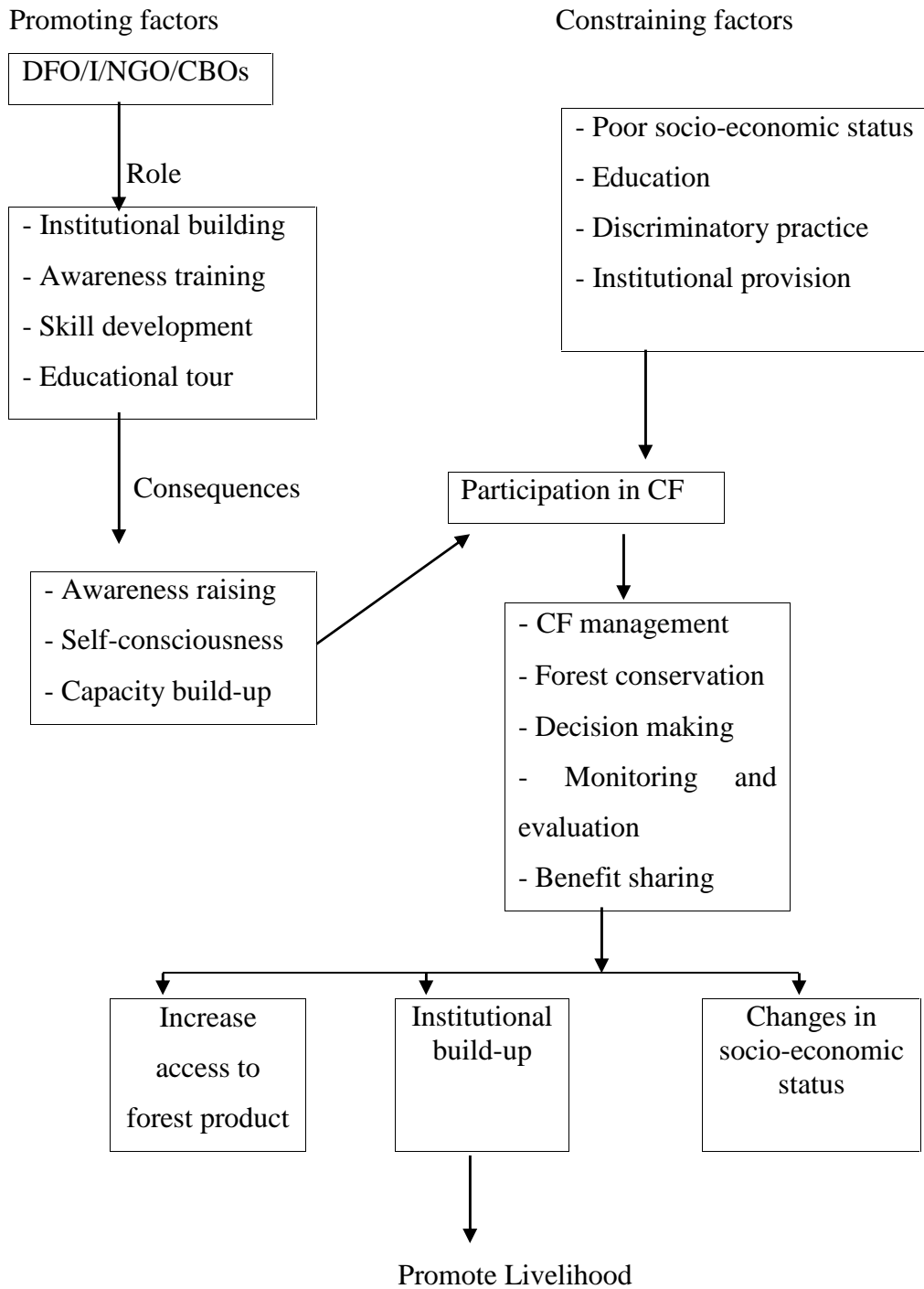
herbs, water-shed management and biodiversity conservation along with increasing employment opportunities through the development of forest based industries.

2.7 Community Forestry and Rural Development

Rural Development is a complex phenomenon. It is not merely the improvement of rural infrastructure, rather it is socio-economic transformation of the rural communities with equality and justice. Rural Development encompasses improved status and access of rural communities to natural, physical, financial, social and human resources in a way that the stock and flow of resources will remain enhanced if not the same. As a principle, natural resources forest can play a significant role in rural development and CFUGs, which are managing the community forests, have a significant role to play. The major sources of Income for the CFUGs are selling of forest product, fines charged to offenders and entry fees. Some CFUGs also collect regular membership in the initial years. But stop when they begin to earn income from the protected forest. It is thus flow of monetary income and the collective spirit underpinning community forest management (CFM) that has enable CFUGs to support community and Rural Development works in rural areas (Kafle, 2005). As per government rules, the CFUGs are free to design and implement this development works provided at 25% of the income goes to forest protection activities and other for the rural development.

2.8 Conceptual framework of the study

The conceptual framework for promoting and constraining factors in the participation of Dalits in CF



The conceptual framework illustrates how to develop community programme effectively. The conceptual framework is intended to show factors that are promoting and also the factors that have become constraints in the participation in CF especially that of the Dalit and their consequences in their life. The promoting factors like DFO support to handover the forest to the local community people and formation of CFUG. Similarly, NGO and IGOs facilitate the local people by providing awareness training, skill development training and educational tours. As a result, Dalits can develop the level of awareness and can enrich their capacity and self-consciousness. On the other hand, some constraining factors like education, socio-economic status, caste discrimination, norms and value, traditional beliefs affect to participate in the CF programme like management activities, decision making and benefit sharing. As a result, Dalit people do have their access in the forest products like firewood, leaf litter, green grass, and timber etc. and institutional build up. At last, Dalit people can promote their livelihood and become self reliance.

CHAPTER-III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals briefly with the research methodology applied by the researcher. This is purely academic research based on social science. In this study data were gathered by various data collection techniques of social science research. This chapter include rational of the selection of study area, research design, universe and sampling procedure, nature and source of data, data collection Techniques/instruments and method of data analysis and presentation.

3.1 Rational of the selection of study area

One of the most critical issues of field work is the selection of the study area. Community forest is a form of user group management is being implemented all over the country. Chambers (1983) points out the various common biases in the site selection. Bearing this in mind the study site has been selected, since it is a part of CF Project generally considered being one of the most successful CF in Dang District. The District is located within the mid-western development region. Present study site is the *Gairakhali Hariyali Community Forestry* of the Dang district. There are 420 CF handed over to the CFUG. Among them Gairakhali Hariyali CF was selected for detail study. Gairakhali Hariyali CF is situated in Tulsipur municipality ward no. 4 and 6. The justifications of the selection of the study area are as follows:

- * The community forestry was started from 2054-8-3 B.S.
- * The study population (Dalits) are the most suppressed section of the society so creating awareness to the dalits people for better Participation and benefit sharing in CF
- * Because of poverty and lack of awareness, Dalits could not participate actively.

- * The researcher is familiar with the ecology.

3.2 Research Design

The research design is based on descriptive and exploratory.

- i. It is descriptive as it is based on detailed investigation and record of the participation of Dalit in community forestry management, utilization of forest products, decision making process and benefit sharing from the forest products.
- ii. It is exploratory in the sense that this present study endeavored to explore the participation of Dalits in community forestry management process and problems of Dalits in active participation in CF programme.

3.3 Universe and Sampling Procedure

There are 420 CF, in Dang district. Gairakhali CF is one of them, which was purposively selected for the research study. There are total 797 HHs of CFUG member. Among them, Dalit HHs are 124. Therefore the sampling procedure adopted during study has been given below.

Universe: Out of 797 HHs of FUG members of the CF from the universe, 124 Dalit HHs were selected purposively.

Study Unit: Among 124 Dalit HHs, 40 HHs were selected for the study on the basis of simple random sampling. Only one respondent was selected from each Dalit HHs. Therefore, there were 40 Dalit respondents. Out of them 10 were males and 30 females. All respondents of the study were Dalit member of the CFUG.

3.4 Nature and Source of Data

For the purpose of the study, both primary and secondary data have been used to generate and analyze the objectives in this study. Therefore,

- I. The primary data has been collected through field visit such as household survey, observation, interview, focus group discussion and case study.
- ii. The secondary data has been collected from various published and unpublished documents, thesis, records, journals, books and relevant materials related to the subject matter.

3.5. Data Collection Techniques/Instruments

Primary data were collected using various tools and techniques. The techniques are described below:

Households Survey: Household survey was conducted to gather more information about the characteristics of Dalit population of CF, such as- age, sex, structure, marital status, population size, education status, occupation, land-holding size, food sufficiency, livestock etc. Various information regarding the participation of Dalit members of the CF were collected through structured questionnaire. It also helped the researcher to familiarize with villagers and make easy to rapport building with them for detail study.

Interview: Semi-structured and structured interview with the key informant was conducted whenever necessary depending upon the situation. Interview was conducted to get information about the participation of Dalit in CFMP such as- decision making, utilization of the forest products, benefit sharing and existing forest management system etc. It was also used to find out the socio-economic status of Dalit of CF in the study area.

Observation: Participation observation is a very useful tool for collecting information such as observes the location of the study area, relationship between people and environment, relations of Dalit with upper

caste, forest user group communities, and participation of Dalits in CFM and access of forest resources for Dalits. Furthermore, researcher also observed the social setting of the user groups.

Focus Group Discussion: It is one of the main techniques of the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods. By this method the researcher discussed with the CFUG members both male and female and collects the information about the past and present situation of the CF, Dalit's participation in CF management activities and benefit sharing of this programme. Group discussion was conducted in the committee's house of Gairakhali Hariyali CF and villager's house and working place.

Interview with Key Informants: The researcher asked some additional questions with some knowledgeable person such as- elderly person, committee members of CFUG, range-post staff, staff of DFO, teachers and local leaders about the CFP, Dalit's participation in forestry management activities and sharing of benefits.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis and Presentation

The collected data were edited, coded, tabulated and presented in appropriate formats. The quantitative data have been presented in tabular form and suitable statistical tools like percentage, ratio, mean etc. and interpreted and analyze in logical way. The qualitative data have been interpreted and analyze in descriptive way based on their numerical characteristics. Pie-chart, Bar-diagram has been presented to make figure attractive.

CHAPTER-IV

THE ECOLOGICAL SETTING OF THE STUDY AREA AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CFUG HOUSEHOLDS

It is essential to know the general information of the study area, demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the study population while undertaking any research. These characteristics have direct implications in any development program. As community forestry is also a program and approach to rural development which demands participation of the villagers for its management, these characteristics are believed to influence and direct the CF program directly or indirectly. Therefore, this chapter mainly includes:

- * General introduction of the study area and CF.
- * Demographic characteristics of Dalit household's population and the CFUG members such as age, sex structure and marital status.
- * Socio-economic characteristics like-literacy, religion, income, occupation and land holding.

4.1 Physical Setting

4.1.1 Dang District: At a Glance

Dang district is one of the most beautiful districts because of its different characteristic. Demographic structure of Dang district is different than other district. It is made by two valleys, one is Deukhuri valley and other is Dang valley. The altitude of the district ranges from 213 meters to 2058 meters above the sea level. Dang district is one of the important districts among others to supply agriculture and forest products. The district is situated in between latitude 27° 36' to 28° 29' North and longitude 82° 2' to 82° 05' East.

The district covers total area of 2955 square kilometers. It is bordered by Kapilbastu and Arghakhachi districts in the East. Surkhet and Banke in the Weast, Salayan, Rolpa and Pyuthan in the North and Uttar Pradesh of India in the South. The average temperature of the district is 32° Celsius and average annual rainfall of 1706 ml. The major River of the district is Rapti Babai. The major parts of the district are Inner Terai (about 80%) and hills (about 20%). The total population of the district is 4, 62,380 (district profile 2061). The economic backbone of the district is agriculture. Most of the inhabitants of the district follow Hinduism as the main religion. Brahmins, Chhetris, Tharus, Damais, Kamis, Magars, Gurungs, Badi, Sunar,etc. are the ethnic inhabitants of the district. The literacy figure of the district is 58 percent.

The total forest area of the district covers 1, 92,155 hectare of the total forests. The total community forest area covers nearly 82, 81,812 hectare. Till date, 420 CF have been handed over to the community from legal aspects. Moreover, there are 56 women CF, 3 religious and 263 private forests in the district.

4.1.2 Demography

The present study site "Gairakhali Hariyali Community Forestry" is situated in Tulsipur Municipality ward no. 4 and 6 of Dang district of Rapti Zone of mid-western development region. It is situated in the western part of the district. It occupies 95 sq km. of the total area of the district. The altitude of the municipality ranges from 725 meter from the sea level. Tulsipur municipality is characterized by plural cast/ethnic group. There are many ethnic and cast groups inhabiting in the municipality. There are 7,162 HHs having 33,876 total populations in the municipality. Chhetris is the dominant population group in the municipality which represents 26.93 percent of the total population. Most of the Dalit members of the CFUG are inhabitants of Tulsipur municipality ward no. 4 and 6. Thus, the demography of the municipality is shown in the table below.

Table 1: Distribution of Tulsipur Municipality population on the basis of Caste/ethnic groups

S.N.	Caste/ethnic group	Total Population	Percentage
1	Chhetri	9125	26.80
2	Brahman	4203	12.39
3	Tharu	7772	22.90
4	Magar	2659	7.83
5	Kami	1895	5.58
6	Damai	989	2.91
7	Sanyasi	940	2.78
8	Sunar	885	2.60
9	Newar	817	2.41
10	Thakuri	759	2.24
11	Gurung	527	1.55
12	Sarki	505	1.49
13	Muslim	343	1.01
14	Gaien	205	0.60
15	Baniya	171	0.50
16	Bote	5	0.01
17	Teli	156	0.45
18	Ethnicity	154	0.45

19	Badi	92	0.27
20	Chhantel	59	0.17
21	Yadab	55	0.16
22	Kalawar	55	0.16
23	Gharti	47	0.13
24	Kumal	37	0.10
25	Rai	29	0.08
26	Serpa	75	0.22
27	Kayastha	18	0.05
28	Haluwai	17	0.05
29	Tamang	15	0.04
30	Kori	14	0.04
31	Raute	10	0.02
32	Rajavar	7	0.02
33	Bangali	7	0.02
34	Luhar	6	0.01
35	Chhamar	5	0.01
36	Sunuwar	5	0.01
37	Others	1264	3.72
Total		33927	100

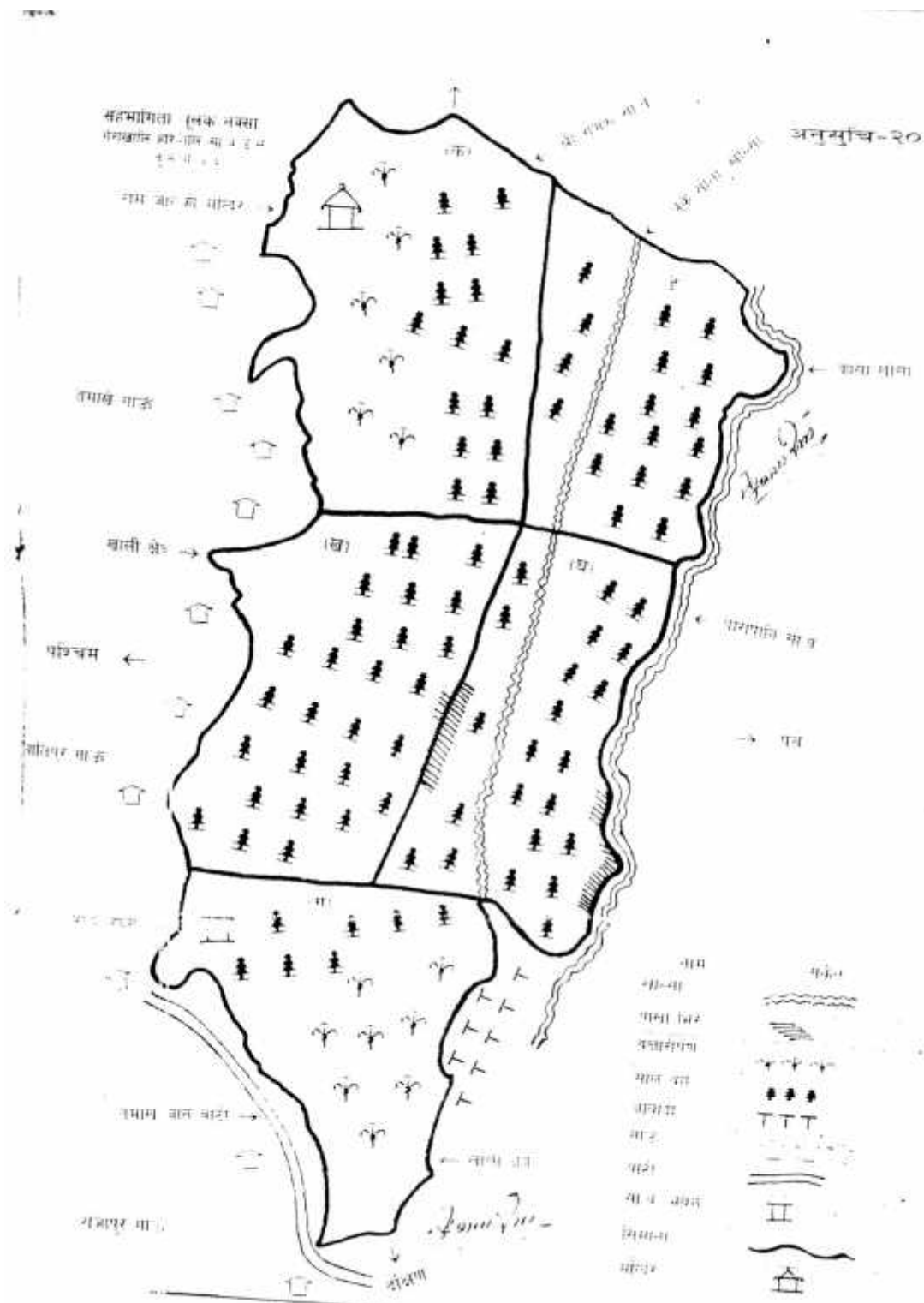
Source: Population of Nepal, Jun 2002 p. 22 UNFPA

The dominant caste group of the municipality is Chhetri. Total population of them is 9125 (26.80%). The least dominant population groups of the municipality are Chamar, Sunuwar and Bote which represents only 0.01 percent of the total population. The above table shows the distribution of population in the basis of caste/ethnic groups.

4.1.3 General Introduction of the Gairakhali Hariyali Community Forest

"Gairakhali Hariyali CF" is situated in the Tulsipur Nagarpalika ward number 4 and 6 which is one of the 2 municipalities of Dang district. There are 15 CF in the Nagarpalika, namely Vhagabati CF, Rayapani CF, Bhairab CF, Gadibarah CF, Ganesh CF, Gairakhali CF, Sarasoti CF, Nabadurga CF, Mahalaxmi CF, Phulbari CF, Mahilanamuna CF, Samjhana CF, Ashwara CF, Dharmashala CF, Tribeni CF. The CF covers 50.80 sq. Km. of the total area. Among these 15 CF, Gairakhali Hariyali CF is one of the CF in the municipality. It is located in ward no. 4 of the municipality which includes Rajapur, Motipur, Nayabasti, Patu, Kapadadevi, Bankatta, Tamakhe, and Kharchawa as major

villages. The CF shares its borders with Kalakhola in east, Gairakhali sota in weast, Shree Ganesh CF in North and Parseni village in the south. Gairakhali CF covers 105 hectare of the total forest area. It is divided into 5 plots according to the action plan. 20 hectare land of the CF is still necked.



Until 20 years back, the forest was a necked hill. The forest area was destroyed recklessly because of illegal activities like removal of Sal forest for timber production, hunting and

poaching of wild animals, overgrazing of livestock and uncontrolled fire wood collection etc. The degrading quality of the forest posed serious threat to the local inhabitants. Therefore, the importance of forest was realized by the local inhabitants, when they started to feel scarcity of firewood, fodder, liter etc. from the forest. As a response, with the initiation of the local educated person, the local elites, and the local inhabitants, a general meeting was held to discuss about the degrading quality of the forest. Then, local inhabitants planted the forest in 2039 B.S. with different types of small plants. By then onwards, the illegal activities, overgrazing of livestock and uncontrolled fire wood collection were controlled gradually. At that time, the local people appointed a watcher (chaukider) to watch the forest by giving some wage by the local people.

After some time, the local people formulated a user group committee with the assistance of DFO. The forest was handed over to community leally in the month of Mansir 3rd, 2054 B.S. After then, the forest user committee faced difficulties to convince the CFUG members, as they paid little attention regarding its preservation. After 4-5 years, because of improvement in the quality of the forest, the CFUG members were excited with a new thought for the conservation of the forest. With kind support from DFO, Tulsipur range post, local educated people and FUG members, the quality of the forest is improving day by day. There are different kinds of plants have been grown up such as- Eipil, Bokaeino, Masala. But Sal was naturally grown up in this forest. Now days, Gairakhali Hariyali CF looks like very beautiful and local inhabitants become very happy because of its improvement and products.

4.1.4 Biodiversity

Variability among living organisms from all sources is called biodiversity. In simple form, flora and fauna are biodiversity categories. In the study community forest the major flora includes-Sal, Jabuno, and Masala as major timber plants. The medicinal plants include- Kurilo, Amala Harro, Barro, Sapagandha, Bojho, Musili, Hard jodni. Similarly major fauna includes- Tiger, Rabbit, Jackal, Monkey, etc. Likewise, among bird- Mayur, Parrot, Kaliz, Wild-cock, Dove etc. are found in the CF.

4.1.5 General Introduction and Characteristics of Gairakhali Community Forest User Group (CFUG)

It is located in the Tulsipur Municipality ward no. 4 and 6 of Dang district. It covers 105 hector of total land. The CFUG members are the local inhabitants of Rajapur, Patu, Kharchawa, Motipur, Kapadadevi, Banakatta, Tamakhe village. There were 690 households having 4140 total population involved in this CF according to CF constitution 2060 B.S. But now, there are 797 households in CFUG according to the secretary of the CFUG committee during the period of field survey. Among the 797 CFUG members, there are 15.55 percent Dalit household in this CF. The dominant cast of the CFUG is Brahamin which occupies 35.88 percent of the total households. The total participant of the CF is shown below.

Table 2: Participation of CFUG member house hold on the basis of Caste/ethnic group

S.N.	Caste/Ethnicity	Total Households	
		Number	Percent
1	Brahmin	254	36.81
2	Chhetri	76	11.01
3	Tharu	189	27.40
4	Magar	33	4.79
5	Dalit*	109	15.80
6	Shah	7	1.01
7	Giri	8	1.15
8	Newar	3	0.43
9	Others	11	1.60
	Total	690	100

Source: CFUG Constitution 2060 B.S.

* Kami, Damai, Sunwar.

The above table clearly indicates that despite its diversity in caste/ethnicity composition, 3 caste groups (Brahmin, Chhetri, and Tharu) represent nearly 76.01percent. The rest other caste/ethnicity groups represent only 23.74 percent of the total population. However, the representation of the Dalit in this CF is satisfactory. Among many cast groups, Dalit is in the third position respectively.

Recently, there are some increases in the participation of the CFUG. The recent participation of the CFUG members is shown in the table below.

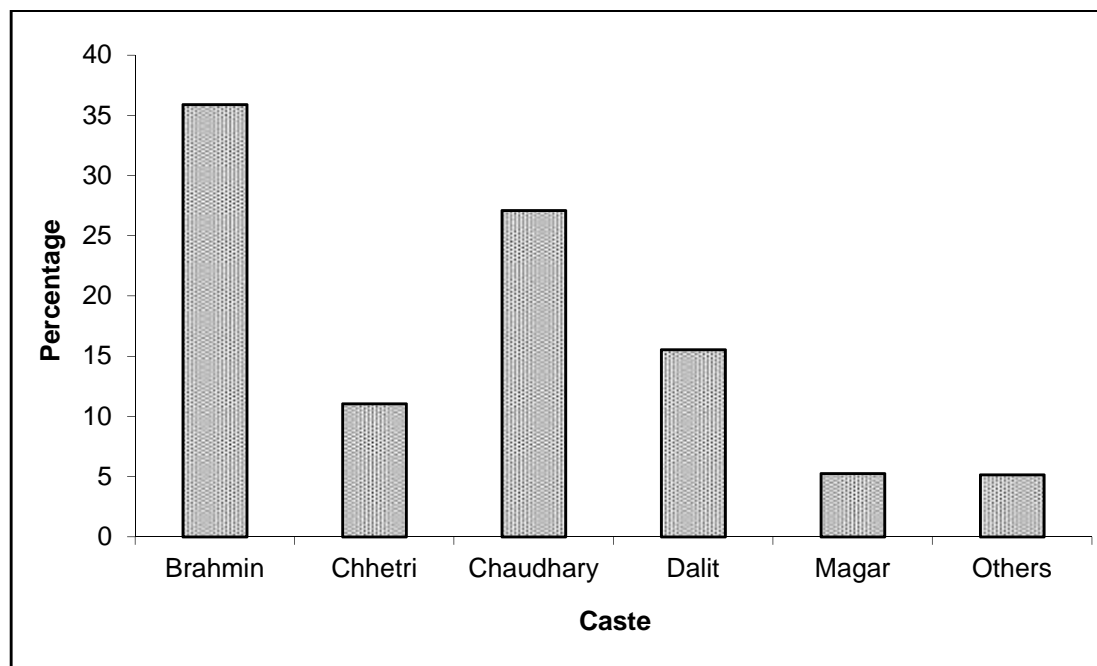
Table 3: Recent participation of the HHs according to Caste/Ethnicity groups

S.N	Caste/Ethnicity	Total Households	
		Number	Percent
1	Brahmin	286	35.89
2	Chhetri	88	11.05
3	Chaudhary	216	27.10
4	Dalit	124	15.55
5	Magar	42	5.26
6	Others	41	5.15
Total		797	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

Table 2 shows the total HHs and involved in the CF in its formation period. The table 3 shows the total HHs involved in the CF in present time. The number of the participants differs between the two tables. By studying these two tables, it can be said that CFUG member are increasing and constitution of this CF need revision.

Figure 1 : Recent participation of the HHs according to Caste/Ethnicity groups



Among the 797 CFUG members, there are 124 (15.55%) Dalit HHs in this CF.

Damai, Kamis, Sunar etc. are the major Dalits in the study area. The dominant cast is Brahmin which represents 36.81% of the total CFUG HHs numbers. Similarly, Chaudhary, Dalit and Chhetri are dominant cast of CFUG members respectively.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Sampled Dalit HHs Population and CFUG Members

Age, sex and marital status are major demographic characteristics of population, which directly affect its economic activities. Therefore, ecologist argues that adaptation of population is affected by such characteristics and sex-structure of the population is directly connected with the activities of resources exploitation. Therefore, this section deals all with some demographic characteristics of the sampled Dalit HHs population and CFUG members.

4.2.1 Age and Sex Structure

Age and sex structure of the population is grate important in the study of population and development activities. Therefore, on the basis of Dalit respondents, the age and sex composition of the studied population is shown in table below.

Table 4: Distribution of Dalit HHs Population by Fifteen Years age Groups and Sex

S. N.	Age-group	Total Population				Total	
		Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Number	Percent
1	Below-15 years	34	35.42	36	36	70	35.72
2	(15-30) years	33	34.37	30	30	63	32.14
3	(30-45) years	20	20.83	19	19	39	19.89
4	(45-60) years	6	6.25	7	7	13	6.63
5	(50-60) years	3	3.13	8	8	11	5.62
Total		96	100	100	100	196	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The above table shows that, of the total study population, population below 15 years age group shares the highest position 70 (35.72%) followed by (15-30) years age group 63 (32.14%). It means sampled HHs population was relatively young. The old aged group (above 60) shares 11 (5.62%) of the total population, highest proposition of male 34 (35.41%) belongs to age group (below 15 years). This value for female is 36 (36%) who also come from the same age group (below-15 years). The sex ratio for overall study

population is 96.00 percent that shows that the number of females is higher than males in the study population.

4.2.2 Age Dependency Ratio

Generally, the number of person below-15 years of age and above 60 years is known as dependent population in Nepal. Its value is calculated by using three different age groups.

- * Young below-15 years of age
- * Old aged above-60 years of age
- * Adult between 15-60 years of age

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Dalit HHs Population by Age-Dependency Ratio and Sex

S.N.	Age dependency ratio	Male	Female	Total
1	Child dependency ratio	57.63	64.28	121.91
2	Old age dependency ratio	5.08	14.28	19.36
Total dependency ratio		62.71	78.56	141.27

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The table shows that overall dependency ratio is 141.27. The table also shows that child age dependency ratio is higher than old age dependency ratio and the dependency ratio for females is higher than males.

4.2.3 Marital Status

Marriage is a social bond that legitimizes sexual activities to a new couple. In economic sense, marriage supplies an active labour and increases reciprocal labour exchange

practice between two families. The marital status of the sampled GFUG members' HHs population is shown in table below.

Table 6: Marital status of Dalit of the CFUG member's population of Sampled HHs

S.N.	Marital Status	Total Population				Total	
		Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Number	Percent
1	Married	41	43.62	41	41.83	82	42.70
2	Unmarried	45	47.88	43	43.88	88	45.83
3	Widow	-	-	12	12.25	12	6.25
4	Widower	5	5.31	-	-	5	2.61
5	Separated	3	3.19	2	2.04	5	2.61
Total		94	100	98	100	192	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The table shows the total study population. The majority of population is unmarried 88 (45.83%) followed by married 82 (42.70%), widow 12 (6.25%), similarly, widower 5 (2.61%) and separated 5 (2.61%) respectively. In case of total males, the higher proportion is unmarried 45 (47.88%), followed by married 41 (43.62%), and widower 5 (2.61%). Similarly, of total females, 43 (43.88%) are unmarried, followed by married 41 (41.83%) and widow 12 (12.25%).

This table shows that, in the study area of Gairakhali CF, the number of married people is equal. The table also shows that the number of bachelors is greater than women. It indicates that the girls are married in their earlier age than the boys. Because, males bear the family responsibility, but girls are married when their parents find better boys without thinking about their education, age, and economic security.

Further, the marital status of the respondents of CFUG members was also collected during study. Their marital status has been presented as given below.

Table 7: Marital Status of the Respondents of CFUG members on the Basis of Sex

S. N.	Marital Status	Total Population				Total	
		Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Number	Percent
1	Married	8	88.89	21	67.75	29	72.50
2	Unmarried	1	11.11	3	9.67	4	10
3	Widow	-		4	12.90	4	10
4	Separated	-		3	9.68	3	7.50
Total		9	100	31	100	40	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

This table shows that most of the Dalit members of the CF are married, 8 males and 21 females. It shows that male go to outside of the house for the business or the wage labour. Many lectures shows married people take more responsibility than unmarried people. Therefore, almost of the respondents take household economic responsibility.

4.2.4 Religion

Religion is one of the most important aspects of population in development intervention. It affects every aspects of the development programme. Environmentalists argue that development programme should be suitable for any development programe. In the study area, there is homogeneity in religion. All of the HHs is Hindus and their main festival is Dashan.

4.3 Socio-economic characteristic of the Sampled Dalit HHs Population and CFUG members

This section mainly deals with socio-economic indicators of the study population such as literacy rate, educational and occupational status, and landholding and subsistence level.

4.3.1 Educational status

Education is the ingredient factor of socio-cultural and economic changes in the society. Any development programme depends upon education for successful implementation. Many literatures suggest that education plays an important role in building confidence, increasing mobility and much more. Therefore, considering the importance of the study, it is better to show the education status of the sampled Dalit HHs population of the CFUG members.

Table 8: Educational Status of Dalit HHs Population of the CFUG on the basis of Sex

S.N.	Educational Status	Male	Female	Total	Percent
1	Illiterate	7	40	47	24.10
2	Literate (able to read and write)	5	5	10	5.13
3	Primary (5 completed)	41	32	73	37.43
4	Secondary (8 completed)	20	13	33	16.92
5	Higher secondary (above 8)	13	8	21	10.77
6	Infant*	6	5	11	5.65
Total		92	103	195	100

* Infants are categorized below 15 years of age.

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The table shows that, in the study area illiteracy rate of Dalit population is 47 (24.10%), followed by primary level of education completed 73 (37.44%). The literate population shares 10 (5.12%), whereas infant population shares 11 (5.65%). This table also shows that females are more illiterate than the male. It means males are more educated than females. This study revealed that the poor Dalit women in the study area were not

facilitated by the modern education. Among the studied population, majority of them are found illiterate and most of the literate people are limited only to the pre-primary and primary level of education. Moreover, most of the students leave the school before completing their primary education mainly because of their HHs miseries due to poverty. CF programme is an approach where local CFUG members take all the responsibility of the forest management. The education also plays an important role in the forest management and participation. Therefore, the educational status of the CFUG members of the community forest was collected, which is given below.

Table 9: Educational Status of Dalit Respondents of the CFUG member on the basis of Sex

S.N	Educational Level	Total population				Total	
		Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Number	Percent
1	Illiterate	-	-	17	56.67	17	42.50
2	Literate (able to read and write)	6	60	4	13.33	10	25.00
3	Primary (5 completed)	2	20	5	16.66	7	17.50
4	Secondary (8 completed)	-	-	2	6.67	2	5.00
5	Higher-secondary(above 8)	2	20	2	6.67	4	10.00
Total		10	100	30	100	40	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The above table shows that, of the total respondents, 17 (42.50%) are illiterate and all of them are females. This indicates that literacy rate of the Dalit respondent is much lower than the national literacy rate. Therefore, more precisely to say that Dalit's participation in the community forestry management is not active because of lack of education. CF is also a rural development programme and approaches both, so it is much futile to expect more outcomes from the illiterate person than from literate person. That's why, it can be said that, illiteracy is the major factor which makes the people voiceless and choice less.

4.3.2 Occupation

Occupation status is another factor, which reflects the socio-economic status of a person. Based on the data collection during field survey, occupational status of Dalit HHs population has been presented below in tabular form.

Table 10: Occupational status of Dalit HHs population of CFUG members

S.N.	Occupational Status	Total HHs Population	
		Number	Percent
1	Agriculture	48	25.27
2	Student	40	21.06
3	Wage labour	25	13.15
4	House wife	23	12.10
5	Gold smith	10	5.26
6	Job (army)	8	4.22
7	Driver	6	3.16
8	Infant*/Old –aged (Not in Occupation)	17	8.95
9	Foreign employment	6	3.15
10	Black smith	1	0.53
11	Tailoring	4	2.10
12	Fisherman	2	1.05
Total		190	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

In the study area, farming is the major occupation 48 (25.27%) of the Dalit HHs. Wagerlabour of the CFUG HHs members are 25 (13.15%). Similarly, housewife are 23 (12.10%), foreign employment 6 (3.15%), Infant and old-aged 17 (8.95%) respectively.

The above table shows that the majority of the people dependent on farming and all the people engage in wage labour because they don't have sufficient land for agriculture activities for them. Moreover, they have no employment opportunities and skill for income generating activities. So they went to out of the country for the employment.

Occupational status of CFUG member also helps to analyze their effectiveness in community forestry participation. So, occupational status of the Dalit CFUG members is given below.

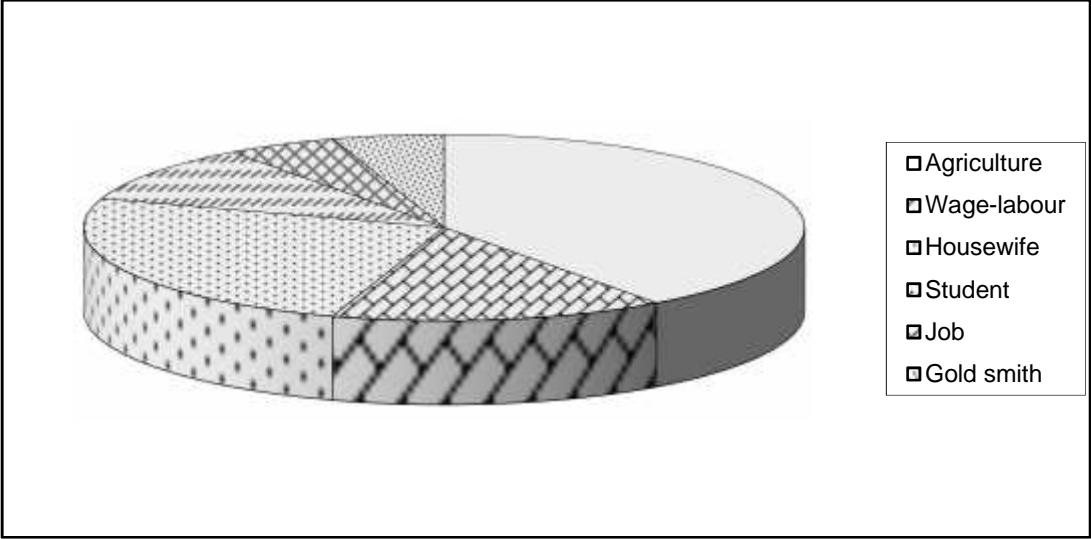
Table 11: Occupational Status of the Respondents of CFUG member on the basis of Sex

S.N.	Occupation	Total Population				Total	
		Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Number	Percent
1	Agriculture	4	40	12	40	16	40
2	Wage-labour	2	20	4	13.3333	6	15
4	Housewife			10	33.3333	10	25
5	Student	1	10	3	10	4	10
6	Job	1	10	1	3.33333	2	5
7	Gold smith	2	20			2	5
Total		10	100	30	100	40	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The above table shows the total respondents. Among them 16 (40%) of the total respondents follow agriculture occupation and 6 (15%) follow wage labour as main occupation. Similarly, housewife occupation shares 10 (25%). CF is highly interlinked with agricultural activities and the livelihood of the rural people who follow agriculture as major occupation. Therefore, their participation of the Dalit people in the forestry management is most important.

Figure 2 : Major occupation status of Dalit CFUG members



4.3.3 Village Economy

Economy includes production, consumption and distribution among the individuals of a community. It supports livelihood to the population. Agriculture forms the backbone of the economy of Gairakhali people. However, majority of the population is challenged by food deficiency. So, majority of the population depends on wage labour and services such as-driver, fisherman, teaching though the backbone of the village economy is agriculture. Economic system plays an important role in socio-cultural life of people. In an integrated farming system land livestock and culture are intimately related. Farm land of the Gairakhali area is fertile and productive but the farmers are unable to produce sufficient food due to lack of irrigation facility and also because of small chunk of land. Farmers of the Gairakhali CFUG are depend on subsistence based product and crops. Livestock integration is the basic characteristic of the society. Each household of the CFUG characteristically has Bari land (unirrigated upland) and has some livestock such as- Cow, Buffalo, Oxen, Pig, Goat and Hen.

4.3.4 Land Holding

The possession of land shows both prestige and source of wealth in Nepal. Land, as for other rural inhabitants of Nepal is the main source of livelihood of the CFUG people. All the CFUG member of the Gairakhali Hariyali CF do not possess the same size of land. My nature of the study includes Dalits' who are economically poor, socially marginalized and discriminated by the state. They hold a small chunk of land. The table below shows the distribution of land among the people of sampled HHs.

Table 12: Land holding Size of the Sampled HHs of Dalit

S.N.	Land-size (in Kattha)	Households	
		Number	Percent
1	Below-3	24	60
2	3-6	8	20
3	6-9	2	5
4	Above-10	6	15
Toal		40	100

Source: Field Survey 2006

The above table shows that, 24 (60%) Dalit HHs of the CFUG members possess land below 3 kattha, followed by HHs 8 (20%) hold 3-6 kattha, 2 (5%) HHs posses land 6-9 kattha and 6 (15%) HHs holds land above 10 kattha respectively. The people, who hold less than 3 kattha land, are not able to produce sufficient food for the whole year. It indicates that majority of the HHs fall under the food deficiency. The HHs who are not able to get sufficient food for the whole year, involved in wage labour. The subsistence living in poverty is the major obstacle that discourages poor Dalit in the CF participation.

4.3.5 Food Sufficiency

Food sufficiency also determines the effectiveness of Dalit participation in CF management. The main occupation of the studied population is agriculture but they can not produce sufficient food grain because of small piece of land. Keeping this in mind, food sufficiency of Dalit HH has been collected which is given below in tabular form.

Table 13: Food sufficiency of Sampled Dalit HH of CFUG

S.N	Food sufficient (duration in month)	Total households	
		Number	Percent
1	Less than 3	2	5
2	3-6	10	25
3	6-9	4	10
4	9-12	2	5
5	Surplus	1	2.50
6	Non of the above	21	52.50
Total		40	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The above table shows that the majority of the HHs falls under the food deficiency. Only 1 HH (2.50%) produce sufficient food for their requirements. 21 (52.50%) HHs are in the miserable condition because they don't have any land for the cultivation and they can not produce food for only one month. So, 97.50% HH bear food deficiency. Among the 97.57% HHs, 5% HH produce food sufficient only for 12 months. To analyze the above data, it can be said that, poor Dalit people of this area are facing hand to mouth problem to run their livelihood. Therefore, active participation of Dalit in CF management is impossible.

4.3.6 Source of Drinking Water of Dalit HHs of CFUG

Drinking water is most important in human life. Without water, not only human beings but also everything of the earth cannot live. Distance of the source of drinking water also affects the economic activities of the people of that study area. Therefore, the data has been collected about the source of drinking water and its distance from their HHs which has given below.

Table 14: Distance of the source of Drinking Water from the Sampled HHs of Dalit of CFUG.

S.N.	Distance in minute	Total households	
		Number	Percent
1	5-10	15	37.50
2	10-20	10	25
3	20-30	15	37.50
Total		40	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The above table shows that the source of drinking water is far from their village in the jungle and public tap. Not only far from the village but also these HHs face the lack of the source of drinking water. Most of the households bring the drinking water from long distance of the house. It consumes more than 30 minutes to fetch water. Many HHs depend on a single source i.e. public tap and well. There is also discrimination between upper cast and Dalits in fetching drinking water. For the improvement of their economic condition, they are demanding the drinking water nearby their houses.

CHAPTER V

PARTICIPATION OF DALIT IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT

People's participation is considered essential for sustainable development and improved management of local resources in rural areas. Since the early seventies, most successful development programmes have noted grass-roots participation as a key factor in their achievements. For rural development and related sector this has meant a focus on village groups, local organizations and local leaders. The concept of CF in Nepal is also a result of such focus.

Community forestry or village forestry is seen as a control management and use of forest resource by villagers. It seems to increase the level of awareness of local people and their active involvement in all aspects of forestry is for the benefit of local people. The primary user of forest product especially those who are dependent on forest product to meet subsistence need. Therefore, this chapter briefly deals the following major aspects.

- * Dalits participation in community forestry management.
- * Dalits participation in decision making process.
- * Benefit sharing
- * Hindrances for Dalit's participation in community forestry.

5.1 Participation of Dalits in CF Management.

The word management is a complex one. It includes the stage from the very beginning of CF to the benefit sharing. The management of CF in the absence of local people's (including all cast and ethnic groups) involvement can not be successful to achieve the goal of CF. Participatory management is more than just voluntary labour. It means the individuals are the actively responsible for deciding what their problem are and what has to be done to manage the CF more effectively. The people's participation is necessary in

forest management and DFO of forest ranger often plays several roles several roles simultaneously.

A group of people selected by the forest user group to be responsible to the forest user group for implementation of the operational plan is called forest user group committee (FUGC). It is representative of all FUG members of the CF. In each and every district Forest User Group Committee (FUGC) have been established by the villagers and I/NGOS. But, it is generally accepted that user group manage forest themselves.

Most of the literature describes traditional forest management practices but these literatures do not provide information about the organizational process. Tamang (1990) says that decisions and agreements among users, village community households and so on are the seeds which forest management practices evolve from. They germinate the supports for the decisions through participation in forest management practice and other forma of positive action allow for the continuous existence of the practice. Various studies have indicated that village communities have initiated forests management practices after perceiving the need to do so. Some say that forest is considerably influenced by how ownership of the forest land is perceived. Forest needs to be seen as being owned by the users, village community, clan, groups of households and so on. The management makes decisions such as where and which area of he forest will be managed? When and in what period of the year will the forest be planted, protected and harvested? How and what practices for harvesting, protection, distribution, planting are to be undertaken to manage forests? What organizational practices are to be established? How will the forest be managed by the user, committee members and households? What will be the major objective in managing forest? These and other many decisions not included in the above list need to be taken, consensus, verbal, or written agreement to decide, have no meaning. These agreements to a decision have to be reflected in positive supporting action when the decision is implemented when agreement is evidenced by supporting action. Only then can be said that consensus for the decision exists. Such

consensus is vital where collective action among groups of people is needed to manage a common resource.

In Gairakhali Hariyali CF, CFUG members have been formulated 5 years operational plan in order to manage the forest effectively. In the study area, Dalit HHs are dependent on forest products such as fuel wood, fodder, litter etc. In the CF, CFUG members are able to prepare their yearly forest management plan. But in general meeting of the CFUG, Dalits participation does not seem to be effective. They involve knowingly or unknowingly in the meeting

5.2 Participation of Dalits CFUG members in Decision Making Process

Decision making process is political as well as social phenomenon. It is one of the most important phases of community forestry activities. The philosophy of CF says that, in this process, all the CFUG members from different strata irrespective of caste, ethnicity, sex, nationality etc. participate to define their problems articulate their interests, problems are discussed and solution are traced by consent and consensus basis to manage the forest more effectively. More precisely to say, decision-making process is governance system. In the early period forest management system the participation of people from all of the villagers was not emphasized. During the period of control of the forest by the government, the ranger and foresters did not take any suggestion from the local people. The villagers thought that it was their forest and they should get chance to use it freely. However, they did not think of its preservation because of lack of felling of ownership.

In this study, participation of Dalits in CF has been measured by various aspects. These include composition of CFUG committee, pattern of participation, role played by Dalit's in decision making process, level of satisfaction etc. Attempt has been made to analyze these above mentioned aspects.

5.2.1 Composition of Forest User Group Committee (CFUGC)

A group of people selected by the forest user group to be responsible to the forest user group for implementation of the operational plan is generally called forest user group committee. The committee is the representative of all the CFUG members and is entrusted to manage forest. Generally, the committee takes the main responsibility to influence and direct the forest management policy. Therefore, it is imperative to question what the ratio is between Dalits and non-Dalits in the CFUG committee. The proportionate ratio between Dalits and non-Dalits has been given below.

Table15: Participation in the Executive Committee on the basis of Caste/Ethnic Group from 2060-2063

S.N	Cast/ethnic group	FY 2060/61		FY 2062/63	
		No.	Percent	No.	Percent
1	Brahmin	5	50	9	42.86
2	Chhetri	1	10	6	28.58
3	Chaudhary	2	20	3	14.28
4	Dalit	2	20	3	14.28
Total		10	100	21	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

Above table shows that, the representation of Dalits in FUG committee is 2 (20%), 3 (14.28%) in the FY 2060/61 and 2062/63 respectively. It also shows that participation of Dalits in FUG committee is increasing. Since, Dalits represent 124 (15.56%) of the total HHs of FUG members. The representation of Dalit in CFUG committee is satisfactory. In this CF, Brahmin, Chhetri, Chaudhary always hold top-position like president, secretary, advisory and treasury. Naturally, these positions are considered to be important to influence and direct the policy for CF management. The most ingredient factor missing here is leadership development quality because of illiteracy and low level of education.

5.2.2 Pattern of Dalits Participation in Committee Meeting /Assembly

A meeting concerned with the management of a particular forest and attended by all users and representative of user groups is called general assembly. Major decisions are made in assembly meeting. Therefore, it is also an important aspect of decision-making process in CF.

In the Gairakhali Hariyali, the general assembly meeting is conducted once in a year and committee meeting is held in the first week of each month. For minor decisions like fixing date of assembly, penalty of fines, FUG committee is responsible. But for major decisions like time of opening forest, plantation, weeding and clearing time etc. group assembly is called. Therefore, keeping this in mind, the researcher has presented Dalit's participation in general assembly, in the following table.

Table 16: Participation of Respondents in generally Assembly

S.N	Pattern of participation	Total households	
		Number	Percent
1	Regular	20	50
2	Irregular	16	40
3	Not at all	4	10
Total		40	100

Source: Field Survey June 2006

In Gairakhali Hariyali CF, of the total Dalit respondents, 20 (50%) of them participate regularly in assembly meetings. Similarly, 16 (40%) participate irregularly and 4 (10%) not at all. These respondents who have not participated in the assembly at all, is because of lack of interest and HHs miseries.

5.2.3 Role Played by Dalit CFUG Members in Decision making process.

In the study area, most of Dalits are informed to attend in the meeting but most of them do not know why meeting is going to be held. Almost all Dalits do not know about forest user group, what operational plan is and what their role is in decision making process. It shows that very low level of awareness still exists among Dalit people. During the study, key informants (educated Dalit people) informed the researcher that, Dalits are called in meeting just for formality because they are not interested in the meeting. They come only for formality and go before ending the meeting. Therefore, the researcher has been collected some informations about the role played by Dalits participation in assembly meeting.

Table 17: Dalit Participation in Decision Making Process on the basis of Role Played

S.N.	Role played	HHs population	
		Number	Percent
1	Active	9	22.50
2	Supportive	11	27.50
3	Passive	20	50
Toal		40	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

Above table shows that, of the total Dalit respondent of the CFUG members who participate in decision making process, 20 (50%) have no role in decision making process, 11 (27.50%) have supportive role and 9 (22.50%) played active role respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that the role of played by Dalits in decision making process is not effective because lack of education and awareness.

5.2.4 Level of Satisfaction

The relationship of CFUG members with FUG committee always holds important aspect to evaluate the effectiveness of participation. It is because the committee is the representative of all the FUG members, which is entrusted to manage forest by making good environment by articulation the interests and voices of all CFUG members. Therefore, the level of satisfaction of Dalit with FUG members with FUG committee and the reasons for dissatisfaction has given below.

Table 18: Level of satisfaction of Dalit FUG members with FUG committee

Satisfaction	Population	
	Number	Percent
Yes	36	90
No	4	10
Total	40	100
Causes of dissatisfaction		
Dominance of elites	2	50
Dominance of upper caste	1	25
Dominance of nearest people of CF	1	25
Total	4	100

Source: Field Survey, June 2006

The table shows that, of the total Dalits respondents, 36 (90%) were satisfied with FUG committee and CF, but 4 (10%) were not satisfied. The main reason behind their dissatisfaction is dominance of elites, upper caste and nearest people of CF.

Therefore, considering all the facts, it can be said that effectiveness of Dalits participation in decision making process is not satisfactory. The lack of leadership quality, illiteracy, awareness, poverty and dominance of social elites are major causes behind ineffectiveness of Dalit's participation in decision making process.

5.3 Participation of Dalits in Benefit Sharing

Benefit sharing is an important component of participation of local people. In the absence of it people's participation can not be authentic and successful in the participation process. If there is no equal sharing, people can be easily frustrated with the programme i.e. community forestry programme. At the same time disparity will increase between the advantageous groups and the under privilege group. People can realize the CF as their own, only if they share equal benefits.

In the course of research work, the member of the study area and CFUG were asked whether they had shared the benefits from the community forestry equally or not and whether they were satisfied about the present condition of the CF or not. And researcher also asked them whether they participated in the benefit sharing or not. Amazingly, almost all the respondent said that they were equally benefited from the CF. But there was not any special programme or discount for the Dalits. The forest is freed for the members by informing them all, and at the time they can collect fuel wood. For this all the CFUG members have to pay 30 rupees. But Dalits are not freed from this charge. During the months of *Poush and Magh*, they can collect fuel wood. The fuel wood is distributed equally by the measurement of the Quintile. Due to high demand and density of the population and small area of the CF, all the demands of fuel wood can not be fulfilled by the CF. Even though; the benefits of the CF is distributed equally between Dalits and non-Dalits. For the collection of grass fodder and leaf litter, all the user group members are allowed to bring whatever they want and can get. These products can be collected by the CF during the scheduled time when it is freed. CF was started since 2054 B.S. but began to gain profit from last few years only, even though the trees are not matured and it is not time to cut timber. The villager informed the researcher that it still requires few more years to take full advantages from the CF. Thus; they all have full faith in CF. The community forestry can provide tangible and intangible benefits for the users.

CF systems generate higher rates of participation from the intended beneficiaries. In the case of women such tangible benefits as the ease in collecting fuel wood, fodder, and leaf litter and grazing animals will motivate them to involve in forest user committee. In the case of user committee members, some tangible benefit as well as intangible benefits as personal satisfaction through the encroachment of knowledge, linkage with government offices and facilitated agencies like I/NGOs etc officials and exposure out side the village, reinforce their participation in community forestry development work.

The most important products coming from CF are leaf liter, fuel wood, green grass etc. However, in the study area villagers are totally dependent on the forest products in CF to maintain their livelihood. They have no alternative sources for forest product. They are fully dependent on the community forest for the fulfillment of their basic needs such as- birth and death rituals, marriage and other ceremonies of the villagers.

5.3.1 Perceived Benefits by Dalits from the CF

The benefits from community forest management are two types: direct and indirect benefits. Every body is aware of various benefits from the forest. But the users generally understand only the direct advantages from the forest. Even though, In the course of research work, focus group discussion was held to ask what benefits they perceive from the CF. The perceived benefits by Dalits from CF has been given below.

Direct benefits	Indirect benefits
* Fuel wood for cooking and heating.	* Maintenance of quality of

<p>* Leaf, letter, green grass for the livestock and production of compost manure</p> <p>* Timber and Khar for the construction of house.</p>	<p>environment.</p> <p>* Conservation of water resources.</p> <p>* Protection of crops from the destruction</p> <p>* Protection of lives and properties through control of flood, land slide, and soil erosion.</p> <p>* Increase of soil fertility.</p> <p>* Protection of Bio-diversity i.e. flora and fauna.</p>
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Source: Field Survey, June 2006

Most of Dalits of the CF perceive only direct benefits. Very few of them were able to trace indirect benefits from the forest indicating that environment awareness among Dalits has not been developed yet.

5.3.2 Benefits from Community Forestry Fund

The distribution of CF fund always holds a major issue in benefit sharing process. The provision made for the regulation of CF fund as per the operational plan of the CF is as follows:

- * All the income generated from the forest management and selling of forest products will directly go into the account of CF.
- * For the utilization of CF fund, it will be accord to the decisions made by general annual assembly on the following headings:

- Forest protection activities
- Forest development
- Infrastructural development
- Official management
- Contingency expenses
- Miscellaneous

Source: Operational Plan of Gairakhali Hariyali Community Forestry (2060).

CHAPTER VI

HINDRANCES OF THE DALITS PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT

To analyze the hindrances of Dalits to effective participation in CF, focus group discussion, analysis of socio-economic characteristics of the Dalits and key informants' views were adopted as methodology during the research time. Therefore, an attempt has been made to describe some major factors that are considered as hindrances factors for effective participation of Dalits in CF.

I) Poverty

The main reason behind low participation of the Dalits in community forestry program is their poverty. Although the term poverty is vague in itself, in this study poverty implies hardship for Dalits to run their livelihood. Because of hand to mouth problem, poor Dalits are not able to participate in decision making process even if they are informed to participate there in meeting, assembly etc.

II) Education

Many literatures show that education and level of awareness have cause and effect relationship. This fact can not be neglected in the research here. In the study area, most of Dalits are illiterate and therefore have low level of awareness. The educated people are devotedly involved in conserving the forest because they are aware about the importance of forest. They know what will happen if the forest is destroyed. But uneducated people do not know anything about the CF management. In the study area, the condition of Dalits education is very miserable. They have not any knowledge about community forest programme, forest related law and bylaws and its importance, etc. what they only know is that they are getting benefits by this programme. So they are blind supporters about the CF development programme made by upper caste or educated

people. In the research it was found that the upper caste people who have access to the district level bring the development programme. They consider that the Dalits are the major part of the society. So they include them in the programme. So Dalits are enforced to participate in the programme. It is because of ignorance and lack of education. They hesitate to express their views frankly and openly.

III) Self-consciousness

Attitude, education, awareness and interest play an important role in developing self-consciousness in a person. Most of the respondents are not aware and have no interest and positive attitude in CF work because of lack of self-consciousness. So education factor is highly affecting in active participation in decision making. Therefore, self-consciousness is also hindrances of Dalits participation.

IV) Untouchability

Culturally and religiously, almost all FUG members of Gairakhali Hariyali Community Forestry are homogenous groups. All users are Hindus but ethnically users are heterogeneous. The practice of untouchability is still prevailing in the study area between Dalits and non-Dalits and also within Dalits. This practice has narrowed the process of intermitting between FUG members to develop social capital for coherent collective actions for effective participation in CF.

V) Lack of Leadership Quality

Lack of leadership quality has been traced as one of the major hindrance factor for Dalits' effective participation in CF. In the study area, although Dalits are selected in FUG committee and almost all Dalits view that the programs under TAL Program is not

suitable for them, still they hesitate to express their views frankly and openly. Therefore, they are unable to influence the forest management practice to make favorable for Dalits.

VI) Discriminatory Practice

Discrimination practice is still alive in the CF program. This practice ranges from decision-making process to benefit sharing. In the CF, most of Dalits informed the researcher that if they express their thoughts frankly forward their views against the program or sometime claim their rights, the elites pretend to incorporate their interests and voices but does not take it seriously in discussion. Consequently, the Dalits feel that their partaking in the meeting will be purposeless. Then, they quit the meeting and develop the lack of interests in CF program.

VII) Culture

The traditional culture of the study area demands that the male should be respected by females. Therefore, female CFUG member from the Dalits don't get the chance to be involved in decision making process even if they participate in such meeting. They don't express their opinion and their opinions are not given consideration by the upper class and male members. However, there is female committee which operates CF effectively without the support of male.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Summary

Participation has become the essence of the modern development context. However, it is not a new concept to gain it momentum. The community forestry program is a popular program to protect and manage the forest resources in a sustainable way. For the successful management of the program, effective participation of the CFUG members is essential. This thesis is conducted to find out the participation of the Dalits in community forestry management. The other specific objectives are as follows:

- i) To analyze the socio-economic characteristics of the Dalit household population of the CFUG members.
- ii) To evaluate the participation of Dalits in CF management process.
- iii) To analyze the status of Dalits in decision making and benefit sharing process.
- iv) To identify the problems of Dalits in active participation in CF program.

There are a total of 420 CF in Dang district. The Gairakhali Hariyali CF is one of them. It was purposively selected for the detail study.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher had applied the social science research methodology. This study was held on exploratory and descriptive research design. The sources of data were qualitative and quantitative. There are 797 households of the CFUG members in the CF. Out of which 124 households are from Dalits. Among total Dalit households, 40 households with 196 populations were taken as study unit. Moreover, 5

respondents were selected of which views and opinions were considered during analysis process. The summary of the study has been given below.

- * The history of the CF shows that the quality of forest was threatened at alarming rate due to reckless deforestation process. But with the initiation of the local inhabitants, the CF was handed over to the local community legally in the year 3rd of Mansir 2054 B.S. Since then the quality of forest is gradually improving day by day.
- * Brahmin, Chhetri, Janjati, and Dalits are the ethnic groups of the CFUGs. Brahmins are the dominant cost of all.
- * Of the total Dalit households population, 19.89 percent of the people were under the age group of 30-45 years of age indicating that sampled household population were relatively adult. The sex ratio for overall study population was 96.00 percent.
- * The dependent population of the Dalit household was 41.34 percent of the overall population. The overall age dependency population was 141.27 percent. The child dependency ratio was 121.91, whereas old-age dependency ratio stood at 19.36.
- * Of the total households population, unmarried population was the highest (45.83), followed by married population 42.70 percent. The number of married male and females were equal. Similarly, of the total Dalit respondents of the CFUG members, 72.50 percent were married.
- * The literacy figure of the Dalits household population was poor. The illiteracy of the Dalit household population counted 24.10 percent. Similarly, the literacy of Dalit respondents of the CFUG members was also very poor. The illiteracy of Dalit respondent was 42.50 percent in which females were comparatively illiterate than males.

- * Agriculture was the major occupation of the Dalit HH population (25.27%), followed by wage-labour (19.15%). Similarly, agriculture was the main occupation of the Dalits of the CFUG members of the total, 60 percent HHs have only 1-2 kattha land. The distribution of land was uneven. The unproductive land and lack of irrigation facilities limited the productivity of land and therefore 97.50 percent HHs are bearing food deficiency, only 2.50 percent HHs product sufficient food. Employ wage-labour as a primary source of income for subsistence.
- * Source of drinking water is very far from the Dalit households. It consumes more than 30 minutes to fetch water. Many households depended on single source of drinking water i.e. public tap and well and drinking water was not sufficient. There was also discrimination between upper caste and Dalits.
- * The FUG members of Gaitakhali Hariyali CF are able to prepare their early forest management plan. The CF is managed by the local people for the fulfillment of their daily needs related to forest such as firewood, leaf-litter and fodder for livestock and also for the protection of environment and soil erosion. The committee meetings held once a month and general assembly is conducted once in a year. All the plans and programs are presented in the general meeting.

Most of the Dalits were not participated regularly and by self-motivation in the CF management. Few of them were participated regularly and by self-motivation. Therefore, the active participation of Dalits in decision making process has not been realized. It is mainly because Dalits have low level of awareness related to forest laws and by laws.

Poverty, education, lack of self-consciousness, untouchability and lack of leadership quality are the major hindrances for the active participation of Dalits in CFMP. Moreover, discriminatory practice by social elites is still in existence.

- * The benefit sharing from the CF is equal. Dalits of the CFUG members were satisfied with the sharing of benefits from the forest products. The provision for getting forest products of daily needs like fuel wood, fodder, litter etc. were made available every time. However, most of them were not getting opportunities to utilize the CF fund for income generating activities. The little attention had given to provide opportunities for skill-development, income generating activities, institutional building etc.

7.2 Conclusion

on the basis of facts, figures, opinion, literature and the experience gained by the researcher during the visit, the researcher has now come to conclude that the active participation of Dalits in decision making process is not satisfactory because of illiteracy, poverty, low awareness level, lack of leadership quality and to some extent, discriminatory practice of the social elites. But, the participation of Dalits in benefit sharing is effective than decision making process. Most of the Dalits households of FUG are satisfied from CF. In the study area, most of the Dalits are very poor and illiterate. They don't have productive land; therefore, they are suffering from food deficiency. As a result, they can not participate actively in CF program. Although, any special programme for Dalit and provision of CF fund mobilization for the socio-economic upliftment of Dalits like- income generating activities, capacity building etc. is not available.

7.3 Recommendations

Based on findings of the study, opinions of Dalits and key informants and the observation and experienced gained by the researcher, some suggestions are put forward to future researchers, planners and policy makers related to the CF development program to make more inclusive for Dalits participation. I hope, it will help to reduce the poverty of Dalits living there by encouraging them to participate in CF management process.

- * In Nepal, CF program has become a major issue for the management and protection of forest products. After the entire research, it is found that this program has overlooked or paid little attention to protect and manage Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). Therefore, policy makers, planners and CFUG members of the CF must focus their attention towards NTFPs farming with adequate assessment of market value. For this, the CF should make provision for providing material assistance and technical assistance for those who involved in NTFPs farming. To promote NTFP farming, some land of CF can be provided to those who are landless and poor Dalits.
- * The case study of operational plan showed that the operational plan does not properly mention to utilize the CF fund for poor. Most of expenditure of the CF fund has been focused for official management and infrastructural development. Therefore, the operational plan needs to be amended by broader discussion to make benefit sharing more transparent and favorable for Dalits. Provision should be made to introduce the concept of equity in management.
- * The traditional occupation of Dalits in the study area is in crisis due to the availability of the modern mass products. For the sustainability and quality of traditional occupation, they should be trained in a new way (providing sewing and cutting trainings to Damai). Providing provision for such training is believed to uplift their socio-economic status.
- * Very little attention has been given to providing capacity building and income generating activities for the Dalits, so, it is advised to seek viable options to employ Dalits in such activities.
- * Discriminatory practice is still prevailing in the area and there high probability to create distance between Dalits and non-Dalits. For it, creating certain conditions for

intermixing between Dalits and non-Dalites by organizing various programs like celebrating party as feasts and festival, involving in breakfast, tea, dinner etc. and worshipping God in temple by joint effort can lead to erode discriminatory practice for a long run.

- * Awareness creation and training about leadership development needs to be provided for Dalits.

For Further Research

The study did not analyze the overall status of the CF due to time and resource limitation. Therefore some future researchers are recommended.

- * The further research should be to explore whether the environmental issue or livelihood issue is to be reflected with priority in CF management.
- * The further research should be to explore what mechanisms should be adopted to make CF program more inclusive for Dalits.

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