

HAPTER – ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

People's involvement in any activities is generally known as participation. It is not a new concept in the field of development. The word 'participation' and 'participatory' appeared for the first time in the development jargon during the late 1950s (Rahnema, 1997). However, in practice, the approach of participation arrived later in the field of development with the slogan of "putting the last first" (Chamber, 1983) due to the failure of earlier development approaches i.e., top down or trickle down approach of development.

In the context of Nepal, the approach of people's participation in the field of development was introduced in the late 1970s, mostly in the area of natural resource management such as forest, irrigation, rangeland and other development activities. Along with the participation of people, women's participation also appeared spontaneously in the fields.

The management, protection and utilization of forest by the local villagers or community is known as community forest (Gilmour and Fisher, 1991, Chhetri, 1994). "Community Forestry (CF) program being implemented in Nepal is essentially a strategy adopted to bring about socio-economic and environmental change and development in rural societies through interventions in regard to the management of forests" (Chhetri, 1994). Over time, this program appeared as one of the best

examples of people's participation or people's participatory development activities in the sector of forest management in Nepal.

Women are the key collectors as well as users of the forest products such as firewood, fodder, leaf-litter, edible plants, flowers, herbs and ritually needed plants including SaaI (*Shorea robusta*), Bhorla (*Banchininia vahlii*), champ(*Michelia kisopa*), bar(*Ficus benghalensis*), papal (*ficus religiosa*) Bel (*Aegle marmelos*) etc. They also manage and protect the forest resources by planting, weeding, conducting pruning and thinning activities, watching the encroachment over forest resources and area. Therefore, women's participation is essential for the effective management of the forest resources. However, the various literatures pointed out that the existing social structure and value system of our society has highly deprived the women from a meaningful participation in the management activities (Gautam 2003). In this sense women are not properly participated in CF and their roles are also less effective (ibid).

In the development program, participation is normally measured through different levels such as participation in program implementation, decision making, monitoring, evaluating and benefit sharing. In this study, the researcher has tried to find out the women's participation in CF through the study of Ugratara CF of Bajrayogini VDC of Kathmandu district.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Nepali society is heterogeneous in terms of caste, culture, language, ethnicity, religion, and class. In all religion, cast, ethnic group and class, women and men have occupied different spaces of the society. In the

sphere of development, people from different caste, ethnic group, religion, class and sex do not participate equally in decision making, program implementation, monitoring and evaluating, and benefit sharing

The structure of Nepali society is male dominated or patriarchal (Bista, 1991). Patriarchy means male domination where only superior male have occupied privileges and power whereas females and other junior males do not have; (Bhasin, 1994) for instance, in the matter of participating in religious work, in achieving parental and husband's property, using and distributing economic resources, participating and deciding in developmental works, sharing the benefit of development and involving in public work, making decision etc. are virtually controlled by male. However, nature of domination can vary in different societies, and even within a single society for different classes and cultural groups (Bhasin, 1994, Agrawal, 1994). It also differs in different period of history. Thus, the existing social system or cultural practices play an important role to determine men and women's space and their role in a society.

In the context of forest management, women have been contributing for protection and management of the forest resources from time immemorial. However, their involvement in different aspects of natural resource management has been mostly in the form of nominal participation (Ostrum, 1992, Agrawal, 2002). Their role is subsided by the existing patriarchal cultural practices, religious beliefs and value system, even though they are the prime managers of the natural resources (Njoroge, 1999, Banjade, 2004).

In the context of Nepalese society, women are less motivated in some cases to go ahead in the area of decision making and representation in public sphere. Banjade (2003) writes that our social system has provided women with less opportunity of education and exposure to outside world, i.e., their enthusiasm, capacity and confidence on leading the management, decision making and influence in management process and out-comes have been limited. Therefore women's social position, meaningful participation and representation in the community forest management are also highly influenced by their level of awareness, capacity and their confidence.

However, women have been the prime managers of the natural resources from time immemorial (Njoroge, 1999). They have made great contribution in plantation, weeding, conducting pruning and thinning activities of forest resource management. They are the responsible persons for the collection of firewood, fodder, leaf-litter and so on for their livelihood. In addition, especially, in the rural areas, commercially valuable products such as medicine, fruits, nuts, mushroom, etc. are mainly collected by women (Banjade, 2003). However, the role of women in decision making and benefit sharing is significantly low (Agrawal, 2002, Ostrum, 2002).

Some studies reveal that CF has potentials for empowering the locals but certainly some of studies shows that it could not equally empower all. The disadvantaged groups like the poor, so called *Dalit* and women are still marginalized through the process of CF management. In this sense Timsina points out:

"Community Forest is a strong medium of empowerment in term of involving local people to decide how to use and mange the community resource. It also seems to be devolution of power to the locals to manage the available resources.... program may further marginalizes the weaker sections of the society like women, poor and the low caste as the policy vests the rights and responsibility on only a few key individuals in the community" (2003: 27).

The elites and the male members of the user group use CF as a medium to obtain power and benefits. Therefore, the weaker sections of society have no access to the resource management. That has badly affected women who are directly depending upon the forest resources. The existing policies did not appear to address the needs and interest of women (Garner, 1997).The executive committee takes the major decision as regards to the forest resources and such committee generally consists of the local elites and males. This leads to the alienation of the women from the resource management as well (Chhetri, 1999).

In this background some of the simple but interesting questions inspire the researcher to conduct the research. The questions are as follows: What is the role of women in forest management at the study area? Have women been participating meaningfully in the management of CF or 'just sitting in'? What are the main constraints that hinder the women to participate in CF management activity? What are the major factors that motivate the women to participate in CF management activity in the study area? Do social and cultural values influence the women to participate in CF in the study area?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine and analyze women's participation in Ugratara Community Forest at Bajrayogini VDC of Kathmandu district. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the socio-economic situation of the study area.
2. To analyze women's participation in community forestry activities, and
3. To find out the hindering and motivating factors of women's participation in Community Forestry.

1.4. Rational of the Study

Common property resource management is one of the interesting areas for anthropological study. The present study is based on the empirical study of Ugratara CF in Kathmandu district. It explores women's position and their roles and responsibilities in the forest resource management activities in relation to gender equality. Therefore, this study seeks to understand the hidden power relations between man and woman within the family and community of the study area. This study can be useful to those persons, institutions and organizations that are interested to know about women status and role and responsibility in CF for planning and policy making. This study may also be beneficial and provide guidelines for those scholars who are interested to study about the women participation in CF.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

All research projects are some how affected by certain limitations. So, this research has also faced some constraints which limit its findings.

The major limitations of the study were:

1. The present research was based on the field work carried out in 2005 at Ghumarchowk community at Bajrayogini VDC, Kathmandu. In this

community, it is also limited because of the diversity of caste/ ethnic groups so, the findings may not be generalized in the other area.

2. Field observation is based on limited duration of only two months

1.6 Organization of the Study

The present study is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter is an introduction chapter of the study. This chapter deals with the general introduction of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, and significations of the study, conceptual framework and the limitation of the study.

The second chapter presents a review of literature which is also divided into two sections. The first section deals with the general management of the forest resources in Nepal and the second section focuses on literature dealing with women's participation in CF.

The third chapter presents the methodology applied by the researcher to carry out this research. This chapter is also divided into three sections. First section presents the rationale for the selection of the study site, the second section describes about the sampling procedure, nature and source of data, tools and techniques applied for collection of data and the third chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of the data applied by the researcher.

The fourth chapter describes the ecological setting of the Bajrayogini VDC of Kathmandu district. This chapter deals about the setting of

study area, the climate, flora and fauna and natural resources found in the study area

It also presents the socio-economic profile of the villagers of Ghumarchowk community. This chapter gives an account of demographic character, settlement pattern, socio-cultural and economic activities of the villagers. The fifth chapter deals about the general overview of CF management and women's participation in CF.

The sixth chapter of the thesis deals about hindering and motivating factors of women's participation in Ugratara CF. The last chapter gives a summary and conclusion.

CHAPTER - TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of previous writing is a part of the research. It provides general ideas about the subject matters and methodology which help the researcher to achieve the targeted objectives. Thus, this chapter reviews of available literature such as books, journals, research papers and articles published by various scholars from different perspective focusing on women in the field of CF management activities.

2.1. Forest Management Practices in Nepal

The management of forest is not a new concept in the context of Nepal. Forests have been managed by the local people in their traditional way since time immemorial Nepal's forest history has been divided into three phases: before the Rana regime, during Rana regime and after the Rana regime (Mahat et al. 1986). We found two types of efforts towards forest management.

2.1.1 Governments Efforts and Practices

Before the Rana regime, Nepal's forest management practice was in the hand of local community and no special rules were made for forest protection. Religious forest, *niji ban*, etc. were found to be well managed by local people (Mahat et al. cited by Palit). During Rana regime forest and land were given to army officers and high ranking officials in the name of *jagir*, *birta* etc. At that time the people in-charge of the forests were *Talukdars* who were responsible for tax collection as well as

distribution of fuel wood, fodder, small timber, grazing, collection of leaf litter and other activities. The local people collected what was needed from the forest without paying any fees, although some sort of gift (*Theki*) in return to the functionary had become customary practiced (Mahat et. al.1987).

The government of Nepal nationalized all types of forest in 1957. That act snatched the use right of local people and deprived people from their traditional use practices of forest (Gilmore, and Fisher, 1991, Chhetri, 1994). The main aim of government was to increase state revenue through the forest. However, land area under forests decreased. The Forest Act of 1961 provided legislation for state administration of the forest. This act defined forest categories and covered description, registration and demarcation of forests. It also defined the duties of the department of forest, listed forest offenses and prescribed penalties. The government was unable to manage the forest effectively because of the lack of requisite infrastructure (both technical and administrative). Forest was categorized into national, religious forest, *panchayat* forest and private forest. Management decision also remained with the government. However, the ninth plan took a significant step towards community forestry through the forest conference held in Kathmandu in 1974. Forest officers from all parts of Nepal attended the conference. A community oriented group of foresters working in districts strongly favored the involvement of people in the management of forests, a form of forestry to be later known as community forestry (Palit 1996).

Community forest was introduced in Nepal with the enactment of Panchayat Protected forest. Thereafter, the Local people were taken as the main manager and user of those forests. After the restoration of democracy in 1991 government owned forest was handed over to villagers as a community forest. The regulation assigned the right and responsibility for forest protection to the local people for their own benefit (Khanal, 1993).

The government of Nepal's Forest Sector Policy was first declared in the Sixth Five Year Plan (1981-1985) which emphasized community participation in the management conservation and uses of forest resources. This policy was further promoted with the passing of the decentralization Act 1982 and the 1984 rules for its implementation. The Act and Rules aimed at handing over responsibility for planning to the panchayat and district levels. The acts formalized the duties and responsibilities of village panchayat and ward communities and empower them to form user groups. The Master Plan for Forestry Sector 1988 has objectives to meet the basic need for fuel wood, timber, fodder and other forest products on a sustained basis and to promote people's participation in forestry resources development, management and conservation. In addition the enactments of Forest Act 1993 and the Forest Rules 1995 have made implementing community forestry programme easier. (Chhetri (1994) stated that in 1977 and 1978 Panchayat forest and panchayat protected forest (PPF) were introduced under the community forest development program (CFDP) with the purpose of handing back the protected forest and its management to the people.

2.1.2. People's Efforts and Practices

It is already mentioned that many ethnic groups of Nepal have been managing and operating the forest resources in their own way. In the eastern hilly region, people mostly managed the forest resources under the *kipat* system (Gautam, 1995). Under this system all land irrespective of its use was owned by the community. This system itself is evidence of local management for local benefit (Tamang 1993). Similarly, Dahal (1994) writes that before 1964, there were *kipat* and *Raikar* system of land ownership in eastern hilly region of Nepal. Both types of land and forest resources were held under control of *Subba*, *Jimawal*, *Pagari* and *Thari* who were not only responsible of maintaining law and order and collecting revenue for the government, but also responsible for the sustainable use, allocation and management of forest resources.

Molnar (1983) investigated the dynamics of traditional forest management systems in a number of communities in Nepal. She noted some key factors, such as leadership, available resources, relative economic inequality, benefit sharing, sanction against users, incorporation of women in management, proximity to markets and a good working relationship between forestry personnel and the community and concluded that they contribute to the success or failure of traditional forest management system(cited in Dahal, 1994).

2.2. Issue of Women's Participation in Development in Nepal

In the development activities, new paradigm has been applied by the government worldwide. Nepal is also going to apply this new development strategy to make women's participate in different local level

development activities. People have different arguments towards women's participation in these areas. Some argued that it is really very difficult to bring women in the mainstream of development activities due to lack of education, effective technical knowledge and commitment. However, socio-cultural and economic constraints are also identified as an influencing barrier for involving women in different development activities (Njoroge, 1999, Banjade, 2004).

Mainly rural women are not so courageous to discuss any social and developmental problem in front of men because of culturally biased assumption towards women, their capability and so they are not given proper place in the society. As a result, women's voices are not properly heard in Nepali society. Similarly, most of the training programs which are provided for women are only the subjects of household sphere such as basic nutrition knowledge, family planning, baby caring, secretarial jobs etc. but their need and roles in large socio-economic activities are ignored (Skutsch, 1986). Thus women are seen primarily as house-wives and child bearers. Majority of the rural women in Nepal are involved in household work, such as processing and production of food, fetching water, collecting fire wood and other forest products, tending livestock and cultivating crops.

2.3. Women's Participation in Community Forest Management

In the 1970s, CF emerged as a locally managed forest. It was realized that women's participation is also necessary from the view of sustainable development in the management of natural resources. After the 1980s, the issue of women's participation came in the field of development discourse. To

facilitate women's participation in CF, HMGN had launched a forestry program to produce female forest officer and ranger as a facilitator (Gautam, 2003). From 1994 scholarship and other effective training program were arranged by the government. These programs found a milestone in the field of participation of women in CF (ibid).

Women and forest have a closer link in rural areas where life is shaped and dedicated by availability and access of basic resources such as water, fuel wood, fodder and other forest products (Siddiqui, 1989). Women are deeply related with forest and their products which are near their house. If forest is not nearby women need to walk long distance to collect fuel wood and fodder. In the study carried out in eight villages, Molnar states that women's over all contribution to house hold work including forest related tasks, was found to be approximately 11 hours a day as compared to 8 hours for men. Thus, women spend a significant portion of their time in forest related activities such as farming collecting fuel wood and fodder, grazing animals, etc. (Molnar, 1983). Their extensive and closer contact with the forest may give local women more detailed understanding of forest resources than local men. This is partly because women are more likely to make frequent trips in to the forest areas in different seasons for firewood, fodder and grasses (Fortman, 1986)

Guha (1993) argues that women are capable of playing more dynamic roles than men in each development activities. In the context of growing commercialization, men are apt to lose sight of the long term interest of village economy. Women have always played an important role in agrarian society as well as in natural resource management. This

structural context may explain the wide spread participation of women in contemporary social issue in the hills. According to Shrestha (1989) “fuel wood and fodder collection is not exclusive responsibility of women, they provide better knowledge about the burning qualities of different varieties of fuel wood and nutrient value of various fodder species”. But the emerging period of CF, women's participation on the forest sector as well as other development sector was neglected. According to Hoskins,

"Though women in rural communities are directly dependent on forest related resources, many forest management projects are designed without any recognition of the impact on them. When the government, NGOs and INGOs speak about improving the position of women, it is to be expected that they will give attention to a reduction of the disadvantage women's face in relation to men. But women are not significantly supported by the policies of different governments. As few example, the fact that basic rights like education, land, equal wage and reproductive health facility are still only in paper as in some instance. The worse living conditions and deforestation is co-related in the context of rural women. So what they need is information on possibilities of improving their productivity through applied or improved technology. In this matter agricultural methods that have beneficial influence on the fertility of soil will also improve the general environment at the same time". (1983:7)

In the context of exploring the issue of participation of women in CF, the women's participation in committee are only fashionable than functional in operational issue. They are unable to implement and manage plans because of lack of support and encouragement from men and forestry staffs. Only few women of FUGs attend meeting and are usually listeners rather than talkers". (Hunt et. al. 1995).

CHAPTER - THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the research method and tools in details that are applied for the research during the study. In this research, researcher used various anthropological tools to make the study more systematic and scientific.

3.1. Selection of the Study Area

Ghumarchowk Community of Bajrayogini VDC of Kathmandu district is selected for the research and studied the situation of women's participation in community forestry. The CF has 45 hectares forest land and 155 household of users. The study area is situated in the north east direction from Kathmandu district. It is 17 kilometers away from Kathmandu city. The study area is purposively selected for the following reason.

-) The Ugratara CF was handed over to 155 household of local people in 1997. Since then mixed *samity* (9 male and 4 female representative is in the executive committee) is managed forest properly.

-) It is also suitable for the study because it's heterogeneity in terms of caste, ethnicity, class, etc.

-) The study site is also accessible and safe considering in the present conflict situation.

3.2. Research Design

In this the researcher applied exploratory and descriptive research design. Exploratory research design was applied to explore the issues concerned with the participation of women in CF management activities. It also assisted to explore the issues regarding to the knowledge, perception and practices about CF management in the studied people. Descriptive research design was used to describe the socio-cultural and economic characteristics of the studied population. Similarly, it is also used to describe the women involvement in different activities of the CF such as decision making, monitoring and evaluating, program implementation and benefit sharing

3.3. Nature and Source of Data

Both qualitative and quantitative data were used in this research those were collected from the field through the use of various research tools and techniques in order to fulfill the stated objectives and to answer the research questions. These data were gathered from the primary and secondary sources. Primary data were gathered from the field through observation, interview, household survey, group discussion, etc. Secondary data were gathered from various published and unpublished documents, records, journals, books, articles etc. The Secondary data helped to understand overall status of women in Nepal, theoretical perspectives to look at women's position and participation and decision making of women in CF management activities.

3.4 Universe and Sampling

The Ghumarchowk community of Bajrayogini VDC of Kathmandu district was selected as universe purposively for the detail study. This community located in ward no. 8. Total population of the universe was 930, of which 432 were male and 470 were female with 155 households. All the households were the users of Ugratara CF. out of total households, 20% (31) user households were chosen for the sample by applying simple random sampling method. Before selection of the sample households, the researcher, firstly, had listed the name of user's household head in the slip of papers and draw the slip of paper by using lottery method. After chosen the sample units from the universe, 31 senior women were selected as a respondent from the selected sample unit. Therefore, the unit of analysis in this research is individual.

3.5. Data Collection Techniques

3.5.1. Household Survey

Household survey was conducted to acquire detail information about population characteristics like age and sex composition, marital status, caste/ethnic, religious, occupation and education etc. Moreover, landholding size, livestock numbers and their types, housing patterns, cropping patterns, sources of fire woods, fodder, life-litter and timber, pattern of forest products collection and involvement of collection were also collected through the household survey. Besides these, it also helped selecting the key informants who were actively involved in the forest management activities and who were know about the CF etc. It

also helped the researcher to build rapport with community members which made it easier to collect the needed information.

3.5.2. Observation

Observation was used to collect qualitative information like women's participation in CF management activities including decision making, monitoring and evaluating activities, program implementation and cost and benefit sharing. Observation also helped the researcher to recheck the information which is collected through the other tools. The CF executive committee minute showed that the women's participation in meeting in both general assembly and executive committee were high. But in my observation, I found that women sign only in the minute book and returned back to their household chore as soon as possible.

3.5.3. Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion proved helpful to find out relevant information like decision making, evaluation process of CF management activities. Three group discussions were held during the field work. One formal group discussion was held in Ugratara secondary school ground. Through this discussion information about motivating and hindering factors of women's participation were collected. Two informal group discussions were held in a tea shop which helped to collect information about socio-cultural practices in the study area. Some of the acquired information collected by other tools was cross-checking through the group discussions.

3.5.4. Interview

Interview was applied to find out the past and present participation and position of women in CF management. Similarly, this tool was also useful for the researcher to find out the women's perception about CF management. A set of questions were prepared for interviewing with the respondent. Four interviews were conducted with female executive committee members about time table of monthly meeting and their attainment and women's role in management activities. Two interviews were conducted with elderly people about crop production and agricultural calendar, seasonal availability of forest products. Similarly, an interview was held with the president of executive committee regarding women's role in CF management. Besides, unstructured interview was also held to gather information; physical facilities i.e., school, health post, market, road, agriculture products, labour, economic activities, cultural practices etc. from the field.

3.5.5. Key Informants Interviews

Through the key informants' interview, information regarding the women participation in CF, the history of forest, women's involvement in forest management, women's perception in CF and hindering and motivating factors of women's participation in CF management were collected. Key informants were the knowledgeable persons of the community. Among them, 5 were elderly people (3 males and 2 females), 1 school teacher, and 2 executive committee members, and 1 political leader.

3.6. Data Analysis and Presentation

The main task of data analysis is to bring the data in to a systematic order out of the mess of the notes, to pick out the central themes of the study and to carry them across to written work (Baker, 1999). The qualitative data were analyzed and interpreted descriptively making the argument in logical way. The quantitative data were coded, classified on the basis of nature of data and then presented in various tables by using simple statistical tool such as mean and percentage. After presentation of the data in tables they were analyzed and interpreted coherently.

CHAPTER - FOUR

SETTING OF THE STUDY AREA

This chapter deals with the physical, socio-cultural and economic setting of the study area. The first part of this chapter deals with physical setting such as location, temperature and rainfall, climate, settlement pattern. Similarly the second part describes about the socio-cultural and economic life of the Ghumarchowk community of Bajrayogini VDC.

4.1. Location

As mentioned above, study site is located at Bajrayogini VDC of ward no.8 of Katmandu district. Lapsipedi VDC of the same district lies in the north-east, Gagalphedi VDC in the north-west, Indrayani in west-south and Sakhusuntal VDC in the south-east from the study site. The Bajrayogani VDC situated between 85⁰20' to 85⁰30' longitude and 27⁰40' to 27⁰45' north latitude. It is approximately situated between 1500 to 1700 meters above the sea level.

Main road and market is about 3km.far from the study site. Health post is in Sankhu which is about 2.5km from there. Bajrayogini (goddess) temple lies in about 1km down from the study site.

4.2. Climate

The study area is located in the hilly region within Kathmandu valley where the climate is tropical and sub-tropical. The weather of the VDC is hot in summer and cold in winter according to the record of 2003 the

temperature was between 17.3⁰ -32.7⁰ c. and 1.2⁰-22.9⁰c. in summer and winter season respectively. The prevailing wind of monsoon brings rainfall in summer season. The average rainfall was noted to be 1975 mm in 2003 according to the VDC.

4.3. Natural Resources

Natural resources are indispensable for the people who live in the rural settings and highly depend on agriculture for their subsistence. Without these resources, people cannot run their life smoothly. In the study area, two types of natural resources were found- renewable (forest and water) and non-renewable (land, soil, sand, gravel, stone and boulder). These resources are going to be discussed below.

4.3.1. Forest

Forest covers 51.3 hector land of the Bajrayogini VDC. There are three types of forest which are categorizes on the basis of ownership and management. These are one community forest, one religious forest and one private forest. The CF covers 45 hector land of the Ghumarchowk area which occupied 87.72% of the total forest land, all forests products are controlled managed and operated by the local user group. Generally, user groups have formed an executive committee to protect, manage and control the CF. The religious forest cover 6 hectors which occupied 3.09% of total forest land, it is under the control of Bajrayogini temple executive committee. Management of forest resource was done by the temple management committee. It also provides various products such as fodder, leaf-litter and firewood for the villagers. The private forest covers 0.3 hector which occupied 0.15% of total forest land of which is managed and controlled by the owner.

In the Ugratara CF types of forests are mixed; however, Salla (*Shorea robusta*), and Utish. (*Alnus nepalensis*) are dominant trees. Besides, various other timber species like Chilaune (*Schima wallichii*), Falant (*Quercus glauca thumb*), Kalikath (*Myrsine seenmrrata wall*), kalikath (*Myrsine capitella wall*) Setikath (*Myrsine myrica esculenta capitellea wall*), Bash(*Cephalostachyum capitatum*), Kafal (*Myrica esculenta*) are also found in the study area. In addition to these trees, the people have also planted. Lapsi (*Choerospondias axillaries*), Aaru (*Prunus persica*), Katush (*Castanopsis*), Desi-naspati(*Pyrus communis*), Lali-gurash (*Rhododendron arboretum*), Kimbu (*Morus nigra*), Amliso (*Thysanoidia maxima*), Alaichi (*Amomum aromaticum*), and Gobre Salla (*Pinus wallichiana*), in the CF area with the help of other organization such DFO and other non-governmental organizations. Among the planted seedling of different trees, Gobre-salla occupies nearly 80-90% of the total seedling. Several kinds of colorful flowers, shrubs, creepers and grasses are also available in the area. These forest products have multi-dimensional values for the inhabitant of Ghumarchowk community. Some of them are religiously and culturally valuable plants such as *katus*, *bash*, *salla* and so on. Local people use some of these forest products for feeding and bedding the livestock. Normally, dry products used for bedding is later on used as fertilizer to the farmland and green products as fodder for the livestock. . Falant, Chilaune, Saal and Uttish are valuable timber trees in the study area.

It was informed that wild animals like fishing Cat (*Felis viverrina*), Jackals (*Canis aureus*), Rabbit (*Lepus ruficaudatus*), Wolf (*Canis lupus*), Jungli cat (*Felis chaus*), Deer (*Moschu moschiferus*), and Monkey (*Macaca mulatta*) are commonly found in this forest. Different

kinds of birds such as Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*), Pheasant (*Lophura emuolana*), peacock (*Pavo cristatus*), Owl (*Bubo nipalensis* Tito), Maina (*Acridotheres tristis*), Dhobi (*Copsychus saularies*), Kalij (*Lophura leucomelana*) are also found in the forest. Similarly, several kinds of snakes and other reptiles, butterflies and insects are also found in the forest. According to the villagers wild animals, birds, reptiles, butterflies and other insects' number is increasing in the study area after the establishment of CF.

4.3.2. Water

Water resource is insufficient in the study area. There is only one small river which is located in the eastern part of the study site. They use this river as a source of irrigation for the farmland. Similarly, a lot of spring and torrential streams were found there which were dry in winter season. However, these streams provide water for irrigation in the rainy season. The Villagers informed that there is insufficient drinking water for them. Thus, to fulfill the need of drinking water, the villagers themselves constructed a reservoir in the upper part of Ghumarchowk for drinking water. The source of that reservoir was located in Manichur which was nearly 3 kilometers away from the upper part of the village. They used this water for drinking, cleaning, washing, and livestock watering. The water is also found used for kitchen garden irrigation in the study area.

4.3.3. Land and Soil

Land is the main source of livelihood for people depends on agriculture. The local people have categorized the structure of land into three categories: sloppy land, less sloppy land and flat land. On the

basis of land structure and texture, the nature of soil varies from place to place. The soil found in the upper part of the study area is normally sandy. According to local people, sandy soil is not suitable for agriculture; therefore, this land is less productive. The ratio of sandy soil is high in the sloppy land. However, people grow millet, maize and squash in that land as it is not suitable for other cereal crops. Similarly, less sloppy land is less sandy in comparison with sloppy land. However, it is also less suitable for wheat and paddy production as regards with flat land. The type of soil found in the flat land is alluvial. According to the villagers the flat land is fertile and irrigated land. Therefore, it is more productive as compared with other two categories of lands. Thus, people grow paddy, wheat, potato and other green vegetables in large quantity. As mentioned above farmers are unable to produce enough crops from the land due to the lack of large chuckle of flat land.

Colorful soil is also found in the area which is used for house smearing and coloring. Mostly, the Chhetri people use red soil to smear house yard and kitchen in various rituals like *Ausi* (a fortnight day), *Purnima* (a full moon day), and *Shraddha* (ancestor worshipping day). Almost all the houses are colored by white, black and red soil during *Dashain* and *Tihar* festivals.

4.4 .Population

The study area is characterized as plural in terms of its caste/ethnic compositions. There are two caste/ethnic groups i.e., Chherti and Tamang. Among the 155 households in Ghumarchowk village, 150 households belong to Tamang and rest 5 households belong to Chhetri. Therefore, Tamang are the dominant group of that area. While asking them about their arrival in that area, all of them clearly replied that

they had come their fore-father time but they had no knowledge about the exact period. Nepali language is the mother tongue of Chhetri, whereas Tamang speak their own Tamang language within their communities. But they also speak Nepali as a second language when they talk to others.

Table No. 1

Population Characteristics of Ugratara CF User Group

Caste/ Ethnicity	Household	Male	Female	Total	%	Ave. Family size
Chherti	5	13	15	28	3.01	5.60
Tamang	150	470	432	902	96.95	6.01
Total	155	483	447	930	100	6.00

Source: VDC Office, 2004

Table 1 clear that Tamang household is higher than Chhetri. It also reveled that the average family size is also higher in Tamang community than Chhetri. As compared with the nation figure, the average family size was also bigger under the study area because the average family size in nation was 5.45 (CBS, 2001) where as 6.00 under the study.

4.4.1. Age and Sex Composition of Population

Age, sex and marital status are major characteristics of a population, which directly affect its economic activities as well as participation in the development activities i.e., CF management activities. In other words, household size, age and sex structure of the population is directly connected with the activities of resources exploitation. Despite this, these factors also affect the participation in the forest management activities. It also helps to understand the social structure of certain

area. The age and sex composition of the studied population is shown in Table 2.

Table no. 2

Age and sex Composition of population

Age	Male	%	Female	%	Total	Total %
0-4	57	12.78	46	9.50	103	11.07
5-9	61	13.67	72	14.87	133	14.30
10-14	86	19.28	71	14.66	157	16.88
15-19	62	13.90	85	17.56	147	15.80
20-24	32	7.17	46	9.50	78	7.95
25-29	24	5.38	31	6.40	55	5.91
30-34	40	8.96	37	7.64	77	8.27
35-39	12	2.69	15	3.09	27	2.90
40-44	28	6.27	26	5.37	54	4.83
45-49	16	3.58	18	3.71	34	4.08
50-54	8	1.79	11	2.27	19	2.04
55-59	9	2.01	11	2.27	20	2.15
60+	11	2.46	15	3.09	26	2.79
Total	446	100	484	100	930	100

Source: VDC Office, 2004

Table 2 shows that majority of population was economically active because the population between the ages of 15-59 is taken as economically active and other age groups are considered inactive in Nepal. Table 2 clear that 54.94% of the population was economically active. However, in the field observation it was found that the age below the 15 and the age above the 60 are also actively involving in agricultural tasks such as carrying manure, digging and ploughing fields, planting, weeding and harvesting agricultural products, collecting firewood, leaf-litter, and fodder.

4.4.2. Family Structure

The study revealed that both nuclear and joint family commonly existed in Ghumarchowk. Nuclear family denotes to that family where father, mother and unmarried children live under the same roof and share common kitchen. On the other hand, joint family consists of a family where parents and married children and their children live under the same roof and share same kitchen. Table 3 shows the family structure.

Table No.3

Caste/Ethnicity wise Family Structure of Ugratara CF User Group

Caste/Ethnicity	Family Structure		Total	Per
	Nuclear family	Joint family		
Chhetri	2	3	5	3.22
Tamang	38	112	150	96.77
Total	40	115	155	100

Source: VDC office-2004

Table 3 revealed that more than 96% of the family were joint in its structure. Joint families were found to be organized under the leadership of the oldest person especially male who possess decisive role in the matter of social, cultural and economic activities. However, the trend of joint family is gradually changing into the nuclear family.

The family structure of an area also determined the participation of household member in the CF management activities. In the study area, it was found that the member of joint family had more leisure time than the nuclear family to participate in the CF management activities. In joint

families, other members carried out the household tasks while one member is engage in CF related work.

Besides this, in the sphere of CF it was found that age, sex and marital status of the people are highly affected in the management activities. The rules and regulations of the Ugratara CF strictly restricted to participate under the 15 age group. Because of that married people were highly participated in CF management than unmarried. Similarly, under the study CF men were found active in decision making area but women were involved in the other sphere of management activities

4.5. Cultural Practices

Buddhism is the dominant religion of this area. Majority of the people are Tamang who follow Buddhism while Hinduism is followed by Chhetri whose number is relatively smaller than Tamang (Table no1.) Due to the variation in religious backgrounds, they follow the different rituals and religious practices. They used various kinds of forest products in their rituals according to their religion such as *bar*, *pipal*, *saal*, *bhalayo*, *titepati*, *pati*, *payau* are commonly used by both religious people in various ritual practices. Tamang people in the study area used *totela*, *nagbeli*, *kurilo*, *kukurdaino* on the top of their door to protect them from evil eyes. Tamang used *totela*(a type of flower) for the symbol of luck.

In the study area, some of the forest related rituals such as *ban pooja* (forest worshipping), and *nag pooja* (snake worshipping) are commonly

practiced by both caste and ethnic people. *Ban pooja* and *nag pooja* are arranged before transplanting the paddy. To arrange the rituals, they collect 10 Rupees and one *mana* (half kg.) rice from each UCF users household. From that collected money, they bought a black she-goat to offer the *ban* deities. During that time, all the male members of the community were participate whereas female were not restricted even though they normally did not involve in the ritual. It is believed that the ritual help them to protect from the natural calamities and evil eyes of forest deities such as diseases, attract of wild beasts to their domestic animals, plants.

Similarly, *nag pooja* is another ritual which is related to the agricultural activities because it was arranged for the better rain fall, favorable weather, and better crops. This ritual has also important relation with the forest. The villagers informed that they made a snake with wheat flour and make it's eyes with black-gram dal and worshipped it out side their house or in the mouth of the water resources which is located in the eastern side of the forest. The people of Ghumarchowk believed that to cut down the forest products from the mouth of the water resources is omen for the village. It is generally believed that if they cut down the forest products from those areas then the god of snake (*nagraj*) would be angry with the villagers. As a result, the various unpleasent events should be occurred in the village such as destroy of crops, diseases, land slide, drought and so on.

Chhetri arrange their rituals by Brahmins and they celebrate Dashain, Tihar, Chaite- Dasain, Shivaratri, Ram Nawami etc. whereas Tamang

celebrate Lohsar, Buddha Purnima, etc.They arrange these by Lama. Beside these they also celebrate Hindu festivals.

4.6. Settlement Pattern

The geographical location of a certain area and cultural practices of the particular groups also play vital role to determine the settlement pattern of the people. The geographical location of the study area was sloppy. Thus, mostly the settlement pattern was found scattered. But some of the households were found in a cluster. Generally, Tamang settlements were scattered than Chhetri.

4.7. Education

Education is a main factor of socio-cultural and economic change in a society. Along with the establishment of one primary government school (Ugratara Primary school) in 1961 modern education was also introduced in the study area. This school was changed in the lower secondary school in 2005.

Ugratara School was established by the government in the publics' initiatives.Besides that, Initiative of government and other various non-government organizations such as, Othohama International-Japan Rotary Club, Manichur Community Development Project was also helping to run the school smoothly. Similarly, the CF also supported with materials i.e., timber for the construction of windows, doors and desk and bench. At present, Ugratara Lower Secondary school has 200 students. After completing the lower secondary education students go to Sankhu for secondary education, walking for about an hour.

According to the VDC office report (2004), 29% of the total population was literate. Out of them, 24% and 5 % was male and female respectively. The respondent informed that considering the low literacy rate of Ghumarchowk community the district education office had launched an adult education program in 1987. This is going on till now with the help of various NGOs. Many illiterate villagers get benefit from this program.

In the course of interaction with the school teacher, it was found that girls' enrollment is higher than the boys. The main cause for that is that most of the villagers send their sons to private English medium schools which are located in Sankhu which is nearly one hour walk from the village school. Similarly, it was also found that people send their children to the primary school but very few respondents send their girl children to secondary schools for higher education. According to the respondents, secondary education was not available in Ghumarchowk and on the otherhand, grown up girl children play as a helping hand to them in household chores and other agricultural as well as other economic activities. Therefore, their girl children dropped out school in this age.

4.8. Economy

Economy indicates production, consumption and distribution of goods and services in the community. It supports livelihood of the population. Economy of Ghumarchowk community is depending on agriculture and animal husbandry. All households have at least a small piece of land for agriculture. In the inquiry about their occupation, most of the people replied that they are continuing farming and were farmers even

though they had jobs and were involved in handicrafts making, business and wage laboring.

4.8 .1. Agricultural Activities

Agriculture is the main occupation of the people of Nepal .Likewise it is the backbone of the people of Ghumarchowk because it supplies main food items to the inhabitants.

The agricultural and forest are interrelated and interwoven to each other in the study area. The farmers of that area were also depended upon the forest for agricultural tools, manure and source of water. The CF provided timber to the users for plough, yoke, handles of sickle, spades.

. 4.8.2. Land

Land is the main source of livelihood of the villager which is divided into *khet* (irrigated land) and *bari* (unirrigated land) on the basis of irrigation facility. More than 73% land of Ghumarchowk is not irrigated. Now-a-days, people have been facing shortage of land due to overpopulation. So, barren land and forest land of surrounding area have been converted into agricultural land. Along with population growth and the break up of joint family, land is fragmented into small pieces and most of the *bari* land of trail sides have been changed into settlements.

All inhabitants of Ghumarchowk do not hold the same size of land. Some of them hold small pieces of land while the others hold a big chuckle. The following table shows the distribution of land among the dwellers of respondent population.

Table no. 4

Land Holding Size of Respondents

Caste/Ethnicity	No of respondents	Types of land		Land in <i>ropani</i>	%
		Flat land	Lowland Slop land		
Chhetri	3	21	11	32	12.85
Tamang	28	85	132	217	87.15
Total	31	106	143	249	100

Source: Field survey, 2005.

Table 4 shows that the Tamang and Chhetri people hold 87.15% and 12.85% agriculture land respectively. It is clear that most of the agriculture land in the study area were under the control of Tamang. However, if we compared number of household and the size of occupy land by two groups; it seems that 10.67 and 7.75 *ropani* of land were under the control of Chherti household and Tamang household respectively in the study area. Chhetri caste, therefore, produced large quantities of crops than Tamang in the study area. Despite agriculture, the villagers are also involved in different other economic activities such as wage labour, carpentry, handicraft making, business and services for meeting with the demand of food at scarce time. The families who did not have sufficient land for agriculture were involved in sharecropping.

The farmland of Ghumarchowk area is sloppy and sandy. Similarly, there is lack of proper facility of irrigation due to its sloppy geographical location. So it is less productive. As a result, villagers can

produce less quantities of food grains i.e., paddy, and wheat. On the other hand, villagers produce large quantities of vegetables and potatoes which they sell in the local market.

It does not have enough irrigated land (*khet*). A small portion of land in *Besi* area is irrigated. Therefore, most of the land is not irrigated (*bari*). The main crops grown in the *bari* land are maize and millet. In the irrigated (*khet*) land people grow paddy, wheat, potatoes and other green vegetables. Agricultural calendar begins from March-April and ends in November-December. The following table shows the farming calendar including all agricultural activities.

Table no. 5

Farming calendar and agricultural activities of Study area

Crops	Land preparation period	Manuring period	Planting/sowing period	Wedding period	Harvesting period
Paddy	May - June	-	June – July	July – Aug	Sep – Oct
Maize	Mar - Apr	Mar – Apr	Apr - May	May - June	Apr – Sep
Millet	Apr - May	-	July – Aug	-	Nov – Dec
Wheat	Nov – Dec	Nov – Dec	Nov – Dec	-	Mar
Mustard	Aug – Oct	Aug – Oct	Sept – Nov	-	Jun-Feb
Potato	Sep - Nov	Sep – Nov	Oct – Dec	Nov – Dec	Jan-Feb
Black lentil	August	-	Aug	-	Nov

Source: Field Survey, 2005

4.8.3. Major Crops

As mentioned above paddy, maize, millet, potato and squash are the main crops of Ghumarchowk inhabitants. In addition to these crops,

buckwheat, varieties of lentils, beans and green vegetables are the secondary crops. Paddy is grown once a year in the irrigated land only. After harvesting paddy, farmers grow either wheat or mustard in the irrigated land. In dry land they produce maize, potato, mustard and maize.

Paddy is a staple food grain of the villagers. It is planted in irrigated terraces along the sloppy land. During the first two weeks of May, seed-beds are ploughed. Three to four weeks later, seeds are transplanted into the paddy terraces which were prepared along with the seed-beds preparation. Two to four weeks later, they start to weed the paddy, which lasts till August. It is ready for harvesting in November. Similarly, wheat is another important food grain of the villagers. After harvesting of the paddy, they plough land for wheat and they plant the seed of its in November. In March and April, they harvest wheat. The Tamang prepare liquor of this grain whereas Chhetri use it for bread.

Maize is the chief crop grown in dry field, generally situated on sloppy land and surrounding the households. The fields are first fertilized with manure (mixture of animal dung and leaves) and ploughed. In April, the planting of maize is done. Four or five weeks later the fields are weeded. Maize is ready for harvesting in late August or early September. They also plant soyabeans and beans along with maize.

Millet is another important crop grown in the village. It is sown in seed beds on dry land in July and transplanted about four weeks later. They also plant seedlings of millet in the shade of maize stalks. They harvest it in November. Millet is a well-known grain for the preparation of

local brew. Millet's brew is a main item of welcoming guests and offering to the gods and goddesses in Tamang families.

Potato is another major cash crop of the villagers. They grow potato in the lowlands of the village. They prepare the land for potato after harvesting paddy. They plant the seeds of potato in November. After four or five weeks of planting, they weed and irrigate the potato field. After two or three weeks of irrigating the potato field, they again weed the land. It is ready for harvesting in March.

Squash is another major source of income of the villagers. One of the respondent Bishnu Bir Lama, secretary of CF executive committee as well as a teacher of local school informed me that most of the villagers fulfill their basic needs by selling squash in the nearby market such as Sankhu as well as Kathmandu. The cultivation of this vegetable has helped to increase the life style of the villagers. They planted the plants of squash in January to February and harvested from June to August.

4.8.4. Food Sufficiency

The main occupation of the villagers is agriculture. However, they can not produce sufficient food grains from the small piece of land and lack of irrigation facility. The following table shows the food production of the community.

Table no.6

**Food Sufficiency of Households According to Their Own
Agricultural Production**

Food sufficiency	Total household	%
Less than 3 months	2	6.45
4-6 months	8	25.81
7-9 months	5	16.13
10-12 months	7	22.58
12+ above months	9	29.03
Total	31	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Table 6 shows that majority of the villagers did not produce sufficient grains to meet their annual food need whereas very few households were producing sufficient food grains to last them through out the year. Due to the lack of annual food sufficiency most of the villagers are involved in other activities i.e. wage labor, business, driving, private and government service to fulfill their need of food grains.

4.8.5. Animal Husbandry

Animal raising is an integral part of agricultural society like Nepal. Animals are a source of milk and meat, manure for fertility, ploughing the field, source of drafting etc.

In Ghumarchowk almost all people raise cattle. Cows, oxen, buffaloes, and goats are raised in Chhetri families whereas Tamang keep pigs and include the above mentioned animals also. In Ugratara, two cattle are

the lowest number of cattle with a single household and the highest number is 17. Oxen are used for plowing field. Cows and buffaloes are kept for milk and dairy products. He goats and pigs are the sources of meat. All caste/ethnic groups of people are keeping chicken which are the good sources of meat and cash for them. They also offer blood of goats and cocks to their gods and goddesses in their various ritual activities. They perceive that blood and meat of these animals are pure and pleasing to their deities.

In the study area, it was found that the family who had large number of animals were depended upon fodder and leaf litter. During the scarcity of fodder and leaf-litter in the farm land, the village mostly depended upon the CF. Size of family, availability of fodder and size of land are found to determine the number of cattle of a household in the study area. The following table shows number of cattle and their types in the study area.

Table no. 7

Number and Types of Animals in Ghumarchowk

Types of cattle	Total number	Average per HHs
She buffaloes	36	1.16
Cow	11	0.35
Oxen	6	0.19
Goats	105	3.38
Chicken	25	0.80
Pigeon	19	0.61
Total	202	

Source: Field Survey, 2005.

Table 7 shows that villagers gave more priority to the goats than other cattle. It was informed that goats are the staple source of cash. They sold goats in the nearby markets and in the market of Kathamandu which was nearly 17 kilometers away from Ghumarchowk. Similarly, it was also found that goats are main source of meat and manure for Gahumarchowk people. Similarly, the villagers also informed the researcher that less fodder was required for goat as compared to cattle and buffalo and similarly, the respondents gave more priority to the buffalos than cows because it gave more milk and produced more manure than cow. There was no he buffalo because they do not use it in ploughing. They took their she buffalo to neighboring community for breeding. The people give less priority to ox because it is not needed throughout the year. During the needed time they hire ox from neighboring community in cash or labor exchange. If a man ploughs his neighbor's field with a pair of oxen then his neighbor will provide him three labors.

Generally, female are responsible for fodder collection. There is no work division for cowshed clearance and caring. However, generally old and junior members of a family take the responsibility for grazing.

4.8.6 Wage Labor

Wage laboring is the common practices among the landless and small farmers of Ghumarchowk villager. Most of them sell their labor to the large land holders during the agriculture season. Both male and female involved in agriculture wage labor. However, female were normally involved in planting and weeding and male were in digging and

ploughing whereas both sexes were involved in harvesting. The employee was paid in cash. The rate of payment is varied according to the sex. The male got Rs. 160 and female got Rs.70 from chhetri household whereas Rs. 150 and Rs. 60 from Tamang household because Tamang household serve *chhyang* (local brew) for them. Despite the agriculture labor, such people sell their labour in other non-agriculture activities such as carpentry, house making activities, caring market goods in Kathmandu and Sankhu. The male were found to involve in these activities.

5.8.7 Services

Service is another source of livelihood of the some villagers. Two Villagers also involved in teaching in the local schools. Similarly, 9 were in army and police services and 6 people were in government organizations and cooperation organization. Similarly, 14 male were found to involve in driving. Similarly, foreign employment is another new service for the villager. In the study area, 2 Tamang young male were found to go aboard for wage.

4.8.8 Business

Business is another secondary source of livelihood of 8 households in the study area. Among them, 2 household run groceries which supplies essential items such as kerosene, oil, spices, tea, sugar, salt, rice, lentil etc. and 3 households have small tea shop. Similarly, other 3 households are involved in collecting cash crops such as potato and squash from Ghumarchowk and sold them in local market such as Sankhu and different markets of Kathamandu.

4.8.9 Other

In the study area, some of the families are involved in handcrafts making. Male are prepared bamboo basket and rope where as female were found to involve for preparing straw mat. They used bamboo basket for carrying of fodder and life-litter, food grains, manure and rope for tying domestic animals and fence.

4.3.10 Labor Organization and Exchange System

In Ugratara, different kinds of labor organizations such as *parma*, *sagaune* and *guhardine* are existed. These labor organizations are developed to cope with the environment. *Parma* is a reciprocal labor exchange system among the villagers. Help of labor in problems is known as *sagaune* and *guhardine*. When a community member face a problem than he/she asks for help to his/her neighbors. Such helps are known as *Sagaune* and *guhardine*. In *sagaune* and *guhardine* laboring host provides breakfast, lunch and local brew to the laborers. But the higher caste groups do not provide liquor.

Generally, community members work together in the fields exchanging labor with each other, which is known as *parma*. This practice is developed to cope with the seasonal manpower shortage among the villagers. In summer season, they are busy with rice and millet planting whereas, in winter they have to be involved in harvesting, ploughing and preparing for winter crop sowing and weeding. The household requires more labor forces to do these several tasks in the same period. Therefore, they do not have the required number of labor forces. The household obtains the assistance it needs to cultivate its fields through the neighbors. Villagers work together in the field in *parma*. The host is responsible for providing *Khaja* (food) in the middle of the day in *parma* laboring.

CHAPTER FIVE

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

This chapter deals with the forest management practices and women's participation in the CF. Participation in the meeting is one of the staple factors which lead to the decision making. It is in the meeting that major decisions about CF management are done. If some section of the committee is left out from such meeting they will not know what has occurred and what is going to happen in future.

5.1. Forest Management Practices of the Study Area

Ghumarchowk community of Bajrayogini VDC covers nearly 300 hectares land. Traditionally, this village is the habitant of Tamang people. According to the respondent, the villagers themselves managed the forest before the government nationalized it. During that time, the density of the population was very small and resources were abandoned, so there was no higher demand of forest products. After nationalization, the government itself started to manage the forest through the forest guards. Then people were restricted to collect the forest resources. As a result, they began to use forest resource in illegal ways. Therefore the condition of forest became worse day by day. The villagers nearly cleared the forest and forest resources either by encroachment of the forest land or illegal cutting of green timber for earning money by selling them in the local market. As a result, the forest resources were nearly finished and villagers started to collect firewood from the nearby

forests which were nearly 1 to 2 hours walk from the study area. Due to the policy of the government, it was handed over to the local people in 1996 to manage the forest resource.

5.2. Community Forestry Formation

Ugratara Forest was formally formed as CF on 28 April, 1996. The official program of CF formation was announced by local elites. During the formation process only 30-40 people participated. All participants were male. These participants themselves declared the boundaries of CF, counting the trees, identified the tree species and separated the location of user group.

The forest covers an area of 45 hectares. Thulo Khola lies in the east, Ugratara Secondary School in the west, Golddhunga in the north and Bajrayogini religious forest in south. The user group divided the forest into 4 blocks for the proper and effective management of the forest. Block no. 1 is called Gandeshthan Block, which covers 9.4 hectares, block no 2 is Turture Dhara which covers 12.6 hectares, block no 3 is Pani-Tanki which covers 16 hectares and block no.4 is Ratomate Danda which covers 7 hectares.

5. 3. Constitution and Operational Plan Development

It was found that the people of the study area depended upon the forest resources for their livelihood. They had made rules and regulations to manage forest which is known as constitution and operational plan. In the beginning, CF constitution and operational plan was formulated in

the presence of local people with the help of district forest officers. It was informed that at that time, only male members were involved. They made an operational plan for forest management and utilization such as plantation, thinning and pruning, collection of fodders, leaf-litter and firewood. Within the field visit it was found that all the users had followed the rules and regulations strictly. They had formulated different rules and regulations for different kinds of resources which are described below briefly. If anybody went against the rules and regulations, he/she will be punished.

5.3.1. Rules for Firewood

Cutting down green trees for firewood was strictly prohibited for the users in the CF. They had allowed collecting dry twigs of trees at any time. There is no restriction on the collection of dry firewood. The thinning and pruning activity is held in every winter season in each block. During this time, the users distribute the firewood that came from thinning and pruning activities on the basis of equality. Similarly, CF provides a green tree and a dry tree for the UG for arranging the Ghyawa, the death ritual of Tamang and for burning the carcass of Chhetri.

5.3.2. Rules for Fodder

The collection of fodder was strictly prohibited at all times from CF. It was only opened for the users twice a time in a year. In *Dashian* and *Tihar* festival, forest is opened for fodder collection for 5 days for each festival. Similarly, in winter season, it is also opened for 5 days which is

decided by the executive committee. During the open period, only 2 persons of each household are allowed to enter the forest and they pay 2 rupees for each *bhari*.

5.3.3. Rules for Leaf-litter

The leaf-litters have to be collected during a specific time of a year. The committee decides the time of leaf-litter collection. Normally, it is opened from February-April. In each month it is open for 5 days only.

5.3.4. Rules for Timber

It is not allowed to collect timber from CF. However, timber is given only to those users who need to construct or repair their house. There was no evidence of timber distribution to the users group in the study area till the field visit time.

5.3.5. Tree Plantation Rules

In the study area, plantation of seedlings is usually held in Jun and July. Seedlings for plantation were provided by the district forest office and other NGOs. The committee had planted 4000 seedling of different plants in 2002.

5.3.6. Thinning and Pruning Rules

In this study area, the committee had organized thinning and pruning activities each November. During that time, they removed useless twigs of trees and unnecessary seedlings for the proper growth of the trees.

The operational plan declared that only one third twigs were allowed to be removed from the trees.

5.3.7. Management of CF Fund

The fund of CF came from the entry fee, punishment fee, donation etc. which were kept in the bank in the name of secretary and treasurer. They used that fund to manage the forest and other local development activities. It was informed that they used 75% fund of the total fund for the development activities such as road construction, temple construction etc. whereas 25% of the fund was found to be used for forest management.

5.4. Women's Participation in CF Activities

5.4.1. Women's Participation in Executive Committee

In UCF, the executive committee members were selection through the consensus of the user members. The present executive committee called the general assembly for the formation of next executive committee. The name for executive members is nominated by the user groups themselves in general assembly and then attendance user groups agree to that nominated person. Then, that person is selected for the executive committee member.

The formation of executive committee is an important aspect in CF because major decisions regarding to forest management is generally done by it. Therefore, women access and participation in CF also clearly assert their presentation in CF executive committee. The involvement of women and men in the executive committee of CF from the first formation to the present is presented in the table no 8.

Table No. 8
Sex wise People's participation in executive committee of
(1997-2005)

Year	Sex				Total
	Male	%	Female	%	
1997	11	100	-	-	11
1997	9	81.81	2	18.18	11
2002	13	72.12	5	27.88	18
2005	9	69.23	4	30.77	13

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Table 8 clear that women participation in CF executive committee was relatively lower than the CF policy. The policy clearly mentioned that 33% women must be present in CF executive committee. However, the participation of women is seen in increasing ratio. In the first formation of CF, there was not a single woman in the executive committee whereas 30.77% women are found to be participating in the present Committee.

5.4.2. Women Participation in the general Meeting

Participation in the general meeting is one of the major factors which lead to the decision making. The major decisions about CF management are done in this meeting. The absent member of the committee had no role in decision making and could not know about the current subject matter of CF and the decision which had done in the meeting. As a result, they have no knowledge about the future plan of CF.

The members of the user group say that there is less participation of the women in meeting of CF executive committee as well as general assembly due to their busy schedule in their household activities. The president of the executive committee informed during the interview that women members normally came after starting the meeting and left it before ending due to their household chores. In the group discussion held in the tea shop the researcher asked the question about the attendance of women in the meeting regularly. An executive member made the ready made answer that 'those who had household chores did not take participation in the meeting but I went after finishing my work'. When the same member was asked what kinds of decisions were taken at the meeting, she replied “nice things”. When asked to clarify nice things she was able to say, “Saving the forest for the future “.

The table no. 9 shows the attendance of males and females in UGs general assemblies during last three years.

Table no. 9

Male and Female attendance in General Assembly (2002-2004)

Year	Sex	No of attendance	%	Total
2002	Male	103	70.54	146
	Female	43	29.45	
2003	Male	110	73.82	149
	Female	39	26.17	
2004	Male	96	88.88	108
	Female	12	11.12	

Source: UCF Record, 2004.

Table 9 clear that there is less participation of women in general assembly. However, the participation of women in general assembly is increasing in 2003 than 2002 due to the access to resources, benefit from

the forest and feeling of own forest. It was decrease in 2004 because general assembly was held in paddy plantation season (June). In previous assembly mostly women raised voice in meeting for opening the forest for leaf-litter and ground grass collection but the voice of men are dominant in the meeting. The major decisions about the CF management such as plantation of the tree seedling, thinning and pruning activities, punishment to the offender and distribution of the forest productions are done by the male members.

5.4.3. Women's Participation in Plantation Activities

It was informed that plantation of the seedling were done three times in the CF after its formation. The first plantation was done in 1989 second in 2002 and last in 2004. It was done in the barren land of the forest which covered nearly 12 hectores of the forest land. They planted several varieties of trees plants i.e. *Lapsi* and *Salla*, *Utish* and *Chilaune* were planted for timber products whereas *Lapsi* for fruit which is a highly demandable fruit in the market.

In the study area, CF plantation was usually done in the rainy season. It was normally done by both sexes. However, male were engaged to prepare the bed for planting the seedling and bringing it form the nursery to plantation area whereas women were found to be highly involved in plantation and wedding activities. The table no. 16 shows the participation of males and females in CF plantation activities which was done in 2004.

Table No 10
Sex Wise People's Participation in Plantation Activities

Sex	Number of Participant	%
Female	30	65.22
Male	16	34.78
Total	46	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Table 10 explains that male participation in the plantation activities is relatively less than female. The main reason was found that women were the key users and collectors of the forest resources in the study area. They depended upon forest for fuel, leaf litter and fodder for livestock. Therefore, they have more demand of the forest resources in their daily life than the male.

5.4.4. Women's participation in Thinning and Pruning Activities

In the study area, the thinning and pruning activities are normally done in November and December. It was held in each block every year for the well growth and betterment of the seedling. All the user members of CF participate. After thinning and pruning, the removing parts of the tree were collected in a certain place. After that, each of the participants got those parts in equal basis. The user members who did not participant in thinning and punning activities had no access to that resource. Children under 12 were not allowed to participate. Males were engaged in supervision of thinning and punning activities whereas females were found involved in removing the useless parts of the trees. The president of the CF, Gyanu Lama informed that female participation was relatively found higher in this activity because they could get firewood during this time which was the main duty of women within a household.

5.4.5. Women's Participation in Forest Products Collection

There is restriction to collect green twigs from the CF even though the CF is opened for the user groups for collecting dry twigs fallen from the trees twice or thrice a year. Despite the CF, in this study area, the villagers who had their own private forest or agricultural land, did not find the need to go to CF or religious forest for fire wood collection. They collected the needed firewood from their own land. Normally, they collected firewood in winter. Similarly, they also used straw of maize and wheat as firewood. On the other hand, the poor people who did not have their own forest land also bought firewood from the rich villagers to fulfill their need of fuel.

In the study area, Women's involvement is found relatively higher than male for collection of forest products. The respondents informed that firewood collection is the key task of a woman in a household. Cooking is taken as the women's sphere in household. Table no. 11 shows the involvement of women in collection of forest products in the study area.

Table no. 11

Sex Wise People's Participation in Forest Products Collection

Sex	Firewood		Leaf-litter		Fodder	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Female	20	64.52	30	96.77	19	61.29
Male	2	6.45	-	-	4	12.90
Both	9	29.03	1	3.23	8	25.81
Total	31	100	31	100	31	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Table 11 clear that both male and female was responsible for firewood collection even though female involvement is higher then male. It was

found that 64.52 % women were involved in this activity whereas only 29.03% males were found to be involved in firewood collection.

Leaf-litter collection is found the main working sphere of female in the study area. It was found that more than 96% of the female were actively involved in leaf-litter collection and the rest were male. Similarly, children also helped them to collect leaf litter. However girl children were found higher than boy.

Similarly, in fodder collection women are found highly involve than men in the study area. However, men collected fodder for their livestock only in the absence of women in the family. Children were also involved in collecting fodder. However, it was informed that girl children involvement was relatively higher than boy children in the study area.

CHAPTER - SIX

HINDERING AND MOTIVATING FACTORS OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN FOREST

In the present day scenario, participation especially of women became the attractive slogan in any development and other kinds of activities. In this sense, women are also found to participate in CF management. Also in Ugratara CF, women's participation in CF executive committee is found to be increasing. But there is still unequal participation in different level of management. Only 33.77% member in executive committee is not so hopeful facts in the field of CF management. Participation is also influenced by some social, cultural and economical factors which are taken as the motivating or hindering aspect of women's participation

6.1. Hindering Factors

Women are the main users of forest resources in the study area. They collect fodder and leaf-litter for their livestock, firewood for cooking and vegetables, fruits and roots for family. Therefore, forest is the integral part of women's life. Similarly, women have vast knowledge about the multiple benefit and usefulness of forest. They argue that forest makes the desert green, helps to protect landslide and helps to increase the sources of water. So it seems that women have vast knowledge of forest and their roles may be more beneficial for forest management. However, some constraints play vital role in hindering the women participation in CF. The main obstacles of women's participation in Ugratara CF are briefly mentioned in the following topics.

6.1.1. Gender Disparity

Gender relation refers to the relation of power between men and women. In the study area, boys and girls were grown up differently. While discussion with female group, they informed me that girls taught to work in household activities such as cooking, cleaning, collecting fodder, leaf-litter and firewood whereas boys did not. Similarly, I also observed that each and every decision within households such as buying and selling of agricultural products, animals, land, construction of house, shade and their managements were made by senior male member. Only in the case of *pewa*, and *daigo*, the female themselves make decision what to do. Such household level socialization process was found highly influence in the community or societal level decision making process. The females of Ghumarchowk perceived that management of forest is the task of men and collection of firewood and fodder, leaf-litter is the women's task. Thus, they did not take interest to participate or to be involved in CF management properly. Women did not have the feeling of equal right and responsibility to take decision about CF activities. This gender based ideology was deeply rooted the mind of women which makes them passive to take participation in CF management.

6.1.2. Patriarchy Value System

In the study area, most of the people are Buddhist by religion even though Hindu ideology is found more dominant. In Hindu ideology or patriarchal value system, women are assigned the role of household activities and they have restriction to go and stay away from the house

without male's order or male family member (Bhasin, 1994). In the course of field work, 8 women were interviewed. Among them, 2 Tamang women informed that they were allowed to go anywhere without support of male members of the family whereas other 2 Chhetri and 4 Tamang informed that they had no permission to go public sphere without support of the male members. Due to this constraint, women's attendance in meeting, making decision, participation in the sphere of public work such as road, tap, school, temple construction as well as forest management was low.

6.1.3. Limited Time for Public Work

In the study area, it was found that women were engaged in household activities such as child rearing, cooking, cleaning, fetching water, collecting fodder and fire woods, maintenance of shed etc. All these activities make women busy throughout the day. Women must leave these activities to participate in forest management activities.

During the interview it was found that they do not have enough time for other tasks except household work. A woman Kanchhi Maya Thin represents the women of Ghumarchowk community and their daily work.

Kanchi Maya Thin - "we have land, livestock, and kids. We have to work hard for the food. We have taken care of the house and the children. In the peak agricultural time, we do not have time even to cook the food. We wake up at about 4: 30 a.m. clean the house, throw the dung, and feed animals. Then we go to fetch water and then go to farm land for fodder collection for livestock, and leaf-litter for bedding

of animals. After coming back if food is not prepared we prepare the food, feed everyone in the family then wash the dishes. After that, we go to the field for the agricultural work. When we return back it is already late to cook the evening food. This is the average task of women in Ghumarckowk community. Some times we do not have time even to clean clothes and take a bath”.

The chair-person of the CF executive committee, informed that women’s participation was very low in 2005 general assembly because it was held during the paddy planting season (June). So most of them did not get the information and women who get the information also did not get the time to take part in the meeting. It was impossible for the women to participate in assembly leaving the work at the field.

The women members of the executive committee also told that generally meeting held at the morning which is the time for preparing meals and collecting fodder and leaf-litter. Thus they could not participate the meeting leaving the cooking and other works.

6.1.4. Illiteracy and Lack of Technical Knowledge

In the study area 95% women were illiterate. Due to their illiteracy, they feel hesitate to participate in public works including CF management activities. In the course of group discussion, some women said, “*hami le padeko chhaina hami jandaina*”. Literally, we are illiterate and we do not know. Similarly, when I observed the executive meeting held in the November 2005 I found 2 women members were participating in the meeting and 2 were absent. Those women did not say anything through

out the meeting. After held the meeting, I asked question to those, why were you salient in the meeting? Both of them made the ready made answer “*hami le padeko chaina, logne-manchhe le padeko chha hami bhanda uneru janchha*”. Literary, male were literate than female so they know well than female. This indicates that they have great problem of reading and writing due to the lack of education. As result, they remain back to make decision about CF management.

The chair-person of the committee Gyanu Lama informed me that they send 15 users members to different training programmes i.e., plantation, weeding, thinning and pruning activities, livelihood, organized by GOs and NGOs in different period. All participants were male. Why the participants were male only? Why the committee did not sent the female member to participant in the training programme? Whether female themselves did not want to participant in the programme or other causes are hidden behind it? To answer these questions I asked some female informant and all of them replied same answer “*hami padeko chhaina, talimma gae pani kehi bhujhadaina*”. Literary, we are uneducated and we do not understand anything in the training. From these arguments, it is clear that education is the main cause that hesitate women to participate in various training programs.

6.1.5. Poverty

Economic condition also play important role in forest management. In the study area, all respondents have no equal economic status. Some of them were economically sound and others were poor. All these people had not given the equal time in different activities of CF management

such as *lauri-palo*, thinning and punning activities, plantation of seedling, and attendance of meeting. Those households which could not produce sufficient food products through out the year, they went outside the village for daily wage labour. They informed that to run livelihood was more important than CF management. Similarly, some informant informed that if they have enough money, they would use bio-gas or other alternative energy for cooking. It would help to save their working time. That time could be used for forest management and other activities.

6.2. Motivating Factors

Women's participation in executive committee was found gradually increasing in Ugratara CF. In the first formation of CF executive committee, there was no woman in it. After that, women participation was found which is increasing in each formation of executive committee (see table 8.). Regarding the increasing of women's participation in CF, the respondents point out several factors that motivate them to participate in the CF activities, which are discussion below.

6. 2.1. Access to Resource

Before formation of the CF, an elder informant, Chandra Maya Tamang, informed that the condition of the forest was poor which was going from bad to worse day by day. During that time, women had to walk nearly 3-4 hours for fire wood collection. Similarly, the leaf-litter was also not available in the local forests. After formation of the CF, the local people took interest to manage the forest. Then, the forest condition was

gradually improving and became better. Consequently, the quantity of the fodder and leaf-litter were also increased in the CF. women did not need to walk to other forests to collect the forest products. And then, they also gradually started to participate in forest management activities by involving in executive committee, planting and weeding of seedling, thinning and pruning activities of the forest.

6.2.2. Felling of *Hamroban*

The informant informed that before formation of Ugrstara CF, the forest was under the control of the government and its management was done by the government itself. During that time, the villagers fulfill their basic needs such as firewood, fodder, leaf-litter, timber, agricultural equipments from the forest through the illegal way. Some of the villagers and outsiders were also collected forest products for their personal benefit. At that time, a person had no feeling to care for the forest and than the condition of the forest was become poor to poorer. After handing over the forest to the local people in 1997 and than they started to manage the forest themselves. Thereafter, they collected their basic needs such as firewood, fodder, leaf-litter, fruits, roots, vegetables, timber from CF through the communal based with the consensus of the users group. It creates the feeling of “*hamro ban*” (our forest) toward forest among the villagers both male and female. Consequently, women were also motivated to protect the forest through direct and indirect participation in the forest management activities in CF. As mentioned above woman are major collectors of forest products

6.2.4. Direct Benefit from the Forest

In the study area, it was also found that the participation of women were encouraged by the benefit they shared from the CF. By showing the forest in the northern side of the study area, Asali Tamang says, “we had to walk nearly 3-4 hours for fire wood collection, the leaf-litter was also not available in the local forests. It took nearly till day to collect one *bhari* leaf-litter for animal bed. After formation of the CF, we need not to walk 3-4 hours to collect firewood. It is available in the CF, the leaf litter and fodders are also available here”. It indicates that villages especially women could get forest products like firewood, fodder and leaf-litter in CF without spending much time. It also leads them to participate in forest management activities.

CHAPTER - SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The main objective of the research was to analyze socio-economic situation of Ghumarchowk and examine and analyze the women participation in Ugratara CF. Further more it has also found out the hindering and motivating factors of women's participation in CF activities. Secondly, the researcher has tried to examine and analyze the motivating and hindering factors of women participation in the CF. On the basis of the findings the researcher has reached to these conclusions

Researcher has tried to find out the women's participation in different aspect of forest management such as: formulate operational planning, program implementation, weeding, thinning and pruning activity, involvement of executive committee.

Women's Participation in CF Management

The plantation of several varieties of trees like *Uttish Chilaune*, *Lapsi* and *Salla* were done in the barren land of the forest in the past few years. It was normally done by both sexes. However, male are highly engaged to prepare the bed for planting the seedling and bringing it from the nursery to the plantation area whereas women are found to be highly involved in plantation and weeding activities. Similarly, in thinning and pruning activities of the forest, both sexes are participating but male are found to be engaged in supervision activities and female are in removing the branches of the trees.

The forest products collection is the major task of women in the community. On the basis of obtained information during the study time, According to research findings both male and female are responsible for different activities of CF even though female involvement is higher than male in particular activities. It was found that 64.52% women are involved in firewood collection, 96.77% in leaf-litter collection and 61.29% in fodder collection activities. Male were only collect the fodder and leaf-litter for their livestock in the absence of female in family.

The formation of executive committee is an important aspect because major decisions regarding to forest management is generally done by it. Therefore, women access and participation in CF also clearly assert their presentation in CF executive committee. In the case of Ugratara CF, women participation in the executive committee and general assembly was found less as compared with man and their participation is also found less effective because they just sit and listen what male member say in the meetings. That is why the women participation is passive as compared with male member. Thus, women participation in CF is only seen rhetoric rather than realistic (see, Chhetri, 1999).

Hindering Factors

Women are taken as a manager of natural resources, especially, forest resources because they are also home –maker and their sound knowledge of ecosystem. Even though some socio-cultural factors play vital role to hinder the women's involvement in forest management activities. Hindering factors of women's participation in CF in the study area are as follows:

The villagers perceive that management like decision making about different activities of CF is taken as man's task and collection of firewood and fodder, leaf-litter is considered as women's task. Thus, this gender disparity hindered women to participate and had no feelings of equal right and responsibility to make decision about CF management. Patriarchal Value system also restricted women to participate in public sphere. Thus, in the context of CF, the attendances in executive committee meeting, making decision, are taken as male sphere not of female.

Women were found highly engaged in household activities such as child rearing, cooking, cleaning, fetching water, collecting fodder and firewood, maintenance of shed etc. All household activities make women busy through out the day. So, limited time also affect to participate.

Illiteracy creates the feeling of hesitation among the women to raise their voice in the group or public field. In Ugratara CF, women could not raise their voice in major decisions regarding to forest management in general assembly and executive committee. Economic status of women also determines their involvement in forest management. The poor families could not give time in CF such as plantation, *lauri-palo*, due to their engagement in fulfilling their basic needs. So, poverty is also a factor which hinders the women to participate.

Motivating Factors

At the present, women participation is gradually increasing in development and management spheres like CF. There are several factors which are motivating women to participate in the forest management activities. The availability of the forest resources nearby their house and access to resource create the feeling of love towards the forest. Feeling of

own-ness is another factor to motivating them. The availability of the forest resources such as fodder and leaf-litter and firewood save their time. Similarly, some of the women got opportunities to participate in the training program related to the forest as well as other income generating activities for their betterment which is also motivated them to participate in CF.

Recommendation

) In Nepal, CF program has become the major issue for the management and protection of the forest resources and women are taken as a manager of forest resources. The findings of this research revealed that women participation is less than men in executive committee and general assembly and their roles are also less effective in decision making process due to the work burden in household, illiteracy, gender disparity and existing value system. Therefore, to bring the women in the mainstream of decision making process these obstacles should be gradually changed or removed.

) In this thesis, I have tried to examine and analyze the hindering and motivating factors of women's participation in Ugratara CF. The finding based on certain period and place which is applicable for that time and place but not applicable for all period or all CFs. So, I suggest further researchers to investigate and examine the other factors that motivate and hinder the women to participate in other CFs whether they may be varied or not from the UCF.

) In this research, I have found out the men and women sphere in CF management activities. Despite this aspect, other public fields such as irrigation, land management, drinking water management, pasture management etc. are also interesting fields for further researchers to find out women participation.

APPENDIX - 3
GLOSSARY OF NEPALI WORDS

Ausi –Dark moon day.

Bari_ Unirrigated land

Birta – Tax free land given to individuals by the government.

Jagir – Land assign to government employees as emoluments

Jimmawal_ Anon-official functionary who collected taxes on khet lands in the hill region.

Khaja – Mid-day snack

Khet- Irrigated land in the hill region on which paddy and wheat can be grow

Kipat – A form of communal land tenure, prevalent among some group

Kudo – A fodder made by grains

Lauro palo_ Turn by turn watching system of forest

Pagari_ A member of a Limbu village council in pallo Kirant.

Parma-_ Labor for labor exchange

Pooja – Worshiping to gods

Purniya – Full moon day.

Raiker_ Taxble land

Ropani – Land measuring units in the hill region (20 ropani = 1 hector)

Sagaune –To help for help.

Subba –A Limbu village headman in pallokirat

Talukdar – A official care taker of the land appointed by Rana government

Thari- A non- official tax collection functionary

Doko –Bamboo basket

Aausi –Dark moon day

Shraddha- Ancestor worshipping day
Purne-Full moon day
Nag pooja –snake worshipping
Bhumi pooja –Land worshipping
Nwagee- Crop harvesting festival
Charu- mixture of rice, barley, sesame and ghee
Dan –Charity
Bari –unirrigated land
Besi – River valley lands in the hill region
Parma –Labour exchange system of Nepal
Ghurdine –Help for help
Bhari –Carrying portion
Sawne-sankrati –First day of the Sawan in Nepali calendar
Maghe-sangrati –First day of the Magh in Nepali calendar
Dashai –Hindu Festival
Tihar –Hindu Festival
Shivaratri –Birthday of god Shiva
Krishnasthami –Birthday of god krishna
Chaite dashai –Hindu festival
Teej –Hindu festival which is celebrate by women
Ramnawami – Birth day of god Ram

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