People's Participation in Community Forest Management

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Abstract

The proposed study introduced the "People's Participation in Community Forest Management". This study was conducted on community forest of the central part of Nepal in Sindhuli district. The main objective of this study was to assess the participation of users group in forest management activities, decision making, benefit sharing mechanism and finding the factors that effect on people's participation. Primary data was collected through preliminary survey, questionnaire survey, focus group discussion and key informant survey. Secondary data was collected from concerned Division Forest Office (DFO), CFUGs operational plan, constitution of CFUGs, minutes, and documents from local government and non-government organizations. The qualitative and quantitative data was analysed using statistical packages SPSS, MS Excel. For qualitative analysis descriptive methods were used and the result was presented in different charts, tables and graphs. From the study, participation of forest users' group was high on forest product collection and distribution and low in plantation in forest management activities, decision making process satisfactory and benefit sharing mechanism was transparent and factors affecting for the participation of users' group was illiteracy and busy in farming. Therefore, this study is supportive for all who work for the improvement of users' group participation in the community forest management.

***Keywords**: Community Forest, People's Participation, Benefit Sharing.*

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A. INTRODUCTION

Forests are a renewable natural resource that is readily available. However, it has previously been undervalued and managed in an unsustainable manner. As a result, the number, quality, and density of these valuable forests are declining. The situation has begun to alter in the previous three and a half decades. In the banner of 'Participatory Forest Administration (PFM),' centralized forest management has steadily devolved into decentralized forest management involving local community engagement. It grew in popularity in the late 1980s and expanded in breadth in the 1990s. PFM is sometimes defined as a forestry program in which trees are planted on public land to suit the community's unique needs for fuel wood, feed, grass, timber, pole, and non-timber forest products (NTFPs). PFM means the 'Forestry of the people, for the people and by the people' (Karki, 2003).

Community forestry is a village-level forestry activity that is decided collectively and implemented on communal land, in which local populations participate in the planning, establishment, management, and harvesting of forest crops, receiving a significant portion of the forest's socio-economic and ecological benefits. Community forestry, social forestry, and rural development forestry are essentially interchangeable terms that reflect Abraham Lincoln's vision of democracy:

"government of the people, by the people, for the people." (2012) (Saree). 'Community forest' refers to any portion of National Forest land set aside for the development, preservation, and use of forest by a local user organization (Nepal Forest Act, 1993). Many user organizations have been able to lease government lands and operate them according to their own set of rules. Nepal is a pioneer in involving people in the protection and management of forest resources. The country's community forestry initiative has been in place for more than two decades and has assisted in the regeneration of large sections of damaged forest. The program's implementation has not gone well during the last two decades. Because there are no precedents, the country has had to learn by trial and error and come up with creative solutions to solve issues as they arise. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world, according to most economic and social metrics, with an estimated 40–50 percent of the people living in poverty. Despite the fact that several user groups have been able to teach Nepal, Nepal has outperformed practically every other country in terms of following a community engagement strategy in forest resource management (Kumar, 2002).

The realization of active engagement of the local people in forest resource management was the catalyst for the start of community forestry (K.C, 2012). "The control, protection, and management of local forest by local people or community known as user groups," according to the definition of community forest (Shrestha, 2004). This initiative, which began in 1978, is founded on the principle of people's participation (Acharya, 2002). In total, 22,266 Community Forest User Groups (CFUGs) have managed 2,237,670.524 hectares of forest, involving 2,907,871 households (DoF, 2018), with community forests averaging 93 ha in size. Furthermore, the community forest program is an umbrella term that refers to a variety of activities that connect rural people with forests and trees, as well as the products and benefits that can be derived from them, and is a component of forestry, agriculture, rural energy, and other aspects of rural development (FAO, 1978). Forest user groups are accountable for the correct management of the forest and resources, which is a unique element of community forestry. It is a project in which community members are responsible for identifying, transforming, resolving, and controlling problems. The major goal of Nepal's community forests is to involve people at all levels of involvement, from decision-making to benefit sharing and poverty reduction.

Community Forest (CF) is a government-community-organization partnership program in which government staff serve as facilitators and catalysts in identifying real user groups, preparing a forest operational plan and group constitution, and implementing CF activities, while the community user group is responsible for managing, protecting, and using the forest in a sustainable manner. It is a component of the national forest that grants users only usage rights, not land tenure, and there is a provision for users to be repaid if they do not follow the forest's operational plan's requirements. This clause has caused some locals to have reservations about the government (Gilmour et al, 1989). The Community Forestry initiative is the largest of six major forest preservation programs established in Nepal. Various international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and non-governmental organizations

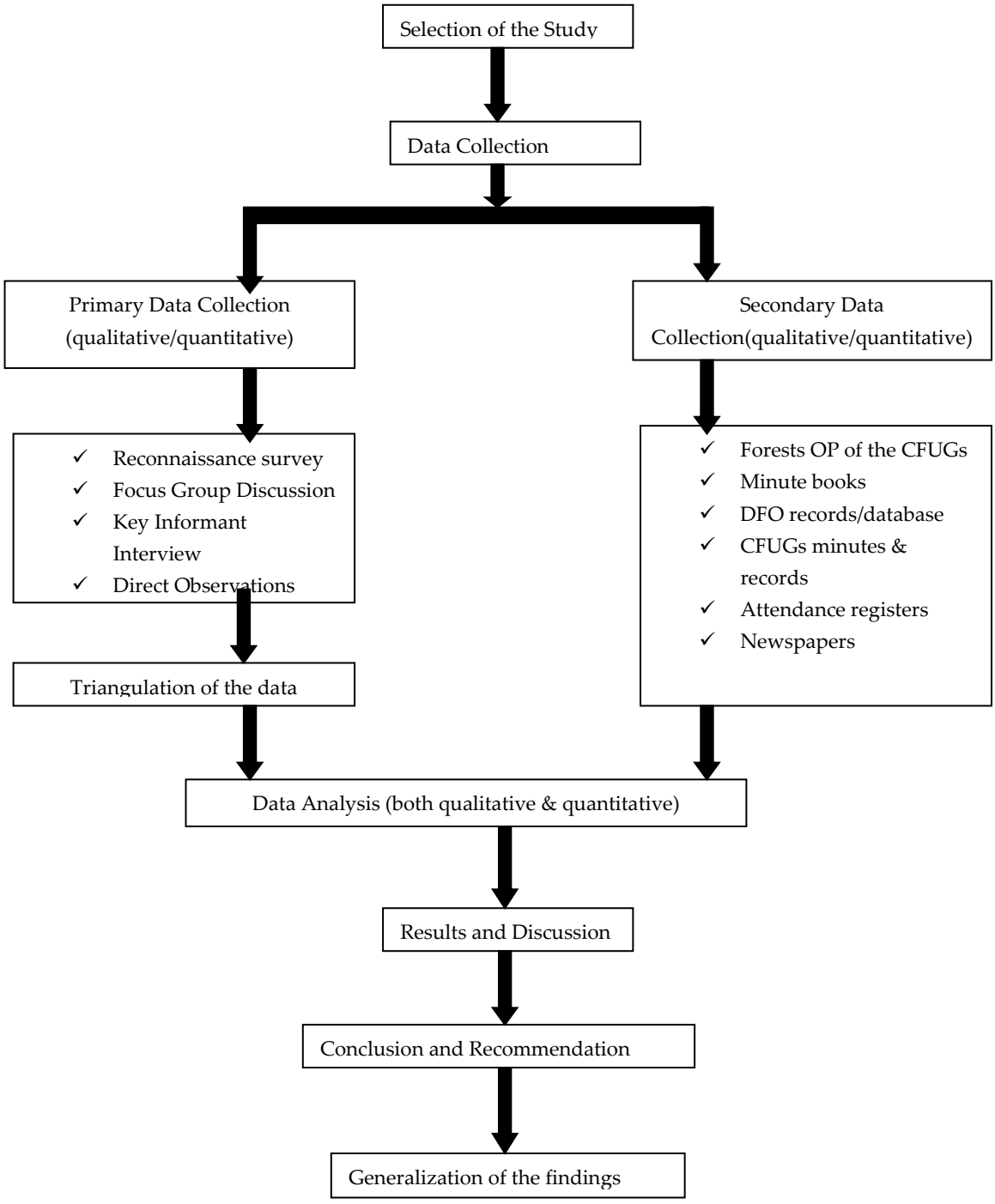
(NGOs) are enthusiastic about such conservation efforts. They are intimately involved in the Community Forestry initiative, as well as sponsoring it. They consider this program as a vehicle for environmental improvement as well as upgrading local people's current livelihoods. They employ Community Forestry as a tool for community development in this regard. The experience has showed promising signs in the enhancement of the environment and community development during the last 24 years (Shrestha, 1999). "Participation" involves "being directly involved in economic, social, cultural, and political processes that affect their life," according to UNDP (1993:21). As a result, participation is a process in which the beneficiaries have a say in the design and implementation of a development program in order to increase prosperity in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance, or other values that they value. Participation is defined as a process in which marginalized people, such as women, have their voices heard and consequently have an influence on decision-making (Agarwal, B., 2001). Women's participation, then, refers to their involvement in decision-making and sharing power over the resources and development initiatives that affect them. People's active, collectively organized, and ongoing efforts in formulating goals, pooling resources, and taking action to enhance people's living situations are referred to as participatory programming (Principles et al., n.d.). In hilly areas, forestry user groups have grown in popularity. Participation is critical in the country's social structure since it allows them to carry out all household and forestry operations. Women are more familiar with forests since they cook food and conduct most domestic chores linked to fuelwood, fodder, green grasses, herbs, leaf litter, grazing the animals, and are the most frequent collectors of forest goods (Agarwal, B., 2006).

In most developing nations, such as Nepal, India, Bhutan, and Pakistan, citizen participation in forest conservation and management is fairly prevalent. Since the mid-1970s, it has been recognized as a critical component of natural resource management, particularly forest management. As a result, it is the complete participation of local communities in any given forestry program, from assessment to planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and long-term operation and maintenance, among other things. People can participate in a variety of ways, such as community forest management, leasehold forest management, collaborative forest management, joint forest management, social forestry, and so on. 'People's participation in design, implementation, benefit sharing, and management is making this initiative more popular,' says Pokhrel (2001). It is a novel method that strives to deliver productive assets to the impoverished through bringing about social transformation and developing effective local institutions. 'Through diverse forest management operations, it builds social and human capital.' People's involvement is crucial in making decisions about planning, execution, benefit sharing and distribution, monitoring, evaluation, training and opportunities, and leadership. The engagement of lower caste, poor, and marginalized individuals in the program, as well as the equitable distribution of benefits, is a significant achievement in forest resource management (Nadkarni, 2000).

B. METHOD

1. Research Design

The major steps followed from the preparation of the proposal to data collection and final write up are presented below:



2. Site Selection

The study was carried out in Shantiswori community forest user group of Cyanneshwor VDC -3, Vitrijamuney Sindhuli District. The CFUG was selected for the study purpose using following criteria:

a. Heterogeneity in terms of wealth status and caste.
b. The community forest had completed its first phase of community forest operational plan implementation.
c. Dependency of poor users on forest was high
d. Forest was managed actively and income generation activities were operating.
e. Active fund mobilization activities were done focusing to community development and income generation.
f. It was selected because of accessibility and interest of CFUGs, FECOFUN, Sindhuli and DFO.

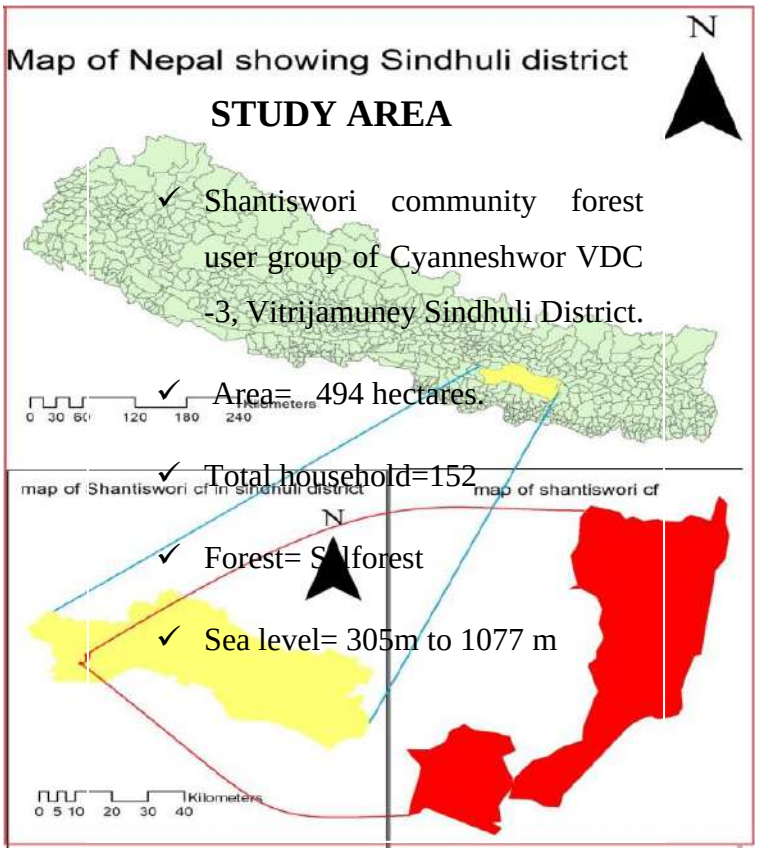


Figure 1: Map of Study Area

3. Sampling Intensity

Socio-economic information data of respondents were collected from secondary sources of data collection taking 100% sample intensity. About 35% sampling intensity was taken for household survey. Stratified random sampling was done for the study, on the basis of different socio-economic strata and education status (Poorer, middle, richer, illiterate, literate and educated). Out of 152 HH, 52 HHs was taken.

4. Data Collection Methods

Primary data collection was done through various PRA tools; as informal discussion with response people, semi-structured interview, field observation and household survey. Different methods were adopted for different purposes.

a. **Reconnaissance survey:** Reconnaissance survey was done to gain general information about the study area.
b. **Focus group discussion:** Focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in the presence

of the members of FUG committee. Separate meetings were conducted with Women, Poor & Dalits for discussion. FGD provided various important information about practices of participation in executive committee, decision making, benefit sharing activities and fund mobilization procedures. The participant expressed and shared their views more freely in the time of FGD.

c. **Key informant interview:** Based on the agreed criteria of selecting key informants was identified and interviews taken as per the interview participatory guides. A series of open-ended questions posed to individuals selected. Interviews were qualitative, in-depth, and semi-structured. Tentatively 6 KIs representing local communities, local teacher, local businessman, member of mother's group, member of local government body and member of community forest user group representing the local communities in terms of their social status and ethnicity, economic wellbeing, knowledge, and ecological regions were selected for the interviews.
d. **Direct observations:** Direct Observation may be more reliable than what people say in many instances. The information collected from observation was used for triangulation of the study. During investigations insight of CFUGs, all observed data were recorded. Notes were taken during all types of meeting and during the walking tours of each CF and toles. The conditions of governance status in CFUG, incase of participation of people in CF meeting, were examined by direct observation.
e. **Household survey:** Questionnaire for HH survey include both closed and open ended, to get quick answer and for to analysis most of the questionnaire were closed ended, Researcher himself collected all the questionnaire information. For the collection of information the researcher went to respective place, which as convenient for the respondent. The researcher also observed the surrounding and non-verbal communication during questionnaire. Type of questionnaire is given in (Annex I).

The constitution, operational plan, GA minutes registers of CFUG, attendance registers of committee meeting of CFUGs, were reviewed to get the information about the history of CF, present status, their formal rules, decision making procedures, pattern of participation etc. The work of secondary data collection was done before and after the primary data collection. This work helped to cross check the primary data. Apart from this following were the main sources of secondary data regarding the good governance, participation and transparency: published literature, internets, journals from libraries, and lectures notes of B.Sc, M.Sc course, internet derived, newspapers and articles.

5. Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used to analyze the data. After completion of household survey, the data was entered into Microsoft Excel with unique number attached to every questionnaire. Each question and response was coded. All quantitative data has been analyzed through the use of statistical methods using excel.

Qualitative analysis of data collected from FGDs, KIs, and direct observation was also used as per need. Descriptive analysis of different cases of environmental services particularly those services that cannot be quantified or monetized such as biodiversity conservation and forest management practices was also carried out for better understanding of the problems, and their remedies. Descriptive statistics (mean, percentage, frequency and range) has been used to analyze the data using simple statistical tools like MS WORD, SPSS, etc. to make generalization and discussions.

6. Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Collected data from various sources such as reconnaissance survey, observation, focus group discussion, household survey and key informants has been properly organized, analyzed and presented in appropriate tables and formats. Such tables and formats have been subjected to interpretation and explanation as necessary.

The gathered data and information have been analyzed using both descriptive and statistical method. Descriptive analytical tool such as tables and figures and statistical tool such as percentage and average value have also been presented statically. MS Excel, SPSS (Statistical Package in Social Science) Software has been used to create appropriate file structure to entry quantitative row data and it has also used to create tables, figures, percentage and average value.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result of the study included factors affecting people's participation in Shantiswori community forest, participation of Women, Poor and Dalit in community forest management activities, decision-making and benefit sharing that were discussed in following section.

1. Characteristics of Respondents

a. Caste/ ethnicity

It is no doubt that Nepal is a multi-caste/ethnicity country so people of different caste live in Nepal. While conducting field work the caste composition of the respondents include Brahmins & Chhetris, Janajati, Madhesi and Dalits (Figure 2).

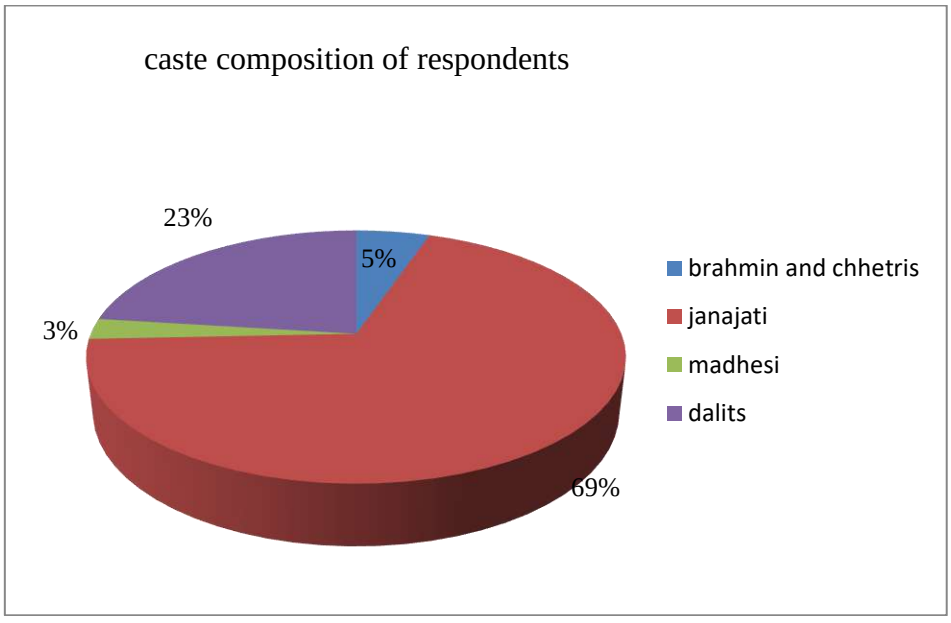


Figure 2: Caste composition of the respondents

Among total respondents, about 69% of total respondents were Janajati, 23% were Dalits, 5% were Brahmin and Chetri and rest 3 % were of Madhesi.

b. Well-being rank of respondents

Majority (60%) of CFUG members were in medium well-being rank followed by pro-poor group (25%), poor (10%) and rich (5%) (figure-3).

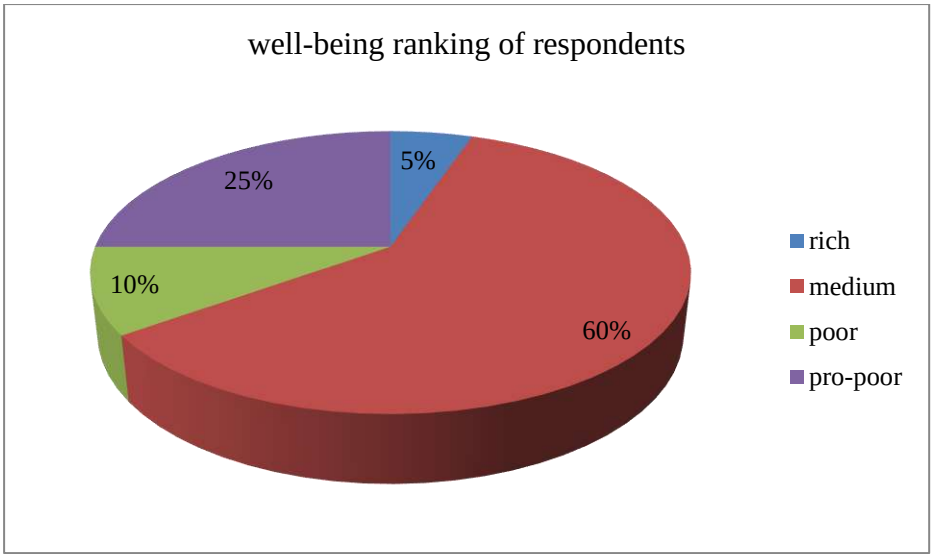


Figure 3: Well-being ranking of the respondents

c. Sex ratio

Among total respondents, 51% of total respondents were male, rest 49% were female (Figure 4).

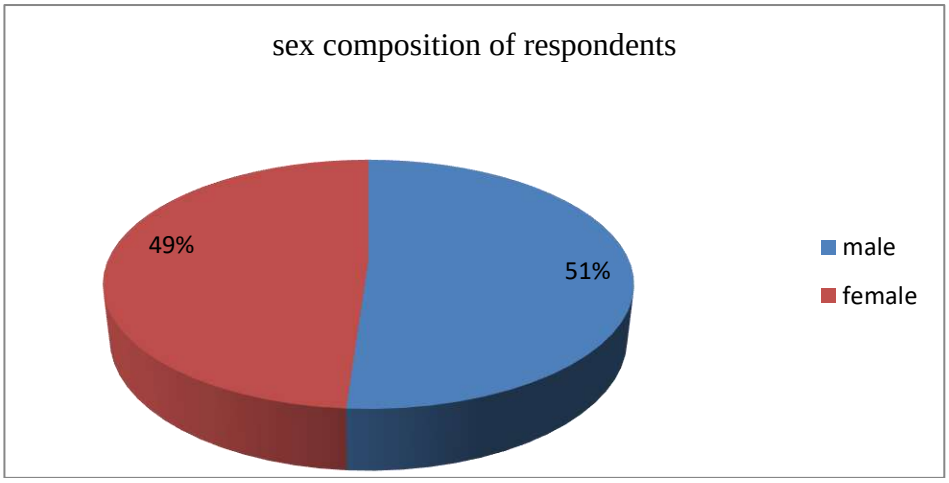


Figure 4: Sex composition of respondents

d. Education status of respondents

Among total respondents, about 55.9% of total respondents were illiterate and rest were able to take education. (Figure: 5)

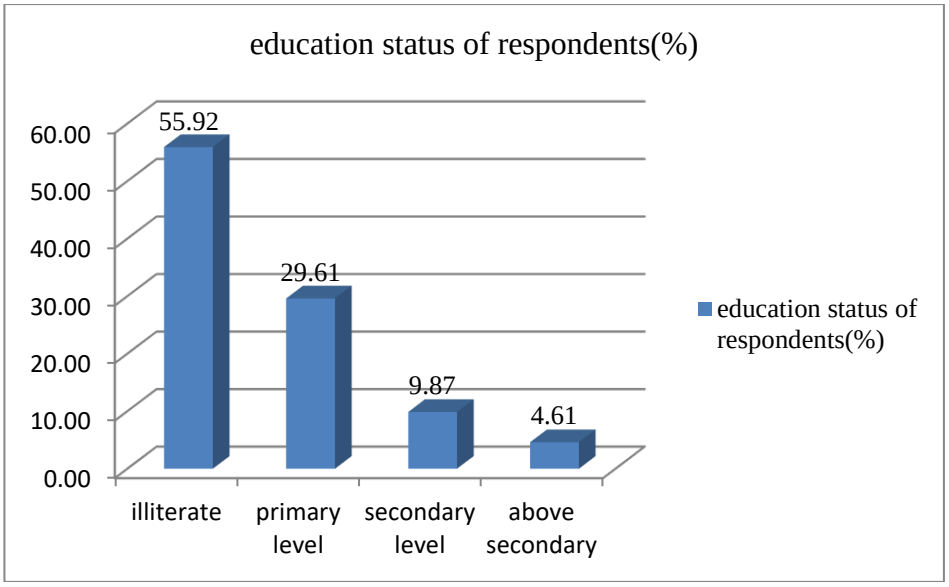


Figure 5: Education status of respondents

e. Occupation of the respondents

Figure 8 shows the occupation of the respondents. Majority (88%) of them were involved in agriculture followed by business (5%), Labour (4%) and service (2%).

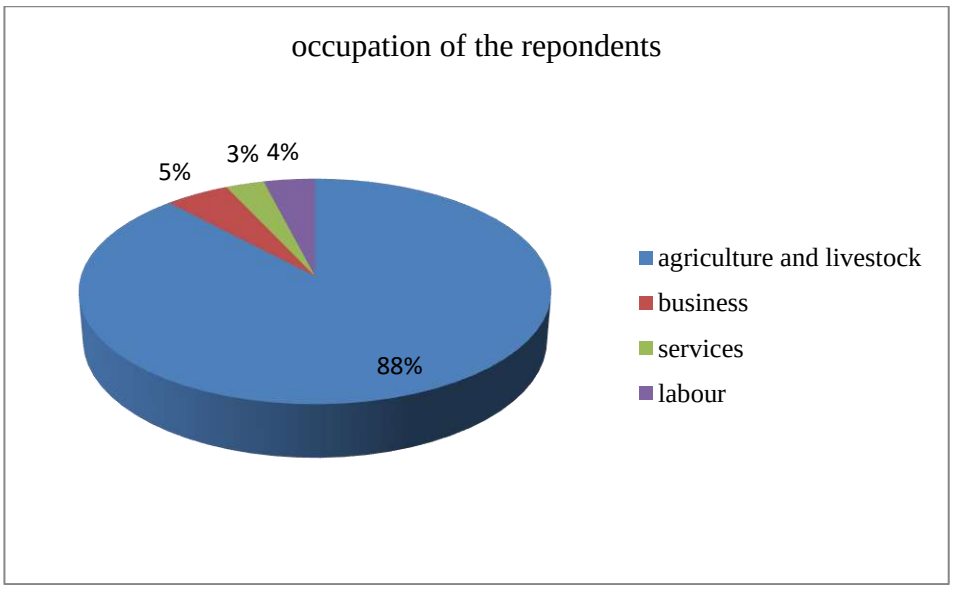


Figure 6: Occupation of respondents

2. Participation

a. Participation of community forest users group members in forest management activities

The protection management includes the activities regarding conservation and protection of forest, forest products, wildlife and encroachment etc. The data regarding the participation of women, poor and dalits in different forest management activities such as forest protection, weeding, singling, pruning, thinning operations, plantation, operational plan renewal, setting price and punishment, budget allocation for development, forest product distribution and collection,

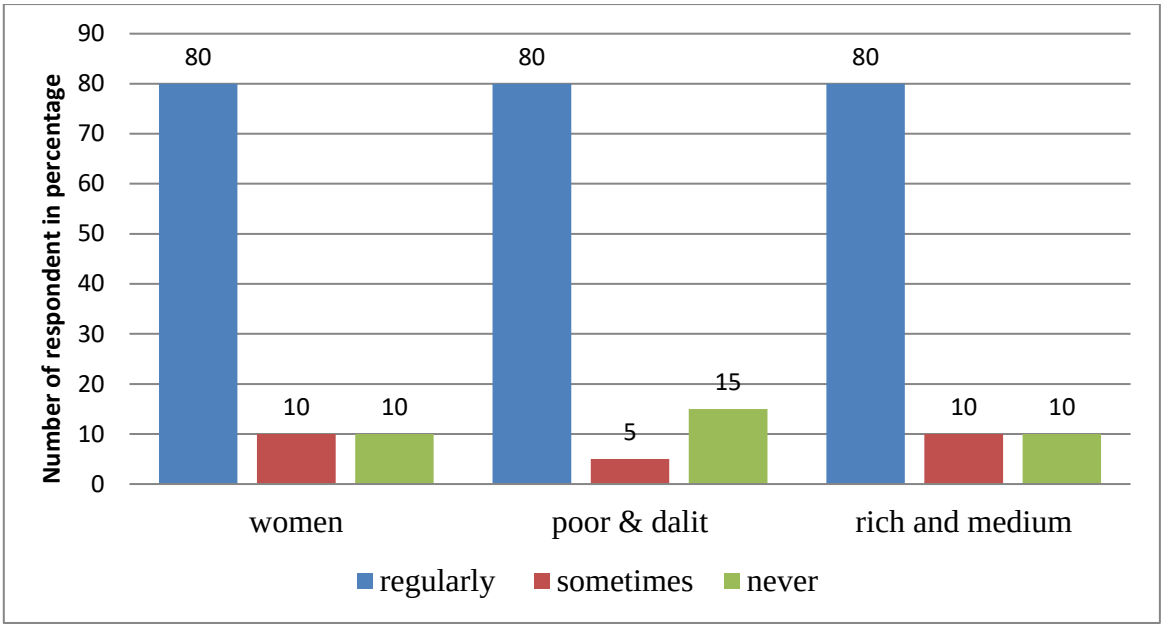


Figure 7: Participation of different respondents on forest management

Above figure 7 shows that some of the poor and Dalits (15%), women(10%) and rich and medium(10%) were not participating in such forest activities. Participation level of CFUGs in different forest management activities was put into Likert scale of five points. Point 1 refers to High(h), 4 for Good(g), 3 for Satisfactory(s), 2 for Low(l) and 1 for Very Low (vl).

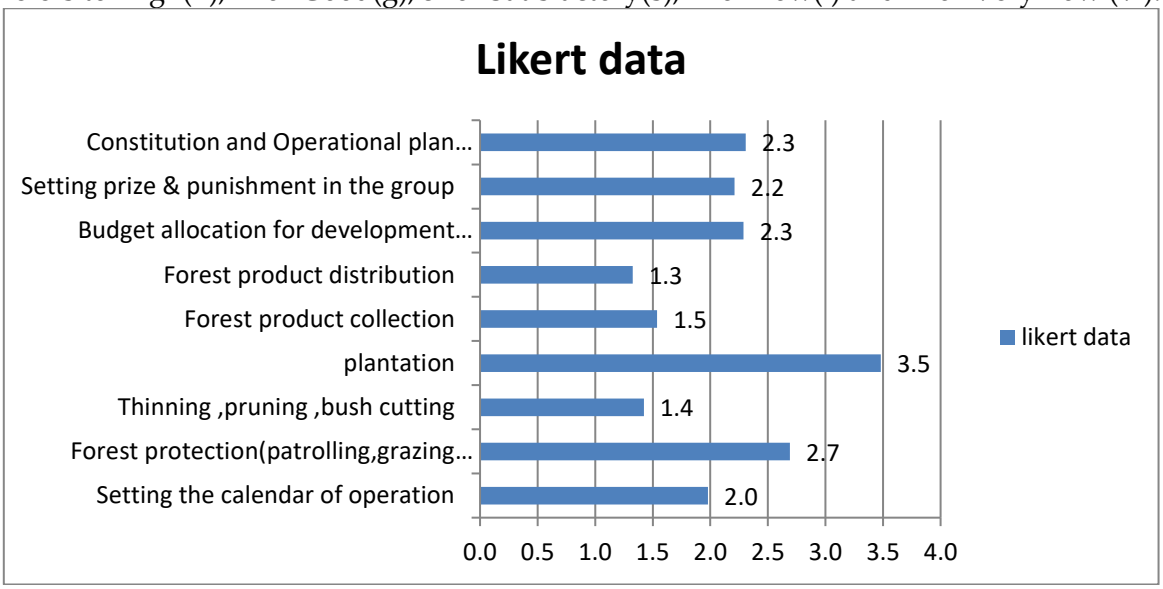


Figure 8: Participation in forest management activities (Likert)

Figure-8, shows that CFUGs had higher participation in forest product distribution with mean ranking of 1.3, following thinning, pruning bush cutting with mean ranking of 1.4, forest product collection with mean ranking 1.5, setting the calendar of operation with mean ranking 2.0, setting prize and punishment with mean ranking 2.2, constitutional and operational plan renewal and budget allocation for development with mean ranking 2.3, forest protection (patrolling, grazing & fire control) with mean ranking 2.7 and plantation had low mean ranking 3.5 due to different factors like far distance from DOF to bring plants for plantation programme.

People's participation, according to Ranjit (2014), is highly dependent on the socioeconomic status of the local people who live in and near the forests. People's

participation in forest conservation and management has three key goals: continuing access to fundamental forest products, socioeconomic development of forest users, and improved forest condition, which aligns with my findings.

b. Participation of community forest users group members in decision making

Participation of CFUGs in general assembly

The participation of women, poor and dalits in general assembly and decision making can be denoted the existence of governance practice in CFUG. The data regarding the perception of women, poor and dalits had been shown in figure 9.

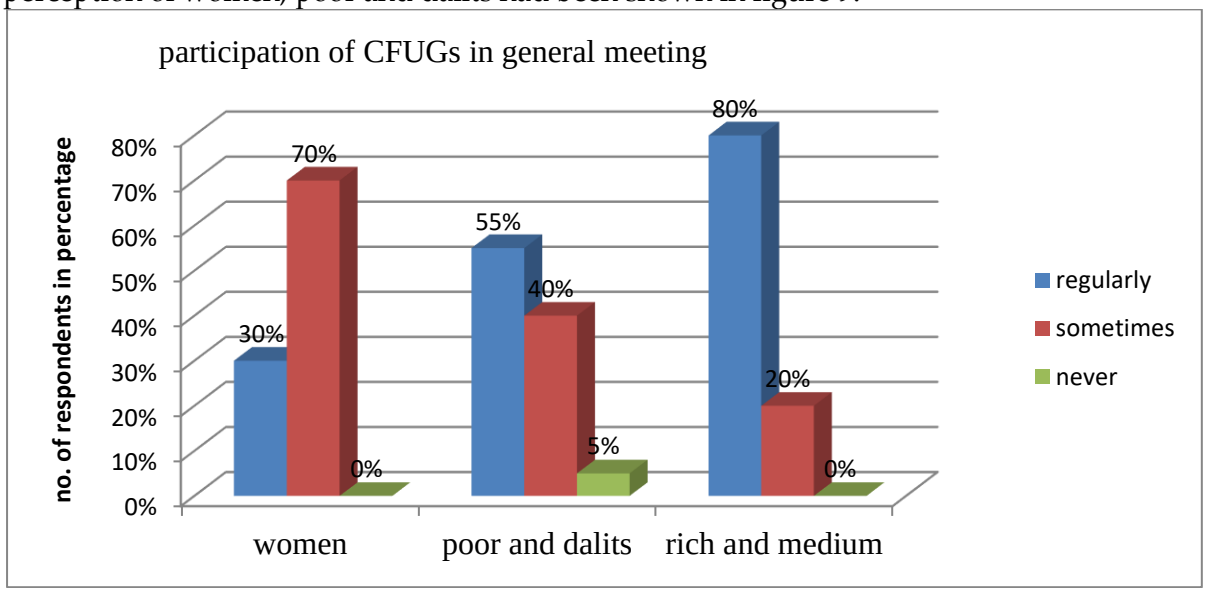


Figure 9: Participation of CFUGs in general assembly

Majority (70%) of the women had participated only sometimes in general assembly while rich & medium (80%) and poor & dalits (55%) class people had participated regularly in general assembly.

c. Participation in group meetings

CFUGs often carried out meetings to discuss about the different issues and the works that they were going to carry out. So active participation of women, poor and dalits in such meetings were necessary which symbolized the existence of governance in the CFUG management. Data about group meeting had been presented in Figure 10.

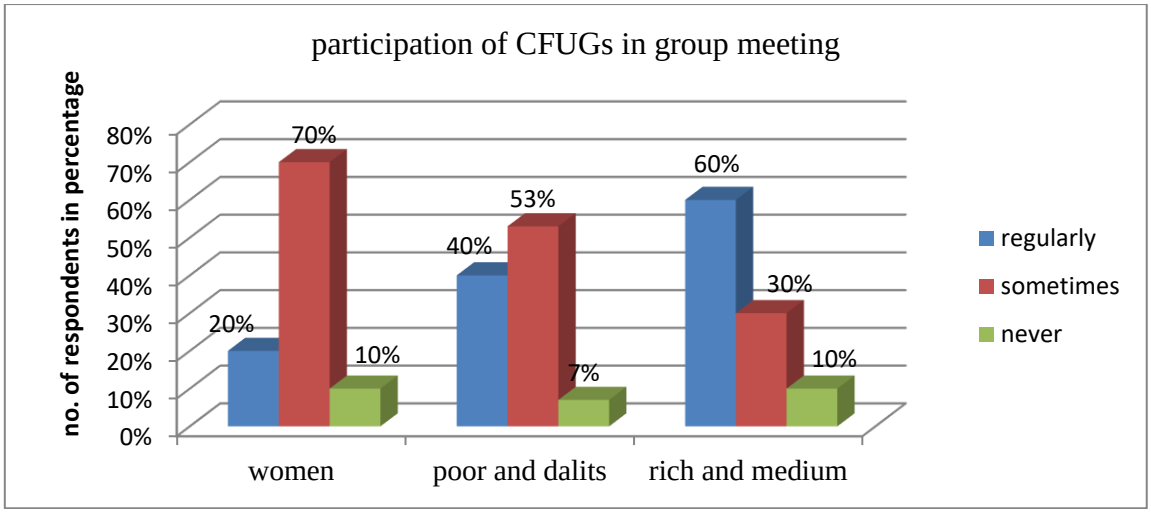


Figure 10: Participation of different members in CFUG meeting

Figure 12 clearly shows that women, poor and dalit CFUG members had participated in such meetings only sometimes. So, there was a lack of active participation of women, poor and dalit CFUG members in such meetings, while rich and medium class CFUG members had participated actively in such meetings.

d. Participation of CFUGs in executive meetings

Executive committee is known as decision making mechanism in the committee. As per the constitutional norms of SCFUG, all the president of village users' groups has right to choose, by consensus or through the exercise of voting, the major five positions of executive committee namely, president, vice-president, secretary, vice-secretary and treasurer, and the president of every village user's group become the member of executive committee automatically. Interesting thing of this community forestry is that one should be the president of village level users' committee to be a member of executive committee of the community forestry.

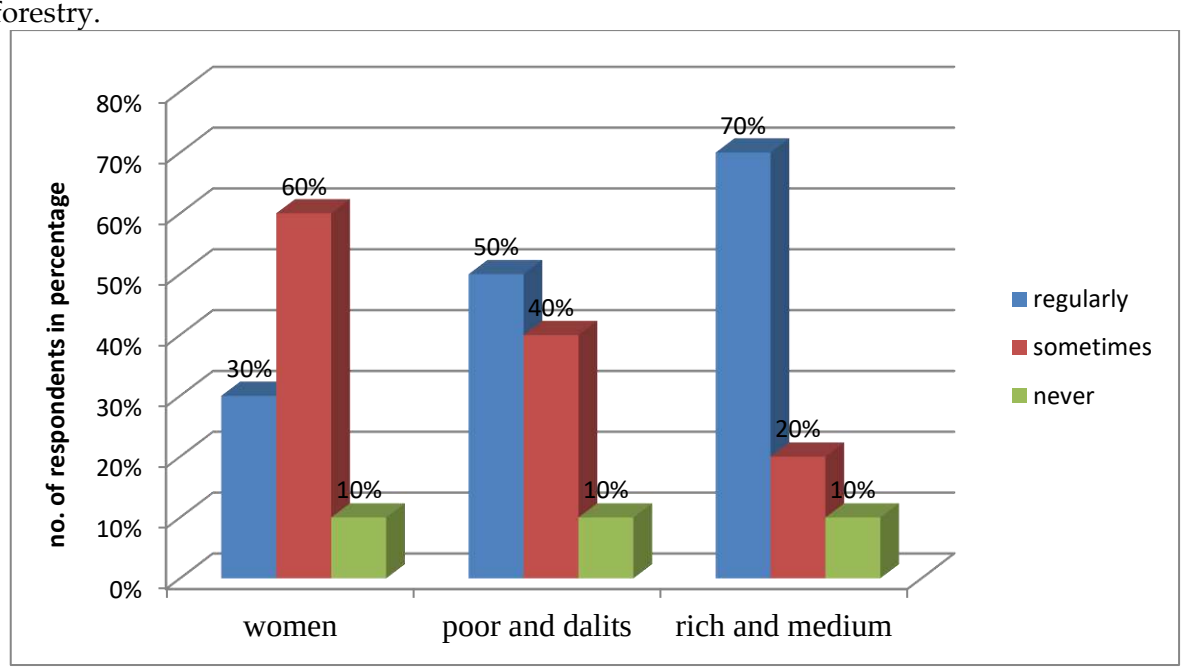


Figure 11: participation of members in executive meeting

Majority (60%) of the women had participated only sometimes in executive meeting while rich & medium (70%) and poor & dalits (50%) class people had participated regularly in executive meeting.

Most of the people are not able to participate regularly in general meeting, group meeting and executive meeting due to busy in farming and illiteracy. Majority (80%) of the people's occupation was agriculture. So, their participation only sometimes was high. Many Forest User Groups are still unsure of their rights and obligations in the management of Community Forests. They are unaware of the engagement of others. Local consumers can adopt democratic decision-making processes through awareness training. Lower caste participation in Forest User Committees will also grow (Jackson, 1994), which is consistent with my findings.

e. Voice of members

All the decisions and the policies to make the CF program a fully community approach required the considerations of thought and needs of women, poor and dalits members. The perception of women, poor and dalits regarding their voice was heard or not by the CFUG executive committee was asked and presented in figure 12

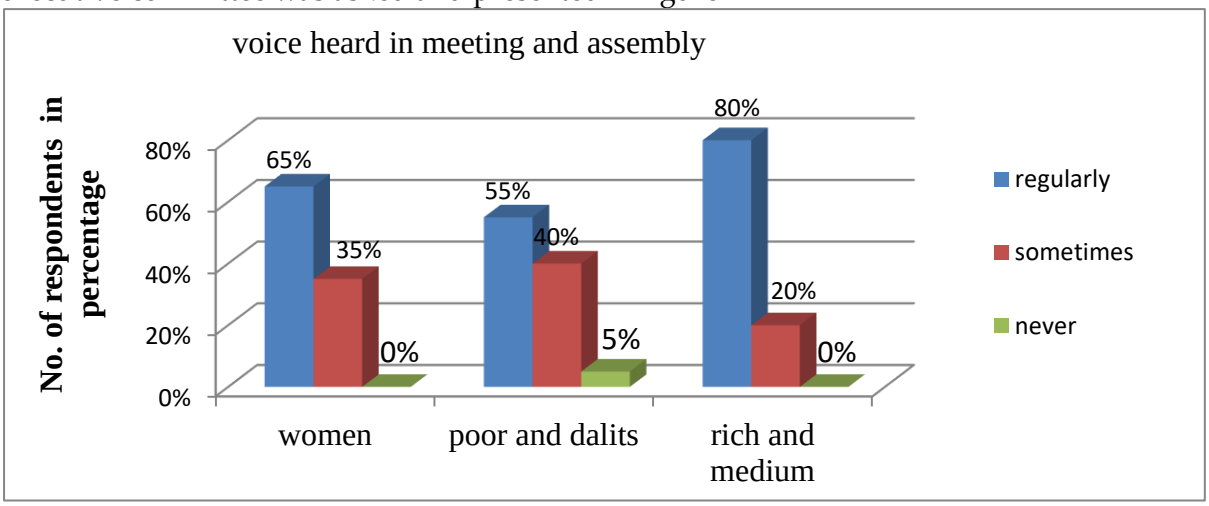


Figure 12: Perception of different respondent regarding their voice

Figure 12 shows that the voice of the women, poor & dalits were heard by CFUG executive committee while the voice of the rich & medium class was heard often. It was concluded that the voices of women, poor and dalits were considered by CFUG executive committee members.

Women, the poor, and dalits, according to Kandel and Kanel (2001), have been marginalized in the development process. They are the forest's major consumers because they are involved in gathering various forest products. Women, the poor, and dalits, on the other hand, are frequently overlooked and excluded from genuine decision-making and benefit-sharing processes. Because their voices are not heard in the forest management process, they are dissatisfied and reluctant to participate in forest operations.

f. Participation community forest users group members in benefit sharing mechanism Level of satisfaction on benefit sharing

The resources were distributed in equity and equality basis. Special policy was made to meet the needs of forest products for all the members. Forest products were distributed in low cost for poor and dalits, who were highly dependent on forest products. Similarly, during

special occasions, natural hazards and other evens forest products were distributed in low or in free cases. Similarly, income generation activities were conducted by the CFUG members. Especially poor, women and dalits were given chance to carry out income generation activities.

Level of satisfaction was put into Likert scale of five points. Point 5 refers to fully satisfactions, 4 for satisfactions, 3 for neutral, 2 for dissatisfaction and 1 refers to fully dissatisfaction.

Table 1: Level of satisfaction on Benefit Sharing

level of satisfaction on benefit sharing							
CFUG	full satisfaction ←→ full dissatisfaction						
		ranking					mean of
respondents	no. of repondents	5	4	3	2	1	rank
Women	12	4(20)	5(20)	3(9)	-	-	4
poor and dalit	10	3(15)	3(12)	4(12)	-	-	3.9
rich and medium	30	12(60)	12(48)	6(18)	-	-	4.2

Table-1, shows that women, poor and dalits were satisfied from benefit sharing mechanism of CFUG, but the satisfaction level of the rich and medium respondents were high with the mean score 4.2. The main reason for satisfaction of all members in CFUG fund mobilization process were transparency.

The cost and benefit sharing patterns are not equitable, and most of the wealthy and influential families in user groups benefit disproportionately at the expense of the poor and ignorant forest users (Malla, 2000). However, benefit sharing is satisfactory and transparent in my results. As demonstrated in table 2, the majority of respondents are knowledgeable about money mobilization, and their satisfaction with fund mobilization is also high. Solar energy, road development, and drinking water were used to mobilize all of the income and benefits from the forest resources.

g. Knowledge about fund mobilization

CFUGs committee generally conveyed the message regarding the CFUG fund, its sources and their mobilization through CFUGs committee meeting and general assembly.

Public auditing was carried out in Shantiswori CFUGs to tally the annual income and expenditures. The information about the annual income and expenditure had been displayed in the general assembly and the photocopies of this information were also distributed to all participants. Table-2, shows the perception of respondents on knowledge regarding CFIG fund.

Table 2: Perception of respondents on fund mobilization

Statement	shantiswori cfugs					
	Women		poor and dalits		rich and medium	
	Yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
annual income	60%	40%	60%	40%	100%	-
source of income	90%	10%	90%	10%	100%	-
utilization of fund	60%	40%	80%	20%	100%	-
provision of women, poor and Dalits	70%	30%	80%	20%	100%	-
chance to observe the audit reports	100%	-	100%	-	100%	-

Table-2, shows that women poor and dalits had knowledge regarding fund mobilization but compared with the rich and medium respondents, women poor and dalit respondents had posed little knowledge about financial management of CFUG.

h. Level of satisfaction on Fund Mobilization

Level of satisfaction was put into Likert scale of five points. Point 5 refers to fully satisfactions, 4 for satisfactions, 3 for neutral, 2 for dissatisfaction and 1 refers to fully dissatisfaction.

Table 3: Level of satisfaction on fund mobilization

level of satisfaction on fund mobilization							
Cfug	full satisfaction ←→ full dissatisfaction						
	ranking						mean of
respondents	no. of respondents	5	4	3	2	1	rank
Women	12	5(25)	4(16)	3(9)	-	-	4.1
poor and dalit	10	3(15)	3(12)	4(12)	-	-	3.9
rich and medum	30	14(70)	10(40)	6(18)	-	-	4.2

Table-3, shows that Rich and medium respondents had higher satisfaction on fund mobilization process with mean ranking of 4.2 and poor & dalits had lower level of satisfaction with mean rank 3.9.

3. Affecting factors in People's Participation

a. Gender

Generally, it is assumed that most of the rural women don't have leisure time to participate in the development activities of society because they spend most of their time in domestic and agricultural work at home. It is thought that if they got leisure time, they spend it in chatting with their friends and relatives in home. If women intend to participate in development activities, they cannot get support of their own male family members and society

also. The male family members such as husband, brothers and sons as well as other males from society also remark when female show some interest in development activities.

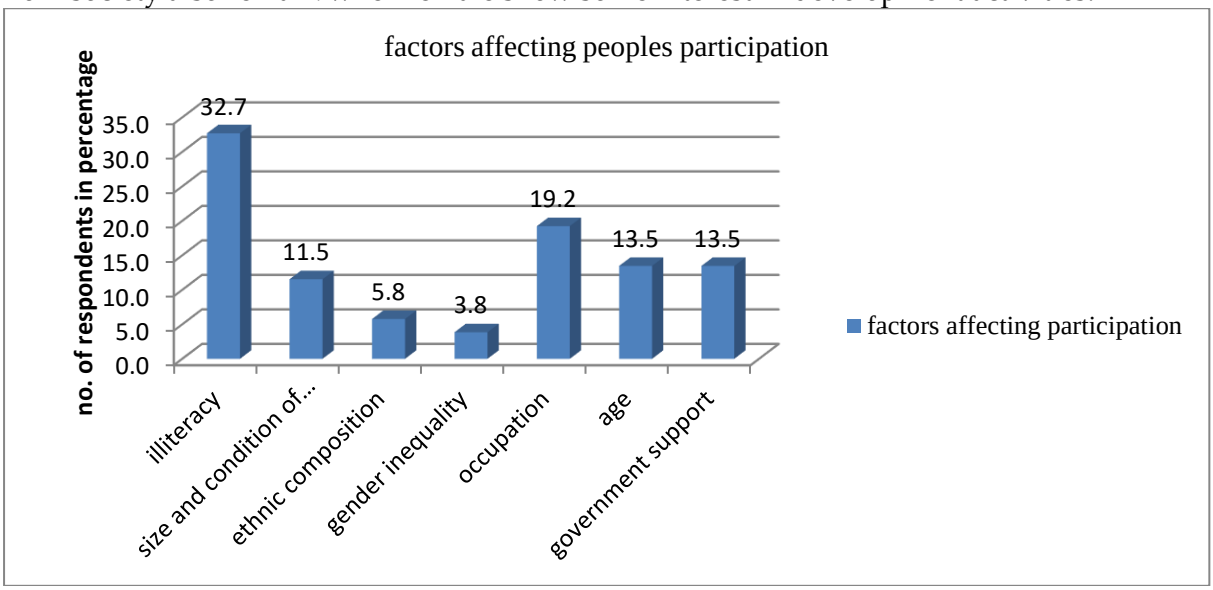


Figure 13: Factors affecting people's participation

Figure-13, shows that out of total respondents (52), Majority (32.7%) of CFUGs members participation were affected by illiteracy following occupation (19.2%), age and government support (13.5%), size and condition of forest (11.5), ethnic composition (5.8) and gender inequality (3.8).

According to Wagley and Ojha (2002): gender inequality is the main reason for low participation level but in my research, illiteracy is the main factors due to low training on forest management activities. Due to the low trainings, awareness programme and majority (55.9%) respondents uneducated were the reason for being illiteracy as main affecting factors on people's participation.

b. Education

Interest, education and awareness play a vital role in developing self-consciousness in person's attitude towards something. Respondents (44.2%) have been found very much aware and they have been shown an interest and positive attitude in community forestry work. Education factor is highly affecting in active participation in the activities and decision-making process of community forestry activities. Illiterate users who participated in meeting do not raise their voice because they think themselves that they are uneducated and don't know as educated. They think that decisions made by educated are always good so that they support decisions done by educated.

c. Age

The field survey unveils the fact that people below the age of 21 years has limited time to take part in the community forest activities because most of them are busy in their study. Most of the people who are participated are aged between 31 to 50 years. They are busy doing something in their professional life however also manage free time to contribute in community forest activities. The people between the age group of 31 to 50 years have been found more than other age group in the participation of community forest activities.

d. Caste/Ethnicity

According to household survey data only 5.8% respondents had perception that ethnicity as a affecting factors in participation. Social values and religious belief on caste system are not affecting in participation of users. There is no practice of discrimination based

on the caste/ethnicity so that all caste/ethnicity (Brahmins & Chhetris, Janajati, Madhesi and Dalits) has been participated equally in CF management activities.

e. Size and Condition of forest

Shantiswori community forest area is 494 hectares and situated in Chure region. Due to large area and difficult land topography of the forest some of the distant respondents were not able to attend the meetings and forest management activities.

f. Occupation

Nature of occupation is also affecting on participation of users. About 88% respondents' occupation was agriculture and livestock farming. Due to this most of respondents are busy in farming. Service holder respondents said they are unable to participate in the activities as free respondents because of their job in government and non-government organizations so they have no time to involve in guarding forests and other forest-related activities and training. However, they are participating in group meetings and assemblies, if the meeting and assembly are organized during the morning or evening time or on leave days or holidays.

g) Government Support

Another important factor that affects people's participation in community forestry is government support. Government officials are supporting CFUG which has enhanced their participation. Forest User Group organized community forest management training and requested technical support (trainer) from District Forest Office (DFO). District Forest office provided such support. As a result of it, the active participation of users in forest-related activities has increased.

D. CONCLUSIONS

People's participation has been recognized as a key element and essential part in natural resource management like forests. As people are highly dependent upon forests and forest products for their livelihood, they do more participate in forestry programmes. People's participation high on forest product collection, distribution, protection, pruning and low involvement in plantation.

Factors that influence people participation in community forest management are the participation in decision making and setting community forest zones that led to their satisfaction. Better livelihood and more income encouraged people to participate in community forest management. Benefits gained from the forest play an important role as incentives to community participation in participatory forest management (Josephine, 2016). The study shows that information flow for fund mobilization was also clear and transparent. Women, poor and dalit CFUG members are satisfied from fund mobilization process and benefit sharing mechanism.

This study shows that the voices of women, poor and dalits were listened and given response by CFUG executive committee members. As we know, each and every thing has its positive and negative impacts on the community, so is found in SCF. During the time of field study, it was observed that CF program has now become an integral part in the life of rural people despite some negative issue that the participation poor and dalits is satisfactory than rich and medium but the role of poor and dalits is inactive in decision making process. However, situation is slowly being more favourable for the poor and dalits participation in decision making level day by day.

Moreover, the study shows that illiteracy is the most effecting factor for the people's participation following busy in farming, distant user, size and condition of the forest, ethnic composition and gender inequality. Rich and medium well-being rank were participated highly on decision making process and different meeting.

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