EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY IN MALAKAND DIVISION, KHYBER PAKHUNKHWA

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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF PESHAWAR
SESSION: 2005-06
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>PAGE NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>List of Acronyms</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acknowledgment</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.1 Rationale for the Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Significance of the Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 The Research Objectives</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4 Synopsis of the Study</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Theorizing Participatory approach in Forest Management</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 Introduction</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part: I</td>
<td>2.2 Concept of Development, Sustainable Development and its Relation with Forest Management</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3 Background of Human Being’s Dependence on Forest Resources</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4 The Evolution of Forest Management in Human Societies</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part: II</td>
<td>2.5 Community Participation in Forest Management or Joint Forest Management</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6 Joint Forest Management and its Characteristics and Advantages: Current Issues and Debates</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6.1 Participatory Approach Creates Sense of Ownership in Local Communities</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6.2 Capacity Building of Forest Department Staff and Empowerment of Local People</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>CONTENTS</td>
<td>PAGE No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.3</td>
<td>Gender Dimension of Participatory Approach in Forest Management</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.4</td>
<td>Provision of Incentives for Local Peoples</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.5</td>
<td>Building Mutual Trust and Cooperation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>A Critical Analysis of the Effectiveness of Community Participation in Sustainable Forestry</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.1</td>
<td>Lack of Training of Forest Department Staff</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.2</td>
<td>Patriarchal Structure</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.3</td>
<td>Lack of Resources</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7.4</td>
<td>Poor Economic Conditions and Lack of Incentives</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 3</th>
<th>Concept of Joint Forest Management in Pakistan</th>
<th>38</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part:I</td>
<td>3.2 Forests in Pakistan</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3 Factors Responsible for the Degradation of Forests</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.4 History of Forest Management in Pakistan</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.5 Forest Policies in Pakistan</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.6 Joint Forest Management in Forestry in Pakistan</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part:II</td>
<td>3.7 Forests in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.8 The Status of Forests in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.9 History of Forest Ownership and Management in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Malakand Division</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.10 Joint Forest Management in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.11 Summary</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>CONTENTS</td>
<td>PAGE NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4</td>
<td>Research Methodology</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.1 Introduction</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2 Overview of the Research Process</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.3 Selection of Qualitative Approach</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4 Case Study</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5 Selection of Locale</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.6 Sampling Strategy and Sample Size</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.7 Tools of Data Collection</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.7.1 Participant Observation</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.7.2 In-depth Individual Interviews</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.7.3 Focus Group Discussion</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.8 Ethical Issues and Considerations</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.9 Transcription, Translation and Analysis of the Data</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5</td>
<td>Perception/Views of Forest Department Employees about</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Participation in Forest Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.1 Introduction</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.2 Activities of Forest Department in Relation to Community</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in Forest Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part: I</td>
<td>5.3 Ideal Community Participation in Forest Management</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.3.1 Community Mobilization and Organization</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.3.2 JFMCs Organization and Structure</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.3.3 Community Needs Identification, Prioritization,</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning and Record Keeping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>CONTENTS</td>
<td>PAGE NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.4</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.5</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part: II</strong></td>
<td><strong>Staff Members Views about Community actual Participation</strong></td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Staff Members Views about Community actual Participation</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Community Mobilization and Organization</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.1</td>
<td>Visiting the Elites</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.2</td>
<td>General Community Mobilization</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Structure of JFMCs</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Awareness, Trainings and Capacity Building Programs</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>Activities and Role of JFMCs</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8.1</td>
<td>Conduct Meetings and Keep Record</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8.2</td>
<td>Needs Identification and Prioritization</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8.3</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8.4</td>
<td>Plantation and Forest Protection</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8.5</td>
<td>Conflicts Resolution</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8.6</td>
<td>Marking and Harvesting of Trees</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8.7</td>
<td>Marketing for Timber</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8.8</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8.9</td>
<td>Revenue Distribution and Utilization</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part: III</strong></td>
<td><strong>Problems Faced by Staff Members in Involving Communities in Forest Management</strong></td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>Problems Faced by Staff Members in Involving Communities in Forest Management</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.1</td>
<td>Lack of Trained Specialized Staff</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.2</td>
<td>Socio-cultural Issues</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>CONTENTS</td>
<td>PAGE NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.3</td>
<td>Financial Constraints</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.4</td>
<td>Ownership Issues</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.5</td>
<td>Extreme Poverty and Lack of Incentives</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.6</td>
<td>Illiteracy and Lack of Awareness</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.7</td>
<td>Political Pressure and Involvement</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10.8</td>
<td>Overpopulation and High Growth Rate</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 6</td>
<td>Views of the Executive Bodies’ Members of JFMCs about Community Participation in Forest Management</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part: I</td>
<td>6.2 Views of the Executive Bodies’ Members about Community Participation in Forest Management</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Community Mobilization and Organization</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.1</td>
<td>Visiting and Organizing the Elites</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.2</td>
<td>General Community Mobilization and Organization</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Awareness, Trainings and Capacity Building Programs</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Structure of JFMCs</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Activities and Role of JFMCs</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.1</td>
<td>Conduct Meetings and Keep Record</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.2</td>
<td>Needs Identification and Prioritization</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.3</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.4</td>
<td>Plantation and Forest Protection</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.5</td>
<td>Conflicts Resolution</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.6</td>
<td>Marking and Harvesting of Trees</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>Page No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.7</td>
<td>Marketing for Timber</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.8</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.9</td>
<td>Revenue Distribution and Utilization</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-II</td>
<td>6.8 Problems affecting Community Participation and Empowerment in Forest Management</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.8.1 Lack of Trained and Specialized Staff</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.8.2 Socio-Cultural Issues</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.8.3 Lack of Interest of FD Staff</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.8.4 Livestock and Forest Depletion (over-grazing)</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.8.5 Ownership Issues</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.8.6 Poverty and Lack of Incentives</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.8.7 Illiteracy and Lack of Awareness</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.8.8 Overpopulation and High Growth Rate</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>General Body Members of JFMCs and Women Perceptions about Community Participation in Forest Management</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-I</td>
<td>7.2 Views of General Community Members about Community Participation in Forest Management</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.3 Community Mobilization and Organization</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.3.1 Visiting the Elites for Intervention</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.3.2 Mobilization of General Community and JFMCs Organization</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.4 Awareness, Trainings and Capacity Building Programs</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.5 Structure of JFMCs</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>CONTENTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>Activities of JFMCs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6.1</td>
<td>Meetings and Record Keeping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6.2</td>
<td>Needs Identification and Prioritization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6.3</td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6.4</td>
<td>Plantation and Forest Protection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6.5</td>
<td>Conflicts Resolution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6.6</td>
<td>Marking of Trees and Harvesting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6.7</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6.8</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6.9</td>
<td>Revenue Distribution and Utilization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part: II</td>
<td>7.8 Issues in the Implementation of Participatory Approach and Empowerment of Local Communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8.1</td>
<td>Socio-cultural Issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8.2</td>
<td>Ownership Issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8.3</td>
<td>Poverty and Lack of Incentives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8.4</td>
<td>Illiteracy and Lack of Awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8.5</td>
<td>Overpopulation and High Growth Rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8.6</td>
<td>Dependency on Forests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER 8**  
Data Analysis  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART: I</th>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>Deficiencies of Forest Department to Involve Local Communities in Forest Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2.1</td>
<td>Lack of Specialized Human Resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of community participation in sustainable forestry in Malakand Division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. It studies the existing mechanism of community participation in the management of forest resources; identifying the factors paralyzing the execution of participatory/joint forest management and highlighting the benefits sharing strategy among different stockholders.

To carry out this study qualitative methodology was employed. Four districts i.e. Swat, Shangla, Dir Upper and Chitral were purposively selected out of the total seven districts in Malakand Division. 24 Executive Body, 48 General Body members of the selected JFMCs and 24 Forest Department employees were individually interviewed in the selected districts. Moreover, 08 Focus Group Discussions were also conducted to ensure more reliable information.

It was found that there was gigantic gap between the theoretical claims and practical implementation of participatory approach in the management of forest resources as the Forest Department had meager resources for the implementation of participatory approach in the management of forest resources. The, staff responsible for such activities, was neither available nor properly trained to perform their duties. The specialized staff had no proper service structure and incentives while working in far-flung hilly areas. Owing to economic and socio-cultural constraints, forest-non owners and women were excluded from the management of forest resources and its benefits. The royalty from the forest products was distributed among the forest owners on the basis of male members in a family. Females and forest-non owners were not given any share in it. Therefore, the poor people were not interested to participate in forest management activities without
incentives. The study suggests that the capacity of Forest Department staff should be built and it should provide with financial resources for the proper implementation of participatory approach. The local masses should be mobilized and organized for active participation in the management of forest resources and the benefits sharing strategy should be made pro-poor and gender sensitive. Furthermore, it is suggested that separate women organizations (JFMCs) would be more effective in such areas where women are in close interaction/contact with forest resources and their socio-cultural setup does not allow them to participate in the same organizations with men.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Top-down approach was adopted for developmental policies in general and forest policies in particular in the past to realize the objectives efficiently. However, later it was found to have failed to realize the perceived vision; and to ensure sustainability and effectiveness of development projects. Thus, to ensure success and sustainability in such projects, the policy makers envisioned an alternative and feasible model i.e. ‘participatory/bottom-up’ approach. Realizing its effectiveness, most countries of the world, including developing countries, adopted this new approach with different names such as Community Based Forest Management (CBFM), Joint Forest Management (JFM) etc for the management and conservation of their forest resources. Looking at its effectiveness, the Government of Pakistan (GoP) borrowed the model of Joint Forest Management from these countries who were practicing it, and implemented it for the protection and conservation of forest resources. For this purpose, Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) were established in forest-dependent communities where different stakeholders including the two key stakeholders i.e. Forest Department (henceforth FD) and local communities were given representation. Yet, this approach could not improve forest resources, rather, in some cases; it triggered even further the deterioration of forests. This study not only investigates the role and deficiencies of FD in the implementation of participatory approach but also examines the role of local-level power relations in influencing this approach. In addition to these factors, this study
critically analyzes the ideological/theoretical framework of JFM with the prevailing reality-based practices in the field.

1.1 Rationale for the Study

Being a resident of Malakand Division\(^1\), which has the highest forest cover in the province, the ruthless depletion of forest resources in the area is a matter of great concern for me. Timber business is considered one of the attractive businesses in this area. Despite the fact that commercial harvesting was banned in 1992, trucks loaded of timber, illegally transporting timbers to other areas, are seen on the roads. As a result, thickly grown forests have been converted to deserts that caused floods and soil erosion in the area. However, some reports by the FD showed an increase in forest cover but independent studies and reports of some reputable international organizations (see for example FAO, 2005) found a constant decrease in forest resources because of high rate of deforestation and high population growth rate in the country. Such factors attracted my attention to the issue of forest conservation and protection.

Hence, realizing the issue I discussed it with some of my close relatives and friends who serve(d) in forest department. They informed me about the formation of Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs, henceforth interchangeably used with community organizations) for ensuring the involvement and empowerment of local communities in

\(^1\) Malakand Division is one of the seven administrative units of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, province. It is situated in the north-west of the province and has the highest forest cover in the province.
the protection and conservation of forest resources. In addition to that, I studied the available literature (see Kruseman & Pellegrini, 2008 and Ali et al., 2006) on the issue and concluded that if participatory approach proved effective and successful in the management of forest resources in most countries of the world then what the possible reasons of its failure in Pakistan can be? Why is deforestation increasing in Pakistan? Are there flaws in the policy or its implementation? Such questions led me to think over the issue. Furthermore, I remembered my personal experience of working with Community Based Organizations (CBOs) when I served in Social Welfare Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa\(^2\) that CBOs were usually made and used by the elites for their personal gains. Such factors motivated me to select this area for my Ph. D study.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study is unique/different from other studies, in the sense that limited studies have been conducted so far to examine the role of participatory approach/JFM in the management and conservation of forest resources in Pakistan, especially in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Malakand Division. Participatory approach was formally adopted by the Government of KP in 2004, for the management and conservation of its forest resources. A number of studies (see Amjad, 1984; Shahbaz et al., 2006 and Ali et al., 2007) have been conducted so far, to evaluate the impact of participatory approach on the livelihood of local communities. Although, such studies

\[^2\] Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is one of the four administrative provinces of Pakistan, located in the northwestern region of the country. It was previously known as the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) until 2010.
increased the interest of local communities to participate in JFM for getting more benefits, yet the impact of participatory approach on the forest resources itself was not properly addressed. The basic reason is that most of such studies have been conducted by different organizations to meet the projects’ objectives only. Hence, this study is an endure to critically examine the process of participatory approach in forest management and investigate the underlying factors (related to FD and local community) that hinder the involvement of local community in such activities. This study will be helpful for policy makers and planners to reorganize their policies and plans irrespective of gender and social status consideration according to the principles of participatory approach and findings of this study. This study will, actually, help the practitioners/implementers to think over their implementation strategy for ensuring and realizing the benefits of this approach. It will also be significant for academia and especially for feminists as women are in frequent interaction with forests and they have no say in its management. Furthermore, it will open new areas of research which will be helpful to expand the horizon of knowledge on the issue.

1.3 The Research Objectives

This study is based on the following objectives:

1. To explore the existing mechanism of community participation practiced by the Forest Department for ensuring sustainable forestry in the form of Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs).
2. To analyze the underlying factors which affect the structure and functions of Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs).

3. To critically examine the effectiveness of participatory approach in involving and empowering local people in forest management and its benefit distributing strategy among the stakeholders.

1.4 Synopsis of the Study

This study comprises nine chapters. Chapter I introduces the nature of the topic, its rationale, significance, its objectives and its overall organization. It enables the reader(s) to understand the issue under consideration in few words.

Chapter II defines and explains various terminologies used for participatory approach in forest management. It reviews the available literature on the issue and the logic behind its adoption in forest management. The new emerging concept of participatory approach, based on the involvement of local community, was reviewed comprehensively, which has significant role in forest management and conservation worldwide. The literature review enables the researcher to identify the missing gaps which the current study intends to fill.

Chapter III highlights the earlier forest management policies of Pakistan. It also enables the reader(s) to understand different aspects/characteristics of such policies. In this chapter, policy shift in the management of forest resources and initiative of community involvement through social forestry projects by the donor agencies, are highlighted. The theoretical/ideal structure and procedure of Joint Forest Management in the province of
KP especially in *Malakand* Division (focused area of the study) has been explained in the light of the available literature.

Chapter IV explains the overall procedure employed in this study. It begins with a brief introduction of the problem following research methods, design, tools used for data collection, population and sampling procedure of the study.

Chapter V is primarily concerned with the presentation of empirical data collected in the field. This chapter presents the views of Forest Department officials about the process of implementation of participatory approach in forest management. It also highlights the issues responsible for paralyzing participatory approach.

Chapter VI supplements the previous chapter V. It presents the views of the executive body members of JFMCs who were mostly forest owners. Their views are of immense importance for the analysis of data and drawing conclusions because members of the executive body are the representatives who nominated/elected to run the business of JFMCs. Chapter VII complements the previous two chapters i.e., Chapters V and VI. It presents the views of general community (forest non-owners) and women. They are the most vulnerable and marginalized segments of the community. Such groups are more dependent on forests resources and in close contact with forests. Hence, their views are of great importance for drawing conclusion on the basis of their analysis with the views of FD staff and executive bodies members of JFMCs (forest owners).

Chapter VIII analyzes the data presented in chapter V, VI and VII. The Data is analyzed qualitatively through thematic approach. This chapter is divided into two parts. Part I
deals with the analysis of empirical data related to the deficiencies of Forest Department with the literature. Part II focuses on the analysis of socio-economic and cultural aspects of local communities that affect the adoption/implementation of participatory approach in the management of forest resources.

The last chapter (Chapter IX) offers the conclusions and recommendations of the study. These conclusions are drawn on the basis of the analysis of primary data in relation to the literature. Further, in the light of these conclusions, recommendations are made for effective implementation of participatory approach in forest management.
CHAPTER 2

THEORIZING PARTICIPATORY APPROACH IN FOREST MANAGEMENT

2.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter explained the nature of this study as well as its significance and rationale. This chapter reviews the literature on participatory approach in the management and conservation of forest resources. To understand the issue in depth, this chapter begins with the concept of development, sustainable development and description of human beings’ dependency on forest resources. It extends the discussion regarding different approaches adopted so far, for the management of forest resources. It further focuses on the introduction of participatory approach in the management of forest resources. This chapter also highlights the process of involving communities in forest management through Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) and its impact on forest protection and conservation. In order to facilitate the reader(s), this chapter is divided into two parts. Part-I portrays the concept of development, sustainable development and historical background of human beings dependency on forest resources and the need for proper management of such resources. This part also focuses on different approaches adopted for the management of forest resources. Part-II focuses on the introduction of participatory approach/joint forest management for the protection and
conservation of forest resources and different characteristics/aspects of a workable participatory approach.

**Part-I**

2.2 Concept of Development, Sustainable Development and its Relation with Forest Management

Although the notion of development is one of the core concepts in sociological literature yet it is one of the fuzziest concepts as well. Despite recurring debates in academic forums and journals, scholars have yet to arrive at an uncontroversial definition of development as well as the related concepts of ‘under-development’ and ‘developing’ countries. Moreover, since its emergence after 2nd World War, a strand of theorists have attempted to redefine and articulate the indicators of development. Theoretical strands have multiplied and the empirical boundaries of the concept have remained somewhat blurred. For instance, when President Truman of the United States of America (USA) popularized the concept of ‘underdevelopment’; social scientists, particularly economists, began to theorize about the strategies to ensure the development of underdeveloped countries to catch-up with the ‘developed’ countries of the world. Practically, per capita income and Gross National Product (GNP) was enthroned as a primary measure for a country’s ‘development’. The most appropriate example of such an approach could be W. W. Rostow’s 5-staged modernization theory (Willis, 2011). In the subsequent years, however, inspired by Marxist approach, the dependency school vehemently critiqued the Rostowian model of development, which was argued to be merely a means of
‘underdevelopment’ of ‘developing’ countries. In simpler terms, although Rostow and other economists and social scientists of his club argued that ‘developing’ countries needed to follow the process of industrialization which will bring economic development and that in turn will change the social structures of these countries. However, Marxist social scientists argued that the process of industrialization was merely making developing countries more dependent on developed countries. This paradigmatic war did extend understanding of the core concept of development but it also resulted in a theoretical impasse for the resolution of which came the idea of ‘participatory development’. Participatory development means “transforming the prevalent discriminatory societal and power structures; empowering marginalized groups to carry on their decisions by themselves; decreasing their reliance on outside agents; organizing them into strong community based organizations and enabling them to utilize their local knowledge for the solution of their local problems” (Ali, 2005: 21). In simpler terms, it means that instead of making grand theories and implementing centralized programs for societal development, the voices of local community (men and women) should be given priority while devising any plan or program for their advancement. In addition to the popularization of participatory development, the theoretical deadlock also contributed to the popularization of another related concept, i.e., sustainable development. Global awareness, particularly in the 1970s and onwards, about worldwide deterioration of natural resources brought our traditional economistic conception of development under increasing scrutiny. It was realized that the world-wide race towards industrialization and competition to catch up with the West not only resulted in the depletion of natural resources but created concerns about environmental issues and global warming as well.
It was particularly the report of World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) commonly known as Brundtland Commission 1987, which led to the popularity of ‘sustainable development’. According to WCED (1987), sustainable development is defined as meeting "the [human] needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (p. 8). The idea was transformed into a policy objective during the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 (Wirth, 1995). The Summit paved the way for the universal acceptance of Sustainable Development as a steering paradigm integrating economic growth, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually supportive elements of long-term development. Furthermore, in September 2000, the United Nations’ declaration about Environmental Sustainability as one of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be reached by the year 2015 further propelled sustainable development into policy circles. For achieving the goal of environmental sustainability, the United Nations (UN) intervened to ensure the elements of sustainable development into all countries’ policies and programs to halt/address environmental degradation.

So far, a brief overview about the problematic nature of ‘development’ along with its evolution has been presented. Before extending the discussion further, it appears relevant to explain the historical relationship/dependence of human beings on the forest resources.

2.3 Background of Human Being’s Dependence on Forest Resources

The interdependence of animals and plants is an important part of the natural system regulating the planet Earth (Mebratu, 1998). Therefore, it is believed that, in the past, all
humans were hunters and gatherers, and relied on wild food (Macionis, 2005). They hunted wild animals and collected wild fruits, plants, seeds and honey. Such hunting and gathering societies were small and nomadic in nature. They had no permanent abode and went about in search of food. There was no proper storage system; hence, surplus food could not be stored. People depended on strong kinship ties by common ancestry or marriage (Scott & Marshall, 2005). Such societies were simple in nature and used simple tools to hunt wild animals and gather vegetables. They existed from three million years to 1200 years ago (Macionis, 2005).

The hunters and gathering societies led nomadic life. The population increased slowly during the period. About 8000 years ago, the human population crossed the figure of 10 million (Meadows et al., 1992). To cope with the problem and satisfy the needs of the increased population, they had to take two steps. Some people increased and speeded up their migration to the densely forest covered regions where they could easily satisfy their needs for food (Mebratu, 1998), while, other people concentrated on the domestication of wild animals and plants for their ease. As a result, the society got pastoral and horticultural in nature and people began to settle at one place. In this way, human beings exploited and degraded forest resources to satisfy their needs for food and shelter. This process of domestication and settlement of people at one place is regarded as the first social revolution in human history. The domesticated animals were further used for the cultivation of fertile land when wooden plow was invented and the land was cultivated for the production of food grains. This era is regarded as the second social revolution and the starting point of human civilization (Henslin, 1997). With the passage
of time, changes occurred in the human behavior which resulted in innovations and technological development from 3000 B.C. to the present era. During this period, high advancements in agriculture, sharpened social divisions of labor and the invention of new means and tools exploited and exhausted natural resources in this stage of development (Mebratu, 1998).

Although agriculture proved very successful in overcoming the shortage of food confronted by the hunting and gathering society, it caused increase in population. After centuries, in 1750, human population reached the figure of nearly 800 million (Macionis, 2005). As a result of such enormous increase, the growing population faced the issue of scarcity of food which paved the way for industrial revolution. Some industries were dependent on natural resources for raw materials while other utilized such resources as a source of energy. During this period, machine proved the main source of production (Meadows et al., 1992). Hence, industrialization revolutionized the world at the cost of natural resources including forests. It improved health facilities that led to high birth rate and increased life expectancy while decreased death rate and infant mortality. Such changes gradually overburdened the natural resources (Schaefer, 2010). Apart from this, industrial revolution triggered pollution and degradation of forest resources, which resulted in soil erosion, chemical adulteration of food items and environmental issues. These challenges were realized that threatened the existence of humanity (Mebratu, 1998). Meanwhile, economists focused on the exploitation of natural resources for getting economic development without thinking over its consequences as the development was measured through economic indicators such as per capita income and
Gross National Products (GNP). For achieving economic development, these natural resources (forests) were over-exploited which were easily accessible and cheaply available. The over-exploitation of forest resources further caused the loss of fertile land as well as caused air and water pollution and environmental degradation. Therefore, the scholars, planners and policy makers realized the issue and pondered to re-define development in the light of new challenges. It was, hence, their thinking which ultimately led to the emergence of the concept of sustainable development. The components of economic, social and environmental factors were integrated under the new concept. It was concluded that natural resources are the gifts of nature and its overexploitation for short-term gains is against the ecological principle of the nature.

Therefore, realizing the importance of such resources Daly (1990), the well known economist, suggests that the use of natural resources must be balanced or lesser than its reproduction rate. Another economist Solow (1999) focuses on the welfare of forest dependent communities and suggests that economic output of such natural resources requires to be spent on providing education and health facilities, infrastructure development and well-being of local communities. In addition, such benefits are required to be extended to the whole community without any discrimination. Similarly, Lodhi & Makki (2010) held that natural resources (forests), being a valuable asset, demand for proper management and conservation. It is the responsibility of the local people to ensure the protection and conservation of such resources. Therefore, environmental archaeologists generally believe that environmental depletion caused the destruction of a number of societies like Rome and Babylonian Empire (Meadows et al., 1992).
2.4 The Evolution of Forest Management in Human Societies

Almost 350 million poor people around the globe, including 60 million aboriginal, are dependent mainly on forest economy for their survival. Similarly, about 1 billion population rely on forests and agro-forestry for satisfying their daily needs. Over 2 billion people use fuel-wood for cooking their food, heating their rooms/houses and foodstuff protection (FAO, 2012). Since the dependence on forests has been an old phenomenon; therefore, the primitive societies had their schemes to manage forests. For instance, Barrera-Bassols & Toledo (2005) found that Yucatec Maya society (250-900 A. D.) was careful in the management of their natural resources. Likewise, Lodhi & Makki (2010) further revealed that the afore-mentioned society had taken step for the conservation of its natural resources. Systematic forest management can be traced back to Bronze Age. The Code of Hammurabi in Babylon introduced the states’ approved norms for harvesting and distributing lumber. About 2000 years ago, the Han Dynasty in China had similar regulations for the management of forest resources. Similarly, the conservation of natural resources was not only realized but also remained an integral part of the Vedic tradition of India. Likewise, realizing the value of forest, king Chandragupta of Maurya kingdom in 300 BCE employed an expert for the management of forests resources. It is also believed that proper rules and regulations were developed by majority of the societies during the Middle Ages in Europe for regulating the use of forest resources. However, the aim of such regulations was to halt deforestation instead of stressing on reforestation. As a result, such measures could not improve forest resources to satisfy the increased demand of wood (FAO, 2012).
Centralized approach was adopted by various countries at different time to address the issue of high deforestation. For instance, Yellowstone Park was declared reserved area in 1872 to ensure the protection of ecosystem, biodiversity and forest resources. In the same way, a number of areas were declared as protected on the pattern of traditional top-down approach like Yellowstone (Lane, 2001 and Pretty & Smith, 2004). The number of Protected Areas reached to 144,296 sites, covering an area of 19,381,000 km², equal to 12.9 percent of the earth (Chape et al., 2008). Britain has 31,380 square kilometers area covered with forests, 30 percent of such forest are managed by the government while 70 percents are owned by private sector (Nix et al., 1999: 2). The United States of America (USA) has declared 154 protected areas as National Forests. It covers an area of 188,336,179 acres (762,169 km²). These forests are under the direct management of United States of America (USA) Forest Service. The first National Forest, as mentioned above, was established as the Yellowstone Park Timber and Land Reserve on 30th March, 1891.

However, this exclusion based top-down strategy did not prove instrumental in safeguarding the forest resources (Hayes, 2006; Pretty & Smith, 2004; Aswani & Weiant, 2004 and Ban et al., 2009). The reason was that the local masses had no say in such management who were dependent on forest economy. Even the local communities were forced into evacuation of the densely forest covered regions. Inevitably, this affected the local dwellers and they did not co-operate with the managers in the management of forests (Garcia-Frapolli et al., 2009; Hamilton et al., 2000; Fu et al., 2004; Jim & Xu, 2002 and Anthony, 2007). Furthermore, the exclusion and deprivation of local people instigated them on the destruction of forest resources through their illegal activities and caused its depletion. For
instance, declaring Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in Uganda, as protected, a huge area of it i.e., five percent was intentionally set on fire by the outrageous masses (Hamilton et al., 2000). The same disastrous act was replicated in Tsitsikamma National Park, South Africa (Watts & Faasen, 2009). As a reaction to local inhabitants exclusions, forest protection was at stake in many areas (Andrade & Rhodes, 2012). Lane (2001) endorses that top-down forest management approach proved fruitless in the protection of forests. When the open access regime and centralized/top-down approach failed in the management of forests, the need for employing a new approach aroused. As a result, a hybrid approach of forest management took place which is called co-management or Joint Forest Management. This inclusive/participatory approach of managing the Protected Areas has been recognized an appropriate one for the management of forest resources (Grainger, 2003; Brown, 2003 and Reed, 2008). Similarly, Aswani & Weiant (2004) emphasize that the conservation of forests is very difficult without the inclusion of local people and addressing their felt needs. However, there are no agreed upon rules for the involvement of local communities and their empowerment in forest management affairs (Mascia, 2003 and Wilshusen et al., 2002).

The emergence of the concept of sustainable development by Brundtland in 1987 gave a new dimension to the development with its focus on environmental aspect where forests got immense importance. Furthermore, after the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, sustainable forestry got worldwide acceptance owing to its benefits in terms of economic growth, social development and environmental protection. Likewise, the UN in 2000 also included environmental sustainability to be one of its MDGs. Such notions sensitized the world for
measures ensuring forest conservations. Therefore, conservation policies focused on the involvement of local communities in the management of natural resource (forests) when the "fortress conservation" i.e. top-down approach failed to ensure the protection and conservation of such resources. Participation has become a buzzword in the development scenario and project management of the day for ensuring sustainability. It is used in different ways such as community participation, people participation, public participation, community involvement in the literature. Community participation refers to the involvement of local people in an activity, project and program, while forestry is the management of trees and forests for environmental or economic gain (Hart, 1991).

Furthermore, sustainable forestry is the forest system which has trees of different age groups (that shows continuous afforestation and reforestation in the area). Such forests not only fulfill the economic, social and environmental needs of the present population but the needs of the next generations are also taken into consideration. Community participation in forestry means involvement of local people in forest related activities, projects and programs to manage forest resources sustainably. Such activities include afforestation, reforestation, forest protection and conservation i.e. forest management.

Part-II

2.5 Community Participation in Forest Management or Joint Forest Management

When the experiences of open access regime and centralized/top-down approach could not produce the desired results and further caused the depletion of forest resources, the
Joint management/participatory approach was adopted for the management of forest resources. It is normally argued that the involvement and empowerment of local communities in the management of natural resources can be more effective in ensuring sustainable and equitable use of such resources. The rules and regulations devised and imposed by involving the local users are more effective in implementing and ensuring sustainable forest management. However, such consensus is possible when the importance of the issue is recognized by the local communities; and the stakeholders have mutual trust and are empowered to make such rules and regulations that could improve forest resources. In the light of participatory approach, local communities have somewhat greater voice/influence in the management of natural resources as compared to the previous (top-down) regimes. The main strategy of such co-management schemes is to build the capacity of local stakeholders (community) and to provide them alternatives to reduce their dependence on forest resources.

2.6 Joint Forest Management and its Characteristics and Advantages: Current Issues and Debates

The last three decades show the priorities of forest management as in the 1970s the focus was only on production. In 1980s along its production, conservation was also focused (Fraser, 2002). In 1990s production and conservation of forest resources was to be ensured through people participation in the management of such resources (Shackleton et al., 2002). Hence, community involvement and empowerment were institutionalized in the forest policy and management of natural resource management around the globe (see Rosyadi et al., 2005;Dupar & Badenoch, 2002 and Baumann, 2000). The stress on the
devolution of power to the local communities and the key role of local users in the management of natural resources (forests) are internationally recognized. According to the centralized/top-down approach, it is believed that local people are not capable to manage forest resources. However, this assumption proved false by conducting studies that in many places forests are being managed very carefully and sustainably by the local users for a long time (Ostrom, 2005). Therefore, participatory approach was adopted when the top-down approach failed to ensure the management of forest resources sustainably (Shahbaz et al., 2006 and Siry et al., 2005). Hence, the basic objective of participatory approach in forest management is to establish working relationship and build mutual trust between local communities and forest departments for a better management of forest resources. For building their mutual trust, it is required to create a sense of cooperation and security among the stakeholders (Pretty & Ward, 2001 and Gardener et al., 2001). Involving local stakeholders in forest management is challenging task (Nygren, 2005). Especially, the involvement and empowerment of powerless is not so simple; it causes conflicts among different stakeholders (Castro & Nielsen, 2001). Though bottom-up approach has benefits for local communities, yet a number of factors hinder the process of devolution. Decentralizing the management of natural resources has proved productive in many places around the world (Miyuki & Boonthavy, 2004; Malla, 2000 and Ribot, 2004). It increases interaction and trust between Forest Department employees and local communities which build the capacity of local institutions to take initiative for the management of natural resources (forest). Hence, participatory approach empowers and enables local stockholders to protect their forest resources from outsiders and commercial interests. It also increases revenues from
forest resources. The involvement and empowerment of poor and marginalized groups play key role in the management of natural resources (forest) as they are more dependent and get more benefits from such resources. This approach creates and increases awareness in the local users and makes them realize the benefits of their cooperation and assistance in the management of forest resources.

It has been noted that by decentralizing the management of natural/forest resources, the elites, using their influence, get more benefits as compared to a layman. However, some negative aspects appear when the decentralization processes is not properly implemented (Shackleton et al., 2002 and Ribot, 2004). Such poorly implemented decentralization program increases the vulnerability of local users especially the disadvantaged and marginalized groups. The local people are assigned the responsibilities of forest conservation and protection without resources and incentives. They are considered to work as labor rather than to involve and empower them in decision-making process. They have to pay more for no or little benefits and large level commercial entities are given chances to use resources with no or little burden. Sometime it causes the exclusion of disadvantaged groups and their deprivation from the benefits of forest resources.

Hence, the process of decentralization of forest management is at the disposal of government (Saigal, 2000 and Timsina & Paudel, 2003). Forest managers/department face(s) a number of challenges from within the department when the authoritarian role is shifting to the role of facilitator. Similarly during the course of implementation several issues arise that question the practicability of the policy in the field (Saigal, 2000). For example, an analysis decentralization process of forest management in India concludes
that it has really increased and extended the authority of the government (Forest Department) at village level (Hobley, 1996). The local elites have dominated the process of decentralization to such an extent that they have deprived the poor and disadvantaged groups from the expected benefits of participatory approach in forest management. It in this context, Richards et al. (2003) argues that participation by local forest users especially disadvantaged and marginalized groups in forest sector projects has been discouraged due to the insufficient incentives for them. Therefore, Ribot (2002) argues that the governments are responsible for the success and failure of decentralization in a country. An effective decentralization requires commitment on the part of the government to transfer powers to the local bodies and empower them in decision-making. Decentralization does not mean paralyzing the central government or downsizing; rather, it intends to establish working relationship based on mutual trust between the central and local authorities. However, despite the stress on decentralization of forest management there is very limited devolution of power and authority to the local stakeholders in many countries. Incapable institutions are responsible for the failure in proper implementation of such policies (Dahal, 2003). Apart from this, such community organizations are under the control and influence of government institutions (Sundar, 2001). However, the commitment of the stakeholders along with building their capacity and extending to them incentives are factors responsible for successful decentralization strategy in forest resources management (Lareson, 2002). Furthermore, if the local organizations are democratic and enjoying discretionary power, the process of decentralization will be more equitable, efficient and effective. However, the number of democratic organizations with such power is very less which has paralyzed participatory
approach. The key elements/characteristics of participatory approach which make this approach feasible and effective are discussed below:

2.6.1 Participatory Approach Creates Sense of Ownership in Local Communities

Participatory approach in forest management is preferred because it guarantees a sense of ownership among local people. It is recognized that the commitment and obedience of local communities are subject to their involvement and empowerment in decision-making processes. Their involvement and empowerment make them realize to devise long-term conservation strategies (Mascia, 2003; Pretty & Smith, 2004 and Fu et al., 2004). On the other side, supporters of the top-down approach suggest that enforcement is the fundamental principle for the success of implementation of conservation policy in the management of protected areas (Bruner et al., 2001 and Lock & Dearden, 2005). Although there are different approaches about the management of protected areas (Chape et al., 2008), yet there is no consensus on an approach that could be better for the management of protected areas. However, the involvement of forest dependent communities is essential in the management of forest resources; otherwise, such people will be involved in the degradation of forest resources when there are no clear property rights and incentives for them due to their exclusion from the management of such resources.

Therefore, it is apparent that generally local people take interest in the management of protected areas only when they are involved and empowered in the decision-making about such areas. It is the involvement and empowerment of local people in decision-making that create a sense of ownership in them. Hence, they not only protect these
resources from others but also utilize such resources very carefully (Aswani & Weiant 2004; Pretty & Smith, 2004 and Ban et al., 2009).

2.6.2 Capacity Building of Forest Department and Empowerment of Local People

Apart from creating the sense of ownership, as mentioned above, participatory approach believes in the capacity building of forest department staff as well as local people. Proper trainings are required for the capacity building of local community and Forest Department staff. Such trainings enhance the capacity of Forest Department staff to implement participatory approach in its real sense and aware the local community about their responsibilities assigned to them in the light of participatory approach. Both the stakeholders come close to each other and provide a platform to discuss issues and play their role in the management of forest resources. Participatory approach ensures transparency through sharing information and adopting democratic values. The poor and marginalized are involved in the whole process of decision-making and benefit sharing. Participatory approach guarantees close interaction, active participation, democratic values and mutual trust that make participatory approach successful. Key to the success of participatory approach is to identify and prioritize the local needs by involving local communities, observing the local culture and traditions and mobilizing local resources for development. The developmental programs based on these principles and utilizing existing experiences and capacities not only ensure sustainability but also contribute to overall development.
It is worth-mentioning that well trained, prepared, and dedicated staff is required for the successful implementation of a project/program (Nkhata & Breen, 2010). If the staff lacks such qualities, the goals cannot be achieved. The capacity building of Forest Department staff is important for the involvement of local people and the resolution of conflicts among different stakeholders during the implementation of participatory approach in forests management (Fiallo & Jacobson, 1995; Akama et al., 1995 and Ban et al., 2009). In fact, if the Forest Department staff is not properly trained and aware about the concepts, strategies and participatory methods of forest management, participatory approach will not work (Fisher, 1989; Bartlett et al., 1992 and Banerjee, 1992). The untrained and inexperienced staff cannot mobilize and organize local communities to involve them in the management of forest resources. Capacity building programs help the stakeholders (Forest Department and Local Community) to understand the concept and techniques of participatory approach and its implementation. Participatory approach is a learning process requires commitment from government officials and local people; however, the support and encouragement of the management make it possible to promote people’s participation.

Capacity building of local people and their empowerment are considered one of the objectives of participatory approach. Therefore, local people requires proper trainings and awareness programs. As a matter of fact, local communities are dependent on forest resources for their survival and to decrease their dependency, it is required to train and involve them in other income generating activities for earning their livelihood. It is helpful in the conservation and sustainable use of forests resources. Furthermore, the
awareness and learning process in participatory approach play a key role in the co-management of an ecosystem. Technical trainings in financial matters, marketing and environmental education/awareness build the capacity of local communities in the management of forest resources (Fu et al., 2004 and Kaltenborn et al., 2008). Such measures produce good results and change the attitudes of local people toward natural resources (Pretty & Smith, 2004 and Ban et al., 2009). Proper motivation and involvement of local stakeholders in the management of natural resources ultimately improve the living standard of local people and reduce conflicts between local communities and protected areas’ managers (De Boer & Baquete, 1998).

Therefore, creating awareness, building the capacity of local people and their empowerment without any discrimination are necessary for the implementation of participatory approach to address ecological, environmental and conservation issues. According to Anthony (2007) empowerment is about people - both women and men - taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, gaining skills, increasing self-confidence, solving problems and developing self-reliance.

2.6.3 Gender Dimension of Participatory Approach in Forest Management

Participatory approach claims the involvement and empowerment of marginalized and destitute segments of the community in the decision making process. Therefore, women and forest non-owners being the marginalized groups have to be the target groups in most cases. However, in majority cases, they have no awareness and information in this regard despite the fact that stress has been given internationally on such measures (World
Summit on the Information Society, 2005). As a matter fact, culture determines the role of women and men in a society; it also determines the way they earn income and have control over resources. Considering various cultures, women are assigned with various tasks and responsibilities. Yet, unlike men women are often denied to join some professions, ownership rights over land and property in different societies. Similarly, women are deprived deliberately to have technical skills and market related professions. As a result, women are placed at the bottom in the social hierarchy as compared to men. Women are always dependent in almost all domains of social life on men that reduce their status. It is a matter of fact that women and men have different perspectives, priorities and goals and of course, development polices have different impacts on them (Sarin, 1996). Generally, women voices are least heard in projects related to the management of natural resource i.e. in formal institutions/organizations (JFMCs), despite the fact that their role in the forest protection is well understood. For example, in Roviana, Solomon Islands, the involvement and empowerment of women in forest management played a remarkable role in the conservation and development of forest resources (Aswani & Weiant, 2004). It is worth noting that the gender of family head can influence the role of a family differently because men and women see collective actions in quite different angles due to their predetermined statuses and roles (Pandolfelli et al., 2007). If women are overburdened with domestic businesses, then they will least contribute in group life (Meinzen-Dick & Zwartveen, 1998). However, it is recognized that their active role is beneficial for the protection of forest resources. For instance in India, scheduled tribes comprised of both men and women of vulnerable settings, resided nearby forests, their involvement and empowerment played key role in the preservation of forest resources.
Therefore, Indian government had to declare Forest Policy of 1988, characterized by the contribution of both sexes. Government of India Order of 1991 reserved two seats for women in every village management committee in the JFM program. In addition, in 1998 an advisory committee was set up by the Ministry of Environment and Forests to ensure the participation of women in the forest management, which suggested that 50 percent of the members of the general body of JFM must be women. Furthermore, on the requisition of 50 percent of the female members of the general body of a JFMC meeting of the executive body may be called. Regrettably, these measures are yet to be implemented due to socio-cultural constraints. Resultantly, in practice, men managed all the related things, because of the women lowest position in Indian society (Rawat & Bedi, 1996).

Commenting on issue Locke (1999) argued that women relationship with their environment can be best understood in the light of the wider social context i.e., power and authority in the social structure. However, as divulged by Kabeer & Subrahmanian (1996) gender equity is now taken into consideration specifically by those donors who are funding these programs and there is redefining and reorganization of women role in the social ladder. In fact, Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPs), such as fuel-wood, oil seeds, medicine plants and fodder etc are collected by women and used for various purposes and monetary gains (Kapoor, 1999). Likewise, in the Harimari village of Midanapore district in West Bengal women along with men jointly protect 100 hectares of forests through JFM agreement. Women collect dry twigs for fuel-wood and they are occasionally accompanied by men in patrolling to check any illegal activity within forests. But the irony is that not a single woman is given the membership of either the general body or the executive body of the Forest Protection Committee (FPC). Again, socio-cultural obstacles
stand in the way of women participatory role there. However, to check the problem of theft-wood, men have once again felt the need of women in the committee. Women also realized their inevitability in the preservation of the natural resources (Raju, 1997).

2.6.4 Provision of Incentives for Local Peoples

If people who are tasked with the conservation of forests resources, they are to be incentivized along with economic opportunities for them, to produce the desired results. It would lead to economic stability of the forest dependent community that would further minimize the exploitation of natural resources on a large scale (DeFries et al., 2007). For instance, in 1987 a livelihood project was started in the light of participatory approach in Kilum-Ijim Forest, Cameroon. The respective community welcomed the project and developed a positive attitude towards the protection of forest resources because of the incentives for them (Abbot et al., 2001). Therefore, it is recognized that people active participation is conditioned with the incentives for them. Majority of the government projects are not focusing on the awareness of the local people and incentives for them also people reservations are not addressed properly. For instance, they are not told about the real benefits they would be reaping once participatory approach is practiced in later and spirit. People fear that the government plants trees on their land/fields to capture it and deprive them of the ownership of their lands. Hence, a trust deficit exists in the local people and the forest management officials, which discourage plantation process.
2.6.5 Building Mutual Trust and Cooperation

The important characteristic of participatory approach is to create cooperation and working relationships among different stakeholders. It will build trust among them and local community will participate and obey voluntary the decisions made with mutual consultation (Lane, 2001 and Mascia, 2003). It is possible when all stakeholders are involved in decision-making in the light of participatory approach (Aswani et al., 2004) and the devised rules and boundaries are clearly defined (Mascia, 2003). However, promoting the strategy of involving and empowering local community in the management of Protected Areas (PAs) is not so easy because the society is not so simple. There are a number of interest groups and complicated power relation, furthermore, access to resources and facilities are determined by these power relation. If such elements/measured, as discussed above, are not ensured in the implementation of participatory approach, it would be affected by the existing power relations of the society and only the powerful and elite class will benefit from participatory approach.

2.7 A Critical Analysis of the Effectiveness of Community Participation in Sustainable Forestry

The theory of community participation is considered an effective approach to resolve all the shortcomings associated with earlier top-down approaches/theories and approaches for a broad-based development of poorer communities in developing countries (Chambers, 1983). It is also remarkable for its applicability in various sectors and fields such as health (Patterson, 2005), natural resources and forest management (Uphoff, 1998;
Shahbaz et al., 2008 and Xue et al., 2006). The primary reason behind participatory approach is its potential for equitable and sustainable development based on the concept of community ownership, mutual trust and community empowerment (Grootaert, 2001). Since community empowerment was the missing element in earlier state-centric, expert-led centralized approaches to development. Therefore, the earlier theories of development were replaced by participation approach to involve and empower the grass root level in developmental activities. However, it is worth noting that programs and projects of various sizes and magnitude designed within the framework of community participation could not produce the expected results. The factors, which retarded the materialization of this approach, are as under.

2.7.1 Lack of Training of Forest Department Staff

Community participation, as delineated above, believes in the involvement, capacity building and empowerment of local communities (Chambers, 1983). This study empirically analyzed community participation in forest management in Malakand Division in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan). The objectives of participatory approach are supposed to impart skills to the staff members of the forest department, who in turn will build the capacity of the community members. The training and capacity building of forest department staff are being stressed upon to develop and polish the behavior and attitude of people towards the attainment of sustainable development. However, the practices observed in this study as well as referred in relevant literature demonstrate that there is a yawning gap between the theory and practice of community participation (see, for example, Abom, 2004; Feldman, 1997 and Sahoo, 2008 and Xue et al., 2006). The primary reason behind participatory approach is its potential for equitable and sustainable development based on the concept of community ownership, mutual trust and community empowerment (Grootaert, 2001). Since community empowerment was the missing element in earlier state-centric, expert-led centralized approaches to development. Therefore, the earlier theories of development were replaced by participation approach to involve and empower the grass root level in developmental activities. However, it is worth noting that programs and projects of various sizes and magnitude designed within the framework of community participation could not produce the expected results. The factors, which retarded the materialization of this approach, are as under.

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This study found that the theory of community participation mostly has become only a buzzword as the staff members considered the formation of community organizations as mere formality; they also lacked the required skills and capacity in organizing and involving local communities. The lack of capacity was not only found in this study that led to a gap between theory and practice of participatory approach, but it was also found to be the case in a number of studies conducted in different places across the globe. For example, Morgan (2001) in his review of literature on community participation in health care in Latin America concluded that although the schism between the supporters and skeptics of community participation has widened it ‘continues to be at once alluring and challenging, promising and vexing, necessary and elusive.

2.7.2 Patriarchal Structure

The theory of community participation has strong undercurrents for gender equality and gender-based justice but the practice as found in this study was different. Community participation in forest conservation in the study area had no proper policy and procedure for establishing community organizations (JFMCs) where representation of both male and female could be ensured. According to the theory of community participation, men’s and women’s participation and empowerment in community organizations creates a sense of ownership which ensures sustainability. The managers in Forest Department claimed that they have employed Female Forest Extensionists (FFE s) to ensure women’s mobilization, involvement and representation in Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs). The existence of such staff was supposed to involve and empower local women in developing a sense of ownership regarding forest management in the women of local
communities. In practice, however, no FFEs were found in most cases and no JFMC had female members. The primary reason for the non-existence of women in such organizations was the cultural obstacles that discouraged women’s participation in decision-making as well their interaction with alien male members of the community. The target areas of Dir Upper is purely Pakhtun man-dominated and altogether patriarchal (Gillett, 2001) and women are strictly prohibited even to go the places where they can be seen by a male. This situation is not confined only to Dir Upper or the study area but also found in almost all regions of the country i.e. Pakistan (Moheyuddin, 2005). In fact, patriarchal power structure is considered as one of the main factors sabotaging the agenda of community participation in many projects and programs, throughout the globe such as in Kenya (see Suda, 2000), in Nepal (see Agarwal, 2001), in India (see Martin, & Lemon, 2001). For instance, in Nepal participatory approach was adopted in health wherein both men’s and women’s participation was stressed upon to participate in health promotion activities/projects. The study area is purely patriarchal and women cannot dare to attend/participate in the meeting of an organization (JFMC) where man are also the member of such organization. Therefore, the polices and the decisions reflected the aspirations of men only.

2.7.3 Lack of Resources

In addition to the above factors lack of resources also made community participation infeasible. Proper resources are required for the capacity building of forest department’s staff as well as for the mobilization and capacity building of local communities. The philosophy of community participation is based on the assumption that top-down
approach in the management and conservation of forest resources is more time consuming and expensive. The centralized government or agency that runs the project spends a significant amount of time and resources on bureaucratic processes such as planning, implementation and evaluating a program. Besides requiring more funding, it also incurs high expenses and thus fails even to realize the concept of self-help, trust and ownership. Therefore, top-down/centralized approach was replaced by participatory approach which is considered an effective alternative to decrease the amount of resources (human and financial) required for the implementation and sustainability of a project (Haines et al., 2007). However, participatory approach also requires for bulk of such resources as the local community has to be properly mobilized and organized to implement this approach in its true sense. Change in human attitude and behavior is a time-consuming process which requires for considerable efforts and resources. Change in human behavior towards forest resources and its management after the implementation of participatory approach was analyzed in this study. Manipulative components which according to the experts did not require enough resources. The practice of community mobilization and organization requires proper resources (both human and financial) but the Forest Department lacked such resources to build the capacity and change the behavior of local people towards forest resources. It is also pertinent to mention that this problem is not confined to the forestry project under consideration; it has been found in many other projects undertaking in different areas on a different subjects as well. For instance, Altaf (2011) in her analysis of the multi-billion (US) dollars’ project of Social Action Program (SAP) in Pakistan, which ran in two phases between 1992 and 2003, found that the notion of ‘community participation’ was merely used as a fiat; in reality,
the hierarchical structure of administrative set up and poor allocation of resources discouraged people’s participation.

2.7.4 Poor Economic Conditions and Lack of Incentives

Participatory theory uncritically considers the involvement, empowerment and ownership of local communities through community organization; but it does not consider the poor economic condition as a factor responsible for discouraging the implementation of this approach. In broader terms, it can be said that the theory does not give adequate attention to the contextual factors. For instance, it believes that the people through community organizations are equally encouraged, involved and empowered in decision-making process that affects their lives. They are enabled to utilize their indigenous resources as well but it forgets that the poor who are always busy in ensuring their survival often do not have spare time for participation in such kind of activity.

The people of the respective area are mostly poor depending upon their small land holdings and mostly on agriculture and forest resources. Moreover, their lives and social organization being centered around subsistence agrarian economy, the villagers are mostly involved almost the whole day to earn their livelihood. The staff members required them to be altogether involved in activity of taking care of the forest; but in fact, they cannot think of sparing so much time. There are no incentives for them while participating in such activities. Therefore, the philosophy of community ownership could not prevail on the ground. In the study area, this was poverty which led to so many problems including, for example, the stealing of forest resources for personal or
commercial consumption. Although it could not be directly observed but the respondents disclosed during the conversation that most of their fellow members in JFMCs (elites) were actually involved in timber trade as their business and are responsible for the degradation of forest resources in the area. Hence, the poor economic condition of respective people of the area caused problems in the right implementation of the theory of community participation.

These are the major reasons that paralyzed the theory of community participation and questioned the practicability of its implementation. Anybody concerned with the effective implementation of community participation must take into account these different variables for making it effective and successful.

2.8 Summary

The chapter summarized the concept of development at different times among the scholars of different fields. It also highlighted the emergence of the concept of sustainable development by integrating and ensuring the three basic component i.e. economic, social and environment. For ensuring environmental factor, the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources (forests) is required that can be ensured with the active involvement of local communities and their empowerment. Therefore, participatory approach/participatory development came to the surface in 1950s because of the failure of centralized/top-down approach. The main reason responsible for shift in paradigm was the exclusion of local stockholders from the process of needs identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation that
adversely affected such projects. Hence, after the completion of projects by the outsider implementing agencies it was not possible to maintain and sustain these projects. It was because of the exclusion of local communities, such projects were not owned by the local people, as they were not asked while planning for and implementing the projects. Furthermore, such programs not focused on the felt needs and priorities of the target population. Participatory approach claims the involvement and empowerment of local community including the disadvantaged and marginalized. However, this approach could not materialized its claims due the existing power structure in society and only the elites became the decision-makers. There are a number of factors such as institutional, socio-cultural and economic that shattered the practicability of participatory approach in the joint management of forest resources.
CHAPTER 3

CONCEPT OF JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT IN PAKISTAN

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explained the emerging concept of sustainable development and its repercussions in the management of forest resources that replaced top-down management with participatory approach in the management of such resources. It also highlighted the underlying factors responsible for the success and failure of bottom-up approach in ensuring community participation and empowerment in forest affairs. While this chapter explains different forest management approaches adopted so far to make forest management more effective in Pakistan. Furthermore, for better understanding of the reader(s) this chapter is divided into two parts. Part-I describes the status of forests and historical background of forest management in Pakistan, and part-II explains different approaches adopted for the management of forest resources in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa especially in Malakand division.

Part I

This part, as referred to above, explains the status of forests in Pakistan as well as different forest management approaches implemented for the conservation of forest resources in Pakistan. It also highlights the reasons responsible for the failure of different approaches in the management of forest resources.
3.2  Forests in Pakistan

The forest cover in Pakistan is low as compared to other countries in the region. It has 4.72 million hectares land covered with forests, which comprises only 5.36 percent of its total area (Wani, et al., 2004:5). According to another report, the forest covered area in Pakistan is nearly 4.2 million hectares, which is about 4.8 percent of its total area. According to the Government of Pakistan (2003) Sindh,3 Baluchistan4, Punjab5, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Kashmir,6 and Northern Areas7 have 0.92, 0.33, 0.69, 1.21, 0.42, and 0.66 million hectares area covered with forests, respectively. This shows Khyber Pakhtunkhwa having 1.21 million hectares area covered with forests at the top of the list. Forty percent of the country's total forests are in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Shahbaz et al., 2007). This indicates that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has the highest forest covered area as compared to other provinces.

The average of per capita of forest in Pakistan is 0.03 hectares as compared to the average of 1.07 hectares for developed and 0.50 hectares for developing countries. This shows that Pakistan has very low forest-covered area as compared to 30 percent for the world (FAO, 2001). In addition, due to the high population growth rate the per capita

3 Sindh is one of the four provinces of Pakistan situated in southeast of the country.

4 Baluchistan is another province of Pakistan located in the southwestern region of the country.

5 Punjab is another province of Pakistan.

6 Azad Kashmir is the region of Kashmir, which has gotten freedom from the Indian state.

7 Northern Areas are an administrative region in the north part of Pakistan and are now called Gilgit Biltistan.
forest area is decreasing. This is the reason that Pakistan has to import forest related products. However, Pakistan exports some sports’ goods and furniture of about Rs. 2 to 3 billion, annually. Furthermore, forestry sector contributes only 0.3 percent to the Gross National Products (GNP). Apart from this, there are some other indirect benefits from forests, which are not included. For example, the annual wood production of the country is about 3.5 million m³. Similarly, wood-based industries are dependent on forest resources for raw materials and these industries provide employment opportunities. More than 500000 people are employed in such industries and about 90 million heads of livestock are dependent on forest. Apart from this, forests prolong the life of Tarbela and Mangla (the names of two dams in Pakistan) which are not only the source for hydropower generation but supply water for the irrigation purpose in the plain areas of Punjab and Sindh provinces as well (Shahbaz et al., 2007).

Though Pakistan does not have enough forest resources, yet forests have some latent productive, protective, regulative and socio-cultural functions. These are in addition to the major forest products and its direct economic benefits. Forest resources play key role in the protection of soil and water resources and preservation of ecological balance (Khan & Mahmood, 2003). Apart from this, forests prolong the existence of dams and reservoirs and also protect the irrigation channels. Similarly, forests sustain the supply of wood and its products (Mehmood, 2003 and Qazi, 1994). Owing to such functions, forest depletion is one of the serious issues for Pakistan as about 39000 hectares of forests are depleting per year. The deforestation rate in Pakistan was reported 1.5 percent, annually, between the years of 1990 and 2000 (FAO, 2005). The high degradation of forests shows the incapability of the
Forest Department to manage forest resources. Therefore, woody biomass presently disappears at a rate between 4 to 6 percent annually which is considered the second highest rate in the world. Therefore, it is realized that if the present trend of deforestation continued, the total woody biomass of the country would be consumed within 10 to 15 years (Khan et al., 2006). It is worth mentioning that the annual projected income from deforestation in Pakistan is about US$ 28-36 million (Brandon, 1995). According to Rodgers et al. (1997), the annual estimated cost of remediation for forests is nearly US$ 157.40 million.

3.3 Factors Responsible for the Degradation of Forests

Overpopulation and high growth rate are the factors considered responsible for the overuse of forest resources. Pakistan also faces the issue of overpopulation as it the high growth rate in the region. To fulfill the needs of the increased population, the forest resources are overexploited; it has increased deforestation. On the basis of the current exploitation rate, it has been assumed that the total existing forest resources of Pakistan would be consumed very shortly. The high rate of deforestation has become a challenge not only for Pakistan but also for developed and developing countries.

However, this is not a new phenomenon as large forests were exploited to meet the needs of the rapidly increasing population during the colonial and post independence period. Most of the forests were cut down for agriculture purposes to satisfy the demand for food for the growing population. The process of deforestation was further strengthened by the complexity of ownership and land tenure system which caused mistrust between different
stakeholders. The local communities of Hazara were deprived of their right and privileges through the Hazara Forest Act 1936 that led to the “bureaucratization” of forest resources. Through the promulgation of this act, the British government got control over the forest resources in Hazara by excluding local people. According to the proponents of top-down approach the local people are incapable to manage the forests resources; therefore, government (Forest Department) has the responsibility to protect/manage forest resources. The forest owners and right holders, on the other hand, criticize the managers (Forest Department) for the high rate of deforestation. Forests are the main source of providing energy for local domestic use while the increased population exerts pressure on forest resources. Local forests fulfill one-third of national energy requirements by supplying about 3.5 million cubic metric of wood (GoP, 2001). As a matter of fact, more than 75 percent of households use wood for their cooking and heating in Pakistan while 90 percent of rural population is dependent on forests for their needs. Similarly, rural people (forest dependent communities) are dependent on livestock for their livelihood; forests are the main source of fodder for their livestock. Therefore, forests in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are considered to be exposed to over-grazing. It is recognized that 82 percent of forests in the northern divisions (including Malakand) of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are affected by over-grazing.

Furthermore, ban on harvesting timber for commercial purposes, after the floods of 1992, ironically aggravated the problem of illegal cutting. As a result, deforestation increased due to illegal activities almost in all regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Malakand division. The processes of royalty payments to the local right-holders delayed or stopped
due to the ban which caused an increase in illegal cutting. Therefore, the frustrated local communities preferred to sell their royalty rights at nominal charges (Suleri, 2002).

3.4 History of Forest Management in Pakistan

The history of forest management in Pakistan is directly the outcome of pre-colonial era. During the period, forests were not directly under the control of Indian states; rather, the forest resources were controlled by the local users/communities which were managed according to the local customs and traditions. All the people benefited from such resources according to their needs and these resources (forests) were regarded as Common Pool Resources (CPRs). The pre-colonial era is regarded as an open access regime in which local people had the right to meet their needs out of such common pool resources and they were responsible to management such resources according to their devised customary laws.

However, due to rapid population growth and industrial revolution, forest resources were over-exploited to speed up the economic development. As a result, to overcome the increased deforestation, state took the control of natural resources especially forests by establishing forest department for better conservation and protection of forest resources. Under such centralized approach, forest dependent people were alienated and displaced from forested areas. Such management changes affected the lives of forest dependent people who are poor and mostly relied on forests for their livelihoods and survival (Durr, 2002 and Khan & Naqvi, 2000) because forestry played an important role in the lives of such communities living in the vicinity of forests (Conway et al., 2002 and Ashley,
2000). However, the management of forest resources is still considered the exclusive domain of the Forestry Department in Pakistan and state is considered the formal owner of all forest resources. The rights and concessions of the local communities have not clearly defined which cause misconceptions and deficit distrust among the stakeholders.

Before the adoption of institutional management, a good historical overview of peoples' involvement in forest management in the pre-colonial era is documented. Pre-colonial Indian states did not occupy the forests and the forest users had the control of forests. With the passage of time, communal rights (local uses) were interrupted by the states/rulers which altered the land-use patterns, property rights and tenure systems in the region. The customary constraints on forest use underwent only occasional intrusions by the Indian states. Local rulers and landlords exercised control to the extent of extracting dues on certain animals and plant species to maintain hunting reserves. Substantively, local communities had control over management and utilization of forests and cultivated land. A hierarchy of user rights rather than an absolute notion of property defined the status quo. Ownership was diverse enough to allow for a variety of groups like stock-keepers, animal trappers, shifting cultivators, and nomadic communities to make use of the land. They were allowed an extensive variety of land use systems to survive and flourish. Such diversity also allowed multispecies forests to exist, catering to a wide variety of ecological uses. From nomads herding livestock to the tribal people engaged in seasonal agriculture all were able to meet their subsistence needs collectively from the forests (Khan et al., 2006).
3.5 Forest Policies in Pakistan

The forest policies in Pakistan date back to the British colonial rule. Such policies, until recently, focused on forest conservation even at the cost of the rights of the local communities. Top-down/centralized approach was adopted for the management of forest resources and local users were ignored in the management of forests resources. Following the colonial style, in the beginning, all Pakistan forest policies of 1955, 1962 and 1975 were autocratic and top down in nature. The aim of such policies was to bring more forests under the control of the government at the cost of depriving and excluding local communities. The first two policies 1955 and 1962 were bureaucratic in nature and empowered the Forest Department like colonial period. However, the 1975 forest policy recognized local people as stockholders but practically there was no sign even to consult local communities in the affairs of forest management and the Forest Department officials played the role of police. There was no accountability of staff to the local people. All these policies were bureaucratic and policing in nature and excluded local communities from the management of forest resources. The organization structure of Forest Department in Pakistan is as bellow:
Organizational Structure of Forestry, Environment & Wildlife Department

The forest policy of 1980 stressed on the involvement of local people in plantation and recommended to bring more land (forests) under the control of the government. The 1991 forest policy was a donor driven policy which focused on the extension of forests cover with the help of local people. Similarly, the forest policy of 2001 has the feature to involve and empower local stockholders in the management of forest resources. Therefore, the forest policies of 1991 and 2001 are participatory in nature to some extent, though, civil societies criticize these policies for not addressing the local needs (Shahbaz et al., 2007) and that such policies failed to achieve their set objectives. According to Geiser (2000) the poor and
marginalized were neither involved and empowered nor benefited from forests. The elite class exploited the forest resources as they wanted. This not only increased the miseries of the poor forest dependent people but also created a sense of lack of ownership among them.

The main reason responsible for non-cooperative behavior of the local community in forest management is considered that all forest policies focused on the conservation of forest at the cost of local livelihood. However, now conservation as well as development is the agenda to attract local stockholders and make them active actor in the whole process (FAO, 2001; Wily, 1997 and Shackleton et al., 2002). However, the introduction of people involvement in forest management in Pakistan is based on the Forest Policy of 1894 and the National Forest Policy of 2001. Now to make these policies more pro-poor and to ensure the implementation of such policies in its true senses for the conservation of forest resources are the challenges to be overcome (Shahbaz et al., 2007). However, the Forest Department had meager resources (both human and financial) therefore to mobilize local people and involve them in the management of resources.

3.6 Joint Forest Management in Forestry in Pakistan

To overcome deforestation and improve forest cover, participatory approach was adopted to involve and empower local people in forest resource management. For this purpose, a number of donor-funded projects were started with the support of Asian Development Bank and World Bank in different provinces of Pakistan. The important projects were Forestry Sector Project (FSP) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab Forest Sector Development Project (PFSDP), Sindh Forestry Development Project (SFDP) (Suleri,
The involvement of local people in forest management became a key feature these projects (Poffenberger, 2000; Fisher, 1999 and Shackleton et al., 2002). However, involving local people in forest management is a challenging job because there are many conflicting and interests groups with their prioritized needs. Participatory approach was adopted in Pakistan for the management of natural and conservation of forest resources through Forestry Sector Project (FSP) in 1995. The objective of this project was the protection and improvement of forest resources in the hilly and mountainous areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the active involvement and empowerment of local communities in forest management. The FSP project organized local communities in the form of Village Development Committees (VDCs) representing local men and Women Organizations (WOs) representing local women. These organizations were responsible for Village Land Use Plan (VLUP) for the management of land according to the Village Land Use Plan at village level. For the management of forest resources, Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) were established. These JFMCs provided joint forum comprised of Forest Department and local communities for the management of forest resources. The rights and responsibilities of stockholders were defined that resulted in mutual trust and accountability.

Part II

3.7 Forests in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly called the North West Frontier Province) is famous for forests as 40 percent of the total forest cover of Pakistan is located in the
hilly areas of the province. Forests resources of the country are depleting at a rate that is one of highest in the world. It is estimated that forest resources inventory of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would finish within 20 to 25 years if the demands for fuel-wood and timber remained constant with the present demand without providing alternatives of fuel-wood for used (FAO, 2007). Centralized/top-down approach for the management of forest resources was considered responsible for the high rate of deforestation. The degradation of forest resources caused an increase of conflicts between stakeholders/local user groups. The Government of Pakistan with the assistance of international donor agencies started extension programs and projects in forest sector to in the upland areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The main objective of such projects was to rehabilitate and protect forests resources for ensuring water supply, controlling soil erosion and environmental pollution and alleviate poverty by involving and empowering local communities for forest management activities.

3.8 The Status of Forests in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The bulk of Pakistan's primary forest resources (40 percent), as mentioned above, are situated in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while more than half of the total forest covered area of the province is concentrated in the Malakand and Hazara divisions. Being the largest division of the province, the former (Malakand) covers 29.1 percent while Hazara division is smaller and constitutes 17 percent of the province's area. The province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) has 7.8 percent of its total area covered with forests. Forest cover in Malakand Division is about 360,912 hectares, which is 8 percent of its total area, while in Hazara
division forest cover an area of 316,318 hectares, which is 5 percent of its area. However, having the rich forest cover in Pakistan, the forests in Malakand and Hazara have depleted significantly over time. This reflects an alarming situation with respect to forest productivity.

Forests play important role in daily lives of the local communities who are living near forests in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Forest provides the benefits like construction wood, timber, medicine plants, fodder, raw material for cottage industries and fuel wood apart from share in the royalty from the forest products. It is due to the high and extreme rate of poverty that makes forest dependent communities more dependent on forest resources. The depletion of forest resources further deterred their socio-economic conditions (Khan & Naqvi, 2000; Durr, 2002 and Warner, 2000). The livelihood of such communities suffered a lot due to the degradation of forest resources and the state policies further caused their deprivation (Baumann & Sinha, 2001).

3.9 History of Forest Ownership and Management in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Malakand Division

The forests of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are situated in the hilly areas of Hindukush, Himalayas and Korakoram. These ranges of mountains are especially in the districts of Dir Upper, Chitral, Swat and Shangla in Malakand Division and district Mansehra in Hazara Division (which is not part of the study). They have valleys and higher slopes covered the priceless resources. In such regions like other part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa local people (as mentioned above) are dependent on forest resources for their daily needs (Khan
Farming is considered the major source of their livelihood and subsistence in such areas of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*. Therefore, to meet their need for food by cultivating more land, encroachment of forests land occurs (Steimann, 2005 and Hussain, 2003).

Though *Walis* (Rulers) *Swat* were criticized for using valuable forests to build and keep alliances with strong and powerful allies. Forest resources were directly under the control of the state/rulers and they were entitled to allot such resources according to their will. The people faced harsh punishments (see Sultan-i-Room, 2005). However, the *Walis* were in a continuous struggle of war with the nearby/neighborhood states and internal rebellious groups and such alliances were made to depend the interests of the Princely State of *Swat* and to curb internal and external threats. The *Walis* played key role in the management of forest resources and local people had the right to meet their felt needs from forests with the permission of *Walis*. Apart, the *Walis* had established a strong social institutions/services system, which eroded since the accession of *Swat* state to Pakistan in 1969 (Kruseman & Pellegrini, 2008). Similarly, the rulers of the Princely State of *Swat* were also considered religious and spiritual leaders of the state and always preferred the interest of the public (Islam, 2013). After accession to Pakistan, the Princely State of *Swat* (including *Shangla*), the forest resources formally came under the control of Government of Pakistan which was held responsible for the management of forests. The local people (legal right holders) were given only 10 percent of the royalty from the forest products apart from some other concession such collecting of some non-timber forest products. The government form the very start extended the centralized and
bureaucratic approach to manage the forests in Swat. The forests were declared either reserved or protected and local rights were suspended. In both (reserved or protected) systems, state (through Forest Department) had the ownership and management for forests. However, both systems extended incentives and privileges to the local people, differently. For instance, in reserve forest cutting was not allowed and the locals had very restricted freedom in terms of extracting dry wood and non-timber forest products. Moreover, in protected forest, it was forest department to arrive at the viable management plan and in case there was any sort of cutting, the Forest Development Corporation (FDC) was responsible for marking and distribution royalty among the right holders (legal owners) (Steimann, 2004). However, the provisions of "local quota" was reserved to local people to use forest products for fulfilling their routine needs and also "emergency quota" in case of emergencies (natural and man-made disasters) to rebuild their houses.

The share of local right holders in the sale-proceed of forest products was increased by the government from 10 percent to 60 percent (in some place to 80 percent. Most of the right holders were the elites’ families-the former allies of the Wali. However, the incapability of the government to replace the old regime of property right and to implement its forest policies caused an open access regime. Under the open access regime, the forest resources were used/exploited by people on the bases of their power relation. The gap between theory and practice was not bridged by the Forest Department in the management of forest resources. Therefore, illegal cutting, encroachment and legal disputes over ownership and royalty became common feature of such communities. However, land
tenure system changed over time from rotational agricultural land to permanent settlement which created ambiguity of forest ownership.

Like other parts of the subcontinent, forest resources were considered collective ownership in *Dir-Kohistan*. Customary law governing rights to natural resources (forests, agricultural land, rangeland, pastures, and wasteland) was rooted in a system known as ‘*garzinda wesh*’ (the traditional system of rotating land ownership) or literally as moveable distribution. The invading *Yusufzai pathans* (a *Pakhtun* tribe) introduced this system in the mid of 17 century and at that time it was also adopted by the residents of *Dir* State. This rotating ownership system got popularity because the features/characteristics of land such its fertility, availability of water, location and accessibility were different from place to place. Hence, the rotational system ensured the sharing of such benefits equally. However, the land with different features was allotted to or distributed among the main tribes. Each allotment included a mix of agricultural, forest, pasture and wasteland. Further, these tribes in turn allotted land to sub-tribes. During the *Nawabi* tenure, the *garzinda wesh* (rotating ownership) system folded into more formal arrangements. The *Nawabs* also laid claim to communal resources and various taxes were levied for the use of agricultural land and forests and *qalang* (a type of rent) for grazing pastures. The local communities were allowed to satisfy their domestic needs from forests. However, after the inclusion of these princely states in Pakistan common pool resources (the communal land and forests) came under the direct control of the government of Pakistan. With the passage of time, the unclear tenure and ownership rights caused unrest in local communities as some people enjoyed
the ownership rights. During the period the international trend to involve local communities in forest management, encouraged the donors to finance forest sector projects in *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* in the early 1990s to control the rapid degradation of forest resources. The main objective of such programs was to launch inclusive system of forest management by giving a stake to the local users groups. It is recognized that the protection, conservation and sustainable use of forest resources is possible by involving and empowering local stockholder in such activities.

Historically, forestry reforms served interests of government (Forest Department) excluding local users (communities) from the benefits. Forests Act 1927 and *Hazara* Forest Act 1936 in *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*, based on the exclusion and deprivation of local communities from their customary rights to use forest product. Though *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* Forests Ordinance 2002 encouraged uniformed and armed forest management staff with increased powers, yet it has the provision of community participation in the management of forest resources which is a good sign.

With the exclusion of local communities from forest related activities, these policies are designed by consultants who are not part of the community for which the policy is made. Therefore, the needs of local communities are not reflected in such policies which causes the failure of projects and programs and their proper implementation. Therefore, such exclusionary policies, focusing more on economic rather than environmental efficacy, cause the depletion of forest resources. Such policies denied community needs for livelihood (Mahmood, 2003; Iqbal, 2000 and Shahbaz et al., 2006). The top-down approach is rooted in the colonial era (Geiser, 2000). The forest department’ staff of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* is
trained in bureaucratic and top-down approach like colonial periods and the powers rest with the provincial capital. To hide their inefficiency, the local users are often held responsible for the degradation of forest resource (Geiser & Steimann, 2004). In this context, Khan and Mahmood (2003) explored that extreme poverty, overpopulation, overgrazing and lack of awareness in local communities are the challenges to over deforestation. Similarly, Mahmood (2003) argues that converting forest to agriculture land, dependency on fuel wood, road construction in forests, urbanization, over-grazing and timber mafia are the factors responsible for high rate of deforestation in *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*. Therefore, the forest covered area reduced to 5 percent in 1996 as compared 20 to 25 percent in 1850 (Sungi, 1996). The gap in production and consumption of fuel wood was more than 300000 m$^3$ in *Swat* (Kruseman & Pellegrini, 2008). History reveals that forests play key role in the economic activities and livelihood strategies of local communities (Sultan-i-Rome, 2005 and Barth, 1985). However, the high growth of population overburdened the forest resources and caused its depletion that created environmental and ecological issues.

### 3.10 Joint Forest Management in *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*

The involvement of local communities in the management of forest resources has become momentous trait of national forest policy and practice around the world. The programs and projects based on community involvement were funded and supported by international donors (Poffenberger, 2000; Fisher, 1999 and Shackleton et al., 2002). In 1995, community-based initiatives were taken in Pakistan for the first time by launching Forestry Sector Project (FSP). This project was started with the assistance of Asian
Development Bank in 1996 and adopted an institutional approach. The main objectives were to institutionalize joint management of natural (forest) resources in *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*. For this purpose, integrated approach was adopted for the management of such resources to improve the environmental and socio-economic conditions of local people. The important feature of this concept was to decentralize forest management to the local stockholders (users groups) by involving and empowering them in forest management related activities. For the management of forest resources Joint Forest Management (JFM) was introduced and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) were established in the forest depending communities to ensure the participation of local communities in the management of forest resources. Later on, the concept of JFM/participatory approach was formally institutionalized in forest management through passing an Act “Community Participation Rules 2004” as a response to the Forest Ordinance 2002 and Devolution Plan 2000. The reason for the introduction of this approach, in the province of KP, was to involve and empower forest dependent communities (users) in the management of natural. Furthermore, it aimed to build mutual trust and create a sense of ownership among different stakeholders. For this purpose, Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Women Organizations (WOs) were formed which represented males and females respectively. These organizations were responsible for proper use of land according to approved Village Land Use Plane (VLUP). However, JFMCs were established for the management of forest resources in these area where forests existed. In JFMCs, it was mandatory to given representation to all stakeholders such as Forest Department, forest owner, forest non-owners, local councils, Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs).
3.11 Summary

This chapter highlighted the forest resources its role/importance and the historical background of forest resource management in Pakistan. Various factors responsible for the degradation of forest resources were highlighted. The need for a shift in the management of forest resources and the replacement of top-down/centralized approach by bottom-up/participatory approach has been reviewed. Having the highest forest covered area in Pakistan, forest resources and its management in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Malakand Division have especially focused. The ownership and management issues of forest resources have been discussed in the historical perspectives. At the end, participatory approach/joint forest management, its feasibility and way of implementation have been highlighted.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted historical background of forest resources and its management in Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Malakand Division. It also explained emergence of the concept of participatory approach for the management of forest resources in the country while this chapter explains the strategy and procedures employed in this study to find out facts related to the implementation of participatory approach practiced by the Forest Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the management of its forest resources. Moreover, it justifies the selection of locale, sampling procedure and respondents for the study. The chapter also highlights the role of the researcher in carrying out this study and describes the tools used by the researcher for data collection. At the end, it points out ethical propositions observed in the field and reflects the way of data transcription and its analysis.

4.2 Overview of the Research Process

Prior to explaining the overall strategy, it is pertinent to present an overview that familiarizes the reader(s) with the research process employed in this study. The process clarifies the procedures employed by the researcher and enables him to formulate research objectives, analyze data and draw reasonable conclusions. Though various
approaches/methodologies are available for studying this phenomenon, each one has its weaknesses and strengths. Therefore, while selecting research methodology I considered all aspects of the phenomenon. According to Bulmer (1982) while selecting an appropriate methodology the researcher must keep in mind the nature, goals and objectives of the study. Therefore, keeping in view the nature and objectives of the study, qualitative method was employed to explore the practice/process of participatory approach in the management and conservation of forest resources. According to Mack et al. (2005) qualitative methodology is more successful in exploring intangible aspects such as social norms and values, gender issues, socio-economic factors etc. Furthermore, case study design was employed in order to study the phenomenon in more detail. Forest Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was selected as a case because of its documented intention of employing and carrying out its forest management activities through community participation. There were different debates about the imminence of multi-case study (see for example, Yin, 1984 and Vohra, 2014); however, single case (Forest Department) was selected to minutely explore the phenomenon of participatory approach and its repercussions on forest resource management. Similarly, single case study promises multi-dimensional and miniature study of the phenomenon (Gustafsson, 2017) as compared to multi-case study that focuses on the comparison of different cases (Bengtsson, 1999). Hence, Malakand Division in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan was selected as a locale for this study, which has the highest forest cover in the province and where JFMCs had already been formed by the Forest Department for the management and protection of forests resources. After selecting the area, the next step was the selection of the respondents. As the focus of this study was to explore the process and
role of participatory approach in involving and empowering local community in forest management and conservation, therefore, not only Forest Department and JFMCs’ executive bodies’ members (forest owners) staff were focused but general community men (forest non-owners) and women were also selected as respondents. The logic behind the selection of different categories of the respondents was to get first hand information from the stakeholders and study the phenomenon from different angles. After selecting the area and respondents, the selection of relevant tools was required. Hence, keeping in view the nature and objectives of the study and requirements of the qualitative methodology; participant observation, in-depth individual and focus group interviews were selected as tools of data collections. The details about these tools are given below:

4.3 Selection of Qualitative Approach

Before reflecting on qualitative approach employed in this study, it is worth mentioning to explain what an approach or methodology is. According to Cohen et al. (2000) it is a systematic way of collecting data and information from target population about the phenomenon under consideration. There are a number of approaches for studying research problems and the selection of an appropriate approach is one of the strategic decisions for researchers (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996). A key criterion in the selection of a methodology is its relevancy and compatibility with the nature and objectives of the study under consideration (Rubin & Rubin, 1995 and Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). It allows researchers to collect, analyze and comprehensively interpret the “narrative and visual data in order to gain insight into a particular phenomenon of interest” (Gay et al., 2006: 399). Keeping in view the nature and objectives of the study
and characteristics of the respondents, qualitative approach was adopted to get a more
detailed and in-depth information about JFMCs, responsible for the management of forest
resources. It is flexible in nature and provides variety of choices to the researcher(s) in
selecting methods and tools of data collection, to find in-depth information about the
phenomenon (Mack et al., 2005). Although qualitative method is criticized for the
‘subjective’ nature of the data, nonetheless, to overcome the perceived deficiencies,
different categories of respondents were selected and variety of tools of data collection,
as referred to above, were used to ensure objectivity, validity and reliability in the study.

Methodological literature provides a number of ways or types for conducting qualitative
research such as ethnography, grounded theory approach, case study etc (Curry et al.,
2009). For this research, empirical data was collected by adopting case study approach. It
was within the case study approach that individual interviews, observations and Focus
Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted. However, before elaborating the rationale
and process of using these tools, it seems appropriate to briefly reflect on the case study
approach as adopted in this research.

4.4 Case Study

Case study is a detailed analysis of a case, which may be a person, a unit or a process
(Mills et al., 2009). It can be an individual, organization, institution, event or a group
(Yin, n. d). It is considered more relevant for studies that intend to closely explore and
analyze the phenomena under consideration (Hakim, 1989). Case study is considered
more intense and in-depth as compared to surveys (Black & Champion, 1976). Moreover,
it allows flexibility in terms of utilizing different tools of data collection (see Punch, 1998). Case study was selected as this study aimed to explore and analyze (1) the actual process of formation JFMCs (2) the functions/activities performed by JFMCs (3) the involvement and empowerment of local communities in JFMCs (4) the benefits from JFMCs by different stakeholders and (5) the role of community participation in the conservation and development of forest resources. These issues were studied in the light of current available participatory approach in comparison with the wider context of participatory approach.

This study was conducted in Malakand Division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Pakistan, where participatory approach was institutionalized by the Forest Department (see Chapter-III for detail) for the management of forest resources in the province. For this purpose, JFMCs were formed in those districts having forest resources to involve and empower local communities in forest affairs. This study focused on the implementation process of participatory approach (JFMCs’ formation and functioning) in the field. Since the introduction of participatory/joint forest management approach in 2004 until the time of the fieldwork, the Forest Department had already instituted 221 JFMCs in different districts of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This meant that the JFMCs might have ‘matured’ considerably at the time of the fieldwork. This also necessitated the selection of Forest Department as a case study because it had organized JFMCs for the sustainable management of forest resources. In Malakand Division, 73 numbers of JFMCs had already been formed for this purpose in the four selected districts i.e. Swat, Shangla, Dir Upper and Chitral.
4.5 Selection of Locale

The Forest Department of *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* province has divided the forests into five major forest circles i.e. (1) Southern Circle (2) Upper *Hazara* Circle (3) Lower *Hazara* Circle, (4) *Malakand* East Circle and (5) *Malakand* West Circle. Among these circles, the Southern Circle has no registered JFMC. Therefore, the area was excluded from this study. The remaining four circles are categorized into two major regions: *Hazara* and *Malakand*. These two are also the general administrative divisions/units of the province. The categorization is based on socio-cultural and geographical differences. A number of JFMCs had been registered under the “Community Participation Rules 2004” in the two divisions. However, due to the following socio-cultural and geographical differences, it was decided to select *Malakand* division for this study. In fact, majority of people in *Hazara* division speak *Hindko*[^8] language about which the researcher has no familiarity. As the researcher intended to employ participant observation and individual interviews and FGDs for data collection, the linguistic barrier in the case of *Hazara* division drove the researcher to select *Malakand* division for the study. Being a resident of *Malakand* Division, the researcher had an experience, in understanding the people and organizations in the area as compared to *Hazara* Division which was culturally and linguistically different. Furthermore, *Malakand* Division has its eight percent area covered with forest as compared to *Hazara* Division which has five percent forest covered area. Keeping in

[^8]: *Hindko* is a language which is spoken in some parts of the *Punjab* and *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* provinces. In *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* this language is especially associated with those areas of *Hazara* Division where JFMCs were registered.
view these factors and lack of resources (time and money), Hazara region/division was excluded and only Malakand region/division was selected for this study.

Malakand division is covering 29800 square kilometers area which is 40 percent of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It consists of seven districts, i.e., Shangla, Swat, Malakand, Chitral, Dir Upper, Dir Lower and Buner. Out of the total seven districts, four i.e. Swat, Shangla, Dir Upper and Chitral were selected because at the time of the fieldwork, JFMCs had been formed only in these districts while the remaining three districts had no JFMC. According to the Provincial Directorate of Forest Department, 73 JFMCs were registered in the selected four districts of Malakand Division (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, n. d.).

4.6 Sampling Strategy and Sample Size

Purposive sampling method was used for selecting JFMCs. According to Baker (1999: 138) “purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which the subject selected seems to meet the study needs”. Before the collection of data, it was decided to conduct fieldwork at those JFMCs that had an active profile and that had been in existence for some time. Keeping this criterion in view, it was decided to select JFMCs which had been operating for at least 5 years and were active. This cut-off point was arrived at after consulting the field-staff of Forest Department, as the newly formed JFMCs might not be familiar with the process as the older ones. Thus, a total of 12 JFMCs, 3 from each selected district of Swat, Dir Upper, Chitral and Shangla, were purposively selected.
Total 96 in-depth individual interviews were conducted with the executives and general bodies’ members (men and women) of JFMCs as well as staff-members of provincial and district offices of Forest Department. Out of the total 96 individual interviews, 24 interviews with the members of executive bodies of JFMCs (6 from each selected district), 24 interviews with male members of the general bodies of JFMCs (6 from each selected district), 24 interviews with female from forest owners and forest non-owners families (6 from each selected district) and 24 interviews with the employees of the Forest Department (5 from each target district office and 4 from the Provincial Directorates) were conducted. It is pertinent to note that the above-mentioned sample size was not determined in advance. According to Patton (2002), there are no rules for determining the sample size in qualitative studies until the researcher reaches the point of saturation. Qualitative research stresses on the collection of rich and thick information.

The detail of categorization of in-depth individual interviews is given in the below table.

**Table 1: Categorization of Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of the Respondents</th>
<th>Number of Male</th>
<th>Number of Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Body Members</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Body Members</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Department Staff</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>96</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from in-depth individual interviews 8 Focus Group Discussion (2 in each selected district) were also conducted.
4.7 Tools of Data Collection

There are a number of tools for collecting first hand/primary information/data from the respondents. Before selecting tools of data collection, it is important to decide their compatibility/relevancy with the study and their applicability in the field. This study, as mentioned above, intended to explore the implementation process of participatory approach in the organizational form of JFMCs including their functions and benefits to the community and its role in the management of forest resources. This agenda mandated that an inductive, triangulated approach should be adopted to unearth multi-faceted local power structure and institutional as well as socio-cultural issues. According to Denzin (1990) triangulation is preferable to the use of a single tool for data collection as no single method can solve the problem of rival causal factors more consistently. Furthermore, the use of multiple tools also ensures reliability (Bulmer and Warwick, 1983) and validity of the data by allowing the researcher to crosscheck the information obtained (Taylor and Bogadan, 1984). For this purpose, a number of tools such as participant observation, individual and focus group interviews were selected for data collection.

4.7.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation is a leading tool of data collection in qualitative research. Marshall & Rossman (1989) define participant observation as "the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study" (p. 79). Though, it is the most natural way of data collection, yet it is the most challenging one as
compared to other tools (Bernard & Gravlee, 2014). In it, the researcher participates in the activities of a group or community but his/her focus is only on those activities which are relevant to his/her research questions/objectives. According to Jorgensen (1989), “participant observation is exceptional for studying processes, relationships among people and events, the organization of people and events, continuities over time, and patterns, as well as the immediate socio-cultural contexts in which human existence unfolds” (p.12). This technique is valued for studying the phenomenon in its natural and real setting (Patton, 1990) as compared to the non-participant observer who is considered an outsider and affects human behavior in the course of action. Further, it enables researchers to observe directly the respondents during their participation in an event or activity. Owing to the significance of participant observation, it was employed in this study. Additionally, it was also selected on the basis of its relevancy with the nature and objectives of the research problem. It seemed important to observe at first hand the process and functioning of JFMCs, including the interaction among its executive and general bodies’ members as well as interaction between the employees of forest department and member of JFMCs. The researcher intended to participate as an observer in the meetings of community organizations (JFMCs). However, as mentioned in Chapters V and VI, no regular meetings were conducted, and if they were occasionally conducted, only few forest owners attended such meetings. Therefore, the researcher focused on informal settings of local communities to explore the process of participatory approach in forest management as practiced by the members (of executive and general bodies) of JFMCs and the benefits sharing strategy of forest resources among different stakeholders. Furthermore, the researcher also aimed at exploring the effects of
community participation on forest resources, which mandated personal visits of the researcher to the sites to observe the real position of forests in the area. However, to find out the ground realities about participatory approach, the researcher did not rely on his personal observations alone but conducted individual interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to understand/explore the process, functions and prospects of participatory approach in the management of forest resources.

4.7.2 **In-depth Individual Interviews**

In-depth individual interview is a tool of data collection, which is commonly used in qualitative researches (Pope and Mays, 1995). Interview allows the respondents to respond openly to the questions (Brenner, 1981). When the number of respondents is small, this tool is adopted in order to have a deep insight into the phenomenon concerned (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The logic for using in-depth interview is to give the respondents a chance to share extensively their experiences regarding the issue. Owing to its flexibility and depth, it is preferred to questionnaire which is criticized for producing superficial information and restricting respondents to pre-determined options in the schedule (Stroh, 2000). Therefore, interviews are considered useful in collecting in-depth data from respondents (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000). In-depth interview technique is also called unstructured interviewing (Berry, 1999) because in this type of interview researchers elicit information in order to achieve an inclusive understanding of the interviewee’s point of view. Therefore, this tool was selected due to its strength in exploring the ground realities about participatory approach in the management of forest resources. Such interviews were unstructured and the relevant information was obtained
about the phenomenon through probing. Individual interviews, as mentioned above, were conducted with the members of executive bodies of JFMCs who were forest owners, forest department employees and member of general bodies including forest non-owners, men and women of local communities. Similarly, interviews with all such interviewees were conducted at suitable places according to the will of the respondents where privacy could be ensured. In addition to individual interviews, FGDs were also conducted.

4.7.3 Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a tool of data collection used in qualitative research wherein a group of people are asked about their perceptions, ideas, beliefs, and attitudes towards a particular phenomenon. FGDs are often used to explore the underlying factors responsible for a phenomenon. According to Harding (2013) FDG is an interactive group setting where questions are asked to participants and the discussion takes place among the participants in a friendly environment. It provides an opportunity of insight into difference of opinions among different stakeholders involved in any activity or practice and helps in arriving at conclusions (Morgan, 1988). The range of opinions and ideas, and the contradictions in the ideas of a group are explored that lead to further discussions (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990). Hence, keeping in view the relevancy, Focus Group Discussion was also used as a tool of data collection to unearth the factors influencing participatory approach in the management and conservation forest resources. The participants/respondents were asked to participate and share their experiences about the phenomenon. The number of participants in such groups was from 7 to 12 (see Nagle & Williams, 2013), and the participants were guided during discussion for getting more
insight into the topic. However, such discussion was in participatory manner and provided an opportunity to all participants to speak and share their experiences and knowledge about the issue. It was an interactive group setting and the participants were informed about the topic for discussion. They were engaged in such a way during discussion that made them feel more comfortable and free to talk about the issue. During such discussions, the information was carefully noted and recorded; hence, focus group discussion proved very helpful in providing in-depth information for the study.

4.8 Ethical Issues and Considerations

The observance of ethical consideration is important for a researcher and it is mandatory that s/he is aware about the culture, values and practices of the area. I was well aware about the local culture as I belonged to the study area (Malakand Division). It was not possible for me to collect data from the local women due to socio-cultural constraints and strict observance of Purdah (veil). Therefore, a female research assistant was hired and trained to collect data from them. However, it was soon realized that accessing local women for a female (research assistant) was also an issue as the male members and heads of households did not allow women to be interviewed even by a stranger woman. While deliberating over the possible solutions of the issue a friend of mine who was employed in Benazir Income Support Program⁹ (BISP) suggested that BISP’s offices in the target districts could be used for data collection. In every district, BISP has specified days to

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⁹ BISP is a government poverty reduction program through cash payment to married women of the poor families. This program started in 2008 by Pakistan Peoples Party as a tribute to its leader Benazir Bhutto.
give out cash payment to women from different areas. That is why my friend suggested that women from the areas of selected JFMCs could be interviewed in BISP offices. This also gave me a chance to observe the process of interview, conducted by the female research assistant.

While conducting research, one of the ethical requirements is to seek consent from the respondents/interviewees. According to Armiger (1997) informed consent is the willingness of the respondent to participate in the process of interview and to answer the questions and give the information about the phenomenon. In this project, before beginning the interviews, research subjects were formally requested to participate in the research. They were also informed about the aims and objectives of the research. Moreover, the respondents were informed that they were to skip a question if they did not want to answer it (see Levine, 1976). I adopted the principles of voluntary participation of the respondents; they were not forced to provide the information that they did not wish to disclose. They were also assured that their identity would not be disclosed and the information provided by them would not be used for any other purpose. Therefore, in this study, the names of participants are not mentioned as disclosing such information might create problems not only for the respondents but also for researcher. For recording the information, audio recording device was used with the permission of the respondents for individual interviews as well as focus group discussions. However, some respondents did not agree and their interviews were secretly recorded without their permission, which is the violation of research ethics. But such violation is allowed when its harms are less than its benefits and is in the best interests of the public (see Ali, 2005).
4.9 Transcription, Translation and Analysis of the Data

The recorded data, through the audio recorder device during individual interviews and focus group interviews, was transcribed from *Pashto*\(^{10}\) into English. During this process suitable words were chosen to convey the exact meaning of the respondents’ responses (see Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Separate registers were maintained for individual interviews and focus group interviews and effort was made to transcribe every interview in full under different headings while spaces were left for the purpose to write relevant responses under the same headings. The number of occurrences and points of significance were noted alongside the views, to enable the strength of the opinions to be considered in data presentation and analysis (see Drever, 1995). After transcribing the data, it was categorized into different but related sets of relevant analytical themes. The themes were further compared with the secondary data and literature for the purpose to drawing inferences and for comparison (see Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

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\(^{10}\) *Pashto* is a language spoken in Afghanistan and some areas of Pakistan especially in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), most of the areas in *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* and northern areas of *Balochistan* and some districts of the *Punjab*. 
CHAPTER 5

PERCEPTIONS/ VIEWS OF FOREST DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES
ABOUT COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN FOREST
MANAGEMNT

5.1 Introduction:

The previous chapter explained the process employed for conducting this study while this chapter presents in detail what FD employees believed; what stages they followed; and what challenges/issues they faced in the implementation of the idea of participatory approach in the field. In addition, it also reflects my observations and field notes regarding the actual participation of local community and its empowerment in decision-making relating to forest management. In order to develop a clear and holistic picture of the issue, the chapter is divided into three parts. Part I describes the theorized ideals of community participation in natural/forest resource management. Part II unearths the actual practices carried out for involving and empowering local communities in decision making in forest management, and Part III reflects upon the problems that caused the gap between the theory and practice of participatory approach.
5.2 Activities of Forest Department in Relation to Community Participation in Forest Management

Forest Department had the mandate to involve and empower local communities in forests affairs through organizing Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at local level with the help of local communities. This approach is contrary to the traditional top-down approach that circles around the importance and empowerment of centre (here it refers to Forest Department) and disempowerment of local people in forest management and conservation. In this respect, in top-down approach forest department employees were trained in bureaucratic style and policing forestry, specially, to alienate local communities from forest resources. However, after the shift from top-down to bottom-up approach in forest management, forest department, in the light of bottom-up approach, was assigned the responsibility to involve local communities in forest management. Therefore, Community Development Officers (CDOs) and Female Forest Extensionists (FFEIs), specialized in participatory approach, were appointed and the existing staff was trained to involve local communities in forest management and conservation activities.

Part- I

5.3 Ideal Community Participation in Forest Management

After hiring/recruiting new specialized staff and training of the existing staff in participatory (Joint Forest Management) approach, it was supposed to involve local communities especially marginalized segments of community (the poor and women) in forest resource management. Local communities, as per ideals of community
participation, were empowered in decision making about the use and management of forest products while the forest department was only responsible for the provision of technical assistance. In short, it had to involve local communities in forest management in the following ways.

5.3.1 Community Mobilization and Organization

FD was required to mobilize and organize local communities to make them realize the importance of combined efforts and to form representative Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) to involve and empower local communities in the management of forest resources. FD was responsible for extending all possible cooperation and technical assistance to such community organizations (JFMCs) and giving practical shape to the decisions taken by such organizations. It was also required to visit local communities including forest owners (the elites, the marginalized one and women to mobilize and organize them for their active involvement and empowerment in forest management.

5.3.2 JFMCs Organization and Structure

Having proper community mobilization and organization in the area, forest department was, further, responsible to establish JFMCs in a way where all segments of the community, the elites (forest owners) poor and women, were to be given proper representation, for the management of forest resources. Members, representing community, were to be elected by the community while representatives from the FD were to be nominated by the concerned Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) for two years tenure. FD was supposed to ensure the establishment of representative JFMCs and get all the
stakeholders involved in management of forest in line with participatory development theory (see chapter 3 for detail).

5.3.3 Community Needs Identification, Prioritization, Planning and Record Keeping

Forest department, as per requirements of participatory approach; held the responsibility to form representative community organizations (JFMCs) and these organizations were further responsible for needs identification and prioritization of local communities and proper planning for its satisfaction. JFMCs were to prepare and approve Joint Forest Management Plan (JFMP) for a period of five years. Furthermore, they had the responsibility to keep the record of their activities such as minutes of the meetings, decisions taken, resolutions passed and especially of financial matters.

5.3.4. Implementation

After needs identification, prioritization and planning by such community organizations (JFMCs), it was supposed to give practical shape to the decisions taken and planning done by such community organizations through their proper implementation. For this purpose, FD was required to provide technical assistance to such community organizations (JFMCs). Therefore, a number of supervisory sub-committees were supposed to be constituted for the smooth functioning of such community organizations.
5.3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

Similarly, participation in planning and implementation, JFMCs had to monitor all the ongoing projects, programs and activities and evaluate all the completed projects in forest sector through special committees constituted for the purpose. Such committees were consisted of five members representing all stakeholders, including general community, FD and other stakeholders if any. Community representation held key role in the constitution of such committees.

Part- II

5.4 Staff Members Views about Community actual Participation

After explaining the ideals of participatory approach in forest management, this part as mentioned earlier, presents the views of the FD staff about the process and procedures employed for the mobilization and organization of local communities to get them involve and empower in forest resource management. They are explained below:

5.5 Community Mobilization and Organization

FD, in the light of JFM approach, held the responsibility to mobilize and organize local communities to ensure their participation and empowerment in forest management. Hence, involving local communities in forest management FD staff members had to keep in view the available resources and power relations in the concerned community, hence, adopted the following procedures/ways for their ease in conservation and protection strategy of forest resources.
5.5.1 Visiting the Elites

keeping in view the available resources and prevailing power relations in the community, forest department employees primarily contacted the elites/forest owners, contrary to the ideal of involving the marginalized segments i.e. poor and women. They, for making intervention possible and easy the FD staff mobilized and engaged such elites to utilize their influence upon common local people. Without involving such elites, they were unable even to conduct meetings with the respective communities. For example, justifying the significance of the local elites in the whole process a Sub-Divisional Forest Officer (SDFO) in district Shangla told in an individual interview that:

“without involving local elites, intervention is impossible and no program can be successfully launched. Therefore, first meeting is conducted with them to get their support and confidence for accessing general community”.

Furthermore, it was observed that FD had no specialized staff and financial provision for such activities. Therefore, having insufficient human and financial resources, the elites were called to FD offices for forming JFMCs and getting their support in forest management. Hence, the strategy for involving influential in forest related decision making was adopted, because it was less expensive and less time-consuming. Due to the already existing social setup, it was considered that the decisions made by them (elites) were acceptable to the general community without any reasoning and justification. Therefore, only the elites (forest owners) were mobilized and organized as they could develop consensus among local people about the formation of JFMCs and management of forest resources.
5.5.2 General Community Mobilization

After getting support from the elites, forest department staff, especially CDOs and FFEs, was to visit general communities for their mobilization and organization in forest management. CDOs were to mobilize and organize male members of the community while FFEs were to mobilize and organize local women for the conservation of forest resources. However, in practice, FD could not conduct such activities in most places because, as mentioned above, it had insufficient specialized human and financial resources for this purpose. It was justified by a Sub-divisional Forest Officer (SDFO) in district Dir Upper in an individual interview that:

“community mobilization and organization is not too easy. It needs specialized human and sufficient financial resources, which we do not have. There is no Community Development Officer and no Female Forest Extensionist in the district, who are specialized in the process of community participation. Furthermore, there is no budget provision/allocation for such activities. Hence, communities are not properly mobilized and organized to participate in forest management”.

As a result, it was observed that FD employees, due to shortage of time and resources, asked the elites to prepare a list of members on the specified format to form a JFMC. Trained and specialized staff, especially CDOs and FFEs, as mentioned above, was not available in most places, and even if available in some places; they were not facilitated by their seniors in the mobilization and organization of local people to involve them in forest management. In addition to that it was observed that the available female staff (FFEs) could not travel from place to place in public transport without the presence of their male
family member while FD management did not provide them with separate transport facility in carrying out such activities. As a result, female staff (FFEs) could not perform their duties accordingly and failed to involve local women in the management of forests resources. The issue was highlighted by an acting Community Development Officer (CDO) in an individual interview in district Chitral that:

“Female Forest Extentionists (FFEs) are not provided conveyance by the Forest Department while carrying out community mobilization and organization activities; while, they cannot arrange separate/special conveyance on their own expenses. Further, the movement of females without their male members is considered against local culture and traditions, hence, proper mobilization and organization of local women is impossible without facilitation of such field staff”.

Apart from their facilitation, there was shortage of FFEs in the study area. Out of the total four selected districts, two districts Dir Upper and Shangla had no female staff (FFEs) who could be responsible for the mobilization of local women. While the remaining two districts i.e. Swat and Chitral had such female staff, but they could not properly perform their duties due to the cultural constraints as well as the senior management did not facilitate them in such activities. In district Chitral, being the biggest district of the province, from geographical point of view, such staff had no facilities to visit far-flung communities for ensuring their involvement in forest management activities. Hence, facing such challenges FFEs could not play their role in the implementation of JFM approach effectively. It was observed that FD staff such as CDOs and FFEs, specialized in participatory approach (community mobilization and organization), were not encouraged/facilitated by the department in performing their duties. They had no proper
incentives, service structure and promotion. Some of them worked in the same scale for the last ten years since their date of appointment. For this reason, they lost interest to come to their offices and carry on their field activities regularly. Eventually, such staff tried to search and get jobs/employment in other department having better service structure, where they have better chances of promotion. An acting CDO in district Chitral, while commenting on the issue of unavailability of such staff told in an individual interview that:

“the specialized staff such as CDOs and FFEs, recruited for the implementation of JFM approach, have no better prospects of promotion in Forest Department as they have no services structure like the rest of Forest Department staff such as DFOs, SDFOs, RFOs etc. Therefore, they try to get jobs in other departments”.

Though, in some places FD management claimed that they had extended its possible support and provided maximum resources to field staff for involving (mobilization and organization) communities in forest management. It was highlighted by a DFO in district Swat that all the available facilities were provided/extended to specialized staff (CDOs and FFEs) for mobilizing and organizing local communities for ensuring their involvement in forest management. However, it was observed that specialized staff such as CDOs and FFEs was not satisfied and local communities were not aware and organized accordingly.

5.6 Structure of JFMCs

In the light of JFM approach, representation was to be given to all stakeholders including forest department, local councils, NGOs, donors, the forest user groups such as the poor
and women from the local communities. Representatives from the local communities were to be elected by the respective communities and the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) concerned had to nominate members from the Forest Department. Chairpersons and secretaries of JFMCs were supposed to be from the community members while member/members of FD could not hold such positions. However, the ground reality was quite different because the general community especially the poor and women were not given representation in such organizations. The marginalized groups were alienated from forest management because the elites/forest owners feared that they would claim ownership rights on the basis of their involvement/representation in JFMCs. It was elaborated by a Range Forest Officer (RFO) in an individual interview in District Chitral that the forest owners never compromised on the involvement of underprivileged groups. They afraid that they would claim ownership rights and share in the sale-proceeds from the forest products on the basis of their representation in JFMCs and the benefits extended to them in JFM.

As a matter of fact, it was observed that forests were situated in the far-flung mountains and the owners lived in the settled areas while marginalized one mostly had their residencies in or near to such forests. Therefore, they were more dependent on forests for their daily needs; yet, they were never involved in forest management. Their exclusion was completely against the ideals of JFM approach that believes in the involvement of all stakeholders and their empowerment in decision-making especially of poor and marginalized people. A SDFO in district Shangla, while focusing on the issue in an individual interview explained that:
“majority of the forest dwellers are poor and marginalized who are more dependent on forests. However, they are not involved in forest management, while most of the JFMC’s members (forest owners) are living in settled areas, several kilometers away from the forest”.

Likewise, it was observed that most of the women visited forests for collecting fuel wood and fodder for the daily use of their families. However, they were not given representation in JFMCs despite their close interaction with forests. Women were excluded from such JFM because their involvement and co-working with males were considered against the local culture. Local culture encouraged strict observance of purda (veiling) for women and discouraged their movement and freedom to participate in forest conservation activities. Furthermore, they had a lot of domestic chores and responsibilities that did not let them to participate in extra activities. Keeping in view the above mentioned reasons, no single woman was found to be the member of any JFMC in the study areas. It was highlighted by a DFO in a FDG in district Dir Upper that women were mostly responsible for collecting wood and fodder from forests; however, due to socio-cultural constraints they had no representation in JFMC.

Apart from the establishment of representative JFMCs, JFM approach had the mandate to conduct free and fair and in time elections to form JFMCs. However, no JFMC was found to have conducted elections after the completion of its (two years) tenure according to the prescribed democratic procedure. Communities were not involved in the formation of such organizations but the elites nominated members of JFMCs from amongst them. In case of absence or death of a member of JFMC, his brother or son was nominated in his place. Therefore, such community organizations had become hereditary in nature where
only the elites (forest owners) had the right to nominate members of JFMCs from among them. A SDFO in district Dir Upper, while describing the process of JFMCs formation expressed in an individual interview that:

“elections are not held properly for JFMCs because communities are neither aware nor involved in JFMCs formation and activities. Such organizations are formed by the forest owners and its members are nominated by them”.

It was observed that such community organizations (JFMCs) were not representative of the community, rather, these were interest groups formed by the elites i.e. the forest owners. Interests of the general communities were not taken into consideration, and these communities were unaware about their role in forest management. Furthermore, forest owners formed JFMCs only for marking and harvesting activities, therefore such community organizations (JFMCs) were commonly known as harvest committees.

5.7 Awareness, Trainings and Capacity Building Programs

Participatory approach believes in the decentralization/delegation of powers to local communities and their empowerment in decision-making in forest management. Therefore, FD had the responsibility to build the capacities of such communities to understand and perform their duties in forest management. They were to organize trainings, seminars and workshops for creating awareness about the importance of forests and their proper management. It was also the responsibility of forest department to train JFMCs members in record keeping especially in financial matters. However, contrary to that, majority of the JFMCs’ members were found unaware and untrained in the affairs of JFMCs. Though it was claimed that in the begging some members of JFMCs were trained
but latter such programs were not carried on due to the lack of proper resources. Apart from this, several trainings and seminars were arranged with the supports of NGOs for the awareness of local communities in some districts. However, there were no incentives for the participants while attending these programs, as a result they lost their interest in such activities. A DFO in district Shangla while reflecting upon the issue complained in an individual interview that:

“there is no budget allocation for arranging seminars, workshops and trainings. Furthermore, the participants expect incentives while participating in such programs”.

5.8 Activities and Role of JFMCs

Participatory approach claims to ensure community participation and empowerment in forest management. Therefore, Community organizations (JFMCs) were empowered to play effective role in the decision making related to forest management. But the ground realities were found somewhat different as neither the JFMCs were representative nor were they empowered in decision-making related to forests’ affairs. The role and activities assigned and performed by JFMCs are presented below:

5.8.1 Conduct Meetings and Keep Record

For ensuring transparency and accountability, JFMCs were to conduct their periodic meetings regularly and keep the record properly. Their activities and resolutions were to be properly recorded and maintained by the secretaries of JFMCs, and special meetings were to be called when required. But in reality, no such practice was found that could
have ensured the conduct of such meetings and the maintenance/keeping of record as required. Furthermore, JFMCs had neither local offices nor properly trained staff for such activities. Because of this, they were unable to keep record and submit it to the concerned DFOs. It was complained by majority of the staff members that Forest Department, as mentioned above, had no resources for the trainings and capacity building of JFMCs’ members. Majority of JFMCs’ members were found to be illiterate. That is why they were unable to maintain the record and submit it to the quarter concerned i.e. DFOs. Apart from that, it was observed that the meetings could not be held/conducted regularly because majority of members of JFMCs were poor and busy in earning their livelihood. They could not spare time for such meetings and activities. Therefore, JFMCs failed in ensuring to conduct meetings regularly and keep the record properly. Meetings were conducted only when there was any threat to the privileges of the elites; however, such meetings were attended by a few influential members not by all members of JFMCs. This was highlighted by a RFO in district Chitral during an individual interview that:

“no regular meetings are held. However, when there is any problem related to forest affairs, a few forest owners sit together and resolve the issue. Their decision is commonly acceptable to the rest of the members”.

5.8.2 Needs Identification and Prioritization

After proper training and capacity building of the members of JFMCs in JFM approach, they were to identify and prioritize needs through involving local communities for better management of forest resources. However, it was possible only when the marginalized and disadvantaged groups of forest user (poor and women) were given proper
representation in JFMCs and their needs were identified, prioritized and then reflected in planning i.e. Joint Forest Management Plan (JFMP). Contrarily to that, only the needs of the elite class (forest owners) were identified and prioritized while the needs of the poor and marginalized people were ignored. A SDFO while explaining the process of needs identification and prioritization in district Shangla, during his individual interview opined that:

“majority of community organizations (JFMCs) are interest groups of landlords and elites (forest owners) serving their interests, while the poor and forest non-owners are neither given representation nor are their interests served”.

Participatory approach believes in the formation of such community organizations (JFMCs) where all user groups could participate right from needs identification and prioritization to planning and its implementation. However, it was observed that these organizations (JFMCs) did not represent all segments of the community, and the needs of all segments were not taken into consideration. The poor and women were completely excluded from these organizations, and only the forest owners (elites) had the right to decide about the use of forest resources. In order to combat poverty, JFMCs were to take measures for reducing dependency of the poor (forest non-owners) on forests by providing them with an alternative source of livelihood and income generating activities. But they did not initiate such activities which were necessary for the conservation and protection of forests in the future. Therefore, the poor had to depend on forests for fulfilling their daily needs. Majority of the people who harmed forests were marginalized such as poor and women. Therefore, looking at their miserable conditions, Forest Department staff did not arrest them for their illegal actions, for it was understood that
such people were completely depended on forests and had no alternate sources for their survival. On the other hand, FD and JFMCs had no sufficient resources to help such people to start other income generating activities such as poultry and other trades for decreasing their dependency on forests. Moreover, such miserable groups were ignored and discouraged to participate in forest management activities. Hence, their needs were neither identified/prioritized nor reflected in planning, as idealized, to decrease their dependency on forests.

5.8.3 Planning

JFMCs had the responsibility of proper planning for the satisfaction of identified and prioritized needs of the communities. They were to prepare Joint Forest Management Plans (JFMPs) that reflect not only the prioritized needs of local communities but also all activities required for ensuring forest conservation and protection. All such activities were to be organized in the light of FMP for improving forest cover. However, JFMPs were neither prepared and approved nor submitted to the DFOs by JFMCs. Furthermore, planning, being a technical job, required trained and skilled personnel who were not available in JFMCs. A DFO while describing the importance of planning and technical human resource required for it in district Swat explained in a FGD that:

“planning is the basic component for the success of a program/project. JFMCs have to prepare joint forest management plan for forest management. There is no such activity, because JFMCs do not possess/have trained and skilled staff for such activities”.

88
Planning was required to cover all aspects/activities of forest management; however, it was observed that practically JFMCs’ members, being the owners, were very active in marking and harvesting activities. They planned only for such activities which had economic output for them but never showed their interest in promoting plantation, forest protection and conservation. This was highlighted by a SDFO in district Shangla during his discussion in an individual interview that such planning was limited only to marking and harvesting activities while there were no proper measures for forest resource development. General community especially the poor and women did not participate as they were not members of JFMCs and their needs were not reflected in planning. Such a gap between the two stakeholders was not a good sign for the conservation and protection of forest resources. This increased the mistrust among stakeholders and caused the depletion of forest resources.

5.8.4 Plantation and Forest Protection

JFMCs, apart from planning in participatory approach, had the responsibilities to ensure community involvement in afforestation, plantation and forest protection. However, local people were not ready to participate in plantation, forest protection or conservation voluntarily without incentives. There was no provision for reward while participating in such activities. A SDFO in district Dir Upper while explaining the causes of community denial to participate in such activities in a FGD highlighted that:

“local communities demand for incentives/wages when they participate in plantation and protection activities. But there is no provision for such incentives
in those projects launched by the government. Therefore, they are not ready to participate voluntarily in such activities”.

Forest protection and conservation were the responsibilities of JFMCs under the bottom-up approach. Such activities required human resources as well as financial resources. However, neither local community nor FD took the responsibility to manage/arrange such resources. A RFO in district Chitral told in his individual interview that local elites (forest owners) just waited for getting their share in the sale-proceeds from the forest products and held FD responsible for plantation, forest protection and conservation. JFMCs did not allocate single penny out of their share (60 to 80 percent) in the sale-proceeds from forest resources for such activities.

Though JFMCs were established to support FD in the protection and conservation of forest resources, yet such organizations could not combat deforestation and launch afforestation activities to improve forest cover in the area. In majority of the study areas, there was not any combined patrolling strategy of community and FD, and JFMCs failed to initiate and encourage such efforts/activities. All such activities were considered the responsibility of FD/government. A Block Officer (BO), while counting the duties of local communities in district Shangla explained during his individual interview that one of the prime duties of community is to participate in conservation and protection of forests. But local communities did not support/participate in such activities.

Similarly, JFMCs, in JFM approach, held the power/responsibility to establish new check posts and shift any check post with the approval of the concerned DFO, for the prevention of illegal transportation of timber. But the local people did not participate in
such activities because they had no direct economic/financial benefits from forests. However, it was observed that they participated and took keen interest in such activities in those areas where forests had economic value for them. Therefore, A DFO while appreciating the role of local community in an individual interview in district Dir Upper explained that:

“local communities take keen interest in the forest management activities. They have established their own check points/check posts because forests of the area are grown up and the people are getting economic benefits from such forests”.

It was because all the residents of the area were forest owners and they had share in the sale proceeds from the forest products. Therefore, they were interested to protect their forest resources. Furthermore, patrolling was another activity through which the illegal cutting of forests and smuggling of timber could be controlled. Previously, FD had an exclusive responsibility to carry out such activities. Now, FD and local communities, under the bottom-up approach, have the responsibility to jointly schedule patrolling for forest protection. However, local communities especially marginalized one who had no share in the sale-proceeds from the forest products, were not ready to participate in such activities. A Forest Guard in district Dir Upper explained in his individual interview that in the light of JFM approach, local communities and FD were responsible for joint patrolling to control illegal activities and ensure forest protection, but local communities especially the poor were not ready to perform these activities without reward/incentives.

Women were found collecting fuel wood and fodder for daily use, however, they were not part of the decision-making process in relation to forest management. There was a
need of female members in JFMCs so that they could keep check on the activities of local women. Unfortunately, no woman was given membership in JFMCs. Moreover, due to socio-cultural constraints, a man could not talk to a stranger woman; therefore, in the absence of female staff, patrolling was ineffective as women were found collecting firewood and harming forests. This was explained by a SDFO in district Shangla in an individual interview:

“women are observed busy in cutting wood and fodder from forests for their daily use, but due to cultural constraints a man cannot forbid them from such activities. Neither Forest Department has female staff nor JFMCs have women members for patrolling and male staff member/s cannot stop women from such activities”.

Furthermore, socio-cultural constraints on women do not let women to participate in an activity where men are present. Therefore, women were not given representation in JFMCs. It was observed that FD had insufficient financial resources and inefficient staff to ensure the involvement of local people in plantation and forest protection/conservation. As a result, local communities were not properly aware and organized for such activities. A SDFO in his individual interview in district Shangla stated that:

“neither the Forest Development Corporation (FDC) nor the JFMCs provide funds for nursery raising. Therefore, plantation and afforestation cannot be ensured”.

5.8.5 Conflicts Resolution

Conflicts arise when communities are involved in forest management as there are various interest groups in every community. JFMCs were considered to play their role in the
resolution of conflicts among different stakeholders. FD staff admitted the role played by JFMCs in the resolution of conflicts and mediation among different interest groups related to forest management as compared to the top-down approach which does not believe in the involvement and empowerment of local people. Therefore, participatory/bottom-up approach seeks the involvement of local community there are fewer chances of such conflicts, and if in case there is, it is resolved on the spot.

Most of the forests, in the study area, were communally owned and not properly demarcated; there were very less/few forests that were individually owned. Therefore, in such communal forests, there were always conflicts and rivalries among different tribes and interest groups. JFMCs, being local organizations, resolved local disputes according to customary laws, which were more quick and effective than the legal lengthy procedure. Disobedience was rare because there was fear of social boycott which compelled the parties to abide by it. This was justified by a CDO in district Swat in his individual interview as:

“community organizations are effective in conflicts and dispute resolution because their decisions are according to the local customs that cannot be easily ignored”.

JFMCs played an effective role in the in the resolution of conflicts and disputes at local level. It was because of such organizations (JMCs) were formed by the elites (forest owners). Their decisions were always obeyed as they were the influential of the area. However, such decisions always served interest of such group and reduced the conflicts among the forest owners but in most cases, it gravitated the conflicts between the forest
owners and poor/marginalized groups. The needs and interests of poor were always ignored. Eventually, this approach created a gulf between the forest owners and disadvantaged groups. This is the reason that there were a number of court cases between different interest groups related to the forest ownership issues in the study area.

5.8.6 Marking and Harvesting of Trees

Like plantation and protection activities, local communities were to be involved in marking and harvesting the grown-up trees. Therefore, JFMCs were responsible to supervise and monitor such activities with the involvement of local community. Forest owners (who were members of JFMCs) were more interested in such activities for getting their share in the sale proceeds from the forest products. This was described by a SDFO in his individual interview in district Dir Upper that local communities actively participated in tree marking and harvesting activities as a major share (60 to 80 percent) in the sale-proceeds goes to them. Therefore, they took keen interest in such activities. On the other hand, FD in the top-down approach, was responsible for all such activities. In this respect, it was often blamed for marking and cutting green trees. Under the bottom-up approach, local communities were to be involved and empowered to monitor and supervise such activities. Having more shares in the sale proceed from the forest products, local communities used all their energies and political pressure to mark and harvest even green/small trees that were banned by the government/FD. This was expressed by a SDFO in district Shangla during his individual interview that:
“royalty-holders from the community struggle and involve political leadership for developing pressure to mark and harvest more trees to get more economic benefits as their share in the sale-proceeds from the forest products”.

Local influential(s) used political pressure and lobbies to mark and harvest more trees for getting more economic benefits from forests products, because they feared that this (60 to 80 percent) share in the sale-proceeds was a concession and that it might be withdrawn at any time by the government. Therefore, they tried their best to exploit forest resources before the government takes such an initiative. It shows that there was no clear ownership, and lack trust between the FD and local communities which caused the degradation of forest resources instead of improving them.

5.8.7 Marketing for Timber

Likewise, in participatory approach, JFMCs were responsible for the marketing of harvested timer. Being the prime stakeholder and shareholder in the sale-proceed from the forest products, local communities were required to be actively involved in marketing and price fixing for the timber. JFMCs provided the forum and opportunity to the local people to be involved in marketing for the forest products. Previously, in the top-down/centralized regime, the Forest Development Corporation (FDC) had the responsibility and therefore, it was blamed by the local communities for corruption in fixing low prices. This was explained by a SDFO in district Dir Upper in an individual interview that:
“local community participates and monitors the harvesting and marketing activities in JFM, and now FD is not blamed because JFMCs members are present and involved at each and every stage”.

It was observed that most of the active members of JFMCs were involved in timber trade, and they had experience in timber marketing. Therefore, they actively participated in such activities. They not only worked on the behalf of their respective JFMCs but earned extra income being working as timber traders as well.

5.8.8 Monitoring and Evaluation

Similarly, JFMCs were required to monitor and evaluate all activities, from need identification and planning to revenue distribution. Without proper monitoring and evaluation no program can achieve its goals and objectives. But there was no proper mechanism for such activities as the elites (forest owners) were interested to monitor tree marking and harvesting activities which were beneficial for them. They participated in such activities only to get their share in the sale proceeds from the forest products. It was explained by a DFO in district Chitral in his individual interview that local communities (the forest owners) were very active in tree marking and harvesting. They visited FD offices only to get the amount of their share. Whenever their cheques were released, they no more visited the offices to monitor plantation and other forest protection activities. They just waited for the next phase of marking and harvesting. Forest owners, being members of JFMCs and shareholders in the royalty, were interested in marking, harvesting and marketing activities because they looked for short time economic benefits
of forests. They were not interested and participated in plantation and forest protection activities which ensured forest conservation in the long run.

5.8.9 Revenue Distribution and Utilization

One of the utmost duties of JFMCs was the distribution of sale proceeds from the forest products among the community members. The community share, as mentioned above, was 60 or 80 percent in the sale proceeds that was distributed among the forest owners. Such amount was never spent on forest development, protection and conservation. The poor and women were entitled to claim share in the sale proceeds. It was observed that FD had no concern with such issues. The cheques of the royalty were given by the Revenue Department to the concerned JFMCs. Furthermore, the JFMCs had the responsibility to fix a criterion for the distribution of shares in the sale proceeds among the forest owners. The sale proceeds from the forest products were distributed on the basis of numbers of male members in a family in most places. It meant that having more male members would have more shares in the royalty, while females were not entitled to claim their share in the sale proceeds if they had no male family member. This was expressed by a Block Officer in district Dir Upper in an individual interview that:

“sale proceed from the forests’ products is distributed on the basis of the male members in a family. Females are not given any share in the revenue, which is totally unjust and clearly gender discrimination”.
5.9 Conclusion

It can be concluded from the perceptions of Forest Department staff that there was a big gap between theory and practice. Local communities were not properly mobilized and organized to form JFMCs and get them involved in forest management. Some people (forest owners) were involved and they participated just for getting their share in the benefits from the forest products. The most vulnerable and forest dependent segments especially women were alienated/excluded from the forest management, while their exclusion was against the concept of participatory approach. The sale proceeds from the forest products was neither utilized for the development of forest resources such as plantation, forest protection and conservation nor was it spent for community development program. The amount of the sale proceeds from the forest products was distributed among the male members of the forest owners’ families, while disadvantaged groups and women were not given share in it. Furthermore, staff specialized in participatory approach such as CDOs and FFEs were not available in most of the districts selected for this study; and the existing staff of the FD was not properly trained in participatory approach to implement it in the field. Apart from this, the available specialized staff was not satisfied with the incentives and facilities. Furthermore, they were not properly facilitated by their seniors during their working in the field. They have been working in the same scale/grade for the last 10 years since their appointment and there were no proper rules/regulations (service rules/service structure) for their promotion like other employees of the FD such as RFOs, SDOs and DFOs etc. As a result, local communities were not properly mobilized and organized to involve them in forest
management. There seemed to be no sense of responsibility and trust as there were no clear divisions of role and responsibilities between the stakeholders i.e. FD and local community. The bureaucratic attitude of forest department staff was itself a challenge to the decentralization of forest managements. The forests in Malakand Division were protected under the control of provincial government and the management of such forests was assigned to the community (elites) who claimed the real/actual ownership of these forests. Hence, declaring them as concessionists under JFM approach instigated them even to exploit these forests as much as possible. They feared that the government could withdraw such concessions at any time. Therefore, this factor further accelerated deforestation in these areas. The non-cooperative behavior of FD staff, lack of resources and socio-cultural constraints paralyzed FD to function effectively and implement participatory approach in forest management successfully.

Part- III

5.10 Problems Faced by Staff Members in Involving Communities in Forest Management

Forest Department staff members, while involving local communities in forest management in the light of participatory approach, faced a number of problems. As a result, participatory approach could not be implemented in its real sense because of these issues raised by the FD staff members. Some issues were due to the inability and incapability of FD staff and some were due to the existing socio-cultural, political and power relations of local communities. These problems paralyzed participatory approach
because only the elites received its benefits and the disadvantaged groups were further deprived. These issues are explained below:

5.10.1 Lack of Trained Specialized Staff

Since community mobilization and organization is a technical job, it requires trained specialized personnel to involve local community in forest management according to the zeal of participatory approach. FD had recruited CDOs and FFEs for this purpose. But they were less in number and most of them belonged to the settled districts. Therefore, they tried to be appointed in or transferred to their home or nearest districts. Apart from their insufficiency, they were not properly trained in participatory approach. This was explained by a DFO in district Dir Upper in his individual interview that:

“the Forest Department as a whole has 2700 employees in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while the province has the highest forest cover in the country, hence the strength of staff is not sufficient for these activities”.

The lack of specialized staff such as CDOs and FFEs, responsible for the implementation of participatory approach, caused ineffective involvement of local communities in forest related activities. The issue was raised by a RFO in a FGD in district Shangla that there was no CDO and FFE in the district. So, in the absence of such staff effective community participation was not possible. Though these districts had the highest forest cover, yet there was no specialized staff for the involvement of local people in forest management. Most of the FD employees specialized in participatory approach tried to be appointed in those districts which had low or no forest covered, because there were no special/reasonable incentives for them while working in densely forest covered
areas/districts. This was explained by a SDFO in district Dir Upper in his individual interview that districts with low or no forest cover had more CDOs and FFEs as compared to the districts with high forest cover. The staff preferred to be posted in low forest covered districts because such districts have less workload.

The unavailability of specialized staff and over-burdening of the existing staff were the issues that were observed in the field. This was explained by a SDFO in district Shangla in a FGD that they were over-burdened by the activities of community participation as the specialized staff (CDOs and FFEs) was not available while there was no provision of additional incentives for the staff performing such duties in districts having high forest cover.

5.10.2 Socio-cultural Issues

Apart from the institutional deficiencies, socio-cultural setup of the districts/areas was not supportive for the female staff to work in the field. Likewise, the working of women and men in the same organization/department was against the norms of the society; therefore, the available female staff members (FFEs) were found absent from their duties due to these reasons. Similarly, local women were excluded from JFMCs due to socio-cultural constraints because they were not allowed by their men to participate in such organizations where men were present; while there were no separate JFMCs for women. However, women were found collecting fuel-wood and fodder for their livestock from forests on daily basis. This was explained by a SDFO in his individual interview in district Dir Upper:
“though the women work in the fields and collect fuel wood and fodder from forests, yet their participation in JFMCs is considered against the local culture and traditions”.

It was because of prevalent male dominancy and patriarchal system in the study area that men were considered economically productive and symbol of social prestige for the family. Furthermore, women were deprived of their right to have property and to participate in economic activities. Such discriminations had no religious grounds as Islam recognizes women rights in property and they have economic freedom. Having subordinate position, women were discouraged to participate in any social activities with men. This was highlighted by a SDFO in district Chitral in an individual interview that:

“culture and society support patriarchy. Men are considered not only bread-earners but also a symbol of social prestige and superiority. Therefore, women are in the subordination of men and they have to act/work according to the will of their men”.

This is the reason that women were assigned unpaid labor/works; though they had to go out of their homes for such activities like collecting fuel/fire wood and fodder from forests, bringing water and working in agricultural fields yet they had no say in the decision that affected their lives. This was explained by an RFO in his individual interview in district Dir Upper that women participation in such community/public organizations was restricted by local culture and traditions. Similarly, the visit of the female staff (FFE) of FD to mobilize and organize local women, who were in close interaction with forests, was also considered against the local culture and traditions.
5.10.3 Financial Constraints

No organization can run without finances. JFMCs activities also require proper budget and finances. Community mobilization, organization, capacity building, arranging seminars and workshops for the awareness of local masses are not possible without the provision of proper budget. Similarly, building the capacity and capability of the Forest Department also required financial resources. Financial constraints were found one of the major factors in hindering the implementation of participatory approach in the field. This was explained by a DFO in district Dir Upper in an individual interview that after employing the participatory/bottom-up approach, the activities of FD increased manifold, while, budget was not allocated/increased for such activities. These activities could not be performed within the available budget.

It was found that there were no proper funds for the plantation and afforestation in the study area. 60 percent to 80 percent of the sale proceed from the forest products was given to the local community (forest owners) as their share and the remaining 40 percent or 20 percent was government share. It was not possible for the government to manage/arrange such activities in the meager available fund and community was not ready to allocate funds for forest development and conservation from its share. This was highlighted by the Forest Department staff in a FGD collectively in district Dir Upper:

“major share in the royalty (80 percent) goes to the local community. In the remaining 20 percent of government share all these activities are not possible. The local community is not ready to spend a single penny from its share on the forest conservation and protection”.
In addition, local community expected incentives while attending seminars, workshops and trainings like in the donor-funded projects and there was no provision for incentives in the available budget. As a result, they lost their interest in such activities. This was highlighted by an Assistant Director Non-forest Timber Products (acting CDO) in an individual interview in district Chitral that seminars and trainings were arranged for local community with the collaboration of different organizations, but the local people did not participate because there were no incentives for them while attending such events.

5.10.4 Ownership Issues

Although JFMCs were to be joint organizations of all stakeholders including the vulnerable segments such as poor masses and women, yet the forest owners were not ready to give representation to these groups. Therefore, participatory approach failed to create a sense of ownership in local communities. Moreover, the forest owners were not satisfied with the agreement between them and the forest department while establishing/organizing JFMCs. They thought that in the bond/agreement, they had been declared as concessionists, not the owners. This created misconceptions and mistrust among members which further accelerated deforestation. As according to the agreement bond, these forests were the ownership of the government and could withdraw the concession extended to the local people (forest owners) anytime. This was realized by the Forest Department staff, and explained by a Block Officer in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that:

“the local people especially the elites consider that their forest resources have been captured by the government. Now, under the new JFMC agreement, they
have been declared as concessionists and this concession can be withdrawn at any time. Thus, they accelerated the exploitation of forest resources”.

The was highlighted by a SDFO during a FGD in district Shangla that the communities were not sure how long they would be entitled to enjoy such concessions extended to them in the light of joint forest management and they worried for clear tenure system and secure ownership rights. Furthermore, forests were communal property and there was no land settlement in the area. The demarcation and division of forests was impossible as there was no possibility of developing consensus on the issue. Therefore, the local community did not care for forest development and conservation; they, rather, exploited communal forests as the society had become individualistic and no one was ready to work for common interests. This was expressed by an acting CDO in district Chitral that the people preferred individual/personal interests to the communal ones. Hence, forest, being a communal resource/assert, was utilized and exploited by the influential for their personal gains.

5.10.5 Extreme Poverty and Lack of Incentives

Most of the people in the study area were poor as there were no industries or labor markets for them to work in. Therefore, such people had to work hard for earning their livelihood. Majority of them went either to metropolitan cities or abroad to the gulf countries for work. Only the elder men and women were at homes that looked after the small pieces of agriculture land and the livestock. The people had no time to participate in forest management related activities without incentives because of their poverty. This was expressed by a SDFO in his individual interview in district Shangla that:

“poverty is the common feature of rural especially forest depending communities. The poor people are not ready to participate in any program without incentives because they are busy in earning their livelihood”.

105
The provision of incentives, as mentioned above, requires proper financial resources, and the government/Forest Department had not such resources. Apart from this, previously the people were extended such incentives in the donor funded projects. Therefore, they demanded incentives on the basis of their past experiences of participating in projects activities. Hence, poverty of the local people adversely affected their participation in the protection and conservation of forest resources. It was observed in the field that majority of the women and poor masses were found cutting and collecting wood from forests. This was remarked by SDFO in his individual interview in district Dir Upper:

“when we patrol, we often see the local people cutting and collecting wood from forests. Their appearances show that they are very poor and have no alternate source of their livelihood for their survival; so, we do not take any action against them but ignore them for their action”.

There were no alternate income generating activities for such people to decrease their dependency on forests. Neither the government nor local community showed interest to initiate such programs that were helpful in reducing their dependency on forests and ensuring the conservation and protection of forest resources.

5.10.6 Illiteracy and Lack of Awareness

Majority of the people were found illiterate. They did not know about the environmental and ecological benefits of forests. Illiteracy was a common feature of forest depending community in general and the women in special. Furthermore, the Forest Department, as mentioned above, had no proper arrangements for the mobilization and organization of these communities. That is why the high rate of deforestation in such areas could not be controlled. This was highlighted by a DFO in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that illiteracy was a great hurdle in the way of working with forest communities.
because in such hilly areas schools were not only less in number but were also several miles away from majority of the people. The forest depending communities had a hard-geographical structure and were cut-off from the settled areas. There were limited/poor sources of communication such as roads, television and internet. Therefore, the awareness programs about forests importance and environment were not effectively communicated to these people. This was stated by a SDFO in an individual interview in district Shangla that:

“there are limited sources of communication in the area. Radio is the only main source; and there are no other sources of communication such as Tele Vision and internet to run awareness programs about forestry”.

5.10.7 Political Pressure and Involvement

The implementation process of participatory approach in forest management was influenced by political interference and pressure. While forming JFMCs, political leaders played their role negatively by giving key posts to their supporters. Fair elections were not held; rather, selection was carried out to organize JFMCs. The political leaders/elites pressurized the Forest Department staff to form JFMCs consisting only of their supporters. Most of the forests were disputed or were not in the location of such recommended groups. An SDFO from the district Shangla explained in his individual interview that one of the Members of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) who was also an ex-minister called for organizing a JFMC by selecting his supporters in a forest area that was disputed. Similarly, the political leaders intervened in posting and transferring of in Forest Department staff according to their will. It influenced the smooth functioning of
Forest Department especially the implementation process of participatory approach in the field. A DFO in district Shangla, while commenting on the issue told in his individual interview that:

“many times, CDOs and FFEs (specialized in participatory approach), by virtue of some political power, have been appointed in or transferred to such districts that have no forest cover. As a result, the far-flung districts with a good forest cover have no such staff”.

5.10.8 Overpopulation and High Growth Rate

Overpopulation is another factor responsible for the degradation of forests and high rate of deforestation. The rapid increase in population overburdened the natural resources, including the existing forests. According to the views of Forest Department staff, there were numerous causes of deforestation; however, rapid growth in population was one among them. As a result, the demand for the construction of more buildings, fuel wood and clearing forest for agriculture purposes increased. This was explained by a SDFO in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that increase in population and modernization led to disintegration of joint family-system that resulted in constructing more buildings, which caused a huge exploitation of forests resources. Similarly, the demand of keeping livestock also increased, which ultimately caused the depletion of forest resources. The other sources of energy such as gas and electricity were not easily available in these areas. Hence, the people used wood for cooking their food and warming their houses in winter. The increased demand for and use of wood, further, overburdened the existing forests. An acting CDO in a FGD in district Chitral told that:
“the people have no other source for cooking except forest wood. This increased deforestation because the local population had to fulfill their needs from forests. Similarly, the increase in livestock also caused the degradation of forests by over-grazing”.
CHAPTER 6

VIEWS OF THE EXECUTIVE BODIES’ MEMBERS OF JFMCs
ABOUT COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN FOREST MANAGEMENT

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the documented/theoretical aspect as well as the views of Forest Department (FD) staff about the actual practices related to the involvement of local communities in forest resource management. It also highlighted the issues faced by the FD staff in the implementation of participatory approach. The current chapter explains the views of JFMCs’ executive body members (who were actually the forest owners) to explore the gaps between theory and practice regarding community participation in forest management. It also includes my observations in the field about community participation and empowerment in forest resource management. Therefore, to compare/analyze the views of FD staff with the views of JFMCs’ members in a better way, this chapter is also organized on the same pattern as the previous one. This chapter is divided into two parts. Part-I presents the views of JFMCs executive body members about community involvement in the form of JFMCs in forest management activities while part-II highlights the issues which restrict a meaningful participation of local community in forest management and conservation activities.
Part - I

6.2 Views of the Executive Bodies’ Members about Community Participation in Forest Management

This part presents the views of JFMCs’ executive body members (forest owners) regarding JFMCs formation and its activities. It unearths the ground realities about the implementation of participatory approach in forest management. The executive bodies of JFMCs are constituted only by the elites (forest owners) which is against the spirit of participatory approach. Their views are, therefore, of immense importance as they controlled/influenced the process of JFMCs formation (structure) as well as its activities (functions).

6.3 Community Mobilization and Organization

Ideally, JFMCs were to be formed in such a way to represent all segments of the community especially the marginalized segments such as the poor and women of the concern community. However, practically, they were not given representation in JFMCs. Harvest committees that already existed were re-registered in the name of JFMCs for the purpose to achieve the targets assigned to the FD staff by the higher authorities. Local communities were not properly mobilized for the formation of JFMCs the formation of which was mandatory for the joint management of forest resources. It required proper
mobilization and organization of local community; but FD, as mentioned in chapter V, had insufficient resources for such activities. JFMCs executive body’s members (forest owners) explained the whole process of community mobilization, organization and participation in the following ways:

6.3.1 Visiting and Organizing the Elites

In order to make its (forest department) work easy, FD staff members contacted the elites (forest owners) of the locality, contrary to the required procedure, to mobilize the whole community including the forest non-owners and women. It was considered that the mobilization and organization of the masses including women would require more time and resources which were in fact not available with the Forest Department. Therefore, to achieve the target, the FD staff made it easy as remarked by one of the JFMC’s members from district Dir Upper in his individual interview that, the DFO called the elites (forest owners) to his office to form FJMCs because the FD had no sufficient staff for such activities. This was elaborated by the executive bodies’ members of JFMCs in a FGD in district Shangla that:

“being the owners of the forests, the FD employees visited and told us about the importance and procedure of the formation of JFMC. We were glad to know about such empowerment because forests in our area were grown enough to be harvested. We (the forest owners) established a JFMC, and as a result got our share in the sale proceeds from the forest products.”

In this way, the FD staff made their job easy to achieve the target of forming more JFMCs in a short period within limited available resource. The elites (forest owners) were
happy to exploit forest resources for their personal interest by excluding the disadvantaged groups, while, there were sincere efforts neither by the Forest Department staff nor by the forest owners to involve local community in forest affairs.

6.3.2 General Community Mobilization and Organization

In fact, as stated above, the membership of JFMCs was restricted to the elites or forest owners, because the FD held meager resources and the elites (owners of the forest) deliberately kept the commoners (disadvantaged groups) away from their representation in JFMCs. They thought that the inclusion of such people would extend more benefits to them and they might claim rights equal to the forest owners. Therefore, JFMCs were represented by the elites (forest owners) and the common villagers especially women had no say in the affairs of JFMCs. This was explained by the executive members of JFMCs in a FGD in Shangla:

“we (the forest owners) extended our cooperation to the Forest Department on the condition that the common people would not be mobilized and organized to give them representation in JFMCs. We feared that they would claim ownership rights and share in the royalty in the forest products.”

The general community especially the marginalized including women were excluded from the forest management and were not given representation in JFMCs, because the forest owners did not agree on their participation and their representation in JFMCs. Therefore, the forest owners (elites) discouraged the general community mobilization and extended their cooperation on the condition that the FD would not involve general
community (forest non-owners) in such organizations. This was claimed by members of JFMCs in a FDG in district Dir Upper:

“the inclusion of the masses in JFMCs, in different areas, created problems/issues and claimed benefits like the forest owners. Therefore, we extended our cooperation to the Forest Department on the condition that it would not mobilize and involve the general community while establishing JFMC and excluded them from JFMC’ membership”.

The forest dependent communities are characterized by poverty and illiteracy; hence, there is lack of awareness in such communities. According to majority of the executive body members of JFMCs, the poor were not interested to participate in forest management because they had no time for such activities. They were always busy in search of paid labor to earn their livelihood. As a result, they took least interest in JFMCs activities. It was found in the study areas/districts that poverty, illiteracy and lack of awareness in the local masses did not let them to participate in forest management without incentives. It was stated by a member of JFMC in district Shangla that the literacy rate in the district was at the lowest as compared to other districts in the province. Therefore, the local community was not properly aware about the importance of forest and their participation in its management. Furthermore, poverty was held responsible not only for low literacy rate and lack of awareness in the area but also for low participation of local people in the management of forest resources. A member of JFMC in district Chitral told during his individual interview that:

“majority of the common people are poor. They are busy in earning their livelihood. They have no time and resources for education of their children,
therefore, majority of them are illiterate. Owing to these reasons, they are not ready to participate in the forest management activities without incentives.”

Apart from the masses, women as a whole were not given representation in JFMCs and their involvement and representation in JFMCs was discouraged by the local communities. The co-working of men and women was considered against the local culture and traditions as well as teaching of Islam. It was found that women in the study area had so many activities that they had no time to participate in such activities. The exclusion of women from the management of forest resources was pointed out by members of JFMCs in district Shangla in a FGD that women participation in such organizations and their co-working with men is against Islam as well as local culture and traditions. The local community extended its cooperation to the FD staff on the condition that no woman would be mobilized for and involved in JFMCs.

Furthermore, there was no female staff such as FFEs available in the Forest Department to mobilize and organize local women, while the male staff members were not allowed to these activities due to strict observance of purdah (veil). As a result, local women were not properly mobilized and organized for such activities. Another member of JFMCs in an individual interview in district Dir Upper reflected that;

“Forest Department has no female staff and the mobilization and organization of local women by the male staff and their participation in JFMCs with male is considered against the local culture or traditions. Therefore, women participation was not possible in such conditions”.

115
6.4 Awareness, Trainings and Capacity Building Programs

For the delegation of powers to the grass-root level, it is required that local communities should be aware and their capacity must be built up to perform their duties. The Forest Department has the responsibility to create awareness in local community about the importance of forests by organizing seminars and workshops. It is also in its mandates to train JFMCs members in record keeping and accounts matters. However, no such practices were found in the field, as mentioned in the previous chapter, for organizing such events. A member of JFMC in district Shangla told in an individual interview that:

“the Forest Department neither organized seminars and workshops for the awareness of local community nor trained and built the capacity of JFMCs’ members to manage their forest resources efficiently”.

In fact, arranging such activities (seminars, workshops and training) for ensuring community participation in forest management required a bulk of resources both financial and human. The concept of JFMCs was first introduced by the donors’ agencies (NGOs) where sufficient resources were allocated for such activities and had the provision of incentives for local communities as well as FD staff, while attending such activities. Now they (community and FD staff) expected the same incentives while attending such events but there was no provision. Therefore, they lost their interest in such activities. Neither the Forest Department staff nor the community agreed to arrange and participate in such activities without incentives. This was explained by members of JFMCs in a FGD in district Chitral that:
“a reasonable budget was allocated in the donor funded projects for arranging seminars, workshops and trainings to build the capacity of local people. The participants were given incentives such as Travel Allowance and Daily Allowance along with refreshment while participating in these events. But the present participatory approach imposed by the government has no such incentives/provisions”.

People prefer to be involved in productive activities to earn livelihood for their family members instead of attending the seminars, workshops, meetings and participating in forest management activities without any incentives. This was highlighted by a secretary of a JFMC in his individual interview in district Dir Upper that most of the people were poor and unable to participate in JFMCs activities like seminar, workshops, meetings and other forest related activities. They were always busy in search of their livelihood, as forest had no economic value for them. Hence, a limited number (two or three) of persons were chosen to deal with JFMCs’ activities.

6.5 Structure of JFMCs

Community organizations especially JFMCs are to be organized/established by giving proper representation to all stakeholder including forest department, forest owners, the poor marginalized people, women and other stakeholder if any. However, the ground reality was found quite different because JFMCs represented only and only the forest owners from the local communities and FD while the disadvantaged people and women were not given representation. The common people were kept away/ignored because of the fear that they would claim royalty/property rights on the basis of their membership in JFMCs. This was explained by a member of JFMC in his individual interview in district
Dir Upper that most of the court decisions were made on the basis of benefits availed by forest dwellers who were not the forest owners. Therefore, giving them representation would provide legal ground for them to claim ownership rights.

In fact, it was observed that majority of the marginalized groups were forest dwellers and they were mostly dependent on forests for their livelihood and livestock but they were not given representation in JFMCs. On the other hand, most of the forest owners had their residents in the settled areas who were members of JFMCs; therefore, the exclusion of the poor people who were residing in forest premises was against participatory approach. This was explained by members of JFMCs in an FGD in district Swat as:

“we have forests and several families of Gujar Tribe (the people who are/were keeping cattle) are settled in these forests for the last 60 years. Now some of them claim the ownership rights and share in the royalty in the forest products. Therefore, we oppose their membership in JFMCs as it will strengthen their claims”.

Similarly, women were also excluded from membership in such community organizations (JFMCs) though women were found in direct interaction with forest resources as they collected fuel wood and fodder from forests on daily basis. However, they were not given representation in JFMCs on the ground that they were already overburdened by so many activities and that they did not want to assign them more responsibilities. This was elaborated by members of FMCs in a FGD in district Chitral that the women were already overburdened as they were responsible for cooking, washing, fetching water, looking after the children, bringing fuel-wood and fodder from
forests. Therefore, to assign to them other activities and involve them in forest management would make them more overburdened.

Furthermore, women participation in JFMCs is discouraged in most places because of socio-cultural constraints on women. Women participation in public organizations and their mixing with men is considered against the cultural values of the area and an agenda of the West against the pakhtun culture. This was explained by a member of JFMC in district Shangla in an individual interview that women liberty and co-working with men was a threat to their cultural values. It was an agenda of the West to destroy cultural values and traditions of Pakhtun society by involving women in such organizations and giving them liberty like Western society.

It was observed that JFMCs’ membership was hereditary in nature as elections were not held for electing the members of JFMCs after completion of its two years tenure. Furthermore, JFMCs worked as harvest committees. The forest owners participated only in harvesting activities instead of plantation and protection activities. It was elaborated by members of JFMCs in district Shangla in a FGD as:

“JFMCs are formed for developing/creating consensus among the owners and other stakeholders (FD and FDC) during marking and harvesting; and after completing these tasks JFMCs are no more active. In case of next marking and harvesting, either old JFMC is reactivated or new one is established. There are no elections for electing the members of JFMCs after the completion of two-years tenure”.
6.6 Activities and Role of JFMCs

JFMCs are constituted to perform a number of activities for managing forests as theorized in participatory approach. These organizations are responsible to help and coordinate with the Forest Department for better management and protection of forest resources. JFMCs are supposed to ensure the involvement of all segments of local community in forest related activities such as need identification, prioritization, planning, monitoring and evaluation of various projects. JFMCs perform a number of activities for the proper management of forests resources. Some of the important duties are as under:

6.6.1 Conduct of Meetings and Keeping the Record Properly

The periodic meetings of JFMCs, at least six in a year, are mandatory to be held and its minutes and resolution are to be recorded. Special meetings are also to be called when required. However, in practice no such activities were found that ensured in-time meetings and proper record-keeping of such JFMCs. The members of JFMCs, as mentioned earlier, were not properly trained for these activities. Similarly, they had no time for such activities in which they had no incentives and rewards. Most of the forests had no economic value because there was ban on harvesting for commercial purposes since 1992. The members of JFMCs in district disclosed in a focus group discussion Dir Upper that:

“the meetings are not conducted regularly because the people are poor. They go out for work to earn their livelihood. They cannot spare time for attending meetings. There are no incentives for them while attending such meetings”.

120
Likewise, it was observed in the study area that the record of the decisions taken and resolutions passed by JFMCs was not properly maintained. Hence, it was also not submitted to the DFO concerned. This was highlighted by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Chitral that neither the meetings were held regularly nor its records and reports were submitted to the DFOs because JFMCs’ members were not properly trained in such activities. Furthermore, as a matter of fact, literacy rate was quite low in the forest dependent communities. That is why most of the JFMCs members were illiterate and it is considered a reason for improper record keeping. This was explained by a chairman of a JFMC in an individual interview in district Shangla that majority of the members of JFMC were illiterate, as the literacy rate in the district was very low. Therefore, it was difficult for an illiterate member to maintain the record properly. Similarly, as a result of low literacy rate and low level of awareness, majority of JFMCs’ members were not aware about the by-laws of such community organizations, hence, they could not observe the prescribed rules regulations. This is clear from the statement of a member JFMC in his individual interview in district Dir Upper as he told:

“we do not know anything about the number of scheduled meetings in a year. We call meeting only when an issue arises or the forest department asks for it”.

6.6.2 Needs Identification and Prioritization

One core responsibility of JFMCs is to identify and prioritize the needs of the community. The FD was to plan her activities to satisfy the identified needs of local community according to its prioritization but later on, FD showed interest in limited fields. That is why community lost its interest as the prioritized needs were not addressed
accordingly. It was highlighted by a member of JFMCs in district Swat in an individual interview that:

“the forest department employees assured that it will be responsible for the fulfillment of identified needs of the local people according to our prioritization. However, later on it showed its interest only in limited fields (forest sector) and the prioritized needs were not addressed properly”.

The same explanation was given by members of JFMCs in a FGD in district Swat that they identified and prioritized the need of water supply scheme for drinking. The forest department failed to work on the project although they visited the DFO office again and again but in vain. They were discouraged and disappointed. However, it was observed that JFMCs members were satisfied with the FD in providing plants and assistance in nursery raising activities on their request. This was elaborated by a member of JFMC in district Dir Upper that local people were assisted by the forest department in nursery raising and plantation on their request. But forest department did not help them in other developmental activities such as water supply, street pavement and road construction.

Furthermore, the poor and women, as mentioned earlier, were not given proper representation in JFMCs. Therefore, they could not participate in the whole process of needs identification and prioritization which was necessary for better conservation and protection of forest resources. The local elites (forest owners) claimed that they better understood the needs of the local community. A chairman of a JFMC in district Swat in an individual interview stated:
“though general community (poor and marginalized) are not given representation in JFMCs but the elites of the locality know better about the needs of the community and its solution as compared to lay men”.

JFM approach has the responsibility to provide technical skill and financial assistance/loans to the poor/needy people. However, it could not initiate such income generating activities for reducing the dependency of local poor people on forests resources. Therefore, they had to depend on forest for fulfilling their daily needs. This was highlighted by a secretary of a JFMC in his individual interview in district Shangla that the poor were dependent on forests but JFMCs had no resources to help them reduce their dependency on forests. The same explanation was given by another member of JFMC in district Swat in his individual interview that:

“though this is the responsibility of JFMCs to reduce the dependency of the poor on forest resources because without it the protection and conservation of forests was impossible. But unfortunately, no such activities were initiated due to financial constraints”.

It was observed that JFMCs were established only as a formality and there was lack of commitment on the part of the FD as well as forest owners to make such organizations representative and effective.

6.6.3 Planning

In addition to need identification and prioritization, planning for its satisfaction is the responsibility of JFMCs. They were supposed to prepare a Joint Forest Management Plan (JFMP) for the development and better conservation of forest resources. However, no
such practice was reported/observed in the field and JFMPs were neither devised and approved nor submitted to the DFOs by JFMCs. A member of JFMC from district Swat while expressing his view on the issue during an individual interview told that:

“planning is the basic requirement for the success of any activity or program. Planning is a technical thing, which requires trained staff in JFMCs. However, no proper training was conducted for the members of JFMCs by the FD or any other organization”.

Thus, no proper planning was observed in the field because there was no plantation on regular basis and the local people fulfilled their needs exploiting forest resources, as compared to previous years. This showed incompetency of the FD and JFMCs members who failed to maintain balance between plantation and harvesting of trees. For instance, members of JFMC’s from district Shangla expressed their views in a FGD that they were being motivated by the forest department staff about the benefits of participatory approach but they never motivated for plantation, conservation and protection of forest resources. As a result, the forest cover decreased. It was also worth mentioning that planning and its implementation was not possible without proper allocation of finances for it. Neither forest department nor JFMCs allocated funds for such activities. This was elucidated by the chairman of a JFMC form district Shangla in his individual interview:

“money is required for proper implementation and giving practical shape to the planning. The unavailability of funds made participatory approach (JFMCs) meaningless. As a result, community showed disinterest in such activities”.
6.6.4 Plantation and Forest Protection

JFMCs were established to involve communities not only in planning and harvesting but also in plantation and forest protection/conservation activities as highlighted in the previous chapter. Local communities were interested only in those activities which were beneficial for them. The forest owners focused on harvesting and exploited forest resources to get economic benefits. They did not realize the importance of plantation and forest protection in the future. Such activities (plantation and forest protection/conservation) were considered the duty of forest department. This was highlighted by members of JFMCs from district Shangla in a FGD, collectively, that Forest Department held the responsibility of plantation and forest conservation in return of 40 percent its share in the royalty from the forest products.

It was claimed by JFMCs’ members, in some areas, that they took part in plantation and forest protection activities whenever forest department asked them for such activities. Some of the JFMCs’ members showed their concerns over their free plantation as they were paid for such activities in the previous donor-funded projects. They believed that forest department had allocated budget for these activities. But it was distributed among the FD staff, and the community was asked to perform such activities voluntarily without any reward or incentives. This was told in a FGD by members of JFMCs in district Dir Upper that they were paid for plantation/afforestation and protection activities, previously in donor-funded projects. The forest department now expects/wants these activities in free from the local community. Since people are poor, they are not ready to participate in such activities without proper remuneration. As a matter of fact, JFMCs’ members
especially chairpersons and secretaries were mostly from the elite class (forest owners) who were responsible for the misuse of power on behalf of such organizations. They along with the FD staff exploited the poor people of the community. Therefore, in order to keep such activities in secret they did not maintain the record properly. A JFMC member in an individual interview reluctantly expressed such views in district Shangla that:

“the forest department staff along with the chairman and secretary of JFMCs divided the amount specified for plantation among them. Though the community had participated and performed these activities voluntarily. The community gave up participation when came to know about this corruption in such activities. Therefore, the chairmen and secretaries along with forest department staff are responsible for the failure of these organizations (JFMCs)”.

Forest Department and JFMCs’ members, in the light of participatory approach, held the responsibility to schedule combined patrolling and establish check posts for the protection of forests. But no such practice was practically found in the field, and JFMCs members held forest department responsible for regular patrolling and monitoring check posts. The members of JFMCs in an individual interview in district Dir Upper expressed their views by saying that the forest department staff had special powers regarding forest protection, but they did not take interest in using such powers for the protection of forest resources.

Local community, in the light of participation approach, had the authority to establish new check posts and shift any check post with the approval of the concerned DFO. But in some areas of district Dir Upper the practice was observed that community had
established check posts and strictly monitored the transportation of timber only in those areas where the forests had economic value for them. This was explained by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in distract Dir Upper that:

“JFMC has effective role in establishing and monitoring check posts only because the forest are grown and have economic value for local community. It is only for their benefits that the local people take interest in such activities”.

6.6.5 Conflict Resolution

It was believed/theorized that community organizations (JFMCs) would be effective in conflicts and disputes resolution. It was noticed/reported that JFMCs played key role in the resolution of local conflicts related to forests/natural resources because such organizations were represented by the elites of the community whose decisions were honored; hence, they proved effective. Many conflicts and disputes were resolved by JFMCs in a short period. Even the decision made by the court could not be implemented without the involvement of local leadership. This was highlighted by members of JFMCs in district Chitral in a FGD that JFMCs had provided a forum to the local leadership to intervene in conflicts and disputes resolution related to forests. In this respect, such organizations played an effective role as the violation of the decisions taken by such organizations was always discouraged by the local elites. This was further elaborated by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in distract Shangla that there was a dispute on forest boundaries between two groups for the last thirty years and even the supreme court of Pakistan had decided the case but could not implement its decision until the local elites (who are also members of JFMC) intervened and successfully resolved the issue.
The decisions made by these local elites were more acceptable and it also took little/short time to make a decision as compared to the complicated judicial system. This was stated by members of JFMCs in a FGD in district Dir Upper collectively that:

“the decisions taken/made by these local organizations (JFMCs) are according to the customs and traditions of locality. Therefore, these are easy to be implemented. The elites are the guarantors whose decisions are honored and obeyed”.

JFMCs being a combined forum for both communities (forest owners) and forest department played an important role in conflicts resolution between these two stakeholders. Before employing the participatory approach, these stakeholders (community and forest department) were just blaming each other, and neither of them was ready even to listen to each other. Now on this forum both had the opportunity to share their concerns and discuss the issues in forest management. This was expressed by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Shangla that JFMCs played the role of mediator not only among community groups but also between community and forest department. Now all the issues were mutually discussed for developing consensus.

6.6.6 Marking and Harvesting of Trees

Community organizations (JFMCs) were established to provide an opportunity to the local community to participate in marking and harvesting activities just like plantation, forest protection and conservation through patrolling and establishing check posts for better management of their forest resources. However, local elites were found very active in those activities that were economically meaningful for them and ignored all other
activities related to forest development and conservation. In the top-down approach, local communities were not properly involved in marking and harvesting activities. As a result, the forest department was blamed for marking and cutting more trees and violating the criteria for such activities. Therefore, local communities, in the light of the participatory approach, were involved in such activities as the major share in sale proceeds (60 to 80 percent) was given to them. This was told by members of JFMC collectively in a FGI in district Dir Upper that:

“these are our forests and we have 80 percent share in its sale proceeds. Our involvement controlled and monitored illegal marking and harvesting exercised by the Forest Department in the past”.

Apart from this, it was observed that members of JFMCs took keen interest in such activities because they were interested, as mentioned in the previous chapter, to exploit forest resources before they were deprived of such concession. They always tried to mark and harvest more trees because they feared that government may change its policy any time and can withdraw or reduce their share in the sale proceeds from the forest products. It increased deforestation and created an environment of mistrust on each other. This was expressed by a member of a JFMC in an individual interview in district Swat as:

“we have no clear ownership rights and tenure system as we have been declared as concessionists. The government has the real ownership of forests and has the authority to withdraw concessions extended to us in the light of participatory approach. In such situation, local communities (forest owners) try to exploit forest resources before they are deprived of this concession”.

129
6.6.7 Marketing of Timber

Community involvement in marketing was one of the most important objectives of the participatory approach as community was the prime stakeholder. Almost, 60 to 80 percent of the royalty from the forest products was the share of the local community (forest owners); therefore, its (community) involvement was necessary. Members of JFMCs, being the representatives of the forest owners, were found very active in tree marking and harvesting as well as in marketing. Forest owners, as mentioned above, were interested to exploit forest resources and get more royalty as their share from the forest products. Previously, FDC (Forest Development Corporation) had the responsibility of marketing for the forest timber and it was blamed for fixing low prices. Now, in the light of participatory approach, local Communities were involved and empowered in marketing to get high price for such products. Apart from this, it was found that majority of the JFMCs members were involved in timber trade and they were timber contractors. The role of Forest Development Corporation (FDC) was criticized by such members, and they demanded the abolition of FDC because its transportation charges were several times higher than the actual charges. This was Justified by a Chairman of a JFMC in a FGD in district Chitral that:

“The FDC has the responsibility of transportation of timber from forests to markets. However, it does not perform its duty and this is done by the timber contractors. Furthermore, the FDC transportation charges are three times more than the actual cost on transportation. The presence of such irresponsible organization is a burden and loss for the community. It should be abolished”.

130
It was observed in the field that FDC was mostly criticized by those members of JFMCs’ who were contractors involved in timber business. They were interested that marketing and transportation of timber should be in the domain of JFMCs instead of Forest Development Corporation (FDC). FDC was criticized for fixing low prices for timber and high transportation charges. This was elaborated by chairman of a JFMC in an individual interview in district Chitral that FDC was the root of corruption as it fixes the rate of timber very low and transportation charges very high. These activities should be totally assigned to JFMC and the FDC should be abolished.

6.6.8 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation, as highlighted in the previous chapter, were the basic duties of JFMCs. Without such measures, no program could achieve its goals and objectives. However, no such practice was found in the field where such community organization properly monitored forest related activities. JFMCs were found interested only in monitoring tree marking, harvesting and marketing activities. It was because such activities had economic value for them. This was exemplified by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Chitral that Forest Department involved JFMCs members in marking, harvesting of trees and marketing of timber because 60 percent of the sales proceed was given to them. Therefore, they properly monitored these activities until getting their share. However, in some places JFMC played an important role in monitoring the Forest protection and plantation. Such monitoring was very effective because local communities knew better the strategies of forest protection and conservation. Their involvement produced encouraging results especially in those areas.
where the forest had economic benefits. A member of JFMC in an individual interview in district *Dir* Upper reflected that:

> “The JFMC members monitor the plantation and forest protection and it proved very helpful in forest conservation and sustainability. These forests have economic values for us as we have 80 percent share in sales proceed, hence, we actively monitor forest related activities”.

### 6.6.9 Revenue Utilization and Distribution

Apart from monitoring, JFMCs also distributed the royalty from the forest products among the community members and created consensus among the community members on its distribution. However, it was only distributed among the owners and did not spend a single penny on developmental works for the community/general public. The forest protection, conservation and development were not on the agenda of JFMCs and these tasks were considered the responsibilities of the government (FD). It was observed and members of JFMCs in district *Shangla* also elaborated their views while focusing on the issue that forests were their property and 40 percent of the royalty from these forests’ products was given to government for developmental activities in the area while the remaining 60 percent was distributed among the owners. Hence, nothing was spent in the interest of the general community including forest non-owners.

Apart from the exclusion of forest non-owners, women were also deprived of their share in the royalty from the forest products. The royalty was distributed among the male owners on the basis of strength of male members in their families while the females were
ignored in the whole process. This was explained by a member of JFMC in a FGD in district Dir Upper that:

“the revenue of the forest is distributed among the owners on the basis of the number of male members as they shoulder financial responsibilities while the females have no such responsibility; therefore, they are not given share in the revenue/royalty”.

It meant that those households that had more male members had more share in the royalty as compared to those which had less male members. This was completely unjust and against the teachings of Islam. It was observed that women did not enjoy property rights and economic independence. They were always dependent on the male members of their families as they were not capable managing forests. Therefore, they were deprived of their right to have share in the royalty/revenue from the forest products. A member of JFMC in district Dir Upper expressed his views in an individual interview that their women were not able and capable to manage forest. Hence, they were not given the right of property/land ownership and share in the revenue/royalty from its products. This is the reason that the revenue/royalty was distributed among the male members of the community.

6.7 Conclusion

This is concluded from the views of the executive bodies’ members of JFMCs that a huge gap existed between theory and practice. The poor and weak segments of the community were intentionally excluded from the management of forest. They were neither mobilized and organized nor involved and empowered in such activities. The forest owners (elites)
were not ready to give membership to the non-owners because of the fear that they (forest non-owners) would claim ownership rights on the basis of their membership in JFMCs. Therefore, they were excluded from all activities related to forest management. Similarly, women were also not given representation in JFMCs as culturally they were not allowed to work in the same organization with men due to the strict observance of purdah (veil). Furthermore, the forest non-owners and women were excluded from the benefits of participatory approach (JFMCs) in forest management. Hence, their needs were neither identified nor prioritized nor included in the planning on such forums. The royalty was not utilized for developmental projects in local communities, and it was divided among the male members of the forest owners. JFMCs were formed only to participate in activities like tree marking, harvesting and royalty distribution among the owners while such community organizations were not active in the overall management of forest resources. Apart from this, JFMCs members were not properly trained to participate in forest management and other developmental activities. They only focused on the financial benefits of forest. Forest department staff was itself not properly trained and aware of participatory approach therefore they could not implement participatory approach in a real sense. The record of the activities and decisions taken by JFMCs was not properly maintained. The chairmen and secretaries were all in all in decision making without any consultation with the community. In the absence of incentives, general communities (forest non-owners) were not ready to participate in forest management because of their poverty.
Part-II

6.8 Problems affecting Community Participation and Empowerment in Forest Management

According to the views of the executive bodies’ members of JFMCs in the study area, there were some problems that discouraged the involvement of the community in forest management (protection and conservation) in its true spirit. These resulted in an ineffective involvement of local forest dependent communities in forest management, and created a gigantic gap between theory and practice. Some of the key issues/problems that affected the effectiveness of community participation and empowerment in forest management are explained below.

6.8.1 Lack of Trained and Specialized Staff

Forest department had the shortage of staff to mobilize the local community and to attend the meetings and elections conducted for JFMCs. There was no female staff to mobilize and organize local women for forest management. This was opined by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Shangla that the DFO was invited several times to attend the meeting, but he excused himself by saying that he was busy. He promised that his representative would attend the meetings, but no one came to the meetings, and the DFO told that there was lack of staff; therefore, it was not possible for them to attend such meetings.
It was observed that the staff in the study area was insufficient, and the number/strength of staff was less for the management of the area (Malakand Division) having highest forest cover in the province. Furthermore, the staff was not properly trained in the mobilization and organization process of local community to involve them and empower them in the management of forests. This was the reason that they could not run an effective campaign for community involvement in the far-flung hilly areas. This was explained by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Shangla as:

“the forest department has insufficient human resource (staff), and the available staff is not specialized and properly trained in participatory approach. The district has limited number of employees. It is not possible for them to visit community and mobilize and organize them for an effective participation in forest management”.

Participation approach was not only new but also in contradiction with the traditional centralized/bureaucratic approach of forest management in which the Forest Department staff was already trained. Because of the unavailability of specialized and trained staff caused improper implementation of participatory approach in the field. This was explained by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that the far flung and forest covered districts had no or less staff such as CDOs and FFEs trained and specialized in community participation. Hence, the Forest Department could not participate and monitor the activities of JFMCs in such areas.
6.8.2 Socio-Cultural Issues

Socio-cultural setup also affects the implementation process of participatory approach in community. Culture and traditions of the study area were not supportive to the participatory approach as the participation of women, their presence and working with men in the same organization were not possible. Therefore, no female was found as a member of any JFMCs. The members of a JFMC collectively in a FGD in district Dir Upper stated that:

“our cultural values and traditions do not allow women to be present at a forum or attend an event where men are present. Therefore, women are not given representation in JFMCs because men were there”.

This was further justified by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Shangla that their women were already over burdened as they were responsible for rearing and caring the children and elders. They worked in agricultural fields and collected fuel wood and fodder from forests. They had no time for joining such organizations.

6.8.3 Lack of Interest of FD Staff

The Forest Department staff, as mentioned above, was already trained and had experience in bureaucratic style. Therefore, they discouraged and did not take interest in implementing the bottom-up approach under which they were accountable to the local community. There seemed a lack of commitment on the part of the Forest Department staff to implement participatory approach that would limit their power and authority.
Forest Department employees had special incentives during the implementation of such projects funded by the donor agencies but they had no such incentives for their work. As a result, they lost their interest in such activities and considered it an extra burden. This was elaborated by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that:

“before the introduction of bottom-up (participatory) approach, the top-down approach was in practice, under which the forest department staff enjoyed bureaucratic style of governance and management. Under participatory approach, in donor driven projects, local community as well as forest department enjoyed many incentives that attracted them to participate. Now there is no provision for such incentives, therefore, participation in such activities is considered a burden and just the wastage of time”.

In the lights of bottom-up approach, community was to be more empowered in forest management and decision-making. The Forest Department staff did not want to make the local people aware about their rights/power which limited their autonomy. Forest Department feared that if local community was aware it would intervene in its activities and would cause unnecessary delay in its work. It was told secretly by a member of JFMC in an interview in district Chitral that the Forest Department was not interested in the mobilization of local communities.

6.8.4 Livestock and Forest Depletion (over-grazing)

The forest dependent communities usually depended on livestock for the fulfillment of their daily basic needs; and their livestock depended on natural resources especially on
forests. This dependence caused the degradation and depletion of these forests. The local communities had the single goal to feed their livestock at any cost; otherwise, they would have nothing to eat and survive. This was observed that keeping livestock was considered one of the most practicable businesses/activities as the fodder for livestock was free of cost in such areas. This was further explained by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that:

“the local people mostly the forest non-owners are dependent on livestock for their livelihood because there is no other source of earning livelihood. They use the products of livestock for fulfilling their basic daily needs, while their livestock are dependent on forests which causes its depletion and degradation”.

The depletion of forest by the livestock of forest non-owners was further justified by a member of JFMC in individual interview in district Swat that the Gojars (a tribe who keeps/kept livestock as a profession) were dependent on livestock. Such people were living in forests and their livestock caused the degradation of forests.

6.8.5 Ownership Issues

The philosophy behind participatory approach was to create sense of ownership among the local community. However, the forest non-owners were excluded from such management and decision-making on the ground that they would claim ownership rights and share in the revenue from the forest products. This was said by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Shangla that:
“the forest non-owners are not given representation in JFMCs, and they are not involved in decision-making and forest management because the forest owners fear that they would claim ownership rights on the basis of benefits extended to them in the light of participatory approach”.

Apart from the exclusion of marginalized segments, the forest owners were also not satisfied with the agreement between them and the Forest Department. According to the agreement, they had not been declared the owners but concessionists that could be withdrawn at any time by the government. Hence, they were not interested in the long term protection, conservation and development of forest resources but they tried their best to exploit these resources as soon as possible.

6.8.6 Poverty and Lack of Incentives

Poverty was found to be the basic characteristic in the study area like other rural and forest dependent communities. These communities struggled for the sole purpose to earn their livelihood. Having no productive activity in the region, majority of the earning persons go/went abroad for getting employment. Therefore, only the children, elders and women were observed at houses. They reared and cared their minors, livestock and agricultural land. They had no time to participate in forest management activities. This was further elaborated by members of JFMC in an individual interview in district Swat that the forest non-owners were not interested in participating in the activities of JFMCs as:

“people of the village (forest non-owners) are very poor. They have no financial/economic benefits and incentives while participating in forest management activities. Therefore, to participate in such activities is considered
the wastage of time. Hence, earning members of their families either work in metropolitan cities of the country or abroad. The younger, elders and women are at home to look after the children and livestock. They have no time to participate in forest management activities”.

Due to extreme poverty, people were dependent on natural resources especially on forests for their livelihood and fodder for their livestock. The local communities, in the light of bottom-up approach, were to participate in forest management and to use forest products for fulfilling their needs which accelerated deforestation. On the other hand, due to extreme poverty the local people especially forest non-owners had no time to participate in forest management activities. The same explanation was given by a Chairman of JFMC in an individual interview in district Shangla that the forest dependent people of the area were in the state of absolute poverty. They were always busy in earning their livelihood. They had no time to participate in forest protection and conservation without incentives. Hence, they did not participate in the meeting of JFMCs.

6.8.7 Illiteracy and Lack of Awareness

The literacy rate in forest depending rural community was very low. The poor and marginalized people especially the forest non-owners and women were illiterate in the study area. Apart from this, there was no proper program for their awareness. As a result, they did not know the environmental utility of forests. They utilized these forests without any proper planning. Further, the exclusion and deprivation of poor and marginalized groups instigated them against these resources. This was justified by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Dir Upper:
“the forest dwellers are mostly nomads and they migrate to plain areas in winters. As a result, they cannot admit their children in school. Similarly, schools in such areas are far away due to scattered population. Therefore, literacy rate in these segments is very low”.

Furthermore, lack of specialized technical and the available overburdened staff of Forest Department caused lack of awareness in such illiterate communities about participatory approach. Forest Department had no sufficient resources for such activities. This issue was highlighted by a member of JFMC in an individual interview in district Shangla:

“to create awareness and mobilize the illiterate communities, the forest department should have skilled staff and funds, but unfortunately, the forest department has no sufficient resources (specialized staff and budget) for such activities”.

Due to these reasons, local communities and Forest Department could not come close to each other for the management of forest resources. As a result, participatory approach could not be implemented in its true spirit.

6.8.8 Overpopulation and High Growth Rate

Apart from other issues, overpopulation was found a major factor because bottom up approach empowered local communities to use forest resources for fulfilling their felt needs. This rapid growth in population resulted in an increase in constructing new buildings, demand for fuel-wood and keeping more livestock that exhausted natural resources especially forests. Hence, the needs of the increased population (overpopulation) put pressure on natural resources and caused the degradation of forests.
It was observed that most of the local people were involved in cutting trees for the construction of buildings and fuel-wood. On the other hand, there was no proper planning for plantation and forest conservation. Hence, overpopulation also resulted in the disintegration of joint family system that increased the demand for constructing new houses/buildings. Most of the buildings were made of wood from these forests. This was justified by a member of a JFMC in district Dir Upper as:

“when I was young there were only ten houses in our village, now there are more than hundred houses. All these houses are made of wood obtained from the local forest as other materials are not easily available and accessible”.
CHAPTER 7

GENERAL BODY MEMBERS OF JFMCs AND WOMEN
PERCEPTIONS ABOUT COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN
FOREST MANAGEMENT

7.1 Introduction:

The previous two chapters V and VI highlighted the views of Forest Department staff and executive body members of Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) about the implementation of participatory approach in forest management respectively. This chapter presents the views of general body members (men) of JFMCs (forest non-owners) and women about the process of community participation in forest management and conservation. It also elaborates my observations and field notes about community participation and empowerment in forest resource management under the Joint Forest Management approach. For comparative analysis, this chapter is also organized on the same pattern as the previous two chapters (5 and 6). This chapter is primarily divided into two parts. Part I explains the views of general body members of JFMCs (forest non-owners and women) about the process of community participation in forest Management. Part II highlights the issues in the implementation of participatory approach in the existing power relations. This chapter unearths the reality about general community especially forest non-owners and women’s level of awareness, participation and empowerment in decision making in forest related activities for the realization of which the new bottom up approach was adopted. Their views were of great importance because
they more depended on forest visited such forests on daily basis for the satisfaction of
their daily needs such as collection of fuel wood and fodder from forests.

Part: I

7.2 Views of General Community Members about Community Participation in
Forest Management

This part (as mentioned above) explains views of the community (JFMC general body)
members about the involvement/participation of local people in forest conservation and
protection. This part is also organized on the same pattern/themes adopted for data
presentation of the preceding two chapters for the analysis of issues.

7.3 Community Mobilization and Organization

Participatory approach, as mentioned in chapter 5, believes in community mobilization
and organization for the involvement of local communities in forest management. Joint
Forest Management Committees (FMCs) were to be formed in such a way as to represent
all segments of the community especially the marginalized ones (forest non-owners and
women). However, no such practice was found/observed in the field because the
community was not properly mobilized and made aware about the concept and role of
JFMCs which were mandatory for implementing participatory approach in forest
management. The procedures adopted for community mobilization and organization and
JFMCs formation for the management of forest resources were as follow:
7.3.1 Visiting the Elites for Intervention

Participatory approach, as highlighted earlier seeks the involvement of all stakeholders (including forest non-owners and women), and aims at empowering them in decision making in forest related issues. However, neither the forest department staff nor the forest owners involved the forest non-owners and women in forest management. Forest Department staff visited only the elites and influential people of the locality for getting their support and establishing the so-called JFMCs for forest management. They ignored the general community (forest non-owners and women) in the processes of community mobilization and organization. Therefore, such segments of the communities were found unfamiliar with the concept of JFMCs. However, in some communities JFMCs were known as harvest committees, and such committees were formed only when there were marking and harvesting activities in a forest. This was explained by a male member of the general body in his individual interview in district Dir Upper:

“the forest department employees visit the elites when they face any problem. They never contact poor and forest non-owners for any type of consultation and organization. There is no JFMC in the area. Harvest committees are constituted by the forest owners when there are marking and harvest activities”.

Such statements show that Forest Department staff visited forest owners/landlords/elites of the village, and did not contact the general community i.e. forest non-owners. It was considered that involving different interest groups would cause delay in decision making because each interest group would try to get the decision in its favor and get more
benefits than others. This was expressed by a man from the user group in his individual interview in district Dir Upper that:

“too many cooks spoil the broth”. When there are too many people with different interests in an organization, the goals are hard to achieve. Forest department does not involve the forest non-owners in such organizations and forest management activities to keep such organizations manageable and controlled; hence, it involves only the forest owners/elites in such community organizations”.

7.3.2 Mobilization of General Community and JFMCs Organization

Participatory/bottom up approach, as mentioned above, believes in proper mobilization and involvement of local communities including the forest non-owners and women in forest management. Therefore, staff specialized in participatory approach such as CDOs and FFEs was to be appointed for this purpose. But no such staff was available in the study area. As a result, these communities were found unaware about the concept of JFMCs as well as the process of its constitutions and its functioning. It was observed that the two key stakeholders i.e. Forest Department and forest owners were not willing/interested to mobilize and organize the general community and involve the forest non-owners and women in the management of forest resources according to the claims of participatory approach. This was explained collectively by forest non-owners in a FGD in district Shangla as:

“we do not know about JFMC as the Forest Department never visited this village for forming such organizations. The forest department employees along with forest owners come here for marking trees when the harvesting activities are started”.

147
It was found that the young male family members of the forest non-owners were not at home but worked abroad. The people were not ready to take part in forest management and protection from which they had no direct economic gains. A seventy years old man told in his individual interview in district Dir Upper that he had five sons and four daughters. All of his sons and daughters were married. Four of his sons were working abroad in Saudi Arabia and one was working in Hyderabad. They all lived in a joint family. The forest owners were not ready to give share to the forest non-owners in the income from the forest royalty; therefore, they did not take part/interest in the management and conservation of forests.

Apart from this, the Forest Department was to appoint Female Forest Extensionists (FFE) for the mobilization and organization of local women in such communities to ensure their active involvement in forest management and conservation. However, in the study area (districts) except district Chitral and some areas of district Swat, there was no specialized female staff for such activities. Women of the study areas shouldered many responsibilities. That is why they could not spare time to participate in forest management activities. This was justified when a woman about fifty years of age told about the routine activities of women in a village of district Shangla that:

“women’s duty is to look after the children and cattle. They daily bring/collect fuel–wood and fodder from the forest and bring water from a spring which is one and half kilometer away from the village. They also work in the agriculture fields”.

11 It is the name of a city in Sindh province of Pakistan.
Similarly, socio-cultural constraints on women were also held responsible for their absence in JFMCs which were meant to manage forest resources. Strict observance of Purda (veil) for women was indispensable and their co-working with men at any forum was discouraged by the local culture. Therefore, no woman was found as member of any JFMC in these areas despite the fact that women had close relation with forest as stated above. This was hopelessly explained by a woman in an individual interview in district Chitral:

“women participation, empowerment and their co-working with men are considered against the local culture and traditions. Therefore, this Pashto proverb is very famous in our society, “Khaza da para ya kor dy ya gor” (it means that a woman should either live in her home or should (die) to be in the grave).”

7.4 Awareness, Trainings and Capacity Building Programs

Participatory approach believes in proper awareness and capacity building of local communities, and ensures active participation and empowerment of such communities in forest protection and conservation. Staff specialized in participatory approach is employed for the mobilization, awareness, training and capacity building of local communities. But in practice, no such staff was found in the study areas/districts although the area had highest forest cover (see chapters V and VI for details). As a result, there was lack of awareness and commitment in the local communities about participation approach in the management of forest resources. For the successful implementation of participatory approach, it is required that local communities must be aware about their role and their capacity must be built up to the level to efficiently perform the duties
assigned to them. Forest Department had all such responsibilities. But the issues/challenges faced by the FD (see chapter IV) did not allow to involve general community (forest non-owners) in forest management. High rate of illiteracy in these communities also aggravated the situation. This was expressed by forest non-owners in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in district Swat that they were illiterate because there was no school in this area, and they migrated to plain areas in winter and came back here in summer for the survival and feeding of their livestock. Therefore, due to their nomadic nature of life they could not admit their children in schools.

Like illiteracy, poverty was another common feature/characteristic of forest depending communities. These communities and their livestock were depending on forest resources which were now in the state of degradation. Such forests could not fulfill the needs of the increased population that resulted in lack of interest on the part of such communities to participate in the protection and conservation of forests. This was explicated by a seventy years old man from the forest non-owners in an individual interview in district Shangla:

“thirty five years back I had only five family members and I earned livelihood by cutting and selling fire-wood. Our livestock was also dependent on forests for fodder. After the government imposed ban on these forests, the local people suffered. However, their dependency on forests did not let them break their relation with forests. They illegally cut forests and now there are forests”.

It shows the dependency of local community/people on forest resources. The forest non-owners (see also chapter V and VI) were mostly poor they were always busy in earning their lively-hood; hence, they had no time to participate in meetings, trainings, workshops and seminars. In the past, incentives were extended to the local people when they
participated in such activities during the donors driven projects. It was brought into light by a man from the local community in an individual interview in district Chitral:

“I work in this forest on daily basis for earning livelihood for my family. If I do not work, who will earn for us? I have no time to participate in any activity without rewards/incentives. This is the duty of landlords/elites being the owners to participate in such activities as they have time and, get economic benefits from forests”.

7.5 Structure of JFMCs

It was documented that proper representation will be given to all stakeholder including Forest Department, forest owners, forest non-owners, NGOs and other stockholder (s) if any in JFMCs. However, it was observed in the field that JFMCs were representing only the forest owners from the community and FD, and the non-forest owners and women were not given representation in JFMCs, which were established/responsible for ensuring sustainability in forestry. The forest owners feared that if the forest non-owners were given representation and involved and empowered in forest management related decision-making, they would claim more benefits and might claim ownership rights. The forest owners tried to deprive and dislocate them from their native villages. It created a gulf between the two stockholders and caused court cases between them. Men form the local community an FGD in district Dir Upper said:

“we are born here and living in this forest for the whole life. My father also lived in and benefited from this forest. There is no JFMC for the management of the forest and some influential people of the nearby village are trying to displace us from here. To avoid this, we have filed a case in the court against them”.

151
Such type of thoughts created an environment of distrust and made the emergence of a number of interest groups in the locality. It was found that the forest owners were influential in the locality, and JFMCs were established by them while their dwellings were several miles away from the forest for which JFMCs were mad. Such case was identified when I visited a forest community/village and asked about the names of JFMC’s members the list of whom I had taken from the office of Divisional Forest Officer in district Dir Upper. I was told that they were the opponents of the dwellers and belonged to another village far away from the forest. It (JFMC) was used as a tool of defense to illegally extend the right of ownership on forest resources. This was told by members of a forest depending/dwelling community collectively in a FGD in district Dir Upper:

“the names/individuals about whom you are asking belong to the village, situated across the river and road. A court case is running between us on this forest. They are educated and some of them are government servants; therefore, they have established JFMC to strengthen their court case about forest ownership”.

It is documented that representation will be given to Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Women Organizations (WOs) in JFMCs. However, no Women Organizations (WOs) were found in the study area. Though, women were in close contact/interaction with these forests on daily basis because they collected fuel-wood and fodder for their livestock as their routine activity yet they were excluded from the management of forest resources. A sixty years old woman in an individual interview in district Chitral came up with the view that:
“most of the women in the village bring fuel-wood and fodder from these forests on daily basis. At the morning time, men are not allowed to visit forests because women are busy in collecting fuel-wood and fodder for their daily use”.

The daily visits of women to forests and the ban on men to enter forests in the specific time shows the interaction of women with forests and the cultural sensitivity of the co-existence of women and men at one place. Furthermore, it was documented that proper elections will be held for constituting JFMCs to make them representative in the real sense. However, no such elections were held as told by the community members in a group interview in district Chitral that neither regular elections were held nor general community’s members were involved in the process of JFMC constitution. Only the elites (forest owners) were involved such process. Furthermore, women had neither separate women organizations (JFMCs) nor they were aware about the process of JFMC constitutions. An old woman in district Dir Upper, when she was asked about women role in the protection and conservation of forests, reflected that it was the responsibility of men to protect, conserve and manage forests. Therefore, they were responsible for constituting such organizations (JFMCs).

7.6 Activities of JFMCs

The JFMCs, as already mentioned, had a number of duties/activities for the conservation and protection of forest resources through the involvement of local community and other stakeholders. The representation of the poor and marginalized including women was to ensured. However, no such practice was found/observed where all the stakeholders were given representation according to the policy/principles. Therefore, JFMCs represented the
elites and failed to safeguard the rights of the marginalized and disadvantaged groups. It affected the functions of JFMCs, which are the following:

7.6.1 Meetings and Record Keeping

The general community especially the forest non-owners and women were not aware about the periodic meetings (at least six in a year) of JFMCs. They had no time to be involved in such activities, as they were poor and were busy to earn their two-time bread. However, they stressed that the elite class such as landlords and influential had time for such activities as they had economic benefits from these forests. A man from the local community in his individual interview in district Swat said:

“I am a shopkeeper. I do not know about JFMC and its activities. I have never heard about its name and meetings. I buy fuel-wood that a poor man brings from the nearby forest. I am busy in my work to earn bread for my family members. I have no time to know about JFMC and to participate in its activities. This is the responsibility of those who get benefits from it”.

This is clear from the statement of the respondent that common people, who had no direct economic benefits from forests, were not ready to participate in forest management activities. It also shows that they were not properly mobilized to know about JFMC formation and its role forest management. This was further elaborated by a man from the forest user group in an individual interview in district Chitral that he did not know about JFMC. Harvest committee was constituted by the forest owners which was active until the completion of marking and harvesting activities. He was not from the forest owners; therefore, he did not know whether its meetings were regularly held or not.
The women were also found unaware about the name of JFMC. They knew only about the committees that were constituted for marking and harvesting activities in the forest. They did not know about the regular meetings of any such committee as they could not participate/intervene in male activities and such committees that were constituted by men. The women from the local community in a FGD in district Chitral told that they did not know about JFMCs and their meetings. These were male related organizations and activities; however, some committees were constituted by their men during harvesting in the forest.

7.6.2 Needs Identification and Prioritization

The new participatory approach was adopted because of the failure of traditional top-down approach in forest management. Under the new bottom-up approach it was required to identify the needs of the community including forest non-owners and women for the sake of better protection, conservation and management of forest resources. For the purpose, all such groups were to be given membership/representation in JFMCs where they would participate in decision-making process. However, no such practice was found where the voice of the voiceless could be heard and their need could be satisfied. This was explained by a community member in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that the elites/forest owners tried to pursue their interests. They tried to mark and harvest as many trees as they could. In such situation/conditions forest development and conservation could not be guaranteed.
This was found that the general community especially the forest non-owners and women were excluded from the forest management though they were more dependent on forests. The forest owners tried to withdraw the concessions that the forest non-owners availed, and they thought that the forest non-owners’ representation in such organizations and their empowerment in such matters would pursue/serve their interests and would be a base for claiming ownership rights. This created an environment of deprivation and distrust among forest users (between forest owners and forest non-owners) groups. This was explained by the local community in a FGD collectively in district Shangla that:

“The forest owners with the assistance of Forest Department have formed/established JFMCs. Under the platform of such organizations, forest owners are united and trying to deprive us (forest non-owners) of the benefits we are enjoying for the time immemorial”.

This statement by the forest non-owners shows the misuse of powers by the forest owners – a power that is assigned to them as members of JFMCs. They not only excluded the forest non-owners from representation in JFMC and forest management but also started a movement against them to snatch/withdraw the incentives/benefit they were enjoying previously. This was explicated by a forest dependent community (forest non-owners) in a group interview (FGD) in district Swat that they used to collect fuel-wood and fodder from these forest, since these were under the control of the Wali Swat (Ruler of Swat state). Now some elites tried to be united and deprive them from such incentives/rights.

It was also observed that women, in the study areas/communities/districts were excluded from the management of forest resources, as there was no representation of women in
JFMCs. Hence, their needs and priorities were totally ignored. Facing the long-standing cultural barriers, they could not participate in general and local elections even to cast their vote. Their reserved seats in local elections remained vacant. So, their needs could not be identified and prioritized because they had no representation in decision bodies/organizations. Despite the fact that women had a number of responsibilities and they did not want to be overburdened with other activities. A woman, above fifty years, explained the activities of women in her village in district Dir Upper:

“apart from collecting fuel wood and fodder from forests, the women of our village bring water from a distance of about one and half kilometer away from the village on daily basis. This is very tough job and no one initiated any drinking water supply program for us”.

This shows the load of work on women apart from their daily domestic chores, such as cooking, washing and cleaning. However, they were confident about their male/men that they knew better about their needs and priorities. This was explained by a woman in district Chitral when she told that men thought better for their women and knew well about their needs and its prioritization. Women had no time for such activities, and interruption in male/men’s activities was not considered good.

7.6.3 Planning

It was documented that in JFMC all segments of the community such as forest owners, forest non-owners including women would be given representation. It would prepare a Joint Forest Management Plan (JFMP) for the development and better conservation of forest, (see chapter IV for detail). However, no such representative JFMCs were found
during the study in the field, and no Joint Forest Management Plans were prepared and approved by the JFMCs. This was elaborated by a community member in an individual interview in district Swat:

“there is no such representative JFMC and no proper planning is done for plantation and afforestation/reforestation of the degraded forests. However, proper planning takes place for harvesting. The purpose of such planning is to serve the interests of a specific group (elites). The poor and vulnerable are neither included in such organizations and planning nor are their needs/interests/priorities fulfilled”.

It is a fact that without proper planning sustainable forestry could not be ensured; but no Joint Forest Management Plan was prepared and submitted by any JFMC. The general community was not aware of such planning; however, they agreed that there was no proper plantation and conservation activities that could improve forest cover. This was explicated by forest dwellers in a group interview (FGD) in district Dir Upper that the forests’ conditions showed the real situation. There were no regular plantation and conservation activities. It was due to the improper planning that neither the local needs were properly satisfied nor the forest cover was improved/increased.

Furthermore, it was realized that for proper planning and its implementation (plantation and conservation activities) finances were required, but JFMC had no such resources. The community share in the sale proceeds, from the forest products, was distributed among the forest owners and nothing was specified for other community development activities. A member from the community in an individual interview in district Shangla highlighted that:
“planning is done in the light of finances one has, as without finances/budget there could be no planning. JFMCs have no financial resources for their activities; therefore, it cannot do planning as it is not possible to give it practical shape without such resources”.

7.6.4 Plantation and Forest Protection

Under participatory approach, it was the responsibility of JFMCs not only to plan but also to take practical steps for proper plantation and conservation/protection to ensure sustainable forestry in the area. However, no such practices were found on the ground. One of the main reasons responsible for this failure was that the forest depending forest non-owners were neither involved nor were taken in confidence in such activities; they were excluded from such activities. The local people/community did not know about the duties and responsibilities of JFMCs. The local people did not participate in plantation, forest protection and conservation activities. However, they had actively participated in such activities under the donor driven projects in the past. This was brought into light by a community member in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that:

“There are no such plantation and forest protection/conservation activities that were there 15 years back under the donors driven projects. The local people actively participated in these activities as they were paid for such activities”.

Proper awareness and motivation campaigns were launched in the past for such activities during the donor driven projects. For example, a male respondent from the local community in an individual interview in district Dir Upper said that:
“under Dir-Kohistan Development Project, proper awareness and mobilization campaigns were devised for involving local people in afforestation and forest protection and conservation activities. Now no such programs are seen”.

During donor driven projects, plantation and forest protection and conservation activities were paid. Therefore, the local communities actively participated in such activities for incentives. Under the new participatory approach, neither government nor JFMC allocated budget for such activities; as a result, community participation was low. A male member from the local community in an individual interview in district Swat said that local community participated in plantation and conservation activities when they were paid for such activities during the donor driven projects. This was because majority of the people were poor in the locality.

In the light of participatory approach, JFMCs had the authority/were responsible for scheduling patrolling, establishing and shifting check posts for the protection of forests. However, the common people especially the poor and women did not participate in forest management, and the forest owners and forest department were held responsible for such activities. A male respondent from the local community in his individual interview in district Dir Upper replicated that:

“The forest non-owners (general community) do not take interest in such activities as they have no economic benefits from forests. It is considered the responsibility of forest department and forest owners who get shares in the sale proceeds from the forest products”.

160
7.6.5 Conflict Resolution

Philosophy behind establishing JFMCs is to resolve local conflicts in forest management as the violation of decisions made by such organizations is discouraged. However, it could not prove effective because such organizations (JFMCs) were not representative as the forest non-owners were excluded from such organizations. In some areas, these organizations denied incentives, which the forest non-owners enjoyed before. Therefore, it created an environment of distrust and resulted in conflicts and disputes among various forest user groups. Male members from the local community in a FGD in district Swat said that:

“the forest owners have formed an organization that is working for their interest and completely against the interests of the forest non-owners. It has created conflicts between the two segments of the community i.e. forest owners and forest non-owners”.

This exposed the poor and weaker segments of the community to more vulnerability. A member of community in an individual interview in district Shangla, reflected that under the JFM approach the forest owners were united and organized to dislocate the forest non-owners as they were not given representation in these organizations. Hence, it created gap between the two stakeholders.

However, it proved effective in resolving disputes/conflicts in some areas especially those that existed among the forest owners on ownership issues or distribution of sale proceeds from the forest products. This was opined by a male community member of
JFMC in district Dir Upper there were ownership disputes/conflicts among different tribes, However, these disputes were resolved by involving JFMCs.

Although conflicts were resolved by JFMCs in some places, yet it created/caused conflicts in some places. This was explained by a male community member in an individual interview in district Swat that:

“JFMCs played important role in conflict and disputes resolution that existed among forest owners. But it intensified rivalries between forest owners and forest non-owners because the forest owners always tried not to give representation to the non-forest owners and to withdraw the incentives they enjoyed in earlier period”.

7.6.6 Marking of Trees and Harvesting

Participatory approach encourages JFMCs to be representative, involving all segments of the community in decisions-making regarding forest management. However, this study found that only the forest owners had the right to be the members or select the members of JFMCs who had shares in the sale proceeds. The forest non-owners and women were totally excluded from such processes and activities. This came into light when community male members were asked in a FGD about the marking of trees for harvesting in the forests of district Chitral; their answer was:

“we are not from the forest owners; therefore, we cannot be the members. But harvest committee is constituted by the forest owners of members among them, and it is responsible for marking and harvesting activities in a forest”.
This was further explained by another community male member in an individual interview in district Shangla that the forest owners, being the members of harvest committee, tried to mark as many trees as they could, for getting more economic benefit from forests.

The general community especially the forest non-owners did not take interest in such activities because they had no direct economic benefits/gains from these forests. These people were not ready to leave their work and participate in forest management without incentives/economic gains. A community member in an individual interview in district Swat said that:

“the amount of sale proceed from the forest products is distributed among the forest owners only, while the forest non-owners are not given any share in it. Therefore, the forest non-owners are not interested in forest management activities”.

7.6.7 Marketing

Community involvement in marketing for the forest products was one of the most important objectives of the participatory approach, as it had 60 to 80 percent share in royalty/revenue from these products. However, the general community members (forest non-owners) were neither involved nor given representation in JFMCs; therefore, they were not aware about the activities. Similarly, they were ignorant about the benefits the user group had in the light of participatory approach. This was explained by a male member from the local community in an individual interview in district Shangla that:
“marketing is related to the economic output of forest resources; therefore, neither the forest owners share such information with the forest non-owners nor the forest non-owners are ready to take part in these activities from which they have no economic gains/incentives”.

Majority of the respondents from the general community (forest non-owners) were found ignorant about the process and procedures adopted for marketing the forest products for two reasons. First, the forest owners did not involve them; and second, they (forest non-owners) had no interest to know and participate in the process without incentives. This was explained by male members from the local community in a FGD in district Chitral that:

“we are collecting fuel-wood and other non-timer products from forests while the forest owners have share in the sale proceed from the timer products. Therefore, they do marketing to get more economic benefits from the forests products”.

7.6.8 Monitoring and Evaluation

The spirit of participatory approach is to empower local communities in decision making regarding forest management activities like planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. Community has to actively participate and monitor all activities such as plantation/afforestation, protection/conservation and harvesting activities. However, the forest owners participated and monitored the harvesting activities only and they did not take part in plantation and other forest protection and development activities while the forest non-owners never participated in any activity of forest management. This was expressed by a male member from the local community in an individual interview in district Swat that:
“The owners are planning for marking and harvesting more and more trees. They actively monitor these activities. On the other hand, there is no planning and monitoring mechanism for plantation, protection and conservation activities; therefore, forest cover is decreasing day by day”.

Like other activities, the forest non-owners did not participate in monitoring and evaluation of forest management activities. The main reason was that they were not extended economic benefits from the forest products. This was explained by a male member from the local community in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that the forest owners had economic benefits from forests; therefore, they were responsible to properly monitor and evaluate forest management related activities. Those who had no share in sale proceed could not be expected to participate in monitoring and evaluation of forest related activities.

7.6.9 Revenue Utilization and Distribution

Participatory approach claims to extend the economic benefits of the forests to the local stakeholders. Therefore, 60 percent and in some areas 80 percents of the sale-proceed from the forest products was given as a share to the concerned community (Forest Owners). It was the responsibility of JFMCs to spend it on forest development and other community uplift programs. However, no such practice was found/noted in the study areas/districts because such amount was distributed/divided only among the forest owners. This was explicated by a male member from the local community in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that:
“eighty percent of forest products’ sale proceed is the share of the forest owners that they distribute among themselves. It is spent neither on forest protection and conservation nor on other community development programs. Therefore, the disadvantaged people are not ready to participate in any activity in free”.

Like the poor marginalized people, women were also not given share in sale-proceed from the forest products. It was found that the sale proceed from the forest products was distributed among the male family members of the forest owners. This was explained by a woman in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that:

“I have a son and seven daughters while my husband is dead. My brother in-law has five sons. Since the amount from sale proceed is distributed on the basis of the number of male members in a family, he gets six times more benefits than us. This is inequality which is completely against the teachings of Islam and laws of inheritance”.

7.7 Conclusion

The general body especially the forest non-owners and women’s views were presented in this chapter. It is concluded from the analysis of this chapter that the general body especially the forest non-owners and women were more marginalized segments of the community. They had no voice in the management of forest resources, though they were more dependent on forests as they were poor. They were not only poor but also illiterate. They had no knowledge of the environmental utility of forests. Furthermore, they had the sole goal/objective and that was the earning of livelihood for their family members. The forest owners were not ready to involve the masses in forest related activities and give them representation in JFMCs that would affect decision and extend more benefits to
them. Though women were more attached to forests as they visited forest for collection of fuel-wood and fodder on daily basis, they were not involved in forest management due to the socio-cultural constraints. JFMCs had not represented all segments of the community but represented only the elite class. Thus, JFMCs served the interests of the elite class rather than the poor vulnerable people and women of the community. The already extended benefits to the forest non-owners were endangered because the forest owners were organized under the new approach and were trying to snatch the incentives/benefits from them.

Part: II

7.8 Issues in the Implementation of Participatory Approach and Empowerment of Local Communities

Some factors were found responsible that paralyzed participatory approach and did not allow the general community including forest non-owners and women to participate in forest management. Some of the key issues/problems are given below:

7.8.1 Socio-cultural Issues

Socio-cultural aspects play important role in the implementation of participatory approach. The culture of the study area/locality, for example Malakand Division, was in favor of male dominancy. Although women were the main users of forest products and they were responsible for collecting fuel wood as well as fodder for livestock on daily basis, they were excluded from JFMCs which were responsible for forest management
and conservation. Their coexistence with men in such organizations was discouraged by the local cultural. This was explained by a male member from the local community in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that:

“women are not allowed to be the members of an organization with stranger men. Their coexistence is considered the agenda of the west. It is discouraged by the local culture and traditions”.

This was the main reason responsible for women absence in such organizations. Although women visited forests on daily basis, they were not involved in forest management. Hence, forest sustainability could not be ensured, as the real users (women) were not properly aware, mobilized and involved in forest management.

### 7.8.2 Ownership Issues

The forest owners were against the representation of non-owners in JFMCs as in some areas there were court cases between the owners and non-owners. The forest owners feared that extending more benefits to the non-owners through/by giving them representation in JFMCs would be in favor of them in deciding court cases. Therefore, the forest non-owners were excluded from forest management and decision-making on the ground that they would claim ownership rights and share in the revenue from the forest products. This was explained by a male member from the local community in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that:

“the forest owners excluded the forest non-owners because they think that if they were included in decision making, then there will be no difference between the
owners and non-owners. On the basis of that, they may claim complete ownership rights”.

7.8.3 Poverty and Lack of Incentives

Majority of the community people were poor and they were always busy to work for their survival. These communities had the sole purpose to earn their livelihood. It was observed that the forest non-owners were in miserable condition. It was clear from their houses, dress and appearances that they could hardly meet their basic needs. An aged person, living in a forest throughout his life, in district Shangla told in an interview:

“I have no son; my six daughters are married, and I am living along with my wife. I daily go to the forest and cut the fuel-wood for sale. There is no other alternate activity for earning my livelihood”.

Due to the miserable conditions of the forest non-owners, they live hand to mouth life. Their schedule was too busy to participate in any other activity. Hence, they could not spare time to participate in forest management activities without incentives. This was explained by a man, about in his sixties, busy in his work in district Dir Upper:

“I am a poor man, working on daily wage. If I do not work, who will earn for us? I have no economic benefit from forest. I cannot spare time for participating in forest management activities”.

This was further explicated by male members from the local community in an FGD in district Swat that they had no financial/economic benefits from forests and no incentives while participating in forest management activities. They were poor and if they
participated without incentive/wages, who would be responsible to earn two time bread for them?

7.8.4 Illiteracy and Lack of Awareness

Majority of the forest communities were illiterate especially the marginalized segments of these communities i.e. forest non-owners and women. There were no schools especially for girls in the area. These marginalized groups were unaware about the ecological and environmental benefits of forest and focused only on its economic aspect. Extreme poverty and geographical isolation were responsible for their worse conditions. This was explained by a male member in an individual interview from the local community in district Swat that:

“one reason for low literacy rate is the less number and far-away schools especially for girls. The parents are sending their children to the schools situated in far-flung areas. Poverty is another reason as children play great role in rearing the livestock. Therefore, they cannot go to school”.

The nomadic/seasonal migration of the people of the area was also responsible for the low literacy rate in such communities. This was explained by a community member in an individual interview in district Swat as:

“Majority of the people are living a nomadic life. In the winter season, they migrate to the plain areas for the better prospects of fodder for their livestock, and to protect them from the extreme cold. Due to this seasonal migration, their children remain uneducated from generation to generation”.

170
7.8.5 Overpopulation and High Growth Rate

Uncontrolled population growth/overpopulation is one of the main reasons responsible for the degradation of forests. Under the new bottom up approach, community was authorized and empowered to fulfill their local needs. The needs of the grown population resulted in degradation of forests and increased deforestation that put more pressure on natural resources such as forests. This was explained by a community member in an individual interview in district Dir Upper that:

“the population has increased and the already degraded forests are not in the position to satisfy the needs of the grown population”.

This was further explained by a community member in district Swat as:

“due to the overpopulation and disintegration of joint family system, the need for constructing more building increased. Most of the building are wooden as other materials are not easily accessible. Hence, the dependency/pressure on forest resources increased”.

7.8.6 Dependency on Forests

The forest depending communities are mostly depending on forests as there are no other activities. This is the reason that they and their livestock are depending on forest for their daily needs. This was explained by an aged member from the local community in an individual interview in district Shangla:

“there is no other activity in the area as there is no industry and agricultural land, but these forest are the hopes of the people. They are depending on these forests not only for their own daily needs but also for the needs of their livestock”.
The local community had no other sources of energy such as gas for cooking and warming the homes/rooms in winter. If the gas is available, its rate is too high to be purchased by the local people. As a result, the local people cut these forests to fulfill their basic needs for their survival. This was explained by a man from the local community in an individual interview in district Chitral that:

“the use of forest wood for local use the major reason of forest degradation as there is no reasonable alternative of fuel wood. The cost of the gas is very high due to the transportation charges that one cannot afford”.
CHAPTER 8

DATA ANALYSIS

8.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters (V, VI and VII) presented views of the staff members of Forest Department, members of the executive bodies of JFMCs (who were the elites and claimed the ownership of the forests) and vulnerable people (poor and women who were excluded from the membership of JFMCs) of the study area respectively. While this chapter analyzes such data vis-à-vis the literature and my field observations for deriving results. To enable the reader(s) in understanding the issue of feasibility of participatory approach in forest management, this chapter is divided into two parts. Part-I analyzes the structure, capacity and capability of forest department required for the implementation of participatory (JFM) approach in the field. It also focuses on the job security and satisfaction of forest department’s staff specialized in participatory approach as well as its impact on their performance/field duties and conservation of forest resource. Part-II analyzes the socio-cultural, economic and political factors influencing the participation of local communities in the management and conservation forest resources. This part especially analyzes those specific factors that affected the involvement of vulnerable and marginalized groups (poor and women) in the management of forest resources.
Part-I

8.2 Deficiencies of Forest Department to Involve Local Communities in Forest Management

Conservation policies nowadays focus on the involvement and empowerment of local people in the management of natural (forests) resources (Bett, 2005; Faizi, 2006 and Umar & Vedeld, 2012). The hallmark of real involvement and empowerment of local communities is proper motivation and organization of such communities. For this purpose, Forest Department needs to have sufficient and capable resources (both human and financial) to materialize the goal of participatory approach in true sense. It is worth-noting that lack of resources (human and financial) may result in the failure to obtain the desired objective of participatory approach. It was found in the field wherein the FD had both inadequate human and financial resources that affected the mobilization and organization of local people to be involved in the management and conservation of forest resources. As a result, local people had a poor sense of responsibility in taking care of/protecting their forest resources. More specifically, the deficiencies of FD that paralyzed the realization of participatory approach in forest management are analyzed below.

8.2.1 Lack of Specialized Human Resources

It is almost beyond any doubt to hold that involvement and empowerment of local communities in forest management is a daydream if trained staff is not available. Furthermore, to realize the vision of participatory approach requires well-equipped and
trained staff for effective mobilization and organization of local people. Nevertheless, the forest staff in the field was very poor in terms of their capacities and capabilities. It was also found that most of the DFOs had insufficient staff; hence, they were unable to perform the routine official duties and correspondence effectively. They were not fit even in the least degree to motivate, organize and involve the local masses to protect forest reservoir. For instance, a DFO in District Dir Upper held that he had limited staff in his office and the available staff had no know-how about the role and importance of involving local communities in the preservation of forest resources. It may also be noted that the training opportunities were denied to both the newly appointed and already existing staff. Thus, in this backdrop, forests conservation could not be guaranteed. This has also been revealed by Okoye & Ezejiofor (2013) in their study that organizations not focusing on the capacity building of their staff members, lag behind in the realization of their goals. It is because trainings instill self-confidence in staff which enable them to carry out their jobs enthusiastically and skillfully (Poffenberger, 1996). Majority of the Forest Department staff members were of the view that community mobilization required well-equipped and trained personnel, who were unfortunately not available in the study area. Regrettably, in district Shangla, the direly needed staff members, such as Community Development Officers (CDOs) and Female Forest Extensionists (FFEs), were not present. Therefore, it is pertinent to note that the non-expert staff members who held no trainings and skills in participatory approach performed the duties of such staff, while employees of Forest Department including some of the DFOs knew very little about participatory approach/joint forest management. For instance, a DFO in district Shangla opined that he had no knowledge about the implementation of participatory
approach and the existence of JFMCs in his district. According to him, such an approach was under consideration and would be implemented very soon. Though, it was implemented ten year before yet he had no knowledge of it. In fact, when the implementing agency’s/department’s head is not aware about the implementation of participatory approach in the field then how can the theory and vision of participatory approach be translated into reality? This is the reason that a number of studies validate that basic training of the staff is bedrock in considering organizational objectives and successes (see Khan et al., 2011 and Falola et al., 2014). Keeping in view the importance of trainings, it is worth noting that for the trainings of Forest Department staff and JFMCs members, a separate training section (Human Resource Development Directorate) had been established, however, it was at a standstill position due to inadequate human and financial resources.

Furthermore, it was found in the study area that district Swat had one CDO and two FFEs while district Chitral had two FFEs and no CDO. The remaining two districts (Dir Upper and Shangla) had no specialized staff (CDOs and FFEs) for the implementation of participatory approach in forest management. This lack of specialized staff caused disinterest on the part local communities in forest protection and conservation. Consequently, one of the executive body members of a JFMC (forest owner) in district Dir Upper unveiled that only the elites were called by the concerned DFOs to establish JFMCs while common people were not properly mobilized and organized for the management of forest resources. The local community, hence, often remained aloof and unaware of the existence of JFMCs in their respective localities. In this connection, a
resident of district Dir Upper remarked that forest staff never consulted common people of the area in the management of forest resources. It was only the influential cadre of the society who were taken into confidence. Further, the forest management staff contended that taking all segments of society on board was time consuming and might cause delay in decisions making owing to the narrow self-interest of the divergent groups.

It was also observed that women, in the study area, were in close interaction with forests. Hence, in the light of participatory approach, they might have a key role to play in the management and protection of forest resources. However, due to lack of trained female staff (FFE)s; women organization and mobilization was an uphill task as opined by a SDFO of district Shangla that in the existing patriarchal setting and unavailability of female staff (FFE)s women representation and involvement was totally missing.

8.2.2 Proper Service Structure and Incentives for Specialized Staff

This is an overt fact that proper service structure is indispensible to improve the performance of an organization. Service structure makes the employees satisfied and committed to the cause of an organization. For instance, Yousef (1998) argues that in Japan, where employees enjoyed job security, were found highly committed towards their duties and their performance was up to the mark. Similarly, Gabcanova (2011) acknowledges the role of trained, motivated and loyal staff for the success of an organization. However, it was found in this study that Forest Department was not only under staffed in terms of specialized personnel such as CDOs and FFEs but they were also denied proper service structure and job security. For example, some of the CDOs
and FFEs had been working as project employees for the last ten years, yet they got no regularization and promotion in the existing hierarchy of the organization. In such scenario, turnover tendencies were high among them and were in search of jobs where they could have a safer future. Such mindsets of the employees were manifested in their poor performance and less commitment with their duties. Moreover, considering the prevailing uncertain situation, many positions of the specialized staff were laying vacant since long. Considering the status quo in the study area, districts Swat and Chitral had one CDO and two FFEs respectively. In this regard, an acting CDO from district Chitral stated:

“we have no job security, proper service structure and incentives for our specialized employees like CDOs and FFEs. Therefore, these specialized personnel give preference to other departments to make their future secure.”

It is also worth-mentioning that specialized staff, working in high forest covered districts, had no extra incentives/privileges. Therefore, they preferred posting or transferring to districts characterized by low or no forest cover. For instance, an Assistant Director of Malakand Division expressed that most of the CDOs and FFEs, in order to avoid extra burden, tried their level best to be stationed in thin-forest covered belts.

8.2.3 Inadequate Financial Resources

Financial resources are considered instrumental to materialize the objectives of an organization. The adequate financial resources, the better would be the result in terms of forest preservations and vice versa (Kadam, 2012). In the beginning, while introducing community/social forestry, forest sector projects were funded by donor agencies; and a
reasonable budget was allocated for the implementation of these activities. After the completion of the project period and adoption by the government, such projects had insufficient financial allocation/support for continuation. In fact, the field staff must be equipped with proper resources/facilities to translate theory into practice. Highlighting the inadequate resources an SDFO from district Chitral opined that the available specialized staff such as CDOs and FFEs could not visit the far-flung areas due to lack of transportation as well as budget allocation. Hence, the meager financial resources were found one of the big obstacles to mobilize and organize local communities especially women for the management of forest resources.

Similarly, for arranging awareness sessions, trainings, seminars, workshops and capacity building programs for the Forest Department staff, JFMCs’ members and general community require financial resources; but there were no funds for these direly needed activities. As a result, the Forest Department staff was poorly trained and the masses were unaware that made the JFM approach just a daydream. One of the DFOs in district Dir Upper, for instance, opined as:

“there is no budget allocation for arranging awareness sessions, seminars, workshops and trainings for staff members, JFMCs members and general community. While such programs are not only necessary for the awareness and mobilization of local community but also for the capacity building of the stakeholders”.

Other research findings also endorse the same. For example, Faizi (2006) reveals that without proper mobilization, organization and capacity building the involvement and empowerment of local community is an uphill task. It is pertinent to note that to ensure
forest conservation, the Forest Department staff and JFMCs members should be equipped with proper skills in conflict resolution, record keeping and report writing. The provision and attainments of such skills demand for handsome financial resources.

Moreover, this under-budgeting resulted in formation of JFMCs, characterized by the under-representation of the marginalized segments of society. These JFMCs also had poor performance in the management of forest resources. It may be, therefore, concluded that handsome financial resources are needed to translate the vision of participatory approach into reality. However, the Forest Department got meager funds which was hardly enough for its routine business. Hence, the employees as well as local masses could not be upgraded according the modern-day-needs to ensure the implementation of the set principles in the light of JFM approach.

8.2.4 Bureaucratic Behavior of FD Staff

The behavior of employees in an organization affects its activities and productivity. It was found that bureaucratic behavior of Forest Department staff retarded the implementation of participatory approach in forest management and failed to involve local communities in Joint Forest Management. The staff trained and experienced in traditional top-down approach had specialty to exclude local communities from forests, while participatory approach believes in the involvement and empowerment of local people in forest management (see Kumar & Kant, 2005). In the absence of proper trainings for the employees of executing agencies, participatory approach failed even to change the outlook of the FD staff (Nayak, 2012). It was observed that due to lack of
trained personnel, the implementation of participatory approach was assigned to other staff members (DFOs, SDFOs and RFOs) who had their training and experience in the implementation of top-down approach - which was bureaucratic in nature and totally based on the exclusion of local community. Therefore, they could not involve local people in Joint Forest Management according to its true spirit.

Part-II

8.3 Socio- Cultural Constraints in the Implementation of Participatory Approach in the Management of Forest Resources

Apart from the Forest Department’s deficiencies, some socio-cultural, economic and political constraints also hindered the way of meaningful involvement of local communities in the protection and management of forest resources. Socio-cultural conditions of a society provide a framework for its operational system. Therefore, any approach having compatibility with the norms of society is destined to be successful and vice versa. In the study, it was found that due to deep-rooted socio-cultural obstacles the marginalized groups i.e. the masses and women were not given proper representation in JFMCs. The following are those socio-cultural that resulted in the impracticability of participatory approach in management of forest resources.
8.3.1 Socio-cultural Constraints in the Involvement of Women in Joint Forest Management

Women’s role is crucial in participatory approach. It means that development programs must be gender sensitive and women should be given proper representation in such programs. It is pertinent to note that social norms are of immense importance in constructing gender relations, assigning roles and responsibilities and allocating disproportionate resources to social groups (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996). However, women participation was greatly hindered by the prevailing norms in the study area. Also, women folk had no ownership and property rights in the given setting. Hence, it made them economically dependent on men and regrettably, many women were found to be making money from selling the forest woods, instead of preserving it. Godbole (2002), therefore, argues that women inclusion and empowerment in JFMCs is of central importance for the management and conservation of forest resources. Furthermore, it may be noted that donors around the globe provide funding to various projects, subject to women participation in forest management. It is because women in Roviana and Solomon Islands managed and monitored forest resources in a good-way by countered illegal activities in the area (Aswani et al., 2004). However, the respondents stressed that women were so much overburdened that they could hardly spare time for any other work. In addition, there were no separate JFMCs for women to play their role in the protection and conservation of forest resources while their co-working with men in the same organization was prohibited by the local culture. Furthermore, there is no policy for the involvement of women in Pakistan as no seats are reserved for them in JFMCs like other
neighboring countries. It was found in this study that women had no say in the affairs of forest management while they were in close contact/interaction with forest resources as an elderly woman from district Chitral remarked:

“majority of women daily collect fuel-wood and fodder from forest in the morning time. Therefore, men are not allowed to visit forest at that time”.

Furthermore, due to socio-cultural and traditional setup in such communities, a man cannot stop a woman from illegal activities in forest. Even a stranger cannot talk to a woman, except her close relatives. Such an action by a man can cause bloodshed between families and tribes. Therefore, men’s endeavor to protect forest is ineffective in such a situation. Moreover, Forest Department had no trained female staff for the mobilization and organization of local women to ensure their active participation in such activities while local culture did not allow male staff to do this job. Agarwal (2001), hence, suggests in this regard that there should be separate women organizations for such activities and these organizations must have coordination with the male organizations to devise an effective strategy for management and conservation of forest resources. Makama (2013) argues that socio-cultural factors are responsible for gender disparity and disempowerment of women in a society. As far as this study is concerned, in light of the available record in DFOs offices no single woman was found member of any JFMC. In some areas, NGOs had formed women organizations, however, their presence was restricted only to paper, which was just eyewash and would not serve the purpose (see Ahmed & Cubbage, 2003). In such a scenario, practically women had no role in such programs and majority of the decisions were taken by men. Similarly, patriarchal values
and male dominancy are embedded in Pakistani culture especially in the culture of Pakhtun society in Malakand Division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where the study was conducted. Therefore, all the economic activities are revolving around men while women are mostly involved in unpaid activities. Thus, they are economically dependent on the male members of their families. Furthermore, women are not given any share in property and similarly in the sale proceed from the forest products. Though women are in close interaction with forest resource, yet neither they have membership in JFMCs nor have separate women organizations to play their role in the protection and conservation of forest resources. They visit forest for cutting fodder and collecting fuel wood on daily basis. This is the reason that participatory approach is not effective in the forest protection and conservation as urged by Agarwal (2001) that the exclusion of women affects the institutional efficiency.

It is also worth-noting that the involvement of women in such activities is associated with the level of their awareness as verified by Pathak (2000) that awareness among community groups especially in poor and women increased their confidence to take part in social activities. Also, this must be realized, as described by Ogra (2000), that only the presence and participation of women is not enough in a male dominant society, rather their real and true empowerment is required. It may also be noted that deforestation would severely affect women folk, for these are women who collect firewood for cooking and fodder for animals in the rural areas. Therefore, forest degradation would compel them to cover longer distance in search of firewood and fodder, which might be harmful for their physical, social and psychological health. Being in close interaction with forests,
women must be given an important role in the affairs of forests; but unfortunately, women are not given representation in community organizations (JFMCs). As a result, the male dominant organizations cannot stop women from illegal activities in forests due to socio-cultural constraints. Hence, in the Bankura district of West Bengal, where male dominated Forest Protection Committees have badly failed to protect and conserve forest resources, Women Forest Protection Committees were formed, which proved more successful and effective in the conservation of forest resources (Raju, 1997 and Godbole, 2002).

8.3.2 Ownership and Land Tenure System Issues

The implementation of top-down/exclusionary approach in forest management resulted in lack of sense of ownership in local people. Participatory approach was adopted with the intention that the inclusion and empowerment of local people in forest management would promote a sense of ownership in them (Eilola et al., 2015) and as a result, they would be able to protect the forest resources from the outsiders (Aswani & Weiant 2004; Pretty & Smith, 2004 and Ban et al., 2009). Likewise, Hoble & Shah (1996) urge that clear ownership rights and secure tenure system are the foundation for sustainable use of forest resources. Hence, without such arrangements joint forest management is not only meaningless but also dangerous. Therefore, it was found in the study area that participatory approach in forest management and conservation could not produce the desired results as the local people (including forest owners) tried their best to exploit forest resources as soon as possible because they feared that the government could withdraw the extended concession at any time. Nayak (2012) points out in his study that
unclear and unsecured tenure system creates confusions and uncertainties among the local users; long term planning and ecological benefits are not possible in such situation.

Therefore, the absence of secure tenure system and clear ownership rights further endangered the existing meager forest resources by giving its management in the hands of illiterate communities. The literacy rate in the study area (Malakand Division) is very low as compared to the other parts (districts) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Based on such evidences, Pagdee et al., (2006) in their study recommend that a secure tenure system and clear ownership rights are necessary for the successful management of forest resources.

8.3.3 Lack of Community Mobilization, Awareness and Organization

Participatory approach intends to involve local people especially the marginalized groups (poor and women) in forest management. Moreover, participatory approach relies on the mobilization and organization of local community for ensuring their active involvement in forest conservation and management activities. To perform such activities, forest department had no proper resources (human and financial). In the start (1980s to 2000), a number of projects such as Kalam Integrated Development Project, Siran Forest Development Project, Aga Khan Rural Support Program and Malakand-Dir Social Forestry Project were started in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the support/funding of different donors agencies (Shahbaz, 2009). Sufficient resources (human and financial) and incentives were provided to the employees of Forest Department as well as local communities in such donor-funded projects. While implementing the Devolution Plan
2002, the government of KP introduced/adopted community participation in forest management. Joint Forest Management (JFM) system was introduced in the form of JFMCs to formally hand-over control and decision-making authority of forest resource management to the local user groups. The primary purpose of JFM was to give them a stake in the management of forests and share benefits from forest and to involve them in planning and management of forest resources. This approach improves the productivity and condition of forests and ensure an equitable distribution of forest products/benefits (Hill & Shields, 1998). The Mexican government played important role in the awareness of local communities through the implementation of participatory approach in forest management and conservation. It proved successful in achieving program objectives by increasing the participation and empowerment local people in forest management (World Bank, 2009).

However, Local communities especially the poor and marginalized segments were unaware about their role, responsibilities and rights in joint forest management approach. As a result, the joint forest management or community participation in the study area could not produce the desired results because most of the stakeholders were found unaware not only of their rights and duties but of the existence of JFMCs/participatory approach in forest management as well. The general body members were completely strangers to this idea; they never participated in such activities like the election and selection of the executive body members.
8.3.4 Underrepresentation of the Marginalized Segments in JFMCs

Participatory approach believes in the equal participation and representation of all stakeholders including the most vulnerable and marginalized groups (especially poor and women). JMCs, in the study area, were constituted in such a way that they could not ensure the representation of these groups in community organizations (JFMCs). According to Warner (2000) the inclusion and empowerment of such disadvantaged groups is the mandate of participatory approach. In contrast to this, Sarin (1999) verifies that such non-representative community organizations empowered certain groups because of their structural and intuitional deficiencies. Therefore, an equitable benefits sharing strategy is not possible in such circumstances and variation in benefits from such community organizations differ from group to group (Kumar, 2000). The same situation was found in the study area where the elites (forest owners) were over represented on the forum of JFMCs while the poor and women were excluded. Only the elite calss had the right/privilege to become member of the executive body in such organizations. This negatively affected the benefits sharing strategy of forest resources and further increased their vulnerability of the poor and marginalized people. This was also verified by Umar & Vedeld (2012) in their study that certain groups get more benefits from JFM approach than others.
Apart from this, it was observed that the forest owners lived in the settled areas that were far away from forests, while the forest non-owners mostly gujar\textsuperscript{12} lived in forests’ peripheries. Hence, excluding this user group from JFMCs membership and forest management created a sense of deprivation among its members. As a result, they were found involved in illegal activities which caused the depletion of forest resources. The findings of study conducted by Zulu (2008) supported that community based natural resources management disregards the power relations among different groups of the target community which dilutes the realization of participatory management. He stated that that participatory approach not only failed to improve forest management and conservation but, in most places, it caused the degradation of these resources as well.

8.3.5 Impacts of Poverty on the Participatory Management of Forests

Participatory approach intends to involve all segments/stakeholders of local community irrespective of their socio-economic, cultural and gender perspectives in the development/conservation process. It primarily focuses on the involvement and empowerment of vulnerable and marginalized segments of a community. Poverty is a barrier in the involvement of the poor and marginalized people of the community in forest protection and conservation. All local users, in Nepal, were declared legal forest user groups irrespective of their socio-economic and cultural status, but the poor marginalized drew their membership, after sometime, as the cost of their participation in

\textsuperscript{12} A tribe now a day living in forests and formerly it was nomadic in nature and kept animals as occupation and main source of livelihood.
forest management and protection was higher than the gains/benefits from forests. As a result, the inclusion and involvement of such people in community forestry became a challenge for the government as concluded by Gauli & Rishi (2004) in their study. This is the reason that justified/suggested the provision of incentives/compensation to the participants. The same situation was also found in the study area wherein people participated in forest management and conservation activities until and unless they were given incentives in the donor driven project. However, they lost their interest in these activities when such incentives were withdrawn. The forest department staff and the forest owners also complained against the poor/forest non-owners that they were not ready to participate and attend the meetings without incentives/compensation as they were to earn livelihood for their dependents. It was also admitted by the local masses that they were busy in their routine activities to earn two-time bread for their family members and if they participated in forest management and conservation activities without incentives/compensation who would feed them? Due to this reason, voice of the poor and marginalized people, who were mostly dependent on Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) in their daily lives, was never heard. In fact, all the decisions were taken by the elites (forest owners) which resulted in the oppression of poor people (ibid).

It was observed in the study area that most of the forests were not grown-up to provide economic benefits to its users and there had been ban on commercial felling since 1992 Shahbaz, (2009). The local poor people were not in the position to spare time and participate in forest protection and conservation activities from which they had no direct economic gains/benefits. It was because the sales proceed from the forest products was
divided among the forest owners and the poor/forest non-owners had no share in it. Therefore, JFMCs were formed by the forest owners; and among them a few influential were responsible to work on behalf of the whole community/owners.

8.3.6 Lack of Clear Rules regarding the Inclusion/Exclusion and Empowerment of Local People

Once it is decided to manage and improve the degraded forest through the involvement and empowerment of local community, the most challenging task is to decide who will be included in or excluded from such community organizations (JFMCs), responsible for the management and conservation of forest resources. Therefore, the formation of representative community organizations (JFMCs) is not an easy job, especially in a heterogeneous community where different vested-interest groups live. It requires for a lengthy process of negotiation on the basis of historical, cultural and geographical links of the forest users. Otherwise, it will cause conflicts and disputes among different segments of the community and will cause degradation of forest resources instead of its protection and conservation (Nayak, 2004). Therefore, to decide the criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of different groups in forest management is a challenging job. Participatory approach claims involving and empowering those who are in close interaction with forests especially the poor and women in decision-making about forest management. However, their involvement and empowerment is not so simple because the elites and influential of the locality always struggle to maintain their dominancy in such community organizations. This is the reason that different segments of the community get benefits from forest resources differently in community forestry though it claims to
empower the local people especially the marginalized and vulnerable segments of the society. Contrary to that, De Haan and Zoomers (2005) argue that power relation determines the benefits from the forest products in community. Therefore, participatory approach proved ineffective in solving livelihood issues of the poor segments of the community. The poor and disadvantaged less benefited in terms of economic gains than the elite class (Kumar, 2002) and even in some cases, participatory approach caused the exclusion and further deprivation of the poor and disadvantaged groups (Malla et. al., 2003). In Nepal, for example, the implementation and extension of participatory forestry failed to contribute to the livelihood of poor people (Neupane, 2003).

A few individuals from the local communities receive advantages from the joint forest management programs. However, it is required to extend such benefits to other segments (poor) of the community to attract them to participate in forest management and ensure sustainable use of forest resources. Furthermore, the revenue from forest products requires to be distributed on equal basis and to spend it on improving social services such as education, health and communication facilities for the whole community. Similarly, imparting skills and starting income generating activities for local people are important for reducing their dependency on forest resources (Kajembe & Kessy, 2000). Apart from these factors, those who participate in forest management and conservation activities are not given any remuneration/incentives. They have to leave their routine works for such communal activities/responsibilities. As a result, they lose their interest in such activities.
8.3.7 Trust Deficit amongst Stakeholders

The prime reason for the adoption of participatory approach in forest management is to build trust, mutual respect and cooperative working relations among different stakeholders especially between the Forest Department staff and local community. Mutual trust and respect are the basic components for the success of participatory approach (Dusphol et al., 2014). Such relationships are based on mutual consensus and respect for one another, and are not based on draconian enforcement like centralized top-down approach. The same has been suggested by Lane (2001) and Mascia (2003) in their studies. The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa adopted/implemented participatory approach for the sustainable use/management of its forest resources. For this purpose, JFMCs were established to create an environment of mutual trust and working relationship between forest department and local people for the better management of forest resources. However, it was found that such participatory approach could not create cooperative and working relationship among different stakeholders, because local community was not properly mobilized and organized for this purpose. As a result, it caused mistrust and conflicts not only between the Forest Department and local people but also among different segments of the community. Therefore, forest depletion increased after the involvement of local communities in forest management and conservation in the study area because local communities especially the forest owners considered that they have been declared as concessionists instead of real owners of forest resources, while the government as the legal owner of these resources. The government reserved had the right to withdraw such concession at any time without any reason. Such
a policy created a sense of mistrust and local communities thought it a planned plot against them. As a result, they tried their best to exploit forest resources before the government withdrew such concession.

### 8.3.8 Disproportionate Distribution of Benefits

Equal or equitable distribution of the benefits from the forest resources guarantees interest of all segments/user groups to participate actively in forest management and conservation activities. Those who have no or less benefits under participatory approach would not only lose their interest but would also oppose such efforts. It was noticed that 60 percent or in some places 80 percent share in sale proceeds from forest products was distributed among the male members of the forest owners and no single penny was spent on collective welfare and developmental activities. Even women from the forest owners’ families had no share in it. Contrary to this, Agarwal (2001) found in his study that usually such amount was utilized for collective welfare and development of the community. Focusing on the gender issues, further, he acknowledged that women’s projects of preference, their needs and interests were not taken into consideration. He also found that some community organizations spent such funds on forest protection and conservation of forests.

In such a situation where the benefits of forest are not equally distributed, the affected people develop hostile behavior against the resources. It causes further degradation.
8.3.9 Overpopulation and High Growth Rate

Overpopulation is another factor responsible for the high rate of deforestation and degradation of forest resources. The rapid increase in population overburdens the natural resources, including forests. The demand for the construction of more buildings, fuel wood and clearing forest for agriculture purposes increases (Agrawal & Yadama, 1997). Participatory approach has the provision to allow local users to satisfy their felt needs from such resources. Therefore, overpopulation and high growth rate was found the main reason responsible for the degradation of forest resources and ultimately the failure of participatory approach in forest management as the local people were dependent on forests and were allowed to satisfy their needs from forests. This was explained by a member of a JFMC in an individual interview in district Swat that overpopulation led to the disintegration of joint family-system that resulted in constructing more buildings, which caused a huge damage to the forests resources. Similarly, the demand of keeping livestock also increased, which ultimately caused the depletion of forest resources. The other sources of energy such as gas and electricity were not easily available in these areas. Hence, local people cleared forests for their demand for fuel-wood, for warming their houses in winter and growing more crops (Edet et al., 2014). The rapid increase in population overburdened the existing forests and caused high rate of deforestation. It was highlighted by a member from the local community in district Chitral in his individual interview that the people have no other source for cooking except forest-wood. This increased deforestation because the local population had to fulfill their needs from forest. Similarly, the increase in livestock also caused the degradation of forests by over-grazing.
8.4 Conclusion

The analysis of the primary data collected from different categories of the respondents and the observations along with the available literature show that participatory (Joint Forest Management) approach employed for the management of forest resources could not produce the desired results. It was not only because of the deficiencies on the part of the forest department but also due to the prevalent socio-economic, cultural and political factors. The forest department had insufficient trained specialized staff, especially the female staff, for the implementation of participatory approach in the forest department. Hence, the local women were not properly aware and involved in forest management activities. The available staff was not satisfied with their jobs and had no facilities for the accomplishment of their duties in the field to mobilize and organize local communities. Apart from this, local culture and traditions kept the women-folk out of such community organizations to work with men. The local elites (forest owners) were not ready to give membership to the poor (forest non-owners) who were more dependent on forest resources. Hence, JFMCs were formed as a formality only. The study conducted by Hobley & Shah (1996) verifies that such community organizations are not meeting the criteria but are formed merely as a formality. It cannot ensure equity and women involvement and their empowerment in forest management.
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Introduction

This study, as explained in chapter one, intended to explore the effectiveness of community participation in ensuring forest conservation and sustainable use of forest resources. Generally, participatory approach is considered very effective in forest management. But here in this case, it almost failed to produce its idealized results. Ideally, participatory approach claims to involve and give representation to all people (user groups) irrespective of their ownership rights, social status and gender considerations in JFMCs for a better and sustainable use of forest resources. Yet, it was not so simple to involve and empower the powerless (especially the forest non-owners and women) because communities were heterogeneous in nature, divided into many vested interest groups and having its own socio-cultural background. Therefore, adopting/implementing the imported model of participatory approach, community organizations (JFMCs) were formed with the goal to involve and empower local community in forest management. Contrarily, such organizations represented and safeguarded the interests of the elites (forest owners) and caused further marginalization of the vulnerable (especially women and forest non-owners). It can be inferred that the deficiencies of forest department as well as socio-cultural, economic and political factors paralyzed participatory approach in forest management. Apart from such factors, forest
policy was also not gender sensitive to encourage women participation in forest management. Therefore, participatory approach was neither practically implanted nor it produced the expected results.

Participatory approach, ideally, speaks to involve and empower local communities, especially the vulnerable and marginalized ones in the decision-making. But it was found that the following factors could not materialize it on the ground.

9.2 Scarcity of Trained and Specialized Staff

As reflected above and explained in chapters V, VI and VII staff specialized in participatory approach was not available in most of the districts in the study area, despite the fact that these districts were having the highest forest cover in the country and the literacy rate among such communities was comparatively very low especially in women population. Owing to these factors, local communities were not aware about the environmental and ecological importance of forests. They required proper mobilization to involve/empower them in forest management. In the absence/non-availability of specialized staff, their duties were assigned to the non-specialized staff while they had no orientation in the philosophy of significance and process of participatory approach. Therefore, local communities were not properly mobilized and organized for the management and conservation of forest resources, according to the spirit of participatory approach.
9.3 Lack of Interest/Commitment on the part of the Staff

In addition, the staff of forest department, as explained in chapter V, was not committed to the process of implementation of participatory approach in forest management. The specialized staff (CDOs and FFEs) worked for the last ten years in forest department but there was no proper service structure and job security of such staff. Similarly, there were no special incentives for them while working in districts having high forest cover. Furthermore, such staff was not supported and encouraged by their seniors in the implementation of participatory approach because it was believed that involvement and empowerment of local people in the affairs of forest management would be a challenge and threat to the bureaucratic nature/style of such staff. These factors discouraged them (specialized staff) to perform their duties efficiently with full commitment.

9.4 Financial Constraints

This study, as highlighted in chapter 5, explored that budget constraints were responsible for the improper implementation of participatory approach in the field. The involvement and empowerment of local people (which was the goal of participatory approach) required for proper mobilization, organization and capacity building. These activities required funds that were allocated neither by the government nor by the local community. Consequently, participatory approach was considered a financial burden on the forest department as such activities were to be performed/compensated in the available budget. There was no budget for the nursery-raising, plantation and forest protection. In addition, participatory approach could not reduce the dependency of forest dependent communities
on forest by providing them alternate sources of income generation/livelihood as promised by the forest department. Such factor created mistrust between the two stakeholders and they lost their interest in participating in such activities.

9.5 Political Interference

Political interference was found a hurdle in the implementation of participatory approach in the field. Not only JFMCs were formed on political basis but staff was also transferred and posted by the elected representatives/political leaders. Most of the specialized staff was from the settled districts. They tried to be posted in or transferred to their home districts where workload was less due to low forest cover. As a result of these factors, posts of the specialized staff (male and female) were vacant despite the fact that these districts had more demand for such staff. The unavailability of specialized staff in such district negatively affected the implementation process of participatory approach.

9.6 Exclusion of Women or Socio-cultural Constraints in the Involvement and Empowerment of Women

Owing to the socio-cultural constraints, women were neither given representation in JFMCs nor were they allowed to participate in the activities of such organizations. No single woman was found member of the executive body of any JFMC because there were no reserves seats for them. They were not allowed to sit and work in the same organization with men while there was no provision for such separate women organizations (JFMCs) to serve their interests despite the fact that the degradation of forest resources and decisions taken by JFMCs affected women more than men because
women were in close interaction with forests. They were involved in the collection of forest products (fuel-wood and fodder) on daily basis. Hence, their exclusion from JFMCs seemed to be the institutionalization of gender discrimination that further caused their marginalization, and was against the agenda of participatory approach.

9.7 Exclusion of Poor and Forest non-owners

JFMCs were formed by the elites (forest owners) only; the poor forest dependent were not given representation in these organizations. They were completely ignored in the management of forests. The forest owners had reservations/concerns that if the forest non-owners were given representation in JFMCs, they would claim share in the sale proceeds (royalty) from the forest products, other benefits and ultimately the ownership rights. They were kept away from such forums despite the fact that they were the most vulnerable people and more dependent on forests resources for their survival. Furthermore, such people were living in forests premises and they were the primary users of forest products. Their inclusion was against the principles/claims of participatory approach and paralyzed this approach.

9.8 Inequity in Benefits Sharing/Distribution

Only the elites benefited from participatory approach /JFM because they were the members of the executive body of JFMCs that was responsible for taking the decisions regarding forest resources-use and its management. Only those decision were taken that served the interest of the forest owners and further marginalized the disadvantaged groups. Therefore, the marginalized segments were not ready to participate in forest
management activities. They realized that JFMCs give benefits/incentives to the elites; therefore, they did not participate in forest management without incentives.

In addition to that, almost 60 percent (while in some areas of district Dir Upper 80 percent) of the sale proceed (royalty) from the forest products was given as a share to the local community. It was distributed among the male members of the forest owners’ families while women and the forest non-owners were not given any share in it. Furthermore, nothing was spent on the welfare of general community. Therefore, the claim of involving, benefiting and empowering the poor and vulnerable seemed to be hard in such circumstances. As a result, the forest non-owners preferred to earn their livelihood instead of participating in forest management and conservation activities.

9.9 Mistrust and Ownership Issues

This study as highlighted in chapters 5, 6 and 7 concluded that participatory approach not only failed to establish working relationship and mutual trust between the FD staff and local community but it increased mistrust among different stakeholders as well. The elites (forest owners) considered participatory approach a plot (threat) against their ownership right. According to the agreement bond, they signed with FD in JFM approach, they were declared as concessionists. Furthermore, according to the agreement, the government had the right to withdraw such concessions at any time. Such types of declarations increased the intensity of their mutual mistrust; and as a result, local communities speeded up the exploitation of forests to get more and more benefits from it before the government takes such an action.
9.10 Rapid Population Growth and its Dependency on Forest Resources

The rapid increase in population and its dependency on forests for fuel-wood, fodder and timber for construction caused the degradation of forests as in participatory approach JFMCs were empowered to allow the local people to fulfill their felt need from forests. Due to this reason, the elites (forest owners who were members of such organization) exploited forest resources using the forum. On the other hand, the poor forest dwellers used illegal means for the satisfaction of their needs. The needs of the increased population ultimately accelerated deforestation in the area and the meager forest resources were under extreme pressure. There were no plantation and protection measures for the regeneration and development of forest resources.

9.11 Extreme Poverty

Excessive poverty is the common feature of forest depending communities. Such people could not be expected to participate in forest protection and management activities without incentives. This is the reason that such people were found busy in earning livelihood for their dependents. Forest department failed to decrease their dependency on forests by providing them with alternate income generating programs and skills. The poor forest non-owners had no share in the sale proceed (royalty) from the forest products. In many cases, their activities/benefits were banned by the elites (JFMCs’ members) which further increased their marginalization.
The aforementioned are the inferences of the study in question. Below are the recommendations based on study findings, which may be helpful in devising a viable and effective strategy to address the obstacles and ensure growth.

9.12 Measures for Consideration/Suggestions and Recommendations

The following measures, on the basis of the findings of this study, are suggested to make participatory approach more effective in the management and conservation of forest resources.

1. The shortage of staff (CDOs and FFEs) specialized in participatory approach was observed. Such staff should be transferred to/appointed in those areas/districts which have high forest cover on priority basis. Especially, female staff (FFEs) should be appointed in such districts where women were in close contact/interaction with forests and where male staff was not allowed to mobilize and organize women for such activities. The availability of such staff would be helpful in the mobilization, awareness and organization of local community for ensuring the involvement and empowerment of all forest users groups in the management and conservation of forest activities.

2. Staff specialized in participatory approach, such as CDOs and FFEs were worried for their future. They had no job security and no proper service structure. The grievances and discrepancies of such staff must be resolved for their efficiency and encouragement. They should be treated like other staff of the FD i.e. DFOs, SDFOs, RFOs etc. There should be a proper service structure and clear-cut policy for their promotions. It would
increase their efficiency and would improve their performance in the implementation of participatory approach.

3. The well-trained staff used to prefer those districts for their posting where they could have least workload. The irony is that special incentives were denied to those who performed their duties in far-flung forest regions. Many posts in the thickly covered forest regions were laying vacant. To address the issue in a befitting manner, the densely forest covered areas should have more competent staff, which would be possible only if their salaries along with other incentives are reasonably increased. This would result in the mobilization and organization of locals, and eventually will lead to the desired goal i.e. their involvement and empowerment in joint forest management.

4. Political interference in the appointments and reshuffling of the staff i.e. CDOs and FFEs retarded the process of participatory forest management. It is undisputed that staff proficiency and commitment is of central importance in realizing any goal. Merit must prevail throughout their carrier and there should be zero tolerance for the breach of the rules in this regard even in the slightest degree. Such measures will be helpful in to have specialized staff in the densely forest covered regions for the effective implementation of participatory strategy in forest management and conservation.

5. The capacity of FD staff was not up to the mark especially in the implementation of participatory approach in the management of forests. They needed proper trainings, refresher courses, seminars and workshops for building their capacities and capabilities. The arrangements of such programs would improve their efficiency and performance,
which would be helpful in the implementation of participatory approach in the field. As a result, they will be able to successfully communicate their message to the local stakeholders for their fruitful involvement and empowerment in forest management.

6. Financial constraints were the main concerns of the forest department for capacity building of its staff and JFMCs members. However, awareness, mobilization and organization of local community and its involvement in forest management required funds because these activities could not be accomplished within the available budget. This is the reason that it (participatory approach) was considered a burden and extra activity on the forest department. Therefore, the government should allocate budget for such activities that would be helpful in the involvement of local stakeholders in forest management and conservation.

7. JFMCs not only represented and safeguarded the interests of the elites (forest owners) which were totally against the spirit/claims of participatory approach but it, further, marginalized the poor and vulnerable segments especially women by excluding them from JFMCs. The Government (FD) should mobilize and organize local stockholders for ensuring their involvement and empowerment in forest management. They should be given share in the benefits from the forests. The poor and women should be given representatives in JFMCs and members of the executive body should be elected for a specific tenure. Elections should be held in time for the smooth running of forest management activities.
8. Women were in close contact and interaction with forest resources. They regularly visited forest for the collection of non-timber forests products. However, they were completely excluded from the forest management as they had no representation in JFMCs. They should be involved in the management and conservation of forest resources by giving them proper representation in the executive bodies of JFMCs. Furthermore, in those areas/districts where women were in close contact/interaction with forests, they were not allowed to be members of the same organizations (JFMCS) with men. Separate women organizations (JFMCs) should be formed for the protection and conservation of forest resources. In such areas, men could not protect forest resources as they were not allowed even to talk to a stranger woman. In such cases, women’ JFMCs would play a better role in the protection of forest resources.

9. In addition to this, the absence of clear-cut ownership rights and secured tenure system caused lack of interest on the part of local community to protect and manage forest resources. In conditions of uncertainty, like this, the elites (JFMCs members) misused their power and exploited the forest resources rapidly. Therefore, local community should be given proper ownership rights with secured tenure system that would ensure better management and conservation of forest resources. Then, they would not overexploit/misuse such resources.

10. The local community exploited forest resources for the fulfillment of their needs of fuel-wood, fodder, timber for construction etc, as no alternate sources were easily and chiefly available in their locality. It caused the degradation of forest resources. Therefore, the government should provide LPG, Sui Gas, Solar Energy plants and electricity
(different sources of energy) and construction materials to the forest dependent communities on concessional base for reducing pressure on forest resources.

9.13 Theoretical Implications of the Study

Participatory approach/bottom-up approach was adopted when centralized/top-down approach failed to ensure sustainability of projects/programs initiated without involving local stakeholders. Participatory approach proved very successful and effective in the sustainability and management of various projects especially in forestry (see Baumann, 2000). However, on the basis of the findings of this study (explained in chapters 5, 6 and 7) participatory approach (JFM) did not prove effective in the management and rehabilitation of degraded forests, because such community organizations (JFMCs) were formed by the elites (forest owners), living in the settled areas far away from forests. They used such forums for their vested interests. While the primary forest users (forest non-owners), settled in the forests premises, were not given representation in JFMCs. Their needs were not properly addressed and remained unmet. As a result, they turned to illegal activities for the satisfaction of their felt needs. This caused a race of competition between the two interest groups in the field of overexploitation of forest resources and ultimately the forest resources were degrading more than before.

In addition, participatory approach claims of ensuring more benefits to local community than the top-down/centralized approach. A number of studies verify that local community got more benefits from the implantation of participatory approach. Similarly, it is also urged that where Joint Forest Management (JFM) or local community was
involved in forest management, they got more befit from forest as compared to those areas where community was not involved in such activities. However, in such studies, it is not clarified who formed JFMCs and who got the benefits. The forest non-owners and women were involved (given representation in JFMCs) in forest management and they were extended its benefits or not. As participatory approach stresses not only on the involvement and empowerment of the vulnerable in decision-making but it also ensures them to have a share in the benefits (see Olukotun, 2008). However, the elites (forest owners) benefited more from participatory approach as they represented such community organizations (JFMCs) which were, to some extent, empowered in decision-making. Such forums were used by the elites for their vested interests and the restricted marginalized the vulnerable (forest non-owners and women). As a result, they had to go a long distance for the collection of fuel-wood, fodder and other forest products.

Similarly, some studies (Aswani et al., 2004) reveal that participatory approach ensured the involvement and empowerment of women that proved very successful in the protection and conservation of forests. However, this study investigates that women were completely ignored as they had no reserve seats in JFMCs. They were in close contact with forests as they were responsible for collecting fuel-wood for cooking, fodder for livestock and other non-timer forest products for the use of their families from these forests. The decision taken (ban imposed) by such organizations ultimately affected their lives, as they had to go/cover long distances for collecting these products that affected their physical and social health. This institutionalization of gender discrimination further marginalized women.
9.14 Areas for Future Research Studies

A number of research studies (Hasan, 2007) have been conducted regarding forest management and joint forest management in Pakistan. Such studies focused on the benefits and incentives of participatory approach or JFM for local people. It is useful to compare the structure and functions of JFMCs in the light of the forest policy under which such community organizations have been formed. Comparative studies may be conducted to compare JFMCs of different regions, communities and provinces having cultural diversity. A comparative study of JFMCs in *Hazara* and *Malakand* Divisions (two regions having two different cultures) is required for a better understanding of the issues of participatory approach. Women are not given property right and its ownership. They are also not given share in the royalty from forest. Hence, gender discrimination in this sense is one of the areas which needs for proper investigation. It was also observed that some species of trees in forest are disappearing very rapidly. The issue may be investigate by technical experts in forestry.

Comparative studies of different forest management models of the various countries are required to be conducted, with special focus on its impact on forest resources. Such studies will be helpful in providing guidance in taking the right directions for the management of forest resources in different areas accordingly. It opens new filed for the researchers to investigate/explore why a model is successful in a country and fails to achieve the same goal in another country. A comparative study of JFM in Pakistan with other countries of the world is required keeping in view the socio-cultural conditions of such countries.


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<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community-Based Organizations</td>
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<td>Divisional Forest Officer</td>
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