

KNOWLEDGE GENERATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS OF WOMEN
LABOURERS FOR IMPROVED LIVELIHOOD

Chapala Koirala

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Abstract Approved
Prof. Bidya Nath Koirala, PhD, Thesis Supervisor

How women labourers generate and process knowledge that they derive from Non formal education and apply it for improving their livelihood was the main research question of my study. I generated answer of my research question through qualitative research. In other words, I used postmodernism paradigm as a research design and hermeneutic mode of interpretation.

I attempted to bring out women labourers' lived experience through reciprocal sharing, interaction, in-depth interview, with some unstructured questions based on NFE package used for them. I also interacted with the women labourers of carpet factories of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur districts individually, three times within a period of one year for this purpose.

I analyzed their accounts with information processing theory/model of cognitive development theory and andragogical theories. I also categorized the field information by using Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1997) frame of understanding women's knowledge into three groups: silence, received and procedural. Then I analyzed how the participants within these groups restored and used the knowledge acquired from NFE for their better livelihood.

I found that cosmological effect on the learning pattern was not found evident, as the learners shared common background and experiences. They were all from the

rural areas and belonged to agriculture profession. From epistemological perspective, they differed in processing knowledge based on their types as stated above. I found that the silence type of learners was not eager to retrieve the knowledge gained and use it to better their livelihood. The received type of learners was enthusiastic to keep the knowledge in their memory and use it for improving their lives. The procedural type besides, being active to apply the knowledge, explored other possibilities as well to better their living. From axiological point of view, these women possessed 'connected' knowledge giving more values to children and family than to self.

Since, different types of literacy learners generated and applied knowledge in different ways, its NFE implication is that the concept of multiple 'literacies' should be nurtured. This implication also paves the way that the trainers' role is required to enable different types of people for specific knowledge generation and its application for their improved livelihood.

Chapala Koirala

Degree Candidate

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents, who had taken immense interest in completion of my study.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted for candidature for any other degree.

Chapala Koirala, Degree Candidate

September 8, 2009

Doctor of Philosophy in Education Thesis of Chapala Koirala presented on
September 8, 2009.

APPROVED

.....
Prof. Bidya Nath Koirala, PhD
Thesis Supervisor

September 8, 2009

.....
Prof. Shreeram Lamichhane, PhD
Research Committee Member

September 8, 2009

.....
Asso. Prof. Mahesh Nath Parajuli, PhD
Research Committee Member

September 8, 2009

.....
Kedar Nath Shrestha, PhD
Research Committee Member

September 8, 2009

.....
Prof. Jai Raj Awasthi, PhD
External

September 8, 2009

.....
Prof. Tanka Nath Sharma, PhD
Act. Dean/Chair of Research Committee

September 8, 2009

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of
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Chapala Koirala

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACAP	Annapurna Conservation Area Project
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AOE	Action Oriented Research
BASE	Backward Society Education
CARE	Citizens Association for Racial Equality
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CDS	Child Development Society
CEFA	Center for Education for all
CIPP	Context, Input, Process, Product.
DFID	Department for International Development of United Kingdom (UK)
EFA	Education for All
FUG	Forest Users Group
GOs	Government Organizations
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture development
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGOs	International Non Government Organizations
IP	Information Processing
LTM	Long Term Memory
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NFE	Non Formal Education
NFEC	Non Formal Education Council

NGOs	Non Government Organizations
NPC	National Planning Commission
PCRW	Production Credit for Rural Women
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper
REFLECT	Regenerated Freiran Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
SEEP	Self Employment Educational Programme
TYIP	Three Year Interim Plan
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WLC	World Literacy of Canada
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

CHAPTER I

START OF THE JOURNEY

This chapter contains some background of knowledge processing system, literacy situation of women, opinions on women's literacy, background of Non formal education, problem statement, research questions, rationale of the study, delimitation and definition of terminologies.

Background

Sources of knowledge are numerous which can be formal, non formal and informal. But how people learn, how they generate knowledge and how they apply for better life differs from one individual to another. Though the age factor and the lack of time due to work load to meet the basic needs of sustenance does not allow majority of women to go for formal schooling, there are other avenues open to them such as their own work experience, non formal literacy and awareness raising programs through audio visual aids etc. from which they can acquire knowledge which can be helpful to them in improving their living conditions.

Based on the various information about what knowledge is all about described in chapter two I derived that knowledge is to know about a thing, place or person, to differentiate them one from another and understand their interconnectedness.

Experience or speculation helps in finding out fact or truths.

Thus knowledge is collection of information and production of new data/information.

Various philosophers have suggested different ways with regard to knowledge processing. The essence of these philosophies is that for knowledge processing, the ideas, reason, opinion, understanding within human mind and conceptualization of the materials of the outer world is important. In this process, some philosophers gave more emphasis to human mind and some emphasized more to the materials of outer world.

Based on these arguments, I investigated how the research participants who are the workers of carpet factories, have gained knowledge from non formal literacy programme, which source they used for knowledge generation and how such knowledge has helped them to broaden their horizon of knowledge and bring difference in their livelihood. In this context, I have taken literacy education/Non formal education as the basic source of knowledge generation for my research participants and have tried to examine how it opened up other avenues for their development.

Setting the Scene

My journey towards this study started with the theme of United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) i.e. 'Literacy as Freedom'. In this process, I knew that there are 860 million illiterates in the world. This means one in five adults and more than 113 children are out of school (Rutsch, 2003). To address this gigantic problem, I reviewed Paris –based UNESCO program that says disadvantaged groups particularly, women and girls, ethnic and linguistic minorities, indigenous population, migrants and refugees, differently able persons, and out of school children and youth will be

the priority target groups during the literacy decade. For this, UNESCO will play the role of coordinator at the international level (ibid).

Moreover, my journey got impetus with the lecture of Deputy Secretary General, Frechette on 13 February 2003 at UN Headquarters in New York. I was impressed with her statement that emphasized the importance of literacy to human beings. She also committed to finish the unfinished job of the last century by spreading literacy to all human beings by the end of the 21st century. Her statement, I found quite an impressive call for the states which have poor literacy rates. In Frechette's own words, as cited in Rutsch (2003), she stressed, "Literacy remains part of the unfinished business of the 20th century. One of the success stories of the 21st century must be the extension of literacy to include all human kind." Frechette thought that literacy was a prerequisite for a healthy, just and prosperous world. According to her, because a larger number of women (two thirds of illiterate adults) across the globe were illiterate and education was the better tool for development, the first two years of the decade were announced as the year of 'literacy and gender'. I thought this statement tried to bring optimism in respect of literacy of women and girls. But, I could not be overwhelmed over this, because in spite of some progress in the education of girls and women, the disparity between the sexes is there since long and seeing the progress over the years, it is less likely that it will be bridged in the near future.

Rutsch (2003) linked the women's education with many more benefits such as healthier and better fed families, increased income, savings and reinvestment and finally bringing positive impact on communities and ultimately to the countries. This gave me the flavour of patriarchy that women's education is always connected with other benefits besides their own self development. I wanted to see the women's

education from the perspective of their own personality development, empowerment and development of self dignity, of course ultimately that will help in mitigating several social issues and poses positive impact on the development of the nation.

The address of Kofi Annan, the then UN Secretary General on the occasion, as stated by Rutsch (2003) appealed me because he did not connect women's education to anything else rather he took education to be instrumental to lifting people from misery, enhancing people's potential and make people to be hopeful towards future and more importantly, he took education as women's human right and the decade was to be its reminder.

Thus, to proceed to my study, I built the concept on education and literacy that, getting education is a human right and it is important for overall development of people and the nation and for this reason, there is a need to prioritize women's literacy, because they lag behind in education than their male counterpart.

To explore further to this, I wanted to find out how women's literacy is taken up by UN officials and others, as education of girls and women has remained one of the focus areas of various UN Conventions. In this pursuit, I knew that that in some predominantly rural countries, more than 90 percent of women are illiterate, the adult illiterates worldwide to be 965 million and the women illiterates to be 637 million in 1990 (UN Chronicle, 1990). In spite of the figure referred above showed the decreasing trend of illiterates but the women's ratio to men's is the same. Therefore, I found it quite discouraging that in spite of, some progress in the literacy of both the sexes the gap remained the same. It is in this context, the UN Officials UNESCO Director Mayor saw the reason of high rate of illiteracy due to the lack of advancement of education among women and girls and he called women as the mothers of 'literate of society'. UNFPA Executive Director Sadik on the other hand,

saw the connection of mother's education in terms of reduced family size, improved child health and reduced child mortality. Every year of mother's education, reduced child mortality by 7 to 9 percent ((UN Chronicle, 1990). In the same line is the opinion of Veneman (2007) who says,

evidence indicates that when girls with at least a basic education reach adulthood, they are more likely than those without an education to manage the size of their families according to their capacities, and are more likely to provide better care for their children and send them to school (UN Chronicle, 2007, p. 60).

Broadly speaking, women's literacy or the education is greatly associated with the improvement of child health and education and betterment of the family.

Then, I proceeded to the Conference on -“Literacy Now: Building an Educated World” on 31 January 2003, where then UNFPA Director, Obaid highlighted the importance of education on the Convention address. Education could bring a fulfilled and healthy life and education was also an equalizer for reducing poverty and inequality. She also pointed out the necessity of making the youth knowledgeable across the globe so that they become able to protect their lives and futures. She also reiterated the fact that literacy decade (2003 – 2012) has given emphasis on increasing the literacy rates especially, of women and girls. On the same occasion, the senior advisor of the Education Programme Division of UNICEF, Fumiss discussed the uses of literacy as a political tool which could be instrumental to realize not only the rights to education but accessing other rights such as right to information and freedom of opinion and expression (Willmott, 2003).

Then, I took a turn to the views of Lidicker (2003) as well, who expected many good things from education. The author saw education as a tool for integrating

multiple culture and multiple languages. He thought illiteracy was the route to social disintegration and for successful functioning of a society members must be able to communicate with each other effectively. The author viewed that illiteracy and its companion ignorance make these multiple associations less likely. In the author's opinion, education helps in losing one's identity from the society but at the same time, sees the importance of education in establishing communication with society of various social as well as multi culture and multi linguist groups. This means literacy is also interpreted as a tool to social integration and change.

What I could collect to take with me as guidelines for my study from the arguments as mentioned above were: literacy/ education and non-formal education (NFE) can be used interchangeably. Literacy education/NFE is important for realizing human right, in freeing people from ignorance, reducing poverty and unemployment, making communication easy, bringing social integration among multi culture and multi languages and women's education is seen as an instrument to bringing down family size, improving child's education and health, more importantly reducing child mortality and achieving all of the objectives required for leading a quality life.

Socio – Economic Situation and Migration

As a woman, I was interested to know about more on women's literacy status. Moreover, knowing the women's illiteracy in broader context, I became curious to know how women progressed in literacy in my own country. For this, I reviewed educational statistics of Nepal, these included various Census data information regarding women's literacy. I found out the following scenario which reinforces the fact that women are far behind men in literacy as in compliance with the global data as presented above. Over the years, as shown below in table I, the nation achieved tangible achievement in literacy, but I found little ground to be satisfied.

Table 1

Literacy Situation

	1971	1981	1987	1991	2001
Female	3.9	12.0	18.0	25.0	42.5
Male	23.6	34.0	52.0	55.0	63.1
National	13.9	24.0	34.0	40.0	53.7

Central Bureau of Statistics (1991 cited in National Planning Commission, 1994), CBS (2007)

The table above provides the progress in literacy situation. But if we read the same table by introducing the absolute number of illiterates, it gives another picture.

The table below presents the increased number of illiterates along with the increased percentage of the literates.

Table 2

Literacy Trend in Absolute Numbers 1980 – 2001

	1980	1990	1998	2001
Population 6+	12,180,000	15,148,000	18,047,000	19,255,805
Literacy rate	23	39	48	53.7
Literate Population	2,801,400	5,907,720	8,662,560	10,348,428
Illiterate Population	9,378,600	9,240,280	9,384,440	8,787,413

Literacy Watch Bulletin No. 5, NRC-NFE (cited in Center for Education for All, [CEFA] 2003, p. 10).

The above table reveals that the literacy rate over the years has progressed definitely, but there is not much difference in the absolute number of illiterates rather it increased in 1998 and slightly decreased in 2001. Thus, the change is erratic making it difficult to arrive at any conclusion; however the progress is not encouraging.

The literacy rate of 15 plus age group also increased to 55 percent in 2005 from 48 percent (Nepal Living Standard Survey [NLSS], 2004 as cited in NPC, 2006). In the same group, female literacy is only 33.8 percent, the literacy of poorest quintile is 23.1 and that for the eastern rural plains is 36.5 percent. There is a great variation in literacy among various social groups and geographical regions. To know what is the range of the variation among different regions, I passed through Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) statistics and found the following status.

Table 3

Literacy Rates by Development Regions and Gender Group

Development Region	Population 6 yrs and above			Population 15 yrs and above		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
East	62.1	37.6	49.4	63.7	34.7	48.2
Central	58.4	35.5	46.5	60.5	31.8	45.5
West	75.1	50.7	61.8	73.5	41.7	55.5
Mid West	64.2	35.4	49.1	65.2	28.5	45.2
Far West	63.8	33.4	47.3	65.3	27.4	43.9

(Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2004, p. 65)

The above table shows that women of Central region have the second lowest literacy and majority of my research participants too belonged to this region. This made me curious to know why the literacy rate of the women is low. For this, I reviewed the available literatures.

These literatures gave me different facets of literacy situation. For example, Center for Education for all [CEFA], (2003) has pointed out two reasons to be responsible for low literacy of women/girls. One is the cultural reasons, that when they are young they have to obey the male members of the family father and brothers

and they are married off early before they reach puberty and after marriage they have to do the same to the in-laws and they have to perform the gender roles as permitted by Manu Smriti, one of the religious Hindu Codes. Second reason is the poverty, due to poverty of the parents, girls are not sent to school and if choice is to be made to leave schooling, girls are the first ones to do so.

I came to know these two reasons also contribute to illiterate child labour. Pannells (1998) found out that both opportunity and cash costs lock girls' education. As majority of girls belonged to family of subsistence farming below or near to the poverty line, the elder daughters provide sibling care. Farm and household work also pull girls out of school. With reference to other studies the author also added that the girls have twice the average daily work load as boys.

Basu & Tzannatas (2003), in this connection have presented theoretical perspectives such as 'luxury axiom' and 'substitution axiom'. Under 'luxury axiom', if children do not work either they will be in education or enjoy free time without doing anything. But 'substitution axiom' applies in the case of poor people and particularly, for girls. Girls are substituting the work of adults in carpet weaving, agriculture and other works which are supposed to be done by adults. Grootaert & Kanbur (1995) did not think that school attendance had inverse relation with child labour, however school enrollment had two determinants. One was the substitution effect between girls' schooling and labour force participation of mothers. When mothers went to work girls were more likely to stay at home. Therefore, girl's schooling was not the forgone opportunity costs, but it was of their mothers'.

The second most important determinant of school enrolment was parents' education particularly, of the mothers. As various literature including CEFA (2003) have pointed out that girls are deprived of educational opportunities because they are

the helping hand to the mother by doing the household chores which sons will not do. On this basis, I felt that the ‘substitution axiom’ also reinforce the patriarchal culture as girls have to replace mothers in household work. Due to patriarchal culture, education of girls is not considered to be important as they will be doing the same work in the future too (CEFA, 2003). Because of this perception, it is seen that parents try to get maximum benefit from girls so long as they are with them. Such situation, I felt more among the groups of my research participants. This discussion was reiterated by the CBS study (2004, p. 62) which, points out that generally boys’ education is affected from poverty and that of girls’ is influenced by parent’s perception. The reason for not sending the children to school is expressed as “too expensive” for boys and “parents do not want” for girls.

According to Basu & Tzannatas (2003) there is a unique relationship between labour and education. Because sisters work, brothers can go to school. This is also called ‘sibling complementarity’ according to the authors, the last born son mostly does not work and the first born girl cannot go to school. This is also connected to gender roles, as girls have to work to send her later born brothers to school.

This implies that the poverty factor is also dominated by the cultural and religious issues, and this dominating structure transforms the girls and women as the main service providers of household. Even if, they are sent to school they have to perform heavy work and spend five to seven hours a day (RIDA, 1991 as cited in CEFA, 2003). This means, these children contribute 50 percent or more of labour and the household chores become one of the greatest impediments in their education (CEFA, 2003).

Who are these child labours? Where did they come from? Questions like these led me to examine the relationship between women, migration, child labor, and literacy.

For this, I chose my participants from the carpet factories and from my contact with them and the study of Child Development Society [CDS] (2005); I knew that they were all migrated labourers. With these migrated laborers, I was interested to know what the main reason of their migration was. In this course, I found out that majority of the population live in rural areas. Lack of industrial and other avenues of employment make agriculture the mainstay of their economy and women form the backbone of all agricultural activities. As per the census of 2001, women constitute 48.1 percent of the total economically active population in the agriculture and forestry sector, (CBS, 2002) and their strength in non-agriculture labor force is 34 percent (Acharya, 2003). According to Acharya (2000) self employed women's proportion increased between 1981, 1991 and 1995/6.

However, women constituted a larger proportion of wage workers as well and this increase was accounted for entirely by those working in the agriculture sector. The author further, added that due to decline of women workers' proportion in non-agriculture sector between 1991 and 1995/1996 women's concentration became visible both in the self-employed and wage earners in agriculture. This was so, in the case of male workers as well. In the agriculture, women's participation as wage workers is 64 percent which is higher than that of men as wage workers which is 29 percent. Whereas, among non agriculture wage workers men constitute 72 percent and women's involvement is only 36 percent. The over all child labour incidence is 32 percent; females have higher incidence than males and rural area has higher child labour incidence than in urban area (CBS, 2004).

The above information encouraged me to analyze the economic scenario of rural area. So, I recalled from my knowledge of the country situation, that in rural areas, agriculture is the only source of employment for people, while population keeps on increasing, the scope of opportunities to work in agriculture does not expand resulting into forced migration for survival. As the population is increasing the land to person ratio decreased. The result has been a migration of such people to the urban areas in search of work and livelihood. CDS (2005) also has pointed this fact. But I could not generalize this fact with my research participants. In the case of girls, the migration did not happen only for life sustenance, but glamorous city life and peer pressure also seemed to be the reason why they left their place. From whatever economic situation they may be, most of them were either illiterate or had very low level of education.

Then, I became curious to know where mostly do the women come from. Coming from their home, where these girls/women go. What their stepping place is how did they happen to be in carpet factories? About this, the conversation with my research participants helped me a great deal. The report of CDS (2005) helped me in understanding that there was a tendency of migration into Kathmandu from adjoining districts for the purpose of getting job in carpet factories. Sindhupalchowk was the main source and few others were from other adjoining districts. I came to know from these two sources that once migrated from their native place, women laborers made city outskirts as their destination. They are found to be working in various places, such as construction sites, brick kilns, and carpet factories. They also work as vegetable venders. However, majority of the women are found to be working in the carpet factories. As they were illiterate or had very low education, there was very little opportunity available for them to work as skilled workers in the big industries or in

any white-collar jobs. CDS report (2005) and my own experience made me realize that Carpet factory is one of the informal sectors where women are overwhelmingly engaged; their situation is less revealed and there is a wide spread illiteracy.

As the population of Nepal is a mixture of various caste and ethnicity, I was curious to know, which ethnic or caste most of the girls/women belonged to. The CDS report helped me a lot to satisfy my question, which pointed out that mostly Tamang and Sherpa groups have been found engaged in carpet weaving. However, the trend of other ethnic groups joining carpet industry as labor is increasing slowly. I also found out that for those, who have no education and other skill it is slightly easier to get jobs in carpet factories than in other areas. My research also proved this fact that majority of them, who I contacted with belonged to Tamang group and very a few of them were from other ethnic groups and secondly, the reason they expressed for joining the carpet factories was that of their illiteracy or less education levels. Another cause of their attraction was that they had the connection/*aphnomanche*/'one's own people' (Bista, 1991) with the workers of these carpet factories.

My study trail did not stop only in the migration; I wanted to seek how far livelihood approach and education were related to improve the living. For this, I took the way for exploring how far the government connected education with livelihood improvement in its policies and programmes. Following this path, I went through various government plans and other related materials to support my objectives.

Education and Livelihood

After going through various development plans, I got to know that poverty reduction has been an overriding concern of all of the development plans of Nepal. It was started with the Seventh Plan and has remained the main focus till the Tenth Plan (2002-2007) and continued to be in the present Three Year Interim Plan (2008-2011).

Though poverty elimination was the priority of the development plans the strategies to this regard, were developed for the first time in 2001. To meet this goal, I came to know that the National Planning Commission prepared Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper [I-PRSP] (2001) which laid down various strategies to combat poverty with setting down objectives to avail services in education, health, safe drinking water, and economic opportunities. The objectives of the Tenth Plan also followed the same document to improve the poverty situation that were, extending the scope of employment opportunities, empowerment, human development, security and targeted programs for women, Dalit and backward communities of remote areas. Besides this, it targeted to improving the situation in education and health with particular emphasis on the reproductive health and education of girls and women (Tenth Plan, 2009-2014). Thus the PRSP and the Tenth Plan were aligned to meet the poverty reduction goal.

Thus, I found out that the Government has given stress on education in each successive development plan, but results could not come as expected. When I examined why the results did not come as expected, several issues came up in my mind, and I concluded that there must be several reasons for this problem lying in both demand and supply, including inadequate physical infrastructure, low quality and less committed human resources, pedagogical inefficiency, cultural factors, administrative lacunas, financial shortage and the programmes not reaching the needy ones. However, the government emphasis remained in this sector. Going back to previous plans, I came to know that in the Ninth Plan (1997-2002) it took the policy of making education instrumental to eradicating poverty and all round development (Ninth Plan 1998). Its policy also addressed about availing equal opportunity with improved quality standard. Aligning with this policy, the plan laid down three

objectives which would address the needs of the groups of people like my research participants. I found that the government has taken a good care of gender, inclusion, and illiterates in its policy, therefore I wanted to cite some objectives of the plan:

1. To conduct literacy programme as national campaign by making it skillful, knowledgeable and information oriented
2. To expand opportunities for and accessibility of women in education for enhancing gender equality in education
3. To provide educational opportunity to disabled, backward ethnic tribes and deprived sections of people living in remote areas and bringing them into the national mainstream” (Ninth Plan, p.614)

I thought that the Tenth Plan had a unique feature, as the development and poverty eradication agenda were taken side by side. The Tenth Plan (2003), which was also the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) included the social and economic sector in one package for enhancing the efficiency of human resources. This plan carried on the vision of the ninth plan and one of the objectives of education sector was utilizing education as the ‘strengthened means for economical and social development for the eradication of poverty’ (NPC, 2003, p. 43).

In this plan, I found out that the policy statement had tried to establish a good linkage between economic and social issues. Here, I wanted to cite some related portion of the plan, which focused on providing people with education and health facilities to develop their human resources and make them capable of reducing poverty. The plan says,

poverty impact of growth, however, cannot be maximized until the income earning capabilities of the poor are improved by addressing the deficiencies of

human development such as low education, ill health. The removal of these deficiencies is not only a means of reducing income poverty but also of improving their social well being. Therefore, programme to support effective delivery of education; primary health and enhanced access to clean water have been given priority (NPC, 2003, p. 44).

Though this policy did not name it as livelihood approach but the issues that have been addressed within this broad framework indicates that the government was taking livelihood approach to alleviate poverty though it did not talk about the physical and environmental factors, which were also important components of this concept.

The broader framework of the Three Year Interim Plan (2007) also continues the same policy that education is taken as a tool to produce capable human resources for enhancing economic capability, preserving natural resources, social heritage and culture so that they can use the capability in producing new knowledge, skill and technique with the feeling of patriotism (TYIP, 2007). The strategies put forward by the TYIP (2007) related to literacy programme include, "to conduct income generating and life skill literacy and post literacy campaign focusing on women, Dalit, ethnic tribes, Madhesis, disadvantaged and disabled and conflict victims" (TYIP, 2007, p. 255).

Reviewing all those documents, I found out that government's policies and strategies in all of the above mentioned development plans have been emphasized on income generating programmes in the literacy for the purpose of reducing poverty. Therefore, NFE has been taken as one of the strategies in reaching the goal. As mass literacy was not possible from formal education, non formal literacy programme was a good strategy to do this job. The government has been concentrating on various

forms of educational programmes beyond schools, since long. I thought it is also necessary to educate myself about NFE, how it is being operated in the country and how the concept has been adopted by the government to remove illiteracy of people.

NFE in Nepal

Documents that I could study gave me knowledge that Government has put into motion several adult literacy programs and targets to achieve 90 percent adult literacy by 2015 with special reference to women (Education for All [EFA] 2001-2015) and also for meeting Millennium Development Goals [MDG]. The EFA Master Plan envisages "education as a force to address the issue of poverty through human development measures by enhancing the capacity of the people in terms of appropriate life skills, knowledge and experiential wisdom to acquire economic and social prosperity" (EFA 2001-2015, p. 2).

From this vision of the government, I understood that education should be instrumental in terms of providing skills to the people for bettering the quality of life by enhancing their knowledge, applying it to bring economic and social prosperity and ultimately reducing poverty. EFA has also given stress to women's education to a greater extent; it has proposed Women Education Programme I and as a follow up, Programme II for phase one completers and Skill training for phase two completers. All these programmes are taken as tools to motivate parents to send their children to school by making them literate and equipping them with life skills which could be helpful to meet their financial constraints. But all these programmes are designed for rural context. It is where, I tried to look into how the type of women whom I chose as my research participants were in the agenda of these programmes. Did they fit in these programmes?

To know more about NFE/adult literacy, how it was started? For whom it was conducted? And who were involved in this? Opening the pages of history, I thought, would be a great help. Then, I proceeded to the related literatures, and found that the Government of Nepal, for the first time initiated systematic NFE in 1956 (though it was already introduced in the late 1940s) aiming at making people literate with particular emphasis on Nepali language. In 1950, after the democracy, the need was felt for making people literate as the literacy rate during the period was only 3 percent (MOES, 2005). Considering from the perspective of women's literacy I felt that there could be a very few literate women during that time. Thus NFE activities did not become evident until the First Five Year Plan in 1956 and, it was limited only to literacy activities until 1960s. With the participation of I/NGOs and local organizations it got momentum in 1980s. After the restoration of democracy in 1990, there was overwhelmed participation of various national and international organization showing commitment to 'Education for All', then onwards these activities spread widely across the country (Tuladhar, 1997). An administrative set-up for non-formal education (NFE) was established under the Ministry of Education in 1950s. Non-Formal Education Center as a secretariat of the Non Formal Education Council was established in 1999 which was responsible for planning and implementation of the programs (MOES, 2007).

The government has given high priority to NFE and it is considered as one of the strategies for improving the literacy rate of the country. For this purpose, the government is mobilizing government, Non Government as well as International Organizations for the expansion of literacy programmes.

These efforts of the past helped me understand that NFE activities were generally conducted for children of 8 to 14 years who have missed out schooling for

various reasons and for adults who were disadvantaged from education in young age. The ultimate goal of NFE for children was to prepare them for schooling after they graduated from these programs and that of adults of 15 to 45 years group was to equip them with functional knowledge and skills to build their self confidence and improve their quality of life. I also realized that women were given special priorities in these programs.

In terms of management, I came to know that community mobilization was must for speeding up the progress of the programme. This required the involvement of local government and local communities in collecting the base-line data, designing the plans and programs, their implementation and monitoring, and coordinating the activities of various agencies and directing their involvement in implementation. Therefore, different GOs, NGOs and INGOs were thought important to be mobilized to participate in such programs (MOES, 2007).

I also reviewed the structure, established for imparting literacy education and found that The Non Formal Education Center has a particular mandate to upgrade and extend literacy, post literacy, and skill oriented activities by integrating different non-formal education programs.

Besides this, the Center has the responsibility of carrying out several activities such as coordination in the process of formulating national policies and strategies in relation to non-formal education, so as to provide the policy directives to program implementing agencies who are working in the field of non-formal education throughout the country. The center formulates both short-term and long-term policies pertaining to national literacy. The Ministry has provided with a mandate of development, dissemination and distribution of curricula, training packages, information, education and communication (IEC) materials, textbooks and other

related materials. The center is also serving as the secretariat of the network of the organizations involved in non-formal education programs. From the policies and mandate of the government it is evident that NFEC has focused on three issues.

- a. Providing literacy to un-reached and un-served groups of children and adults
- b. Imparting functional knowledge and skill for building self confidence and improving quality of life
- c. Providing income-generating programme for poverty stricken, deprived, disadvantaged and Dalit women.

I came to know that NFEC is also curious to know the impact of NFE and has been conducting the programmes' evaluation study. Such study was conducted for the first time in 1978 on the NFE programme conducted by Small Farmers Development Project. In 1990, it carried out another study on the literacy campaign of Sukhet district, it conducted a study on the post literacy project in Sarlahi district in 1995 and 1997, and in 1998 it did the impact study of NFE. Based on the findings of these studies NFE has gone through various revisions in educational materials: books, curriculum, additional educational materials and facilitators' skill enhancement. The last study was the impact study carried out in 1999 in five districts of five development regions. This study found out that most of the knowledge and skill expected from NFE were achieved in terms of literacy, implementation of various skills learned, initiating income generating activities such as vegetable farming, goat farming, horticulture, shop operation, tailoring etc. and participation in community activities, such as school building construction, and other community works. However, this study has also acknowledged that the activities on health and hygiene, nutrition, environment, and agriculture were not found very successful, due to the

reason that the suggestions made in the various study reports could not be implemented (MOES, 2005).

This showed that NFEC is mothering the literacy program. It is where, I questioned myself, could NFEC reach to the carpet factory workers with its traditional parafarlaina. With this question, I reviewed NFE Policy (2007) that has been brought into effect, by proposing to introduce some newer approach for the NFE operation such as:

1. Oral literacy programme through sessions, and mobilization of various communication media
2. Post literacy programmes linked to income generating activities
3. Life skills to be attached to both contents and pedagogy
(MOES, 2007)

After going through the importance of literacy, opinions of various people, women's scenario in the country, their migration, their scope of employment opportunities and livelihood gave me room for identifying my problem area and choosing the issue for study.

Problem Areas and Research Question

The first issue is that NFEC has emphasized through its policy and strategy, to reach the un-reached and un-served illiterate people, but in practice it has not happened so. The example is that people like my research participants are not easily identifiable. This helped me realize it as a problem.

Secondly, as such women have difficulty to take out some time from their work, they find difficulty to complete the primers designed for the programme.

I knew that when the women join the programme, they generate knowledge from these NFE classes, but the questions such as, how they link it with their other

sources of knowledge. How they cross- fertilize information and generate new one to improve their living. How they apply knowledge that is generated from their work experience in their life? These un-answered questions made me interested to undertake this as a problem.

Research Question: In order to address the above problems I developed an overarching research question for this study is:

How women labourers generate and process knowledge derived from NFE and apply it for improving their livelihood?

Based on this research question I intended to answer the questions below:

1. How knowledge is generated among women labourers?
2. How and in what context do they apply the acquired knowledge from NFE in their day to day life and work places?
3. How does NFE help in enhancing skills to acquire more knowledge for improving livelihood?

In the process of finding out the answers of the above questions, I also looked into the demand side of the NFE whether some topics in the curricula, were context specific, and whether they needed different contents or different process to impart the required knowledge.

Based on my discussion with various government and non government people who conducted NFE and my own experience as an implementer of NFE, I had developed some assumptions that NFE with life skills and income generating skill has a great success. But after going through various literatures and my field experience I had to modify my assumptions.

Some Experience of NFE Programmes

Various evaluation and assessment reports are found to have given very positive feedback of programmes of literacy and income generating activities, in generating knowledge which was helpful in improving their livelihood. The examples are the Production Credit for Rural Women (PCRW) of the then Ministry of Local Development and the Women Development Program under Small farmers Development Program of Agricultural Development Bank of Nepal, which were mainly implemented in rural areas of the country for improved livelihood. However, IFAD (1995) study presented a different scenario which claimed that NFE could not help improve the livelihood of the landless women and situation of women. This experience suggests that NFE programme needs to be context as well as need specific.

Tuladhar (1997) has pointed out that in majority cases, NFE is judged in quantitative terms, appropriate monitoring and evaluation system has not been developed for adult literacy and 'step up' programme is not arranged for the neo literates. For this reason, many development agencies, government, semi government as well as non government organizations embedded other programs such as income generating projects with the literacy package to help sustain their learned knowledge (ibid). Similarly, NGOs also combined literacy program with income generating activities. In this regard, Tuladhar (1997) referred that many INGOs such as Save the Children, USA, CARE/Nepal, and local NGO like BASE and Stri Shakti combined literacy programme and income generating activities.

Tuladhar also noted from one of the studies of SC US that this was some sort of attraction to the learners and also added that there are some agencies that are forming support groups after the literacy. Experience has shown that non-formal education provided at one time has not been very effective, in the sense that after

some lapse of time the participants forgot what they had learned and almost reached the same stage where they had started from. If neo literates have no opportunity to be engaged in reading, writing, they can relapse into illiteracy (UNESCO, 2003).

Perhaps this could be due to content of the programme not being context specific. I also knew that follow up activities are mostly recommended after NFE. UNESCO (2003) also suggested that there is a need of developing supportive literate environment with interesting reading materials for sustaining the skill of the learners which they derive from the literacy.

Rationale of the Study

Prior to writing the rationale of this study, I understood that there are some researchers in this field. Then, I went through some of the previous studies carried out in this field. Aryal (1977) has researched on to find out non formal education as a strategy for development. His focus was on whether non formal education can be undertaken as the strategy for social change contributing to or interacting with the forces of this change and what should be the ingredients of this strategy. The research has also focused on whether or not NFE has met the conditions as acclaimed, who should benefit from this strategy and what are the perspective of the development of NFE?

Lamichhane (1992) is another researcher in NFE. His research has analyzed the perspectives of NFE and related it to the context of Nepal. He has presented case studies of three countries Tanzania, Bangladesh and Nicaragua. His focus is on the analysis of the perspectives of NFE, experiences of these countries and developing a framework. The objective was to develop conceptual framework for non formal adult education that has potential to empower illiterate people through integrated

framework by promoting mental and manual skills and capabilities making poor people's life better.

Tuladhar (1994) has based her research on finding out a model as a follow up of NFE. Therefore her objective was to developing a model for participatory community video as a post literacy activity in Nepal.

Luitel (1996) has researched on the impact of NFE provided by Save the Children USA on Maithili women. Her research has mostly, seen how Maithili women of one of the villages of Siraha district, reacted to the NFE, what type of program was given to them, whether or not the program progressed as envisaged, whether that proved to be the empowering process in bringing change in their socio/political, economic and psychological situation. Her focus is on to study how women feel of being empowered as a result of being literate and whether they have seen literacy as the source of empowerment.

Acharya (1999) researched women's self help groups under the background of empowerment, literacy and community organization. She has addressed the issues of effective approaches to improve participants' rates, continuance, and learning achievement. She has also addressed the issues around community mobilization to assist practices of literacy programmers and other community organizations.

Masalak's (1999) thesis is also based on adult education. This research investigated the factors that influenced and determined Tharu group's educational decisions made for girls in rural Nepal. This study was undertaken in one of the villages of Terai Regions of Mid Western Nepal. This study brought out a better understanding of educational enrollment of girls in rural Nepal and also highlighted on the role of gender dynamics affecting girls' participation in primary education. Here, adult education is analyzed as a contributing factor for girls' education.

Bhomi's (2000) research is on adult education programme in Nepal. The objectives of the research were: to determine the effectiveness of the single primer written in the Nepali language, to compare the attitudinal change among learners of different mother tongues, to assess the effectiveness of the programme in the daily lives of the adults and to develop a model of AEP that would be relevant to multi-lingual group. The model embedded the structure of AEP, implementation strategy, support system and monitoring and evaluation. The author used quantitative method for the research.

Parker (2005) has studied on demand for NFE in Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP). This is an Action Oriented Research (AOE), and was conducted in two phases. The first phase was a critique of ACAP's conservation and education programme with the findings that demand for NFE was not being met in the study area. It also highlighted the social barriers that were excluding people from attending evening classes. In the second phase, the researcher introduced REFLECT (Regenerated Freirian Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques), a structured learning process.

Thapa (2008) has analyzed the contribution of NFE in the field of community empowerment and improved livelihood. This study has also analyzed the NFE designing and implementation process and factors affecting empowerment process. This is also rural based and the primary information is taken from Chitwan and Dhading districts.

Mitchell (2003) in her Master of Arts dissertation on adult literacy programmes has tried to find out how far UNESCO has tried to integrate gender in its literacy evaluation programmes. For this, she reviewed two adult literacy programmes

of Nigeria and Namibia by using the tools UNESCO checklist and Women's Empowerment Framework.

The studies so far, concentrate in rural area and they focus on the rural people. Except for Aryal and Lamichane, who tried to see NFE from strategic perspective for social change, all other authors have sought to explore the positive changes that NFE brought in rural women. Luitel and Thapa stressed on the empowerment aspect brought by NFE, Acharya, though focused on the self help groups, her concerns were also empowerment, literacy and community organization. Bhomi's focus was on the effectiveness of the AEP among various language groups and he also proposed a suitable model for making the programme effective. Masalak wanted to know the gender dynamics and saw adult literacy from the perspective of increasing girl's schooling. Parker concentrated first to find out the social barriers for education and secondly, her main purpose was to introduce REFLECT. Mitchel's Masters' thesis was on the UNESCO, how far, it could integrate gender in evaluation. Tuladhar's focus was on post literacy activity.

Going through all these researches, I thought that I do not match in any of them, and that gave me space to claim that I differ in many ways from them. They are, (a) conceptually, I have taken NFE as a tool to generate knowledge for better livelihood (b) operationally, the research participants, I chose to be the migrant women labourers who are urban dwellers (c) theoretically, I have analyzed the situation from cognitive development/information processing perspective (d) methodologically I have tried to use postmodernism paradigm and interpretive style by bringing out the voice of invisible women labourers.

There is a widespread illiteracy in rural area, this is a fact and it is quite natural for everybody to take keen concern to mitigate this problem. For this reason,

the government also has done tremendous effort to eliminate the problem and designed adult literacy programmes and with the coordinated effort of various agencies is implementing the programmes. This could be the reason most of the researches concentrate on rural areas. It is where, I found some lacuna in the implementation of such programmes for variety of people. In the first place, the concentration is wholly and solely gone to the rural areas and the programme also is designed to fit in rural context. It is the least likely that such group of illiterate people more particularly, the women fall in the eyes of programme implementers. What is there, for the learners of my kind of research participants? They are from rural area, of course, but are residing in urban area as labourers and are illiterate or semi-literate. I did not find any research being undertaken for such people for examining how they generate knowledge from NFE and apply it for improving their livelihood. Therefore, I became concerned that when they are given the same literacy package how they are going to grasp or generate knowledge and how they are going to use it; is it relevant to their context, does it help to improve their livelihood, and does literacy open up other avenues for knowledge generation. I have concentrated on these issues which I found none of the researches mentioned above have covered. What I saw the rationale of my research that perhaps this will give impetus to concerned organizations to look out for the illiterates who are not easily visible, help adult or adolescent literacy policy makers/programme designers in devising the context specific programme for them so that they can benefit from literacy to a great deal.

Delimitation

There could be innumerable sources for knowledge generation. Usually, people generate knowledge from family, community, school, friends, mass media etc. But for

this study I used non-formal education programme as the source of knowledge and women labourers as knowledge generator and user to improve their livelihood.

Organization of the Report

I have divided the report in seven chapters. The first chapter, which I have named as 'Start of the Journey' includes views of various people on literacy, literacy status of women, socio-economic status and migration of women, research questions and rationale of the study. Second Chapter, 'Knowledge Generation and Learning Theories' cover the explanation on what knowledge is, how is it processed, various learning theories and how I use them in my research. The third Chapter is 'Literacy Scenario' which covers various thoughts on literacy, its coverage and expectations from it. Similarly, the views and theories of Non Formal Education also are presented in this chapter. Fourth Chapter is 'Livelihood Approach' in which I have included the concept of livelihood and its applicability in literacy programme. Fifth Chapter is the methodology which titles 'Choosing the Right Path', includes how I came up with the idea of choosing this particular issue for my research and the way I wanted to proceed to the research. Chapter Six is 'Knowing Pattern and Its Use in Improving Livelihood'. This chapter is based on my field discussion with 12 participants and their cases have been taken to appendix D, E and F. Chapter Seven named as 'Wrapping up the Journey' covers the conclusion, implications and theory building findings and implications based on my information derived from the field visit, then follow the Reference and the Appendices.

Defining Terminologies

I have used different words with specific meaning for this study, they have the following meaning.

Literacy: Literally, literacy is used for reading, writing, numeracy the literacy programme given to the illiterates or semi-literates. Literacy programme in our context means 3 Rs with some contents which are useful for the learners' lives.

Literacy Education: Literacy education is synonym to print literacy. It has direct relationship with modern employment opportunities. It is more related to survival issue. Thus this has broader spectrum than just literacy. Literacy education here is meant for various literacy programmes operated both by government and I/NGOs to the illiterates and semi literates with the use of primers.

Non formal education: Non formal education terminology does not mean only basic literacy. However, in the context of my study, it is extensively used for literacy programmes. In this study, it is also used for the literacy or literacy education programmes interchangeably.

Empowerment: Literacy providers use the word frequently. But the word empowerment has a wider coverage, it is not only the inner power development but it also embraces wider dimensions. Therefore, in this study I have used it for broader coverage following the concept of Stromquist (1995, cited in Aksornal, 2005) who took it as a social political concept having four components 'cognitive, psychological, political and economic, than just knowing how to read, write and numeracy with some knowledge of social issues.

Invisible: I have used the word invisible women in the context of the labourers who are illiterates or semi literates and due to this characteristic they landed up to work in carpet factories. They are paid on piece rate basis. Generally, they do not fall in the eyes of policy makers and planners and they are not easily approachable too. Bhatt (1987) used this term Indian invisible women who were mostly engaged in

home based industries such as beedi making, were paid on piece rate basis and were out of the premise of labour laws.

CHAPTER II

KNOWLEDGE GENERATION AND LEARNING THEORIES

The research questions of this study cover three areas, knowledge generation, literacy/non formal education and livelihood. Therefore, the scope of research needed literature review in these areas. Thus, I have divided the literature review into three chapters according to the areas mentioned above. This chapter reviews documents on what knowledge is, how knowledge is generated, how it is processed and the ways of women's knowing. The review also includes some learning theories which are the basis for analyzing the field information on the research participants' generated knowledge. This information is applied to analyze the field information in order to answer first research question.

The Knowledge

Philosophers tried to understand knowledge from different lenses. Some of them understood it as a condition or act where knowing takes place (Clarke, 1999). Locke defines knowledge as the perception of the agreement or disagreement between "ideas". He strongly believed in the existence of idea which he thought would help in thinking and knowing (Kenyon, 1989). Knowledge is also awareness and understanding and skill to do something. It is also a human capacity to tackle situation in uncertain circumstances and it is an ability to make a change or receive change according to Locke (Hewett, 2006).

Broadly speaking, knowledge is accumulation of facts and information (Clarke, 1999), it is also a process, it shows interconnectedness and it is a deeper understanding, and the highest degree of the speculative faculties, consists in the

perception of the truth of affirmative or negative propositions. This implies that knowledge seeks to reason truth, be it positive or negative propositions. Elaborating further to the thinking of Locke, Curtis, Boulton & Morris (1965, p. 230).) say “Locke defined knowledge as consisting of the perception of the agreement or disagreement between ideas. He gave so wide an extension to the meaning of the term “idea” that he failed to distinguish between the idea as a notion and the mental image. According to the authors, he gave too much emphasis on the ideas. experience and exercise for correct use of mental faculties were also important for Locke.

Knowledge is also familiarity gained by actual experience and practical skill. In this way knowledge is taken as a process or a tool by which one can reason out, can arrive at truth and through which human beings can acquire power. People give importance to having knowledge because it results into power. Throughout their lives, people pursue knowledge because either they want to learn or external pressures compel them to do so and some also love to dumping information as they like to learn (Moser, Moulder & Trout, 1998).

Knowledge is also interconnectedness and it outlines that it is an appreciation of the possession of interconnected details which, in isolation, are of lesser value. Similar to this view, is of Aristotle who believed that without basic knowledge, there could be no knowledge at all. According to him knowledge of what a thing is by grasping its form could be called basic knowledge and we think we do not have knowledge of a thing until we have grasped its why, that is to say, its cause (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2004). If there were no basic knowledge, then whatever we know is based on some other knowledge we have’. He also thought that knowledge would have to be derivative as well because it required to be based on some other knowledge.

Interconnectedness aspect of knowledge unveils complications. Clarke (1999) in this regard thinks that knowledge is a complex of several related ideas. At the first level, it is knowing at a superficial level such as to be acquainted with a thing, place or person and to be able to distinguish one from another. The second one is, knowing at deeper level, such as to apprehend with clearness or certainty and to have theoretical or practical or spiritual understanding of that subject. Both these categories characterize knowledge as the ability for showing interconnectedness.

According to Philips (1990, p. 21) "traditional epistemologies whether of empiricists or rationalists persuasion regarded knowledge as being built upon some solid and unchangeable foundation". He further explains that the empiricists (Locke, Berkley, and Hume) saw the foundation to be human experience - sense impressions and rationalists thought it was human reason which is the base where knowledge is built upon.

Knowledge is also a deeper understanding. It is the third type of knowledge as categorized by Clarke (1999). At this stage, people obtain both theoretical or practical or spiritual understanding of subject, which is influenced by one's experience and achievement.

Some epistemologists assume that at least human adults are knower and the exponents have made a distinction between knowledge and mere opinion. According to this, knowledge and opinion go side by side in the sense that if two persons have different opinions, both cannot be right, if one is wrong it is understood that particular person lacks knowledge. But even in this case, according to Plato, the person who gives correct opinion also might lack knowledge if the person's correctness of opinion is a matter of luck (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2004). The same source further, says that correct opinion should be supported by evidence. This means the

focus of western epistemology has been on the study of evidence. If the strength of evidence is needed for distinguishing opinion from knowledge, a question also arises on how strong the evidence should be. In this pursuit skepticism comes up.

Encarta Encyclopedia (2007) describes knowledge as the awareness and understanding of facts, truths or information gained. Knowledge is also gained in the form of experience of learning (a posteriori), or through introspection (a priori). What is known by perceptual experience and reasoning is also knowledge according to the same information. Knowledge is also defined as “the human capacity (both potential and actual) to take effective action in varied and uncertain situations It is also an organized information or contextualized data which are useful to create new meanings and generate new data. Furthermore, it is also the distillation of the information that has been collected, classified, organized, integrated and value added.

Knowledge can be acquired through various sources as such it is gained and preserved by knowing through instruction: acquaintance: enlightenment: learning: scholarship: erudition etc.

The traditional sources of knowledge as discussed by rationalists and empiricists were the perception and memory and so far as the testimony in knowledge was concerned it involved a rich network of social dependence which questions whether and how the social character of an intellectual contributes to knowledge (Moser et al., 1998). The authors also add that the theory of knowledge should be able at least to clarify the difference between genuine knowledge and likely counterfeits. The theory which fails to do so will be defective to perform one of its central tasks that is, in explaining what genuine knowledge includes.

Discussing epistemology and sources of knowledge Clarke (1999), says epistemology as a branch of philosophy is dedicated to the study of knowledge, its

sources, varieties and limits. As in every philosophy, in epistemology also there are two competing views, one is empiricism and the other is apriorism. The former one holds that knowledge is derived from experience whereas the later 'apriorism' believes that knowledge is innate. The extreme form of empiricism is referred to as positivism or logical positivism and the extreme form of apriorism denies that knowledge lies outside human mind.

This concept shows the dilemma in deciding whether knowledge is concrete or it is abstract.

According to the Columbia Encyclopedia (2007) epistemology is the branch of philosophy that is directed toward theories of the sources, nature, and limits of knowledge. Since the 17th century, epistemology has been one of the fundamental themes of philosophers, who were necessarily obliged to coordinate the theory of knowledge with developing scientific thought.

Epistemology also means “treatment of the subject of knowledge”. The basic question epistemology raises is about nature of knowledge. Most of the ancient philosophers took only adult human beings as being capable of knowing. On the arguments that whether babies and non- human have knowledge the conclusion was that in order to know a person must also have understanding. Thus understanding also is a component of knowledge. In the this line, Moser (2002) discusses that some philosophers like Lehrer (2000) viewed that infants and brutes never know, thus the Lehrer focused on the adults who have concept which is correct and true. The author argued that according to Lehrer the memory retention only constitutes retention of information, but not knowledge.

Talking about the sources of knowledge, Moser (2002) points out that from epistemic perspective, generally there are four basic sources of knowledge,

perception, memory, consciousness/introspection and reason/intuition. According to the author, some writers have shortened them to only two sources: experience and reason.

From Hinduism perspective, Sivananda (2004) says there are seven planes of knowledge, such as inspiration, revelation, insight, divine sight and the supreme, blissful state and according to him knowledge has four sources: instinct, reason, intuition and direct knowledge of Brahman (God) or Brahman-jnana (knowledge of God). He elaborates it further, that instinct is automatic movement and there is no thought process here, and it is found in animals and birds. In the same way, he adds, reason is found in human beings and this process collects information, reasons out from cause to effect, from effect to cause, derives conclusion and leaves to the door of intuition. Belief, reason, knowledge and faith are four important psychic processes in this. Intuition brings direct perception of truth or immediate knowledge through ‘Samadhi’ or Superconscious State. Things are known in a flash. There is no reasoning process in intuition. Brahman Jyana is above intuition it transcends the causal body and is highest level of knowledge.

According to Ancient Greek Theories of Knowledge, things are not always the same as they seemed to be, therefore there is a possibility of human beings to be deceived. The early philosophers suspected that there could be defect in the information that is received by senses.

Knowledge can be of two types, explicit and tacit according to Edvinsson & Malone (1997). They opine that explicit knowledge can be expressed in words and numbers and can be shared as data, formulae, specifications, manuals etc. whereas tacit knowledge is highly personal and hard to communicate and share with others. The authors have shown two dimensions of tacit knowledge. The first dimension is in

the form of informal and to pin down skill or crafts termed as 'know how'. People collect wealth of expertise at their finger tips after a long experience but it is hard for them in articulating technical and scientific principles behind them. According to the authors, subjective and personal insights, intuitions and hunches also fall in this category of knowledge. The other dimension of tacit knowledge is 'cognitive' one. It includes perceptions, beliefs, values, emotions etc. and though it is hard to articulate easily, the authors say that it shapes the way we perceive the world around us.

In the nutshell, knowledge is to know about a thing, place or person, to differentiate them one from another and understand their interconnectedness. It is derived through experience or speculation, which helps arrive at fact or truths. Thus knowledge embeds collection of information and production of new data.

Above discussion on knowledge tells us that according to traditional philosophers, there are four sources of knowledge: perception, memory, intuition and reason and as per Shivananda (2004) there are four planes instinct, reason, intuition and Brahman Jyana and there are two types of knowledge explicit and tacit.

With this backdrop, I investigated how the research participants have understood the knowledge gained from, Non Formal Literacy programme, which source they use for knowledge generation and how such knowledge has helped them to bring difference in their livelihood. In this context, I tried to examine how tacit knowledge that the women bring with them influence the explicit knowledge, which they gain from NFE.

Knowledge Processing System

In order to understand how women labourers process knowledge generated through NFE, it was required to know something more about epistemology. In this pursuit, I found that epistemology tells about how the knowledge of an object is acquired and

how correct knowledge can be obtained. Thus, it aims at providing knowledge of origin, method and development of cognition (Moser et al., 1998).

The ancient atomist Democritus (The History Guide, 2009) believed in the knowledge processing through concrete objects. He doubted the knowledge to be yielded through senses; he thought it would rather obscure knowledge because senses do not have the ability to see objects smaller than a certain size. He opined that knowledge what one gets through perception is not reliable, because it shifts its character due to the body's dispositions, influences and confrontations. This thought denies human perception or senses as the reliable knowledge processor due to limitation of sense organs.

Plato believed in knowledge processing through concrete objects but he also gave importance to ideas and perceptions as such he gave a space to knowledge a priori. He thought what is real is "forms". He claimed that "forms" are the objects of the knowledge and that they are separate from the objects of senses. Later on "forms" evolved into "systems". The process of abstracting concepts from the concrete objects is based on the mind's ability to grasp forms inherent in the sensible objects. He differentiated between knowledge and opinion, as knowledge being stable and opinion fleeting. He also believed in human beings as being capable of knowledge a priori, which is independent of experiences (Ancient Landmarks, 1939).

Aristotle also gave emphasis on the sensory organs. According to him "the sense object proper to a sense is one which is perceived by that sense only and not by any other sense. Sense is not subject to error when it is concerned with its proper object" (Curtis et al., 1965, p.106).

For John Locke, knowledge derived from senses was important and he introduced the concept of empiricism in the west and tried to base knowledge of the

physical world on the senses. According to him, ideas were the basis of knowledge, which were ultimately derived from the senses (Kenyon, 1989). According to him, first the passive mind receives simple ideas then it is able to act upon in various ways so that abstract ideas are created (Curtis et al., 1965). He thought that there is no knowledge beyond experience. He also left no space for the probability. He thought evidence should not make belief probable, if so then we lack knowledge (Kenyon, 1989).

On acquiring knowledge, Stoics were skeptical of the knowledge through senses, whereas Aristotle's theory depended much on the repeated sensory experience to grasp the forms of things. Stoics also raised the question of judgment and held that many requirements had to be fulfilled in order to someone to have knowledge.

The Unification Thought showed relationship between human beings and all other things as subject and object, human beings having dominion over all things and all things being the objects of joy, beauty and objects of dominion (The Unification Church, 1996). Thus in this theory of Unification Epistemology, experience and reason both were important and cognition was the outcome of the unified operation of the two. According to this theory, cognition is accompanied by judgment and judgment is considered as the measuring act. Ideas within the human mind are thought to be the measurement standards and these ideas serve as the standards of cognition. These ideas are called "prototypes" which are the images within the mind and they are the integral objects. When the image within the mind and the image of the external object are collated cognition takes place. Realism emphasizes external objects disregarding the innate ideas, which is also reinforced by Marxism through copy theory. According to Subjective Idealism, which was advocated by Berkeley, cognition is recognized only in so far as it appears in human consciousness (ibid). The

former epistemologies did not clarify the subject of cognition (human being) and the object of cognition [all things](ibid). Either more emphasis was placed on the subject of cognition as in rationalism that cognition occurred due to understanding (reason), or as in empiricism cognition took place due to object resulting from sensation.

The method of this theory differs from the transcendental method of Kant's and Marx's dialectical one. According to Kant the real world is not to be understood as the realization of the possible, he does not see it as pre-given or preexistent. In his analysis possible existence is replaced by possible experience (Whereas, Marx sees the ideal) nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought (Stalin, 1938)

The principle of Unification Epistemology theory (The Unification Church, 1996) is give and receive action between subject and object. Therefore, Unification Epistemology is called give and receive epistemology. There must be some requisites such as, 'the subject must have prototypes and concern and the object must have content i.e. attributes and form' (Stalin, 1938). Cognition will take place through the give and receive of outer activity and give and receive activity within human consciousness. There is an also a priori idea, which is called 'protoimage' coming from the some part of prototype corresponding to content. The 'protoimage' has nothing to do with experience. In prototypes there are also acquired ideas that are added through past and present experience. According to Wilson (2002) traditional epistemologies depended upon sensory data, thus it could not deal with the question of how we can know invisible reality, such as God, or truth, or love. In his opinion subject of epistemology should also cover the cognition of these most valuable invisible realities.

On how the concept of knowledge changed, Philips (1990, p. 21) discusses, in the twentieth century there has been a steady erosion of foundationalism of both varieties (empiricism and reason). It is now recognized that there is no absolutely secure starting point for knowledge; nothing is known with such certainty that all possibility of future envision is removed. All knowledge is tentative. Karl Popper (1968) is probably the best known advocate of this newer perspective, but he is not a solitary figure.

According to Philips (1990) the most reliable sources of knowledge is hard to be found, all types of sources lead to us in error at times. Therefore, the writer proposes a different question that it is not about finding out knowledge rather how can we hope to detect and eliminate error?

Regarding the mental processes Luria (1974) refers different views of various schools of thoughts. The French school of sociology disregarded to interpret the influence of society and socio economic system on the individual mind and took the formation of human mind as spiritual event "occurring in isolation from concrete practice and the particular conditions of its physical milieu" (ibid, p. 4). The author presents another view that some relied on experimental data and proposed that the intellectual apparatus of humans in primitive culture was similar to that of advanced people but their thinking generalized the facts of the external world into different categories and it did not reflect racial inferiority and differences in beliefs. The author's conclusion is that human mental process is influenced by culture, history and the environment. He refers a research undertaken forty years ago under the initiative of Vygotsky in the context of unprecedented social and cultural change that higher cognitive activities remain socio historical in nature, and that the structure of mental activity - not just the specific content but also the general forms basic to all

cognitive processes - change in the course of historical development" (Luria, 1974, p. 4).

On how knowledge is processed there is varying opinion among philosophers. Some believed more on the sensory organs and knowledge sensed or that could be tested, that have evidence is more real, while other philosophers held different views that human mind, idea, perceptions were more true. Above described literature shows that the concepts of epistemology and knowledge generation process also includes: existence of basic/a priori knowledge, understanding, knowledge through senses, knowledge through evidence, obtaining knowledge on the basis of solid and unchangeable foundation, formation of ideas, mind's inherent ability to grasp forms of objects, give and receive of outer activity, and give and receive in human consciousness, judgment as the measuring act.

Later, Unification thought came which tried to bring balance between subject and object that is human ideas and the evidence.

Based on these views, I derived that dimensions of knowledge generation are: knowledge processing through sense organs that could be proved, knowledge processing through perception or ideas, knowledge processing through interplay of both human senses and ideas, and knowledge processing through judgment.

All of the philosophies in one way or the other suggest that for knowledge processing, the ideas, reason, opinion, understanding within human mind and the outer activity and conceptualization of the materials of the outer world is important. In this process, some philosophers gave more emphasis to human mind and some to the materials of outer world.

On this epistemological backdrop, I have tried to understand women labourers's knowledge generation process through NFE and its application process

from post modernization framework towards improved livelihood through NFE interventions.

Women's Ways of Knowing

Nature of knowledge generation is different to different people. In order to solve the epistemological problem three types of theory are suggested such as objectivism, dualism and subjectivism (Montague, 1925). The author views that inspite of the division of the theory, from the standpoint of dialectical and historical development; there is found some degree of subjectivism in the first two types which underwent various stages. However, the author has underlined some of the properties of each of the theory. According to him, pure objectivism believes in the physical existence of all of the objects, which are independent of consciousness. Pure dualism on the other hand accepts that all immediately experienced objects are dependant on the self, and exist only in its consciousness and at the same time it also believes that all of the truly inferred causes of sense data are independent of them, and exist only in world outside and beyond them. Pure subjectivism asserts that all objects whether of immediately sensed or inferred depend upon the self and exist solely within its experience.

The above-mentioned theories are generally applicable to all people regardless of their sex type but particularly on the ways how women acquire knowledge, Belenky et al. (1986) have identified five major epistemological categories. The first one is silence which is a position where women experience themselves mindless and voiceless and depend on the whims of external authority. The second is the perspective of received knowledge in which women are capable of receiving and reproducing knowledge but not able to create knowledge on their own. Another perspective is of subjective knowledge, it is a position in which women think knowledge and truth as private or personal, which is subjectively known or intuited.

Procedural knowledge is another position in which women learn and apply objective procedures for obtaining and communicating knowledge. Women, who are in a position of constructed knowledge view knowledge as contextual, experience themselves as creators of knowledge.

Following the above stated categories, I have analyzed the participants' perspectives and tried to understand women labourers' ways of generating and applying the knowledge for improved living and classify them in which category they fall in. With this backdrop, I ensured epistemological links of women labourer's generated and applied knowledge for their improved livelihood in varied ways. In this process, the "give and receive" of non formal education content took place. The outer "give and receive" took place through the teaching and learning method and the "inner give and receive" took place after collating the content with the basic knowledge which existed within their consciousness.

Learning Theories

There are various schools of thoughts on how human beings learn and in the same line several theories have emerged. Mainly there are three notable thoughts: behaviourism, cognition and constructivism. There are many exponents of these thoughts and some times they also overlap in the concept. Though most of the theories deal with the children's psychology, their development and behaviour and they give clues to teach them effectively, I derived that some theories such as cognitive development also hint about human mind and also talk about lifelong learning.

Kehoe (1999) takes learning as an ongoing process, which begins at the moment of birth and continues throughout life span. The author adds, it takes place at school, at home and even at work. Learning does not mean only regurgitate but to understand and apply the knowledge acquired.

There are various theories on how people learn. It is useful if applied in both teaching and learning. As people's learning pattern is not similar it is useful to identify one's particular way of learning (Dunn, 2000). According to Burns (1995 as cited in (Ibid) learning is permanent change in behaviour. Here, behaviour includes both activities, which are observable and those, which are internal processes such as thinking, attitudes and emotions. Dunn also includes motivation in this process and also states that observable behaviour will not occur immediately, rather it takes sometime after the educational programme takes place.

Foley (2004) says "learning is central to human life - as essential as work or friendship". The author cites the statement of David Kolb (1984, p. 4) that "learning is human being's primary mode of adaptation: if we don't learn we may not survive, and we certainly not prosper. Learning is complex and multifaceted, and should not be equated with formal education".

Forrester & Jantzie (n. d.) take learning as a personal act. Each person places one's personal stamp on how one learns, what one learns and when one learns. Every body has own style of learning. The authors further opine that the act learning is paradoxical in nature. Often it seems to be a very simple act and natural to our existence as learning organisms. Though learning is taken for granted as a natural process but it is not as simple as that. Thus, in order to explain its complexity numerous definitions and theories have cropped up say the authors.

The learning theories guide us to know how people learn when they are introduced to new things. Actually the theories speak about the process how human mind works when they come across to new things or are in the process of exploring new things. Learning is one of the various ways to generate knowledge. Rogers (1983 cited in Blunt & Maurer, 2005) talks about learning not "as lifeless, sterile, futile,

quickly forgotten stuff but as the insatiable curiosity that drives the adolescent boy to absorb everything he can see or hear or read about". Rogers says he is talking about any learning in which experience of the learner progresses along this line. According to him, learning should enable a person to understand, internalize and act upon it, based on one's experience. Thus, what it implies is that learning is not just receiving knowledge about certain things rather by obtaining knowledge one should be able to generate new one.

Above arguments on learning suggest that learning is a continuous process throughout life, learning is not only to know things but also should be understood and applied, it should change behaviour both observable and unobservable, it is multidimensional and has complex phenomenon. In order to understand its complexity various theories emerged. As stated earlier three major theories are Behaviourism, Cognitivism and Constructivism.

The propagators of Behaviourism are. Thorndike, Skinner, Guthrie, Watson, Bandura. The focus of this theory lies on the conditioning of human behaviour. Watson has defined learning as a sequence of stimulus and response, which are reflected in observable cause and effect relationships (Forrester & Jantzie, n. d.). Pavlov's example of dog's salivating to the bell ringing in the case of classical conditioning suggests that a human being learns to respond to a neutral stimulus, which would normally followed by unconditioned stimulus. Based on operant conditioning of Thorndike, Skinner derived that voluntary or automatic behaviour is strengthened or weakened by immediate reward or punishment. The authors cite Belkin & Gray (1977, p.59) that "the principles behind operant conditioning is that new learning occurs as a result of positive reinforcement, and old patterns are abandoned as a result of negative reinforcement".

The key words used for these theories are operant conditioning, respondent conditioning, stimulus response, reinforcement, rote learning, memorization, trial and error learning, programmed, etc. (Funderstanding, n.d.). All of these words signify that behaviorist theories recognize the passivity of the students. The main activities lie on the part of teachers. The same literature further elaborates that behaviorists believe that environment shapes behaviour and they are more concerned with the changes in students' behavior through two types of conditioning respondent and operant which are identified by Skinner. Watson who is considered as the father of Behaviorism has defined learning as "a sequence of stimulus and response actions in observable cause and effect relationships (Forrester & Jantzie n.d. p. 4). Byrnes (2001) presents the opinion of Thorndike who described knowledge in terms of neutrally based associations between situations and responses. Knowledge grows according to the laws of exercise and effect; students are viewed more as "other regulated than self regulated" (Thorndike as cited in Byrnes, 2001, p. 8). To Thorndike knowledge is the result of exercise and its effect but this is regulated by others not by themselves. Talking about behaviourist view of learning, Forrester and Jantzie(n.d.) cite Belkin and Gray (1977, p. 211) by saying, "learning implies a change in the individual as a result of some intervention. It may be viewed as an outcome or as a process." Actually this view was the starting point of learning for the authors to expand their description of learning. Hence, the focus of behaviourism is the observable behaviour to know that learning is taking place. Kehoe (1999) cites Deterline Web, which says, that behaviourists believe learning is explained in terms of observable stimulus and response events. They also stress on the role of reinforcement in motivating the individual to behave in certain ways.

Behaviorism, according to constructivist's perspective was too teacher centered and directed. It denied meaningful learning and it also focused more on individual than on group work.

Cognitive theories originated in the 19th century but in the beginning of the 20th century the behaviourist theories were dominant however, they emerged as the dominant force again. They hold some different view on how learning takes place. As per Demetriou, Efklides & Shayer (Eds, 1994) the object of study of psychology of cognitive development are the transmission of culture- valued knowledge, the development of learning skills and the cultivation of creative thinking, which would make a student inventor of new knowledge. These theories have different perspective that students actively process information and learning takes place through the efforts of the student themselves when they organize, store and then find relationships between information, linking new to old knowledge, schema and scripts.

Cognitive approaches emphasize how information is processed (Charles Stuart University, n.d.). This literature refers to the views of three researchers Ausubel, Bruner and Gagne who take some different perspectives but their main focus is on how people learn.

Some of the exponents of Cognitive theories are. Vygotsky, Piaget, Wertheimer and Bandura. There are some more philosophers in this thought. The main concern of these theories are meaningful learning, information processing, short term as well as long term memory, insightful learning, phenomenology, productive thinking accommodation etc. (Charles Stuart University, n. d.). According to Forrester and Jantzie (n. d.) cognitive psychologists hold contrast views in learning, they lay emphasis on the mental processes of mind in order for learning to take place. These theories believe that learning must be meaningful and learning should bring change in

student's understanding. Learning and Learning theory further elaborates the theories that Ausubel's 'assimilation theory of learning' involves around several components such as students learn better, if they find the learning useful. Rote learning or memorization does not interest the learners but it is used if the information is important to them. If new information is presented to the students it is processed which will enable the learner to associate the information with previous learning. It adds the important component of cognitive theories is the relationship between long term and short memory. As per Kehoe (1999) cognitive learning theories are another approach to describe on how learning takes place and these theories take learning as an internal process.

These learning theories have identified various strategies to make learning useful and transferable. They are rehearsal, elaboration, organization, comprehension, monitoring and effective strategies. Cognitive theories also include Information processing models. Some theorists, who proposed this model were Gagne, Tolman and Bandura and they were classified under both behaviouristic and cognitive learning theories. Forrester and Jantzie(n.d.) opine that Information Processing theory regard human learning as a computer which has ability to store memory. When human process information through senses either it is processed in short-term memory or it is lost. The information is used and practiced then only it goes into long-term memory.

Byrnes (2001) says by quoting Pressley et al. (1994) that research has proved that there are always some students who benefit more from certain technique than others. The author adds Vigotsky had expressed similar opinion a long time ago that in order to understand best the current state of learners it is important to know where they have come from and where they are going. Vygotsky has given importance to social interaction and his Social Development Theory suggests that “social interaction

plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition” (Learning Theories Knowledgebase, 2009). The same literature cites Vygotsky (1978, p.78)

Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first: on the social level, and later, on the individual level: first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals.

The other aspect of Vygotsky’s theory is that consciousness is the end product of socialization. When the children master in communication with the adults and peers they become internalized and allow “inner speech.” Thus, Vygotsky has given importance to interaction with the society in order to bring individual development of a child. His theory suggests that some key features in the context of learning are such as “interaction with others, cultural tools, Zone of Proximal Development, (ZPD), scaffolding, guidance of others and constructing and internalizing shared meanings” (Mace, 2005)

In the context of changes to be brought by the learning Bynres (2001, p. 7) says that “development analysis suggests that the rate of change slows with age” According to the author’s view the speed of learning process slows down with age. From the various theories the author derives that practice is important, learning should be meaningful and goal oriented and knowledge the students (children) bring to the classroom greatly affect what they learn.

Constructivism is another theory which is propagated by several theorists. The major theorists are Tolman, Bruner, Lewin, Bigge, . Dewey and. Allport (Bynres 2001). As per Forrester & Jantzie (n.d.), constructivists believed that all human beings have the ability to construct knowledge in their own mind through a process of

discovery and problem solving. The theorists believe that the 'learning is constructed through two processes: the resolution of conflict and reflection about theory.' They prefer discovery learning to expository teaching. They think that discovery learning motivates students to learn and it has long-term memory. This means Constructivism provides a framework or structure where students have a free time for exploration. This type of learning demands students to be active so that s/he can select and interpret information from the environment. It denies the hands- on - learning but the student's learning is determined by what s/he already knows. It believes that knowledge is a personally meaningful construction. According to Forrester & Jantzie (n. d) constructivists believe that all human are capable of constructing knowledge in their own minds through a process of discovery and problem solving.

Piaget is a pioneer of Constructivist thought (Dougiamas, 1998). The author presents various faces of constructivism such as trivial constructivism, radical constructivism, social constructivism, cultural constructivism, critical constructivism and constructionism. For constructivism, Dougiamas outlines some tenets in pedagogical terms such as students come in the class with an established worldview formed by their prior experience and learning, their worldview filters all experiences, which affect their interpretation of observations. Students require work to change their worldview. Students learn from each other and from the teacher, they learn better by doing and they should be allowed opportunities to have a voice that promotes the construction of new ideas.

Piaget's cognitive constructivism emphasizes individual assimilation and accommodation though he does not deny interaction with others. The key points he suggested for learning to take place were "schema, assimilation/accommodation, teachers challenging current conceptions with new unfitting ideas, interaction with

others and world, students work individually and with others to construct schemas” (Mace, 2005).

Byres (2001, p. 8) describes Piaget’s theory of Constructivism as “Piaget described knowledge in terms of schemes, concepts, and structures; knowledge is manifested in four levels of thought and grows through processes of abstraction and equilibration; equilibration is the manifestation of self regulated thinking for Piaget.”

Schema theorists argue that although sometimes schemata misguide students to understand and remember things, usually they help them solve problems, categorize, understand and remember main ideas. The author says, “schemata are formed through abstraction process and can change in response to experience” (ibid).

Out of the three kinds of theories viz. Behaviorism, Cognitive Development and Constructivism, I chose the Information Processing Approach of Cognitive theories to be the background of my study, which I thought was suitable for this kind of research. The reason was, the participants of my study were mostly illiterate and primary level dropouts. They had been the participants of non formal literacy Program and some had completed the programme and some did not. They were not children who had very fertile mind to adopt new things or respond quickly. They had already crossed the primary school age. They wanted to study just because they had some purpose or they wanted to do the thing, what their friends did. I have further discussed it under adult learning.

As my research participants were not children, I thought perhaps they do not follow Behaviorist theories because their age factor as well as their social environment does not permit them to do what the instructors or the teachers want them to do. Behaviourism demands very fertile mind so that learners receive what the teachers want to inculcate in them, it asks for memorization and rote learning which

they may not be able to do due to time constraints and engagement in other priority areas. It also suggests the passivity of the learners, which for the adult is difficult to be applied. Adult learners come with established worldview as influenced by several factors, which occur in their lives. Their experience of life also plays a crucial role in learning which behaviourism does not take much in account.

So far as the Constructivism was concerned, my research participants would not be able to devote plenty of time for doing mental exercise to create new knowledge as this theory demanded. The idea that "Knowledge is constructed by the learner, not passively received from the environment. Learning is work, effective learning requires concentration" (Dougiamas, 1998, p. 4) is the concept which I thought may not exactly, fit to the majority of my research participants. I also thought that my research participants do not have plenty of time to concentrate on the study as suggested by Dougiamas.

Information Processing Theory

Information Processing Theory is one of the influential cognitive theories used in instructional design (Kehoe, 1999). Kehoe thinks this to be the developmental theory. Wyer (1974) thinks to understand the information processing, it will be helpful to draw an analogy between the human "information processor" and the computer. "Several aspects of an information processor must be understood if it is to be used effectively and the output is to be correctly interpreted"

1. The structure and organization of memory
2. Information acquisition
3. Integration and processing of information
4. Language translation rules (Wyer, 1974, p. 2).

Like a computer human has a limited capacity for the amount and nature of information that it can process say Lachman, Lachman and Butterfield (1979). According to the authors the most interesting aspects of human cognition are almost the same as stated by Wyer above, which are thinking, understanding, language, memory, knowledge creativity, result from just such recoding operations in which the channel increases its own efficiency by altering, solving, reorganizing and retrieving the information to which it is exposed. Huitt (2003) with similar views on information processing, presents four principles of this model. They are: mental system has limited capacity and there are bottlenecks in the processing of information, a control mechanism is required to oversee the encoding, transformation, processing, storage, retrieval and utilization of information and there is two a way flow of information as people make sense of the world around them and human organism is genetically prepared to process and organize information in specific ways.

The most important generalization of information processing as suggested by Payne (1980, p. 95) is that “active processing of information is a serial process that occurs in a memory of limited capacity, duration, and ability to place information in more important storage”. It implies that information pass through few stages through which one receives it, stores it and retrieves at the time of need. Citing Simon (1976) the author also says that “information processing theory stresses the need to pay attention to the behavior of individual subjects” (Payne, 1980, p.102).

Information Processing theorists' argument on knowledge processing is that there exist two forms of knowledge: declarative and procedural. According to these theorists knowledge is acquired by passing information through the memory stores: self regulated students use strategies to create permanent memories, plan and monitor their performance. The author also gives opinion of Vygotsky “who described

knowledge in terms of concepts and functions, knowledge acquisition is described as a process of internalizing the words and actions of teachers, parents and more capable peers; self regulated students use egocentric and inner speech to help themselves stay on track (Byres, 2001, p. 8). According to 'Overview of Information Processing Theories Extended Discussion' in the last 30 years general issues addressed by Information Processing Theories are so extended that they are beyond the periphery of behavioural and Gestalt-like models of human learning and memory. The same document 'Overview of Information Processing Theories Extended Discussion' has classified knowledge into four types: declarative, procedural, episodic and conditional. This signifies fact, how to, memories of life and knowing when and why, respectively.

According to Annis (1985) Information Processing Theory of learning is used to explain the cognitive processing of learners. The author further adds, this theory involves the three essential steps of orienting attention to the material that is to be learned, processing or encoding the material into a personally meaningful form, and finally, associating the new material to what the learner already knows (p. 4).

In the same line, the University of Kentucky (2008) asserts three primary stages of IP theories that are encoding (information is sensed, perceived and attended to), storage (information is stored for short or long time depending on the encoding processes) and retrieval (information is found at the appropriate time for use on a current task. It says human has sensory register for a very brief period of time. One has enormous amount of capacity more than one can perceive and the holding time is very short from one second to as high as two and half to three seconds and this depends on the modality used. Auditory memory is more persistent than visual.

In order to move information into consciousness one needs to have ability to attend to it in the sense that one is able to perceive and later remember those things, which pass through the "attention gate". The learner is capable of filtering the information only, if one is attentive, is interested in material, has conscious control over attentional resources and if one finds the thing is surprising (the University of Kentucky, 2008)). This means learners have working memory which as a storehouse holds the information or data for a limited period of time until the learner has adequate amount of resources to process the information or until it is forgotten. If information is not attended it fades away and new and old information blocks access to the information. There are a few steps suggested in order to hold the information in LTM (long term memory). They are: organizing information efficiently, deep processing i. e. focus on meaning, elaboration, generation (produced by oneself is easier to remember), context (remembering the situation when it occurs), personalization (making information relevant to the concerned), situative learning occurring in context, prototype formation/comparison (establishing a prototypical representation for future access (ibid).

Through sensory organs individuals receive information such as eyes, ears, nose, mouth or sense of touching. Most of the information is discarded and those, which are not discarded is transformed into a message and sent to working memory (Kehoe, 1999). The author presents Miller's theoretical idea on Information Processing Theory that information is divided into small "chunks" structures in working memory. Miller thought that only 5 - 9 chunks are stored in the memory. The chunk could be anything digits, data, chess position, or peoples' faces. These structures stay for twenty seconds and some stay longer but can be quickly lost or forgotten.

Mooij (2005) views that the information a person has acquired must be organized in order for it to be placed in one's memory. The author further adds, the human memory is arranged according to schemata, the structures of knowledge a person possesses about objects, events, people, or phenomena. In order to place the acquired information in memory it must be encoded according to the existing schemata. Schematically stored information can be used to make judgments, evaluations and choices. The author elaborates information theory is a psychological approach to analyze how people acquire, organize and use information to assist choice behaviour. How people acquire information varies with individualism.

In a nutshell, Information Processing Theory suggests that on the one hand learning should be meaningful and effective to the learners and on the other hand usefulness of the learning depends on the interest of the learners as well as it should be relevant and context specific and produced by oneself. Though through sensory organs, individual constantly receive information, they do not stay long, those, which are useful stay in the working memory. The received information is processed by mental activities and they are retrieved by the learners whenever it is necessary. If the information is not retrieved it is forgotten.

I have used the information processing theory in order to know how far participants have found the non formal education useful and meaningful to them in terms of bettering their livelihood and I have also examined how they have retained their generated knowledge and use them for the same purpose.

Adult Learning Pattern

Most of the learning theories focus on the children's learning and it is the least likely that adults behave the same way as a child does. After reviewing literature on learning theories I realized that though some theories such as cognitive development and

constructivism hint about lifelong learning they do not sufficiently guide the adult learning pattern.

Talking about adult education field, which is fragmenting, diversifying and expanding, Foley (2004) has presented four types of education: formal, non-formal, informal and incidental learning. Formal education has the characteristics of organized setting with defined curriculum and it helps enhance the qualification, non-formal learning happens in sporadic way based on the need of the learners. Informal learning occurs when people learn from their experiences through individual or group reflection and incidental learning occurs while people perform other activities. People perform various activities in life and learning goes on continually. The author cites Brookfield (1986, p.150) who noted that most of the adult learning does not occur in formal courses but is gained through their experience and the social life as they are involved in community or family activities. Learning for them is generally unplanned, is mostly tacit and the content of it may be technical or may be social, cultural and political.

The interest in adult learning in the scope of educational psychology dates back to the World War I. The American Psychological Association formed a committee comprising of prominent psychologists led by Robert Yerkes to create aptitude measures to be used in war effort (Anastasi, 1988 as cited in Smith & Pourchot, 1998). The measures were named as Army Alpha and Army Beta tests. The purpose of the tests was to classify young adult conscripts regarding their intellectual capabilities. After World War II there was dramatic increase in the enrollment of adults in post secondary education. Thereafter participation in all forms of adults' education doubled from 1924 to 1950 (Presssey & Kuhlen, 1957 as cited in Smith & Pourchot, 1998). Traditionally, educational psychologists paid little attention to adult

learning. Their focus was on children and school education. Consequently "the problems of adult learning could not be said to occupy the minds and the work of educational psychologists" (Pourchot, 1998., p. 4). The authors add, due to lack of interest in adult education of the educational psychologists, the educational psychology and adult learning rarely get space in the same sentence. As such, concern with the nature of adult learning processes, the most effective way to teach adults, the processes and outcomes of adult development has been given to adult educators, counselors, and recently to life-span developmental psychologists . The authors further, say, now some educational psychologists think that education is not limited to childhood and adolescence, but it is a life long process and learning occurs both inside and outside school. They also emphasized that adult learning is influenced by many variables such as their conjugal relationship, responsibility towards children and elders, their relationship with various social, community, commercial, educational institutions etc ((Pressey & Kuhlen, 1957 as cited in Smith & Pourchot,1998).

Besides this, according to the authors they confront various hurdles in life, resolve them and learn from their experiences and pass their knowledge to children. Though adult learning and educational psychology do not seem to have any relationship, most of the important work in adult learning is based on the learning theories developed by educational psychologists. Smith's (1982) learning how to learn model, Knowles' (1980) experience based learning and Tough's (1977) learning projects model seem to have based on psychologically based theories. However, according to the authors, though the psychological theories are acknowledged to be useful in explaining adult learning, the adult educators take adult learning as self directed activity and they are supposed to plan, carry out and evaluate their own learning, the teacher being only as a facilitator or a couch and the teachers are neither concerned with what the learners

get in their heads nor with their individual differences. The authors realize the necessity of interdisciplinary approaches to adult learning because of the complexity of adults' lives as they learn and develop within and across multiple, interacting contexts and continue to learn throughout their lives.

Solomon (2003) describes how adult education emerged in Britain in the nineteenth century. According to the author, the pressure came from workers who were in poverty and wanted to know why they were in such a condition with no hope of betterment. In the nineteenth century the Hampdens, Miltons and Cromwells longed for learning, they did not want to remain silent and were seeking the rights, which we in present day call human rights. Through the British movement the "workers seized every opportunity to make learning accessible. The workers were certainly novices in education but they knew what knowledge they wanted" (Solomon, 2003, p. 16). Chartism in 1838 was the first movement of the working class in Britain and according to Richardson (1993) the chartists wanted 'useful knowledge' in a political sense. Other political movements were anarchism of Germany, Marxism in Europe, or post colonial emancipation in South America, their second grand aim of education was social efficiency as industrial competency was in danger of falling into the hands of autocratic commercial regime. Dewey also realizing this danger suggested a democratic way, which was to pursue the development of practical skills up to a minimum age of people (Solomon, 2003). The author further adds in the meantime revolutionary authors like Illich (1963) & Freire (1970) argued that education should be both liberating and socially and politically emancipatory for adults. They were against the schooling and hence preached for autonomous learning. Again during 1990s, Giroux (1997, p.17) came as a critique of autonomous learning and through his 'pedagogy of hope' "he promoted a process by

which the teacher could bring relevant topics closer to students and then encourage them to make their voices heard". This suggests that education is necessary to bring positive changes in the people's lives especially that of adults. This adult learning is often known as andragogy.

Andragogy a Strategy of Adult Learning

The word andragogy, the theory of adult learning, was first coined by Knowles in 1946, a young director at a Boston YMCA. When a course was designed on astronomy for a local university professor to teach the class, it did not prove to be effective hence, he rescheduled the course to lead the course through the experiences and queries of the students. After exploring various teaching styles, Knowles used the method of teaching focused on the interest of the learners and engaging them in their own discovery and that was the structure he used for the YMCA students. Knowles did not name this structure as andragogy until 1970 when his book 'The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy vs Pedagogy' was released. Though his theory is complex he has suggested four points in the case of adult learning: adults need to know why they are learning something, they have reservoir of experiences which should be tapped for ongoing learning, they need hands - on - learning approach as such rote memorization of facts should be avoided, they want to use new knowledge and skills immediately therefore, learning which will be useful for the future will not be retained (Kruse, 2002).

Andragogy came as a separate strategy which addressed adult learners as different from other learners. Debate on whether it is an adult learning or teaching went on for a long time, many thought it as a useful teaching guidelines or practices however, various alternatives also were coming up to make it a more legitimate theory for adult learning. Atherton (2003) has presented six assumptions of Knowles which

differ from pedagogical theories made about the learners. The assumptions are: (a) Need to know, (b) Self-concept, (c) Experience, (d) Readiness to learn, (e) Orientation to learning, (f) Motivation.

Knowles says that learners need to know why they want to learn something before they start to learn. For him adults should have a self-concept which makes them responsible for their own lives so that others see a need for them to be capable of self direction. He further emphasizes that adults have plenty of experience, which would have influence in their learning. In other words, adults are motivated to know only those things, which they need to know and be able to cope with in real life situations. Besides this, adults are interested to learn if it helped them perform tasks or deal with problems at their work. The best motivators of adult learners are internal: self confidence or cultural motivation rather than external motivators (ibid).

According to Copper (n.d.) adult education has been considered to be different from education of children since a long time. In North America adult education began to be organized during 1920s as the problems arose due the pedagogical assumption with regard to school education that schooling was to transmit knowledge and skills. The author further explains that adult learners have different characteristics therefore they need more than pedagogical strategies such as drills, rote memorization. Andragogy thus involves teacher as a facilitator who makes resources and procedures available to the adult learner. Instructional objectives are based on the needs of the learners and techniques and materials are designed accordingly (ibid).

Knowles believed that self actualization is the main objective of adult learning therefore it is the mission of the educators to help them in developing and achieving their full potential as emotional, psychological and intellectual beings. He suggested four assumptions of adult learning viz.:

- a) “Adults tend to be more self directed as a result of their maturity,
- b) Adults possess personal histories which defines their identities and serve as a resource of experiential learning upon which new learnings can be applied,
- c) Motivation in adults is directed to more socially relevant learning, and
- d) “Adult learners have interest in immediate application for problem solving”
(Knowles, 1980 as cited in Cooper n. d.).

In the same vein, Boggs (1981) thinks that adult education can be life enhancing if it met some criteria such as:

- Promotes skill - development and positive self-concept,
- Helps alleviate fears, prejudice, illusions, and promotes critical thinking about stereotypes, cultural myths, and biased thinking,
- Promotes creativity,
- Helps the individual more toward personal goals,
- Helps the individual become tolerant, generous, sensitive, discerning, and understanding
- Provides access to greater opportunity,
- Moves the person closer to his/her full potential,
- Contributes toward revitalization of positive cultural ideals and traditions (as cited in Cooper n d).

Hiemstra (1994) has taken adult learning as self-directed one. According to the author most of the adults spend considerable amount of time in acquiring information and learning new skills. For him, change is an ongoing process, new knowledge has been cropping up rapidly, widening access to information has made possible in obtaining new knowledge and skill. However, such information acquisition takes place in the initiative of learners. Therefore, such learning is labeled as self-directed

learning and can occur in both formal and informal settings but the primary responsibility of planning, implementing and even evaluating is the effort of the learners. The author has taken self-directed learning as the main feature of adult learning. Through this learning pattern, learners can become empowered to make various decisions relating to learning endeavour.

Adult education is treated as a separate area by adult educationists as if it has no connection with the learning in childhood and adolescence (Brookfield, 1995). In order to examine this claim, the author has explored four major research areas, which have been considered to be representing unique and exclusive adult learning processes. The areas are: self-directed learning, experiential learning, critical reflection and learning to learn. About the issues in adult learning, the author says despite innumerable literature in the form of books or journals and research conferences to adult learning, universal understanding of adult education has not been reached. The author cites Brookfield (1992), who opined that from epistemological, communicative and critically analytic viewpoint, theory development in adult learning is weak. This work is obstructed by the ever-remaining myths in adult educators' minds. These myths taken together have been resulted into academic orthodoxy in adult education. Brookfield further notes that to find a separate theory in this field which will be contradictory to what people know about learning at other stages of life will be a grave error. He opines that while examining learning in the lifespan the variables of culture, ethnicity, personality and political ethos will have a greater significance in explaining how learning takes place rather than the variable of chronological age does. Thus the author has the opinion that adult learning does not need a completely separate theory, which will be in contradiction to previous educational theories. The only difference in the adult learners is that they are

influenced by various factors such as age class, ethnicity, culture and political situation and they are more affected by these rather than their particular age.

Dunn (2000) thinks Malcolm Knowles is the theorist who brought the concept of adult learning to notice. He presents the characteristics of adults as described by Knowles (1978, 1990):

- a) adults bring with them a lot of experience which the educators can use as resource,
- b) adults can influence on what they are to be educated and how are to be educated
- c) adult learners' active participation should be encouraged in designing and implementing educational programmes
- d) adults should see the application of new learning
- e) adults are also expected to be involved in how learning will be evaluated and
- f) adults expect their feed back to be acted upon which they give on the progress of the programme (ibid)

Talking about Transformative Theory of Learning for adults Marsick (1998) sees the importance of adult learning as adults are facing unprecedented challenges in every sphere of life. They feel stretched to learn continuously and transformatively, as the world demands higher level thinking. As adults, they have to transform their deeply held frames of reference based on their experience, which will better suit to increasingly complex demands. Individuals use their existing knowledge to interpret new challenges, which may lead to misinterpreting their experience through inappropriate lens. As it is difficult to change fundamental view even when they are outmoded, they need to dig out views and analyze taken for granted meanings which were thought to be true. In this Mezirow's theory of transformative learning provides

a way out into how to change the fundamental views. Mezirow's theory grew out of a study in the 1970s of women who came to study higher education from raising their families seeking to reassess societal values, which they had internalized and accepted without question. Though to change the beliefs and assumptions is difficult, Mezirow believes that "all adults can see and challenge their own assumptions, given the opportunity and appropriate educational assistance, but research on adult development suggests that many adults cannot easily step outside their worldview (Marsick, 1998, p.120).

To a different fashion Susan (1998) cites Taylor (1998) who says that the Transformative Theory developed by Mezirow in 1978 has been a topic of research and theory building in the field of adult education. This theory has evolved "into a comprehensive and complex description of how learners construe, validate, and reformulate the meaning of their experience" according to Cranton (1994 as cited in Susan, 1998). Taylor (1998 as cited in Susan, 1998) thinks "Centrality of experience, critical reflection, and rational discourse are three common themes in Mezirow's theory which is based on psychoanalytic theory (Boyd & Myers, 1988) and critical social theory (Scott, 1997)". According to Mezirow (1991, p.167 as cited in Susan, 1998 pp. 3, 4) for learners to change their "meaning schemes (specific beliefs, attitudes, and emotional reactions)", they must engage in critical reflection on their experiences, which in turn leads to a perspective transformation. The author further elaborates perspective transformation that it is the process of becoming critically aware of how and why we perceive, understand, and feel about our world so that one becomes flexible to discriminate and integrate perspective resulting into being capable of making choices or otherwise acting upon new understandings. One of the critiques

of this theory, Grabov (1997, pp. 90-91) notes that “his theory describes a learning process that is primarily rational, analytical, and cognitive with an inherent logic.”

This theory suggests that adults reflect their experience in the learning which they bring from different culture and context. Based on this theme, I looked into how the women’s experience and context reflected in their knowledge generation and application process.

All andragogical concepts indicate that adults do not come with empty minds so that they learn whatever is fed to them. They have identified needs, historical and social background, responsibilities towards their family, peer’s influence etc determine what actually they want to learn.

On the above backstop, I have analyzed my research participants’ propensity to learn from all these angles, as such their needs, motivation, background and their eagerness to apply for improved livelihood while interpreting the field findings.

Summing up

The reflection of this chapter establishes the fact that Knowledge is an act of knowing as defined by various sources. It also brings the knowledge that human being goes on acquiring facts or tenets within a certain span of time. This is also information collection and storing which develop consciousness and understanding. In this sense, knowledge is also awareness and understanding and skill to do something. It is also a human capacity to tackle situation in uncertain circumstances. Regarding how knowledge is processed various philosophers have presented varying views whether whatever seen, touched, felt or anything that can be tested is knowledge or the knowledge gained through sensory organs collating with the images of mind is knowledge. In this context, Plato, Aristotle and Kant have varying opinions. This means knowledge can be categorized into explicit and tacit, the former is generally in

written form whether in words, data or in other visible form whereas, tacit is within the mind and not to be transferred easily. Whatever knowledge the research participants have through their experience and culture is tacit knowledge, which cannot be brought in visible form. It implies that knowledge is gained through learning and people vary in the pattern of acquiring it. In line with this, various theories have been emerged in order to understand how children learn. The Behaviourism theories show active role of teachers and learning as the result of cause and effect. The cognitive theories show the internal process in human beings, need of active role of students for learning to take place and storing information and decode it at the time of need. Constructivism offers the thought that students should be much more active and create new knowledge on the basis of learning. At this point, I have analyzed my research participants from the information processing pattern of cognitive theories. As my research participants were not children and the psychological theories were less likely to be useful at times, andragogical aspect also was important. Andragogy though is considered as a theory to know about adults' learning pattern, educators think that the adult theories also are built on educational psychologies. Malcolm Knowles is the proponent of andragogy and this theory mainly tells that adults are not teacher directed, rather they are self directed; they know what they want and need to know. They bring lots of experience with them; they are influenced by host of factors such as their family, culture, values and beliefs. Therefore, I have tried to analyze from andragogical viewpoint to understand my research participants' interchangeably. Transformative theory of Mezirow has also been used to make me easier to see the changes of research participants through Non formal education in their livelihood pattern.

Since I am interested in finding out the knowledge generation process of NFE/literacy participants, the following chapter includes literatures on literacy and Non formal education. The succeeding chapter examines NFE for looking into the pattern how women generate knowledge from it. This information is the basis for answering the second research question.

CHAPTER III

LITERACY DIMENSIONS

In this chapter, I have described why there is an urge for education in present day society, various views on the literacy education, the motive of literacy program and the importance of Non Formal literacy strategy.

Background

Epistemologically, question emerges why we need literacy education. Theologically speaking, literacy education is needed to know, to love, to praise and to serve God (Beckett, 1993). It is considered as the linking tool between individual and the God. The modernists took literacy education as a means to make people economically active and functional (UNESCO, 2003). The Marxists made it a liberating tool for autonomy, empowerment and rationality of the marginalized people. The post modernists brought the concept of cultural literacy as a means for individual satisfaction (Matheson, 2000). Very recently, literacy education has been regarded as a tool to gaining employment and alleviating poverty.

Various philosophers saw literacy education in different ways. Plato saw it as the provider of beauty and perfection to the body and soul based on one's capability, Herbert Spencer believed in formation of character, Horace Mann thought it a way to bring enjoyment of best quality and infinite quantity. Thomas Huxley viewed it as, "instruction of the intellect in the laws of nature" (Mayer, 1960, p.11).

Back in home, Hindu philosophy also took literacy education as a tool to obtain spirituality where material gains do not have any importance. This implies that

gaining wealth, fame or physical power and social improvement do not carry any value rather they emphasize on the cultivation of the spirit and cosmic values through which human being realizes the essential self (Mayer, 1960).

From economic point of view, literacy education is needed for personal and social development. Traditional human capital theory has given more importance to the private rather than social gains from literacy education and has hardly spoken about externalities. Similarly, neoclassical growth theory, which is based on assumptions of competitive markets, assumed that all factors of production would be rewarded according to their social marginal contribution to production (Solow, 1987). Thus private and social returns were equal, as there was no scope for externalities. Traditional growth theory also included only capital and homogeneous labour as factors of production, so that there was no role for literacy education to play in the creation of 'human capital' (ibid). As suggested by these theories and understandings, literacy education is a way to attain salvation from spirituality point of view. It is an instrument in increasing growth rate and empowering human beings from materialist point of view.

Changing Concept of Literacy

Materially speaking, traditional approaches of literacy considered it as a technical skill of the people which involved decoding and encoding written symbols, once they mastered the basic skills they were supposed to use these three Rs for their own purposes (UNESCO, 2003). For UNESCO, literacy passed this stage and reached to the arena of functional literacy to meet the economic demand with a focus on the individual right as articulated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In the 1960s, literacy went beyond this and this was seen as an integral part of development and a tool that help the learners understand better the political and social forces that

impact their lives (ibid). This means UNESCO took literacy not as a single concept rather a plural one which was bureaucratic, religious, personal, cultural, in the mother tongue or official language, acquired through school or out of school. In the 1970s, new approach to literacy experimented by Paulo Freire was the literacy of immediate relevance to the learners. This was termed as ‘conscientisation’ approach which focused on literacy as an educational process which could empower people to question why things are as they are, and to take autonomous action to change them. Paulo Freire’s approach to literacy was to make the learners active, as actors and “subjects” not as “objects”. His movement took literacy from classroom environment to social-political arena (UNESCO, 2003, p. 9).

During 1980s, literacy was further elaborated based on the Freiren concept by making a distinction between “autonomous” and “ideological” literacy. The autonomous was in terms of skill which was value and context free and ideological in the terms of the practice as defined by political and social context (Ibid). With the changing conceptions of development, previously conceived role of literacy in the development also changed (Malone & Arnové, 1998). The authors saw the newer approaches of literacy to be integral part of development far from the encoding and decoding printed symbols. Literacy was considered as a tool that helped learners to understand the political and social forces that impact their lives. However, political and social awareness was not the goal but it was to be understood after learners gained the skills of reading, writing and arithmetics.

This means, any change that occurs in the end will virtually be reflected in the means of education (Carmack, 2001). Literacy education is not an exception to it.

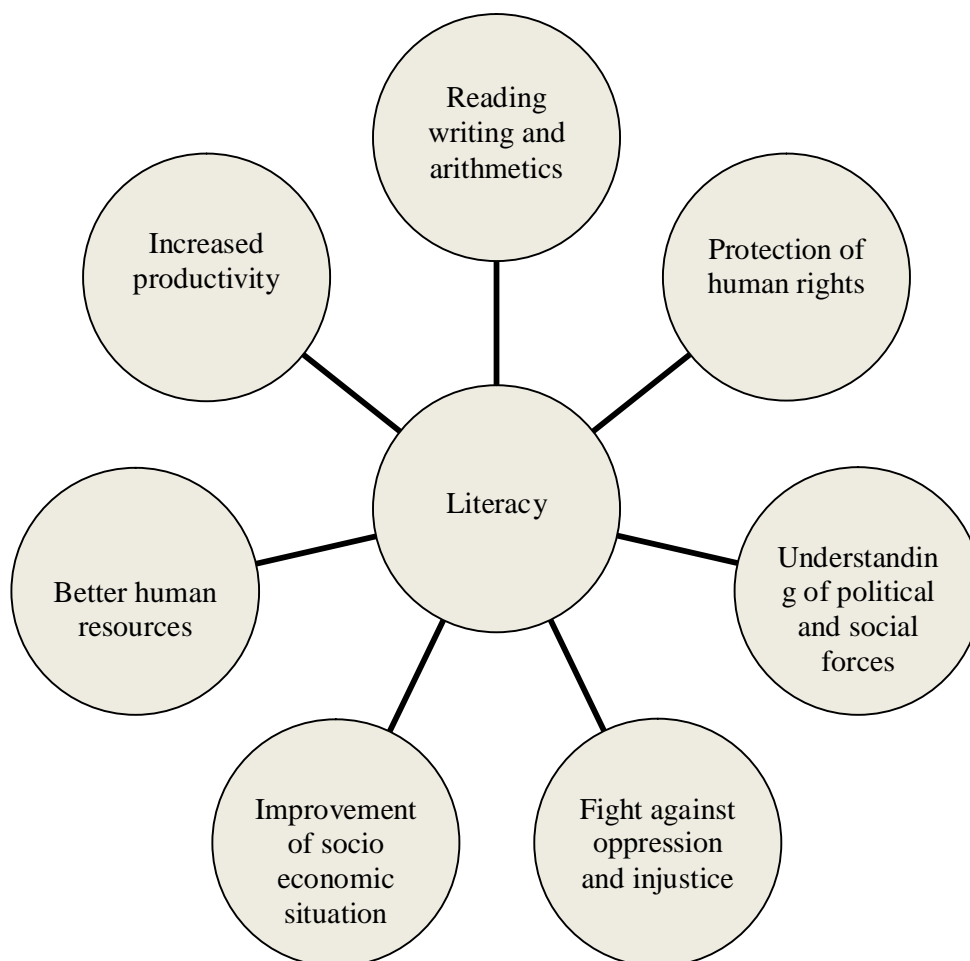
Resnick & Gordon (1999) present the thinking of social historians who have been interested in the uses of literacy. The authors say the social historians have been

interested in the uses of literacy because it is implicated in all major social, political, and cultural processes of modern life, from protecting the rights of citizens to overturning oppressive institutions and building religious and national communities. Literacy, they argue, has provided support for rebellion against established authority, oppositional social movements, and personal liberation. But, they also made it clear that it has also been an important factor in the growth of state power, bureaucratic centralism, and social control (ibid). Their reflection signifies that literacy can be instrumental in affecting various dimensions of life and it also empowers people and helps in leading a movement to fight against oppression and for human rights. Historically speaking, its role has been “to enlighten and emancipate” people.

From the discussions of various writers and the changing concept of literacy over time I drew the following dimensions of literacy:

Fig.1

Dimensions of literacy education



The above figure shows various dimensions of literacy including its changing concepts over times. At present time, it is more related to economic gains with the understanding of other several issues pertaining to individual, community and the state. Literacy starts with reading, writing and doing simple arithmetic, learners develop understanding of social and political issues, they know what they need for betterment of their life such as education, health services, drinking water, sanitation

etc. and they also become aware of their oppression from the upper class and develop the sense of acquiring liberty. Consequently, with these understandings and increased earning potential they become better human resources and ultimately the learners as well as the state both benefit.

Literacy Education in Use

Print literacy became synonymous to literacy education today. This literacy has direct relationship with modern employment opportunities. This urge for literacy for survival came with the wide spread mass printed materials and broadening functions of print use. In this context, the ability to read and right became social, religious, political, and economic goal due to mass availability of printing materials (Gates & Waterman, 2000). In the agrarian society, when people produced for oneself and the family, there was hardly the need for education, but according to the authors in this increasingly technical society, literacy was important for basic survival. The authors show relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and literacy achievement. They state that poorer a person is the dominant culture assigns lower status to the person. This relationship is interpreted and understood from two different directions. The first one is that there is direct relationship between low literacy and poverty and sociopolitical status and this is most commonly held interpretation. The second one is the socioeconomic status and sociopolitical status of a person hinders a person's literacy level potential or attainment. Poverty, which results into ill health due to poor nutrition and lack of access to health services and the inability to buy literacy materials for literacy practice, causes people to live as nonliterate. The authors also refer to the case study of a nonliterate, poor, urban Appalachian family presented by Purcell-Gates (1995). Purcell-Gates pointed out how the status of literates and illiterates differed and described that the experience of the family was that literate

middle class was like a foreign place for the illiterate family. The author found the family to be living in another world, a world without print.

According to World Literacy of Canada [WLC] (2000), there are two basic interpretations of literacy. One is the acquisition of literary and numeracy skills and the other is attaining of quality of life by meeting the basic needs. WLC's concept of literacy is beyond the meeting the basic needs; it should be ensuring people gain life skills and knowledge. It states that illiteracy is rooted in the prevailing social, cultural and economic situation of the country and illiteracy is associated with poverty, disadvantage and exclusion. Literacy is important because it is instrumental in fighting for justice, human dignity and equality. WLC's concept towards illiteracy is that "it inhibits progress and productivity, cultural and spiritual advancement and fuels the chronic dependency of entire society" (WLC, 2000, para 2). Connecting literacy with economic development the literature further adds for improving lives people need to be involved in development process. Development process gives people a tool to improve their lives of which literacy is one.

In the context of literacy being perceived as the device for gaining employment, raising productivity, bringing social awareness and uplifting social and economic status, Matheson (2000) says in the light of postmodernism where there are no grand narratives and its assertion of the end of social class, there is an opposing pole of lifelong learning that is, learning for economic necessity. He adds "this posits an idea that one's learning is most worthwhile when it is linked to gaining or retaining employment" (Matheson 2000, p.198). The author adds the effect of education on individuals and communities is great and should not be underestimated. The World Bank also has recognized that education can affect peoples' lives, their communities and the country's economy. The Bank further elaborates,

Education can serve to develop human capital and hence productivity. It can impact on health and nutrition, develop social capital and strengthen social cohesion and equity. It can expedite growth and development at the macro level” (World Bank, 1999 as cited in Matheson, 2000, P. 200).

Literacy education expanded due to the mass availability of printed materials and their extensive use. It also developed the widespread belief that the ability to read and write is a desirable social, religious, political and economic goal (Kaestle; Damon-Moore; Stedman; Tinsley, & Trollinger, 1991 as cited in Waterman, 2000, p. 4). This points out that literacy has a role to play in all spheres of life. Waterman (2000, p. 4) further adds “it is now believed that literacy is central to basic survival in an increasingly technical society”. The author further elaborates that in this complex, print-based and information networks, adults have hard time to get by as even most low –level service jobs require reading and writing capabilities.

The same document refers to the research of Mingat & Tan (1996) that explored new estimates of social returns to education. The researchers showed that the increased productivity of workers may increase the productivity of coworkers, which may benefit the society at large and the rise in the general education of labor force may increase potential for innovations and adaptations leading to more long-term efficiencies in the workplace. The researchers have also suggested that for low-income countries primary education has been the best investment and respectively, and middle income countries benefit from the secondary education and tertiary education brings highest returns in the high- income countries. The same literature also refers to the controversy raised by some researchers on the return of primary education which they thought is overestimated. However, they also have not negated the benefit to be brought by primary education. The document further describes the

importance of education of all levels, which contributes to economic growth through imparting general attitudes and disciplines and specific skills necessary for a variety of workplaces. The knowledge acquired in school is considered to produce more flexible workers who are capable of acquiring new skills and adapting to new working environments. In this regard ADB, (1998, p.195 as cited in ADB n. d.) shows a virtuous circle on the benefit of education that "greater skills lead to progressively greater benefits from the introduction of new technology which, in turn, will lead to the further development of human resources". Apart from it, literacy education produces a person with new knowledge and skill with increased productivity and flexibility to newer circumstances. Thus, it can be assumed that a literate person's knowledge gained through education can lead to improving one's livelihood.

Women and Literacy

Because of the patriarchic frame of understanding women are last to join in education no matter it is formal or non-formal. Moreover, for women, education is considered as a means to control population, raise productivity (UNESCO, 1988, p. 2 as cited in Robinson-Pant, 2004). Very recently, this notion has been challenged by introducing empowerment thesis and human rights concept in education (ibid). It means literacy for women has some more coverage, it is not only limited to the individuals, rather it embraces the women as individuals with children, household, family and the community. As such, their roles to various areas become primary agenda for literacy and their personal growth becomes secondary one.

The literacy of women is linked with the nurturing of their children rather than the importance of it in their own lives, on this UNESCO (1988, p. 2 cited in Robinson-Pant 2004, p.15) states,

The priority attention given to women's literacy is justified not only by the gravity and extent of their position, but also by a recognition of the responsibilities they have for the survival and well-being of their children and the key role they play in transmitting knowledge to upcoming generations.

On how an illiterate woman was enlightened after being literate, the same document gives the experience of an Ethiopian woman of 27 years old, who despite of her family responsibilities after completion of six month's literacy program said, "to be aware of many things. It is like being reborn, like a blind person recovering his or her sight. I had never dared hope something like that could happen to me."

Generally, literacy and educational levels of mothers are believed to affect mothers' attitudes toward their children's education. However, very little research is done to support the understanding that involvement of parents with their children increases with literacy. A study comparing women participants and non-participants in an integrated literacy and basic education programme in Bolivia (Burchfield, 2002, p. 63 as cited in Farah n. d.) concludes that women who were educated had greater involvement in their children's educational activities than those who were less educated. They were more likely to help their children in homework, visit their children's school and read to them.

The same literature also cites Egbo (2000) who presented similar case that changes were brought in the routines of children of literate women than those of the illiterate mothers in Nigeria. In the context of how literacy helps in bringing cultural benefits to adults the same literature gives an example of Lesotho that through such programme some participants were able to change gendered roles and practice by men taking more responsibility at home (Attwood; Castle, & Smythe, 2004 as cited in *ibid*). Similarly, in Bangladesh, it was found that in some households, literacy enabled

women to establish their right of financial management for the household normally controlled by men (Maddox, 2005 as cited in Ibid). It has further cited Khandekar (2004) who described a case to demonstrate how literacy empowered Dalit (low caste) women to challenge a culture which expected them to suffer poverty, violence and to adopt a subservient behaviour.

Discussing about planning literacy for migrant women Malone & Arnove (1998) think that planning literacy programme for these women fall within the scope of 'Systems planning' in which planners need to take into account the earning opportunities for women in the area, community attitude towards women's working outside the home and the government policies relating to migrants. Thus the Systems' thinking gives the idea that literacy is not only a process of teaching reading, writing and numeracy but also it is a political, economic and social act. This view suggests that literacy programme is not a 'one for all' approach but it should be context specific deciding how broad it needs to be. This also hints about the gender roles of women in a given community, how far public and private domain are demarcated between men and women, that need to be considered while designing the programme.

Talking about literacy for women, Robinson-Pant (2004, p.1) raises some questions on why women actually want to read and write. She says,

Women's and girls' education has been taken up by many governments and development agencies as the key to improving the lives of poor families. In particular women's literacy classes are often run as the entry point to other development interventions, such as family planning and child nutrition programmes .

The author is not sure whether there is a link between the two. The reason is there is high drop out rates in the literacy class. Therefore, the author is skeptical

whether the women really feel the need for reading and writing in order to learn about contraceptives or to find out the immunization for their children. The author elaborates further, due to belief that women's literacy will help in bringing their greater participation in the development efforts brought widespread literacy programmes for them. As such, researchers and evaluators tried to measure the impact of women's literacy on their lives with the use of the indicators such as 'empowerment', child mortality or fertility and the policy makers focused on finding out the barriers for their high drop out rates and long term retaining skills. Recently, some questions about the purpose of educating women have been raised, challenging the efficiency arguments of the past. The question is, is literacy the only strategy so that women can become better mothers and wives? The author thinks that literacy should not be seen in a relative term rather it should be treated as the human right issue.

The author, however, is somewhat upset that the policy discourse of the aid agencies has not changed much in the case of women's literacy, she cites the same document UNESCO (1988, p.1) that "the emphasis on women as mothers who need to be better educated to improve their families' lives, the metaphors of rebirth, gaining sight through literacy and the distress of the several hundred million illiterate" (Robinson-Pant, 2004, p.15). The author further adds the main reason for promoting women's literacy is still thought to be a contributing factor to their efficiency as mothers and workers: "to improve family's sanitary and dietary conditions...to improve production particularly of agricultural production and to follow up their children's school work more adequately" (ibid, p.16).

The author elaborates, majority of studies in the 1970s and 1980s aimed at correlating women's literacy rates with indicators of development such as child

mortality, (Caldwell, 1979), fertility (Cochrane, 1979) or income and employment. Education has not been taken as women's human right and their education is not yet perceived as important for their individual development. However, she says "since the Fourth UN World Conference for Women in 1995, the rights' perspective on women's education has however, occasionally been added as an appendage to discussions of the economic and social benefits of women's literacy" (Robinson-Pant, 2004, p. 16).

Talking about the effect of education to people, Jejeebhoy (1995, p. 36) states, education can affect peoples' lives through several channels. It affects access to knowledge, information and new ideas. It enhances overall efficiency, market opportunities and social status. It also changes attitudes and behavior, among other things, bringing about an openness to new ideas and experiences, an increasing independence from traditional authority, and a questioning of passivity and fatalism.

Thus showing good aspects of education, the author further adds that these effects generally equally apply to both the sexes but the men have wider contacts with the world outside the family and the local community whereas women have narrow scope in this aspect. The unique effect to women through education is that it enables women to assume more autonomy or power in both traditional gendered –stratified family settings and more egalitarian ones. Jejeebhoy (1995) also in this study has shown the relationship of women's education to fertility and the effect depended on the number of years spent in school, rather than the content of schooling.

Above literature shows that literacy for men has different meaning and for women it is something associated with fertility, children and the nation. This means, literacy to women is seen from the social gains perspective through which her children, her family and her community are expected to gain more from her knowledge than her own individual development. My research in this regard could not

concentrate on the whole issues, I focused on knowledge of 3 Rs, health issues and livelihood options based on the study which the women received from the Non Formal Education Package of six months' duration.

Non Formal Education, a System and a Process

Non formal education emerged for the first time in 1968 (Coombs, 1968 cited in Rogers, 2004a). The emergence of non formal education is attributed to the widespread feeling that education was failing (Illich, 1973 as cited in Ibid) not only in the developing countries but also in Western or Northern societies (Bowles & Gintis, 1976 etc cited in Ibid). Non formal education was interpreted by different people differently. Many thought NFE as the 'ideal' form of education, far better than formal education. Others saw it, as a subsystem of education, not superior to formal system and some also thought this as inferior to the formal system. Coombs and Ahmed (1974, p. 8 as cited in Rogers, 2004a) have defined NFE as:

Nonformal education... is organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, adults as well as children.

This definition has taken NFE as a system though it is outside the formal system of education. According to UNESCO (n. d.), every kind of learning that happens outside the formal setting is called non formal. However, it is difficult to define non formal education, it is defined in various ways in the course of educational movement, as a setting, a process and a system (UNESCO, n. d.). Rogers (2004a) outlines that every country interpreted NFE in its own way. Some meant NFE to be the educational programme provided by the Ministry of Education apart from the education provided from the schools and colleges for example adult literacy classes. For others, NFE meant the educational programmes like schooling provided by Non

government agencies (NGOs). Some others felt NFE included all of the educational training activities carried out by other Ministries. Yet, some others thought NFE also included individualized learning programmes for different or specific learning groups whether provided by the state, NGOs, commercial agencies or civil society bodies etc. Some thought, it has a larger coverage which included everything related to educational activities outside the schools and colleges even radio, television programmes and also print media within the arena of NFE (Rogers, 2004 a).

The same literature further elaborates NFE that these programmes/projects are very diverse in scope. The common characteristics under these programmes/projects are that they are organized, systematic, and educational activity carried out outside the formal education system, to meet the requirements of a particular group of population including both adults and children.

On how NFE emerged as a system, Rogers (2004b) further elaborates that during 1980s Non formal education spread enormously in the Third World countries which addressed mostly children's education. These programmes included children's alternative schooling for those younger persons who were too old to go to school. The author also gives the example of Bangladesh where BRAC, an NGO which conducted several programmes of schooling for school-aged children with the title of NFE. Similar was the case in Mali where a large number of non formal primary school programme (community school) were run. In the Philippines and Thailand national Non formal education programmes of accreditation and equivalency for adults were created. This was a second chance provided to those who missed out or did not complete their primary schooling (Ibid). Thus as a system it addresses context, input, process and product.

In the Philippines, Non formal education is taken as one of two sub systems of education, formal education being another subsystem. Non formal education addresses the needs of those who were not able to participate in the formal subsystem. The participants of this subsystem are those who are dropped out from the formal system. In this regard, the clientele are quite different. The reasons of a substantial number being dropped out of the formal sub-system mostly, centered on poverty. The organization, activities, delivery methods are designed to meet the specific needs of the participants (ILO, n. d.)

Learning in modern life is not restricted to a few years; it is a life long process. The concept of acquiring education at early years of life, and working in one particular field until the period of retirement period has been changing due to rapid technological change and growth of information require ongoing learning (UNESCO n. d.). Another group of people, who miss out the basic education suffer exclusion and need a different system for learning. Therefore, the ongoing learning throughout life gives opportunities to people to learn as society changes and to those who are unemployed to reenter the workforce (ibid).

Non formal education has some exceptions to the trend that it is the education with alternative schools for children and adults. NFE is seen in a wider context. The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) is the example of such approach. ADEA has set up a Non formal education working group which tries to identify all of the Non formal education world including agricultural and health extension, women's programmes, income generation into one Non formal education system. All civil societies, trade unions, churches and other organization contribute towards national development goals. Such programmes have different teaching

learning materials, more flexible timing, simplified curriculum and less qualified and trained teachers (Rogers, 2004b). In this context, NFE is more seen as a process.

I have used the word literacy, literacy education, and non-formal education interchangeably. But, how this programme has been conceptualized? In order to understand it, I have reviewed the literatures and found that it is both a process and a system as I have stated above. As a process, it deals with several issues, such as pedagogical dimension, empowerment and social transformation and as a system as I stated above, it addresses CIPP [context, input, process and product] (Rogers, 2004b).

As a process, NFE should function with adult learners under Non formal setting, with flexible timing according to the convenience of the learners, teachers becomes facilitators, it saves cost and the content is more functional or vocational within short span of time.

It is also seen as a process of lifelong learning (Tight, 1996) some take it as complementary to formal education (Shipur, 1995) some view it as a supplementary to formal education (Singh, 1987), others think it is an alternative way to acquire education (Rogers, 2004b) and some take it is as a substitute to formal education.

Historically speaking, the concept of literacy education is not very old, but its practice and process is as old as human history (Singh, 1987). To quote Singh, The ancient Chinese and the Hindus practiced it as part of their family tradition. Skills and knowledge were transmitted within the family but for this transmission of skill or knowledge no one fixed any time table, evolved a set curriculum or and examination. The reward for learning lay in public recognition and consumer appreciation. Both the Buddhists and the Hindus taught their pupils by demonstration and the actual usage of a piece of knowledge (p. 4).

This means literacy in the olden days was thought as the transfer of skill within family but without any formal lesson either in relation to content or time. In the passage of time, it became a flexible process, flexible in terms of time, content, admission criteria to suit with the characteristics of the learners. People thus realized that it is largely meant for rural population and for economic gains as well as enhanced quality life and increased participation in political and social development. NFE is also seen as the school for individual growth making him/her equipped with functional skill for solving problems which in the long run benefit the nation's development. In this context, Singh (1987, p.1) gives the views of Professor Malcolm Adiseshiah who opine that non formal education has been a programme for preschool, unschooled and under schooled children, for youth and adults who are unschooled and under schooled. In the same way it has been the programme of 15 – 60 years old people. It can also be classified by the learning content involved in the organized system where the emphasis is given in the general education and the content is mainly vocational (ibid).

In the process, people saw the importance of literacy education. Rogers (2004b, p.121) in this regard outlines the advantages of NFE by citing Torres (1991) that “it is versatile, quick to respond and more use to government than formal education due to its nature of less hierarchal, more plastic, more open to experiment and innovation, cheaper and more relevant to its content”. Rogers also cites Blunt (1988, p. 41) and Hall (1986) who suggested that NFE has the advantages of low costs, community orientation and flexible teachers. The author also cites Radcliffe and Colletta (1985) who argued that NFE was less structured, more talk and skill oriented, more flexible timing, locally specific, flexible teaching methods, learner centered and experiential. Participation was based on interest and opportunity, not age

and compulsion, and teachers were recruited on the basis of opportunity and their inclination.

Non formal education brings quality of life through practical approach is another school of thought. According to Frith and Reed (1982 as cited in Reed & Loughram, 1984) Non formal education is a practical rather than abstract approach to learning (Reed & Loughram, 1984).

As a system, literacy education is a route to alternative education. This school of thought gives more emphasis on the flexibility of NFE. To this Rogers (2004a) quotes the Council of Europe which recognized the Non formal education as the alternate way for educational practices as the formal educational systems alone could not meet the challenges of modern society. It is also a “planned instructional design which uses both overt and covert procedures in a more flexible environment” (Ward & Dettoni, 1974 as cited in Dejene, 1980, pp. 15, 16); or and his associates who defined NFE as

any intentional and systematic educational enterprise (usually outside of traditional schooling) in which content, media, time units, admission criteria, staff facilities and other system components are selected and or/ adopted for a particular student, population or situation” (Kleis & associates as cited in Dejene, 1980, p.16)

This school of thought talks of NFE as more of a system and suggests it as an alternate approach to formal education and time and content are made flexible as required.

The author cites Harbison (1973, p. 17) who defines NFE as “skill and knowledge generation outside the formal schooling system, and which is a heterogeneous conglomeration of unstandardized and seemingly unrelated activities

aimed at a wide variety of goals". In the same vein, one school of thought considers NFE to be instrumental in enhancing economic growth and deriving individual rights through conscientisation in political and social issues. To support this Bock and Papagiannis (1983) cite Fagan (1969), Freire (1971), and Grabowski (1972). They assume that all forms of schooling be it formal schooling or Non formal education occur in a certain sociopolitical context and this context largely determines in which extent these program are successful in conveying cognitive and non cognitive messages to their clients.

As a system, there is another thought as well which says NFE as an instrument to provide education to the rural poor, help evading cultural barriers that obstructs using school effectively, use scarce resources efficiently and modify school system.

This means, as a system NFE is thought to be a best tool in enhancing political and social awareness in rural people and shows more prominent role in building democracy in the learners' states, eliminating cultural barriers which are impeding in getting education.

From gender lens, Non formal education is thought to be most suitable process for women as they are deprived of education in comparison to their male counterpart. But literature hardly support this thought (Rogers, 2004b). This means gender is less talked about issue in the context of NFE. On this, Rogers (2004 b, p.160) cite (Paolucci et al., 1976; Robertson, 1984) and claims,

it is strange that gender were relatively limited in the great debate.

Contemporary discussions on "Women in Development" did not get a place in the debate. However, throughout the debate, the construct of 'women' (like 'people') were seen as "one single undifferentiated and uniformly oppressed

group for whom NFE was particularly appropriate” (Knidervathen, 1979; Hans, 1985; Jerudasa & Koshy, 1976 as cited in Rogers, 2004, p.160).

This issue got attention when the world began to talk about empowerment and human rights (Stromquist, 1986; Van den Westen, 1990). Prior to it, the women were as subordinates and/or object but not the instrument (Ebbis, n.d. as cited in Rogers, 2004b). Most of the writers in the debate were men, and the specific voice of women in the debate was hardly heard. In larger part, this was because formal education too, at that time was rarely seen to have gender dimension except in strategic terms – regretting the lower attendance of girls in schools and the lower literacy among women. Women were to be the recipients of the charity which NFE planners and providers could offer to them, the beneficiaries who got the new opportunities to engage in society on society’s terms, were encouraged to access the existing resources of society rather than actively transforming society. Participation meant “joining the programmes designed by others” (Derryck, 1979 as cited in Rogers, 2004, p. 160).

Here the writer thinks that the NFE did not help to liberate women but contributed to keep them in the subordinate position as usual though NFE is thought to bring various political, social as well as cultural changes. I thought that the implication of all these arguments was that NFE has not been able to address the pertinent gender issues.

Theories on NFE

Reed and Loughram (1984) have raised an issue about NFE: is NFE largely perceived as nearly value free process, characterized by low - structured, interrelated educational variables (objectives, learners, teaching - learning approaches, resources etc.), or is it also seen as a way to promote socio-economic political reform? These questions show the difference on emphasis between the epistemology and axiology.

The authors have suggested two theories of NFE, one is the Process Theory and the other is the Social Reform Theory.

Process theory proposes a set of interrelated educational process variables which focuses on developing and implementing ways of learning which is compatible with the target group's interests and their unique environmental settings. This perception of NFE sees it to be contrast from formal education with its characteristics of being flexible, immediate results, inexpensive, less abstract, less structured and with functional objectives. According to this theory, "The value of NFE is seen in its more effective, less expensive ways of achieving the objectives of an established social system" (Hansen, 1977 as cited in Reed & Loughram, 1984, p. 63).

Social Reform Theory sees formal schooling as 'elitist, as hand - in - glove' which maintains established social structures that ensure power, wealth, status for the elite minority (Hall, 1975; Heredero, 1979; Labelle, 1976 as cited in Reed and Loughram, 1984).

Practitioners of this reform view that unless NFE is tied to an explicit value emphasis it would be as a band aid which will cover up and make bearable injustices which are common in many cultures. The NFE projects which are aided by outside resources have many negative effects. Particularly the third world countries where the resources come from industrialized countries, there is a fear of victimization through cultural colonization, the beliefs about modern development also is dominated by these countries. Therefore, these critics suggest other development models that take into account the cultural and contextual variables of the target population's origin (ibid). On this, the authors argue, many practitioners do not take an explicit position on the issue of NFE being process and value - free versus social reform. Instead, they assume that the implementation of NFE implicitly means there will be a forwarding of

egalitarian and empowerment goals. It seems doubtful that such an assumption is warranted without taking into account the overall, controlling, philosophical - political - economic context of a culture within which each NFE program operates.

As I was looking into the knowledge generation process of the women labourers, I tried to look into the NFE from these perspectives and analyzed how far the process used for the literacy programme was useful to meet the desired goal. So far as the cultural imposition was concerned, though the programme was supported by foreign assistance, National NGO was the implementing agency. Therefore, such problem did not occur.

In order to explore the knowledge gained by my research participants, I also analyzed the NFE package to find out how far they have considered gender issue in the contents (appendix A). I found out that contents have reinforced their gender roles.

Summing up

Education is so many things to so many people. Various authors have provided different thoughts on defining education. Some see it in the form of beauty and perfection, for some it is building of character, others see it as the instruction in the laws of nature and John Dewey perceives it as the reconstruction of character but not in the form of indoctrination and propaganda as used by Hitler and Mussolini.

Generally, traditional education is linked with Greek and Roman education which is aesthetic attitudes and perception based on art and culture and literature.

In traditional thought, education was for knowing, loving and praising God, Indian philosophy also links education to spirituality where material gains do not have any importance. At this time, education was mostly for individual gains. Even economic theories did not consider education as important for productivity.

In modern and post modern period education is seen more important to meet several needs. As the first step to education literacy was thought essential for people due to increased use of print materials and literacy became important even for small jobs. Literacy programme which was initially started with the objective of providing 3 Rs to the illiterates, slowly became important as a process in meeting several needs. Therefore, literacy increasingly became essential to uplift socioeconomic and political status, produce better human resources, increase productivity etc. Thus it emerged both as a process and system.

Thus, Non formal education which is generally used as synonymous to literacy programme covers both a system and a process. Therefore, several literature on NFE talks about both system and process in the sense that it describes how NFE is conducted without any fixed parameters for the learners, time and content and it elaborates what is expected from the education.

To support these, two theories have emerged on NFE: Process Theory and Social Reform Theory. The first one tells about the system how NFE is conducted and the second one describes about what should be expected from education. Social Reform Theory is also against conducting the programme with foreign assistance because in such a case there is fear of imposing foreign concepts to the learners so that actual needed social reform may not be achieved.

Since NFE/literacy imparted livelihood related information to the NFE/literacy learners I have discussed the Livelihood approach in the next chapter in order to have the clarity on what livelihood is all about and to understand whether the research participants were able to bring changes in their living through the literacy programmes.

CHAPTER IV

LIVELIHOOD APPROACH

Livelihood is not just an earning; it covers various aspects of one's life. It is taken as an approach to combat poverty but in a sustainable way. Therefore, livelihood also includes ecological sustainability so that not only present generation but also future generation can lead a better life. In this chapter, I have described livelihood theories, various approaches, changing concepts of livelihood and its application to Nepal. Let me begin with livelihood theories.

Livelihood Theories

In 1848, J.S.Mill proposed two theories that were theory of dependence and protection and other was that of self-dependence. These theories addressed the state of the labouring class which was very much subject of discussion and speculation during the period. Thus, these theories were the result of various discussions in the condition of labouring class which could give respect to the desirable position of manual workers (Mill & Tavior, 1848).

The theory of dependence and protection showed the complete dependence of poor people on the above class. Everything was regulated for them. They were on the mercy of others in everything; they were not encouraged to think for themselves and did not have the liberty to have an influential voice in determination of their own destiny. The higher class acted like the commander and officers of an army who were supposed to having total control of the labouring class, and taking responsibility of their fate. Actually, it was the duty of the higher class to take care of the lower class.

Working with this dependence and protection theory, researchers found that the relationship between the two classes was partly authoritative: amicable, moral and sentimental, on the one side and respectful and grateful on the other side (Mill, 1848). The rich were supposed to be *in locoparentis* to the poor who provided some sort of guardianship over the labourers. The rich guided and restrained the poor like children. The morality and religion were also provided to the poor by the rich, therefore, the poor were supposed to do the work and be moral and religious. In return for their labour and attachment, they were 'properly fed, clothed, housed, spiritually edified, and innocently amused'. This theory showed how powerful and privileged classes used their power over the poor for their interest and selfishness. It was not out of the sympathy that they were caring the poor but to show self-importance they were doing so. The relationship between the two classes was that of the protector and protected and there lied loyalty and tenderness on the one part and chivalry on the other.

This theory limited livelihood to only food and shelter and did not take into account other aspects of life and everything was controlled by the higher class who employed them as labourers. They were not allowed to hold independent ideas and thoughts rather they were supposed to be in compliance in everything with their employers. This sort of situation existed due to lack of protective legal and social as well as institutional services to the labouring class.

The literature also deliberated that in the present society, where law can protect people, no man or women should be dependent on others, rather one is able to earn independent livelihood. If one desires to be protected it would be sheer ignorance on the part of the person.

On the contrary to the dependence and protection theory, self-dependence theory offered different views. According to this theory, people were not supposed to

be the subject. This theoretical concept was given to the people when they were taught to read, and given access to newspapers. During the period, this could encourage the railway patrons and employers to be a co-worker in the government (Mill, 1848).

The working class no longer thought their interest was the same as that of the employers but they reversed their ideas and thought that they should take their interests in their own hands. Such awareness was brought by the institutions which organized lectures, discussion, collective deliberations on questions of common interest, and the trade unions, political agitation helped awaken public spirit and excite thought (Mill, 1848). The literature further adds the labouring class will more and more dislike the theory of dependence and protection because they like to lead a life of self governed conduct and condition. With education and growth of intelligence, the lower class desire intervention of legislature in their affairs and regulation by law in various things, which concern them. They want their own ideas and suggestions to be taken care of but do not want the rules laid down by other people. According to Marx (Wood, 2004) dependency of one class to another is reflected through an economic phenomenon. The higher class, in order to create their own wealth, exploits the labour of the lower class and he suggested that the conflict between the two classes is ongoing and is inevitable. He opined that classes are like strata of a social structure and they are bound by economic relationships. The function of one class within a system of production is specialized. It is specialized not in terms of what people actually do, rather, a class is defined in terms of the relationship of people's labour to their sources of subsistence and to the means of production. Marx thought poor people such as labour for their subsistence living are exploited by the rich and the relationship between these two classes was of only economic

phenomenon which would give rise to conflict. Thus Marx's theory brings out the exploitation of the poor by the rich due to the compulsion of the poor people to earn for living (Wood, 2004).

The theoretical differences helped me question about the NFE learners' expectations from the state. Do they need protection for their livelihood or they seek for enabling environment for their self-dependence? In order to answer this question, I have gone through literatures that told me some approaches which explained poverty and various approaches. They were suggested for combating poverty of the poor.

Livelihood Approaches

The phrase Sustainable Livelihoods originated from the work of Robert Chambers and others, through a research programme carried out by the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex, involving the work in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Mali in particular (Chronic Poverty Research Centre, n.d.)

This approach was undertaken by DFID and other development agencies as a dominant framework and it became a familiar framework during 1990s (ibid).

Under this framework six approaches are identified. The first approach is 'people centered, this policy is based on understanding the realities of struggle of poor people. The second approach is that it is holistic in the sense that it is non sectoral and it recognizes multiple influences, actors, strategies and outcomes. Thirdly, it is dynamic and tries to understand change, complex cause and effect. Fourthly, it tries to analyze strengths rather than understanding the needs, therefore it builds on everyone's potential. Fifth approach is to bridge the gap between micro – and macro levels. Sixth one is the commitment to several different dimensions of sustainability such as environmental, economic, social and institutional (Chronic Poverty Research Centre, n.d.). The concept that is envisaged in these approaches implies that

livelihood approach helps in understanding realities of the poor, their potentialities, various influences that would affect their lives, and tries to narrowing the gap through multiple dimensions of sustainability.

The sustainable livelihood framework was adopted and popularized by UN at the 1992 United Nations Conference on the Environment, held in Rio de Janeiro. One of the programmes developed in the Conference was the Agenda 21. It was a blueprint for achieving sustainable development across the world (UNCHS, 2001 as cited in Naper, Santosa & Rubin, 2002).

Agenda 21 started several strategies for alleviating poverty and hunger and mostly they were enabling mechanisms to the poor for achieving livelihoods at the local level. The goals set out for the human settlements were: improving access to sustainable livelihoods through entrepreneurial opportunities and productive resources, providing universal access to basic social services, progressively developing social protection systems to those who cannot support themselves, empowering people living in poverty and their organizations and addressing the disproportionate impact of poverty on women (UNCHS, 2001 as cited in Naper et al., 2002).

Livelihoods are generally understood as a way of thinking – an approach or a means of analysis, which are used to understand the complexities of life. It is mostly found to be linked with poverty, sustainability, and environment. It is also defined and interpreted differently by different people. Generally, livelihood is understood to be embedding “the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living” (Allison, Bampton, Kandel, Shrestha and Shrestha, n.d.). According to DFID (1999 as cited in Allison et al.), sustainable livelihood has to “cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or

enhance its capabilities and assets, both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resources base”. The same literature refers to the report of World Commission on Environment and Development that sustainable livelihood started “as an approach to maintain or enhance resource productivity, secure ownership, of and access to assets, resources, and income earning activities as well as to ensure adequate stocks and flows of food and cash to meet basic needs.” It further elaborates the broader concept which was taken in The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development that sustainable livelihoods was taken as a goal to eradicate poverty focused on the poor of marginalized area (Allison et al. n.d.).

DFID has also tried to link urban livelihoods with poverty and underdevelopment and proposed people-centered-approach for eradicating poverty in a book ‘Urban Livelihoods: A People Centered Approach to reducing poverty.’ In this publication DFID defined livelihood as follows:

Inherent in this conception of livelihoods is the notion that the relative poverty or economic well being of poor people should be understood from the point of view of the people themselves. This people centered view provides a balance to the global and more strategic perspective normally offered by sustainable development policy approach (Removing Unfreedoms, n d.).

This document further elaborates that this approach regards an individual both as a possessor and producer of livelihood assets. For the enhancement of the assets effective policies are needed. The main focus of the policy should be reversing the deprivation of people in asset owning member of a community. Protecting the assets of the poor also fall within the scope of livelihood. The assets are categorized into five items such as financial (savings, access to credit), human (labour, health, education, and other skills), natural resources (urban agriculture, rivers, land), physical (housing,

livestock, economic, and social structure, production equipment), and social development (social support mechanisms, information). Thus the definition of DFID covers all natural, physical and human aspects, which are needed for better living. It also characterizes the poor as having low legal status with informal wage employment, lacking shelter, land and political rights, lack of basic social services, poor physical environment, socially challenged environments and dependence on cash economy being vulnerable to fluctuating market prices (Removing Unfreedoms, n. d).

The same literature refers Sen's Rights based approach which also places the individual at the centre of its concerns. Both the approaches focus on the inalienable Human Rights addressed by the UN Declaration 1948 and recognizes the individual as the citizen belonging human rights.

Another approach suggested by the literature is the freedom approach; it addresses the rights and opportunities, which have to be gained to enhance the capability of a person.

DFID (1999 as cited in Allison et al. n.d.) asserts that though there are several definitions about livelihood, in the context of sustainable livelihood it is not just a person's job or a way toward to earn a living, it includes everything necessary for a means of living. It presents the livelihood definition suggested by Chambers and Conway (1992, p.172) that claims,

The capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resources base.

The authors further elaborate that livelihoods is a way of thinking – an approach or a means of analysis which can help in understanding complex lives which we lead.

This approach has been broadly adopted by DFID and a range of other development agencies. It is therefore described here as the ‘official’ or dominant framework.

IFAD (2007) focuses on the poor and points out the need for raising their status by enabling them to become as a possessor and producer of assets through right based approach and freedom approach.

The concept of livelihood is not just a living; it encompasses so many things such as equity, ownership of resources, participatory decision-making, conflict resolution mechanisms and security of both household and communities. Most importantly, it is not just meeting the needs of the present but with consideration of future generations without compromising their ability. Therefore, livelihood demands the economic activities, which are viable, restorative and protect ecological integrity (Roy & Turner, 1996). This concept of livelihood suggests that livelihood should bring equity in all respects without disturbing the ecology, which is the property of future generations.

Moser addressing the harsh realities that the poor face, used the idea of ‘asset portfolios’ (Napier, Santosa & Rubin, 2002). The asset portfolios included sets of physical objects, relationships and abilities, which were able to provide households with coping mechanisms. The authors further elaborate the idea of Moser as cited in Castro (2002) that Moser also examined the institutional relations and the asymmetrical impacts on the various sectors of the community. Describing the situation of women in the context of livelihood, the authors further cite Moser (2002)

that in present times, if women and children are generally deprived of the opportunity of having access to formal institutions, such as finance houses and government support programmes, traditionally also they did not benefit from the informal institutions such as tribal councils and community committees.

In the above paragraphs, I examined livelihood from four different closures, the dependency and protection closure aimed to rely poor on state support; the self dependent closure wanted to enable people for self-regulated development initiative; the freedom thesis encouraged people for their informed choice. The fourth closure is related to ecological sustainability. By using all these closures, I have assessed the concept of livelihood of the NFE graduates and presented in the analysis chapter of this study.

Livelihood Sustainability

Most of the livelihood problems arise due to environmental scarcities such as dearth of arable land and water, which are vital factors for agriculture (Ohlsson, 2003) The author further, elaborates in spite of this, agriculture still is the largest source of livelihood and income but presently, it is unable to meet the needs of rising population in rural areas of developing countries, which ultimately becomes the cause of environmental degradation. Such problems create loss of livelihoods

This suggests that livelihood also emphasizes the sustainability of ecology because the importance of ecology is not only for present day, it is equally important for the future generation.

Some authors such as Ohlsson (2003) and Evans (2002) saw close connection between better living and ecological sustainability. Poor cities of developing world are the centers for economic and cultural activities but they are economically unsustainable for ordinary people to live in. In this context, Evans (2002) sees bleak

future of the third world countries because their cities are becoming the financial and productive networks of global economy and they are not providing livelihoods and good settlements for the people. Consequently, ordinary people are degrading environmental resources inside and outside the cities in such a pace that it makes difficult to maintain.

Sustainable Livelihood approaches emerged from the changing perspectives in poverty, participation and sustainable development. The author suggests that unless political strategies are developed to address the livability issue the future of these countries is dark.

According to Evans (2002, p.1), livelihood is one of the two faces of livability, the other face being ecological sustainability. To the author, “livelihood means jobs close enough to decent housing with wages commensurate with rents and access to the services that make for a healthful habitat”. He also suggests that livelihood must be sustainable and if the quest for jobs degrades the ecology of the city the problem of livelihood is not solved. The author emphasizes that livelihood should not degrade the quality of life so that citizens get the livelihoods at the cost of green space and breathable air. For the livability the governance must put both sides of the coin together, providing livelihood both for the rich and the poor without disturbing the quality of the ecology. The author sees a great practical problem to keep balance between the two. There was a need for clear set of ideas and interests of the people who shape the cities, and their abilities to realize those interests. In the case of livability issue both the rich and poor share the same common interest but their dreams are different. The poor dream of having urban homes and the elite imagine of the global city.

Livelihood problems give rise to conflicts; in this context linking poverty with environment is necessary. Ohlsson (2003) thinks that loss of livelihoods has many causes and mostly, it gives rise to agriculture and environmental scarcities. According to the author, due to higher rate of population increase in developing countries they face severe challenges due to scarcity of work opportunities in relation to the number of jobs required.

In such countries, agriculture as a sector, at present is unable to involve the rising numbers of people in rural areas, giving rise to rapidly increasing environmental scarcities. The losses of livelihood resulting from environmental scarcities of arable land and water, vital for agriculture, form a special case of growing livelihood problem. Although nearly half of the populations are living in cities, agriculture is still by far the largest single source of livelihoods and income. Environmental scarcity of arable land was one of the factors, that enabled the *genocidaires* of Rwanda in first full-blown genocide after the Holocaust, and they remain many of the driving forces for mobilizing the foot-soldiers of the on-going livelihood conflicts (Ohlsson, 2003).

Women have different role to play in relation to livelihood than that of men and this holds even for issues related to livelihood strategies, food security, natural resource management, the implication of HIV/AIDS problem and authority. The concept of livelihood for them is rapidly being taken into account in research about causes of and solutions to rural poverty including that of women's issues. It means livelihood theory takes care of gender issue as an important variable. Research done so far (Gender in Food & Agriculture, n.d) suggests that "Feminization of agriculture" has been a phenomenon. The same applies to "feminization of poverty" and yet livelihood and gender theory has not included the gendered nature of entitlements,

ownership of assets, and access to and control over resources that are needed for agricultural and domestic production and for livelihood generation

Women universally have the responsibility of feeding the family, taking care of their children and involved in household food processes and nutrition and security, which are gendered. Literature on food security (ibid) also focuses on food acquisition and availability at household level and nutrition gives focus on the quality, calories and micronutrients of food consumed. The various processes in-between such as processing, storage, preparation and distribution of food in which women play a crucial role, are often glossed over (Gender in Food & Agriculture). Either woman's work which mainly happens at the household level is unnoticed or undermined.

In the agrarian households, natural environmental resources are important inputs for the livelihood systems. As such environmental degradation is both cause and effect of livelihood vulnerability, which have greater impact in women's role as a gatekeeper of household food and nutrition, security and family wellbeing. Due to their greater involvement with natural resources, for management and indigenous knowledge they are gendered. Women's roles in this regard has been visualized as family feeders and caregivers that are directly related to the issues like soil quality, water availability and quality, agro diversity and availability of wild foods (ibid). In this context, I have examined NFE graduate women's approach to livelihood sustainability. The result has been discussed in chapter seven.

Changing Concept of Livelihood

There is increased international attention to the rural poverty and sustainable developments, which emphasizes on the need for better tools and methods in order to assess the livelihoods and livelihoods change. Consequently, there is a shift in the conceptual and theoretical models by making them wider and holistic. These concepts

and models, which emerged in 1990s, have taken livelihoods more than just income. Poverty during this period is taken in a wider perspective, which included not only lack of income and wealth but also lack of asset for livelihood and outcomes (Dewi, & Achdiawan, 2006). It means the sustainable livelihoods framework conceptualizes five capitals such as human, physical, natural, financial and social as a means for producing livelihood outcome which have changed the way how scholars, policy makers and development agencies thought about and addressed poverty (Carbet, 1988; Scoones, 1998; Bebbington, 1999; Ellis, 2000 as cited in *ibid*). Empowerment and institutionalization were added latter on. These additive contents were championed by Sen (1999 as cited in *Ibid*).

Odero (n.d.) elaborates the five capitals. Natural capital called biophysical elements (water, air, soils, sunshine, woodlands, and minerals) is renewal. In order to harness them, human capital is most important (Chivara & Maraike, 1998 as cited in *ibid*) and it is both subject and object of development. Apart from it, the financial capital is thought to be important to the functioning of market economy. Physical capital refers to manmade assets such as housing, roads and other types of hard capital and it should not be confused with natural capital. The same literature presents the view of Coleman (1990) in social capital. In the author's views this capital is productive to making possible in achieving some ends and the sustainable livelihoods also include social networks and associations to which people belong. Information capital which was added later is also considered to be most vital asset/resource, which needs to be integrated into sustainable livelihood framework.

In the same vein, Arun, Heeks & Morgan (2004) present the concept of Chambers and Conway (1992) and Carney (1999) and claim that sustainable Livelihoods approaches are evolved from changing perspectives on poverty,

participation and sustainable development. They reiterated that it is was the result of narrow indicators of poverty that were confined to income and consumption which led to interest in asset/vulnerability approaches to understanding poverty (Moser, 1998 cited in *ibid*) that focus on sustainable local-level poverty reduction strategies which strengthen people's own inventive solutions.

Chambers and Conway (1992, p. 9 cited in Dewi, Balchor & Achdiawan, 2006) define the concept of livelihood as "the means of gaining a living, including livelihood capabilities, tangible assets and intangible assets".

This means they gave a broader perspective to define livelihood, which was not limited only in income and consumption but it went up to enhancing capabilities of people.

Toufique (2001) described and analyzed the livelihoods approach and the rights-based approach. The author argued that the livelihoods approach starts with a given set assets and looks at institutions, policies and processes as a mapping device and there are set of indicators to evaluate the outcome. But under this approach the role of institutions, policies and processes are under- analyzed and under- focused.

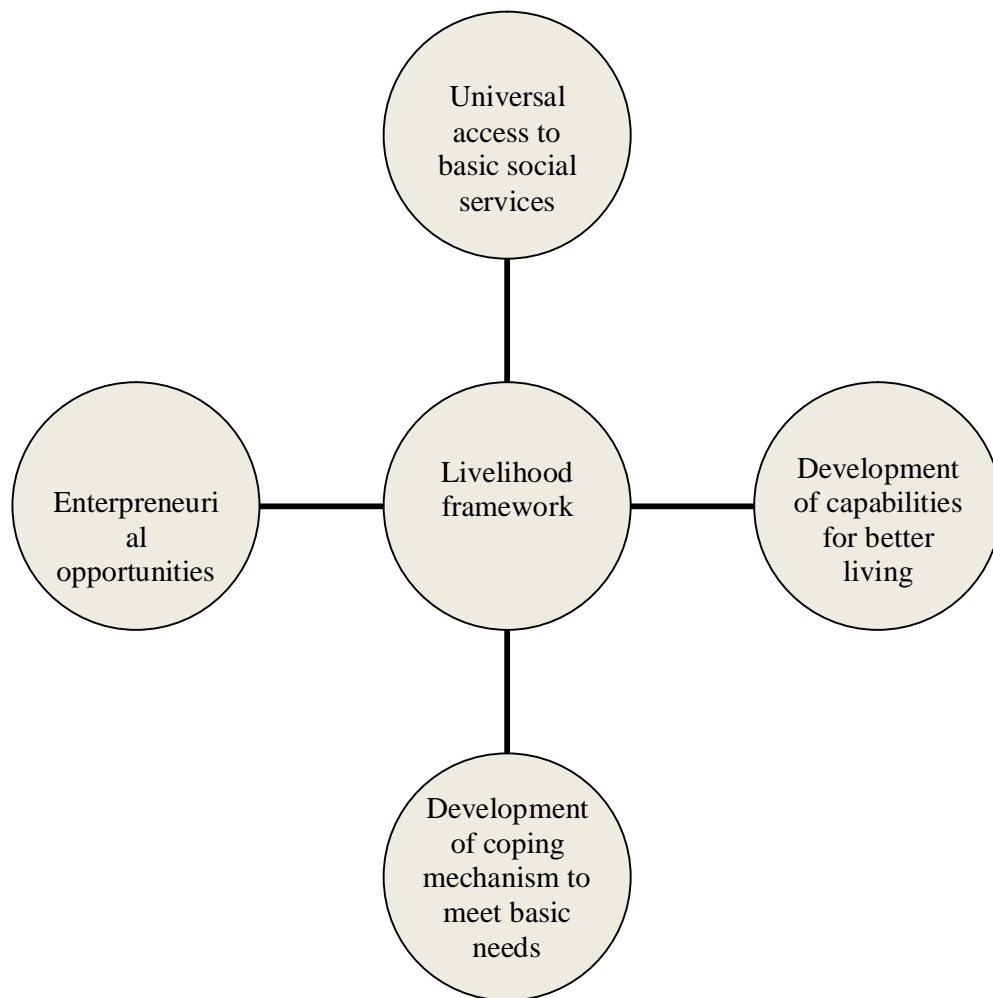
The rights based approach starts with a set of rights. These rights are determined by positive and normative considerations. It then looks at the institutions, policies and processes that distribute and enforce these rights. Under this approach, policies, institutions and processes are not under-analyzed and under-focused.

The main concern in this approach is how life and livelihoods of the people are affected by them, who are excluded and how their voices can be created and made effective. These perspectives indicate that these two approaches appear to be more complementary than substitutes. They are also complementary on other aspects.

Keeping the above definitions of livelihood in view, I developed a framework to examine the livelihood concepts of the NFE graduates. The framework is as follows,

Fig. 2

Livelihood Framework



The framework shows that livelihood approach should enable people to enjoy basic universal services that can help developing capabilities for better living, and also provide coping mechanisms with entrepreneurial opportunities.

Literacy and Livelihood

Literature shows that there is a relationship between the level of literacy and livelihood (Betts, 2000). In line with these literatures, DFID has also emphasized on education and health, pro poor policies and programmes economic growth, better management and accountability, effective implementation by all the sectors for better livelihoods for the poor.

Globalized world is no more exceptions which look for more literacy that can make a person able to have access to information and use them, engage in issues that are relevant to one's life, to build confidence and to make one's voice heard. Literacy thus has been taken as a powerful aspect to empower a person with such capabilities and practices to fight poverty, vulnerability and isolation. Thus literacy can be better vehicle for communication, bolster self-esteem, and can motivate people to participate in decision making (DFID, 2002). This concept has reiterated a close link between literacy and livelihood and literacy has a role to play to combat poverty and empower a person to counter with various difficulties.

However, the same literature mentioned that literacy though became the agenda of various sectors; its impact was limited due to high drop out rates, low enrolment and completion rates and accordingly, low rates of return. In spite of this, adult literacy does have the capacity to enhance the quality of life in difficult circumstances across the globe and it is the agenda of the development agencies (DFID, 2002). At this point, the main question is how can we respond the daily realities of the poor, the needs and practices, hopes and aspirations? How can it avoid stigmatizing those who have no opportunity to read and write? How can literacy be made relevant, accessible, and equitable within the access of the hardest to reach?

Betts (2000) also referred to a conference held in Kathmandu which outlined the limited returns of literacy that programmes were mostly ‘decontextualised’ from the learner’s lives. The participants of the conference noted that most of the lessons received from the literacy programmes were not in coherence with the underlying principles of sustainable livelihoods approach to development (ibid).

The author also outlined six main principles of the sustainable livelihoods approach such as people-centered, holistic, dynamic, building on strengths, sustainable, generating micro-macro links. They are also linked to a framework, which provides a conceptual tool for understanding the context in which people live.

The conference also noted some of the ways in which lessons from experience, linked to the sustainable livelihoods principles, could potentially benefit future literacy work: They were: (a) Listening to the voices. The voices basically tell that reification of ‘literacy’ should be avoided in order to escape the mistakes of the past. This is not to advocate ‘literacy comes second’ necessarily, but rather a view of literacy as a mechanism for helping people attain their own articulated aims and aspirations. (b) Building on strengths. Since literacy has strength, the main starting-point for literacy work should therefore be what people already have, known and do, rather than the assumption that people are ‘unknowing’ blank slates. © Lives and context are dynamic. This means literacy work therefore needs to be flexible and responsive within other livelihoods programmes, to reflect these varying needs and aspirations in an increasingly globalised world. (d) Responding to demand. This shows that there is a role for ‘literacy first’ work under the principle of ‘demand-driven’ development; however, experience has shown that if high attrition and low outcomes are to be avoided in these kinds of initiatives, then creative, flexible and often innovative responses are required. (e) Experience shows that ‘One-shot’, one-

size fits all campaigns have largely failed to deliver sustainability. Long-term commitments are required - which means taking a more embedded, locally owned view of programmes and projects.

Going through these benefits I developed a framework to find out the achieved benefits made by the NFE graduates.

Did literacy help in accessing basic social services?

Did it help in exploring Entrepreneurial opportunities?

Did it help in developing coping mechanism to meet basic needs?

Did it help to enhance the livelihood capabilities of the learners?

Livelihood Experience in Nepal

There are some literatures that have mentioned about the livelihood experiences of the poverty-ridden people DFID is one of them which believed that right policies and interventions were needed and creating an atmosphere for effective implementation of pro poor policies and effective programme by the stakeholders like government, donors, non government organizations in a coordinated manner. In order to address the root causes of poverty DFID identified the following actions to be taken immediately (Livelihood Connect, n. d.).

1. Support for broad based economic growth through better infrastructure and more effective management of natural resources
2. Improved governance and accountability of government and more empowered communities
3. More coordinated donor effort in health and education focusing on the rural poor
4. Improved opportunities for rural livelihood and enterprise development through effective implementation of the Agriculture Perspective Plan (APP)

and better exploitation of off farm income and revenue opportunities in key areas of growth and potential (Livelihoods connect, n. d.).

The forest sector as well introduced literacy for its users' group right from the emergence of community forestry in Nepal. Its aim was to help the users fulfill the subsistence needs particularly that of fuel woods, construction of timber and poles, agricultural implements, charcoal, grass and fodder (Yadav, Dev, Springate-Bagninski, Soussan, 2003). The community thus formed for forest use had convergent interests, meaning that different people have different priorities from forests based resources on their livelihood components and the nature and the condition of the forest itself (ibid). And yet the livelihood approach did not come as a policy until 1999 (ibid). Recently, other considerations such as gender, equity, poverty and social exclusion are also included in CF practice. The same literature (ibid) adds that most of the middle hills depend on agriculture for their main livelihood through support by a variety of other activities, and DFID financed livelihoods has pointed out that non agricultural income is very much important due to withdrawal of labour and necessity for cash inclusion in the household economy. Formation of Forest Users Group (FUG) thus has helped in formation of social capital which assesses and combines different capitals for assembling a livelihood. In this consideration, FUGs have helped in improving natural capital and bringing sustainable benefit flow in the long term (ibid).

Livelihood issue is seen to be emerged to address poverty. For instance the Ninth Plan (1998) set poverty alleviation as its main objective, which aimed at reducing the number of population below poverty line from 42 percent to 32 percent. The plan emphasized on raising the standard of living of such people by providing them physical, social and economic infrastructure in the underdeveloped and remote

regions of the country (Ninth Plan, 1998). The main focus of the Plan was to achieving high economic growth in various sectors and generating extensive employment opportunities. Agricultural sector was given lead role with the implementation of Agriculture Perspective Plan. Stress was to given to make accessible primary health, education and drinking water to the weaker section. Other priorities were skill development, population control, rural electrification, environment protection etc. In this Plan, education was taken as a means for alleviating poverty and all round development. The overall aim was making education development oriented.

Tenth Plan's priority was also on poverty alleviation and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper/Tenth Plan (2002 – 2007) was developed to reduce the poverty to 30 percent by the end of the Plan period. As livelihood is mostly linked with environment as pointed out by various literatures described above, in Nepal too, this approach is taken in forestry sector and the Tenth Plan focused on community forestry and leasehold forestry to address poverty (Allison et al., n.d.)

Following the same spirit, the Tenth Plan (2003) explicitly identified poverty reduction as the overriding objective of development efforts in Nepal. The Plan aimed at reducing poverty from 38% (at the beginning of the Plan) to 30% by the end of the Plan in 2007. Emphasis was given in developing human resources with the stress on health, education, drinking water and sanitation for reducing poverty and enhancing quality of life of the rural areas (Tenth Plan 2002 – 2007). The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) of the Tenth Plan also enunciated the following four major pillars for poverty reduction:

- Broad based Economic Growth
- Social Development

- Targeted Programmes
- Good Governance

Broad Based Economic Growth emphasized on the needs of policy, regulatory and implementation level interventions in agriculture development, improved irrigation facilities, rural electrification, sustainable forest and environment management, industrialization in priority sector, opening up more tourism destinations and improving tourism infrastructure, expansion of road density, communication infrastructure and information technology and foreign investment .

In the sector of education, the Tenth Plan aimed at expanding literacy programmes to improve the livelihood of deprived people including girls, Dalits and deprived children along with improving access to and quality of primary education and improvement in higher levels of education.

The current third Year Interim Plan (2008) also more or less has the same goal of building infrastructure for social and economic transformation to establish just and prosperous and modern Nepal. The overall aim is to reducing unemployment, poverty and inequality contributing to establishment of durable peace. This plan has aimed at extending access to natural and economic resources of the deprived people as human rights. Poverty alleviation and improving access to economic and social resources are overriding objective of the plan. The Plan outlines the big challenges to narrow down the gap between rich and poor, limited possibilities for initiating self employment due to lack of access of majority of people to skill, capital and technology. Education in this plan has been considered to be the means to produce capable human resources by enhancing the economic potential of people and enabling people in maintaining and developing natural resources, social traditions and culture.

The above plans thus seem to have the objective of education to be producing potential citizens so that they can better their living standard.

In connection with why livelihood problems arise in rural areas of the country Timalisina (2007) has outlined some reasons, such as increasing population pressure at the household level, increasing socio-economic disparities between people and communities, disparities between urban and rural areas, increasing unemployment, unequal land ownership, difficult rural life in general, and conflict have become the push factors to the people to move to the urban areas more particularly Kathmandu in search of work. The author opines that internal migration became a way of survival strategy to create livelihoods in the informal sectors. Among the various capitals of livelihoods the author also shows the situation of rural people that they have limited access to physical, financial and political capitals therefore they have to depend on natural and social capitals for their livelihoods.

A review study of Sustainable Rural Livelihood Programme implemented in Sankhuwa Sava district of Nepal carried out by Karki and Adhikari (2007) showed that this was a success story of which most of the project beneficiaries and also the non-target group specially the women were organized in different users groups (members in cooperatives, micro- credit, vegetable growers group, water users groups, livestock raising groups, mothers groups are some example). Implemented by a NGO Rural Construction Nepal (RRN) the project had the objective of achieving poverty reduction and improved quality of life of socially excluded and marginalised people in a gender sensitive and environmentally sustainable way. Women and children were major target groups for livelihood. The project had five components: Enhanced level of awareness, education and skill improvement, increased household

income, improved overall health condition, infrastructure development, institutionalization of self-help groups (SHGs).

In a nutshell, livelihood is understood as a tool to addresses poverty, it focuses not only on income, but it covers other aspects of life such as basic necessities: food, shelter, education, health, environment, social cohesion and freedom to exercise the right of people in question.

Non formal Literacy Programme and Livelihood

In order to examine the relationship between literacy and livelihood, I reviewed two types of literacy package, one developed by the government and used for adults for the purpose of providing functional knowledge for bettering their lives. The second type of the package was developed by the World Education particularly for the adolescent girls.

Both of the packages seemed to have included the contents that were important to better the livelihood of rural people based on what actually livelihood literature suggests as described above.

Following this section of literature review, I developed some questions for empirical study.

Did the learners develop awareness on social issues?

Are they using the knowledge gained and how they are doing so?

Could they figure out some livelihood options from the knowledge gained?

Summing Up

Livelihood theories as proposed by John Stuart Mill depicts the situation how poor people or the labouring class get food and shelter from the rich people. Dependency and protection theory describes how labouring people depend totally on the rich

people for their living i.e. food, shelter and everything for them is decided by the upper class. Even their thinking and religion are within the whims of the higher people. Whereas self-dependence theory depicts the situation of labouring class some freer than the situation as described by the previous theory that is they are paid against their income but other things are decided by themselves not by their superiors.

Various proponents believed that livelihood is not just income and consumption rather it covers wider arena including five capitals/assets: human, physical, natural, financial and social.

Livelihood approach emerged in 1990s, the 1992 United Nations Conference on the Environment, held in Rio de Janeiro adopted and popularized the sustainable livelihood framework. Several literatures show that livelihood approach has been taken to address poverty of rural people.

Livelihood is not to be understood only as income but it is capabilities and assets as well. Generally it is linked with poverty, sustainability and environment.

In order to combat the livelihood problems two approaches are suggested; right- based approach and freedom approach. In Nepal livelihood approach is taken to deal with poverty and it started in forestry sector in 1979 with the support of DFID (DFID)

As I tried to seek the livelihood approaches in NFE packages which my research participants studied, what I found is that the contents of the packages have tried to provide knowledge on various aspects of life related issues which would make their life better in terms of increasing monetary gain through income generation activities and in terms of improving their habits, being healthy, improve socialization which indirectly progress their monetary situation.

Conceptual Framework

The major core area of my study is the literacy/ NFE which is the basis of knowledge generation for the women labourers. Therefore, the research participants are the recipients of literacy programme. How such women generate knowledge from NFE and apply for their better life is the basic framework of the study. But literacy has broader perspective; it is not limited only to the 3 Rs and some basic life skills. It provides other avenues through which learners can connect the knowledge thus acquired to social, cultural, religious and political spectrum. According to UNESCO (2003), from 1960s onwards literacy went beyond the technical skill of coding and decoding written symbols and it became a tool for facilitating the learners in understanding political and social forces that impact their lives. In the same way, social historians sought implication of literacy in the area of social, political and cultural processes of modern life from protecting the rights of citizens to change the oppressive institutions and building religious and national communities (Rensick & Gordon, 1999), in this process, literacy is instrumental in generating and processing knowledge among learners so that they can also establish linkages with other social, political, religious and economic cosmologies which can affect their lives. Thus, literacy becomes a platform for understanding the social and political issues, and is a vehicle for seeking justice and to raise voice against oppression. The diagram below displays my conceptual framework.

My conceptual framework is presented in the following table:

Table 4

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual premises	Process	Activities
Women labourers' ways to generate knowledge and apply for improved livelihood	Identify women labourers' literacy/NFE programme for study	Exploring women labourers' ways of generating and using knowledge
Literature review	Review of literatures on knowledge generation, various learning theories, livelihood theories and approaches as well as related materials concerning to the issue	Understanding women labourers' experiences through Information Processing model, Marxism, feminism, Livelihood theories and livelihood approach
Qualitative inquiry	Use of postmodernism paradigm	Generating mini stories of the research participants
Hermeneutics mode of analysis	Apply back and forth between field and theory and vice versa	Bringing the realities and the lived experience of the research participants
Case study approach	In-depth interview with research participants	Drawing out the cases of the research participants through interview and observation
Theory Building	Explore gray areas between theories, examine their connection with the field, and come up with a new understanding	Makhamali theory for transforming the passive learners

The above conceptual framework gives the glimpse of my study process.

While using the theory, I looked into from different perspectives such as, for understanding women labourers I examined them through Marxism, for comprehending gender issue, I analyzed them from feminism point of view. Similarly, in order to know the learning pattern of women labourers, I understood them from Information processing model. Marxism gave me the frame to understand women as a class; feminism offered me a closure to bring women's subjectivity and information processing model gave me a room to analyze their information sharing process.

The literature in chapter two, three and four is the framework to examine how the women labourers applied knowledge gained from NFE and how they improved their livelihood. These literatures are applied to examine the field information derived from the account of 12 women labourers in Chapter six and seven.

CHAPTER V

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PATH

In this chapter, I have described how I came up to select this particular issue for my research, various theoretical perspectives that can be applied in qualitative research and the guidelines, which I followed in my research work. Thus, this chapter includes research design, research methods; various paradigms of qualitative research method, research process, modes of analysis, authenticity and report writing.

Locating the Research Participants

During my association with Child Development Society, where I spent about three years in the capacity of general secretary and executive director, I came across with women labourers of carpet factories. I was also the founder member of this NGO and we had initiated our work in the area of health and education for the children of the workers of carpet factories. We used to organize NFE for the children of the carpet workers who were deprived of the opportunity to go to school. After the completion of the course, we used to raise funds from local contribution and help them in enrolling in schools. In this course, we used to organize meetings every week among the parents of different groups of children. In these meetings, I found out that almost all of the mothers were illiterate and had to use thumb prints for their signature. They were mostly adolescents, had limited world of carpet weaving and bringing up the children with whatever inherited or culture/tradition bound knowledge they had. I was quite shocked to know that in the heart of Kathmandu, there is such a group of people of not very old age and migrated from districts not very far from Kathmandu district, is totally illiterate and I was interested to arrange literacy programme for them. In

these meetings, many of them expressed their desire to be educated. Their primary concern was to be able to read signboards in the streets and to write their names instead of using thumb prints. Though the meetings were for parents, majority of the participants used to be mothers and they took keen interest in the education of their offsprings. Fathers in negligible number, used to be present in those meetings. But, it was not that the fathers were literate, they also were almost in the same status as that of their wives but had greater rate of literacy than their wives. When we had series of interactions with them in the capacity of the parents of the children, who were being given Non formal education, their strong desire of being literate urged us to arrange some literacy programmes for them. Later, we also found out that they were not all illiterate, quite a few had gone to school, but their literacy was not worthwhile due to long disassociation from education. So far as my experience goes, women workers of the carpet factories in Kathmandu are out of sight and out of reach of government programs. It is difficult to identify them even by I/NGOs.

With our efforts in organizing literacy programmes for them, initially, USC Canada supported the NFE for these women using the package 'Nyan Goreto' produced by the government and they were also given knitting and tailoring training of three months as a follow up programme. A very few of them excelled in them and even were employed in tailoring shops, a few also became NFE facilitators, but for others, they were not very much of use. However, proficiency in the skill could not be observed in majority of them. Later, based on our proficiency in organizing literacy programmes and our association with carpet factories and the experience in working with carpet labourers, World Education supported to organize similar programme but with different learning materials called 'Lalima' for the adolescent girls of carpet factories of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur districts. They were the programme of six

months duration and could not provide follow up programme to all of them. Some of them were given skill training called Self Employment Educational Programme (SEEP) in soap making, tailoring, bead string making and doll making.

The labourers' carpet weaving was not time bound; they used to work from early in the morning and up to late night if the demand was high and in slack seasons they did not work much. Actually, working time was flexible but as the wage was fixed according to the square meter they wove, the wage depended on the volume of work they completed. However, they were kept in the closed atmosphere within the factory compound, allotting them a small room for two people and in the case of the labourer, who was single and did not want to share with others, had to hire a room outside within the periphery of the factory and s/he was given small amount of money for the rent.

As it was difficult for them to go out of their working place for attending the literacy programme, at some central point, the classes were to be managed near by the cluster of factories, so that the participants did not have to spend much time in reaching the class. In some case, the factory manager also spared a room for this purpose.

It was very difficult for them to spend full time i. e. two hours, sometimes due to work sometimes, due to their children's disturbance. They used to bring their babies/children with them in the classes. As such, full concentration of the mothers as well as other participants was difficult. After completion of six months' course for both type of learners and the second phase of SEEP as well, I was curious to know what they gained, were they capable to using the knowledge and was it helpful to make their life some better, because the money and time was spent but what was the achievement? I wanted to know how they grasped the knowledge provided by the

programme and how they used it, did it help to make their life some better? Thus I wanted to study these women for my dissertation as to how they generated knowledge and how did they apply it, though the number of participants was small, I thought it would be a great a help in developing literacy programme for similar type of learners which would perhaps save time, money and human resources in days to come and cover larger population with the same funds.

How these women, particularly of carpet factories generate and apply knowledge that they gain from Non formal education for improved livelihood I chose to be my area of enquiry. Thus, for my research, I designed the framework of the methodology in the following way.

Research Design

For conducting a study two kinds of research methods are used quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative method demands large sample, statistical tools and measurable outcomes which can be generalized whereas, qualitative method needs in depth study, thick description which is contextual to particular time and people.

Research design is a strategy to guide the researcher (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996 p.18), a model of logical proof to investigate the causal relations of a phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 1995), a guideline to connect theoretical paradigm with the empirical world, and a means to address the two critical issues of representation and legitimation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 25).

It crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matters and explains the complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts, assumptions and these include various perspectives related to foundationism, positivism, post-positivism, post-structuralism and various methods connected to cultural and interpretive studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 2).

This statement describes that qualitative inquiry can bring many things under one roof. This implies that qualitative research design involves around everything what a research should include such as theoretical base, relevant strategies, suitable methods for gathering information/data, connect theoretical paradigms to strategies of inquiry and methods for collecting empirical materials. Thus, research design helps the researcher in situating in the empirical world and connecting him or her to specific sites, persons, groups, institutions and bodies of relevant interpretive material. Research design also helps the researcher in addressing the two critical issues of representation and legitimization.

In order to understand the perception of people qualitative research is a better method as the quantitative one will not meet the purpose. In this context, Bell (1993) deliberated that researchers adopting a qualitative perspective are more concerned to understand individuals' perceptions of the world. They seek insight rather than statistical analysis. They doubt whether social 'facts' exist and question whether a 'scientific' approach can be used when dealing with human beings. The views of the author also encouraged me to choose qualitative method because the size of my research participants was small and the quantitative technique could not have captured their opinion and perceptions objectively. They were not in a position to fill up the lengthy questionnaires by themselves because reading the questions, understanding them and replying was a tough job for them.

According to Schurink (1998, p. 241 as cited in Poggenpoel , Myburgh & DerLinde, 2001) "the qualitative paradigm stems from an antipositivistic, interpretative approach, is idiographic, thus holistic in nature, and the main aim is to understand social life and the meaning that people attach to everyday life" (p 408)

What leverage does qualitative research provide to a researcher, from various literatures, I came up to the conclusion that a qualitative enquiry requires direct contact with the participants, establishing relationship with them, and interacting with them to observing the situation were the essential aspects of qualitative method.

I wanted to interact with the research participants and understand their feeling, their concepts as well their problems by following the characteristics of qualitative enquiry as shown by literatures that qualitative research usually involves an immersion into the environment of the subjects in order to observe the context of a social situation whereas quantitative research is often associated with structured scientific experiments, statistical measurement of a controlled environment, with the researcher objectively positioned at a distance from the subjects.

Quantitative research is a bit hard to be used in this kind of research. All these literatures gave me intuition that qualitative and quantitative designs for conducting research offer that no one method is absolute and one does not replace the other, but where to use the methods is important and sometimes both methods can be used in one research. Here, I had a choice. In this choice, I opted for qualitative research design for this study. This design is considered to be appropriate to understand the 'other' (Vidich & Lyman, 2000, p. 38 as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 2) who are none but the adult women participants of the literacy program. Here, I put my research participants in the 'other' because the experience till now has shown that this is less accessible group of people for conducting research and to my knowledge until now this kind of research has not been undertaken for women labourers.

Literature also stresses that direct contact is essential although the amount of time spent can be varied. This reiterates Bryman's idea (1988) that the relationship with the participants is required while carrying out qualitative research.

There are various themes of qualitative research suggested, such as naturalistic inquiry, inductive analysis, holistic perspective, qualitative data, personal contact and insight, dynamic systems, unique case orientation, context sensitivity, emphatic neutrality and design flexibility, which allows the researcher to study real world situation without any manipulation (Patton, 1990). The author suggested that all these themes called for immersion in details, data in ‘thick description’ with direct quotation and direct contact with people. The author further elaborates that, “qualitative methods are first and foremost research methods. They are ways of finding out what people do, know, think and feel by observing, interviewing and analyzing documents” (Patton, 1990, p. 94).

Corbin and Strauss (1998) consider that qualitative research cannot be derived through statistical tools because scientific measurement cannot tell about the lives, stories and behaviour of people and also the social movement and interactional relationship between organizations.

Thorne (2000) thinks that qualitative researchers are more concerned with uncovering knowledge about how people think and feel about the circumstances in which they find themselves, they do not make judgments about whether those thoughts and feelings are valid.

This understanding encouraged me to follow qualitative design for this research.

In the qualitative research, attention is given to a process, change is ongoing with the focus on individual or entire culture. The findings become contextual and to make generalizations across time and space will be meaningless for the qualitative researchers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). On this ground, here, I just claim that my study will be contextual as well as theoretical generalization.

The statement of Darlington and Scott (2002, p. 1) also encouraged me to choose this method, who suggested that “scientific methods of investigation have great difficulty coping with the dynamic and complex social world of the human services. Qualitative research has an important role to play in understanding this world and in complementing other forms of knowledge.

Another feature of the qualitative study like mine is that complete objectivity is not possible hence; researcher’s personal experience becomes part of the relevant data.

In the case of my study also situation was of the carpet factories and the workers were related to the carpet weaving and the findings of the study might not be very appropriate to generalize in the case of workers of other factories or other sector. However, as Wiersma (1991, p.6) suggested “qualitative research is not concerned with broad generalization of results but characteristics of the research are described to the extent that other researchers may use the results to extend knowledge”.

I have similar expectation from my study so that it will be a guide to conduct a similar research related to factory labourers.

Choice for Postmodern Paradigms

All kinds of research whether quantitative or qualitative have various perspectives and have some underlying assumptions about what constitutes ‘valid’ research (Myers [Ed.], 1997). The document further says the most pertinent philosophical assumptions are those which are the underlying epistemology that guides the report. Epistemology refers to the assumptions about knowledge and how it can be obtained (Hirschheim, 1992 cited in Myers [Ed.], 1997). Based on this assumption, I tried to find out the epistemological concept emerged through NFE and bring women labourers’ perception/ experience.

Regarding the assumptions, all of the authors do not have the same opinion. Guba and Lincoln (1994 cited in Myers [Ed.], 1997) suggest four paradigms for qualitative research: positivism, post positivism, critical theory, and constructivism. Orlikowski (1991) following Chua (1986 as cited in *ibid*) have presented only three categories based on the underlying research epistemology, positivist, interpretive and critical. The literature further elaborates that qualitative research is not the synonymous to interpretive and it may or may not be interpretive depending upon the underlying philosophical assumptions of the researcher. With interpretive assumptions the research is guided by the researcher's set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Since this is a qualitative research, I have taken interpretive epistemology as the underlying philosophical assumption. Apart from it, my study is based on the theoretical background of postmodernism and critical postmodernism through which small events, stories, joys and sorrow of the women labourers could be brought into light.

Going through various literature on postmodernism, what I derived was that postmodernism is not metanarratives, it respects mini stories, gives importance to local events; it respects multiple truths, it is based on reality, it does not bind the writers to follow the pre-established rules, respects capacity of human reason, believes in ever moving trend of society, it questions the legitimacy of truth and allows many more flexibility based on real life situation.

In order to better understand the underlying assumptions of postmodernism, I went through some literatures. I found that it is also taken as an anti modern concept. Grentz (n.d) mentioned that the post modern philosophy denies unified, all encompassing and universally valid narratives. It respects differences and celebrates

local and particular instead of universal. It rejects the discovery derived through scientific method which provided the intellectual foundation for constructing a better world. Thus the postmodern outlook is anti-modern.

In the same vein, Bryant, Johnston & Usher (1997, p. 4).) pointed out that “the emergence of postmodern identities is also due to the valorization of difference and the recognition of the significance of the particulars of differences”.

The authors present the views of Lyotard (1984) who rejected the idea of human betterment and social progress to be achieved through the application of reason and scientific knowledge. He thought, it was one of the ‘grandnarratives’, higher order forms of legitimization which postmodernity takes as ‘incredulity’. He further thought “the notion of ‘incredulity’ is important and needs further elucidation”.

Burbules (1995 as cited in *ibid*, p. 4) in favour of postmodern ethos, states We can no longer bring ourselves to believe in the grand narratives. We cannot take them at their word because if we do they become monolithic and hegemonic, totalising power-plays concealed in the cloak of universality, value-neutrality and benevolent progress. Rather than true accounts, we now see them simply as interesting stories, even though there will be different degrees of investment in them.

According to the authors, in the postmodernism difference is celebrated not suppressed.

“Interpreting God and the Postmodern Self” the author says, "Postmodern self faces life and society with suspicion, there is no trust but modern self has optimism on the capacities of human reason"(Grentz, n. d.).

There are other ways as well to explain post modernism. For example, according to Burke, (2001) modernism and post modernity explain postmodernism only with the help of modernity. It views that society is ever moving, it is not static,

philosophers and thinkers throughout time believe that society has been changed according to immutable and unchangeable laws but in modern times the evolution of society is thought to be progressive movement. This movement of society is called to be modernity or modernism. Modernism had its origin at the end of Enlightenment at the end of the 18th century. The Enlightenment and the historical period that it brought in had three characteristics that, a) the power of reason over ignorance, b) power of order over disorder and c) power of science over superstition (ibid). These features were regarded as universal values, which will be able to avoid outmoded ideas. This movement was thought to be the forerunner of the advent of capitalism as a new mode of production and a transformation of the social order. The movement brought in various things such as wars and famines natural and manmade disasters etc but they were all overcome by men and everyone moved on.

In the late 1970s, a movement among French intellectuals which rejected the notion that were within the modern era brought by the Enlightenment entered the age of postmodernism. According to Giddens (1990 as cited in Burke, 2000) modernism and postmodernism tended to be associated with aesthetic and intellectual movement and modernity and post-modernity were used to refer to changes in social and economic institutions. However, there was no any hard and fast difference, modernism and post- modernism were also concerned with social and economic change. The literature considers all major changes such as disintegration of state, erosion of trade unionism, growth of individualism and consumerism, cultural life being fragmented and being pluralistic, are the outcomes of postmodernism. Postmodernism is characterized by the expanding trend of flexibility, diversity, differentiation, mobility, communication, decentralization and internationalization.

The same literature in a nutshell, defines postmodernism as an era, which rejects absolute truth and grand narratives explaining the progressive evolution of society. At the same time it has brought multitude of different perspectives on society and an appreciation of different cultures. “It has highlighted globalization on the one hand and localization on the other, the celebration of difference and the search of commonality” (ibid).

Klages (2003), on an essay on Postmodernism also finds difficulty in defining postmodernism, as it appears in so many areas such as architecture, music, film, literature, sociology, communications etc. Therefore, the author suggests that thinking about modernism is important for understanding postmodernism. The essay outlined some of the characteristics of modernism such as emphasizing on impressionism and subjectivity in writing, multiply narrated stories rather than omniscient third person narrators, blurring of distinctions between genres, fragmented forms, discontinuous narratives, random-seeming collages of different materials, a tendency towards reflexivity or self- consciousness, rejection of the distinction between high and low or popular culture. Postmodernism follows most of these characteristics, however the author deliberates that the difference between these two ‘isms’ is that the former laments over fragmentation which took over unity, coherence and meaning which has been lost in modern life but in contrast Postmodernism does not express regret over the changes brought by modernity. The author also defines Postmodernism in the same way as the exponents as I described above, that postmodernism rejects grand narratives, favours “mini-narratives,” stories that explain small practices, local events, rather than large scale universal or global concepts. Postmodern “mini-narratives” are always situational, provisional, contingent, and temporary, and it does not make a claim to universality, truth, reason or stability (Klages, 2003),

To Habermas, post- modernism is “antimodernism”, the characteristics of post-modernity thus are plurality, iron double coding and recognition that if there are multiple ways of knowing then there must be multiple truths (Hlynka & Yeaman, 1992).

Some other views on Postmodernism is that people have different arguments on postmodernism that truth is not one, it is multiple, it is not universal but it is local and it is created (made) within a particular political, economic and social situation. It advocates for small and changing truth by denying big and unchanging legitimacy of truth.

Talking about what critical postmodernism is about Boje (2001), points out its both positive as well as dark sides. On the dark side there are several plights of labourers under post modern corporations for example Nike Corporation, Las Vegas casinos, Disney land etc. The pleasure organizations are attracting families toward gambling and sex addiction.

On the positive side critical postmodern theory is a way to analyze the fractured and tortured lives of voiceless who work under these pleasure corporations. Similarly, critical postmodernism can guide us to explore the ‘micro-practices’ of organizational life, as well as contextualize the stories of the marginal ‘Other’ (Boje, 1995 as cited in Boje, 2001).

Habermas (1983, p.30 cited in Postmodernism and research method) thought due to failure of the modernist project of social sciences postmodernism emerged. From this perspective, there can be no ultimate ‘truth’, only the interplay of complex truth games, stories, narratives of the way the world is rather encouraging people to conduct research for discovering and revealing ‘truths’ about the audience. In this way, the same literature referred that from epistemology determined ontology and it

referred to James Curran who put it that 'believing is seeing'. How I see, is what I see. Facts are facts only if one's interpretive framework determines that the facts as facts. Thus, in this case, epistemology determines ontology. The literature cites Lather (1988, p.570) that epistemology and ontology are socially conditioned and historically relative or contextual. It further clarifies, 'ways of knowing are inherently culture-bound and perspectival' (Lather, 1988, p.570 as cited in Culsock, 2006). According to Jecks, (1989) postmodernism is a contemporary philosophic approach concerned with the multiple and contradictory ways of knowing in this historically postmodern time (as cited in Hlynka & Yeaman, 1992). The same literature defines postmodernism as "post" to the modernity of the industrial age.

About the merits and shortcomings of postmodernist theorizing, feminist scholars differ in their views according to Wolf (1996). The author adds, some of the feminist scholars find the sensitivity demonstrated by the postmodernist theorizing toward greater multiplicity of power relations useful, as it has created opportunities for further innovation in research methods and the post-field work process. By citing the views of McDowell (1992), Mascia-Lees, Sharpe & Cohen (1989) the author adds that some feminists argue that postmodernism poses certain obstacles to feminism and also makes the lives realities of women irrelevant. However, the author presents the views of Harding (1987, p .6) "who thought that we cannot just talk about feminist research method, we must also recognize multiple feminist epistemologies and multiple feminist projects".

The essence of all literatures is that postmodernism values differences in the knowing contradicting with the assumption of modernity in grand or meta narratives and universal truth. It believes in plurality and seeks to reveal hidden injustice and inequality with the intention of social transformation.

All these literatures on Postmodernism and Critical postmodernism encouraged me to choose this approach to inquiry and writing. Through these approaches, I intended to reveal the mini stories of the NFE participants. These women were never on the scene to fall in the eyes of researchers, unless one knows the real life situations of these women on the one hand, and on the other hand, reaching to them and spend some time with them also was unbelievably difficult, if someone was not of the carpet owners' acquaintances. Following postmodernism approach, I thought that if glamorous life of 'Las Vegas' is taken as hyper reality from postmodern perspective the lived experience of each and every such woman is also the reality and has meaning, which is true from her perspective. Based on this theoretical background, I wanted to reveal small stories of the women laborers, which could expose their joys and problems while being learners of NFE thereby affecting their knowledge generation and application process.

Research Process

Similar as the case of various underlying assumptions of the qualitative research, there are various qualitative research methods. The method is the inquiry, which proceeds from the philosophical assumptions to research and data collection. The methods used for qualitative inquiry are action research, case study, ethnography and grounded theory. I chose to base my study on the Grounded Theory as proposed by Glaser & Strauss (1967) as it has been a method for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed (Corbin & Strauss, 1994).

According to Carbin & Strauss (1990) there are the three basic elements of grounded theory that are concepts, categories and propositions. Concepts are the basic units of analysis since it is from conceptualisation of data, not the actual data per se, that the theory is developed. Theories can't be built with actual incidents or activities

as observed or reported; that is, from "raw data." The incidents, events, happenings are taken as, or analysed as, potential indicators of phenomena, which are thereby given conceptual labels. Pandit (1996) referring to the method as proposed by Carbin and Strauss (1990), suggests that the researcher who uses grounded theory need to have some qualities. According to the author, the researcher needs to have confidence, creativity and experience both of doing research and of the context being researched.

However, I ventured to try out this method. I thought the accounts of women labourers' knowledge processing based on the NFE which they participated could be molded into a theory with interpretive paradigm. For further clarification, I picked up Martin & Tuner (Myers [Ed.], 1997) grounded theory which is an inductive, theory discovery methodology. It allows developing a theoretical account of the general features of a topic by simply grounding the account in empirical observations or data. This implies that grounded theory is different from other methods in many ways. Myers in this connection says, "The major difference between grounded theory and other methods is its specific approach to theory development and this theory suggests that there should be continuous interplay between collection and analysis" (Myers [Ed.], 1997). In the same line Borgatti (n. d.) says, the grounded theory approach developed by Corbis and Strauss consists of a set of steps, which has to be carefully executed in order to bring out a good theory. The quality of the theory is judged by the process by which a theory is constructed.

According to Charmaz (2005, p.508) "Grounded theory entails developing increasingly abstract ideas about research participants' meanings, actions, and worlds and seeking specific data to fill out, refine, and check the emerging conceptual categories". By following these concepts of the grounded theory, I tried to account the information derived from the participants to develop a theory. For this, I used

case study approach for information/data collection. The characteristics of a case study are that, it focuses on a case with clear boundaries, it describes the setting of the case and provides an in-depth picture of it and extensive and multiple sources are used when collecting data (Creswell, n.d.). This method, according to Bell (1993, p.6) is a technique that allows the researcher to concentrate on a specific instance or situation and to identify, or attempt to identify, the various interactive processes at work. These processes may remain hidden in a large scale survey but may be crucial to the success or failure of systems or organizations.

For Stake (2005), for a case study, local meanings, foreshadowed meanings and readers' consequential meanings are important. Because of the aforesaid strengths of the case study method, I opted for qualitative method against quantitative one.

Techniques for Data collection

I generated primary information from the women carpet workers who received Non formal education. As such the places were selected from the areas where carpet factories were clustered. Selection of the factories was done on the basis of non formal education receivers.

The places selected were Chabahil and Jorpati in Kathmandu district and Chundevi in Bhaktapur district. The reasons for selecting these places were in the first place, the carpet industries were clustered around these areas and secondly, women labourers of some of these factories were NFE learners. Selection of the participants was quite a tough job as entry by unknown persons in these factories especially, to talk with the labourers was not easy, however with the help of a staff of the NGO Child Development Society which had provided NFE with the assistance of some international agencies as I have described above, helped me in selecting the participants. From the factories of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, I interacted with 12

women in my first visit but in the second visit all of them were not available. This time, I talked with 10 women whom I had interviewed before and I talked with two new ones. The two participants, whom I missed second time, one of them had married off and gone to another place and another woman also had left the factory in Chundevi and shifted to another factory. I met four of them third time who represented the three groups of learners which I have categorized in chapter VI. Though literatures suggest that qualitative research can include participants from 4 to 6 persons but keeping in view of verification and authenticity for meeting the problem of representation and legitimization, I interviewed 14 women. But, I have presented the cases of twelve only. Actually, the participants who were keen in taking the literacy classes were included in the sample. The way, I had to select the research participants became a kind of following purposive sampling method, which is generally used in qualitative method.

Related literatures regarding relevant theories, policy documents of the government, ethnographic literature, reports of various organizations including government, I/Non government organizations, bilateral and multilateral agencies and plan and program documents and related research work were the secondary sources of my information.

Background of Research Participants

As revealed by a study on carpet factory carried out by CDS (2005) larger segment of the workers were from Sindhupalchowk, my research participants also though were from 9 districts, majority were from Sindhupalchowk (appendix D, E and F).

They all belonged to various ethnic groups, 9 were Tamangs,, one each from Magar, Newar and Rai.

Their ages ranged from 15 to 35 years, one participant was 15, one was 16, three were 18, four were 28, one was 27, one was 25 two were 22, and one was 35.

Though, they almost were from the same background, shifted from the agricultural occupation to the carpet weaving in Kathmandu, the reasons they left the work was not the same.

One group of participants who were illiterate did not leave the place because of the pressure to earn for living. They remained illiterate not due to the poverty of the parents, but here, the case was quite opposite. The family had enough land for living and the girls were supposed to do the heavy work related to agriculture such as taking care of livestock, herding them, and preparing mid day meal (khaja) for the farm workers, therefore their parents did not send them to school whereas, sons were sent to school. Here, gender discrimination due to deeply rooted patriarchal culture played a role. One participant who was one of the issues among two daughters and three sons said, “as daughters were supposed to go to other’s house, she was not sent to school.”

Such participants think, if they were poor they could go to school as there would not be any work at home and due to free education they would have got opportunity to be educated. One of the participants said,

“poor girls of the village did have the opportunity to go to school because they did not have work at home and their parents sent them to school as they did not have to pay anything for their education. But we were not sent to school because we had plenty of work at home”

Such group of participants fled away from the village with their friends who were already in the carpet factory without their parents’ consent. They were tempted to wear nice clothes as their friends who were working in Kathmandu. There was little

chance for them to get consent from their parents as earning was not their pressing need.

Second group of my research participants were those who due to shortage of resources to maintain the family from farm production migrated to Kathmandu either with their parents, or relatives or friends. Some of them who came with their friends took consent from their parents to do so.

All of them landed in the carpet factory because it was convenient to be there as their friends were working in this occupation and second reason was that as they were illiterate, carpet weaving happened to be some easier for them to learn by observing how others were doing.

Most of them were married by their own wish and had children who they were educating in private schools or some children were sponsored by some NGOs for education in government schools or also in private schools.

All of the participants had attended the Non formal literacy classes of six months. Some of them had participated in the adult literacy classes of six months based on the literacy package called 'Naya Goreto' developed by the Ministry of Education and Sports and the second group of learners participated in the literacy programme designed for adolescent girls using the package called 'Lalima'.

Process of Information Collection.

Among the various methods of qualitative research interview and direct observation were the methods used to collect materials. When I visited the participants, I was quite open without any preconceived assumptions as allowed me by the qualitative research method. I did not develop any questionnaires for this purpose. In this phase of information generation, I just noted only a few points for my reference to talk with the participants based on the contents of the NFE package. Though I had taken tape

recorder to record the conversation, I did not find it any useful, as the participants used to repeat the same thing time and again and I stopped the idea of recording it but noted their sayings.

During this time, I realized that women had a hard time to speak up. They were not well educated and were from the ethnic groups whose mother tongue was different from the Nepali language therefore, some of them had difficulty to express their feelings. In such a case, Consciousness Raising technique (Reinharz, 1983 as cited in Cook & Fonow, 1990, p.75) was to be used. This feminist methodology says: another application of this method is through the use of specific consciousness – raising techniques, such as role playing, rap groups, simulations, and psycho-drama, in a more self-conscious, deliberate manner. These approaches have provided feminist researchers with a way to tap women's collective consciousness as a source of data and have provided participants in the research project with a way to confirm the experiences of women, which have often been denied as real in the past.

To use this technique, I did not use the various acts as mentioned above but I had to spend some time with them to arouse them for discussing with me about what they learnt in NFE and tried to motivate them to speak. In this process, the CDS staff who had accompanied me in the course of my interview with the participants helped me a great deal. They seemed to be quite scared also because they thought that I came to test their knowledge about the NFE which they took some years back, therefore, I had to take some time in sharing with them about my purpose of visiting them. However, following the ethics of research, I had already visited them to take their owner's and their consent for interviewing them and assuring their confidentiality. I tried my best to respect their feelings and took particular care, if I somehow would offend them. After initiating discussion with them, they were not very keen to keep

their confidentiality, because there was hardly anything that had to be concealed, therefore I have used their real names in the study. In this process, I visited them two times within an interval of seven to eight months. I interacted with them almost two hours keeping in view of their free time in both of my visits. Lastly, I did member checking with four of the participants with whom I spent little less amount of time. In this meeting, the passive learners gave me clue to propose strategies which would be suitable for them in retaining and retrieving acquired knowledge.

Modes of Analysis

There are many different modes of analysis in qualitative research; in this research I tried to analyze data from hermeneutic perspective. Hermeneutic perspective assumes that there are presuppositions which affect the gathering of the data and that will also influence what is going to be found out. According to Bleicher (1980 as cited in Michael [ed.], 1997) hermeneutics can be treated as both underlying philosophy and a specific analysis. As a philosophy, it is more broadly used in contemporary philosophy to denote the study of theories and methods of the interpretation of all texts and systems of meaning and as a mode of analysis it suggests a way to understanding textual data.

Patton (1990) has proposed three ways of data collection viz. (1) in-depth open- ended interviews, (2) direct observation, and (3) written documents. All of them calls for various activities such as direct quotations about experiences of people, opinions, feelings, knowledge, people's behavior, actions, interpersonal interactions, excerpts, quotations from documents, program records, memoranda and correspondence, personal diaries, and open ended written responses to questionnaires and surveys. Darlington & Scott (2002) as well, suggested the same ways such as (1)

in depth interviewing of individuals and small groups, (2) systematic observation of behaviour and (3) analysis of documentaty data.

I tried to use first two ways as the prime focus, and I used the third way whatever was possible and available to me. Through this way I focused on the knowledge, women workers' behavior, and changed actions brought by the literacy program and accordingly, information and data were collected with the use of above-mentioned modes, which I thought would be suitable to the context.

Authenticity

Qualitative findings are not judged by internal and external validity rather authenticity is the main point to be considered (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Avoiding personal biases, theory creation, summarizing and synthesizing information in a systematic form are the parameters that are to be judged in this research method. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005) the internal and external validity of positivist criteria are replaced by trustworthiness and authenticity. Fairness is thought to be important in this inquiry, which brings balance in quality in terms of making all stakeholders' views, perspectives, claims, concerns and voices apparent.

As a qualitative researcher I was aware of Denzin & Lincoln (2005) who have warned that one needs to address the triple crisis related to representation, legitimization and praxis in the research process. In this process, I followed Pugach (2001) who said, the representation problem is related to context, the belief is that local context is central to the understanding of the phenomenon and it should be giving voice for the groups that continue to be oppressed based on race, class, culture, and language. To this, I could ensure representation by bringing the voice of the women labourers who were deprived of education because of their invisibility at the surface level. With regard to legitimizing process as well, I applied the same author

and discussed contemporary postmodern qualitative research paradigm to bring out the voices of participants whose voices have not been heard before. Following this postmodern approach, I have ventured to bring the voices of women carpet labourers whose experiences were not made open before. I also did member checking with 4 participants to ensure that I could get legitimized knowing. Similarly, in order to meet the praxis crisis, I have analyzed the lived experience of the women with the background of learning theories, Marxism and Feminism and reflected my knowing against the knowing of my research participants. .

As suggested by Kvale, I adopted a critical outlook during the analysis, for this, I became explicit in stating personal biases and avoiding biased interpretation. I tried to connect theory creation or testing (as cited in Lee, 1998 p.160). Summarizing and synthesizing information from diverse sources in standardized format may also serve as reporting tools (Mittman, 2001). For this purpose, I took more research participants than the number allowed me by the qualitative research method.

My study was not based on the collection of data, which could be verified to test the validity and reliability. This was based on subjectivity and which would in most cases be interpretive cases, beliefs on how the qualitative researcher sees the world and acts in it (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p.26). Talking about the validity of the data I followed Bateson (1972, p.314 as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p.30) who said, “The researcher is bound within a net of epistemological and ontological premises which – regardless of ultimate truth or falsity—become partially self-validating”. Besides this, I used Bryman's (1988) idea who said, qualitative data is often described by researchers as ‘rich and ‘deep’, and it is believed that the value of the data is in the immense detail with which it is recorded. This level of detail is achieved by the continuous contact with the subjects of the study, providing insights

into the most detailed aspects of the social situation. Since the data is contextual and cannot be quantified, the theories and the cases are validated by the details of the social situation (ibid). Since, my study had also dealt with the detail situation of the women labourers of the carpet factories therefore; the data/information in this regard was thought to be valid. I also used data triangulation process for the validation of the data. According to Franfort –Nachmias & Nachmias (1996) data triangulation is the use of more than one form of data collection to test the same hypothesis within unified research plan. The authors also suggest that a researcher can use two or more methods of data collection to test hypotheses and measure variables and for minimizing the degree of specificity of certain methods to particular bodies of knowledge; this is the essence of triangulation.

Data triangulation is not very applicable in qualitative research as structured questionnaires and statistical tools are not used therefore, scientifically proven results cannot be derived. However, I tried to follow the steps as proposed by Denzin (1970 cited in Bryman, n. d.) who suggested four types of triangulation i.e.

- (a) Data to data Triangulation
- (b) Investigator to investigator triangulation
- (c) Theory to theory triangulation
- (d) Methodology to methodology triangulation

Data triangulation is divided into three subtypes - time, space and person. He suggested that the data should be collected at different time, from multiple locations and from different people from the observed group so that data is validated.

Postmodernism paradigm does not demand verification of data however I used the data to data triangulation just to check the information I derived from different tools, localities and timings. In this manner, I tried to make the data/information of this

research as reliable as possible by following qualitative methods. However, the major reliability depends on the researcher like me. According to Kantor (n.d), the researchers include various perspectives to triangulate the data/information, the author says “ethnographers attempt to include multiple perspectives- their own, the subjects’, other outsiders – as they triangulate the data they are gathering” (Klein, 1990). In this research also, I used the perspectives of the women labourers, NFE programme implementers’ as well as my own perspectives for getting the information from the participants.

For data authenticity data crystallization is more important in the place of triangulation in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). For this, I used crystallization, which is commonly used in this type of research for verifying the authenticity. Ellingson developed crystallization as a frame work for making her easier to construct and articulate multiple lived realities. In this context, Ellingson (2008, p. 4) says,

I forged a path toward articulating crystallization as an emergent framework for qualitative research in order to accomplish my multigenre goals for ethnographic and other qualitative work. I do not promote a rigid, recipe like, or formulaic approach to crystallization, but instead sought to provide a map of the terrain to guide those seeking to learn more, who could benefit from specificity and instructions.

The author further clarifies that crystallization combines multiple forms of analysis and multiple genres of representation into coherent text or series of related texts. It builds a rich and partial account of phenomenon, it highlights the researchers’ vulnerability and positionality, and makes claims about socially constructed meanings.

Following this process, I did not use any rigid or pre-determined questions to the participants, but I tried to make them as comfortable as possible to articulate their experiences and their lived realities. To make myself clear about what they said to me, I asked the same questions time and again in order to cross check whether they would deviate from what they said earlier. Even one participant deviated what she said earlier and I took it as her reality and postmodernism respected the contradictions.

Report Writing

As a researcher, I took special care in writing the report in a systematic way because the research findings of this research can be the interest of broad range of stakeholders. Therefore, in order to best present the findings of the study one systematic way need to be followed. For this, I consulted literatures on report writing that says no matter the researcher is a writer or not, clarity, content and organization are important while presenting a research report (Purdue University n.d.). On this ground, I tried to use Taylor & Bogdon (1984 as cited in Marshall & Rossman, 1995) who mentioned five models of report writing such as (1) description of one's account of life with analytic points about the social significance of that life, (2) presentation of data gathered through in -depth interviews and participant observation, (3) the third approach tries to the practice to theory by summarizing the descriptive data and linking them to general theoretical constructs, (4) this is a theoretical approach and the report addresses sociological theory about institutionalization and the symbolic management of conditions in total institutions, (5) the final approach attempts to build theory by drawing on data gathered from several types of institutions and various research conditions.

Out of the five approaches, the fifth approach I thought was appropriate for me because since, I had used grounded theory, which was built based on the data gathered from in depth interviews, observation and interpretation.

Field Problems

I had predicted the following obstacles during my research work. Though the workers covered by NFE include the women workers of both registered and unregistered factories, the mobility of the workers of the latter ones was high. As such, during the course of research period there was a higher possibility of unavailability of the same workers in such factories. The reason was when the demand for carpet was high the large or the exporting factories outsource the production to the smaller unregistered ones and the owners employ more laborers. But, when there was a lull in the demand for the carpets the factory owners lay off the excess workers. Another reason for the mobility was that the workers were on the lookout for better options of the work. Sometimes, the workers shifted from the factories of Kathmandu and worked in the factories in Bhaktapur which could result into research mortality. Fortunately, there was no problem for me in finding out the NFE graduates because majority of them were still working in those factories from where they attended the NFE classes. When I visited them the second time, I was expecting the same problem that I may not be able to meet them all but this time too, it was not the case, I could meet the same 10 participants out of 12 whom I first visited. For the verification of information, I met four of my research participants the third time.

Secondly, the workers consist of various ethnic groups who have their own dialects or local language. I had expected that the participants might have come from varying context, culture and language and they could have difficulty in interacting with me but the culture, context and even language of majority were the same and

regarding the language some of them told me that as their mother tongue was different they could not express their opinion and ideas though they knew about many things from the NFE. Perhaps due to this reason, they repeated the same thing many times because they did not find words for their expression. I realized that the medium of language does have impact on learning as found out by Awasthi (2004).

Thirdly, the factory owners did not allow visitors like me to go into their factories unless they were frequent visitors with some purpose and they knew the visitors well. Therefore, as I had also mentioned above that I had to accompany some one known to them and who had a good rapport with the owners and thereby provide hawthorn effect in research and my connection with CDS also made it easier to get in.

I had also some intuition that some of the participants would be so shy that they would find difficulty in speaking with the outside visitors. But I have also described in the chapter six, NFE made them bold to speak up with strangers as per their feed back to me, the women with whom I talked to were not shy, yet a very few were not quite open.

Fortunately, all those problems were not very severe during my research work. As I mentioned above, I had to accompany one official from CDS who was the coordinator of the NFE programme conducted for the women labourers and in this course he had good rapport with the owners/managers of the carpet factories and with the women. Moreover, he won a good respect from all of them. Therefore, in Kathmandu, I was easily given permission by the owners to talk with the women but to manage the timing was a bit difficult. I myself too, knew some of the factory owners whom we used to call meetings to take feed back regarding the progress of NFE programme provided to their workers and seeking their support in the day care centers.

In Bhaktapur, one of the NFE facilitators helped in reaching the participants and accompanied me throughout my field visit. In both the places, some free time that was available to the workers was only from about 10 A.M. to 11 A.M which was the time of their meal. To talk with them in their work also was not very comfortable for me as well as for them. Therefore, I had to adjust with their suitable timing which was from 10 a. m. to 11 a. m and in their own room which made me easier to find some evidence of their application of knowledge that they learned from NFE.

CHAPTER VI

KNOWING PATTERN AND THE USE OF KNOWLEDGE FOR BETTER LIVELIHOOD

In this chapter, I have presented the account of 12 research participants who I interacted with in the course of my research.

People hold various types of knowledge such as explicit, tacit, procedural, and episodic and that are discussed in chapter two. Out of these knowledge types, my research participants possessed tacit knowledge. They possessed indigenous knowledge on health issues, were of home based medicine had trust in traditional faith healers and elders, accepted gender discrimination and were deprived of education. All of them had agro based knowledge of livestock as well as crop farming, some had experience of working in their own field, others also worked as wage labourers, but they lacked technical know how of modern type, I figured out this while talking with them. Community IPM (2000) also reiterates my finding, which says majority of women are involved in agriculture farming and their area of work is manuring, planting, weeding, harvesting and threshing, whereas men mostly did digging the terrace corners, preparing the terrace bunds and application of chemical fertilizers. How important literacy is for such "womanish agricultural work" the same literature has stated that literacy is not a prerequisite for such agricultural work. However, it significantly contributed to confidence building and developing communicative skills making easier for outsiders to reach such women. More importantly, it was an indispensable tool for women to pursue development. These women, whom I consulted with during the course of my study also felt the need for literacy after coming out of this profession.

But, how those 12 research participants could generate and process the knowledge gained through NFE for applying to improve their livelihood? The answer that I got from them could be categorized in three types (Belenky et al., 1986). These types were silence/passive type, received knowledge type, and procedural knowledge type. The silence/passive type learners were those who could not use any reason of their own to accept or reject what was taught to them. They wholly relied on the facilitators without questioning, if whatever taught to them was related to their context or culture. I felt that they believed on what their sensory organs received, cognition through subject and object interaction as unification theory of epistemology suggested was hardly applied to them. They did not know whether gender discrimination to education was practiced by not sending them to school and but by entrusting them for farming work by the parents. In this case, the participants did not use logic by applying reason and for them the sources of knowledge were their tradition and culture. But when they took NFE class their knowledge sources were mostly the facilitator and the books.

Makhamali, the Silence/Passive Type

Four women whom I interviewed were silence/passive type learners. Their knowing pattern relied on belief; their knowledge application was rest on immediacy.

Makhamali, Maiya, Keshmaya, and Swastani were of these types. Let me begin with Makamali Lama, 27 years old who said, “what the facilitator said must be right otherwise, she would not have said it. Sirs/madams do not teach wrong things”. The lessons she remembered were the agriculture and simple numeracy skill. She used the knowledge of sums for immediate benefit that was to read the number of the wool to be used for the carpet weaving, to know the weight of the wool to be used for it and to read her work record card. This implied that immediate concern was of greater

importance to the silence/passive type learners. However, the knowledge related to their tradition carried greater value as she did not want to forget the agriculture farming knowledge but wanted to keep it for future use which she restored in long term memory. But her interest of agriculture faded away when I met her second time. Her concentration was more on meeting the immediate needs only. Future was uncertain she was in a dilemma what she will do in the future.

For Makhamali Lama, the source of knowledge or epistemology was the facilitator and ontology was the strong belief upon the books and the facilitators. From the discussion with her, I understood that silence/passive learners see everything from the eyes of the facilitator. They act as parasite to them. However, the tradition and culture have played a greater role even in their learning initially; they took keen interest in enhancing the farming related knowledge, which they wanted to carry with them back home but gradually they were diverted to other things and the knowledge of agriculture could not remain long in their long term memory. Their determination became feeble and could not decide what they will be doing in the future because there were possibilities of other work. Various literature in adult learning (Knowles, 1980 cited in Cooper, n.d.) thought adult learners as reservoir of experiences and have suggested that adults bring with them their experiences, their tradition and culture, which can have impact in their learning. In their case too, information provided in agriculture farming had a greater influence though in the present context this knowledge was not relevant to them. It is where the silence/passive learners generate and process knowledge though not for immediate purpose but for the future. But for passive type of learners, the knowledge and their interest did not stay long.

In my first meeting with Makhmali Lama, she was quite happy for getting the opportunity to attend NFE classes. After she attended NFE she knew how to read but

had difficulty in writing. In the first meeting, she remembered about the lessons on health, cleanliness of the surroundings and nutritious food, keeping good relationship with people and but in my second meeting she had forgotten most of the knowledge. It reminded me of the information processing theory (Kehoe, 1999). This theory says that if the learners did not use gained knowledge immediately, it fades away. This also indicates how the learners internalize the acquired knowledge. If she felt that the knowledge gained was important to make a difference in her life in terms of improving human asset, social asset and ultimately the financial assets, she would have restored in her memory. It also gave me the lesson that if the learners are not updated about the learned knowledge; it does not stay in their memory. From the discussion with the participants, I also realized that how useful is the generated knowledge also depends on how keen is the learner to acquire it for bringing changes in life. If the learner is adult and s/he identifies the need why one wants to study, that decides how far the knowledge is retained and applied in one's life. In Makhamali's case, the only need she identified was ability to read the date when she started the carpet weaving in the loom and how much kilo of wool she used. For starting other business, she said she will have to do financial investment but for this work she does not have to spend anything. For her, reading was important to know some information related to carpet weaving, establishing good rapport with people, and obtaining agricultural knowledge, which was of culture and tradition bound profession. It means the 'silence/passive' learners are satisfied for whatever ability they gain in terms of reading, knowing simple functional knowledge, and they did not see use of other knowledge. They do not venture to go forward for increasing their financial status except for remaining silent and be in the same situation (refer to the case of Makhamali Yonjon and Maina Ghising's case in appendix, D1& appendix D2).

Another participant, Maina Ghising also belonged to the same category as of Makhamali Yonjon. They were together in the programme. Her reaction also was not different from that of her colleague. She said, “I can read simple sentences, can check the home-work of my daughter, and can read sign board in the street”. She expressed her happiness to own this much of knowledge from the NFE and her appetite for learning was satisfied with this limited knowledge. The knowledge of agriculture farming had more or less the same type of influence in her too. She also thought that the knowledge of agriculture was important for her as she had in mind that she will go back home and work in this field in the future.

In Maina’s case, she was not preoccupied by what she wanted to learn but whatever she could learn from the programme she seemed to be satisfied. As she was feeling low due to her illiteracy only the knowledge of reading also was a big achievement for her. Her ability to check daughter’s home-work indicated that now she is keener to provide education to her daughter than to her own. For her daughter’s future her self is disguised. Though she was from agriculture background, its knowledge also did not appeal her. Like Makhami she was also in look out for other options not totally depending in agriculture occupation only.

Other experience, while talking with them I acquired that if the women came from the same context and culture their learning pattern also was more or less similar. Makhmali and Maina came from almost the same environment and their responses also were similar.

The participants who were very young in the age of i.e.15/16 years were more concerned with the ill effect of early pregnancy and observing the experience of their female counterparts after getting married being surrounded by so many problems that bearing children, being responsible of bringing them up, husbands migrating to other

countries etc. they wanted to refrain from getting married. They developed such concept after attending the NFE programme, but such sensitivity developed through the lessons derived from NFE but it sustained only for a very short period of time. After some time, they were in a dilemma to decide what the right decision was and what was not. In such a case, I found that the convention of what others were doing played a key role in deciding what to do, at least for those who were teenagers. Here peer influence was dominant than the knowledge they acquired from the NFE. Perhaps, it would not be wrong to interpret this change to be the influence of their culture of getting early marriage by their own will. I found such a situation in Keshmaya's case.

One of the participants, Keshmaya Tamang, 16 said, from the NFE she learned that early marriage was not good, early pregnancy was injurious to health and she added, knowing all this she wanted to abstain from marriage. But such effect was short term because, when I visited her second time, she had got married. In her case too, this lesson did not remain long lasting like other lessons such as cleanliness, hygiene etc. This time, her reaction was different from before. She said, she already knew about the information about health and hygiene, it was not new information to her. She also said that she was not very keen in restoring and applying such knowledge. After talking with her, I realized that if the girls are very young, particularly, if they do not have children they do not internalize such knowledge as health, hygiene, nutritious food etc. because while talking with the participants my intuition was that women seemed more concerned with their children's health than their own. Her reaction of this time gave me the strong feeling that women's knowledge is more of 'connected type' more attached to the children (Belenky et al., 1986).

Keshmaya was also one of the participants of SEEP training which was given to the participants as a follow up to NFE to enable them for choosing other income generating options. The training provided her the skill of making beads string and doll, but in my second visit she said, she threw away all the materials of the doll making and beads making. This implied that if one is not serious enough to learn any skill, it would not be wise to give the skill to them. The second point could be that she was not in the pressing need to raise her income. Thirdly, she did not have skill of marketing. For the trainees like Keshmaya, the time of training, the money and the materials were of sheer wastage. And yet, people like Keshmaya retain knowledge in some part of their memory but it was less likely that they decode it for applying (refer to appendix D 3 for Keswhmaya's case).

While talking to Keshmaya, I got the impression that young girls like her are easily lured by others and they want to copy what the girls of her age do. Joining NFE and SEEP training did not happen in a planned way and forgetting all those knowledge and deciding to get married early also occurred in a similar way. Actually, this group of learners were given the knowledge of ill effects of early marriage and as I mentioned above, immediately after the course, she thought of remaining unmarried but all those were gone within some lapse of time.

Here, Keshmaya seemed to be in a dilemma. Earlier she was determined not to get married because she had seen other girls suffering from the married life but she could not resist this determination for long, because she also emulated other girls and got married. In this sense, she could not decide what was right and what was wrong for her. As postmodernism respects multiple truths as opined by various authors in Chapter Five, in Keshmaya's case both of her decisions were truth of her life. Immediately, after she took NFE she was more concerned with the ill effects of early

marriage and forthcoming risks of it in her physical and social life. During that time, it was the truth for her, but later she wanted to follow what her peers did and got married and neither she wanted to update her knowledge gained from the NFE, nor she wanted to keep up the skill acquired. This was also another truth of her life. What I derived from Keshmaya's case that in young age newer knowledge however useful it may be attracts the knower only for a short period of time but when time passes by and more learning to update the knowledge does not take place, the knower will be swayed away by whatever is mostly seen or by what others mostly do. It seemed that the agriculture work too was not much of her interest. As she also did not have guardians to provide her counseling she was free to do whatever she liked to do.

More or less, similar was the case of Swastani Shrestha who remembers some of the things such as ill effects of early marriage and necessity of boiling the drinking water. She also did not seem to be quite keen to retain the knowledge and apply it.

I could not meet Swastani second time because she had left the factory after getting married. Her case also hinted me that though the knower retains some of the knowledge acquired from the books or the facilitator but they have difficulty in applying due to their context or some other constraints. She also remembered the knowledge provided by the NFE lessons on reading and writing and she said 'now I can read signboards in the street'. But she said "I am very busy therefore, I cannot boil the drinking water". Besides, her being busy, it could also be the fuel cost which would have been difficult to bear by the family or the ignorance of her family on the importance of hygienic drinking water might have resisted her in implementing the acquired knowledge but she did not express such things to me as she was some introvert type of girl. This also can be interpreted that the knower could not very much trust the knowledge provided by the books or the facilitator and wanted to

depend more on the traditional sources of knowledge than other knowledge later gained from other sources. Her case also indicated that though they internalize knowledge, which could be useful in life, due to practical difficulty they could not use it. Or this could also indicate learners like Swastani could not develop full trust in the lessons or the facilitator of NFE.

The deliberation above gave some intuition such as

1. NFE program gave 'one fits all' materials to the learners
2. It could not capture the knowing pattern of its learners
3. Teaching process could not fully develop trust in the lessons given by the NFE.

Minu, the Received Knowledge Type

The received knowledge type learners generate knowledge from the tradition, culture and from the facilitators and from books after attending the NFE programme.

This group of women is capable of receiving and reproducing knowledge but is not able to create knowledge on their own (Belenky et al., 1986). They try to apply the knowledge gained as far as possible. These participants could reason out what they have learned and tried to apply. But they could not modify or explore more for their benefit from what they have learned. However, sometimes they tried out other options as well. My field experience says that majority of my research participants, whom I talked to fall in this group. This group of women had not grasped all the knowledge given by the NFE facilitators; they were also selective but were broader in understanding and applying. They felt empowered in terms of speaking with other people, developing social behaviour and seeking justice from the employers and also keeping their traditional knowledge of agriculture intact. In this group as well, knowledge receiving and applying depended on the area where they felt urgency of

being literate and gathering information where it was needed. For instance, Minu Magar Rana joined this programme to learn better how to read and write as she was a school drop out and was not illiterate. Her prime motive to join this programme was a little different from the illiterates as she was already literate her need was to enhance the quality of her already acquired knowledge of reading and writing and to be skilled in other areas for shifting to other occupation. Thus, to look for other income generating options was also her priority. She also tried to draw out implications for improving her life from what she read in the books. Her story also gives a lesson that peer's interest and knowledge also influence in processing knowledge.

Different from her peers, she remembers a story which portrayed a picture of a drunkard husband who gave torture to his wife physically and mentally. She says this story gave her a lesson that she should be watchful to her husband if he would be indulged in bad habits. Thus, she could also draw implications of the lessons that she has to be careful to make her conjugal life better. While talking with Minu, I also knew that if someone regularly listens to his/her friends about some topic that has also greater influence in his/her doings and knowledge generation. To quote Minu, who said "when friends keep talking about agriculture farming I also became interested in it." Regular reinforcement from her friends and the lesson of agriculture farming aroused her interest in agriculture. Actually, she was not from agriculture background. She was from Silgudhi, India, and married to a boy of Nepal. Her parents used to work in tea garden in Silgudhi, India. She had some experience of tea gardening but now as she is very influenced from her friends and is taking interest in agriculture. Her husband is also from agriculture background and she thinks that in the future she has to go to husband's home and work in agriculture. Therefore, she wants to keep the knowledge of agriculture in her memory so that she can use it back home in the

future. She is prepared for this. From her case, I came to know that peer influence is also very important in generating knowledge.

Minu's case helped me draw out that peers / friends/children can also be the episteme and reinforce the knowing process. She said she remembers the knowledge provided by NFE about cleanliness of one's surroundings, preparation of 'nun chini pani,' (the oral dehydration solution). She said, "my daughter also taught me about the importance of fresh vegetables. My daughter learned this in her school". Thus she could verify her knowledge gained from NFE with her daughter's knowledge provided by her school. For her, daughter also became the source of knowledge. Through her daughter, her knowledge was reinforced and this motivated her to apply the lessons for better life. She also recalled about the possibility of small business like kitchen gardening for additional income that she learned in NFE.

In my second meeting with Minu, she said that she had started small business of vegetable marketing but it did not work out and she left and started carpet weaving again. As she was from India she sees more possibilities of small business in India than in Nepal. In Minu's case her childhood environment, tradition and culture have influence in applying the knowledge that is gained from NFE. She related the story with the husband of other girls giving trouble to wives that made her to be careful towards her husband (appendix. E1). Minu wanted to apply the knowledge she gained from NFE class regarding cleanliness and small business. She with her friends had started to clean the surroundings but she said "while we were cleaning our surroundings, male peers used to tease us for doing menial work and we left it". In the case of starting other business she said "there is a greater possibility of small business in India, but here I don't see any possibility". According to her, she encountered bad experience when she had started a business. . In the first case, she could not resist the

offence of male partners and in the second case she could not try out other options of earning. It indicates that the NFE could not give sufficient knowledge about the ‘coping strategies’, which livelihood approach should have given to better the livelihood so that she could resist others’ comments. She was also interested in knowledge transfer which she expressed in the use of ‘nun chini pani’, she said even if she did not have to use it, she could use it for other children.

Sita Rai was a teenager of 18, who emphasized on two points which she learned from NFE. The first thing that she instantly remembered was the cleanliness and the hygienic factor which she had to take care of at the time of her menstruation and secondly, she reiterated several times that she learned how to speak and behave with other people and her statement was supported by her sister also who was accompanying her when I was talking to her. Her sister emphasized on the changed behaviour in Sita after she took NFE classes. She said “Sita used to be very rough with people before, she was hesitant to speak with others, but after she participated in NFE her behaviour has changed significantly, now she is polite and knows how to talk with people”.

In my second meet, Sita was married and she resided with her husband outside the Carpet factory. Her place was very clean and she gave the credit for such improved living to the knowledge generated from NFE. This time too she was not behind in speaking high of NFE in bringing change in her behaviour in terms of talking with people. She was also quite impressed with the lesson “our responsibility” of the NFE package, as she said “I will do my duty though my mother- in law is not happy with our marriage”. According to her, mother-in -law was not quite happy with their inter caste marriage. In her case too, though she knew that girls should not marry before the age of 20, she could not resist refraining from marriage. In ethnic groups,

even though girls are convinced that early marriage is injurious to their health some times the pressure from boy's side used to be very strong and there was difficulty in resisting it. Besides, changes in Sita were quite visible. She had taken the lessons learned from the NFE very seriously and as I mentioned above she was very keen to apply the knowledge of health, hygiene, behaving with people and fulfilling her responsibility towards seniors. In the case of her marriage the culture of early marriage in their group also might have played a role. Secondly, they could marry on their own choice. For her agriculture knowledge has not been deposited for the future, because during farming season she used to go home and work in the field.

Like Sita, Thuli could relate the knowledge gained from the NFE to make her as well as children's life better. Though she could not complete the course she was able at least to read, to check her children's homework, and find out various facilities that were available and had importance in her life. She gave the example that, now she could find out available services in hospital, meaning that NFE helped her in accessing social capital to improve her human capital. First, she found the knowledge source in the NFE contents which enabled her to read and then she was able to capitalize this knowledge to relate and to explore other knowledge which would be useful in her life. Other important knowledge she derived was the knowledge of mathematics which helped her in checking her wage record prepared by the manager. This made her able to seek justice in the workplace if something went wrong or cheating took place from the manager. Thuli was also one of the participants who became courageous to speak up after attending NFE. She said "before I was very much scared to talk with people but now I became bold and knew that if I speak with people nothing happens".

Aita Laxmi Pakhrin (Tamang), 18, was also one of the school drop outs, who had to leave schooling in order to meet the cash shortage of the parents. She relapsed to illiteracy due to lack of follow up of her education, therefore she joined the NFE. She applied the knowledge that she obtained from NFE class when she fell sick. She also trusted on the precautionary measures suggested by the facilitator against girls trafficking. She reasoned about what was right and what was wrong and only through the deliberation on various issues in the class, she trusted NFE lessons as well as the facilitator as the epitome.

Phulmaya, 35 was not very young. The reason why she left home for Kathmandu was not the financial constraint but due to her temptation to wear nice clothes like her friends who were working in the carpet factory.

When I met her second time, her children were already admitted to school and two different NGOs had supported them. Because of the knowledge she obtained from NFE class, she realized that her children were inhaling wool dust because they always used to be with her when she was weaving the carpet, consequently they used to become sick frequently. After she took NFE, when the children were not kept with her in work, their frequency of falling ill decreased. She learned this from the experience. Therefore, 'experiencing was believing' to her. She was influenced to acquire knowledge about agriculture farming and she wanted to take it seriously because she wanted to memorize and use it back home.

But Devi Pakhrin's (Tamang) story reminded me Rogers (1998) who argued that it is not the age that determines the adulthood, but it is the responsibility that one takes decides who the adult is. She was 15 years old when I first met her. She was staying with her maternal uncle and auntie, working in the factory and taking care of her little brother who was studying in grade five. She talked quite matured not by her

age but by the responsibility she was taking of her brother. Her mother was in Saudi Arabia. She also was very influenced by the agriculture knowledge that she gained from NFE. She said “when my mother returns we go back to our village and do the farming (refer to appendix E.6 for Devi’s case).

Devi was influenced by the knowledge for market management and savings that she received in the NFE class. When she received this knowledge she was quite immature by age to take major decisions. The SEEP training including doll making was of no use to her age. She was working in the factory

The deliberation above gave me some intuition such as

4. Learners’ level of understanding and purpose determine nature of livelihood.
5. Cultural influence seems to have greater influence in applying generated knowledge.

Pasang, the Procedural Knowledge Type

The procedural knowledge type of NFE participants were some more courageous and went beyond the convention of remaining at the status quo. The same contents of NFE made them bold and enabled them to take up some adventurous work to earn more for better living. Belenky et al. (1986) have divided this knowledge group into separate knowledge and connected knowledge types of people. The authors have also shown that mostly men fall in separate knowledge group and women in connected knowledge group. But here, I have not separated the participants in two. I have put the participants in only one group that is procedural knowledge group. Because I was not comparing women and men in this research and I found connected type in other groups as well. Procedural type of knowledge is a position in which women learn and apply objective procedures for obtaining and communicating knowledge. However, I

found that these women's knowledge also is connected either with the children or with the family or with the friends. I put those participants in this position who felt very much empowered from the knowledge gained from the NFE and the facilitators and tried out various options and still thinking of venturing newer options for better livelihood. I found this group of the NFE graduates different from others whom I described above. Pasang Pakhrin is one of them.

Pasang Pakhrin, 28, who belonged to Tamang group of Sindhupalchowk, attended NFE when she was working with a carpet factory. There, she knew how to read and write and immediately she joined tailoring training with her own cost (appendix F1).

Her concentration seemed more on enhancing financial capital. She said that she had three sources of income now: the first is the carpet weaving where she earned about Rs 4000 a month and tailoring adds up something and the small business of grocery which she is running in her own room adds up Rs. 400/500 per 20 bags of rice and little extra for other food items sold. She was also instructing other people about the health and hygiene and sharing her knowledge about different ways of income generation with her friends. She said "NFE worked out as a medicine to me which brought consciousness to me as if I was dead before". She was also doing some tailoring side by side.

Lakmaya Tamang, 28 another NFE graduate took driving license for a three wheeler and started driving it, but unfortunately she met an accident and came back in the earlier occupation of carpet weaving. But she was not discouraged, she is again thinking of driving microbus for public transportation (appendix E2).

In my second visit to Lakmaya, I found her as eager as before to trying out various options that would bring positive results in her life. The knowledge that she

learnt in the NFE class on health, hygiene, trafficking was as fresh in her memory as before and like Pasang Tamang she used to share information to the other people as well. She also seeks information from other sources such as radio, TV and friends and is always is look out for new knowledge. The knowledge of agriculture farming had influenced her greatly she said, “had I known about multiple cropping before, the land in the village would have been sufficient for food”. She wanted to keep the knowledge of agriculture farming fresh in her mind, she said she will use it when she goes back home. After knowing more about farming, she used to watch agriculture programme in TV. She also recognized the knowledge when it was available in other sources but this happened in the area of agriculture, which implied that traditional and cultural knowledge is hard to go from the mind. This made me think that they were keen to further knowledge in agriculture though they learned many other things as well. She is quite determined that she will go back home after some years and do the agriculture farming. In my third visit to her, she was as determined as before and very enthusiastic to apply the knowledge of poultry, goat farming etc. whatever she learned from the NFE lessons. She also tried vegetable vending for some time but she said “my friends teased me for doing this work then I left and she added actually vegetable business was quite profitable”. Lakmaya could not resist the remarks of her friends that she sold vegetable though she benefited from it. Such lack of resistance of her pointed out that the NFE could not provide adequate ‘coping strategies’.

Pasang Tamang and Lakmaya Tamang were the ones who wholeheartedly depended on the knowledge obtained from the NFE contents and the facilitators, and also made this knowledge as the base for exploring their own ways for better their living. In their case, their context and culture did not obstruct their venture but yet in

Lakmaya's case the coping strategies for livelihood seemed to be lacking as she was not able to resist her friends' teasing her for vending vegetables.

The deliberation above gave some intuition such as,

6. NFE is the jumping station to the assertive learners.
7. Inadequate delivery of coping strategies made the assertive learners not fully capable of utilizing the knowledge gained.

Closure

I presented the cases of 12 research participants with whom I discussed about their learning and acquiring knowledge from NFE class. Their knowing pattern were rather different; some believed what they saw, felt or told as suggested by empiricism and other type of participants used both experience and reason as suggested by Unification theory of epistemology (The Unification Church, 1996) to use the acquired knowledge.

The analysis of the three types of NFE graduates gave many questions such as (a) how a NFE facilitator could address the interest groups if they want to learn other things than the prescribed information (b) how the facilitator could distinguish between the passive, receptive, and procedural learners and treat them differently (c) how NFE materials are to be developed to suit with the people of varied interests and characteristics (d) how the facilitators should be trained if s/he himself/herself belong to a type out of the three viz., passive, receptive, and procedural (e) what should be the mechanism to know the groups of the facilitators that the management wants before it organizes the training, and (f) what should be the post NFE support system to help them use their knowledge into action no matter they belong to any types of learners. Along with these questions, I also realized that how much knowledge the NFE graduates could grasp and use it depends on the learners, how interested they are

what has been their priority and what is their ability to process the knowledge for their betterment. I also knew that facilitators' ability is also the important factor to make the learners keen to apply the learning for their improved living. This reminded me the latter view of Locke which he himself contradicted to previous view and said as cited by Curtis et al. (1965) that “men are born with different capacities and aptitudes” (p.232). In Lockes’s version as cited in (Ibid, p.232) “Amongst men of equal education there is greater inequality of parts”.

In this chapter, I described the cases of the research participants and in the following one I have examined their cases from the perspectives of various theories and approaches.

CHAPTER VII

WRAPPING UP THE JOURNEY

In the previous chapters, I presented various perspectives related to learning theories, varying views on literacy and Non formal education, arguments on livelihood approach, and discussion with research participants about their knowledge generation from Non formal education and its application for their improved livelihood. In this chapter, I have analyzed how the information theories applied in the research participants' knowledge processing, how the andragogical concept as characterized by adult learning theories have impacted their learning pattern and how far Non formal education have embraced livelihood concept and how much the learners could capture those concept for improving their livelihood.

Rereading the Information Processing and Adult Learning Theories

The NFE learners' knowledge generation and application process for improved livelihood reminded me the information processing/ stage theory of Atkinson & Shrifin (1968 as cited in Huitt, 2003). This theory has advocated for how the learners process information and send to short term memory. My research participants also reconfirmed this theory. At the same time, their ways of getting and using the information for livelihood gave me a gray area to think over this theory i.e. all of the learners though belonged more or less to the same situation, their pattern of receiving, retrieving and using the information varied greatly. For instance, some gave attention to store the health information, and immediately used, while some others just restored the information but were less keen to use, some were more concerned with collecting various information by using reading skill, some others were more interested to be

enterprising. There, I proposed to draw a line that makes the Atkinson & Shrifin's information theory complete. In other words, my research participants did not follow the steps of the information processing theory rather some passed through first step but did not proceed to another and some jumped from step one, and went beyond. In doing so, they indicated that all do not follow the steps sequentially, which I thought gave some gray area in the implementation of the information theory. For example, the type one participants valued more to their children than their basic needs such as food, health, security, and education. This type of participants also accumulated the knowledge that was not of immediate use for them but they had experience and interest to them. This shows that these participants wanted to process the information and send to long-term memory, which they can encode at the time of need. But this was also not applied to other types of the learners as some learners wanted to process information and send to long term memory even though they did not have prior experience, the reason was the interconnectedness with the peers which motivated them in taking interest in the subject, wanted to process it and retain.

Here peer's influence was dominant, about which, information theories including Atkinson & Shrifin's have hardly talked about.

On how my research participants processed knowledge derived from NFE, I tried to examine this process from Information Processing model of Cognitive development theory. I chose cognitive development theory because as my participants were not children and their mind was already preoccupied with several issues, which were important in their lives; under this situation, I thought some kind of knowledge imposition as Behaviourists suggested might not be applied. They had ideas of their own through which they could develop images of outer object and cognition was to be taken place in their own style.

However, I also found that for some participants, the passive type of learners, cognition took place according to what the theory of behaviourism suggested. Such participants wanted to process knowledge and retain it exactly what others suggested. They desired the facilitator to be active and believed in what s/he had taught. They did not even question whether the things that the facilitator taught was practical in their lives or not; they had unquestionable trust in the facilitator. They were not very keen even to implement whatever knowledge was given to them, they wanted to restore the knowledge exactly what has been given to them. They also wanted the facilitator to be strict and impose authoritative style in teaching. According to them, perhaps this way they would have encouraged to learn more. During my conversation with them, they reiterated two things one was that if they would get opportunity to learn again they will learn better, secondly, the facilitator should take strict disciplinary measures to make them learn better. This type of women, I put in the category of 'silence' type (Belenky et al., 1997). As I stated above, I found that the learners were also motivated by the experience of the peers and were keen to acquire the knowledge though it was of little use to them now and in the future. Here, I differed with the theory of Knowles whose andragogy put all of the adults in the same category. But, I agree with the remarks of Tisdell & Taylor (1999) who argued on Knowles' andragogy that it emphasizes on homogeneity, the difference determined by only personality not by the positionality (culture, gender, & class). The authors also put Knowles in the category of humanist philosopher who sees the adult educator as a skilled crafts person, who is adept at facilitating the practice of andragogy so as to better meet the individual needs of the adult learner (ibid). Secondly, as opposed to the prescribed process of NFE, for some learners more particularly for the 'silence/passive' type of learners the participatory or the dialectic process did not work, they wanted the imposing style as

advocated by the behaviourists, because the traditional behaviourists viewed learning as a mechanistic or robotic phenomenon (Klein & Mowrer, 2000). None of these behaviouristic theorists hinted at the possibility that the organism actually understood what was going on. Here the stamping in of the S-R association was automatic and nonconscious (Klein & Mowrer, 2000). In this line, I felt most of these learners too wanted to grasp the information mechanically, as if filling fuel in a machine as the above authors thought.

From various literatures about NFE which I have discussed in chapter three, I figured out that NFE tries to give knowledge and information to its clients in several issues which are also called functional literacy and that are considered to be useful in life for raising living standard. But, the question is how far the learners receive knowledge, use them and better their lives. In this connection, I talked to the participants about their knowledge enhancement through NFE, its implementation and support to better their lives. Out of the participants, who completed the NFE package and who could not complete the lessons, all of them had a few things at the tip of the tongue, as if they had memorized them and also are implementing them as far as possible. The knowledge, which they had restored, did not have any connection whether they had completed the lessons or did not do so.

According to information processing model, the learners can restore the information only for a limited period of time and they can filter the information only if s/he is attentive, is interested in the contents taught and has control over the resources and the topic is surprising. This theory seeks quite an exercise within the mind to process the information derived. If the information is not attended it will fade away.

The information processing theory whether of Miller or Atkinson & Shriffi's stage theory, suggest that only a little information remain in the short term memory of the learners and the learners can retain them only if they use them immediately.

For this purpose, the learners' interest and how they can internalize the acquired information need to be given attention while planning the contents. The other point to be noted was, if the knowledge was directly related to them and children's health and their education also went to their memory. Here, I found the similarity with the aforesaid information theory as the informants were interested in those things where they are concerned and they were convinced that the information was really important for them as well as in their children's lives.

Miller's Information Processing theory informs that information remains as small "chunks" in working memory (Kehoe, 1999). In line with this theory, I found that some NFE participants stored the memory on health, hygiene, sanitation, reproductive health, importance of education, and simple sums as the "chunks" but they did not spend their time to remember. In the case of the knowledge of agriculture farming it was different. The knowledge of agriculture also remained in their working memory. It was not because, it was of immediate use but because they have back in mind that it should be used in future, as their ultimate destination was the farming, after they left the carpet weaving. Perhaps, such storage of information was influenced by the long-term memory (LTM) for which they have to organize the information efficiently, do deep processing, reviving when it was needed. For other information, perhaps they did not pay much attention, or was not to the context or for some other reason it did not stay in their memory. From this, it can also be derived that they processed the knowledge which they could easily apply and thought it was important in their lives and the knowledge of agriculture interested them to a great

deal because they always kept in mind that agriculture was their occupation as the security for the future. This was also possible that they were influenced by culture/tradition bound profession. In this case, as suggested by information theories that some information they send to the long-term memory through deep processing worked out for them in the case of the knowledge on agriculture farming.

What I derived from the opinions of the NFE participants, which I have described in chapter three, that maximum amount of knowledge, is expected in several issues from minimum amount of time through which the participants benefit in terms of getting their livelihood improved. The research participants' style of learning matched with the information theory suggested but the information they processed was very limited and more limited was the application process.

Reflecting over the Pedagogy/Andragogy

From the discussion with the women labourers, I felt that they used to learn the weaving without much effort and secondly, as they were illiterate, or semi literate, getting other jobs was difficult, carpet weaving happened to be some easier for them to learn by observing how others were doing. Here, I found that literacy was not that important but observation skill was very important to learn. This gave me the room for andragogic/pedagogic challenge; challenge to Freire's idea and Malcolm's ideas. For example, Knowles has emphasized on four points in the case of adult learning that they need to know as to why they are learning, they have plenty of experiences which should be the resource for learning, they need hands – on – learning and they want to use the skill immediately (Kruse, 2002). Referring it to my study, I found that Knowles' points did not all apply in such learners. Their need for learning was also very limited, reading and writing and simple sums were their only identified needs, their experiences also could not be tapped as the resource, may be, it was the inability

of the facilitators bring out their them or the learners could not articulate their experiences.

Here, I found some grey area in the application of andragogy of Knowles. In other words, my research participants were not the type of learners who could identify their own needs and they were more guided by the peers than their own experiences. But, this was not the case to all of them and yet majorities were of this type. This type of learners was more or less similar to the case of Freire suggested pedagogy i.e., “conscientization” which is thought to be the foundation of the teaching approach that seeks “to promote educational experiences that are transformative, empowering, transgressive, and even subversive” (Puett, 2005). The author further argued that education should be both liberating and socially and politically emancipatory for adults and he was against schooling (Solomon, 2003). Linking this argument with my study, I realized that Freire’s approach to education promoted Marxists’ revolutionary views against the capitalists/producers. But the motive of NFE in our context was more to bring consciousness to improve the informants’ living rather than agitating against the oppressors. However, NFE did include empowering process through imparting knowledge of one’s rights to fight against injustice. This ideology and the process aptly fits with MOES (2008, p. 23) that says, “The main guiding principles for the delivery of both formal and non-formal educational services will be the raising of awareness of the importance of education followed by demand-orientation during the preparation of detailed strategies and plans.” Taking the participants’ case and reflecting it against Freire’s pedagogy, I was rather skeptical whether this fully applied in my research participants. What, I derived from the literature that, the objectives of the NFE is to deliver the knowledge and skill which will improve their

lives and make them aware of various issues, but they do not totally transform the social structure or the life style of the learners.

Rereading Class Theory and Literacy Participants

As discussed in methodology chapter, majority of the learners came from Sindhupalchowk district; their economic status differed to some extent. One group of participants who were illiterate did not leave the place because of the pressure to earn for living. They remained illiterate not due to the poverty of the parents but because they had heavy work at home as described above. I could relate this case with Maslak's study (1999) on Tharu group of Midwestern region in Nepal. According to her findings, ethnicity appeared to be the most influencing factor to enroll girls in schools and women with high ethnicity scores tend to send their girls to school more than the women with lower ethnicity scores. This finding reminded me of the feminist theory, caste theory, and Marx's economic theory. This also complies with the lower literacy rate of some ethnic groups.

The feminist theories mostly, address the issues on gender inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations and sexuality. They are based on experiences of gender roles and relations of the women. Many of these theorists focus on studying gender inequality and promoting women's rights, interests, and issues. The themes that these theories cover are generally patriarchy, stereotyping, objectification, sexual objectification, and oppression. In line with this framework they raise the issues such as reproductive rights, domestic violence, sexual harassment, discrimination and sexual violence (Eastern Kentucky University, 2008).

As I was more concerned with the education of the women, I found patriarchy culture to be prevailing to a great deal and gender inequality was evident, as I described in chapter six. For some girls, poverty was not the cause that obstructed

their education, they had to share the work of the parents related to farming. Those who were poor, they had to work for family sustenance and parents did enjoy the earnings of the daughters. In the case of my research participants too, gender issues could be observed. They were over-burdened; they worked in the carpet factories, did the household chores and took care of the children, simultaneously. I found that mothers were more concerned in the education of their children than the fathers. Though in some cases their brothers also could not go to school but one of them was sending her brother to school through her earnings. Therefore, from this scenario, I accepted the aforesaid theories though they had some leverage in the family.

The caste theory on the other hand includes three elements: repulsion, hierarchy, and hereditary specialization (Cox, 1948). This theory perpetuates subdivisions, sets cultural standards, and propels caste classification indefinitely and continuously (Cox, 1948, p. 5). My research participants were women who belonged to various ethnic groups but majority were Tamangs, as I described in chapter five. While talking with them, I found that they were less conscious about the importance of education and more so in the case of girls. From the discussion with them, I developed the intuition that ethnicity wise they did not have any restriction in any matters but only consciousness and poverty were the hindering factors to their development.

The Marxist economic theory, on the other hand, mainly talked about the producers/ capitalists, the labouring class or the proletariat. It did not hold much reality of my research participants though they were labourers. In other words, my research participants were not the type of the mass of labourers who forgo individualism for the sake of common good. I did not find any probability that they could be united as Marx wanted to be and be a part of the struggle against the

producers. In fact, the common interest of my research participants was not to become labourers for the agitation purpose as Marx advocated. For instance, Marx claimed that to form a class, the workers should share common situation and common interests and these common interests form the class's individuals' interests (ibid). But Marx's class does not end only in this he does not call such a group as a class, unless the labourers get involved in political movement i.e. for social change. Wood (2004, p.93) in this regard cites Marx and says,

insofar as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence which separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture (*Bildung*) from those of other classes and put them over against these others in hostile relation, they form a class .

Here, I wanted to connect whether Marx's philosophy of class formation was possible due to the literacy programme and I came up with differing views that the class solidarity as Marx presumed was not very relevant with this kind of labourers even after acquiring literacy skill. As I have stated above, the reason they came and joined the carpet weaving was not the same for all. They varied, for instance, one group of participants came to Kathmandu due to the shortage of resources to maintain the family from its farm production. Some of the others came with their friends with parents' consent to earn more in the city center.

Some of the participants who could not go to school ran away from the village to enjoy the glamorous urban life. However, stepping in this occupation through the peer/relative's pressure was dominant with all the labourers. Out of them, some were married and had to bring up children either alone or with the husband and some were unmarried and easily carried away by peers or boys. In this context, objectives of coming to Kathmandu and joining carpet factories differed, therefore the solidarity as

expected by Marx or Freire did hardly apply as such the andragogical concept which Knowles proposed putting adults into one basket was not also very relevant.

Amalgamating the feminism, caste theory, and Marxists theory, I tried to reflect my field and found that girls and women belonged to both type of families whether they were well off or poor, were more likely to be deprived of education. The parents who could send them to school did not do so due to heavy work at home, those who were poor could not incur education cost for the girls. After the marriage the husbands left them behind with children in the pretext of either to work outside the country or even deserted them. In the course of my field work, I found one woman who had gone outside the country but did not have contact with them at all. Such woman had to perform both the breadwinner role and mothering role. There were three other women whose husband had gone outside the country and sending money occasionally. Though in the context of education, I felt that patriarchal concept was prevailing to a great deal which supported women's secondary position depriving them of getting education, I found that these women did enjoy some freedom in decision making, as they did not look subdued to their families either to in laws or to the parents. Here, I could also feel some area of comfort that even with the patriarchal concept there was some flexibility at least for this group.

As claimed by andragogues, adults come with self-concept as to why they want to learn, behind the participants' interest of acquiring literacy, they have some objectives. Looking from this perspective, my research participants were guided by some purpose, some were only interested to read and write so that they can write their names and read signboards in the street, some were interested in gaining knowledge in sums, others were interested to acquire skill for exploring other options of living, some also joined with open mind and participated because their friends did so. Here, I

developed the intuition regarding the three Rs that their desire for reading and knowing some sums was strong but they did not opt so much for writing. They wanted to use their reading knowledge to read signboards in the street and in checking the home work of the children, if they have school going children. Writing was only useful for them in writing their names and some of them expressed their need to write a letter to their husbands as some of the husbands of the learners were outside Nepal for work. But, in my third visit to them, some of them told me that writing was not of use as communication was easy through telephone and mobile. Thus it was less likely that that knowledge came into effect except for they knew how to write their name. I figured out that to spend time in writing was not very effective as some of my research participants expressed their difficulty in writing, particularly the joined words. However, reading also was not that easy for some of them.

Here, I realized that NFE could not provide adequate knowledge in writing or the writing exercise could not appeal the learners or the facilitator could not make it joyful to the participants or the learners thought it was less useful in bettering their lives than the skill of reading. However, for majority of them reading skill also was used very limitedly. To this situation, I wanted to contend the andragogical concept of Knowles that every learner comes up with self concept and objectives. Even if, s/he has built some concept of what they wanted to know or why they wanted to be literate, the scope of their concept was much limited to only being able to read simple sentences and sign their names which would not be sufficient to totally transform their life and bettering their livelihood and bring 'conscioization' as Friere dreamt. Similarly Mezirow's Transformative learning theory (Susan, 1998) also did not apply to such learners who were virtually illiterate and none of the three themes of this

theory, centrality of experience, critical reflection, and rational discourse were possible from their part.

Reading Between Homogenization and Individualization of NFE

My research participants came from agriculture background. The tacit knowledge and skill they had was about traditional farming and indigenous knowledge on health and hygiene. In this sense, following the characteristics of the tacit knowledge that it was the compilation of facts accumulated from working experience, they just inherited the knowledge from their parents. This implies that their inherited occupation did not require literacy education. Even the carpet factory where they worked did not demand literacy. In fact, they learned weaving by observation and practice. But after joining this job they realized some usefulness of literacy in their work. Here, I inculcated a number of questions such as (a) does a person require literacy for individual sake? (b) does a male need literacy only for himself? (c) does a woman need "connected literacy" with her self and the children? (d) does a person regardless of male and female need literacy for socio-political empowerment? (e) does the literacy make male's and female's life better in terms of improved livelihood?

Questions like this helped me differ from Friere and NFE experts who saw the importance of literacy packages. Even the "generative package" of Freire could not bring desired results in the case of my research type of learners. Here, I found myself positioned to Bash (2003 as cited in Wang, 2007) who said two things. One, adult learners might not be interested in knowledge for its own sake. They focused on the lessons that are most useful to them in their work and their personal life. Two, the role of instructors is important because adult learners may not learn anything new if their instructors fail to demonstrate a relationship between course work and "real life". The

author emphasizes that the best instructors are those who can show adult learners how the lessons can help them attain their educational goals.

As I elaborated in chapter six, those who were in 20s and mother of a few children expressed desire to learn and they were very interested at least to write their names because they used to feel bad to use thumb prints for signature if they had to attend some meetings related to their children's education or invited in some other meetings. In such a case, they thought to know how to write their name was important; they felt their status was elevated, though they had difficulty in writing other things. At this point, I realized that adult learning models were less likely to be implemented because there were some learners, who were content being somehow able to write their names through which they considered their prestige raised. They had no other aspirations for being knowledgeable in other things. More importantly, their learning was not to make much difference in their profession. Here, I saw the importance of individualized literacy as advocated by Streets (2001, p. 2). In his community literacies, the author cites Heath (1983); Street (1993b, 1995); Barton (1994); Barton et al. (1999) that "literacy is not just a set of uniform 'technical skills' to be imparted to those lacking them—the 'autonomous' model—but rather that there are multiple literacies in communities and that literacy practices are socially embedded". I also saw the importance of "connected literacy" to the women that has been promoted through the six month literacy programme that includes health and hygiene related to women and children, knowledge on preservation of natural resources, savings etc. But the question was, could this "connected literacy" make their life better in terms of improving their livelihood.

Learners' Type and Literacy Program

Based on the discussion of various knowledge groups as categorized in chapter six, I found that some of the learners were very much passive; they could not use any reason of their own to accept or reject what was taught to them. These "passive learners" "are dependant on authorities to hand down the truth, teaching them right from wrong" (Belenky et al., 1997, p.9). This type of "dependent/passive learners" enabled me to question, do these type of learners need individualized or focused literacies that could make them received knowledge/skill, store them in the memory and retrieve them when they need and make them more open

The second category of the NFE participants fell on the received knowledge group. The participants of this group did reason out that they tried to apply exactly what they have learned and also felt some improvement in their life in respect of health and hygiene. However, they could not modify or explore more for their benefit from what they have learned. Some participants of this group were also interested to share their knowledge to others and even seeking connection of acquired knowledge to other sources of knowledge such as they could connect similar information if they heard from radio, TV, children etc. This group of the literacy participants encouraged me to propose the amalgamation of individualized and social/collective literacies (Streets, 1998).

The third category participants of procedural knowledge learned and applied at their best but also communicated the knowledge to their peers and local people even when they made short term visit to their village more particularly, they also ventured to start something new. Though I did not categorize them in 'constructed' knowledge group, somehow they could also construct knowledge because they tried to experiment newer things for making their life better. With the knowledge of these

groups of the learners I differed with Coombs and Rogers and other NFE proponents who suggested functional literacy for the group of 15 to 60 years age of adults and expected a lot from them. After this study, what I found lacking in what these theorists proposed was that they brought out a good planning for the literacy of the adults but that could not address the varying interest of the individuals within the groups. At this point, I derived that the expectations from NFE were possible from the learners who are already somewhat educated but not from those who were illiterate or semi-literate and were already in one profession and were not residing in their domicile.

Some other research participants suddenly became conscious and obtained '*Brahman Jyana*' or enlightenment. For them, literacy worked out as medicine as it was "fantastic feeling - being able to read" to the 38 year old woman (UN Chronicle, 1990).

As I mentioned above, the age factor, the propensity to learn and relevancy of the knowledge to be provided to the learners are the deciding factors as to how far the literacy has been effective. Acharya & Koirala (2006) also have found out varied reactions to literacy practices by the learners. According to the authors, for some, literacy is not the means to the end but it is the end in itself whereas, for others it is the means to reach somewhere. Similar was my experience in the case of my research participants also. From knowledge generation perspective, the literacy was only the end for the silence and received type of my research participants and means to the end in the case of procedural type of participants. In the same way Bhomi (2000) found the literacy more effective among the Nepali language speakers than those having other mother tongues. Therefore, class concept of Marx and the 'consciencization' of Freire, and functionality of Coombs were less likely to be applied to all at the same

level. Very few learners of course did achieve some tangible results, which could be compared with 'consciensization' of Friere (1970) and '*Brahman Jyana*' of Shivananda (2004).

Various authors (Wang, 2003; Knowles, 1978, 1990 as cited in Dunn, 2000) have stated that as described in chapter two, participants bring with them wealth of experience which can influence their learning. In this case, the participants as I stated above brought experience of agriculture farming and some cultural and social beliefs. But, they were different from what the literacy packages provided to them. These differences yielded in them multiple knowledges and choices. On the other hand, the same choice pushed my research participants into dilemma.

As stated above, the learners were not of the same type, some benefited more without being active parts of the group, while others contributed and were able to grasp more being the part of the group. The literacy programme became a programme of common good as suggested by the 'Voting Paradox' of Social Dilemma theory. As individuals as a part of mass, enjoy differently to utilizing the right of voting (Felkins, 1994), from this programme too, the learners benefited differently based on their interest, capability and the need. How individuals value a cost or reward often varies greatly. Here, I remembered Marsick (1998) who outlined Kegan's views on transformative learning. He says that the learners come with modern mindset thus they want to invent own work, be self initiating, self correcting, self evaluating, be guided by their own visions, take responsibility etc. This "modern mindset" of the learners and "old contents of the primers" encouraged me to read transformative learning (Cranton, 1997 & Taylor, 1998 as cited in Susan, 1998) that says that there are two views in this type of learning, one gives more emphasis on critical reflection and another focuses on rational processes and imagination as such there no single

mode of such learning exists. This made me realize that one single method would not suffice to meet the requirement of the learners of various age group and varying ability and motives.

My "connected" research participants taught me the 'care ethics' (Robinson, 1999) which was also accepted by feminist theorist that moral responses emerge from within close, personal relationships such as those between mothers, or mothering persons, and children.. The author also thinks that there is no objective truth, knowledge is relational and identities also are forged in relationship that meaning is social rather than natural, mutable and fixed. This reiterates that women's knowledge is also based on their relation with their children and the family, but this is true only with married women and I found little difference in the case of unmarried girls. However, such girls also try to establish some link with others. Even my unmarried NFE participating girls were of two types, one was the type who was more influenced by the peers and other type was more connected to the family. Thus the first type girls' learning was influenced by the relation with theirs peers and the second type girls' learning was influenced by family and other social responsibilities. Gender roles also had a greater influence in their learning. This encouraged me to develop literacy program around "care ethics" only for those who are connected type learners.

Literacy providers were using the word, empowerment frequently. I have also used 'empowerment' in some cases of the participants in the previous chapter. But the word empowerment has a wider coverage, it is not only the inner power development but it also embraces some power categories such as 'power over', 'power to', 'power with', 'power within' (Rowland, 1998 cited in Aksornkool (2005). According to Moser (1992 as cited in *ibid*) it incorporates understanding of gender concept as a social issue. Stromquist (1995) understands it in terms of socio- political concept

which has four components ‘cognitive, psychological, political and economic’ (cited in *ibid*). Considering these concepts of empowerment and relating them to my research participants' literacy, I could not claim that except for a very few, they were empowered. Those who reported them as empowered also gave the rhetoric answer that the literacy evaluators come across viz., “had you come before we attended NFE, we would not have been able to share with you anything. We were very shy”. This finding led me think that only social literacy backed by political ideology can empower people.

Revisiting Livelihood Concept

In order to understand whether my research participants were able to bring improvement in their livelihood through NFE, I tried to examine from the perspective of the theoretical background that I described in chapter four. I also tried to examine them from the livelihood theory of dependence and protection and self dependence theory (Mill, 1848) to know whether women were totally dependant on the owner of the factories or some other people by surrendering completely what the owners/others said or did or they had some self stand of their own. I found that my research participants had got reasonable accommodation facility and hence they were not in a situation as depicted by the dependence and protection theory (*ibid*) where the owner provided shelter and food and the laourers had to pay for them (CDS, 2005). Besides this, the owners also were not in a position to control every thing of the labourers including their thoughts, feelings, morality and their religion etc. as suggested by the dependence and protection theory. In this situation the dependence and protection theory was not applicable because activities such as collective deliberations on questions of common interests, the trade unions, and political agitation to awaken public spirit were undergoing (Mill, 1848). And yet I could see some of the

parameters of this theory such as providing a place for living, helping them for medical treatment and making some food items available in the factories.

The self-dependence theory (Mill, 1848) seems to be somewhat applicable with my research participants who were not totally in the hands of the owners. This theory further suggests a situation where labourers will in longer remain in 'locoparentis' (ibid) situation. Even though the poor are attracted by giving them higher wages, they do not want to remain in restraining condition and wage will be the attraction for only short period of time. My study with these labourers also revealed that money was not the only attraction for them but the flexibility of working time that was allowed in these factories was also the charm for them to be in this profession. Secondly, they also had to support the family in the villages sending some portion of their wages to them though such contribution was not regular but in a sporadic way. Some kind of interdependence also could be noted with them because the labourers contributed to the family both physically and financially. On the one hand, they supported the family in the village on the other hand they also used to go to village to work during agricultural season. They were enjoying such liberty. Thus, the improvement of their living in the factory phenomenon and improving the living in the village both went on simultaneously. At this point, I argue that this theory has some relevance to such labour intensive factories such as carpet factory and majority of them is running in unorganized sector.

I tried to analyze my research participants from poverty eradication perspectives through literacy program. I found that they have understood different ways of earning, saving, and using the resources for better living. Following these ways, one of my research participants wanted to start vegetable vending in a cart but as her residence was not convenient to take the cart and keep it, she gave up this idea.

However, some of the participants tried some other options for earning additional income. Some even left the carpet weaving and tried other possibilities they had to come back again in the same job due to failure of the work.

This helped me reflect that physical asset or capital was not of much concern with my research participants which mainly dealt with housing, livestock, economic and social structure, production equipment etc. The participants somehow were enabled to enhance human, social capital and to some extent financial capital but could not enjoy the whole package as envisioned by livelihood approach.

Contribution of NFE

The contribution of NFE can be examined by applying Deleon (1975 cited in Bock, 1983, p. 3) who has shown the possible contribution of literacy program in the following excerpts:

If the aim of these programmes adult education is to provide knowledge and skills, they have some success, but if their goal is to change psychological and sociological attitudes, the results are meager; if the goal is the acquisition of privileges previously denied to the majority, some progress is visible, but if the goal is liberation of individuals and the deepening of their awareness, much more has to be achieved; if they should enable individuals to adapt themselves to society and to new technologies, many programmes can claim tangible achievement, but if they aim at a real change of the status of those who have been “marginalized” the outcome is poor; if the role of adult literacy programmes is to provide millions to the 3 Rs, some results have been evident; but if their purpose includes the preparation of illiterates for a different working and social role and responsibilitythe results are poor from these objectives (pp. 90-91 cited in Deleon, 1975 cited in Bock, 1983,).

Deleon's remark also indicated that Marx, Knowles and NFE proponents were very optimistic to presume high expectations from the literacy programmes.

Jejeebhoy (1995) was skeptical about the effect of NFE for bringing changes in learners' lives which formal schooling can bring.

From the research participants I drew out the findings on how the three types of learners stored, retrieved and use the information derived from literacy (Table 5).

Table 5

Improvement Realized Through Knowledge Gained From NFE

Type of learners	Native Knowledge	Knowledge stored	Knowledge retrieved
Silence/Passive type	Women had indigenous knowledge on health issues, trusted in faith healers, had local knowledge on agriculture farming and livestock rearing as land owners and wage workers	Cognition of simple letters, Importance of health care, child care and reproductive health, nutritious food, agriculture farming	Reading sign boards, checking children's homework
Received/Active type	Tea gardening was also localized knowledge of one of the woman apart from the local knowledge of agriculture farming for others. Acceptance of gender discrimination in work and education was also their destiny. They were also aware of home based medicine for different illness and believed in locality based faith healers.	Simple reading, numeracy, importance of health care, child care and reproductive health, importance of responsibility, agriculture farming, entrepreneurial skill, good behaviour with people	Reading sign boards and related information, cognizing simple numeracy, checking children's homework, implementing health care knowledge, connecting similar information with other sources, sharing information with peers, good relationship with friends and neighbours
Procedural/Proactive type	Wage labour was the destiny of one woman and the other had the experience of being land owner. They believed in god and fate to a greater extent than in their own efforts. Possessed local knowledge on livestock rearing and applied traditional home based medicine during reproductive health and other general health problems.	Reading, writing and numeracy, importance of health care, child care and reproductive health, agriculture farming, entrepreneurial skill, good behaviour with people	Reading sign boards, related information, checking children's homework, implementing health care knowledge, connecting similar information with other sources, sharing information with peers, simple numeracy skill used in work, exploring various ways of earning and implementing best suited to the context, good relationship with friends and neighbours

The preceeding table shows the native knowledge which the research participants brought with them, what they acquired from NFE, how much they could retain and how they used for improving their lives.

Interconnectedness between Postmodernism and Research participants

I drew out the connection between the research participants and postmodernism through hermeneutic mode of analysis in the tables that follow (Table 6 & Table 7)

Table 6

Interconnectedness between Postmodernism and Learners' Stories

Research participants' Characteristics	Postmodernism concept	Research participants' Knowledge Generation Process	Interconnection between research participants' knowledge and the concept of postmodernism
Migrated women from rural areas working in carpet factories	Postmodernism reveals oppressed and voiceless group of people' worldview (Pugach, 2001), and analyze their fractured as well as tortured lives (Boje, 2001)	Research participants reflected their oppressed life. They realized that education could liberate them	I could show the invisible and voiceless lives of my research participants
In spite of similar cosmology, research participants had varieties of learning interest, capability, perspectives, and needs	It brings out different perspectives of the people (Giddens, 1990) It also respects mini-narratives, stories that explain small practices	They brought varying epistemological patterns, different ways of restoring and using knowledge through their mini-narratives and stories	I could figure out silence, received; and procedural types of learners and their interest. I also found that literacy education programs had not addressed them all
They have different ways of knowing and have varying capacities to learn	It believes that truth is not one, it is multiple, it is not universal, it is local and it is created (Grentz, n.d.)	Some of my research participants just restored the information, some understood the importance and used the knowledge and some explored other ways to make life better	I could identify various perceptions and individual reality of different types of learners
They were deprived of educational opportunities, resulting into facing injustice and oppression in the family as well as in the work place	It advocates for plurality and seeks hidden injustice and inequality for social transformation (Boje, 2001)	Once my research participants became literate, they understood the inequality and injustice in the society and workplace and became cautious towards it	I could feel that my research participants became aware of various social, political and economic issues. They were also seeking for justice

Reflecting over the above table, I hold the knowledge that postmodernism respects in multiple truths, believes in plurality, and brings out different perspectives of people. It also values small stories of oppressed people. With this understanding, I could figure out my research participants' ways of knowing, approach to grasping the knowledge and utilizing it for their improved livelihood. I also, could categorize them in three groups: 'silence', 'received' and 'procedural'. For all of them, literacy became the stepping place but how they moved on was different. I also could explore that the procedural group processed the knowledge in such a way that they set a future goal and determined to achieve it, keeping one to one relation with literacy, whereas the silence and received type of learners were looking out for other options for immediate and future needs according to the changing context. One of the learners of procedural group says 'I am quite determined to go to village and do the agriculture farming by using the knowledge acquired from literacy in the future'. One of the learners of silence group says "now we do not need the letter writing skill because we use telephones and mobiles, at present our need is to learn English because for using the mobile we have to know the English letters and numbers." She added "farming is not our goal for the future because our village is now connected with motorable road, we can do other things". This gave me the knowledge that literacy became the platform to move to other language and other occupation as well. In other words, literacy opens one to one livelihood option for the 'procedural' group and one to many avenues for the 'silence' as well as the 'received' types of learners.

In the following table I have shown how I analyzed the field information through hermeneutics mode.

Table 7

Hermeneutics Mode of Analysis

Hermeneutics Mode	Interpretation
Hermeneutics assumes that there are presuppositions which can have influence what is going to be found out (Bleicher, 1980 cited in Myers Ed., 1997)	Like Hermeneutic mode of understanding I had some presumptions about literacy on the basis of various literatures and interaction with various people but I could bracket its influence over the data collection through value clarification and reflecting my self (Love, 1994)
It brings out the meaning of a text or text analogue (Radnitzky, 1970)	I interpreted the texts of the learners which came out from the dialogue with them for understanding their real life situations
It makes clear of confused, incomplete, cloudy and contradictory text (Taylor 1976, p. 153 cited in Myers Ed., 1997)	My research participants were not very clear at times, in expressing their feelings and opinions and through interpretations I had to make clear of their text. On this basis, I categorized the learners into three groups viz., procedural, receive, and silence with three different knowledge processing pattern.

As described above hermeneutics mode of analysis provided me a way to analyze the information, which came out while interacting with my research participants. Following this mode, I could bring out the meaning to their sayings and understand their realities. This also made me easier to differentiate the learners and classify their varying interests, learning pattern including the knowledge generation process.

The following table gives the picture how different types of learner generated and processed knowledge.

Table 8.

Knowing Pattern of Women Labourers

Learners' type	Knowledge generation process	Knowledge application process
Passive/silence type	learning influenced by empiricism, trusted what is handed down, silently received the information fully relying on the trainer and the contents provided,	Not very keen in implementing the generated knowledge, implemented that much what was immediately needed, did not store knowledge for future use, volatile in determining future needs
Active/received type	Analyzed the information acquired and also could draw out implications from the knowledge gained, tried to connect the knowledge to other sources and verify it	Eager to implementing the knowledge and tried out the knowledge for meeting immediate needs and also stored the knowledge that was connected to their family tradition and determined to use in future, enhanced their human and social assets, also shared their knowledge with others and helped them in implementing the knowledge
Proactive/procedural type	Very eager to acquire various knowledge also, could draw out implications from the knowledge gained, tried to connect the knowledge to other sources and verify it	Very enthusiastic to apply the knowledge acquired for meeting immediate needs and stored the knowledge that was connected to their family tradition for meeting the future needs with strong determination. Explored and tried out various options for improving their human, social and financial assets, also was eager to transmit their knowledge to others.

The above table suggests that women labourers are not the same in receiving, and using the knowledge gained. Their varied patterns of generating and applying knowledge lead to classify them in three knowledge groups: silence/passive, received/active and procedural/proactive. Passive type are not very serious in using the knowledge whereas the second and third types try to use the acquired knowledge, more so for the third type but both need some more coping strategies to resist the problems that can arise in the course of application.

Theory Building

On the basis of the field information derived from the 12 women participants I propose Makhamali theory. This theory has four essence viz., (a) Women as a group does not have the same knowing pattern, they are three types, passive, active and proactive (b) Women have connected type of knowledge, their knowledge generation and application is more connected to their children or the family (c) They are guided by care ethics, and (d) They are guided by two types of need i.e. immediate and future.

Now I examine the connection of my Makhamali theory between the meta theories/concepts such as postmodernism, feminist approaches, Marxism, Malow and Herjburg's needs theory, learning theories and gender concepts, and figure out the commonalities and differences in them.

Let me begin with postmodernism. Postmodernism believes in multiplicity, respects mini-stories. It is a contemporary philosophic approach concerned with the multiple and contradictory ways of knowing in this historically postmodern time (Jecks, 1989, as cited in Hlynka & Yeaman, 1992). Thus postmodernism has the commonality with the Makhamali theory as it found out the different patterns of women's knowing, their varying needs and interests as Jecks's views of

postmodernism (ibid). For instance, the literacy/NFE participants had different interests to join in the program. One of the participants was interested to enhance her knowledge to make her conjugal life better whereas the other one had the objective of her learning to recognize the letters and learn how to sign her name. This interest-difference challenges the structuralists' notion of women as a group. It also questions Freireian approach of empowering women with the same key words. In other words, the case of the above women does not look for a theme and a key word. They rather look for different themes and different key words though they were working as carpet factory labourers.

Makhamali theory has the connection with the feminist theory as well. The feminist theories mostly, address the issues on gender inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations and sexuality. Ramazanoglu (1989, p. 8) says “Feminism comprises of various social theories which explain the relations between the two sexes and differences between men’s and women’ experiences”. The author elaborates that feminism addresses the women’s oppressions, their subordination to men, which need to be changed, it challenges the system what is taken for granted as natural, normal and desirable in all societies. Feminism brings all society into question; it is also a political practice, which aims at changing the world, transferring the relations between women and men. Feminism also comprises varied political practices, which are all aimed at changing the relations between two sexes by giving women control over their own lives. In the case of my study, I found different versions of feminism.

Some of my research participants focused on the relationship between men and women and women’s oppression and subordination and the others emphasized on need for transforming women’s lives. These emphasis-differences reminded me

Stabile (1995) who said that the concept of women as a uniform group proved an inadequate foundation for feminists, either as a theory or a framework for activism. Taking this author in mind I realized that my research participants though suffered from unequal relationship between men and women, were not a uniform group. This means the feminism theory hardly focuses on their knowing pattern and least likely to see women's knowledge grasping capacities, and their needs from education perspective as my research participants opted for. This concept has compliance with Makhamali theory in the sense that as a group of women in general these women also were deprived of education due to unequal relationship with men. But the difference of Makhamali theory is that feminism cannot address the variance of women within a group of same characteristics in terms of knowledge generation and application. For example feminism does not the address the individual or small group's issues as that of my research participants. They take women in totality but the case of my research participants wanted women to be treated individually.

Makhamali theory though complies with Marxism as they were labourers but differ from it in other ways. Marxism believes that the workers should share common situation and common interests and these common interests form the class and individual's interests (Wood, 2004). This means Makhamali theory differed from Marxism because though the women lived in the same situation they had different interests and motive for social change. Thus, I could not see commonality of Marxism with my theory.

Makhamali theory has some commonality and some difference with Knowles's andragogy as well. For instance the four assumptions that Knowles made for the learners that adults tend to be self-directed, their experiences become the resource for learning, motivation in them is directed to more socially relevant learning

and they are interested in immediate application (Cooper. n.d.) put all the learners into a uniform group. Concentrating only on the knowing pattern of these women through literacy programmes, I found that literacy programmes designed to homogenous group of illiterates or semi-literates cannot fulfill the varying needs of individuals by addressing their interests, propensity to learn and the relevancy to the learner's life. But my research shows that contrary to Knowles understanding there were three kinds of learners. Some were passive, others were active who wanted to apply what was learnt and the third types of learners who were proactive wanted to try out new ventures. All of the learners could not benefit from one single approach and method. The characteristics of three types of learners call for individualized or focused literacies. The learning pattern of these women also differed from what was proposed by Freire (1970) who treated men and women as an oppressed group with similar characteristics and they needed to transform their life. Similarly, andragogy also did not comply with my findings regarding the knowledge generation pattern because this concept also puts all the learners in one basket. My theory de-basketed women into learning type groups and proposed literacy programme accordingly.

I examined Makhamali theory from need theory as well. I found Maslow (1943); Herzberg (1959) & McGregor (1960) developed need theories {DeCenzo & Robbins 2000 (appendix G)} but Makhamali theory does not comply with these theories because like Makhamali, women have two kinds of needs: one is of immediate concern and the second one is of future concern. These theories are based on the needs that the subordinates expect from the employers and they are related to their job satisfaction. But the needs of these women were not much related to their present work. They were rather related to enhancing their children's as well as their own human asset and livelihood concern for the future. This means Makhamali

theory rejected Maslow and Greger's ladder of needs and helped me claim that needs does not go to a specific ladder as the authors championed.

I also examined Makhamali theory from gender perspective, which shows that women have two kinds of needs, practical and strategic (Momsen, 1991). But the needs that I have identified of the women workers were a bit different. These differences were observed in the form of what I call "connected needs" of the women. Because of this "connected type" needs they sought the connection of their literacy/NFE knowledge with children, the family or peers and hence their future need was based on their previous work or knowledge which they carried from the tradition or they were looking out for other options which would be their future security.

Therefore, I claim that Makhamali theory complies with some concepts and differs from some above mentioned various theories/concepts because it does not see women as a universe or women in a particular group, caste or class but it takes women as individuals or groups with different needs, different capacities and different interest in terms of knowledge generating and applying process. The chart below displays the commonalities and differences of Makhmali theory with the aforesaid theories.

Table 9

Compliance and Difference of Makhamali Theory with Other Concepts

Focus of the theories/concepts	Focus of the Makhamali Theory					
Postmodernism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple and contradictory ways of knowing 	_____					
Feminism: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unequal relationship between men and women Women as a class 		_____				
Marxism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labourers in similar situation Labourers as a class with common objectives 			-----			
Andragogy of Malcolm Knowles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults having similar characteristics 				-----		
Maslow's & Herzberg's motivation theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hierarchy of needs 					-----	
Gender and Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical needs and strategic needs 						-----

Note: Straight line _____denotes compliance and dotted line ----- shows the difference

The analysis of the above table shows that Makhamali theory complies and also differs from the grand theories. It complies with the postmodernism in respect of its believing in contradictory ways of knowing. In respect of Marxism and feminism though Makhamli theory agrees with similar situation of labourers and the unequal relationship of men and women respectively, it differs from these theories for taking such women as a class. Similarly it also differs from the hierarchy of needs as well as practical and strategic needs.

Findings and Conclusions

From the knowledge generation and application perspective, the learners usually generate knowledge in the area where there is felt need. They expand their knowledge for meeting their immediate needs and future needs. In the case of knowledge generation they follow the information processing model and retain the “chunk” of information and send to memory and retrieve when it is needed. Some knowledge which they generate from literacy education link with their previous knowledge, though immediately it cannot not be used they process and send it to their long term memory. Such knowledge they take as future security.

- a) Knowledge generation process was not the same to all kinds of learners.
Though cosmologically, they did not differ as they shared the same kind of experiences, generating as well as applying the acquired knowledge depended on the learners’ felt need, intensity of their interest as well as their capability to grasp the information.
- b) Epistemologically speaking, there were found three types of knowledge groups: silence/passive, received/active and procedural/proactive from the perspective knowledge generation and application.
- c) Passive type of learners had very limited needs just to recognize letters, read simple sentences to meet their spatial need, sign their names and check their children’s homework of the primary level. They were in dilemma to decide what will be their future need. They also wanted to adjust with the changing context. For them literacy education was not the platform to exploring further knowledge. As Belenky at. al. (1997) pointed out, they want the truth to be handed down and receive as it is. Therefore, such learners totally depended on the facilitators.

- d) The received/active type went ahead, they retained information and used as per their need. But their knowledge generation is not limited to the literacy programme, they tried to connect the knowledge to other sources and also verify it. While doing so, sometimes their school going children become the source of information to reinforce their knowledge obtained, sometimes the information provided by media such as radio or TV helps to enhance their knowledge, and other times peer influence becomes dominant. They also reasoned out what they learnt and tried to find out their implications in their own lives. They also share their knowledge with others.
- e) The procedural/proactive type was found keen in generating knowledge from various sources around them based on the knowledge they acquired from the literacy education and the facilitators. For such learners, the literacy education came as enlightenment to change their life. For one of the participants, literacy education became like Sivananda's (2004) "Bramahgyana" and 'consciensization' of Friere (1970). Pasang represented the concept of Brahmagyana and consciensization together, who said "NFE worked out as a medicine to bring consciousness to me. I thought I was dead before". This type of women sought various ways to enhance their knowledge. Such women had definite determination what they wanted and what they wanted to do in future. For them literacy became as a means towards finding out various ways for improving their living.
- f) Axiologically speaking, women's knowledge generation and application process had been linked more to the children and the family. Either they were attached to the children or to the family. Equally influential was the relation with the peers. Therefore, their knowledge could be considered as 'connected

type' and guided more by care ethics. This finding helped me to understand that women's priority for acquiring knowledge was for their children or the family. In generating knowledge peer influence also had played a key role.

- g) Ontologically speaking, livelihood improvement also varied according to the types of learners. More progress could be realized in the improvement of human asset/capital in terms of developing the ability of reading and some numeracy skill and social asset through the knowledge of keeping social relations with good behaviour with friends and others, among all types of learners. The proactive ones were also enabled to enhance financial asset with the initiation of various avenues for income generation.
- h) There was found dearth of 'coping strategies' which livelihood approach should have provided, therefore, even the active learners used to be moved by offence by their male counterparts in applying their knowledge in connection to health, sanitation etc. Even proactive ones were affected by some failures in their attempt in trying out new ventures.

Table 10

Study in a Nutshell

Rationale	Research Question	Method	Findings	Implications
Knowing knowledge generation and application pattern of women labourers Examining how they improve livelihood from the knowledge gained from NFE	<p>How women labourers generate and process knowledge derived from NFE and apply it to improve their livelihood?</p> <p>How knowledge is generated among women labourers?</p> <p>How and in what context they apply the acquired knowledge from NFE in their day to day life and work places?</p> <p>How NFE helps in enhancing skills to acquire more knowledge from other sources?</p>	<p>Qualitative Enquiry:</p> <p>Postmodernism Paradigm</p> <p>Hermeneutics mode of analysis</p>	<p>Epistemologically women were of three types passive, active and proactive and their way of knowing and applying knowledge also varied. Axiologically, women's knowledge was 'connected' more linked to children and the family.</p> <p>Ontologically, livelihood improvement also varied according to the type of learners.</p> <p>Inadequacies of 'coping strategies' was felt among active and proactive women in implementing the knowledge</p>	<p>Need for understanding of women's varied learning pattern by classifying them into different groups</p> <p>Passive type of women need reinforcement of knowledge and their exposure to other sources of knowledge is necessary</p> <p>Trainers need intensive training to develop expertise in identifying different knowledge groups and exploring delivery process to meet the needs of women</p>

I studied women labourers who received NFE by using qualitative enquiry. The women varied in the pattern of knowledge processing and applying process also differed. This implies that women need to be categorized in different groups according to their pattern of knowing and provide the knowledge accordingly.

Implications

As I used NFE/literacy program along with literacy primers as source of information and women labourers as knowledge generators, I have drawn implications into two aspects: types of learners' knowledge generating and using appropriately, relation with the source of knowledge like literacy primer and the programme.

a) Implications for different types of learners

1. Women are needed to be divided into different groups depending on the knowledge generating approach and according to which group they fall in, the sources of knowledge can be varied and they need to be treated differently. For this grouping techniques should be adopted and facilitators should be trained in the skill of observing and identifying the varying characteristics of the learners so that group based technique and materials can be developed and this can be extended in formal education as well.
2. Silence/Passive learners' knowledge generation is limited. They are less keen in using the acquired knowledge. Therefore, knowledge reinforcement for such women is necessary and particular strategies for making them able to apply the acquired knowledge need to be designed. This probable design could be including practical exercises in the programme, so that they generate knowledge through learning by doing such as role play. .

3. As a connected group of people silence type learners were motivated in enhancing knowledge in nurturing and caring. This implies that such women labourers' exposure to wider knowledge source is important besides limiting on the primers only. This can be providing self-learning materials, developing audio-visual materials and preparing peer groups to help each other through locally generated material such as closed circuit televised materials.
 4. Assuming homogeneity among similar type of women will make the passive type of learners disadvantaged, therefore inter and intra group interaction within the larger group is important for cross sharing their experiences and helping them in generating and applying knowledge through the peers. For this facilitators need to divide the learners in groups according to their similar characteristics and activate them through different techniques for group sharing and cross sharing with the larger group.
 5. Particular strategies are necessary for facilitating the passive type of learners such as establishing informal interaction with the women in order to finding out the method suitable to their needs, interest and context, using audio visual aids to have lasting effect of the knowledge and skill and using stories, rhythmic delivery process for arousing interest and making the knowledge sustainable to the women.
- b) Relation with the source of knowledge
1. Active type of learners were motivated to generate knowledge in both caring as well as to some extent strengthening their self confidence, therefore there is a need to build their self confidence through the

exposure of wider knowledge. For this, more confidence building exercises and presentation of women role models are necessary. For example, the cases of women of different professions such as doctor, engineer, social worker, politician, adventurer etc. need to be included in the learning materials.

2. In order to encouraging the active type of learners in implementing the knowledge gained institutional back stopping is needed in their efforts. The programme implementers should monitor and follow them up providing technical and financial support when they need.
3. Proactive/Procedural type of women explored sources of knowledge by themselves and tried to open up various ways of improving their livelihood on their own initiation, however there is a need to equip them with more 'coping strategies' to tackle the probable problems in their ventures. Programme implementers should include more information and knowledge in the programme for enhancing learners' human, social and financial assets. For this they need to arrange for more learning materials related to education, health, public relation and business as well as marketing techniques with empowerment training.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Model of Non Formal Education

As Graham-Brown (1991: 74-77 cited in <http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-nonfor.htm#idea>) has shown a number of dimensions that have to be taken into account in order literacy programme to be effective, they are:

Training and motivation of literacy workers.

The quality and relevance of materials.

The reinforcements of literacy.

Smith (2001) has adapted the model of NFE and shown how it is different from education system in terms of process.

Ideal- Model of Non-formal Education		
	formal	non-formal
purposes	Long-term & general Credential-based	Short-term & specific Non-credential-based
timing	long cycle / preparatory / full-time	short cycle / recurrent / part-time
content	standardized / input centred academic entry requirements determine clientele	individualized / output centred practical clientele determine entry requirements
delivery system	institution-based, isolated from environment. rigidly structured, teacher-centred and resource intensive	environment-based, community related. flexible, learner-centred and resource saving
control	external / hierarchical	self-governing / democratic

(Adapted by Fordham 1993 from Simkins 1977, pp.12-15 cited in Ibid)

Fordham (1993 cited in Ibid) suggests that education provided should be in the interests of the learners and organization and curriculum planning should also be in their interests which could empower the learners and change the social structure if they felt

"Non formal education (NFE) is any organized, intentional and explicit effort to promote learning to enhance the quality of life through out of school approaches. Compared with formal schooling, NFE has these characteristics: learner-centered, community oriented content, nonhierarchical relationship of facilitator and learner, use of local resources, present time focus, age inclusive for learners. It takes place through the daily operations of self - help groups, human and social agencies, religious groups, the media, clubs etc" (p. 52).

Longhran and Reed (1984, p. 52) support this thought that "NFE is any organized, intentional and explicit effort to promote learning to enhance the quality of life through out- of -school approaches".

Fordham (1993 cited in Ibid) suggests that education provided should be in the interests of the learners and organization and curriculum planning should also be in their interests which could empower the learners and change the social structure if they felt so.

Non-formal education can be seen as of recurrent and lifelong learning. Tight (1996: 68) suggests, that non-formal education is about 'acknowledging the importance of education, and it is learning and training which takes place outside recognized educational institutions'

Shipur (1995) states that NFE emerged as a complimentary form of education which focuses on the poor and the deprived illiterates, drop outs, workers, farmers, women etc. The author characterizes that NFE can bring quick results and is less

expensive and can meet the demand of anyone, anywhere and anytime. The author further adds NFE focuses more on developing knowledge creating awareness on various aspects of life and developing knowledge and attitude so that the learners can meet their needs

Singh (1987, p. 1) gives various dimensions of non formal education, it has been interpreted by different persons differently, for some it is supposed to be complementary to formal education for others it is an alternative system to formal education. The writer also quotes Coombs (1973) that it is an “organized, systematic educational activity outside the framework of the formal system (designed) to provide selective types of learning to particular sub groups in the population, adults as well as children”

The above literature views NFE a flexible type of system which is made suitable for the learners in terms of time, content and method and it can help in promoting individual right, enhancing economic growth, increasing social and political awareness, removing cultural barriers, and achieving democracy,

Appendix B Review of Non Formal Education Package

The first package is called 'Naya Goreto' (first part), developed for adults dealt with reading and writing words and text of day-to-day use. The contents are within the periphery of work, food, small enterprise, farming including livestock, land slides, reforestation, relationship, neighbourhood, marketing, bad habits and their implications, simple numeracy and girls' trafficking.

'Naya Goreto' (second part) dealt with bribery, forgery for exploiting the poor, hygienic food, awareness to diseases such as cholera, importance of forestry, simple sums (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division), improved oven, importance of education, effects of smoking, importance of girls education etc.

The contents were particularly designed to be suitable to rural context however the intent of the package seemed to bring awareness to people on various aspects of their lives.

Lalima, (first part) dealt with words of day-to-day use related to water, food, and relationships together with very simple sums like counting of things. The contents included in the first part were about cleanliness, effects of fire smoke, importance of forests, farming, nutritious food, responsibility, pregnancy related treatment, probable bad habits during adolescence, trafficking and awareness towards violence and sums of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division were included side by side. .

Lalima (second part) dealt with right age for marriage, implication of early marriage, awareness against malnutrition, effects from treatment from traditional faith healers, exorcism, implications of many children waiting for a son, effects of smoking, knowledge about nutritious food, medicine and vaccination of various kinds

needed at the time of pregnancy and for children, treatment for the menstruation pain, various steps to be taken at the time of menstruation related to hygiene, cleanliness, exercise, importance of girls education, service to nursing mother and baby, precautions to be taken by the adolescent girls against violence and encouragement for skill development, knowledge about first aid for the treatment of dog bite, snake bite etc, family planning services, sexual diseases. Like in the first part this part also included sums (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division side by side.

Appendix C Characteristics of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

Wiersma (1991) has outlined the characteristics of these two methods as follows;

Qualitative research

Understanding social phenomena

Holistic enquiry

Context Specific
(generalizations)

Observer – participant
researcher

Narrative Description

Quantitative research

Determining relationships
effects, and causes

Focused on Individual
Variables

Context free

Detached role of

Statistical Analysis

CASE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Appendix D.1 Makhamali Yonjon

I do not know what I will do in the future

Makhamali Yonjon (Lama) is 27 years old belonging to Tamang group. Originally she was from Ramechhap district but she married a boy of Sindhupalchowk. She was illiterate before joining the NFE classes. It was not the poverty that she was deprived of education but well off situation of the parents and daughters' heavy work related to farming became an impasse in her education. After coming to Kathmandu and started working in carpet factory, she participated in NFE classes; unfortunately she could not complete the package. However, she can read simple sentences but has difficulty in writing. She is very happy that she can read various sign boards that appear in the street, can read calendar to find out the date. She does not really remember which were the topics she studied but she retains the knowledge such as there should be no discrimination between sons and daughters, types of food that should be fed to the children and the importance of nutritious food, necessity of keeping children and the surroundings of living places clean, caring about reproductive health, particularly during menstruation. But she has forgotten most of the knowledge acquired during the period. She is remembering the farming knowledge as she thinks it will be useful when she goes back to village. She used to watch agriculture programme in TV. She is using her reading ability to read the date of starting new carpet weaving, total kilogram of wool needed for the carpet. She could not try out other work for earning as she said for other work she would need financial investment.

When I met Makhamali third time she had not remembered most of the things she learned from NFE. Perhaps she was not keen to use them. The knowledge that was connected to her experience back home which was of agriculture also did not in her memory. She does not think that now she will use the farming knowledge as she is not determined what she will be doing in the future even not decided whether she will go back home. She will be seeking for other opportunities. She says "farming is not our goal for the future because our village is now connected with motorable road, we can do other things, we need not depend on agriculture".

Appendix D.2 Maina Ghising

I can check my daughter's homework and read signboards

Maina Ghising was born and brought up in Ramachhap district. She was 25 years old and belonged to Tamang group. She had lots of responsibilities at home, herding animals and preparing tiffins for the labourers who were hired to work in farm. In spite of her severe longing for study she was not sent to school. She ran away from home at the age of 12 years and started weaving carpet. She worked in the carpet factory about three/four years and returned home. But she again came back in this occupation. The reason of choosing this occupation was her illiteracy she said. At the age of 16 years she got married with a boy who was also in the same factory. She was so interested to be educated therefore, as soon as she got the opportunity to join NFE class, she got admitted. But unfortunately, she says 'due to strikes and andolan I could not complete the course'. She was the participant of Lalima package. The knowledge that she generated from the course was almost the same as her friends. She said 'I can read simple sentences, but I cannot write. I can also check my daughter's homework and can also read signboards in the street for getting information of various things. Like her friend she also wanted to retain the agriculture knowledge which she gained to be used for future.

Maina Ghising was also not different from Makhmali. She did not retain any particular knowledge from NFE except the cognition of letters and signing her name. She has some knowledge of health issues and nutritious food. She also holds the same view that agriculture farming is not that important for her as the case was the same as of Makhmali.

About the teaching strategies for such kind of women, she told me her memory when she used to herd the goats that “when we used to go for herding the animals near the village school we used to enjoy the rhythm of the students to memorize the

Appendix D3 Keshmaya Tamang

I threw all the materials of doll making

Keshmaya Tamang was from Sindhupalchowk, she came to Kathmandu with her brother and sister-in-law for search of work because the family had difficulty for sustaining the family from the farm income as the farming products were sufficient only for 5/6 months a year. Carpet weaving was the occupation in which they landed up. She was 16 years old and had started weaving carpet since last two years. She attended the NFE of Lalima package and in my visit she said she learned many things from the programme. She said “I learned that early marriage is injurious to health therefore I am thinking to remain unmarried”. She said she also was given skill development training on soap making, beads preparing, tailoring and doll making and she had made dolls during her training period through SEEP. After some time she got married with a boy of the carpet factory and she did not want to remember whatever she learned in the NFE. Neither she was interested in the skill which she learned in the six month skill training. In my second visit she said “I knew the knowledge about the health and sanitation in my village and I did not learn any new things from the NFE” and regarding the skill training she said “I threw away all the materials of doll making because I don’t make dolls now. I don’t want to make”.

For Keshmaya type of girls as she was a teenager, she would not take anything seriously. When I first met her she looked quite serious that she learned many things from the NFE and she also showed me the dolls she made after the SEEP training but within a time of 7/8 months she was completely changed. She completely reversed her earlier version. The knowledge about health issues, other things which she had said that she learned from the NFE, she said she knew about them in her home from other

sources. Girls of this age perhaps are easily swayed by friends. The case of Keshmaya pointed out that girl who did not have any responsibility towards the family was lured easily by friends, which could affect their life in the future.

Appendix D4 Swastani Shrestha

I can read sign boards in the street

Swastani Shrestha was 18 years old. She was from Sindhupalchok district. Her family migrated to Kathmandu in search for work leaving whatever land they had behind, as the production was insufficient for the family. Her father was a labourer and mother was working for making wool balls for carpet factory and Swastani started weaving carpet since last four years. She was admitted in school back home, but as her father left to India for work she had to quit from education and started working in carpet factory. Because she wanted to study she joined the NFE class. A few things that she remembered from the programme, she said “girls should not marry before the age of 20. Drinking water should be boiled. The main advantage she got from the programme was, she said “I can now read sign boards in the street. Because I am very busy I don’t boil drinking water”.

Swastani was the type of girls who though could generate knowledge on some issues was not in a position to apply it because she was living with her family and she did not have the knowledge application environment. For her the knowledge of reading and signing the name was a big achievement. She was also introvert type of girl and was not very expressive to talk about her difficulties in applying her acquired knowledge. Thus Swastani was not very free to choose anything as per her will because she was living with her parents. Therefore, she was suffering from gender discrimination and poverty, culturally she belonged to Newar community whose freedom is some different from her other counterparts.

Appendix E 1 Minu Magar

I took NFE to read and write correctly and explore better livelihood option

Minu Magar Lama is 27 years old. She was from India but of Nepali origin and married to a Nepali boy who was from Sindhupalchowk. She was a grade four drop out but she joined NFE to learn how to read and write correctly. Therefore, knowing how to read and write was not a big deal to her, what she instantly remembered was the story of 'Bire and Suntali' which depicted the picture of a drunkard husband who tortured his wife mentally and physically. She said that was a lesson to a wife to be careful to the husband whether he will be indulged in bad habits. She also remembered the importance of cleanliness and she with other friends had started cleaning the surroundings of their residing place but she said "male counterparts teased us for doing this work and I with my friends gave up the cleaning of the surroundings". She also said "Sir had told us about agriculture farming and small business." She also said she is also influenced by the agriculture knowledge because she is constantly hearing her friends talking about agriculture farming. She also recalls the importance of 'nun chini pani' and she remembered the process of its preparation. She said "even if I don't need the knowledge of preparing 'nun, chini pani' it will be a help to other children". This showed her attitude in helping others and group cohesiveness. She thinks there is a greater possibility of other business in India than in Nepal. She was influenced by the knowledge provided for alternative earning but she could not find congenial atmosphere to start a new work. In my second meeting she said she had started some business but it failed. Due to this reason also she sees more possibility of small business in India than in Nepal.

The example of generating knowledge through peer influence is Minu. Even in my third visit to her she said she is quite motivated to do agriculture work because she learned about it through her friends. Now she is quite determined that she will go back home (her husband's home) and do the agriculture work. She says "I have to work when I go home."

Appendix E.2 Seeta Rai

I learned about my responsibilities towards family and friends

Seeta Rai is 17 years old. She is from Udayapur district. Though farming was enough for family sustenance there was financial shortage and she had to leave her schooling. At the age of 11 she came to Kathmandu and at the age 13/14 years she started weaving carpet. After taking NFE classes she also learned how to take protection from various diseases, knew about HIVAIDS. She learned about her responsibility, the ill effects of early marriage, necessity of eating nutritious and hygienic food for children and adults, cleanliness at the time of menstruation and she said she is practicing all of the knowledge given by the lessons. NFE taught me “to know about my responsibilities towards my family and friends” She added she also learned how to help friends at the time of need and knew how to behave with people. Her sister with whom she was living also reiterated this fact that “before she did not know how to talk with people but after she took the literacy classes she is changed and has become polished. Before she used to be rough with her friends and was not that friendly, now she is different, she has become polished and knows how to behave with people”. NFE made her aware of girls trafficking by known or unknown persons and to be careful about it. Besides, the knowledge of mathematics made her easier to keep her wage records. Her sister was taking care of her wage and she was given a fixed amount of money for her personal expenses. She said “the knowledge of mathematics made me easier for keeping my wage record. Now I can tell my parents about my earning statement and also I keep record of my pocket expenses. I am also helping my parents by sending money every now and then. She also said that now at the time of summer she goes to home to help her in laws for farm work. She added “from the

NFE lessons I have learned that I have to do my responsibilities therefore I am doing my duty to my in laws though they are not happy with our inter caste marriage”.

She says “I am using the knowledge that I acquired from the NFE about the reproductive health, taking particular care of cleanliness and sanitation at the time of menstruation.” She adds, “ I am also teaching other friends about it.”

Appendix E.3 Thuli Lama

If I went to hospital, it became easier for me to find out available services

Thuli Lama was 27 years old, was born and brought up in Kavre Palanchowk district Kalleri VDC Chautara. She married to a man from Kavre too. She came to Kathmandu at the age of 12/13. She was not from a poor family but remained illiterate for not getting the opportunity to go to school. Her primary purpose to attend the NFE was to learn sums because she thought the knowledge of sums is important in life. Though it was unfortunate that she could not complete the package of NFE, she was happy that she was able to read sign boards in the street and knew information what it provided. She said “I can now check my children’s homework. It is also easier for me to go to hospital and find out the available services. She said she felt empowered and it helped enhance her confidence. She said “I knew that even I speak with others nothing happens before I used to be scared to talk with people”. She can also read the work record card provided by the factory manager/owner and to check whether it was right.

Appendix E.4 Aita Laxmi Pakhrin

I became aware of girls trafficking

Aita Laxmi Pakhrin (Tamang) is 18 years old, came to Kathmandu from her birth place Sindhupalchowk district Hagan VDC, with her parents' consent. Though they had sufficient land for food, due to financial constraint goat and chicken were kept to meet the cash problem. For the same reason she came to Kathmandu to work. She normally saves from Rs 1100 to 1500 a month after her fooding and sends to her parents who are adding goats and chicken to meet the cash crisis. She was grade 2 drop out because her parents stopped her schooling as her mother did not see any reason to educate her. Though she went to school, she forgot completely whatever she learned due to lacking of follow up of her study as she was very busy in herding animals, collecting grass for the goats, and performing household chores. She attended NFE and she said "I learnt we should eat green vegetables, yellow fruits so that we may not fall ill". She added "when I practiced whatever I learnt my frequency of falling sick fell down". When she was in village she used to be sick frequently. She was also practicing cleanliness at the time of her menstruation by cleaning her clothes at night, drying under the sun, folding them and keeping separately. After knowing that girls should not get married before the age of 20 years, she was in a dilemma whether she should marry or not. Even though she got proposal from a boy for marriage she rejected and she said "I will think over it when I reach 20 years". Another reason why she is not yet convinced for marriage is that she has seen her friends who got married had to bring up the children alone, as their husband either went to other countries leaving them behind or deserted them. The knowledge obtained from NFE also made her aware of girls trafficking. She said "I also became

aware that we should be careful of the strangers who make false marriages and sell girls in the brothels”.

Appendix E 5 Phul Maya Tamang

I know how to take care of health and behave with people

Phul Maya Tamang was 35 years old and she was also from Sindhupalchowk. She ran away from home with her friends, came to Kathmandu and started working in a carpet factory. Though farming was sufficient for the family's sustenance she was tempted to wear nice clothes as her friends who were already working in the factory. She married with a boy who was also in the same factory. But presently, he was in Malaysia. She has a daughter of 14 years and a son 10 years old. She says she learned many things from NFE. Being able to read and write she is very pleased that she can now write her name. She says "now I can read signboards in the street, can check the homework of my children, I know the importance of clean water and more importantly, I know how to behave with people and talk with them without any hesitation. Before, I used to being shy". As day care centre was also a part of the NFE which she took, her children were taken care by the centre, she said "my children did not have to inhale the wool dust and they did not fall sick like before and I am able to save time and can work more than before therefore, my earning also has increased." She further said the agriculture farming knowledge which I got from NFE, I can use when I go back home."

Phulmaya was a matured type of learner by age and she trusted on the knowledge what she learned from the NFE and the benefit of the day care center for her children. She was also determined to apply what she learned because she was conscious that by using the knowledge would have positive effect in her livelihood in terms of increased human capital, social capital and indirectly the social capital. From her determination I came to know that Phulmaya type of learner knew what she

wanted and what she has to do and is not easily swayed by others. However, it was difficult to try out new ways for income generation.

Appendix E.6 Devi Pakhrin (Tamang)

I learned early marriage invites risks

Devi was 15 years when I met her. She was also from Sindhupalchowk district. She came to Kathmandu at the age of 13 with her own family. The family leased their land against half crop. Her mother was in Saudi Arabia since some time back and Devi was living with her maternal uncle and auntie. She was working in the carpet factory and also taking care of her little brother who was in grade V. They were in India when she was 7/8 years old and also was sent to school up to grade 3. She does not remember the place where she was in India. After she took the NFE classes she knew about the repercussions of early marriage and the process of cleanliness she had to undergo during the menstruation. She has also bitter experience of marriage, she said “I have seen husbands being drunk beating their wives, about marriage I will think later, now I have the responsibility of my brother and his schooling”. She added “only mother has to bring up the child”. She also remembered the NFE lessons about market management and “Savings”. She said “savings is necessary because we need it if we fall sick and can spend at the time of necessity”. The changes that came in her due to the knowledge gained from the NFE was, she said “if I became sick I used to go to traditional faith healer before, but now I am changed I go to the doctor if I am sick”. Her income was controlled by her uncle and auntie and the expenses for her brother was borne by her uncle from her earnings. She has also the nostalgia of farming, she said “when my mother comes back we go back to our village and do the farming.” She also had taken SEEP training of six months and she said “I know how to make dolls”.

The case of Devi indicated that the situation of a person decides in which issue one is interested in. As Devi has taken the responsibility of her brother, she feels greater importance of saving. Here she is taking a motherly role and her brother's life is more important than her own life. Thus, though she is a girl her knowledge is connected type more attached to her brother. As Rogers' version her responsibility determined her maturity.

Appendix F 1 Pasang Pakhrin

NFE gave me new life

Pasang Pakhrin (Tamang) was 28 years old. She was married at the age of 13 and she had one son and a daughter. There was no school in her village therefore she could not get a chance to go to school. Thus she remained illiterate. After coming to Kathmandu, as others, she also stepped in the carpet weaving. When she joined NFE she learned how to read and write. She said “I can read but have some difficulty in writing”. Then she took the tailoring training on her own but she said “due to inadequate knowledge of sums, I had to leave the training incomplete”. But she continued her tailoring practice and used to sew simple clothes such as petticoat, trousers and children’s clothes and take some tailoring charges. She also participated in the tailoring training provided by the SEEP. She told “before taking the NFE classes I had not thought that I could do so much. I did not know how to talk with people, did not know the importance of cleanliness of her surroundings and hygienic food. She said “NFE worked out as a medicine to bring consciousness to me. I thought I was dead before”. She added “now I listen to radio when it gives programme on health and hygiene. I have also started feeding my children nutritious food. I used to be scared to talk with people. She did not come to Kathmandu due to financial constraint as farm production was sufficient for the family but the education of children was the cause of her leaving home. Their mother tongue was Tamang and it was the medium of teaching used, but they thought it was important to learn Nepali language and this was the reason why they left their village. Recently she has started small grocery shop in her own room. She sells rice and other food items to her friends

of the factory. She sells about 15/20 bags of rice in two months from which she made profit of about Rs 500. She was doing three kinds of work side by side.

Pasang's case pointed out that some woman has a strong will power and she was determined to use her knowledge that she gained from in finding out various outlet for r enhancing social and financial assets and transforming her living.

Appendix F.2 Lakhmaya Tamang

In the Village I become a doctor

Lakhmaya Tamang was 28 years old, she was from Sindhuli district. Her father had two wives and they five sisters and four brothers from two mothers. As farming was insufficient for the family they had to do labour for living. She was married but husband had gone outside the country for work. She also recalled the knowledge she gained from the NFE in terms of various diseases, importance of cleanliness, and nutritious food for children, post natal care, importance of education to children and where to consult if one fell ill. She shared with me that “NFE made me bold to speak otherwise I was very shy and could not speak with a stranger”. She added “another important knowledge I obtained from the NFE was how to escape from the possibility of being trafficked. I became not only bold to speak with strangers but also knew how to behave with various people.” She said “I took license for driving a three wheeler after being literate and commuted for some time but once I met an accident and left the work and again joined the carpet factory. She also sold vegetable for some time and she used to earn Rs 70 by selling vegetables of Rs 30. But she too could not resist her peers’ teasing for doing this work and she left. She said “vegetable business was quite profitable”. Again she is thinking of driving micro bus for commuting people. She used to share knowledge of health and hygiene with other people particularly when she went back home. She said “in the village I become a small doctor”.

When I met Lakhmaya third time, she had the same spirit as before for trying out various work. But this her husband had returned and she had a new born son. She said “as I have a small child, presently I am not able to do any other work except the carpet weaving”. But she had retained the knowledge from the NFE as before and she

was quite determined that the knowledge about agriculture which she learned is for future and she says “I am sure I will go back home in the future and I will use the knowledge there and I will be in better condition than before when I was in the village”.

Appendix G Motivation Theory

There are various perspectives regarding the needs of workers, Maslow (1943) proposed hierarchy of needs which included five types of needs placed them in hierarchy such as physiological, safety, love, esteem and self actualization, Herzberg (1959) proposed motivation – hygiene theory that included intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors. McGregor's (1960s) theory X and Y proposes two set of assumptions, the first set of assumptions hold negative perception towards workers and second set hold positive perception (DeCenzo and Robbins 2000).