

Women Participation in Decision Making and Women Drudgery in High Hilly Districts of Uttarakhand

Sponsored by

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Presented by

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Introduction and context

Women constitute nearly half of the global population and approximately accounts for one-third of the total labour force. ‘Women’s question today is ... no longer an issue confined to the position of women within the family or their rights to equality with men in different aspect of social life. It is part of the total far broader question regarding the direction of change of that process’ (Majumdar 1985). In socially and economically developed societies, women power is being absorbed, integrated and assimilated into the national main stream. This has, however, not been the case in the majority of the developing and underdeveloped countries. Much of the labour contributed by women, especially in the domestic chores and also outside is not usually considered as productive.

Women have always been working everywhere in each part of the society of the world since the beginning of human civilization. Women today are paid less and have lower status at work than men. In spite of legislation and pressure from women’s movements, equality at work and status is still only a remote possibility for most women in the third world countries.

The issue of women’s development caught worldwide attention first in the year 1975 when the first International Conference of women was held in Mexico and the decade 1975-85 was declared as United Nation’s decade for women. This declaration by UN had initiated deliberations at various forums on women’s issues and policies have been formulated to integrate women into mainstream of development with a shift from the ‘welfare’ and ‘beneficiary’ approach to ‘participatory’ development approach. In may 1991, an expert group meeting on the role of women in public life held in Vienna agreed that women had the right and responsibility to participate actively in public life, and that rather than being seen as a minority issues, equality in public life should be seen as an issue of democratic parity.

The convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women states that discrimination ‘Violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women on equal terms with men in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hampers the growth of prosperity of society and the family and makes more difficult

the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity (UN Resolution 1979).

The importance of women's participation was recognized by the commission on the status of women at its thirty sixth session held at Vienna in March 1992. The commission adopted by consensus a resolution expressing its conviction that true democracy could not be achieved without the full participation of women in all spheres of life and using governments to increase their efforts to appoint women to all executive decision making bodies in political, economic and cultural life, so as to achieve incremental full gender equality.

The convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women at Nairobi (1985) forward looking strategies for advancement of women to the year 2000 reflect the significance that the United Nations attached to the importance of equality as part of the process of advancement of women. The Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace was held at Beijing, China from 4 to 15 September 1995. The 1995 Beijing platform stresses that equality in decision-making is integral to the advancement of women's rights and that women's equal participation in decision making is not only a question of simple justice or democracy but also a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. 'Equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and is also a necessary and fundamental prerequisite for equality, development and peace. A transformed partnership based on equality between women and men is a condition for people centered sustainable development' (UN Resolution 1979). Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) recommends two strategies:

1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structure and decision making.
2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision making and leadership.

The issues and concern raised through these platforms have wide-ranging implications and countries have made varying degree of progress in this regard. The progress and performance of developing countries in this regard has been more dismal. Four indicators, namely, education, employment, nutrition, and health are considered as major inputs for women development. But considerable disparities and

discrimination in access to these vital inputs regarding women empowerment continue to persists at both micro and macro level in the developing counties.

Indian Scenario

The constitution of India provides equal rights and opportunities to all of its citizens.

Four fundamental pillars of our constitution are:

Justice	-	Social, Economic and Political
Liberty	-	of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship
Equality	-	of status and opportunity
Fraternity	-	assuring the dignity of the individual and unity of the nation

In our constitution special attention has been given to the needs and problems of women as state can make any law under articles 15(3) relating to women and children in order to alleviate and improve their status. Beside these constitutional provisions and other legal safeguards, the entire women-specific development exercise is sought to be achieved through appropriate state legislations made from time to time. In the decade of eighties and nineties the paces of such women-specific policies have gathered additional momentum as a result of global awareness in this front.

The National Committee on the Status of Women (1974) examined the whole issue relating to the rights and status of women in the context of social and economic condition prevailing in the country. Its important terms and references were:

1. To examine the constitutional, legal and administrative provisions that have a bearing on social status of women, their education and employment.
2. To assess the impact of these provisions during the two decades on the status of women in the country, particularly in the rural sector and to suggest more effective programmes.
3. To examine the status of women as housewives and mothers in the changing social pattern and their problems in the sphere of further education and employment.

4. To consider the development of education among women and to determine the factors responsible for slow progress in this regard.
5. To suggest any other measure which would enable women to play their full and proper role in building the nation.

The suggestions given in the final report of this committee formed the basis of administrative set up under various ministries and departments of government of India.

Rural Women in India

Rural women in India are under-privileged in all social, economic and political front and they have to face discrimination, exploitation and oppression in the male-dominated world. The traditions and values, religious norms, caste rules and social taboos restrict women's lives and work opportunities and seek to confine women to traditional work, role and opportunities. Therefore it seems imperative to increase women's participation at the different decision making levels, without which, the changes they need for their empowerment may not materialize in favor of them.

In spite of more than six decade of development, rural women in India continue in the grip of economic dependence, social neglect and political ignorance and are not in a position to attain their due place in society. Though rural women play a significant and crucial role in agricultural development and in the allied fields including in the main crop production, livestock production, horticulture, post harvest operations and agro-social forest etc; they have little role in decision making particularly in matters related to agriculture and financial matters.

The position of women of hilly regions of Uttarakhand is more or less the same. Rural women of Uttarakhand constitute the most important productive work force in the economy of this region. Majority of the agricultural workforce in this region comprises of women. In this area, the participation of women is more in operations like fodder collection, cleaning of cattle shed, milking of animal and preparation of milk products. Apart from these activities, they have to perform the duties in running the family, maintaining the household, all the domestic activities and extending a helping hand in rural artisanship and handicraft. In spite of discharging all these duties and responsibilities, her involvement in decision making process is low.

Women undoubtedly play a unique role in the socio-economic setup of this region. Their socio-economic contribution towards family and community is highly significant but the reciprocal benefits conferred on them are disproportionate. Hill agriculture is absolutely dependent on women. Women generally work more than 15 hours a day, attending to agricultural work, cattle, and collection of fuel, fodder and water as well as the normal duties within their homes (Samal 1993).

In fact, the contribution of rural hill women needs a fresh review in the light of their social-economic status, awareness, outlook and perception which have so far by and large been unsatisfactorily attended. Since women play a key role in hill economy, they should be the first persons to take decision and make plans. Keeping this in mind, the present study has been undertaken in the two districts i.e. Almora and Nainital of Kumaun division of the state of Uttarakhand to find out the extent of women's involvement in decision making processes related to domestic, economic and political activities and to assess their freedom to go outside home. To understand the drudgery problem of hill women, the time spent by them in their outdoor, indoor and leisure time activities is also investigated in this study.

Decision making power

The extent of women's participation in decision making can be seen as the key indicator of gender equality in a society. Decision making power is the ability to influence decisions that affect one's life - both private and public. Formal access to position of authority and to decision making processes is an important condition for women to have decision making power in the public domain. In fact, decision making power is a composite of access, capabilities and actions that shape whether women have influence over the decision about their private life.

Decision making capacity of women is measured as one of the principal components of empowerment. Empowerment of women was not merely an end itself, but a key to long term overall development of a nation and without ensuring women's development, the goal of national development cannot be achieved. The strengthening of women's participation in all spheres of life has become a major issue in the development discourse. Socio-economic development cannot be fully achieved

without the representation of women in decision making at all level, in the family as well as in their social life.

In fact, every human being has the right to participate in decision that defines his or her life. This right is the foundation of the ideal of equal participation in decision making among women and men. This right argues that since women know their situation best they should participate equally with men to have their perspective effectively incorporated at all levels of decision making, from the private to the public spheres of their lives.

The present study focuses on the decision making capacity, which is regarded as a fundamental component of empowerment, of rural women of Uttarakhand. As we know, women from these hilly regions are over burdens with outdoor and indoor activities. These burdens are imposed on them by system that supports the subordination of women. The nature of such work burden of hill women and the drudgery associated with it, visible or invisible is also being examined in this study.

Methodology

The present study is sponsored by Directorates of Economics and statistics, government of Uttarakhand. The basic aim of the study is to examine the decision making capacity of hill women in relation to domestic economic and political spheres of their life and day to day working pattern of rural women of this region. The present study is therefore, confined to the rural hill region of Kumaun Division of Uttarakhand. Two districts of this division were selected for the purpose of the study. The Study is conducted by the Department of Sociology, DSB Campus, Kumaun University, Nainital. The study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To analyze rural women's decision making capacity in domestic/family affairs.
2. To study rural women's decision making capacity regarding socio-economic and political affairs.
3. To examine rural women's degree of freedom of movement.
4. To analyze working pattern of rural women regarding outdoor, indoor and leisurely activities.
5. To establish the influence of education, caste and age on women's decision making power and on their working pattern.
6. To identify the factors responsible for the drudgery of work on women.
7. To suggest some suitable ways through which the status of rural women can be improved and drudgery of work on them can be reduced.

The study, being empirical in nature, required a considerable data base and a major proportion of primary data was collected through interviews of some 320 women respondents from eight villages of two districts i.e. Almora and Nainital. To measure decision making capacity of rural women, a four point rating scale was designed with the kind of responses ranging from **high participation, medium participation, low participation and no participation**. The data were gathered with the help of a structured interview schedule, specially designed for this purpose. This formed the basis of primary data and it was further supplemented from other sources, viz, Gram Pradhans, officials of Blocks, NGOs etc. The major portion of the study is based on primary information collected by trained female field investigators. Basic information about study area has been collected through secondary sources. A detailed analysis pertaining to decision making capacity and working pattern of

womenfolk of this region has been made. An in depth study about the status, awareness, outlook and perception of the womenfolk has also been done.

For sample selection, multistage sampling method was adopted. The study has to be completed within a short time span; therefore it was confined to the Kumaun region of Uttarakhand. At first stage of sampling two districts i.e. Almora and Nainital were randomly selected from hilly districts of the state. Two blocks from each district were selected at second stage of sampling and the process was being done randomly. Hawalbag and Tarikhet from district Almora and Betalghat and Okhalkanda blocks from Nainital were selected as sample blocks. Caste has been taken as an important variable to assess the decision-making and drudgery of hill women, therefore at this stage, in each block a list of such ten villages has been prepared, where sufficient numbers of scheduled caste residents were living. Then out of these ten villages, two villages from each block were randomly selected and in this manner, ultimately eight villages, four from Almora and four from Nainital district were selected as sample villages.

Apart from caste, age and education have also been taken as independent variables. At the last stage, voluntary sampling method was applied to ensure proper representation of different castes, age groups and educational categories. Forty households from each village were selected as sample households and total 320 households were selected from eight villages. The name of representative districts, selected development blocks and the sample villages has been given in the following table.

Table 1 -The Details about Sample Structure

Districts	Selected Development Blocks	Sample Village	No. of Sample Households
Almora	Hawalbagh	Dhamas	40
		Matena	40
	Tarikhet	Badhan	40
		Mangchaura	40
Nainital	Betalghat	Chapad	40
		Chhar-Kheirna	40
	Okhalkanda	Khanshyu	40
		Mahtoli	40
	Total		320

Source: Uttarakhand District Census Handbook Almora and Nainital.

Thus altogether 320 households, 160 from district Almora and 160 from district Nainital were chosen. One women respondent was selected from each household. Information collected from respondents was further supplemented through personal observation, discussions with local people and some officials of district and block office. The field survey was done by the female investigators and the survey was conducted during the month of September 2016 to December 2016.

Demographic Profile of Study Area

As mentioned earlier, the district of Almora and Nainital has been selected for field survey in the present study. It would be worthwhile to give an account of the main demographic features of the study area. Therefore an attempt has been made to highlight the socio-economic profile of these two districts. Both the districts fall in the Kumaun Division of the state. The total geographical area of district Almora and Nainital is 3144 sq. km. and 4251 sq.km. respectively. According to 2011 census, the population of district Almora is 622506 out of which 291081 are male and 3311425 are female. The population of Nainital district is rather high in comparison of Almora district. Total population of this district is 954605 and male and female population is 493666 and 460939 respectively. The data highlight that female population ratio is much higher in Almora district. Decadal growth rate of population (2001-2011) has been -1.64 percent in district Almora and 25.13 percent in Nainital district as against 18.81 percent in the state as a whole (Table 02). An important cause of negative population growth rate in Almora district is the outmigration of young population from this area. Most of the population in both the districts lives in rural areas but in Nainital district its percentage is rather low. The rural population in Almora and Nainital districts is approximately 90 and 61 percentage. The density of population (persons per sq. km.) in Almora district is 198 and 225 in Nainital district as against 189 in the state as a whole. Sex ratio (number of female per thousand male) in Almora and Nainital districts is 1139 and 934 and at the state level it is 963. The number of inhabited villages in district Almora is 2184 and in district Nainital is 1097. The villages in both the districts are thinly populated.

The literacy rate in both the districts is comparatively higher than the average of the state. The literate population constitutes 80.47 percent in Almora district and 83.88 percent in Nainital district in the total population. Percentage of literate persons in both the districts is higher in comparison to the state as a whole. But sex wise categorization of literacy data highlight that there exists a gender gap in literacy rate and the rate of literacy among male in both the districts is relatively higher than female literacy rate.

Table 02 Demographic characteristic of Almora and Nainital Districts

S. No.	Characteristic	Almora	Nainital	Uttarakhand
1	Total population (2011, in lakhs)	622,506	954,605	10,086,292
	a- Rural population	560,192	542,871	7,036,954
	b- Urban population	62,314	371,734	3,049,338
2	Population growth rate (in %) during 2001 and 2011	-1.64	25.35	18.81
3	Percentage of total population (2011)			
	a- Rural	89.99	61.06	69.77
	b- Urban	10.01	38.94	30.23
	c- SC	24.26	20.03	18.76
	d- ST	0.21	0.79	2.89
4	Density of population (population per sq. km; 2011)	198	225	189
5	Sex Ratio (No. of female per 1000 males 2011)			
	a- Total	1139	934	963
	b- Rural	1177	948	1000
	c- Urban	848	912	884
6	Percentage of literate (population 2011)			
	a- Total	80.47	83.88	78.82
	b- Rural	92.86	90.07	87.40
	c- Urban	69.93	77.29	70.01
7	Worker as percentage of total population (2011)			
	a- Main workers			
	Total	32.30	31.05	28.46
	Male	35.12	44.03	40.30
	Female	29.83	17.15	16.16
	b- Marginal workers			
	Total	15.60	8.35	9.93
	Male	13.82	8.01	9.37
	Female	17.17	8.72	10.52
7	Percentage of main workers (2011)			
	a- Cultivators			
	Total	69.62	36.56	40.81
	Male	51.42	27.33	28.82
	Female	86.27	56.46	64.00
	b- Agricultural laboures			
	Total	3.45	9.24	10.42
	Male	3.55	8.35	11.23
	Female	3.35	11.14	8.84
	c- Household industry			
	Total	1.45	2.60	2.95
	Male	1.89	2.33	2.72
	Female	1.04	3.16	3.41
	d- Other workers			
	Total	25.49	51.61	45.82
	Male	43.14	61.99	57.24
	Female	9.34	29.24	23.75

Source: Census of India, 2011, Uttarakhand, District Census Hand book Almora and Nainital

The schedule castes and schedule tribes constitute 24.47 percent in district Almora and 20.82 percent in district Nainital in the total population of these districts. This figure is 21.65 percent in the state. According to census 2011 data regarding the occupational characteristics of population in both districts; the total workers (main and marginal) constitute 47.90 percent in Almora district and 39.41 percent in district Nainital. Work participation rate among the male population is higher in both the districts in comparison to female population. But female work participation is significantly higher in Almora district.

As mentioned earlier that the agriculture, in the hill region of the state is basically a women's job. This is proved from the fact that the highest number of female workers are engaged in agriculture in both the districts. But in comparison to Almora district, where the percentage of female cultivators is 86.27, the proportion of female cultivators in Nainital district is quite low (56.46%). The household industries are not developed in this region. Out of the total workers, a little more than 3 percent in Almora district and 2.60 percent workers in Nainital district are engaged in household industry and manufacturing. The quantitative information regarding above mentioned issues about the state of Uttarakhand and Almora and Nainital districts are shown in the Table 02.

Socio-Economic Features

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study has been conducted in the eight hilly villages selected from the sample districts i.e. Almora and Nainital for the purpose of this study. 320 women from these villages have been surveyed. The objectives of this part of report are as follows-

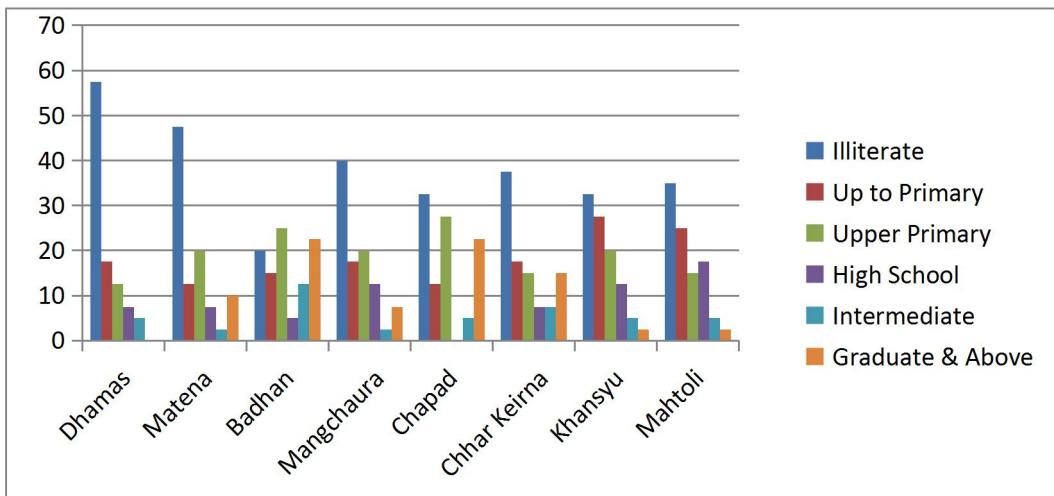
1. To portray the demographic characteristics of the women respondents such as age-group, educational level, socio-economic back ground etc.
2. To analyze the socio-economic features of the sample households in terms of population, family size, education, occupation etc.

Table 03 Educational level of respondent

Name of Village	Educational level						Total
	Illiterate	Up to Primary	Upper Primary	High School	Intermediate	Graduate & Above	
Dhamas	23 (57.50)	07 (17.50)	05 (12.50)	03 (7.50)	02 (5.00)	-	40 (100.00)
Matena	19 (47.50)	05 (12.50)	08 (20.00)	03 (7.50)	01 (2.50)	04 (10.00)	40 (100.00)
Badhan	08 (20.00)	06 (15.00)	10 (25.00)	02 (5.00)	05 (12.50)	09 (22.50)	40 (100.00)
Mangchaura	16 (40.00)	07 (17.50)	08 (20.00)	05 (12.50)	01 (2.50)	03 (7.50)	40 (100.00)
Chapad	13 (32.50)	05 (12.50)	11 (27.50)	-	02 (5.00)	09 (22.50)	40 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	15 (37.50)	07 (17.50)	06 (15.00)	03 (7.50)	03 (7.50)	06 (15.00)	40 (100.00)
Khansyu	13 (32.50)	11 (27.50)	08 (20.00)	05 (12.50)	02 (5.00)	01 (2.50)	40 (100.00)
Mahtoli	14 (35.00)	10 (25.00)	06 (15.00)	07 (17.50)	02 (5.00)	01 (2.50)	40 (100.00)
All Villages	121 (37.81)	58 (18.12)	62 (19.38)	28 (8.75)	18 (5.63)	33 (10.31)	320 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Table 03 presents the educational level of respondents. The data about the educational level of women respondents reveal that around 37.0 percent women were illiterate and the educational level of 18.12 percent women was up to primary level. The data shown in this table highlight the fact that the educational level of maximum respondents (46.25%) was up to the level of high school. Taking all respondents together it was found that only 15.94 percent respondents were educated up to intermediate and graduation. A significant variation was found in the educational level of respondents in different villages.

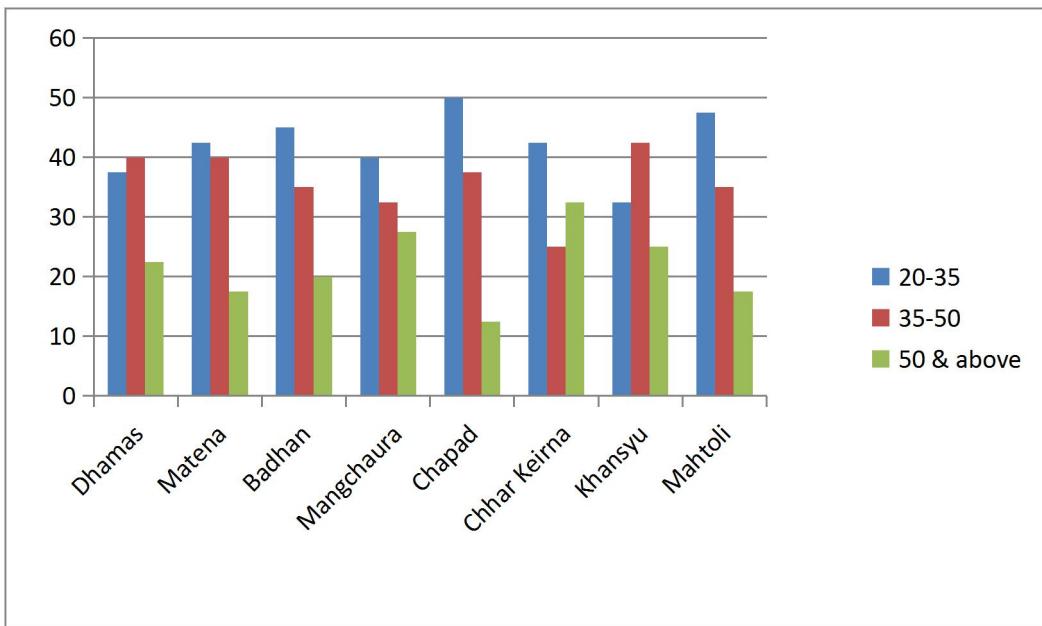


The proportion of illiterate respondents was found to be highest (57.50 %) in village Dhamas of Almora district and lowest 20.00 percent in village Badhan of the same district. No respondent was found graduate and above in village Dhamas whereas the highest percentage (22.50%) of graduates was found in two villages i.e. Badhan and Chapad. There were only thirty three graduate respondents in the total sample. The data show that the literacy rate among the women respondents was below the average literacy rate of the state as well as both the sample districts. There was only one village i.e. Badhan where the average literacy rate (80%) of women respondents was above the average of the state and both districts.

Table 04 Age Group of respondents

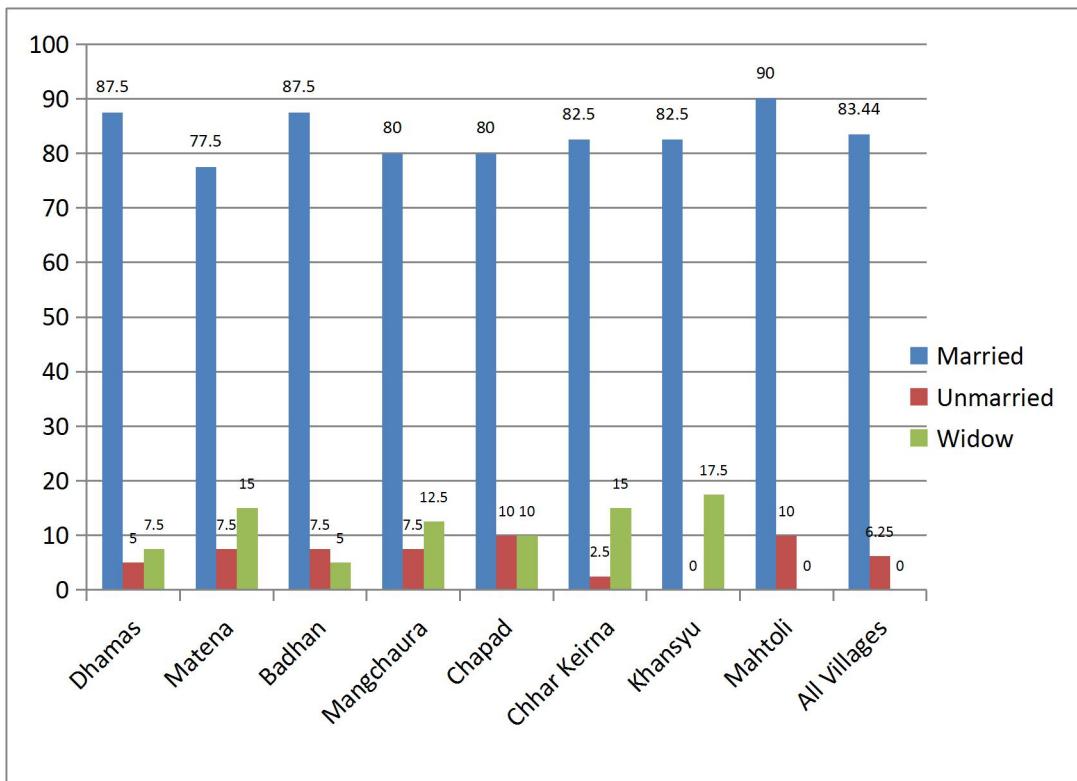
Name of Village	Age Group of Respondents (years)			Total
	20-35	35-50	50 & above	
Dhamas	15 (37.50)	16 (40.00)	09 (22.50)	40 (100.00)
Matena	17 (42.50)	16 (40.00)	07 (17.50)	40 (100.00)
Badhan	18 (45.00)	14 (35.00)	08 (20.00)	40 (100.00)
Mangchaura	16 (40.00)	13 (32.50)	11 (27.50)	40 (100.00)
Chapad	20 (50.00)	15 (37.50)	05 (12.50)	40 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	17 (42.50)	10 (25.00)	13 (32.50)	40 (100.00)
Khansyu	13 (32.50)	17 (42.50)	10 (25.00)	40 (100.00)
Mahtoli	19 (47.50)	14 (35.00)	07 (17.50)	40 (100.00)
All Villages	135 (42.18)	115 (35.94)	70 (21.88)	320 (100.00)

Note- Percentage is shown in parentheses



Age has been taken as an independent variable in this study and it was tried to include women respondents from different age-groups in the sample. The distribution of women respondents, according to different age-group has been presented in Table 04. The data pertaining to age distribution of respondent reveal that the age-group of 20 to 35 years was the major group in which there were 42.18 percent respondents. In the different sample villages, the proportion of respondents in this age-group varied from 32.50 percent in village Khansyu to 50.00 percent in village Chapad. The second major age-group of respondents was 30 to 50 years which accounted 35.94 percent in aggregate. The proportion of respondent in this age-group was highest (42.50%) in village Khansyu and lowest in village Chhar- Kheirna (25.00%). The respondents who were above 50 years of age constitute 21.88% in the total sample with differentials in their proportion in the sample villages. Table 04 shows that there is a proper representation of all age-groups in the selected sample.

To analyze the socio-economic background of respondents, they were distributed according to their marital status, caste category, economic category and family type. Related data are shown in Table 05. When we look at the marital status of the women in the sample, we find that 83.44 percent were married, 6.25 percent were unmarried and the percentage of widows was 10.31percent. In different sample villages, the proportion of married women varied from 77 to 90 percent. Only 30 (6.25percent) women respondents were found unmarried in total selected sample and they were generally between 20to25 age group.



As mentioned earlier, caste has also been taken as an independent variable. In the related sample villages, no significant group of ST and OBC category households has been found. Therefore respondents from general and SC caste category were selected as sample. Such types of villages were selected as sample where the numbers of scheduled caste households were sufficient along with the households of general caste category. In this manner proper representation was given to both the caste categories in the selected sample. Data shown in Table 05 reveal that respondents from general and SC category were 54.38 and 45.62 percent respectively. In different sample villages, the representation of respondents of general category varied from 47.50 percent to 70 percent and in relation to SC category this variation was found from 30 percent to 52.50 percent. In this regard, maximum variation was found in Mahtoli village of district Nainital and Manguchaura village of district Almora. In these two villages the representation of responds of general category was much higher as compared to SC category. Equal proportion of these two caste categories was found in two villages i.e. Dhamas and Matena of Almora district.

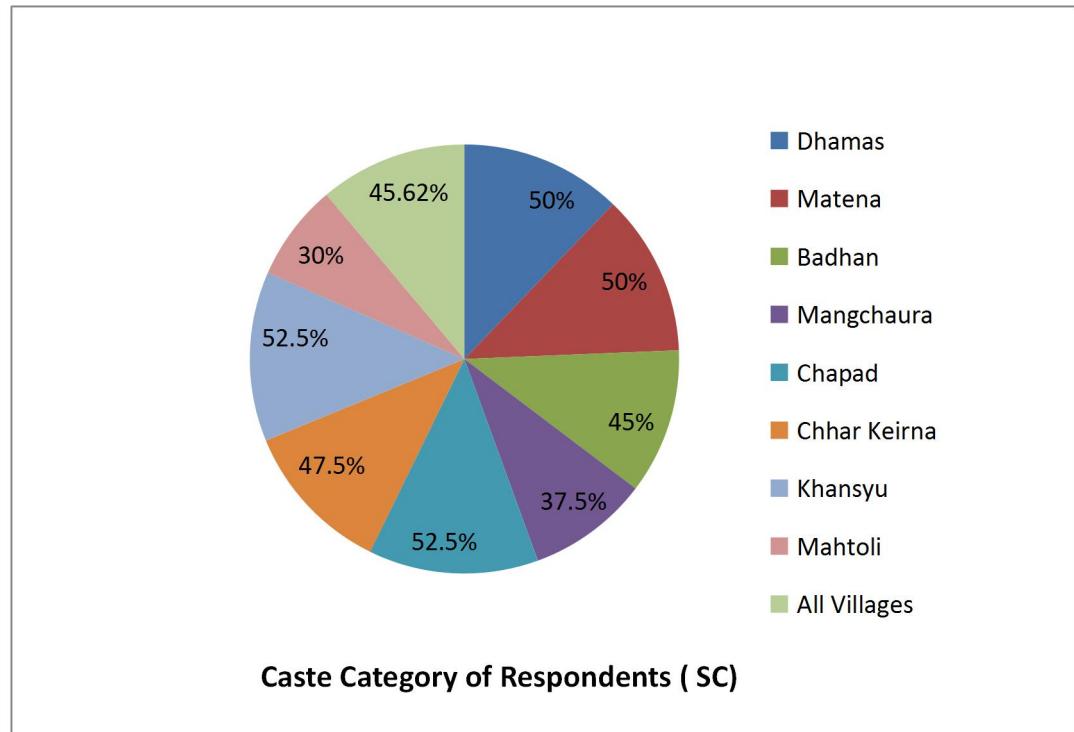
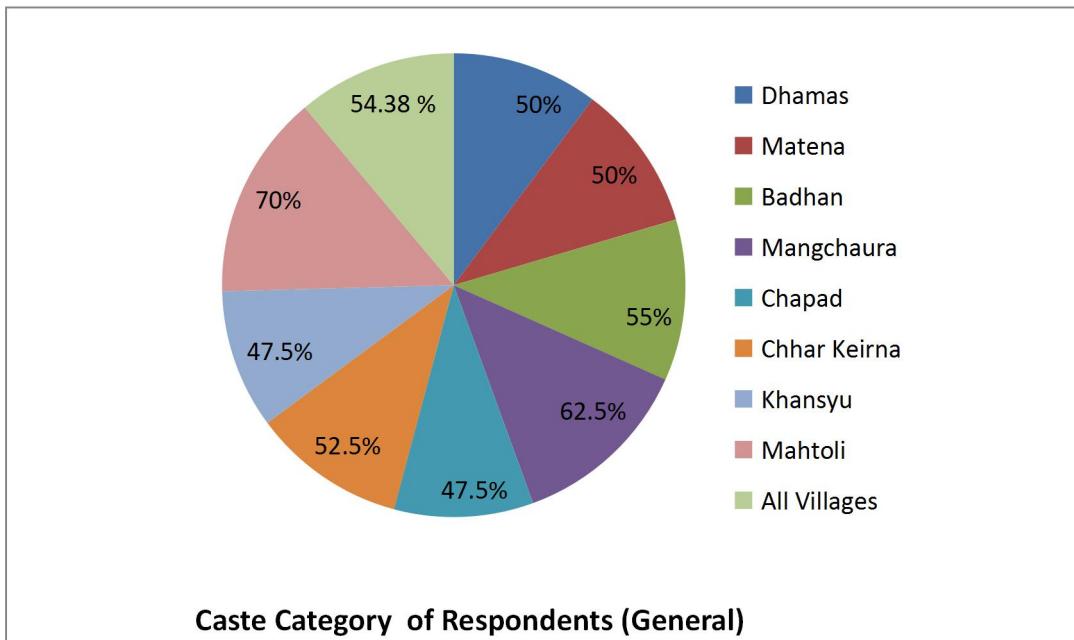
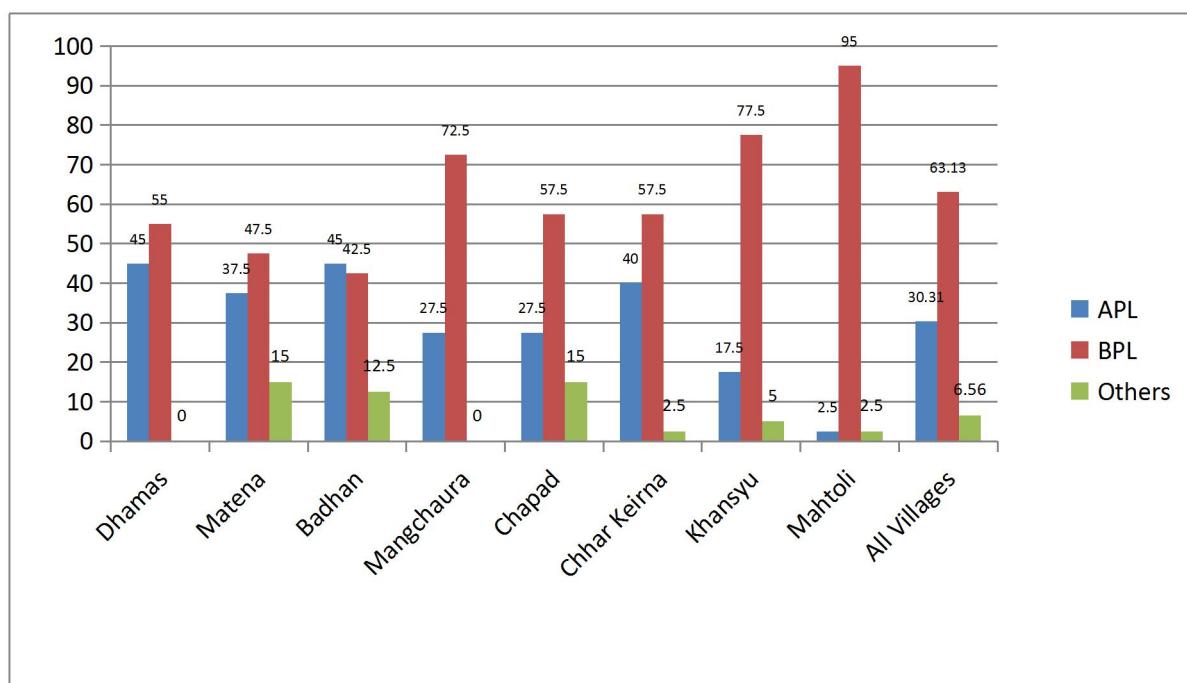


Table 05 General Profile of respondents

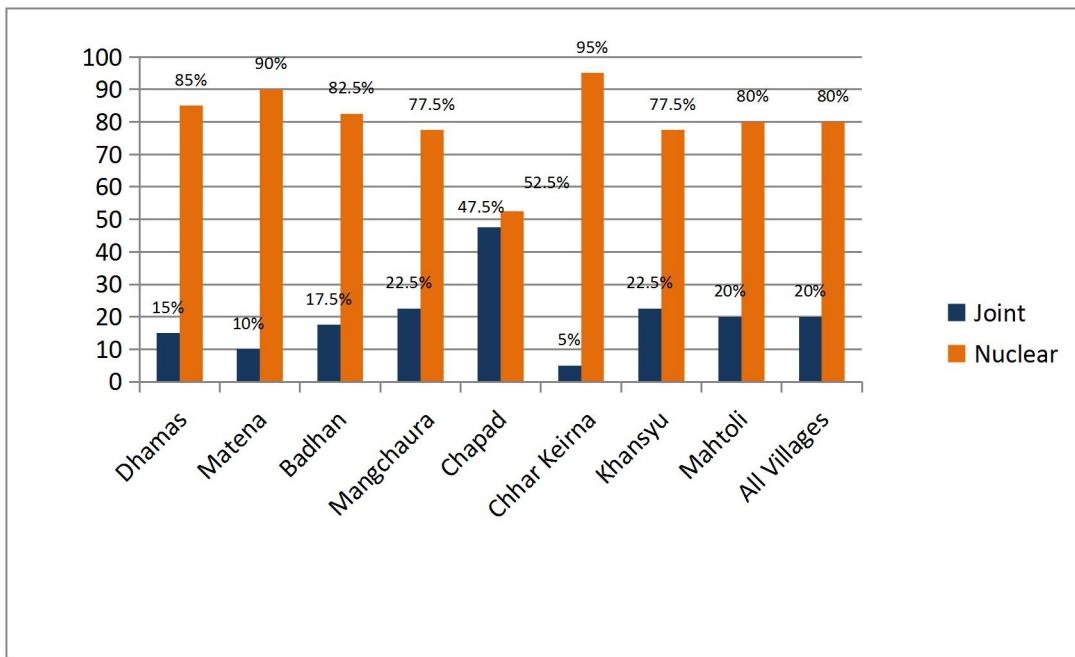
Name of Village	Marital Status			Caste Category		Economic Category			Type of Family		Total No. of Respondents
	Married	Unmarried	Widow	General	SC	APL	BPL	Others	Joint	Nuclear	
Dhamas	35 (87.50)	02 (5.00)	03 (7.50)	20 (50.00)	20 (50.00)	18 (45.00)	22 (55.00)	-	06 (15.00)	34 (85.00)	40 (100.00)
Matena	31 (77.50)	03 (7.50)	06 (15.00)	20 (50.00)	20 (50.00)	15 (37.50)	19 (47.50)	06 (15.00)	04 (10.00)	36 (90.00)	40 (100.00)
Badhan	35 (87.50)	03 (7.50)	02 (5.00)	22 (55.00)	18 (45.00)	18 (45.00)	17 (42.50)	05 (12.50)	07 (17.50)	33 (82.50)	40 (100.00)
Mangchaura	32 (80.00)	03 (7.50)	05 (12.50)	25 (62.50)	15 (37.50)	11 (27.50)	29 (72.50)	-	09 (22.50)	31 (77.50)	40 (100.00)
Chapad	3.2 (80.00)	04 (10.00)	04 (10.00)	19 (47.50)	21 (52.50)	11 (27.50)	23 (57.50)	06 (15.00)	19 (47.50)	21 (52.50)	40 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	33 (82.50)	01 (2.50)	06 (15.00)	21 (52.50)	19 (47.50)	16 (40.00)	23 (57.50)	01 (2.50)	02 (5.00)	38 (95.00)	40 (100.00)
Khansyu	33 (82.50)	-	07 (17.50)	19 (47.50)	21 (52.50)	07 (17.50)	31 (77.50)	02 (5.00)	09 (22.50)	31 (77.50)	40 (100.00)
Mahtoli	36 (90.00)	04 (10.00)	-	28 (70.00)	12 (30.00)	01 (2.50)	38 (95.00)	01 (2.50)	08 (20.00)	32 (80.00)	40 (100.00)
All Villages	267 (83.44)	20 (6.25)	33 (10.31)	174 (54.38)	146 (45.62)	97 (30.31)	202 (63.13)	21 (6.56)	64 (20.00)	256 (80.00)	320 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

To understand the economic status of sample households, the respondents were distributed on the basis of economic category. The distribution has been presented in Table 05. The data related to the economic category of respondents reveal that maximum of respondents (63.13%) were from the category of below poverty line and 95 percent respondents belong to BPL category in village Mahtoli of district Nainital. It was observed that the proportion of BPL category respondents was much higher in the villages of district Nainital in comparison to the villages of Almora district. Only 30.31 percent respondents belong to the APL category in the all sample villages and remaining 6.56 percent belong to other economic category. The respondents who were benefited under 'Food security scheme' were included in 'other economic category'.



To analyze the social background of respondents, data regarding the type of their family were also collected. It was observed that attraction towards nuclear families is increasing continuously in the rural areas also. Our survey revealed that 80 percent respondents of all sample villages were from nuclear families. In different sample villages, the proportion of respondents belonging to nuclear family varied from 52.50 percent to 95.00 percent and it was highest (95%) in the village Chhar-kheirana and lowest (52.50%) in Chapad village. Both villages are located in the district of Nainital.



Structure of House and Accommodation

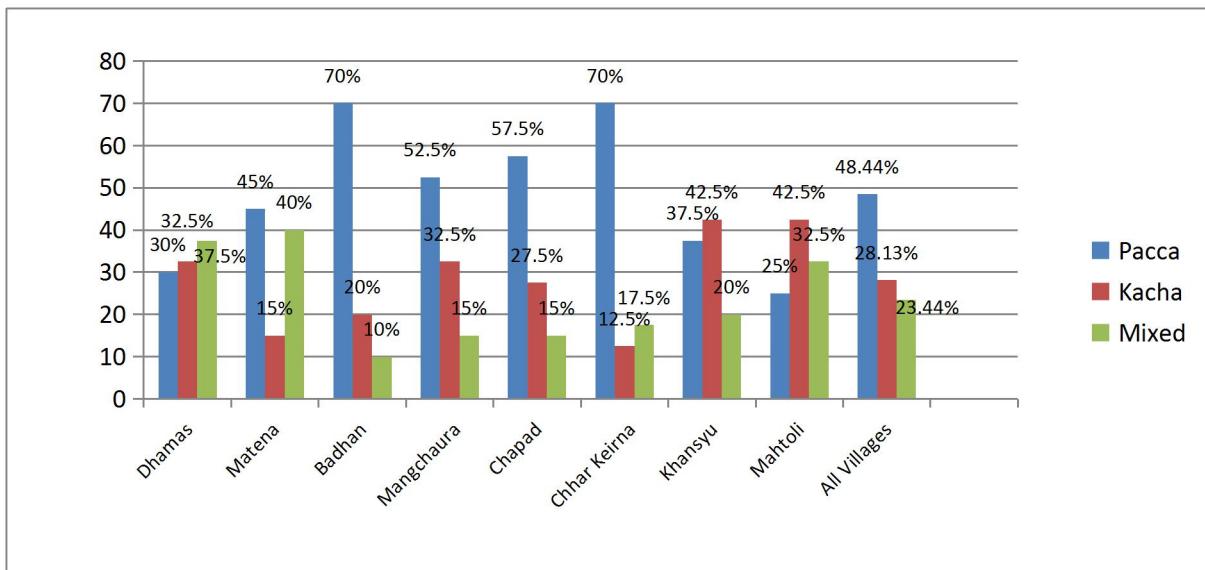
Data related to housing structure of the sample households presented in the Table 06. Data reveal that around 48 percent houses were *pucca* which were made of cement, stones, bricks and wood. 28.13 percent houses were *kuchha* (made up of mud, straw, wood and dry leaves) and rests of the houses (23.44%) were mixed or semi-*pucca*. It was found that the villages, which are located near the highway, are much developed. The houses of 70 percent respondents of villages Badhan and Chhar-Kheirna were *pucca* in nature. Minimum respondents (25%) have *pucca* houses in village Mahtoli of district Nainital.

The data regarding accommodation in the sample households reveal that the number of rooms were not sufficient for the family members. Average numbers of rooms in all sample villages were only 2.67. It was found that about 2.67 rooms are shared by a family of 5.5 (Table 07) members in the sample households. It was observed in the study that there was a separate kitchen in 55.94 percent households and the rest had no separate kitchen. 44.06% respondents reported that they had no separate kitchen in their houses. Variations were also found in the proportion of households in the sample villages who had provision of separate kitchen and this proportion varied from 25 percent in village Dhamas to 90 percent in village Badhan. The facility of bathroom and latrine within the house premises was found in 75.63 percent and 84.38 percent households respectively in all the sample villages. These facilities were also varied in different sample villages.

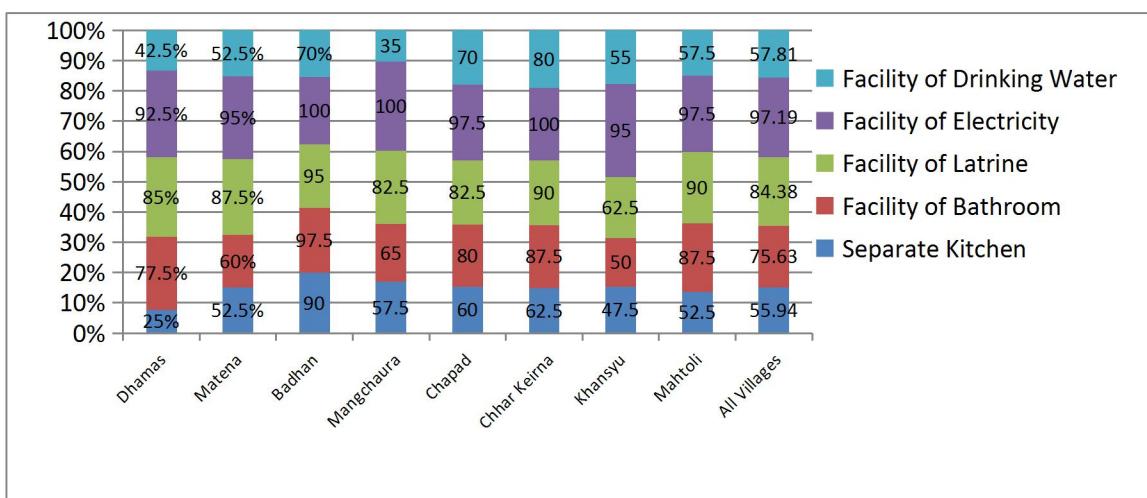
Table 06 Structure of House and Accommodation

Name of Village	Nature of House			Average No. of Rooms	Separate Kitchen	Facility of Bathroom	Facility of Latrine	Facility of Electricity	Facility of Drinking Water	Per Family No. of Livestock	Total No. of Households
	Pacca	Kachha	Mixed								
Dhamas	12 (30.00)	13 (32.50)	15 (37.50)	2.37	10 (25.00)	31 (77.50)	34 (85.00)	37 (92.50)	17 (42.50)	3.3	40 (100.00)
Matena	18 (45.00)	06 (15.00)	16 (40.00)	2.88	21 (52.50)	24 (60.00)	35 (87.50)	38 (95.00)	21 (52.50)	3.7	40 (100.00)
Badhan	28 (70.00)	08 (20.00)	04 (10.00)	3.30	36 (90.00)	39 (97.50)	38 (95.00)	40 (100.00)	28 (70.00)	1.68	40 (100.00)
Mangchaura	21 (52.50)	13 (32.50)	06 (15.00)	2.63	23 (57.50)	26 (65.00)	33 (82.50)	40 (100.00)	14 (35.00)	3.38	40 (100.00)
Chapad	23 (57.50)	11 (27.50)	06 (15.00)	2.83	24 (60.00)	32 (80.00)	33 (82.50)	39 (97.50)	28 (70.00)	1.88	40 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	28 (70.00)	05 (12.50)	07 (17.50)	3	25 (62.50)	35 (87.50)	36 (90.00)	40 (100.00)	32 (80.00)	1.45	40 (100.00)
Khansyu	15 (37.50)	17 (42.50)	08 (20.00)	2.37	19 (47.50)	20 (50.00)	25 (62.50)	38 (95.00)	22 (55.00)	2.6	40 (100.00)
Mahtoli	10 (25.00)	17 (42.50)	13 (32.50)	2.87	21 (52.50)	35 (87.50)	36 (90.00)	39 (97.50)	23 (57.50)	3.63	40 (100.00)
All Villages	155 (48.44)	90 (28.13)	75 (23.44)	2.67	179 (55.94)	242 (75.63)	270 (84.38)	311 (97.19)	185 (57.81)	2.49	320 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses



In the village like Badhan 97.50 percent households had separate bathroom whereas only 50 percent households had this facility in village khanshyu. Regarding the facility of latrine, the variation was found less in comparison to bathroom. It was from 62.50 percent in village Khanshyu to 90 percent in village Badhan. The electricity facility was available in all the sample villages and around 97 percent sample households had electricity facility in their houses in all sample villages. In the villages like Badhan and Mangchaura of district Almora and Chhar-Kheirna in Nainital district, all sample households were found electrified. Facility of drinking water is still a problem in the hilly rural areas of this region. Taking all the sample households together it was found that the houses of 57.81 percent respondents had drinking water facility. This facility in the houses varied from 35 percent sample households in villages Mangchaura of district Almora to 80 percent in village Chhar-Kheirna of Nainital district.



Livestock Pattern

Data pertaining to livestock pattern in the sample households indicate that the number of livestock per household was 2.49 in aggregate with differentials in the sample villages. Per family minimum number of average livestock were found in village Chhar-keirna which was 1.45 and maximum 3.70 per family livestock were reported in village Matena. In the rural hill region of Uttarakhand the burden of work related to animal husbandry is generally on the shoulders of female members of family and the responsibility of feeding, maintaining, milking and grazing them is also taken by female members in the households. The average number of livestock in the sample households was not much high. In different sample villages, particularly in those villages which were located roadside, a sufficient number of families had no livestock.

Demographic features of population of sample households

Table 07 Population, Sex ratio & Size of Families of respondents

Name of Village	No. of male population	No. of female population	Total population	Sex Ratio	Average size of family	Total no. of respondents in sample
Dhamas	110	126	236	1145	5.9	40
Matena	107	99	206	925	5.1	40
Badhan	110	117	227	1063	5.6	40
Mangchaura	90	88	178	977	4.4	40
Chapad	106	109	215	1028	5.3	40
Chhar Keirna	104	102	206	980	5.1	40
Khansyu	130	135	265	1038	6.6	40
Mahtoli	110	120	230	1090	5.7	40
All Villages	867	896	1763	1033	5.5	320

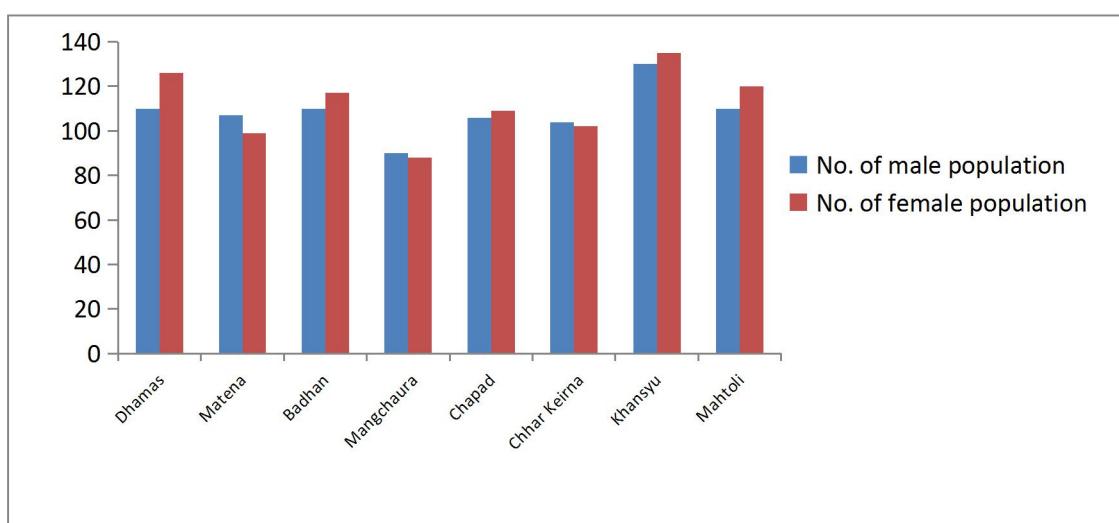


Table 07 presents the demographic features of the households of the related women respondents. The families of 320 women respondents had the population of 1763. The average size of family was 5.5 in all sample villages. Variation in this regard was found from 4.4 in village Mangchaura of district Almora to 6.6 in village Khanshyu of Nainital district. Total number of female population is higher in comparison to male population in all sample villages. Taking all the sample households together the sex ratio was found 1033 females per 1000 males. The sex ratio was recorded highest 1145 in village Dhamas and lowest 925 in village Matena. Both villages are located in district Almora.

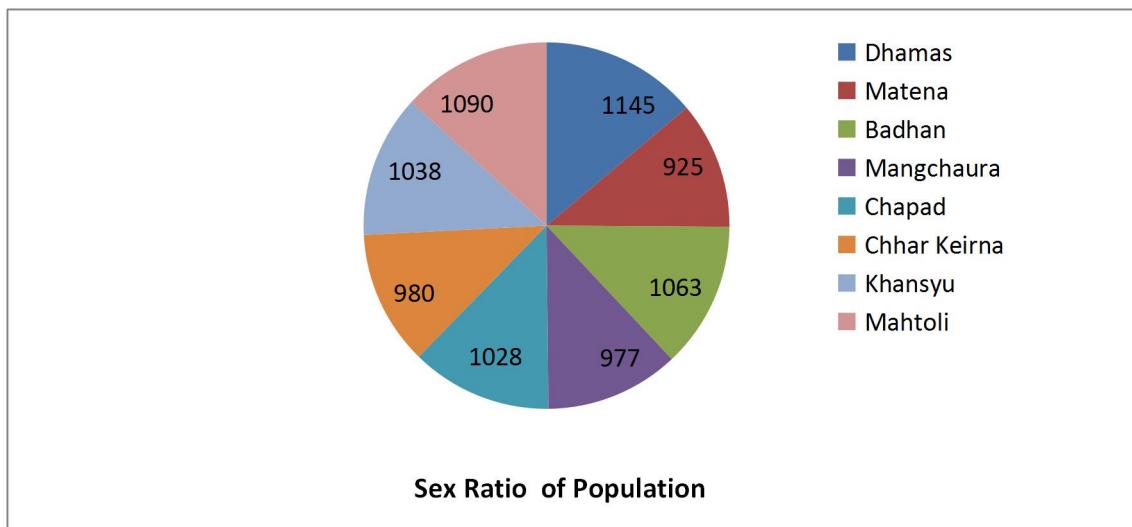
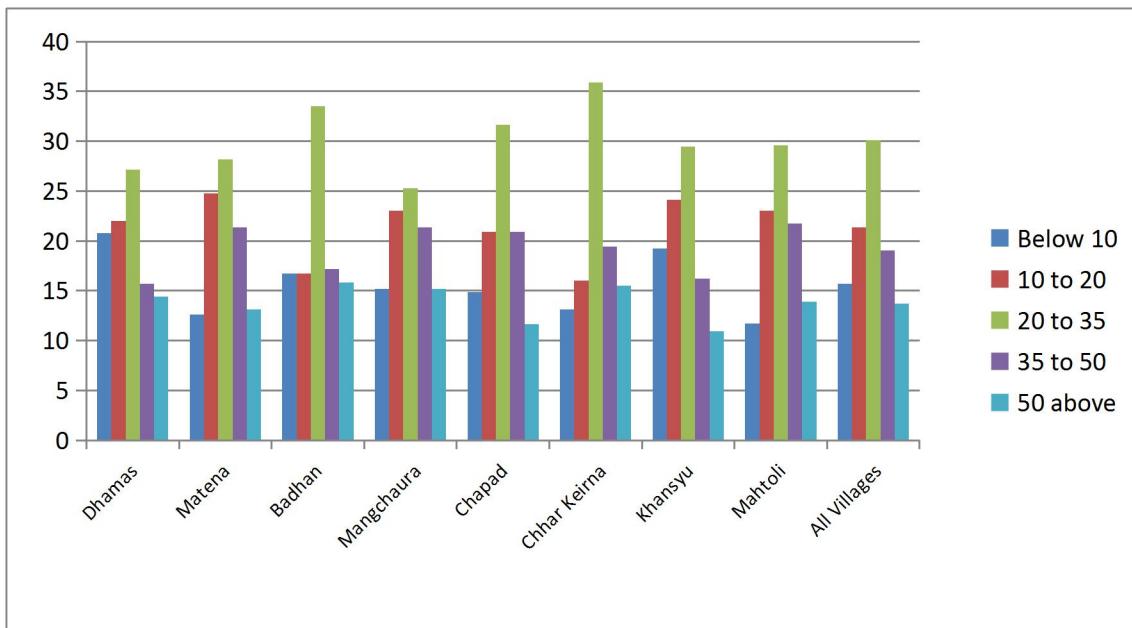


Table 08 Distribution of population in the households according to different age groups

Name of Village	Age group (years)						Total no. of households in the sample
	Below 10	10-20	20-35	35-50	50 above	Total	
Dhamas	49 (20.76)	52 (22.03)	64 (27.12)	37 (15.68)	34 (14.41)	236 (100)	40
Matena	26 (12.62)	51 (24.76)	58 (28.16)	44 (21.36)	27 (13.11)	206 (100)	40
Badhan	38 (16.74)	38 (16.74)	76 (33.48)	39 (17.18)	36 (15.86)	227 (100)	40
Mangchaura	27 (15.17)	41 (23.03)	45 (25.28)	38 (21.35)	27 (15.17)	178 (100)	40
Chapad	32 (14.88)	45 (20.93)	68 (31.63)	45 (20.93)	25 (11.63)	215 (100)	40
Chhar Keirna	27 (13.11)	33 (16.02)	74 (35.92)	40 (19.42)	32 (15.53)	206 (100)	40
Khansyu	51 (19.25)	64 (24.15)	78 (29.43)	43 (16.23)	29 (10.94)	265 (100)	40
Mahtoli	27 (11.74)	53 (23.04)	68 (29.57)	50 (21.74)	32 (13.91)	230 (100)	40
All Villages	277 (15.71)	377 (21.38)	531 (30.12)	336 (19.06)	242 (13.73)	1763 (100)	320

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

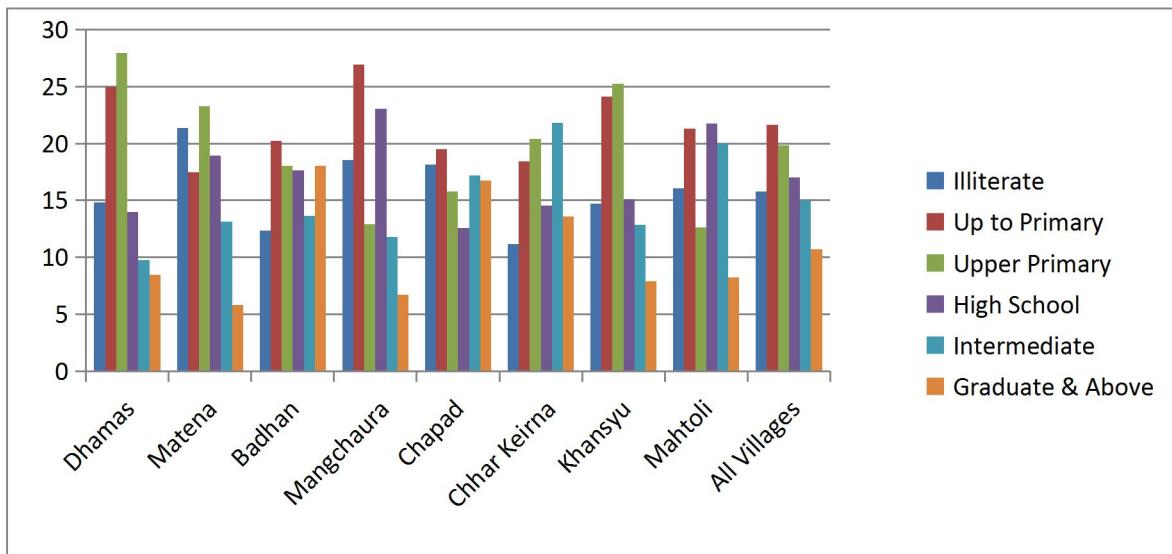


Data regarding age wise distribution of population in the sample households are presented in Table 08 which indicate that about 37.09 percent of the population was less than 20 years and about 13.73 percent was 50 and above 50 years. The population between 20to50 age group constitutes active work force and 49.18 percent population of total household was between this age-group. In this category 30.12 percent population were found between 20 to 35 age group and 19.06 percent were between 35 to 50 age category.

Table 09 Educational level of population in sample households

Name of Village	Total no. of households	Educational level						Total population
		Illiterate	Up to Primary	Upper Primary	High School	Intermediate	Graduate & Above	
Dhamas	40	35 (14.83)	59 (25.00)	66 (27.97)	33 (13.98)	23 (9.75)	20 (8.47)	236 (100.00)
Matena	40	44 (21.36)	36 (17.48)	48 (23.30)	39 (18.93)	27 (13.11)	12 (5.83)	206 (100.00)
Badhan	40	28 (12.33)	46 (20.26)	41 (18.06)	40 (17.62)	31 (13.66)	41 (18.06)	227 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	33 (18.54)	48 (26.97)	23 (12.92)	41 (23.03)	21 (11.80)	12 (6.74)	178 (100.00)
Chapad	40	39 (18.14)	42 (19.53)	34 (15.81)	27 (12.56)	37 (17.21)	36 (16.74)	215 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	40	23 (11.17)	38 (18.45)	42 (20.39)	30 (14.56)	45 (21.84)	28 (13.59)	206 (100.00)
Khansyu	40	39 (14.72)	64 (24.15)	67 (25.28)	40 (15.09)	34 (12.83)	21 (7.92)	265 (100.00)
Mahtoli	40	37 (16.09)	49 (21.30)	29 (12.61)	50 (21.74)	46 (20.00)	19 (8.26)	230 (100.00)
All Villages	320	278 (15.77)	382 (21.67)	350 (19.85)	300 (17.02)	264 (14.97)	189 (10.72)	1763 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses



The educational level of the population in the sample households has been presented in Table 09. The data regarding the educational level of the family members of sample households indicate that 15.77 percent of total population was illiterate. The illiterate population was lowest in village Chhar-Kheirna and highest 21.36 percent in Matena village. The population whose education level was up to primary standard constituted 21.67 percent. Data indicate that persons who were educated up to upper primary and high school recorded 19.85 and 17.02 percent respectively. Educational level of 14.97 percent was up to intermediate and only 10.72 percent were graduate and above in the total sample households. A significant variation had been found in different sample villages regarding the education up to graduate and above. The proportion of highly educated population was found to be highest (18.06%) in village Badhan and lowest in village Matena (5.83%).

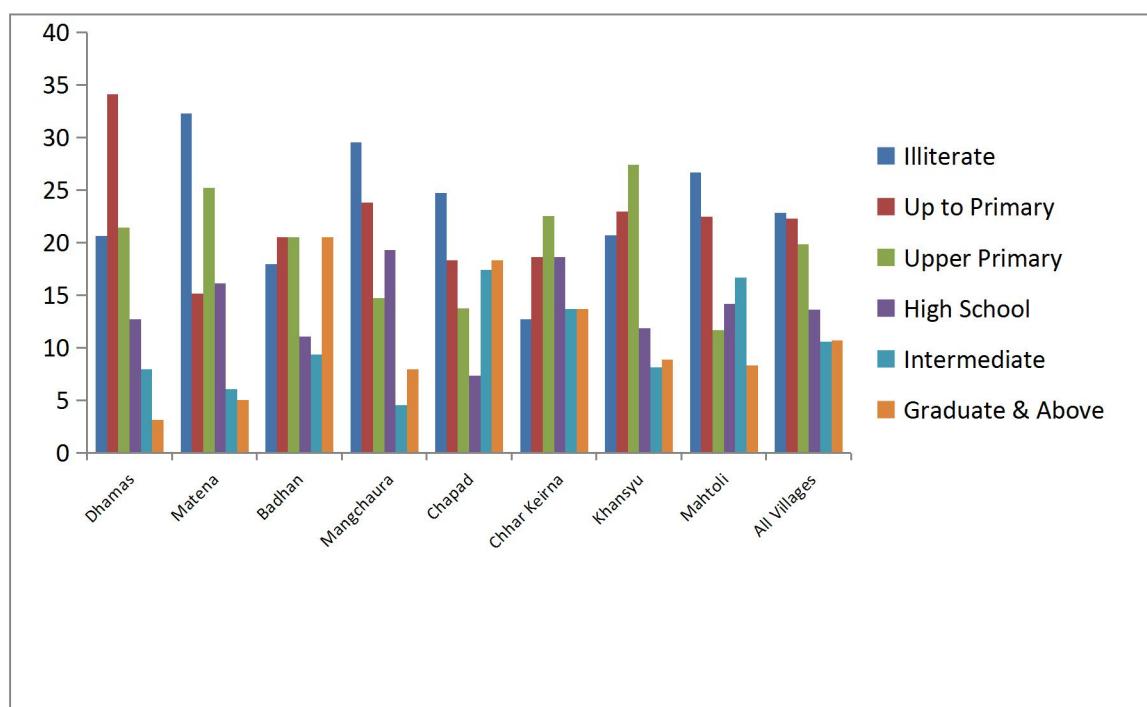
The educational level of female population of all sample households has been analyzed separately. The data presented in Table 10 reveal that the illiterates among female population were 22.88 percent which is much higher in comparison to the illiterates among total population (15.77%). The illiterates among female were highest (32.32%) in village Matena and lowest (12.75%) in village Chhar-Khreina. Table 10 shows that 22.32 percent females were educated up to primary level and those who are educated up to upper primary constituted 19.87 percent. Comparative analysis of data regarding female education in different sample villages indicates that the educational level was lowest in three villages namely Dhamas, Matena and Mangchaura and all these villages are in district Almora. In these villages more than eighty five percent female population was either illiterate or educated only up to high school level. A significant variation has been seen in different

sample villages regarding highly educated female population. It varied from 3.17 percent in village Dhamas to 20.51 percent in village Badhan.

Table 10 Educational level of female population in sample households

Name of Village	Total no. of households	Educational level						Total population
		Illiterate	Up to Primary	Upper Primary	High School	Intermediate	Graduate & Above	
Dhamas	40	26 (20.63)	43 (34.13)	27 (21.43)	16 (12.70)	10 (7.94)	04 (3.17)	126 (100.00)
Matena	40	32 (32.32)	15 (15.15)	25 (25.25)	16 (16.16)	06 (6.06)	05 (5.05)	99 (100.00)
Badhan	40	21 (17.95)	24 (20.51)	24 (20.51)	13 (11.11)	11 (9.40)	24 (20.51)	117 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	26 (29.55)	21 (23.86)	13 (14.77)	17 (19.32)	04 (4.55)	07 (7.95)	88 (100.00)
Chapad	40	27 (24.77)	20 (18.35)	15 (13.76)	08 (7.34)	19 (17.43)	20 (18.35)	109 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	40	13 (12.75)	19 (18.63)	23 (22.55)	19 (18.63)	14 (13.73)	14 (13.73)	102 (100.00)
Khansyu	40	28 (20.74)	31 (22.96)	37 (27.41)	16 (11.85)	11 (8.15)	12 (8.89)	135 (100.00)
Mahtoli	40	32 (26.67)	27 (22.50)	14 (11.67)	17 (14.17)	20 (16.67)	10 (8.33)	120 (100.00)
All Villages	320	205 (22.88)	200 (22.32)	178 (19.87)	122 (13.62)	95 (10.60)	96 (10.71)	896 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses



Migration pattern in sample households

Out migration of rural population has been increasing at an alarming rate over the past few years in the state of Uttarakhand. Villages in the hill region of the state are disappearing owing to movement of inhabitants towards urban plain lands with better opportunities. According to census 2011 out of Uttarakhand's 16793 villages, about 1053 have no inhabitants and 405 of them have less than 10 occupants. Census data and other reports show that the rate of migration from the hilly areas of the state has increased after it was formed in year 2000. In fact, the migration to cities has been in such great numbers that Uttarakhand has recorded the highest increase in the share of urban population in comparison to the other Himalayan states of the country while its rural decadal growth rate is the lowest.

Migration of male members adds to the problems of women drudgery in the hill region. Though the migrants' households receive remittance from the migrants which increase the purchasing power of their families, but it is at the cost of increased work burden on the rural women. Keeping in view all these facts, an attempt has been made to understand the migration pattern in the sample households. Table 11 indicates about number of migrants and destination of migration. Data reveal that from all sample villages, total 310 persons have been migrated and among these migrants 72.90 percent were male and 27.10 percent were female migrants.

It is important to note here that the rate of out migration is not much higher in the sample villages. There were some households, whose members were never migrated permanently. Out of the total migrants around 51 percent were migrated within district or towards another district of the state and remaining 49 percent out of the state. Gender wise comparative data indicate that the proportion of out migration from villages was much higher among male population. It was 61 percent within district, 77.97 percent towards other district within state and 78.95 percent towards other states. Rural households were getting some remittance from the migrant members of their family but it was not enough to improve their economic status. Better opportunities of employment and education for male population and marriage for female population were the main causes of out migration in this region.

Table 11 Pattern of migration in sample households

Name of Village	Total no. of households	No. of migrant persons			Destination of migration								
					Within district			Other district			Other state		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Dhamas	40	38 (84.44)	07 (15.56)	45 (100.00)	-	-	-	04 (100.00)	-	04 (100.00)	34 (82.93)	07 (17.07)	41 (100.00)
Matena	40	19 (82.61)	04 (17.39)	23 (100.00)	03 (100.00)	-	03 (100.00)	03 (60.00)	02 (40.00)	05 (100.00)	13 (86.67)	02 (13.33)	15 (100.00)
Badhan	40	23 (82.14)	05 (17.86)	28 (100.00)	05 (83.33)	01 (16.67)	06 (100.00)	09 (81.82)	02 (18.18)	11 (100.00)	09 (81.82)	02 (18.18)	11 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	24 (92.31)	02 (7.69)	26 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	-	01 (100.00)	11 (100.00)	-	11 (100.00)	12 (85.71)	02 (14.29)	14 (100.00)
Chapad	40	18 (78.26)	05 (21.74)	23 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	-	01 (100.00)	03 (100.00)	-	03 (100.00)	14 (73.68)	05 (26.32)	19 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	40	21 (63.64)	12 (36.36)	33 (100.00)	10 (62.50)	06 (37.50)	16 (100.00)	01 (50.00)	01 (50.00)	02 (100.00)	10 (66.67)	05 (33.33)	15 (100.00)
Khansyu	40	42 (54.55)	35 (45.45)	77 (100.00)	28 (50.91)	27 (49.09)	55 (100.00)	06 (60.00)	04 (40.00)	10 (100.00)	08 (66.67)	04 (33.33)	12 (100.00)
Mahtoli	40	41 (74.55)	14 (25.45)	55 (100.00)	12 (72.22)	05 (27.78)	17 (100.00)	09 (69.23)	04 (30.77)	13 (100.00)	10 (80.00)	05 (20.00)	25 (100.00)
All Villages	320	226 (72.90)	84 (27.10)	310 (100.00)	60 (61.00)	39 (39.00)	99 (100.00)	46 (77.97)	13 (22.03)	59 (100.00)	120 (78.95)	32 (21.05)	152 (100.00)

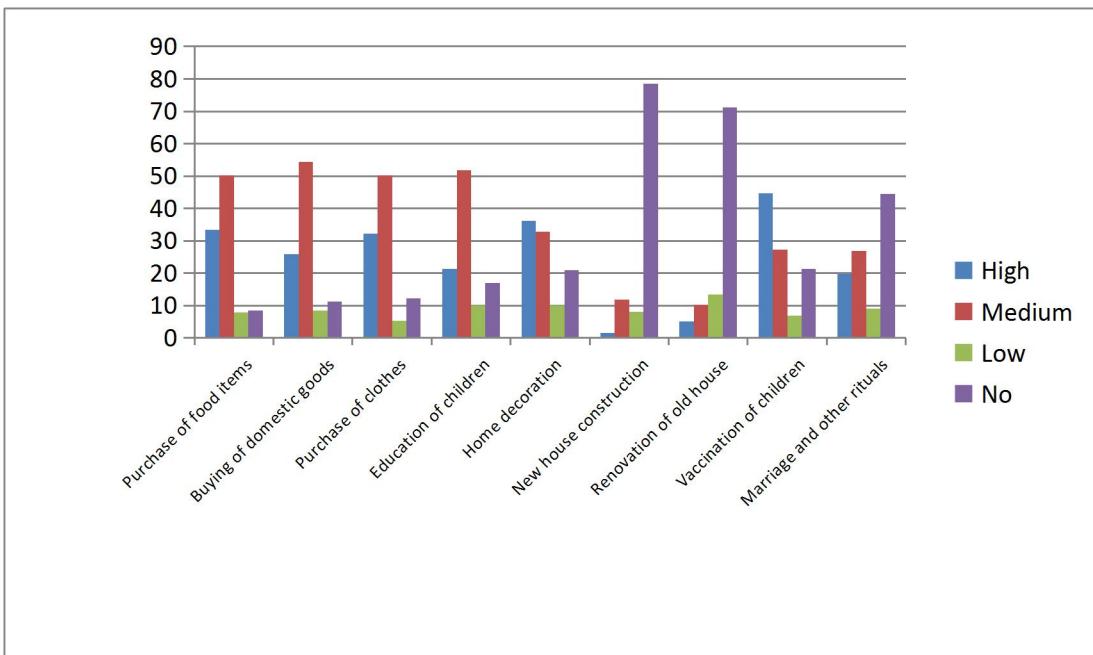
Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Decision Making Capacity of Hill Women

Decision making capacity is an important indicator of empowerment. Women's confidence and self esteem increases when they have greater knowledge, economic assets and income earning capacity and they are more likely to participate in both private and public decision making. Rural women of Uttarakhand share abundant responsibilities and perform a wide spectrum of duties in running the family, maintaining the household, attending to farm labour, tending domestic animals etc. In spite of all these responsibilities, they have little role in decision making in different matters of their private and public life.

Table 12 Participation level of respondents in domestic activities

S. No.	Type of domestic activities	Participation level				Total No. of Respondent
		High	Medium	Low	No	
1	Purchase of food items	107 (33.44)	161 (50.31)	25 (7.81)	27 (8.44)	320 (100.00)
2	Buying of domestic goods	83 (25.94)	174 (54.38)	27 (8.44)	36 (11.25)	320 (100.00)
3	Purchase of clothes	103 (32.19)	161 (50.31)	17 (5.31)	39 (12.19)	320 (100.00)
4	Education of children	68 (21.25)	166 (51.88)	32 (10.00)	54 (16.88)	320 (100.00)
5	Home decoration	116 (36.25)	105 (32.81)	32 (10.00)	66 (20.94)	320 (100.00)
6	New house construction	05 (1.56)	38 (11.88)	26 (8.13)	251 (78.44)	320 (100.00)
7	Renovation of old house	16 (5.00)	33 (10.31)	43 (13.44)	228 (71.25)	320 (100.00)
8	Vaccination of children	143 (44.69)	87 (27.19)	22 (6.88)	68 (21.25)	320 (100.00)
9	Marriage and other rituals	63 (19.69)	86 (26.88)	29 (9.06)	142 (44.38)	320 (100.00)
Total		704 (24.44)	1011 (35.10)	253 (8.78)	912 (31.67)	2880 (100.00)



In fact, women's access to decision making can be seen as the key indicator of gender equality in a society. Decision making is a basic process that underlines all functions of family resource management. The basic aim of this study is to understand the gender dynamics of decision making in hilly villages of Uttarakhand in order to improve policies and programmes designed to expand the role of women in public life. This part of the report highlights the participation level of rural women in decision making in both private and public realms. Thus participation level was investigated regarding their domestic, economic and political activities. Table 12 indicates the decision making pattern of rural women in domestic activities. Their participation level was categorized in four levels i.e. **high participation, medium participation, low participation and no participation**, and on this basis their decision making capacity was analyzed. Women's participation level was judged in relation to nine domestic activities. Activities like purchase of food items, buying of domestic goods, purchase of cloths, education of children, home decoration, new house construction, renovation of old house, vaccination of children and participation in decisions related to marriage and other rituals are included in the domestic matters.

Our survey revealed that rural women in the study area play more or less a significant role in decision making in domestic activities. Data shown in Table 12 indicate that around 60 percent women respondents' participation level was either high or medium in domestic matters but there were also 31.67 percent such respondents whose participation level was nil in this regard.

Table 13 Age wise participation level of respondents in domestic activities

S. No.	Type of domestic activities	Age wise participation level of respondent in domestic activities														
		20-35					35-50					50 and above 50				
		High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total
1	Purchase of food items	39 (28.89)	65 (48.15)	14 (10.37)	17 (12.59)	135 (100.00)	39 (33.91)	64 (55.65)	06 (5.22)	06 (5.22)	115 (100.00)	29 (41.43)	32 (45.71)	05 (7.14)	04 (5.71)	70 (100.00)
2	Buying of domestic goods	36 (26.67)	65 (48.15)	16 (11.85)	18 (13.33)	135 (100.00)	30 (26.09)	69 (60.00)	08 (6.96)	08 (6.96)	115 (100.00)	17 (24.29)	40 (57.14)	03 (4.29)	10 (14.29)	70 (100.00)
3	Purchase of clothes	45 (33.33)	56 (41.48)	08 (5.93)	26 (19.26)	135 (100.00)	38 (33.04)	68 (59.13)	04 (3.48)	05 (4.35)	115 (100.00)	20 (28.57)	37 (52.86)	05 (7.14)	08 (11.43)	70 (100.00)
4	Education of children	36 (26.67)	67 (49.63)	12 (8.89)	20 (14.81)	135 (100.00)	23 (20.00)	68 (59.13)	11 (9.57)	13 (11.30)	115 (100.00)	09 (12.86)	31 (44.29)	09 (12.86)	21 (30.00)	70 (100.00)
5	Home decoration	49 (36.30)	47 (34.81)	12 (8.89)	27 (20.00)	135 (100.00)	50 (43.48)	32 (27.83)	11 (9.57)	22 (19.13)	115 (100.00)	17 (24.29)	26 (37.14)	09 (12.86)	18 (25.71)	70 (100.00)
6	New house construction	02 (1.48)	15 (11.11)	07 (5.19)	111 (82.22)	135 (100.00)	01 (0.87)	15 (13.04)	13 (11.30)	86 (74.78)	115 (100.00)	02 (2.86)	08 (11.43)	06 (8.57)	54 (77.14)	70 (100.00)
7	Renovation of old house	04 (2.96)	13 (9.63)	11 (8.15)	107 (79.26)	135 (100.00)	09 (7.83)	10 (8.70)	20 (17.39)	76 (66.09)	115 (100.00)	03 (4.29)	10 (14.29)	12 (17.14)	45 (64.29)	70 (100.00)
8	Vaccination of children	70 (51.85)	33 (24.44)	09 (6.67)	23 (17.04)	135 (100.00)	55 (47.83)	37 (32.17)	09 (7.83)	14 (12.17)	115 (100.00)	18 (25.17)	17 (24.29)	04 (5.71)	31 (44.29)	70 (100.00)
9	Marriage and other rituals	10 (7.41)	38 (28.15)	16 (11.85)	71 (52.59)	135 (100.00)	18 (15.65)	32 (27.83)	10 (8.70)	55 (47.83)	115 (100.00)	35 (50.00)	16 (22.86)	03 (4.29)	16 (22.86)	70 (100.00)
Total		291 (23.95)	399 (32.84)	105 (8.64)	420 (34.57)	1215 (100.00)	263 (25.41)	395 (38.16)	92 (8.89)	285 (27.54)	1035 (100.00)	150 (23.81)	217 (34.44)	56 (8.89)	207 (32.86)	630 (100.00)

Note- Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 14 Caste wise participation level of respondents in domestic level

S. No.	Type of economic activities	Caste and participation level									
		General Caste category and					SC				
		High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total
1	Purchase of food items	52 (29.89)	94 (54.02)	12 (6.90)	16 (9.20)	174 (100.00)	55 (37.67)	67 (45.89)	13 (8.90)	11 (7.53)	146 (100.00)
2	Buying of domestic goods	41 (23.56)	95 (54.60)	14 (8.05)	24 (13.79)	174 (100.00)	42 (28.77)	78 (53.42)	14 (9.59)	12 (8.22)	146 (100.00)
3	Purchase of clothes	56 (32.18)	88 (50.57)	11 (6.32)	19 (10.92)	174 (100.00)	47 (32.19)	73 (50.00)	07 (4.79)	19 (13.01)	146 (100.00)
4	Education of children	38 (21.84)	92 (52.87)	15 (8.62)	29 (16.67)	174 (100.00)	30 (20.55)	74 (50.68)	17 (11.64)	25 (17.12)	146 (100.00)
5	Home Decoration	67 (38.51)	61 (35.06)	14 (8.05)	32 (18.39)	174 (100.00)	50 (34.25)	44 (30.14)	18 (12.33)	34 (23.29)	146 (100.00)
6	New house construction	05 (2.87)	20 (11.49)	12 (6.90)	137 (78.74)	174 (100.00)	-	13 (8.90)	12 (8.22)	121 (82.88)	146 (100.00)
7	Renovation of old house	14 (8.05)	18 (10.34)	25 (14.37)	117 (67.24)	174 (100.00)	03 (2.05)	25 (17.12)	18 (12.33)	100 (68.49)	146 (100.00)
8	Vaccination of children	78 (44.83)	49 (28.16)	15 (8.62)	32 (18.39)	174 (100.00)	69 (47.26)	39 (26.71)	07 (4.79)	31 (21.23)	146 (100.00)
9	Marriage and other rituals	37 (21.26)	42 (24.14)	21 (12.07)	74 (42.53)	174 (100.00)	26 (17.81)	36 (24.66)	08 (5.48)	76 (52.05)	146 (100.00)
Total		388 (24.78)	559 (35.70)	139 (8.87)	480 (30.65)	1566 (100.00)	322 (24.51)	449 (34.17)	114 (8.67)	429 (32.65)	1314 (100.00)

Note- Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 15 Education wise participation level of respondents in domestic activities

Type of domestic activities	Education and participation level																			
	Illiterate					Low education					Medium Education					High Education				
	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total
Purchase of food items	39 (32.23)	62 (51.24)	10 (8.26)	10 (8.26)	121 (100.00)	48 (40.00)	59 (49.17)	05 (4.17)	08 (6.67)	120 (100.00)	11 (23.91)	27 (58.70)	03 (6.52)	05 (10.87)	46 (100.00)	09 (27.27)	13 (39.39)	07 (21.21)	04 (12.12)	33 (100.00)
Buying of domestic goods	28 (23.14)	72 (59.50)	08 (6.61)	13 (10.74)	121 (100.00)	39 (32.50)	59 (49.17)	11 (9.17)	11 (9.17)	120 (100.00)	06 (13.04)	26 (56.52)	05 (10.87)	09 (19.57)	46 (100.00)	10 (30.30)	17 (51.52)	03 (9.09)	03 (9.09)	33 (100.00)
Purchase of clothes	25 (20.66)	65 (53.72)	08 (6.61)	23 (19.01)	121 (100.00)	47 (39.17)	64 (53.33)	05 (4.17)	04 (3.33)	120 (100.00)	13 (28.26)	20 (43.48)	03 (6.52)	10 (21.74)	46 (100.00)	18 (54.55)	12 (36.36)	01 (3.03)	02 (6.06)	33 (100.00)
Education of children	16 (13.22)	59 (48.76)	16 (13.22)	30 (24.79)	121 (100.00)	29 (24.17)	71 (59.17)	11 (9.17)	09 (7.50)	120 (100.00)	10 (21.74)	23 (50.00)	03 (6.52)	10 (21.74)	46 (100.00)	13 (39.39)	13 (39.39)	02 (6.06)	05 (15.15)	33 (100.00)
Home decoration	32 (26.45)	47 (38.84)	13 (10.74)	29 (23.97)	121 (100.00)	46 (38.33)	39 (32.50)	16 (13.33)	19 (15.83)	120 (100.00)	20 (43.48)	12 (26.09)	02 (4.35)	12 (26.09)	46 (100.00)	18 (54.55)	07 (21.21)	01 (3.03)	07 (21.21)	33 (100.00)
New house construction	01 (0.83)	17 (14.05)	12 (9.92)	91 (75.21)	121 (100.00)	-	13 (10.83)	08 (6.67)	99 (82.50)	120 (100.00)	02 (4.35)	05 (10.87)	06 (13.04)	33 (71.74)	46 (100.00)	02 (6.06)	03 (9.09)	-	28 (84.85)	33 (100.00)
Renovation of old house	10 (8.26)	07 (5.79)	16 (13.22)	88 (72.73)	121 (100.00)	03 (2.50)	11 (9.17)	16 (13.33)	90 (75.00)	120 (100.00)	01 (2.17)	11 (23.91)	09 (19.57)	25 (54.35)	46 (100.00)	02 (6.06)	04 (12.12)	02 (6.06)	25 (75.76)	33 (100.00)
Vaccination of children	34 (28.10)	39 (32.23)	08 (6.61)	40 (33.06)	121 (100.00)	64 (53.33)	35 (29.17)	09 (7.50)	12 (10.00)	120 (100.00)	20 (43.48)	10 (21.74)	04 (8.70)	12 (26.09)	46 (100.00)	25 (75.76)	03 (9.09)	01 (3.03)	04 (12.12)	33 (100.00)
Marriage and other rituals	31 (25.62)	37 (30.58)	07 (5.79)	46 (38.02)	121 (100.00)	20 (16.67)	32 (26.67)	10 (8.33)	58 (48.33)	120 (100.00)	06 (13.04)	09 (19.57)	08 (17.39)	23 (50.00)	46 (100.00)	06 (18.18)	08 (24.24)	04 (12.12)	15 (45.45)	33 (100.00)
Total	216 (19.83)	405 (37.19)	98 (9.00)	370 (33.98)	1089 (100.00)	296 (27.41)	383 (35.46)	91 (8.43)	310 (28.70)	1080 (100.00)	89 (21.50)	143 (34.54)	43 (10.39)	139 (33.57)	414 (100.00)	103 (34.68)	80 (26.94)	21 (7.07)	93 (31.31)	297 (100.00)

Note Percentage is shown in parentheses

Age and caste wise comparative data have also been presented to analyze respondent's participation level. It was found that the respondent between the age group of 35 to 50 highly participated in domestic activities in comparison to other age groups. 63.57 percent respondents of this age group showed 'high' or 'medium' participation in this regard. Looking at the different domestic activities, it was found that in the decisions related to home decoration and vaccination of children, women's participation level was comparatively high. The percentage in this regard was recorded 36.25 percent and 44.69 percent respectively. More than 30 percent respondent highly participated in purchase of foods items and cloths (Table 12). Least participation was found in relation to 'New house construction' and 'renovation of old house'. More than 65 percent women of all age groups never participated in these domestic activities. (Table 13)

An exceptional outcome has been seen in the decision taking capacity of women of high age group regarding the matters related to marriage and other socio-cultural rituals. 50 percent women of 50 and above age category highly participated in these decisions whereas this percentage was only 7.41 and 15.65 percent in other age groups.

Caste has also been taken as an independent variable to analyze the decision taking capacity of rural women of different social background. Related data are shown in Table 14. No significant variation has been found among the women of different caste categories. Irrespective of their caste background, their position was found more or less same. In brief, it can be stated that respondent's involvement in the activities like house construction and renovation was definitely low but in other domestic activates they were playing significant role and related decisions were being taken with their consent.

The data pertaining to domestic activities of women respondents corresponding to their educational level have also been analyzed to examine the impact of education on their participation level and decision making capacity. Re-categorization of different educational categories has been done in order to analyze the relationship between education and respondent's different activities. Respondents educated up to primary and upper primary level have been included in low educational level, educated up to high school and intermediate level have been categorised as medium level of education and respondents whose educational level was up to graduation and above were regarded as highly qualified. Data pertaining to the educational qualification and domestic activities of respondents are shown in Table 15. There had not been seen much significant relationship between respondents' educational level and their participation in domestic activities. But a significant variation had been found between illiterate and highly qualified respondents. Only 19.83 percent illiterate respondents

reported about their high participation in domestic activities whereas this percentage among highly qualified respondent was 34.68. The lowest participation of respondents of each educational category was seen in the activities like 'new house construction' and 'renovation of old house'. Though there had not been seen much variation among the respondents of different educational categories, but it was found that in maximum domestic activities the highly educated respondent's participation was much higher in comparison to the respondents of other educational categories.

Participation in Economic Activities

Women's participation level in economic matters was judged in relation to eight activities i.e. expenditure on different items, taking debt for domestic needs, saving and investment, purchase and sale of animals, purchase and sale of land, to give house on rent, sale of agriculture output and purchase and sale of gold/ornaments. The present study indicates that the participation level of rural women is much less in money related matters. Data shown in Table 16 reveal that 67.85 percent of all women respondents had never participated in the decision making process in economic activities. Only 5.35 percent respondents showed high participation in this regard.

Table 16 Participation level of respondents in economic activities

Type of economic activities	participation level				
	High	Medium	Low	No	Total
Expenditure on different items	40 (12.50)	89 (27.81)	62 (19.38)	129 (40.31)	320 (100.00)
Taking debt for domestic needs	11 (3.44)	23 (7.19)	17 (5.31)	269 (84.06)	320 (100.00)
Saving and investment	13 (4.06)	40 (12.50)	116 (36.25)	151 (47.19)	320 (100.00)
Purchase and sale of animals	15 (4.69)	42 (13.13)	33 (10.31)	230 (71.88)	320 (100.00)
Purchase and sale of land	08 (2.50)	19 (5.94)	12 (3.75)	281 (87.81)	320 (100.00)
To give house on rent	04 (1.25)	14 (4.38)	19 (5.94)	283 (88.44)	320 (100.00)
Sale of agriculture output	12 (3.75)	47 (14.69)	46 (14.38)	215 (67.19)	320 (100.00)
Purchase and sale of gold/ornaments	34 (10.63)	44 (13.75)	63 (19.69)	179 (55.94)	320 (100.00)
Total	137 (5.35)	318 (12.42)	368 (14.38)	1737 (67.85)	2560 (100.00)

Note- Percentage is shown in parentheses

Maximum respondent's participation level was 'nil' regarding the activities like 'taking debt for domestic needs', 'purchase and sale of land' and 'to give house on rent.' Around 85 and more than 85 percent women were never in a position to take decision in these matters. The proportion of those respondents who had highly participated in economic activities was recorded less than 5 percent. It was comparatively better only in two activities i.e. 'expenditure on different items' and 'purchase and sale of gold/ornaments' (12.50 and 10.63 percent).

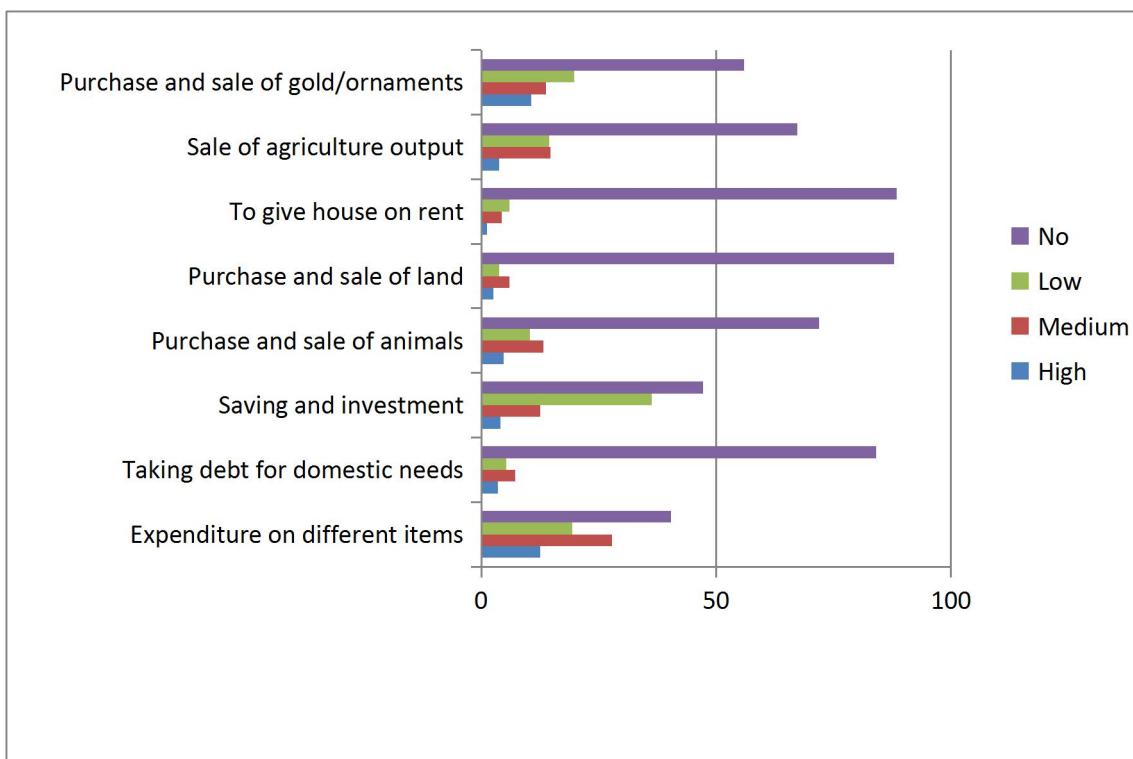


Table.17 Age wise participation level of respondents in economic activities

S. No.	Type of economic activities	Age and participation level														
		20-35					35-50					50 and above 50				
		High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Mediu m	Low	No	Total	High	Mediu m	Low	No	Total
1	Expenditure on different items	11 (8.15)	37 (27.41)	28 (20.74)	59 (43.70)	135 (100.00)	15 (13.04)	30 (26.09)	24 (20.87)	46 (40.00)	115 (100.00)	14 (20.00)	22 (31.43)	10 (14.29)	24 (34.29)	70 (100.00)
2	Taking debt for domestic needs	05 (3.70)	07 (5.19)	04 (2.96)	119 (88.15)	135 (100.00)	03 (2.61)	10 (8.70)	07 (6.09)	95 (82.61)	115 (100.00)	03 (4.29)	06 (8.57)	06 (8.57)	55 (78.57)	70 (100.00)
3	Saving and investment	02 (1.48)	18 (13.33)	36 (26.67)	79 (58.52)	135 (100.00)	05 (4.35)	15 (13.04)	48 (41.74)	47 (40.87)	115 (100.00)	06 (8.57)	07 (10.00)	32 (45.71)	25 (35.71)	70 (100.00)
4	Purchase and sale of animals	05 (3.70)	11 (8.15)	09 (6.67)	110 (81.48)	135 (100.00)	06 (5.22)	22 (19.13)	16 (13.91)	71 (61.74)	115 (100.00)	04 (5.71)	09 (12.86)	08 (11.43)	49 (70.00)	70 (100.00)
5	Purchase and sale of land	01 (0.74)	05 (3.70)	04 (2.96)	125 (92.59)	135 (100.00)	04 (3.48)	09 (7.83)	03 (2.61)	99 (86.09)	115 (100.00)	03 (4.29)	05 (7.14)	05 (7.14)	57 (81.43)	70 (100.00)
6	To give house on rent	- (3.70)	05 (5.93)	08 (90.37)	122 (90.37)	135 (100.00)	03 (2.61)	06 (5.22)	07 (6.09)	99 (86.09)	115 (100.00)	01 (1.43)	03 (4.29)	04 (5.71)	62 (88.57)	70 (100.00)
7	Sale of agriculture output	02 (1.48)	15 (11.11)	18 (13.33)	100 (74.07)	135 (100.00)	03 (2.61)	23 (20.00)	17 (14.78)	72 (62.61)	115 (100.00)	07 (10.00)	09 (12.86)	11 (15.71)	43 (61.43)	70 (100.00)
8	Purchase and sale of gold/ornaments	07 (5.19)	16 (11.85)	22 (16.30)	90 (66.67)	135 (100.00)	13 (11.30)	18 (15.65)	25 (21.74)	59 (51.30)	115 (100.00)	14 (20.00)	10 (14.29)	16 (22.86)	30 (42.86)	70 (100.00)
	Total	33 (3.06)	114 (10.56)	129 (11.94)	804 (74.44)	1080 (100.00)	52 (5.65)	133 (14.46)	147 (15.98)	588 (63.91)	920 (100.00)	52 (9.29)	71 (12.68)	92 (16.43)	345 (61.61)	560 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 18 Caste wise participation level of respondents in economic activities

S. No.	Type of economic activities	Caste category and participation level									
		General					SC				
		High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total
1	Expenditure on different items	26 (14.94)	56 (32.18)	32 (18.39)	60 (34.48)	174 (100.00)	14 (9.59)	33 (22.60)	30 (20.55)	69 (47.26)	146 (100.00)
2	Taking debt for domestic needs	06 (3.45)	14 (8.05)	14 (8.05)	140 (80.46)	174 (100.00)	05 (3.42)	09 (6.16)	03 (2.05)	129 (88.36)	146 (100.00)
3	Saving and investment	07 (4.02)	24 (13.79)	65 (37.36)	78 (44.83)	174 (100.00)	06 (4.11)	16 (10.96)	51 (34.93)	73 (50.00)	146 (100.00)
4	Purchase and sale of animals	08 (4.60)	29 (16.67)	23 (13.22)	114 (65.52)	174 (100.00)	07 (4.79)	13 (8.90)	10 (6.85)	116 (79.45)	146 (100.00)
5	Purchase and sale of land	05 (2.87)	15 (8.62)	06 (3.45)	148 (85.06)	174 (100.00)	03 (2.05)	04 (2.74)	06 (4.11)	133 (91.10)	146 (100.00)
6	To give house on rent	01 (0.57)	11 (6.32)	14 (8.05)	148 (85.06)	174 (100.00)	03 (2.05)	03 (2.05)	05 (3.42)	135 (92.47)	146 (100.00)
7	Sale of agriculture output	07 (4.02)	31 (17.82)	27 (15.52)	109 (62.64)	174 (100.00)	05 (3.42)	16 (10.96)	19 (13.01)	106 (72.60)	146 (100.00)
8	Purchase and sale of gold/ornaments	19 (10.92)	27 (15.52)	32 (18.39)	96 (55.17)	174 (100.00)	15 (10.27)	17 (11.64)	31 (21.23)	83 (56.85)	146 (100.00)
Total		79 (5.68)	207 (14.87)	213 (15.30)	893 (64.15)	1392 (100.00)	58 (4.97)	111 (9.50)	155 (13.27)	844 (72.26)	1168 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 19 Education wise participation level of respondents in economic activities

Type of economic activities	Educational and participation level																			
	Illiterate					Low educational level					Medium educational level					High educational level				
	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total
Expenditure on different items	17 (14.05)	32 (26.45)	24 (19.83)	48 (39.67)	121 (100.00)	16 (13.33)	31 (25.83)	24 (20.00)	49 (40.83)	120 (100.00)	04 (8.70)	14 (30.43)	08 (17.39)	20 (43.48)	46 (100.00)	03 (9.09)	12 (36.36)	06 (18.18)	12 (36.36)	33 (100.00)
Taking debt for domestic needs	05 (4.13)	11 (9.09)	05 (4.13)	100 (82.64)	121 (100.00)	04 (3.33)	08 (6.67)	06 (5.00)	102 (85.00)	120 (100.00)	01 (2.17)	02 (4.35)	05 (10.87)	38 (82.61)	46 (100.00)	01 (3.03)	02 (6.06)	01 (3.03)	29 (87.88)	33 (100.00)
Saving and investment	08 (6.61)	15 (12.40)	52 (42.98)	46 (38.02)	121 (100.00)	03 (2.50)	13 (10.83)	41 (34.17)	63 (52.50)	120 (100.00)	01 (2.17)	03 (6.52)	14 (30.43)	28 (60.87)	46 (100.00)	01 (3.03)	09 (27.27)	09 (27.27)	14 (42.42)	33 (100.00)
Purchase and sale of animals	07 (5.79)	23 (19.01)	13 (10.74)	78 (64.46)	121 (100.00)	05 (4.17)	13 (10.83)	17 (14.17)	85 (70.83)	120 (100.00)	01 (2.17)	03 (6.52)	03 (84.78)	39 (82.61)	46 (100.00)	02 (6.06)	03 (9.09)	-	28 (84.85)	33 (100.00)
Purchase and sale of land	04 (3.31)	09 (7.44)	07 (05.79)	101 (83.47)	121 (100.00)	02 (1.67)	08 (6.67)	02 (1.67)	108 (90.00)	120 (100.00)	01 (2.17)	01 (2.17)	01 (93.48)	43 (100.00)	46 (3.03)	01 (3.03)	01 (3.03)	02 (6.06)	29 (87.88)	33 (100.00)
To give house on rent	-	06 (4.96)	08 (6.61)	107 (88.43)	121 (100.00)	02 (1.67)	05 (4.17)	03 (2.50)	110 (91.67)	120 (100.00)	02 (4.35)	01 (2.17)	05 (10.87)	38 (82.61)	46 (100.00)	-	02 (6.06)	03 (9.09)	28 (84.85)	33 (100.00)
Sale of agriculture output	06 (4.96)	19 (15.70)	14 (11.57)	82 (67.77)	121 (100.00)	04 (3.33)	13 (10.83)	16 (13.33)	87 (72.50)	120 (100.00)	02 (4.35)	07 (15.22)	10 (21.74)	27 (58.70)	46 (100.00)	-	08 (24.24)	06 (18.18)	19 (57.58)	33 (100.00)
Purchase and sale of gold/ornaments	17 (14.05)	15 (12.40)	24 (19.83)	65 (53.72)	121 (100.00)	10 (8.33)	14 (11.67)	32 (26.67)	64 (53.33)	120 (100.00)	02 (4.35)	12 (26.09)	02 (4.35)	30 (65.22)	46 (100.00)	05 (15.15)	03 (9.09)	05 (15.15)	20 (60.61)	33 (100.00)
Total	64 (6.61)	130 (13.43)	147 (15.19)	627 (64.77)	968 (100.00)	46 (4.79)	105 (10.94)	141 (14.69)	668 (69.58)	960 (100.00)	14 (3.80)	43 (11.68)	48 (13.04)	263 (71.47)	368 (100.00)	13 (4.92)	40 (15.15)	32 (12.12)	179 (67.80)	264 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Some variations had been found among women of all age groups. Age wise data indicate that in each age category, the highest percentage was of those respondents who never participated in economic matters of family, but the proportion of these respondents was decreasing as their age was increasing. It was 74.44 percent in 20to35 age group, while this proportion was 63.91 and 61.61 percent among the women of 35 to 50 and 50 and above age group. Total percentage of all respondents whose participation was at high, medium and low level was 32.15(Table 16). The proportion of participation at all levels was being seen increased according to increasing age group. It was lowest among the women of 20 to 35 age group (25.56%) and highest (38.40%) among the group of elder women (50 and above 50 age group). The data make it evident that elder women in the family have more decision taking power in rural societies. (Table17)

Caste wise comparative data are shown in Table 18. Much variation had not been found among the women of both caste categories. But involvement of women of general category was rather high in comparison to the women of another caste group. The proportion of 'high', 'medium' and 'low' participation was 35.85 percent among the respondent of general category whereas it was 27.74 percent in case of scheduled caste respondents. Regarding different economic activities, caste-wise responses were also more or less same.

Data shown in Table 19 revealed that no significant relationship has been exited between education and women's participation in economic activities. Taking all the respondents together, it was found that not more than 7 percent respondents highly participated in different economic activities and this proportion was lowest (3.80%) among the respondents of medium educational level. It will be important to state here that this proportion was highest (6.61%) among illiterate respondents. In this way, no relationship had been found between education and economic decision making. More than 64 percent women respondent never participated in the economic matters of their family, whether they were illiterate or highly qualified. Maximum of economic issues were decided by the male members of the family.

It could be concluded from the data based information that rural women either they belong to any age category, caste group or educational level were not involved in economic decision-making process. A sharp gender bias had been seen in taking economic decisions and almost in every economic activity, male members of family played major roles.

Freedom to go outside home

The issue was further probed by asking the extent of freedom of movement of women respondents for different purposes. They were asked about their freedom of movement regarding going to hospital/doctor, to social-religious functions, to market, visiting her parent's home, outside village for work and to temple.

Table 20 Distribution of respondents regarding freedom to go outside home

S. No.	Type of freedom	Level of freedom			
		Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total
1	Go to hospital/doctor	60 (18.75)	68 (21.25)	192 (60.00)	320 (100.00)
2	Go to social/religious functions	47 (14.69)	88 (27.50)	185 (57.81)	320 (100.00)
3	Go to market	94 (29.38)	83 (25.94)	143 (44.69)	320 (100.00)
4	Go to visiting her family and relatives	170 (53.13)	57 (17.81)	93 (29.06)	320 (100.00)
5	Go outside village for work	107 (33.44)	53 (16.56)	160 (50.00)	320 (100.00)
6	Go to temple	110 (34.38)	73 (22.81)	137 (42.81)	320 (100.00)
Total		588 (30.63)	422 (21.98)	910 (47.40)	1920 (100.00)

Note- Percentage is shown in parentheses

The responses are summarized in Table 20. Data reveal that around 30 percent respondents had to take permission from the elder members of their family to go outside their house, 21.98 percent just informed only whereas 47.40 percent could go outside as they wish. 53.13 percent respondents accepted that they had to take permission to visit their parent's home. Women had greater freedom to go to the hospital and social-religious functions.

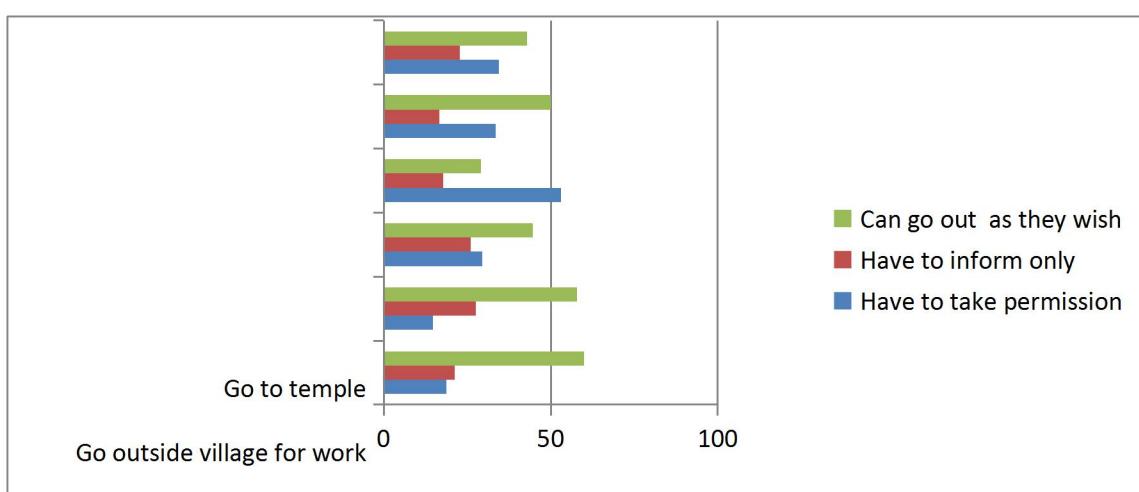


Table 21 Age wise distribution of respondents regarding freedom to go outside home

S. No.	Type of freedom	Age group and level of freedom											
		20-35				35-50				50 & above			
		Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total	Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total	Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total
1	Go to hospital/doctor	38 (28.15)	30 (22.22)	67 (49.63)	135 (100.00)	13 (11.30)	25 (21.74)	77 (66.96)	115 (100.00)	9 (12.86)	13 (18.57)	48 (68.57)	70 (100.00)
2	Go to social/religious functions	30 (22.22)	38 (28.15)	67 (49.63)	135 (100.00)	13 (11.30)	30 (26.09)	72 (62.61)	115 (100.00)	4 (5.71)	20 (28.75)	46 (65.371)	70 (100.00)
3	Go to market	52 (38.52)	33 (24.44)	50 (37.04)	135 (100.00)	31 (26.96)	29 (25.22)	55 (47.83)	115 (100.00)	11 (15.79)	21 (30.00)	38 (54.29)	70 (100.00)
4	Go to visiting her family and relatives	80 (59.26)	24 (17.78)	31 (22.96)	135 (100.00)	66 (57.39)	15 (13.04)	34 (29.57)	115 (100.00)	24 (34.29)	18 (25.71)	28 (40.00)	70 (100.00)
5	Go outside village for work	85 (62.96)	18 (13.33)	32 (23.70)	(100.00)	17 (14.78)	19 (16.52)	79 (68.70)	115 (100.00)	5 (7.14)	16 (22.86)	49 (70.00)	70 (100.00)
6	Go to temple	60 (44.44)	27 (20.00)	48 (35.56)	135 (100.00)	30 (26.09)	25 (21.74)	60 (52.17)	115 (100.00)	20 (28.57)	21 (30.00)	29 (41.43)	70 (100.00)
Total		345 (42.59)	170 (20.99)	295 (36.42)	810 (100.00)	170 (24.64)	143 (20.72)	377 (54.64)	690 (100.00)	73 (17.38)	109 (25.95)	238 (56.67)	420 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Age- wise data distribution is shown in Table 21. Result indicates that the degree of freedom of movement also depends upon the age of women and their position in the family. Restrictions on movements were greater for young women in comparison to the elderly women. The percentage of women who had to take permission for their movements was highest among the women of 20to35 age group (42.59%) while it was decreasing among the women of increasing age-group. It was 24.64 and 17.38 percent in the 35 to 50 and 50 and above age group.

Table 22 Caste wise distribution of respondents regarding freedom to go outside home

Type of freedom	Caste-category and level of freedom							
	General Category				SC Category			
	Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total	Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total
Go to hospital/doctor	40 (22.99)	37 (21.26)	97 (55.75)	174 (100.00)	20 (13.70)	31 (21.23)	95 (65.07)	146 (100.00)
Go to social/religious functions	29 (16.67)	62 (35.63)	83 (47.70)	174 (100.00)	18 (12.33)	26 (17.81)	102 (69.86)	146 (100.00)
Go to market	54 (31.03)	49 (28.16)	71 (40.80)	174 (100.00)	40 (27.40)	34 (23.29)	72 (49.32)	146 (100.00)
Go to visiting her family and relatives	91 (52.30)	38 (21.84)	45 (25.86)	174 (100.00)	79 (54.11)	19 (13.01)	48 (32.88)	146 (100.00)
Go outside village for work	52 (29.89)	39 (22.41)	83 (47.70)	174 (100.00)	55 (37.67)	14 (9.59)	77 (52.74)	146 (100.00)
Go to temple	41 (23.56)	43 (24.71)	90 (51.72)	174 (100.00)	69 (47.26)	30 (20.55)	47 (32.19)	146 (100.00)
Total	307 (29.41)	268 (25.67)	469 (44.92)	1044 (100.00)	281 (30.08)	154 (17.58)	441 (50.34)	876 (100.00)

Note-Percentage are shown in parentheses

Caste wise categorization of data is shown in Table 22. Data reveal that freedom of movement is much higher for the women of SC category as compared to the women of general category. 50.34 percent respondent of scheduled caste category accepted that they could go outside as they wish, while in general category the percentage of such respondents was 44.92. The proportion of respondents who had to inform only for their movements was 25.67 percent among respondents of general category, whereas only 17.58 percent scheduled caste women had to inform for their movements. The percentage of respondents who had to take permission to go outside their home was almost same in both the caste categories. As stated by all respondents women of both caste categories had least rights in taking decision to go to their parent's home. The percentage of such respondents in both caste groups was 52.30 and 54.11 respectively.

Table 23 Education wise distribution of respondents regarding freedom to go outside home

Type of freedom	Education and level of freedom															
	Illiterate				Low educational level				Medium educational level				High educational level			
	Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total	Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total	Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total	Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish	Total
Go to hospital/doctor	18 (14.88)	25 (20.66)	78 (64.46)	121 (100.00)	18 (15.00)	25 (20.83)	77 (64.17)	120 (100.00)	13 (28.26)	10 (21.74)	23 (50.00)	46 (100.00)	11 (33.33)	08 (24.24)	14 (42.42)	33 (100.00)
Go to social/religious functions	11 (9.09)	31 (25.62)	79 (65.29)	121 (100.00)	16 (13.33)	37 (30.83)	67 (55.83)	120 (100.00)	12 (26.09)	12 (26.09)	22 (47.83)	46 (100.00)	08 (24.24)	08 (24.24)	17 (51.52)	33 (100.00)
Go to market	31 (25.62)	32 (26.45)	58 (47.93)	121 (100.00)	34 (28.33)	29 (24.17)	57 (47.50)	120 (100.00)	17 (36.96)	15 (32.61)	14 (30.43)	46 (100.00)	12 (36.36)	07 (21.21)	14 (42.42)	33 (100.00)
Go to visiting her family and relatives	62 (51.24)	24 (19.83)	35 (28.93)	121 (100.00)	63 (52.50)	17 (14.17)	40 (33.33)	120 (100.00)	25 (54.35)	12 (26.09)	09 (19.57)	46 (100.00)	20 (60.61)	04 (12.12)	09 (27.27)	33 (100.00)
Go outside village for work	51 (42.15)	15 (12.40)	55 (45.45)	121 (100.00)	29 (24.17)	22 (18.33)	69 (57.50)	120 (100.00)	17 (36.96)	10 (21.74)	19 (41.30)	46 (100.00)	10 (30.30)	06 (18.18)	17 (51.52)	33 (100.00)
Go to temple	30 (24.79)	40 (33.06)	51 (42.15)	121 (100.00)	43 (35.83)	18 (15.00)	59 (49.17)	120 (100.00)	19 (41.30)	10 (21.74)	17 (36.96)	46 (100.00)	18 (54.55)	05 (15.15)	10 (30.30)	33 (100.00)
Total	203 (27.96)	167 (23.00)	356 (49.04)	726 (100.00)	203 (28.19)	148 (20.56)	369 (51.25)	720 (100.00)	103 (37.32)	69 (25.00)	104 (37.68)	276 (100.00)	79 (39.90)	38 (19.19)	81 (40.91)	198 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Freedom of movement of respondents was also analyzed on the basis of their educational level. Data shown in Table 23 indicate that rural women's freedom of movement was not influenced by their educational background at all. The proportion of respondents who had to take permission for their movements was highest (39.90%) among highly qualified women as compared to illiterate respondents (27.96%). In fact, this proportion was increasing with the increasing order of educational level of women respondents. In each educational category, least freedom of movement had been seen regarding to visit to their parent's house and it was increasing with the increase in their educational level. In this regard, the highest percentage (60.61%) was of those women who were highly qualified. In fact, no influence of education has been seen on the freedom of movement of rural women.

It can be concluded that rural women enjoy limited autonomy in deciding about their movements outside home. It does not matter whether they represent young or elder generation, are educated or illiterate or belong to any caste category. However the degree of freedom for elder women is relatively high and they enjoy a much liberal degree of freedom to a certain extent and restrictions on movements are greater for young women in comparison to elderly women. In the same manner women of scheduled caste category enjoy a little bit more autonomy on this movement.

Political participation of rural women

Gender equality in political participation is a fundamental aspect of modern democratic governance and both men and women should have equal rights and opportunities to participate at all levels of political process. But in practice, it is often more challenging for women to access and exercise these rights. The extent of women's access to political decision making can be seen as a key indicator of gender equality in society.

In fact, the political forces demonstrate insufficient understanding and lack of acceptance of the gender equality and its advantage for society. After 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment women have sufficient representation at the grass-root level political institutions i.e. Panchayat Raj institutions at rural level and local self government at urban level. It is between 33 to 50 percent in different states. But in real life, their access to political power structure still has to be achieved.

Table 24 participation level of respondents in political activities

S. No.	Different Political Activities	Participation Level				
		High	Medium	Low	No	Total
1	Participation in Voting in elections	255 (79.69)	29 (9.06)	11 (3.44)	25 (7.81)	320 (100.00)
2	Membership of political parties or other political organizations	10 (3.13)	05 (1.56)	01 (0.31)	304 (95.00)	320 (100.00)
3	Participation in election propaganda	24 (7.50)	17 (5.31)	49 (15.31)	230 (71.88)	320 (100.00)
4	Participation in the meetings of political parties or election rallies	16 (5.00)	17 (5.31)	17 (5.31)	270 (84.38)	320 (100.00)
5	Participation in political discussion	11 (3.44)	14 (4.38)	12 (3.75)	283 (88.44)	320 (100.00)
6	Communication with elected representatives	13 (4.06)	08 (2.50)	25 (7.81)	274 (85.63)	320 (100.00)
Total		329 (17.13)	90 (4.69)	115 (5.99)	1386 (72.19)	1920 (100.00)

Note- Percentage is shown in parentheses

In the present study an attempt has been made to evaluate the political participation of rural women and their political consciousness. Their political participation was evaluated in relation to six political activities. These were participation in voting, membership of political parties or other political organizations, participation in election propaganda, participation in the meeting of political parties or election rallies, participation in political discussion and communication with elected representatives. Table 24 presents the data collected from respondents. Least participation of rural women had been seen in different political activities. 72.19 percent respondents reported that they never participated in political activities. Their awareness was only seen in voting behavior and 79.69 percent respondents accepted that they had always casted their vote in different elections. Only 7.81 percent never participated in voting. Besides voting in all other political activities, their participation was too less. Only 5 percent respondents reported about their affiliation to political parties in which all three levels (high, medium and low) of participation were included. 28.12 percent women sometimes participated in election propaganda, but among them only 7.50 percent showed their high level of participation. More than 84 percent women respondents never participated in the meetings of political parties and in any political discussion. They had no communication with their elected representatives. No significant variation had been found among the women of

different age group and caste categories. Maximum of them never participated in different political activities and their highest participation was seen in voting behaviour.

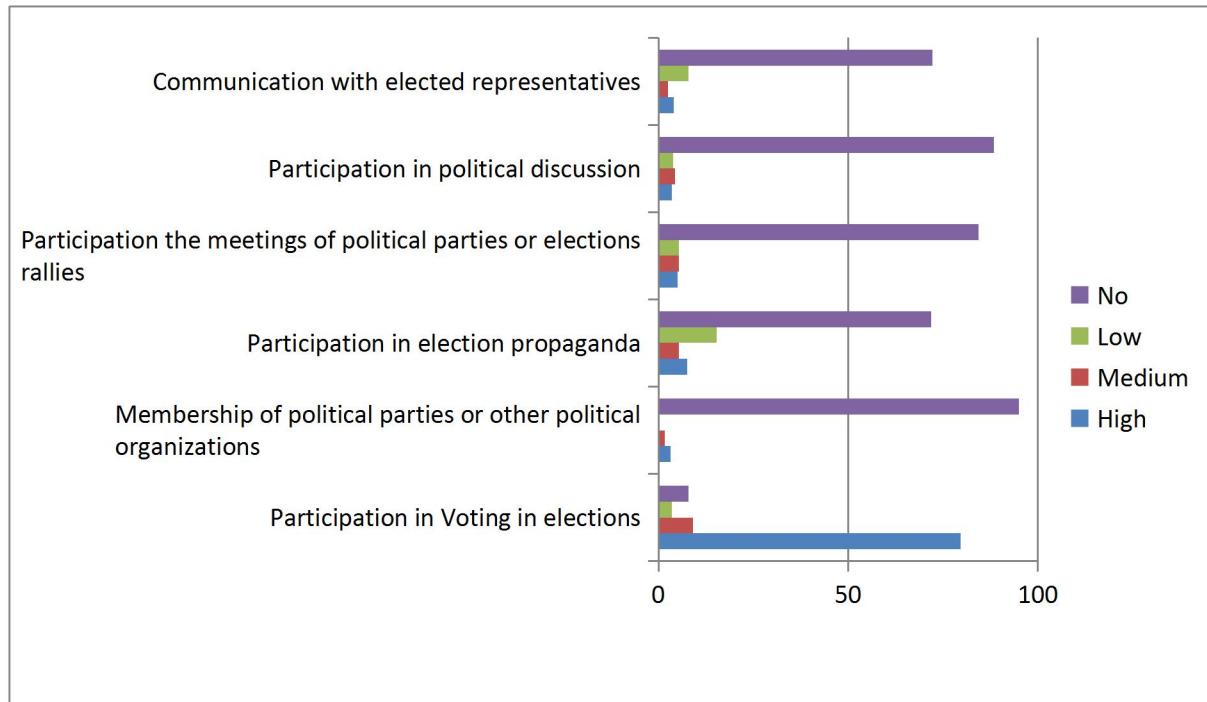


Table 25 Age wise participation level of respondents in political activities

S. No.	Different Political Activities	Age group and participation level														
		20-35					35-50					50 & above				
		High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total
1	Participation in Voting in elections	101 (74.81)	14 (10.37)	05 (3.70)	15 (11.11)	135 (100.00)	102 (88.70)	11 (9.57)	02 (1.74)	-	115 (100.00)	52 (74.29)	04 (5.71)	04 (5.71)	10 (14.29)	70 (100.00)
2	Membership of political parties or other political organizations	03 (2.22)	02 (1.48)	01 (0.74)	129 (95.56)	135 (100.00)	06 (5.22)	02 (1.74)	-	107 (93.04)	115 (100.00)	01 (1.43)	01 (1.43)	-	68 (97.14)	70 (100.00)
3	Participation in election propaganda	07 (5.19)	05 (3.70)	27 (20.00)	96 (71.11)	135 (100.00)	11 (9.57)	07 (6.09)	14 (12.17)	83 (72.17)	115 (100.00)	06 (8.57)	05 (7.14)	08 (11.43)	51 (72.86)	70 (100.00)
4	Participation the meetings of political parties or elections rallies	04 (2.96)	08 (5.93)	09 (6.67)	114 (84.44)	135 (100.00)	09 (7.83)	07 (6.09)	04 (3.48)	95 (82.61)	115 (100.00)	03 (4.29)	02 (2.86)	04 (5.71)	61 (87.14)	70 (100.00)
5	Participation in political discussion	03 (2.22)	08 (5.93)	03 (2.22)	121 (89.63)	135 (100.00)	06 (5.22)	05 (4.35)	03 (2.61)	101 (87.83)	115 (100.00)	02 (2.86)	01 (1.43)	06 (8.57)	61 (87.14)	70 (100.00)
6	Communication with elected representatives	06 (4.44)	02 (1.48)	09 (6.67)	118 (87.41)	135 (100.00)	06 (5.22)	04 (3.48)	07 (6.09)	98 (85.22)	115 (100.00)	01 (1.43)	02 (2.83)	09 (12.86)	58 (82.86)	70 (100.00)
Total		124 (15.31)	39 (4.81)	54 (6.67)	593 (73.21)	810 (100.00)	140 (20.29)	36 (5.22)	30 (4.35)	484 (70.14)	690 (100.00)	65 (15.48)	15 (3.57)	31 (7.38)	309 (73.57)	420 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 26 Caste wise participation level of respondents in political activities

S. No.	Different Political Activities	Caste Category and participation level									
		General Category					SC Category				
		High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total
1	Participation in Voting in elections	135 (77.59)	20 (11.49)	02 (1.15)	17 (9.77)	174 (100.00)	120 (82.19)	09 (6.16)	09 (6.16)	08 (5.48)	146 (100.00)
2	Membership of political parties or other political organizations	03 (1.72)	03 (1.72)	01 (0.57)	167 (95.98)	174 (100.00)	07 (4.79)	02 (1.37)	-	137 (93.84)	146 (100.00)
3	Participation in election propaganda	11 (6.32)	09 (5.17)	28 (16.09)	126 (72.41)	174 (100.00)	13 (8.90)	08 (5.48)	21 (14.38)	104 (71.23)	146 (100.00)
4	Participation the meetings of political parties or elections rallies	07 (4.02)	14 (8.05)	13 (7.47)	140 (80.46)	174 (100.00)	09 (6.16)	03 (2.05)	04 (2.74)	130 (89.04)	146 (100.00)
5	Participation in political discussion	06 (3.45)	09 (5.17)	08 (4.60)	151 (86.78)	174 (100.00)	05 (3.42)	05 (3.42)	04 (2.74)	132 (90.41)	146 (100.00)
6	Communication with elected representatives	08 (4.60)	04 (2.30)	15 (8.62)	147 (84.48)	174 (100.00)	05 (3.42)	04 (2.74)	10 (6.85)	127 (86.99)	146 (100.00)
		170 (16.28)	59 (5.65)	67 (6.42)	748 (71.65)	1044 (100.00)	159 (18.15)	31 (3.54)	48 (5.48)	638 (72.83)	876 (100.00)

Note- Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 27 Education wise participation level of respondents in political activities

Different Political Activities	Educational level and participation level																			
	Illiterate					Low educational level					Medium educational level					High educational level				
	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total	High	Medium	Low	No	Total
Participation in Voting in elections	91 (75.21)	16 (13.22)	05 (4.13)	09 (7.44)	121 (100.00)	107 (89.17)	07 (5.83)	03 (2.50)	03 (2.50)	120 (100.00)	34 (73.91)	03 (6.52)	02 (4.35)	07 (15.22)	46 (100.00)	23 (69.70)	03 (9.09)	01 (3.03)	06 (18.18)	33 (100.00)
Membership of political parties or other political organizations	04 (3.31)	-	-	117 (96.69)	121 (100.00)	04 (3.33)	03 (2.50)	-	113 (94.17)	120 (100.00)	-	01 (2.17)	-	45 (97.83)	46 (100.00)	02 (6.06)	01 (3.03)	01 (3.03)	29 (87.88)	33 (100.00)
Participation in election propaganda	12 (9.92)	07 (5.79)	15 (12.40)	87 (71.90)	121 (100.00)	04 (3.33)	07 (5.83)	21 (17.50)	88 (73.33)	120 (100.00)	04 (8.70)	02 (4.35)	03 (6.52)	37 (80.43)	46 (100.00)	04 (12.12)	01 (3.03)	10 (30.30)	18 (54.55)	33 (100.00)
Participation in the meetings of political parties or elections rallies	09 (7.44)	06 (4.96)	05 (4.13)	101 (83.47)	121 (100.00)	05 (4.17)	03 (2.50)	06 (5.00)	106 (88.33)	120 (100.00)	-	03 (6.52)	02 (4.35)	41 (89.13)	46 (100.00)	02 (6.06)	05 (15.15)	04 (12.12)	22 (66.67)	33 (100.00)
Participation in political discussion	06 (4.96)	05 (4.13)	05 (4.13)	105 (86.78)	121 (100.00)	03 (2.50)	05 (4.17)	04 (3.33)	108 (90.00)	120 (100.00)	-	02 (4.35)	02 (4.35)	42 (91.30)	46 (100.00)	02 (6.06)	02 (6.06)	01 (3.03)	28 (84.85)	33 (100.00)
Communication with elected representatives	05 (4.13)	03 (2.48)	10 (8.26)	103 (85.12)	121 (100.00)	03 (2.50)	04 (3.33)	10 (8.33)	103 (85.83)	120 (100.00)	02 (4.35)	01 (2.17)	02 (4.35)	41 (89.13)	46 (100.00)	03 (9.09)	-	03 (9.09)	27 (81.82)	33 (100.00)
Total	127 (17.49)	37 (5.10)	40 (5.51)	522 (71.90)	726 (100.00)	126 (17.50)	29 (4.03)	44 (6.11)	521 (72.36)	720 (100.00)	40 (14.49)	12 (4.35)	11 (3.99)	213 (77.17)	276 (100.00)	36 (18.18)	12 (6.06)	20 (10.10)	130 (65.66)	198 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

An attempt has been made to analyze the impact of education on respondent's political participation and awareness. Though the level of political participation of all respondents was poor, but a partial influence of education had been seen on their political participation level. Data shown in Table 27 indicate that political awareness was highest among the highly qualified respondents. Total 34.34 percent highly qualified respondents reported about their participation in political activities at different levels (high, medium and low) whereas this proportion was rather low among the respondents of other educational categories. It was 28.10 percent among illiterates and 27.64 and 22.83 percent among the respondents of low and medium educational level.

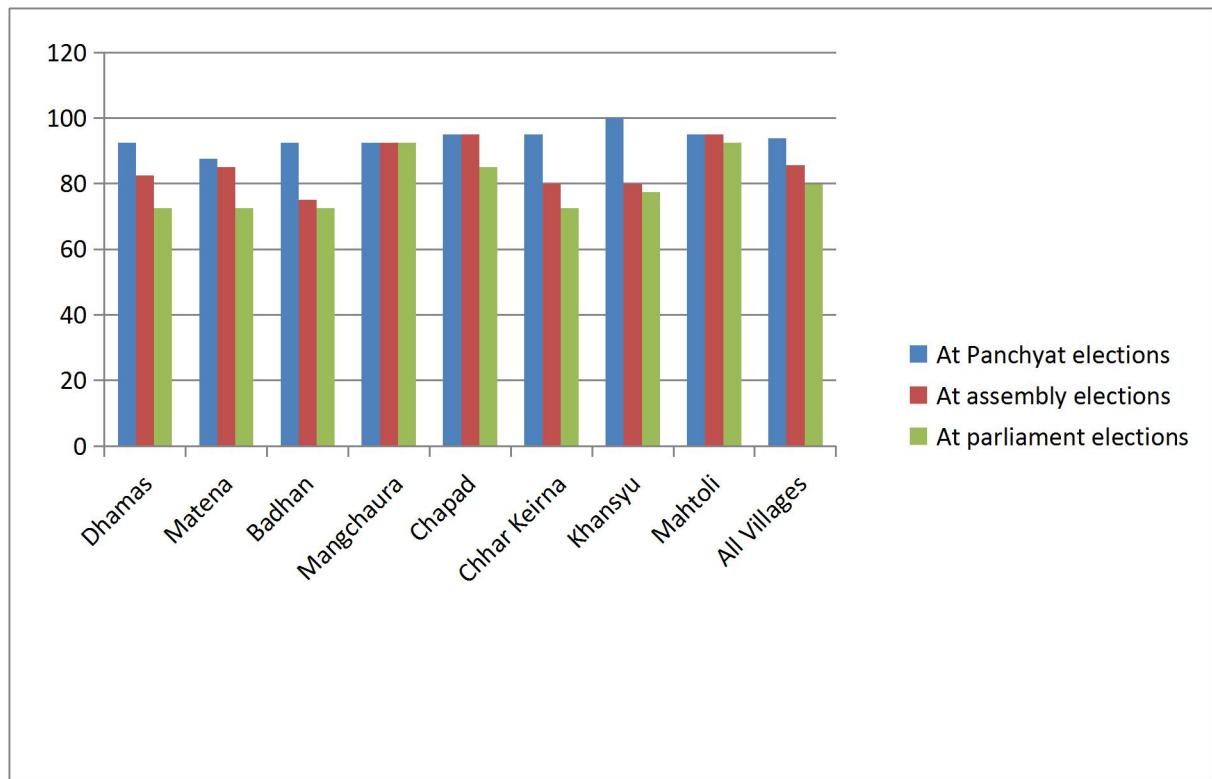
The low level of women's affiliation in political activities is not difficult to understand. It is a cumulative result of their burden of daily work, low level of education, lack of awareness and lack of independent status in the family. It was found during field survey that in selected sample villages, some had women 'Gram Pradhans' but they were least aware about their duties and responsibilities. Their husbands and other male members of family were performing their duties on their behalf.

According to new panchyat raj act, there is a provision for reservation of 50 percent seats for women in village panchayats in the state of Uttarakhand. But in the sample villages, women's political awareness was not influenced by this provision. In fact, their political activities get influenced by the burden of their outdoor activities, household duties and the socio-cultural values based on patriarchy.

Table 28 Voting pattern of respondents in last election

Name of Village	Total no. of respondents	At Panchyat elections		At assembly elections		At parliament elections	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Dhamas	40	37 (92.50)	03 (7.50)	33 (82.50)	07 (17.50)	29 (72.50)	11 (27.50)
Matena	40	35 (87.50)	05 (12.50)	34 (85.00)	06 (15.00)	29 (72.50)	11 (27.50)
Badhan	40	37 (92.50)	03 (7.50)	30 (75.00)	10 (25.00)	29 (72.50)	11 (27.50)
Mangchaura	40	37 (92.50)	03 (7.50)	37 (92.50)	03 (7.50)	37 (92.50)	03 (7.50)
Chapad	40	38 (95.00)	02 (5.00)	38 (95.00)	02 (5.00)	34 (85.00)	06 (15.00)
Chhar Keirna	40	38 (95.00)	02 (5.00)	32 (80.00)	08 (20.00)	29 (72.50)	11 (27.50)
Khansyu	40	40 (100.00)	-	32 (80.00)	08 (20.00)	31 (77.50)	09 (22.50)
Mahtoli	40	38 (95.00)	02 (5.00)	38 (95.00)	02 (5.00)	37 (92.50)	03 (7.50)
All Villages	320	300 (93.75)	20 (6.25)	274 (85.62)	46 (14.38)	255 (79.69)	65 (20.31)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses



As mentioned earlier, among different political activities, women's highest participation had been seen in voting. Respondents were also asked about their voting pattern in different elections and their highest participation in voting was again proved. Data shown in Table 28 indicate that maximum respondents casted their vote in different elections. However it was highest in panchayat elections. 93.75 percent respondents casted their vote in last panchayat election. The proportion of their voting was being decreased in assembly and parliament elections. At these two levels 85.62 and 79.69 percent respondents had used their voting right. It is evident that respondents were much aware about local level elections as compared to state and national level. Much variation had not been seen in different villages in relation to their voting pattern. Highest proportion of voting in each sample village was found at panchayat level. 100 percent respondents used their vote right in village Khanshyu at this level and in other villages this percentage was more than 92 percent except in the village Matena where this proportion was found around 87.50 percent. The voting pattern from Gram Panchayat to parliament was found same in all sample villages which was in decreasing order from local to national level.

Table 29 Age wise voting pattern of respondents in last election

Name of Village	Age group (years) and different elections											
	20-35				35-50				50 & above			
	At Panchayat elections	At assembly elections	At parliament elections	Total	At Panchayat elections	At assembly elections	At parliament elections	Total	At Panchayat elections	At assembly elections	At parliament elections	Total
Dhamas	13 (86.67)	13 (86.67)	11 (73.33)	15 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	14 (87.50)	13 (81.25)	16 (100.00)	08 (88.89)	06 (66.67)	05 (55.56)	09 (100)
Matena	12 (70.59)	12 (70.59)	11 (64.71)	17 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	13 (81.25)	16 (100.00)	07 (100.00)	06 (85.71)	05 (71.43)	07 (100)
Badhan	15 (83.33)	11 (61.11)	11 (61.11)	18 (100.00)	14 (100.00)	12 (85.71)	11 (78.57)	14 (100.00)	08 (100.00)	07 (87.50)	07 (87.50)	08 (100)
Mangchaura	13 (81.25)	13 (81.25)	13 (81.25)	16 (100.00)	13 (100.00)	13 (100.00)	13 (100.00)	13 (100.00)	11 (100.00)	11 (100.00)	11 (100)	11 (100)
Chapad	18 (90.00)	18 (90.00)	16 (80.00)	20 (100.00)	15 (100.00)	15 (100.00)	13 (86.67)	15 (100.00)	05 (100.00)	05 (100.00)	05 (100)	05 (100)
Chhar Keirna	17 (100.00)	13 (76.47)	12 (70.59)	17 (100.00)	10 (100.00)	09 (90.00)	07 (70.00)	10 (100.00)	12 (92.31)	10 (76.92)	10 (76.92)	13 (100)
Khansyu	13 (100.00)	10 (76.92)	10 (76.92)	13 (100.00)	17 (100.00)	16 (94.12)	16 (94.12)	17 (100.00)	10 (100.00)	06 (60.00)	05 (50.00)	10 (100)
Mahtoli	17 (89.47)	17 (89.47)	17 (89.47)	19 (100.00)	14 (100.00)	14 (100.00)	13 (92.86)	14 (100.00)	07 (100.00)	07 (100.00)	07 (100)	07 (100)
All Villages	118 (87.41)	107 (79.26)	101 (74.81)	135 (100.00)	115 (100.00)	109 (94.78)	99 (86.09)	115 (100.00)	68 (97.14)	58 (82.86)	55 (78.57)	70 (100)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Table 30 Caste wise voting pattern of respondents in last election

Name of Village	Total no. of respondents	Caste category and different elections													
		General Category						Total	SC Category				Total		
		At Panchayat elections		At assembly elections		At parliament elections			Yes	No	Yes	No			
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Dhamas	40	20 (100.00)	-	18 (90.00)	02 (10.00)	16 (80.00)	04 (20.00)	20 (100.00)	17 (85.00)	03 (15.00)	15 (75.00)	05 (25.00)	13 (65.00)	07 (35.00)	20 (100.00)
Matena	40	16 (80.00)	04 (20.00)	16 (80.00)	04 (20.00)	14 (70.00)	06 (30.00)	20 (100.00)	19 (95.00)	01 (5.00)	18 (90.00)	02 (10.00)	15 (75.00)	05 (25.00)	20 (100.00)
Badhan	40	21 (95.45)	01 (4.55)	18 (81.82)	04 (18.18)	18 (81.82)	04 (18.18)	22 (100.00)	16 (88.89)	02 (11.11)	12 (66.67)	06 (33.33b)	11 (61.11)	07 (38.89)	18 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	23 (92.00)	02 (8.00)	23 (92.00)	02 (8.00)	23 (92.00)	02 (8.00)	25 (100.00)	14 (93.33)	01 (6.67)	14 (93.33)	01 (6.67)	14 (93.33)	01 (6.67)	15 (100.00)
Chapad	40	18 (94.74)	01 (5.26)	18 (94.74)	01 (5.26)	18 (94.74)	01 (5.26)	19 (100.00)	20 (95.24)	01 (4.76)	20 (95.24)	01 (4.76)	16 (76.19)	05 (23.81)	21 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	40	20 (95.24)	01 (4.76)	18 (85.71)	03 (14.29)	17 (80.95)	04 (19.05)	21 (100.00)	18 (94.74)	01 (5.26)	14 (73.68)	05 (26.32)	12 (63.16)	07 (36.84)	19 (100.00)
Khansyu	40	19 (100.00)	-	13 (68.42)	06 (31.58)	12 (63.16)	07 (36.84)	19 (100.00)	21 (100.00)	-	19 (90.48)	02 (9.52)	19 (90.48)	02 (9.52)	21 (100.00)
Mahtoli	40	27 (96.43)	01 (3.57)	27 (96.43)	01 (3.57)	26 (92.86)	02 (7.14)	28 (100.00)	11 (91.67)	01 (8.33)	11 (91.67)	01 (8.33)	11 (91.67)	01 (8.33)	12 (100.00)
All Villages	320	164 (94.25)	10 (5.75)	151 (86.78)	23 (13.22)	144 (82.76)	30 (17.24)	174 (100.00)	136 (93.15)	10 (6.85)	123 (84.25)	23 (15.75)	111 (76.00)	35 (23.97)	146 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Table 31 Education wise Voting pattern of respondents in last election

Name of Village	Total no. of respondents	Education and different level of elections											
		Illiterate			Low Educational level			Medium Educational level			High Educational level		
		Panchyat	Assembly	Parliament	Panchyat	Assembly	Parliament	Panchyat	Assembly	Parliament	Panchyat	Assembly	Parliament
Dhamas	40	22 (95.65)	18 (78.26)	14 (60.87)	11 (91.67)	11 (91.67)	11 (91.67)	04 (80.00)	04 (80.00)	04 (80.00)	-	-	-
Matena	40	19 (100.00)	18 (94.74)	14 (73.68)	12 (92.31)	12 (92.31)	11 (84.61)	03 (75.00)	03 (75.00)	03 (75.00)	01 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	01 (100.00)
Badhan	40	08 (100.00)	07 (87.50)	07 (87.50)	16 (100.00)	13 (81.25)	12 (75.00)	06 (85.71)	04 (57.14)	03 (42.86)	07 (77.78)	06 (66.67)	07 (77.78)
Mangchaura	40	16 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	15 (100.00)	15 (100.00)	15 (100.00)	05 (83.33)	05 (83.33)	04 (67.67)	02 (66.67)	02 (66.67)	02 (66.67)
Chapad	40	13 (100.00)	13 (100.00)	10 (76.92)	15 (100.00)	15 (100.00)	14 (93.33)	02 (100.00)	02 (100.00)	02 (100.00)	08 (88.89)	08 (88.89)	08 (88.89)
Chhar Keirna	40	14 (93.33)	12 (80.00)	11 (73.33)	13 (100.00)	11 (84.62)	09 (69.23)	06 (100.00)	05 (83.33)	05 (83.33)	05 (83.33)	04 (66.67)	04 (66.67)
Khansyu	40	13 (100.00)	08 (61.54)	07 (58.85)	19 (100.00)	16 (84.21)	16 (84.21)	07 (100.00)	07 (100.00)	07 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	01 (100.00)
Mahtoli	40	14 (100.00)	14 (100.00)	14 (100.00)	16 100.00()	16 (100.00)	15 (93.75)	07 (100.00)	07 (100.00)	07 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	01 (100.00)
All Villages	320	119 (98.35)	106 (87.60)	93 (76.86)	117 (97.50)	109 (90.83)	103 (85.83)	40 (86.96)	37 (80.43)	35 (76.09)	25 (75.76)	23 (69.70)	24 (72.73)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Age, caste and education wise comparative data have also been presented in order to analyze the respondent's voting pattern. Data summarized in Table 29 indicate that women of 35to50 age group highly participated in last elections. It was important to note that in each sample village, 100 percent respondents of this age group voted at pancyayat level election and out of eight sample villages, in six villages 100 percent respondents of 50 and above age group voted at this level. Around 95 percent women of 35 to 50 age category used their voting right in last assembly election and this proportion was found 86.09 percent in last Parliament elections. In four sample villages namely Matena, Maungchaura, Chapad and Mahtoli, 100 percent respondents of this age group voted at assembly level also. Highest proportion of voting had been seen in Panchayat elections and a decreasing pattern of voting was seen in the assembly and parliament elections. The voting pattern of respondents showed that they were extremely aware about their voting right and highest awareness was seen among the respondents of 35to50 age group.

Table 30 highlights the voting pattern according to caste category. Maximum respondents of both castes voted in last Panchayat elections. No significant variation had been seen between the respondents of general and scheduled caste categories. Voting pattern was almost same among the respondents of both caste category but percentage of voting was relatively high among the respondents of general category in comparison to scheduled caste category.

Education wise data have also been analyzed to examine the impact of education on the voting behavior of respondents. Data are shown in Table 31. The voting pattern of the respondents of each educational category was found same as already discussed in relation to the respondents of different age and caste category. Maximum respondents of each educational level voted in Panchayat election and minimum in parliament election. No positive influence of education had been seen on the voting pattern of respondents. The voting percentage of highly qualified respondents from panchayat to parliament was lowest in comparison to illiterate and the respondents of other educational category. The same pattern of voting had been seen in different sample villages.

Briefly, it can be concluded that respondents' participation level and awareness in voting behavior was relatively high among other political activities

Necessity of reservation for women at grass root level Political Institution

In this study, an attempt has been made to find out respondents' views regarding the necessity of reservation for women at grass root level political institutions i.e. Gram

Panchayats to assess their political awareness. Data shown in Table 32 indicate that this reservation policy was favoured by 65.62 percent respondents. 28.44 percent respondents were confused in this regards and they responded 'Can't Say'. The lowest percentage of respondents was found in village Khanshyu, where only 35 percent women responded in favour of reservation for women. The range of variation in different villages was found from 35 percent in village Khanshyu to 77.50 percent in village Badhan.

Table 32- Respondent's views regarding necessity of reservation for women at grass root level political institutions

S. No.	Name of Village	Response			Total no. of respondents
		Yes	No	Can't Say	
1	Dhamas	25 (62.5)	05 (12.5)	10 (25.00)	40
2	Matena	27 (67.5)	01 (2.5)	12 (30.00)	40
3	Badhan	30 (75.00)	-	10 (25.00)	40
4	Mangchaura	29 (72.5)	03 (7.5)	08 (20.00)	40
5	Chapad	31 (77.5)	03 (7.5)	06 (15.00)	40
6	Chhar Keirna	24 (60.00)	03 (7.5)	13 (32.5)	40
7	Khansyu	14 (35.00)	04 (10.00)	22 (55.00)	40
8	Mahtoli	30 (75.00)	-	10 (25.00)	40
9	All Villages	210 (65.62)	19 (5.94)	91 (28.44)	320

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

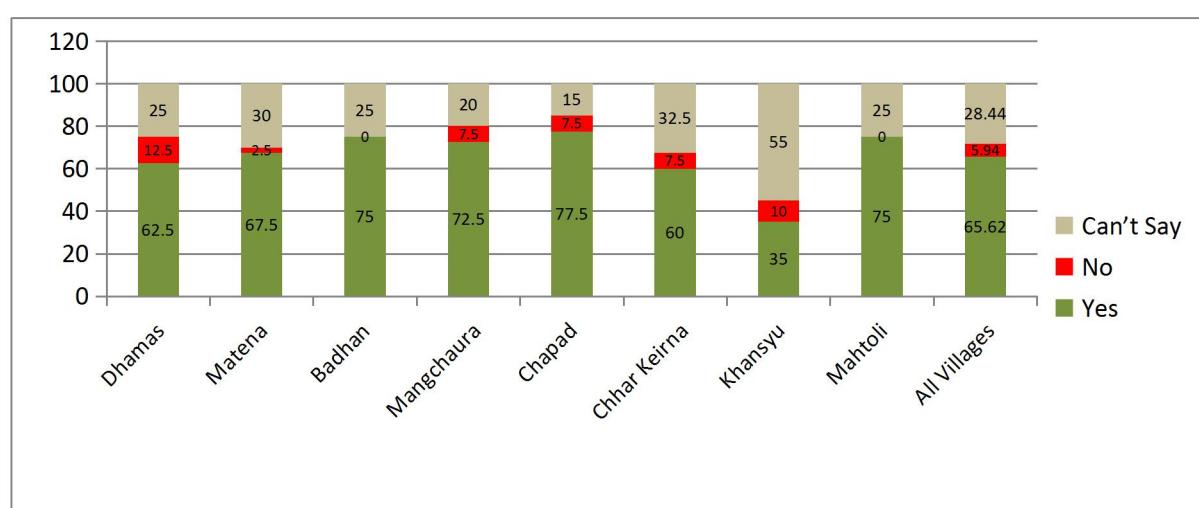


Table 33 Age wise distribution of respondent's views regarding necessity of reservation for women at grass root level political institutions

S. No.	Name of Village	Age group (years) and response											
		20-35				35-50				50 & above			
		Yes	No	Can't Say	Total	Yes	No	Can't Say	Total	Yes	No	Can't Say	Total
1	Dhamas	11 (73.33)	01 (6.67)	03 (20.00)	15 (100.00)	08 (47.06)	04 (23.53)	05 (29.41)	17 (100.00)	05 (62.50)	01 (12.50)	02 (25.00)	08 (100.00)
2	Matena	10 (58.82)	01 (5.88)	06 (35.29)	17 (100.00)	13 (81.25)	-	03 (18.75)	16 (100.00)	04 (57.14)	-	03 (42.86)	07 (100.00)
3	Badhan	12 (66.67)	-	06 (33.33)	18 (100.00)	12 (85.71)	-	02 (14.29)	14 (100.00)	07 (87.50)	-	01 (12.50)	08 (100.00)
4	Mangchaura	08 (50.00)	02 (12.50)	06 (37.50)	16 (100.00)	11 (84.62)	01 (7.69)	01 (7.69)	13 (100.00)	10 (90.91)	-	01 (9.09)	11 (100.00)
5	Chapad	12 (63.16)	-	07 (36.84)	19 (100.00)	13 (92.86)	-	01 (7.14)	14 (100.00)	05 (71.43)	-	02 (28.57)	07 (100.00)
6	Chhar Keirna	13 (72.22)	01 (5.56)	04 (22.22)	18 (100.00)	06 (60.00)	-	04 (40.00)	10 (100.00)	05 (41.67)	02 (16.67)	05 (41.67)	12 (100.00)
7	Khansyu	06 (46.15)	02 (15.38)	05 (38.46)	13 (100.00)	06 (35.29)	01 (5.88)	10 (58.82)	17 (100.00)	02 (20.00)	01 (10.00)	07 (70.00)	10 (100.00)
8	Mahtoli	12 (63.16)	-	07 (36.84)	19 (100.00)	13 (92.86)	-	01 (7.14)	14 (100.00)	05 (71.43)	-	02 (28.57)	07 (100.00)
9	All Villages	84 (62.22)	07 (5.19)	44 (32.59)	135 (100.00)	82 (71.30)	06 (5.22)	27 (23.48)	115 (100.00)	43 (61.43)	04 (5.71)	23 (32.86)	70 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 34 Caste wise distribution of respondent's views regarding necessity of reservation for women at grass root level political institutions

S. No.	Name of Village	Total no. of respondents	Caste Category and response							
			General Category				SC Category			
			Yes	No	Can't Say	Total	Yes	No	Can't Say	Total
1	Dhamas	40	15 (75.00)	01 (5.00)	04 (20.00)	20 (100.00)	10 (50.00)	04 (20.00)	06 (30.00)	20 (100.00)
2	Matena	40	14 (70.00)	-	06 (30.00)	20 (100.00)	13 (65.00)	01 (5.00)	06 (30.00)	20 (100.00)
3	Badhan	40	17 (77.27)	-	05 (22.73)	22 (100.00)	13 (72.22)	-	05 (27.78)	18 (100.00)
4	Mangchaura	40	16 (64.00)	03 (12.00)	06 (24.00)	25 (100.00)	13 (86.67)	-	02 (13.33)	15 (100.00)
5	Chapad	40	13 (68.42)	03 (15.79)	03 (15.79)	19 (100.00)	18 (85.71)	-	03 (14.29)	21 (100.00)
6	Chhar Keirna	40	13 (61.90)	02 (9.52)	06 (28.57)	21 (100.00)	11 (57.89)	01 (5.26)	07 (36.84)	19 (100.00)
7	Khansyu	40	10 (52.63)	02 (10.53)	07 (36.84)	19 (100.00)	04 (19.05)	02 (9.52)	15 (71.43)	21 (100.00)
8	Mahtoli	40	25 (89.29)	-	03 (10.71)	28 (100.00)	05 (41.67)	-	07 (58.33)	12 (100.00)
9	All Villages	320	123 (70.69)	11 (6.32)	40 (22.99)	174 (100.00)	87 (59.59)	08 (5.48)	51 (34.93)	146 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 35 Education wise distribution of respondent's views regarding necessarily of reservation for women at grass root level political institutions

Name of Village	Total no. of respondents	Educational level and response											
		Illiterate			Low educational level			Medium educational level			High educational level		
		Yes	No	Can't Say	Yes	No	Can't Say	Yes	No	Can't Say	Yes	No	Can't Say
Dhamas	40	12 (52.17)	04 (17.39)	07 (30.43)	08 (66.67)	01 (8.33)	03 (25.00)	05 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	-
Matena	40	12 (63.16)	-	07 (36.84)	09 (69.23)	01 (7.69)	03 (23.08)	02 (50.00)	-	02 (50.00)	04 (100.00)	-	-
Badhan	40	06 (75.00)	-	02 (25.00)	13 (81.25)	-	03 (18.75)	04 (57.14)	-	03 (42.86)	07 (77.78)	-	02 (22.22)
Mangchaura	40	14 (87.50)	-	02 (12.50)	13 (86.67)	01 (6.67)	01 (6.67)	02 (33.33)	02 (33.33)	02 (33.33)	-	-	03 (100.00)
Chapad	40	10 (76.92)	-	03 (23.08)	12 (75.00)	01 (6.25)	03 (18.75)	02 (100.00)	-	-	07 (77.78)	02 (22.22)	-
Chhar Keirna	40	07 (46.67)	06 (40.00)	02 (13.33)	09 (69.23)	-	04 (30.77)	04 (66.67)	-	02 (33.33)	04 (66.67)	-	02 (33.33)
Khansyu	40	-	03 (23.08)	10 (76.92)	07 (38.89)	01 (5.56)	11 (61.11)	06 (85.71)	-	01 (14.29)	01 (100.00)	-	-
Mahtoli	40	12 (85.71)	-	02 (14.29)	11 (73.33)	-	05 (33.33)	07 (77.78)	-	02 (22.22)	-	-	01 (100.00)
All Villages	320	73 (60.33)	13 (10.74)	35 (28.93)	82 (68.33)	05 (4.17)	33 (27.50)	32 (69.57)	02 (4.35)	12 (26.09)	23 (69.70)	02 (6.06)	08 (24.44)

Note- Percentage is shown in parentheses

Age wise data highlighted in Table 33 indicate that 71.30 percent respondents among the age group of 35 to 50 were of the opinion that women should be given reservation in such political institutions. In other age categories around 62 percent respondents expressed their opinion in favour of reservation for women.

Respondent's opinion was also judged on the basis of their caste category and it was found that respondents from general category were more aware about this provision in comparison to the women of scheduled caste category. The proportion of respondents who were favouring this provision in both caste categories was 70.69 and 59.59 percent respectively. The same trend has been found in different sample villages except in village Mangchaura where 86.67 percent respondents of SC category favoured this policy. In this regard variation had been seen in general category from 52.63 percent in village khanshyu to 89.29 percent in village Mahtoli. This proportion among SC category was found from 19.05 percent in village Khanshyu to 86.67 percent in village Manchaura. It is evident that respondents from general category were much more aware regarding the reservation policy which provides 50 percent seat for women in panchayat Raj institution (Table 34).

Respondent's views in this regard were also analyzed on the basis of their educational background. Data shown in Table 35 reveal that among illiterate respondents 60.33 percent favoured this policy whereas this proportion was around 69 percent in other educational categories. Among illiterate respondents no one favoured the reservation policy in village Khanshyu, but in the same educational category, in village Mangchaura 87.50 percent respondent favoured reservation for women in panchayats. In other educational categories, no significant variation had been found.

The reservation for women at grass root level political institutions can be regarded as a revolutionary step taken in independent India. Though, due to this policy lakhs of women are holding position in panchayat raj institutions but they are not enjoying their power in practice. As the results of this study revealed, the awareness level of rural women is gradually increasing and it can be assumed that in future they will be in a position to take their own decision.

Drudgery of Work of the Hill Women

A vast majority of rural women in India take part in agricultural field operations as well as in a lot of household activities. In rural areas of the hilly region of Uttarakhand, women equally share the outdoor activities with their men folk and their contribution is found in almost all the rural occupations. Hill women are more deprived than their male counterpart because they bear the burden of cultivation and household chores. The drudgery of hill women is enormous as they work for about 14-16 hours per-day and their role in agricultural operations is very significant as maximum of these activities are performed by rural women.

Working pattern and hours of daily work of hill women

In this section of the report, an attempt has been made-

- To analyze the working pattern of hill women in various activities performed by them.
- To assess the drudgery of hill women on the basis of time devoted by them in different outdoor and indoor activities.

Women's role in agricultural operations is very important in hill economy. They have to participate in almost all the agricultural operations, viz. land preparation, sowing, weeding, take care of crop from wild animals, harvesting, threshing, storage of food grain and so on. Sharing of agricultural activities by women is not a new phenomenon in this region and women have to undergo a very hard life due to geo-physical condition of the region. Almost all the household activities are performed by women and it takes a lot of time of womenfolk. The major household activities performed by women are rearing of children and aged persons, bringing water, collection of fuel and fodder, milking cattle, cooking, washing clothes, cleaning utensils etc. Beside these activities, they help in the marriage and religious ceremonies and of neighbors and relatives. In fact, they have to perform a lot of responsibilities not only in household activities but in outdoor activities also.

In the present study, respondents were asked about their day-to-day household and non household activities and time spent by them in each activity. The activities performed by women have been divided into three categories-

- 1- Outdoor activities
- 2- Indoor activities
- 3- Activities of leisurely and recreational type

The activities performed by hill women outside the house, which involve maximum amount of physical work are included in outdoor activities. These activities are related to agricultural, animal husbandry, water fetching and fuel and fodder collection. Indoor activities are confined to daily household work of routine nature. It includes kitchen work like cooking and cleaning utensils, washing clothes, house cleaning and caring of children and aged persons who cannot do work on their own. Though this work is less burdensome in term of physical stress, but it absorbs a substantial portion of their daily time. In this study it was tried also to find out that whether the women have any time in their daily routine for leisurely and recreational type of activities. In these activities craft work, reading and writing, watching TV, social work, religious activities and involvement in computer and social media are included. But women do not have much time for such leisurely activities as they are busy elsewhere in household and non-household work.

Table 36 Disposal of daily and monthly time of rural women in different activities

Activities perform by rural women	Disposal of time		
	Per women Per day hrs of work	percentage distribution of per woman per day work	Per women Per months hrs of work
A. Outdoor activities			
1. Agriculture	2.24	14.09	62.22
2. Animal Husbandry	1.29	8.11	38.72
3. Water fetching	0.57	3.58	17.09
4. Fodder collection	1.55	9.74	46.45
5. Fuel wood collection	2.18	13.69	65.34
B. Indoor activities			
1. cooking	1.64	10.29	49.08
2. washing cloths	1.08	6.82	32.53
3. house cleaning	0.87	5.47	26.11
4. cleaning utensils	1.11	6.98	33.31
5. care of children/aged	1.56	9.81	46.83
C. Leisurely/recreational / Creative Activities			
1. Craft work	0.11	0.68	3.23
2. Reading and writing	0.13	0.82	3.89
3. watching TV	0.99	6.21	29.63
4. Social work	0.12	0.77	3.66
5. Religious activities	0.39	2.46	11.73
6. Computer /Social media	0.08	0.49	2.34
Total	15.91	100.00	477.16

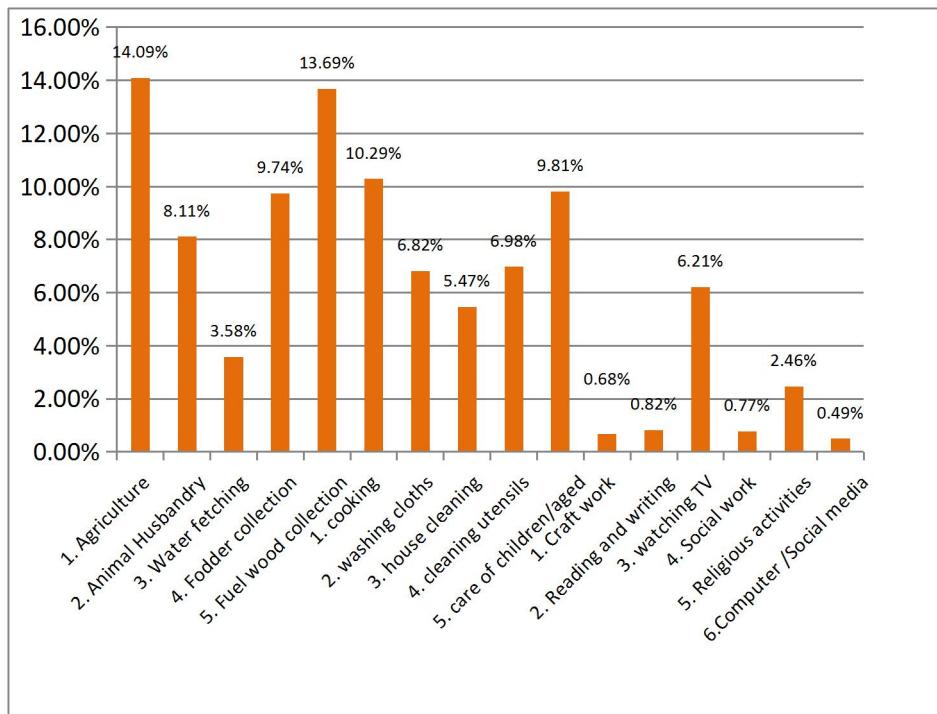
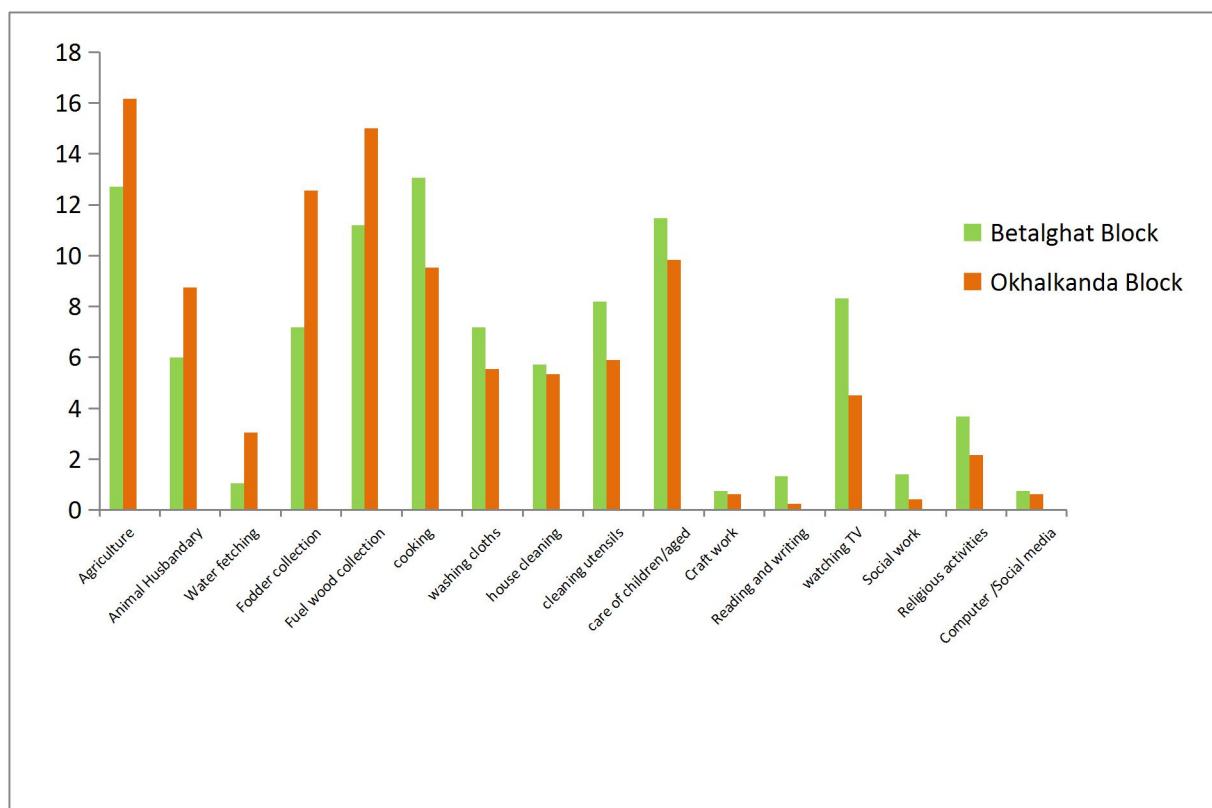
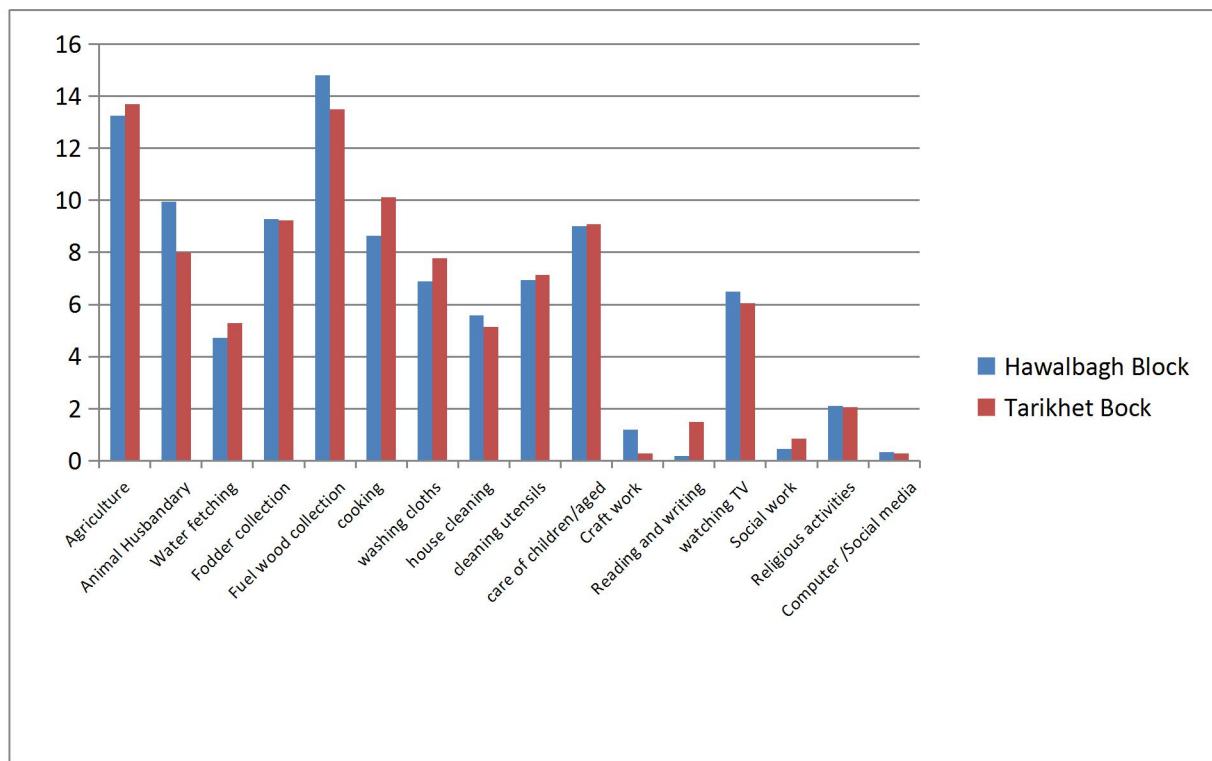


Table 37 Disposal of daily and monthly time of rural women in different activities (Almora District)

Activities perform by rural women	Hawalbagh Block			Tarikhet Bock			Total		
	Per women Per day hrs of work	Percentage distribution of work disposal	Per women Per months hrs of work	Per women Per day hrs of work	Percentage distribution of work disposal	Per women Per months hrs of work	Per women Per day hrs of work	Percentage distribution of work disposal	Per women Per months hrs of work
A. Outdoor activities									
1. Agriculture	1.81	13.25	54.36	2.41	13.71	72.38	2.11	13.51	63.38
2. Animal Husbandry	1.36	9.96	40.88	1.41	7.99	42.19	1.38	8.85	41.53
3. Water fetching	0.64	4.71	19.31	0.93	5.29	27.94	0.79	5.03	23.63
4. Fodder collection	1.27	9.27	38.06	1.63	9.23	48.75	1.45	9.25	43.41
5. Fuel wood collection	2.03	14.80	60.75	2.38	13.49	71.25	2.20	14.07	66.00
B. Indoor activities									
1. cooking	1.18	8.63	35.44	1.78	10.12	53.44	1.48	9.47	44.44
2. washing cloths	0.94	6.89	28.31	1.37	7.78	41.06	1.16	7.39	34.69
3. house cleaning	0.79	5.580	23.81	0.91	5.15	27.19	0.85	5.43	25.50
4. cleaning utensils	0.95	6.94	28.50	1.26	7.14	36.69	1.10	7.05	33.09
5. care of children/aged	1.23	9.00	36.94	1.60	9.09	48.00	1.42	9.05	42.47
C. Leisurely/recreational / Creative Activities									
1. Craft work	0.16	1.19	4.88	0.05	0.28	1.50	0.11	0.06	3.19
2. Reading and writing	0.03	0.18	0.75	0.26	1.49	7.88	0.14	0.92	4.31
3. watching TV	0.89	6.49	26.63	1.06	6.04	31.88	0.98	6.23	29.25
4. Social work	0.06	0.46	1.88	.015	0.85	4.50	0.11	0.68	3.19
5. Religious activities	0.29	2.10	8.63	0.36	2.06	10.88	0.33	2.08	9.75
6.Computer /Social media	0.04	0.32	1.31	0.05	0.28	1.50	0.05	0.30	1.41
Total	13.67	100.00	410.44	17.60	100	528	15.64	100.00	469.22

Table 38 Disposal of daily and monthly time of rural women in different activities (Nainital District)

Activities perform by rural women	Betalghat Block			Okhalkanda Block			Total		
	Per women Per day hrs of work	Percentage distribution of work disposal	Per women Per months hrs of work	Per women Per day hrs of work	Percentage distribution of work disposal	Per women Per months hrs of work	Per women Per day hrs of work	Percentage distribution of work disposal	Per women Per months hrs of work
A. Outdoor activities									
1. Agriculture	1.80	12.70	54.00	2.94	16.17	88.13	2.37	14.65	71.06
2. Animal Husbandry	0.85	5.99	25.50	1.54	8.75	46.31	1.20	7.40	35.91
3. Water fetching	0.15	1.06	5.50	0.55	3.05	16.61	0.35	2.18	10.56
4. Fodder collection	1.02	7.19	30.56	2.28	12.56	68.44	1.65	10.20	49.50
5. Fuel wood collection	1.59	11.19	47.63	2.73	15.00	81.75	2.16	13.33	64.69
B. Indoor activities									
1. cooking	1.85	13.05	55.50	1.73	9.53	51.94	1.79	11.07	53.72
2. washing cloths	1.02	7.19	30.56	1.01	5.54	30.19	1.01	6.26	30.38
3. house cleaning	0.81	5.73	24.38	0.97	5.33	29.06	0.89	5.51	26.72
4. cleaning utensils	1.16	8.20	34.88	1.07	5.90	32.18	1.12	6.91	33.53
5. care of children/aged	1.63	11.46	48.75	1.79	9.84	53.63	1.71	10.55	51.19
C. Leisurely/recreational / Creative Activities									
1. Craft work	0.11	0.75	3.19	0.11	0.62	3.38	0.11	0.68	3.28
2. Reading and writing	0.19	1.32	5.63	0.04	0.24	1.31	0.12	0.72	3.47
3. watching TV	1.18	8.33	35.44	0.82	4.51	24.56	1.00	6.18	30.00
4. Social work	0.20	1.41	6.00	0.08	0.41	2.25	0.14	0.85	4.13
5. Religious activities	0.52	3.67	15.62	0.39	2.17	11.81	0.46	2.83	13.72
6. Computer /Social media	0.11	0.75	3.19	0.11	0.62	3.38	0.11	0.68	3.28
Total	14.18	100.00	425.31	18.16	100.00	544.91	16.17	100.00	485.11



Data related to the different activities performed by women of this region and time devoted by them towards such activities are presented in Table 36,37&38. Data indicate that rural hill women devote about 15.91 hours in a day for performing all such type of activities. In the individual sample blocks, based on village wise calculation, women in Hawalbagh and Tarikhet block of Almora district had to spend 13.67 and 17.60 hours in a day in these activities and the average of district Almora was found 15.64 hours per day (Table 37). In the two blocks of Nainital district i.e. Betalghat and Okhalkahnda, women had to spend 14.18 and 18.16 hours per day respectively while the average of whole district was found 16.17 hours per day (Table38).The proportion of work disposal according to outdoor, indoor and leisurely activities was recorded to be 49.21, 39.37 and 11.43 percent respectively. This ratio of different activities indicates the amount of physical labour that rural hill women have to perform in various types of activities. The outdoor activities are being seen more time consuming and about 7.74 hours out of total daily routine work of 15.91 hours is absorbed in this activity.

In outdoor activities, women had to devote maximum of their time in agriculture related work and fuel wood collection. These tow activities consume around 28 percent of their total time. Other activities which consume much amount of their time are animal husbandry and fodder collection. They had to devote 19.23 percent of their total working hours in these two activities. Though, availability of L P G is sufficient, but fuel wood is used as a main source of fuel in this region till date. Fodder and fuel collection consumes around 24 percent time of their total working hours. The activity in which least time had been consumed was water fetching. Drinking water facility in available to maximum of households, therefore this is now a less time taking activity.

The block and district wise time pattern as revealed in the study shows some variation as compared to total figures. In Okhalkanda block of district Nainital a woman had to devote 18.16 hours per day in these activities and 17.60 hours had been devoted by a woman of Tarikhet block in district Almora, whereas the total figures in this regards were 15.91 hours per day. Agriculture was the most time consuming and water fetching was found the least time taking activity in all the blocks of both district.

Table 39 Age wise disposal of daily and monthly time of rural women in different activities

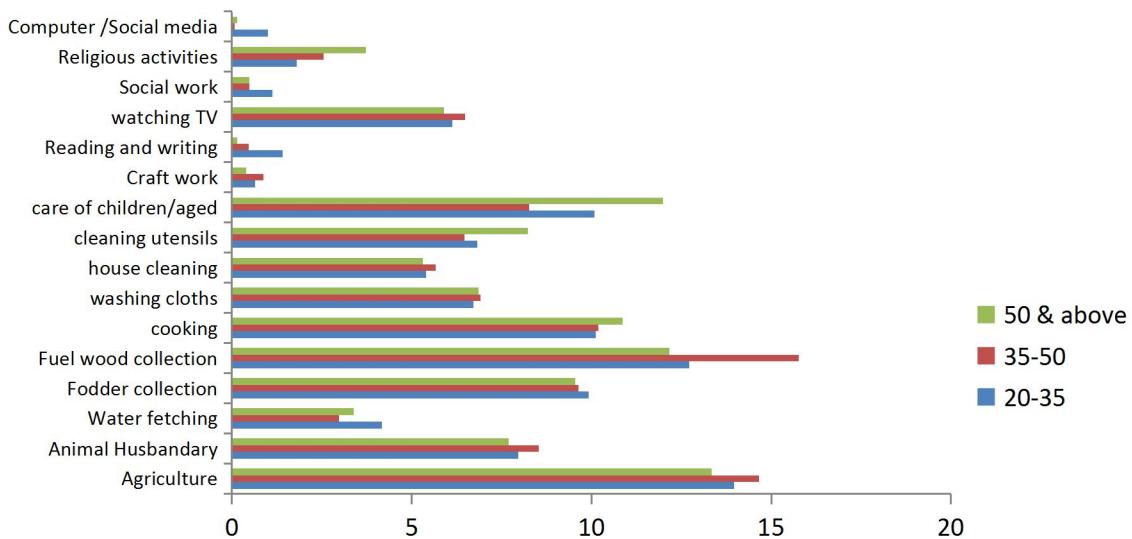
Activities perform by rural women	Age group (years) and disposal of time								
	20-35			35-50			50 & above		
	Per women Per day hrs of work	percentage distribution of per woman per day work	Per women Per month hrs of work	Per women Per day hrs of work	percentage distribution of per woman per day work	Per women Per month hrs of work	Per women Per day hrs of work	percentage distribution of per woman per day work	Per women Per month hrs of work
A. Outdoor activities									
1. Agriculture	2.31	13.97	69.33	2.33	14.66	69.91	1.96	13.34	58.71
2. Animal Husbandry	1.32	7.97	69.56	1.36	8.53	40.70	1.13	7.69	33.86
3. Water fetching	0.69	4.16	20.67	0.47	2.98	14.22	0.50	3.39	14.91
4. Fodder collection	1.64	9.92	49.22	1.53	9.63	45.91	1.40	9.54	42.00
5. Fuel wood collection	2.10	12.72	63.11	2.50	15.76	75.13	1.79	12.17	53.57
B. Indoor activities									
1. cooking	1.67	10.12	50.22	1.62	10.18	48.52	1.59	10.86	47.79
2. washing cloths	1.11	6.72	33.33	1.10	6.92	33.00	1.01	6.86	30.21
3. house cleaning	0.89	5.40	26.78	0.90	5.66	27.00	0.78	5.31	23.36
4. cleaning utensils	1.13	6.83	33.89	1.03	6.47	30.86	1.21	8.23	36.21
5. care of children/aged	1.67	10.09	50.11	1.31	8.26	39.39	1.76	11.98	52.71
C. Leisurely/recreational / Creative Activities									
1. Craft work	0.11	0.65	3.22	0.14	0.88	4.17	0.06	0.39	1.71
2. Reading and writing	0.23	1.41	7.00	0.07	0.47	2.22	0.02	0.15	0.64
3. watching TV	1.01	6.13	30.44	1.03	6.48	30.91	0.86	5.89	25.93
4. Social work	0.19	1.12	5.56	0.08	0.49	2.35	0.07	0.49	2.14
5. Religious activities	0.30	1.80	8.96	0.41	2.55	12.17	0.55	3.72	16.37
6. Computer /Social media	0.16	0.99	4.89	0.01	0.08	0.39	0.02	0.15	0.64
Total	16.54	100.00	496.29	15.89	100.00	476.86	14.67	100.00	440.14

Table 40 Caste wise disposal of daily and monthly time of rural women in different activities

Activities perform by rural women	Caste category and disposal of time								
	General Category			SC Category			Total		
	Per women Per day hrs of work	percentage distribution of per woman per day work	Per women Per months hrs of work	Per women Per day hrs of work	percentage distribution of per woman per day work	Per women Per months hrs of work	Per women Per day hrs of work	percentage distribution of per woman per day work	Per women Per months hrs of work
A. Outdoor activities									
1. Agriculture	2.28	13.92	68.45	2.19	14.30	65.75	2.24	14.09	62.22
2. Animal Husbandry	1.52	9.26	45.52	1.02	6.66	30.62	1.29	8.11	38.72
3. Water fetching	0.61	3.74	18.36	0.52	3.39	15.57	0.57	3.58	17.09
4. Fodder collection	1.80	10.96	53.88	1.25	8.18	37.60	1.55	9.74	46.45
5. Fuel wood collection	2.24	13.68	67.24	2.10	13.72	60.08	2.18	13.69	65.34
B. Indoor activities									
1. cooking	1.66	10.12	49.74	1.61	10.50	48.29	1.64	10.29	49.08
2. washing cloths	1.04	6.35	31.21	1.14	7.42	34.11	1.08	6.82	32.53
3. house cleaning	0.85	5.21	25.60	0.89	5.81	26.71	0.87	5.47	26.11
4. cleaning utensils	1.06	6.45	31.72	1.17	7.65	35.20	1.11	6.98	33.31
5. care of children/aged	1.34	8.19	40.26	1.82	11.88	54.66	1.56	9.81	46.83
C. Leisurely/recreational / Creative Activities									
1. Craft work	0.07	0.46	2.24	0.15	0.96	4.42	0.11	0.68	3.23
2. Reading and writing	0.18	1.12	5.52	0.07	0.42	1.95	0.13	0.82	3.89
3. watching TV	0.02	6.23	30.60	0.95	6.19	28.46	0.99	6.21	29.63
4. Social work	0.18	1.09	5.34	0.05	0.36	1.64	0.12	0.77	3.66
5. Religious activities	0.41	2.50	12.30	0.37	2.40	11.05	0.39	2.46	11.73
6. Computer /Social media	0.12	0.74	3.62	0.23	0.18	0.82	0.08	0.49	2.34
Total	16.39	100.00	491.61	15.33	100.00	459.95	15.91	100.00	477.16

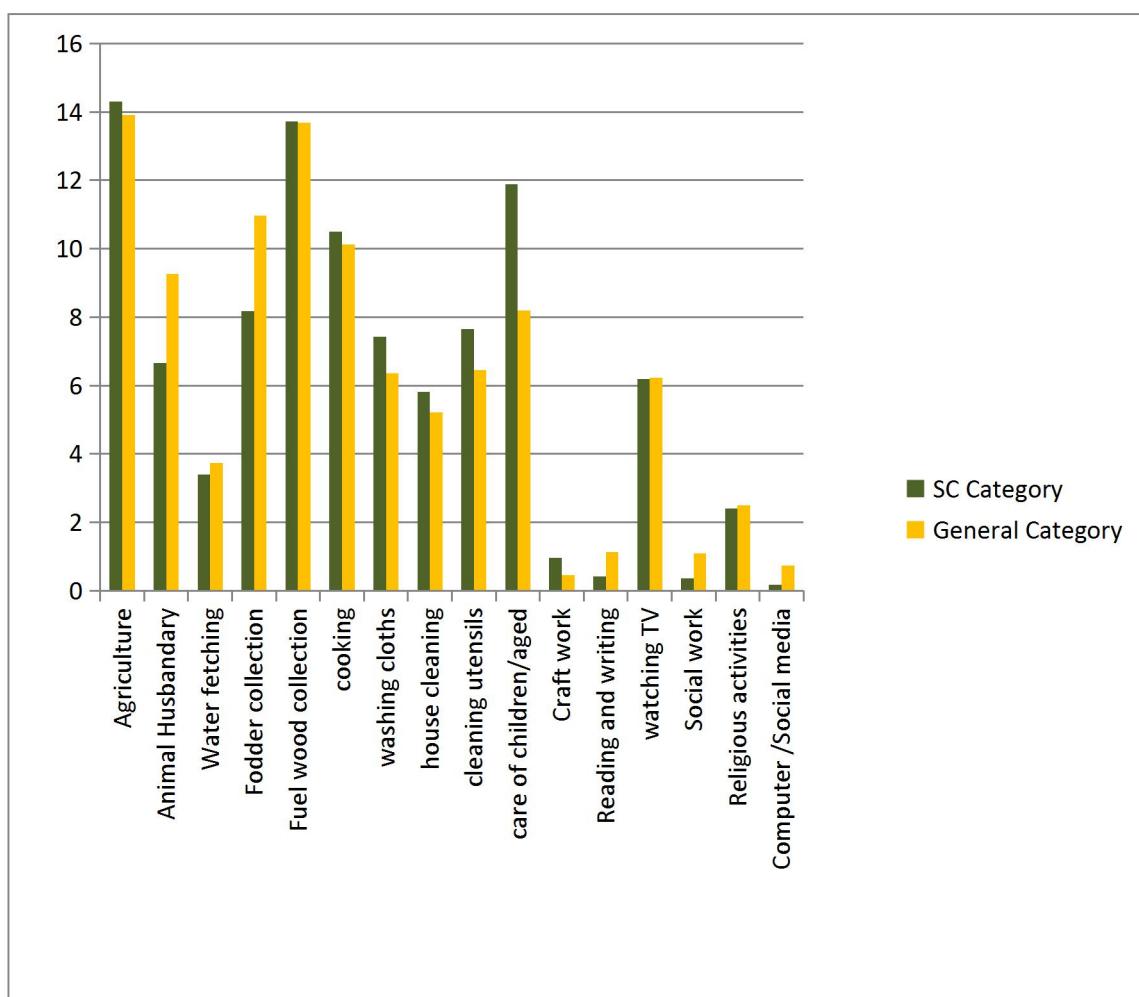
Age and caste wise data regarding disposal of time of rural women in different activities have been presented in Table 39 and 40. Age and caste wise time pattern as revealed in the study did not show much variation as compared to total figures. The time devoted in all these activities was found to be 16.54 hours per day by per woman belonging to the age group 20-35 and this time duration was seen decreasing with the increasing age-group. It was 15.89 and 14.67 hours per-day by per women among the women of 35 to 50 and 50 and above age group. Same pattern of time consumption had been seen among the women of both the caste categories. They had to devote their maximum time per day in two outdoor activities i.e. agriculture and fuel wood collection. But in all the outdoor activities, women of general category devoted much time (around 51 percent) in comparison to the women of SC category (46.25 percent).

Among indoor activities, cooking and care of children and aged persons are the chief activities of the womenfolk and these two activities consume 3.19 hours (20.10 percent of total time) of a woman in a day. The time involved in cooking generally depends on the family size, type of food, nature and condition of source of fuel and the cooperation of the other family members. In other indoor activities washing cloths and cleaning utensils take sufficient proportion of rural women's time. They had to devote 2.35 hours (15.39 percent of total time) per day in these two activities. Both indoor and outdoor activities take a lot of time of rural women (88.58 percent of total time). The burden of maximum of outdoor and indoor activities had always been on women's shoulders in rural areas and this is the main cause of drudgery among rural women in this hill region.



Variation had been seen among the women of different age group regarding outdoor and indoor activities. Data indicate that in outdoor activities women of 35 to 50 age-group had to spend 8.18 hours (51.56 percent of total per day hours), while in these activities women of 50 and above age group devote minimum 6.78 hours (46.13 percent of total hours) in a day. Opposite results have been seen regarding indoor activities. Women of uppermost age group devoted their maximum time (43.24 percent of total hours) in indoor activities. To look after the children was recorded as their major indoor activity. The maximum burden of outdoor activities was seen on the shoulders of women of 35 to 50 age- group.

Caste wise data presented in Table 40 reveal that women from SC category have to devote more time (43.26% of total hours) in indoor activities in comparison to the women respondents of general category who spent 36.32 percent of their total per day working hours in indoor activities.



A significant variation has been found between two sample districts. In Almora district, women had to involve much more in outdoor activities which need much physical labour.

Around 50 percent of their total working hours consumed in these activities whereas the respondents of district Nainital devoted less time (47.80%) of total hours) in these activities. Opposite result has been seen regarding indoor activities. Respondents of district Nainital devoted more time (40.26% of total working hours) in indoor activities as compared to district Almora where rural women devoted 38.43 percent of their working hours in indoor activities.

Under the head of leisurely, recreational and creative type work, activities like craft work, reading and writing, watching TV, social work, religious activities and involvement in computer/social media are included. The total time devoted to these activities was found 1.82 hours (11.43% of total hours) by a woman in a day as revealed in the Table 36. Taking total respondents together, it was revealed that maximum time had been devoted in watching TV (0.99 hours) and religious activities (0.39 hours). These activities consumed 8.67 percent portion of their total working hours per day. Their least involvement was seen in computer and social media. Among all respondents, the proportion of young ones (20-35 age group) was rather high in comparison to other age-groups in this regards. It was found that little time was devoted by respondents in reading and writing. Illiteracy among women is the basic reason for this trend and pattern. Less time of rural women was consumed in the activities like social work and craft work. Rural women have always been overburdened in the outdoor and in domestic activities. Their maximum time is being consumed in these two activities. Therefore they have little time for recreational activities. TV is the main source of entertainment for them and religious/social functions provide them some moments of happiness.

Age and cast wise distribution of data regarding leisurely time activities of respondents presented in Table 39&40 reveal almost same trend and pattern. But the time devoted in these activities by the respondents of 20to35 age-group was rather high in comparison to other age groups. In fact in increasing age group, the time devoted to these activities was seen decreasing. In the same manner the respondents of general caste category were devoting rather more time (12.08% of total per day hours of work) in leisurely activities as compared to SC category (10.57% of total working hours).

In fact due to lack of infrastructural facilities related to entertainment and lack of spare time available with womenfolk, a very low time was devoted towards leisurely, recreational and creative activities. Entertainment is also a low key affair in the rural households. In the present study, the entertainment hours are recorded 1.82 (11.43% of total hours) in the

aggregate, being 1.72 hours (11% of total hours) in Almora district and 1.94 hours (11.98% of total hours) in Nainital district. Leisurely activities of rural women are mainly confined to watching TV and participating in religious activities/functions. A small number of respondents, particularly from young age group were also using social media/computer, but their participation is too small.

Women's per month workload was also assessed on the bases of their per day work load. It was found in the study that women of study area were devoting 477.16 hours per month in different outdoor, indoor and leisurely activities. Per month highest work load was seen among the women of Okhalkanda block of Nainital district (544.91). Lowest work load was found on the women of Hawalbagh block who had to devote around 410 hours per month in these activities (Table36).

A variation had been seen according to age and caste category. Data presented in Table 39&40 indicate that women of younger age group (20-35) had to devote maximum 496.29 hours per month in these daily routine activities, whereas this proportion was seen decreasing according to increasing age group. It was 476.80 hours per month for the women of 30-50 age group and minimum 440.14 per month for the women of 50 and above age group. Caste wise variation was also seen and women of general caste category had to perform relatively more responsibilities. They were devoting 491.61 hours per month in these activities whereas SC women were devoting comparatively fewer hours (477.16 hours per month) in various outdoor, indoor and leisurely activities.

District wise data distribution reveal that contribution of women of Nainital district was much more (485.11) in comparison to the women of Almora district (469.22).

The study highlights that rural women of this hill region have to perform various activities which need much physical labour. Their outdoor activities are highly time taking and maximum hours of their daily routine are absorbed in these activities. Apart from outdoor activities, entire household work also had to be performed by womenfolk only. Around 89 percent of their total working hours are consumed by these two activities. Hence the drudgery of womenfolk of this region is self evident as they have to take the maximum responsibility of indoor as well as outdoor activities.

Factors like family size, land holding size, number of animals, distance of forest, number of children and aged persons in the family, generally determine the hours of daily work of women and work load on them. At present, the nature of family in rural areas is

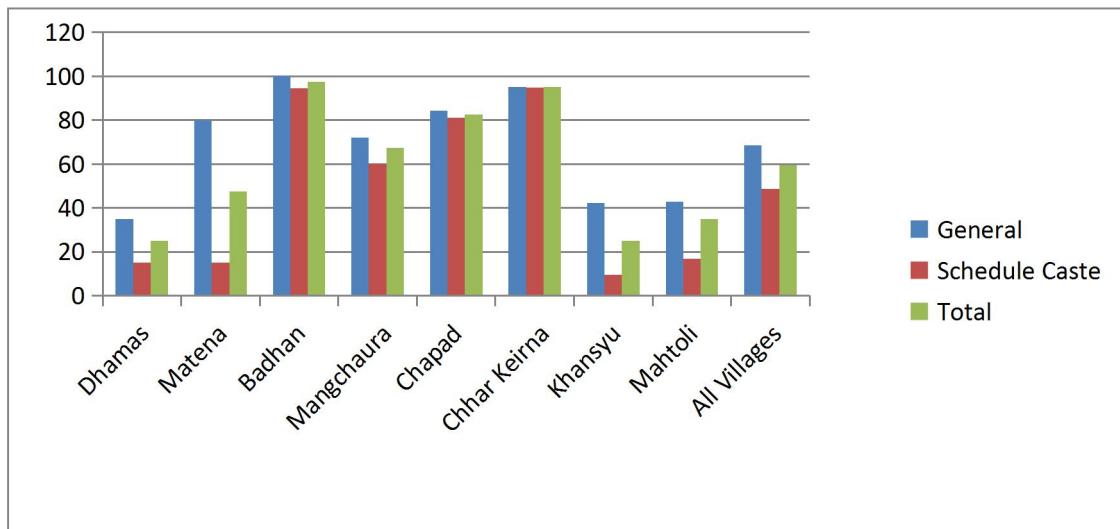
transforming from joint to nuclear. This is also an important cause of women's drudgery. In traditional joint families, adult women of families perform different activities with co-operation to each other and all the responsibilities are performed in sharing mode. But as the nuclear families are replacing the joint families, the work load on the women is being seen to be increasing.

Source of fuel in sample households

Fuel wood has always been one of the basic requirements for energy in this hilly region. But now availability of cooking gas (LPG) is increasing in rural areas also and due to which women's burden of fuel wood collection may be decreased. The information regarding availability of LPG in sample households is also collected and related data are highlighted in Table 41. Taking together all the sample households, it was found that around 59 percent households had the facility of LPG. A significant variation had been seen in different sample villages. In the villages like Badhan and Chhar-Kheirna, located at road side, 97.50 and 95 percent households had the facility of LPG, but in Dhamas and Khanshyu only 25 percent households were being benefited with this facility.

Table 41 Caste wise distribution of sample villages regarding availability of LPG

Name of Village	Caste Category					
	General		Schedule Caste		Total	
	Availability of LPG	% age distribution	Availability of LPG	% age distribution	Availability of LPG	% age distribution
Dhamas	07	35.00	03	15.00	10	25.00
Matena	16	80.00	03	15.00	19	47.50
Badhan	22	100.00	17	94.44	39	97.50
Mangchaura	18	72.00	09	60.00	27	67.50
Chapad	16	84.21	17	81.00	33	82.50
Chhar Keirna	20	95.24	18	94.74	38	95.00
Khansyu	08	42.11	02	9.52	10	25.00
Mahtoli	12	42.85	02	16.67	14	35.00
All Villages	119	68.39	71	48.63	190	59.38



Caste-wise data regarding this facility (Table41) reveal that 48.63 percent SC households were availing this facility, whereas the percentage of such household was found rather high (68.39%) among general caste category. In village Khansyu only 9.52 percent SC families had been availing this facility and in the villages Dhamas, Matena and Mahtoli also, only few families were availing the facility of LPG. This shows the poor economic status of the weaker sections, of this region.

Table 42 Main source of fuel in sample households

Name of Village	Source of Fuel			Total
	LPG	Fuel wood	Any other	
Dhamas	-	40 (100.00)	-	
Matena	03 (7.50)	37 (92.50)	-	40 (100.00)
Badhan	-	40 (100.00)	-	40 (100.00)
Mangchaura	03 (7.50)	37 (92.50)	-	40 (100.00)
Chapad	09 (22.50)	31 (77.50)	-	40 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	09 (22.50)	31 (77.50)	-	40 (100.00)
Khansyu	02 (5.00)	38 (95.00)	-	40 (100.00)
Mahtoli	02 (5.00)	38 (95.00)	-	40 (100.00)
All Villages	28 (8.75)	292 (91.25)	-	320 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Though in the study area, around 59 percent households were availing LPG, but in spite of this facility, fuel wood was found the main source of their fuel requirement. 91.25

percent respondents reported fuel wood as their main source of fuel and variation in different villages was seen from 77.50 percent in village Chapad and Chharkheirna to 100 percent in village Dhamas. It is evident that in rural hilly villages, fuel wood is a basic source of energy and is being used for cooking as well as for space heating purpose (Table 42).

Table 43 Caste wise distribution of sample houses regarding main source of fuel

Name of Village	Caste category and source of fuel							
	General				Schedule Caste			
	LPG	Fuel wood	Any other	Total	LPG	Fuel wood	Any other	Total
Matena	-	20 (100.00)	-	20 (100.00)	-	20 (100.00)	-	20 (100.00)
Dhamas	03 (15.00)	17 (85.00)	-	20 (100.00)	-	20 (100.00)	-	20 (100.00)
Badhan	-	22 (100.00)	-	22 (100.00)	-	18 (100.00)	-	18 (100.00)
Mangchaura	02 (8.00)	23 (92.00)	-	25 (100.00)	01 (6.67)	14 (93.33)	-	15 (100.00)
Chapad	08 (42.11)	11 (57.89)	-	19 (100.00)	01 (4.76)	20 (95.24)	-	21 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	02 (9.52)	19 (90.48)	-	21 (100.00)	07 (36.84)	12 (63.16)	-	19 (100.00)
Khansyu	02 (10.53)	17 (89.47)	-	19 (100.00)	-	21 (100.00)	-	21 (100.00)
Mahtoli	02 (7.14)	26 (92.86)	-	28 (100.00)	-	12 (100.00)	-	12 (100.00)
All Villages	19 (10.92)	155 (89.08)	-	174 (100.00)	09 (6.16)	137 (93.84)	-	146 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

This information has also been examined on the basis of caste category. Data presented in Table 43 indicate that though fuel wood is the most important source of fuel for both the castes but it is more necessary for the households of SC category in comparison to general category. 93.84 percent households of SC category had to depend on fuel wood to fulfill their need of fuel. This shows relatively low economic status of SC households in the study area. Village wise variation had also been found in this regard. In village Chapad, among general category only 57.89 percent households were found dependent on fuel wood while 42.11 percent respondents reported LPG as their main source of fuel. But in other villages, more than 85 percent of households had to depend on fuel wood and in two villages i.e. Dhamas and Badhan even 100 percent households depended on fuel wood.

The situation of SC households was found much worse in this regards. In five sample villages, 100 percent household of this category had to depend on fuel wood, in two villages this proportion was more than 90 percent. In this way, fuel wood is the main source of fuel in

this region and this is an important cause of women's drudgery in hilly rural areas of Uttarakhand.

Pattern of fuel wood collection and its burden

It is an evident fact that fuel wood is the main source to fulfill the energy requirement of this region. The process of its collection is an important cause of drudgery of rural women. The problems involved in its collection are manifold and it is the female adults who are more involved in this problem.

Table 44 Collection of fuel wood in sample households

Name of Village	Collection of fuel wood by					
	Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total
Dhamas	-	37 (92.50)	03 (7.50)	-	-	40 (100.00)
Matena	-	37 (100.00)	-	-	-	37 (100.00)
Badhan	-	36 (90.00)	03 (7.50)	01 (2.50)	-	40 (100.00)
Mangchaura	-	35 (94.59)	02 (5.41)	-	-	37 (100.00)
Chapad	-	30 (96.77)	-	-	01 (3.23)	31 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	-	19 (61.29)	12 (38.71)	-	-	31 (100.00)
Khansyu	-	30 (78.95)	08 (21.05)	-	-	38 (100.00)
Mahtoli	-	21 (55.26)	17 (44.74)	-	-	38 (100.00)
All Villages	-	245 (83.90)	45 (15.41)	01 (0.34)	01 (0.34)	292 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

According to data shown in Table 44, it was revealed that in 83.90 percent households, the collection of fuel wood is done alone by women and in 15.41 percent household this activity was shared by both male and female. No household was found where only men were performing the task of fuel wood collection. It can be considered as a positive indicator that now children are not being involved in this type of activity. In the case of individual villages, the collection of fuel wood is done only by women members of family in village Matena and the proportion was more than 90 percent in other four villages i.e. Dhamas, Badhan, Mangchaura and Chapad. This analysis of data highlights that fuel wood collection in more or less confined to the womenfolk with a very low participation of male members of family.

Table 45 Collection of fuel wood in sample households (Caste wise distribution)

Name of Village	Total no. of households	Caste Category and Collection of fuel wood by											
		General Category						SC Category					
		Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total	Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total
Dhamas	40	-	19 (95.00)	01 (5.00)	-	-	20 (100.00)	-	18 (90.00)	02 (10.00)	-	-	20 (100.00)
Matena	40	-	17 (100.00)	-	-	-	17 (100.00)	-	20 (100.00)	-	-	-	20 (100.00)
Badhan	40	-	20 (90.91)	01 (4.55)	01 (4.55)	-	22 (100.00)	-	16 (88.89)	02 (11.11)	-	-	18 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	-	21 (91.30)	02 (8.70)	-	-	23 (100.00)	-	14 (100.00)	-	-	-	14 (100.00)
Chapad	40	-	11 (100.00)	-	-	-	11 (100.00)	-	18 (90.00)	01 (5.00)	-	01 (5.00)	20 (100.00)
Chhar kheirna	40	-	09 (47.37)	10 (52.63)	-	-	19 (100.00)	-	10 (83.33)	02 (16.67)	-	-	12 (100.00)
Khansyu	40	-	13 (76.47)	04 (23.53)	-	-	17 (100.00)	-	17 (80.95)	04 (19.05)	-	-	21 (100.00)
Mahtoli	40	-	13 (50.00)	13 (50.00)	-	-	26 (100.00)	-	08 (66.67)	04 (33.33)	-	-	12 (100.00)
All Villages	320	-	123 (79.35)	31 (20.00)	01 (0.65)	-	155 (100.00)	-	121 (88.32)	15 (10.95)	-	01 (0.72)	137 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Table 46 Collection of fuel wood in sample households (Age wise distribution)

Name of Village	Age groups (years) and Collection of fuel wood by																	
	20-35						35-50						50 & above					
	Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total	Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total	Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total
Dhamas	-	14 (93.33)	01 (6.67)	-	-	15 (100.00)	-	14 (87.50)	02 (12.50)	-	-	16 (100.00)	-	08 (100.00)	-	-	-	08 (100.00)
Matena	-	16 (100.00)	-	-	-	16 (100.00)	-	15 (100.00)	-	-	-	15 (100.00)	-	06 (100.00)	-	-	-	06 (100.00)
Badhan	-	15 (83.33)	02 (11.11)	01 (5.56)	-	18 (100.00)	-	13 (92.86)	01 (7.14)	-	-	14 (100.00)	-	07 (100.00)	-	-	-	07 (100.00)
Mangchaura	-	16 (100.00)	-	-	-	16 (100.00)	-	11 (84.62)	02 (15.38)	-	-	13 (100.00)	-	08 (100.00)	-	-	-	08 (100.00)
Chapad	-	17 (94.44)	-	-	01 (5.56)	18 (100.00)	-	12 (100.00)	-	-	-	12 (100.00)	-	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	03 (100.00)
Chhar kheirna	-	11 (68.75)	05 (31.25)	-	-	16 (100.00)	-	04 (44.44)	05 (55.56)	-	-	09 (100.00)	-	04 (66.67)	02 (33.33)	-	-	06 (100.00)
Khansyu	-	06 (50.00)	06 (50.00)	-	-	12 (100.00)	-	17 (100.00)	-	-	-	17 (100.00)	-	04 (57.14)	03 (42.86)	-	-	07 (100.00)
Mahtoli	-	12 (63.16)	07 (36.84)	-	-	19 (100.00)	-	06 (42.86)	08 (57.14)	-	-	14 (100.00)	-	03 (42.86)	04 (57.14)	-	-	07 (100.00)
All villages		107 (82.31)	21 (16.15)	01 (0.77)	01 (0.77)	130 (100.00)		92 (83.64)	18 (16.36)		-	110 (100.00)	-	43 (82.69)	09 (17.31)	-	-	52 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Caste wise data shown in Table 45 reveal the fact that more women from SC category were involved in this activity rather than the women of general caste category. Taking all sample villages together, it was found that in 88.32 percent households in SC category, only female adults had to take the burden of fuel wood collection while this burden was relatively low for the women of general caste category. It will be important to highlight the fact that in both caste categories this activity was not being done alone by men in any sample household.

Age wise distribution of data is shown in Table 46. Data indicate that there was no significant variation existed among women of different age categories. Respondent of each age group reported that in maximum households only female adults had to perform the activity of fuel wood collection.

It will be necessary to mention here that this information was collected from 292 respondents. Remaining 28 were excluded because their main source of fuel was recorded as LPG and they had not to be involved in the actively of fuel wood collection.

Distance covered in fuel wood collection

The main problem associated with fuel wood collection is the distance from where fuel wood is collected. Forests are the main source of fuel wood in this hilly region. As already mentioned, the activity of fuel wood collection is mostly done by females in the rural areas of this region. This is one of the activity which adds to drudgery on women because they have to cover a considerable distance for fuel wood collection.

Table 47 Distance covered in collection of fuel wood

Name of Village	Distance					Total no. of respondent
	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	
Dhamas	-	16 (40.00)	07 (17.50)	17 (42.50)	-	40 (100.00)
Matena	02 (5.41)	18 (48.65)	14 (37.84)	03 (8.11)	-	37 (100.00)
Badhan	02 (5.00)	22 (55.00)	11 (27.50)	03 (7.50)	02 (5.00)	40 (100.00)
Mangchaura	01 (2.70)	09 (24.32)	14 (37.84)	13 (35.14)	-	37 (100.00)
Chapad	-	05 (16.13)	15 (48.39)	10 (32.26)	01 (3.22)	31 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	03 (9.68)	23 (74.19)	02 (6.45)	01 (3.23)	02 (6.45)	31 (100.00)
Khansyu	02 (5.26)	14 (36.84)	20 (52.63)	02 (5.26)	-	38 (100.00)
Mahtoli	-	18 (47.37)	20 (52.63)	-	-	38 (100.00)
All Villages	10 (3.42)	125 (42.81)	103 (35.27)	49 (16.78)	05 (1.71)	292 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

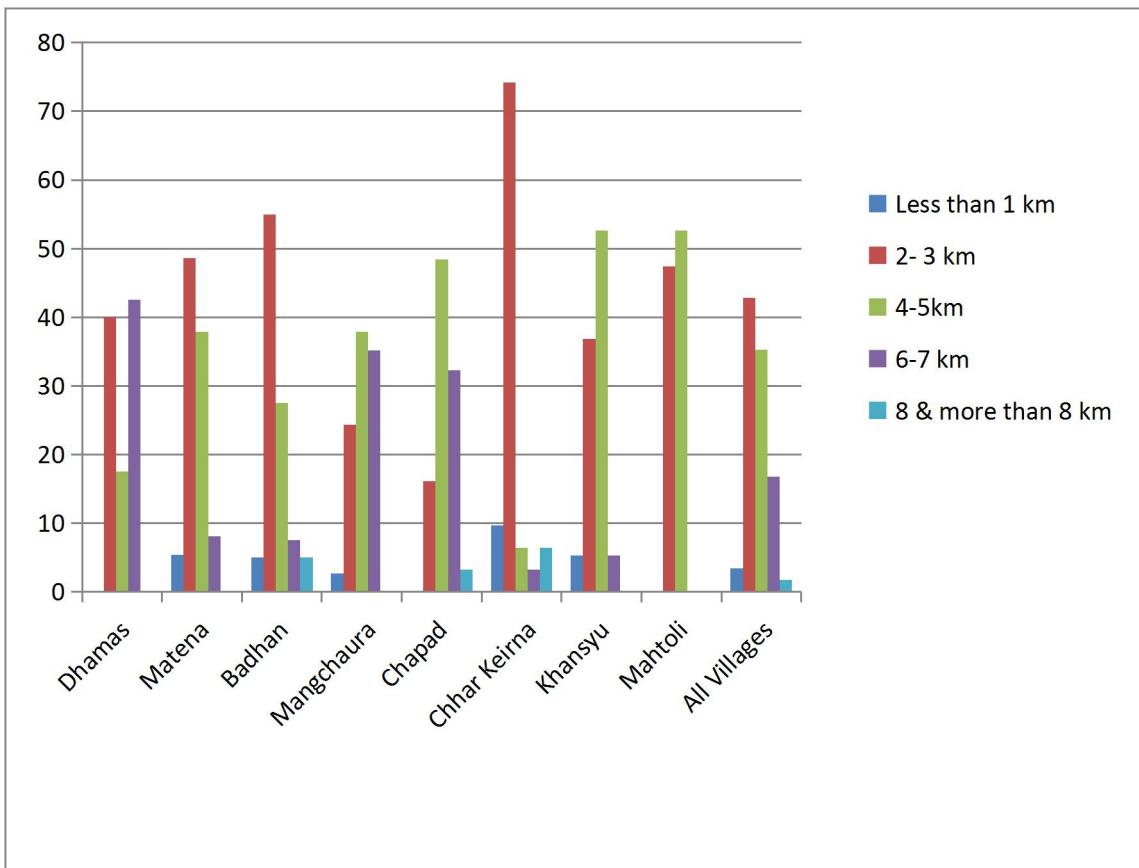


Table 47 presents the distribution of respondents reporting the distance that have to be covered in collection of fuel wood by them. Taking all the respondents together, the data revealed that maximum women had to cover 2 to 5 km. to collect fuel wood as reported by around 78 percent respondents. The proportion of the respondents was recorded 16.78 percent who had to travel 6 to 7 km for the collection of fuel wood. More than 50 percent respondents reported that the collection of fuel wood requires a travel of more than 4 km. Some 1.71 percent had to cover more than 8 km. to accomplish this activity. Due to the severe cold condition, rainy season and danger of wild animals, the problem of fuel wood collection can be well understood.

Table 48 Distance covered in collection of fuel wood (Caste wise distribution)

Name of Village	Caste category and distance											Total no. of respondents	
	General Category						Schedule caste category						
	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	Total	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	Total	
Dhamas	-	09 (45.00)	02 (10.00)	09 (45.00)	-	20 (100.00)	-	07 (35.00)	05 (25.00)	08 (40.00)	-	20 (100.00)	40
Matena	02 (11.76)	07 (41.18)	06 (35.29)	02 (11.76)	-	17 (100.00)	-	11 (55.00)	08 (40.00)	01 (5.00)	-	20 (100.00)	37
Badhan	-	11 (50.00)	07 (31.82)	02 (9.09)	02 (9.09)	22 (100.00)	02 (11.11)	11 (61.11)	04 (22.22)	01 (5.56)	-	18 (100.00)	40
Mangchaura	01 (4.35)	08 (34.78)	08 (34.78)	06 (26.09)	-	23 (100.00)	-	01 (7.14)	04 (28.57)	09 (64.29)	-	14 (100.00)	37
Chapad	-	-	07 (63.64)	04 (36.36)	-	11 (100.00)	-	05 (25.00)	08 (40.00)	06 (30.00)	01 (5.00)	20 (100.00)	31
Chhar	02 (10.53)	14 (73.68)	02 (10.53)	01 (5.26)	-	19 (100.00)	01 (8.33)	09 (75.00)	-	-	02 (16.67)	12 (100.00)	31
Keirna													
Khansyu	02 (11.76)	10 (58.82)	05 (29.41)	-	-	17 (100.00)	-	04 (19.05)	15 (71.43)	02 (9.52)	-	21 (100.00)	38
Mahtoli	-	14 (53.85)	12 (46.15)	-	-	26 (100.00)	-	02 (16.67)	10 (83.33)	-	-	12 (100.00)	38
All Villages	07 (4.52)	73 (47.10)	49 (31.61)	24 (15.48)	02 (1.29)	155 (100.00)	03 (2.19)	50 (36.50)	54 (39.42)	27 (19.71)	03 (2.19)	137 (100.00)	292

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Table 49 Distance covered in collection of fuel wood (Age wise distribution)

Name of Village	Age group (years) and distance																	
	20-35						35-50						50 & above					
	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	Total	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	Total	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	Total
Dhamas	-	04 (26.67)	03 (20.00)	08 (53.33)	-	15 (100.00)	-	09 (56.25)	03 (18.75)	04 (25.00)	-	16 (100.00)	-	03 (37.50)	01 (12.50)	04 (50.00)	-	08 (100.00)
Matena	-	07 (43.75)	07 (43.75)	02 (12.50)	-	16 (100.00)	01 (6.67)	08 (53.33)	05 (33.33)	01 (6.67)	-	15 (100.00)	01 (14.29)	03 (42.86)	02 (28.57)	01 (14.29)	-	07 (100.00)
Badhan	01 (5.56)	11 (61.11)	06 (33.33)	-	-	18 (100.00)	01 (7.14)	08 (57.14)	04 (28.57)	-	01 (7.14)	14 (100.00)	-	02 (33.33)	01 (16.67)	02 (33.33)	01 (16.67)	06 (100.00)
Mangchaura	01 (6.25)	03 (18.75)	09 (56.25)	03 (0)18.75	-	16 (100.00)	-	03 (23.08)	01 (7.69)	09 (69.23)	-	13 (100.00)	-	03 (37.50)	02 (25.00)	03 (37.50)	-	08 (100.00)
Chapad	-	03 (16.67)	10 (55.56)	04 (22.22)	01 (5.56)	18 (100.00)	-	02 (16.67)	05 (41.67)	05 (41.67)	-	12 (100.00)	-	-	02 (66.67)	01 (33.33)	-	03 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	-	15 (93.75)	-	01 (6.25)	-	16 (100.00)	03 (33.33)	04 (44.44)	01 (11.11)	-	01 (11.11)	09 (100.00)	-	04 (66.67)	01 (16.67)	-	01 (16.67)	06 (100.00)
Khansyu	01 (8.33)	05 (41.67)	06 (50.00)	-	-	12 (100.00)	-	06 (35.29)	09 (52.94)	02 (11.76)	-	17 (100.00)	01 (14.29)	03 (42.86)	03 (42.86)	-	-	07 (100.00)
Mahtoli	-	09 (47.37)	10 (52.63)	-	-	19 (100.00)	-	04 (28.57)	10 (71.43)	-	-	14 (100.00)	-	05 (71.43)	02 (28.57)	-	-	07 (100.00)
All Villages	03 (2.31)	57 (43.85)	51 (39.23)	18 (13.85)	01 (0.77)	130 (100.00)	05 (4.55)	44 (40.00)	38 (19.09)	21 (19.09)	02 (1.82)	110 (100.00)	02 (3.85)	23 (44.23)	14 (26.92)	11 (21.15)	02 (3.85)	52 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Caste wise variation has been seen in this regard. Data presented in Table 48 indicate that the proportion of women of SC category, who had to cover more than 4 km to collect fuel wood, was found much higher in comparison to women of general category.

Age wise data regarding fuel wood collection are shown in Table 49. Data indicate that maximum (53.85%) women of 20to35 age group were traveling more than 4 km. for the collection of fuel wood and minimum proportion (40%) in this regards was found among the women of 35 to 50 age category. To cover such a long distance for fuel wood collection, women have to devote a considerable amount of time. This time taking activity increases drudgery of hill women.

Data presented in Table 36 highlight that the collection of fuel wood requires a considerable time. On an average, a woman at least needed 2.18 hours per day for fuel wood collection. She had to devote 13.69 percent of her total working hours in this activity which is not only time taking but needs a physical labour also.

Table 50 Time required in collection of fuel wood as compared to five years back

Name of Village	Time required			Total
	Same time	More time	Less time	
Dhamas	17 (42.50)	17 (42.50)	06 (15.00)	40 (100.00)
Matena	33 (89.19)	03 (8.11)	01 (2.70)	37 (100.00)
Badhan	22 (55.00)	10 (25.00)	08 (20.00)	40 (100.00)
Mangchaura	28 (75.68)	09 (24.32)	-	37 (100.00)
Chapad	13 (41.94)	17 (54.84)	01 (3.23)	31 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	05 (16.13)	03 (9.68)	23 (74.19)	31 (100.00)
Khansyu	18 (47.37)	12 (31.58)	08 (21.05)	38 (100.00)
Mahtoli	15 (39.47)	21 (55.26)	02 (5.26)	38 (100.00)
All Villages	151 (51.71)	92 (31.51)	49 (16.78)	292 (100.00)

Note- Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Respondent were asked about the time consumption in fuel wood collection as compared to five years back. Related data are presented in Table 50. The study revealed that around 51 percent respondents (aggregate of eight villages) were devoting same time whereas 31.51 percent had to devote more time in fuel wood collection as compared to five year back. 16.78 percent respondents reported that their families were better off in this regard and their time requirement in fuel wood collection was less as compared to five years back.

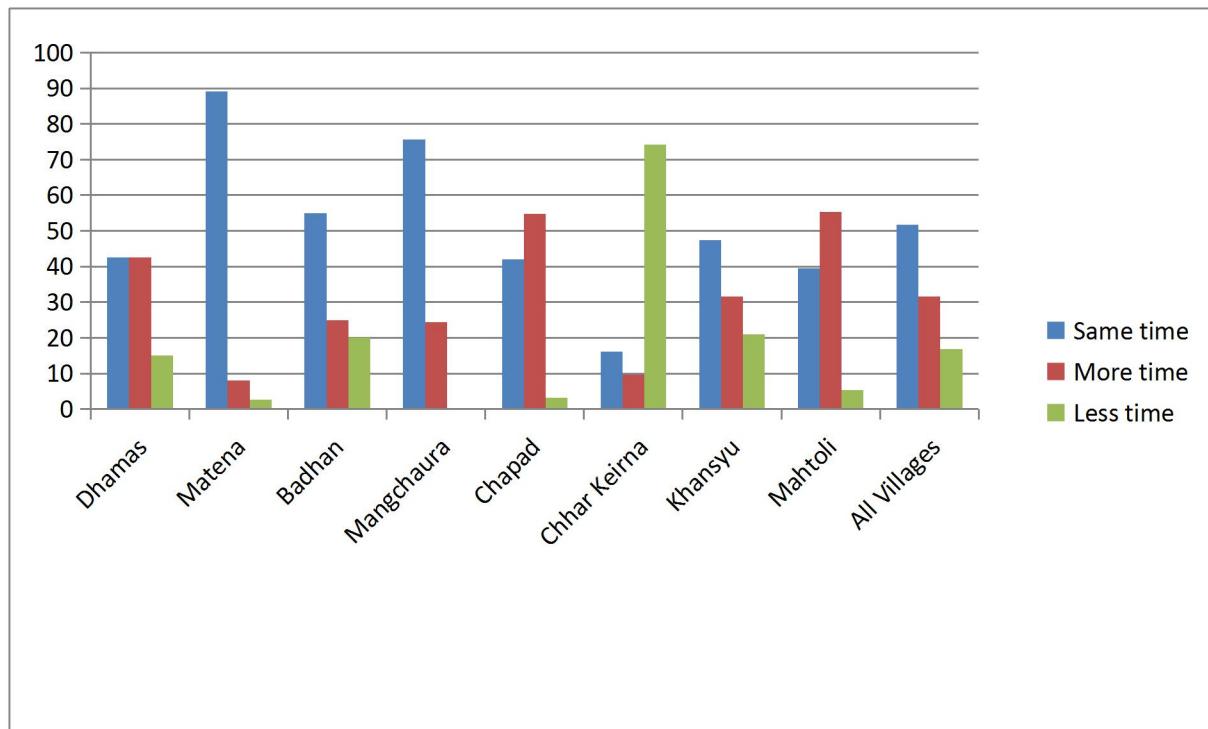


Table 51 Reason for more or less time taken in collection of fuel wood as compared to five years back

Name of Village	Total no. of respondents	Reason for more time taken					Reason for less time taken			
		Deforestation	Restriction from Forest dept.	Family Size Increased	Any other	Total	Reduction in fuel wood consumption	Division of family	Any other	Total
Dhamas	40	04 (23.53)	08 (47.06)	05 (29.41)	-	17 (100.00)	05 (83.33)	01 (16.67)	-	06 (100.00)
Matena	40	01 (33.33)	-	01 (33.33)	01 (33.33)	03 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	-	-	01 (100.00)
Badhan	40	02 (20.00)	05 (50.00)	01 (10.00)	02 (20.00)	10 (100.00)	04 (50.00)	04 (50.00)	-	08 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	-	08 (88.89)	-	01 (11.11)	09 (100.00)	-	-	-	-
Chapad	40	09 (52.94)	08 (47.06)	-	-	17 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	-	-	01 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	40	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	03 (100.00)	13 (56.52)	06 (26.09)	04 (17.39)	23 (100.00)
Khansyu	40	-	08 (66.67)	03 (25.00)	01 (8.33)	12 (100.00)	01 (12.50)	05 (62.50)	02 (25.00)	08 (100.00)
Mahtoli	40	21 (100.00)	-	-	-	21 (100.00)	02 (100.00)	-	-	02 (100.00)
Total		40 (43.48)	37 (40.22)	10 (10.87)	05 (5.43)	92 (100.00)	27 (55.10)	16 (32.65)	06 (12.24)	49 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

The reasons for more time consumption are illustrated in Table 51. Deforestation was reported as the major problem due to which women had to devote more time in this activity. Deforestation leads to not only scarcity of fuel wood and fodder but also environmental degradation and ecological imbalances. Another reason for more time was the restriction from the forest department as reported by 40.22 percent respondents. Lastly due to increase in family size, the family requirements for fuel wood have increased in the case of 10.87 percent households among those who reported more time in fuel wood collection.

As mentioned in Table 50 about 16.78 percent of the total respondents reported less time consumption in fuel wood collection as compared to five years back. Two major reasons have been viewed for this trend. Reduction of fuel wood consumption was the first reason as reported by 55.10 percent respondents. Due to availability of cooking gas, there had been reduction in the fuel wood consumption in sample villages. Division of family was another reason for lesser fuel wood consumption as reported by 32.65 percent respondent (Table 51). As reported earlier, attraction towards joint family is gradually decreasing in rural areas too, due to which fuel wood consumption in families is also decreasing.

The present study revealed that different patterns are adopted by the household in fuel wood collection and these patterns are determined by family size, availability of the fuel wood, weather, distance from forest, need of the fuel wood and availability of time. Some households collect fuel wood once in a week, some make the collection of fuel wood twice in a week and some once in a month. The households, who collect fuel wood after a gap of time, usually hire other persons for this activity apart from their own family members.

As far as pattern of fuel wood collection, distance covered in it and time required for this activity are concerned, this study highlights that the burden of this task falls mainly on the women folk. This has an adverse impact on their health. Collection of fuel wood, fodder and water fetching are the main outdoor activities to be performed by the womenfolk in the hilly region of Uttarakhand. These activities consume not only a significant portion of their time but also exploit the physical energy of the rural women of this region. Hence, it can be stated that these activities increase the drudgery of hill women.

Pattern of fodder collection and its related problems

Collection of fodder in hill region is basically a women's job and participation of male members of family is completely absent in this activity. A major part of the total fodder

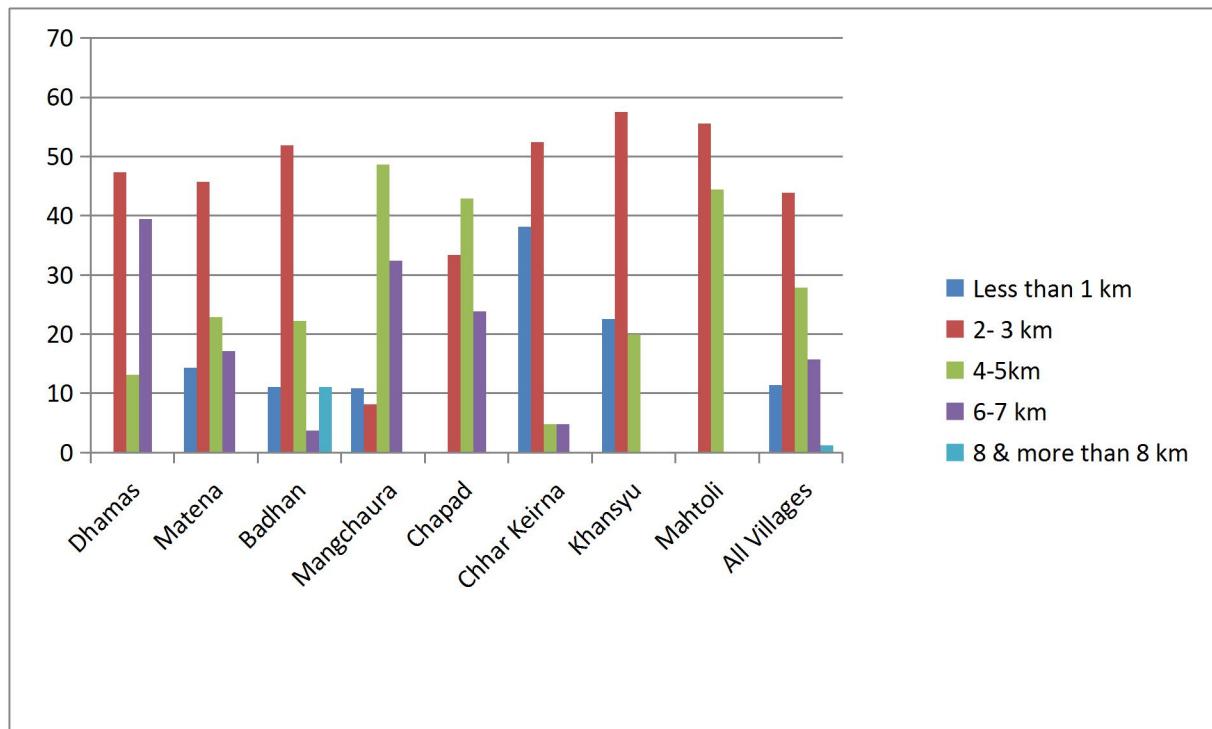
requirement is collected from nearly forests. It is to be mentioned here that in the villages, located near road side, some households are not involved in cattle rearing actively due to lack of cattle in their home. Among total sample households only 225 were involved in cattle rearing activity. Hence only 255 respondents reported about the activity of fodder collection.

Table 52 Distance covered by women in collection of fodder

Name of Village	Distance					Total no. of respondent
	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	
Dhamas	-	18 (47.37)	05 (13.16)	15 (39.47)	-	38 (100.00)
Matena	05 (14.29)	16 (45.71)	08 (22.86)	06 (17.14)	-	35 (100.00)
Badhan	03 (11.11)	14 (51.85)	06 (22.22)	01 (3.70)	03 (11.11)	27 (100.00)
Mangchaura	04 (10.81)	03 (8.11)	18 (48.65)	12 (32.43)	-	37 (100.00)
Chapad	-	07 (33.33)	09 (42.86)	05 (23.81)	-	21 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	08 (38.10)	11 (52.38)	01 (4.76)	01 (4.76)	-	21 (100.00)
Khansyu	09 (22.50)	23 (57.50)	08 (20.00)	-	-	40 (100.00)
Mahtoli	-	20 (55.56)	16 (44.44)	-	-	36 (100.00)
All Villages	29 (11.37)	112 (43.92)	71 (27.84)	40 (15.69)	03 (1.18)	255 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

The fodder obtained from agricultural field in the form of crop by product is very limited due to small land holdings. The search of fodder becomes a tough daily exercise and women have to go outside of the village for fodder collection. Respondents were asked about the distance covered by them in fodder collection. Table 52 shows the distance covered by the women in the collection of fodder. Out of total respondents, maximum 44.71 percent reported that they have to cover more than 4 km. for the purpose of fodder collection and among these women some 16.87 percent had to go 6 to 7 and even more than 8 km. to procure fodder. In different sample villages, the proportion of those respondents was found highest who had to cover 2 to 3 km for fodder collection.



Caste and age wise distribution of respondents have been presented in Table 53 and 54. No significant variation has been found on the basis of caste. Maximum respondents of both caste categories had to cover on an average 2 to 3 Km in this activity. Only 11.84 percent and 10.68 percent respondents from general caste category and SC category had to cover less than 1 km. for fodder collection and remaining respondents had to go 4 to 8 and more than eight km. for this purpose.

Age wise data illustrate that 2 to 3 km. had to be covered by maximum respondents of each age category. This proportion was highest (47.66 %) among the women of 20to35 age group and other two age categories it was around 40%. Respondents who have to go more than 4 km. for fodder collection constituted about 48 percent among 35to50 age group whereas in other age groups this proportion was found 41.12 percent among 20 to 35 and 46.15 percent among 50 and above age group. There was only one village, Badhan, where women had to cover more than 8 km. for the collection of fodder.

Table 53 Distance covered by women in collection of fodder (Caste wise distribution)

Name of Village	Caste category and distance										Total no. of respondents		
	General Category					Schedule caste category							
	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	Total	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km		
Dhamas	-	11 (55.00)	-	09 (45.00)	-	20 (100.00)	-	07 (38.89)	05 (27.78)	06 (33.33)	-	18 (100.00)	38
Matena	02 (11.76)	06 (35.29)	04 (23.53)	05 (29.41)	-	17 (100.00)	03 (16.67)	10 (55.56)	04 (22.22)	01 (5.56)	-	18 (100.00)	35
Badhan	01 (5.26)	08 (42.11)	06 (31.58)	01 (5.26)	03 (15.79)	19 (100.00)	02 (25.00)	06 (75.00)	-	-	-	08 (100.00)	27
Mangchaura	04 (16.00)	03 (12.00)	12 (48.00)	06 (24.00)	-	25 (100.00)	-	-	06 (50.00)	06 (50.00)	-	12 (100.00)	37
Chapad	-	01 (14.29)	03 (42.86)	03 (42.86)	-	07 (100.00)	-	06 (42.86)	06 (42.86)	02 (14.29)	-	14 (100.00)	21
Chhar Keirna	07 (38.89)	09 (50.00)	01 (5.56)	01 (5.56)	-	18 (100.00)	01 (33.33)	02 (66.67)	-	-	-	03 (100.00)	21
Khansyu	04 (21.05)	12 (63.16)	03 (15.79)	-	-	19 (100.00)	05 (23.81)	11 (52.38)	05 (23.81)	-	-	21 (100.00)	40
Mahtoli	-	17 (62.96)	10 (37.04)	-	-	27 (100.00)	-	03 (33.33)	06 (66.67)	-	-	09 (100.00)	36
All Villages	18 (11.84)	67 (44.08)	39 (25.66)	25 (16.45)	03 (1.97)	152 (100.00)	11 (10.68)	45 (43.69)	32 (31.07)	15 (14.56)	-	103 (100.00)	255

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 54 Distance covered in collection of fodder (Age wise distribution)

Name of Village	Age group (years) and distance																		Total no. of respondent	
	20-35						35-50						50 & above							
	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	Total	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	Total	Less than 1 km	2- 3 km	4-5km	6-7 km	8 & more than 8 km	Total		
Dhamas	-	06 (42.86)	01 (7.14)	07 (50.00)	-	14 (100.00)	-	08 (50.00)	04 (25.00)	04 (25.00)	-	16 (100.00)	-	05 (62.50)	-	03 (37.50)	-	08 (100.00)	38	
Matena	01 (6.67)	08 (53.33)	03 (20.00)	03 (20.00)	-	15 (100.00)	03 (21.43)	06 (42.86)	03 (21.43)	02 (14.29)	-	14 (100.00)	01 (16.67)	02 (33.33)	02 (33.33)	01 (16.67)	-	06 (100.00)	35	
Badhan	-	09 (75.00)	03 (25.00)	-	-	12 (100.00)	02 (20.00)	04 (40.00)	02 (20.00)	-	02 (20.00)	10 (100.00)	01 (20.00)	01 (20.00)	01 (20.00)	01 (20.00)	05 (100.00)	27		
Mangchaura	01 (6.67)	01 (6.67)	10 (66.67)	03 (20.00)	-	15 (100.00)	02 (15.38)	01 (7.69)	03 (23.08)	07 (53.85)	-	13 (100.00)	01 (11.11)	01 (11.11)	05 (55.56)	02 (22.22)	-	09 (100.00)	37	
Chapad	-	04 (36.36)	05 (45.45)	02 (18.18)	-	11 (100.00)	-	03 (37.50)	03 (37.50)	02 (25.00)	-	08 (100.00)	-	-	01 (50.00)	01 (50.00)	-	02 (100.00)	21	
Chhar Keirna	05 (50.00)	04 (40.00)	01 (10.00)	-	-	10 (100.00)	01 (20.00)	02 (40.00)	02 (40.00)	-	-	05 (100.00)	03 (50.00)	03 (50.00)	-	-	-	06 (100.00)	21	
Khansyu	05 (38.46)	08 (61.54)	-	-	-	13 (100.00)	03 (17.65)	09 (52.94)	05 (29.41)	-	-	17 (100.00)	01 (10.00)	06 (60.00)	03 (30.00)	-	-	10 (100.00)	40	
Mahtoli	-	11 (64.71)	06 (35.29)	-	-	17 (100.00)	-	06 (46.15)	07 (53.85)	-	-	13 (100.00)	-	03 (50.00)	06 (50.00)	-	-	06 (100.00)	36	
All Villages	12 (11.21)	51 (47.66)	29 (27.10)	15 (14.02)	-	107 (100.00)	11 (11.46)	39 (40.63)	29 (30.21)	15 (15.63)	02 (2.08)	96 (100.00)	07 (13.46)	21 (40.38)	15 (28.85)	08 (15.38)	01 (1.92)	52 (100.00)	255	

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 55 Time required in collection of fodder as compared to five years back

Name of Village	Time required			Total
	Same time	More time	Less time	
Dhamas	15 (39.47)	12 (31.58)	11 (28.95)	38 (100.00)
Matena	28 (80.00)	02 (5.71)	05 (14.29)	35 (100.00)
Badhan	14 (51.85)	04 (14.81)	09 (33.33)	27 (100.00)
Mangchaura	23 (62.16)	12 (32.43)	02 (5.41)	37 (100.00)
Chapad	10 (47.62)	11 (52.38)	-	21 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	10 (47.62)	07 (33.33)	04 (19.05)	21 (100.00)
Khansyu	18 (45.00)	06 (15.00)	16 (40.00)	40 (100.00)
Mahtoli	16 (44.44)	20 (55.56)	-	36 (100.00)
All Villages	134 (52.55)	74 (29.02)	47 (18.43)	255 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

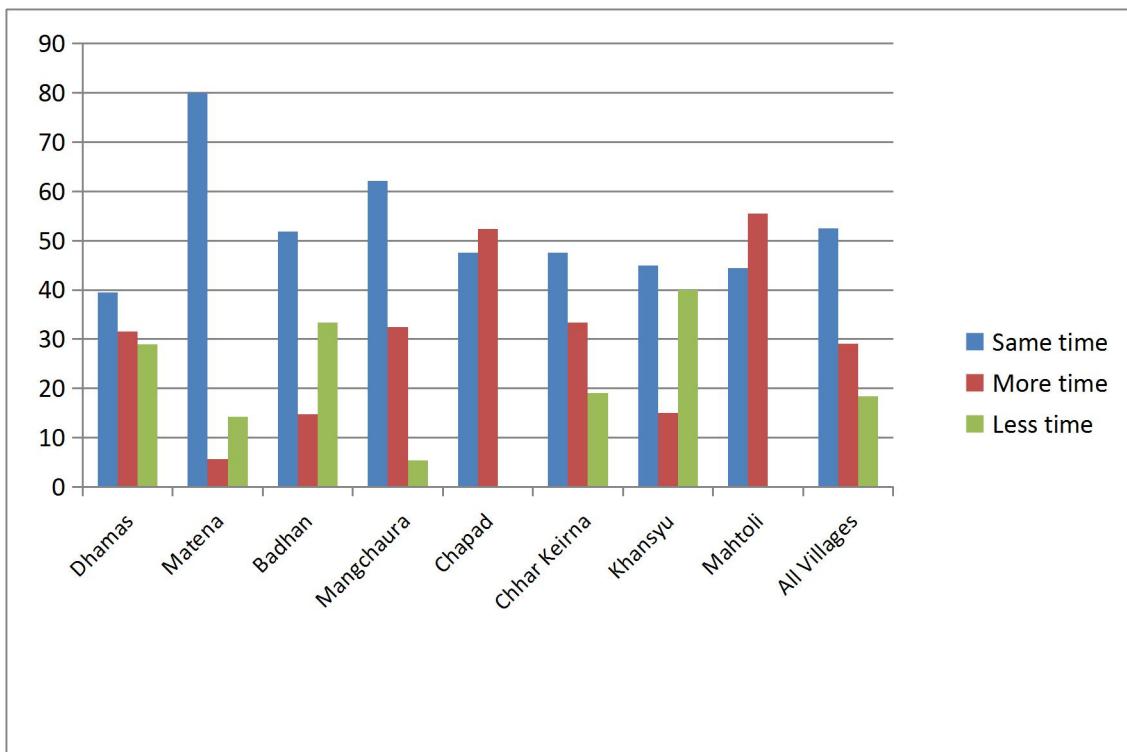


Table 56 Reason for more or less time taken in collection of fodder as compared to five years back

Name of Village	Total no. of respondents	Reason for more time taken					Reason for less time taken			
		Not easily Available	Cattle increased	Family members decreased	Any other	Total	Cattle decreased	Family members increased	Any other	Total
Dhamas	40	11 (91.67)	01 (8.33)	-	-	12 (100.00)	11 (100.00)	-	-	11 (100.00)
Matena	40	02 (100.00)	-	-	-	02 (100.00)	04 (80.00)	01 (20.00)	-	05 (100.00)
Badhan	40	02 (50.00)	01 (25.00)	01 (25.00)	-	04 (100.00)	09 (100.00)	-	-	09 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	06 (50.00)	02 (16.67)	01 (8.33)	03 (25.00)	12 (100.00)	02 (100.00)	-	-	02 (100.00)
Chapad	40	10 (90.91)	-	01 (9.09)	-	11 (100.00)	-	-	-	- (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	40	04 (57.14)	-	03 (42.86)	-	07 (100.00)	03 (75.00)	01 (25.00)	-	04 (100.00)
Khansyu	40	03 (50.00)	01 (16.67)	01 (16.67)	01 (16.67)	06 (100.00)	12 (75.00)	02 (12.50)	02 (12.50)	16 (100.00)
Mahtoli	40	20 (100.00)	-	-	-	20 (100.00)	-	-	-	-
All Villages	320	58 (78.38)	05 (6.76)	07 (9.46)	04 (5.41)	74 (100.00)	41 (87.23)	04 (8.51)	02 (4.26)	47 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

Table 55 presents the percentage of respondents reporting their opinion about the requirement of time at present for the collection of fodder as compared to five years back and reasons for this trend. Around 29 percent respondents reported that collection of fodder takes more time as compared to five years back. The respondents constituted 52.55 percent in the total sample, who reported that collection of fodder requires same time as it was five years back. However the proportion of respondents was recorded 18.43 percent who had to devote less time in fodder collection as compared to past. Various reasons were given by the respondents for taking more time in the collection of fodder. As a result of depletion of forest cover in the hills, the distance of forests has been increasing and the grass is not easily available. Therefore women have to cover a long distance which takes more time in fodder collection. This reasons had been reported by 78.38 percent (Table 56) of the respondents who reported more time. This proportion of respondents was recorded highest (100%) in two villages i.e. Matena and Mahtoli and lowest (50%) in three villages namely Badhan, Mangchaura and Khansyu. Some of the respondents (6.76%) reported that numbers of cattle in their households have increased. Due to outmigration and division of family, family members decreased in some households and the burden of fodder collection falls on remaining females in the households. As a result collection of fodder takes more time as reported by 9.46% respondents. As mentioned already 18.43 percent respondents reported

that collection of fodder requires less time as compared to five years back. For this trend, two reasons have been given by them. Around 87 percent of them reported that numbers of cattle in their households have decreased and as a result the fodder is required in less quantity and also lesser time required. During last five years the members of 8.51 percent households have increased and the collection of fodder is also done by other female members in the family. As a result they have to devote less time in fodder collection as compared to past.

Water fetching activity of rural women

Water fetching is also one of the activities which requires physical hard labour and devotion of time in the hill regions. Water is generally required for drinking purpose, domestic use and for the use of animals. The data regarding water fetching pattern in the sample households (Table 57) revealed that it is also a female dominated job in this region. Out of total 320 respondents, only 156 had to cover some distance in water fetching activity and remaining had this facility in their own houses.

Table 57 Pattern of water fetching in sample households

Name of Village	Total no. of respondents	Water is generally fetch by					
		Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total
Dhamas	40	-	15 (75.00)	02 (10.00)	-	03 (15.00)	20 (100.00)
Matena	40	01 (4.55)	20 (90.91)	01 (4.55)	-	-	22 (100.00)
Badhan	40	-	10 (71.43)	01 (7.14)	02 (14.29)	01 (7.14)	14 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	-	37 (92.50)	03 (7.50)	-	-	40 (100.00)
Chapad	40	01 (8.33)	10 (83.33)	01 (8.33)	-	-	12 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	40	-	02 (66.67)	01 (33.33)	-	-	03 (100.00)
Khansyu	40	01 (3.70)	16 (59.26)	08 (29.63)	-	02 (7.41)	27 (100.00)
Mahtoli	40	01 (5.56)	16 (88.89)	01 (5.56)	-	-	18 (100.00)
All Villages	320	04 (2.56)	126 (80.77)	18 (11.54)	02 (1.28)	06 (3.85)	156 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses

It is evident from the data shown in Table 57 that water is generally fetched by female members of the family in the study area as 80.77 percent respondents reported that the

activity of water fetching is performed by female member of their family. The proportion of respondents was 11.54 percent who reported that this activity is performed by both male as well as female members in their households. About 5.13 percent respondents reported that water is generally fetched by children in their households and among them the proportion of girls is much more in comparison to male children. Overall it emerged that around 51 percent have the availability of tap water in their houses, therefore this activity is less time consuming for womenfolk in comparison to other activities. But in those houses where water facility is not available, in 80.77 percent households water fetching activity is performed by female members of the family. Only in 2.56 percent households, this activity is performed by male members of the family.

Caste wise comparative data shown in Table 58 indicate that in both caste categories, water fetching is a female dominated job, but more female adults had to perform this activity among the women of general caste category as compared to SC women and the proportion of children who had to involve in this activity was found relatively higher is SC category.

Age wise data categorization illustrated in Table 59 indicate that the proportion of female adults involved in water fetching activity was highest among the women of 50 and above age group. It was around 90 percent and found lowest (72.41%) among the women of 30 to 50 age- group. In five villages namely Dhamas, Matena, Badhan, Mangchaura and Chapad, water fetching is only female job in the households of women of 50 and above age group. Overall it emerged in the study that maximum work related to water fetching is performed by females in sample households. Much different was not found on the basis of caste and age in this regard. Taking all sample households, this activity was not found much time taking because around 51 percent of sample households have the tap water facility in their houses, hence they had to devote less time in this activity.

The main source of drinking water in the sample villages is tap water. Data regarding the source of drinking water has been presented in Table 60. It was found that 62.81 percent households had the facility of tap water either on individual or collective basis as reported by them. 7.50 percent respondents reported that the members of their family have to fetch water from the river nearby their village. Remaining 29.69 percent households had to depend on other source to fulfill their need of drinking water. 'Naula' and 'Dhara' (natural sources of water) are reported as 'other' source of drinking water. In the individual sample villages, the facility of tap water was found highest (in 100% households) in village Chhar-Kheirna of Nainital district and it was lowest (20% households) in village Mangchaura of Almora district.

Table 58 Caste wise pattern of water fetching in sample households

Name of Village	Total no. of households	Caste Category and pattern of water fetching											
		General Category						SC Category					
		Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total	Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total
Dhamas	20	-	09 (100.00)	-	-	-	09 (100.00)	-	06 (54.55)	02 (18.18)	-	03 (27.27)	11 (100.00)
Matena	22	-	06 (100.00)	-	-	-	06 (100.00)	01 (6.25)	14 (87.50)	01 (6.25)	-	-	16 (100.00)
Badhan	14	-	06 (75.00)	01 (12.50)	01 (12.50)	-	08 (100.00)	-	04 (66.67)	-	01 (16.67)	01 (16.67)	06 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	-	22 (88.00)	03 (12.00)	-	-	25 (100.00)	-	15 (100.00)	-	-	-	15 (100.00)
Chapad	12	01 (33.33)	01 (33.33)	01 (33.33)	-	-	03 (100.00)	-	09 (100.00)	-	-	-	09 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	03	-	02 (66.67)	01 (33.33)	-	-	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	-	- (100.00)
Khansyu	27	-	03 (42.86)	03 (42.86)	-	01 (14.29)	07 (100.00)	01 (5.00)	13 (65.00)	05 (25.00)	-	01 (5.00)	20 (100.00)
Mahtoli	18	-	11 (91.67)	01 (8.33)	-	-	12 (100.00)	01 (16.67)	05 (83.33)	-	-	-	06 (100.00)
All Villages	156	01 (1.37)	60 (82.19)	10 (13.70)	01 (1.37)	01 (1.37)	73 (100.00)	03 (3.61)	66 (79.52)	08 (9.64)	01 (1.20)	05 (6.02)	83 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Table 59 Age-wise pattern of water fetching in sample households

Name of Village	Total no. of households	Age groups (years) and Collection of fuel wood by																	
		20-35						35-50						50 & above					
		Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total	Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total	Male adult	Female Adult	Both	Male child	Female child	Total
Dhamas	20	-	09 (90.00)	-	-	01 (10.00)	10 (100.00)	-	01 (20.00)	02 (40.00)	-	02 (40.00)	05 (100.00)	-	05 (100.00)	-	-	-	05 (100.00)
Matena	22	-	08 (100.00)	-	-	-	08 (100.00)	01 (9.09)	09 (81.82)	01 (9.09)	-	-	11 (100.00)	-	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	03 (100.00)
Badhan	14	-	03 (60.00)	01 (20.00)	01 (20.00)	-	05 (100.00)	-	03 (60.00)	-	01 (20.00)	01 (20.00)	05 (100.00)	-	04 (100.00)	-	-	-	04 (100.00)
Mangchaura	40	-	14 (87.50)	02 (12.50)	-	-	16 (100.00)	-	12 (92.31)	01 (7.69)	-	-	13 (100.00)	-	11 (100.00)	-	-	-	11 (100.00)
Chapad	12	-	06 (100.00)	-	-	-	06 (100.00)	01 (20.00)	03 (60.00)	01 (20.00)	-	-	05 (100.00)	-	01 (100.00)	-	-	-	01 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	03	-	02 (66.67)	01 (33.33)	-	-	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Khansyu	27	01 (11.11)	06 (66.67)	02 (22.22)	-	-	09 (100.00)	-	09 (69.23)	03 (23.08)	-	01 (7.69)	13 (100.00)	01 (20.00)	03 (60.00)	-	01 (20.00)	-	05 (100.00)
Mahtoli	18	-	10 (100.00)	-	-	-	10 (100.00)	-	05 (83.33)	01 (16.67)	-	-	06 (100.00)	01 (50.00)	01 (50.00)	-	-	-	02 (100.00)
All Villages	156	01 (1.49)	58 (86.57)	06 (8.96)	01 (1.49)	01 (1.49)	67 (100.00)	02 (3.45)	42 (72.41)	09 (15.52)	01 (1.72)	04 (6.90)	58 (100.00)	02 (6.45)	28 (90.32)	-	01 (3.23)	-	31 (100.00)

Note-Percentage is shown in parentheses.

Table 60 Source of drinking water in sample villages (Caste wise distribution)

Name of Village	Caste category and source of water											
	General Category				SC Category				Total			
	Tap water	river water	Any other	Total	Tap water	river water	Any other	Total	Tap water	river water	Any other	Total
Dhamas	11 (55.00)	05 (25.00)	04 (20.00)	20 (100.00)	11 (55.00)	08 (40.00)	01 (5.00)	20 (100.00)	22 (55.00)	13 (32.50)	05 (12.50)	40 (100.00)
Matena	14 (70.00)	-	06 (30.00)	20 (100.00)	04 (20.00)	-	16 (80.00)	20 (100.00)	18 (45.00)	-	22 (55.00)	40 (100.00)
Badhan	15 (68.18)	02 (9.09)	05 (22.73)	22 (100.00)	12 (66.67)	02 (11.11)	04 (22.22)	18 (100.00)	27 (67.50)	04 (10.00)	09 (22.50)	40 (100.00)
Mangchaura	08 (32.00)	-	17 (68.00)	25 (100.00)	-	-	15 (100.00)	15 (100.00)	08 (20.00)	-	32 (80.00)	40 (100.00)
Chapad	16 (84.21)	-	03 (15.79)	19 (100.00)	12 (57.14)	-	09 (42.86)	21 (100.00)	28 (70.00)	-	12 (30.00)	40 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	21 (100.00)	-	-	21 (100.00)	19 (100.00)	-	-	19 (100.00)	40 (100.00)	-	-	40 (100.00)
Khansyu	15 (78.95)	03 (15.79)	01 (5.26)	19 (100.00)	17 (80.95)	04 (19.05)	-	21 (100.00)	32 (80.00)	07 (17.50)	01 (2.50)	40 (100.00)
Mahtoli	20 (71.43)	-	08 (28.57)	28 (100.00)	06 (50.00)	-	06 (50.00)	12 (100.00)	26 (65.00)	-	14 (35.00)	40 (100.00)
All Villages	120 (68.97)	10 (5.75)	44 (25.29)	174 (100.00)	81 (55.48)	14 (9.59)	51 (34.93)	146 (100.00)	201 (62.81)	24 (7.50)	95 (29.69)	320 (100.00)

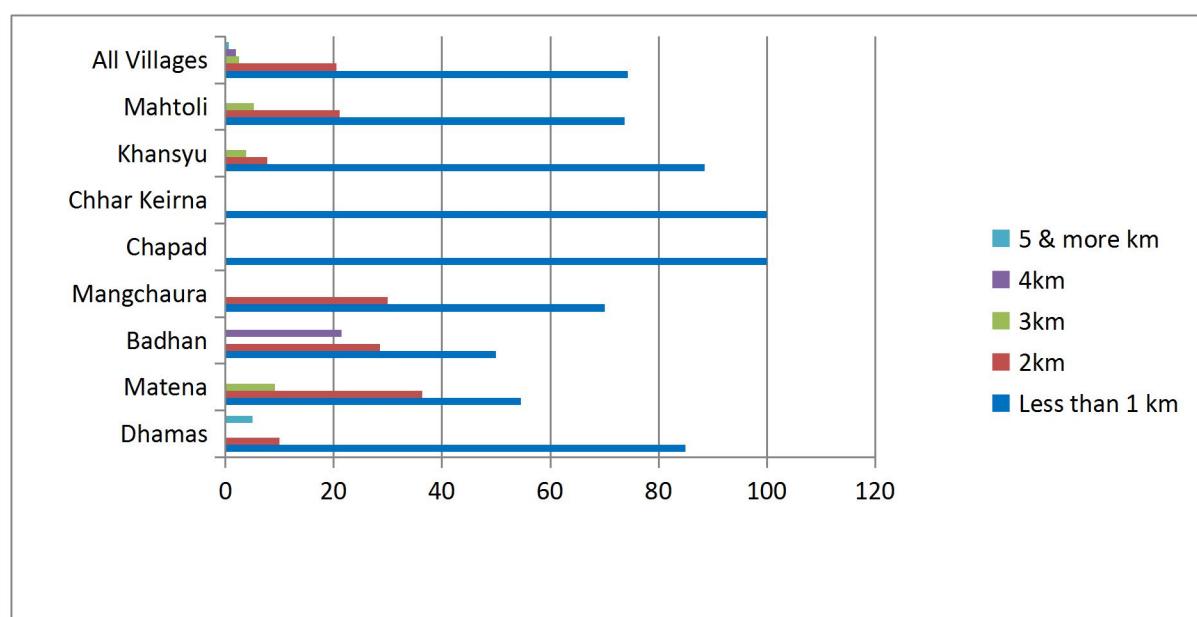
Note-Percentage are shown in parentheses

Caste wise variations in this regard have also been found. Data presented in Table 60 indicate that women of SC households had to spend much time in water fetching activity as only 55.48 percent households of SC category have facility of tap water in their houses while in general caste category 68.97 percent households were availing the facility of tap water in their own houses.

Table 61 Distance covered for fetching drinking water

Name of Village	Distance					Total no. of households
	Less than 1 km	2km	3km	4km	5 & more km	
Dhamas	17 (85.00)	02 (10.00)	-	-	01 (5.00)	20 (100.00)
Matena	12 (54.55)	08 (36.36)	02 (9.09)	-	-	22 (100.00)
Badhan	07 (50.00)	04 (28.57)	-	03 (21.43)	-	14 (100.00)
Mangchaura	28 (70.00)	12 (30.00)	-	-	-	40 (100.00)
Chapad	12 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	12 (100.00)
Chhar Keirna	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	03 (100.00)
Khansyu	23 (88.46)	2 (7.69)	01 (3.85)	-	-	26 (100.00)
Mahtoli	14 (73.68)	04 (21.05)	01 (5.26)	-	-	19 (100.00)
All Villages	116 (74.36)	32 (20.51)	04 (2.56)	03 (1.92)	01 (0.64)	156 (100.00)

Note-Percentage are shown in parentheses



Information about the distance covered for fetching drinking water in the sample households' revealed variation. Data shown in Table 61 indicate that around 74 percent sample households' family members have to cover less than one km. for fetching drinking water. Family members of 20.57 percent households have to cover about 2 km. for fetching drinking water and those who have to cover 3 km constituted about 2.56 percent. The family members of 2.56 percent households have to cover 4 or 5 km and more than 5 km. for this activity.

Table 62 Distance covered for fetching drinking water (caste wise distribution)

Name of Village	Caste category and distance											Total no. of respondents	
	General Category						Scheduled caste category						
	Less than 1 km	2 km	3 km	4 km	5 & more than 5 km	Total	Less than 1 km	2 km	3 km	4 km	5 & more than 5 km	Total	
Dhamas	07 (77.78)	02 (22.22)	-	-	-	09 (100.00)	10 (90.91)	-	-	-	01 (9.09)	11 (100.00)	20
Matena	02 (33.33)	03 (50.00)	01 (16.67)	-	-	06 (100.00)	10 (62.50)	05 (31.25)	01 (6.25)	-	-	16 (100.00)	22
Badhan	02 (25.00)	03 (37.50)	-	03 (37.50)	-	08 (100.00)	05 (83.33)	01 (16.67)	-	-	-	06 (100.00)	14
Mangchaura	24 (96.00)	01 (4.00)	-	-	-	25 (100.00)	04 (26.67)	11 (73.33)	-	-	-	15 (100.00)	40
Chapad	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	03 (100.00)	09 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	09 (100.00)	12
Chhar Keirna	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	-	-	03
Khansyu	04 (66.67)	01 (16.67)	01 (16.67)	-	-	06 (100.00)	17 (85.00)	01 (5.00)	02 (10.00)	-	-	20 (100.00)	26
Mahtoli	11 (84.62)	01 (7.69)	01 (7.69)	-	-	13 (100.00)	03 (50.00)	03 (50.00)	-	-	-	06 (100.00)	19
All Villages	56 (76.71)	11 (15.07)	03 (4.11)	03 (4.11)	-	73 (100.00)	58 (69.88)	21 (25.30)	03 (3.61)	-	01 (1.20)	83 (100.00)	156

Note-Percentage are shown in parentheses

Table 63 Distance covered for fetching drinking water (Age wise distribution)

Name of Village		Age group (years) and distance															Total no. of respondent		
		20-35					35-50					50 & above							
	Less than 1 km	2 km	3 km	4 km	5 & more than 5 km	Total	Less than 1 km	2 km	3 km	4 km	5 & more than 5 km	Total	Less than 1 km	2 km	3 km	4 km	5 & more than 5 km	Total	
Dhamas	08 (80.00)	01 (10.00)	-	-	01 (10.00)	10 (100.00)	05 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	05 (100.00)	04 (80.00)	01 (20.00)	-	-	-	05 (100.00)	20
Matena	03 (37.50)	03 (37.50)	02 (25.00)	-	-	08 (100.00)	08 (72.73)	03 (27.27)	-	-	-	11 (100.00)	01 (33.33)	02 (66.67)	-	-	-	03 (100.00)	22
Badhan	02 (40.00)	02 (40.00)	-	01 (20.00)	-	05 (100.00)	03 (60.00)	02 (40.00)	-	-	-	05 (100.00)	02 (50.00)	-	-	02 (50.00)	-	04 (100.00)	14
Mangchaura	14 (87.50)	02 (12.50)	-	-	-	16 (100.00)	09 (69.23)	04 (30.77)	-	-	-	13 (100.00)	05 (45.45)	06 (54.55)	-	-	-	11 (100.00)	40
Chapad	06 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	06 (100.00)	05 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	05 (100.00)	01 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	01 (100.00)	12
Chhar Keirna	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	03 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	03	
Khansyu	05 (71.43)	-	02 (28.57)	-	-	07 (100.00)	12 (85.71)	01 (7.14)	01 (7.14)	-	-	14 (100.00)	04 (80.00)	01 (20.00)	-	-	-	05 (100.00)	26
Mahtoli	06 (54.55)	04 (36.36)	01 (9.09)	-	-	11 (100.00)	06 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	06 (100.00)	02 (100.00)	-	-	-	-	02 (100.00)	19
All Villages	47 (71.21)	12 (18.18)	05 (7.58)	01 (1.52)	01 (1.52)	66 (100.00)	48 (81.36)	10 (16.95)	01 (1.69)	-	-	59 (100.00)	19 (61.29)	10 (32.26)	-	02 (6.45)	-	31 (100.00)	156

Note-Percentage are shown in parentheses

Caste and age wise data distribution in relation to water fetching activity have been presented in Table 62 and 63. Data reveal that the family members of SC category had to devote more time in this activity. Around 30 percent respondents of SC category reported that their family members have to cover 2 to 5 and more than 5 km for fetching drinking water while this percentage among general caste category respondents was relatively low (23.29%). Drinking water facility is available for 76.21 percent households of general caste within the range of 1 km whereas this percentage among SC households was found 69.88 percent.

Age wise data categorization indicates that the family members of respondents of 30to50 age group had to cover minimum distance in water fetching activity. 81.36 percent of them have to cover less than 1 km and rest 18.64 percent have to cover 2 to 3 km. It was highest among the age group of 50 and above. 38.71 percent of them have to cover 2 to 4 km. for water fetching activity and 61.29 percent of them have to cover less than 1 km. In lowest age group (20 to 35) 71.21 percent have to cover less than 1 km, 27.28 percent have to travel 2 to 4 km. to fetch drinking water and 1.52 percent had to cover even more than 5 km. for this activity.

During the survey, maximum respondents reported that at present fetching of drinking water takes less time as compared to past because villages have been provided water through pipes. The tape water is available in different sample villages either in houses or on community basis. The above analysis indicates that the availability of tap water reduces the work burden of rural women and decreases the drudgery of rural womenfolk.

It can be stated in brief that weather it is the collection of fodder or fuel wood or the fetching of water, the direct burden falls on the womenfolk in this region as these activities are mostly performed by the women. The relationship of forest and women is very close in the rural hilly region of the state.

Summary: Conclusion and Suggestion

The present study is based on an intensive field survey of 320 woman respondent selected from eight villages, four from district Almora and four villages in district Nainital of Kumaun division of Uttarakhand.

The socio-Economic profile of the study area is based on secondary data from the published sources of the state Government and Census of India 2011. The study area comprises an area of 7395 sq. km. and inhabits a population of 15,77,111. Thus the density works out to 198 persons per sq. km. in district Almora and 225 persons per sq. km. in district Nainital in comparison to 189 in the state as a whole. The sex ratio in Almora and Nainital is 1139 and 934 females per 1000 males as against state's average of 963. The SC and ST population of the study area is 24.47Percent in district Almora and 20.82 Percent in district Nainital as compared to 21 percent in the state.

The literary rate in both the district is comparatively higher than the average of the state. But there exists a gender gap in literary rate and the rate of literary among male in both the districts is relatively high. The percentage of main workers in the population is higher in this region as compared to the state average. It is 32.30 percent in Almora, 31.05 percent in district Nainital and 28.46 percent in the state. The important feature of the hill districts is the presence of a substantial high proportion of female workers in the work force, but it reflects the hard economic life of the womenfolk of this region. In the total main workers, cultivator constitutes 69.62 percent in district Almora and 36.56 percent in district Nainital as against 40.81 percent in the state. In both districts the proportion of female cultivators is much higher as compared to male cultivators. The agriculture in the hill region is largely a women's job. The household industries are not developed in these districts. About 1.45 percent of the main workers in district Almora and 2.60 percent in district Nainital are engaged in household industries which are lower figure than the state's average.

As mentioned earlier a total of 320 sample households from eight villages were chosen for the study from representative districts of Almora and Nainital. From each sample household one woman was selected for detailed survey. The basic features of the respondents and their households indicate that the families of 320 women respondents had a population of 1763 with an average size of the family of 5.5 members. The sex ratio was found to be 1033 females per thousand of males. The workforce (age group 20 to 50 years) constituted 62.91%

in the total population. Data reveal that 15.77 percent of total population was illiterate and the percentage of illiterate female population was found much higher (22.88%) in comparison to male population. It is evident that the educational level of female population was comparative low.

In the selected sample, a proper representation was given to the households of both GC and SC categories. 54.38 percent households belong to GC category whereas 45.62 percent were from SC category. Maximum of sample households were from low economic category and 63.13 percent among them belong to BPL category. Among total households 80 percent were nuclear in nature. It is evident that in rural areas also the joint family system is gradually decreasing.

As regards the housing structure, 48.44 percent were 'pucca' houses and remaining were either 'kachha' or 'mixed'. But the accommodation was found to be insufficient for family members. Thus 2.67 rooms were shared by 5.5 members in a family. But it was encouraging to find out that around 97 percent households were enjoying the facility of electricity, 84.34 percent had separate latrine and 75.63 percent had the facility of bathroom in their houses. It was found that 55.94 percent households had the facility of separate kitchen. Drinking water was available to 57.81 percent households in their houses.

Data pertaining to livestock pattern indicate that the average number of livestock per household was 2.49 in aggregate with differentials in the sample villages. In the rural hill region of Uttarakhand the burden of work related to animal husbandry is generally on the shoulders of female members of family.

Out migration of rural population has been increasing at an alarming rate over the past few years in the state of Uttarakhand. Migration of male members adds to the problem of women drudgery in the hill region. Data regarding migration indicate that among the migrant persons in study area 72.90 percent were male, but the rate of out migration is not much higher in the sample villages. Better opportunities of employment and education for male population and marriage for female population were found the main causes of out migration in this region.

Decision making capacity is an important indicator of empowerment. Rural women of Uttarakhand share abundant responsibility and perform a wide spectrum of duties, but they have little role in decision making in different matters of their private and public life. In this

study rural women's decision making capacity is judged in relation to their domestic, economic and political activities. Domestic activities were distributed in nine categories. Our investigation revealed that rural women play more or less a significant role in decision making in domestic activities and around 60% women respondents' participation level was either high or medium in domestic matters. Among different domestic activities, women's participation level was found comparatively high in relation to children's education and their vaccination. Women's least participation was seen in the activities like 'new house construction' and 'renovation of old house'. But in other domestic activities they were playing significant role and related decision were being taken with their consent.

Women's participation level in economic matters was judged in relation to eight activities. The present study indicates that rural women's participation level is much less in money related matters. It was found that 67.85% women respondents never participated in the decision making process in economic activities. The data make it evident that elder women in the family had more decision taking power in rural societies. In fact, the rural women, either they belong to any age category, caste group or educational level, were not involved in economic decision making processes. A sharp gender bias had been seen in taking economic decisions and maximum of economic issues were decided by the male members of the family.

The issue of women's decision making power was also probed by the extent of their freedom of movement. It was found in the study that women had greater freedom to go to the hospital and social- religious function and had least freedom to visit their parent's home. Result indicates that the degree of freedom of movement also depends upon the age of women and their position in the family. Restriction on movement was greater for young women in comparison to the elderly women. Caste wise comparative result reveals that freedom of movement is much higher for the women of SC Category as compared to the women of general caste category. It was noticed that rural women's freedom of movement was not influenced by their educational background at all. The proportion of respondents who had to take permission for their movements was highest (39.40%) among highly qualified women in comparison to illiterate respondents (37.96%). It can be concluded that rural women enjoy limited autonomy in deciding about their movement outside home.

Gender equality in political participation is a fundamental aspect of modern democratic governance. Both men and women should have equal rights and opportunities to

participate at all level of political process. In this study rural women's political participation was evaluated in relation to six political activities, but their least participation had been seen in different political activities. Maximum (72.19%) of them never participated in political activities. Their awareness was only seen in voting behavior and in all other political activities, their participation level was too less. They had no communication with their elected representatives. No significant variation had been found among the women of different age group and caste categories, but a partial influence of education had been seen in this regard and political awareness was highest among the highly qualified respondents. It was found in the study that rural women were much aware about local level election (Panchayat) as compared to state and national level. Regarding voting rights, highest awareness was seen among the women of 35 to 50 age group and voting pattern was almost same among the respondents of both caste categories, but the percentage of voting was relatively high among the respondents of GC category.

As we know, the 73rd amendment of Indian constitution provides provision of reservation for women in panchayats. The study indicates that this policy was favored by rural women and women of 35 to 50 age group and general caste category were found more aware about this provision. As the results of this study revealed, the awareness level of rural woman is gradually increasing and it can be assumed that in future they will be in a position to take their own decisions.

In the rural hilly regions of Uttarakhand, women equally share the outdoor activities with their men folk and they have to perform the entire domestic activities also. The drudgery of hill women is enormous as they work for about 14-16 hours per day in outdoor and indoor activities. The result of present study indicates that rural hill women have to devote around 16 hours per day in different activities. The outdoor activities are being seen more time consuming and about 7.74 hours of their total daily routine work of 15.91 hours is absorbed in these activities. In outdoor activities, women have to devote maximum of their time in agriculture related work as well as in fuel wood and fodder collection. It was observed in the study that women of young age group (20-35 years) have to devote maximum hours per day in different activities, but with increasing age-group women have to devote less time in these activities. Regarding all the outdoor activities it was noticed that women of GC category devote much time in comparison to the women of SC Category. Both indoor and outdoor activities take 88.58 percent time of rural women in this region. The burden of maximum of

outdoor and indoor activities had always been on women's shoulders in rural areas and this is the main cause of drudgery among rural women in this hill region.

The maximum burden of outdoor activities was seen on the shoulders of women of 35 to 50 age group and in the case of indoor activities women of upper most age group (50 & above) devote their maximum time. As mentioned earlier in all outdoor activities women of GC category have to spend maximum time but in indoor activities women of SC category spent more time as compared to G.C category.

Due to lack of infrastructural facilities and availability of spare time, rural women have very low time to devote in leisurely and recreational activities. Entertainment is a low key affair for them. In fact their leisurely activities are mainly confined to watching TV and participating in religious activities.

In fact, the drudgery of womenfolk of this region is self evident as they have to take the maximum responsibilities of indoor as well as outdoor activities. Transformation of families from joint to nuclear is also an important cause of their drudgery because in traditional joint families all the responsibilities were performed in sharing mode by the adult women of families, but in nuclear families the work load of woman is seen to be increasing.

It is found in the study that in spite of the availability of L.P.G; fuel wood is the main source to fulfill their fuel requirement. It is not only a basic source of energy but is being used for space heating purpose. The process of fuel wood collection is also an important cause of drudgery of rural hill women which requires a considerable time and physical labour also.

Apart from fuel wood collection women of this region have to devote their time in fodder collection and water fetching. Fetching of drinking water now takes less time because villages have been provided water through pipes. But all these activities consume not only a significant portion of their time but also exploit their physical energy. The pattern of their work revealed a high participation rate of rural women in all the activities, i.e. household and non-household. Though their work participation level is high in different activities, but their role in decision making regarding domestic, economic, political spheres and freedom of movement is rather low as compared to their male counterparts. Lower participation in decision making process and high rate of drudgery show a discriminatory status of rural women of this region.

Some major conclusions of the present study are as follows-

1. The literacy rate of the women respondents was below the average of the state as well as both the sample districts. Women respondents between 20 to 35 age groups were the major group in the total sample and the representation of other age categories was decreasing according to their increasing age.
2. As per socio-economic profile of respondents, it was found that more than $\frac{3}{4}$ th percent of them were married. Proper representation was given to both caste categories i.e. general caste and scheduled caste. Economic status of respondents was found low and maximum of them constitute BPL category. It was also noticed that attraction towards nuclear families is continuously increasing in rural areas.
3. It was encouraging to notice in the study that various facilities like electricity, separate latrine, bathroom, kitchen, facility of drinking water etc. are available in this rural area.
4. Out migration of male members of family adds to the problem of women drudgery, but the rate of migration was not found much higher in the sample villages.
5. Regarding the decision making power of rural women, this investigation revealed that women of this area play more or less a significant role in domestic activities and related decisions are being taken with this consent. But their participation level is much lower in different money related matters. Maximum of them never participated in economic decision-making process. A sharp gender bias has been seen in taking economic decisions and almost in every economic activity, male members of the family are playing major roles.
6. In analyzing the extent of freedom of movement it was noticed that rural women of this region enjoy limited autonomy in deciding about their movements outside home. However the degree of freedom for elder women is relatively high and restrictions on movements are being seen greater for the women of young generation. In the same manner women of SC category enjoy a little bit more autonomy on their movements.
7. The political activities of rural women get influenced by the burden of their outdoor activities, household duties and the socio-cultural values based on patriarchy. Though their least participation had been seen in different political activities but they are aware about their voting right and their participation in voting was found relatively high as compared to other political activities.

8. Rural women of this region have to participate in almost all the agricultural and other outdoor activities. They have to undergo a very hard life due to geo-physical condition of this region. This study highlights that rural women have to perform various such activities which need much physical labour. Their outdoor activities are highly time-consuming and the entire household work also have to be performed by women folk only. Hence the drudgery of women folk is self evident as they have to take the maximum responsibility of indoor as well as outdoor activities. Transformation of families from joint to nuclear is also seen as an important cause of their drudgery. Entertainment is a low key affair in the rural households. Leisurely activities of rural women are mainly confined to watching TV and participating in religious activities.
9. It is evident in the study that elder women in the family have more decision making power in rural societies and their work burden in different activities decreases with the increasing age groups.

Suggestions

The process of development has no meaning, unless women are fully integrated in this process. However, women are not being fully considered as a potential human resource and have been marginalized in term of benefits from the development programmes. The status and awareness of women can play a significant role in the social transformation. The awareness of women is determined by their education and education of women is governed by economic, social, political and cultural factors. Moreover it is the government which can influence all the factors responsible for women's education, status and awareness. On the basis of present study, following suggestion can be given to improve women's decision making capacity, awareness level and to reduce their drudgery.

1. The workload of rural hill women in the agriculture could be reduced to a great extent by changing the cropping pattern and crop diversification. Villagers should be motivated to produce cash crop and other value added items through horticulture, floriculture, sericulture, mushroom growing etc.
2. Use of modern technologies to the areas of agriculture and other related activities as well as household activities can reduce women's hard physical labour and save their time. They can spend their quality time in other creative activities.

3. The quality of cattle needs to be improved which requires better technical support from the veterinary specialists. Cattle can be a source of additional income generation for rural women. To reduce women's drudgery, new varieties of fodder crops suited to this region also needed urgent attention.
4. Agro-based industries, packaging and processing units could easily be developed at the grass root level by imparting adequate vocational and technical skill to women folk. The involvement of women folk in such agro-based units would serve the dual purpose of improving their productivity and skill and also generating spirit of entrepreneurship among them.
5. Economic independence would help in improving the status of rural women. Women should be given vocational training in various fields, like tailoring, vegetable growing, fruit preservation, embroidery, knitting etc. to make them economically self depend . The major emphasis should be given on vocational training related to secondary sector rather than primary sector. The women's organizations might be encouraged to take up economic programmes for providing employment in rural areas. Some skill based and vocational training is also highly desirable as it will raise overall income and employment avenues for rural womenfolk.
6. Sincere efforts should be done to improve the educational level and awareness of rural women. It can not only alleviate them from their inferior social status and ignorance but can enhance their decision making power and level of awareness and makes them more receptive to technological changes which can reduce their drudgery. Active action should be taken by concerned government department to narrow down the educational gap among women. Vocational training package can be developed for rural women with the help N.G.Os.
7. The development of some other sources of non-conventional energy should be encouraged. Improved cooking stoves (smokeless chulhas) and solar cooker should be provided to rural women, which will not only reduce fuel wood requirement but will also reduce their cooking time. The installation of biogas plants needs to be encouraged where they are feasible and viable.
8. It is evident in the study that outdoor and indoor activities of women absorbed more than... hours out of a daily routine working schedule of hours. It itself explains the extent of imbalance in the work-leisure ratio. This unfavorable work –leisure ratio acts as a serious hindrance to the development of women's personality and degrades her domestic and outdoor status. In this regard, it is necessary to improve the primary

sector structure activities which can reduce the high incidence of work in the fields and the time and distance problem of procuring the required infrastructure necessary for running the kitchen and the household.

Finally, on the basis of this study, it may be pointed out that the state government could introduce such schemes through which rural women may be provided an ideal opportunity to enhance their social status, improve their awareness and outlook towards life, to improve their overall personality and their financial condition. Such programmes undertaken by government agencies would not only improve rural women's decision making capacity, but also reduce their drudgery.

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Women Participation in Decision Making and Women Drudgery in High Hilly Districts of Uttarakhand

A Survey Conducted by
Kumaun University, Nainital
Year- 2016

Sponsored by Directorate of Economics & Statistics Govt. of Uttarakhand

1. General Profile

Distt.	Block	Village	Gram-Panchayat	Respondent's Name	Father/Husband' Name
Education	Marital Status	Age-Group	Caste Category	Economic Category	Type of Family
		14-20 20-35 35-50 Above 50	S T S C O B C General	B P L A P L	Joint Nuclear Extended

Phone /Contact No of Respondent

2. Structure of Dwelling & Amenities

House	No of Rooms	Separate Kitchen	Toilet	Bathroom	Electricity	No of Live-Stocks
Pucca		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Kutcha		No	No	No	No	
Mixed						

3. Demographic profile of Family members

S. No.	Name	Sex	Age	Relation with Respondent	Education	Marital Status

4- **A-** Are the family members migrated

a- Male member Yes/No

b- Female member Yes/No

B- If yes, destination of migration-

Within district/other district/ other state/ Abroad

C- Cause of migration -----

D- Are you getting some remittance from migrants?

Always/Sometimes/Never

Participation of women in Decision Making

4. Decision making in domestic activities-

S. No.	Type of Activities	Level of Participation			
		High	Medium	Low	No
1	Purchase of food items				
2	Buying domestic goods				
3	Purchase of cloths				
4	Education of children				
5	Home Decoration				
6	New house construction				
7	Renovation of old house				
8	Vaccination of children				
9	Marriage & Other rituals				

5. Decision making regarding money matters

S. No.	Type of Activities	Level of Participation			
		High	Medium	Low	No
1	Expenditure on different items				
2	Taking debt for domestic needs				
3	Saving and investment				
4	Purchase and sale of animals				
5	Purchase and sale of land				
6	To give house on rent				
7	Sale of agriculture output				
8	Purchase and sale of gold/ornaments				

6. Freedom of women to go outside home-

S. No.	Type of Freedom	Response		
		Have to take permission	Have to inform only	Can go out as they wish
1	Go to hospital/doctor			
2	Go to social/religious functions			
3	Go to market			
4	Go to visiting her family and relatives			
5	Go outside village for work			
6	Go to temple			

7. Decision Making Regarding Political Participation

S. No.	Type of Activities	Level of Participation			
		High	Medium	Low	No
1	Participation in voting in elections				
2	Membership of political parties or other political organization				
3	Participation in election propaganda				
4	Participation in the meetings of political parties or election rallies				
5	Participation in political discussion				
6	Communication with elected representatives				

8. Voting in last election

- a. At panchayat level YES/NO
- b. At state level YES/NO
- c. At national level YES/NO

9. Necessity of reservation for women at grass root level political institutions- Yes/No/Can't Say

Drudgery of work of hill women

10-How much time you spend in the following activities-

(A) Outdoor activities

S. No.	Activity	Time spend
1	Agriculture	
2	Animal husbandry	
3	Water fetching	
4	Fodder collection	
5	Fuel wood collection	

(B) Indoor activities

S. No.	Activity	Time spend
1	Cooking	
2	Washing clothes	
3	House cleaning	
4	Grinding & husking	
5	Care of children/aged	

(C) Leisurely / recreational/Creative activities

S. No.	Activity	Time spend
1	Craft work	
2	Reading & writing	
3	Watching TV	
4	Social work	
5	Religious activities	
6	Computer/Social Media	

11. Availability of LPG YES/NO

12. Main source of Fuel LPG/Fuel wood/Any other

13. Fuel wood collection and its burden

- A. Who, among following collects fuel wood in your family-
Male adult/female adult/both /male child/female child
- B. How much distance has to be covered for the collection of fuel wood-
Less than 1 km./2-3km./ 4-6 km./6-7 km./more than 8 km.
- C. Time taken in collection of fuel wood as compared to five years back-
Same time/ more time/ less time
- D. Reason for more time-
Deforestation/Restriction from forest department/ family size increased/ any other
- E. Reason for less time-
Reduction in fuel wood consumption/ division of family/Any other

14. Fodder Collection and Its Burdon

- a. Distance covered by women in fodder collection-
Less than 1 km./2-3km./ 4-6 km./6-7 km./more than 8 km.
- b. Time taken in fodder collection as compared to five years back-
Same time/ more time/ less time
- c. Reason for more time-
Not easily available/ cattle increased/ family member decreased/ any other
- d. Reason for less time-
Cattle decreased/ family member increased/ any other

15. Water fetching activity

- A. Water is generally fetched by male adult/ female adult/ both/ male child/ female child/ both
- B. Source of drinking water
Tap/Spring
- C. Distance to cover for fetching drinking water
Less than 1 km./2km./3 km./4km./ more than 5 km.

16. Other Suggestion and Comments

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