

# Participation of Indigenous Peoples in Mass Media

## A Case Study of FM Radios in Kavrepalanchowk, Nepal



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Thesis Submitted for the Degree of  
Master of Philosophy in Indigenous Studies  
Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education  
University of Tromsø  
Norway  
Spring 2013





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Supervised by

Professor Gunnar Thorvaldsen

**DEDICATED TO ALL THE VOICELESS PEOPLE**

Bolne ko Pitho Bikchha

... बोल्नेको पीठो बिकछ ...

*“Voices are heard if spoken”*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge myself privileged for an opportunity to be a student of Master of Philosophy in Indigenous Studies at University of Tromsø (UiT). My special thanks goes to the Sami Centre for founding such a program to sharing knowledge of indigenous peoples, indigenusness and indigeneity amongst international students.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Professor Gunnar Thorvaldsen for his incredible supervision, guidance and encouragement during the preparation of this thesis. His continuous supervision, creative advices, comments and recommendations have been instrumental in formulation of this thesis, without which the thesis would not have been in the present form. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to prof. Dr. Bjørg Evjen, Academic Coordinator of Indigenous Studies for her due stimulation. I am gratified to Scott Meyer for the proofreading; and I must thank Rachel Issa Djesa for the support in this regards. I am grateful to Dr. Christine Smith-Simonsen and Associate Professor Torjer Andreas Olsen for their valued lectures to flourish methodological and practical prospects of the study.

I would like to express my due appreciation to the journalists, administrators and officials of the radio stations of Kavrepalanchowk, Nepal for their valuable co-operation during the fieldwork and data collection. I express my heartily thanks to all informants who provided me the required information for this study. My warm thanks goes to all my colleagues for their suggestion, support and inspiration. I want to express my heartiest appreciation to my better half Niruta Sapkota for her continuous support throughout my study and suitable home environment. Finally, I want to thank my parents, relatives and all the well-wishers for their motivation and moral support.

Sapkota, Prakash

Tromsø, Norway

April 2013

## ABSTRACT

This thesis entitled “Participation of Indigenous Peoples in Mass Media” is a case study of indigenous peoples’ participation in FM radios in Kavrepalanchowk district of Nepal. The study intends to highlight the participatory pattern and impact of indigenous peoples in FM radios, the most popular modern means of mass media.

The research is based on the fieldwork carried out in Kavrepalanchowk district of Nepal attempting to assess the access of indigenous peoples in mass media and to compare indigenous and non- indigenous participation in FM radios in mid-hill region of Nepal. The research further tends to highlight the career status and opportunity for indigenous peoples in media sector. This study has been conducted with certain methodological process. Data collected from the fieldwork by using survey, interview, observation and discussion methods have been presented and analyzed accordingly to sum up with the findings.

Mass media can play a crucial role for indigenous peoples to keep them within their own cultural identity. Media can be a source of information and knowledge of indigenes for indigenous peoples from generation to generation. It is possible only if representatives from indigenous communities are emphasized to participate in media. Secondly, the media professionals from indigenous communities should not be influenced by majority mechanisms. Hence, indigenous participation and their executive power in media are vital for empowerment.

There is a universal quotation- ‘voices are heard when they are spoken’. Indigenous peoples should speak themselves to make their voices to hear. Basically, community FM radios have common purpose of inclusive participation to bring the ‘voice of the voiceless’ on air. So, my research has focused on evaluating the implementation of cited goals of those community FM radios in a district (Kavrepalanchowk) of Nepal.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |   |               |
|--|---|---------------|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT                        | -----   | V             |
| ABSTRACT                               | -----   | VI            |
| ABBREVIATIONS                          | -----   | X             |
| <b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>         | <b>-----</b>  | <b>1- 20</b>  |
| 1.1                                    | Theme and General Context -----                                     | 1             |
| 1.2                                    | Background of Study -----   | 5             |
| 1.3                                    | Conceptual Framework of Study -----                                 | 7             |
| 1.3.1                                  | Indigeneity and Indigenous Peoples of Nepal -----                   | 7             |
| 1.3.2                                  | Concept of Participation -----                                      | 8             |
| 1.3.3                                  | Concept and History of Ethnic Media in Nepal -----                  | 9             |
| 1.4                                    | Indigenous Peoples in Nepalese Media -----                          | 11            |
| 1.5                                    | Area of Study -----   | 15            |
| 1.6                                    | Key Concepts -----  | 17            |
| 1.7                                    | Objectives -----  | 18            |
| 1.8                                    | Limitations -----   | 18            |
| 1.9                                    | Methodology -----   | 19            |
| 1.9.1                                  | Planned Methods -----   | 19            |
| 1.9.2                                  | Source of Data -----  | 19            |
| 1.9.3                                  | Role as Researcher -----  | 20            |
| 1.10                                   | Organization of Thesis -----  | 20            |
| <b>CHPATER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE</b> | <b>-----</b>  | <b>21- 32</b> |
| 2.1                                    | Literature on Ethnic Population and Indigenous Media -----          | 21            |
| 2.2                                    | Review of Related Literature -----                                  | 24            |
| 2.3                                    | Indigenous Media Empowering Indigenous Voices Internationally ----- | 25            |
| 2.4                                    | Some International Circumstances -----                              | 27            |
| 2.5                                    | Cultural Imperialism and Technological Determinism -----            | 31            |
| <b>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b> | <b>-----</b>  | <b>33- 42</b> |
| 3.1                                    | Research Design -----   | 33            |
| 3.2                                    | Selection of the Study Area -----                                   | 34            |
| 3.3                                    | Sources of Data -----   | 35            |
| 3.3.1                                  | Primary Data Collection -----                                       | 35            |
| 3.3.2                                  | Secondary Data Collection -----                                     | 36            |
| 3.3.3                                  | Sample Size -----   | 36            |
| 3.4                                    | Tools and Techniques of Data Collection -----                       | 37            |
| 3.4.1                                  | Survey -----  | 37            |
| 3.4.2                                  | Interview -----   | 38            |

|       |  |    |
|-------|--|----|
| 3.4.3 | Observation                                | 39 |
| 3.4.4 | Focus Group Discussion                     | 39 |
| 3.4.5 | Selection of Key Information               | 40 |
| 3.4.6 | Field Diary                                | 40 |
| 3.5   | Obstacles and Challenges                   | 41 |
| 3.6   | Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analysis | 41 |

#### **CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS ----- 43- 73**

|       |  |    |
|-------|--|----|
| 4.1   | Demography of Kavre                              | 43 |
| 4.2   | Media in Kavre                                   | 44 |
| 4.3   | Access of Indigenous Peoples to Infrastructure   | 45 |
| 4.4   | Participation of Indigenous Peoples in Media     | 46 |
| 4.5   | Overview of FM Radios in Kavre District          | 48 |
| 4.5.1 | Radio Namobuddha                                 | 49 |
| 4.5.2 | Radio ABC  | 49 |
| 4.5.3 | Prime FM   | 50 |
| 4.5.4 | Grace FM   | 50 |
| 4.5.5 | Radio Janasanchar                                | 51 |
| 4.5.6 | Radio Madhyapurwa                                | 51 |
| 4.5.7 | Radio Masti                                      | 52 |
| 4.5.8 | Radio Shepherd                                   | 52 |
| 4.6   | Analysis of Primary Data                         | 55 |
| 4.6.1 | Indigenous Journalists in FNJ- Kavre             | 56 |
| 4.6.2 | Indigenous Media-Persons in FM Radios of Kavre   | 59 |
| 4.6.3 | Indigenous Programs in FM Radios of Kavre        | 63 |
| 4.6.4 | Indigenous Participation and Indigenous Programs | 66 |
| 4.7   | Qualitative Analysis                             | 67 |

#### **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION--- 75- 80**

|     |                 |    |
|-----|-----------------|----|
| 5.1 | Summary         | 75 |
| 5.2 | Conclusion      | 76 |
| 5.3 | Recommendations | 79 |

|            |        |
|------------|--------|
| REFERENCES | 81- 84 |
|------------|--------|

|            |        |
|------------|--------|
| APPENDICES | 85- 88 |
|------------|--------|



## **LIST OF TABLES**

|      |  |       |    |
|------|--|-------|----|
| 1.1  | Households using Different Facilities/Services               | ----- | 17 |
| 4.1  | Media in Kavre   | ----- | 46 |
| 4.2  | Indigenous Journalists in Some Kathmandu Based Radios        | ----- | 47 |
| 4.3  | Websites of FM Radios  | ----- | 54 |
| 4.4  | Selected FM Radios for Study                                 | ----- | 55 |
| 4.5  | Executive Members of FNJ, Kavre                              | ----- | 56 |
| 4.6  | General Members of FNJ, Kavre                                | ----- | 57 |
| 4.7  | Classification of Indigenous Journalists by Ethnicity        | ----- | 58 |
| 4.8  | Indigenous Participation in Managerial Positions of FM Radio | ----- | 59 |
| 4.9  | Indigenous Peoples as Chief Technicians of Radio             | ----- | 60 |
| 4.10 | Indigenous Staff in FM Radio                                 | ----- | 61 |
| 4.11 | Participation in Radio from Different Indigenous Groups      | ----- | 62 |
| 4.12 | Radio Programs for Indigenous Peoples                        | ----- | 63 |
| 4.13 | Types of Indigenous Programs in Different Radios             | ----- | 65 |
| 4.14 | Comparison of Indigenous Participation and Radio Programs    | ----- | 66 |
|      | APPENDIX 1: Categories of Indigenous Nationalities of Nepal  | ----- | 85 |
|      | APPENDIX 2: Indigenous Participation and Position in Radio   | ----- | 86 |

## **DIAGRAMS**

|          |  |       |    |
|----------|--|-------|----|
| FIG I:   | Indigenous and Non-indigenous Radio Professionals in Radio Nepal | ---   | 48 |
| FIG II:  | Executive Committee and General Members of FNJ, Kavre            | ----- | 57 |
| FIG III: | Classification of Journalists by Ethnicity                       | ----- | 58 |
| FIG IV:  | Comparison of Indigenous Population and Participation in Radio   | ----- | 63 |
| FIG V:   | Programs of Various Indigenous Groups                            | ----- | 64 |
| FIG VI:  | Comparison of Indigenous Participation and Radio Programs        | ----- | 67 |

## **MAPS**

|             |  |       |    |
|-------------|--|-------|----|
| Map Showing | Area of Study                          | ----- | 16 |
| Map Showing | FM Radios of Kavre                     | ----- | 53 |
| APPENDIX 3: | Locations of FM Radio Stations, Kavre  | ----- | 87 |
|             | Area of Coverage by FM Radios of Kavre | ----- | 87 |

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| ABC    | Araniko Broadcasting Corporation                                 |
| AM     | Amplitude Modification   |
| ANIJ   | Association of Nepalese Indigenous Journalists                   |
| BBC    | British Broadcasting Corporation                                 |
| BS     | Bikram Samwat  |
| BP     | Bishweswar Prasad (Name of Highway)                              |
| C4E    | Communication for Empowerment                                    |
| CBO    | Community Based Organization                                     |
| CMA    | Community Media Association                                      |
| CRSC   | Community Radio Support Centre                                   |
| DDC    | District Development Committee                                   |
| DFID   | Department for International Development                         |
| Dr.    | Doctor   |
| Etc.   | And So Forth (Latin: Et Cetera)                                  |
| FAO    | Food and Agriculture Organization                                |
| Fig.   | Figure   |
| FM     | Frequency Modulation   |
| FNJ    | Federation of Nepalese Journalists                               |
| i.e.   | That is (Latin: Id Est)  |
| INGO   | International Non Governmental Organization                      |
| ILO    | International Labor Organization                                 |
| IP     | Indigenous People  |
| IPUMS  | Integrated public Use Micro data Series                          |
| JAN    | Jugal Association Nepal  |
| JEP    | Janajati Empowerment Project                                     |
| KAT    | Kathmandu  |
| MHz    | Mega Hertz   |
| NBL    | Nepal Bhutia Lepcha  |
| NEFEJ  | Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists                         |
| NEFIN  | Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities                     |
| NFDIN  | National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities  |
| NGO    | Non Governmental Organization                                    |
| NPHC   | National Population and Housing Census                           |
| NRK    | Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (Norsk Rikskringkasting)      |
| Prof.  | Professor  |
| SAARC  | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation                 |
| TV     | Television   |
| UK     | United Kingdom   |
| UN     | United Nation  |
| UNDP   | United Nations Development Programme                             |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| USA    | United States of America   |
| Vs.    | Versus   |

# **CHAPTER: 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Theme and General Context**

*“Low representation of journalists and/or media professionals from indigenous people (IPs) groups and their limited capacity; journalists from other groups have limited knowledge about issues related to IPs ... Limited voices and participation of IPs in public discourse at the national and local levels, which will influence/shape the policy making process as well as decisions affecting their lives.”*

*-Communication For Empowerment in Nepal (CAE Report, 2009)*

Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own language and to have access to all forms of non-indigenous media without discrimination.<sup>1</sup> The rights of indigenous peoples have come to the forefront in Nepal and are hotly debated. There is a considerable diversity within the population of Nepal. More than a third of the populations belonging to indigenous peoples are marching ahead with their demands related to guaranteeing the rights, and the issue is politicized. The long history of exclusion and marginalization is being reviewed and socio-economic variations among various ethnic groups are being discussed.

Communication strengthens human development because it enables people to access and produce information and transfer it, which is important for empowerment and progress. People can arrive to their understanding of issues, to consider and discuss ideas and to engage in public debates through communication. Hence, communication enables people to negotiate, develop and act on knowledge and facilitates the formation of public opinion in democratic system. Social inclusion and participation through access to information and effective communication channels are integral parts of democratic governance and sustainable development for the poor vulnerable and marginalized groups. The changing socio-political climate in Nepal is trying to increase political

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Article: 16).

participation of the indigenous peoples. On the other hand, it is important to take in to account if indigenous people's participation in the communication sector makes any difference for their own community. It is positive if indigenous issues and messages regarding the indigenous peoples, their rights or their community are fostered due to the promotion of indigenous participation. However, it creates questions to find out the reasons if there is negative or zero impact of indigenous people's participation in media, in this regard.

This study is based on some particular research problems. A long history of absence of indigenous participation in decision-making level is slowly improved with more inclusive policy. Increases in participation or better employment alone cannot guarantee these issues will gain prominence, which can be seen in Nepalese media today. Condition of indigenous participation and the impact of media towards indigenous societies are problematic issues in Nepal. Low representation of indigenous journalists and media workers is one of the issues to consider. The other important issue is empowering indigenous peoples including the subjects of indigenous interest. The government policy of Nepal in regards to documentation and ratification of laws for indigenous welfare seems strong, but implementation of the policy remains weak. Such problematic situations followed me during this study.

The 2011 census has shown that the population of indigenous peoples in Nepal is 35%, which is 2.7% less than the 2001 census. After a government-sponsored promotion encouraging inter-caste marriage, some indigenous and ethnic minorities have been assimilated through the matrimonial process. Some census specialists of Nepal have argued that other indigenous peoples hide their identity by introducing themselves as non-indigenous. That has influenced indigenous population. On the other hand, indigenous activists are arguing that there are serious mistakes in the recording of indigenous population. According to the indigenous specialists, some indigenous groups have not been recorded and some have been kept in other categories that made the indigenous population look smaller. They claim, however, the population of indigenous peoples has to be increased. In fact, the National Bureau of Statistics, the authentic

department for recording the census data, has started to review the report. Hence, relating the data of the 2001 census was appropriate for this study.

According to the 2001 census report, there are around 100 ethnic groups in Nepal and 59 indigenous groups are officially recorded. The Report of Indigenous Peoples Development Framework for Rural Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Sector Development Program has mentioned that indigenous peoples of Nepal cover 37.2% of total population of Nepal.

*Nepal's complex social structure makes it challenging to define IPs in Nepal. The 2001 census has identified 100 different social groups in the country with over 92 languages and a mix of Hindu, Buddhist, Kirat, Animism and Muslim religions. Nevertheless, 2001 Census reports 8.4 million populations of (43 ethnic nationalities 37.2% of Nepal's population). Furthermore, Government of Nepal has recognized 59 different nationalities as indigenous peoples of Nepal who comprises about 37.2% of the country's population of over 25 million.<sup>2</sup>*

The National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities Act of Nepal (2002) describes *Adivasi Janajati*, that is, indigenous peoples or nationalities of Nepal, as those ethnic groups or communities that “have their own mother tongue and traditional customs, distinct cultural identity, distinct social structure and written or oral history of their own.” Those different ethnic and indigenous peoples practice their own culture enriching their existence and identity. However, long rooted practices of domination and discrimination from so-called high caste and majority groups of people has created struggle for them. Social exclusion and neglect of indigenous issues for decades have kept them excluded in participation of developmental activities and decision-making. National policies and strategies could not address indigenous issues. In 2007, Nepal formally acknowledged that indigenous peoples have suffered historic exclusion, limiting them in exercising their right to identity, with all the associated impacts on their participation in the overall development process.<sup>3</sup> After this, Nepal ratified the International Labor Organization (ILO) convention 169 on indigenous and tribal people

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.rrr.gov.np/downloads/Indegenius\\_People\\_Development\\_Framework\\_For\\_RRRSDP.pdf](http://www.rrr.gov.np/downloads/Indegenius_People_Development_Framework_For_RRRSDP.pdf); 4 Feb., 2011.

<sup>3</sup> C4E Report; 2009

and became the first South Asian country to ratify the convention. Still, indigenous organizations are raising questions about its implementation.

More than 370 million peoples across the world are considered indigenous peoples. They live in more than 90 countries of the world with nearly 70 percent of them living in Asia.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, indigenous peoples represent over 5000 of the estimated 7000 distinct culture and language group in the world. However, they [all] share a common problem of high rates of poverty. Indigenous peoples suffer disproportionately higher rates of poverty than non-indigenous peoples throughout the world.<sup>5</sup> The determinants of their poverty, however, are currently unknown.

Isolation, discrimination and exclusion predominantly began early in the colonization period and indigenous peoples around the world suffered because of it. They were isolated even on their own traditional land, and they had to fight for land rights. This was a common situation for indigenous peoples around the world. Beginning from the 1950s, indigenous peoples started gaining attention in public discourses. However, the empirical works on socio-economic status of indigenous peoples began only recently in the early 1990s.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, indigenous voices that were obscured for centuries, slowly, started to be publicized; however, the problem is that indigenous issues are interpreted incorrectly to this day. In much of the developing world, poor and vulnerable groups lack access to information and communication channels to voice their concerns. They go unheard when development strategies and political decisions affecting them are made. Indigenous voices and viewpoints have been mostly absent from decision-making about their own development.<sup>7</sup>

Indigenous peoples in Nepal, also known as indigenous nationalities<sup>8</sup>, have remained a marginalized and vulnerable group largely excluded from the mainstream development process. Participation of indigenous peoples in any of the state's three organs (executive,

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<sup>4</sup> IFAD 2000/2001

<sup>5</sup> Carino; 2009

<sup>6</sup> Lama, 2009

<sup>7</sup> Meier; 2008:2

<sup>8</sup> The state has addressed Indigenous peoples as indigenous nationalities, which simply can be understood as indigenous ethnicity.

legislative and judiciary) remains very low. Employment opportunities in those sectors keep indigenous peoples in distance.

*...hill Janajatis (i.e., excluding Newars and Tharus), with 22 percent of the population had just 7 percent of the jobs, and Madhesis, with 31 percent of the population had only 11 percent of the jobs. Dalits with nearly 9 percent of the population had just 0.3 percent of the jobs.*<sup>9</sup>

Hence, the statistics of indigenous and other marginalized groups in employment is poor seemingly due to the tradition of supremacy by 'majority groups'. The fourth and very important organ of the state, journalism also has limited access for indigenous peoples. This is how the expressions and voices of indigenous peoples are blocked. The changing socio-political environment, today, seems positive in some issues; however, further actions are still expected and demanded by indigenous peoples.

## **1.2 Background of Study**

*"The media in Nepal remains the career of choice of a new generation of Nepalis."*<sup>10</sup>

The history of modern mass media in Nepal is not so much long. Although the institutional history of Nepali press could be traced back to 1851 when Rana Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana installed a printing press (the Giddhe Press) in 1901 and the state-owned newspaper, the Gorkhapatra, was launched, its practical history begins in the 1950s, after the fall of Ranas, when several pioneering journalists took to publishing newspapers in a transitional democracy.<sup>11</sup> However, the restoration of democracy in 1990 made a drastic change in Nepali mass media especially in the matter of promoting the private sector in media. The constitution of Nepal formally guaranteed the freedom of press and publication in 1990. Afterwards, mass media sector faced many changes during the Maoist insurgency, king's direct rule and the times of different political ups and downs.

Although right to information is one of the basic fundamental rights of the citizen, the question about equal opportunity and equal participation remained constant for decades.

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<sup>9</sup> Gellner; 2007:1825

<sup>10</sup> Khanal, C. & Kumar, D.; 2006:2

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.nepalpressfreedom.org/content/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=33&Itemid=92](http://www.nepalpressfreedom.org/content/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33&Itemid=92); as on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2011

Prof. Dr. Om Gurung argues- “Indigenous peoples, [...] and other marginalized groups are not proportionally represented in the state’s politics, legislative and executive bodies and judicial and civil and military services.”<sup>12</sup>

There is a popular proverb in Nepali- “voices are heard if spoken”. However, medium is necessary to reach the spoken voices to the listeners. Access of indigenous peoples in media only makes them able to publicize their voices. The poor situation of indigenous people’s professional participation in mass media has created a debate on how issues are interpreted. Numbers of professionals representing indigenous population are not shown in the media, and this is another serious question, what can be the reason for that?

Indigenous peoples are deprived from tasting the fruit of development. They have less access to infrastructure. Mass media is one of them in which there are fewer indigenous peoples showcased in the media. Thus, many sensitive issues about indigenous peoples, their activities or related issues are interpreted incorrectly or sometimes negatively. This has happened in Nepal in many cases. Rights to information have internationally become a fundamental right. However, indigenous and marginalized peoples do not often benefit from this right. There seems to be discrimination in the media sector like in other sectors in terms of indigenous participation. Indigenous peoples also suffer from discrimination in terms of employment and income.<sup>13</sup>

This research attempts to assess the access of indigenous peoples in mass media and to compare indigenous and non-indigenous participation in Nepal. The research further highlights the career status and opportunity for indigenous peoples in the media and has the main research question- ***What is the level of participation of indigenous peoples in audio broadcasting mass media (radio) in Nepal and why?***

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<sup>12</sup> Prof. Dr. Om Gurung is one of the founding faculty members of the Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology of Tribhuvan University at Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal; he is a Professor of Anthropology and Head of the Central Department.

<sup>13</sup> Carino; 2005



## **1.3 Conceptual Framework of Study**

### **1.3.1 Indigeneity & Indigenous Peoples of Nepal**

Before discussing issues of indigenous peoples and indigeneity, it is important to talk about what indigeneity is and who indigenous peoples are. Since there is no universal acceptance of the term, it is quite problematic to make a distinction between indigenous and non-indigenous. Considering the diversity of indigenous peoples, any UN-system body has not adopted an official definition of “indigenous”.<sup>14</sup> In such a situation, the United Nations has developed a modern understanding of this term based on self identification, historical continuity with pre-colonial societies, strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources, distinct social, economic or political systems, distinct language, culture and beliefs, etc. There are certain criteria in connection to the history, culture, politics, economy and geography of indigenous peoples, which make them indigenous. It is even more diverse in such a multicultural and multiethnic country like Nepal where the debate of being indigenous has become more controversial.

Among the definitions of indigenous peoples, the ILO definition<sup>15</sup> is applicable in Nepal because the Hindus took refuge in Nepal from India after the eleventh century, and they controlled the political economy of the country since the eighteenth century.<sup>16</sup> Nepalese scholars believe that the term “indigenous” is based on place and time. That means whoever came and settled in a place “first” are referred to as indigenous. Indigenous peoples in Nepal are popularly known as “indigenous nationalities”. Although “indigenous peoples” and “nationalities” are not synonymous, all the “nationalities” seem to be the “indigenous peoples” in the context of Nepal. Most of the nationalities in Nepal are indigenous and hence, they are referred to as “indigenous nationalities” (Bhattachan; 2003). Indigenous peoples of Nepal are known as “Adibasi Janajati”. “Adi”, in Nepali, means “the ancient” whereas “Basi” means “settlers”. Likewise, “Jana” means

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<sup>14</sup> A Factsheet entitled ‘Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Voices’ by United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

<sup>15</sup> According to the Article 1 (1.b) of the ILO Convention 169, ‘peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions’.

<sup>16</sup> Bhattachan; 2003:12

“peoples” and “Jati” means “nationalities”. Thus, the term Adibasi Janajati refers to those peoples or nationalities that are the settlers of the land since the ancient period. The use of the word “Janajati”, here, clearly combines both the “peoples” and “nationalities”.

Having varieties of indigenous peoples’ groups, Nepalese indigenous peoples are categorized on the basis of their status as endangered, highly marginalized, marginalized, disadvantaged and advanced group (see Appendix: 1). Those categorized as endangered and highly marginalized groups represent a smaller population and have almost given up of their cultural and lingual struggles against assimilation. National Population and Housing Census 2011 further show the vanishing situation of these groups. For instance, the population of Kusunda in Nepal is 273 but only 28 of them are using the Kusunda language as their mother tongue. Likewise, 29.17% of Majhis (24422 of 83727) speak Majhi and 50% of Lhomis (808 in 1614) speak the Lhomi mother tongue. Hence, the dominant language of the majority groups has diminished the speakers of indigenous mother tongues in Nepal.

### **1.3.2 Concept of Participation**

*“Participation includes people’s involvement in decision-making process, in implementing programmes, their sharing in benefits and risks of development in efforts to evaluate such programmes”*

*- Cohen, J. and N. Uphoff: 1977*

Participation is a multi-dimensional and a dynamic process, which takes varying forms and changes during the project cycle and over time, based on interest and need. Participation in social, economic, political and cultural affairs refers to the means by which people directly legislate plans in their domains and apply their physical, intellectual and psychological energy to accomplish intended development goals which directly affect their lives and outcomes. Participation is viewed as an active process in which the participants take initiatives and actions that are stimulated by their own thinking and by deliberations over which they exert effective control.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Hedayat Allah Nikkhah & Ma’rof Redzuan: “Participation as a Medium of Empowerment in Community Development”; European Journal of Social Sciences – Volume 11, Number 1 (2009) : 172

Participation is a democratic process in which people question their total existence and those elements that make up that existence. It is a process in which peoples' involvement exists in decision-making level. Participation is a collaborative decision-making process through which stakeholder's influence and share control over development initiatives and resources that affects themselves (Ondrik, 1996:1). The participatory process can be defined as one which deeply respects the knowledge of local people, poor, marginalized, women, backward, down trodden, disadvantaged and creates an environment in which all people can feel self esteem and self receptivity. Thus, in this dissertation, participation of indigenous peoples is coined as the existence of indigenous peoples in broadcasting media that can influence indigenous culture and contribute to the indigenous society.

### **1.3.3 Concept & History of Ethnic Media in Nepal**

*Though principal of journalism is to highlight voice of the voiceless communities, media run by managers with profit making objectives do not carry voice of the voiceless.*

*- Chun Bahadur Gurung; 2007:9*

After interpreting the concept of community press into practice, voices of the marginalized and socially excluded communities could be underlined. Therefore, an emergence and development of ethnic media was endorsed.

Principally, media established, managed and run by communities to inform, educate and entertain ethnic communities are known as ethnic media. According to Warner Charles, a media expert at University of Missouri School of Journalism (USA), community press is based on the principal of providing the community with news about issues that the community selects, advocates for community improvements, and generally supports the community. According to Community Media Association (CMA), community media is community owned and controlled media, giving access to voices in the community and encouraging diversity, creativity and participation. It shows that community media popularly called ethnic media encourages local and ethnic/indigenous participation. Community broadcasting media (FM radios) in Nepal have been setting goals based on this interpretation.

In Nepalese context, ethnic media can be defined as media initiated by indigenous nationalities so as to voice their concerns. Additionally, Nepal has criteria to identify ethnic media. Those media having: more than 75 percent local staff in editorial section, a majority of revenue from local advertisement and sales, more than 50 percent of the editorial content on local issue, a regular focus on local issues, dedication to raising the living standard of the local people by providing them relevant and essential information and knowledge, a goal of providing a voice to the voiceless people and advocating development of infrastructure that promotes socio-economic development in the country are some criteria.<sup>18</sup> Hence, the concept of ethnic media has the intention of raising local issues and increasing direct local participation for empowerment.

The history of ethnic media pulls our attention to the Nepalese indigenous movement. Firstly, an organization, Nepal Bhutia Lapcha (NBL) was formed in Sikkim India. According to Dr. Harka Gurung, with the inspiration of NBL, some Newar Intellectuals of Kathmandu formed an organization in Calcutta in 1924.<sup>19</sup> It is believed that this movement from the Newar community encouraged other indigenous communities to organize. A monthly publication in the Newari language from Calcutta, India in 1925 was the first step and milestone for the indigenous media history. Tharu Kalyankarini Sabha was the second indigenous organization formed for the rights of the Tharu indigenous community. This history shows that the Newars were in the front, leading the indigenous movement in Nepal. Later, indigenous nationalities from the hill also replicated the activities of the Newars for their rights and culture. Slowly, indigenous nationalities felt a need for their own media to share their voices and raise awareness.

As said by Ashok Shrestha, the editor of *Nugu Bishwobhumi* daily, *Nepal Bhasa Patrika Daily* edited by Phatte Bahadur Singh in the Newari language even launched the first subscription campaign in the history of Nepalese journalism. It shows that indigenous media not only paved the path for indigenous awareness but also made historic contribution to Nepalese journalism as a whole.

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<sup>18</sup> Kasaju, Vinay; In Asia and Pacific: The community Press is Alive:61

<sup>19</sup> Dr. Harka Gurung has mentioned it in a working paper presented on the occasion of International Day of World's Indigenous Peoples in 2005 in Kathmandu.

According to Amar Tumyahang, the history of the community press in the Limbu language is a century younger than Nepali language journalism. Limbu journalism is yet to be professionalized. Community journalists from the Newar, Tamang, Limbu and Magar communities have set up a common forum and other community journalists in cooperation with journalists from ethnic communities, affiliated with mainstream media have already come together to safeguard their rights as indigenous communities.<sup>20</sup>

Indigenous journalists actively working for the right-based movements also created a media forum for the advocacy of indigenous rights in Nepal. This effort gave birth to the Association of Nepalese Indigenous Journalists (ANIJ) that is led by the professional indigenous journalists associated with mainstream media. Today, indigenous journalists are campaigning cooperatively through organizations that have resulted in positive outcomes in quantitative and qualitative incremental growth of participation in the media in Nepal.

#### **1.4 Indigenous Peoples in Nepalese Mass Media**

There is still claim from indigenous activists and scholars that indigenous peoples in Nepal are not only underrepresented in mass media but also improperly portrayed. Lack of coverage of indigenous issues or negative coverage due to lack of journalists from the particular ethnic groups was a main argument. Neither print nor electronic media are easily accessible for indigenous peoples. There are few publications in indigenous languages and some media run by indigenous peoples are trying to narrow the gaps in information and communication; however they are facing a problem due to ineffective media policies. Therefore participation of indigenous peoples in mass media is vital for accessing indigenous voices. The Association of Nepalese Indigenous Journalists (ANIJ) was established in 1999 as a forum for the journalists representing indigenous communities to exercise a democracy for an integrated development. It aims to consolidate all Nepalese indigenous/nationalities journalists to properly address a growing issue of indigenous peoples.<sup>21</sup> This association is raising the issues of indigenous interests along with motivating indigenous journalists to increase participation.

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<sup>20</sup> Gurung, C.B.; 2007:18

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.anij.org.np/>; as on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2011.

Among the various types of household amenities, the largest percentage of households in Nepal has a radio in their house. As mentioned in the report of National Population and Housing Census 2011, 50.82% of the households have a radio. However, a majority of the households in urban areas have television rather than radio. The report mentions, 60.67% of the urban households have television whereas 53.56% of the urban households have radio. Contrastingly, in rural areas, 50.17% households have radio whereas only 30.66% households have television. Hence, radio is more popular in rural areas of Nepal. This figure shows that radio is the most popular electronic media in Nepal because Nepal is a country with a majority of households in rural areas. Additionally, most of the indigenous peoples of Nepal live in rural areas. Thus, radio as a means of mass media should have a great impact for the rural indigenous communities.

Radio Nepal, the only one national (government owned) radio was established in 1951. It transmits its broadcasting all over Nepal and a few areas of India and China too. Presently, none of the Board of Directors of Radio Nepal is from indigenous representatives. Similarly, the proportion of the staff organization is also unbalance.<sup>22</sup> In Nepal Television, the national television of Nepal established in 1985, only one out of six board of directors is an indigenous representative, which is 16%. Only 5 out of 13 high-ranking officials are indigenous representative, which is 38%.<sup>23</sup> However, in the leadership of all these categories, there is no indigenous representative. Similarly, the editorial board of Gorkhapatra, the government owned national newspaper shows only 20% participation of indigenous representatives.<sup>24</sup> This type of unbalanced recruitment can be found in private mass media as well. Even if indigenous peoples are recruited in better quantity, they are given junior positions from where the voice of those employees from indigenous groups cannot reach decision-making levels. It is claimed that the situation has been improved. I contend, however, the progress has had a minimal impact in indigenous peoples and communities.

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<sup>22</sup> Visited the website <http://www.radionepal.org>, on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2011 to observe the situation.

<sup>23</sup> Visited the website <http://www.ntv.org.np/>, on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2011 to observe the situation.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.gorkhapatra.org.np>, as on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2011 showed this figure

There are two types of media in Nepal. One is the “mainstream” media and the other is the “alternative” media. A large number of indigenous activists and scholars in Nepal have argued that the mainstream media are not welcoming to indigenous peoples’ issues and causes, though they do give minimal space on their issues. An indigenous expert and professor Dr. Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan states, “Mainstream print and electronic media are very much against IPs issues and cause. Indigenous Peoples have not been able to show their presence in mainstream media”. It indicates the poor situation of indigenous participation and its negative impact in mainstream media.

However, some researchers argue differently. They believed that the situation has improved in recent years. *“There has been increased recognition of the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural character of Nepali society and the need for respecting diversity for political stability and social progress. The government has included specific references to rights and needs of indigenous peoples in a number of important legal and policy documents. This includes constitutional law and special legislation as well as references in core government planning documents.”*<sup>25</sup> In my opinion, the change in a few particularly symbolic sectors shows quantifiable progress but not qualitative change.

All governmental and non-governmental bodies have created a specific space for an indigenous quota. A provision of employing a certain number of candidates from indigenous peoples’ groups has been mentioned. However, the implementation of the documented policies has been found unsatisfactory by some studies and investigations. This has created conflict between indigenous peoples and the governance in Nepal.

Occupationally, indigenous peoples in Nepal have involved mainly in subsistence agriculture. Predominantly inhabiting rural areas, traditional occupations continue to be practiced by many indigenous nationalities in Nepal. Despite the overall predominance of subsistence agriculture, there is also a wide variety between different indigenous groups in terms of modes of production and occupations. They range from urban to rural, from hunter-gatherer and those engaged in subsistence modes of production to porters, traders

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<sup>25</sup> Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Nepal Participatory Constitution Building Booklet Series No. 6, p:6

and carpet weavers.<sup>26</sup> It seems that the continuation of traditional occupation in indigenous communities has caused indigenous peoples to remain consistently behind in participation in modern technical sectors like media and communication.

Nevertheless, the educational strategy, impact of accessible modern technology and awareness of indigenous nationalities have brought a periodic change in occupational condition too. The democratic government's flexibility towards indigenous peoples and growing interest of indigenous peoples to make their presence in different sectors has increased the number of indigenous participants. The history of Nepali mass media shows that the participation of indigenous representatives either in print or electronic media seems to have happened from the beginning of Nepalese journalism. However, indigenous representatives who have been employed in media sector have not been able to flourish. The indigenous issues are another matter.

Since 2006, Nepal has taken major steps to ensure increased participation of indigenous peoples in policymaking through provisions in the 2007 Interim Constitution of Nepal and a new electoral law that requires political parties to ensure proportional representation of all excluded groups in parliament. Similar measures have been taken in the civil service and other state structures. In 2002, the National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) was established to oversee the development interests of indigenous peoples and to make policy recommendations.<sup>27</sup> This clarifies the legal status of indigenous peoples in Nepal that was even worse before the time of the constitution of 2007. Thus, participation of indigenous peoples in infrastructural development and in the decision-making level could not be satisfied.

Numbers of educational institutions are providing formal and informal education on mass media in Nepal today. There are students from indigenous communities in considerable number in such institutions, but the current issue is about the opportunity that they are given in utilizing their practical knowledge. In fact, various indigenous movements have raised awareness steps. Indigenous activists in Nepal have, to some extent, brought

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<sup>26</sup> Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Nepal Participatory Constitution Building Booklet Series No. 6, p:4

<sup>27</sup> Anne-Isabelle Degryse-Blateau Country Director, UNDP (C4E Report-2009)



positive change as well. Further evaluation of the progress in the situation of indigenous peoples, their issues and participations will be discussed in upcoming chapters.

### **1.5 Area of Study**

Kavrepalanchowk (hereinafter- Kavre) is the third largest district and one of the eight districts of the Bagmati Zone, located in the Central Development Region of Nepal. The district of Kavre lies between 85° 24' to 85° 49' east latitude and 27° 22' to 27° 85' north longitude. The height ranges from 275 m. (Dolalghat) to 3,018 m. (Bethanchowk hill) from the sea level. It has subtropical and temperate climate. It borders Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts in the west, Dolakha and Ramechhap districts in the east, Sindhupalchowk district in the north and Sindhuli and Makwanpur districts in the south. The district headquarter is Dhulikhel which is one of the three municipalities of the district too. The district has 87 Village Development Committees, the smallest administrative units of Nepal.

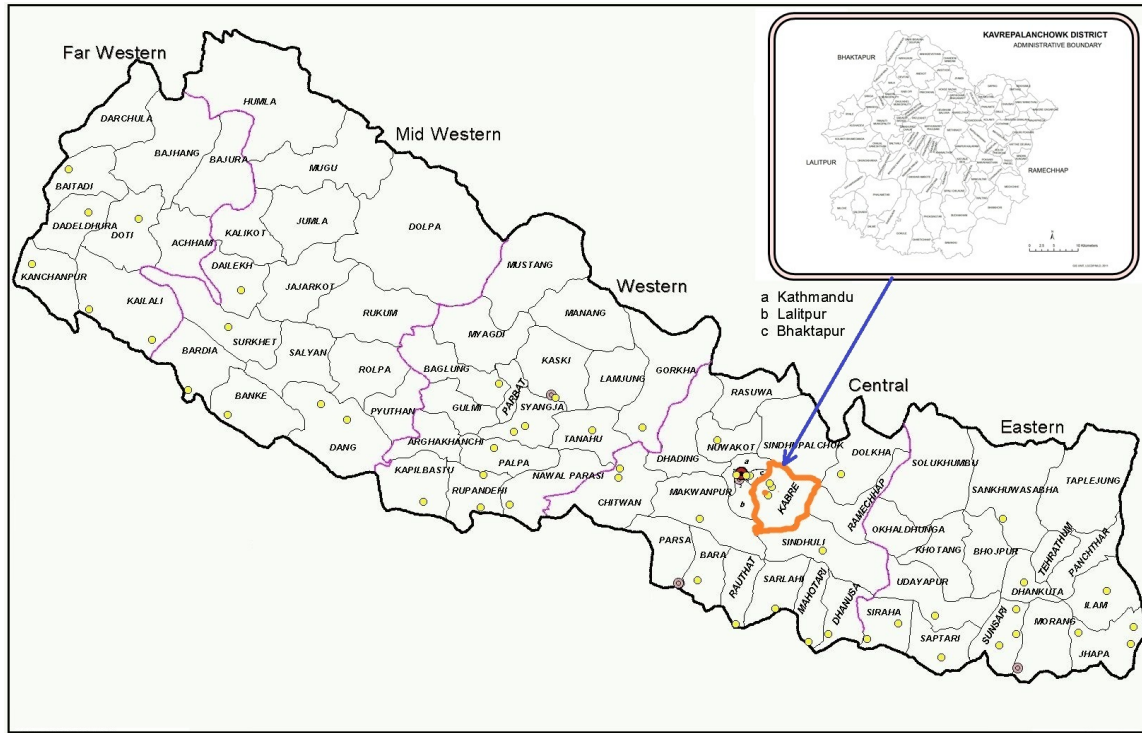
Total area of the district is 1404.86 square kilometers. As per the census data of 2011, total population of the district is 381,937 where 48.5% is male and 51.5% female. According to the District Statistic Office of Kavre, the annual population growth rate is 0.09%. Population density is 274 per square kilometer, and Banepa municipality has the maximum density of 4477 per square kilometer. With a 10,211 increase in the total number of households, there are now 80,720 households in the district (which was 70,509 in 2001).<sup>28</sup> The average household size is 4.73. Only 18.20% of the population lives in urban areas while the urban population of the district in 2001 was 13.72%. This figure demonstrates the rapid growth of population in urban area, which also indicates the migration from rural to urban areas.

The major ethnic people of this district include Tamag, Chhetri, Brahimin, Newar, Magar, Pariyar, Biswakarma and Tolange. These ethnic people have a common Nepali dialect but some ethnic people such as tamang, newar and magar, have their own

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<sup>28</sup> Although Central Bureau of Statistics of Nepal has publicized census report of 2011, there are still some contradictions and possibility of reviews in the report. Hence, 2001 census report will be used in this dissertation for analyzing some cases.

dialect.<sup>29</sup> Tamangs inhabit rural areas and Newars living both in rural and urban areas are the major indigenous peoples of the district. Pahari, Majhi are some other indigenous peoples of the district.



There are both print and electronic mass media in the district. There are 8 FM stations and one television channel. More than 20 newspapers are being published from the district. Some Internet web portals are regularly providing local and national news. Moreover, various national media having their station in the capital city, Kathmandu have appointed representatives from the district. Those representatives collect news and information from around the district and send it to their station.

According to the census 2011, 87.30% of the households are using electricity. Only 63.45% households were using electricity in 2001. The use of electronic mass media has increased in the district. Table: 1.1 shows the use of household amenities in the district.

<sup>29</sup> Malla & Chhetri; 2009:97 / They use Nepali language in general communication process though they have their own mother tongue.

**Table 1.1: Households Using Different Facilities/Services**

| <b>S.No</b> | <b>Services Used by Households</b> | <b>Number of Households</b> | <b>Percentage of Used Services</b> |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1           | Radio                              | 46,037                      | 57%                                |
| 2           | Television                         | 41,297                      | 51%                                |
| 3           | Cable Television                   | 9181                        | 11%                                |
| 4           | Computer                           | 5488                        | 7%                                 |
| 5           | Internet Facilities                | 1684                        | 2%                                 |
| 6           | Landline Phone                     | 5750                        | 7%                                 |
| 7           | Mobile Phones                      | 53,834                      | 67%                                |

*Source: Census, 2011*

Since a considerable number of people use mobile phones for listening to the radio, the number of radio listeners may increase to some extent. In spite of being a rural district of a developing country, the figure shows the stimulation of access of communication facilities in Kavre district of Nepal.

## **1.6 Key Concepts**

In carrying out this research, I intend to work with the concepts outlined below:

**Mass Media:** “Mass Media” is a broad term and widespread sector. Although mass media refers to all modern means of information and technologies, popular means of mass media, which have a major impact to the population in the field area, is the focus of this work.

**Participation:** Direct and professional involvement of indigenous peoples in mass media sector. It can generally be the involvement as an employee or holding leadership or ownership or position of any level in means of mass media.

**FM Radio:** FM radios are sound transmitting device and are appropriate for broadcasting within a certain local area. Unlike AM waves, FM waves travel straight and transmit the sound of equal quality within distance. However, FM signals are disturbed when they pass across mountains because the

mountains block the straight travel of the waves. Hence, FM transmitters are located on mountaintops or roof of tall buildings in order for signals to be better received. FM is chosen over AM for radio stations wishing to transmit in high quality to a smaller area because of its stereo capabilities<sup>30</sup>.

### **1.7 Objectives**

Each and every research has some sorts of objectives. The objectives of this research are as follows:

- To assess the access of Indigenous peoples to means of mass media (FM radio),
- To appraise the impact of indigenous peoples' participation in FM radio,
- To evaluate the approach of media to indigenous peoples,
- To explore the situation of addressing indigenous issues,
- To compare indigenous and non-indigenous participation in FM radio.

After all, the research further tends to highlight the career status and opportunity for indigenous peoples in mass media.

### **1.8 Limitations**

The study has been limited in terms to focus on the particular subject matter and going straightforward towards the desired track. The study has determined the following limitations:

This study has been limited in terms of area covering the Kavre district of Nepal only. Main study areas are the three municipalities (Dhulikhel, Banepa & Panauti) since almost all mass media offices, stations, printing and publication centers, administrative offices and governmental/non-governmental organizations are situated within these areas.

The study mainly concentrates on indigenous peoples however non-indigenous participation is taken in to account for comparison.

The issues of Dalits (Untouchables) have been described together with indigenous issues in various studies in the past. It is quite difficult to separate Dalits from indigenous in many cases too. There is the system of untouchability within and in between indigenous peoples as well. It is totally different and a complex issue

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<sup>30</sup> Stefansson J., "*Radio Waves: AM Vs. FM*", [www.ehow.com](http://www.ehow.com) assessed on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2013

that is not going to be taken in account for this study. Data may display the presence of Dalits for comparative analysis though. All indigenous are treated as indigenous for this study but untouchables (Dalits) other than indigenous are disregarded.

There are several types of media. It is impossible to bring all of those means in a single study. Thus, the study intends to cover mainly one i.e. radio which is the most effective means of mass media since the highest number of the population in the study area use it. Radio has major impact in public matters and is a good focus because of the purpose of study and time constraints in the research.

## **1.9 Methodology**

### **1.9.1 Planned Methods**

There could have some critical and complicated situations in finding answers of some questions regarding the indigenous issues in media participation. Therefore, a single method alone could not be effective. With the careful study of situation, some possible methods were planned. As per the pre-planned procedure, the following methods were applied to obtain results. Media house surveys with some structured and unstructured questions, face to face and written interviews with various personalities, observations of the activities, expressions, status and behaviors and a focus group discussion were the methods planned and applied accordingly.

### **1.9.2 Sources of Data**

Data and information required for the study has been fetched by various sources. Both primary and secondary data sources have been accompanied. Oral sources like interviews, informal talks and discussions, written sources like books, publications, reports, journals, newspapers and brochures and audio-visual sources like radio reports, television reports, documentaries, cassettes and recordings, etc. have been used for obtaining some crucial and beneficial information related to the research topic. In addition, I have used available online contents with reliable sources. Data, supporting information and references for the study are included within the circumstance of these primary and secondary sources. Even though a short overview of methods is conveyed

here for the general information, there will be a detailed explanation of the methodological analysis in chapter three.

### **1.9.3 Role as Researcher**

Since, the study area was close to my hometown, I had to be more inclusive. However, being a member of a non-indigenous community, I merely tried to act as an outsider most of the time during formal interviews and talks. Even though in the study area, study sector (journalism) were some of the factors that automatically made me an insider in many cases.

### **1.10 Organization of Thesis**

This thesis is going to be divided into five chapters. The first chapter is an introductory chapter. It includes an introduction to the research topic, definitions, objectives and area etc. The second chapter presents a review of literature. This chapter will comprise two sections: general conceptual literature and related literature review. Methodology to carry out the work will be presented in detail in the third chapter. The fourth chapter will present the results. The analysis of field work and findings will be described in this chapter. Finally, the fifth chapter will summarize the whole thesis, give conclusions and make possible recommendations.



## **CHAPTER: 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This chapter presents the review of various studies previously carried out in the field of indigenous media, mainly analog electronic media source (Radio). Writers and scholars have different arguments on this particular subject. There is an enormous amount literature available on communication and mass media. However, comparatively very little literature has been written about participation of indigenous peoples in Nepalese mass media. Some authors have written articles on this related subject, which are published as print or online editions. This chapter intends to review that literature, separating different sub-topics as related literature of national and international circumstances.

#### **2.1 Literature on Ethnic Population and Indigenous Media**

There are 125 caste/ethnic groups reported in the census 2011. Chhetri is the largest caste/ethnic group having 16.6% of the total population followed by Brahman-Hill (12.2%), Magar (7.1%), Tharu (6.6%), Tamang (5.8%), Newar (5.0%), Kami (4.8%), Musalman (4.4%), Yadav (4.0%) and Rai (2.3%).<sup>31</sup>

Although the National Population and Housing Census 2011 has reported 123 languages spoken in Nepal as mother tongues, the majority of the population (44.6%) speak Nepali. According to the census report, 11.7% of the total population speaks Maithili as a mother tongue and 6.0% speak Bhojpuri. Tharu is spoken as a mother tongue by 5.8% of the total population. Tamang, Newari and Magar is spoken by 5.1%, 3.2% and 3.0% respectively.

Nepal has been declared as a secular state ending a long history of being a Hindu kingdom. Hence, population is categorized in a variety of religions. However, the 2011 census report has shown that 81.3% of the total population still follows Hinduism. Buddhism is followed by 9.0%, Islam by 4.4%, Kirat by 3.1%, Christianity by 1.4% and Prakriti by 0.5%. There are ten types of religion categories reported in the census. People in Nepal also follow Bon, Jainism, Bahai and Sikhism. Most of the indigenous peoples in

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<sup>31</sup> National Population and Housing Census 2011; Volume 02, NPHC 2011; Page 4

Nepal are not Hindus. Major indigenous groups such as Tamang, Newar, Sherpa etc. follow Buddhism.

The present political scenario of Nepal is growing more complicated in regards to indigeneity. Those groups, which were previously recorded as dominant, are asking to be recorded as “Adibasi”. Their demand is that they are inhabitants of the traditional land since the ancient history, which is even older than other indigenous groups. Since this conflict has more political influence, this issue is not being discussed in detail here. On the other hand, there are more hurdles to the multicultural and multiethnic parts of indigeneity. Declaration of reward by the government of Nepal to the couple getting inter-caste marriage has encouraged marriage between different ethnic groups. Such state policy and its perception of avoiding discrimination between so-called high and low caste has created a number of questions to the new generation. For instance, the child from such couple loses the social category of both his father and mother’s ethnicity. If the parents are from different status of indigenous and non-indigenous groups, the question is more complicated contrasting to the social practices. Hence, a number of intellectuals argue for a review and reconstruction of the criteria of indigenous peoples of Nepal so that actual groups of indigenous peoples and their indigeneity will hold fast.

Nepalese mass media faces barriers due to the confined geography of the country. Mass circulation of the print media and coverage of electronic media are unfortunate. Both press and electronic media are concentrated in urban centers and have limited significance to rural people. This has affected participation from rural indigenous communities in Nepalese mass media.

Nepal officially changed from a monarchical non-party system to a parliamentary model in 1990. The new constitution revealed the right to freedom of expression. It ensured every citizen the right to information of their concern and any matter of public importance. Moreover, the constitution enabled media-friendly policies. As a result, National Communication Policy- 1992, National Broadcasting Act- 1993 and Broadcast Regulations- 1995 were brought into practice.

*“Prior to 1994, radio broadcasting was the exclusive domain of Radio Nepal, the state broadcaster, established in the early 1950s. Even after 1990 state governments were*



*slow in relinquishing monopoly control of radio broadcasting. The first independent license was granted only in 1997, four and a half years after the initial application”.*<sup>32</sup>

Nepal is the first South Asian country to establish independent community radio. The Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) spearheaded the movement to establish FM radio in the country. After five years of lobbying, NEFEJ was able to get a license from the government to set up Nepal's as well as South Asia's first independent radio station, Radio Sagarmatha (Mainali; 2003:24). After the establishment of the country's first independent broadcaster, Radio Sagarmatha, in 1997, many community matters of public interest were transmitted. Arjun Banjade submitted a case study on “Community Radio in Nepal” to the Scripps College of Communication of Ohio University in 2007 as a form of dissertation. *“In Nepal, the growth of electronic media in the late 1990s is credited to the liberal political environment that provided space for radio broadcasting from commercial as well as nongovernmental organizations. In 1997, Nepal became the first country in South Asia to grant a license to operate a radio station run by nongovernmental sectors. The government of Nepal provided licenses to 50 more FM radio stations in October 2006, bringing the total number of radio stations to 106. Twenty of the radio stations already on air are self-declared community radio stations started mainly by community groups and nongovernmental organizations.”*<sup>33</sup>

Hence, the political improvement and loyalty of state towards the public helped to increase radio stations in Nepal. Radio Sagarmatha, the first community radio of Nepal, struggled for years to reach transmission. Nonetheless, establishment of community radio with a participatory communication model became a milestone of community media, especially against the supremacy of traditional media trends. Later, radio Madanpokhara was licensed as Nepal's first rural community radio. Community radio has grown in number gradually from one license in 1997 to 90 at the end of 2007. Until late August 2011, the government had issued 393 licenses.<sup>34</sup> Infoasaid, a media project, listed 404 licensed FM radios in Nepal by 2011.

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.nepalradio.org/radiosagarmatha/index.htm> as on 10th March, 2013

<sup>33</sup> Banjade, Arjun; 2007:47

<sup>34</sup> Assessing Community Radio Performance in Nepal, CRSC/NEFEJ with support of UNESCO Kathmandu, 2011; Page: 15

## **2.2 Review of Related Literature**

There is little literature on this particular topic of indigenous peoples' participation in Nepalese mass media. However, scholars have discussed the issues using different forms of analysis over the course of time. A few research studies about media issues and participation are available, but most of them focus on print media. Though it is quite difficult to find the related literature, the intent here is to discuss some of the available research.

A “National Survey on Participation of Dalit<sup>35</sup> and Janajati in Print Media” surveyed and analyzed by Sekhar Parajuli and Bhaskar Gautam presents an overview of Nepalese mass media from a participatory angle. This is an important document from the 1990s used by new scholars and readers of respective fields for reference. This literature provides detailed knowledge on situations of journalists from Dalit and Janajati communities and shows the participation pattern numerically. Moreover, the survey brings together the membership statistics of Dalit and indigenous journalists in organizations like Federation of Nepalese Journalists, Press Council Nepal, Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists and Sancharika Samuha: A Forum of Women Journalists and Communicators. In addition, it provides an overview of participants from those communities in journalism training and educational institutions. This survey finds that participation of indigenous journalists by 1990s was 14.9 percent, whereas journalists from majority groups (Bramhin-Chhetri) were 79.57 percent, and the rest were from Dalits. This huge gap between indigenous and non-indigenous participation in print media was the basis of study because visual and broadcasting media were relatively few in number.

After the 1990s, a revolutionary change in the sector of journalism transformed the situation. State became more loyal and flexible in licensing community and private FM radios and television stations. After that, some research in broadcasting media was also conducted.

In 2009, a research team of Khagendra Prasai and Raghu Mainali conducted a baseline survey on Consciousness and Viewpoint of Listeners of Radio Namobuddha of Kavre.

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<sup>35</sup> Dalits are untouchable groups different than indigenous groups as per the ethnic classification and social system in Nepal.

This survey gives a situational synopsis of community radio (popularly known as Tamang Indigenous Radio) of the Kavre district from the listener's point of view. This research has also examined some community variables of radio listeners that influence public interest. However, it is completely based on one radio station and its listeners of the district and therefore, ignored rest of the FM radios. Due to the limited available references, my research incorporates materials gathered in my own fieldwork. In addition, some related international situations and subjects are included.

### **2.3 Indigenous Media, Empowering Indigenous Voices Internationally**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2012, a special event dedicated to the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples took place at UN Headquarter in New York; it focused on the theme "Indigenous Media, Empowering Indigenous Voices". This section of the chapter reviews some particulars about the special event and its relevance to this study.

Media has the power to sharpen people's lives. Communication and media are the keys to raise awareness; share knowledge; and support a broader debate on indigenous knowledge, culture and values. It is stated in an article sourced from Internet (See: <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article4052>) that the theme highlighted the importance of indigenous media in challenging stereotypes, forging indigenous peoples' identities, communicating with the outside world and influencing the social and political agenda.<sup>36</sup> In a press release distributed by UNESCO office in Kathmandu on 8<sup>th</sup> of August 2012, this theme was chosen to highlight the role of media in supporting indigenous peoples' models of development that are in accordance with their own priorities, cultures and knowledge systems.

It is quite obvious to take media as a powerful tool to strengthen indigenous identities. However, Australian Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda has said it is 'critical'. "Indigenous media is critical to demystifying Indigenous culture and strengthening our identity." Acknowledging the 2012 theme of Indigenous Media, Empowering Voices, Gooda said, "Australia's Indigenous media outlets played a valuable role in challenging

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<sup>36</sup> Indigenous Media, Empowering Indigenous Voices; <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article4052>, 13 August 2012.

stereotypes”.<sup>37</sup> In a sense, I agree with Gooda that it is often complex for mainstream media to portray issues accurately and realistically, and sometimes, despite good intentions, this portrayal reinforces damaging stereotypes. Also, it is more challenging with a situation of lacking participation of indigenous journalists in mainstream media.

Australian indigenous peoples may have fewer challenges having indigenous media outlets with a vision and breadth that gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the information they need on the things they are interested in. However, Indigenous peoples of developing countries like Nepal have more complications because indigenous media outlets are not yet completely independent. Hence, in my opinion, the 2012 theme was more attractive for those indigenous peoples of underdeveloped nations.

Jose Graziano da Silva, the Director-General of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has published a statement with special views of FAO on the occasion of the International Day of World’s Indigenous Peoples. In his assessment, indigenous media and communication fulfill three crucial functions in fostering self-determined development: access to information, participation and knowledge exchange and capacity enhancement.<sup>38</sup>

Modern technological development has made the world like a village. Indigenous media and means of communication may educate, inform and encourage indigenous peoples to remain distinct. 2012 International Day inspires the world’s Indigenous Peoples to explicitly participate in media. It is indispensable because, “without meaningful participation of indigenous peoples in national, regional and global processes, sustainable development cannot be realized.”<sup>39</sup>

Indigenous peoples’ communities in Nepal have little access, voice and participation in the mainstream media so far. Axel Plathe, the head of UNESCO office in Kathmandu, said on the occasion, “We need to build the capacity of indigenous journalists, and to

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<sup>37</sup> News from Australian Human Rights Commission, 09 August 2012; Indigenous Media Strengthens Identity; [http://humanrights.gov.au/about/media/news/2012/77\\_12.html](http://humanrights.gov.au/about/media/news/2012/77_12.html)

<sup>38</sup> A statement by FAO Director-General Jose Graziano da Silva; FAO; 9 August 2012

<sup>39</sup> Message from UNDP on the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples- 9 August 2012

sensitize media professionals from as many ethnic groups as possible to better understand and cover the issues affecting indigenous people”.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO in her message on the same occasion stressed that indigenous peoples are custodians to a great wealth of languages and traditions. According to her, “New forms of media can play a crucial role to capitalize the positive practices embedded in indigenous cultures by fostering synergies between modern services and local knowledge and assist communities in taking full advantages of their social assets- the knowledge, culture and governance systems”.<sup>41</sup> Despite being specific to Nepalese indigenous media, both experts have endorsed the general global situation in this statement.

#### **2.4 Some International Circumstances**

World Radio Day is observed on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February every year with objective of highlighting the importance of radio as a communication tool. A message of World Radio Day in 2013 was as follows:

*“The World Radio Day seeks to raise awareness about the importance of radio, facilitate access to information through radio and enhance networking among broadcasters. Radio has to be recognized as a low cost medium, specifically suited to reach remote communities and vulnerable people: the illiterate, the disabled, women, youth and the poor, while offering a platform to intervene in the public debate, irrespective of people’s educational level.”<sup>42</sup>*

The message interprets radio as a powerful tool of communication for remote communities and vulnerable people including illiterate. Hence, indigenous empowerment through media is thought to be most effective by radio. Indigenous peoples’ participation in radio is therefore indispensable for effective promotion of subjects of indigenous interest.

*“We celebrate radio today, because radio still reaches more people than the Internet or television. In this age of new media, radio remains the medium that can carry any*

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<sup>40</sup> Press Release; UNESCO/KAT 04/2012; Kathmandu, 8 August 2012:1

<sup>41</sup> Press Release; UNESCO/KAT 04/2012; Kathmandu, 8 August 2012:2

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.worldradioday.org/>, 13 February 2013

*message to any place at any time. It is both a platform for global conversation and a forum to address local problems.*”<sup>43</sup>

According to Irina Bokova, radio “provides voice to the voiceless, to the poor, to minorities, to women.” Indigenous peoples in different parts of the world have unique situations. However, the pressure of the majority or the dominant society causes them to remain voiceless. Community radio organizations around the world try to make radio an inclusive media tool in the society, yet various countries and communities have different situations.

Aboriginal peoples of Canada have been using the broadcasting services since 1960s. However, “From the early 1970s to the early 1980s, serious and substantial initiatives were put in place to provide Aboriginal people with the opportunity to develop their own radio and television networks.”<sup>44</sup> Today, it is believed every Aboriginal person in Canada has access to radio and/or television service. On the other hand, Aboriginal languages and cultural sustainability are evident in Aboriginal broadcasting services.

Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait received direct access to media nearly a decade later than Canadians. Literature says, “*During the 1970s our people began to tap the potential of non-Indigenous media to make our voices heard, share our stories, publicize our songs and spread information into our local communities and across Australia.*”<sup>45</sup> After this initiative, Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander established community-based radio, television stations and print media for three decades with limited funds from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and other indigenous organizations. Thus, Australia’s indigenous peoples, encouraged and promoted by their well-wishing organizations, collectively built strength in the media sector.

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<sup>43</sup> Audio message from Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO on the occasion of the World Radio Day 13 February 2013

<sup>44</sup> Jennifer David, 2004; page: 4

<sup>45</sup> Australian Indigenous Communications Association, Submission to National Review of Government, Investment into the Indigenous Broadcasting and Media Sector; Page: 7

In New Zealand, promotion of the Maori indigenous language is a priority for the government. The Maori Language Strategy published by the New Zealand Government in 1999 set out objectives not only to increase the Maori speakers but also to “improve proficiency and provide opportunities in the broadcasting sector for more language speakers.”<sup>46</sup> Broadcasting media has been regarded as a powerful tool for revival of indigenous language by the government, and the Maori Language Commission has noted it accordingly.

*“...broadcasting is an important part of any serious Maori language promotion, revival and revitalization programme. In our view... TV and radio are important to minority language revitalization because of their tremendous influence and ‘cultural’ power.”<sup>47</sup>*

New Zealand has more than nine hundred licensed broadcast transmitters, of which five hundred are operated by commercial providers and four hundred by public and non-commercial services.<sup>48</sup> For the subsistence of Maori language and cultural transmission, the first Maori radio was established in 1988. Since the 1980s, Maori people have radio frequencies that have played a vital role for tribal endorsement. There are now 21 Maori radio stations throughout the country.<sup>49</sup>

Although Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) started 15-minutes weekly radio broadcasts in Sami in 1946, the Sami Radio Section was established in 1976. NRK Sami Radio not only transmits programs in Northern Sami language but also produces regularly scheduled radio broadcasts for the Lule and Southern Sami speaking populations. *“In addition, the commercial radio stations P4 and Kanal (Channel) 24, and the commercial television station TV 2, broadcast programmes in Sámi and on topics of Sámi interest to meet the requirements of licensing terms and conditions issued by the Ministry of Culture.”<sup>50</sup>* However, the first Sami Radio was started in 1952 in Sweden focusing on the Sami indigenous peoples of Northern Scandinavia.

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<sup>46</sup> Jennifer David, 2004; page: 31

<sup>47</sup> Maori Television: A Summary of Views, 1997; page: 9

<sup>48</sup> Review of Radio Spectrum Policy in New Zealand, 2005; page: 20

<sup>49</sup> See [http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/english/resources\\_e/radio.shtml](http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/english/resources_e/radio.shtml)

<sup>50</sup> See [http://www.galdu.org/govat/doc/eng\\_radio\\_tv.pdf](http://www.galdu.org/govat/doc/eng_radio_tv.pdf)

Radio has been the medium of choice in many remote areas in Guatemala with little other forms of communication. Radio is the primary source of news, information and entertainment for Guatemalan people. However, the telecommunication law of Guatemala does not provide a licensing mechanism for community radio. Community members claim to operate community radio because it has been guaranteed by peace accords, the Guatemalan constitution and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In such a situation, community volunteers run community radio with the risk of operating stations without a license. However, favoring indigenous peoples, Cultural Survival has created a network of 80 community radio stations across Guatemala. 18 of which operate as hub stations, coordinating the distribution and production of programs in Mayan languages and Spanish.<sup>51</sup> *“Owned and run by the community, Indigenous community stations are uniquely qualified to choose content representing their interests and cultural norms. Community radio stations strengthen social and economic ties by involving local leaders and community organizations to speak on radio programs. The opportunity to speak Mayan languages over the radio while discussing Mayan issues reinforces pride and interest among the community in maintaining their culture in the face of strong assimilationist pressures.”*<sup>52</sup> According to earlier researchers, participation of indigenous peoples in Guatemalan community radio is affected by telecommunication policy.

The literatures reviewed above mostly discusses indigenous broadcasting histories and techniques of different countries. Ultimately, indigenous media focuses on language, culture and indigenous sustainability. Amplified recognition of indigenous media increases the participation of indigenous peoples in media. In addition, programs produced for or focused on indigenous communities in mainstream media engage indigenous representatives. In the Nepalese context, introducing a media as indigenous is more complex and tricky. Some indigenous media persons and program producers have shared bitter experiences with me in this case. Due to a dispersed population of a particular indigenous group, programs or content cannot be focused enough to

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<sup>51</sup> Community Radio Project: Promoting Indigenous voices and rights on community radio; <http://www.culturalsurvival.org/grp> as of 26 February 2013

<sup>52</sup> See: <http://www.culturalsurvival.org/grp>



indigenous population. It is risky financially when public support and advertisements are the main source of income. Hence, increasing participation of indigenous media, media persons and their content in mainstream media and/or local media has been a key issue for indigenous empowerment in Nepal.

## **2.5 “Cultural Imperialism” and “Technological Determinism”**

Undoubtedly, community media has a power effect on community peoples. Specialists have different views and arguments about the effect of media to indigenous peoples. Usually, media have been customary for empowering indigenous peoples by facilitating them to revitalize language, extending the culture to new generations as well as getting informed of global indigenous issues. In the meantime, some intellectuals notify the destructive collisions of media to the indigenous communities. Many indigenous and non-indigenous writers have suggested that broadcasting media, especially television, plays a negative impact in the lives of native people. They believe that electronic media technology harms native cultures. Cultural imperialism and technological determinism theories are in the same line.

“Theory of cultural imperialism” intimates that cultures of the ‘First world’ export cultural products to societies in the ‘Third’ or ‘Fourth’ world with the goal of eliminating native cultural representations and replacing them with “alien” representations. These representations are in turn supposed to transform the culture so that it loses its autonomy and becomes assimilated into the global capitalist world-system. “... *the media are used as an instrument to promote the ideology of the ruling classes, and to perpetuate the “false consciousness” of the masses.*”<sup>53</sup> This theory assumes that the cultural imperialism process is deliberate, directed, and totally unwanted by the recipient society. It argues the cultural products are forced on the recipient society against their will. It also assumes the receiving culture is powerless to stop the import of these external productions, and the exporting culture uses them as an explicit tool of electronic colonization. As a result, westernized cultural products wither indigenous and native cultures around the globe. There are some critiques from the scholars that the powerful society forces the cultural products by compelling minority cultures to receive it within

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<sup>53</sup> Mizrach S.; 1998

the same country as well. This internal imperialism process is hazardous for indigenous peoples within the country.

On the other hand, the “technological determinism theory” perceives that introduction of new technologies as the primary force to create socio-cultural change. *“If indigenous societies accept technologies from Western societies, their values and beliefs and cultural practices will become like those of the dominant society.”*<sup>54</sup> As long as indigenous peoples accept modern media technologies, they attempt to imitate the majority culture giving less priority to their own culture. It causes cultural assimilation over the course of time. Marshal McLuhan has argued that new technologies of communication change the balance of peoples’ sensory perceptions and even their ideas of authority, identity, or meaning. There is fear of imitation of majority culture by indigenous peoples due to the improper use of media technology within the country.

In my opinion, neither cultural imperialism nor technological determinism is applicable in all indigenous societies. It depends on the ways people think and use media. From the previous section of this chapter, it has been shown that indigenous media in certain developed countries have made radical change in indigenous lifestyle and increased indigenous peoples’ participation on a decision-making level. It is possible that broadcasting media not only have advantages for indigenous peoples but also have risks. Media like radio and televisions, which are one-way channels, may create misunderstandings and more risks because they do not allow people to interact in a reciprocal process like the computer-based digital media does. Consequently, interactive programs transmitted by analog media are fascinating and are more popular for indigenous peoples. Participation of indigenous peoples with sensible motive of enhancing indigenous society and sustaining indigenesness should give positive outcomes. Increasing in participation of such representatives from indigenous communities decreases the risk of cultural imperialism and technological determinism in mass media.



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<sup>54</sup> Mizrach S.; 1998

## **CHAPTER: 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter includes the methodological discussion. The chapter presents the methodologies of this study including the place where the study was conducted, the design used for constructing the research, sampling design used in getting the respondents' size, the subjects, the tools and treatments utilized in analyzing and interpreting the data taken and instrument used in data gathering. The chapter gives an overview of the methodological tools and techniques of the project. It includes planned methods for the fieldwork, execution of methods in the field, and techniques used to collect primary/secondary data.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study uses a descriptive research design aiming to look at the social situation and record as much as possible during the fieldwork. This has led the research through descriptive observation. Descriptive observation, in response to the descriptive question, will include a considerable amount of information about the ethnographer.<sup>55</sup> “Descriptive research design is a scientific method which involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way” (Shuttleworth: 2008). Many scientific disciplines, especially social science and psychology, use this method to obtain a general overview of the subject. Shuttleworth further notes, “Some subjects cannot be observed in any other way; for example, a social case study of an individual subject is a descriptive research design employing both qualitative and quantitative methods and allows observation without affecting normal behavior.” James P. Key (1997: 12), a research fellow at Oklahoma State University argues: “Descriptive research is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe ‘what exists’ with respect to variables or conditions in a situation...which investigates the relationship between variables, to developmental studies which seek to determine changes over time.”

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<sup>55</sup> Spradley J.P.; 1980:76

This project includes the situational study of indigenous people's access, opportunity and the impact of their involvement in community media. It will elaborate on the outcomes of indigenous movements, awareness programs and their effect on indigenous peoples over time. Hence, the research design in the research project seeks to explore the overall scenario of indigenous participation in radio in a descriptive manner.

### **3.2 Selection of the Study Area**

The study area of the *Kavre* district is located in the mid-hill region of Nepal. The landscape varies from plain valleys to high hills. Similarly, the living standard of the people varies from business backgrounds with high standards of living to agro-based poor. As the district is very close to the capital city, Kathmandu, there is easy access to acquire commodities direct from the capital. However, the district sometimes is named as *the place of shade beneath the glowing lamp*<sup>56</sup> because of the poor lifestyles of the people in remote rural areas of the district.

People living in the remote rural areas are mostly from disadvantaged, marginalized, poor and vulnerable groups. Most of the indigenous peoples (Adibasi Janajati) dwell in these areas. Specifically, the Kavre district is known as the land of Tamang origin. The Timal sector of the district is densely populated by Tamangs even today. Newars, living in both urban and rural areas of the district, comprise another major indigenous group. Moreover, Danuwars, Rais, Gurungs and Magars and some other Janajatis live in different parts of the district.

Geographic barriers have limited communication access to the people. Mobile phone towers built in different high mountains have made possible the use of mobile phones as a means of communication in almost every corner of the district. However, distribution of print media such as newspapers is still complicated due to the poor condition of road transportation. Therefore, electronic means of media are common. Among electronic communication, television is comparatively more expensive than radio. Consequently, radio is generally in use almost in every household even in the rural areas. A survey

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<sup>56</sup> The Translation of a Nepali proverb "Batti muniko andhyaaro

made by Radio Namobuddha<sup>57</sup> in 2009 has shown that 92% of the households in the district have radio in their homes. The participation of audiences from rural villages in many of the phone-in radio programs can be taken as evidence of its popularity.

Adibasi Janajatis of Nepal are behind in regards to education as well. The same situation can be found in *Kavre*. Most of the Janajatis of the older generation are illiterate. The youth of the new generation are quite aware of education and therefore the literacy rate of the Janajatis is increasing. However, the education in national language (Nepali) or English language promoted in private boarding schools has dominated the mother-tongue education instead of ethnic languages. In such a situation, at least two of the community-based radios in *Kavre* are purposely educating and awaking indigenous peoples through informative indigenous cultural programs. Other FM radios are realizing the necessity of such programming.

The *Kavre* district was selected as the study area for a few particular reasons. The first reason to select the district is because of its locality. The district is connected with almost all the facilities of the capital city. On the other hand, the district includes remote rural areas of poor villagers and ethnic people. The area was right at the intersection of urban and rural area, so it was possible to observe and generalize the situation of both areas. Since the district is my home district, there was easy access of information and contact with informants. It was wise when considering budget and the length of the fieldwork. The area is also removed from disturbances such as strikes, political programs and movements, which were going on during the fieldwork.

### **3.3 Sources of Data**

This study is based on both primary and secondary data as discussed below:

#### **3.3.1 Primary Data Collection**

Primary data refers to information directly obtained from the investigation. Primary data in this research was mainly collected through structured and unstructured questionnaires.

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<sup>57</sup> Radio Namobuddha is renowned as community radio owned and conducted by locals in Kavre district of Nepal. Since, a large number of members in this community radio are from Tamang community group, the public often refers to Radio Namobuddha as the Tamang Indigenous Radio.

The primary data was required to find out the proportion of indigenous participation as well as programs for their needs and the importance of radio. To fulfill the objectives of the research, the data of indigenous journalists, their position and contribution, number and types of radio programs were collected manually. The population of the district, population of indigenous people and their occupations, size of the radio audience, etc. were collected while surveying administrative offices and radio stations.

### **3.3.2 Secondary Data Collection**

Secondary data has also been obtained from various sources. Among the most significant sources of secondary data is the report entitled “Radio Program Producers on ILO C 169” submitted to the ILO Country Office by Community Radio Support Centre and Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists after an orientation-training program in February 2011. An overview of community radios in Nepal and their efforts of producing programs of indigenous interest especially emphasized by the ILO convention was noted in the report. Other literature such as relevant literature on community radio, relevant research works and journals, newspapers and articles, books and booklets, brochures of the organizations in the targeted area, etc. were collected particularly in Nepal. These reports, records, journals, and articles were obtained from local administrative bodies, public libraries, indigenous media and several related organizations as well as their websites. Furthermore, a considerable quantity of information was obtained from the Internet. Research publications of several organizations, as available, have been thoroughly consulted as secondary data for the study.

### **3.3.3 Sample Size**

Primarily, two sampling techniques have been applied for the selection of the sample. First, a representative area of the entire population of indigenous and ethnic people of the district was selected. It was important to find the area where most of the media personnel live and work. Three municipal areas where local FM radios transmit was the focus area. Secondly, the informants were selected by the convenience sampling technique. It is a sampling method in which units are selected on the basis of ease of access or availability. At least two representatives from all FM radios were prioritized. A list of radio professionals and presenters was created and indigenous radio workers were picked from

the list. Without any mathematical formula, conveniently available candidates at the very moment were preferred. The study was carried out on the basis of the survey method. A small but carefully<sup>58</sup> chosen sample has been used to represent the indigenous population of the district.

### **3.4 Tools and Techniques of Data Collection**

Different methods, tools and techniques of data collection were used to collect the primary data. As a tool of data collection, a set of preset questions was developed with Gunnar Thorvaldsen, the supervisor of this project. Similarly, a checklist was also used to obtain information from key informants. Both planned/designed interviews and unplanned sudden conversations were applied as techniques. To determine the presence of indigenous representative in radio and their use pattern, observations were made during the field visit. Each of above tools is explained below.

#### **3.4.1 Survey**

Media houses survey was conducted with some structured questions. In some situations, unstructured questions had to be asked to clarify unclear answers or information. The following FM stations were surveyed during the fieldwork.

- Radio Namobuddha FM 106.7, Dhulikhel, Kavre, Nepal,
- Radio ABC FM 89.8, Banepa, Kavreplanchowk, Nepal,
- Prime FM 104.5, Banepa, Kavre, Nepal,
- Grace FM 107.6, Dhulikhel, Kavre, Nepal,
- Radio Madhyapurva FM 104, Dhulikhel, Kavre, Nepal,
- Radio Janasanchar FM 107.9, Sanga, Kavre, Nepal,
- Radio Masti FM 87.9, Sanga, Kavre, Nepal

Additionally, one more radio station was recently established during the time of field study. Radio Sephard FM 88.4 is the newest radio in the district and was not surveyed.

Aside from radio stations, media offices and local administrative offices were surveyed during the field visit. Both structured questionnaires and unstructured queries were used

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<sup>58</sup> Carefully in the sense that the selected candidate should preferably be an indigenous representative. But, in some cases non-indigenous representatives are also selected to compare the views and expressions.

as tools to acquire the quantitative data. Some imperative figures such as lists of journalists, radio-workers, means of mass media and program schedule were obtained by the method. A sketch of the coverage area and the quantity of the proposed/targeted audience was assembled. Other basic quantitative information such as age, sex, education, assigned position and the role of individual, etc. have been gathered through household surveys.

### **3.4.2 Interview**

Interviews were an important research tool for this study and were conducted with various individuals. Indigenous radio journalists, station managers, senior journalists, representatives of Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalist (NEFEJ) and the president of Association of Nepalese Indigenous Journalists (ANIJ) etc. were the major respondents for the interviews. Two types of interviews were conducted- face-to-face (oral) interviews and written interviews. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the following respondents:

- Nagendra Lamsal, Media Linkage Officer, NEFEJ
- Suresh Prasad Sainju, Managing Director, Radio Janasanchar
- Ujad Raktim Tamang, District President, ANIJ
- Bhakta Bahadur Syangtan (Tamang), Station Manager, Radio Namobuddha
- Rajendra Timalisina, Managing Director, Radio Madhyapurwa
- Bijay Shrestha, Administration Officer, Grace FM
- Saraswati Shrestha, Program Presenter cum Technician, Radio Namobuddha
- Binod Neupane, Administration Officer, Prime FM
- KB Rana Magar, Technician, Radio ABC
- Kedar Timalisina, Advertisement Chief, Prime FM

Furthermore, sets of questionnaires were distributed to some informants and were collected after obtaining the answers. These written interviews were conducted with the following people:

- Jagat Man Tamang, Program Producer/News Reader, Radio Namobuddha
- Ujad Raktim (Tamang), Reporter, Gorkha FM (Kathmandu),
- Sharmila Shrestha, Program Presenter, Radio Namobuddha
- Chamar Singh Tamang, Program Presenter, Radio Madhyapurwa



Written interviews reviewed various aspects of radio including the history of community radio, participation of community members in radio, opportunities for indigenous people and challenges, condition of indigenous people's participation in radio and possible reasons, etc. All but a few of the interviews were conducted according to a pre-planned schedule. Instruments such as notebook, pen, recorder, mobile phone, and digital camera have been used to record the interview data.

### **3.4.3 Observation**

Observations of the activities, expressions, and behaviors of interviewees were also important for the research and were reviewed accordingly. This method helped acquire some important information from physical and psychological perspectives. During the period of fieldwork, I observed the radio stations and the offices including radio program production and recording, editing and broadcasting of the programs, administrative activities, and the general atmosphere. Observations within two different audience groups were carried out in order to gain the feedback on some typical indigenous radio-programs. This technique was beneficial in recording visible outcomes of the field visit and in determining the physical presence of indigenous journalists in those FM radios.

Participant observation is a key method of data collection for the research study. I surveyed the physical condition of the research site and observed the program activities. In some cases, I participated in daily activities of the local journalist and collected the situational and behavioral information acting as an insider. Meanwhile, I employed 'moderate participation' *which involves seeking a balance between being a part of the activities and observing them*<sup>59</sup> as I also participated in indigenous journalists' gatherings and observed their demands, actions and programs.

### **3.4.4 Focus Group Discussion**

Focus group interviews are less expensive than face-to-face interviews and allow the researcher to observe an interaction among the participants.<sup>60</sup> My impression of this method while applying it during fieldwork was that indigenous participants speak more

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<sup>59</sup> Spradley 1980:60

<sup>60</sup> Berg 1998:104

openly on a topic when they are in a group. A group of indigenous radio journalists formed by the district committee of ANIJ was involved in a group discussion. There were fifteen journalists in the group, and ten representatives actively participated in the discussion. Those who were present but were not participating in the discussion agreed with the points of participants. District level media persons, journalists representing indigenous and non-indigenous communities and representative of the ANIJ actively partook in discussion. Questions asked during these discussions were aimed at answering the research questions.

In a passionate participation of indigenous radio-technicians, presenters, program producers and market representatives, the discussion was productive for research purposes, and many unclear interview answers were clarified by reciprocal interaction. They came with various perspectives on their roles as indigenous professionals and challenges of raising indigenous issues in media. Negligence of indigenous programs and censorship was understood after the discussion and recorded accordingly. The concerns of indigenous journalists were rooted in the traditional pattern of domination of so-called majority or powerful groups.

#### **3.4.5 Selection of Key Information**

From a larger number of informants, a few have been selected to obtain in-depth information regarding participatory history of indigenous representatives, change in the participation model in community radio, management system and change in the attitude of people towards indigenous broadcastings etc. The key informants are station managers, the leader of indigenous journalists, media officers of Community Radio Support Centre and deprived radio employees. In addition, four FM radio stations of the district are chosen for key information.

#### **3.4.6 Field Diary**

I used a handwritten diary to maintain the record of necessary day-to-day observations during field survey. These observations included supporting data not covered by the survey questionnaires, such as important incidents, events and discussions. Significant information obtained by audio-visual means and Internet sources were recorded in diary.

### **3.5 Obstacles and Challenges**

I selected Kavre district of Nepal for the study because it was my hometown area. I believed the selection of the area would best for several reasons. The first and foremost reason was related to accessing information; I was familiar with most of the people of that field, which is related to my study area. This of course made gathering data and information within limited timeframe an easier, cheaper and quicker process. However, a few mentionable practical problems emerged.

- I was more like an insider than an outsider most of the times. My attempts at acting as outsider turned out to frequently be unsuccessful. Interviewees hesitated to answer openly and escaped, stating that I knew the issues better. Thus, some face-to-face interviews were unproductive. In this situation, written interview appeared relatively better.
- I had double the work recording much of the information. All conversations were in Nepali language and almost all information was gathered in Nepali as well and had to be translated later. Unavailability of proper English words for some typical Nepali and other Indigenous words was the other practical problem. Using best available words was the only option in such a situation, which sometimes carries the risk of missing the appropriate point or meaning of the issue.
- In Nepalese context, surnames are the person's ethnic identification. Some radio jockeys and technicians introduce themselves by name or nickname instead of surnames. It was problematic to identify the person as indigenous or non-indigenous from the collected list of radio professionals. To solve this problem, I had to revisit every radio station to verify the list and recognize indigenous and non-indigenous peoples from the list.

Due to the practical problems mentioned above, I had to follow the same questions, issues and persons repetitively in order to clarify unclear situations.

### **3.6 Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analysis**

Not all of the required information can be obtained in terms of numerical forms or quantitative research. So, some information (participation effect, activities and problems,

causes and perceptions of local community etc.) are collected in qualitative form and will be analyzed as such. The qualitative data has been described in derivative and analytical terms.

The collected data have been classified, tabulated and analyzed in terms of simple statistical tools such as frequency, percentage and mean. Descriptive methods have been taken into consideration to meet the basic purpose of the study. Tabulation, charts and diagrams have been used. The gathered data are to be presented in different tables. The frequency tables, ratio table, cross and comparative tabulations have been used for the analysis of the primary data. The research data have been explained to make the research report informative and analytical.



## **CHAPTER: 4**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

This chapter presents the data and information collected from different sources. Primary and secondary data collected throughout field visit and relevant information gathered from Internet source are presented in this chapter. The chapter begins with demographic data of the field area. Moreover, detailed quantitative data and qualitative information are presented. Concentrating the focused area, this chapter brings the result of what I found from fieldwork and study. In quantitative analysis, numerical data presented in a form of tabulation and graphs are analyzed to determine with findings. Qualitative analysis is made with the support of different cases. The chapter notifies the situation and intimates to the conclusion of the study.

#### **4.1 Demography of Kavre**

Geographically located in the hilly region of Nepal, Kavre occupies 1404 square kilometers. The population of the district as per the population census 2011 was 381,937, with 51.5% of the total population female and 48.5% male. The total number of households including institutional households is 80,720. The average household size is 4.73 and population density is 274 per square kilometer.<sup>61</sup>

The major ethnic groups of the district are Tamang, Bramhin, Newar and Chhetri making up 33.78%, 22.79%, 13.03% and 13.30% of the population respectively (Census 2001). It confirms that the indigenous population in the district is higher. Tamang and Newar are the main indigenous peoples of the district. The census shows that 61.7% of the population in the district are Hindus and 38.2% are Buddhists. The main languages spoken in the district are Nepali (49.44%), Tamang (34.24%) and Newari (15.74%). However, the linguists claim that the dominant language, Nepali has had an impact to the speakers of their mother tongue especially in the town area today. Considerable numbers of indigenous youths residing in city areas do not use (some even don't understand) their own historical and traditional scripts. Experts argue that there is a weak government

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<sup>61</sup> National Population and Housing Census 2011, Central Bureau of Statistics; November- 2012: 40

policy and education system; moreover, indigenous youths are often not literate themselves. Although literacy of the 5 years and older age group is 40%, education for rural poor and indigenous peoples and other marginalized is very low. In addition women are more illiterate.

Like the rest of the nation, agriculture is the main occupation of people in the district on which 78.3% depend for subsistence. Other occupations of people in the district are labour (9.06%), salary-based service (3.77%), trade (2.94%), transportation employees (0.75%), cottage industries (0.45%), contractors (0.2%) and others (4.57%)<sup>62</sup>.

The population in the remote rural areas in recent records is decreasing gradually if it is compared to census data of 2001. People of those areas have migrated towards the city, like Panauti, Dhulikhel and Banepa, making these places more crowded. The towns have basic infrastructure to make the citizens' daily life easier, attracting more people towards the town. This process of migration has caused an assimilation of rural culture and tradition.

#### **4.2 Media in Kavre**

The mass media sector is better developed in the district. There are a number of newspapers and FM radios. Good access to the Internet and a private television (Mission Star Television) are other media outlets in Kavre. The table below gives an overview of the quantitative situation of media in the Kavre district of Nepal.

*Table 4.1: Media in Kavre*

| <b>Media</b>         | <b>Quantity</b> |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Newspapers (weekly)  | 18              |
| FM stations          | 8               |
| Online News Portals  | 2               |
| Television (private) | 1               |

*(Source: Federation of Nepalese Journalists, Kavre; 2011)*

<sup>62</sup> "Kavre: Jilla Parswa Chitra", Soiviner of DDC, Kavre, 2002

**Media from Audience Perspectives:** One can determine the effectiveness of media on the basis of flow of audience and their feedback. Sometimes, studies or surveys made in a similar field provide a figure to reflect the situation for situational analysis. A survey conducted by Equal Access Nepal in 2007 has shown that broadcasting media is the most popular among media in Nepal where 64.1% of the total populations prefer radio as the source of information and entertainment compared to 35% who prefer television. Only 0.8% prefers newspapers and 0.1% prefers Internet, as per the survey. Correspondingly, a Baseline Survey on Consciousness and Viewpoint of Listeners in Kavre district conducted by Community Radio Support Centre and Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists in 2009 has highlighted that a great portion of its respondents (92%) have radio sets in their house. From these illustrations, it is clear that radio is the most popular and widely used means of mass media not only in Kavre but also in whole Nepal.

### **4.3 Access of Indigenous Peoples to Infrastructure**

The population of indigenous peoples in the district is more than that of non-indigenous. Tamang inhabiting the Timal area of Kavre made the political leaders propose the area as 'Tamsaling State'. Most of the Tamang settlement areas are economically behind. Newars are the second largest indigenous people by population in the district. Most of the trade and business sectors are handled by Newars. Consequently, Newars are taken as economically advanced among indigenous peoples. Magar, Danuwar, Gurung and some other indigenous communities are also considered as poor communities.

Unlike in the past, indigenous peoples have increased their interest in involvement in the public sector today. Hence, representatives of different indigenous communities are found in the education, health, transportation and communication sectors. Moreover, majority of soldiers serving in Nepal, India, UK and other countries are indigenous peoples. But, only 14% indigenous peoples of Nepal are in the civil services<sup>63</sup>. According to indigenous leaders, there is insufficient attention paid to indigenous interests because of the lack of power in policy-making and/or decision-making. Thus, political leaders representing indigenous communities are in the process of forming an indigenous

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<sup>63</sup> <http://www.nefin.org.np/>, an official website of Indigenous Peoples of Nepal

political party in order to fight for indigenous matters and increase their access to the infrastructures, which were excluded by major mainstream political parties so far.

#### **4.4 Participation of Indigenous Peoples in Mass Media**

An overview of Nepali social structure is incomplete without including different ethnic groups together. However, there is a majority of Bramhn-Chhetri (non-indigenous) in the media sector of Nepal, similar to other sectors (Parajuli and Gautam; 2008:125). Lack of access, lack of awareness, professional insecurity, illiteracy and language problems have been determined as the major problems for indigenous peoples to participate in media sector. Journalist Ramkrishna Karmacharya<sup>64</sup> mentions- “the state has ignored indigenous peoples to provide them training, neither reservation, because of majority of so-called high class people in major responsible positions.” He further stresses- “inclusive policy is necessary now, and the journalism sector cannot be apart of this policy.” Those expressions from the expert indicate that participation of indigenous peoples in journalism sector is quite unfair and inadequate even after the political change of 1990 in Nepal where peoples’ freedom of speech and expression has been guaranteed. Hence, the question raised by indigenous activists, sometimes, comes close to the truth- are indigenous peoples treated as equal citizens of the same country?

New opportunities opened up in Nepal after the people's movement of 1990 restored democracy. The new constitution ensured freedom of the press and the right to information. Consequently, pressure was exerted on the government to formulate appropriate policies, laws and regulations. Establishment of Radio Sagarmatha, in 1997, as the first community radio of the region had the aim of including voices of the voiceless. This community radio had its targeted audiences in rural corners and from all ethnic background. In other words, Radio Sagarmatha broke a tradition of the only broadcasting media and national radio of Nepal, Radio Nepal’s monopoly. Media personalities of Nepal claim it was the first revolutionary step in Nepalese broadcasting history in terms of addressing the people’s issues and increasing people’s participation.

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<sup>64</sup> RamKrishna Karmacharya is the editor of Astitwa Weekly Newspaper, which started publishing in 2027 BS (1970). Karmacharya was the President of the then National Press Club.



Thus, there is more interest from rural people to get involved in media that include indigenous peoples.

As described above, some factors were affecting indigenous people's ability to participate in media professionally. Slowly, indigenous activists focused on awareness among indigenous peoples to increase participation. The Association of Nepalese Indigenous Journalists (ANIJ) was established in 1999 to consolidate all Nepalese indigenous/nationalities journalists to properly address a growing issue for indigenous people. As a result, awareness of indigeniety increased among indigenous peoples. ANIJ started to organize trainings for indigenous journalists. The number of students from indigenous communities rose. According to Bhakta Bahadur Syangtan, the station manager of Radio Namobuddha- increased literacy in indigenous communities has helped to increase the number of journalists in the national as well as local news agencies and broadcasting media today. The situation of indigenous journalists in few Kathmandu-based FM stations is presented in table 4.2 below.

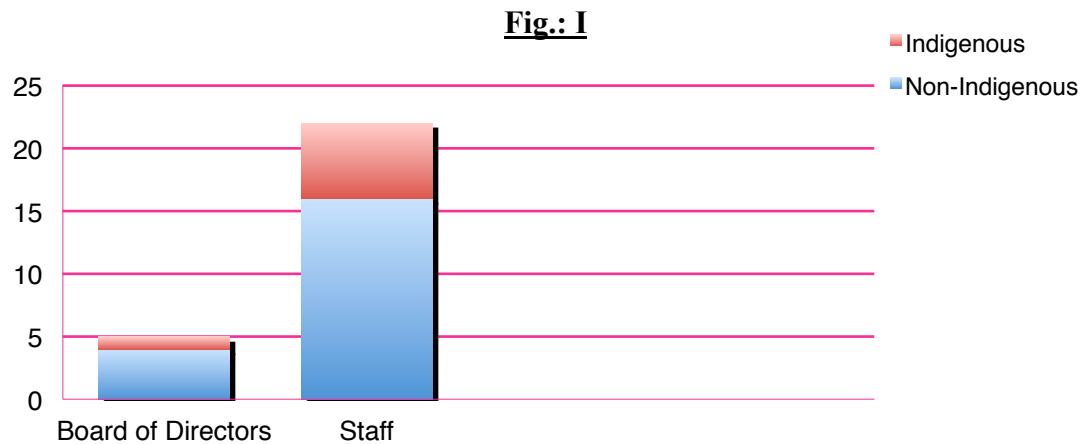
***Table 4.2: Indigenous Journalists in Some Kathmandu-based FM Radios***

| <b>S.No.</b> | <b>Name of FM Stations</b> | <b>Total Journalists</b> | <b>Number of Indigenous Journalists</b> | <b>Percentage of Indigenous Journalists</b> |
|--------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| 1            | Kantipur FM                | 39                       | 3                                       | 7.7   |
| 2            | Sagarmatha FM              | 49                       | 4                                       | 8.2   |
| 3            | KATH FM                    | 61                       | 2                                       | 3.2   |
| 4            | Metro FM                   | 25                       | 4                                       | 16.0  |

(Source: *Nepali Media ma Dalit Tatha Janajati* by Kumar Yatru; 2001.)

The management side of Radio Sagarmatha and Metro FM argue that the entry of indigenous peoples in radio journalism is rare because there is a lack of able manpower to produce indigenous programs via radio transmission (Yatru: 2001:130). However, Ujad Raktim, President of ANIJ district chapter, Kavre and one of the respondents to the survey of this dissertation stated that there are enough skilled manpower from indigenous communities today but fewer opportunities for indigenous peoples.

The following diagram displays the current situation of professionals from indigenous peoples in Radio Nepal, the national radio of Nepal.



*Source: <http://radionepal.org.np/> as on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012*

Radio Nepal is the national radio station of Nepal that covers 70-80% of the total population, transmitting programs from different stations all over the country. The only government owned radio has very few indigenous (Janajati) members on the board. There is only 20% Janajati's participation in board of directors and 27.3% in staff. The most important thing is, the greatest number of Janajati professionals is in technical sector rather than front desk, information and management sector. This signifies that indigenous peoples have substantial role but are under pressure and control of non-indigenous even in the government owned radio yet. Since my area of study is the Kavre district of Nepal, I am focusing the discussion towards the particular area for now.

#### **4.5 Overview of FM Radios in Kavre District**

There has been remarkable growth in both private and non-for-profit radio in Nepal from 1997: 216 licenses have been issued as of July 2007 with 78 FM stations broadcasting; of 93 licenses issued to non-profit groups, 31 were operational as of May 2007 (Subba; 2007:4). By 2009 the government had licensed 380 radio stations. However, according to the Ministry of Information and Communications, only 319 of these were actually on air

in 2011. (infoasaid, 2011:12). As my focus is on indigenous peoples' participation in FM radios of Kavre, a short description about the local FM stations of the district is essential.

#### **4.5.1 Radio Namobuddha**

Radio Namobuddha FM 106.7 MHz is a 100 watts capacity radio. Radio Namobuddha is the first community broadcasting station in the Kavre district adjoining transmission in some parts of other neighbouring districts. This radio was first on air in September 2006. A community organization Jugal Association Nepal (JAN) is the parental organization of this community radio. In their own words, "Radio Namobuddha concentrates more on news, views and brainstorming sessions." Entertainment too is given an equal importance.

Radio Namobuddha is commonly known as the indigenous radio in the district. According to the experts, the credit of initiation of founding the organization and attaining the concept of community radio in Kavre goes Tamang community members. Radio Namobuddha is the result. In other words, Radio Namobuddha is dubbed "Tamang's Radio" by a large number of radio listeners in the district. However, station manager of Radio Namobuddha argues, "It is not only the Tamang's radio but also Nepalese Radio". Nonetheless, its objective of facilitating democratization and pluralism by increasing people's access to information and continuously advocating for human rights and indigenous peoples' rights is remarkable from the indigenous point of view.

#### **4.5.2 Radio ABC**

Araniko Broadcasting Corporation Radio is known as Radio ABC for short. With the catchphrase of "Madhya Pahadko Aawaz" (Voice of the Mid-hill) this radio was established in November 2007. Radio ABC 89.8 MHz has a capacity of 500 watt, which is the largest in the district. On the base of its capacity, the management of this radio claims that its transmission is wide spreading in more than 16 districts including 8 mid-hilly districts and that it has the biggest coverage among the local stations of the region.

Radio ABC broadcasts informative, educational and entertaining programs. It aims to promote languages, culture and literature, traditional arts and architecture. It also

attempts to discourage one-way communication and encourages making the media sector a common forum of all multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multicultural groups. Prioritizing the voices of the minority, indigenous and voiceless peoples are among its objectives. Radio ABC is organized by a community organization named Chetana Nepal.

#### **4.5.3 Prime FM**

With a slogan of *a place of your feelings*, Prime FM 104.5 MHz was established in February 2010 under a community organization called Eye Communication Centre. It has the main objective of assuring the fundamental rights to be noticed as well as to enlarge the information and communication among the citizen of the peripheral area of Kavre district. This FM supports information of the sovereign, prosperous and eligible society. The management team of this FM has a policy of supporting marginalized citizens in their economic, social, cultural, educational, health and environmental development.

It broadcasts information and news, programs related to developmental activities and entertainment, art, culture, music and literature<sup>65</sup>. Utilizing its 100 watts capacity it covers the area of almost 8 districts of Bagmati zone (Kavre, Sindhupalchowk, Rasuwa, Dhading, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur) and its periphery.

#### **4.5.4 Grace FM**

Grace FM 107.6 MHz was established in August 2009 with an aspiration of including the voice of the rural voiceless people. Therefore, it has affixed a slogan of *'Equality, creativity and peace, inclusive voice of radio'*. Located in its studio office in Dhulikhel, the district-headquarter, Grace FM was founded under the social organization named "Aashako Sandesh Nepal" This FM was known as news-based FM at first because it was the first community radio in Kavre to broadcast news every hour. After all, it broadcasts informative, entertaining and knowledge-based programs during its on-air period from 5:30 AM to 23:00 PM everyday. The transmitter power of this FM is 100 watts, and its coverage area is Kavre and the surrounding districts. Infoasaid has mentioned that Grace FM is also known as Christian station.

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<sup>65</sup> (<http://primefm.com.np/prime/about-us/> as on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012)

Recently some FM stations have been started by religious groups. Kathmandu now has a Hindu station, FM Adhyatmajyoti (which describes its content as ‘spiritual’), and a Christian station Good News FM. There is another Christian station, Grace FM in Dhulikhel. - <http://infoasiad.org/guide/nepal/radio-overview>

The operation team of this radio declares that they are not influenced by any religious organization and they are broadcasting all types of informative, academic, entertaining programs of all cultural, religious groups with equal priority.

#### **4.5.5 Radio Janasanchar**

Radio Janasanchar FM 107.9 MHz has 100 watts of transmission power. Although its formal office, Janasanchar Griha, is located in Bhaktapur; the transmitter and the station of this radio is in the Sanga Height of Kavre district. This radio came on air in March 2010 proclaiming “*People’s voice, People’s Idea*”. Together with entertainment, this radio aims to train, educate and enlighten people. This radio is publicly known as Newar’s indigenous radio. However, Suresh Sainju, the Station Manager denies it, takes it as allegation and argues- “Even though there is majority of Newars in management team, our programs are focused on all groups and communities, most of the programs are in Nepali language. Hence, the blame of “Newar’s Radio” is just to discourage and dominate us in society.” The frequency of this radio covers Kathmandu Valley, Kavre and certain parts of Ramechhap, Sindhuli, Sindhupalchowk and Nuwakot districts. Information and entertainment are the main focus areas of programming on this radio station.

#### **4.5.6 Radio Madhyapurwa**

A social organization named “Araniko Jagaran Manch” decided to transmit a radio in Kavre and went on-air in April 2010, which was Radio Madhyapurwa FM 104.0 MHz. It began the programming of entertainment programs. Slowly, it included informative, cultural, educational and literature-based programs. This radio has 100 watts of transmission power and targets its coverage to whole parts of Kavre, 80% of the area of Sindhupalchowk, 40% of Dolakha, 30% of Ramechhap and some parts of Sindhuli and Rautahat districts. According to Rajendra Timalina, Station Manager of Radio

Madhyapurwa, this radio has more non-indigenous listeners than indigenous and the management is not supposed to specify any programs for indigenous communities.

#### **4.5.7 Radio Masti**

Radio Masti FM 87.9 MHz is only the radio station in the Kavre district with non-stop musical programs. This radio is founded by a group of youths under a private organization named AD Plan Private Limited. With 100 watts capacity, this radio started broadcasting in early 2011. “Masti” meaning fun is the principal aim of this radio. It has the slogan of *Full Doze of Masti, Radio Masti*. According to Bipin Dhungana, the Managing Director of Radio Masti; “whenever and wherever you tune our radio, you will enjoy the music.” Radio Masti broadcasts non-stop entertainment programs without any consideration or discrimination to any social or ethnic communities. Youths of all ethnic groups are its targeted listeners. However, it does not prioritize entertainments in any indigenous languages. Its coverage is Kavre, Sindhupalchowk, and some surrounding districts including the Kathmandu Valley.

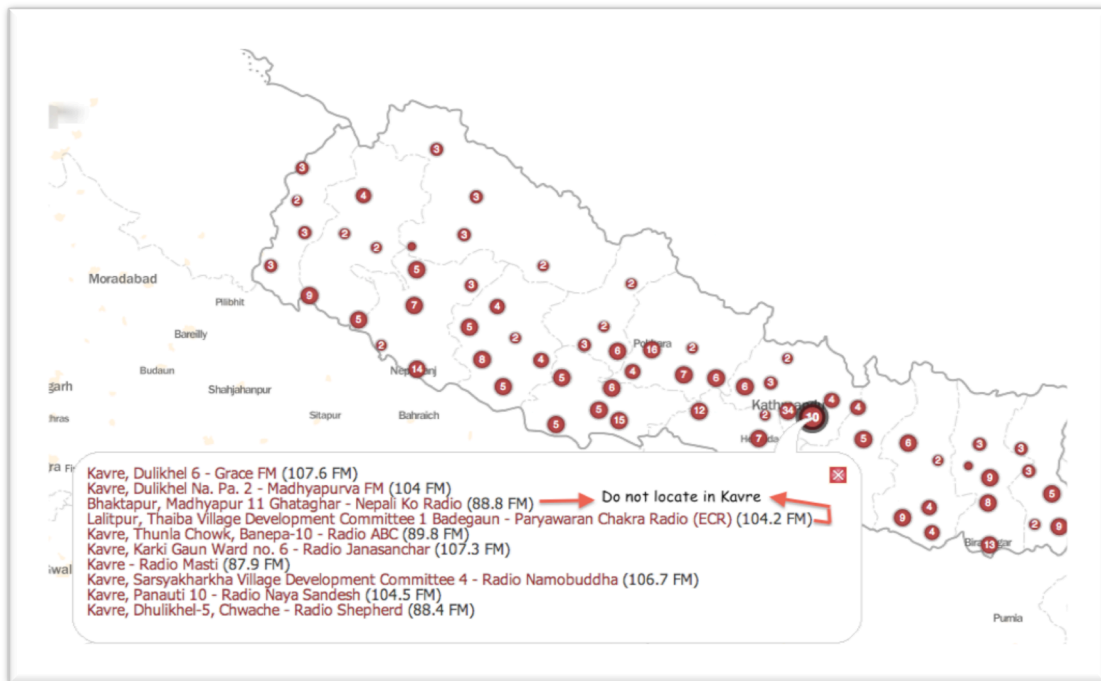
#### **4.5.8 Radio Shepherd**

Even though the government had licensed Radio Shepherd FM 88.4 MHz a bit earlier, this radio was inaugurated (went on air) on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2011. Right at the time when I was in fieldwork, Radio Shepherd initiated its trial broadcast. This radio has the transmission power of 50 watts and its focuses the rural areas of Kavre and its periphery. The detailed information of its programming was unavailable at the time.

Seven FM stations out of eight declare themselves as community radios but not commercial stations. However, a guide published by infoasiad (a DFID-funded project that is being implemented by a consortium of two media development organizations - Internews and BBC Media Action) has mentioned that most radio stations outside of Kathmandu, both commercial and community provide the same kind of service. As infoasaid states:

*FM stations are generally classified, unofficially, as either commercial or community radios. The government does not categorise them in this way when granting licenses, but the radio stations generally brand themselves as one or the*

other. Stations that are owned by individuals or profit-seeking companies are deemed to be commercial. Those that are owned and operated by non-profit making groups – such as professional associations and NGOs – describe themselves as community radios. However, in terms of staffing and programming there is very little difference between them.



Source: infoasaid.org

Almost all FM stations in Kavre are in operation under the name of a community organization. Those organizations have the common mission of providing service to the community. They are quite clear at least in social integrity, unity and equality. Surprisingly, there are some indigenous and ethnic organizations in the district but their involvement in radio operation or program production does not exist. The Association of Nepalese Indigenous Journalists even has no organizational involvement in broadcasting activities. However, there are some members of the association involved in radio as program presenters, technicians or journalists.

More interestingly, all FM radios have directly or indirectly emphasized an inclusion of peoples from all communities. Moreover, the objective of almost every FM broadcasters is commonly to promote the voices of voiceless. It's thus important to identify whether

the writings and policy documents are actually implemented. These issues will be discussed with the results of primary data in next section of this chapter.

Different radio stations and their mother organizations have different characteristics and qualities. Some FM radios have strengthened their coverage area by operating websites. Hence, those radios have more listeners even outside the coverage of their transmitter, mostly abroad. The following radio stations of Kavre have websites and thus have online listeners too.

**Table 4.3: Websites of FM Radios**

| S.No. | Name of Radios   | Website  | Facilities        |
|-------|------------------|--|-------------------|
| 1     | Radio ABC        | <a href="http://www.radioabcnepal.com">www.radioabcnepal.com</a>     | Live programs     |
| 2     | Radio Namobuddha | <a href="http://www.radionamobuddha.org">www.radionamobuddha.org</a> | Recorded programs |
| 3     | Prime FM         | <a href="http://www.primefm.com.np">www.primefm.com.np</a>           | Live programs     |
| 4     | Grace FM         | <a href="http://www.gracefm.com.np">www.gracefm.com.np</a>           | Live Programs     |
| 5     | Radio Shepherd   | <a href="http://www.radioshepherd.org">www.radioshepherd.org</a>     | Live programs     |

*(Source: Own Field Survey, May 2011 & respective websites)*

Some FM radios broadcast a few programs in local languages too. Radio Namobuddha has included programs in Tamang, Newar, Danuwar and Hyolmo languages in radio programs. Radio ABC and Prime FM broadcast some hours of program in Tamang language and Newari music. Radio Janasanchar produces and transmits programs in Newari language. This points to the inclusion of indigenous programming and shows they have realized that their listeners are from different ethnic, cultural and language groups. However, it is still important to talk about the types of programs in local languages and their impact to the particular community, which will be discussed in the next section of this chapter. In order to focus on the particular issue and concentrate on the research objective, four FM stations out of eight stations will be the focus of the continued research.



*Table: 4.4*

| <b>S. No.</b> | <b>Selected FM Radios for the Research</b> | <b>Reasons for Inclusion</b>  |
|---------------|--|---|
| 1             | Radio Namobuddha                           | - Tamang's majority in management and operation team,<br>- The first community broadcasting station of the district                                       |
| 2             | Radio ABC                                  | - Objective of prioritizing the voices of indigenous, minority and voiceless groups,<br>- Radio with biggest transmission power and wide area of coverage |
| 3             | Radio Janasanchar                          | - Managed by Newar community members<br>- Popularly known as Newar's radio  |
| 4             | Prime FM                                   | - Broadcasting programs in few local and indigenous languages   |

Although I have surveyed and interviewed with representatives of all FM radios of Kavre, choosing four stations helps to focus on the related information from the gathered data. The officials of each and every radio confessed that they are genuinely addressing the indigenous demands through their media. The judgment of this issue is tough because there are different angles of inspections of such cases because the claims of the media industry runs contrary to the arguments of indigenous activists. Despite this, my research is focused on involvement of indigenous peoples in FM radios and its impact to the indigenous community. The explanation of data of the selected four FM radios, in the next section, will contribute the general scenario of the case.

#### **4.6 Analysis of Primary Data**

I am going to present the quantitative data first in this section. The main purpose of formulating the quantitative survey is to find out the numerical difference of participation between indigenous and non-indigenous media persons. As the census data has shown a higher population of indigenous peoples in the district, the situation of representation in

media and whether it is justifiable will be displayed by data. The qualitative aspects will be discussed afterwards.

#### 4.6.1 Indigenous Journalists in FNJ- Kavre

The Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ) is an umbrella organization of all Nepalese journalists. It is a professional representative body of all media persons working in print, electronic and online media across the country. It opens application for membership from all the districts every year to identify the new journalists and bring them under the same umbrella. It elects a working committee for every three years. The status of indigenous and non-indigenous members in the working committee of Federation of Nepalese Journalists, Kavre is shown in the following table.

*Table: 4.5: Members in Working Committee of FNJ, Kavre*

| Description                        | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Indigenous                         | 3      | 21.43 %    |
| Non-indigenous (Bramhin & Chhetri) | 10     | 71.43 %    |
| Dalit (untouchable)                | 1      | 7.14 %     |
| Total Members                      | 14     | 100 %      |

*(Source: Own Field Survey, May 2011)*

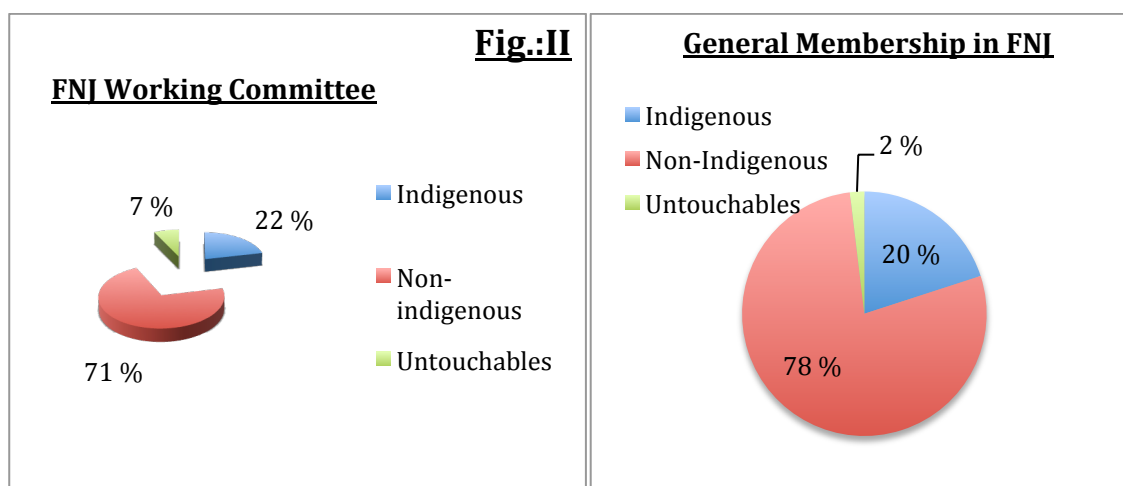
**Findings:** Out of 14, only 3 members are Janajati (Indigenous). Direct voting among members elects 2 of them and one is appointed in the indigenous reserved quota by the board. All of them are Tamang Janajatis whereas there are no representatives from other indigenous communities such as Newar, Gurung, Danuwar, etc. Only 21.42% of the members in the Federation of Nepalese Journalists, Kavre are indigenous (Tamangs) whereas the population of indigenous peoples in the district is higher than non-indigenous. All major positions (President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer) are held by non-indigenous (Bramhins & Chhetris). This figure shows that participation of indigenous peoples is not satisfactory in working committee of the organization.

Following table shows the general members pattern of the Federation.

**Table 4.6: General Membership in FNJ, Kavre**

| Description                                   | Number | Percentage |
|---|--------|------------|
| Indigenous Members                            | 21     | 20.00 %    |
| Non-indigenous Members<br>(Bramhin & Chhetri) | 82     | 78.10 %    |
| Dalits (Untouchables)                         | 2      | 1.90 %     |
| Total Members                                 | 105    | 100 %      |

(Source: Own Field Survey; May 2011)



Generally, the membership of FNJ is the official identification of journalists. However, all the journalists may not be members of FNJ. Some media can appoint the media persons as per their need and it is not necessary that the person should be the member of FNJ. Nevertheless, (s)he can be eligible for obtaining FNJ's membership. The above table of classification of journalists of Kavre according to FNJ's membership shows that the majority of journalists are from the Bramhin & Chhetri communities in general.

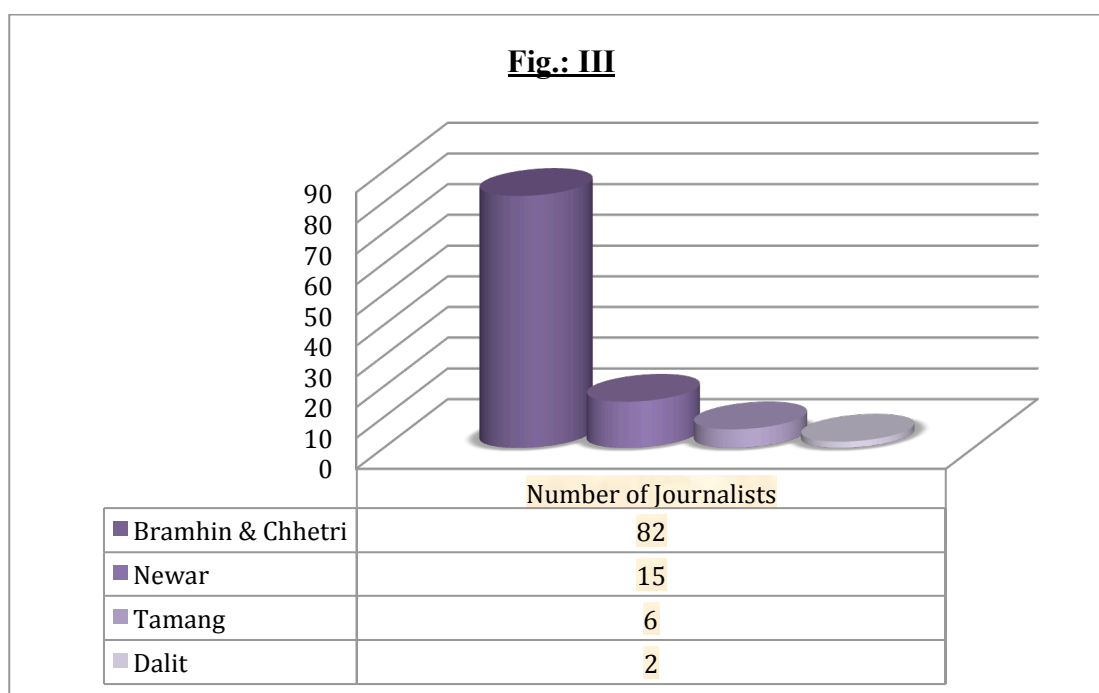
The following table further divides the indigenous members into various ethnicities.

**Table 4.7: Classification of Indigenous Journalists by Ethnicity**

| Ethnic Group | Number of Journalists | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Tamang       | 6                     | 28.57 %    |
| Newar        | 15                    | 71.43 %    |
|              |                       |            |
| Total        | 21                    | 100 %      |

(Source: Own Field Survey; May 2011)

**Findings:** The Bramhin & Chhetri communities making up 36.35% of the total population has the largest number of journalists in the district. Whereas, indigenous people’s representation in journalism is relatively poor even though the population of indigenous peoples in the district, collectively, is more than 60%. This shows that the mechanism for communication is mostly controlled by non-indigenous. Among indigenous, Tamang’s population is more than Newar’s population in the district. However, the portion of journalists is the reverse with more from the Newar community. There is zero representation from other indigenous groups other than Tamang and Newar while there are more than 50 ethnic groups inhabiting in the district.



Hence, the participation of journalist from indigenous and ethnic communities is not consistent with their population. The above lists of journalists include all journalists of print, electronic and online media. Likewise, some of them are the district correspondants of national mainstream media.

#### 4.6.2 Indigenous Media-persons in FM Radios of Kavre

As stated above, four FM stations are selected for the study, and there will be discussion about indigenous involvement in radio, as journalists, staff and the media-persons in this segment. However, for the situational analysis of the inclusive management of all the radios, indigenous participation in the managerial post of all FM radios of Kavre is displayed below.

**Table 4.8: Indigenous Participation in Managerial positions of FM Radios**

| S.No. | Name of FM Radio  | Name                | Position          | Ethnicity of the Manager | Indigenous/Non-indigenous |
|-------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1     | Radio ABC         | Rajan Luitel        | Managing Director | Brahmin                  | Non-indigenous            |
| 2     | Radio Namobuddha  | Bhakta Syangtan     | Station Manager   | Tamang                   | Indigenous                |
| 3     | Prime FM          | Ashok Byanju        | Managing Director | Newar                    | Indigenous                |
| 4     | Radio Janasanchar | Suresh Sainju       | Managing Director | Newar                    | Indigenous                |
| 5     | Grace FM          | Keshav Luitel       | Station Manager   | Brahmin                  | Non-indigenous            |
| 6     | Radio Madhyapurwa | Rajendra Timalisina | Station Manager   | Brahmin                  | Non-indigenous            |
| 7     | Radio Masti       | -                   | Station Manager   | Brahmin                  | Non-indigenous            |
| 8     | Radio Shepherd    | Narayan Joshi       | Manager           | Newar                    | Indigenous                |

(Source: Own Field Survey, May 2011)

**Findings:** FM radios in Kavre have Janjati (Indigenous) managers as much as Gair-Janajati (Non-indigenous). This shows indigenous people are able to handle and manage

the media. Normally, indigenous people are given such opportunity not because they are indigenous but of the trust on them that they are able. Tamang and Newar seem forward in media's management committee and other ethnic group's participation is poor.

The following table presents the participation of indigenous people as chiefs in technical sector of radio.

**Table 4.9: Indigenous Peoples as Chiefs in Technical Sector of Radio**

| S.No. | Name of FM Radio  | Name of Technician  | Position          | Ethnicity | Indigenous/Non-indigenous |
|-------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 1     | Radio ABC         | K.B. Ranamagar      | Chief Technician  | Magar     | Indigenous                |
| 2     | Radio Namobuddha  | Sisir Dong          | Senior Technician | Tamang    | Indigenous                |
| 3     | Prime FM          | Ram Chandra Danuwar | Chief Technician  | Danuwar   | Indigenous                |
| 4     | Radio Janasanchar | Suresh Sainju*      | Main Technician   | Newar     | Indigenous                |

\*Suresh Sainju, the Station Manager was temporarily working as a technician at the time of survey while Radio Janasanchar was looking for a new technician at the time.

**Findings:** Participation of indigenous peoples as radio technician is impressive. There is representation of different indigenous communities (i.e. Danuwar, Tamang, Newar, Magar) radio's technical support. Indigenous youths are technically skilled and able to produce radio programming.

Now, for a comparative analysis, participation of indigenous peoples in FM radios among total staff including directors is presented in a table below.

**Table 4.10: Indigenous Staff in FM Radios**

| S. No. | Name of FM Radios | Total Staffs | Indigenous | Non-indigenous |
|--------|-------------------|--------------|------------|----------------|
| 1      | Radio ABC         | 38           | 8          | 30             |
| 2      | Radio Namobuddha  | 30           | 25         | 5              |
| 3      | Prime FM          | 24           | 8          | 16             |
| 4      | Radio Janasanchar | 23           | 19         | 4              |

*(Source: Own Field Survey, May 2011)*

The above table shows that Radio ABC and Prime FM have a higher number of staff members that represent non-indigenous community whereas Radio Namobuddha and Radio Janasanchar have a large number of staff members representing indigenous communities.

**Findings:** Radio ABC includes 78.95% of their staff from non-indigenous but only 21.05% from indigenous peoples. Prime FM has 66.67% of their staff from non-indigenous communities but only 33.33% from indigenous. Radio Namobuddha and Radio Janasanchar are at the forefront in terms of recruiting indigenous peoples. Representation of Janajatis in staffing of Radio Namobuddha and Radio Janasanchar are 83.33% and 82.6% respectively.

This encouraging mode of participation is a positive sign of opportunities to indigenous peoples. Surprisingly, the number of indigenous staff is higher than non-indigenous collectively. Still, questions like which of the indigenous communities exists in higher quantity, what sorts of positions do indigenous representatives hold are matters of discussions because that determines the impact of their presence. A detailed table of participation portion and job types is presented in Appendix 2.

The 2011 national population census has recorded 60 ethnic groups inhabiting the Kavre district. The census has also identified more than 40 Janajatis living in the district. However, there seems little participation of Jannjatis in radio. Participation of Tamangs and Newars is higher. There are few participants from Magar and Danuwar in few radios while the presence of Majhi, Sherpa, Hyolmo and Jirel only in Radio Namobuddha

indicate the inequal opportunities. This explanation is based on the quantitative data presented above only. The number of participants from different indigenous groups in radio is as follows:

**Table 4.11: Participation in Radio from Different Indigenous Groups:**

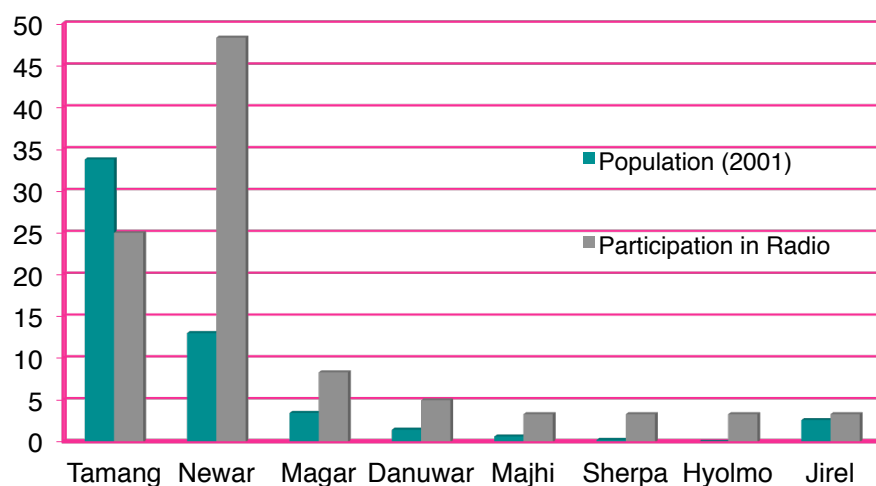
|                    | Radio ABC | Radio Namobuddha | Prime FM | Radio Janasanchar | Total     |
|--------------------|-----------|------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| <b>Newar</b>       | 4         | 4                | 3        | 18                | 29        |
| <b>Tamang</b>      | 1         | 11               | 2        | 1                 | 15        |
| <b>Magar</b>       | 3         | 1                | 1        | -                 | 5         |
| <b>Danuwar</b>     | -         | 1                | 2        | -                 | 3         |
| <b>Majhi</b>       | -         | 2                | -        | -                 | 2         |
| <b>Sherpa</b>      | -         | 2                | -        | -                 | 2         |
| <b>H Yolmo</b>     | -         | 2                | -        | -                 | 2         |
| <b>Jirel</b>       | -         | 2                | -        | -                 | 2         |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>8</b>  | <b>25</b>        | <b>8</b> | <b>19</b>         | <b>60</b> |

*(Source: Own Field Survey, May 2011)*

**Findings:** Participants from the Newar community have the highest participation rate (48.33%) among the indigenous peoples though their population is less than Tamang's population in the district. Tamang's, having highest population in the district (33.78%), are the second higher position in FM radios by number. Newars and Tamangs are found in all FM radios whereas Magars are in 3, Danuwars in 2 and Majhi, Sherpa, Hyolmo and Jirel are found in Radio Namobuddha only. The participation of Tamang, Magar and Danuwar indigenous communities is 25%, 8.33%, and 5% respectively. Majhi, Sherpa, Hyolmo and Jirel are representing the same portion of 3.33% each.

The following diagram shows the comparison between the population of indigenous peoples and the number of participants in FM radios from the particular indigenous communities.





Representatives from the Tamang community in radio are less than the overall population. The rest of the indigenous communities have better participation in comparison to the population of particular community.

#### 4.6.3 Indigenous Programs in FM Radios of Kavre

Representation or physical appearance cannot guarantee improved spread of indigenous voices. Do representatives from indigenous communities appear on radio as indigenous, and are they allowed to broadcast programs of, from, and for indigenous people? This question is unanswered as of yet. Hence, display of program patterns is necessary.

*Table 4.12: Radio Programs for Indigenous Peoples*

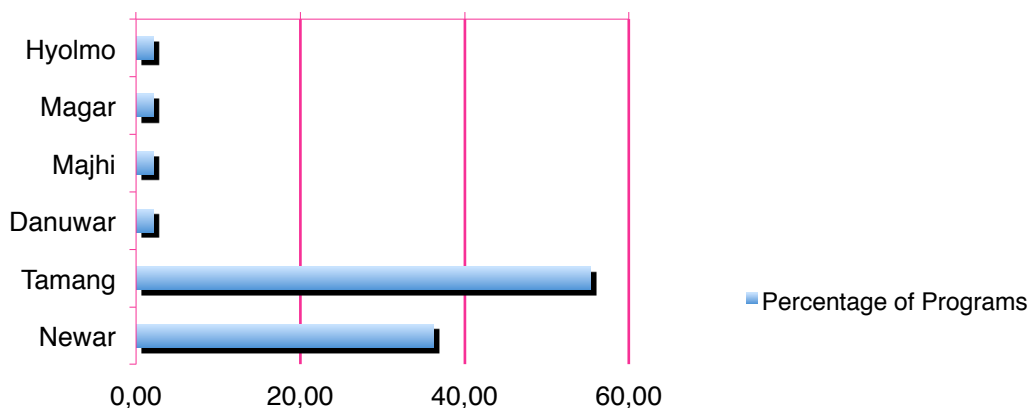
|                                       | Radio ABC  | Radio Namobuddha | Prime FM   | Radio Janasanchar | Grand Total |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Total Broadcast Hours (Weekly)</b> | <b>119</b> | <b>98</b>        | <b>112</b> | <b>119</b>        | <b>448</b>  |
| <b>Newari Program (Hours)</b>         | 0.5        | 3.5              | 0.5        | 4                 | <b>8.5</b>  |
| <b>Tamang Program (Hours)</b>         | 0.5        | 11               | 0.5        | 1                 | <b>13</b>   |
| <b>Danuwar Program (Hours)</b>        | 0          | 0.5              | 0          | 0                 | <b>0.5</b>  |
| <b>Majhi Program (Hours)</b>          | 0          | 0.5              | 0          | 0                 | <b>0.5</b>  |
| <b>Magar Program (Hours)</b>          | 0          | 0.5              | 0          | 0                 | <b>0.5</b>  |
| <b>Hyolmo Program (Hours)</b>         | 0          | 0.5              | 0          | 0                 | <b>0.5</b>  |
| <b>Total Hours For IPs (Weekly)</b>   | <b>1</b>   | <b>16.5</b>      | <b>1</b>   | <b>5</b>          | <b>23.5</b> |

*(Source: Field Survey, May 2011)*

**Findings:** Only 5.25% of the total radio programs are targeted at indigenous peoples. And, Radio Namobuddha alone broadcasts 70.21% of the total indigenous programs. Radio Namobuddha and Radio Janasanchar broadcast 16.8% and 4.2% of programs about indigenous peoples and their issues, respectively. Radio ABC and Prime FM transmit less than 1 % (0.8% and 0.9%, respectively) of programming about indigenous peoples, rights and issues. Among the programs of indigenous peoples, Radio Namobuddha covers more of the Tamang’s issues (11 hours per week) while Radio Janasanchar covers more of the Newar’s issues (4 hours per week). Radio ABC and Prime FM include half an hour Newari programming and half an hour of Tamang programming per week, which is unfair to compared to other groups. Radio Namobuddha alone distributes for Danuwar, Majhi, Magar and Hyolmo programs, and at only half an hour per week.

The following diagram depicts the distribution of programs for various indigenous groups in percentage.

**Fig.: V**



Data reflects that indigenous programs in radio are not enough to empower indigenous peoples. Moreover, most of the indigenous programs are entertainment type programs. It is important to categorize programs in such a way that they encourage empowerment and indigenous sovereignty.

“Newa Dabu” is a half hour Newari program on Radio ABC every week. Similarly, Prime FM broadcasts “Newa Sha”, a Newari program, half an hour every week. Both are

completely entertaining programs talking about Newar youths, their romantic music and normal conversations in Newari language. “Largyung” and “Tamang Karyakram” are Tamang programs transmitted by Radio ABC and Prime FM respectively. Those programs are exclusively entertaining programs too. Hence, Radio ABC and Prime FM are broadcasting limited programs in limited indigenous languages for fun more than for empowerment. However, some programs in Radio Namobuddha and Radio Janasanchar enhance cultural and political awareness for indigenous peoples. Moreover, Radio Namobuddha airs news in one of the indigenous languages (Tamang) every day. Radio Janasanchar produces and broadcasts Newari programs more than other indigenous programs. Majhi, Danuwar, Hyolmo and Magar programs in Radio Namobuddha are for cultural awareness and entertainment for the particular community, according to the authorities of stations. All indigenous programs are in the language of particular indigenous communities. Therefore, use of indigenous languages in radio is similar to the proportion of indigenous programs. There is no case in any of the radios in Kavre that indigenous programs are produced and announced by non-indigenous journalists.

The following table shows the types of indigenous programs in different radios.

**Table 4.13**

|                                    | Radio<br>Namobuddha | Radio<br>Janasanchar | Radio ABC | Prime FM |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------|
| Total Indigenous Programs          | 18                  | 5                    | 2         | 2        |
| Entertainment Programs             | 7                   | 2                    | 2         | 2        |
| News                               | 1                   | -                    | -         | -        |
| Indigenous Political               | 2                   | 1                    | -         | -        |
| Indigenous Cultural                | 4                   | 1                    | -         | -        |
| Indigenous Rights &<br>Sovereignty | 4                   | 1                    | -         | -        |
|                                    |                     |                      |           |          |

*(Source: Field Survey, May 2011)*

This shows that most of the programs are entertainment. News for indigenous peoples in their own language is of least priority. Radio Namobuddha broadcasts Tamang news once in a day, which is the one and only news program in the indigenous mother tongue. Other radio stations claim that they also broadcast news of indigenous issues considerably, though they are in national language. Political, cultural and issues of indigenous rights are addressed to some extent by other radio stations too but mostly in majority language (Nepali) with minimal priority.

#### 4.6.4 Indigenous Participation and Indigenous Programs

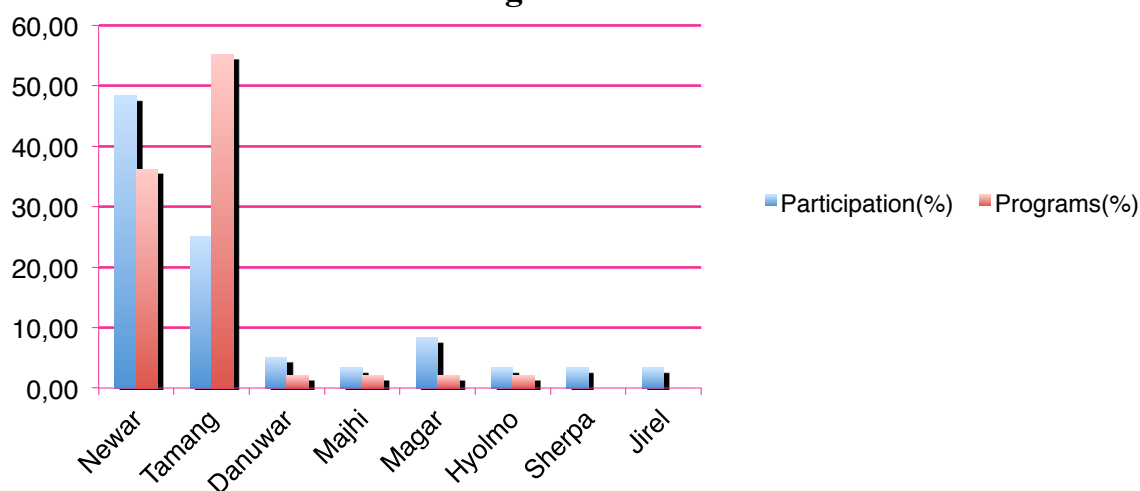
Generally, inclusion of indigenous peoples in media should make some difference in raising their own issues. Regarding FM radios in Kavre district of Nepal, not only the general staff but also the chairpersons of the majority of radio stations are indigenous representatives. This is the subject of pride for indigenous peoples and also an opportunity for them. However, due to practical difficulties, sometimes, the situations do not go smoothly. The table below compares the participation of indigenous peoples and the percentage of indigenous radio programs.

*Table 4.14*

|         | Participation (%) | Programs (%) | Remarks                  |
|---------|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Newar   | 48.33             | 36.2         |                          |
| Tamang  | 25                | 55.2         |                          |
| Danuwar | 5                 | 2.12         |                          |
| Majhi   | 3.33              | 2.12         |                          |
| Magar   | 8.33              | 2.12         |                          |
| Hyolmo  | 3.33              | 2.12         |                          |
| Sherpa  | 3.33              | -            | Appointed for future use |
| Jirel   | 3.33              | -            | Appointed for future use |

*(Source: Field Survey, May 2011)*

**Fig.: VI**



**Findings:** Newari programs are less than the proportion of participation. On the other hand, Tamang programs are greater than the portion of participation. Danuwar, Majhi and Hyolmo have little difference between the proportion of their participation and programs. There is higher participation from Magar but programs are as equal for Danuwar, Majhi and Hyolmo. Sherpa and Jirel people have no radio programs as of yet, though there are some representatives from those indigenous communities in some radio.

Hence, appearance of indigenous peoples in media does not always act equivalently to raise their voices and make their voices heard. Different factors and consequences play various roles in making the majority of indigenous participants voiceless. This will be further discussed in the qualitative section.

#### **4.7 Qualitative Analysis**

Radio is the source of information and entertainment in most of the households in Nepal. People use radio for different purposes at different places. Radio remained an important medium of information and knowledge until the 1980s. Early on, radio was the only source of information and was primarily tuned for news. This was later challenged by the newspaper first and the television later. Eventually, radio has been able to restore its popularity with the introduction of FM. Nowadays radio is not merely been an empty vessel to kill time, but a part of life itself. <sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Parajuli, S.; Seven Decades of Radio Listening in Nepal; 2007:61

History of broadcasting media ascertains that indigenous peoples of Nepal are underprivileged. Radio Nepal, the national broadcasting service of Nepal, ignored indigenous languages other than Nepali for years at the beginning. Ultimately, the trend changed. Mainly, local and regional community radio stations tried to avoid the negligence towards ethnic communities. Some broadcasting media are struggling to introduce indigenous media today. The quantitative situation of indigenous participation and radio programming of indigenous peoples in FM radios of Kavre district was analyzed in the previous section, and there readers can review general ideas about the case. Sometimes, the quantitative study shows the decent scenario while the quality of the situation does not accept it. For that reason, qualitative discussion is predictable in social anthropology. I will review six different cases<sup>67</sup> that highlight the situation of indigenous peoples in Nepalese media.

**CASE# 1:** *A local newspaper published from the Kavre district once, published news about theft. It publicized the names of four thieves. One of them was an ethnic Tamang and the rest were Chhetris. The newspaper gave the news highlighting Tamang with his name and surname (caste) at the beginning and the Chhetri's names were without the family name. Indigenous people, hence, suspected that the news had the intention of spreading the fallacy that all thieves were Tamang. Though it is difficult to prove that it happened because of the majority of Bramhin-Chhetris in the editorial board of the newspaper, it encouraged this belief among indigenous peoples.*

**CASE # 2:** *News about the construction of a road in a rural village was publicized with wide coverage. Most of the laborers in the project were from the Tamang indigenous community. However, the news did not talk about that except highlighting the leader of project who was from the Bramhin non-indigenous community. This news was reported by a non-indigenous reporter and edited by non-indigenous editor.*

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<sup>67</sup> **Case# 1& 2:** Part of interview with Ujad Raktim, President, ANIJ- Kavre, 03 June, 2011;

**Case# 3& 4:** Part of interview with Suresh Sainju, Station Manager, Radio Janasanchar, 13 June, 2011;

**Case# 5:** Part of interview with Bijay Manandhar, Administrator, Grace FM, 10 June, 2011;

**Case# 6:** Part of group discussion on 12 June, 2011- during field visit

Involvement of media personnel from indigenous communities is felt necessary in order to bring the indigenous issues to the media for indigenous peoples and by indigenous peoples. The above statement (in Case # 2) from Ujad Raktim is especially relevant. The biased coverage may not be the intent of the reporter or editor, but, indigenous peoples realized that non-indigenous reporter and editor are not aware of the indigenous peoples. According to Ujad Raktim, this situation was created on purpose to dominate indigenous peoples because there were fewer indigenous peoples in the media in the district at that time. That would not happen if the editor had a sense of equality. The number of indigenous employees has grown today. Has the situation changed? Raktim says- “Drastic change cannot be expected at once. At least indigenous reporters are correcting such mistakes and eliminating misunderstandings.”

**Findings:** Indigenous participation in media is necessary not only to eradicate misunderstanding between indigenous and non-indigenous media ethics but also to balance the news pattern of indigenous and non-indigenous issues. Moreover, indigenous participation is necessary to analyze and diminish the conflict between ethnicity and create social harmony. Access of indigenous peoples in media reduces the cases of misinterpretation of news and issues of indigenous interest.

**CASE # 3:** *The marketing representative reported to the station manager of Radio Janasanchar that one of the government offices refused to provide advertisement to their radio. This made the station manager displeased because it was the right of all media to claim advertisement, which has to be distributed in equal basis. The station manager asked the administrator of the office to know the reason of denial. He was told that the radio was popular among the Newar society alone. The advertisement broadcasted by such radio did not spread the message to all communities, and they did not want to spend for advertisement in such a media. They had to struggle with a long conversation to convince the administrator that the radio and its programs were not focused on any particular ethnic society.*

**CASE # 4:** *The government office created a condition and argued to deduct the price of advertisement when it was time to ask for the payment. They argued, the announcement*

*was not clear since a Newar journalist spoke it with incorrect articulation. The station manager realized that they were not ready to pay the full amount for the advertisement and agreed with their rate which was 50% less than the rate had to be. This created a question among indigenous journalists whether the government offices are discriminating or discouraging indigenous peoples in media.*

Advertisement is the main financial source for the FM radios in Nepal. Government offices, public organizations, NGOs, INGOs, CBOs and few personal affairs are the source of advertisement. The Communication Department of Nepal's Government categorizes the media and assists with some financial support by providing advertisement of public interest and awareness. Such advertisement should be distributed to all media on equal basis, and media have the right to acquire it. However, documentation of the policy seems contradictory in its implementation. Suresh Sainju, the Station Manager of Radio Janasanchar argues, indigenous journalists are discriminated for no reason; just because they are indigenous. Even though it is difficult to judge based on a single case, it has created misunderstanding between administrators and indigenous radio workers.

**Findings:** There is misunderstanding between bureaucracy and indigenous journalists in the district. Bureaucrats should be more responsible and conscious in indigenous cases to solve it. A difficult situation is found in case of the use of language. Use of indigenous dialect may cause the loss of advertisement and the use of Nepali language by indigenous journalist is pronounced incorrectly. The above cases indicate that indigenous involvement cannot change the radio programming to indigenous concerns easily. Social organizations working for indigenous people's welfare have to be active to find an alternative financial source for the media and to attempt to develop ethnic media.

**CASE # 5:** *Grace FM, situated in Dhulikhel, wanted a weekly program for the Danuwar indigenous communities. They requested proposals from a particular community to present a program about the welfare and empowerment of Danuwar indigenous peoples. However, no proposals were received. Later, they came to know that none of the Danuwars living in Kavre speak their mother tongue nor have any literary and musical creations in or about Danuwarism. Hence, the efforts of Grace FM in this regard was unsuccessful.*



**CASE # 6:** *A training session for indigenous journalists of the Kavre district was organized by ANIJ in early June 2011 during my field visit. I, as a former language editor of a local newspaper was invited to deliver a lecture for an hour on language issues. I was pleased to have such an opportunity that concerned my research. Spending most of the time to talk about the use of indigenous language in media, I highlighted the importance of indigenous language revitalization. Finally, I got feedback from the organizers that they did not expect such a speech from me. Instead, they wanted me to teach the effective methods of using the Nepali language in media by indigenous journalists.*

**Findings:** Indigenous communities have been assimilated in modern Nepali society in such a way that indigenous youths are giving up the use of their traditional culture, even their mother tongue. Some of the indigenous communities do not contain any record of their own literature and cultural manuscript. There is high desire of indigenous youths and journalists to being mainstream journalists than the journalists of a particular indigenous community. Customarily, the long exclusion of indigenous participation in media has resulted indigenous peoples to compete for being mainstream journalist and deserve it. This has built confidence and appreciation to indigenous media-persons but endangered their lingual distinctiveness.

After all, indigenous peoples do not benefit from the local broadcasting media as much as they should. The first and second cases described above are showing the misapprehension and discouraging elements to the indigenous peoples. These issues have created distance between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in the media even if the particular cases were unintentional. The third and fourth cases show the negligence of bureaucracy towards indigenous peoples. The fifth and sixth cases can be understood as the impact of the previous four cases. Indigenous people lose their dignity while thinking of their survival in media and the trend continues. Thus, the interest of the majority overrules that of the minority. Hence, there is fear of cultural imperialism in due course of time.

A respondent argued during an interview that local community radios have to compete with national stations. They have to follow the trend of national broadcasting and transmit more attractive programs to increase the listeners. Hence, local and indigenous issues are less prioritized. My observation has assessed some instances as well.

Indigenous journalists do not want to limit them within their own community matters. Journalists from local media have foresight to involve in national stations as soon as they build confidence after working sometimes in local media. They are attracted to national stations for better opportunities, security of their job and for better earnings. Journalists have to work as volunteer or they have deficient salary in local stations. Therefore, they use local stations as training centers. Many indigenous journalists leave the community issues behind during this process. In addition, most of the indigenous youths first come to media with their own passion rather than dedication and responsibility of their community. They are shaped and designed by media according to the interest of the dominants from the beginning. Hence, indigenous media participants flow with the mainstream trend.

The survey of my project found that most of the participants in FM radios in Kavre are aged younger than 30 years old. Most of them have a high school education or above in Nepali or English as medium. A majority of the respondents of my interview expressed that their presence in media has helped promote indigenous issues to some extent. However, the status of the majority of radio programs contradicted their claims. While indigenous involvement in media becomes an issue, media houses prioritize numerical increases. However, the media content on issues and quality changes rarely. Indigenous journalists realize themselves the growth of indigenous issues in the media in recent years. However, indigenous radio workers are promoting non-indigenous issues rather than indigenous issues in most of the community radios.

Indigenous youths want popularity more than their position in media. Indigenous youths want to escape from the tradition of domination and show their ability and gain popularity in the media sector. For that, they do not care of their responsibility as

indigenous representative since they have to establish themselves in media at all cost. Hence, radio became one of the sectors of attraction for indigenous youths.

Weak policy of the government towards indigenous peoples and indigenous media workers is another cause of annoyance for indigenous peoples. A majority of the respondents argue that the government supports them neither financially nor morally. Nonetheless, they have to find the source of finance by themselves. Advertising agencies do not support media that targets indigenous communities, and indigenous organizations are not strong enough to support such media or programs. So, there seems inspirational progress and attraction of indigenous media persons in local FM radios but no predictable impact of their participation.





## **CHAPTER: 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This study has been carried out in Kavre district of Nepal. The study looked at the access of indigenous peoples in FM radios, the most popular media. International organizations have considered the importance of the role of media to empower indigenous peoples today. Thus, the International Day for the World's Indigenous Peoples in 2012 used the theme "Indigenous Media, Empowering Indigenous Voices". My study further meant to observe the impact of indigenous participation in media to their respective community.

Two months of field visit was conducted in the study area from May-June 2011 to collect primary data and supporting information. In order to obtain necessary data for the study, various research methods like survey, interview, observation and group discussion have been applied during fieldwork. Data collected by various sources are processed and analyzed accordingly in the third chapter. The participatory pattern of indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in radio has been presented quantitatively. This numeric data is presented in frequency tabulation. Some analysis comparison and distribution has been demonstrated by bar-diagrams, pie charts and percent-bars. Moreover, a number of cases are stated and discussed to elevate some qualitative aspects.

The study has concluded with considerable remarks after analyzing the data. There are neither specific ethnic media nor any indigenous broadcasting services in Kavre. Therefore, indigenous peoples in the district have to be involved in and rely on general community radios for indigenous affairs. There are eight radio stations in Kavre and most of them are community radios except a few, which are commercial. Ethically, community radios need to be inclusive to all communities in terms of recruitment and media content. However, the situation in Kavre, in this study, is inconsistent to some extent. Most notably, recruitment of indigenous representatives in FM radios of Kavre seems surprising in number. Surprisingly, the number of indigenous staffs in FM radios of Kavre is higher by 2% than non-indigenous even though it is still not consistent with the population (i.e. the population of indigenous peoples in the district is even higher). Participation of Newars in radio is the highest with more than 48% whereas Tamangs,

who have the highest population in the district, represent 25% of radio-workers. This is the other contrasting figure.

Most of the technicians in radios are indigenous. Danuwar, Tamang, Newar and Magar indigenous representatives have proved their technical skills. The numbers of managers in FM radios of Kavre are indigenous as equal as non-indigenous. However, there are few radio programs targeting indigenous populations. Only 5.25% of radio programs are specifically targeted to indigenous peoples. Furthermore, most of those programs except some Tamang's programs in Radio Namobuddha are for entertainment rather than cultural awareness and empowerment. Indigenous communities other than Tamang and Newar are seldom addressed with their issues on the radio.

Interpretation and presentation of indigenous issues by non-indigenous reporters and editors in printing or broadcasting media has created misunderstandings and conflict. Even government officials and bureaucrats do not motivate those media operated by indigenous leadership. Due to a lack of an indigenous-friendly education system for the country and policy of the government for the welfare of indigenous societies, indigenous youths of Nepal are giving up their traditional values of language and culture. They are educated in the national Nepali language or other international languages. Resultantly, indigenous youths attempt to compete with the language of the majority and assimilate to their society. The role of community media is crucial in such a situation. However, the impact of radio transmission has not yet followed optimistic outcomes for indigenous peoples although the recruitment pattern is improving in the Kavre district of Nepal.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Being one of the small countries in South Asia<sup>68</sup>, Nepal has made remarkable progress in the field of indigenous, ethnic and community development. Conceptualizing 'the radio for community people by community people' after 1990s, Nepal became the first country of South Asia to establish community radio and transmit community radio programs in 1997 (see page 23). The concept 'voice of voiceless' and empowerment of

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<sup>68</sup> South Asia is referred to a region of eight countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives, which are members of SAARC.

disadvantaged community people was admirable not only in Nepal but also in South Asia as a whole. Community radio paved a way to empower indigenous and other ethnic people of rural communities of Nepal. It also encouraged indigenous peoples' participation in broadcasting media sector. Ratifying ILO convention 169 in 2007, Nepal became the first South Asian country to respect the rights of indigenous and tribal people (see page 3 & 4), which was the second notable progress. This means, Nepal accepted the policies of non-discrimination, recognition of culture, consultation, participation and right to decide priorities for the process of development of indigenous and tribal people.

### **Background**

According to the principles of consultation and participation of the ILO convention, indigenous and tribal people should have specific development projects as well as broader questions of governance and participation in public life. The ratification, at least, motivated indigenous peoples to stand in a common platform and demand their rights, cultural recognitions, participation in public discourses and so on. Thus, it made some visible improvements.

Nepal's government has encouraged inter-cast marriage with the expectation of abolishment of discrimination based on cast and ethnicity. However, it is creating a serious challenge for cultural assimilation. For instance, an indigenous woman has to be involved in non-indigenous cultural activities and give up her indigenous identity after she marries a non-indigenous man. She has to change her surname and use the language, costumes of her husband's society and participate in his socio-cultural activities. Hence, it is entrenched in such a patriarchal society like in Nepal.

To increase indigenous participation in public discourses, government created the policy of recruiting certain portions of indigenous peoples in government and non-government service sectors. This policy also helped to increase political participation of indigenous peoples and participation in bureaucracy. However, indigenous issues and agendas could not be addressed reasonably. Indigenous advocates of Nepal argue that it happened due to control over indigenous by non-indigenous supremacy. I think, educational and socio-

cultural factors will have a major effect. Awareness for indigenous peoples is another important factor to be considered.

### **Mass Media**

My research data show that indigenous peoples' participation in mass media sector of Nepal is increasing in recent years. Even though it does not satisfy while matching with the population proportion, there has been progress compared to the past. In Kavrepalanchowk, a local weekly newspaper (Sanchar Darshan) is publishing in Tamang indigenous language once in a month. Local FM radios are providing some hours for indigenous programs. ANIJ is providing skill development trainings and practical workshops. Some of the local broadcasting media are focusing their contents to certain indigenous communities and trying to increase indigenous listenership. Local FM stations are recruiting indigenous representatives to some extent. Some indigenous representatives have earned managerial positions in FM stations. The growing indigenous participation in mass media symbolizes the progression. On the other hand, there are numerous problems in the development of indigenous societies by media. Only 5% of total radio programs are related to indigenous peoples, language and their agenda. Additionally, the involvement of major indigenous representatives in other radio programs is not focused on their issues, but rather as back-desk office responsibilities.

With a lack of indigenous broadcasting services of their own, indigenous peoples of the district have to depend and rely on local FM radios. There are frequent problems to introducing any media as an indigenous media. Community radios are forced to be commercial radios because of the financial demand. Advertisements and charities are the major source of finance of most of the local radios. Not only does this affect indigenous program producers and presenters but also the officers and managers who do not want risk losing advertisements from different community organizations. Governmental offices and organizations also discourage indigenous programmers, producers and managers from providing advertisements and other support until the programs are in Nepali, the official language. Thus, government policy is still not favoring indigenous radio programs and participation.



The education system and policy of the country is clearly not designed for indigenous empowerment. Indigenous children and youths receive education in Nepali as their first and compulsory language. Some prefer English rather than their mother tongue. Hence, the indigenous mother tongue is limited to their family communication and has remained unofficial. Some indigenous dialects are facing serious challenges of lacking continuity in new generations. Many indigenous youths have given up their written language. Indigenous youths participating in local radio are educated and trained in Nepali language, which has negative effects in contributing to their own indigenous communities.

There is still the fear of censorship of indigenous contents in media. Non-indigenous peoples preferably control front desk offices and editorial boards in mainstream media. Local media follow the trend of mainstream media. Indigenous empowerment in media is less prioritized. There is a lack of trainings and workshops about indigenous concerns for indigenous media-workers. As a result, many of the radio presenters representing indigenous communities are attracted to presenting light entertaining programs that are popular among most youths. Thus, cumulative participation of indigenous peoples in radio is not parallel to its impact on indigenous communities.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

- ✚ It is necessary to attract older generation to radio programming because they are more dedicated and have a better conscious to their culture and tradition.
- ✚ Media should create an environment to promote indigenous journalists to feel proud of being a representative of an indigenous community in media
- ✚ Community radio should be inclusive not only for recruiting community members from different ethnic communities but also for embracing the radio programs of their communities and for their communities.
- ✚ Media should not only give position but also rights and power for indigenous professionals.
- ✚ All radio stations of Kavre are located in the urban-center. Local and community radio stations should be near rural community peoples in order to reach local indigenous peoples and cover their issues.

- ✦ Indigenous Peoples' organizations, indigenous journalists' organizations and a few community and media organizations are assembling some training programs for indigenous journalists to some extent. However, trainings in indigenous language have not been prioritized. Trainings in indigenous languages for indigenous journalists are necessary to build confidence and prepare them to take responsibility for indigenous programs.
- ✦ Media should provide opportunity for indigenous peoples to work freely without pressure, control and fear of censorship.
- ✦ Indigenous organizations and media professionals should unite to establish an indigenous media in Kavre. This should be fully supported by the government to establish indigenous media for indigenous empowerment.
- ✦ Indigenous journalists and organizations should cooperate and build collaboration with international indigenous organizations.
- ✦ Government should promote mother tongue education from primary level to the higher studies and educate indigenous peoples to preserve their language and culture.
- ✦ Government should accurately and sincerely implement ratified conventions and obligations of national/international legitimacy.
- ✦ Inter-caste marriage helps eliminate caste-based discrimination. However, there should be some pre-conditions in case of such a marriage between different ethnic and indigenous groups. For instance, the couple can commit to teaching an indigenous language to their children and allow him/her to participate in indigenous activities, cultural events and affairs.
- ✦ Media having the goal of empowering indigenous peoples should search for alternative sources of finance and fund to move ahead. Government should give more priority to contribute to such media and assist with development aid.



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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Categories of Indigenous Nationalities of Nepal

| Endangered Groups                     | Highly Marginalized Groups                   | Marginalized Groups | Disadvantaged Groups  | Advanced Groups                  |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Kusunda                               | Majhi  | Sunuwar             | Chhairotan            | Newar                            |  |
| Bankariya                             | Siyar  | Tharu               | Tanbe                 | Thakali                          |  |
| Raute                                 | Lhomi  | Tamang              | Teengaunle<br>Thakali | <b>Total Advanced Groups = 2</b> |  |
| Surel                                 | Thudam                                       | Bhujel              | Baragaunle<br>Thakali |                                  |  |
| Hayu                                  | Dhanuk                                       | Kumal               | Marphali Thakali      |                                  |  |
| Raji                                  | Chepang                                      | Rajbangshi          | Gurung                |                                  |  |
| Kisaan                                | Santhal                                      | Gangaai             | Magar                 |                                  |  |
| Lepcha                                | Jhagad                                       | Dhimal              | Rai                   |                                  |  |
| Meche                                 | Thami  | Bhote               | Limbu                 |                                  |  |
| Kuswadiya                             | Bote   | Darai               | Sherpa                |                                  |  |
| <b>Total Endangered Groups = 10</b>   | Danuwar                                      | Tajpuriya           | Yakkha                |                                  |  |
|                                       | Baramu                                       | Pahari              | Chhantyal             |                                  |  |
|                                       | <b>Total Highly Marginalized Groups = 12</b> | Topkegola           | Jirel                 |                                  | <b>Total Disadvantaged Groups = 15</b> |
|                                       |  | Dolpo               | Byansi                |                                  |  |
|                                       |  | Fri                 | Yolmo                 |                                  |  |
|                                       |  | Mugal               |                       |                                  |  |
|                                       |  | Larke               |                       |                                  |  |
|                                       |  | Lohpa               |                       |                                  |  |
|                                       |  | Dura                |                       |                                  |  |
|                                       |  | Walung              |                       |                                  |  |
| <b>Total Marginalized Groups = 20</b> |  |                     |                       |                                  |  |
| <b>Grand Total: 59</b>                |  |                     |                       |                                  |  |

*Source: NEFIN (2008)*

## APPENDIX 2: INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION AND POSITION IN RADIO

| Name of Radio     | Indigenous Groups | Number of Participation | Types of Job   |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Radio ABC         | Newar             | 4                       | 1 Newari program presenter, 3 Nepali program presenters  |
|                   | Tamang            | 1                       | Tamang Program Presenter   |
|                   | Magar             | 3                       | 1 Technician, 1 Nepali program presenter, 1 office assistant   |
| Prime FM          | Newar             | 3                       | 1 Managing Director, 1 Newari program presenter, 1 Nepali program presenter  |
|                   | Tamang            | 2                       | 1 Nepali program presenter, 1 Nepali news reader   |
|                   | Magar             | 1                       | Office Receptionist  |
|                   | Danuwar           | 2                       | 1 technician, 1 Nepali program presenter   |
| Radio Namobuddha  | Newar             | 4                       | 2 Newari program presenters, 1 Nepali program presenter, 1 news reader   |
|                   | Tamang            | 11                      | 1 Station Manager, 1 marketing, 1 accounts, 2 technicians, 2 Tamang program presenters, 3 Nepali program presenters, 1 news reader |
|                   | Magar             | 1                       | Magar program presenter  |
|                   | Danuwar           | 1                       | Danuwar program presenter  |
|                   | Majhi             | 2                       | Majhi program presenters   |
|                   | Hyolmo            | 2                       | Hyolmo program presenters  |
|                   |                   |                         |  |
|                   |                   |                         |  |
| Radio Janasanchar | Newar             | 18                      | 1 Managing Director, 4 Newari program presenters, 13 Nepali program presenters   |
|                   | Tamang            | 1                       | Tamang program presenter   |

*Source: Own Field Survey, May 2011*



### APPENDIX 3: AREA MAPS

#### Locations of FM Radio Stations, Kavre



#### Area of Coverage by FM Radio of Kavre



Sources: [fmscan.org](http://fmscan.org)

**APPENDIX 4: PICTURES FROM THE FIELD WORK**



A Tamang Indigenous Journalist recording a Tamang Program in Radio Namobuddha



An Indigenous Technician in technical room