

**Traditional Entrepreneurship Practices**  
**(A Study on Tharu Women of Tulsipur Sub-Metropolitan, Gaurigaun, Dang)**

Bhubaneshwar Lamichhane<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Tribhuvan University, Mahendra Multiple Campus, Nepalgunj

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding Author: madhavlc558@gmail.com

Article History: Received: Nov. 20, 2022

Revised: Jan. 5, 2023

Received: Jan 19, 2023

**Abstract**

This study highlights the extent to which cultural traditional basket entrepreneurship in the Tulsipur Sub-Metropolitan City-10; Gaurigoun of Dang District is poorly developed. A number of problems related to the production and marketing of crafts in the Dang District have been identified. The supply of handcraft was found to be less today than ten years ago in terms of quality, quantity, and variation of products. At the same time, it was observed that the commercialization of baskets only few of the traditional basket designs remain. Due to the absence of an overall national promotion scheme, the exports of crafts from the Dang District is said to be unorganized and underdeveloped. It was further noted that activities by the government geared towards craft development and marketing such as craft exhibitions has put more emphasis on basketry at the same time neglecting other crafts in the region especially craftwork. Lastly, it was mentioned that ever since the commercialization of Baskets in the Dang, natural resources have been over-utilized.

*Keywords:* entrepreneurship, handicrafts, products, exports, exhibitions, resources

**Introduction**

Nepal is a country of villages where more than 65 percent of population (CBS, 2011) live in rural areas and survive below a specified threshold level called Poverty Line. The lack of adequate resources, rapid population growth, unequal distribution of resources, lack of proper investment potentiality, low level of technological innovations, and lack of skilled human resources is the major reasons for causing poverty.

Women enterprises are assumed to be innovative and imitated or adapted business activities with a desire for economic independence. The rising consciousness through education and training among women has led to the growth of women entrepreneurs (Agrawal, 2003:pp.34-37). Like men, women also have a big role to play in developing the micro-enterprises in developing countries like Nepal, because they are not only the crucial labor-force of agriculture but they have the ability to develop home based micro-enterprises like foods, handicrafts and garments.

Interim Constitution 2063 of Nepal has made following provision for the rights of women; no discrimination on the basis of feminine, every woman has reproductive health and reproductive rights, physical, mental or any kind of violence against women is strongly restricted by the law. The high rate of illiteracy, economic dependence, lack of access to property, heavy workburden and their actual labor force participation is under reported or estimated because much of the work women do in the subsistence farming category is not classified as economically active.

Addressing the women's issues in Nepal was started from the sixth-five-year-plan (2037-2042 BS) in the field of education, health, employment, agriculture, forestry, co-operative development and legal system with the help of governmental as well as non-governmental agencies. The 12th three year Plan has also emphasized on women's development with some quantitative targets by implementing the targeted programs related to mainstreaming, empowerment and gender equity.

Nepalese Women are disadvantaged and underprivileged in terms of their socio-economic status as compared to their male counterparts. The long-standing and deep-rooted impression is that women are weak, passive and home-oriented, less intelligent and less capable than men. It is vastly internalized in our society. Women, mostly, are engaged in their household activities. Even in the household level decision making process, women have no access. Their voices are unheard. Women in our society have nominal representation community development and religious activities as well as in political parties at local and national level.

But there have been a few studies about women entrepreneurs and about their businesses in the trade literature over the past decade. So, comparatively little information has been gathered about the problems of women entrepreneurs in Nepal when starting their businesses. The aim of this study is to give a picture of current situation faced by women entrepreneurs in Nepal such as unavailability of market, loan issues, tax related and registration as well as getting information problems particularly in Tharu women entrepreneurs of Dang District. Therefore, research has attempted to solve the following questions:

1. What is the status of Tharu women in traditional entrepreneurship development?
2. What are the factors that affect performances?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to analyze the status of Tharu women in traditional entrepreneurship development and to analyze the factors that affect performances.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study is related in a specific area of Tulsipur Sub Metropolitan ward no. 10 of dang district. It is concerned with the study of all Tharu women entrepreneurs of Gaurigoun village.

### **Review of Literature**

Entrepreneurship capacity building of women for creation and development of small cottage industry can be most important intervention for women that will create an opportunity for income sources as well as employment and self-employment. According to the interaction with

women (FGD) of Tarigaun area, for creation of economic and job opportunity of women, legally registration process of small cottage industry needs to be made in somehow easier for easy access for promotion of traditional skills and entrepreneurship. Simultaneously, commodities and products of women headed cottage industry need to be standardized as per the national and international market that is possible by technical training organized for women. Because of these efforts, in terms of women of Gaurigaun, Tulsipur Sub-metropolitan City, Dang, There is more viability of markets and possibility for creation of employment in this area, it is because Tulsipur market is nearby of this village in Dang. Together with this, it needs to make access to the financial institutions so that the women of this area will get services of credit facilities to be invested in their enterprises. For the commercialization of their entrepreneurship the market information is must through creation of information networks developed from Tarigaun area to national or to international market.

Ahooja (1982:pp.108) Ahooja focuses on the women's participation on development. He presents the statistics about the women's contribution in various sectors. The women constitute the largest number of food producers (i.e. approximately 50 percent) in Africa, 30-40 percent in Asia, then in Latin America. The least qualified jobs are filled by women. Women get low wages in comparison to the men counterparts. One billion women in the Third World's countries cannot read. Education is one of the major factors of determining the decision-making. This study focuses on the contribution of women in various sectors but does not analyze their role in decision-making in these sectors.

The World Bank's Document WBD (1989: pp 317) highlighted about the Nepalese women, who are living in the poor households. The conclusion of the document is that women at all ages work considerably longer daily hours than men, so that they have limited time for selfemployment and education, and the opportunity cost of their time to the household is high. This reflects that school enrollment and literacy rates are much lower for females than males, and all these are indications of their poverty. The World Bank also emphasizes on literacy and reducing poverty for enhancing women power in decision-making but social barriers are also needed to reduce.

NPC (1992:pp 198) National Planning Commission of Nepal has summarized that there are two major quantitative indicators of women status used the relative input into two areas of decision-making viz. farm management, and involvement in local market economy and domestic activities. The commission has also analyzed that Hindu society is largely confined to non-market i.e. domestic and subsistence production, displaying a less significant role in decision-making. Including economic factor, socio-cultural, political, educational and legal factors are also important part in the decision-making process.

Acharya (1997:pp.61-64) states that conservative social custom is one of the major reasons obstructing women from full participation in economic development, which results low decision-making power in women's hand. Higher the women's participation in economic development, higher will be the decision-making power of women. On the other hand, the social conception is that only women are responsible for the reproduction of human beings, conception delivery and upbringing of child has made it extremely difficult for women to participate in the development process as equal member of society. Due to all these reasons their status compared to men is very low.

The identity, importance, existence and practice of indigenous knowledge of the Tharu are in endangered position. The Tharu organization system, i.e., Barghariya, Mahatawa, Bhalmannsa system and Kulapani Chaudhary system are now practiced only in Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts; some villages of Rupandehi and Surkhet have retained the Barghariya system. Historically, both organization systems were in widely practiced throughout the Tarai and Inner Tarai districts of Nepal and even in Tharu villages in India. Shamanism (the Guruwa system) has an inherent relation with indigenous Tharu daily life, rites and rituals, feasts and festivals, protection from evil and diseases, etc. Likewise, knowledge of medicinal plants was very widely practiced; every disease had a plant derived treatment; and there was no need of external medical practice. Other types of the indigenous knowledge have been also in the same position. This means that the knowledge and practice of the medical system is also going to be disappeared.

The afro-mentioned researchers have addressed various issues of traditional entrepreneurship practices but the issue of Tharu community was untouched. To fulfill the research gap, this researcher has raised the new issue regarding the traditional entrepreneurship practices of Tharu women of Dang district, Nepal.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

In this study, descriptive and analytical type of research design has been used to find out entrepreneurship practices of Tharu women.

#### **Nature and Sources of Data**

The data were collected mainly through the primary sources. These were Tharu women entrepreneurs of Dang District particularly in Tulsipur Sub-metropolitan City- 10 of Gaurigoun Dang. The natures of data are both qualitative and quantitative nature. The quantitative information has been collected from the household survey and interview.

#### **Universe & Sample Size**

It was larger the sample to cover all the Tharu women entrepreneur of Tulsipur Sub-metropolitan City Ward No. 10 of Gaurigoun Dang District due to cost and time. Therefore, particular ward, area Tulsipur Sub-metropolitan City Ward No. 10 of Gaurigoun Dang was selected through convenience sampling techniques and all Tharu entrepreneur women were selected by using census method.

#### **Data Collection Tools/Technique**

The data required for this study has been collected by using following tools and techniques.

#### **Questionnaire**

To collect and organized necessary information regarding the study purpose, individual questionnaire schedule was used. The questionnaires were developed to examine about the

existing practices and current situation of female entrepreneurship of Tharu women. This study was completed within 100 house households of Tharu women through individual questionnaire.

### Observation

Observation method has been used to find the real participation of those women who were involving in small hand craft entrepreneurship in Tharu community. In my study, I have noted cultural of the community, social values, sustainability strategy and economic status of the study area.

### Interview Schedule

The interview schedule was prepared and used to the Tharu women of the gaurigoun Village. This is provided both the qualitative and quantitative information. They are related to family types, income, sanitation, education, awareness level, participation in other activities etc.

### Analysis and Presentation of Data

Data have been broken down into different parts according to nature of obtain answer of research questions. The data collected have been categorized, ordered, manipulated, and summarized to obtain answers. Data are reduced to intelligible and interpretable form. Interpretation takes the result of analyses, makes inferences pertinent to the research relations studied and draws conclusion. Quantitative data have been analyzed to show the real condition of the study area.

### Educational Status of the Respondents

A total of 30 informants were interviewed, 27 respondents (90 percent) out of 30 informants have passed primary education, 3.33 percent respondents have passed secondary, 3.33 percent respondents have passed higher secondary and 3.33 percent respondents have passed bachelor. The table below shows that 90 percent Tharu women who have completed primary education are engaged in entrepreneurship. The women who passed secondary, higher secondary and bachelor go for higher education and search for jobs and are doing jobs so the number is reducing than primary level. They are not aware about the information for entrepreneurships. They find the process of official documents for firms and registration complicated and difficult so they ignore doing entrepreneurship. Therefore, engagement of illiterate women in entrepreneurship is in 0%.

**Table 1**

*Educational Status of Respondents*

Education	Number	Percent
Illiterate	0	0.00
Primary	27	90.00
Secondary	1	3.33
Higher secondary	1	3.33
Bachelor	1	3.33
Total	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2022

### Barrier to Start Hand-Craft Business of Respondents

A total of 30 informants, of which 23.33 percent women have no barriers, 20.00 percent have financial barriers, 33.33 percent have barriers of lack of adequate information about business idea, 6.67 percent have barriers of finding the right contact for business venture, and 16.67 percent have barriers of combined family and additional working life. No respondent responded that confidence is the barrier to start the handy craft business. The table is below shows that the barriers of starting are financial lack of information and business idea, right contact and combine family. The data relating to barriers is given in the table below.

**Table 2**

*Status Respondents in Regards of Barriers to Start Business*

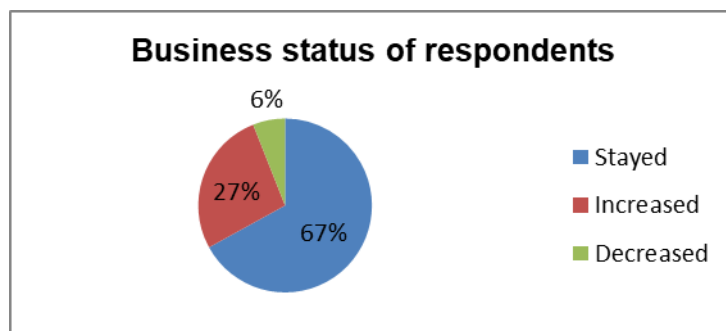
Major	barrier Number	Percent
No barrier	7	23.33
Lack of self confidence	0	0.00
Financial problem 20.00	6	20.00
Lack of adequate information about business idea	10	33.33
Finding the right contact for business venture	2	6.67
Combining family and work life	5	16.67
Total	30	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2022

### Sales status by Annual Turnover of Respondents

The chart below shows that 67% respondents out of 30 respondents said that they could not have benefit as of their expectation from their business. They had their business table. They had neither benefit nor loss. 27% respondents said that their sales in comparison to beginning. It is because they got opportunity of training and refined in design and finishing of their products. They had linkage with markets and commercialized their business in an organized way than before. 6% respondents said they got loss in their business. It is because they did not get opportunity of training and they did not have skills for linkage with markets. **Figure 1**

*Business Status of Respondents*



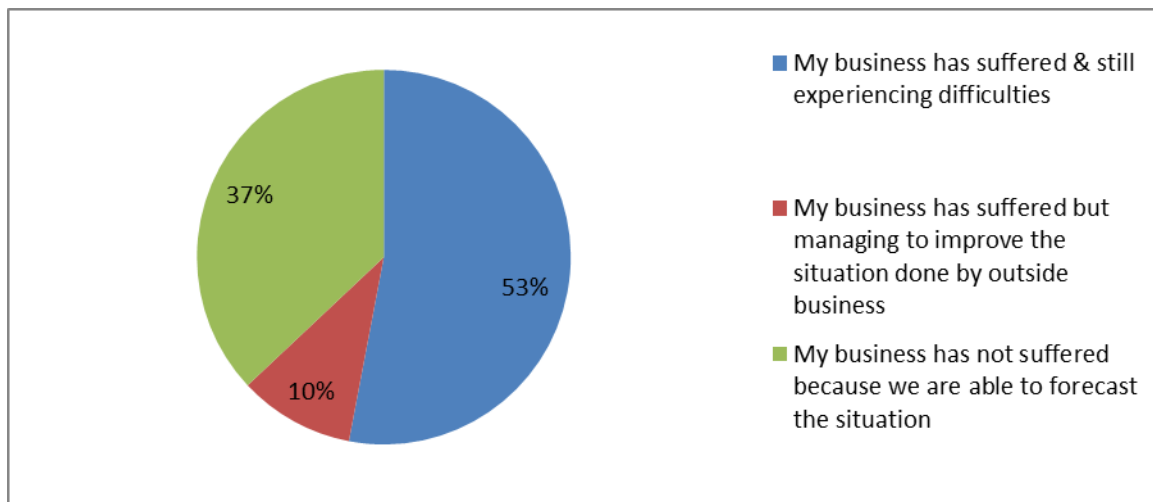
Source: Field Survey, 2022

**Respondents' situation of business at present economic down truth in Nepal**

Due to the political instability in Nepal, band and strikes caused by different political parties and ethnic groups took place. 53 % respondents said due to these Banda and strikes their business was severely affected at that time and still facing problems. 37 % respondents responded that their business was also suffered but as the situation went on normalizing they improved their business and run smoothly. 10% respondents responded that their business remained stable means was affected by band and strikes. Their business was not affected even in such adverse situation. It is because they had already assumed about the adverse effect of situation and selected the places for business accordingly.

**Figure 2**

*Effect in Business of Adverse Situation*



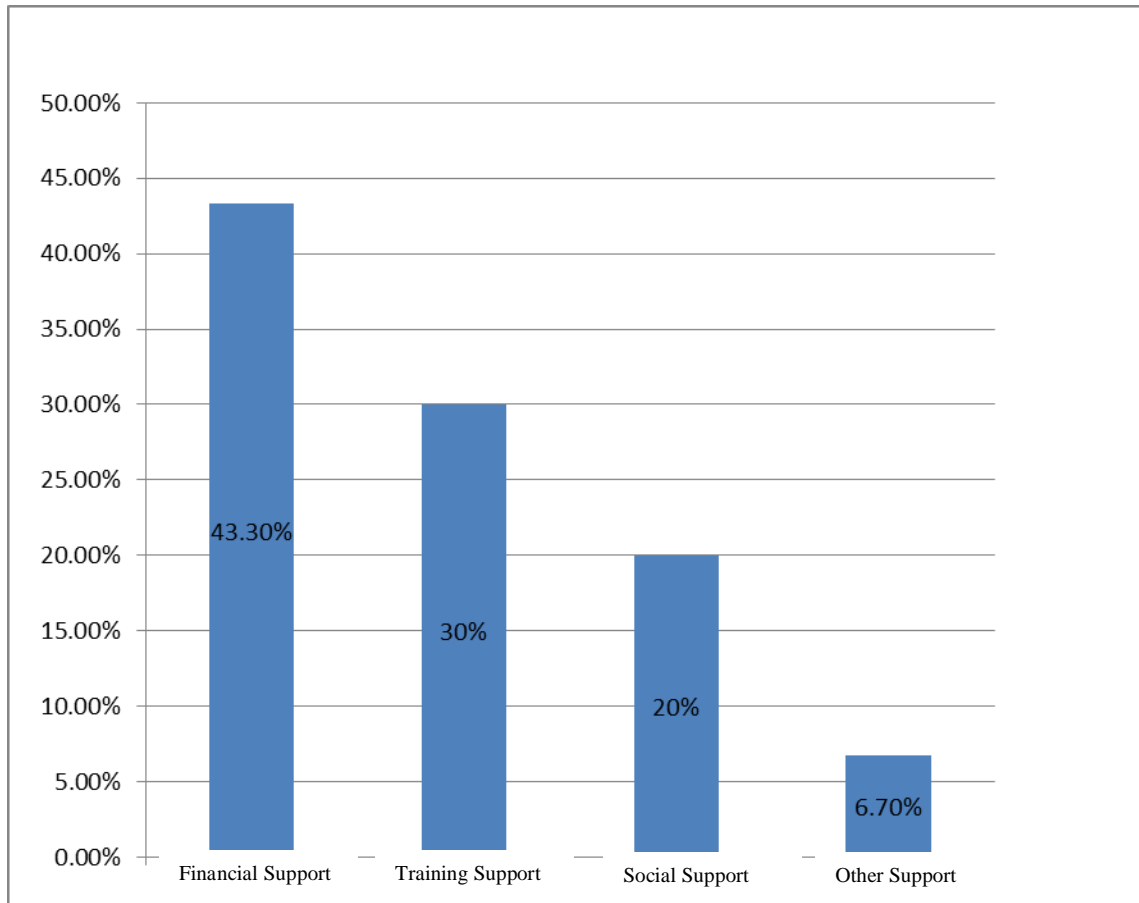
Source: Field Survey, 2022

**Types of Support to Resolve the Problem of Respondents**

In the below table 43.33% respondents out of 30 respondents said the financial matter plays great role in running and promoting business. Finance is the key factor. In addition to financial support, 30% respondents said training is very crucial in business. Without training one cannot manage his/her business properly in an organized way. Similarly 20% respondents said social support in the surrounding also plays a great role in business. The people in the surrounding should have positive attitudes towards the business in the area. 6.67% respondents said external environment plays crucial role in running and promoting business.

**Figure 3**

*Level of Effort for Support Business*



**Source:** Field Survey, 2022

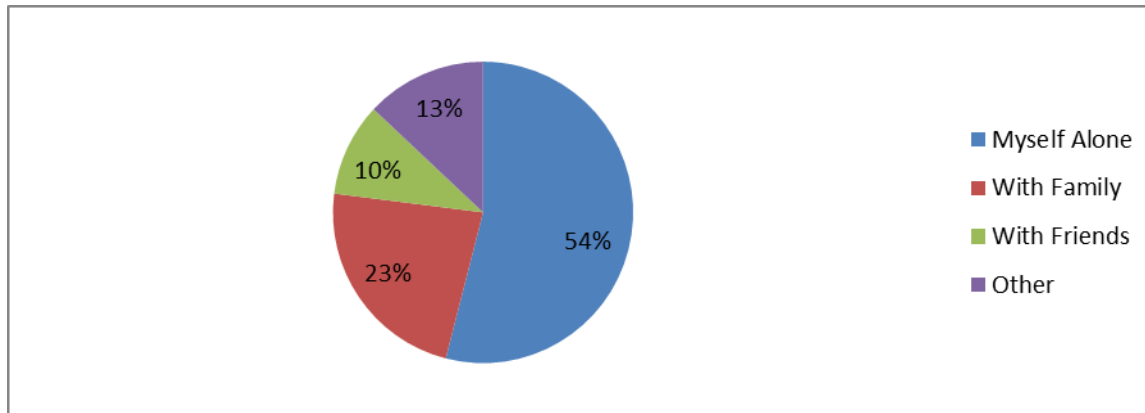
### **Initiations to Starting Business of Respondents**

Table below shows 54 % respondents out of 30 respondents responded that they started their business in their own initiation. It is because they had traditional skill and raw materials were locally available, useable for household purpose and can sell in the markets. These encouraged them to initiative business. 23% respondents responded that they got financial support, encouragement from family and their family members support in works and started their business. 13% respondents responded that their friends shared about their business and they were motivated by sharing of friends and got the encouragement to start business. 10 % respondents responded they started their business by seeing other people doing business in their surroundings. Observation of business of other people was also one of the key factors of starting business.



**Figure 4**

*Percentage of People for Initiating Business*



**Source:** Field Survey, 2022

### **Financial Services and Schemes**

Insufficient cash and credit facilities, especially start-up capital have been identified as a major constraint faced by small local handicrafts businesses in the Dang District. According to local planning securing finances to establish a small enterprise has always been a major problem in developing countries, especially in Nepal. Borrowing money from the bank is not easy since small enterprises often do not have collateral security, in the form of title deeds to their land. In my study, small handicrafts entrepreneurs also complain of lack of financial assistance, especially start-up capital. They feel that the current Citizen Entrepreneurial Developmental Agency is inappropriate for their needs. The major concern focuses on inadequate information in accessing the financial scheme to further develop their businesses. It was identified that due to lack of education, entrepreneurs are unable to come up with the required business plan. Craft businesses have seasonal revenue but require a steady flow of capital. Because they struggle to raise a sufficient level of capital they are often unable to provide the market with large quantities of products.

### **Marketing**

Marketing is essential for the success of small handicraft enterprises. However, my study indicates that the entrepreneurs carry out insufficient marketing. This is mainly attributed to lack of finance as well as strategies on how to adequately market their products. Therefore, it is important that the signs are attractive and easily noticeable in order for tourists to be tempted to visit their craft shops. It was also noted in my study that efforts by Small Cottage Industries , which operates as a marketing company and encourages the continued production of traditional craft and the development of new items, has reduced its sales in the past years. As some of the artisans mentioned that government support to promote such marketing agencies is very minimal. Backward Society Education (BASE) work closely with the government and further extend their work beyond conservation of resources to cover local entrepreneurship.

As individuals are constrained by scarce finance, demand and market information, local small handicraft entrepreneurs can establish a network association that will help market their products. It was noted in my study that none of the local craft entrepreneurs was willing to take the initiatives. However, this is attributed to the fact that most of the locals do not have any idea on how to go about it.

### **Lack of Information**

My study reveals that small handicraft entrepreneurs lack information in three key areas. Firstly, finance information relating to how they can get more finance for their businesses, secondly, demand information on new and existing customers, and thirdly, information on how to get more or better skills for their businesses. It has been identified in my study that such cooperatives do not have enough access to information, relating to how they can effectively and efficiently sell their products. Though the women meet regularly to discuss ways of improving the standard of weaving and ways in which they can better market their products, such discussions are characterized by conflicts in which some members want their ideas to dominate and ultimately nothing is resolved.

### **Availability of Raw Material**

The production of craft in the Tulsipur Sub-metropolitan City Ward No 10 of Gaurigoun is under threat by increasing levels of environmental degradation resulting from over-harvesting of materials by producers and the absence of sufficient measure by the government to ensure the replenishment of materials. It is due to such problems that artisans and other places are forced to travel long distances to secure raw materials. It is poor knowledge mentioned that though literature shows scarcity of raw material in Tulsipur Sub-metropolitan City Ward No 10 of Gaurigoun not much is done to encourage communities to practice sustainable harvesting methods. In his view such problems will further affect the development of handicraft businesses in the region.

### **Education and Training**

The school education system in Nepal has been criticized for being biased against self-employment. The quality of such training has been noted to be poor, and only few courses have been unavailable. In addition to product development my study found that a lot of training and education is needed in the area of marketing. Small handicrafts entrepreneurs need to be equipped with the necessary marketing skills as well as improve the quality of their products to enable them to highly compete with products from Dang mid-west of Nepal. This is indicated by the absence of appropriate financial services or schemes to assist small businesses involved in the production of crafts. Within the National Ecotourism Strategy (NES) efforts were made to promote citizen enterprise development through the newly established Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA). However, it was noted that CEDA still remain out of reach for the local entrepreneurs and does not necessarily cover most of the financial needs previously provided by PAF. To my view, based on the findings, the current financial scheme that demands a detailed viable business plan is not appropriate for locals given the fact that their level of education is very low. Moreover, my study identified that not much effort has been made by the government to encourage enterprises with a similar focus to link up thereby providing national networks of single-interest activities as proposed within the National Ecotourism Strategy (NES).

## Conclusions

Lack of finance, especially start-up capital, has been identified as one of those constraints that affect the establishment of small handicrafts enterprises in the Dang District. Lack of finance and lack of training and education are perceived as a source of other problems. Due to problems related to securing finances, small handicrafts entrepreneurs are unable to effectively market their products as well as extend their sales beyond the mid-west region. The small entrepreneurs cannot afford to advertise their products or even put up attractive signs to show where their small businesses are located. Access to finance in this case is taken as a facilitator; it does not necessarily guarantee business success. One can conclude by saying that the problem facing the small handicrafts enterprises is attributed to the fact that crafts are generally perceived across the country as having a very low value and contributing little to the economy. Due to the obstacles discussed above, my study held that currently the small-scale handicrafts enterprises do not constitute a vital innovative force in the tourism industry of Dang District. These enterprises just absorb a labor force that would otherwise be unemployed and at the same time do not allow the locals to explore new tourism opportunities. This should be done through training and education that incorporates various institutional factors. In the process of addressing problems surrounding small handicrafts enterprises should be adequately addressed, my study highlights the importance of networking in which grouping of small handicrafts enterprises can play a complimentary function. Networks of social relations are important as a form of social capital.

## References

- Acharya M. (1997 pp.56-61), *Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in Nepal: A report submitted to UNFPA, Kathmandu.*
- Acharya M. and L. Bennet (1981 pp. 76-78), *Women and Subsistence Section Economic Participation and Household Decision-Making in Nepal, the World Bank's staff working paper 526, the World Bank, Washington DC.*
- Acharya M. and Acharya P. (1997 pp 61-64), *Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. A Status Report, UNEPA, Kathmandu.*
- Agrawal G.R. (2003 pp.34-37.), *Entrepreneurship Development in Nepal.* Kathmandu: M.K. Publishers and Distributors.
- Ahooja Krishna (1982 pp. 108), "Another Development with Women: Development Dialogue,' A Journal of International Cooperation, Dag Hammar sold Foundation.
- Jamali, D. (2009, Vol. 24, No. 4, pp. 232-251), "Constraints and Opportunities Facing Women Entrepreneurs in Developing Countries: A Relational Perspective', Gender in Management: An International Journal
- NPC (1992: pp. 198) *National Planning Commission.* Nepal.
- Ojha, H.K. (1984 pp. 39): *Women's participation in Handloom Industry at Kirtipur Village Dissertation.* Trivhuwan University, Kathmandu.
- Tulsipur Sub-metropolitan City profile (BS 2071: p 43)
- The World Bank's document* (1989: pp. 317)