

# **Main Problems of Involvement the Local People in Management of Natural Forest (Case Study: Elrawashda Natural Forest)**

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper aimed to assess the main problems of involvement the local people in natural forest management in Elrawashda natural forest reserve at Elgadarif State of Sudan. The study based on a quantitative and qualitative data focus on structure interview, group discussions, supported by personal observations made during fieldwork. Three villages were selected randomly and (60) Household were selected for structure interview based on total population around the Elrawashda natural forest reserve and (20) nomads were selected randomly. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software (Ver. 16.0) by computing descriptive statistics. The results showed that the high rate of illitercty have decreased local people participation in forest maanement activities at planning and implementation stages, nomads groups in particular. (43.3%) villagers were participated at least partly in the project activities. The results indicated that the most of nomads are not aware about project as result of lack of extension programme before project implementation. The results also indicated that women were not included in any activities, despite of their readiness towards project activities, and they are willing to participate in community programme activities. The study recommended that any natural forest management should be implementing with very significant involvement of local people including women.

**KEYWORDS:** Management, Local people, Participation, Conservation, Protection, Sustainable

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The traditional forest management in Sudan is recognized in general as less effective in achieving their objectives. Natural forest resources still suffer continuous deterioration, due to increase in number of population and consumption of forest products. The new approaches prove the need to involve local communities in forest management process in order to ensure their co – operation and consequently sustainable managements. The increased demand of forest products and land for agriculture schemes resulted in more pressure on forest resources, moreover, the increased of animals number also led to great pressure on forest resources. (FAO and FNC, 1995) reported that human activities are contributed effectively to decline forest cover. In the past forest policy was concentrated management of forest reserve under government control to the all management operation, but this sort of forest monument was felt and become ineffective in last decade, a few year left the government trend become to concerning forest policy and legislation to support and encourage local people involvement in management of natural forest resources ,the government senses that traditional forest management was not achieve its limited objectives, such as forest protection and extensive grazing, the major constrains towards the government policy implantation were lake clear monument practice and local people involvement in the management process beside absence of proper land use practices. Many serious attempts for management were made and new approaches have tested, they started to call for sustainable forest management considering collaboration with local people in conservation and management forest is become more acceptable to

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achieving national management objectives (Mohammed, 2000) the increasing in both population and animals' number resulted in serious environmental problem. In 1980<sup>th</sup> the government recognizes the concept of multiple forest uses and sustainable yield management by public participation with local people in management, conservation protection, communicating and working together with different people and groups in order to achieve common goals. In the past many natural forest management activities often failed to meet their objectives because the lack of local people participation, too many projects were designed and implemented without consultation or co-operation with the people whose lives round the forest reserves. Since then, participation has become one of the essential words of development projects. It now seems that every project description or plan adopts a 'participatory approach often because this is required by donor organizations for political reasons. Unfortunately, project planners and implementers frequently use the word 'participation while continuing a traditional style of management that does not involve local people (Wily, 1997). Elrawashda natural forest reserve is the largest forest in Eastern Sudan Since the reservation no sound attempt was made to manage the forest until 1987, when the forest subjected under the integrated land use plan. The goal of this plan was to organize its multiple uses so that various forest products and services made available. Elrawashda integrated forest management has witnessed positive collaboration between FAO, FNC and local people around forest reserve, towards successful involvement of local people in management and sustainable forest resources use. Many experiences and lesson have been gained form project activities and this lesson needed to be further investigated to improve the experience in this field. The objective of this study was to assess the main problems of involvement the local people in natural forest management in Elrawashda natural forest reserve at Elgadarif State of Sudan.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

**1. Study area:** The study was conducted in Eastern part of Sudan in ELgadarif State which lies between latitudes 10 – 15 N and longitudes 35 – 40 E with an area of 78.228 km and average altitude of 600 meters above sea level (Atta el moula, 1985). The study area lies between ELgadarif and Showak localities covering an area about 25.900 hectares. The climate of the area is semiarid, with an average rain fall of 175 mm at Goz in the North and 650mm at Doka in the South. The main vegetation is characterized by several Acacia species of which important multipurpose species. The area is inhabited both by settled and nomadic population, their economy is dominated by traditional rain fed agriculture and animals raring (Osman, 2000).

**2. Methods:** Secondary information for the study was obtained through the review of literature including textbooks, journals, reports and previous studies that available. For primary data collection, two targeted questionnaires were primary designed to obtain information from the villagers and nomads, about their perception and attitudes towards conservation and management of Elrawashda forest project on sustainable basis and their experiences and participation in project activities. Three villages were randomly selected for data collection; the interview covered sixteen households with sample percent 20% of the total number of households in every single village. The second questionnaire was prepared to collect information from nomadic groups, about their involvement in managements and protection of Elrawashda forest project, 20 nomads were selected randomly from different tribes that using forest. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software (Ver. 16.0) by computing descriptive statistics. The results were presented using frequency counts and percentages. Chi – squire test was perfumed to test significant of any differences between respondents viewed.

## III. RESLUTS AND DISCISSTION

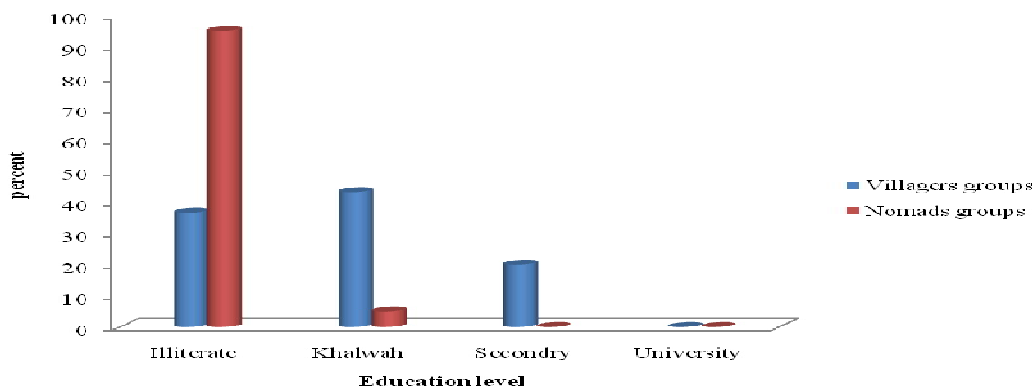
The result in figure (1) shows very high significant difference at ( $P>0.001$ ) in educational level between villagers and nomads groups, the result shows that the majority of nomads respondents were illiterate (95%) this attributed to nomads did not care about education on their children they depend on them to look after animals, the high illiterate rate within nomads may be due to lack of schools in place were nomads are moved or either schools time contradicts with their movement. In addition to that, the nomadic lifestyle and the seasonal migration of the nomads community brought its own challenges to the educational program. Moreover, Sudan's nomadic communities – a group with a very high illiteracy rate, and who have traditionally resisted the notion of sending their children, especially girls, to school. The high illiteracy, lack of awareness and marginalized by governments within nomads groups resulted to low contribution

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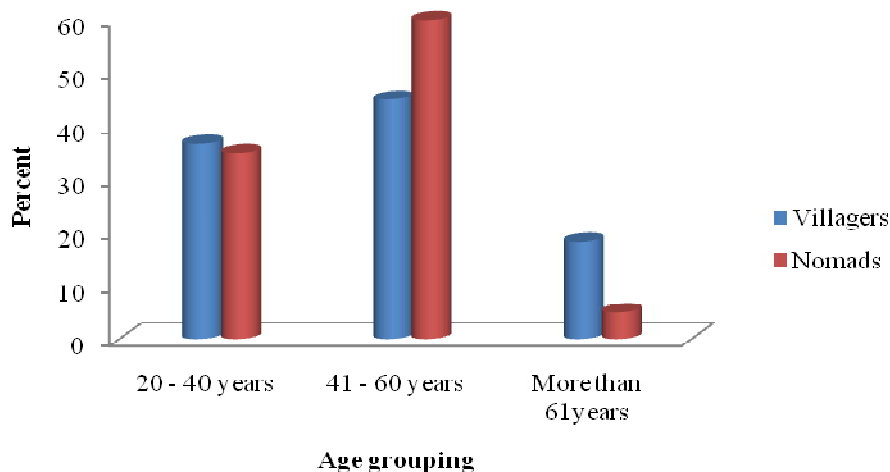
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in projects activities. The results obtained indicated that the most of villagers (43%) educated at Khalwa (Islamic schools to learn holly Quran), followed by illiterate (22%) this may be attributed to attitude of villagers that educated at Khalwa is considered better than schools, the gradual increases of educational level and residency within villagers resulted in significant contribution in projects activities.



**Figure (1) Education level for Villagers and Nomads groups**

The result in figure (2) indicated that 45% of participants within two groups was ranged between age (40 – 60) years and followed by (36.7%) between age (20 – 40) years. This attributed that this groups were most active, productive, and have awareness about advantage of their participation in project for forest sustainability production within villagers in particular, while the nomads in most cases send the youth to look after animals for long distances to graze in rainy season grazing lands. The adults have knowledge about role of forest protection in sustainable forests production and they have awareness and understanding of forest ecological role in a nature by historical sense. They sense that availability of forest resources were often greatly reduced for use by the local people due to increasing pressures to cultivate the land around forest. Moreover, the local people believes that forests can get rain to fall effectively, all reason above let the local peoples specially villagers were participate actively.



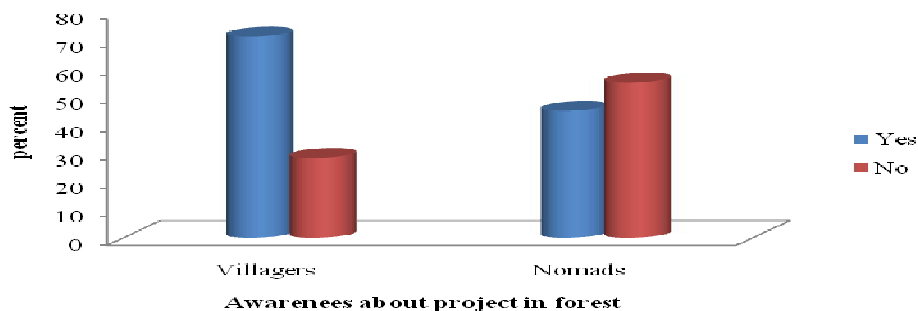
**Figure (2) Distribution of villagers and Nomads according to Age grouping**

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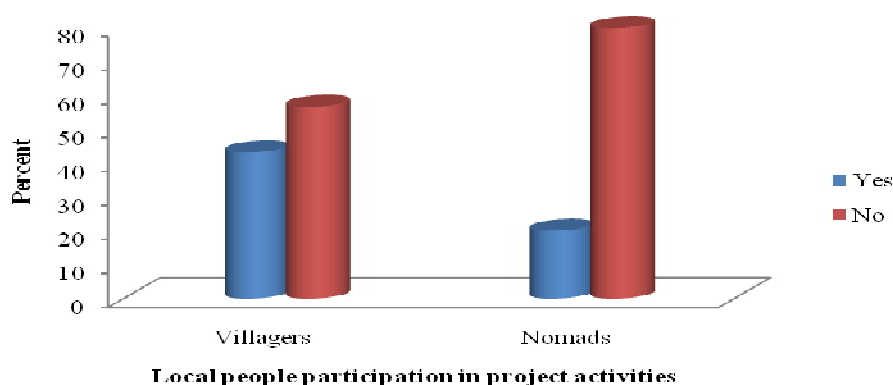
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There is a significant difference between two groups about their knowledge concerning the collaboration system that has been adapted in the forest between the FNC and FAO, in order to involve local people in project activities, the results in figure (3) indicated that the majority of villagers are aware about project and it is advantage for local people this achieved with their residency in one place and may be they received more extension programme, also the results indicated that (55%) of nomads viewed are not aware about project, while (45%) of them said they knew and convinced with projects activities. the main problems of nomads participation in project activities may be due to fact that majority of nomads were illiterate as indicated in figure (1) in addition to that their families send them to look after animals and they spend most of time in their movements. Elnour (2001) report that nomads in ELGadarif migrate looking for food and water for their animals and escape unfavorable condition in certain condition.



**Figure (3) Awareness of villagers and Nomads about project in forest**

The result in figure (4) revealed that the majority (80%) of nomads groups said they have not been involved in decision making especially at primary stages of project, this may be due to that nomads did not received awareness services about project activities, the high rate of illiteracy may be main reason to their limit participated. While (48.3%) of villagers said they participate in planning stage, this may attributed to lack of extension programme before project implementation. The neglecting of local people in developments projects in their areas may have negative results; it may lead to conflicts between different groups. Peter (1995) reports that participation must be in all stages of natural forest management concerning all people that suppose to involve in management activities, these people must allowed to have their voice in planning level to determining their objectives and supposed benefit, this can supports projects administration to make their local knowledge, skills and resources available. The involvement of local people in developments program might provide the people with the opportunity of joint responsibility with the project administration in the process of planning and implement, and hence help them to develop a sense of belonging, this can resulted to participation and perceive them as their own assets designed to solve some of their felt needs.



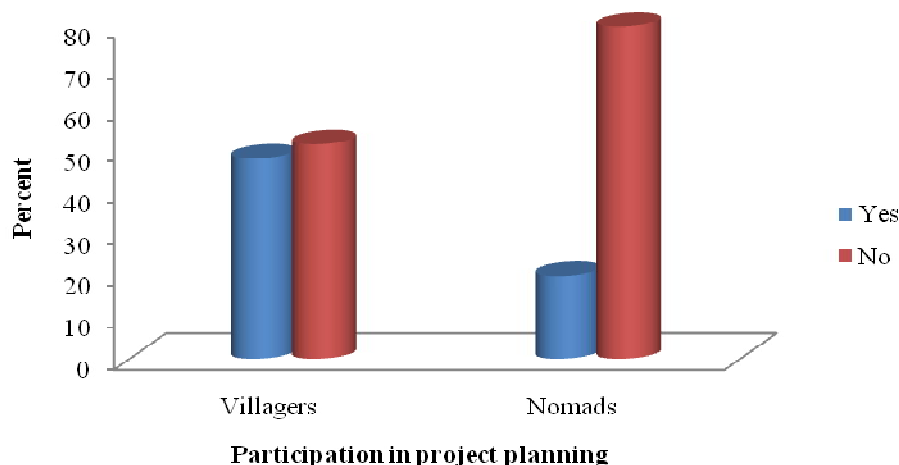
**Figure (4) Participation of villagers and Nomads in project planning**

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The results in figure (5) showed that the most of villagers (43.3%) participated at least partly in the project activities such as, fire control, prevent illegal cutting, planting operations which include land preparation, watering, seedling transportation, cleaning, and so forth, participated in sustain and protection of the forests, these beside others contributions mainly in form of ideas and organization. While nomad's participation was very rare (20%) were participated in project activities this may attributed to limited awareness they received in this respect in all stage. It is observed that women were not included in any activities, despite of their readiness towards management activities, and they are willing to participate in community programme activities. This may be attributed to that women are not allowed to involve by cultural attitude, and men play a central role in family decision. The lack of active participation and proportional representation of nomads in management process may attribute to their movements. Nomads are most involved in forest resources uses and, therefore, their role in managing and protecting forests is important.



**Figure (5) Participation of villagers and Nomads in project activities**

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The high rate of illiteracy is one of the main problems that face the local people to participate in natural forest management activities in both planning and implementation stages within two groups. The lack of extension programme resulted in limit awareness of local people about management process. Women were not included in any activities, despite of their readiness towards sustainable management process, and they are willing to participate in all activities.

#### VI. RECOMMINDATIONS

- Any natural forest management activities should be implementing with very significant involvement of local people including women.
- The equals opportunity and compound efforts can make natural forest management process more effective and general sense within people themselves benefit from access to participates in management promote can help FNC administrator in implementation.

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