

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN STONE CRUSHERS
A CASE STUDY OF SITA PAILA VDC OF KATHMANDU DISTRICT**

A Thesis

Submitted to

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Central Department of Rural Development

in the Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of

Master of Arts in Rural Development

SUBMITTED BY

TRIPTI THAPA

Exam Roll No.4014

TU Registration No.:6-3-28-40-2004

Central Department of Rural Development

Tribhuvan University

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This thesis by Ms. Tripti Thapa, entitled “**SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN STONE CRUSHERS: A CASE STUDY OF SITA PAILA VDC OF KATHMANDU DISTRICT**” has been prepared under my supervision. I hereby recommend the Evaluation Committee to examine this thesis submitted in the partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts in Rural Development.

Mr. Tulasi Sharan Sigdel
Supervisor

Date: 2067/12/03

APPROVAL LETTER

We certify that this thesis entitled “**SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN STONE CRUSHERS: A CASE STUDY OF SITA PAILA VDC OF KATHMANDU DISTRICT**” submitted by Ms. Tripti Thapa in the partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in Rural Development, has been found satisfactory in scope and quality and thus hereby accepted and approved.

The Evaluation Committee

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Head of Department

Prof. Dr. Pradeep Kumar Khadka

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External Examiner

Mr. Tulasi Sharan Sigdel

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Supervisor

Date: 2067/12/07

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It gives me immense pleasure and satisfaction for having conducted this research and many people have been influential in the completion of this study.

Firstly I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Tulasi Sharan Sigdel, my research supervisor, for his valuable guidance throughout the entire research process, especially for his critical comments, genuine support, special concern and above all, for contributing his precious time. Profound thanks to our Head of Department Prof. Dr. Pradeep Kumar Khadka for approving my research proposal and referring accordingly, and all concerned faculty members and staff of Rural Development Department for their support and help.

I am also grateful to Mr. Labha Basnet, mine-owner, for introducing me to other mine-owners and giving me valuable information about the stone crushers prior to the study and special thanks to all of my respondents without whom this research would not have had been possible.

My sincere thanks also goes to Dr. Rameet Thapa (Bhai), Mr. Kushal Thapa (Kushu), Ms. Kalyani Thapa (Kals), Ms. Aparna Singh (Apps), Ms. Tina Gurung, Ms. Renu Gurung, Ms. Karma Choeden Gurung and Ms. Tina Manandhar (Tina didi) for their invaluable contribution in making this research a success. Also, to Mr. Mahesh Shahi, Mr. Dawa Dorje Punel(Kanchha Bhai) and Mr. Paljor Gurung for showing me around the sites of Sita Paila VDC. Thank you all for sparing your precious time with me.

Special thanks goes to my parents; Prof. Dr. Trilok Pati Thapa and Mrs. Rajani Thapa, my brother and sister-in-law; Dr. Rameet Thapa and Dr. Smriti Thapa, and Mr. Mohan Gurung for their continuous support and encouragement. Also, heartfelt gratitude to my dear friends Ms. Ansu Tumbahangfey, Ms. Nisha Pandey and Mrs. Urmila Rayamajhi for being my strength, and for giving valuable comments and suggestions.

Thank you all. May forever loving Jah bless you always.

Tripti Thapa

May 2011

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the socio economic status of women stone crushers in Sita Paila V.D.C. The main aim of this study was to find out the socio economic condition of women stone crushers. For this purpose, ward no. 5 of Sita Paila, namely Aadeshwar Mahadev, was selected where there was a stone mine with an approximate number of 500 stone crushers working there, among which a total of 120 workers were estimated to be women.

The main questions addressed in this thesis are: what is the social situation, economic status, work condition, health status and attitude of the women stone crushers? Thus the objectives of the study were to find out the social status of women stone crushers, their economic condition, their health condition, their situation at their workplace and general attitude towards their occupation. The methodology used was interviews conducted in the field, which were supplemented with the review of the available literature on the issue.

The findings of this field study regarding the social status of women stone crushers clearly reflected that very few respondents lived in joint families whereas the rest (90 percent) lived in nuclear families. It was also found that they did not face any problems in their family regarding their work. These are strong indicators to explain their degree of freewill at home and at their workplace. Almost half of the respondents were found to have more than three children which signify lack of family planning awareness.

The result of the study with respect to the economic status clearly showed that they were paid in accordance to how much stones they were able to crush. Also, it was seen that they could choose to either work or not work. Hence, they had their free will on how much they wanted to work. There were not any hard and fast rules at their workplace. For most of the women stone crushers, their family's average income per month started from approximately Rs. 4000 up to Rs.10000. It was found that 60 percent of the respondents mentioned that their family's monthly income was sufficient signifying the attitude of self dependence and self pride. The problems they faced due to insufficient salary were; their income was not enough to cater to the needs of their children's education as well as food and lodging.

Regarding changes at their workplace, 83 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had not experienced any changes. Also, none of them were engaged in other income generating activities. The study further revealed that 32 percent had been away from work due to accidents. The type of accident was mostly minor injuries like cuts and bruises, eye injuries and eye infection and some having serious accidents leading to fracture of legs and hands due to heavy stones.

It was found that 48 percent of the respondents solely took care of the household activities. Most of their children were grown-ups, some brought their the children at the site, for the remaining their children were looked after by their relatives , neighbours and husbands.

Regarding health condition, it was found that 45 percent had suffered from various illness/ disease within the past six months. Among them 78 percent mentioned going for allopathic treatment. It was further revealed that 40 percent of the respondents mentioned having health problems due to their occupation which included illness/ diseases such as respiratory problem, limb problems and eye problems.

Regarding the attitude towards their work it was found that 54 percent of the women stone crushers mentioned that they were satisfied with their work and 23 percent were happy. Among the respondents who mentioned that they felt that their work as a stone crusher was miserable(23 percent) the solution they gave to improve their situation was higher wages and good working condition.

With respect to their view about stone crushers, 45 percent of the respondents mentioned that being a stone crusher is a good opportunity for those who are unemployed and uneducated, 25 percent mentioned that they did not have any comments, 20 percent said that being a stone crusher is a harsh experience whereas the remaining 10 percent mentioned that they were very happy and proud to be a stone crusher.

Hence, the research contributes to giving a picture of the situation of women stone crushers in Nepal. The study shows the picture of the social, economic, work and health status of women stone crushers and to some extent, their attitude and aspirations. The study also discusses on various recommendations made on the same.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBS	:	Central Bureau of Statistics
CDPS	:	Central Department of Population Studies
ESCAP	:	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ILO	:	International Labour Organization
NFHS	:	Nepal Fertility, Family Planning and Health Survey
VDC	:	Village Development Committee

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Women have always been treated as second class citizens in every nook and corner of the world. The extent of exploitation is more prominent in developing countries and Nepal is no exception. Women are not free from discrimination from time to time, whether it is at their homes or their workplace or even in the public. If we look at scholars they too cannot go unnoticed since at times they have also excluded women from their studies stating that their number is negligible.

Looking at the past few decades, changing figures do suggest that the status of women is improving; nevertheless women have not achieved the optimum level of becoming an effective part of human resource for development. Women have mostly been a part of the labor work force rather than intellectual work force. Their condition is evident if we look at the numbers and the situation of women involved in various sectors, including the stone crushers.

It has been seen that the women stone crushers bring children to work. They sit on the ground, placing rock after rock on a flat stone, breaking them into smaller pieces. Their children also do the same. One of the women stone crushers mentioned the flood washing her house in Nuwakot district. Since she did not have work, and no place to live she migrated (Bavier, 2004).

Nearly 40 percent of all stone quarry workers are migrants. Many come to the city looking for better jobs, a practice that began with the introduction of democracy in 1990. But with the onset of the Maoist insurgency in 1996, rural Nepal suddenly became the front lines of the war between rebels and the government's security forces. This led families to move to urban areas, fleeing a devastated rural economy and the real possibility of getting caught in the crossfire of a war. It has also been mentioned that many parents from the villages are illiterate, and they don't see any immediate returns from sending their children to school. So, they want their children to work instead of going to school. In this way, the stone quarry children are always deprived of their basic rights to education, health, and recreation. For most, the decision to put children to

work as stone crushers boils down to a simple question of economics, as the higher cost of living in urban areas has many families using every available resource simply to get by.

Generally stone crushers can earn from Rs. 1,500 to 1,700 monthly which is usually spent on rent and food, and without the help of their children's meagre income, the family would come up short every month. Such precarious economic situations are common in the quarries and have yielded some shocking statistics. The average age of child labourers in the stone quarries is twelve years. More than two-thirds of those children work from nine to ten hours each day. And it is not uncommon to see children as young as five working alongside adults (Bavier, 2004).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Studies that focus on women stone crushers are largely under researched. Even though reports are available with respect to dealing with the issue, they have mainly focused on children working in stone quarries. When it comes to studying women working as stone crushers, focus has been on a specific health hazard related to people, both males and females alike, involved in stone quarries. Studies have shown that women suffer from various diseases due to explicit working conditions and poor housing situations.

Therefore a study in this area is needed in order to assess the situation of women stone crushers and further identify the possible problems faced. By focusing on the social status, economic condition, work situation, health condition and their attitude and aspirations towards their occupation as stone crushers the socio-economic status of women stone crushers can be highlighted. Also, it is necessary to ensure that such workers have a specific term that exactly denotes the type of work they are involved in because in most instances it seems that people are least bothered and they just haphazardly categorise them as stone quarry workers or mine industry workers.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The plight of stone crushers, especially women has been largely ignored. The hardships they have to face include working in inappropriate conditions, for instance, working by the highways or barren lands or stone mines. This can result in risks in accidents, health hazards caused by

pollution from vehicle smoke and dust exposure, etc. It is most likely for them to live in makeshift conditions as well.

Focusing on the socio economic condition of women stone crushers would throw light upon their social status such as family size, education, family support, etc. It would highlight their economic condition and health hazards. Hence there would be a clearer understanding of their income and its sufficiency and various problems caused in their health due to their occupation. By looking at their situation in their workplace, the working conditions and their general attitude towards their work can be identified.

Overall, the study will be able to highlight the condition of women stone crushers which undoubtedly has a direct link with other integral parts of the society such as the economic system, education system, family system, health system, etc.

At the national level, loopholes in the informal work sector and manual occupations can be identified to some extent as well.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

Since very few studies have been carried out on women stone crushers, this study aims to explore the socio economic condition of women stone crushers, which in turn can be helpful for researchers or development workers to further analyse the issue of women stone crushers in particular and other stone crushers in general.

They are the ones who contribute to the economy and to the construction business, or rather say the empire, yet their plight is overlooked. They are an important part of the construction community who indeed play a vital role, but their health, safety and economic issues have not been explained or taken into consideration, except for very few organisations.

Hence, since issues like these that hamper the very roots of development are largely ignored, there is the need of attention to be paid to women stone crushers.

1.5 Research Questions

- What is the social status of women stone crushers?

- What is their economic condition?
- What is their situation at their workplace and general attitude towards their occupation?
- What is their health condition?

1.6 Objectives of the Research

- To find out the social status of women stone crushers
- To find out their economic condition
- To find out their situation at their workplace and general attitude towards their occupation
- To find out their health condition

1.7 Operational Definitions

- **Stone crushers:** It refers to the people working on roadsides or in barren lands involved in breaking stones manually or by using a metal ring and hammer
- **Women stone crushers:** It refers to the women aged 18 years and above working as stone crushers at Sita Paila VDC.
- **Workplace:** It refers to the site where the women work at Sita Paila VDC.
- **Social status:** It refers to the social condition of women stone crushers in terms of their family support and working conditions
- **Economic condition:** It refers to the economic status of women in terms of their earnings as well as their type of work
- **Health condition:** It refers to the health situation of women in general and also in terms of their work environment

1.8 Organisation of the Study

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter I introduces the background of the study and statement of the problem. It further discusses the scope and rationale of the study. Then the research questions and objectives have been mentioned followed by operational definitions. Chapter II focuses on the various literature available on status of women in Nepal, women labour and women in informal labour. Chapter III focuses on the research methodology used in order to conduct this research. Chapter IV discusses the results and discussions in detail and chapter V deals with the summary and conclusion and recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses various literature available about the status of women in Nepal, specially focusing on women's status in Nepal in accordance to various sectors such as health, education and work. Also, focus has been on manual work, women labour and situation of stone crushers. Books, reports, articles and data available on the World Wide Web have been taken into reference.

2.2 The Status of Women in Nepal

Statistically, it is seen that the total number of women in Nepal is 11,587, 502 and the total number of men is 11,563,921 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2004).

It has also been stated that women constitute 50.1% of the total population (Central Bureau of Statistics, 1995).

The sex ratio in Nepal is 99.5, indicating an excess of women over men. Men outnumber women in urban areas, while the reverse is true in the rural areas. This is largely due to a bias in employment and education that favour men, resulting in large male out-migration from rural to urban areas. Nepal also has had a long history of male emigration with regional variation (ESCAP, 1995).

Furthermore, it has been stated that women make up about half of Nepal's population, which crossed 22 million in 1999. However the female population is not evenly distributed. Female population exceeds in the hills and mountains due to excessive male out-migration to urban areas due to which work on the farm and household activities totally depends upon women's labour.

It has been stated that lack of policy and programmes to reduce gender disparity at national government level, social and religious norms at the community level and discrimination against women at the household level have all contributed to the low status of women. This has led to women being disadvantaged in many ways. They have suffered from social, cultural and political

biases and have to live under harsh conditions. In addition, since their male counterparts have benefitted due to expanded educational and employment opportunities, women's status has declined even more (Mukhopadhyay and Sudarshan, 2003).

Also, it has been mentioned that women are generally subordinate to men having less access to education, economic resources and political power (Konar, 2005).

It is seen that the majority of communities in Nepal are patriarchal and it is reflected in the practice of patrilocal residence, patriarchal descent, and by inheritance systems and family relations. Such patriarchal practices are further reinforced by the legal system. Furthermore, marriage has an overwhelming importance in a woman's life. The event of marriage determines almost all her life options and subsequent livelihood. Early marriages are rooted in both the concept of purity of the female body and the need for helping hands in farm households in general (Bennett, 1979).

2.2.1 Health

The health status of women is also regarded to be low. High birth rates, low life expectancy, high infant and maternal mortality rates indicate so. Discrimination in care and nurture, differential socialization, low levels of nutritional intake, poor sanitation and health facilities are some of the leading factors which contribute to poorer health condition among women (Mukhopadhyay and Sudarshan, 2003).

It has also been found that over the past two decades, within the overall progress in the general health situation, there have been some significant improvements in the health status of women. However, Nepalese women and girls at large still suffer from poor health compared with their male counterparts, due to lack of adequate health services, general poverty, and, in some cases, the sociocultural preference for male children. Women suffer from lack of medical facilities in case of pregnancy complications, malnutrition, anemia, and many other diseases related to their reproductive functions (NFHS, 1996).

2.2.2 Education

Similarly it is seen that there is lower literacy rates among women. Historical, economic and social reasons such as social prejudices against female education, restrictions on mobility, low social status granted to the females and the system of early marriage have contributed to lower literacy among women. Although women are the main contributors to domestic activities and are often solely responsible for family maintenance, their access to knowledge, skill, resources and power is very limited (Mukhopadhyay and Sudarshan, 2003).

In 2003 the literacy rate was estimated at 45 percent of the adult population, with a large gap between male and female literacy rates. Only 28 percent of the female population was literate in 2003 compared to 62 percent of the males (Konar, 2005).

It is also seen that women have made substantial gains in literacy over the last 25 years, partly due to vigorous government programs for girls' education starting in the early 1970s, including the training of female teachers from backward areas. The female literacy rate (six years and above) increased from a meager 4 percent in 1971 to 25 percent in 1991. Likewise, it has also been reported that adult female literacy rates as being between 19 percent and 23 percent. Despite the gains in overall educational opportunities, however, the level of literacy is still low, and the gender gap in the literacy rate remains enormous (Acharya, 1994).

2.2.3 Employment

In terms of employment, self-employment in agriculture is the predominant form of employment in the country. Besides that, 19 per cent of the rural workers and 21 per cent of all workers work as wage labourers, whereby a majority of the wage labour is in the unorganized sectors. And only between 7 and 10 per cent of all workers are employed in the organized segment of the economy. With respect to the status of women, they enjoy a lower employment status since they are predominantly engaged in agriculture and wage labour (Mukhopadhyay and Sudarshan, 2003).

2.2.4. Legal rights

With respect to legal rights, the women do not enjoy equal rights as men do. Nepal's Constitution states that there will be no discrimination of any kind on grounds of sex, caste, religion and race. Yet there are certain national codes which privilege men and certain clauses in

public law (Mulki Ain) that put women in a vulnerable position (Mukhopadhyay and Sudarshan, 2003).

The 1990 constitution has several laws that protect rights and promote gender equality but there is still no law that gives a female worker the right to approach the courts to demand equal pay.

Many female workers in both urban and rural areas have failed to get compensation after filing complaints in district courts (Newar, 2006).

2.3 Women Labour

2.3.1 Women at Work

“In this country women are more labourious than men. Not only the household works, but the outside works are also carried out by women” (Konar, 2005).

If we look at the data collected by the Central Department of Population Studies on employment it is seen that only 7 per cent of women are employed in paid jobs, 30 per cent of women are engaged in various income earning activities while a large chunk of women (63 per cent) are involved as unpaid family workers (CDPS, 1997).

This partly explains their low socio-economic status. Overall, the percentage of female workers in rural and agricultural occupations is higher than the corresponding percentage for male workers, the percentage of female workers employed in the organized sector is much lower than the corresponding percentage for male workers, and underemployment affects female workers more than male workers. Thus not only are the female workers confined to less productive and less remunerative jobs, they also have fewer employment opportunities than males. This makes it possible to argue that the labour market disadvantages for female workers arise partly because they are less skilled and less educated than male workers. But this further reflects discrimination against women in education and skill development programmes.

In Nepal, women are more vulnerable than men to poverty and unemployment. Available data indicate that women face higher levels of unemployment and underemployment in both rural and

urban areas. Women are the ones left behind to take care of the family when men temporarily migrate elsewhere for jobs during slack seasons.

Reports further show that very few women are engaged in self-employment outside agriculture, and the remaining women are still confined to self-employment in the agricultural sector which is a low productivity and high labour intensive area (Mukhopadhyay and Sudarshan, 2003).

Hence it is seen that women work harder and longer than men, mostly contributing solely to taking care of household chores, fetching water and animal fodder and farming. However, a large part of women's work is not considered as economic activity. The women who are employed still face discrimination since they do not receive equal benefits as men do.

2.3.2 Wage Rates

The prevailing belief that shapes the reality of millions of female Nepali workers is that men work harder and produce more, women are weaker and less productive so they should be paid less. Hence women have always been paid less than their male counterparts for the same amount and quality of work. For instance, the minimum wage for male labourers is Rs 100-150 but no more than Rs 80 for women and the rate has been frozen for the last 10 years (Newar, 2006).

Discrimination against women in job opportunities and wage rates is a common pattern in both the rural and urban areas. However, reliable data on wages are scarce. Analysis is made more difficult because there are many different modes of wage payment in Nepal. At least a part of the wage is paid in kind and labourers often enter into a variety of credit relations with their employers. The present employment situation is more of a problem for women than for men in the sense that higher proportions of women work long hours in poor working conditions without compensation or insurance (Mukhopadhyay and Sudarshan, 2003).

2.4 Women in Informal Labour

2.4.1. Informal Labour

During the past three decades, the migration of men and women in search of work has been extensive in Nepal. The literature reveals that seasonal migration is predominant. Lack of work in the Mountain and Hills during the slack agriculture season, low wage rates and lack of income

from non agricultural sources have been forcing a large number of workers to migrate to the Terai and cities and towns of Nepal and India looking for work. In recent years, seasonal migration has not been limited to the people from hills, but has spread among the people in the Terai as well (ILO, 2000).

‘Informal labour’ is defined to include all construction workers who are employed on a casual or temporary basis without any proper form of contract, as well as those who work for themselves either alone or in small groups. The terms and conditions of employment are not regulated in any way and hence the workers have no protection from the law against dismissal and no social protection against sickness, old age or incapacity to work (Jha, 2002).

2.4.2 Women Stone Crushers

Limited literature was available solely focusing on women stone crushers. However, reports regarding construction activities, stone mines or stone quarries did shed light on the situation of stone crushers as a whole since stone crushers are regarded among those workers who belong to the informal category. They are also an integral part of the construction industry since they are involved in the production of construction materials.

One of the reports mentions that no previous estimates were found either in written or printed form with regard to miners, let alone stone crushers, hence the author has given his own estimates based on the study he conducted as mentioned below.

It has been found that in 283 quarries of Nepal approximately 42, 000 people are engaged officially. Other than them, at least 20,000 to 30,000 people are engaged in unorganized way in the same field. These people collect boulders from their surroundings and break those into chips. They don’t work in a quarry. Taking an average of Rs.120 a day, one such person earns Rs.35,000 in a year which could not be reflected in any report. In mining labourers earn Rs.120 to Rs.200 a day irrespective of their sex. This kind of job is in contract, not in daily wages, for example, loading or unloading a four ton truck earns Rs.200 (Konar, 2005). This gives a vivid picture of stone crushers.

Furthermore, it has been pointed out that they are mostly village people from surrounding area. In many cases both husband and wife work together in the same mine. Like other Nepali women

the wife has to carry out household works besides her mining duty. If the area is near any town, children of course attend school. Women mostly are engaged with their household and field work. Total household works including fetching water and fuel wood is carried out by women only (Konar, 2005).

With regard to work situation, it is seen that stone crushers face a constant risk of hand and eye injury. They breathe in huge quantities of stone dust that expose them to the risk to cardiac diseases. Even after crushing, their families hardly have enough to eat. The job is the monotonous reduction of big stones into small ones for the building industry. It takes about a week to make a 10 tonne mound of gravel. Women armed with picks and hammers heat huge stones under dangerous high pressure to crack them into sizeable pieces before crushing them (Walubita, 2006).

Thus, the available literature was able to show a lower status of women and limited information about stone crushers, which highlighted the need to further explore the area of women stone crushers.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes in detail the research methods used to carry out this study. It deals with the research design, major variables of the study, sampling design, data collection, data analysis and limitations faced during the course of the study.

3.2 Research Design

The type of research is exploratory since it has focused on exploring the socio-economic status of women stone crushers. However, it also tries to describe the situation of women stone crushers so it is descriptive to a certain extent. Major independent and dependent variables have been taken into consideration. The sample size has been chosen to make it representative. Both quantitative and qualitative data has been used from both primary and secondary sources. Interview method has been used for data collection. Quantitative data has been produced by manually classifying and analyzing the collected data.

3.3 Major Variables

The study comprised of both dependent and independent variables. The independent variable of the study was women stone crushers of Sita Paila VDC and the dependent variables were the social situation, economic condition, health status and situation at workplace of women stone crushers.

3.4 Sampling Design

The universe of the study covers all the women stone crushers of Sita Paila VDC. Forty women were taken as sample size. The sampling technique used was random sampling. Through key informant interviews with the site owners, it was found that approximately 125 women stone crushers were working in Sita Paila VDC. From this sampling frame, 40 women stone crushers were taken as sample.

3.5 Data Collection Tools and Techniques

Data collection has been done by using various tools and techniques. Primary source of data was collected through individual interviews. The researcher made use of interview schedules which were first pre-tested prior to data collection. The interview schedule included both open ended and close-ended questions. The questions were further subdivided into various categories in order to make the interview as well as the results clearer. The data was collected by interviewing women stone crushers at Sita Paila VDC.

Two Focus Group Discussions were conducted to gain an overview of the respondents' perception regarding their status. The group consisted of in total 10 women stone quarry workers. The discussion took place at the site, which lasted for an hour and a half each.

In addition, Key Informant Interviews were also conducted with 3 mine owners of Sita Paila VDC. A semi structured interview schedule was prepared in correspondence to the research objectives.

Another technique used by the researcher was observation. The researcher made use of the checklist that was prepared in order to observe the site and women stone crushers.

Likewise, secondary data was collected by referring to newspaper articles, reports, books, and various websites.

3.6 Data Analysis

Quantitative data was collected for the study. The collected data was classified and then analyzed manually. Hence, forty samples were first edited and statistical measures were used for analyzing the data. Besides that, MS excel, computer software program was used for the processing of primary data. The presentation of the data was done through tables and charts.

3.7 Limitations of the study

First and foremost, access to literature was very limited. It was hard to find literature relating to women stone crushers, however literature was abundantly available on status of women, women in labour work, stone quarry workers and children stone crushers.

Problems were faced during data collection as well. The women stone crushers were mostly reluctant to participate and it required convincing them and ensuring that the collected information was purely for academic purpose. Except for few who denied taking part, the interview went quite smoothly with others.

The universe chosen was all the women stone crushers working at Sita Paila VDC. But the research was conducted at Aadeshwar Mahadev, Ward No. 5 of Sita Paila VDC. Out of approximately 125 women stone crushers, 40 respondents were interviewed. Therefore, the chosen respondents would be representing only a fraction of the whole universe. So, generalization of the whole universe on the basis of the sampling units will be limited.

Also, the study may not cover the exact socio economic status of women stone crushers at Sita Paila VDC since the objectives of the research focused only on specific aspects of women stone crushers.

Since the research was conducted in Sita Paila VDC, there was geographical limitation as well. So, the findings would not be much applicable to all the women stone crushers in general.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the results of the research by analyzing various variables and finding the relationship between different variables. The collected data is presented in tables, pie charts and bar diagrams and interpreted accordingly.

4.2 Personal Background of the Respondents

4.2.1 Ethnicity of the Respondents:

The following table gives information about the ethnicity of women stone crushers of Sita Paila VDC.

Table No.4.1

Ethnicity of the Respondents

S. No.	Ethnicity	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Tamang	12	30
2.	Magar	11	27.5
3.	Newar	9	22.5
4.	Rai / Limbu	4	10
5.	Brahmin	2	5
6.	Chhettri	1	2.5
7.	Gurung	1	2.5
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It is seen that 30 percent of the respondents were Tamangs, 27 Percent were Magars, 22 percent were Newars and the remaining 10 percent, 5 percent and 2 percent each were Rai/ Limbus, Brahmins, Chhettris and Gurungs respectively. Hence, Tamangs, Magars and Newars are more likely to be involved in manual jobs and their job oppurtunities are narrower in non manual occupations.

4.2.2 Age of the Respondents:

The table below shows the age composition of the respondents.

Table No 4.2

Age of the Respondents

S. No.	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Below 20 years	3	7.5
2.	20-29 years	12	30
3.	30-39 years	9	22.5
4.	40-49 years	9	22.5
5.	50-59 years	6	15
6.	Above 60 years	1	2.5
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It can be seen that 30 percent of the respondents belonged to the age group 20-29 years, followed by 22.5 percent each belonging to the age group 30-39 years and 40-49 years, 15 percent belonging to the age group 50-59 years, 7.5 percent belonging to those below 20 years and 2 percent belonging to those above 60 years. Thus, age is not much of a barrier in this occupation. However it is more likely that the ones below 50 years of age are involved in this occupation which shows the need for income generation to secure their livelihood and children's future.

4.2.3 Education of the Respondents:

The table below gives an overview of the education status of the respondents.

Table No. 4.3

Education of the Respondents

S. No.	Education	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Illiterate	35	87.5
2.	Primary	4	10
3.	Secondary	1	2.5

4.	Higher Secondary	0	0
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It is seen from the above table that 87 percent of the respondents were illiterate, 10 percent had primary education, only 2.5 percent received secondary education and none had received higher secondary education. Hence it is clearly seen that education has a direct impact on occupation. Illiteracy is linked with limited employment opportunities and thus the women are restricted to low pay manual jobs.

4.2.4 Marital Status of the Respondents:

The table below gives us information about the marital status of the women stone crushers.

Table No. 4.4
Marital Status of the Respondents

S.No.	Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Married	30	75
2.	Single/ unmarried	5	12.5
3.	Other	4	10
4.	Separated	1	2.5
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

From the above table, it is seen that majority (75 percent) of the respondents were married, 12.5 percent were single and the remaining 10 percent and 2.5 percent were widow and separated respectively. It was found that since their husbands were working at the site, they were more likely to be working there. Also, it reflects that only their husband's income is insufficient.

4.2.5 Family type of the respondents :

The following table gives us information about the type of family.

Table No. 4.5
Family Type of the Respondents

S.No.	Family Type	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Nuclear	36	90
2.	Joint	4	10
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above table clearly shows that only few (10 percent) respondents lived in joint families whereas the rest (90 percent) of the respondents lived in nuclear families. Hence, reflecting a higher degree of freewill with regard to their occupation. It is seen that there is less family pressure.

4.2.6 Total Number of Family Members:

The following bar chart shows the total number of family members of the respondents' family.

Figure No.4.1
Total Number of Family Members



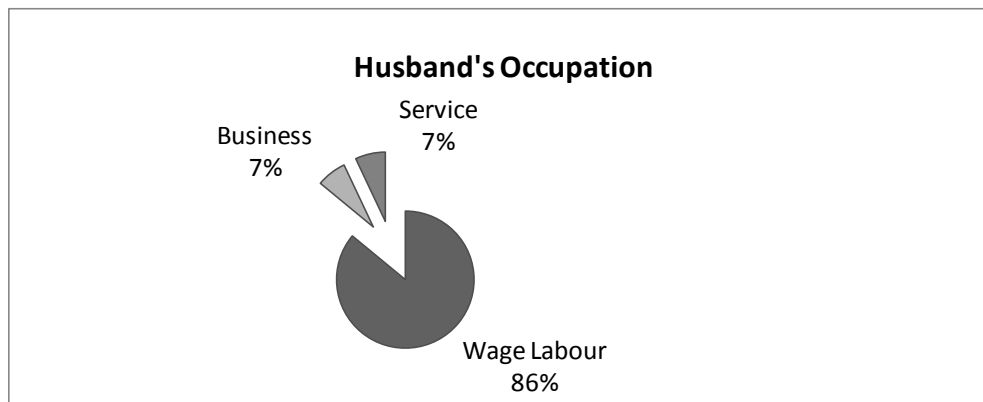
(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above diagram clearly shows that 70 percent of the respondents lived in families comprising upto 5 members while the remaining 30 percent lived in families with more than 5 members. Therefore, nuclear family type is more dominant among women stone crushers and it reflects the awareness about having less family members.

4.2.7 Husband's occupation:

The following diagram shows the type of occupation of the respondents' husbands.

Figure No.4.2
Husband's Occupation



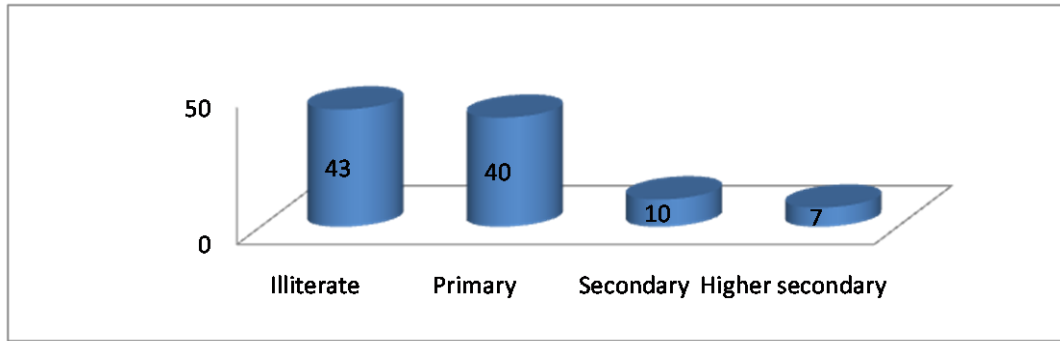
(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The pie chart above clearly shows that majority (86 percent) of the respondents husband's occupation is wage labour and only few (7 percent each) respondents husband's occupation is business and service respectively. The ones into wage labour were mostly construction workers, site workers and stone crushers and few were porters. The ones into business were land dealers and shopkeepers. This reflects that manual occupation of their husbands is one of the driving forces for women to work. Husbands are more likely to be illiterate and might have had migrated to escape poverty and for better opportunities.

4.2.8 Husband's Education:

The bar diagram below shows the education status of the husbands.

Figure No.4.3
Husband's Education



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

From the above diagram it is seen that 43 percent of the husbands were illiterate, 40 percent had received primary education, 10 percent had received secondary education and only 7 percent received higher secondary education. Again, a clear link is seen between education qualification and occupational status. Those who are illiterate or have lesser education are likely to be in manual jobs.

4.2.9 Total Number of Children:

The table below shows the total number of children of the respondents.

Table No.4.6
Total Number of Children

S. No.	Total number of children	Frequency	Percentage
1.	More than 3	17	48
2.	1-3	13	37
3.	None	5	15
Total		35	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

From the table above it is seen that 48 percent of the respondents have more than three children, 37 percent have 1-3 children and the 15 percent of the respondents mentioned not having

children. It is seen that regardless of their lower economic status, they have more children. This shows lack of awareness regarding family planning.

4.2.10 Place of Origin:

The table below gives an overview of the place of origin of the respondents.

Table No.4.7
Place of Origin

S. No.	Place of Origin	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Central Development Region	31	78
2.	Eastern Development Region	5	13
3.	Western Development Region	3	7
4.	Mid Western Development Region	1	2
Total		40	100

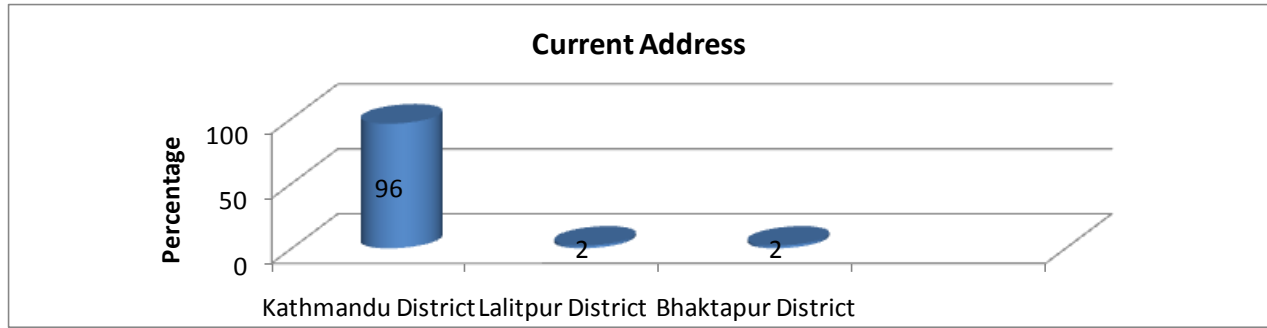
(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It is seen from the above table that 78 percent of the respondents were from Central Development Region, hailing mostly from Kathmandu, followed by Sindhupalchowk, Dolakha, Makawanpur, Nuwakot, Bhaktapur, Kavrepalanchowk, Dhading, Chitwan, Sarlahi and Sindhuli district, 13 percent of the respondents were from Eastern development region, hailing from Udayapur, Khotang, Illam, Sunsari and Tehrathum district, the remaining 7 percent and 2 percent of the respondents were from Kaski and Gorkha district of Western development region and Dang district of Far western development region respectively. Again, there is a direct link of migration with economic status. In migration to city areas from various rural areas of the country reflects the need to escape poverty and find better opportunities. More respondents are from Central development region which shows that accessibility also has an effect on migration.

4.2.11 Current Address:

The following diagram gives an overview of the current place of stay of the respondents.

Figure No. 4.4
Current Address



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With respect to the above diagram, it is seen that almost all (96 percent) of the respondents mentioned that they were currently residing in Kathmandu district, especially in Sita Paila and surrounding areas like Ichhangu, Swayambhu, Halchowk and Kimdole and only 2 percent each were living in Lalitpur and Bhaktapur district respectively. Hence, their current address reflects a link with their economic and social status. Transportation plays a major part in cutting down the expenses and living nearby their workplace allows them to meet their basic requirements in a better manner rather than living far. Also, living with stone crushers in the same community allows stronger and closer social relationships.

4.2.12 Duration of Stay:

The table below gives information on how long have the stone crushers been living in the current address.

Table No.4.8
Duration of Stay

S. No.	Duration of Stay	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less than 5 years	11	27
2.	6-10 years	11	27

3.	11-15 years	8	20
4.	16-20 years	7	18
5.	More than 20 years	3	8
Total		40	100

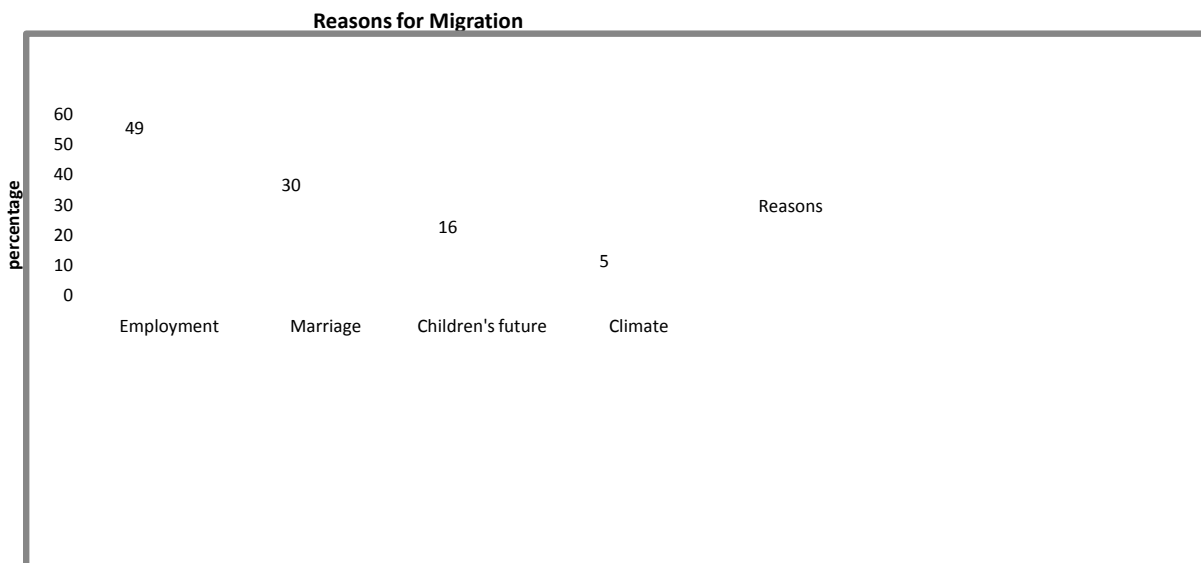
(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above table clearly shows that 27 percent each of the respondents mentioned that the duration of stay was less than 5 years and 6-10 years respectively, 20 percent had been residing since the past 11-15 years, 18 percent fell between the range of 16-20 years and the remaining 8 percent had been living for more than 20 years. It is seen that the respondents living there for less than 5 years and those living there for 15 years is almost the same which clearly reflects that they have been in the same occupation for a long time and still more people are joining in. This shows that people are still attracted towards the job as a stone crusher and place of stay also has an influence on the job they want to take.

4.2.13 Reasons for Migration:

The diagram below gives information about the reasons for migration.

Figure No.4.5
Reasons for Migration



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

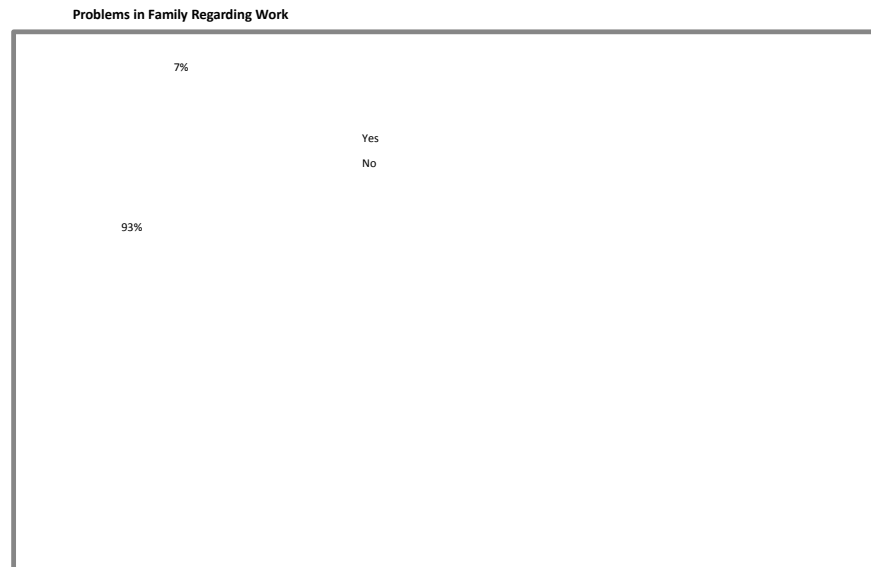
The above bar diagram shows that among the 37 respondents, 49 percent of them mentioned the reason for migration was for employment opportunities, 30 percent mentioned that it was due to marriage, 16 percent mentioned that the reason was for a better future for their children and the remaining 5 percent mentioned that it was due to climate since their place of origin was too hot to stay. Hence, the major cause being for employment reasons followed by marriage shows that people are interested in manual jobs rather than agriculture to secure their livelihood and that patriarchy still prevails. Also, another reason being better education option for their children and their future reflects their awareness on the importance of education.

4.2.14 Problems in Family Regarding Work:

The following chart gives information on whether the respondents face any problems or not at home due to their occupation as a stone crusher.

Figure No.4.6

Problems in Family Regarding Work



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

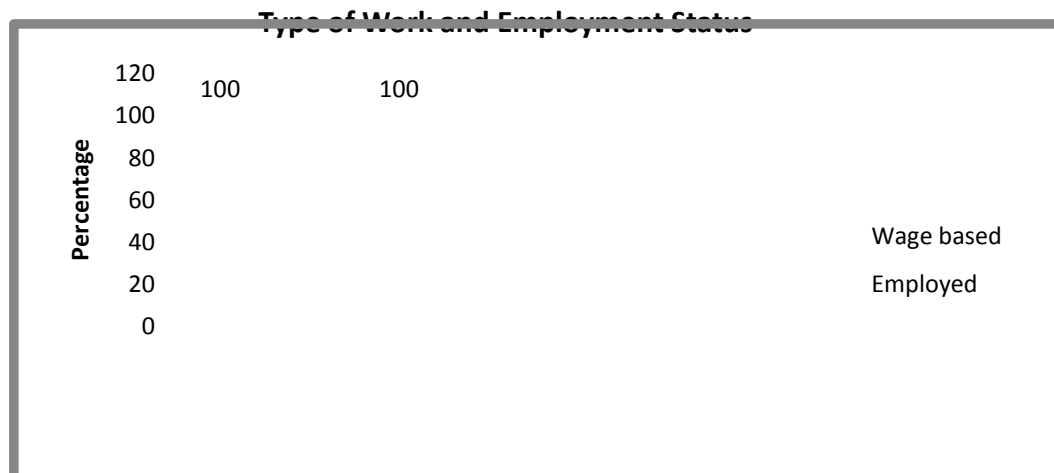
The pie chart above clearly shows that almost all (93 percent) of the respondents mentioned that they did not face any problems in their family regarding their work while the remaining 7 percent mentioned having to face problems since they were told not to work because of their age and in order to give time to children. This clearly shows that their family size has a direct impact upon their freedom. Since most of the respondents live in nuclear families, there is freedom to exercise their choices. Lesser restrictions also reflect their economic needs, where priority is given to earn regardless of the type of job.

4.3 Economic condition of the Respondents

4.3.1 Type of Work and Employment Status:

Figure No.4.7

Type of Work and Employment Status



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With regard to the above diagram, it can be seen that all the respondents mentioned that their type of work was wage based, i.e. they were paid in accordance to how much stones they were able to crush. It was found that, the respondents were paid after they were able to complete crushing one lot of stones, which was sufficient enough to fill a pickup truck. Also, it is seen that all of the respondents mentioned that they could themselves choose to either work or not work. Hence, they had their free will on how much they wanted to work. There were not any hard and fast rules at their workplace, it totally depended upon how much and how fast the respondents could crush the stones. The norm was “the sooner, the better”, whereby whoever could crush the larger amount of stones would end earning the most. So, their work is based on how much stones they can crush and they are not paid until the quota is fulfilled. There are not any rules regarding their work and no one to take responsibility, it depends upon themselves to work or not.

4.3.2 Method of Remuneration and Other Kind of Payment:

The following table gives information about the method of remuneration, i.e. the mode of payment and whether they receive any other kind of payment or not.

Table No.4.9

Method of Remuneration and Other Kind of Payment

S. No.	Frequency	Percentage
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1.	Method of Remuneration		
	Work based	40	100
2.	Other kind of payment		
	None	40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

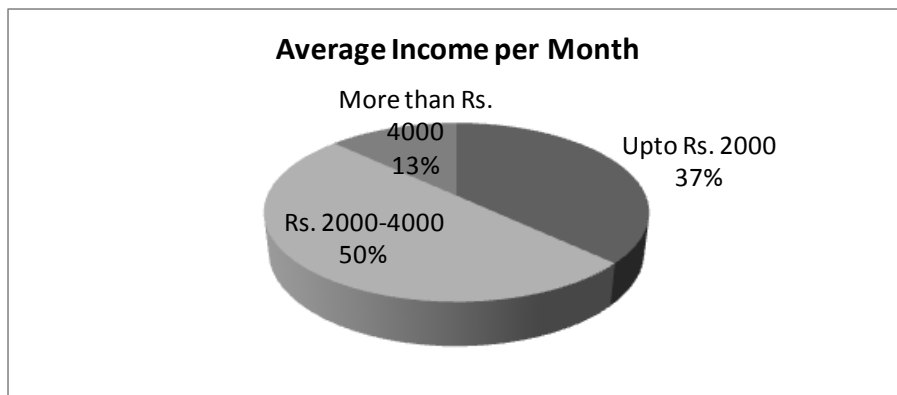
The above table clearly shows that all of the respondents mentioned that their method of payment was wage based which totally depended on how much stones they were able to crush. They were either paid Rs.11-14 per “doko” or Rs. 1200-1600 per “trip”. With regard to any other kind of payment they received, all the respondents mentioned that they did not receive any other kind of payment be it in terms of cash or kind. It was also found that when in need, they would take loan from contractors which would be paid back by crushing stones worth the amount that has been taken. Hence, it is seen that their pay is restricted to how much stones have been crushed.

4.3.3 Average Income per Month:

The figure below gives information about the average income per month of the respondents.

Figure No.4.8

Average Income per Month



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above diagram clearly shows that half of the respondents (50 percent) mentioned earning between Rs. 2000-4000, 37 percent mentioned earning upto Rs. 2000 and the remaining 13 percent earned more than Rs. 4000. Therefore, the average income per month amounts to Rs.

2000-4000 which is equivalent to 2-3 trips per month. This shows that the average earnings of the respondents are very low.

4.3.4 Husband's Type of Work:

The following table shows the type of work of the respondents' husbands based on their payment.

Table No. 4.10
Husband's Type of Work

S. No.	Husband's Type of Work	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Wage Based	21	70
2.	Monthly Basis	8	27
3.	Others	1	3
Total		30	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

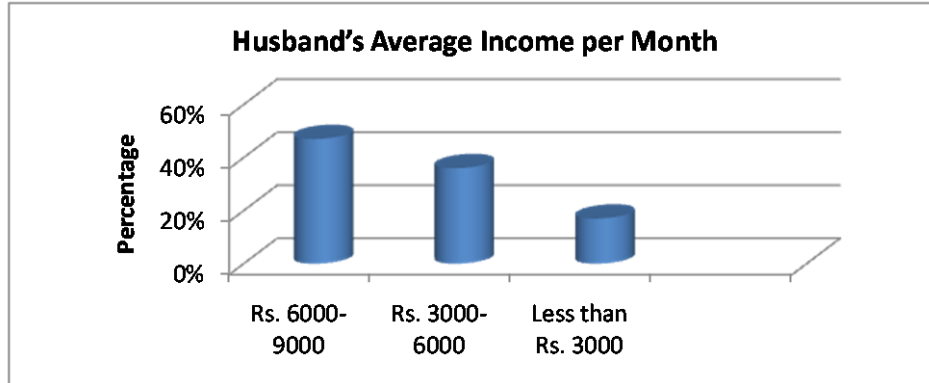
With respect to the above table it is seen that 70 percent of the respondents mentioned that their husband's type of work was wage based whereby payment was done according to the task accomplished, 27 percent were paid on monthly basis which meant that the payment was done at the end of each month and only 3 percent of the respondents whose husband was into business mentioned that the type of work depended on how much sales were made. Thus, it is seen that the husbands are also more likely to be involved in manual occupations whose type of work is wage based. But it was also found that not all manual jobs are wage based. Those working in stone mines and construction sites were more likely to have wage based jobs but those into carpentry and metal industry were more likely to have jobs that paid on monthly basis.

4.3.5 Husband's Average Income per Month:

The bar diagrams below shows the average income per month of the husbands.

Figure No.4.9

Husband's Average Income per Month



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It is seen from the diagram shown above that 47 percent of the respondents mentioned that their husband's average income per month was Rs. 6000-9000, 36 percent mentioned that the earnings were Rs. 3000-6000 and the remaining 17 percent mentioned that their husbands earned less than Rs. 3000. Hence, it is seen that comparatively the husbands earn more than the women stone crushers. But in comparison to non manual jobs, their pay is low. So, this reflects a lower economic status.

4.3.6 Family's Average Income per Month:

The following table gives information about the monthly average income of the respondents' family.

Table No. 4.11

Family's Average Income per Month

S. No.	Family's Average Income per Month	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less than Rs. 4000	7	17
2.	Rs. 4000-6000	10	25
3.	Rs. 6000-8000	8	20
4.	Rs. 8000-10000	9	23
5.	More than Rs.10000	6	15
Total		40	100

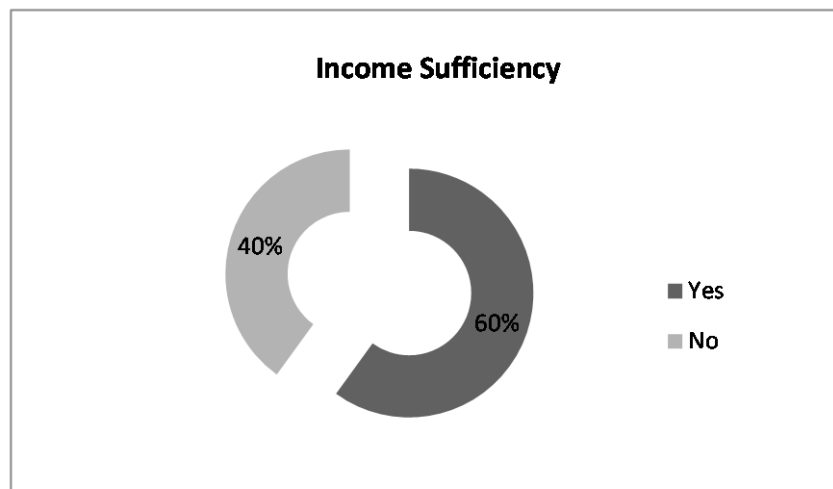
(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above table shows that 25 percent of the respondents mentioned that their family's average income per month was Rs. 4000-6000, 23 percent of the respondents mentioned that it was Rs. 8000-10000, 20 percent mentioned having an income ranging from Rs. 6000-8000, 17 percent mentioned that the family's income was less than Rs. 4000 whereas only 15 percent of the respondents mentioned earning more than Rs. 10000. Hence, the average monthly income of the family ranges from Rs. 4000-10000 which reflects a lower economic status.

4.3.7 Income Sufficiency:

The following figure gives information on whether the respondents' income is sufficient or not.

Figure No. 4.10
Income Sufficiency



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With respect to the above diagram, it is seen that 60 percent of the respondents mentioned that their family's monthly income was sufficient and the remaining 40 percent of the respondents mentioned that it was not enough. Hence, it is clearly seen that most of the respondents are satisfied with their income. This reflects the attitude of self dependence and self pride. Even though they have a relatively lower economic status and face problems regarding children's education, health and paying the rent on time, most of them are satisfied.

4.3.8 Problems Faced due to Income Insufficiency:

The table below gives information about the problems faced by the respondents due to income insufficiency based on the response of those who mentioned that their income was insufficient.

Table No.4.12

Problems Faced

S. No.	Problems faced	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Children's education, food and lodging	7	44
2.	Food and lodging only	5	31
3.	Children's education only	4	25
Total		16	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It is seen from the above table that among the 16 respondents who mentioned that their income was not enough, 44 percent of the respondents mentioned that the problems faced was that their income was not enough to cater to the needs of their children's education as well as food and lodging, 31 percent mentioned that the rent could not be paid on time and limited amount of food had to be bought in order to cut down expenses and the remaining 25 percent mentioned that it would be difficult to pay the schools fees of their children. To some extent, the finding reflects the respondents' awareness about the importance of education though majority of them are themselves illiterate. It is seen that lodging is also a problem faced by the respondents since the respondents are immigrants and they have the pressure to pay the rent on time.

4.4. Work Situation

4.4.1 Years Working as a Stone Crusher:

The table below gives information about the total number of years of the respondents spent as a stone crusher.

Table No.4.13
Years Working as a Stone Crusher

S. No.	Years Working as a Stone Crusher	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less than 5 years	21	53
2.	6-10 years	7	17
3.	11-15 years	7	17
4.	16- 20 years	2	5
5.	More than 20 years	3	8
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It is seen from the above-mentioned table that 53 percent of the respondents mentioned that their experience working as a stone crusher was less than 5 years, 17 percent each mentioned that the years working as a stone crusher had been 6-10 years and 11-15 years respectively. 8 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had been working as stone crushers for more than 20 years and the remaining 5 percent mentioned having worked for the past 16-20 years. Hence, it is seen that the respondents who have been in this occupation for a long time are still working, joined by those who have not had much experience. So, there seems to be job satisfaction among the stone crushers and it can be said that job opportunities are limited as well.

4.4.2 Reason for Choosing the Occupation of Stone Crushers :

The following table shows the reason for choosing the occupation as a stone crusher especially focusing on the various people who have been influential.

Table No.4.14
Reason for Choosing the Occupation of Stone Crushers

S. No.	Reason for Choosing the Occupation of Stone Crushers	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Self interest	17	42
2.	Family members	10	25
3.	Friends	8	20
4.	Neighbours	3	8
5.	Contractor	2	5
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With respect to the above table it is clearly seen that 42 percent of the respondents chose the occupation as a stone crusher due to self interest, 25 percent mentioned being influenced by their family members, 20 percent were influenced in the work due to friends working as stone crushers, and the remaining 8 percent and 5 percent mentioned that they came to know about the job through neighbours and contractors respectively. This reflects the effect of socialization process whereby it is clearly seen how the surrounding has influenced the choice of occupation of the respondents. It also shows that the respondents are more likely to have close knit kinship and friendship ties whereby it is more likely that the choice of occupation is influenced by those around them.

4.4.3 Total Working Hours per Day:

The table below shows the total working hours per day of the respondents.

Table No.4.15
Total Working Hours per Day

S. No.	Total Working Hours per Day	Frequency	Percentage
1.	More than 10 hours	11	27
	6- 10 hours	19	48
2.	Less than 5 hours	10	25
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It is clearly seen from the above table that 48 percent of the respondents worked for 6-10 hours, 27 percent worked for more than 10 hours and the remaining 25 percent worked for less than 5 hours. Thus, it is seen that the respondents work as per the need. Mostly, it is seen that they work as much as or even more than those in non manual jobs. The total number of hours spent at work also reflects the free will of workers.

4.4.4 Problems Experienced at Work:

The following table reflects their view regarding the problems they face at their workplace.

Table No. 4.16

Problems Experienced at Work

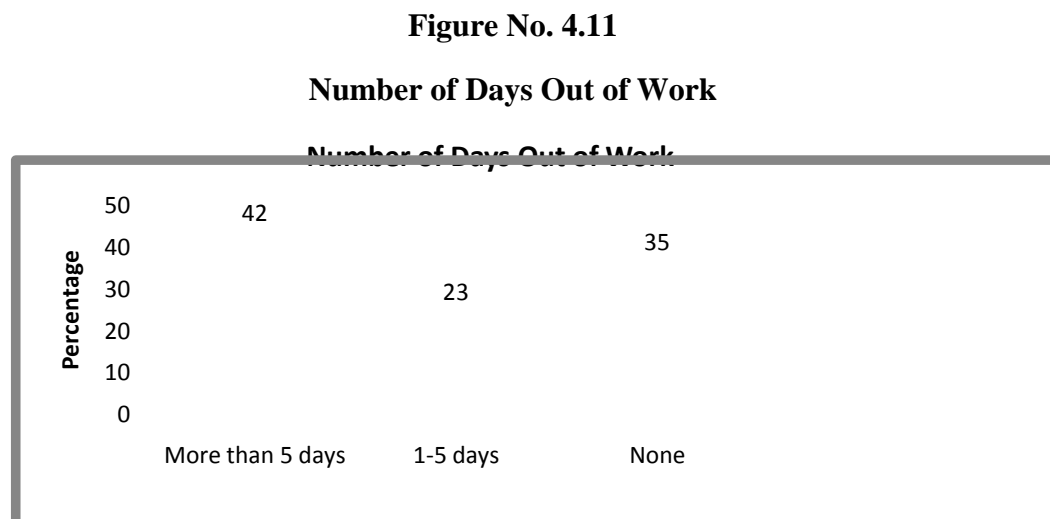
S. No.	Problems Experienced at Work	Frequency	Percentage
1.	None	29	73
2.	Health problems	6	15
3.	Economic problems	5	12
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The table above shows that 73 percent of the respondents mentioned that they did not experience any problems at their workplace. 15 percent of the respondents mentioned that they suffered from health problems while the remaining 12 percent mentioned facing economic problems. This reflects their satisfaction since most of the respondents expressed that they do not face any problems. Also, their acceptance is seen regarding their work and working conditions.

4.4.5 Number of Days Out of Work:

The bar chart below gives an overview of the number of days out of work of the respondents.



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above bar chart shows that 42 percent of the respondents mentioned being out of work for more than 5 days, sometimes due to health reasons while at other times it would be that they would stay at home when they felt lazy to work or because it rained, 35 percent mentioned not being out of work at and the remaining 23 percent mentioned being out of work for 1-5 days. Looking at the situation of number of days out of work, it is seen that there is flexibility with regard to their absence, though some respondents did also mention that the weather condition like rainfall also has an impact on their work.

4.4.6 Changes Experienced at Workplace:

This section looks at the changes experienced at the workplace by the respondents in comparison to the working condition in the previous years.

Table No. 4.17
Changes Experienced at Workplace

S. No.	Changes Experienced at Workplace	Frequency	Percentage
1.	No changes	35	83

2.	Few Changes	5	12
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

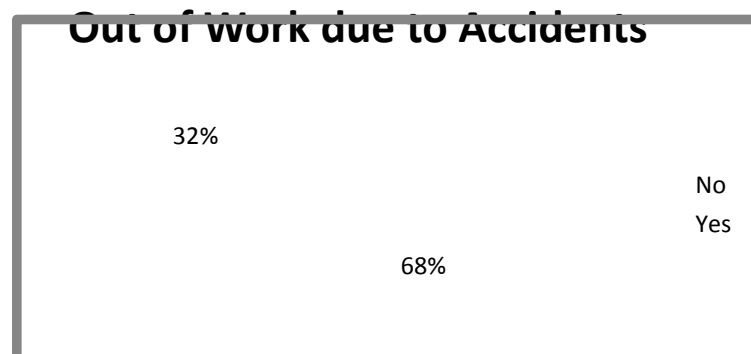
The above table shows that 83 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had not experienced any changes at their workplace in comparison to the previous years and only 12 percent mentioned experiencing some changes such as the type of tools used and the place where they crush stones. Some even mentioned that the rates differed from place to place. It was also found out that none of the respondents were engaged in other income generating activities. When there was no work the women would spend their time in household activities such as cleaning, washing, looking after children and cattle, etc. This clearly shows that not much change has taken place and there is lack of data that can be cited as evidence for a better working condition.

4.4.7 Out of Work due to Accidents:

The pie chart below shows the percentage of those respondents who have been out of work due to accidents and of those who have not been out of work.

Figure No.4.12

Out of Work due to Accidents



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

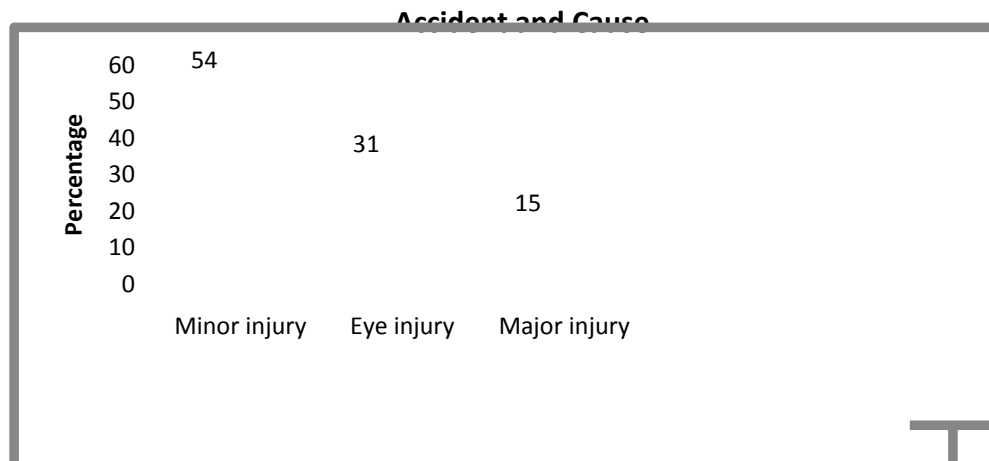
It is seen from the above diagram 68 percent of the respondents had not been out of work due to accidents and only 32 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had been away from work due to accidents. This clearly shows that major accidents do not occur frequently. But the very fact that some of the respondents have been out of work due to accidents does throw light upon

the fact that they are not totally free from mishaps since the working conditions are not completely safe.

4.4.8 Accident and Cause:

This section gives an overview about the type of accident faced at the workplace by the respondents as shown in the figure below and also explains the cause of the accident as seen in the following paragraph.

Figure No.4.13
Accident and Cause



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With respect to the diagram above, 54 percent of the respondents mentioned that the accident was minor injuries like cuts and bruises in the hands and legs because of the stones and tools used accidentally, 31 percent mentioned eye injuries and eye infection caused by specks of dirt and dust or sometimes even small stones and the remaining 15 percent mentioned having serious accidents leading to fracture of legs and hands due to heavy stones. So, as a whole, it is seen that the respondents were likely to be suffering from minor injuries now and then. Thus, the working conditions are not too safe.

4.4.9 Duration Away from Work:

The following table gives information about the total number of days away from work when they have suffered from various accidents and the following description also throws light upon who cared for the expenses.

Table No.4.18
Duration Away from Work

S. No.	Duration Away from Work	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less than 1 month	7	54
2.	1-6 months	5	38
3.	More than 1 year	1	8
Total		13	100

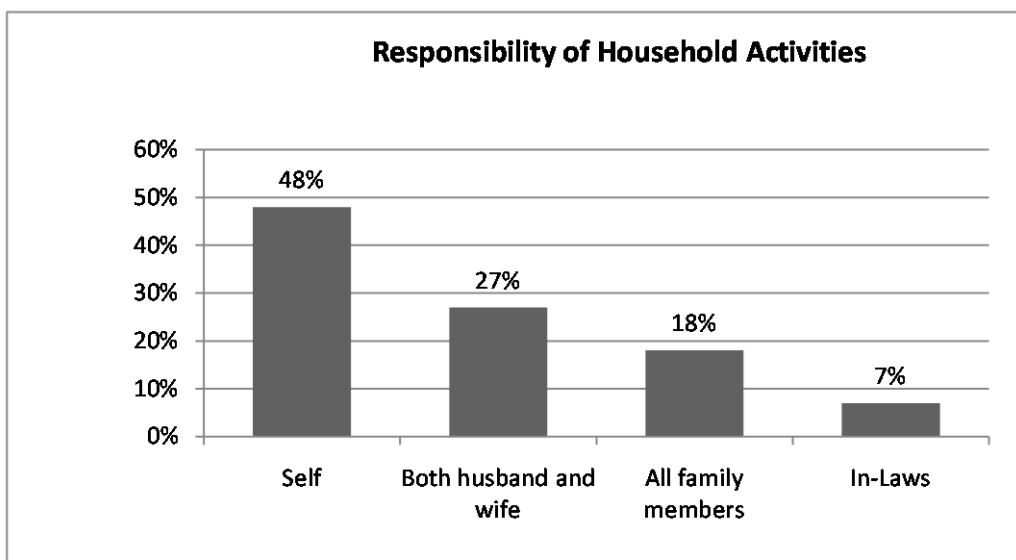
(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It is clearly seen from the above table that 54 percent mentioned that the duration away from work was less than 1 month, 38 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had been away for 1-6 months and the remaining 8 percent mentioned being away for more than 1 year. Thus, since mostly the accidents are minor injuries, it is more likely for the respondents to be out of work for less than a month. Because of the low wages, they cannot afford to stay out of work for too long.

4.4.10 Responsibility of Household Activities:

The figure below clearly shows who takes full responsibility of household activities.

Figure No.4.14
Responsibility of Household Activities



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above diagram shows that 48 percent of the respondents mentioned that they themselves took care of the household activities, 27 percent of the respondents mentioned that both husband and wife looked after the activities, 18 percent of the respondents mentioned that all family members shared the household activities whereas only 6 percent of the respondents mentioned that their mother-in law took responsibility of such activities. Hence, it is clearly seen that women still have the major responsibility. But to some extent the activities are seen to be shared which reflects the concept of conjugal roles. A clear link is seen between family type and sharing of household tasks. Conjugal roles are more prominent due to nuclear families.

4.4.11 Responsibility of Children during Work:

The table below gives information on who takes care or who has the full responsibility of the children when they are at work.

Table No.4.19

Responsibility of Children during Work

S. No.	Responsibility of Children during Work	Frequency	Percentage
1.	They are grown ups	13	43
2.	I bring them along at the	7	23

	site		
3.	Relatives	5	17
4.	Neighbours	3	10
5.	Husband	2	7
Total		30	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With regard to the table shown above, it is seen that 43 percent mentioned that their children were grownups who could take care of themselves, 23 percent mentioned bringing the children at the site, 17 percent of the respondents mentioned their children were looked after by their relatives and the remaining 10 percent and 7 percent of the respondents mentioned that the children were looked after by their neighbours and husbands respectively. So, mostly the children are grown ups and it is more likely that the dependent children are brought to the site. Close knit kinship and neighborhood ties are seen since the respondents also mentioned that their children were looked after by relatives and neighbours.

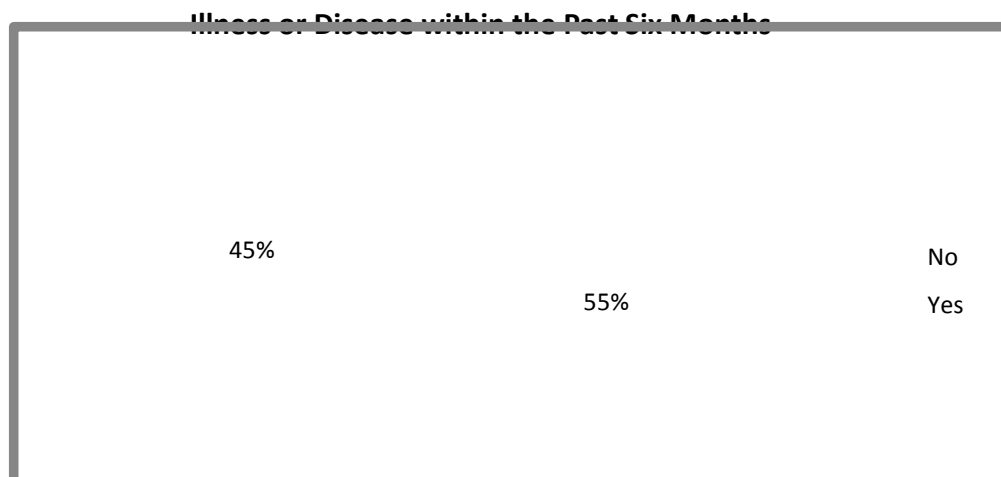
4.5 Health Condition

4.5.1 Illness or Disease within the Past Six Months:

The figure below shows the health status of the respondents within the past six months.

Figure No. 4.15

Illness or Disease within the Past Six Months



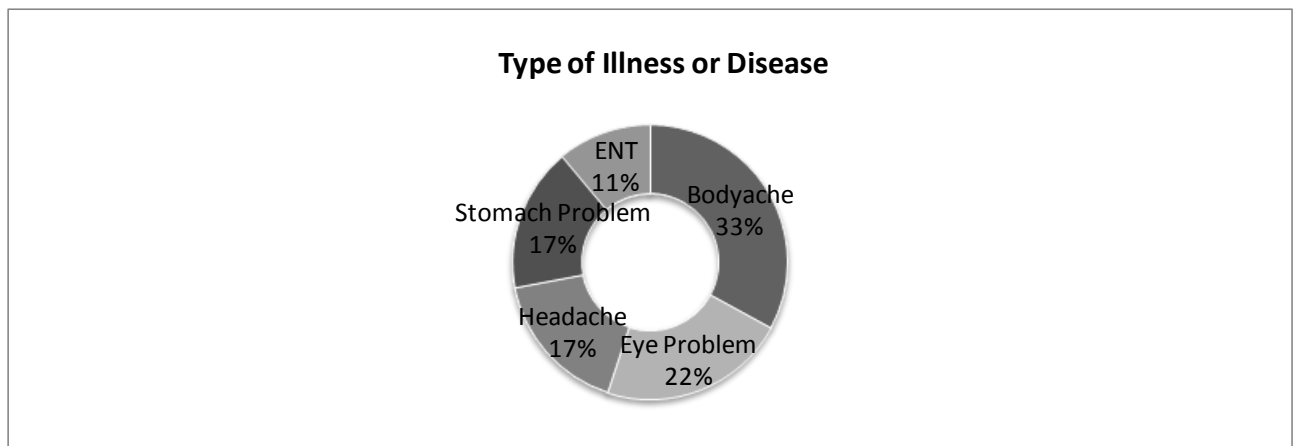
(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above pie chart shows that 55 percent of the respondents mentioned not suffering from any illness/ disease within the past six months whereas the remaining 45 percent mentioned that they suffered from various illness/ disease. Hence, the health condition of the respondents can be said to be a bit poor. The fact that 55 percent of the respondents mentioned not having suffered from any illness or diseases reflects good immunity power but on the contrary it can be equally stated that awareness about health issues may be lacking because of which realization is not there.

4.5.2 Type of Illness or Disease:

The following chart shows the type of illness or disease that the respondents have suffered from within the past six months.

Figure No.4.16
Type of Illness or Disease



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With regard to the type of diseases that the respondents suffered from, the above diagram clearly shows that 33 percent mentioned that they suffered from body ache, 22 percent of the respondents mentioned they suffered from eye problems like allergy and infection, 17 percent each mentioned that they suffered from headache and various stomach problems respectively. The remaining 11 percent of the respondents mentioned suffering from ear, nose and throat infections. The diversity regarding the type of diseases that the respondents suffer from gives a clear indication that they are vulnerable to various types of diseases due to their working conditions. To some extent, age is also a contributing factor.

4.5.3 Mode of Treatment:

The following table shows the mode of treatment used by the respondents when they fall ill.

Table No.4.20

Mode of Treatment

S. No.	Mode of Treatment	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Allopathic doctor	14	78
2.	None	3	17
3.	Ayurveda	1	5
Total		18	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

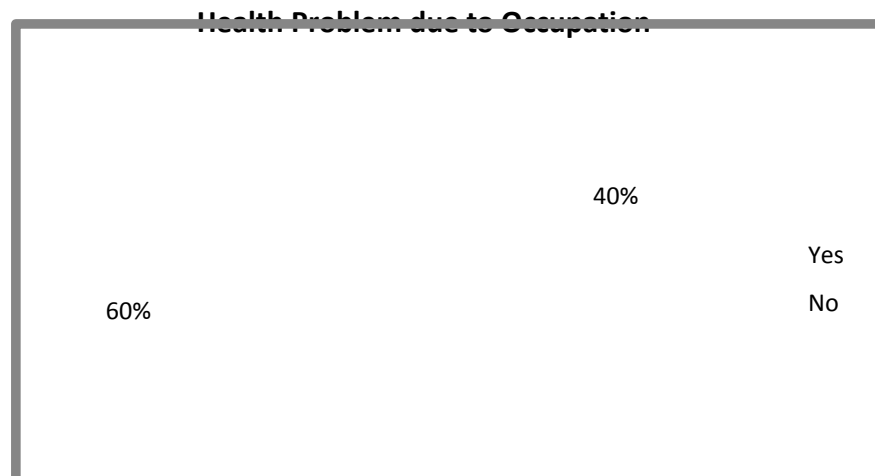
With respect to the mode of treatment used, the table above shows that 78 percent mentioned going for allopathic treatment, 17 percent of the respondents mentioned not having any sort of treatment and the remaining 5 percent mentioned opting for ayurveda treatment. It is clearly understood that regarding treatment options there is awareness on visiting health clinics and allopathic doctors. There is influence of city life and accessibility to health services seen as well.

4.5.4 Health Problem due to Occupation:

The following diagram gives information on whether the respondents suffer from health problems due to their occupation or not.

Figure No.4.17

Health Problem due to Occupation



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

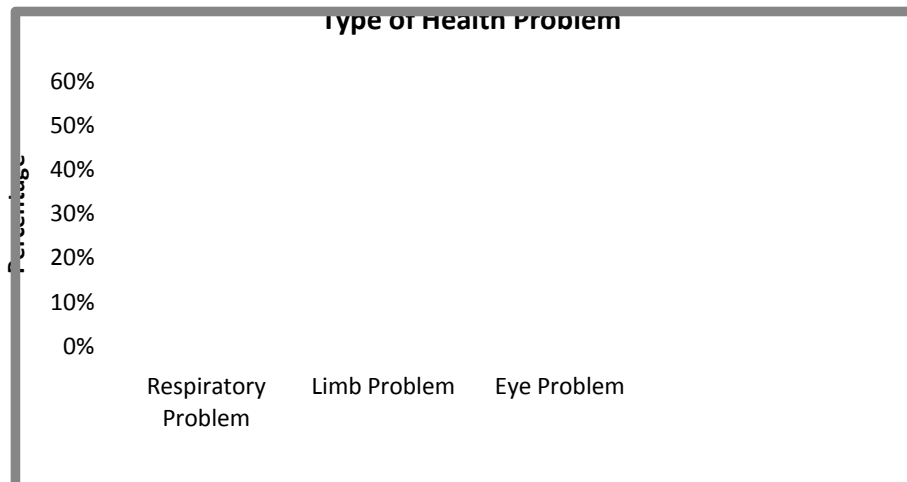
With respect to the diagram shown above, 60 percent of the respondents mentioned not facing any health problems due to their occupation and 40 percent of the respondents mentioned having health problems.

4.5.5 Type of Health Problem:

The bar diagram below shows the type of health problems faced by the respondents due to their occupation.

Figure No.4.18

Type of Health Problem



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

It is seen from the above table that 54 percent mentioned that they suffered from respiratory problem, 31 percent mentioned suffering from limb problems such as joint pains, swelling, etc. Whereas the remaining 13 percent mentioned having eye problems such as infections. Hence, to some extent their occupation has an effect on their health condition and the type of health problems they have to face. This shows a clear link between the health status and working conditions.

4.5.6 Meals per Day:

The following table gives information about the total number of meals consumed by the respondents.

Table No.4.21

Meals per Day

S. No.	Meals per Day	Frequency	Percentage
1.	2 meals per day	12	30
2.	3 meals per day	25	63
3.	4 meals per day	3	7
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above table shows that a majority of 63 percent had 3 meals per day, 30 percent mentioned having 2 meals per day and the remaining 7 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had 4 meals per day. Hence, on an average the respondents consume 3 meals per day which includes two main meals, one in the morning and one at night, and one light meal in the afternoon.

4.5.7 Food at Workplace and Type of Food Consumed:

Table No.4.22

Type of Food Consumed at Workplace

S. No.	Type of Food Consumed at Workplace	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Tea and Bakery Items	10	56
2.	Canteen Food	7	39
3.	Fruits	1	5
Total		18	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With respect to the table mentioned above, 18 respondents mentioned eating food at the workplace and the remaining 22 respondents mentioned not having food at their workplace. Out of the 18 respondents who mentioned having food at the workplace, 56 percent mentioned having canteen food such as 'sel', curry or chowmein, 39 percent said that they had tea and bakery goods like biscuits, doughnuts or puff and 5 percent mentioned eating fruits. This shows that since less than half of the respondents eat at their workplace their economic condition is not good and their health status is poor nutrition wise as well.

4.6 Attitude and Aspirations

4.6.1 Opinion about the work as a Stone Crusher:

The following table shows the opinion about the respondents regarding their own work as a stone crusher.

Figure No.4.23

Opinion about the work as a Stone Crusher

S. No.	Opinion about the work as a Stone Crusher	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Satisfied	22	54
2.	Happy	9	23
3.	Miserable	9	23
Total		40	100

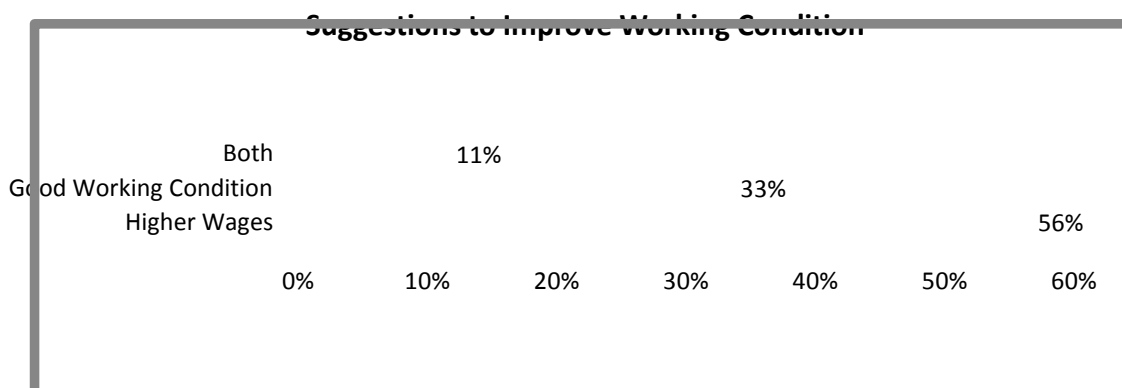
(Source: Field Survey 2010)

The above table clearly shows that 54 percent of the women stone crushers mentioned that they were satisfied with their work, 23 percent said that they were happy and the remaining 23 percent mentioned that they felt that their work as a stone crusher was miserable. Overall, it is seen that there is job satisfaction regardless of the hardships the respondents have to face. So, acceptance level is high among them.

4.6.2 Suggestions to Improve Working Conditions:

The chart below gives information regarding how to improve their working conditions.

Figure No.4.19
Suggestions to Improve Working Condition



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With respect to the respondents who mentioned that they felt that their work as a stone crusher was miserable, the above diagram clearly shows that 56 percent mentioned that their situation would be improved through higher wages, 33 percent mentioned good working condition would improve their situation whereas 11 percent of the respondents mentioned that good working condition along with higher wages would improve their situation. This again reflects a poor economic status whereby high wages would be the most appropriate solution in order to improve their condition.

4.6.3 Responsibility of Ensuring Safe Working Conditions:

The following table shows the respondents' view on who is responsible for ensuring safe working conditions at their workplace.

Table No.4.24
Responsibility of Ensuring Safe Working Conditions

S. No.	Responsibility of Ensuring Safe Working Conditions	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Contractors	28	70
2.	Don't know	9	23

3.	Government	3	7
Total		40	100

(Source: Field Survey 2010)

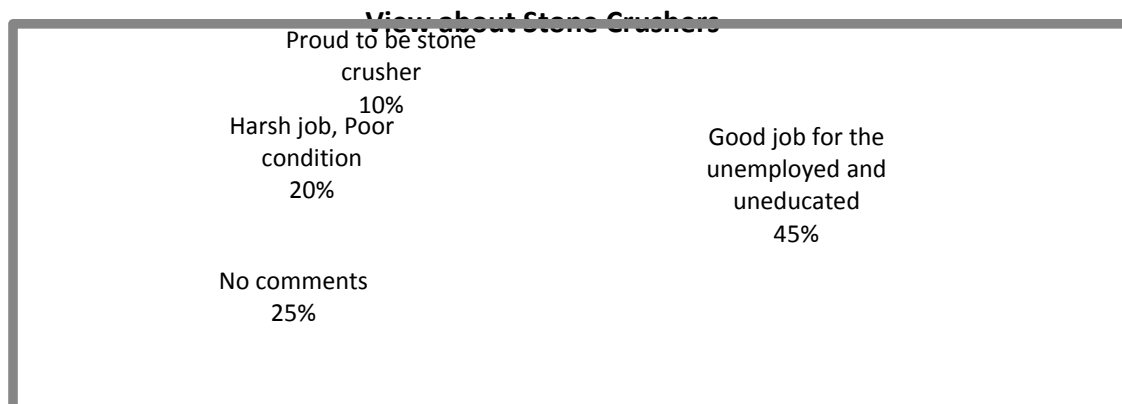
With respect to the people who are responsible in ensuring safe working conditions for them, the table above shows that 70 percent mentioned that the contractors were responsible, 23 percent of the respondents mentioned that they did not have any idea so as to who should take responsibility and the remaining 12 percent mentioned that the government had the responsibility of ensuring safe working conditions. This clearly shows lack of awareness among the respondents regarding their own working conditions who immediately see the contractors being responsible. It is seen that they have not given much thought about their working condition and their attitude is passive. They are used to the situation. Yet again a clear link is seen between their education status and attitude.

4.6.4 View about Stone Crushers:

The pie chart below shows the attitude of the respondents with respect to the occupation of stone crushers in general.

Figure No.4.20

View about Stone Crushers



(Source: Field Survey 2010)

With respect to the diagram shown above, 45 percent of the respondents mentioned that being a stone crusher is a good opportunity for those who are unemployed and uneducated, 25 percent of the respondents mentioned that they did not have any comments about stone crushers in particular, 20 percent said that being a stone crusher is a harsh experience where they have to

face poor working conditions whereas the remaining 10 percent mentioned that they were very happy and proud to be a stone crusher since it is better than being unemployed or being a beggar. Hence, the attitude and aspirations towards the occupation of a stone crusher is satisfactory. The respondents expressed mixed feelings but on the whole it is seen that their self dependence and self pride is high.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present chapter focuses on the major findings of the study and suitable recommendations have been made with regard to the improvement of present situation of women stone crushers.

5.1 Conclusion

The status of women in Nepal is low. In every sector, it is seen that women are disadvantaged in comparison to men. Various policies have been made and steps have been taken in order to uplift the status of women, however very few have been lucky enough to enjoy the benefits. Mostly, women have to suffer in many ways and various obstacles are faced, and the main cause is because she is a woman. At home, at their workplace, in the society, women are constantly abused in one way or the other and are victims in various situations. The plight of women is unheard, and even though it is heard nothing much is done. Solutions are there on an individual level but since the problems are deeply rooted true freedom cannot be experienced on a societal basis. There is awareness but no change in attitude. With regard to women stone crushers, it was clearly seen that they have a lower socio-economic status in comparison to other women in the informal work sector and among the manual workers. Though they can exercise their degree of freewill at home and at their workplace it has a direct effect on their pay.

The findings of the study regarding the general background of respondents showed that the ethnic makeup of women stone crushers included Tamangs, Magars, Newars , Rai/ Limbus, Brahmins, Chhettris and Gurungs. Among them, Tamangs, Magars, Newars and Rai/Limbu's were predominantly involved in this job. The age group of the respondents varied but it was seen that most of them were between 20-49 years. The findings regarding education was that more than 80percent of the respondents were illiterate, followed by very few receiving primary education and secondary education.

The social status of women stone crushers clearly reflected that very few respondents lived in joint families whereas the rest (90 percent) of the respondents lived in nuclear families It was also found that most of the respondents mentioned that they did not face any problems in their

family regarding their work while the remaining 7 percent mentioned having to face problems since they were told not to work because of their old age or to give time to children. These are strong indicators to explain their degree of freewill at home and at their workplace.

Almost half of the respondents were found to have more than three children. This reflects the lack of awareness of family planning.

With respect to the place of origin, predominantly the women stone crushers were from various districts of Central Development Region, hailing mostly from different places of Kathmandu , and almost all currently residing in Sita Paila and surrounding areas like Ichhangu, Swayambhu, Halchowk and Kimdole. It was also found that the duration of stay at the current address ranged from the time span of 5-15 years to more than 20 years. The reasons for migration were found to be for employment opportunities, due to marriage, for a better future for their children and due to climate since their place of origin were too hot to stay.

The result of the study with respect to the economic status clearly showed that the type of work was wage based, i.e. they were paid in accordance to how much stones they were able to crush. It was found that, the respondents were paid after they were able to complete crushing the required amount of stones, which was usually sufficient enough to fill a pickup truck. Also, it was seen that all of the respondents mentioned that their employment status was self employed, i.e. they could themselves choose to either work or not work. Hence, they had their free will on how much they wanted to work. There were not any hard and fast rules at their workplace, it totally depended upon how much and how fast the respondents could crush the stones.

Their method of remuneration was wage based which totally depended on how much stones they were able to crush. They were either paid Rs. 11- 14 per “doko” or Rs. 1200-1600 per “trip”. The rate of pay depended upon the contractors. With regard to any other kind of payment they received, all the respondents mentioned that they did not receive any other kind of payment be it in terms of cash or kind. The average earning was between the range of Rs. 2000-4000.

It was also found that majority (86 percent) of the respondents husband’s occupation is wage labour and only few respondents husband’s occupation is business and service. The education status of the husbands showed that 43 percent of the husbands were illiterate.70 percent of the

respondents husband's type of work was wage based whereby payment was done according to the task accomplished and that their husband's average income per month was Rs. 6000-9000.

For most of the women stone crushers, their family's average income per month started from approximately Rs. 4000 up to Rs.10000. And it was seen that 60 percent of the respondents mentioned that their family's monthly income was sufficient while the remaining 40 percent of the respondents mentioned that it was not enough. This reflects the attitude of self dependence and self pride. Even though they have a relatively lower economic status and face problems regarding children's education, health and paying the rent on time, most of them are satisfied.

The problems faced due to insufficient salary were; their income was not enough to cater to the needs of their children's education as well as food and lodging

It was found that 53 percent of the respondents mentioned that their experience working as a stone crushers was less than 5 years, 17 percent each mentioned that the years working as a stone crusher had been 6-10 years and 11-15 years respectively. 8 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had been working as stone crushers for more than 20 years and the remaining 5 percent mentioned having worked for the past 16-20 years.

The reasons for choosing the occupation was that the respondents chose the occupation as a stone crusher due to self interest, or since they were influenced by their family members, friends working as stone crushers, neighbours and contractors respectively.

Most of the respondents worked for 6-10 hours, followed by those who worked for more than 10 hours and those working less than 5 hours.

15 percent of the respondents mentioned that they suffered from health problems while the remaining 12 percent mentioned facing economic problems.

The respondents mentioned being out of work due to health reasons while at other times it would be that they would stay at home when they felt lazy to work or because it rained.

83 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had not experienced any changes at their workplace in comparison to the previous years and only 12 percent mentioned experiencing some changes such as the type of tools used and the place where they crush stones, some even

mentioned that the rates differed from place to place. It was also found out that none of the respondents were engaged in other income generating activities, when there was no work the women would spend their time in household activities such as cleaning, washing, looking after children and cattle, etc.

The study revealed that 32 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had been away from work due to accidents. The type of accident was minor injuries like cuts and bruises in the hands and legs because of the stones and tools used accidentally, eye injuries and eye infection caused by specks of dirt and dust or sometimes even small stones and having serious accidents leading to fracture of legs and hands due to heavy stones. Figures also showed that they did not stay away too long away from work.

Almost 50 percent of the respondents solely took care of the household activities, the remaining respondents mentioned that both husband and wife looked after the activities, or all family members shared the household activities or that their mother-in law took responsibility of such activities.

With regard to taking care of children some of their children were grown ups who could take care of themselves, some brought their the children at the site, for the remaining their children were looked after by their relatives , neighbours and husbands.

It was found that 45 percent had suffered from various illness/ disease within the past six months. The type of diseases that the respondents suffered from were bodyache, eye problems like allergy and infection, headache, various stomach problems and ear, nose and throat infections. Among them 78 percent of the respondents mentioned going for allopathic treatment, 17 percent of the respondents mentioned not having any sort of treatment and the remaining 5 percent mentioned opting for ayurveda treatment.

It was further revealed that 40 percent of the respondents mentioned having health problems due to their occupation which included illness/ diseases such as respiratory problem, limb problems such as joint pains, swelling, etc. and eye problems such as infections.

The majority of respondents mentioned having 3 meals per day followed by those having 2 meals per day and a minority of 7 percent of the respondents mentioned that they had 4 meals per

day. 45 percent mentioned eating food at the workplace and the remaining 55 percent mentioned not having food at workplace. Among the respondents who mentioned having food at the workplace, 56 percent mentioned having canteen food such as 'sel', curry or chowmein, 39 percent said that they had tea and bakery goods like biscuits, doughnuts or puff and 5 percent mentioned eating fruits.

The study showed that 54 percent of the women stone crushers mentioned that they were satisfied with their work, 23 percent said that they were happy and the remaining 23 percent mentioned that they felt that their work as a stone crusher was miserable. Among the respondents who mentioned that they felt that their work as a stone crusher was miserable the solution they gave to improve their situation was higher wages and good working condition.

With respect to the people who are responsible in ensuring safe working conditions for them, 70 percent mentioned that the contractors were responsible, 23 percent of the respondents mentioned that they did not have any idea so as to who should take responsibility and the remaining 12 percent mentioned that the government had the responsibility of ensuring safe working conditions.

With respect to their view about stone crushers, 45 percent of the respondents mentioned that being a stone crusher is a good opportunity for those who are unemployed and uneducated, 25 percent of the respondents mentioned that they did not have any comments about stone crushers in particular, 20 percent said that being a stone crusher is a harsh experience where they have to face poor working conditions whereas the remaining 10 percent mentioned that they were very happy and proud to be a stone crusher since it is better than being unemployed or being a beggar.

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made based on the findings of the study. It has been further subdivided into three sections. The first covers recommendations made to the government, the second sections refers to recommendations made for non government organizations, social welfare institutions and local bodies alike and the third refers to contractors.

5.3.1 The Government of Nepal

- should monitor the informal work sector
- should take necessary measures to provide appropriate working conditions for workers in the informal sector
- should introduce basic guidelines or principles in running stone mines

5.3.2 Non Government Bodies:

- should work with the government towards providing working rights and wage rights for the stone crushers
- should monitor the payments provided to workers and ensure a reasonable rate is provided
- should play a role of change agent in increasing the wages through interaction with the government as well as mine owners
- should act as facilitators and help in finding funds for providing protective gear for workers

5.3.3 Contractors:

- should focus on providing better facilities for stone crushers at the workplace
- should agree on a fixed rate and pay accordingly ensuring regular payment
- should support various non government organizations and independent researchers willing to work for the welfare of stone crushers

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ANNEX I

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN STONE CRUSHERS: A CASE STUDY OF SITA PAILA VDC OF KATHMANDU DISTRICT

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A. PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

1. Name :
2. Age :
3. Education :
 - a. Illiterate
 - b. Primary
 - c. Secondary
 - d. Higher secondary
4. Marital status :
 - a. Single/ unmarried
 - b. Married
 - c. Separated
 - d. Other:
5. Family type:
 - a. Nuclear
 - b. Joint
6. Total no. of family members:
7. Husband's occupation:
8. Husband's education:
 - a. Illiterate
 - b. Primary
 - c. Secondary
 - d. Higher Secondary
9. Total no. of children:
10. Place of origin:
11. Current address:
12. Duration of stay :
13. Reasons for migrating:
14. Do you have any problems in your family regarding your work?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

15. If yes, please specify:

- a. Yes b. No

B. ECONOMIC CONDITION:

16. Type of work:

- a. Wage based b. Monthly basis

17. Employment status :

- a. Self-employed b. Employee

18. Method of remuneration /payment:

- a. Time based b. Work based

19. Any other kind of payment?

- a. Yes b. No

20. If yes, please specify:

21. Average Earnings (income) per month:

22. Husband's type of work :

- a. Wage based b. Monthly basis

23. Husband's income:

24. Family's monthly income:

25. Is your family's monthly income sufficient?

- a. Yes b. No

26. If not, what are the problems faced:

C. WORK EXPERIENCE

27. Number of years working as a stone crusher:

28. How did you get into this work?

29. Working hours per day:

30. Any problems experienced at your workplace?

a. Yes , specify:

b. No

31. Approximate number of days worked and periods out of work per month:

32. Work experience prior to the past year:

a. No changes b. Few changes c. A lot of changes

33. What do you do when there is no work?

34. Have you been out of work due to accident/s:

a. Yes b. No

35. If yes, describe the accident and the cause:

36. How long were you away from work and who cared for your expenses?

37. Who looks after the household activities?

a. Only you b. Both husband and wife c. All family members share the task

d. Other :

38. Who looks after the children when you are at work?

a. Husband b. Family members c. Neighbours d. You bring them at the site

e. They can take care of themselves

D. HEALTH CONDITION:

39. Have you suffered from any illness/disease in the past 6 months?

a. Yes b. No

40. If yes, what are they?

41. What was the mode of treatment

a) Traditional healer b) Ayurveda c) Allopathic doctor d) Any other:

42. Have you suffered from any health problems due to your occupation?

a. Yes b. No

43. If yes, specify:

44. How many meals per day do you have?

45. Do you eat anything at your workplace?

46. If yes, please specify:

E. ATTITUDE AND ASPIRATIONS:

47. How do you feel about your work as a stone crusher?

a. Happy b. Satisfied c. Miserable

48. If miserable, how can your life become easier?

a. Good working condition b. Higher wages c. Other:

49. Who is responsible for ensuring safe working conditions on the sites where you work?

a. Government b. Contractors

50. What is your view about stone crushers?

Thank you!!!!

