

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Until the last three decades of the 20th century, women throughout the world were placed in a special category – to be protected, cosseted, respected, revered, or discriminated against and exploited, as the situation warranted.

Till the mid-1960s, women all over the world were expected to fulfill their designated traditional roles in society which encompassed, as the Germans put it, *kinder, kutcher und kirsche* or “the children, kitchen and the church.” Although the history is full of instances of learned women and powerful queens from Vedic period, women by and large played a secondary role in society. A women’s ultimate aim was to have a “good” marriage, as wealth, power and social prestige all originated from the man and his status in society. The concept of woman having her own identity and independent status simply did not exist.

After the First World War, when women were forced to help in the war and even took up jobs in factories, the women’s Suffragette Movement in the United States and England sought to obtain the right to vote. Despite their image of being “advanced” and “modern”, women in Western societies were dominated upon their sisters elsewhere. During the middle ages, though chivalry was the order of the day, knights going on Crusades bound their wives with a chastity belt.

Even today, in many so-called modern and civilized cultures there are separate norms for men and women. For example, even in 21st century Japan a girl cannot ascend the throne in many Western countries, men and women do not receive equal pay for equal work and in Switzerland women had not received the right to vote until the early 1990s.

For many centuries, the pattern of women’s lives remained the same. Education for them was not considered important. Beauty, docility, domestic skills, obedience and patience were necessary virtues that had to be cultivated. Divorce was virtually

unheard of and strong social strictures ensured that marriage was a permanent bond.

Although the Women's Liberation Movement of the 1960s, along with the emancipating effect of the birth control pill, forced radical change in Western societies, in other parts of the world the effect has not been so dramatic. Yes, women are more educated and seek to utilize their education to become professional and financially independent, but the home and family are still given importance, particularly in our Nepali society. Since Nepal moves in several centuries at the same time, there are still many in the remote areas that bring up the girl-child as has been done over the millennium, with few concessions to modernity.

According to the latest census held in 2001 the total population of Nepal of men and women is 1,13,59,378 and 1,13,77,556 respectively. Since women constitute more than half of the population, development of the country is unattainable and cannot fully be achieved without the active involvement of women in productive activities.

Despite the fact that the involvement of the women in development can be never underestimated, it was not long ago that the involvement of women in economic development was realized in our country.

It has been apparently known that women have always been active partners for men in different sectors of economic activities since the dawn of the civilization in every part of the world. However, their contribution was always neglected and almost never counted. The need of women's involvement in developmental work was not felt in the past. It was treated like the concern for development is only man's subject and women have no role on it. In other parts of the world, though it had been a similar notion in many countries, women were involved in the development sectors earlier. Those countries that acknowledged the need of women's role in the development as equal to men have progressed in all sectors of development today.

Woman is mother, a sister, a partner-yet she is often at the bottom of the society. Most societies throughout the history of the world have held women in an inferior status in comparison to men. A woman's status is usually justified as being the natural result of biological differences between sexes, and also due to her physical

inferiority. However, researches show that both women and men have the same range of emotional, intellectual, and creative attributes. Occasionally, a woman has risen to prominence and power, for instance Queen Boadicea or Empress Theodora, or Queen Elizabeth, who democratized the institution of monarchy more than any other monarch in the history. Jawaharlal Nehru's little girl, Indira Gandhi, soared to become one of the most dynamic leaders of enigmatic India, and Condoleezza Rice, a middle class black girl from Birmingham, Alabama, rose to emerge as the national "Security Advisor" of the United States. The first Japanese female astronaut, Chiaki Mukai, said: "People say Japan is male dominated society, but my approach is, if you believe you can do something, and then just go for it." She is right.

In ancient India and Nepal, from Aryan to the Mauryan times (1500BC-320BC) women enjoyed many privileges, including in education, although their primary concerns were to manage household affairs and nurture children. The age of Reason that swept Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries bolstered women's participation in intellectual activities. Gatherings in Paris, called *salons*, held brilliant discussions on serious issues among the learned men and women of society. Women during the Vedic era evidently had greater intellectual freedom, but their status declined under the slogan of Brahmanism. Still, the subjugation persists in Nepal, and there are many discriminatory legal provisions motivated by Hindu norms and doctrines, which are unfair and unjust towards women.

Like any parts of the world, Nepal also has a patriarchal family system since very early periods. The father or the elder son is the main person. For any work, a woman always has to follow the decision of male, her father, husband, or son. The father or the head of the family, on behalf of the family, takes the economical activities and other main decisions. Inscription of the Lichhabi period also proves this. Queen Rajyavati was likely to go *sati* with her husband king Dharma Deva (464AD). It was a social custom and duty of the women to burn herself with her dead husband. After her son Mandeva's objection, she didn't die as a *sati*. She followed the son's request. It proves that after father, the power of order directly goes to the son in this

system. It shows that a widow had to take permission or order of the son to perform any religious or other works.

Mandeva's daughter Vijay Vati was educated. Women were not allowed to take her husband's name. Abhiri (ordinary citizen) in her inscription (540AD) has not written her husband's name directly but introduced him as the name of her father-in-law's name. Abhir has established *Shiva linga* in the name of her husband with the consent of her son. It shows that a widow had to take permission of the son to do any religious or other work. Even today, women don't verbalize their husband's name. Husband is often addressed as a father of a child, like Ram's father.

In the mediaeval period also, women (queen, queen mother) were important. Pratap Malla's queens and daughter-in-law, Riddhilaxmi and her daughter-in-law Bhuwana Laxmi were other powerful women who ruled efficiently for some years during the infancy of their son. Thus, no period of history seems to have run its course without some leading role of women in the activities of the state in Nepal.

In theory, a goddess protects a mankind while a woman is protected by father in her childhood, by husband in youth and by son in old age. Though Sarawati is the goddess of art, knowledge and education, Laxmi of wealth and Durga of Strength, women as creatures have no independent status, either in society or legal status.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the last 20 years or so, many women have taken up careers in teaching, hospitals, government jobs, factories, companies and development organizations. With every passing day it is becoming more evident that education and training is really the only dowry that a daughter needs. This proposed study basically attempts to point out the degree and magnitude of the Nepali job-doing-women's socio economic status, problem and related issues to be tackled. The main attempt in the present study is to highlight the difficulty faced by the Nepali women who are job-holders and supporting their families. Attempts will be made to highlight the depth, magnitude, seriousness and degree of the problem identified.

According to the national Census of 2001 more than 50% of the total population of the country is covered by females. However, when we see the aspects of the human development of men and women, women are very back in every aspects like shown by Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) in such: Female's share in the parliament, Females share in professional job, Females share in administrative work, female's share in income and most significant to note is that the female literacy rate is very low.

It's obvious that the socio-economic status of the women of the country is very low. At the same time the role of education has great role to determine the social-economic status of people. Gradually the literacy rate of the women in the country is increasing and the level of the education among women is also increasing. With the promulgation of the new democratic constitution of 1990, women have provisions of enjoying more rights. In one step forward present interim constitution has given 33% reservation for woman in CA. The adoption and initiation of liberal policies in market has opened larger scope to women as well. More over the expansion of capitalistic economy through out the globe and the impact of globalization has certain and unavoidable impact on women, too. The economy of Nepali people does not rest solely on land and agriculture any more. People have been gradually shifting from subsistence level economy to agro-based economy and in turn to market based economy. This is the latest unavoidable impact of modern world system.

The educated women have started to do jobs either to be independent or out of compulsion and they have certainly different life style than those who are not doing jobs. At the same time the question like their double roles also lingers.

According to Human Development report (1993) there is no country in the world in which women's quality of life is equal to men. The complex measures that include health status, educational opportunity employment, political participation and legal rights are the main issues that increase disparities among men and women. The disparity level among men and women can differ but no society treats women equal to men. Women do inherit all human values and capacities to perform in any situation for human survival but women are not perceived equally physically,

intellectually fit as men globally. Everywhere women as a group enjoy fewer advantages and work for longer hours with undervalued work and opinions. Women of pre-industrial society have the issue of unequal paid labor. Men dominate women of the agrarian society even though they contribute more than 60% of unpaid labor. In every path and sphere of human life women have been contributing more than men with unpaid labor and time. Women's triple role workload has overloaded women rather than benefiting them can be out of question. Women have been working as a change agent as an individual or group of individuals and have taken responsibility for driving and facilitating a change process within family, an organization or any society. The issues to be addressed are presented below.

Unless the status of women is uplifted the momentum of national development cannot gather the tempo to catch the speedy pace of development that the developed countries have been rocketing through. And it is not totally an impossible dream, too. When the other half of economically active population gets the same social dignity and economic opportunity it is not a far trance at all. But at the same time the other side of the coin is that the socio-economic development of a country is impossible in the absence of judicious co-partnership between male and female segments of the society. Therefore, the issues to be addressed in the present research are the problems and prospects of working women and their attitudes towards social concerns like marriage, property inheritance, family and economy.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the present study is to identify socio-economic status of women workers of Shangri-la orphanage Home, Lalitpur.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To identify the problems and prospects of working women in Shangri-La Orphanage Home
2. To describe the changes in attitudes of working women towards marriage family structure, parental property inheritance, abortion, family planning etc, and

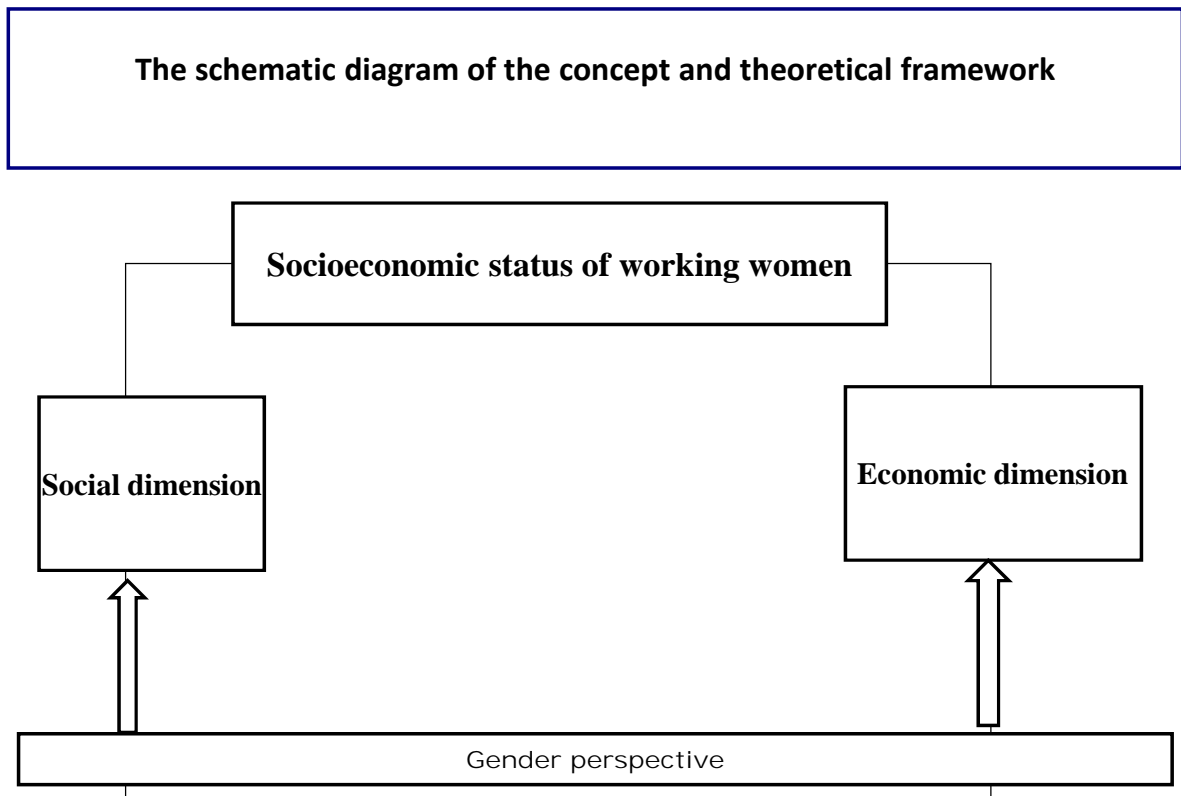
3. To make recommendation to the organization, Shangri-La Orphanage Home concerning the findings.

1.4 Conceptual Framework of the study

The conceptual framework of the study is to explore the socioeconomic status of the job doing women. While doing so there are different dimensions that impact on the status of women. Here in the present research the socioeconomic status of working women is mainly seen through two dimensions. One pertinent dimension is social dimension and another equally important side is economic dimension. Social dimension has its own sub-aspects and similarly, the economic dimension has. These aspects and dimensions are seen through the lens of gender perspective, theoretically.

To explain more explicitly, elements like caste and ethnicity, place where they were born and brought up, parental back ground and socialization processes, religion, age, sex, culture and exposure to other culture and media like television, internet and news papers/magazines, social institution, education, have been explored under social dimension. Similarly the elements like job and changes in the personal life, decision making capacity in the family in relation to economy, property and property rights, household amenities, facilities and materials, job satisfaction and view towards it and similar elements have been considered in economic dimension in the study.

Since the women population is over more than half of the country's total population the socio-economic status of the women should be understood well and must be uplifted for the country's overall progress and growth and development. Development in what ever terms it is defined or understood either in terms of human development, social development, sustainable development economic development or gender and development; the real development is not possible without uplifting the socio-economic status of the women of the country. So, this significant issue has been seen from gender perspective in the present study.



1.5 Rationale of the Study

The study of socio-economic status of women of Nepal is a multifaceted venture in itself. Nepalese community is made up of diversified and varied settings. Women are, no doubt, the backbone of Nepali economy, dynamic partner supports to household affairs and manage family. Still, their status has continually remained lower to that of men.

It is so often quoted quote that man and women are two wheels of the same cart. However, everyone agrees that generally men have better socio-economic status and it is a fact, too.

Many studies have been done in the exploration of socio-economic status of women. This study aims to find out the socio-economic status of job doing women in an organization. The following points justify the rationale of the study.

The socio-economic status of women is worse than that of the men. However, the status of the job doing women should be different than that of job-not-doing women. The study throws light on this fact empirically.

The result of the study will be helpful to solve the problems faced by the job doing women.

Since the study is made in a single organization, it will be beneficial to improve the situation of the organization.

It is the study of an organization where more than 90% of the employees are women. It will be useful to make comparative study in the future with the organization where women workers are in minority.

The organization that is selected for the study is a non government organization where the women have exposure with the foreigners and get opportunity to trainings. It can be useful to compare with the governmental employees socio-economic status in the future.

It is a kind opportunity for the study maker to make this study since the researcher himself is the employee, a member of the management team, of the same organization of which this study is made. This study will certainly be beneficial for the organization as the organizational reflection and feedback for overall improvement for the employees' motivational levels to bring improvements in environment and working conditions.

Socio-economic status of women varies from region to region, among races/ethnicities/castes and social classes. But, here, in this study it is focused in comparison to men, in general. However, the contributing or influencing components will be studied as well.

1.6 Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five Chapters.

First chapter introduces the background, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, conceptual framework of the study, rationale of the study and the organization of the study.

Second chapter gives the overview of the literature review carried out to complete this study.

Third chapter gives the research methodology, rationale of the chosen study area, data collection, processing and analysis, and different operational definitions and limitation of the study.

Fourth chapter gives the data presentation and analysis according to the conceptual framework of the proposed study.

Fifth chapter gives summery, conclusion and recommendation of the proposed study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Literature review is an integral part of thesis writing. It is very important and beneficial to review the available literature and research work conducted by various writers, institutions and research centers. Such literature review provides the thesis writer guidelines and direction for the work. It avails with the knowledge already explored and outlines the scope of the study. This literature review was made to get theoretical knowledge of the concerned subject of the proposed thesis.

In this section, efforts have been made to review some past studies and publications pertaining to my study. I have also quoted from them as and when appropriate. For this study a medium type of literature review was made from the various libraries in Kathmandu like of Global College, TU Central Library, UNDP Publications, Library of the Shangri-La Orphanage Home, previously made similar research works and daily papers and different magazines. Similarly relevant literatures available in the websites in the internet were equally useful to make the work done successfully. Literature review is helpful to identify appropriate research methodology, tools of data interpretation, to properly illustrate the set hypothesis and make recommendations for future researchers.

2.2 Socio-Economic Status of Women

2.2.1 The Status of Women World-wide

As of 1996, only 5 of the world's 190 countries had women as heads of government: Bangladesh, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. This is but one reflection of women's second class status through out the world. It is estimated that they grow half the world's food but they rarely own land. They constitute one third of the world's paid labor force but are generally found in the lowest paying jobs. Single-parent households headed by women – which appear to be on the increase in many nations – are typically found in the poorest sections of the population. Indeed, feminization of the poverty has become a global phenomenon. (Petty, 1996)

A detailed overview of the status of the world's women, issued by the United Nations (1995:xvii) in 1995, noted that too often, women and men live in the different worlds – worlds that differ in access to education and work opportunities, and in health, personal security, and leisure time. While acknowledging that much has been done in the last 20 years to sharpen people's awareness of gender inequalities, the report identified a number of areas of continuing concern:

- i. Despite advances in higher education for women, women still face major barriers when they attempt to use their educational achievements to attain social and economic advancement. For example, women rarely hold more than 1 to 2 percent of top executive positions in companies.
- ii. Women almost always work in occupations with lower status and pay than men. In developing countries, many women work as unpaid family laborers in subsistence agriculture.
- iii. Despite social norms regarding support and protection, many widows around the world find they have little concrete support from the extended family networks.
- iv. In many African and a few Asian nations, traditions mandate the cutting of female genitals, typically by practitioners who fail to use sterilized instruments. This can lead either to immediate and serious complications due to infections or long – term health problems.
- v. While male outnumbers females as refugees, refugee women have unique needs, protection against physical and sexual abuse (United Nations, 1995:xvi-xvii, 11, 46, 46, 76)

Moreover, according to a Human Development Report issued by the United Nations in mid-1995, there are twice as many illiterate women in developing countries as illiterate men. Of 1.3 billion people living in poverty around the world, 70% are female. (Horne, 1995).

In reviewing the global perspective on women's equality, two conclusions can be offered. As anthropologist Laura Nader (1986:383) has observed, even in the relatively more egalitarian nations of the West, women's subordination is

institutionally structured and culturally rationalized, exposing them to conditions of defense, dependency, powerlessness, and poverty. While the situation of women in Sweden and the United States is significantly better than in Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh, women nevertheless remain in a second class position in the world's most affluent and developed countries. Second, there is a link between the wealth of the industrialized nations and the poverty of the developing countries. Viewed from a conflict perspective, the economies of the developing countries are controlled and exploited by industrialized countries and multinational corporations based in those countries. Much of the exploited labor in developing countries, especially in non-industrial sector, is performed by women. Women workers toil long hours for low pay, but contribute significantly to their families' incomes. Consequently, the affluence of western industrialized nations has come, in part, at the expense of the women in third world countries. (Jacobson, 1993)

A recent report prepared for the National Women's Commission (2004) has revealed the socio-economic condition of Nepalese women. The report prepared after studying the situation in 68 out of total 75 districts in the country and by analyzing the data revealed by the census 2001 exposes the extremely skewed nature of property distribution in this predominantly conservative in our country.

The report revealed that only 0.78 percent of houses were actually (legally) owned by women, that is just over three women out of 500 had houses in their name. Only 5.25% of women had land ownership certificate in their name. Like wise, only 5.45% of women owned their livestock.

Around 17 % of women had some kind of properties / assets in their name like ornament. Jewelleries, houses, land etc. Only 16 % of women had a regular income. The civil service had 8% percent of women work force.

The report has vindicated what has been continuously said about the status of women in Nepal.

According to the Census 2001, the sex ratio (male per 100 females) in Nepal, which has total population of over 23.4 million, is 99.8. Among the women population, 55.3

were economically active. In fact, they occupy 43% in total economically active population: 48% in agriculture sector and 34% in non-agriculture sector.

However, according to Dr. Durga Pokhrel, the high percentage of economically active women could be misleading. Most of these women work within the periphery of their households and do not earn income. They work in fields, tend to household chores, which do not pay but by definition are economically active. (Spotlight March 12 2004)

Women right activists believe that the poor property rights of Nepalese women is a major reason for their financial well as social deprivation. According to Sharu Joshi Shrestha, programme coordinator at United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Nepal as they (women) are economically dependent, their other rights including health, education as well as employment is also neglected. Due to lack of rights on properties and assets, women are treated discriminatorily and there fore has resulted in abysmal situation in their education and health and among others.

Dr. Devendra Raj Panday in Nepal's Failed Development states that the gender bias against women is a well known historical and social legacy of our society. Advocacy of the right of the women and the need to assimilate the neglected one half of Nepal's population in the development processes now widely accepted. But women are still far behind men as beneficiaries and as participants in development. Female life expectancy is 95% of that of the male population, giving Nepal the dubious distinction of being only one of three countries in the world with lower life expectancy for women than men. The preference of the male child is as strong as ever in the society. This is so in spite of the evidence that at all levels of poverty girl child works harder than a boy child. Time used data show that girls above the age of 10 in poor rural households are engaged almost full time in domestic labor in farm and within the house-hold. Female literacy is only 36% of that of adult males and year of schooling is only 31%. In primary schools, female enrollment still comprised only a little over one-third of the total enrollment. Female teachers have not been able to be a source of inspiration for the girl children to go to schools regularly, because, of the total teaching force of the country only 11.5 are female teachers.

It is more or less the same story in the government administration. In 1978, 3.2% of the gazetted officers of his majesty's government were women. In 1993, this percentage had improved a little, but not substantially, to 4.4%. Only 16 of the first class officers were women, and there was not anyone in the Special Class category (Acharya1994). This situation has changed only marginally at present.

These hard facts, combined with generally discriminatory attitude of the patriarchal society towards women limit their access to income and employment opportunities outside of the household sector. Despite some increases in recent years, the labor participation rate for women is still only around 40%, substantially lower than for men, which, in turn, is influenced by household division of labor. Wage levels for the same type of the work are generally lower for female than male, by 15.5% to 20%. Gender bias, which is a product of historical as well as social prejudices, continues to get aggravated by the denial of inheritance right to daughters and other discrepancies in the law and the society.

2.2.2 Social Status

The social and economic status of girls and women is responsible for creating an environment where they can become victims of discrimination. Men feel superior to women since their process of their upbringing. Many restrictions are imposed on girls' activities. Unfortunately, women also perpetuate patriarchal values and differentiate between son and daughter because sons are preferred in the family and are seen as the protectors and providers although girls and women contribute greatly to the household economy. Due to this crisis of attitude, girls and women are seen as sex objects and blamed, even when they are victims of violence.

The low status of women is perpetuated by a lack of emphasis throughout Nepal on early childhood development. In our subsistence economy, women's contribution is 50%, men's contribution is 44% and children's contribution is 6%.

According to the recent Nepal Census, Nepal's total population is 2 crore 32 lac and 14 thousand. So-called low caste people constitute 20% Of the total population of Nepal. Of that population, 96% of the women and 70% males are illiterate.

The low status of women is played out in the sexual division of labor with in the agrarian system of Nepal, and exacerbated by large inequalities of land distribution that plague both men and women with poverty. Agriculture is the only source of livelihood for most of the people. About 81% of the population live in rural areas and earn their living from farming. Nepali women make an important contribution to the agricultural activities of the country, but their work is not considered productive from an economic point of view, their contribution is not included in the national statistics. Nepali women's participation in the agricultural sector is the highest in the south Asia. The percentage of females over 10 years who take part in the labor force in the agriculture sector is 96 in Nepal, 80 in India, 70 in Bangladesh, 60 in Pakistan and 60 in Sri-Lanka. Except for ploughing the field, almost every agricultural activity is the responsibility of the women.

2.2.3 Educational Status

The literacy rate in Nepal is low for both sexes- for women it is 40%and for men 60%. The illiteracy of parents as well as social taboos and role given by the society limits the girl child's access to education. Studies revealed that 77%of the girls between 6 and 15 years leave school. As mothers are overworked, daughters are bound to share this burden and drop out school. The government has kept the provision of one female teacher for primary school to motivate girls to go to school. The past political system and social system and social norms are primarily responsible for the slow development of education in our country.

2.2.4 Legal Status

The constitution of Nepal, 1990, states that all individuals, regardless of caste, religion, ethnicity or sex shall be guaranteed fundamental rights and treatments. Despite this, there are still many laws, which contradict the constitution. Our laws have been influenced by religious texts that favor men. Women are denied inheritance of property rights. According to amendments, daughters are given parental property rights but they have to give it back the day they get married. But

the interim constitution 2063 gave equal right for the parental property although it is not effectively implementation in practice. It takes long time to break existing norms, society will not accept changes easily. In fact, it is within the social institutions and political institutions in Nepal that some of the worst forms of discrimination and violence occur like child marriage, polygamy, sexual abuse, dowry related violence, alcoholism, and caste related violence, unequal pay for equal work and trafficking of girls and women.

2.2.5 Economic Status

When women receive the opportunity to take part in the community activities, they gradually become aware and realize the important role they can play. The concept of women's group evolved due to the several barriers encountered without their participation. Women are not decision-makers and therefore, are not entrusted with the freedom to participate in financial transactions.

2.2.6 Reproductive Health Status

The legal age of Marriage is 18 years with parental consent and 20 years without, according to recently passed laws. However 40% females are married before the age of 14 and 50% have their first child between the age of 15 and 19. The decision to marry and bear child is often not by choice of the female, but is a result of arranged marriages.

Woman lack awareness about the health, especially reproductive health. Many misconceptions exist in relation to body and bodily functions, which may result in practices that are detrimental to a women's health. 80% of Nepali women give birth at home, which can lead to severe complications or even death. The current fertility rate is 6 children per family and can be partly contributed to lack of support for women to practice family planning. Women are primarily responsible for family planning and often must do so secretly as many husbands do not support such practices. Unseen and unexpressed is the mental suffering of woman who has lost a child. Nowadays maternity related illnesses are regarded as the most serious,

although the problems of malnutrition and anemia also take their toll on women's health.

Each year 500,000 mother throughout the world die from problems related to child birth. According to a family planning survey conducted in our country, the desire to have a son by women without children was found to be 86%, for women who have had three girls, it was 100%. Those with one son wanted another son in 90% of the cases.

Many women are in prison because of infanticide and abortion. When women become pregnant due to an illegal relationship, their family and society blame them. According to the publication of unicef "Human Rights for children and Women", a UNICEF programme policy document, the Convention on The Elimination of All Forms Of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is the most comprehensive and detailed international agreement with the advancement of women. While it builds upon the existing international human rights machinery, CEDAW points out that those treaties were not sufficient to guarantee the full enjoyment and exercise of women's human rights. CEDAW applies to females of all ages since no specific age group is specified.

The convention requires States to eliminate discrimination against women in the enjoyment of all civil, political, economic and cultural rights. It also establishes programmatic measures for states to pursue in achieving equality not only in public life – for example, in the realm of legal status and political participation – but also in private life and, in particular, the family. In pursuing CEDAW's goals, States are entitled to introduce measures of affirmative action until equality between men and women is reached. CEDAW's Preamble acknowledges that despite the UN's various effort to promote human rights and equality of women, "extensive discrimination against women continues to exist." It declares, moreover, that the discrimination "violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of the women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hamper the growth of the

prosperity society and the family and makes more difficult the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity.”

2.3 Research Gap

Here in my study I have used the word working women to mean job doing women. Till recent years most of the women were inside the four walls of the house and they were burdened with domestic chores. In recent years women have moved to the job market and they have interfaced changes in their social and economic life. This has been an interesting topic to explore from different perspective. I have not found a fully dedicated study in socio economic status of working women of Nepal as a research from gender perspective though some such topics appear in many studies as cross cutting issues. This research is an attempt to explore socioeconomic status of working women or job doing women of Nepal from gender perspective.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the entire research methods and techniques applied have been discussed that have been used for this study.

3.2 Research Design

This study is mainly designed to describe the socio-economic aspect of the working women in Shangri-La Orphanage Home. It is based on the descriptive research design. In order to fulfill the specific objective of the study, the analysis is specially based on primary data collection. The primary data are collected through interview schedules and questionnaire. And books, research reports, journals and articles are other pertinent documents that are used as secondary data.

3.3 Universe and Sampling

The study area of the present research is a non government organization, Shangri-la Orphanage Home, Chapagaon, Lalitpur, Nepal. The following points justify the rationale behind the selection of the study area, the working women in Shangri-La Orphanage Home.

- i. Shangri-La Orphanage home is a non governmental organization that has more than 90% female employees among the total number of employees of the organization.
- ii. The organization has different projects and the nature of job varies in its kind. This gives an opportunity to make study of different types of job workers, both in horizontally and vertically different positions.
- iii. There are employees ranging from just literate to high qualification.
- iv. The workers in the organization come from different part of Nepal, and of different socio-cultural background.

- v. The organization gives opportunity to inter-cultural exposure with the foreign volunteers and different empowerment trainings. The impacts of these exposures can be studied in the research.
- vi. Last but not the least; since the researcher himself is one of the members of the management team of the organization it will be easy to collect the data and relevant information for the research.

The study is conducted through purposive sampling procedure in SOH. 25 interview questionnaires have been filled with women worker respondents.

Since it is very difficult if not impossible to census the whole population, the twenty five working women were selected purposively from the total universe of 33 female workers in SOH.

3.4 Nature and Sources of Data

Two kinds of data, Primary and Secondary, have been collected for the study. The Secondary data were collected from different sources: Internet, SOH library, CBS Nepal, and internet. Primary data were collected from personal interview, case study, observation, in-depth interview through semi-structure questionnaires, focus group discussion. Since the researcher is an employee of the SOH it was easy to collect almost all the information from interviews of the women workers. Besides, to know the attitude of employers towards the workers, it was equally important to contact them directly. So during the visits some direct questions were asked to the employers as well.

3.5 Data Collection Technique

As the main objective of the study is to find out the actual socio-economic status of women workers in SOH, so to achieve the objectives the data for the present study was collected from primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected mainly through the use of questionnaire, interview and observation. The questionnaire was designed to collect the necessary data which are suitable for the study concerned. Here, the structured and semi-structured questionnaire was used.

Specially, for the qualitative information, the interview method was used. The interviews were conducted at the place of work and at the residence of respondents. Observation method was also used as primary data collection to find out the different aspects such as physical condition, health condition, wage, job satisfaction, loan facilities, working condition etc. in SOH.

3.5.1 Personal Interview

Personal interview were made with the help of fellow office staff who assisted the researcher for collecting data. Structured and semi-structured questionnaire were used for making the personal interview.

3.5.2 Observation

Since long time I am also working in the same organization as a member of the management team it was easy for me to collect the qualitative information through observation method of the study area.

3.6 Data Processing and Analysis

After the data collection they were processed and analysed in Windows-2003 and Excel. The quantitative data were categorized tabulated and analysed using statistical tools. After the data procession they were tabulated through Tabulation etc. Qualitative data were processed manually and analysed in descriptive way to fulfil the objectives.

3.7 Limitations of the Methodology

As no study can be free from limitations and shortcomings, it will be wrong to not to expect so in this. All the data for the study have been collected through field of the study area, Chapagaon, Lalitpur.

Therefore, the study is restricted to the following major limitations.

- i. The study is based on an organization/working place. Therefore, the finding may not be generalised at the district or national level.

- ii. Additionally, the sample survey of 25 female workers was conducted purposively to fulfil the objectives of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

Through the combined efforts of Nepalese and European organizations (Shangri-La Association in Nepal and Govinda Entwicklungshilfe in Germany) the organization, Shangri-La Orphanage Home, was founded in the summer of 1998. Both the associations are humanitarian, non-profit making, non-religious, non-political and non-confessional.

The vision of both the associations is of a world where all the children can realize their full potential as a human being in the society in which they find love and security of a family. The two organizations are committed to bring lasting improvements in the quality of life of the underprivileged children in Nepal. The mission of ensuring the children's secured future is achieved through their empowerment and improved life chances.

The Orphanage project started twelve years ago in Kathmandu in 1998 AD with just five children. Through the personal involvement of members of both the organizations and present Nepali employees, it has been possible to bring practical assistance to 51 impoverished orphans from different parts on Nepal. Except them 15 orphan children who were previously staying in the orphanage successfully re-integrated at their home/family/ society.

4.2 Socio- economic Profile of the Respondents

The main objective of the study was to examine the socio-economic status of working women in SOH. In this chapter analysis and interpretation of data in terms of caste, sex, salary, age, education level, marital status, family background, residential background, job satisfaction, and other socio-economic related background etc are presented and explain to attain the basic objectives. The data are shown in different tables. The analysis of the chapter is based on the

questionnaire survey, interview and observation. Mainly the data from primary sources have been analyzed to meet its various objectives.

4.2.1. Age Structure

Age is a vital demographic feature and an essential variable in analyzing the status of an individual. The occupation, job and profession of any person are much influenced by the age factor. Since, it requires certain age to join certain types of jobs and sometimes there is age limitation for the job type; age is important factor for the study. Women, in our context, are not equally free in all age-brackets. Age has direct links with marriage, bearing children, fertility, and other reproductive and productive works of women. Hence the age structure analysis of the workingwomen of the study area is attempted below.

Table 1

Age Structure of the Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
20-29	21	84
30-39	3	12
40-49	1	4
Total	25	100

Source: Field survey, 2010

From the above table we see that 84% of the total respondents belong to the age bracket of twenties (20-29). 12% belong to the age group thirties and only 1 respondent out of total sample of 25 respondent was above 40. This shows that most of the women join the job at the early age at the time of either studying or before getting married.

Women's working in the early age like twenties shows that women are more conscious of being economically independent. They are more empowered and can make many decisions that concern their life, if they are economically independent, and do not have to depend upon their other family members.

4.2.2 Education

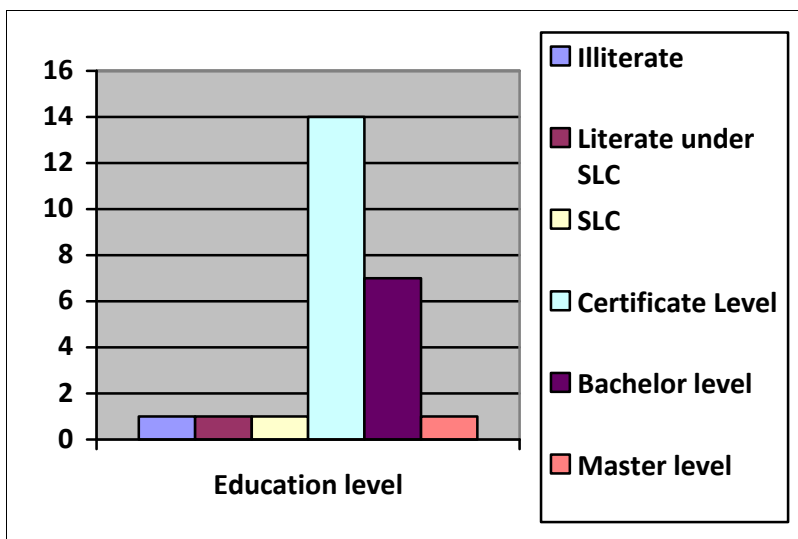
In our society, women were not given education till modern time. It was considered that women were supposed to do the domestic work only and it was not necessary to get education to do the reproductive work that the women were supposed to do.

Table 2

Literacy and Academic Qualification of the Respondents

Educational status	No. of respondents	percentage
Illiterate	1	4
literate (under SLC)	1	4
SLC	1	4
Certificate level	14	56
Bachelor level	7	28
Master level	1	4
PhD	0	0
total	25	100

Source: Field survey, 2010



The above given table shows that there are 56% of the women have passed intermediate level, 28% have passed Bachelor level and there was 1 respondent who has passed the Master level. One of the women was found to be illiterate, too.

4.2.3 Marital Status

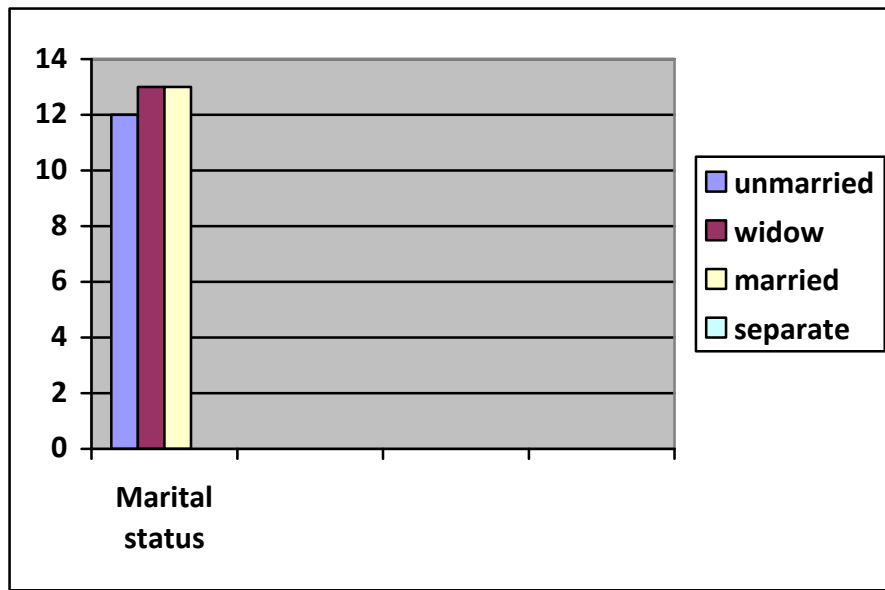
Marriage is such an important factor for the women life in our society that a man or a woman is considered to be “half” spiritually without getting married. Married women are often called “*ardhangini*” of the spouse, which simply means that the wife is a half body of the husband. It connotes that man or woman is never a complete whole without spouse. Late marriage or celibacy throughout life in the case of woman is not considered nice. In the past, there was a practice of child marriage, especially in the higher cases. In lower caste groups and non caste groups also marriage during the teenage was a rampant practice. Now legally the child marriage is abolished, but we see such case in many places time and again. Legally a girl must reach the age of sixteen to get married. Below table shows the marital status of the working women of the Shangri-La Orphanage.

Table 3

Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
unmarried	12	48
married	13	52
widow	0	0
separate	0	0
total	25	100

Source: Field survey, 2010



The above table shows that the jobholders of Shangri-La are almost equally divided into two groups of married and unmarried. While 48% are unmarried, 52% are married. 50 % of the married respondents were married after they started job. Other 50 percent were married before joining the job. This shows it is increasing trend that women have priority in jobs over marriage.

4.2.4 Continuation of Job after Getting Married

When asked to the unmarried respondents on whether they would continue the job after getting married also, all of them replied that they would continue the job, provided that their marriage takes place from where they can come to office. This shows if they were married out of valley, they would quit the job.

This shows that marriage does not affect their job doing interest unless it is because of the spatial causes. Because our society is patrilocal society in which women have to go to husband's place after getting married, in such cases, it is unimaginable for the women to remain in the same place and asking husband to move to her place. It is only possible if the husband is also doing the job outside his home place and possible to stay together and do their respective jobs. No women were found to be living out side the home just for the reason of doing job. Those who were living away from their family were for their studies, not for the reason of job only.

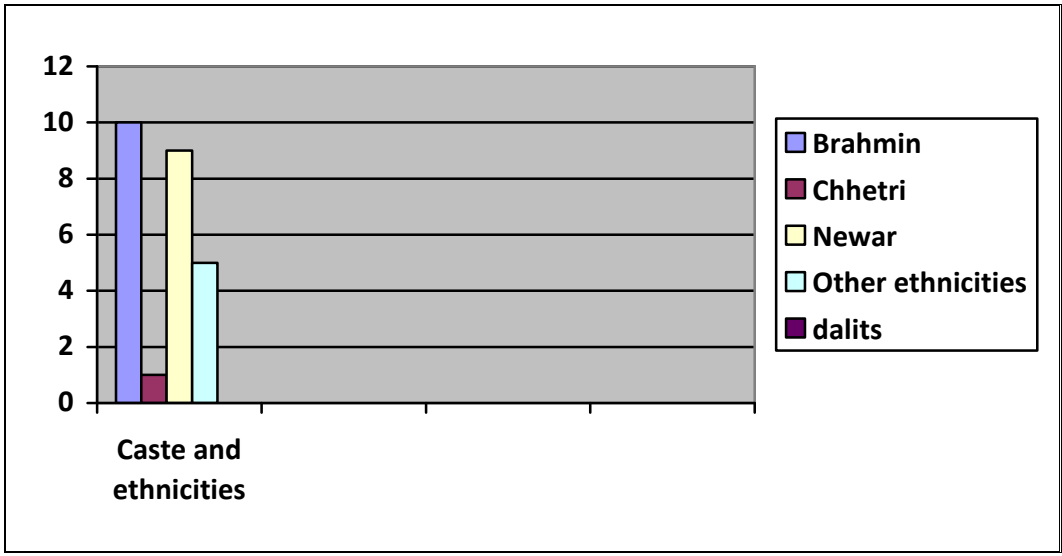
4.2.5 Caste/ Ethnicity

Caste system is one of the peculiarities of our nation. Caste system, though a special feature of the Hindu society is also prevalent in the Buddhist society of Nepal. Again there are some non-caste groups in Nepal. It is often said and analyzed fact that the upper Hindu castes people, Brahmin and Chhetris are better privileged and they occupy most of the higher positions in politics, administration, development organizations etc. The table below shows the composition of caste and ethnicity of the women workers in the organization.

Table 4
Caste/Ethnicity Composition of Respondents

Ethnic Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Brahmin	10	40
Chhetri	1	4
Newar	9	36
others/ Magar, Gurung	5	20
so called untouchables castes	0	0
Total	25	100

Source: Field survey, 2010



The table no.4 shows that there is large number of women from the Brahman and Newar castes. 40 percent Brahmin, 36% Newar, 20 % magar and Gurungs and 4% chhetri is the composition. There are no women of so called lowest caste group, untouchables. This shows that Brahmin women are getting more opportunities for the job. The Newars, though they are considered ethnic group they are better than other ethnic castes as the statistics shows that 36 % of the workers are the Newars. The statistics shows that the Gurungs, Magar are also getting the employment. There are no workers from so called the lowest caste group. It shows that the lowest caste group women are not getting opportunities for the job and are far back in comparison to other caste groups.

4.2.6 Caste Discrimination in the Organization

When asked if there were any caste discrimination in the organization where they are working nobody accepted that there is such discrimination. In fact they said that there is special provision for the lower castes people in its different projects. The organization's scholarship programme project gives the topmost priority to the lowest caste children in its selection procedure.

4.2.7 Family Type and Structure

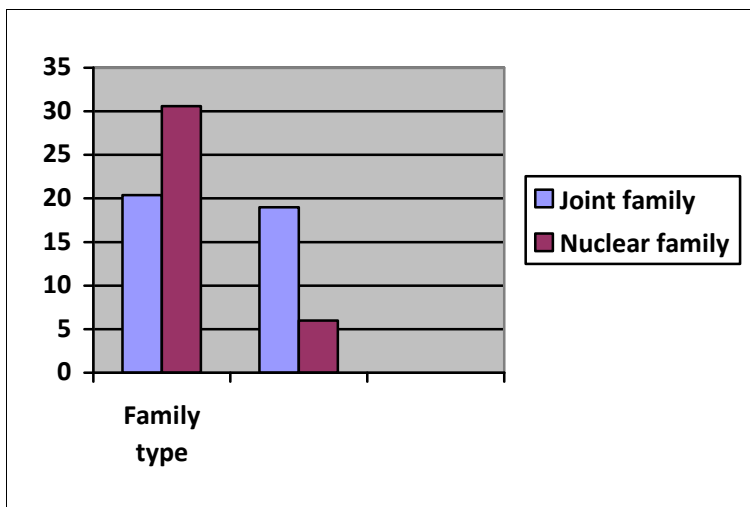
Family is very important institution in our society. All most all people live in one or another type of the family. A person is away from his/her family temporarily for certain purposes like for studies or for job away from home and the family.

The following table shows the type and structure of the family.

Table 5
Family Structure of the Respondents

Family Structure	No. of the Respondents	Percent
Joint	19	76
Nuclear	6	24
Total	25	100

Source: Field survey, 2010



The above table shows that 76% of the workers families live in the joint family. Only 24% of the workers live in the nuclear family. It shows that still joint family is the most common type of the family in Nepal.

4.2.8 Preference of the Type of the Family

During the study it was found that all the Newar workers were found to be staying in the joint family. However when asked if they really preferred the joint family almost nobody preferred the joint family who were non-Newars. The reason they did not prefer the joint family were that they had a lot of domestic burden in the joint family and much hierarchy and stratification in the position inside domestic relations among the members of the same family. However, the Newar women saw some positive aspects in the joint family system that it is easy for them to perform traditional customs and practices living together in the joint family.

4.2.9 Impact of the Joint Family in their Personal Life

All the respondents responded that they have much more familial obligations and responsibilities in the joint family. The junior most daughters-in-law have to perform almost all the domestic chores. Some times in the joint family, they said, the youngest daughter- in- law is treated like a domestic servant. They are not free to mobility outside home.

4.2.10 Women as a Cause of Women's Domination and Suppression in the Family

It is often said that women are oppressing women. Especially in the families, mother-in-law is oppressing the daughter in laws and mothers do not prefer daughters in relation to the sons.

How ever the respondents did not agree this proposition. They said it is the patriarchal rule that has the influence upon women. Mother-in-laws and mothers have learnt from patriarchal system to prioritize sons as the patriarchy is deep rooted in every institution of our society, marriage, family, religion etc.

4.2.11 Head of the Family

In our society, it is a common fact that in every house there is a *gharmuli* or the head of the family. The head has been the head for the practice s/he has to perform in the

household such as important decision making like education of the children, sale and purchase of the property, keeping the property, making the decisions of important functions in the family liker marriage. All most all the respondents said that the heads of the family is father, husband or father-in-law. Only one respondent said that it depends upon the situation and the husband and wife (the respondent herself) make the decision together.

This shows that all the respondents' families are purely patriarchal families where the male dictates and rules in all the familial affairs.

4.2.12 Respondents Participation in the Family Decision-making

Involvement and participation in decision making is one of the main indicators to observe the empowerment of the women. More the women have the participation in the family decision making the more the women have opportunities to make decisions on their benefits and advantages. The access and the control in decision making makes the women empowered. All most all the women in the sample said that they are only sometimes involved in the important decision makings. However, they do not have decisive roles in the participation. They take the participation as an opportunity to be informed of the incidents only.

4.2.13 Source of Income of the Respondents' Family

The knowledge of the source of income of the family is very important to study the socio-economic status. The table below shows the source of income of the families of the respondents.

Table 6

Source of Income

Source of Income	Frequency	percentage
Agriculture	21	84
Business	1	4
Job	3	12
Other	25	100

The above study shows that 84% of the respondents' families are dependent upon agriculture. Only 12% rely on job and only 1 respondent out of 25 said the source of income of their family is business.

This clearly shows that our job-doing-people's family's main source of income is agriculture.

4.2.14 Fixed property owned by the respondents

Fixed property like land, house and building, industry, company are comparatively permanent and reliable assets. One who owns such assets feels comparatively more secured financially. In our patriarchal society most of such type of the property is owned by the male in the family.

When asked if they had any fixed property and assets like land, house registered on their name or own privately, it was found that only one woman had a piece of land on own name. Otherwise all other respondents said either their husbands have or their parents.

4.2.15 House Hold Amenities

The house-hold amenities are important indicators to measure socio-economic status in our society. The following table shows amenities owned and consumed by the respondents.

Table 7

House Facilities and Accessories

Amenities	Frequency	Percentage
Separate kitchen and living room and bedrooms	24	96
Bathroom	23	92
Electricity	25	100
Telephone	21	84
piped drinking water	18	72
Television	25	100
vehicle	3	12
Computer	2	8
gramophone	25	100

The above table shows that almost all respondents' families are well off and in good economic status in relation to average Nepali people. However, it is very interesting to know that none of the above mentioned amenities were installed or bought in the decision of the women or in their consensus.

4.2. 16 Facilities or Materials Bought by the Women in their decision

When asked what amenities were bought in their consensus and decision almost all replied that nothing was bought. Only materials like food stuffs, clothes, decorative materials, kitchen utensils were bought by the women.

4.2.17 Parental property

Conventionally the parents give their property to their sons on equal share in our society. This is the legal provision, too. The sons can claim for the parental property by law. But there is not such provision for the daughter. The recent amendment in the regulation reads that daughters can claim for the parental property before getting married. However, the property should be returned once she gets married. Or, when the daughter reaches the age of 35 and still she is unmarried she is liable to claim for the property. Most women think such provisions gender-biased and

discriminatory. Below are the views of the women of the study area on parental property.

Table 8
Attitude towards Parental Property

Parental Property	Frequency	Percentage
equal share to both daughters and sons	19	76
not parental property to daughter	2	8
according to the wish of the parents	3	12
only to unmarried daughter equal share like to son	1	4
	25	100

Source” Field survey 2010

76% of the respondents said that there should be equal share between sons and daughters. 8% refused to give support for the parental property to the daughters while 12% said it should be the matter of parents will. One respondent was in favors of giving only to unmarried daughter equal share like to the son.

This shows that most of the women are in favor of giving parental property to the daughters in equal share among sons and daughters.

4.2. 18 Knowledge of Present Law on Parental Property

It is very important to know the awareness and level of consciousness of the women on the provision of laws and regulation concerning their legal rights etc.

Asked on what is the present legal provision concerning the parental property rights of women only 12% (3 respondents out of 25) were able to rightly state the amended

provision. Rest of the respondents either was unknown of the amendment or did not know the exact provision.

This shows that even the educated women working in the office are ignorant of legal rights that are very vital to them.

4.2.19 Job Income and Adequacy

In response to the query that if the income from the job that the respondent was earning sufficient to manage her expenses to manage her family, only one respondent said that it hardly meets three fourth of the family expenses. The respondent was holding the one of the senior most position in the organization. Other remaining 24 respondents said that the salary meets her personal expenses only and can contribute around one fourth of the family expenses.

This shows that the family cannot fully depend upon the job that the family member is doing. What the members of the family earn from the job they do is usually not sufficient to manage all the family expenses. For this reason, the family cannot abandon the traditional agro-based economy though it does not give them in affluence; it assures them to fulfill their subsistence. This is the peculiarity of the Nepali agro-based economy, too.

4.2.20 Job Satisfaction

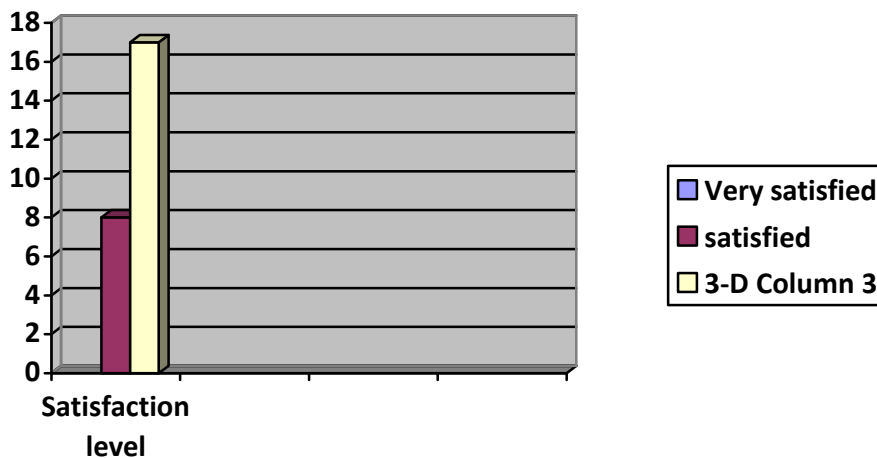
It is very important to learn that whether the women are satisfied from the jobs they are doing. Some researches have shown that by doing a job the women are over burden as their work doubles. They have to function double roles at the working place and at their own hose, too as the family members or the males assume that the domestic chores are solely the women's job. She has to manage it any how whether she does work outside house in the day time or not. The table below shows the responses of women on this regard.

Table 9

Job Satisfaction of the Working Women

Satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percentage
very satisfied	8	32
Satisfied	17	68
dissatisfied	0	0
Total	25	100

Source: Field survey, 2010



The above table shows that 68% of the women are satisfied with the job. 32% are very satisfied. No woman was found to be saying she was dissatisfied from the job.

4.2. 21 Attitudes of the Family Members towards the Respondents' Job

Doing job by women is not always seen affirmatively in the society. With the rise of awareness and education the women have been liberal and have started to public life. The table shows the respondents reading about the attitudes of the family members towards the job doing women.

Table 10

Attitudes of the Family Members towards the Respondents' Job

Attitudes of the Family Members	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Positive	24	96
Negative	1	4
Total	25	100

Source: Field survey 2010

The above table shows that almost all the respondents family are affirmative to the respondents job doing. Only 1 respondent said that the family was not showing suggestive attitude for her doing job.

4.2. 22 Domestic Work and Chores

Almost all the respondents told that they work in the kitchen, cleaning house, washing clothes, kitchen shopping as their domestic chores. Shopping for the kitchen, preparing for the family ceremony are the usual jobs that they have to do at home. No women were found to be still going to field though they had the field after they started office job. They said the family members do not press for such work nowadays.

The reproductive role of the women at home has not changed. However they have not been doing difficult manual jobs like going in the field to cultivate or harvest after starting going for the job. This shows that their life pattern has gradually changing. However the conventional gender roles have not changed yet.

In average the respondents told that they give some 5-6 hours at the domestic chores at home. This shows that they do office job for 6 hours plus travel up and down to from office for 4 hours. Almost 16 hours per day they spend in work. They have very little time for recreation and rest.

4.2.23 Support of Male Members in the Domestic Work

Almost all the respondents had the same answer that the males give moral support to them but in practice hardly any support has been found in the domestic chores. It

is interesting to mention the response of one of the respondents that her husband prefers staying empty stomach rather than cooking himself and serving her wife and the children.

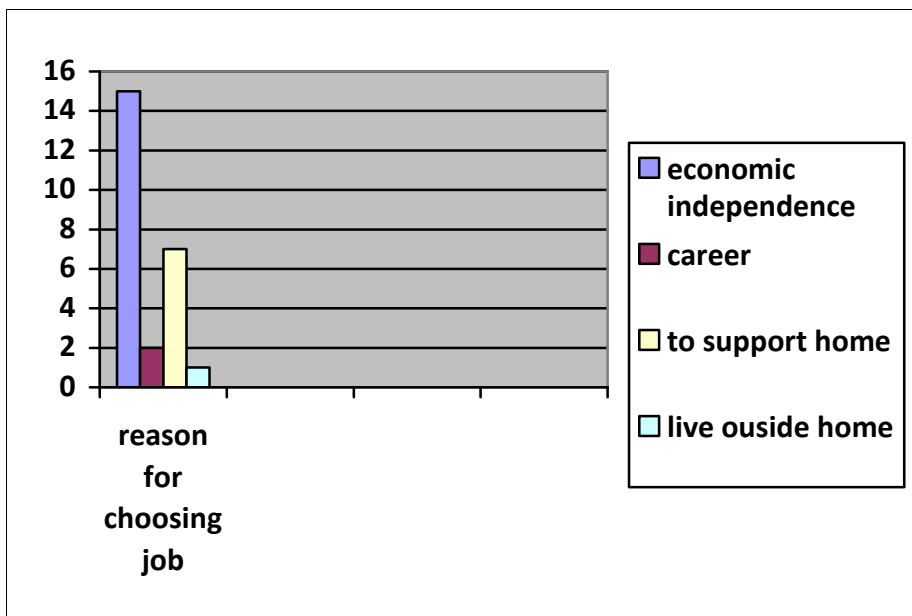
4.2.24 Motivation for Doing Job

Table 11

Motivation for Doing Job

Reasons	No. of Respondents	Percentage
economic independence	15	60
career	2	8
to support home/family	7	28
life outside home	1	4
Total	25	100

Source: Field survey, 2010



The above table shows that 60 % of the respondents were motivated towards the job for their individual economic independence while 28% gave the reason that they were doing the job to support their home. This shows that mainly the women were doing the job for economic reason rather than other reasons like career ambition,

service wish, and utilization of time or qualification or for developing their own personality.

This shows that the job for the women is rather a need.

4.2.25 Discrimination at Working Place

By laws and regulations women and men are equal in very respect in the working places in Nepal. However, there might be sex discrimination at the work place like sexism. The table shows the fact revealed by the worker themselves.

Observing the organizational structure and the opportunities granted and achieved in the organization it is clear that there is not such sex based discrimination. The executive head of the organization is a woman. There are women in the executive committee. The Shangri-La International School, one of the main projects of the organization has more than 98% women teachers. The Orphanage has almost all female workers. In the scholarship programme project run by the school, the girl child gets the top most priority in the selection process.

4.2.26 Impact of Job on their Personal Life

The type of the work a person does has direct and indirect impact on their life. The table below show the impact of the job on their lives as the respondents felt after they started doing job.

Table 12

Impact of Job on their Personal Life

Impact of the Job	No. of Respondents	Percentage
self-dependent	4	16
Empowered	5	20
change in socio economic status	16	64
Total	25	100

Source: field survey 2010

The above table shows that 64% felt change in their socio-economic status, 20% felt empowered and 16% felt self dependent.

This shows that one of the main ways to bring the changes in socioeconomic status is through their opportunities in employment.

4.2.27 View of Age at Marriage of the Respondents

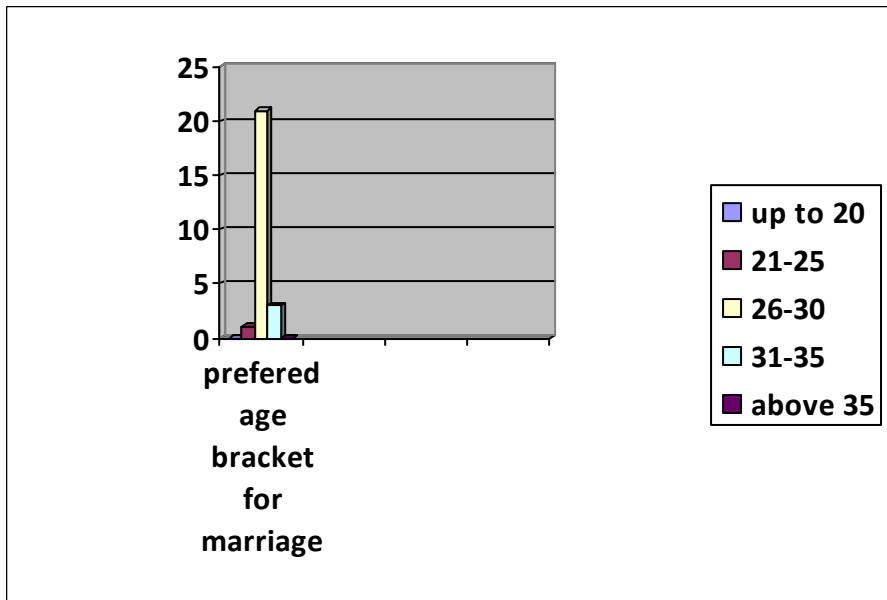
In the past the marriage of a woman took when she was still a child. This early marriage often ended either to widowhood of the women early in her life or lived an unhappy life because of the unmatched couple in many respects. But in modern times the marrying age has delayed. The table below presents the view of the women as regarding the marrying age for a happy life.

Table 13

View of Age at Marriage

Age of Marriage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
up to 20	0	0
21-25	1	4
26-30	21	84
31-35	3	12
above 35	0	0
Total	25	100

Source: field survey 2010



The above data shows that almost all the women preferred the second half of the twenties as the best age for women be married.

4.2. 28 Existence of Inequality between two Sexes

The given table below presents the women's view on whether there exists the inequality between the two sexes. Almost everyone agrees that there is inequality between men in women in the society.

Table 14

Existence of Inequality between Two Sexes

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percentage
women are equally privileged to men	0	0
women are less privileged to men	25	100
Total	25	100

Source: field survey 2010

The above table explicitly reveals that women are less privileged than men in the society.

4.2.29 Main Causes of Inequality between the two Sexes

It is an intellectual debate to pinpoint the main causes of the inequality between the sexes. The respondents' view on this issue is revealed below.

Table 15

Main Causes of Inequality between the two Sexes

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
unequal rights	12	48
patriarchal society	7	28
economic cause	5	20
biological cause	1	4
Total	25	100

Source: field survey 2010

Almost half of the total respondents are seen in terms of unequal rights or artificial barriers to women's participation in the public world, beyond the family and household. They focus on public sphere, on legal, political and institutional struggles for the rights of the individuals to compete in the public market place. Second to it, 28% of the respondents say that the root cause of the inequality is patriarchal society. They see sexual oppression of male as the oldest and even the most profound form of inequality. Thirdly 20% of the women see the cause of the inequality lies on economy. The private property is controlled by men and hence as the result of it, there exists inequality between the men and women in the society. Interestingly 4% gave credit to the socio-biological cause like women being weak by nature.

4.2.30 Sex Differentiation and Social Stability

Within the general framework of the functionalism functionalists maintain that gender differentiation has contributed to overall social stability. Sociologists Talcott Parsons and Robert Bales (1955:13-15,22-26) argued that in order to function most effectively, the family requires adults who specialize in particular roles. They viewed

the traditional arrangement of gender roles as arising out of this earlier need to establish a division of labor between marital partners. Parson and Bales contended that women take the expressive, emotionally supportive role, with the two complementing each other.

Asked the women the same question on sex differentiation and social stability the result was as revealed below in the table.

Table 16
Sex Differentiation and Social Stability

Sex Differentiation	Frequency	Percentage
maintains stability	2	8
does not maintain stability	23	92

Source: field survey 2010

The responses of the women reveal that they do not believe - the sex differentiation brings social stability as the functionalists believe. They believe that the relationship between females and males has been one of unequal power, with men in a dominant position over women. In this sense, traditional gender roles do not simply assign various qualities and behaviors to females and males.

4.3 Findings

The major findings of the study are concluded below.

- i. The organization, SOH, is a working place where more than ninety percent of the employees are women having heterogeneous socio-cultural background who come from different parts of Nepal. The organization is supported by an INGO, Govinda Development Aid Association (Govinda Entwicklungshilfe e.V.) Alen Germany. It has mainly three projects: Orphanage, School and community support thorough infrastructure building educational support etc. The women working in the organization come from free competition to work there from all over Nepal. How ever rural, local and disadvantageous group

women get high priority preferably. They best reflect general impression of the working women in Nepal.

- ii. Most of the working women in the organization were young. 84% of the sample women were of the age between 20 and 29.
- iii. 56% of the respondents were Intermediate level passed. 28% were bachelor level passed. All those who were educated accepted that education has changed their life. Those women who have passed the SLC and above said that women can compete with men. They do not accept that women are less competent than men in any respect.
- iv. Analyzing the sample according to their marital status, 48% were unmarried and 52% were married. No one was living separate or was a widow. The married one gave first priority to home and family while the unmarried ones gave first priority to job.
- v. 40% of the workers among the sample were the Brahmins while nearly the same percent, 36% were the Newars. It was found that there was no discrimination according to castes and ethnicity in the organization. In some of the projects to empower the so called lower castes and the ethnic people they were given priority.
- vi. Religion wise analysis revealed the fact that all the working women from the sample in the organization were the Hindus. All the respondents accepted that the women are oppressed and dominated in the name of religion. There are discriminatory rules and guidelines to the women in the religion. They said religion gives second status while men are at first rank and even men get privileges from the religion. No one said they were strictly following the Hindu rules as dictated by the religious texts to the women.
- vii. 76% of the women lived in the joint family. However, almost no one preferred the joint family as they gave the reasons like there is more hierarchy within the members of the family in the joint family. The women have to remain in low profile at such stratification and often the

daughters and daughter-in-laws are placed in lowest profile. However, the Newari women saw some positive aspects in the joint family.

- viii. In all the families of the respondents it was found that the head of the family were males and this shows that the families were purely patriarchal. The respondents were only sometimes involved in the family decision making but they never have leading or decision making role. Their participation is only ends on being informed.
- ix. 84% of the respondents' families depended mainly on agriculture. It clearly shows that the respondents' economy is agro-based and the job is a complementary to their economy. Almost all the respondents' families had good household amenities like radio, television, toilet separate kitchen and living room. However, these amenities were bought by the male members of the family. The women buy only the kitchen gadgets and however none of the respondents had any land or other forms of fixed property like house etc.
- x. Most of the women were in favor of inheriting parental property. 76% of the women in the sample said the daughters should get the parental in equal share like the sons. However, only 12% of the women were found to be aware of the provision regarding parental property in the present law.
- xi. 60% of the women in the study area said that they did job for the economic independence while 28% said it is necessary for them to do the job for supporting their family. All the workers were satisfied from the job they were doing.
- xii. Almost all the respondents said that the family is affirmative to their job-doing that is, working out side home. Only one respondent said the in-laws are not happy with for doing job by the daughter-in-law.
- xiii. It was interesting to note that almost all the women neither admitted that their personal domestic burden has decreased nor family members managed the work other wise even after starting to work outside home

and earning additional. Almost all have of the women have to do the same types of the domestic chores such as cleaning, washing, going for the kitchen shopping and working in the kitchen. Serving the in-laws and looking after the smaller kids in different respect is usual to all of the women in the study. Almost for more than 16 hours a day they spend on working at home and office. In practice no one said they really get support from the male members at their domestic chores.

- xiv. Even though they are not getting very good support and encouragement for their job from the home, they are happy with their jobs and say it has an impact on their personal life positively. 64% said they have felt a change in their socio-economic status.
- xv. About view on the age of marriage for women 84% said the right age for getting married for a woman is in between 26 to 30. No one was there to suggest below 20 or above 35.
- xvi. 100% of the respondents said there exists inequalities between men and women in our society. 48% of the respondents said the root of the inequality lies on unequal rights between women and men. 28% said the cause is our patriarchal society. 20% said it is an economic cause as women do not own private property all the inequality emerges out of it while 4% said it is obvious as there is biological difference.
- xvii. Only 8% said sex differentiation contributes to social stability while other 92% saw no social stability with it.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

The objective of the present study is to identify socio-economic status of women workers of Shangri-la orphanage Home, Lalitpur. With the help of this present study it is possible to analyze and compare with both job-holding women and non-job doing women that can reflect the changing scenario of status of Nepali women.

The specific objectives of the study are to locate the social and economic conditions of the women working in Shangri-La Orphanage Home, to explore their socio-economic problems to describe the changes in attitudes of working women towards marriage family structure, parental property inheritance, abortion, family planning etc., to assess whether the job has been extra burden to them, to investigate whether their quality of life has been improved to investigate their level of satisfaction with the working environment in the organization, to uncover their feeling they experience while working with male workers in the organization, to assess as to what extent they experience different before and after they joined the job at their home and overall life situation and to understand the problems faced by the women workers.

5.2 Conclusion

Women are getting priority and preference to work in Shangri-La Orphanage Home. Most of the organizations say they give preference to women but while making the final selection for the posts men are selected. Shangri-La has more than 90 percent women employees. It gives women high opportunity for their empowerment socially as well as economically. Most important is it is found that the organizations project lie in the rural and marginalized setting. This further gives opportunity for the people of such area to be employed as the organization has been found of giving priority to the local women.

84% of the women worker of the age of twenties shows that the young generation has been fascinated towards jobs and work outside their own home. Women who move outside the four walls of their home get more competent and can contribute as men are doing.

As all those who were educated accepted that education has changed their life and women who have passed the SLC and above said that women can compete with men it shows the importance of the education. Education can only be a universal leveler which can bring different inequalities on the same ground and more equal.

The married one gave first priority to home and family while the unmarried ones gave first priority to job. It shows that the women's life in our society has been greatly impacted with the marriage. Women become less independent after getting married. When they are married they have to give more priority to their family than to their own interest, career and life. Women in joint families suffer from this constraint even more in comparison to the women of the nuclear family.

Though the organization has no discrimination on the basis of castes and ethnicity most of the employees were found to be coming from higher Hindu castes and the Newars. The Newar though they are called ethnic castes by the state are better than other lower Hindu castes and all the other ethnic groups of Nepal. There were no employees from other lower Hindu castes and other ethnic minority. It shows that only provision of equal opportunity is not sufficient to empower women. Such groups must get educational opportunity first.

The women's indictment to religion on differencing male and female has been not great impediment as the women themselves said the religion is, in fact flexible and no one claimed that they were following the religious dictation as women ought to do according to the religious text.

Joint family is not the choice of the women of today. They prefer the nuclear family. Joint family was a need when the society was totally agro-based and the members of the family could be engaged in agricultural activities together. Today, when some members of the family have already joined in different profession in the job markets nuclear family will be easy for them to live in them as the family burden in such

family is less in comparison to the joint family. Additionally women do not have to remain in low status in intra-family hierarchy that is perceptible more in the joint family.

Still, though the women are earning themselves the women have no access and control in the house hold decisions. The gadgets and amenities are not the choice of the women. Women make purchases for the kitchen concern and food stuff. Women have no private property and they own no fixed property. This reason they have no hold in decision making in the house hold affairs.

Women believe that if they have their own fixed property they will be more empowered and will be able to play decisive role in the family. Parental property is own of the fixed property that the women can own.

The salary paid to the women is not very low according to their qualification and the position that they are working at. The pay is equal to men and no discriminatory rules exist in the organization. However, the income is hardly enough for them to run the monthly costs. For this reason too, they have to depend upon the family incomes and other resources. They have been partly independent but still have to depend upon their family.

It is idyllic anecdote to learn that almost all the families are positive towards the women who are working outside their home. This shows that our society is changing.

However, Family are not supportive practically in another sense. The work burden of the women has even increased than before. Non job doing women have to work at home only where as the job doing women have dual role to play. Returning back home after all day office work they have to do all the domestic chores. Males or the family members do not do the work which is supposed to be done by the women. So there still lies the stigma of the *gender roles* very strongly. Not withstanding all this, women have experienced a change in socio-economic status because of the little income they themselves make and the exposure that they got in the world out side of their own home.

About marrying age women were found to be acknowledging that the late twenties is the apt as for their marriage. This shows they give priority to studies and job before getting married. This is positive sign towards women empowerment process. Educated and economically independent women can be competent with men in the any society.

All the women say that there exists gender inequality in the society. However they differ in the cause behind the situation. 60% of the respondents said the root of the inequality lies on unequal rights between women and men. They seem like the liberal feminists an32% said the cause is our patriarchal society.20% said it is an economic cause as women do not own private property all the inequality emerges out of it while 8% said it is obvious as there is biological difference.

On question like whether the sex differentiation is functional, only 8% said it contributes to social stability while other 92% saw no social stability with it. This shows that the conventional notion of the sex wise division labor and the explanation of the functionalists is no more working. Actually now a days we see the sex differentiation creating conflicts more than creating social stability and harmony. Gender balance society must be functioning in equilibrium.

In short, the profession that they have joined because of their education has allowed them for vertical mobility giving them rise to higher social status.

5.3 Recommendation

The projects of the organization are gender sensitive. It has highly focused and given preference to the women in every aspect. Other organizations working for children and women can learn many things from the organization. It would be praiseworthy if the same organization can extend some of its projects in other rural part of the country where women are very backward so that it would also serve as a model to learn for other local organizations.

Although there is stratification on the basis of gender the educated and job\doing women are rather equal to men than the non- job doing women. Thus one of the best ways to mitigate social inequality is to educate women so that they can get jobs

out side home and their social as well as economic status goes up. Often it is heard of sexual harassment and sexism in the working place but such harassment is more severe at domestic level and with ignorant and uneducated women as they hide or keep their lips tight against such abuse. Educated and empowered women can fight such sexual malice.

In the past, let the differentiation between male and female be there. There was distinct division between older generation women and the younger generation. Often *rite de passage* like marriage rituals also divided women between two groups those in girlhood and womanhood. It was a serious deviance if one did not follow the rituals that a woman had to follow after the rite. Women had two different positions: before marriage of low status and higher after getting married. However, now such division cannot be noticed and married and unmarried are equal and both are of equal status. Sometimes the married have more burdens and cannot enjoy the same freedom like the unmarried ones. The patrilocal marriage and family structure causes women inconvenient for some period after getting married. The husband's help is vital in this time. Patriarchy and tradition of preferring to patrilineal descent sometimes humiliates women in the later lives. At modern times this has been also slowly changing. Even unmarried women are gaining respect and are living descent lives. However, the life chances of women get better only if they can earn themselves.

Some recommendations to the specific study made in Shangri-La Orphanage on job-doing women of the organization are given below.

- i. Since most of the working women in the organization were young and in between the age between 20 and 29 and studying in the colleges and universities it would be great help to them if they get some sort of facilities for attending colleges. The facilities would be like studies leave, opportunity to further studies from the organization etc.
- ii. Since all those who were educated accepted that education has changed their lives and those women who have passed the SLC and above said that women can compete with men. It is a lesson for all

concerned who are working for the upliftment of women (including state) that education can play such a vital role for empowering women. Topmost priority must be given to educating women. There should be equity policy for educating all women in the country through different programmes and strategies.

- iii. Though there was not any discriminatory stipulation in hiring the employees, on the basis of the castes the lower castes and the ethnic minorities except the Newars were not found to be getting job in the organization. This shows that the equal opportunity alone can be no help if the back ward castes and ethnicities are not educated at all. There should be special programmes for educating the backward castes and ethnicities.
- iv. Though it is often said religion is one of the main constraint for the progress of the women, the Hindu religion is very flexible and none of the women said that they have been following the dictation of the religious texts and values. However, any discriminatory belief that gives women the second status next to men should be ended.
- v. If women are to be promoted and allowed to do the jobs outside home their family burden must be reduced. The male members of the family and in-laws must be aware first for this. In joint families women are oppressed and dominated. For job-doing women nuclear family is better.
- vi. Women should be included in the family level decision-making processes. Things and gadgets and amenities that make the work of the women easier should also get priority while making house-hold purchases. If a family can own a motor why not buying a washing machine that cuts down the burden of the women? This is just one example.
- vii. Unless women have control and possession of property they cannot play decisive role of their own benefit. Inheriting parental property can be a solution for it.

- viii. Almost all the respondents were ignorant about the parental property provision in law. This is the case of the educated women, who are considered very aware among the total population of women of the country. Attempts should be made from every sector that is working for women empowerment to make women aware of their rights to property. Media like radio and television can be very good way to give such knowledge.
- ix. 60% of the women in the study area said that they did job for the economic independence while 28% said it is necessary for them to do the job for supporting their family. However, no body said the salary is adequate for them to be fully dependent on the salary only. Unless one can fully depend upon the salary s/he is always unsure to the work and has to be either searching better job or be dependent upon other family members. It is better if the salary is at least an amount that can be enough for managing a nuclear family with it.
- x. Father and mother in-laws must be liberal and understanding to their working daughter in laws. It must be understood that our present Nepali society lives in different centuries at the same time. The older generation should be made aware that the younger generation has different needs and aspirations. The media can play important roles on bring changes in the older generation at least they cope with the modern generation to avoid the fissures and conflict at homes.
- xi. It is seen that the working hours of the job doing women is even more than that of the non job doing women as they have to do the same domestic chores after and before their office work. The family members must be cooperative on it and gender awareness must come to men as well. As long as males do not understand that it is their responsibility to support women to make them as competent as men the gender egalitarian society is inconceivable. The organization working for gender awareness should understand that gender awareness programmes are

first need to men as if men are not cooperative to women in the family it is no help and sometimes it proves to become a disaster.

- xii. 60% of the respondents said the root of the inequality lies on unequal rights between women and men.32%said the cause is our patriarchal society.20% said it is an economic cause as women do not own private property all the inequality emerges out of it while 8% said it is obvious as there is biological difference. From the statistics what we can say is the changes on legal, political and institutional sphere can bring the change in the status of women.

Annex- 1
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