

CHALLENGES FACED BY EDUCATED WOMEN IN ACCESSING EMPLOYMENT IN THAKLE VILLAGE OF LAMJUNG DISTRICT

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Miss Sabita Ghimire has worked under my supervision and guidance for the preparation of this dissertation entitled **“Challenges Faced by Educated Women in Accessing Employment in Thakle Village of Lamjung District”** for the partial fulfillment of Master’s degree of Arts in Sociology. To the best of my knowledge, the study is original and carries out useful information. I therefore recommend it for the evaluation and approval to the dissertation committee.

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APPROVAL LETTER

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DECLARATION

I therefore declare that the dissertation “**Challenges Faced by Educated Women in Accessing Employment in Thakle Village of Lamjung District**” submitted to Tribhuvan University's Central Department of Sociology is entirely my original work, prepared under the guidance and supervision of my supervisor. Throughout the preparation of this thesis, I have given full credit to all ideas and information acquired from various sources. This thesis has never been presented or submitted anywhere else for the purpose of receiving a degree or for any other reason. I guarantee that no element of this thesis' material has ever been published before.

.....

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July, 2024

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Educated women play significant role to their society in various ways. Especially, educated rural women by challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes, they promote gender equality and empower other women to pursue education and employment opportunities. Additionally, through education, rural women acquire valuable skills and knowledge that enable them to contribute effectively to the productivity and competitiveness of rural industries, whether in agriculture, entrepreneurship, or business management. Their participation in the workforce not only generates income but also leads to increased household income and financial stability for their families. Moreover, their increased visibility in public spaces and decision-making processes fosters broader social changes, including greater respect for women's rights and increased participation in community development initiatives. Furthermore, education correlates strongly with improved health outcomes and access to healthcare services. Educated rural women are more likely to make informed decisions regarding their own health and that of their families, thereby contributing to better overall health outcomes for rural communities. In essence, the empowerment of educated rural women is pivotal not only for their personal development but also for the holistic advancement of rural societies (Alam, 2).

Educational background directly influences job options and levels, with gender being another significant factor. It is conceivable that highly educated women may have fewer job opportunities than less educated men. Gender based stereotypes about certain occupations being more suitable for men or women. Certain industries and professions may exhibit occupational segregation, where one gender dominates a particular field. Gender roles have historically influenced perceptions of leadership qualities, potentially disadvantaging women seeking leadership positions. It may influence expectations regarding work-life balance, with women often facing societal pressure to balance career and family responsibilities. Educational achievement gaps based on gender are more noticeable between urban and rural areas in Nepal. Furthermore, there are fewer educational opportunities for women in rural areas.

This leads to a lower number of women with higher-level qualifications in rural areas compared to urban regions (Population Monograph of Nepal, 2014). Hence, this research endeavors to explore the difficulties faced by rural educated women in securing and maintaining job.

Access to education for women confronts a range of intricate social hurdles, such as deeply rooted gender bias reinforcing traditional roles that emphasize household responsibilities over schooling. Early marriage and pregnancy frequently compel girls to forsake their education, and societal norms may actively dissuade or forbid females from pursuing academic pursuits. Insufficient support from families, driven by financial constraints, and the prevalence of violence and harassment during the journey to or within educational institutions further obstruct women's educational prospects. Insufficient infrastructure, encompassing the lack of proper facilities and transportation, compounds these difficulties. Economic hardship may result in prioritizing male education, while the absence of prominent female role models and restricted access to information about educational opportunities can curtail aspirations (Acharya,2020).

In certain conservative societies, women face challenges in accessing quality education, and even if they overcome these hurdles, societal norms often restrict their career choices, emphasizing traditional gender roles that prioritize women's roles as wives and mothers. This leads to societal pressure and resistance when women seek to enter the workforce, as exemplified by the tragic incident of MalalaYousafzai being targeted by terrorists for advocating women's education. Cultural norms further discourage women from pursuing specific roles, and workplace discrimination may hinder their career advancement. Lack of support systems, both at home and work, adds significant stress, especially when families or colleagues do not endorse a woman's decision to pursue employment. Conservative social norms may limit networking opportunities, particularly in male-dominated industries. Balancing work and family responsibilities is challenging due to societal expectations that women focus primarily on domestic roles. Moreover, legal and institutional barriers in some conservative societies may hinder women's participation in certain professions, perpetuated by discriminatory laws or policies.

Rural educated women encounter fewer job opportunities compared to their urban counterparts. The employment prospects for educated women in rural areas are influenced by

a variety of factors, including economic, social, cultural, and structural elements. The degree and caliber of education, skills and training as well as the presence of essential infrastructure like transportation, communication, and basic amenities in rural areas, play pivotal roles in determining the accessibility of job opportunities for women. Additionally, societal norms and cultural expectations, which dictate acceptable gender roles, may constrain the range of jobs deemed suitable for women. Limited access to information regarding job opportunities, market demands, and skill prerequisites can pose a barrier. The influence of government policies and programs targeting rural development, women's empowerment, and skill enhancement is significant in shaping the employment landscape for educated rural women. Moreover, the availability of dependable and affordable childcare facilities can serve as a facilitator (Radhika, 2019).

Compared to men, women have a smaller range of employment opportunities. In underdeveloped nations, women are typically employed in domestic tasks that are related to reproduction and have less opportunity to work in the productive sectors. Even when they do work, women typically work in the agricultural sector for little pay (Tansel, 2002:4). In order to promote gender equality and socio-economic growth, women's employment is crucial. When women participate in the workforce, it is not only contributing to their economic empowerment but also enhances overall societal well-being. Gainful employment provides women with financial independence, enabling them to make decisions about their lives, education and health care. The economic inclusion of women has a ripple effect on families and communities, as it often leads to improved education and health outcomes for children.

A growing number of young people, high levels of illiteracy and low levels of education, rising rates of unemployment, gender and caste-based inequality, and an unequal distribution of the country's resources have all combined to create a lack of employment opportunities and a high rate of poverty, especially in rural areas (UNDP, 2009). Nepalese society is a male dominated society, where men take all the decisions on important matters. Gender inequality prevailing in the society is one of the main reasons for women's backwardness. Gender based differences are very common among all ethnic group however the degree of disparity varies (NESAC, 1998)

Lives in rural areas are more difficult than in urban areas. In Nepal, 81.34 percent of the total population resides in rural areas (CBS, 2021). Rural communities often maintain traditional lifestyles and face a shortage of various facilities, including communication, healthcare,

irrigation, education, and transportation. Rural areas are characterized by their remoteness, low population density, limited and often costly services due to high transaction costs, and a significant portion of economic activity based on natural resources (Argentina, 2018). Thakle village is one of the rural areas of Lamjung district. Women especially in this area are involved in agriculture. They actively engage in tasks such as planting, weeding and harvesting food crops as well as taking care of livestock. Simultaneously, they assume care giving roles and managing household affairs. Despite their many responsibilities, women have significantly less access to the resources and services they need to increase their productivity and their income. In comparison to the male population of the society, females are facing many problems in participating in the development activities and employment. They can go and participate still only for a limited time. Women are frequently barred from participating in political campaigns and other gatherings. When they do have the opportunity to join, they are usually expected to finish their household duties beforehand. Women are as capable of performing economic activities as men but they are paid less than men in the labor markets. They spend more time at household as well as agricultural works, however their labor is not considered to contribute to the national income. In the society, as compared to men, women have limited access to health, education, economic welfare and political agency which force women to lead a miserable life. In the society there are some educated women but they are unemployed. Men and women have starkly different access to employment opportunities, which also affect the role of women in the society. So, this study has only focused to find out the employment challenges faced by educated women in rural area.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Women comprise more than half of the population of Nepal, but lag behind in every socio-economic, legal and political sphere of life (Acharya, 1997). Women in Nepal suffering from social cultural and political discrimination which spreads across all aspects of their everyday life. Women find themselves in vicious circle of lack of education lack of opportunities, which in turn leads to enhanced dependency upon males and lacking self-esteem. Women are the vital contributors to the domestic economy and thus to the nation (Ojha and Weber, 1993). Their access to knowledge, skills, resources, opportunities and power remains low. Women are restricted inside their homes, have lesser access to life opportunities and have limited involvement in decision making on important issues directly affecting their lives (Swahnberg, 2022).

Despite their many responsibilities, women have significantly less access to the resources and services. Women have limited educational opportunities and minimal access to employment. Their participation in decision-making, from household matters to executive levels, is significantly lacking (UNICEF, 1996). Economically, women's status is disappointing, primarily due to their restricted access to job opportunities. Compared to men, women have a much narrower range of employment options. Gender pay gap still exists. Women, on average, earn less than men for the same work. The majority of the societies around the world believe that women are less intelligently and physically capable than men. Women's talent, education and capacity are less respected than those of men (Achrya, 2020).

Women face substantial time constraints because they shoulder a greater share of domestic and caregiving responsibilities than men. On average, women work 58.8 hours per week, which is 11 hours more than the 47.9 hours men work (CBS 2011). This heavy domestic burden keeps many women at a subsistence level, often limiting them to home-based production and hindering their ability to advance into higher-value economic activities such as market trade. Women face challenges in every aspect of their lives. Promoting equality, but there are still a lot of obstacles preventing complete equality in society (Farcasiu, 2022). Women also face a number of obstacles and injustices at work. Their varied societal responsibilities and duties, their familial circumstances, the enduring impact of traditions on their individual and familial life, and their social authority are additional variables contributing to this problem (Shoaib et al., 2012).

For this study, I reviewed various literatures related to the topic. Several researches focuses on rural area, women, women's education, women's employment access, and other women's related issues but it is less common to find studies on educated women living in rural areas and the employment opportunities available to them. Many researchers like Alam ,Bhandary, Acharya, TabassumNaznin, Aslam and his colleague and other researchers study about the women , women's education , women empowerment, gender stereotypes. My research study is different from others researcher's study.No similar study on this topic regarding the women in this village has been done previously. My research is based on employment access of educated rural women. And it also studyabout employment opportunities available to educated women living in rural areas, as well as the challenges these women have encountered in finding work. Therefore, this study is different from others research study.

Thakle village is one of the rural areas of Lamjung district, which lacks basic infrastructures. People of different caste and religion live here. They have their own cultural values and norms. Most of the people are farmers in the village, but only a few people have enough land to survive. Women of this village lag far behind then men in the society and women in urban areas. The village still consolidates traditional norms, values and beliefs that affect the status and role of women in the society. Most of the women are economically dependent on men. Women are considered inferior to men.

In the study area, women are actively engaged in agriculture but are not acknowledged as farmers. Most rural women sell domestic products such as milk and fresh vegetables but lack the freedom to spend the earnings as they wish. Women's economic contributions are often undervalued, as household tasks are not considered economic activities. This highlights the challenges women face, including hard work and societal difficulties. Some women in study area are educated but they who are educated are not all employed. Only handful of them have access to employment. But the women, who are employed, are not in good position. Women have limited access to markets, productive services, and education, health care and local government. Most of the women have not any access to employment opportunities. In the society women have different access to employment as compare to men. So, it is necessary to find out the employment challenges that are faced by educated women in rural area.

This study aims to find out the employment challenges faced by educated women in Thakle village. Hence, the study is guided to the following questions:

1.3 Research Question

- 1) How is the education status of women changed in rural area of Nepal?
- 2) What employment challenges have faced by educated women in rural area?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

- 1) To find out the education status of women changed in rural area of Nepal.
- 2) To find out the employment challenges faced by educated women in rural area.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Women's employment is a cornerstone for economic development, social progress and individual empowerment. It enhances economic stability, promotes gender equality and fosters healthier and more educated communities. Economically empowered women are more likely to engage in advocacy, policy-making and driving societal changes that benefit all genders. Employment empowers women by providing financial independence and greater control over their lives and decisions. Financially independent women can afford better health care for themselves and their families, leading to improved health outcomes.

Analyzing women's employment helps to identify and address gender disparities in the work place, promoting equality and social justice. Understanding the barriers of women that hinder the employment access of educated women in rural area helps to inform the creation of policies and programs to support women's career advancement and work life balance.

This study aims to investigate the employment challenges faced by educated women in rural area. Additionally, it seeks to shed light on the overall situation of women living in rural communities. By understanding the employment barriers specific to educated women in rural settings, this study can provide valuable insights into the broader social and economic dynamics impacting rural women. Furthermore, the researcher aims to explore various aspects of rural women's social lives, behaviors, and activities, contributing to a deeper understanding of their roles and experiences with in their communities.

This study provides valuable insights into the employment challenges experienced by educated women in rural areas, it also beneficial for individuals and institutions interested in understanding this issue. Additionally, it describes the overall conditions of rural women. The findings of this study can be instrumental for planners, policy makers, NGOs, INGOs and other organizations involved in women's empowerment and rural development.

1.6 Organization of the Study

This thesis is organized mainly into five chapters. They are as follows.

Chapter One: The first chapter introduction provides background of the study, statement of the problems, research question, objectives of the study, significance of the study and organization of the study.

Chapter Two: The second chapter provides literature review. This chapter attempts to review some relevant past studies regarding women. This chapter includes: Empirical studies, educational status of the women in Nepal, the role of education in shaping the lives of rural women, challenges faced by rural women getting education, situation of women's employment in Nepal, theoretical review, gender inequality in education and employment and challenges that hinder women's employment.

Chapter Three: The third chapter comprises of research methods used during the field study for generating data and information. Here I have touched upon the descriptive method of our study area and provided a detailed explanation of the research design and procedure, data generated and the tools and techniques used during the process. This chapter also includes limitation of the study.

Chapter Four: The fourth chapters have been devoted to data analysis and it also provides demographic features of the respondents and also contains the essence or findings of the study in table formats generated from the data analysis.

Chapter five: Chapter five describes the employment challenges faced by educated women in rural area, and their views and experiences

Chapter six: The summary and conclusion from the entire study, based on the analysis and findings, are included in chapter six.

HAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter attempts to review some relevant past studies regarding women. Historically, women have been confined to domestic duties such as household chores, cooking, child – rearing and property maintenance. Society has perceived women as weak, vulnerable and dependent on men. Nepalese women are tasked with three categories of responsibilities: reproductive duties, household chores, and family-related tasks. Unfortunately, reproduction is often overlooked as a form of labor, and the government system does not recognize housekeeping as productive work. Women face discrimination in terms of educational opportunities and personal mobility, essential factors for skill development and achieving independence (UNDP, 1995).

2.1 Empirical Studies

2.1.1 Educational Status of Women in Nepal

Women’s position is always inferior to men in every sphere of life. Nepalese women are facing numerous problems in the society. Our society is still dealing with women empowerment. Nepalese women encounter a multitude of challenges within society, spanning health, education, participation in various spheres, economic empowerment, self-perception, decision-making capabilities, access to policy formulation, and human rights. Despite efforts from numerous organizations aimed at enhancing the status of women in Nepal, the circumstances for women remain distressingly inadequate.

Women continue to be undervalued in society, with inadequate implementation of legal and administrative measures for their empowerment. The lack of enforcement of laws and order exacerbates this situation. Economically, women in our country lack significant power due to limited opportunities for employment and earning potential in the labor market. They are often perceived as less productive and face discrimination in payment when they do secure work. Despite constitutional guarantees of equal protection under the law regardless of sex, Nepali women still encounter social, economic, and political discrimination. This discrimination permeates various aspects of life including property rights, employment

opportunities, reproductive health, marriage, and family relations. Deep-seated cultural norms and patriarchal values further compound the challenges faced by women (CEDAW, 1995).

According to the census 2078 Literacy rate of the male is 83.6% and literacy rate of female is 69.4% this data present that female are still uneducated in the society. Literacy is crucial for promoting and maintaining peace, as well as for building inclusive and prosperous nations. While Nepal has made significant strides in literacy over the past decade, a notable gap still exists between male and female literacy rates.

The educational situation for rural women in Nepal remains challenging, reflecting broader societal inequalities and barriers. Cultural norms and traditional expectations often prioritize household duties and early marriage over education for girls, leading to limited opportunities and perpetuating gender inequality. Additionally, the burden of household chores and care giving falls heavily on girls and women in rural areas, leaving little time or energy for schooling. Moreover, socio-economic factors such as poverty and lack of infrastructure contribute to educational disparities. Limited access to schools, inadequate transportation, and insufficient resources for learning create barriers, particularly in rural communities. Additionally, the patriarchal nature of Nepalese society often prioritizes the education of sons over daughters, further marginalizing rural women and reinforcing gender disparities in education (Bhandary, 2017).

In Nepal, women have lower levels of education compared to men. This educational disparity leads to numerous negative consequences in the lives of Nepalese women. It's not just about limiting their skills and capacities and also impacts their individual health, family well-being, legal rights, economic opportunities, and involvement in community affairs. Patriarchal society limits women's access to education, with socio-cultural, economic and political factors influencing this disparity. Families typically prioritize educating sons, viewing it as an investment in their future caretaking role, while daughter's education is seen as less beneficial. This perception, coupled with the costs associated with education, prevents many girls from attending school, particularly those from impoverished families. Additionally, familial responsibilities, such as care giving and domestic work, further hinder girl's educational opportunities (Pennells, 1998).

Several studies have indicated that literacy and educational achievements significantly impact individual and household well-being (Panthhe, 2015). Education is one of the most

important ways to empowering women with the knowledge, skill and confidence. It is one of the factors for development of human personality as well as nation. There are many empirical studies pertaining to the significance of literacy rate for national development, and they all point to education as the first stage in the development process and as the foundation for improving the socio-economic state of nation (Thapa, S.B.2013).In Nepal, women have limited access to quality education due to factors such as distance to schools, lack of infrastructure, and cultural norms that prioritize boy's education. Only a small number of individuals are inclined to send girls to school, and even among those who do, there is a limited desire for girls to receive the same level of education as boys (Achrya, 1982). The prevailing notion is that when daughters mature, they will eventually become wives and in essence, labor for another family. This perception discourages investment in girl's education, leading to a higher rate of dropout among girls compared to boys (Gurung, 1999).

2.1.2 The role of education in shaping the lives of rural women

In Nepal, the patriarchal authoritarian family structure is prevalent, men are typically regarded as superior to women and exert dominance in various aspects of personal, social and domestic life. Consequently, Nepalese women often rely on men for social, educational and economic support. They are frequently assigned traditional gender roles, such as handling household chores, bearing children, and looking after the needs of their husband's family and their husband's themselves (Gyawali, 2006). Women in Nepal have been discriminated based on the gender from the centuries. The discrimination is due to the culturally based gender endorsed differences, which has led to their subordinate status in the society, often resulting in violence or exploitation of them(ILO Report,2010). Marital status makes a woman completely dependent upon her husband because she only has access to the family's assets through her husband. Realizing the condition of women the government has necessary to empower rural exploited and extremely poor women through skill development program and enhance their economic opportunity.

Education equips women with knowledge, skills, confidence, empowering them to make informed decisions, improves their socio-economic status, and contribute effectively to their communities. It enables them to challenge traditional gender norms, access better opportunities, and participate more actively in various aspects of life, including economic activities, healthcare, and governance. Education acts as a catalyst for transformation within rural communities, providing avenues for individuals to enhance their socio-economic status

and broaden employment opportunities. By acquiring knowledge and skills through education, individuals can secure better-paying jobs, leading to improved income levels and living standards. Additionally, education facilitates access to social connections and resources, nurturing personal and professional development and enhancing overall socio-economic well-being. Through expanded career options in formal sectors, entrepreneurship, or vocational fields, education empowers individuals to achieve financial stability and mobility. Moreover, education's role extends to reducing unemployment rates, aligning skills with market demands, and fostering sustainable economic growth in rural areas and beyond (Bishaw, 2014, Alam, 2014).

Firstly, it broadens their horizons by equipping them with the skills and knowledge necessary to pursue a diverse range of employment opportunities, breaking free from traditional gender roles. This not only leads to higher-paying jobs but also enhances their financial literacy, enabling better financial planning and stability for themselves and their families. Moreover, education enhances their agency and decision-making capabilities, empowering them to advocate for their rights, negotiate fair treatment, and challenge societal norms that perpetuate inequality (Alam, 2014).

Secondly, education significantly improves the health and well-being of rural women and their communities. Educated women are more likely to access healthcare services, make informed decisions about their health and nutrition, and contribute to reducing maternal and child mortality rates. Furthermore, education fosters leadership skills and self-confidence among rural women, enabling them to take on active roles in community development initiatives and advocate for social change. Through their empowerment, educated rural women not only transform their own lives but also contribute to broader social and cultural shifts, challenging gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality in rural communities (Alam, 2014).

Education has a profound impact on the socio-economic status and employment prospects of women. Through education, women gain access to knowledge and skills that enable them to secure better-paying jobs and elevate their socio-economic status. Education equips women with the tools needed to compete in the job market, increasing their employability and opening doors to various career opportunities. Additionally, education provides women with the confidence and empowerment to pursue their aspirations, thereby breaking down traditional gender barriers and fostering economic independence. Overall, investing in

women's education not only benefits individual women but also contributes to broader socio-economic development by creating a more inclusive and equitable society (Aslam and colleague, 2019).

2.1.3 Challenges faced by rural women getting education

In Nepal, like in many parts of the world, women in rural areas encounter significant hurdles when seeking education. These challenges stem from a complex interplay of socio-economic factors, cultural traditions, and institutional barriers that disproportionately affect women. Cultural norms, deeply ingrained in Nepalese society, often dictate strict gender roles and expectations. These norms frequently discourage or even prevent girls from pursuing education, especially in rural regions where traditional values hold strong sway (Nanda et al, 2012).

One of the most pervasive obstacles faced by rural women in Nepal is early marriage. Girls are often wed at a young age, which disrupts their education as they assume familial responsibilities as wives and mothers. This custom, rooted in the notion of marriage as a familial agreement rather than an individual choice, deprives girls of their childhood and denies them access to education, a violation of their basic human rights (Keesing, 1998).

Furthermore, the burden of household chores and caregiving falls heavily on girls and women in Nepalese society. Traditional gender roles assign females the primary responsibility for domestic duties, leaving little time or energy for pursuing education. This unequal distribution of household responsibilities perpetuates gender inequality in education, with girls bearing the brunt of the workload, particularly the eldest daughters (Brannen, 1995).

Moreover, Nepalese society's patriarchal structure reinforces the preference for sons over daughters. The birth of a son is celebrated as a symbol of masculinity and a source of pride for families, whereas daughters are often considered harbingers of misfortune. Sons are favored as primary heirs to carry on the family lineage and provide financial support in old age, leading to unequal treatment of daughters within families, including disparities in access to education and (Subedi 1997).

In this cultural context, educational opportunities are often prioritized for sons, while daughters' education is viewed as a wasted investment. Sons hold deeper socio-cultural,

religious, and economic importance, enjoying privileges such as participation in religious rituals, inheritance rights, and higher status within the family structure. Consequently, rural women in Nepal face multifaceted challenges rooted in entrenched cultural norms and societal expectations, hindering their access to education and perpetuating gender inequality.

2.1.4 Situation of women's employment in Nepal

The employment landscape for rural women in Nepal presents significant hurdles, stemming from entrenched socio-economic factors and cultural norms. Traditional gender roles often confine women to household duties, limiting their access to formal employment opportunities. Moreover, the unequal burden of unpaid care work further restricts their ability to engage in paid labor outside the home. These cultural dynamics, coupled with challenges like limited access to education and skills training, discriminatory practices in the workplace, and inadequate infrastructure, collectively hinder rural women's economic empowerment and perpetuate their dependence on male family members.

Despite these obstacles, efforts to enhance rural women's employment prospects are underway. Initiatives aimed at expanding educational opportunities and vocational training, promoting entrepreneurship, and combating gender-based discrimination in the workforce are essential. However, sustained commitment and investment from both governmental and non-governmental sectors are crucial to address the deep-rooted structural barriers and create an inclusive environment where rural women can actively participate in the economy and achieve economic autonomy.

Many women in Nepal are engaged in agriculture, contributing significantly to the rural economy. They are actively involved in tasks like planting, harvesting, and tending to livestock. Gender-based discrimination, stereotypes and social norms limit women's access to certain job opportunities and career advancements. There is a gender pay gap, and women face challenges in accessing leadership roles. Bhusal (2004) noted that women make significant contributions across multiple sectors such as industry, household management, and rural markets. They are equally involved in the informal sector alongside men, across both impoverished and affluent regions worldwide. Typically, women occupy peripheral roles within larger enterprises, often as temporary, contract, or part-time workers.

Women contribute a greater proportion to household chores compared to men, they have much more work burden at all time. The women's daily working hour ranges from 4 to 18 hours in these types of non-monetized works (Bhattarai;1988;74). While males spend less than an hour a day doing domestic maintenance tasks, women spend 4 hours a day cooking, cleaning, washing, clothing, and taking care of the kids. Women in rural area are more active in economic activities than urban women. Despite their many responsibilities, women have significantly less access to the resources and services. Women have low degree of opportunities for their education and hardly any access for employment. There is lack of women participation in decision making from house to the executive levels (UNICEF, 1996).

Women face additional barriers in accessing formal financial services due to factors like limited mobility and low levels of financial literacy. Low levels of financial literacy mean that women may have less understanding of how formal financial system work, making them less likely to utilize such services even if they are available to them. These factors collectively hinder women's ability to fully engage with and benefit from formal financial services (ADB, 1999). It is noted that many women who work in non-agricultural sectors are engaged in agriculture related work. Furthermore, there is a notable trend of women expand into a variety of fields such as services, tourism, manufacturing, and construction, indicating a broadening of their employment opportunities beyond agriculture (World Bank, 2017). However, many of these jobs are characterized by vulnerabilities. They may be of low quality, often informal or unpaid and frequently based at home (UN women, 2015).

Women are capable of performing economic activities as men but they are less paid than men in the labor markets. They spend more time in household as well as agricultural works, however, their labor is not considered to contribute to the national income. According to CBS 2014, gender equality is a crucial component of human development. However, Nepal continues to face gender disparities across various sectors. Economic empowerment remains a significant challenge, with women's participation in non-agricultural sectors remaining relatively low, possibly influenced by limited educational opportunities and a cultural preference for agriculture. The prevalence of women engaged in self-employment or unpaid family labor is notably high. Compared to previous census there is changes in many areas but, this is not sufficient.

2.2 Theoretical Review

There are various sociological theories which study about the women. Among them, Feminist theory is also one of the theories that aim to understand the nature of gender inequality. It examines women's and men's social roles, experiences, interest etc. Feminist theories analyze women's experiences of gender subordination, the roots of women oppression, how gender inequality is perpetuated. Feminist theory offers a perspective for understanding human behavior in the social government by centering women issues that women face in contemporary. Feminist theory is most often associated with the rights of women (Acharya, 2074).

There is different perspective for understanding and analyze the issues of women. Liberal Feminism focuses on liberal and political rights. There is need of equal participation in every arena of society. It aims to gradual changes in the political, economic and social status of women. The goal of liberal feminism is to achieve gender equality inside the system through social policies for men and women. De Beauvoir's views on women being dependent on men illustrate the theme of subject and object relationships. To address women's oppression, she proposes rejecting the notion that women are inherently feminine and inherently weaker than men. The existentialist perspective she advocates challenges the belief that women must unquestionably embrace assigned roles. De Beauvoir's concept of subjectivity, as she employs it, emerges from defining or accepting roles for oneself and others, empowering individuals to take control of their own destinies (Beauvoir, 1949).

Usually, women are disproportionately found in roles traditionally associated with femininity, like nursing, teaching and social care. These occupations often receive lower pay compared to others. In numerous countries, a gender wage gap persists, where women, on average, earns less than men for performing same job. Liberal feminism primarily seeks gender equality in the public domain, aiming for equitable access to education, fair wages, and elimination of job segregation based on gender and improved working conditions for women. Advocates of liberal feminism believe that these objectives can be realized through legal reforms (McLeod, 2023).

2.2.1 Gender Inequality in Education and Employment

Various studies indicated that the involvement of women in education and employment enhances both social and economic welfare. Gender-based inequalities in education and labor markets are deeply interconnected and mutually reinforcing. The disparities that exist in educational opportunities and outcomes directly impact women's access to and participation in the labor force, as well as their ability to secure quality employment and advance in their careers. Education serves as a critical foundation for economic empowerment and social mobility. Gender disparities in access to education, quality of education, and retention rates limit women's ability to acquire the necessary skills and qualifications for employment. Limited educational opportunities for women perpetuate gender inequalities in the labor market by restricting their access to higher-paying jobs and positions of leadership (Paola Belingheri, 2021).

Gender stereotypes play a vital role in shaping career choices and opportunities for men and women. In education, it influences access to educational attainment and subject choices for example, historically girls have faced barriers to accessing education. There is also under representation of women in science, technology and engineering subject. Gender based inequalities in education and employment are strongly interlinked with each other. Differences in education enrollment rates, completion rates, academic achievements, especially field of study influences the types of job and careers that individuals pursue. Specially, Science and technology field offers higher- paying and more stable employment opportunities. Furthermore, Differences in education also leads to occupational segregation. Not only women and men are in different sectors and occupation but their distribution of grades, levels of responsibility or positions also differ (EU Science Hub).

Feminist believe that providing equal access to education empowers women by freeing them from traditional gender roles and enhancing their social standing. Thus, ensuring fair educational opportunities is crucial for women's empowerment. We should eradicate male dominance over women and strongly encourage women to actively participate (Wollstonecraft, 2014). Wollstonecraft argued that educated women would make significant contributions to the well-being of society. Feminist perspectives, suggest that women are consistently exploited, oppressed, and subjected to stereotypical socialization. For feminists, ensuring women have equal educational opportunities is a powerful means to empower them, foster independence, and significantly diminish gender inequality.

Theoretically, this study is based on the ideology of liberal feminism. Liberal feminism believes that women's unequal access to legal, social, political and economic institutions promotes to oppression. So, women have to equal participation in public sphere such as education, politics, employment etc. They believe that we should focus on making public sphere more equal. They also believe that women should have the same rights as men to participate fully in society and to have equal representation in the political arena, the work force and the media. They desire equal representation in roles with more responsibility.

2.2.2 Challenges that Hinder Women's Employment

Mazumdar (1982) examines the enduring social, economic, and political biases and oppression faced by Asian women, which continue to persist today to varying degrees. She argues that monopolies over economic and political power, coupled with limited access to knowledge, are the primary factors perpetuating inequality within and between nations. Many women in Asia are excluded from these spheres, further diminishing their societal standing by devaluing their work as "non-productive." This undervaluation of women's economic contributions is closely tied to their lower social status and constrained individual freedoms within family structures. He also critiques non-socialist countries where capitalist expansion has marginalized women's economic and social roles, often relegating them to roles as consumers rather than equal partners in societal progress. She contends that despite well-intentioned welfare policies, these often inadvertently reinforce various forms of exploitation among women. Additionally, Mazumdar underscores that in Asia, women comprise the largest group engaged in agriculture and food production, yet very few control critical assets such as land. Despite their active labor participation, they are frequently excluded from decision-making processes.

A Case study conducted in Haryana state in 1987 Kaur highlights the importance of education and access to educational opportunities as an important factor influencing women's input in the decision-making process. As she observes educated women are better placed as compared to their illiterate counterpart. Various studies analyze that social factor that may contribute to involvement and attendance in education (Pal 2004). Cultural tradition comes into play. There is rise in female education if it is a tradition that they are educated. Since the 1970s, educational segregation of girls into stereotypical "women's jobs. Instead, girls have been encouraged to pursue fields traditionally dominated by men, such as science and technology. Despite advancement, Women are still predominantly directed towards

professions like social work, nursing and child care, where qualities like compassion and care, traditionally associated with females are valued. Conversely, men are more often found in hands-on roles such as mechanics, policing and engineering, which are perceived as requiring traits like intelligence, strength, and leadership (Connell, 2002). Despite the implementation of equal opportunity policies, there is still a large imbalance of females to males in these positions. The jobs that are being categorized as more adequate for men are usually higher pay and often higher status and reputation leaving in equality at a high rate (Huppatz, 2012).

Marta Cipriano describes women were viewed as the inferior gender and frequently placed in subordinate positions to men across all facets of society, including with the family, in personal life and in employment. Women are not only face personal challenges but also contend with patriarchal power structures predominantly controlled by men. They are often pressured to submit to men's economic or emotional needs (Poya, 1999). Women were traditionally viewed solely as home makers and relied on men for financial support. Men could not take the role of a house wife and those who did, were seen as an abnormality as it went against social norms (Oakley, 1974). Parsons 1955 emphasizes the importance of the man's role in the family, stating that his occupation and social status dictate the family's cultural and economic position in society. Success as a husband and father is often gauged by his attainment of a high-income job with significant social standing.

Gender inequalities in rural employment exist and persist because of range of interlinked social, economic and political factors. Social institutions play a significant role in perpetuating gender disparities, particularly in rural communities. Traditions, customs, and social norms act as invisible but powerful barriers that hinder women's empowerment and limit their ability to compete with men. The belief that women are less able to manage assets. The idea that women have to obtain their husbands or guardians permission to leave the house. Legal restrictions that do not allow women to have any property or inheritance rights. These practices are extremely difficult to eradicate and are detrimental to women's capacity to develop as productive members of society (ILO, 2012).

Economic factors significantly influence women's roles in society, both directly and indirectly. Women who are more economically active tend to have greater decision-making power within their households. Additionally, they emphasize the disparities in women's participation in the market economy among various groups. These disparities can impact

women's ability to make decisions for their households, as those with greater economic opportunities may have more agency and influence compared to those with limited access to economic resources. Overall, Acharya and Bennett highlight the complex interplay between economic factors and women's roles (Acharya and Bennett, 1981).

Societal customs and norms significantly hinder women's full participation in economic development. It is one of the challenges faced by women. These customs often limit women's decision-making abilities and relegate them to subordinate roles within society. Specifically, Acharya points out that women face challenges in engaging as equal members of society due to social expectations that they are primarily responsible for tasks related to human reproduction, such as pregnancy, child birth and child-rearing. These gendered roles contribute to a lower standing for women in comparison to men, exacerbating gender inequalities and limiting women's opportunities for economic empowerment. Overall, Acharya highlights the need to address societal customs and norms that perpetuate gender disparities in order to promote women's full participation in economic development (Acharya, 1997).

According to Shtri Shakti 1995, Women's participation in public life is severely restricted by cultural norms and the patriarchal social system prevalent in society. These norms confine women to subordinate roles, limiting their involvement in both public and private spheres. Various factors such as religion, ethnicity, culture, legal traditions, historical influences and societal attitudes further reinforce these restrictions, shaping the cultural worldview and individual self-perception. Consequently, these factors impact the conceptualization and implementation of development initiatives. This is evidenced by the limited representation of Nepalese women in professional, managerial, and decision-making roles. Overall, Shtri Shakti highlights the entrenched cultural and social barriers that hinder women's advancement. According to the World Survey. The creation of adequate employment options for women and investments in social safety, public services and infrastructure that acknowledge, lessen, and redistribute unpaid care and domestic duties are necessary to address the twin bond of women's income and time poverty.

Gender Stereotypes and Their Impact on Women's Career Progression from A Managerial Perspective, Naznin Tabassum and Bhabani Shankar Nayak describe gender stereotypes creates problems in the progress of women's careers. Despite efforts to promote gender equality through policies, discrimination based on gender remains prevalent due to deeply

ingrained stereotypes. These stereotypes, which are often rooted in societal expectations and norms, have negative effects on women's opportunities for career advancement. They influence managerial behaviour and occupational perspectives within the workplace, often reflecting patriarchal beliefs and expectations. As a result, women may face bias, unequal treatment, and limited access to leadership roles and opportunities for professional growth.

Gender specific behavior demotivates and demoralizes women in the workplace. In organizational settings, negative beliefs about women's performance or efficacy may damage their aspiration for career advancement (Dickerson and Taylor, 2000). Women in workplaces are usually perceived as emotional, illogical and intuitive decision makers (Green and Casell, 1996). Heilman (2001) emphasizes that men are considered to be emotionally strong, assertive and workplace achievers whereas women are often considered to be emotionally unstable, weak and timid. These attitudes were found to be exemplified in a study conducted by Zafarullah (2000) looking at the status of women in workplaces in Bangladesh. The author observed discriminatory attitudes prevailing in the organizations, including the perception that women are less capable physically, mentally and emotionally.

Heppner (2013), addressed gender equality for both men and women in her chapter of the second edition of *Career Development and Counseling*. Schultheiss (2021), writing for the third edition, emphasized the structures contributing to gender inequality for both genders, while also highlighting occupational differences. She discussed disparities in pay, parenthood, and work-life balance, alongside a section dedicated to men's career development. As women join the workforce, they are consistently managing the balance between their personal and professional spheres (Hite and McDonald, 2003). They encounter various career barriers such as limited access to mentorship, experiences of sexual harassment, unequal pay, advancement challenges, and pressure to prioritize family over career advancement. These challenges may impact women's perceptions of their own abilities (Betsworth, 1999).

Gender inequality in the workplace has adverse effects on the physical and psychological well-being of women. One of the major aspects of this inequality is the gender pay gap, where women consistently earn less than men on average across various countries. This disparity in earnings persists despite efforts to address it, indicating systemic issues within workplaces and society at large. The gender pay gap not only affects women's economic security but also impacts their mental health and overall quality of life. According to the study, women

typically earn between 5 and 45 percent less than their male colleagues. It indicates that there is a significant gender pay gap (Wiler et al; 2022).

Women still face harassment and work discrimination in the work place (Rahman, 2019). This behavior not only creates a hostile work environment for women but also has profound effect on their mental health, career outcomes and job satisfaction. Sexual harassment can lead to feelings of fear, anxiety, and stress among women, impacting their overall well-being and ability to perform their job effectively. Moreover, experiencing harassment can hinder women's career advancement opportunities, as they may feel compelled to leave their jobs or industries altogether to escape the hostile environment (Maghraby et al ;2020; Alrawadieh et al; 2022).

Women's career decisions and career advancement differed from those of men (Fitzgerald, 1980). In 1975, Osipow edited "Emerging Women: Career Analysis and Outcomes", the first model of women's career development. The model incorporated two main categories of factors: individual elements such as attitudes, interests, and abilities and social influences including family, school, religious institutions, support networks, mass media, and significant others. These factors were influenced by challenges like fear of success, role conflicts, overload, direct or indirect discrimination, and time constraints. The model anticipated outcomes in women's career development, ranging from successful careers or marriages to varying levels of achievement, self-exclusion, underutilization of abilities, or even societal change.

To enhance women's decision-making power, it is crucial to ensure their equitable participation in planning and policy formation processes at all levels of society. This approach underscores the importance of recognizing women as active agents of change rather than merely passive beneficiaries, labor contributors, or consultants. The objective is to ensure that both men and women are represented in decision making forums in proportion to their involvement in the broader community. This means moving beyond token representation of women or including only the spouses of male leaders in decision-making processes (Shrestha, 1994).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

Every study needs a systematic methodology to show the better result of the research. Research methodology helps to solve the research problems systematically. This part explains the methodological process of this research. A good researcher always pays attention towards the well- structured research methods. The nature of this research is descriptive. Qualitative method of data collection has been applied to get answers on research question.

3.1 Rationale of Site Selection

Main objective of this study is to find out the employment challenges of educated women in rural area. And also, to find out the education condition of women in rural area. For this purpose, Thakle village of Sundarbazar Municipality of Lamjung District has been selected. It is located in Gandaki province of Northern central Nepal. This municipality is created by merging different 9 VDC's of Lamjung district. Total area of this municipality is 72.03sq.km followed by the total population of 26864. There are 11 wards in this municipality, where Thakle village is one of them. In this village people from different socio-cultural, religion and occupational background live there.

For this study, Thakle village of Sundarbazar Municipality of Lamjung district has been selected because in the past no similar studies have been carried out considering these issues of the females of this village. It is one of the reasons to select this site for the study.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is a planning structure and strategies for the research. It is compulsory for any researcher to do research and to direct research work on systematic way. It helps to analyze how to collect meaningful data. This research is based on descriptive and exploratory research design. Descriptive research is flexible for study and can address question of all types (what, how, why, when). By the help of qualitative research method researcher can know the respondents 'feelings, emotions, perceptions and views. Therefore, this research is based on descriptive and explorative research design.

3.3 Nature and Source of Data

Both primary and secondary sources of data with qualitative nature are used in this study. The primary information has been taken through interview. The primary sources of data were obtained from the rural women of the village. In primary sources, researcher himself has to go the research field, so if the researcher visits the research fields and collects the information then it is going to be more informative and reliable. The secondary sources of data are obtained from articles, journals, books, village profile etc. It takes short period to collect more data and information for the researcher by using secondary sources.

3.4 Universe and Sample

This research study consists of Thakle village of Sundarbazar Municipality of Lamjung district. The total population of this village is 340. Total population of male is 166 and total population of female is 174. For this study, I have selected 30 women as a respondent. I have selected 30 educated women who are holding certificates of SLC and above SLC for interviews. Because this study is going to find out the employment challenges of educated women. The data has been collected from 30 educated women from different social, economic and cultural background. This research has followed purposive sampling process because for this study respondents are needed to select among the group of women those who are educated and hold the certificates of SLC and above SLC.

3.5 Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

In order to meet the objectives of this study, various tools and techniques are implemented to collect data and information from the field level. The researcher has used different tools and techniques for data collection they are as follow:

3.5.1 Interview

Interview is a systematize conversation between interviewer and interviewee. It is one of the powerful techniques of gathering information. It helps to find out the real data and information. In this research, the interview is taken with the 30 SLC pass women of the village. To gather data, an in-depth interview method was utilized. A series of questions were crafted to gather information on both individual and household backgrounds, aiming to understand the respondents' activities and contexts better. Each question was designed for

clarity and ease of understanding. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, allowing for questions to be explained and elaborated upon as necessary during the interview process.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis and Interpretations

The method of data analysis plays a crucial role in determining the reliability, applicability, and validity of a research study. The data collected from the field study is organized into tables after editing and coding. Analysis includes interpretation and presentation using figures where needed to enhance clarity and reliability. Simple statistical tools like averages and percentages are also utilized to aid in the analysis process.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to Thakle village of sundarbazar municipality-5 Lamjung district. Thus, the findings of the study derived from the particular area may not be generalized for all societies. And this study is only micro level study not the macro level of the society and the nation. This study is conducted to fulfill the requirements for a master's degree in sociology. Therefore, conducting an extensive and detailed research was not feasible due to limited resources and time constraints. Main focus of this study is about the employment challenges of educated women and to find out the education status of women. It is limited to academic purpose only. Here are some of the study's limitations:

- 1) The study is based on a particular village of Thakle Lamjung district.
- 2) The study focuses on employment challenges faced by educated women in rural area and education status of women.
- 3) This study is limited to the academic purpose only.

CHAPTER IV

DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF THE RESPONDENTS

This chapter provides a concise introduction to the study area, aiming to describe its geographical features, cultural aspects, socioeconomic conditions, and demographic characteristics that significantly influence societal structures. The study focuses on Thakle village in Lamjung district as the chosen research site. The findings of this study are closely aligned with the unique setting of the study area and the sampled population.

Demographic Information

Lamjung district lies in the north-central part of Nepal in western development region. This district has a unique blend of the landscapes that comprises of the three distinct ecological zones of Nepal: the middle hills, high mountains, and the Himalaya in an area of 1692sq.km. It has mixed habitation of casts and ethnicities. There are 4 municipalities and 4 rural municipalities. Sundarbazar is one of the municipalities of Lamjung district which is created by merging different 9 vdc's of Lamjung district. Total area of this municipality is 72.03 sq. km whereas the total population is 26864. There are 11 wards in this municipality. Thakle village is one of the villages of Sundarbazar municipality. The total population of this village is 340. People from different socio-economic, cultural, religion and occupational background live there. The population of the village consist of different casts/ethnic groups. This includes Brahmins, Chhetri, Gurung, etc. Moreover, different ethnic groups have their own culture, tradition and languages. Majority of the people follows Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity.

4.1 Population

Table 4.1: Total Population of the Village

Sex	Number	Percentage
Male	166	48.83
Female	174	51.17
Total	340	100

The above table 4.1 shows the total number of populations of the village. Total population of village is 340. In which one hundred seventy-four (174) are female and one hundred sixty-six (166) are male. We can see that in the village, the male population is lower than the female population.

4.2 Age of the Respondents

Age and sex composition are pivotal factors in population demographics, impacting various economic and demographic conditions. Age serves as a crucial demographic variable, offering insights into the distribution of individuals across different age groups at a specific point in time. This information is essential for understanding the number of economically active individuals and dependents within the population. Age influences various aspects such as working hours, types of work, mental and physical capabilities, responsibilities, and social engagement. The age structure not only reflects demographic shifts but also offers insights into the economic history of a population spanning a century. The table number 4.2 gives the age of the respondents. The age group of the respondents was classified into 3 age groups: 20-30, 31-40, 41-50.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents Age Group

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
20-30	7	23.33
31-40	18	60
41-50	5	16.67
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey

Table number 4.2 shows the distribution of respondent's age group in the study area. According to the data, we can see that 23.33 percent respondents belong to the age group 20-30 years and 60 percent respondents belong to the age group 31-40 years. Furthermore, 16.67 percent respondents belong to the age group 41-50 years. From the data we can say that maximum numbers of the respondents (60%) are in between 31-40 years age group.

4.3 Family Structure of the Respondents

The family serves as a fundamental and universal social institution, meeting diverse needs of its members. In the study area, both nuclear and joint families coexist. A nuclear family typically comprises two generations—father, mother, and children—often adhering to traditional gender roles. In contrast, a joint family includes three generations—grandparents, parents, and children—who live in close proximity and maintain regular contact. Table 4.3 illustrates the family structures of the respondents.

Table 4.3: Family Structure of the Respondents

Type of family	Number	Percentage
Nuclear family	17	56.67
Joint family	13	43.33
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey

The family is a fundamental social institution centered on love, affection, sexual relationships, reproduction, childbearing, childcare, and socialization. Every individual is part of a family, either by birth or through marriage. Family plays a central role in shaping an individual's activities and interactions.

The above table shows that 56.67 % of the sample house hold consists of nuclear family. Nuclear family consists of husband, wife and their children. And there is 43.33 % of sample household consist of joint family. Joint family included grandparents, parents and children. Nowadays many of them are preferring nuclear family. Several factors contribute to the rise of nuclear families, including economic hardships such as limited land and inadequate income to support a large family. Families engage in various activities to enhance their quality of life. According to the table, 56.67% of respondents prefer smaller family sizes to better manage household expenses.

4.4 Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital status significantly influences women's roles, as marriage transitions them from daughter to daughter-in-law, increasing their responsibilities. In the Nepalese context,

marriage often leads to childbearing. Marital status is a critical indicator in women's lives, reflecting their societal roles and responsibilities. It also serves as an important social indicator for understanding gender participation in household economies. Table 4.4 presents the marital status of the respondents.

Table 4.4: Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital status	Number	Percentage
Married	30	100
Unmarried	0	0
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey

The above table number 4.4 shows the marital status of the respondents of the study area. According to the data we can see that all respondents are married.

4.5 Educational Status of the Respondents

Education is important for all individual. It plays a crucial role in developing their skills, capabilities and knowledge. Education enhances personal growth and empowers individuals to make knowledgeable choices, encouraging ongoing learning and self – betterment throughout their lives. Education serves as a pathway to social and economic mobility. It opens doors to better opportunities, higher –paying jobs and improved living standards. Educated women can be self-supportive and self-dependent. Education helps in transitions such as change in thoughts of people according to time and situation. The table number 4.5 shows the educational status of the respondents.

Table 4.5: Educational Status of Respondents

Education Status	Number	Percentage
SLC	6	20
Intermediate (I.A)	14	46.67
Bachelor (B.A)	8	26.67
Master (M.A)	2	6.66
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey

Above table number 4.5 shows the educational status of the respondents of the study area. The educational status is divided into 4 categories which are SLC, IA, BA, and MA. According to the data, it shows that 20 percent (20%) of the respondents has passed the SLC level education, 46.67 percent (46%) of the respondents has passed intermediate (I.A) level education, and 26.67 percent (26.67%) respondents has cleared the bachelor (BA) level education. Moreover, 6.66 percent (6.66%) respondents have passed master degree (MA) level education. According to the data, it is shown that the highest number of respondents (46.67%) has passed intermediate (I.A) level education than others.

4.6 Occupation and Source of Income

Occupation and income sources are vital indicators of individuals' economic status and contribute significantly to shaping their social identity. For most individuals, occupation serves as their primary source of income, making it a key characteristic examined in this study. Agriculture is the dominant occupation in the study area, providing a major source of income along with teaching. Additionally, some households engage in non-agricultural activities like foreign employment and daily-wage labor. Through this research, I have studied both respondents who have job and who doesn't have job. I have mentioned those respondent who doesn't have job under household work.

The following table shows the occupation composition of respondents.

Table 4.6: Occupation Composition of Respondents

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Agriculture	7	23.33
Business	1	3.33
Finance	2	6.67
Household Work	15	50
Teacher	5	16.67
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey

The above table number 4.6 shows the occupational composition of respondents. 7 women out of the 30 respondents are involved in agriculture, 1 in business (small shop) and 2 respondents are involved in finance whereas 5 in teaching profession. There are also 15 respondents who are not involved in any profession but engaged in household activities. It is found that 50 percent of women are involved in household work it means that higher rate of female have no job. During data collection, we observed a lack of male involvement in household activities. This study also reveals limited female participation in business and other economic fields. Many women remain primarily engaged in agriculture and household duties, with little awareness or involvement in non-agricultural sectors. A significant proportion of women do not have access to paid employment opportunities. The female input in terms of working hours per day is higher than that of their male counterpart. They are involved in both domestic as well as the agricultural sphere of activities.

4.7 Women’s Role in Household Related Expenditure

Decision making is one of the indicators of social status. The ability to make decision makes people powerful. The decision maker is considered as center both in the family and society, around which all members revolve. Decisions have to be taken in all sectors including business, household works, education and so on. The chances and opportunities to make decisions determine the progress and development of people. Various activities are conducted within families to ensure smooth functioning, where the roles of both men and women are

crucial. Ideally, there should be gender equality and equity, but in male-dominated societies, this is often lacking. The involvement of men and women in decision-making processes is often biased by discrimination and influenced by male-centric ideologies. Some of the household activities and role of male and female are presented below.

4.7.1 Control Over Household Cash

Table 4.7.1: Control Over Household Cash

Persons	No. Of Households	Percentage
Male members	24	80
Female members	6	20
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey

The above table number 4.7.1 shows the control over household cash in the respondent's family. According to the data it is found, that male members of the family i.e. 80% has control over household cash than the female members (20%). It shows that male members keep the household money. Female members have no such control as compared to their male member in the family.

4.7.2 Control over Bazaar Purchase

In every household, acquiring essential goods from the market is a common activity. In my research area, women have significant authority over these purchases, making decisions on what and where to buy. However, their purchasing power is indirectly influenced by the economic control held by their husbands. The table below illustrates the involvement of women in marketplace purchases.

Table 4.7.2: Control Over Bazaar Purchases

Persons	No. of Households	Percentage
Male members	11	36.66
Female members	19	63.34
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey

The above table number 4.7.2 shows the control over bazaar purchase. According to the data, it is found that 63.34 percent of female members have control over bazaar purchase and 36.66 percent of male members control over bazaar purchases in the household. It shows that female members have a greater control over bazaar purchase as compared to the male members of the house hold. Women play a significant role in making decision about food, clothes and other matters. The female especially wife have major role in deciding the expenditure of household material.

4.7.3 Women’s Role in Educational Management

Parents hold the responsibility for their children's education. Women who are more educated often have higher status within the household and possess greater influence in decisions regarding their children's education. In this study, all the respondent were asked about who decides to take admission of their children to school, buy books, uniforms and payment of fees. The responses are presented below:

Table 4.7.3: Women’s Role in Educational Management

Educational instrument	Male	Male Percentage	Female	Female Percentage	Total
Admission in school	23	76.67	7	23.33	30
Paying fees	26	86.67	4	13.33	30
Uniforms	5	16.67	25	83.33	30
Book/copies	6	20	24	80	30

Source: Field Survey

The above table number 4.7.3 shows the decision of males and females regarding to buy the educational instruments of their children of the respondent’s. According to the table it is shown that 76.67 percent male and 23.33 percent female decide regarding selection of school regarding their children’s admission. Furthermore, there is 86.67 percent male and 13.33 percent female made decision to pay the fees of their children. Similarly, 16.67 percent male and 83.33 percent female had made decision to buy uniform for their children. Moreover, 20 percent male and 80 percent female has made decision to buy books and copies for their children.

According to the table number 7.3 it is clear that most of the decision regarding education of the children, their fees, and selection of school for admission is made by male member where as female made the decision regarding the uniform, book, copies of their children only. Though some of the roles are given to females which are considered less valuable in comparison with males.

4.8 Participation of Women in Community Activities

In society, both men and women participate in social and community activities. While men have the freedom to engage in all types of these activities, women are often restricted to family-related roles. However, in this study area, many women are actively involved in community efforts such as labor exchange (parma), community forest groups, and agricultural cooperatives. Engaging in these activities offers women valuable opportunities for public exposure, helping to shape their public image and establish their individual identities. The following table shows the participation of women in community activities.

Table 4.8: Participation of Women in Community Activities

Participation of Community activities	Number of people participation	Percentage
Yes	13	43.33
NO	17	56.67
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey

The above table number 4.8 shows the participation of respondent in community activities. 13 out of the 30 respondents i.e. 43.33 percent female participate in community activities like exchange labor (parma), community forest group and agricultural group etc and 17 women out of the 30 i.e. 56.67 percent of the women do not participate in such activities.

4.9 Freedom for Women in Participation of Political Activities

The following table shows the freedom of women in participating political activities.

Table 4.9: Freedom for Women in Participation of Community Activities

Freedom for participation	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	40
No	18	60
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey

Out of 30 women, 40% reported having the freedom to participate in political activities, while the remaining women stated they did not have such freedom. Consequently, women's involvement in decision-making related to political participation is minimal. In this study area, it was observed that women are involved in various decision-making processes, including education, expenses, and labor utilization. However, the final decisions in these matters rest solely with their husbands. Despite their participation in community activities, the effectiveness of their involvement is limited because they are disadvantaged and marginalized in other areas. Their engagement in discussions and activities does little to improve their overall status. This demonstrates how male-dominated ideologies successfully keep them indirectly suppressed and left behind.

4. 10 Educational Opportunities of Rural Women and their Employment Access

There is gradual improvement in educational status of rural women in Nepal. There are different government policies and non-governmental initiatives which play important role to increase literacy rates and school enrollment for girls. In comparison to the previous census 2068, the literacy rate of female is increased in 2078 i.e. 69.4 %. It also indicates that there is gradual improvement in girl's education in Nepal. In the rural area women have limited access to quality education. Because of lack of skilled education and practical knowledge many women became unemployed and women who are employed are in low paying job with lower position. Educational opportunities for women significantly enhance their access to employment. If women attain higher levels of education they become eligible for a broader range of job. Their skills, knowledge, qualification make them more competitive in the job market.

During the interview respondent said that there is change in educational status of women in the society. There is increase in number of girls students in school and college. Different scholarship and programs provided by schools and government also helps the girls for their education. Different governmental and international organizations also played a crucial role by providing resources and raising awareness about the importance of female education. Social attitudes towards educating women gradually change day by day. But many women in rural areas are still facing barriers such as poverty, early marriage and cultural norms that prioritize male education. She said that she encountered various obstacles while seeking education. There are various factors that affect the higher level of education for women in rural area, factors such as geographical structure, distance to schools, lack of infrastructure, cultural norms that prioritize boy's education, the burden of household chores, poverty and insufficient support from families also influence the educational status of women in the society. And challenges such as limited resources, geographic barriers and entrenched traditional norms still hindered complete access to education for rural women.

There is gradual improvement in educational situation of women in rural area. But there is still obstacle and barriers for women which affect the educational and employment opportunities of rural women. In this study area, among 30 participants majority of them are involved in household activities i.e. 50% and rest of them are engaged in professional activities like teaching, finance, and business. This shows that there are higher rate of female have no job. And it also shows that higher number of women is unable to engage in professional activities.

CHAPTER V

EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES FACED BY EDUCATED WOMEN IN RURAL AREA

Women are essential pillars of society. They are playing a vital role in families and contributing significantly to community progress. As caregivers, nurturers, and educators, women provide the foundation for strong and resilient families, fostering love, support, and guidance for their loved ones. Moreover, women are catalysts for positive change in their communities. Despite their significance, women encounter various challenges that hinder their ability to contribute fully. Employment empowers women by providing financial independence and greater control over their lives and decisions. Working women contribute to stronger social networks and community engagement. Employed women can provide better educational opportunities for their children, breaking the cycle of poverty and enhancing future prospects. This study reveals that there are various challenges face by educated women in rural area to get employment opportunity. The views and experiences express by each participant are individualistic and unique.

5.1 Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination is one of the challenges for women seeking employment opportunities. It manifests in various forms such as unequal pay, limited advancement prospects, and biased in hiring practices. Discrimination and bias against women in hiring processes and workplace environments still exist in the society. In hiring process, unconscious biases can influence decision making, leading to the underrepresentation of women in certain industries or positions. For example, stereotypes about gender roles may lead employers to perceive women as less capable or committed to their careers, resulting in discriminatory hiring practices. Even with similar qualifications as men, women face challenges in securing employment or advancing in their careers. During the interview one of the respondents (respondent1) said that the bias against women is present in a variety of context, the payment for women for same job is less than that of men. There is bias in hiring practices. Women's talent, education and capacity are less respected than those of men.

Supporting to the respondents1 another (respondents2) said that we have less opportunities to work in the productive sectors. Even when we do work, we work in theless prestigious

positions for little pay. She also said that she is the working women, she works 10-5 job. She said that there is limited representation of women in professional, managerial and decision-making roles. There is not equitable participation in planning and policy making, there is also unequal paying. She even said that I am also working women but, my salary is not sufficient for living. I am not satisfied with my salary and job.

According to the, these two representatives it is cleared that gender discrimination is one of the challenges which directly and indirectly impact the employment access of educated women in rural area. Gender discrimination is a widespread problem which significantly impacts women across various facets of life. From workplaces to political arenas and social environments, women frequently encounter discrimination, leading to disparities in opportunities and limited access to resources. This systemic bias undermines their ability to thrive and contribute fully to society, perpetuating inequality and hindering progress towards gender equality.

5.2 Patriarchal Social System

Our society is patriarchal society. It is a social system in which men hold primary power. And property and title are inherited by the male lineage. The patriarchal social system presents a formidable obstacle for women in accessing employment opportunities. Rooted in traditional gender roles and norms, this system often assigns women care giving responsibilities and confines them to domestic spheres, limiting their ability to pursue education and career aspirations. Additionally, patriarchal attitudes and biases prevalent in workplaces can leads to discriminatory hiring practices, unequal pay and limited advancement prospects for women. In the society male member is the household head in the family. Women do not make the decision in the family because they are not the head of the household and head makes most of the decisions.

During the interview (respondent 3) said that Many opportunities are given to male member rather than women from the household bases. Major decisions like, decision about land selling, children's education, purchasing of expensive things are taken by male members. She even said that women have to obtain their husbands or guardians permission to leave the house. There is also belief that women are less able to manage assets. And sons are favored as primary heirs to carry on the family lineage and provide financial support in old age.

As per the above respondent, we understand that patriarchal social system also impacts the access of employment opportunities of women in rural area. Patriarchal attitudes and biases prevalent in workplaces can lead to discriminatory hiring practices, unequal pay, and limited advancement prospects for women. These deeply ingrained beliefs often result in systemic barriers that hinder women's career progression and perpetuate gender inequality in the workforce. Discriminatory hiring practices may include preferences for male candidates or biased recruitment processes that undervalue women's qualifications and skills. Furthermore, unequal pay practices, where women are paid less than their male counterparts for the same work, perpetuate economic disparities and undermine women's financial security. Additionally, limited advancement prospects for women may stem from stereotypes and biases that undermine their leadership abilities or create hostile work environments that hinder their professional growth.

5.3 Work- life Balance

Balancing work and family responsibilities remain a significant challenge for many women. Women often have to balancing between their jobs and personal responsibilities, such as care giving, household duties. And this balancing act can be tough because they have to manage both their work duties and personal responsibilities at home. In many works place the standard working hours are from 9 to 5 and schedules are often rigid and inflexible. This setup can create difficulties for women in fulfilling their care giving duties while also meeting the demands of their jobs.

During the interview (respondent4) said that I want to work, but I have two children and grand parents and my husband is a teacher. There is no one to help me in the house so, I have to finish all the house hold responsibilities and duties that's why I don't have any time to work. She also said that in our society, there is no division of work. All household works are done by women. In the society, male members do not work in household activity however they are majorly involved in economic activity. There is not equal participation of women in any developmental activities and other gathering as well. If we want to go, we have to finish our household chores first. Furthermore, there is also gender division of labor. Religious and cultural taboos might sometimes prevent women from participating in certain activities.

According to the respondent view it is cleared that there no division of work. Balancing work and family responsibilities remains a significant challenge for educated women. Women are

expected to fulfill their roles in the workforce while also managing the majority of household and care giving duties. This imbalance can result in increased stress, time constraints, and difficulty in advancing in their careers. Women face pressure to prioritize family obligations over professional ambitions, leading to career interruptions, reduced working hours, or even exiting the workforce altogether. Moreover, the lack of affordable childcare options and supportive workplace policies such as flexible working arrangements or parental leave exacerbate these challenges.

5.4 Social Perception

Social perception presents a significant challenge for women. In many cases, traditional gender roles and stereotypes prevail, which can limit women's opportunities and agency. They may face stigma or judgment if they deviate from expected roles, such as prioritizing career advancement over family duties. Additionally, societal norms may restrict women's mobility or participation in certain activities outside the home. In modern contemporary society we can see various changes in our society. But “people’s mind set still not change”. In the society, many people seem to believe that men are more knowledgeable than women. Women have no leading roles; they are considered as second grade citizens and play subordinate role in the society. And there are traditional beliefs about what women should and should not to do. For example, ploughing agricultural land, there is traditional knowledge about that the females do not use plough. Certain tasks are traditionally considered to be men’s work. The majority of traditional civilizations keep girls mostly inside the boundaries of the home and family, where they are sheltered and taught to accept the decisions made on their behalf by other parents, teachers and brothers.

5.5 Insufficient Source of Income

Insufficient income in the family is a significant challenge that affects women's employment and overall well-being. When a family lacks an adequate source of income, it often places additional pressure on women to seek employment to support themselves and their dependents. However, limited job opportunities or low wages may make it difficult for women to find stable employment that can adequately meet their family's needs. In such situations, women may face heightened financial insecurity, which can lead to stress, anxiety, and difficulties in accessing essential resources such as food, housing, and healthcare.

During the interview respondent 5 said that the family background, especially economic status is a determinant factor for women's employment. She said that me and my husband both are unemployed, there are 4 members in my family, husband, wife and two children, we have not enough land for agriculture. Crop production is not sufficient for the whole year. We have not sufficient source of income. If we have sufficient agricultural land and income, we can establish agricultural farm for survive. She also said that we are struggling to fulfill our daily needs, in this situation how can we afford different skillful training and experience for professional job.

If there is not any sufficient source of income in the house, they only focus about their family and livelihood; they cannot afford things that are necessary to sustain life easily. They only focused how to survive. Household works which are completely non-paying works, pull the females backward from their creativity. Limited financial resources can hinder access to quality education, healthcare, and essential services, which are critical for breaking the cycle of poverty and improving economic prospects. Without access to education, women may lack the skills and qualifications needed to secure well-paying jobs or pursue higher education opportunities, trapping them in low-wage and insecure employment.

5.6 Lower Access to Outdoor Activities

The limited access of women to outdoor activities poses a significant challenge to their employment opportunities and overall well-being. When women are constrained in their ability to participate in outdoor activities, it restricts their access to job opportunities that may require mobility, networking, or engagement in outdoor settings. Additionally, it can hinder their ability to develop essential skills and experiences that are valued in the workforce, such as leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving, which are often cultivated through outdoor activities and community involvement. Moreover, restrictions on women's outdoor mobility may contribute to social isolation, limiting their access to support networks, mentorship opportunities, and information about job openings or career development resources.

Respondents 6 said that in the societies, cultural norms and gender stereotypes may restrict women's mobility and engagement in public spaces, including participation in outdoor activities and programs.

It means in the society there is limited access of women to outdoor activity like participation of different programs, job, developmental mental work in the community, different meetings, school management, community forest, production work, business activity, leadership program, decision making etc. This limitation not only affects women's overall well-being but also hampers their ability to network, gain skills, and access job opportunities that may be available through participation in community events, workshops, or training programs. Additionally, the lack of exposure to outdoor activities and programs may contribute to a narrower range of experiences and skills, potentially limiting women's competitiveness in the job market.

5.7 Geographical Structure

Geographical structure is also one of the challenges in rural area for women's employment. In many rural regions, limited access to transportation, infrastructure, and essential services such as childcare facilities and healthcare centers can restrict women's ability to participate in the workforce. Geographic isolation and lack of connectivity to urban centers may also limit the availability of job opportunities and educational resources for women in rural areas.

During the interview respondents said that all of the offices, schools, hospitals, NGOs/INGOs are city oriented. And we cannot manage time and resources to go over there. There is limited time for public bus so there is problem in returning home.

Employment opportunities in urban areas create significant challenges for women in rural areas who often face limited access to jobs. Geographical barriers such as inadequate transportation infrastructure and long distances from urban centers can further exacerbate this issue. In rural areas, transportation options may be limited, making it difficult for women to commute to urban areas where employment opportunities are more abundant. Additionally, the cost and time required for long commutes may be prohibitive, especially for women who have caregiving responsibilities or other obligations within their communities. These factors contribute to a disparity in economic opportunities between urban and rural areas, perpetuating inequalities and hindering women's access to employment and economic empowerment.

5.8 Different Religious Beliefs and Restriction to the Women

Societal expectations and traditional gender roles can limit women's access to employment opportunities. In some cultures, women are expected to prioritize family responsibilities over their careers, which can hinder their ability to work outside the home. Deep-rooted cultural norms and patriarchal values often create an unfavorable environment for women. These norms and values dictate societal expectations, roles, and behaviors based on gender, often leading to the marginalization and oppression of women. Patriarchal systems prioritize male dominance and control, relegating women to subordinate positions with limited rights and opportunities. Cultural norms further reinforce these power dynamics, perpetuating stereotypes and discriminatory practices that restrict women's autonomy, agency, and access to resources. Such norms may dictate women's roles primarily within the domestic sphere, limiting their participation in public life and decision-making processes.

In the societies, religious doctrines or traditional customs may prescribe specific roles and responsibilities for women, limiting their access to education, economic opportunities, and participation in the workforce. Religious or cultural norms may also dictate gender-segregated workplaces or limit women's access to leadership positions and decision-making roles, reinforcing gender inequalities in the labor market.

5.9 Early Marriage

In the Nepalese context, marriage signifies a transition for women from the status of a daughter to that of a daughter-in-law, often accompanied by increased responsibilities. This transition typically involves taking on new roles within the household, including managing domestic affairs and potentially bearing children. In Nepalese society, marriage often marks the beginning of childbearing for women, as it is a culturally significant aspect of married life and is often expected shortly after marriage. Additionally, gender ideologies prevalent in these societies dictate specific roles for married women within the household economy, which can differ from those of unmarried women or men. These roles may include tasks such as childcare, household management, and sometimes income generation within the constraints of traditional gender roles. Consequently, marriage not only changes a woman's social status but also shapes her roles and responsibilities within the household, reflecting broader cultural norms and expectations regarding gender and family dynamics. Woman's marital status significantly affects her economic independence and access to property rights.

When a woman gets married, her rights to family property often become contingent upon her husband's ownership or control. This means that her economic security and access to resources are primarily determined by her role as a wife. Consequently, women's rights to property and economic stability are intricately tied to their adherence to societal norms regarding marriage and proper marital behavior.

During the interview, respondent said that she wants to work but, she's married at young age. Then she has two children and her husband is working outside the country. She does not have any one to care for her children and house hold responsibilities. She also said that she is married women so, she has to finish the household chores first that's why she has no time for job. We have not sufficient time for 10 to 5 jobs so, Balancing work and family responsibilities is one of the problems.

According to the above respondents it is found that early and frequent childbearing is a significant challenge for women seeking employment. The responsibilities associated with childcare can impact their ability to pursue and maintain a career, as they may need to take breaks or reduce their working hours to care for their children. This can hinder their career progression, limit job opportunities, and affect their earning potential. Additionally, workplace policies and societal attitudes towards working mothers may not always be supportive.

5.10 Limited Access to Technology and Information

The absence of training and development opportunities for women can greatly impede their professional growth and fulfillment. Training programs not only enhance skills but also provide avenues for networking and mentorship, which are crucial for career advancement. Without access to such opportunities, women may find it challenging to acquire new skills or stay updated with industry trends, hindering their competitiveness in the job market. This lack of development can also lead to stagnation in their careers, limiting their chances of progression into higher positions. Moreover, without adequate support for their professional growth, women may experience lower job satisfaction and feel undervalued in their roles.

During the time of interview Respondent said that she wants to job, she has completed master degree, but she is unemployed. There are 6 members in her family, husband, wife, two children and Grandparent. Her husband is a teacher, her everyday duties is cooking cleaning

and take care of children, husband and old age grandparent. She also said that only the salary of her husband is not sufficient for surviving. Children's education expenses are high day by day so, I want job, but I have no any skillful training and experience, and I also do not have any idea about advance technology. Supporting to the respondent 6 opinion another respondent said that we are not informed about vacancy about any job. If there is vacancy the spouses of leader take opportunity first.

According to the respondent opinion limited access to the technology and information is also one of the challenges of women's employment. Discriminatory practices limit women's access to essential opportunities such as education and personal mobility, which are crucial for their skill development and ability to make independent decisions. In the societies, gender biases result in unequal access to education for girls and women, depriving them of the knowledge and skills needed to pursue their career goals and contribute fully to society. Furthermore, restrictions on personal mobility, whether due to cultural norms or practical barriers, can isolate women and hinder their ability to access training programs, networking opportunities, and employment options. Without the freedom to move and access resources independently, women face significant obstacles in their journey towards economic empowerment and decision-making autonomy.

5.11 Lack of Access of Education

Education of women is not just a matter of social justice but a critical factor in driving economic growth, improving health outcomes, fostering social development, and achieving gender equality. Education equips women with the knowledge and skills necessary for personal growth, critical thinking and informed decision making. Educated women tend to have higher earning potential. This not only benefits them personally but also contributes to the economic stability and growth of their families and communities.

Lack of access of education is a significant barrier to women's employment, it affects their ability to participate fully and effectively in the workforce. Without education, women lack essential skills and knowledge, limiting their employment opportunities and career advancement. They also enable to adapt technological changes, Education is crucial for understanding new technology which is important in many job sectors. Because of lack of education women confined to low paying, low -skill jobs, preventing them from accessing higher-paying, more secure employment. Lack of education reinforces traditional gender

roles, keeping women in stereotypical occupations and preventing them from entering diverse and high -status fields.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

This is a qualitative research study, conducted in Thakle village of Lamjung district in order to find out the employment challenges faced by educated women in rural area. There were 30 educated women participated in this study. A Purposive sampling research was applied in order to select the group of women who were educated and who hold the certificates of S.L.C. and above.

In-depth interview was applied as research tools to find out the information of respondents. After the data collection, information was transcribed into Nepali language and then it was translated into English language. From the translated version, data were coded, categorized and thematized for easily analyzing the data. Hence, data were thematically analyzed as per content analysis.

This study explains the employment challenges faced by educated women in rural area. In this study it is found that there are various challenges which affect the employment access of educated women in rural area. Socio-cultural beliefs impact women's involvement in various programs, with certain tasks traditionally labeled as men's work. Many people hold the attitude that males had more knowledge than the females, there is traditional beliefs about what women should and should not to do. Women's of this study areas are mostly involved in household work; it means that higher rate of female have no job. Women are less involved in other economic activities such as business and government positions.

There are various activities which are performed with in the family. The role of both male and female is inevitable in every activity. There should be gender equality but, it is not found in study area. The role of male and female in decision making is discriminated and guided by male ideology. It is also found that male members of the family have control over household cash than the female members. It shows that male members keep the household money.

When women engage in marketing activities, they gain more exposure and greater influence in household decision-making. A greater economic role definitely improves their status

within the family and society. In this study area, majority of women were involved in market activities. They are seen as final decision makers for items like food, clothing, medical treatment, social and religious ceremonies, but the husband is the main final decision makers on crucial issues like investments, children's fees, and school admission. It shows that roles which are given to females are less valuable in comparison with male member of the society. Although women take on significant role and major responsibilities in many areas, men make decision in crucial matters, where women's roles have been narrowed down only to follow or obey.

In this study, it is also found that women are facing so many problems. Despite so many efforts directed towards their upliftment, women's status is still poor due to the traditional perception of the society and lack of adequate improvement in the existing laws. The problems faced by rural women are more severe than the women in urban areas. Study also shows that most of the women in study area are involved in non-economic household activities, but their contribution in household activities is not recognized. They are involved in household works from early in the morning to late night. Economic activities of the women are always under estimated because household works are not classified under the economic activities. Few of the women have only access of employment but they are not satisfied with their job because their salary is not sufficient for their survival. Because of ongoing prejudice, Women are primarily employed in low-paying jobs where they do not have the same access to or control over financial, technological and training resources.

It is also found that women's education plays a significant importance to enhance their participation in economic activities. Education enhances personal growth and empowers individuals to make knowledgeable choices. It also opens doors to better opportunities, higher paying jobs and improving living standards. Women in rural area encounter significant hurdles when seeking education. Patriarchal social system which still prefer sons for education. Burdens of household works, early marriage, lack of infrastructure, adistance to school, cultural tradition and institutional barriers are the challenges which hindering women's access to education.

The disparities that exist in educational opportunities directly impact women's access to employment. Employment and education are intrinsically connected. Education equips individuals with knowledge, skills, and qualifications necessary to access better job opportunities and achieve career growth. A higher level of education typically leads to

higher paying jobs and greater job security. Education also fosters critical thinking, problem solving abilities and adaptability, which are essential in a dynamic job market.

In this study, it is found that the village still consolidates traditional norms, values and beliefs that affect the status of women in the society. People's minds set are still not changed in the society. In this study it is found that because of lack of skilled education and practical knowledge and experience many women who are holding the certificate of higher level education are also unemployed. There are various challenges faced by educated women in rural area to get employment opportunity. Discrimination in equal paying, bias in hiring practices still exists in the society. Similarly, gender discrimination, no division of work and household responsibilities are the major challenges of women's employment. Patriarchal social system, Work life balance, different religious beliefs and restriction to the women, limited access of outdoor activities, and lack of access of education are the challenges that hinder the employment access of educated women in rural area.

6.2 Conclusion

On the basis of the above findings, it has been concluded that there are various employment challenges faced by educated women in rural area. Employment is a strong indicator of the different powers and positions. In this rural area, it is found that women's participation is high in household work. Higher rate of educated women have no job. There is very less involvement of women in other economical activities like business and government officials. Business and official tasks are mostly managed by male members. Male are paid more than women though they perform same work outside the household which indicate that there is still gap between male and female. There is a gender inequality in employment, inequality in hiring practices, wage gaps, and limited opportunities for career advancement, which creates disparities between men and women in the society. Women are engaged in low-paying and informal sectors of the economy.

It is also found that there is gender bias and stereotypes in the society which also play a significant role in shaping women's experiences in the employment which hinder their career progression and limit their access to leadership position. Caregiving responsibilities and traditional gender roles also limit women's ability to participate fully in the labor force and pursue career opportunities.

It also concluded that while there has been progress in the areas of gender equality and women's empowerment, there are still significant inequalities. In the society women have different access to employment as compare to men. It is also found that in the rural area there is not equal access of women in education, resources, employment opportunities and representation in decision making. These are the key areas which transform the lives of women. Education equips women with critical thinking and professional skills, while access to resources such as finance and technology enables women to pursue and sustain their careers. An employment opportunity provides economic stability in the family and women also became financially independent. Representation in decision making ensures that women's perspectives and needs are considered in policies and initiative, and there is more inclusive and equitable societal progress. Regarding the education in this rural area it is found that there is gradual improvement in education. Some women are able to manage to forward their higher level of study but there is still obstacle and barriers for women which affect the educational opportunities of rural women.

Women's employment status plays a significant role in changing the lifestyle of women. In order to change the lifestyle of educated women in rural area, it is necessary to change in the employment status. For improving women's employment status it requires a plan and policies which eliminate work place discrimination and unequal paying by providing equal access to quality education and different skillful and vocational training. There is also need for providing affordable childcare and family leave for women. Government and organization should promote gender diversity in leadership roles and create supportive workplace environments that offer flexible working arrangements. Addressing cultural biases and stereotypes is crucial and there should be an inclusive workforce.

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APPENDIX

Employment Access of Educated Rural Women: A Study in Thakle Village, Lamjung District

S.N.:

Date:

Respondent Information::

Age:

Sex:

Occupation:

Education:.....

Religion:

Marital Status:

Family Type:

Family Information:

Total Members in Family:

Questions:

1. Who is the head of your family?
2. What are the major income sources of your family?
3. Do you contribute financially to your family's income?
4. Who pays the school fees, uniform, and other educational expenses for your children?
5. Who decides school and admission for your children?
6. Who is primarily responsible for household (Bazar) expenditure?
7. Who makes financial decisions in your family?
8. What challenges did you face while attending school?
9. Did you and your brothers attend the same school?
10. Did you have adequate time to study at home?

11. What do you think about the challenges girls face in obtaining education now compared to your school time?

12. Data shows the access of girls to education is increasing in recent decades. What do you think has made this possible?

13. Do you have a daughter? If yes, what are your plans for her education and why?

If Respondent is Not a Job Holder:

1. Why are you not employed? Are you seeking a job?
2. What challenges do you face in finding a job?
3. What are your family and husband's opinions about you working?
4. Do your family members support you with household work, especially your husband and children?
5. Do you face restriction and barrier from society and family for job?
6. Did you get any training for your skill development?

If Respondent is a Job Holder:

1. Where do you work? Please briefly describe your job.
2. How did you get your job? What challenges did you face in securing it?
3. What is your monthly salary? Is it the same as your male co-workers?
4. How many years ago did you start your job?
5. Have you faced any challenges or disparities in your workplace? Please share any related incidents.
6. Have you noticed any changes in the workplace for women over the years?

7. Does your family support you as a job holder?
8. What challenges do you face in balancing your household responsibilities and job?
9. Do your family members support you with household work, especially your husband and children?

For Both:

1. Are you engaged in any income-related work beyond a formal job?
2. Do you participate in social programs?
3. Are you a member of any social organizations or political parties?
4. Do you have freedom to participate social organization and political parties