CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the national development, women play vital role, but in male dominated society, female are considered low standard and of less value. Literacy rate differs vastly. Total literacy rate is 53.7 percent. Among them 42.5 percent women are literate and where 65.1 percent men are literate (CBS, 2011). Life expectancy of women at birth in 2002 is 62.2 years. Only 17.5 households reported the ownership of females on house, land and livestock. There are only 14.9 percent female headed households. Employment status of female shows that there are 5.13 percent in gazetted level and 8.55 percent in non-gazetted level in organized sector. (CBS, 2011)

The decision making level of women in household is very low is female population 13 percent. Female infant mortality and child mortality are higher than male. The maternal mortality rate is 539/10000 live birth (CBS, 2011) women work 11 hours while male work 7 hours (ILO, 23000). They have low participation in political activities and other social activities. But, in the recent years, people have started realizing the importance of women's role and participation in the economy as well as social and developmental activities. Without women participation, development goals cannot be fully attained. Therefore we can say that man and women are two pillars of development.

In recent world scenario, women have been actively participating in the political and social aspects. The voice of equality for men and women was raised first in the western countries. After the revolution, the women of these countries demanded equal rights for them which is being followed by the other countries of east and west. So, the socio-economic standard of women has great chance to develop the community and nation. Now men and women have started participating equally on development activities which can bring drastic change in the socio-economic status.

Many conservative religious dogmas confine the certain boundary in their lives. Most of the women are illiterate. Those who are support to be educated also cannot overcome the religious problems.

As a result they are not left free to use their conscience for leaving their houses, accompany with suitable partner. The national conflict has also been one of the major causes to display so many people. Even in this case women are mostly affected .They have to look after the family in absence of their male members. Women are accepted as second grade citizen. They are humiliated themselves to participate in socio-economic activities.

Women have more biological responsibility to bear child and care them. It loses their physical strength and personality. In addition to this biological responsibility they have to involve at the household works. They are not so free to handle any sort of risky jobs by being for away from their location. It draws them back to developed their career and uplifting the socio-economic status.

House is the primary unit of society. If they are not handled effectively, we can't expect ideal society at all. Women as housewives handle their houses efficiently and play important roles to structure a better society. When families (houses) are well disciplined they can make their environment for better earning. Expanding women's opportunities, especially in ways that enchase their productivity are earning potential will raise women's own living standard and contribute to better economic performances, alleviation of poverty and improved family welfare.

Women are ignored in Asia and African countries. A large number of women in south Asian countries are affected by social evils, conservative tradition culture in these countries the birth of a son is celebrated with great joy but a girl brings a great disappointment and frustration in the family. So, it is direct or indirect effect on their socio-economic life style.

The term Meche is used for both the folk group and the language which is a given to them by outsiders. The folk group prefers to use Bodo for both the language and the people. Besides, the Meche people accept their relationship to Bodo folk group settled in Asam state of eastern India. Kachhari folk group in Bangladesh is also supposed to belong to the same group. Meche are mongoloid people whose origin and the date of arrival and settlement into Nepal is not much clear. However, there are a few different views on their settlement in Nepal. One of these views relates the group to Mahabharata era. According to the view king Vanasura Meche was ruling in the state

somewhere in the present Nepal territory which was defeated by Krishna. Krishna, then, established the Gopal dynasty. Gopal dynasty is the oldest dynasty recorded in Nepalese history. This view introduces Meche folk group as first settlers of Nepal (Sanyal, 1993).

The Mech tribe (known also as historical Bodo tribe and being one of the scheduled tribes of India) belongs to Kachari tribal grouping. There are two origin of the term, i.e. Mech is name given to Bodo people living near river Mechi to manas river of undivided Goalpara district by others and Mech is shorten name of mlechcha given to the Bodo tribe due to non-Vedic religion by others i.e. Arya. Here Mechi River might name after Mech (Bodo) people. Bodo and Mech are same people with different names in different places. They mainly speak the Bodo language an Assamese language which has been influenced by the Indo-European Assamese language (www.ncard.org.np\categorydetail\meche.html).

Meches, also known as Bodos, migrated into India through Patkai Hills between India and Burma and gradually spread themselves into the whole of Assam, North Bengal and parts of East Bengal. It is said that, during their migration to India, they marched towards different directions. One group went along the river Brahmaputra and established themselves in the whole of Assam up to Goalpara district and parts of Jalpaiguri district and Cooch Behar district under the name of Bodo or Bara. Another group went towards the West along the foot of the Himalayas up to the river Mechi, bordering India and Nepal and settled on the North bank of the river known as Mechi or Mechia. Later they spread to Darjeeling Terai, Baikanthpur in Jalpaiguri district again marched further East and settled in the Dooars. It is said that, a group of Mech people, again moved further east, crossed the Sankosh River, and went towards Goalpara in Assam. Due to repeated floods in Dooars and eastern bank of Teesta river, a large number of families migrated towards Assam (Ibid).

Another view about Meche is that a group departed from Tibet was divided into three sub groups and one went to Assam in India and settled there which is known as Bodo, another group went to present Bangladesh and settled there which is known as Kachhari and third group came to east Nepal and settled here which is known as Meche (Sanyal, 1993).

According to the third view Rai, Limbu and Meche were three brothers who are settled in eastern hills of present Nepal. They went to Terai for the search of job. After twelve years, they decided to return back for their home. While preparing to returning back Meche got a bit late and Rai and Limbu left him. Meche tried to follow them but failed. He was lost on the way and remained in the jungle. He settled on the riverside in the jungle of eastern Terai of present Nepal. His descendants are known as Meche people now (Sanyal, 1993).

Different process play important role to bring changes in socio-cultural and economic phenomena in the society. Economy, migration, technology, education, transportation, globalization, modernization, urbanization, industrialization, discovery, diffusion and so on are the major processes of change. The introduction of new technology, moderation and diffusion play the significant role to bring changes in socio-cultural and economic life of the people. Along with the arrival of new technology, people gradually give up their traditional technology and culture to cope with the changing environment (UN, 2000). Similarly, the government has also imposed different policies in different periods for the women's' empowerment. Such policies have succeeded to change women status in Nepal. But still it is found that Meche women are still back warded in development. In Nepal, Meche are in minority group and women's status is far behind to develop. Therefore, this study focuses on condition and process of empowerment of Meche women and their present status in the society.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nepal is a developing country. Women are poorer than men because they have less access to resources income and employment opportunities than men. This is particularly due to limited access to education and traditional gender bias in attitudes concerning women's activities. According to the CBS report literacy rate of population above 15 years male is 67.2 percent and female is 34.9 percent. However, women in rural areas of the country are involved intensively in family activities and household works. So, their estimated earned income index is 0.345 in which mean is 0.485 (NHDR, 2004).

Nepalese women have a lower life expectancy them men have. In most par of the country the work burden of girl is two and three times that of boys and their school attendance is one third (Singh, 1990). Girls usually receive less quality and less

nutritional varieties of food than boys and are less likely to receive medical care. In many households, the girl child's workday begins before sunrise and ends long after dark. In their mid or late teens, most rural girls are sent away in arranged marriage to take on the additional burden of motherhood.

In Nepal's context, women's work is higher than that of men but their labor often goes unreported because women's domestic activities are generally considered unproductive regarding the work of men. The women's labours are unpaid or of low wages. According to the CBS report, economically active population of recent 10 years in male's case is 67.6 and female is 48.9. It shows that economically active women are fewer than men. Women have less access in property which is shown by CBS report of 2011 (CBS, 2011).

In Nepal, the vast majority of girl children (0-14 age group) are denied or deprived of the opportunity to develop and realize their full potential as they are discriminated against in all spheres of life. The gender bias against them, which begins from the moment of their birth, continues in one form or another throughout their lives. Customs, traditions, legal rights and the harsh economic reality have conditioned the parents to perceive a daughter as a liability, both morally and economically. The sooner she becomes responsible of another family, the better she has her life. A son on the other hand is viewed as an economic asset. From early in life, it is drummed into a girl child that her ultimate goal in life is to get married, to bear children and serve husband and in laws. Parents, with all the best intentions in the world, accordingly train their daughters so that they can slip smoothly into the socially predetermined approved role of wife. Mother and daughter in law parental perception of the girl child's interior status and subservient role has inexorably influenced her socialization, her access to health care and education, her work burden and hear childhood experience in general. Available evidence indicate that the majority of girl childhood worth mentioning (Singh, 1990).

Nepal has amongst the highest of son preference in the world. Son is desired because they carry on the family name and represent the old age insurance. Moreover, property is transmitted through them from one generation to the next. They are required to conduct rituals at and after the death of father to secure his spiritual salvation. Among orthodox Hindu groups, the birth of a boy is an accession for

rejoicing while the coming of a girl, especially a third or fourth one is cause for disappointment 'to be born a daughter is a misfortune' and 'let it be latter but let it be a son' are common saying Nepal's society (Ghimire, 1997).

As in other developing countries, Nepal has a pervasive sex preference, which is undoubtedly associated with high desired family size among married women. In Nepalese society, whether Hindu or Buddhist, male child birth is preferred because it is believed that son is necessary to continue their family line (Dahal,1989).

In general, women have less access to income, wealth and family matters. So, in this condition, all castes and ethnic groups of women stand on low profile because of male domination in society and lack of education. Low status of women is mainly due to their lesser involvement in the income generating activities. Thus, the common problems related to women are :

- No employment opportunity in rural areas.
- Women's contribution has been ignored, taken as less productive and unpaid.
- Obviously, the access of education and skill development has been narrowed down.

In this way it can be said that the status of women is the matter of issue and problem in Nepal. The academic research study is needed to be done to excavate the status of Nepalese women of different castes and ethnic groups.

In Arjundhara Municipality, most of the women have greater household responsibilities than men. They have less access in higher study and less authority for decision making, which is the main concern of this study.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study is to analyze the socio-economic status of Meche women especially in education, health, culture decision making power, property ownership status of Arjundhara municipality at Jhapa District. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify the role of Meche women in decision making process in household activities.

- To analyse the changes in socio-economic life style of Meche women in Arjundhara Municipality.
- To view the changes seen in traditional cultural rituals of Meche community regarding women.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Nepal is made up of various ethnic groups having own originality and features of each group. This study tries to find socio-economic condition and cultural change in Meche women and focuses on modernization of the Arjundhara Municipality.

Women's education, health property ownership, decision making level, employment level, opportunities etc. are the key factors to affect their status. So the study centralizes on the women's participation in educational, social and economical dimensions. Therefore, the national planners and policy makers, advocates and professionals need to be concerned in order to improve their status. The issue of the literary awareness and skill developing program should be implemented for women's self confidence and self sustained.

So, the finding of the study will be useful for the planners in micro level projects/ development plans and programmes to improve the socio-economic condition of women in Nepal. It can equally help the government and non-government organizations and Meche community agencies to have clear information about the targeted group. It can be useful for different sectors of ethnic groups of Nepalese women and it can be also useful for development activities on women in local and national levels. This study may be useful for the students of research and those people who are interested on women's issues.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The study has the following limitations :

- The study is concentrated only on factors related to socio-economic condition of Meche women.
- It is also limited to the cultural aspect of Meche women and the change in cultural activities.

- This study is based on small sample size of Arjundhara Municipality Ward No. 5, 6 and 7 of Jhapa District. The overall data analysis is applicable only at the micro level of households, but not at the macro level of society and the nation. So, it does not represent district/national level of socio-economic status of Meche women but gives the message to other researchers to conduct research at national level. Thus, the study, the socio-economic change in Meche women is limited within small area.

1.6 Organization of the Study

This study is divided into the five chapters. The first chapter consists of the background of the study, statement of problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study and organization of the study. The second chapter is related with the review of the literature. The third chapter is related with research methodology which includes the research procedure, sources of data, data collection techniques and tools and data analysis procedure. In chapter four, the socio-economic life style of Meche women in the study area is analyzed and interpreted and the findings of study is presented. Chapter five summarizes and concludes the entire study with the optional model of recommendations required to fulfill the gap.

CHAPTER-II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 General Review

Colonial ethnographers of British India identified the Meches as an aboriginal tribe and categorized them as non-Aryan. Their facial features, language and religious practices are close to those of the Limbu people of the northern Hills. They also show the characteristic habits, quick temper and aggressiveness of the Limbu people. However, they have their own language, culture and customs. Meches consider themselves of Kirati descent. They consider the Rai, Limbu and Dhimal people of Hills as their brethren.

According to Hodgson (1847) the Meche, Bodo and Dhimal tribes are of the same race; however, comparison of language does not support so close connection, he added. He stated that "… but it is difficult to suppose the Bodo and Dhimal languages other than primitive". He also stated that the Meches are "nomadic cultivators of wild. For ages transcending memory or tradition, they have passed beyond the savage or hunter state, and also beyond the herdsman's state, and have advanced to the third or agricultural grade of social progress, but so as to indicate a not entirely broken connection with the precedent condition of things. They never cultivate the same field beyond the second year, or remain in the same village beyond from four to six years". He again identified the barter system for the few things which they require and do not produce themselves.

Their animistic religion is very close to the Kirant religion. They worship nature and other household gods. Hodgson identified their religion as the religion of nature, or rather, the natural religion of man have neither temple nor idol; their cultivation as shifting cultivation; and "this race assure him that they once had chiefs when they dwelt as a united people in Morang".

The religion, as identified by Hodgson, is very much different from Hinduism as they have neither temples nor idols. "Altogether, their religion belongs to the same primitive era as their habits and manners", Hodgson added.

The Meches who are native to the Tarai region of Far-Eastern Nepal prefer to be known as the kinfolk of the Rais and Limbu communities of the middle hills. They are officially recognized as an indigenous ethnic group of Eastern Tarai by the Nepal Government. Although the exact genealogy of the Meches is not determined, they are commonly referred to have their ancestral root from the mongoloids belonging to the *Thangdawa* clan. According to the oral tradition, Meches share their origin with *Thangdawa* clan alongside Koche, Dhimal and Tharu. The national population census report of 2011 shows the total number of Ethnic population of Meche is 4,867 out of which 2,265 are male and 2,602 are female (Sapkota, 2013).

Physically, the Meches are medium sized and strong people. They have sharp eyes, flat nose, sparse facial expression, thick hair, thick lips, round face and quite dark complexion. They are simple, straight forward and hardworking. Historians point out that Meches lived nomadic life until few decades ago. However, with gradual deforestation, they started settling in permanent communities. Most of the Meches are pagan and worship the forest spirits besides their clan deity Shiva who is referred to as *Bathau*. Shiva is established in the countryyard in the form of *Bathau* of every Meche house.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Functionalism

According to functionalist perspective, also called functionalism, each aspect of society is interdependent and contributes to society's functioning as a whole. The government, or state, provides education for the children of the family, which in turn pays taxes on which the state depends to keep itself running. That is, the family is dependent upon the school to help children grow up to have good jobs so that they can raise and support their own families. In the process, the children become law- abiding, taxpaying citizens, who in turn support the state. If all goes well, the parts of society produce order, stability, and productivity. If all does not go well, the parts of society then must adapt to recapture a new order, stability, and productivity. For example, during a financial recession with its high rates of unemployment and inflation, social programs are trimmed or cut. Schools offer fewer programs. Families tighten their budgets. And a new social order, stability, and productivity occur.

Functionalists believe that society is held together by social consensus, or cohesion, in which members of the society agree upon, and work together to achieve, what is best

for society as a whole. Emile Durkheim suggested that social consensus takes one of two forms:

- Mechanical solidarity is a form of social cohesion that arises when people in a society maintain similar values and beliefs and engage in similar types of work. Mechanical solidarity most commonly occurs in traditional, simple societies such as those in which everyone herds cattle or farms. Amish society exemplifies mechanical solidarity.

- In contrast, organic solidarity is a form of social cohesion that arises when the people in a society are interdependent, but hold to varying values and beliefs and engage in varying types of work. Organic solidarity most commonly occurs in industrialized, complex societies such those in large American cities like New York in the 2000s.

The functionalist perspective achieved its greatest popularity among American sociologists in the 1940s and 1950s. While European functionalists originally focused on explaining the inner workings of social order, American functionalists focused on discovering the functions of human behavior. Among these American functionalist sociologists is Robert Merton (b. 1910), who divides human functions into two types: manifest functions are intentional and obvious, while latent functions are unintentional and not obvious. The manifest function of attending a church or synagogue, for instance, is to worship as part of a religious community, but its latent function may be to help members learn to discern personal from institutional values. With common sense, manifest functions become easily apparent. Yet this is not necessarily the case for latent functions, which often demand a sociological approach to be revealed. A sociological approach in functionalism is the consideration of the relationship between the functions of smaller parts and the functions of the whole.

Functionalism has received criticism for neglecting the negative functions of an event such as divorce. Critics also claim that the perspective justifies the status quo and complacency on the part of society's members. Functionalism does not encourage people to take an active role in changing their social environment, even when such change may benefit them. Instead, functionalism sees active social change as

undesirable because the various parts of society will compensate naturally for any problems that may arise.

2.2.2 Symbolic Interaction Theory

Symbolic interactionism is a micro-level theory that focuses on the relationships among individuals within a society. Communication—the exchange of meaning through language and symbols—is believed to be the way in which people make sense of their social worlds. Theorists Herman and Reynolds (1994) note that this perspective sees people as being active in shaping the social world rather than simply being acted upon.

George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) is considered a founder of symbolic interactionism though he never published his work on it (LaRossa and Reitzes 1993). Mead's student, Herbert Blumer, coined the term "symbolic interactionism" and outlined these basic premises: humans interact with things based on meanings ascribed to those things; the ascribed meaning of things comes from our interactions with others and society; the meanings of things are interpreted by a person when dealing with things in specific circumstances (Blumer 1969). If you love books, for example, a symbolic interactionist might propose that you learned that books are good or important in the interactions you had with family, friends, school, or church; maybe your family had a special reading time each week, getting your library card was treated as a special event, or bedtime stories were associated with warmth and comfort.

Social scientists who apply symbolic-interactionist thinking look for patterns of interaction between individuals. Their studies often involve observation of one-on-one interactions. For example, while a conflict theorist studying a political protest might focus on class difference, a symbolic interactionist would be more interested in how individuals in the protesting group interact, as well as the signs and symbols protesters use to communicate their message. The focus on the importance of symbols in building a society led sociologists like Erving Goffman (1922–1982) to develop a technique called dramaturgical analysis. Goffman used theater as an analogy for social interaction and recognized that people's interactions showed patterns of cultural "scripts." Because it can be unclear what part a person may play in a given situation, he or she has to improvise his or her role as the situation unfolds (Goffman 1982).

Studies that use the symbolic interactionist perspective are more likely to use qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews or participant observation, because they seek to understand the symbolic worlds in which research subjects live.

Constructivism is an extension of symbolic interaction theory which proposes that reality is what humans cognitively construct it to be. We develop social constructs based on interactions with others, and those constructs that last over time are those that have meanings which are widely agreed-upon or generally accepted by most within the society. This approach is often used to understand what's defined as deviant within a society. There is no absolute definition of deviance, and different societies have constructed different meanings for deviance, as well as associating different behaviors with deviance. One situation that illustrates this is what you believe you're to do if you find a wallet in the street. In the United States, turning the wallet in to local authorities would be considered the appropriate action, and to keep the wallet would be seen as deviant. In contrast, many Eastern societies would consider it much more appropriate to keep the wallet and search for the owner yourself; turning it over to someone else, even the authorities, would be considered deviant behavior.

2.3 Empirical Review

According to Nepali (1964), various ethnic groups live in the hilly region of Nepal. Broadly speaking, they can be divided into their racial and linguistic affinities - the Gorkha or parbatias who speak an Indo-Aryan language Nepali and the speakers of Tibeto-Barman group of dialects. The Nepali speakers, according to the census report, numbered a large quantity nearly about 25 lakhs, about 50 percent of the country's total population. The Tibeto-Burman speakers numbered about 20 lakhs and they have been divided into numerous mutually exclusive dialect-groups with their own respective cultural traditions.

Acharya and Benett (1983), write that decision making is also influenced by ethnicity. We find variation in different communities. Women's decision making power is relatively high in Gurung, Rai, Meche, Magar, Thakali and Matuwali communities than in Brahmin/Chhetri communities. In the Brahimin/Chhetri community, women are the primary supporters of the domestic and subsistence sector. Their major role in agriculture production both as labors and household is considerable.

According to Bista (1976), there are few opportunities for Meche women in employment and earning activities. In addition, the prevailing wage rates around the village discriminate against women and discourage them from seeking wage employment. Women are considered to be weak, vulnerable and dependent on men. So, it is found that economy of women is very low.

Kasaju (1979), writes that education is for life itself because it is that element which equips a woman with the tool to solve her problems in life and helps her to live in a better life. Education is therefore essential for the rural women in a measure as well as a form that they need to become more productive and worthier citizen of the country.

Singh (2004), mentions that various research works have shown that female education has positive impact on economic growth and development. 4 to 5 percent GDP in Nepal may be attributed to the increasing number of female literacy, participation in various communities and user committees at grass root level. Thousands of women are now involved in income generating activities.

Bista (1967), writes that the Meche men typically wear a Nepali shirt and a loincloth on ordinary days and during festivals they wear the full Nepali suit and cap complete with European style suit jacket. The Meche women wear a sari and blouse of colorful cotton materials and wear silver necklaces, bangles, gold earring, nose rings and ring on their fingers. In general, they dress in a little more sophisticated manner than the Rais, as Meches are closer to and more under the influence of market and industrial town of Biratnagar, Dharan and especially Darjeeling, one of the most westernized places in India.

According to Tumbahang (1998), Nepalese society is made up of different castes, races, religious sects etc. It is in fact, a multicultural, multilingual and multi-religious society. In order to emerge as a respectable personality of such a society, a person should rise above their own community, be free from parochial thinking and have the capacity to lead people. In the Meche community, popular social reformers, leading figures and dominant figures from the female world have not yet appeared in the national level. Since very few women are educated, they do not live in the community of the country society. Illiterate women do not have any role whatsoever. Neither they play any role in the society nor do they know the roles to be played. In the past there was no opportunity for foreign employment. Opportunities for British Gorkha

Recruitment and India Gorkha Recruitment were there, but they did not bring handsome salary and allowance as they are doing now. Therefore, people were reluctant to join the army. There were no other work opportunities either at home or abroad. People were farmers who lived in a joint family. Some members had to look after the cattle, some members had to bring fodder for them, some others had to bring firewood, and drinking water etc. and others had to be busy in the field. In fact, a family needed many hands and joint family was practised. Commandership was necessary in the family and it was usually taken by the oldest man. He distributed the works among the family members who carried out the assigned duties, such as cooking, serving food, washing utensils, cleaning the house, bringing water, weaving clothes and others comparatively easier worlds. Males were allotted works like ploughing fields, digging them, carrying heavy loads etc.

CHAPTER-III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodology of the study is discussed. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following methodology is adopted :

3.1 Research Design

This research is exploratory in nature. It tries to explore and investigate the socio-economic and family issues of the study area in terms of decision making process of Meche women as compared to their counterpart men. This research is slightly descriptive as well as analytical. It means that the data interpretation is supported by tabular analysis followed by their explanations.

3.2 Nature and Source of Data

This study is based on both quantitative and qualitative of data, however this study is more qualitative than quantitative approach. Both descriptive and numerical data were used. The data collected were analysed and interpreted statistically and descriptively as well. Information were collected from both primary and secondary sources.

3.2.1 Primary Data

For collection of primary data, the interview and observation method was used to the sampled women in the study area. To collect the primary data about the respondent's status like health, education, community relation, decision making power, social works and culture etc. the sample respondents as well as key informants from women representatives, social workers and women health assistants and so on were used. The respondents were asked to fill up the questionnaire and the key informants were interviewed and asked for concerned information.

3.2.2 Secondary Data

Secondary source of data are also one of the important method or tools used to collect relevant information to complete the study. One such source of secondary data is population census. Different kinds of secondary data were collected from the district survey. In addition, different books and reports related to socio-economic life style of Meche women, various books, reports and journals were consulted in different libraries.

Hence, the relevant literature whatever and wherever available were studied and the required informations are extracted.

3.3 Sample and Universe

The total Meche population of Arjundhara Municipality was considered as the universe for the study. The information about the distribution of Meche population in Arjundhara Municipality was collected and tabulated as follows :

Table 3.1 Meche Households in Different Wards

Word No.	Households	Percentage
1	-	-
2	-	-
3	-	-
4	16	3.80
5	77	16.39
6	114	27.08
7	46	10.93
8	4	0.95
9	7	1.66
10	96	22.80
11	61	14.49
Total	421	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The population sample was taken from the three most densely Meche population carrying wards of Arjundhara Municipality. According to the table above, Ward No. 5, 6, 7, 10 and 11are more densely populated by Meche people than other wards. There are 77 Meche households in Ward No. 5, 114 households in Ward No. 6 and 46 households in Ward No. 7. So these three wards, i.e. Ward No. 5, 6 and 7 of Arjundhara Municipality were included in the study area and out of 237 Meche households, 63 households were selected as the sample on purposive sampling basis. The sample population was made inclusive of different aspects as far as possible. The women from the sample households were chosen regarding their age, occupation, age at marriage, educational status and other variables.

Table 3.2: Number of Respondents Sampled by Selected Wards

Ward No.	Total Meche HHS	Samples HHS
5	77	20
6	114	29
7	46	14
Total	237	63

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Ward No. 5, 6 and 7 are selected purposively considering concentration of Meche community and because of geographical location. There are 77, 114 and 46 households in these wards respectively. Among them 20, 29 and 14 households were selected from these wards respectively (63 households all together), which was approximately 25% of the Meche population in these wards. The sampling was done by using purposive and convenient sampling method.

3.4 Data Collection Tools and Techniques

The researcher has used direct participation, observation and structured questionnaires to obtain necessary and reliable data for this study. The data collection tools are mentioned below.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was prepared and administered to the selected women. The researcher himself visited door to door in the sample households and tried to generate necessary information with the help of the structured questionnaire.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section seeked for women's general information, which included their family structure, age, and education level, employment status, property ownership, decision making power, health status and use of family planning etc. The second section seeked for their social, political and cultural status like their involvement in community decision making process, relation with neighbours etc and change in their life style. It also seeked for their relationship in the family, position in the family in the decision making of the family matters etc. The structured questionnaires are included in the annex I.

3.4.2 Interview

The respondents were interviewed using unstructured interview questions so as to fetch necessary information concerning Meche lifestyle.

3.4.3 Key Informants Interview

Some women having profound knowledge of socio-economic, culture, rituals and practices of Meche people were interviewed separately as key informants on the basis of the techniques, unique cultural features and social attributes among the Meche people of Arjundhara Municipality. Those topics not covered in formal interview such as social customs, rituals and others were collected through key informants. A total of 5 key informants were interviewed and they were the teachers, social workers, political workers etc.

These persons were selected on the basis of their position in the society and knowledge of topics. The key informants were met repeatedly during the survey period to have a greater insight of the problem under the research.

3.4. 4 Observation

Observation is one of the techniques to collect the data. During the field work everyday life, social interaction, relation, household activities among the Meches in the sampled area were observed. This has helped the researcher to know about Meche women's life style.

Simple observations were applied to get information for the study. They were used to collect qualitative data. Direct observation method was used to observe the infrastructures of the wards, the settlement pattern and activities related with socio-economic and cultural practices.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Data

The data collected are cross checked and their validity is tested. In case of any doubt on the validity of the data collected, the sources are consulted and made the data reliable.

3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedure

The collected quantitative information were tabulated manually and analyzed descriptively using simple rate, ratio and percentage. Interpretation was incorporated in the analysis when necessary.

The prepared questionnaire was pre-tested on a small group of women for testing its credibility and some additions and deductions of question were made and finalized. Then the researcher himself conducted the entire questioning within the 63 sampled households. All respondents were mainly the senior female members of 20-50 years old of the sampled households. It means below 20 and above 50 years women and other female members such as daughters, granddaughters and so forth were not interviewed.

The collected data were grouped into two categories such as general information and social, financial and cultural aspects according to the group of questionnaire. Then the data were generated into table to analyze.

CHAPTER-IV

DEMOGRAPHIC SITUATION

The study of demographic characteristics is considered to be very important because it is not merely the population factor but throws light on economic, social, educational, employment and other conditions of the society. The study of demographic situation also helps to analyze the economic status of study group as compared to other groups in the study area.

4.1 Meche Households in the Study Area

The Number of households and the number of Meche households in Ward No. 5, 6 and 7 of Arjundhara Municipality is presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Total No. of Households and Dhimal Households

Ward No.	Total Households	Meche Households	
		Number	Percent
5	1659	77	4.64
6	1159	114	9.84
7	964	46	4.77
Total	3782	237	6.27

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 4.1 shows that 6.27% of the households in the study area are Meches. In the study area, there are 3782 households altogether and Meches are 237 households.

4.2 Population

4.2.1 Ethnic Population

Arjundhara Municipality is the land of diversity of caste/ethnic groups where nearly 20 ethnic groups reside. According to Arjundhara Municipality report, different ethnic groups residing in Arjundhara Municipality as a whole and their population are presented in table 4.2.

Table: 4.2 Population by Caste/Ethnicity

Caste Group	Population		Caste Group	Population	
	Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage
Chhetree	12029	19.63	Sherpa	219	0.36
Brahman - Hill	16523	26.52	Terai Brahmin	186	0.30
Magar	2022	3.30	Bhujel	437	0.71
Tharu	1560	2.55	Mallaha	70	0.11
Tamang	2607	4.25	Kumal	317	0.52
Newar	1758	2.87	Hajam/Thakur	679	1.11
Musalman	639	1.04	Rajbansi	1017	1.66
Kami	2966	4.84	Majhi	333	0.54
Yadav	88	0.14	Danuwar	1116	1.82
Rai	3416	5.57	Haluwai	36	0.06
Gurung	372	0.61	Badhaee	323	0.53
Damai/Dholi	1874	3.06	Satar/Santhal	586	0.96
Limbu	3743	6.11	Dhimal	306	0.50
Thakuri	273	0.45	Yakkha	88	0.14
Sarki	832	1.36	Bangali	45	0.07
Teli	130	0.21	Meche	1785	2.91
Kurmi	733	1.20	Lepcha	37	0.06
Sanyasi/Dashnami	1177	1.92	Bengali	455	0.74
Dhanuk	161	0.26	Others	276	0.45
Musahar	69	0.11	Total	61283	

Source: Arjundhara Municipality, 2018

Table 4.2 indicates that out of total population 61283, Meches are only 1785 (2.91 %). This clearly indicates that Meches are one of the minority castes in Arjundhara like other ethnic groups. The population of Brahmin and Chhetri is the highest which occupies 46.15% of the total population and Lepcha ethnic group is the lowest, which occupies 0.06% of the total population.

4.2.2 Population Composition

The population composition is the important characteristic of population. On the basis of population composition, economic, educational, social, political and developmental policies can be formulated in the society. The following Table 4.3 reveals the composition of population of Arjundhara Municipality by caste and sex.

Table: 4.3 Population Composition by Caste and Sex

Caste Group	Total	Male	Female	Caste Group	Total	Male	Female
Chhetree	12029	5574	6455	Sherpa	219	109	110
Brahman - Hill	16523	7773	8750	Terai Brahmin	186	82	104
Magar	2022	947	1075	Bhujel	437	192	245
Tharu	1560	745	815	Mallaha	70	35	35
Tamang	2607	1226	1381	Kumal	317	171	146
Newar	1758	829	929	Hajam/Thakur	679	349	330
Musalman	639	327	312	Rajbansi	1017	491	526
Kami	2966	1391	1575	Majhi	333	158	175
Yadav	88	50	38	Danuwar	1116	547	569
Rai	33416	1644	1772	Haluwai	36	17	19
Gurung	372	175	197	Badhaee	323	161	162
Damai/Dholi	1874	859	1015	Satar/Santhal	586	288	298
Limbu	3743	1761	1982	Dhimal	306	142	164
Thakuri	273	134	139	Yakkha	88	47	41
Sarki	832	409	423	Bangali	45	21	24
Teli	130	70	60	Meche	1785	798	987
Kurmi	733	333	400	Lepcha	37	18	19
Sanyasi	1177	546	631	Bengali	455	222	233
Dhanuk	161	71	90	Others	276	128	148
Musahar	69	33	36	Total	61283	28873	32410

Source: Arjundhara Municipality, 2018

Table 4.3 shows that the total number population of Arjundhara Municipality is 61283. Out of the total population the number of male population is 28873 and the number of female population is 32410. Total Meche population in the municipality is 1785 which comprises of 798 male and 987 female population.

4.3 Sex Composition of Meche Population

Sex composition is an essential feature of population which determines several demographic and social matters. The balance of sex affects the social and economic relationship within a community. The two sexes play partly contrasting and partly complementary roles in the economy and society. The following Table 4.4 demonstrates the composition of Meche ethnic group according to sex.

Table: 4.4 Sex Composition of Meche Population

Total Population	Male		Female	
	Population	Percentage	Population	Percentage
1785	798	44.71	987	55.29

Source: Arjundhara Municipality, 2018

Table 4.4 shows the sex composition of Meche community of study area (Ward No. 5, 6 and 7) of Arjundhara Municipality. It is clear from the table that the female population is more than the male population in Arjundhara Municipality. The Total number of Meche males and female are 798 (44.71%) and 987 (55.29%) respectively.

4.4 Age Sex Ratio

Sex ratio is the demographic concept that measures the proportion of males to females in a given population. It is usually measured as the number of males per 100 females. If the ratio is expressed as in the form of 105:100, where in this example there would be 105 males for every 100 females in a population.

The sex ratio shows the balance of sexes in a population. The sex ratio of two sexes in a population is expressed as the number of males per 100 female or vice–versa. It shows the equilibrium between both sexes of population. It is obtained by dividing the total number of male by the total number of females and multiplied it by 100. Sex ratio more than 100 is regarded an excess of males over females and sex ratio below 100 is regarded an excess of females over males. The following Table 4.5 shows the sex ratio of different age groups of Meche in the study area.

Table : 4.5 Age Sex Ratio of the Meche Population

Age Group	Total Population	Male	Female	Sex Ratio
0-4	105	42	63	66.67
5-9	143	62	81	76.54
10-14	155	55	100	55.00
15-19	245	103	142	72.54
20-24	175	85	90	94.44
25-29	162	79	83	95.18
30-34	206	98	108	90.74
35-39	170	82	88	93.18
40-44	146	67	79	84.81
45-49	90	43	47	91.49
50-54	50	30	20	150.00
55-59	75	30	45	66.67
60-64	38	12	26	46.15
65 above.	25	10	15	66.67
Total	1785	798	987	80.85

Source: Field survey, 2018

The sex ratio of any group of population is affected by part of fertility, migration and morality. Table 4.5 shows that the sex ratios of Meche population of the study area in different age groups. It shows the population of both male and female from the age group from 0- 4 to 65 and above. The total number of female population in the study area is more than that of male population. As per Table 4.5, males in the age group of 50-54 exceeds female. On the other hand, females exceed in all the other age groups. The highest sex ratio is in the age group of 50-54 i.e. 150 males per 100 females. The Lowest is in the age group of 60-64 i.e. 46 males per 100 females.

4.5 Marital Status

Marriage is important in human life. The study of marital status is an important part of fertility analysis. It affects the rate of fertility and mortality. Fertility study indicates that the groups that have a tendency to marry early may have a high fertility rate and vice-versa. Low fertility rate is the indicative of development. This study tries to find

out the marital status of the single community i.e. Meche community of selective study area, which is shown in the Table 4.6.

Table: 4.6 : Marital Status of the Meches (15 years of age and above)

Marital Status	Total No. of Population	Percentage	Male		Female	
			No.	%	No.	%
Unmarried	230	16.83	130	18.76	100	14.84
Married	1048	76.66	524	75.61	524	77.74
Widow/Widower	68	4.97	32	4.62	36	5.34
Divorced/Separated	21	1.54	7	1.01	14	2.08
Total	1367	100.00	693	100.00	674	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 4.6 shows that the unmarried males are higher than unmarried females in the study area. The unmarried males are 18.76% and that of unmarried females are 14.84% of the total 693 males and 674 females in the study area. A total of 68 people are noticed as widow/widower representing 4.62% males and 5.34% females. There are only 21 persons found to be divorced in the study area.

4.7 Educational Attainment by Sex in Meche Community

Education is one of the variables to measure the social status of any society. It helps to bring awareness and change in the community. The level of education is the indicator of socio-economic status of particular community. Education is a means through which human being may bring a better life. Education attainment is more marked for the younger age groups than the older age groups. It will not only help the individual for personal development but it also provides knowledge and skills which can be applied in the economic development of the country.

In the study area, most of the aged Meche are found to be uneducated who have little knowledge about the value of education. However, new generation of the Meche people are conscious of education. Table 4.7 presents the status of education among the Meche people in the study area.

Table 4.7 : Educational Attainment of Meches by Sex

Level of Education	Population					
	Total	%	Male	%	Female	%
Graduate & above	23	1.29	16	2.01	7	0.71
Secondary	135	7.56	55	6.89	80	8.11
Basic Level	526	29.47	250	31.33	276	27.96
Literate Only	742	41.57	329	41.23	413	41.84
Illiterate	359	20.11	148	18.55	211	21.38
Total	1785	100.00	798	100.00	987	100.00
Total literate	1426	79.89	650	81.45	776	78.62

Source: Field survey, 2018

Table 4.7 shows the educational attainment by sex in Meche community Arjundhara Municipality. The total number of literate people is 1426 (79.89%) out of 1785 persons. Among them 526 persons (29.47%) have attained basic level education, 135 persons (7.56%) have attained secondary level education, 23 persons (1.29%) have attained graduate level and above and 742 persons (41.57%) are literate only. Out of the total Meche population, 359 persons (20.11%) are identified as illiterate in the study area. Still some children of Meche community are found either dropout the school or not attending the school due to the lack of awareness about the importance of education or due to the poverty. The poor Meche people are found making their children engage in their household work.

It is also observed that the percentage of females has fallen below males in each category of education except in secondary education level. 8.11% females have attained secondary education, whereas only 6.89% males have attained the secondary education.

CHAPTER-V
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter attempts to analyze the collected data and information for securing the objectives of the study. It derives the major findings of the socio economic status of Meche women of Arjundhara Municipality is presented. It also includes social characters education, health decision making power and occupation of Meche women such types of data is analysis which shows the general information about the women in the study area.
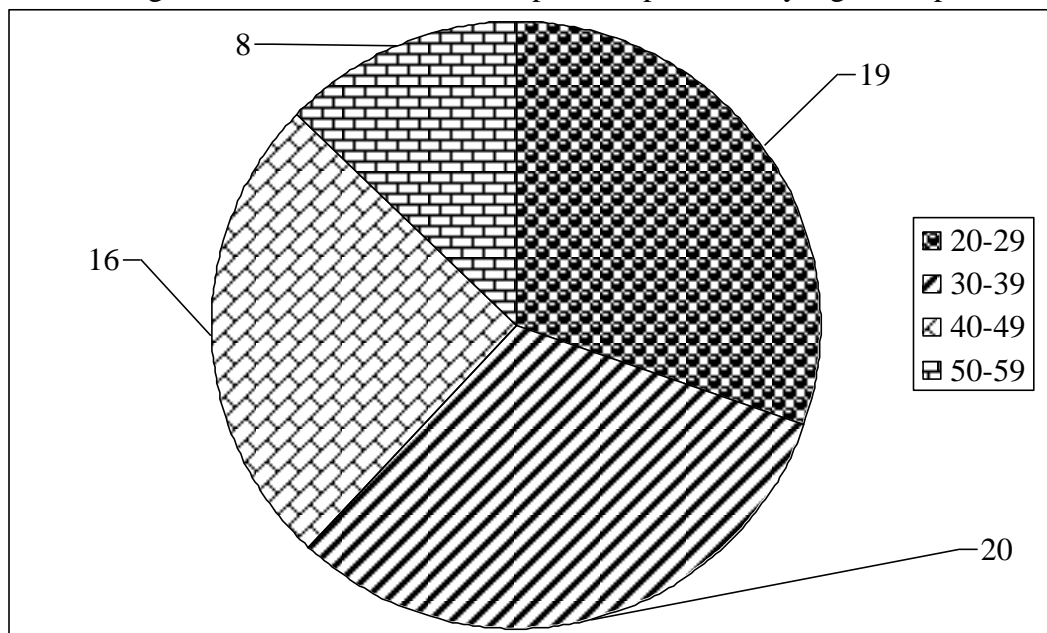
5.1 Age of Respondents

Age plays vital role to involve into the economic activities. It makes difference in working hours types of work and involvement in decision making process in the study age of respondents ranged from 20-59 they are categorized into four category 20-29 years,30-39 years,40-49 years and 50-59 years. The data mentioned in the table below shows the description of age group on sample household.

Table 5.1 : Distribution of Sampled Respondents by Age Group

Age Group	Number of respondents	Percentage
20-29	19	30.16
30-39	20	31.75
40-49	16	25.40
50-59	8	12.70
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Figure 5.1 : Distribution of Sampled Respondents by Age Group

Above table and figure show that the higher percentage of respondents (31.75%) are 30-39 years age group, then (30.16%) are 20-29 year age group, (25.40%) belong to 40-49 years and lower percentage of respondents (12.70%) are 50-59 years age group.

In the study the women of 20-29 age group are quite modern, educated and conscious. The women of the age group of 30-39 and 40-49 are mostly of working age in the society. The women of age group 50-59 are mature and fully responsible and authorized to their family socially, economically and personally.
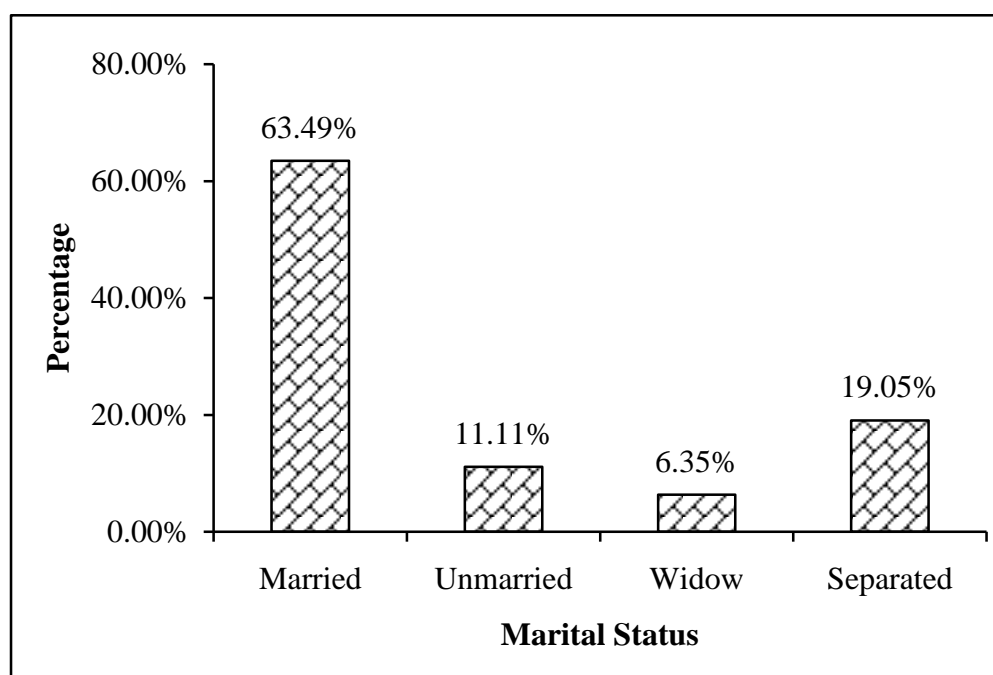
5.2 Marital Status

Marriage is important in human life. In Hindu society marriage is supposed to be a religious obligation. After marriage there is a transition in the status of men and women with attendant, rights and obligation. The study deals with the status of women and their marital status. The following table shows the marital status of Meche women of Arjundhara municipality.

Table 5.2 : Distribution of Sampled Respondent by Marital Status

Marital status	No of Respondent	Percentage
Married	40	63.49
Unmarried	7	11.11
Widow	4	6.35
Separated	12	19.05
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Figure 5.2: Distribution of Respondent by Marital Status

The marital status changes the women's role and increases their duties and a work load. Most of the respondents are married in the study area. Among the total respondents 63.49 percent are married in sample of 63 household, there are 11.11 percent unmarried, 6.35 percent of women are widow and 19.05 percent of women in the study area are separated with their husbands.

In this study, it was found that most of the young girls below 20 are married. They are not well educated and fully matured. They are compelled to change into daughter in law from daughters. They should do so many works in new houses and respect the family members but cannot get the rights of different things.

5.3 Family Structure

Family is a social institution and most important primary group in society family structure plays an important role to develop socio-economic status of women, the structure of the family is categorized into three types in this study. These are nuclear joint and extended. Nuclear family have husband wife and their unmarried children joint family have husband, wife one or more married and unmarried children and extended   family have husband , wife their married unmarried children, grand father and grand mother living in one household who take their meal in the same kitchen and work.

Table 5.3 : Distribution of Sampled Respondents by Family Structure

Family Type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Nuclear	33	52.38
Joint	25	39.68
Extended	5	7.49
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

From table 5.3, it is clear that the higher percentages (52.38%) of Meche women in study area are living in nuclear family. Among them 39.68 percent live in joint family. Only 7.94 percent of Meche women are in extended family. In joint and extended family is lesser than in nuclear family. It is found that there is no god relationship among the family members also.

5.4 Educational Status

Education is one of the main variables to measure social status of any society. It helps to bring awareness and change of the level of social status of women in the community. But women literacy rate in Nepal is 42.5 % according to the CBS report 2001, which is quite low therefore women's status is very low, table 4 shows the educational level of the respondents of the study area.

Table 5.4 : Distribution by Literacy and Educational Status of the Respondents

S.N	Level of Education	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Illiterate	22	34.92
2	Just literate	7	11.11
3	Basic (1-8)	18	28.57
4	Secondary (9-12)	12	19.05
5	Higher Education	4	6.35
	Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Figure 5.3 : Distribution by Literacy and Educational Status of the Respondents
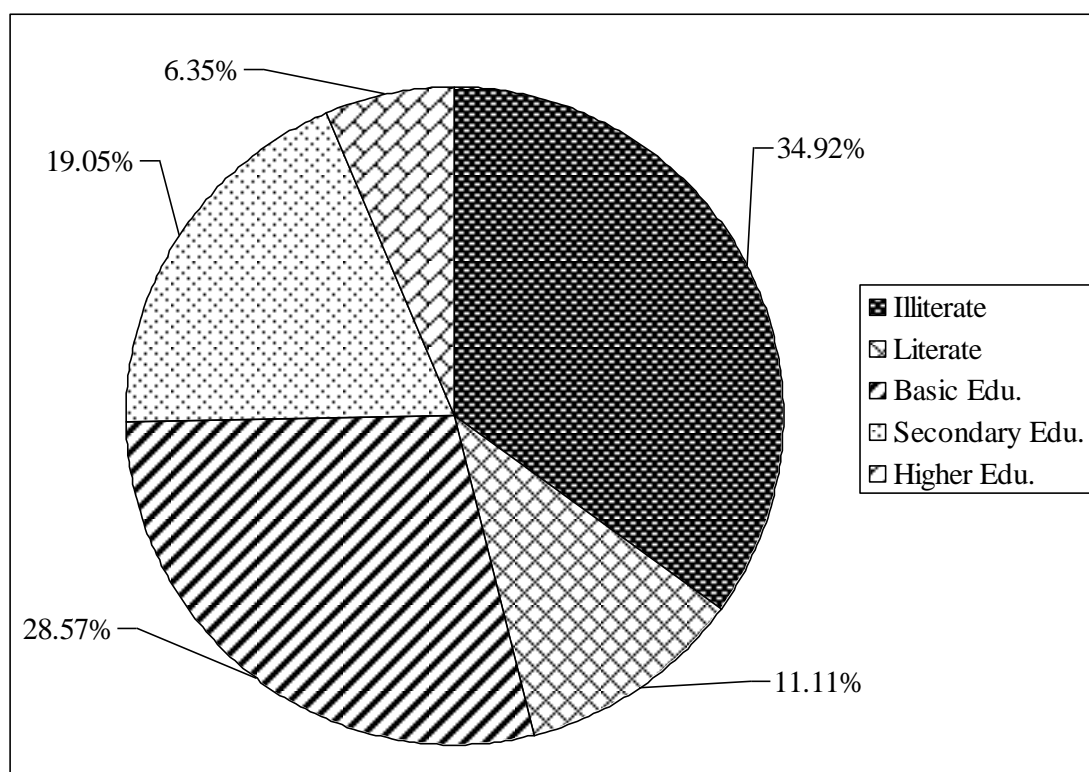
In this study the general literacy rate of Meche women is 65.08 percent and 34.92 percent are illiterate. Among 65.08 percent of literacy rate of women 11.11 percent are just literate by adult education and they could only read and write in simple words. There are 28.57 percent of respondents who have acquired their study of basic level. Fewer (19.05 percent) respondents have completed secondary level education and 6.35 percent respondents have finished higher education. So, from the data presented

in table 5.4 and figure 5.3, it is clear that the condition of women's education is very poor.

The main cause of the lower enrollment and higher dropout rate is due to the cause of the some discrimination between son and daughter and early marriage of the girl most of the girls have got married during their school life period and they born child which disturbs their study.

5.5 Reading Culture

Reading culture is also most important variable to measure the educational status of people. Who used to read books newspapers and they can take many information enjoy and enough knowledge also. Reading culture helps to make the mind of people broad and bring awareness. Especially reading culture plays an important role to develop the knowledge of women. Table 4.5 shows the reading culture of Meche women in Arjundhara municipality.

Table 5.5 : Distribution of Sampled Respondent by Status in Reading Culture

Types of Reading	No of Respondent	Percentage
Not reader	31	49.21
Book reader	9	14.28
Newspaper reader	7	11.11
Magazine Reader	16	25.40
Total	63	100

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Table 5.5 shows that Meche women's status in the reading culture is divided in to four categories (Not reader, book reader, newspaper reader, Magazine reader). In this study 50.79 percent of Meche women used to read books, news paper and magazine. Among them 14.28 percent of women are book reader, 11.11 percent women are newspaper reader and 25.40 percent of women are magazine reader. In this study found that uneducated women do not read any book or newspaper or magazine. Meche women who do not read magazines are not well conscious and those who read newspapers are educated, conscious and responsible women in house and society.

5.6 Women Participation in Informal Education

Literate means a person who can read and write in any language with understanding. The involvement in literacy classes of Meche women has been presented in table 5.6.

Table 5.6 : Participation of Meche Women in Literacy Classes

Yes/No	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Yes	24	38.10
No	39	61.90
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Table 5.6 shows that only a small percentage 38.10 percent out of 100.00 percent respondents has been participated in adult literacy classes. Conducted by different institution and large percent 61.90 of the Meche women did not participate in the classes from Arjundhara Municipality.

As the higher percentage of women do not participate in literacy classes and are illiterate, it can be concluded that their level of education and awareness is very low.

5.7 Occupational Status or Source of Income

Nepal is an agricultural country most of the people are farmers. In this study also a large number of economically active population are engaged in agriculture. It is the backbone of the economy of this village, which is shown into table below.

Table 5.7: Distribution of Sampled Respondent by Major Occupation or Source of Income

Occupation	No of Respondent	Percentage
Agriculture and livestock	34	53.97
Services	9	14.29
Business	15	23.81
Wage Earning	2	3.17
Pension	3	4.76
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

The table shows that agriculture is the main source of income. There are higher percentage of respondents (53.97 percent) engaged in agriculture and having the main source of income from agriculture. Fewer (23.81 percentage) respondents have the main income of business and 14.29 percent have services. Similarly, 4.76 percent have their pension and 3.17 percent have wages.

It can be concluded that the main occupation and the income source of Meche women is agriculture.

5.8 Outside Job

Women involving in jobs act as a main variable in determining their socio economic status. In this study there are two types of job one is household work and other outside household works. In outside works, skill employer is one and unskilled is the other.

Table 5.8 : Distribution of Sample Respondent by Job

Types of Job	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Household work	41	65.08
Outside of household work	22	34.92
Skilled	(17)	(26.98)
Unskilled	(5)	(7.94)
Total	63	100

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

From the table 5.8, the large number of respondents (65.08 percent) are engaged at household works, which is considered as non-economic activity. Only 34.92 percent respondents have outside work. This outside job is divided into two types one is skilled and another is unskilled, 26.98 percent respondents are engaged in skilled job and 7.94 percent are engaged in unskilled job.

The data shows that most of the women are engaged in non-economic activities and their labour is not paid off.

5.9 Women's Economic Status in the Family

In this study, women's economics status in the family is divided in two categories - dependent with male members and independent. The table below shows the dependency status of Meche women in matters of economic affairs.

Table 5.9 : Distribution of Sampled Respondents by their Economic Status in the Family

Women's Status	No of Respondents	Percentage
Dependent with male member	35	55.56
Independent with male member	28	44.44
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Table 5.9 shows that Meche women's economics status in the family is divided in two categories (dependent with male and independent with male). Among the respondents, 55.56 percent are dependent with male members and 44.44 percent are independent which means they are self sustained. They are involved as women health workers, teachers, daily wage workers in the agriculture, selling firewood, selling beer-wine and self employed.

It can be concluded that majority of the women in Meche community are dependent on the male members of the family as they are incomeless.

5.10 Property in Women Ownership

In Nepal women have less access on ownership of family so they are economically backward than male. If they have property in their ownership, they are not free to use it. Therefore socio-economic status of women is miserable. In this study, property in women's ownership is categorized as land, house, live stock and bank deposit, the following ownership of Meche people in Arjundhara Municipality.

Table 5.10 : Distribution of Sampled Respondents by Women's Property in Ownership

Women's Ownership	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Land	6	9.25
House	2	3.17
Livestock	15	23.81
Bank deposit	9	14.29
No. ownership	31	49.21
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

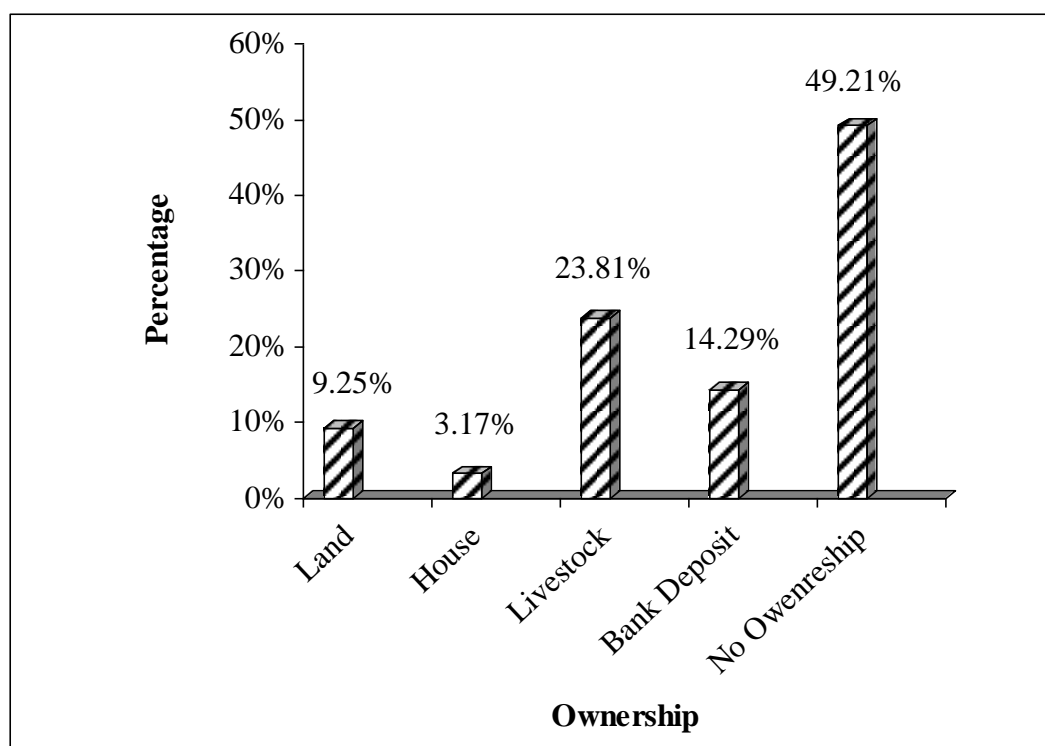Figure 5.4 : Distribution of Sampled Respondents by Women's Property in Ownership

Table 5.10 shows that out of total respondents 9.52 percent said that women in their family have ownership on land. 3.17 percent said that women in their family have ownership on house. 23.81 percentage said that women in their family have ownership on livestock and 14.29 percent women said that that their have ownership

on bank deposit. A half or 49.29 percent the women of Arjundhara Municipality have no ownership on any type of family property.

Thus, it is revealed that Meche women are deprived of property ownership and are dependent on the male members of the family. They cannot make any contribution on the economic decision of the family as they have no property rights in the family.

5.11 Major Household Workers

In Nepal most of the female are in household workers and agricultural activities. They have less access to education and hence lower proportion is involved in gainful economic activities. They are surrounded by household activities. Mostly women are the major household workers in Nepalese societies. Men work outside and women are given the responsibilities of household chores. The following table shows the involvement household works in Meche community:

Table 5.11 : Distribution of Sampled Households by Major Household Workers

Member	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Male	12	19.05
Female	51	80.95
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Above the table shows that of the 63 sampled households in more than 80 percent households, female are major household workers and only 19.05 percent male members have this responsibility.

It shows that most of the women have the responsibility of household chores which can be categorized as the non-economic activities. It has resulted on the condition that women have lower economic status than that of men.

5.12 Ownership of Household Income

Both male and females need to equally responsibly for household activities and they need to share equal benefits in family. Principally both are equal having equal rights and duties but, in our society males have dominated roles. Females have supportive roles. They have to follow their male counterparts in decision making. Like this

maximum Meche females are also engaged in household activities, livestock caring and agricultural activities and males go outside and earn. Male have more opportunity to keep their property. The following table shows the males domination to keep household income:

Table 5.12 : Distribution of Sampled Household by Ownership of Household Income

Member	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Male	29	46.03
Female	19	30.16
Both	15	23.81
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Out of the 63 households, male members keep the household income in 46.03 percent households and in 30.16 percent households, female members keep it. In 23.81 percent households, both males and females keep jointly. This shows that male members control the house-hold income and female have to get permission to use income. Male can use the income according to his will but female cannot do so. It is due to the male domination in the family as well as in society.

5.13 Health Status

The popular staying that "Health is wealth" it is taken as the symbol of civilization. So, health is an important factor to determine that socio-economic status of people.

In this study the health status of Meche women is categorized into three categories. They are general, good and very good. Health indicates such type of general respondents who are almost sick and they continue to get appointment to the doctor and take medicine regularly. Very good health indicates such type of respondents who are healthy. Besides these two categories, all respondents belong to the good health till they have not taken any kind of medicines and hospital appointment.

Table 5.13 : Distribution of Sampled Respondent of Health Status

Health Status	No. of Respondent	Percentage
General	17	26.98
Good	34	53.97
Very good	12	19.05
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Table 5.13 shows that the higher percentage 53.97 percent of Meche women's health status is very good, the lower percentage 19.18 of respondent's health status is very good and remaining 26.98 percent of respondent's health is general. Among them the Meche women with general health are suffering much because of child bearing.

5.14 Family Planning

Fertility is one of the most important factors which affect women's health status as well as their socio-economic status. Adopting family planning controlled frequent pregnancy and unwanted childbirth. Therefore the knowledge about family planning is an indicator to their socio-economic status.

Table 5.14 : Distribution of Sampled Respondents by Adopting Family Planning

Family Planning		No. of Respondent	Percentage
Adopting	Concern	6	9.52
	Husband	17	26.98
	Family advice	9	14.29
Not adopting		31	49.21
Total		63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

From the table 5.14, it is clear that a half or 49.29 percent the respondents are not adopting any family planning either they have not knowledge about family planning or their husband are using. 50.79 percent respondents are adopting family planning. Among them only 9.52 percent are adopting family planning with their own concern. Besides these, 26.98 percent are adopting family planning with husband's advice and 14.29 percent women are adopting family planning with her family member's advice.

This shows that adoption of family planning is not in practice among Meche women much. As a result the birth rate is higher and women's health status is poor.

5.15 Decision Making Power of Women

The decision making field of social field indicates the social works like to make road build tap and school building which is contact in the society. The decision making field of financial indicates that to building the selling goods cattle land etc. Playing the wage to the field workers so on where the decision making field of family is the family matters like to send the child into school, household work and agriculture work etc.

This present study has tried to analyze Meche women's decision making power in social, financial and family matters which shows into table.

Table 5.15 : Distribution of Sampled Respondent by Decision Making Power of Women

Decision Making Power	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	22	34.92
No	41	65.08
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

In this study area, the large number of respondents i.e. 65.08 percent has not got decision making power. They can decided only in minor thing like about planning seeds, processing and storing good gains and issue concerned with kitchen and supply etc. beside these some of them are involved partially indecision making process. 24.92 percent respondents had got fully decision making power in different sectors like social, financial and family.

This shows that most of Meche women cannot make decision on their family affairs and are to follow the decisions of the male members.

5.16 More Decision in Household Work

It is considered that male and female are equal in family and they have equal roles and responsibilities. But males have dominance in decision making process and other

social activities. The following table shows the more decision in household work of male and females in Meche community.

Table 5.16 : Distribution of Sampled Household by Decision on Household Work

Decision Maker	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Male	46	73.02
Female	17	26.98
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Out of the total 63 sampled households, more decisions in household works are male dominated. In 73.02 percent of respondents, more decisions are made by male. Only 26.98 percent of females decide for household works. It shows that in household works, husband's decisions are dominating in the family.

5.17 Decision of Expenditure on Household

Most women are engaged in household chores and they spend more time for these activities than males played dominant role in decision on household expenditure. The following table shows the situation for decision making in terms of household expenditure.

Table 5.17 : Distribution of Sampled Household by Decision on Household Expenditure

Decision Maker	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Male	39	61.90
Female	24	38.10
Total	63	10.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Among the 63 sampled household 61.90 percent decision on households expenditures are made by male member. Only 38.1 percent decisions are done by females. It show the low decision making power of female in household with regard to household expenditure. However, there is leading role of females in female headed household

and nuclear family. In male headed households and household with joint family, female have lower decisions in household expenditure.

5.18 Decision on Children Sending to School

Education is a means through which human being may bring a better life. Education attainment is more important for younger age groups than for the older age groups. Age many of the Meche parents are not well educated, they do not understand the well value of education. In spite of sending the children to school many of female students are bound to look after children similarly they have to go help the parents in agriculture field.

Table 5.18 : Distribution of Sampled Household by Children Sending to School

Decision Maker	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Male	29	46.03
Female	34	53.97
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

The decision of female in sending their children to school are found to be strongest which 53.97 percent is while the male member 29 decision is to be found 46.03 percent respondents.

It shows that in majority of the households, female members decide about the education of the children.

5.19 Expenditure of Children Education

According to the field survey, out of the total 63 sampled households, male member have dominant role in deciding children's education. The decisions about children's education and expenditure for them were made by males in most cases. The following table shows the male dominating to take decision on expenditure of children's education.

Table 5.19 : Distribution of Sample Household by Decision of Expenditure of
Children's Education

Decision Maker	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Male	34	53.97
Female	29	46.03
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Out of 100, it was found that 53.97 percent respondents decision were made by meals
and only 46.03 percent respondents decision were made by females. Through both
male and females are equally responsible for the children's future but only male
member decide in most of the cases. It may be due to low educational status of female
and their economic dependency. The decisions of the female in sending their children
to school are found to be strongest.

5.20 Decision on Treatment of Sickness

Health is very sensitive for human being and it affects all the other activities. Medical
science has developed many kinds of medicine and injection for frighten of diseases.
The life expectancy of people has been increased due to modern medical facilities. In
terms decision related to treatment for sickness of family member, males have
dominant role. Mostly male member decide, the type of treatment to be practiced to
care the disease. The following table 5.20 shows the decision for treatment.

Table 5.20 : Distribution of Sample Household by Decision on Treatment for
Sickness

Decision Maker	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Male	18	28.57
Female	14	22.22
Both	31	49.21
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Above table shows that 28.57 percent decisions are made by males and 22.22 percent by females. Similarly, 49.21 percent decisions are made by both male and females members. It shows that both male and female equal decision for treatment.

5.21 Decision to Attend Social Activities

Social activities are important part of human life. It is generate the human beings and to gain for knowledge and awareness. The following table shows the situation of decision making on to social activities.

Table 5.21 : Distribution of Sampled Household by Decision to attendant Social Activities

Decision Maker	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Male	30	47.62
Female	33	52.38
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Among the 63 sampled household, 47.62 percent respondent's decision were made by males and 52.38 percent respondents be female. It shows the decision making power of female is higher then male on to go social activities.

5.22 Women Participation in Socio-Cultural Activities

The Nepalese society is traditional and most of the traditional and cultural aspects play effective role to enhance the status of women in the society. Females have no property rights and low access to education and economic actively. Indeed it is ridiculous in modern society where both male and female are equal rights and responsibilities. Through males and females are considered equal, female have low access to education, employment and other gain full activities and they have low status in the society. But different social organization female's generated low social status out of the 63 respondents the participated in social-cultural activities shows the following table.

Table 5.22 : Distribution of Sampled Respondents by Participation of Women in Social Cultural Activities

Type of Activation	No. of Respondent	Percentage
C.F.U.G	20	31.75
Mother Group	14	22.22
Religion	9	14.28
Others	8	12.7
No participated	12	19.05
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

This table 5.22 shows that 19.05 percent Meche women were not participant any social-cultural activities. 31.75 percent respondents were the member of community forest user groups. Similarly 22.22 percent respondents were the member of mother group. In same were 14.28 percent respondents were involve in religious group and 12-70 percent respondents were involve in other different group such as relative of health, livestock, management and assistant of social works.

5.23 Women's Involvement in Community Decision

Nepalese are son preference societies. Still women are controlled to participate in community decision. Beside it religion, tradition, social attitudes make several limits on women's involvement into community decision. Following table shows that women's involvement in community decision.

Table 5.23 : Distribution of Sampled Respondent by Women's Involvement in Community Decision

Community Decision	No. of Respondent	Percent
Involved	37	58.73
Not involved	26	41.27
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

In this study area, 58.73 percent respondent is general participating into community decision and 41.27 percent respondents of Meche women have not involvement into

community decision. This report shows that the women's involvement condition in community is very good.

5.24 Women Considered in Community

This study area, about 53.97 percent respondents have reported that women are considered as housewife, 12.70 percent are member of society. Similarly, 4.76 percent are considered second grade citizen, 22.22 percent are considered as equal and others 6.35 percent respondents are like life partner in the Meche community which is shown on the table 5.24:

Table 5.24 : Distributions of Respondents by Women Considered in Community.

Women Considered	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Housewife	34	53.97
Members of society	8	12.70
Second grad citizen	3	4.76
Equal	14	22.22
Other	4	6.35
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

5.25 Women's Relation with Neighbors

Relation with neighbor is the factor which is affected to the social status of women. Table 5.25 shows that women's relation with neighbours.

Table 5.25 : Distribution of Sampled Respondents by Women's Relation with Neighbors

Women Relation	No. of Respondent	Percentage
General	27	42.86
Close	29	46.03
Very close	7	11.11
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

According to table 5.25, the higher percentage 46.03 percent respondent's relation with their neighbour is close. 42.86 percent respondent's relation is general and 11.11 percent of respondent's relation is very close. So on nobody have bad relation with their neighbour.

5.26 Causes of Low Socio-Economic Status of Meche Women

Meche women are found having low socio-economic status in their community. Enquiring its causes, the respondents were asked some questions and their responses are tabulated below :

Table 5.26 : Causes of Low Socio-Economic Status of Women

Causes	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Lack of education	36	57.14
Patriarchal	12	19.05
Culture	9	14.29
Lack of knowledge	6	9.52
Total	63	100.00

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

Figure 5.5 : Causes of Low Socio-economic Status of Women
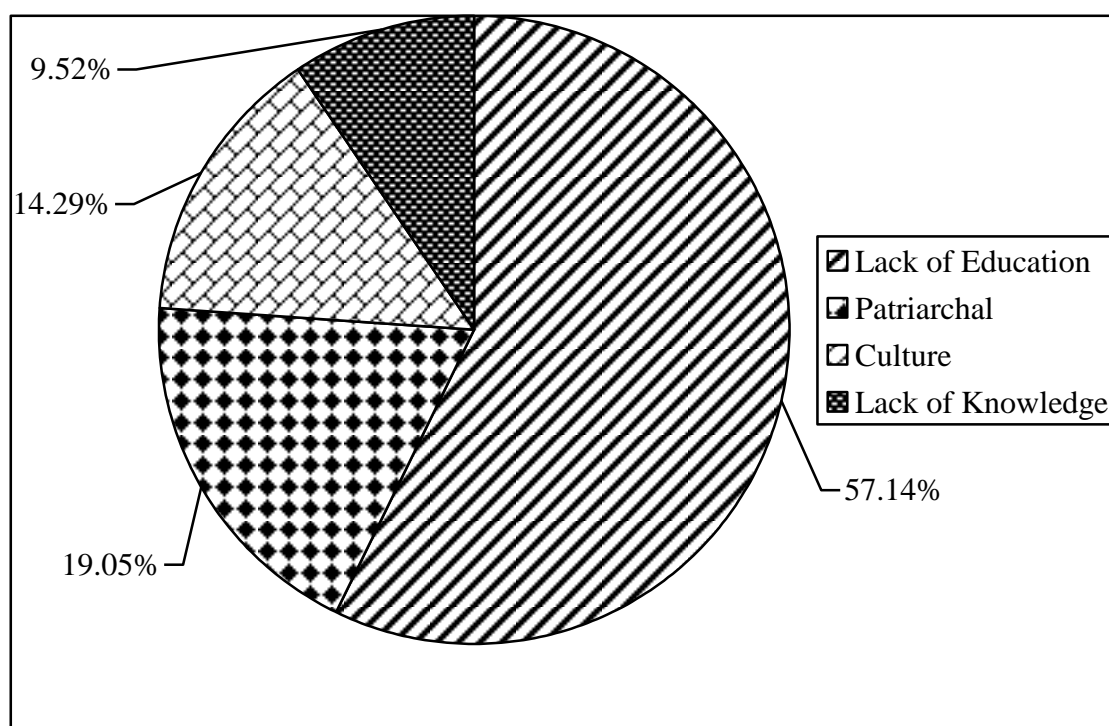
In this study area, the higher percentage 57.14 percent of respondents reported that the main cause of Meche women's low socio-economic status is the lack of education. 19.05 percent of respondents reported that patriarchal system is the cause of their low status. Then 14.29 percent of respondents reported the culture is the cause of low status and 9.52 percent of respondents reported that they have lack of knowledge or don't know about their low socio-economic status.

5.27 Suggestion to Improve the Socio-Economic Status

The respondents were asked what they suggested about the improvement of their socio-economic status. Their responses are tabulated below :

Table 5.27 : Distribution of Respondents by Suggestion to Improve Their Status

Suggestion	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Remark
Promote the education	18	28.57	The
Equal property right	17	26.98	ignorant
Primary in job opportunity	15	23.81	respondents
Skill promotion	6	9.52	said "I don't
Improve in traditional belief	5	7.94	know"
Others	2	3.15	
Total	63	100.00	

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

In this study area, the researcher asked the question to the respondents "what do you suggest to improve your status?" 28.57 percent respondents and 26.98 percent respondents answered that education and equal property right should be provided for Meche women to develop their socio-economic status. 23.81 percent respondents said that giving priority in job opportunity for women can development their status. 9.52 percent respondent said that skill promotion should provide for Meche women to develop their status. Similarly 7.94 percent respondents reported that the traditional belief should change for their development and 3.18 percent respondents said that they don't know or they have lack of knowledge about this.

5.28 The Role of Government and NGOs for Development

The respondents were asked what they suggested the government and non-government organizations for the improvement of their socio-economic status. Their responses are tabulated below :

Table 5.28 : Role of Government and NGOs to Improve Women's Status

Role of Government and Other Organization	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Remarks
Awareness, literacy education	27	42.86	The ignorant respondents said "I don't know"
Skill promotion/ job opportunity	25	39.68	
Enhancement of self empowerment	6	9.52	
Health	2	3.18	
Other	3	4.76	
Total	63	100.00	

Source: Filed Survey, 2018

In the question of what kind of role should be plan by government and other organization to development the socio-economic status of women, the higher percentage 42.86 percent respondents reported that the awareness, literacy and education program should provide by government and other organizations. Similarly, 39.68 percent respondents reported that skill promotes job opportunity and 9.52 percent respondent said enhancement of self scheme and empowerment should provide women to develop their status. Then 3.18 percent respondents said and similarly 4.76 percent respondents replied that they don't know about the role of government and other organizations to develop their socio-economic status.

CHAPTER-VI
SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

Women constitute 50.04 percent of the total population of the country. So their development contributes to the overall development of Nepal. But women are still forced to live in insecure life because of poverty, illiteracy and gender discrimination. Nepal has patriarchal society. It gives more priority to men than women. So, women are lacking behind than men in social, political, education, economic property ownership, employment and many other sectors. It is said too that women of Meche are poorest among the poor. Their lives are dominated by domestic workloads. In Nepal women bear triple work responsibilities in their houses such as responsibilities household works and outside works or employment. In developed or developing countries reproduction is not regarded as work and household works is not considered as productive work. However, the work burden of women in Nepal is high in global scenario. Thus the socio-economic status of women is very poor.

The present study is carried out in Arjundhara Municipality of Jhapa district to find out the socio-economic status of Meche women of that village. Among 11 wards 3 wards (5, 6 and 7) are taken for sample. These wards have 237 households. Among them 63 (26.58%) households are sampled and 1 woman is selected from each sampled household.

This study is mainly based on primary data. To collect the data, researcher designed the questionnaire and visited the sample household then asks the questionnaires to the main female members of the household. For the analysis of the data, all the row data were tabulated as necessary and simple statistical tool like percent is use. Similarly secondary data is also collected from different sources.

This study shows that the higher percentage of family is nuclear is this area. The general literacy rate s satisfactory in this village but the higher study rate is very poor. Agriculture is the main sources of income of the women are involved into agricultural works and only few women are engaged in outside works (official works). From economic point of view almost all women are depended on their family. The decision

making power of women is low. It shows gender discrimination of this village is prevalent. Most of the women have no any property in their ownership. The higher women's health is good and the higher percentages of women are not adopting family planning. Most of them adopt by taking husband's advice.

In the study area, all women of this have good relation with their neighbours. A few numbers of women are involved in community decision making work. Most of the women said that the cause of their low status is lack of education and equal property right is the key factor to develop their socio- economic status. The higher percentage of women said that the government and organization should provide awareness, literacy and education to develop the socio-economic status of women in the society as well as nation.

6.2 Findings of the Study

This study analyzed "Socio-economic Condition of Meche Women" in Arjundhara Municipality Ward No. 5, 6 and 7. It lies in the eastern part of Nepal at Jhapa District. It is typically in plain area, which is not much facilitated by the pitch road, hospital and campus. There are multiethnic groups such as Brahmin, Chhetri, Newar, Rajbanshi, Meche, Magar, Damai-Kami, Tamang etc.

This study is mainly based on primary data. The researcher visited all sampled women and asked questionnaire to collect data. The major findings of the study are mentioned as below.

1. The large numbers of the women's age range was 30-39 years and a few number of women's age range was 50-59 and 40-49 years. The researcher found that 30-49 years old women were mostly participated in agricultural work.

2. In the study area (Arjundhara) most of the young girls below age of 20 are married. In other words, early marriage of girls was found there. Therefore the higher number of married women were selected for the study.

3. In the study area the higher percentage of Meche family lived in nuclear and joint but lower percentage of family lived in extended family.

4. In the study area, the general literacy rate was high but the educated women were low. It means a few number of women have attained formal education. The

researcher found that a few numbers of women have completed their school level study or passed SLC and the higher study of Meche women is low.

5. In this study area, the large number of women reported that they do not read any types of book newspaper or magazine and few numbers of women reported that they have got reading habit. It means Meche women have not good reading culture.

6. In this study area, the researcher found that a few number of women have participated in adult literacy classes conducted by different institutions and large number (61.90%) of women have not participated in the classes. So, educational status of Meche women is low.

7. In the context of major income source, most of Meche's income was agriculture. Few number of people's major income source were business and service. So the higher percentage of Meche women's economic status is dependent on the male member of their family. They were engaged in household chores and agriculture. The large number of Meche women had not got property in their own name. Few number of women have land, house, livestock and cash in their own name or authority. Almost all the women with property ownership were single, separated with their husband and widow.

8. Higher percentage of women were engaged in agriculture. Their work is considered unproductive it is use for the purpose of family use. So they did not have payment. Therefore, most of the women's economic status is poor. Lower percentage of women work outside. Among them some were engaged in teaching or official work and some were working as labors. The researcher found that women's literacy rate was higher but they were only literate, not educated. That's why the nominal percent of women had opportunity to do the official work or job opportunity in the study area.

9. In this study area, women's health status is satisfactory. The higher percentage of women had good health and lower percentage of women had very good and general health. So, their health status is not very bad.

10. This study found that the higher percentage of women were not adopting family planning means and only the lower percentage of women were adopting. They have more children which directly affects their economic activities. On the other hand, they want to have sons instead of daughters. They think sons are their

successors and only the sons do their rituals acts. As a result, they bear more children and it affects their health status.

11. In the most of cases, women have low decision making power in comparison to men. The saying "men and women are equal" is not brought in practical life, even though women are self sustained in their family. They have talent, capacity and power but they cannot decide about financial, social and family matters. Therefore, the decision making power of women is very poor. In this study area the higher percentage of women decide to send their children to school (53.97%) and go to social activities (52.38%) then other (25.98%) women can decide in household work, 38.10 percent women can decide in household expenditure, 46 percent women can decide in expenditure of children's education and only 22 percent women have got authority to decide in treatment of sickness in their family. The study found that the higher percentage of women participate in social-cultural activities and the lower percentage of women (19.05%) do not participate, among them, the large number of women are the members of community forest group.

12. Significantly, higher percentage of women are not involved in community decision. The society is not giving priority to the women. They think there is no need of women's involvement in community decision, men are sufficient for community decision. Therefore, the nominal number of women are involved in community decision. Women are bounded into household activities and they are not free like men. Therefore, they are less involved or not involved in community decision.

13. The large number of women said that women are considered as a housewife and lower number of women said women are considered as a second grade citizen. Very few women said that women are considered as a life partner in Meche society. It shows that women are symbolized into various names but they have not own identity as men have.

14. In the study area, almost all Meche men and women's relation with their neighbours was good and no one had bad relation with their neighbour

15. In this study area, the higher number of women reported that the main cause of their low socio-economic status are the lack of education and the lower number of women reported that traditional, religious and culture are the main causes of their low socio-economic status in their society. 19.05 percentage women

reported that the patriarchal system is the main cause and 9.52 percent women reported that the lack of knowledge is the main cause of their low socio-economic status in their society.

16. In the study area, the higher percentage of women reported that education and equal property rights are the key factors to develop socio economic status of women. 23.81 percent reported that priority in job opportunity for women is the solution to develop their socio-economic status in the society, and 9.52 percent of women have reported that social skill promoting programmes should be launched to develop their socio- economic status. Similarly, 7.49 percent have reported that traditional belief should be improved and 3.18 percent women said that they don't know about the suggestion.

17. In context of role to be played by various organization and government to develop the socio-economic status of women in community, 42.86 percent of women have reported that awareness, literacy and education should be provided by the government and different organizations to develop their status. 39.68 percent reported that the government and organizations should provide the machining on skill promotion and job opportunity and 9.52 percent of women reported that the government and different organizations should provide the enhancements of self scheme and empowerment for women and 4.76 percent women reported that they don't know about the role of government and different organizations to develop their status.

18. Education is the key factor to improve socio-economic status of women. In this study area, the large number of old age women are illiterate. So, due to the lack of education, women's economic status is low.

19. Most of the Meche women are illiterate in the study area. They have traditional thought. They follow the social traditional rules and regulations which were used by their previous generations. So they are not conscious about their pitiable condition. They think being women (housewife) to do household works like cleaning, cooking, washing, cleaning etc. is their first duty.

20. At last, the findings of the study are not different than that of the national scenario. It means the social economic status of Meche women of the present study of Arjundhara Municipality is same with the socio-economic status of all community of women in Nepal.

6.3 Conclusion

Through this study, it is concluded that women have multidimensional roles and responsibility in their families. Their work burden is higher but most of their time is spent in their household activities. They should spend more time in agriculture which is not counted as income generating work; they work only for the purpose of family use. The literacy rate of women is higher but they are not well educated and higher education status of women is very low. They are deprived from acquiring the higher education due to the various social, economics and cultural barriers. They are not getting outside job therefore, only a few numbers of women are engaged in outside jobs.

The higher number of Meche women are dependent on their family in economic sector and their decision making power is also very low. The minimum numbers of women are involved in social and financial decisions. A few women are involved in community decision.

Women property ownership is the important variable to develop their socio-economics status. In this study area, the minimum members of Meche women have property ownership. They use property but have no ownership. From these statuses, the researcher has concluded that except general literacy and health status, the socio-economic status of women in the study area is very low.

6.4 Recommendations

Based on the current study, the following recommendations relating to different sectors such as the government, society and the community members can be forwarded for the betterment and improvement of Meche women:

1. Mass education is an important factor to bring quick changes in the attitude of society, for Meches women's status and to promote the women literacy number of government.
2. Government should provide the scholarship and other facilities for women education not only in schools but even in higher education educations which may build and promote their career to acquire job opportunities and to promote better life. So that it helps them to be self dependent.

3. Emphasis should be given to vocational skills and entrepreneurship to Meche to increase employment opportunities.

4. The study indicates that the economic status of women at Arjundhara Municipality is low. In order to develop their economic status government and various organizations should conduct skill developing programmes such as sewing, tailoring, weaving etc. which build up the women and provide greater opportunities for small jobs. Only the traditional sector of employment and new job access need to be improving for their status.

5. There is minimum women's participation into government service. So certain quotas or reservation should be given to women in government services. And special arrangements should be made to provide loans to poorer women who are interested in income generating activities. At list foe a specific time period to come up in or equal sectors with their make counterparts.

6. Women spend more time in domestic sphere, which is not included as economic activity. Therefore domestic or household contributions should be valued as economic activities.

7. Legal provision should be set up on the ownership of assets of female in parental property and there should be equal property tight of men and women.

8. Women's decision making power is very low to promote their participation in decision making power. Their capacity building or socio-economic empowerment must in order to attain this goal. Government and their organizations should provide awareness creating programs for the people highlighting the importance of educational, economical, social participation for women in order to balance the gender equity for the overall socio-economic development.

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APPENDIX-I

Socio-economic Condition of Meche Women

(A Case Study of Meche Women of Arjundhara Municipality, Jhapa District)

Questionnaire

I. General information

1. Respondent information

    a) Name: b) Age:

                                             20-29, 30-39

                                             40-49, 50-59

    c) Marital status   d) family structure

    Married/unmarried   nuclear/ joint

    Divorced/ separate   expanded

    Widow

2. What is your educational background?

    A) illiterate   b) literate

3. If literate, the level

    a) just literate   b) basic level (1-8)

    c) secondary level (9-12)   d) higher level

4. Did you participate the informal education?

    a) yes   b) no

5. Do you read only news paper/ books?

    a) yes   b) no

6. If yes what do you read?

    a) book   b) newspaper

    c) magazine

7. What is your major source of income?

    a) agriculture and livestock   b) business

    c) wage earning   d) pension

8. What is your status of employment?

    a) household work   b) outside of household work

                                    i) Skill employer   ii) unskilled manpower

9. What is the female status in your family?

    a) dependent with male member   b) independent/ free

10. In your family, do female members have ownership in any property?

    a) yes   b) no

11. If yes, what type of property is registered?

    A) land   b) house   c) livestock   d) bank deposit

12. What is your health status?

    a) general   b) good   c) very good

13. Do you have any support of your family in health status?

    a) yes   b) no

14. Are you adopting any family planning?

    a) yes   b) no

15. If yes, is it your consent or family advice?

    a) self   b) husband   c) other family member

16. Do you have authority to take decision?

    a) yes   b) no

17. Whose role is prominent in household work in your family?

    a) male   b) female

18. Who does the more decision on household work in your family?

    a) male   b) female

19. Who keeps the household income or money?

    a) male   b) female   c) both

20. Who decides the expenditure of household?

    a) male   b) female

21. Have you sent all your children to school?

    a) yes   b) no

22. If yes. Who decides?

    a) male   b) female

23. Who decide for expenditure of children's school?

    a) male   b) female

24. Do you consult doctor if any member of your family suffers?

    a) yes   b) no

25. If yes, who decides for it?

    a) male   b) female   c) both

26. Do you have any group of socio-cultural committee in your own society?

    a) yes   b) no

27. Have you participated in any socio- culture activities?

    a) yes   b) no

28. If yes what type of activities?

    a) CFUG   b) mother group

    d) religious   d) cultural

29. Who decides to go to socio- culture activities?

    a) male   b) female

30. Have you ever casted votes?

    a) yes   b) no

31. If yes, did you decide yourself whom to caste the vote or did your family head direct you?

    a) decided myself   b) family head directed me

32. Have you been involved in any organization?

    a) yes   b) no

33. If yes, what type of organization is this?

    a) political party   b) users' group

    c) NGO   d) religious organization

II Questionnaire for social aspect

1. What is the status of women in community decision making?

    a) involved   b) uninvolved

2. How are women considered in your community?

    a) housewife   b) member of society   c) second grade citizen

    d) equal   e) other

3. How is your relation with neighbors?

    a) bad   b) general   c) close   d) very good

4. What are the main causes to make socio-economic status of Meche women in the society?

  a) education   b) health

  c) culture   d) patriarchal society

  e) don't know

5. What do you suggest improving socio- culture status of women?

  a) education   b) equal property right

  c) skill promotion   d) priority in the job opportunities

  e) Improve in traditional belief

6. What kind or role should be played in by various organizations (CBOS/MGOS) and government to develop the socio-economic status of women in community and nation as a whole?

Role	By Government	By CBOs	By NGOs
1	Promotion of the awareness literacy and education	Skill promotion	Job opportunities
2	Enhancement of self scheme	Enhancement of self employment	
3	Improve the bad rule and regulation		

APPENDIX-I

Socio-economic Condition of Meche Women

(A Case Study of Meche Women of Arjundhara Municipality, Jhapa District)

List of the Sample Population

S.N.	Name	Address
1	Tika Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
2	Dhan Maya Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
3	Sabina Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
4	Ganga Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
5	Bishnu Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
6	Kanchan Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
7	Alisha Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
8	Bhawana Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
9	Rekha Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
10	Devika Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
11	Harka Naya Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
12	Radhika Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
13	Soniya Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
14	Anita Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
15	Susmita Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
16	Manisha Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
17	Bhumika Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
18	Sonu Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
19	Sabita Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
20	Smarika Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
21	Sarmila Meche	Arjundhara-5, Jhapa
22	Sita Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
23	Sanumaya Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
24	Ranmati Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
25	Sovadevi Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa

51	Bhabindra Kumari Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
52	Misha Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
53	Hem Kumari Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
57	Asmita Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
55	Jharmna Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
56	Dik Kumari Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
57	Ramala Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
26	Chandra Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
27	Sarita Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
28	Bina Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
29	Dipa Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
30	Pramila Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
31	Manju Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
32	Shanta Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
33	Manmaya Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
34	Dhanmaya Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
35	Matirani Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
36	Sanchrani Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
37	Radha Devi Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
38	Ramala Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
39	Kalpana Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
40	Muna Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
41	Kumari Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
42	Salina Meche	Arjundhara-6, Jhapa
43	Dipika Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
44	Ram Kumari Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
45	Prem Kumari Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
46	Renuka Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
47	Bed Kumari Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
48	Binita Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
49	Rinku Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
50	Moti Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa

58	Pramila Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
59	Shashi Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
60	Gaurimaya Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
61	Motihangma Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
62	Shukramaya Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa
63	Aitarani Meche	Arjundhara-7, Jhapa