

# **ROLE OF WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD DECISION MAKING**

**(A Study of Baghaura, Lamki Chuha Municipality Kailali)**

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to Central Department of Sociology  
in partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the  
Master's Degree in Sociology**

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**2016**

**Tribhuvan University**  
**Humanities and Social Sciences**  
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**Kirtipur, Kathmandu**  
**Nepal**

**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

This is to certify that Mr. **Kamal Bahadur Rawal** has completed this dissertation entitled **ROLE OF WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD DECISION MAKING (A Study of Baghaura Lamki Chuha Municipality Kailali)** under my supervision and guidance. I, therefore, recommend this dissertation for the final approval and acceptance

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General Background of the Study

Men and women are considered as two wheels of a cart. Women can give tough competition to men in each and every field. They are equal in each and every sector either that is administrative, force, games, social activities or household activities. So, in the development process of any nation women can play a key role. In past days women were considered to be low grade citizen and given less importance. But in today's era people have started realizing the importance/value of women's participation in the economic as well as in social development activities in many developed countries, it has been realized that relation between male and female is just like the relationship of the "Blood with body". This mutual relationship between male and female can bring drastic change in the socio-economic status of nation (Shrestha, 1991).

In Nepal, women consist of more than 50 percent of total population (CBS, 2011). Women are heavily engaged in domestic chores along with the socio-economic activities. They have major role in household work. Less than 50 percent have got chance in decision making power. Even in 21st century they are not enjoying equal decision making power in comparison to their male counterparts. They are being discriminated since their childhood. In childhood they have to live under their father, in adulthood they should follow their husband, and in old age they have to live under their son. They have no liberty to decide freely even on their own activities CBS (2011).

Socio-economic status of female affects the role of women in society. Even though, they are capable and potential, their capability and

potentiality have been devalued. Education is one of the major factors for their development. Those women, who have got higher education and social higher economic background, have greater chance on decision making power. According to Census (2011) only 17.18 percent households are being headed by women .

Education and labour force participation are the strongest variables affecting the status of women. Education provides some of the basic skills and confidence to being taking control of their lives. Labor force participation may help control over social and material resources within the households. Thus, status of women refers to the extent to which human beings have control over their own lives and access to knowledge, economic resources and political power. The status of women is an important factor affecting the socio-economic development of a country. It can not be fully realized if women who constitute more than 50 percent of population enjoy a subordinate position to men and their talents remain unutilized or underutilized (Pandit, 2003).

Prior to the UN declaration of 1975-1985 as the UN decade for women, only well defined women organization in Nepal was practically not in existent. Those few women's organization which emerged as an outcome of the political upheavals of the pre 1950s and 1960s were primarily interested, motivated, designed to some their own circle of families and friends instead of women at large. The focus of Nepal Women's Organization (NWO), established in 1960 was directed more towards social welfare activities like knitting, sewing and weaving. Although, its interest was not purely in the upliftment of women never these, its efforts to indicate and interest and concern for women and their development cannot go unappreciated (UNICEF, 1995).

It was only after the UN declaration of 1975 as the international year of women and 1975-1985 as the UN decade for women that a national committee on international women year in Nepal was formulated. This committee attracted considerable foreign funds, which helps in some extent to uplift the socio-economic status of women.

In the world as well as in Nepal, women covered half of the total population. They are backbone of the society. Though male and female are considered as the 'two wheels of a cart' having equal rights and responsibilities, there is gender disparity in various sectors like socio-economic, political as well as in the decision making process. Very few females are lucky to get opportunity in white-collar job. Most of women are surrounded by household boundaries. They are limited only in cooking, livestock, earning, firewood collection, grass management, child rearing, agricultural activities and household chores. They have low access to education, employment and medical facilities (Shakti, 1995).

In male dominated country like Nepal find a large gender inequality. Male are given preference in many socio-economic activities. We find involvement of males from district level to national level program rather than women.

It can be concluded that only strong status in society can enhance the decision making power of women otherwise they have to play subordinate role of their male partners. Women of Nepal are suffering from lack of resources such as property rights; the general income goes to family pocket. Because of the lack of power to asset which is their natural rights, they are suffering from exploitation and injustice. Women strategies should be focused on as: increasing self confidence, increasing women participation in development, educating people (Shakti, 1995).



So, at last everybody agrees that a woman play a very important role in setting up a good family. Women can spoil a house as well as make it a heaven. In fact, women have very strong character in every household. According to Mahatma Gandhi "Educate a man of you will have a person educated but educate a women and you will have a whole family educated".

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

According to Central Bureau of Statistics, 2011, the total population of Nepal is 2,64,94,504 of which 49.9 percent are male and 50.1 percent are female. The data shows that women cover more than half of the country's population but still in the Nepalese context women suffer from illiteracy, unemployment and household burden. The estimate literacy rate for men is 65.1percent and that of women is only 40.23 percent (CBS, 2011). So women are poorest among the poor, since women are more vulnerable then men in all sectors (CBS, 2011).

The role and status of women differ according to caste and ethnicity however their sub-ordinate to men exist in all caste, ethic and religious groups. Women play important role in household subsistence, in agriculture, in labor work and so on. Women labor participation in agriculture is thus the backbone of Nepalese economy(Shrestha, 1991). Besides agriculture, they have to perform many other household activities such as childcare, cooking, feeding, cleaning and decorating houses. These activities of women in household are not taken into account into monetary terms. So, it is necessary to do depth analysis of Nepalese women's situation in order to support the planning of facilitating increased integration of women to the national developing process.

Women have also substantial contribution on household economy through skill-based entrepreneurship like weaving, poultry, fishing, vegetable farming etc (Shrestha, 1991).

The role and contribution of women in household economy has been "invisible" because women's involvement in domestic works and skill-based activities such as handicrafts, agriculture works etc. have been regarded as non-productive sector. This has been devaluating the women's contribution in household economy which is no doubt a significant constraint to uplift the socio-economic status of Nepalese women. Thus it is necessary to study the contribution of women in household economy (Shrestha, 1991).

Therefore, the present study focuses taking into an account the diversity of Nepalese population in terms of caste, ethnicity, age, locality to study the role of women of Lamki Chuha Municipality ward no.5 Baghaura in their household decision making.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

- a. What is the condition of the women in socio-economic field ?
- b. Why women are roles of women weak in household decision making ?
- c. What are measures of solving problem of household decision making ?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The general objectives of this dissertation are to study the role of women in household decision making process. Other specific objectives of the study are follows:

- a. To explore the socio-economic status of women of Baghaura, Lamki Chuha Municipality.
- b. To find out the role of women in household decision making.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study attempt to reflect the women's status in terms of decision making power inside and outside the household. Furthermore, this study is important in finding out the actual condition of women in study area in terms of socio-economic status and their decision making roles. women constitute half of the total population in Nepal. They should have equal rights and responsibilities for the development of the society.

So, this study is very useful for those individuals and institutions, who are interested to know about the women's role in decision making power. It will also be useful even for planners, policy makers, NGOS/INGOS and other organizations to formulate and implement appropriate policies, plans and programs focusing on the issues of women, mainly in decision making sector. It may be helpful for the researches, and person interested in gender studies too.

All the development activities are performed by people for the people. They are main focal point of development. Decision making power gives space of women's skills and ability. They can envision better life looking at their equal position to males. If happened male will also learn the necessity of women to accelerate and enhance the development.

## **1.6 Organization of the Study**

This study is divided into 5 chapters. They are as follows:

**Chapter One:** The first chapter provides introduction or role of women in various sector and civil society, statement of the problems, objectives, research questions and importance of the study.

**Chapter Two:** The second chapter consists the review of literature. The review of literature from the previous studies publication books, theories and research reports on the concept the regarding status of women, role of women in decision making as theoretical framework.

**Chapter Three:** Third chapter comprises the research methodology on which the researchers design, sample size, nature of data and collection procedure, data analysis and data analytical tools was explained.

**Chapter Four:** The fourth chapter is related to the role of women in household decision making which was analyzed and explained through statistically.

**Chapter Fifth:** The fifth chapter is summary and conclusion. At last Appendix and Bibliography was affixed to make this study authentic and relevant.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

Jiggins (1989) in the article “How Poor Women Earn Income in Sub Sahara Africa and what works against them” has highlighted on the condition of women who are involved mostly in household based agricultural activity. An overall 30 percent of rural household are estimated to be headed by women who contributed 80 percent of agricultural labor mainly as unpaid labor. They produce 60 percent of the food consumed by rural households and contribute over one third of all household income through small business, trading and casual labor.

But despite their major input to household food and economic security, “patriarchal family and social structures deny women real property rights in land, limit women’s access to control over the proceeds of their own labor and constrain their decision making roles”.(Rana, 2002).

However, Jiggins also suggested various micro level interventions which would strengthen women’s position “in the labor process, within the household and as independent wage and income earners” (Jiggins.1989:1960). Such interventions would be supportive of the expansion of income generation opportunities and activities for women which would stop further deterioration of their livelihoods.

United Nation (1987) focused that the role of young women workers in manufacturing of rapidly industrializing economy is closely associated with the international division of labor. Garment and textile industries of Philippines and Thailand were chosen to analyze the role of women. The data presented in this study indicated that women’s employment has been

concentrated in the most labor-intensive and wage industries and that in associated with this fact, the labor force participation rate of women has increased much faster than that of men during the export oriented phase of industrialization. The wage levels of men and women are found to be similar in Thailand, but the work burden of women and the task assigned to them does not revealed as the same. Since the development programs have not effectively addressed women's contribution as industrial workers, fairer laws are required to cover women working in manufacturing .If governments are genuinely interested in protecting women as well as promoting opportunities, then social policies and jobs of the future.

UNICEF (1987) depicts that women's contribution to economic and social progress is still constrained by their limited access to education and information which the full development of utilization of their intellectual and productive capacities. For a large proportion of women, the written world still finds no meaning. Many rural women who do become literate however, will lose their skill because there are few opportunities for them to practice. Low level of educational attainment among the women and prejudice in favor of male requirement may also negatively affect the formal employment of women. In 1982, in government services only 7 percent of graduated officers and 5 percent of the supporting staff were women .Women constitutes less than 10 percent of decision making position at the national and local level. Most of the decision making concerning activities are made by men. The study shows about 50 percent of decision are made by men, 19 percent jointly and 31 percent by female which shows very low percent of decision making power on the part of women.

Kaur (1987) in a case study carried out in Haryana state, emphasizes upon the need to give due recognition of female decision making especially in the case of home and farm affairs among the rural families.. She claims that women who are never found as final decision maker in many matters except for case of food and nutrition of the children. Ironically women are not even free to decide about participation in women's organization such as Mahila Mandals. Financial decisions are found solely manipulated by husbands except in few cases. She concludes saying planned programs should be designed which support women's potential as capable and worthily decision makers.

Kaur goes on to emphasize education and access to educational opportunities as an important factor influencing women's input in the decision making process. As she observes "Educated women are better placed as compared to their illiterate counterpart".

Mazumdar (2001) in her article on "Another Development with women: A view from Asia" speaks of the Asian women who have been subject to acute social, economic and political prejudice and oppression in the past and which continue even to this day, may be to a lesser degree.

According to her, "the monopolies of economic and political power as well as access to knowledge are the three major instruments by which the present structure of inequality between and within nations are maintained". The majority of the women in the world, especially the Asian women, are excluded from these instruments. Their position is further belittled by the fact that their work is considered as "non-productive". This under devaluation of women's contribution to the economy is closely associated with their inferior social status and also "the relative loss of individual freedom and status with the family"

Mazumdar (2001), Mazumdar also talks of non-socialist countries, where the extension of capitalism has further marginalized the economic and social roles of women. They have been projected as mere consumers, worthy of only social welfare services but not as partners with equal say in building a new society. Such welfare policies, no matter how well intentioned, are found to reinforce various forms of exploitation of these women.

Mazumdar (2001) also highlights upon the fact that in Asia, women constitute the single largest group engaged in agriculture and food production. Some Asian traditions even claim that women discovered agriculture. Yet very few of them control the basic asset-land-Although they participate actively in the labor process, they are often excluded from the decision making process.

Further, women in agriculture attach highest priority to food crops, as it becomes their responsibility to feed their families. Therefore their greater control on agriculture decision could be made instrumental in reducing the areas under food crops.

She concludes, saying the constraint to family, illiteracy and all traditional barriers and attitudes prevent women's ability to influence vital decision making she suggest farming grass root level organizations responsive to the needs of poor, local women. Along with this is needed a new approach to study the social organizations, i.e. families and household in a clearer perspective. Better knowledge of women both in the past and present can bring a lot changes to these perceptions.



## 2.2 National Context

Women have very low participation in decision making process, 75 percent of household related and external decision making are entirely made by male member of house (Acharya, 1995).

Acharya and Bennett (1981) focused that women are primarily involved inside the household. Women are frequently dependent on men as mediators with the outside world. This dependency deprives women of the opportunity to learn the skills necessary for forms of development increasingly being made available by government. Women in the economically defined non dichotomous communities (Lohorung Rai, Baragaonole and Kham Magar) have considerably more decision making responsibility both outside and inside the household than women in the dichotomous communities (Maithali, Parbatiya and Tharu), while remaining communities (Chhetri and Tamang) women's decision making roles falls in between.

Acharya and Bennett (1981) give a wider overview of women's status in their decision making power in household. They claim that economic factor affects women's role in decision making both directly and indirectly. If a woman has a greater economic participation she has a greater power of decision making. Similarly social and demographic factors also influence the roles of decision making e.g. Small size of children imply higher economic participation and consequently greater decision making power for women.

Acharya and Bennett (1981) have singled out "decision making" from the multidimensional concept of status which reflects the internal dynamic of sexual stratification within the household. They developed some models

from the study of eight different village communities from the status of women in Nepal. In this model, the villages were more conceived to be operating in such four spheres of subsistence activities as household domestic work, agricultural production activities, work in village labor market and local bazaar and total employment in the wider economy beyond the village.

Acharya and Bennett (1983) mentioned that various socio-economic, cultural and demographic factors affect the extent and structure of female economic participation in the largely subsistence economy of rural Nepal. The women's labor is heavily concentrated in their own agricultural production activities. However female percent's involvement can be seen in the local market economy and wider economy beyond village. Women in the more orthodox Hindu communities who are subsistence production display a much less significant role than those in the Tibeto-Burman communities where women participate actively in the market economy. The proportion of time spent by women in domestic activities emerged as a positive factor in the determination of her input in farm management decisions and as a negative factor in her input into resource allocation decisions. Participation in the market economy outside the village had a positive influence on women's input into both domestic and resource allocation decision and a negative influence on farm management decisions. Women who participate in the market activities make a measurable contribution to the household income, while women working in the subsistence agriculture are generally laboring on land, controlled by the male household head. The women involving in the development process and expanding their acceptable roles beyond those of mother, household and subsistence agricultural worker can be expected to have

important long range effects in terms of reduced fertility rates and changed social attitudes towards children's education.

According to Shrestha (1994), decision making power of women may increase with an equality of participation at all levels of planning and policy making not as recipient beneficiaries, labor and input contribution and consultants but as active change agents at the concerned level. It does mean the involvement of one or two women or the wives of the leaders, but the involvement of women and men in the same proportion in decision making as their proportion in the community at large.

She further added that women of Nepal are so dependent to men that if the partners of members deny giving shelter to them, it is a question of basic survivals. This system has made women so helpless, houseless and dependent that women men they will not survive. So in this human system the right of survival is laid on the heart of men.

Pandit (2003) mentioned in his dissertation that community based development and welfare programmers should focus on increasing women's representation in decision making procedure. They should also be added in some relevant training in community for money.

Women in Nepal, as elsewhere, hold the triple work responsibilities of reproduction, house holding and frame work. However, reproduction is not treated as work and household is not considered as productive work by government system. Women also suffered from discriminatory practices in opportunities for education, personal mobility, which is required among other for skill development and independent decision making (UNDP, 1995).

The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) aimed at integrating women to the development though; gender equality and women's empowerment increasing, women's participation in every sector, giving a concrete shape to gender concept in the process of formulation, implementation and evaluation of sector policies and programmers, accelerating the process of multi-faced development of women's empowerment by uplifting their social, economic, political and legal status projecting and promoting the right and interests of women and gradually eliminating violence, exploitation, injustice and atrocities being committed against women Tenth Five Year Plan (2003).

The article of the Katmandu Post (March 16,2005) all UN agencies are committed to advancing gender equality and women empowerment as well as fighting discrimination against women and girl children at all level, especially in remote and rural areas. We believe that gender equality should be a guiding principle throughout the year than a day celebration.

Even in this age of miraculous changes where we are breathing, we can see that women still fell the suppression of one kind or the others, especially in the developing countries. But women are directly or indirectly involving in the place of economic development. (The Rising Nepal, 2008).

“A situation analysis of children and women in Nepal” depict that, women have less access to income, wealth, employment education and health facilities etc then men. Women figure are predominately has been explained as four concentric spheres of activities.

- i. Household chores.
- ii. Agricultural production activities.

iii. Local market economy.

Our village economy i.e. implement through short term migration.

In the same way, the major quantitative indicator of female status used was the relative input into areas of decision making.

iv. Farm Management.

v. Involvement in local market economy and domestic activities.

(National Planning Commission, 1992)

In Nepalese context, women are observed as heading weak decision-making power of women. Therefore, the issues of women empowerment would not be fulfilled till women attain decision-making process rights for their own households. Therefore, this study focuses the women's decision making power in household, in Baghaura, Lamki Chuha Municipality Kailali.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study is designed both on descriptive as well as exploratory methods. The generated information is displayed in descriptive formats. At the exploratory research is used for collecting information about respondents views and ideas about the program and their problems.

#### **3.2 Selection of the Study Area and its rationale**

The present study was conducted in Lamki Chuha Municipality Baghaura of Kailali district which is 500 km southwest from capital city. According to CBS (2011) the total population of this area is 1,854. Out of the total population 926 are males and 928 are females. Baghaura is situated in Lamki Chuha Municipality which is just linked by Mahendra Highway. Pratapur and Chisapani are the neighboring village in the Southwest. There are many ethnic groups are living in this area. They speak different language. They have different culture, tradition and life style.

As mentioned earlier the main objective of the present study is to examine the decision making role of women in household economy at micro level. The present study area is selected for the case study because the women of this area are still lagging on household decision making because of illiteracy and empowering skill.

#### **3.3 Source of Data Universe and Sampling**

From total household of Baghaura sample coverage 50 household are surveyed. The selection of household was done using 'random sampling' lottery method.

### **3.4 Nature and Data**

Qualitative and quantitative data has been used for research purpose. Both primary and secondary data have been collected. Primary data has been collected during the field studies and the conversation with key respondents. Secondary data has been collected from the review of previous studies, published and unpublished documents

#### **3.1 Primary sources**

The researcher has tried to collect the factual data. In this attempt flowing technique has been adopted for colleting required information.

#### **3.3.2 Secondary sources**

Secondary data and information has been collected throw the review of the secondary sources available. The researcher has collected the required materials from the library, VDC office and the leaflet of research area. A literature survey has been carried out to update and shaped ideas in role of women in household decision making. Beside the literature contained a huge sources a experiences with regard methods for this kinds of research.

### **3.5 Methods of Data Collection**

The structured questions and interview schedule is prepared. The first section dealt with the purpose of getting information about socio-economic status of the households and the second section dealt with the purpose of getting information about decision making role in farm management, health aspect, educational aspect and household management. The used questions are displayed in Annex. Similarly, some relevant quarries was floated to concerned key informants to generate the facts regarding the role of women in household decision making status.

### **3.5.1 Interview with Key Informants**

The checklist is conducted by discussing with the local teacher, ward representatives and the community leaders to respond on women's participation.

### **3.6 Universe and Sampling**

There are 278 household of Baghaura according to the municipality profile of CBS (2011) the sample size is selected for current study is around 20 percent of the total number of households. It approximately comes around 50 household. This study is completed by using random sampling method and lottery method. Because the purpose of this writing is to dig out the status of female decision making within the family. But to explore the real scenario or to find out the information in relative term, males was interviewed as Key Informants.

### **3.7 Data Processing and Analysis**

The collected data and information was processed and analyzed with the highlights on a descriptive and explanatory technique to fulfill the objectives of the study. The data was analyzed in both ways i.e. qualitatively and quantitatively. The generated data was tabulated and analyzed using simple statistical tools.



**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE**  
**RESPONDENTS**

**4.1 Ethnic Composition of Respondents**

The ethnic groups reveal a tendency to stay clustered among their own communities. However, people from different groups were also found to be believing together in certain areas of settlement. The study area is the mixture of different cultural groups. The major portion of the population compares of Tharu which is followed by Brahmin, Chhetri and other:

**Table No. 4.1 Ethnic Composition of Respondents**

Ethnic Group	No. of Households
Tharu	16
Brahmin	12
Chhetri	8
Sarki	4
Kami	4
Damai	3
Magar	3
Total	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

The table no. 4. 1 shows the ethnic composition of households. Among the total household, Tharu is the highest, Brahmin contains the second position and Chhetri is stayed third position in which Sarki, Kami, Damai and Magar are 4 HHs 4 HHs 3 HHs and 3 HHs respectively. In comparison with the females of the so-called upper class, the condition of the females of the lower class is even more pathetic. They are forced to obey whatever the males say.

## 4.2 Marital Status of the Women

Marital status is also a significant social indicator for understanding gender participation in household economy. Gender ideologies for married and unmarried male and female differ and consequently their roles also differ in the household economy. Therefore, the marital status of the respondents have been taken into consideration. The marital status of the respondent is shown in the table below:

**Table No. 4.2 Marital Status of the Respondents**

Marital Status	No. of Households
Married	40
Unmarried	6
Widowed	4
Total	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

Out of the total 50 female households, 40 of them are found to be married, 6 of the them unmarried and only 4 widowed. Married, unmarried and widowed females get different treatments in the society. In comparison with others, unmarried females can enjoy more freedom in the family. The married females have to lose all their rights and freedom. Their main duty is supposed to satisfy their husband. They are not allowed to doubt and question their husbands. The condition of widowed females is even worse. They have to face the curses and unnecessary blames of the society.

## 4.3 Educational Status of the Household Couple

Education is an important element of life that exposes the bright future of life. It plays a vital role for the development of people, national economy

as a whole. It is the principle mechanism for fulfilling the awareness and change of the people. Therefore, it is one of the most important demographic characteristics for empowering both men and women.

The educational status of the sampled household of the study area has been presented below:

**Table No. 4.3 Educational Status of Household couple**

Educational Status	Male	Female	Total
Illiterate	2	13	15
Literate	12	10	22
Under SLC	10	13	23
SLC	13	8	21
Above SLC	13	6	19
Total	50	50	100

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

The educational status is divided into 5 categories which are literate, illiterate, under SLC, SLC and above SLC those people who can only read and write are kept in literate and having school education but did not pass the SLC are kept under SLC and above SLC represents are all who have attained all the levels above SLC level education.

Table 4.4 shows the educational status of the respondents. Out of the total 50 respondents 15 illiterate consisting 2 males and 13 females. It was found that only 22 are literate among them 12 males and 10 are females. Only 13 males and 8 females have attained SLC education. This table shows that higher proper times of females are literate.

#### 4.4 Occupation and Source of Income

Occupation and source of income represent the economic status of people. Occupation is considered as the main source of income. Business is the main occupation in the study area along with government services. Thus, the major sources of income are business and service. However, some households are engaged on agricultural occupation too and some HHs are engaged in non-agriculture occupation for e.g.: Foreign employment, Tourism, Daily-wage earners etc. The following table shows the occupational composition of sampled HHs with reference to male and female population.

**Table No. 4.4 Occupational Composition of the Respondents Couple**

Occupation	Male	Female
Business	16	14
Services	13	13
Agriculture	7	9
Oversees	5	2
Others	1	12
Total	42	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

The table no. 4.4 shows that 16 out of the 42 male are involved in business, 13 in govt. service, 7 in agriculture, 5 in overseas and 1 in others. Out of 50 females, 14 of them concentrated mainly upon business, 13 in service sector, 9 in the agriculture, 12 in household work (other) and 2 in overseas. The great portion of females do not have access to paying jobs. Though, they have to do more works in comparison with their male counter parts in total, they get nothing in return. The household works, which are completely non-paying works, pull the females

backward from their creativity. This further compels their submission before the males.

#### **4.5 Working Hours among the Male and Female**

The working hour of female is definitely higher than that of their male counterpart. This can be attributed to their involvement in both business, HHs work as well as the agricultural sphere of activities.

**Table No. 4.5 Working Hours among the Male and Female Groups**

Working Hours	Male	Female	Total
Up to 2 hrs	9	-	9
3-5 hrs	10	10	20
6-8 hrs	17	25	42
9-11 hrs	5	8	13
11+hrs	1	7	8
Total	42	50	92

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

We find only men in the category where the working hour per day is two hours. On the other hand women constitute the highest number of working hours/day. Overall finding is that, men comprise a larger proportion of the lesser number of working hours, whereas women constitute a greater HHs of the higher number of working hours.

The working hours between males and females definitely shock everybody. The females are compelled to internalize the fact that they are born to work. In other words, working always becomes their natural duty towards their family and society.

Thus, in the male-dominated societies like ours, females are considered just as machines which can easily be repaired and replaced if they do not

function. They are confined within the narrow walls of kitchen. Furthermore, they are given their prime duty of giving birth, rearing and nourishing their children. The age-old male ideology deprives them from their natural, innate and inborn rights of equality, freedom and justice. The females of all classes and families are trapped in the claws of cruel and ruthless male ideology.

#### **4.6 Empirical Findings on Decision Making Role of Women In Household**

This chapter explains the women's status in terms of decision making in different aspects of household as well as other activities. It reveals women's participation in making decision in household activities, where decisions are regarded to HHs related expenditure, social and other HHs related activities. This chapter is divided into three different parts. They can be listed as women's decision making role in:

##### **4.6.1 Decision Making Role in HHs Related Expenditures**

Decision making is one of the indicators of social status. The ability to make decision makes people powerful. The decision maker is considered as centre both in the family and society, around which all other members revolve. Decisions have to be taken in all sectors including business, household works, education, choosing bridegroom and so on. The chances and opportunities to make decisions determine the progress and development of people.

##### **4.6.2 Decision Making in Business Investment**

Business is the major source of income in some families. It yields large profit to those who invest. In almost all families, decision about business investment is taken by male members, as a consequence, females have to

be dependent on males. The following table clearly shows the decision making in business investment.

**Table No. 4.6 Decision Making in Business Investment**

Decision maker	Think First (No. of H.H)	Final decision maker (No. of H.H)
Husbands	21	24
Wife	13	18
Other Male members	9	4
Other Female members	1	-
Jointly	6	4
Total	40	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

The table no. 4.6 shows that only 50 households are involved in business investment. Although wives have a greater input as initiators 13 HHs however the husbands appear as the main persons to be consulted 21 HHs and as final decision makers 18 HHs as well. The other male members have some kind of contribution in all three stages of the decision making process, while the joint decisions in the final stage score 4 HHs . Ignoring the females, males make decisions in business investment and other income generating activates.

Despite their negligible involvement in income generating and profit making activities, we can find large involvement of women as major decision maker regarding food expenditure, clothing, medical treatment, loans and gifts, social and religious ceremonies.

#### **4.6.3 Decision Making on Buying Household Items**

In this section radio, T.V, furniture and (telephone/mobile) are categorized as household things. Almost all households have a radio in

their home. Maximum number of women replied that they had mutually decided to buy a Television. But in the case of telephone/mobile) women were found to decide less than men. The responses from the households are shown in the table below:

**Table No. 4.7 Decision on Buying Household Things**

Household things	Male	Female	Both	Total
Radio	22	16	12	50
T.V	21	18	11	50
Telephone	19	19	12	50
Furniture	17	21	12	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

The table no. 4.7 shows, the decision of male, female and both of them on buying of household things. As shown in the table, 22 HHs of male and 21 HHs of female and 12 HHs of both of them made decision on purchasing Radio. 21 HHs of male, 18 HHs of female and 11 HHs of both of male and female made decision to purchase T.V. Similarly, the decision to purchase Telephone (Mobile) is made by 19 HHs of male 19 HHs of female and 12 HHs of both of them made decision to purchase Telephone (Mobile). Likewise, 17 HHs of male, 21 HHs of female and 12 HHs of both of them made decision to purchase furniture.

Therefore, as shown in the table, the decision to purchase Radio, Television and Furniture were found to have relatively more than that of male. This clearly indicates the role of female to be effective only deciding about the minor household activities.

#### **4.6.4 Educational Management Aspect**

Parents have to take the responsibility of educating their children. Better educated women may have more status in the household and have greater



authority to speak openly with their husbands about their children's education. In the present study, all the 50 households were asked about who decides to take admission of their children to school, buy books, uniforms and payment of fees. The responses are presented in table below:

**Table No. 4.8 Decision Making Role in Educational Management**

Educational Instrument	Male	Male HHs	Female	Both	Total
Books/Copies	22	44	18	10	50
Uniforms	15	30	22	13	50
Payment of fees	24	48	16	10	50
Admission in school	19	38	18	13	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

The table no. 4.8 shows the decision of males and females regarding to buy the educational instruments of the children. As shown above table, 22 HHs of male, 18 HHs of female and 10 HHs of both of them made decision to buy books and copies for children. Similarly, to buy their uniforms, the decision is made by 15 HHs of male, 22 HHs of female and 13 HHs of both of them. Likewise, 24 HHs of the male 16 HHs of female and 10 HHs of both of them made decision to pay the fees of the children. 19 HHs of male, 18 HHs of female and 13 HHs of both of them decided regarding selection of school regarding their children's admission.

According to the table, it is clear that most of the decision regarding education of the children, their fees selection of school for admission is made by males where as female made the decision regarding the uniform of their children only. Though some of the roles are given to females, they are of less value. The major roles are assumed by the males themselves. Thus, the females are engaged only in insignificant things, in which the final and most decisive decision is taken by males.

#### 4.6.5 Decision Making on the use health services

Wives are again seen as the primary initiator and final decision makers for expenditure on medical treatment (both traditional/modern) among the 50 households.

**Table No. 4.9 Decision Making on the use of health services**

Decision maker	Think First (No. of H.H)	Final Decision Maker (No. of H.H)
Husband	14	20
Wife	26	21
Other Male members	7	5
Other Female members	2	2
Jointly	1	2
Total	50	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

Such decision making depicts women's greater control for the health of the family members. The husbands, however are consulted the most in such matters, as they score the highest 48 HHs in the second stage of the decision making process. The other male members have a greater input than the female members in all three stages of decision making. The joint decisions are 2 HHs only.

Hence, females are taken as only housekeepers whose main duty is only inside the family. Their decisions do not contribute to the overall development of the family as these decisions can be completely subverted by the males. The females are forcefully made to internalize that they are physically and mentally immature and weak, and as a result, they cannot make wise decisions.

#### 5.6.6 Decision Making Role in Social and Other Activities

Males and females have different roles in the social activities. Males can participate in all social and other activities whereas females are restricted

only within the family. The exposure of males in different activities supersede them than females in many respects. The female are made to be passive and silent, and accept whatever the males decide irrespective of the advantages and disadvantages.

#### **4.6.7 Decision Making in the Choice of Bridegroom**

The natural right to choose the bridegroom is not given to daughters. Moreover, their mother and other female members are also pathetic in this regard. The final decision is made by male members.

**Table No. 4.10 Decision Making in the Choice of Bridegroom**

Decision Maker	No. of H.H.
Husband	20
Wife	14
Other Male members	4
Other Female members	2
Jointly	10
Total	50

Source: Field Survey 2015

On the table no. 4.10 it can be concluded that husbands from 20 HHs out of the 50 household decide on the bridegroom for their daughters. The wives and other male members and joint decisions have 14 HHs 4 HHs and 10 HHs respectively each for the choice of bridegroom. It has been proved that the other female members are including the choice of the bridegroom.

Thus, female members are made just silent recipients of the male's decisions. Due to the age-old male ideology, the false and fake inferiority of female is naturalized.

#### 4.6.8 Decision Making in Dowry System

Dowry system is observed to be practiced among all the 50 households. Women are questioned whether taking fewer dowries with them during their marriage meant greater condemnation from their laws or the profile in households.

**Table No. 4.11 Decision Making in the Dowry System**

Decision Makers	No. of Household
Husband	20
Wife	12
Male members	6
Female members	2
Jointly	10
Total	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

The table no. 4.11 we see that husbands in the households appear to have a greater say 20 HHs in the amount of dowry to be giving away for their daughters. Joint decisions are also comparatively strong 12 HHs in these matters. The other male members and wives of the households have a low, while the other female, male including daughters(brides) have say no at all in this decision making process.

#### 4.6.9 Social/ Religious Ceremonies

Wives are mainly responsible for the two stages of decision making process namely as initiators and final decision makers for expenditure on social/ religions obligations. But, their input as persons consulted equal that of the husbands.

**Table No. 4.12 Religious Ceremonies**

Decision maker	Think First (No. of H.H)	Final Decision Maker (No. of H.H)
Husband	17	11
Wife	23	19
Male members	9	8
Female members	1	3
Jointly	-	9
Total	50	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

The table no. 4.12 clearly shows that the male members show the greater input as final decision makers than the other female members, the later show greater input as initiators than former, while joint decisions, and although low are found in the second and third stage of decision making.

The females are found to be most pathetic members in their own family. They are suppressed and dominated by their male counterparts. They are considered only as the manager of the household activities, where the important role is played by male members. Their decisions are only nominal and insignificant.

#### **4.6.10 Decision Making for the Use of Family Planning Measures**

Rapid growth of population is creating big problem at present in most of the developing countries. Rapid population growth is the cause of the degradation of the quality of life as well as environment.

Family planning is main factor for not only controlling birth but also enhancing the standard of living of people. In developing countries, the food production is low and there is lack of proper utilization of available resources. Therefore, use of family planning is essential to balance and manage population and environment properly.

**Table No. 4.13 Decision Making for the Use of Family  
Planning Measures**

Decision maker	No .of Households
Husband	22
Wife	18
Jointly	10
Table	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

These 50 households using family planning measures reported their decisions for its use as being the strongest. Their inputs in this process constitute 18 HHs of the total HHs. The joint decisions rank second 10 HHs among the 50 households with the decision of the husbands following closely behind with 22 HHs .The husband are found to be privileged to make the choices of family planning devices. Their dominant role in each and every sphere of life indicates the culmination of male domination and hegemony.

Thus, family planning was adopted in large households in my study area. So, it can be said that people have knowledge about family planning. Both husband and wife jointly decide which family planning measures to adopt. However, temporary family planning measure was practice in great deal. Though both husbands and wife use and decide the family planning devices, the role of husbands in deciding these devices is crucial.

#### **4.6.11 Decision Making in Sending Children to School**

Education is generally regarded as the light of life, which leads us from the darkness to the brightness. It enlightens and brightens our life, thereby removing the inherent weaknesses and short-comings. Every family has

to take wise and timely decision about the education of their children. The role of husband and wife is found as follows regarding decision making in sending their children to school in my area of study:

**Table No. 4.14 Decision Making in Sending Children to School**

Decision Maker	No. of Households
Husband	22
Wife	20
Jointly	8
Total	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

On the table no. 14 Fifty HHs found to send their children to school. 22 HHs of male, 20 HHs of female and 8 HHs of jointly have made decisions to send children to school.

The close analysis of the above table shows that women are backward in making decisions about sending their children to school. Though some of the women can be involved in decision making, others have to obey the decisions of their husbands. This clearly exhibits the dependency of female on male.

#### **4.6.12 Decision Making for Women's Education**

Women education is one of the fundamental steps for women empowerment. Educated women can be self-supportive and self-dependent. It is helpful to release them from the cruel trap of male domination. But, the women are not free to decide about their education. They need to take permission from their husbands to attend the adult literacy classes. Only few of them can decide independently. The following table shows the decision making for women's education:

**Table No. 4.15 Decision Making for Women’s Education**

Decision making	No. of Households
Husband	12
Wife	10
Jointly	8
Total	30

*Source: Field Survey 2015,*

On the table no. 4.15 shows that only 30 of women among the 50 households are found to participate in adult literacy classes.

For the 30 women who participate in these classes, their husbands dominate as decision makers for their education, making up 12 HHs of the total while the wife's decision is only 10 HHs of the total and joint decisions of husband and wife is 8 HHs of the total women.

Thus, with the help of their clever strategy of not sending females to get education, males are successfully continuing their dominating education for most of the females is the matter of mercy of their husbands.

#### **4.6.13 Community Activities**

Community activities provide great chance to expose to the public. These activities determine the public image of a person and help to create their own identity. In my area of study, many women are found to be participated in community activities.



**Table No. 4.16 Women’s Participation in Community Activities**

Participants	No. of Households
Yes	28
No	18
Total	46

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

We see that women from 46 out of them 50 households participate in community groups like mother group, community forest group and agricultural group etc. these women form the large majority of 18 HHs of the women who do not participate in such activities.

Though most of the females are found to be involved in different community activities, it is not found to be very effective because they are weakened and paralyzed in other sectors. Their interactions and discussions in such activities are not very useful to change their overall status. here, the politics of male ideology is successful to cause then falling behind indirectly.

#### **4.7 Decision Making Role in Other HHs Related Activates**

Different activities are performed within the family to run it smoothly. The role of both male and female is inevitable in every activity. There should be gender equality and equity. But, it is not found in the male - dominated society. The role of male and female in decision making is colored by discrimination and guided by male ideology. Some of the household activities and role of male and female are presented below.

##### **4.7.1 Control over Household Cash/ Expenditure/ Transactions**

Female's share is found more in decision making in case of general household expenditure. They have manage the expenditure of different

kitchen items and other materials. The following table shows the control of female over household cash:

**Table No. 4.17 Control over Household Cash**

Persons	No. of Households
Husband	13
Wife	27
Male members	7
Female members	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

On table no. 4.17 we see that wives make up the highest 27 HHs among the other members of the household as the ones to keep the household money. However the other female members appear to have no such control as compared to their male counterpart. The female especially wife have dominant role in deciding the expenditure of household materials.

#### **4.7.2 Control over Bazaar Purchase**

Every family has to purchase the essential materials from the market. In my field of study, the females have greater authority over purchasing the materials. They can decide what and where to buy but their purchasing authority is indirectly controlled by economy in which husband has complete grip. The following table show this situation:

**Table No. 4.18 Control over Bazaar Purchase**

Persons	No. of Households
Husband	16
Wife	25
Male members	5
Female members	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

The wives alone have a greater control over purchases required from the bazaar as compared to the other members of the household. The other female members, however, show very little control in this matter 3 HHs which is in fact the least among the rest of the household.

The husbands alone make up 16 HHs for control over bazaar purchases. The remaining males can control about 5 HHs .This is less than female members to control over bazaar purchase.

The female despite having almost complete control over purchasing the essential things, are not free from male bondage. As they are engaged only in non-paying works, they have to kneel down in front of their husbands for money. So, inaccessibility to income sources have become a curse to female.

#### **4.7.3 Control over Family Expenditure (Small gift/loan to friend/relative)**

Female have sole control over other different family expenditures, which are mainly supposed to be minor. They are free to decide about small gifts. Loan to friends or relatives. But, in most of these cases, the final decisions are made by male. Discarding such things as insignificant and minor, males do not hear their responsibility regarding such things:

**Table No. 4.19 Control over Family Expenditure**

Decision maker	Think Firstly (No. of H.H)	Final decision maker No. of H.H
Husband	8	16
Wife	22	24
Other Male members	7	3
Other Female members	5	5
Jointly	-	2
Total	42	50

*Source: Field Survey 2015*

Note: the decision is made for all sections of table No. 19 are carried out under the stage process, namely:

1. Initiators of the idea.
2. Persons consulted for that idea.
3. Final decision makers.

Only 8 HHs out of the 50 households have expenditure on small gifts and loans to friends or relative. Among them, the wives reveal the greatest input as initiators 22 HHs and final decision makers 24 HHs for such expenditure, while the husbands are consulted the most in these matters, the other male and female members appear to have a low input as initiators and final decision makers.

In sum, the role of female in household decision making is ambivalent. They are allowed to make decisions in some so-called inferior and insignificant works, but the main and final decisions are taken by male only. The voices and suggestions of the females are found to be addressed only in some of the cases. Avoidance and negligence of female in household activities have lead to degradation of the family. Family welfare is possible only with the involvement of female. Active participation and involvement of women in each and every activity of the family including decision making in different matters is needed for the all round development of family members and it also helps to make the family happy, realty, progressive and prosperous.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This study on “Role of Women in Household Decision Making” was conducted in Baghaura, Lamki Chuha Municipality aiming to assess the socio-economic status of women with the magnitude of their role in household decision making. Among the 278 total HHs, 50 HHs are surveyed. The study is carried-out in some sequential steps of research methodology such as defining research problem, reviewing literature, designing research, collecting data, analyzing data and interpreting data.

Women, being primarily the main agents of household economy, their role in decision making processes of household activities should be addressed. Therefore, it is crucial as well as important to carry out this study. To assess the decision making role of women in household, the socio-economic, cultural and many other variables have been chosen and analyzed. These variables encompass various dimensions of social structure (gender, caste, age group, ethnicity, class), socio-cultural norms, education, extension, motivation, income generation activities, expenditure pattern of HHs and HHs management activities. However the major findings of the study are as follows:

Out of 50 HHs, 16 HHs are Tharu, 12 HHs are Bramhan, and 8 are Chhetri, and 4 HHs are Sarki, 4 HHs are Kami 3HHs Damai, and 3 are Magar. It is also found that there are 15 HHs respondents illiterate in this area. Where the majority of the respondents are literate and they have passed SLC level i.e. 21 HHs . From this, it is clear that there are mostly literate people in this study area. It is found that the majority of the population is engaged in business which has accounted 14 HHs female

respondents of the total. On the other hand, services are found 13 HHs female respondents. Similarly, agriculture is 9 HHs female respondents, foreign employment is 2 HHs female respondents and other (daily wage earner, part time job and tourism activities) is 12 HHs female respondents. Thus, in this study area business is seen as the main occupation. Similarly, it is found that the married women constitute large majority of 41 HHs widowed 4 HHs unmarried women 6 HHs out of the total number of households.

Through the study, it is found that we find only men in the category where the working hour per day is 2 hours. On the other hand women working our is the highest number of hours/day. Which implies that women constitute a greater number of working hours. Similarly, it is found that only 50 HHs out of the 50 households are involved in business investment. Although wives have a greater input as initiators 26 HHs however the husbands appear as the main persons to be consulted 42 HHs and as final decision makers 36 HHs as well. 44 HHs of male and 42 HHs of female and 24 HHs of both of them made decision on purchasing Radio. 42 HHs of male, 36 HHs of female and 22 HHs of both of male and female made decision to purchase T.V. Likewise, 34 HHs of male, 42 HHs of female and 24 HHs of both of them made decision to purchase furniture. At the same time 44 HHs of male, 36 HHs of female and 20 HHs of both of them made decision to buy books and copies for children. It is concluded that women as major decision maker of the many HHs expenditure activities.

It is found that the wives and other male members and joint decisions have 12 HHs 6 HHs and 14 HHs respectively each for the choice of bridegroom, husbands in the households appear to have a greater say 12 HHs in the amount of dowry to be given away for their daughters, 24

HHs of male, 20 HHs of female and 6 HHs of jointly have made decision to send children to school and 20 HHs of the wife decision makers for their own education.

It is also found that the wives make up the highest 54 HHs among the other members of the household as the ones to keep the household money and wives reveal the greatest input as initiators and final decision makers 48 HHs for control over family expenditure, which clearly shows that female members appear to have no such control as compared to their male counterpart.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This study is concentrated on the analysis towards the decision making process of women in terms of social as well as household activities. Based on different facts, conclusion can be drawn that females have lower decision making power and they have sub-ordinate role in family or in the society. They are deprived from their right and responsibilities. They have lower decision making power than their male counterparts. In major household activities men played a dominate role in decision making. The females who have higher decision making than merely illiterate households. As our society is male dominated, males have superior in most of the cases and females have to follow them, even they can't decide for child birth and treatment of illness.

It can be concluded that females have low socio-economic status and thus lag behind men in household decision making. So, it is essential to improve their ability and capacity to participate in major decision making process. Unless females are brought into the mainstream of development, it is impossible to develop society as well as the nation. For this, education and empowerment play a important role. This study shows that

females have to work more in household activities, having less decision making. They have to follow their male partners decision in most of the cases. Though they have responsibility to complete the work, they have no chance to decide for it.





9. Please help me with detail information of your family .

S.N	Name	Sex	Age Year			Education	Occupation	Marital Status
			Below 15	15-59	Above 60			

10. How many Children do you have ?

- a. Son                                      b. Daughter                                      c. None

**B. Information Regarding Household Decision Making**

**I. Farm Management Aspect**

1. Please inform me about your cropping pattern.

Area	Summer	Winter
Crop		
Production		

**Economic Aspects**

1. What is your attitude towards public service ?

- a. tough                                      b. public oriented                                      c. unavailable for poor

2. Is anybody in the family in public service ?

- a. Yes                                      b. No

3. Who inspired him/her to join public services ?

- a. wife                                      b. Husband                                      c. Other

4. Why s/he prefer to join the public service ?

- a. Security                                      b. facility                                      c. Provident fund

5. In which position does s/he is in ?

- a. Officer                                      b. assistance officer                                      c. others

6. Who decides to spent the money ?

- a. Wife                                      b. Husband                                      c. others

7. Who plays vital role for managing the house ?

- a. Wife                                      b. Husband                                      c. others

8. Is any one member of your family has been to foreign countries ?  
a. Yes                      b. No
9. If yes, then who has been there ?  
a. wife                      b. Husband                      c. others                      d. Son
10. How the household Economic status improved due to foreign earning ?  
a. Education                      b. Business                      c. Gadgets                      d. all
11. Who decides him/her to send foreign country ?  
a. Education                      b. Business                      c. Gadgets                      d. all
12. What type of alternative source of income do you have ?  
a. rent                      b. business                      c. stock market
13. Who makes decision on all the aspects ?  
a. Wife                      b. Husband                      c. Both

## **II. Health Aspect**

1. Where did you get treatment when you suffered from illness ?  
a. Health Center                      b. Private Clinic                      c. Hospital
2. Who decides to take care for treatment ?  
a. Self                      b. Husband                      c. Both                      d. Others
3. Do you use family planning ?  
a. Yes                      b. NO
4. If Yes , who decided to use family planning method ?  
a. Self                      b. Husband                      c. Both
5. Where did you deliver your first baby ?  
a. Home                      b. Hospital
6. Who made this decision ?  
a. Self                      b. Husband                      c. Both                      d. Others



**V. Household Management Aspect**

1. Do you spend your income in your family ( if any) ?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Sometimes
  - d. according to the situation
  
2. If Yes, where do you spend your income ?
  - a. Purchase of land
  - b. Purchase of Jeweler
  - c. Household expenditure
  - d. Health
  - e. Food
  - f Clothing
  - g. Festival
  - h. Others
  
3. Who decides to spend your income ?
  - a. Self
  - b. Husband
  - c. Both
  
4. Who generally keeps the household money ?
  - a. Self
  - b. Husband
  - c. Others
  
5. Who usually goes to the bazaar purchases ?
  - a. Self
  - b. Husband
  - c. Both
  - d. Others
  
6. Do you sell your agricultural products when it is surplus ?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
7. If Yes, who decides to sell the agricultural products ?
  - a. Self
  - b. Husband
  - c. Both
  - d. Others
  
8. Do your husband /family member focus your consent while purchasing any kind of property ?
  - a. Yes
  - No.

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