

# CHAPTER-ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General Background

Nepal is a Himalayan country which is situated in south Asia. It is great geographic, cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. Across the diversity, the majority of communities in Nepal are patriarchal where male are powerful than female. Women's life is strongly influenced by her father, husband and son. Patriarchal society is further reinforced by the legal system.

According to the census 2011 of Nepal, total population is 262620829, among which 12927431 are males and 13693378 are females. Out of total population 48.56 percents are males and 51.44 percents are females. Though there is higher number of female in overall population but female have discrimination in most sectors of socio-economic as well as demographic sectors. They have important and dominant role in household activities as well as other activities but their access and control over resources is limited, Women were limited within household. They have unequal access to purchasing household goods, in selling surplus goods, in household expenditure, markets, economic, education, and health care, limited opportunities to earn incomes, restricted access and control over productive resources, low participation in decision making, local government and very few effective legal rights. Women's autonomy in decision making is associated with her ethnicity, deprivation level, urban/rural classification, education, and number of living children (Kabeer, 2002). Nepalese women are further underprivileged by a lack of awareness of opportunities and their legal right. Women work 10-13hrs but their low participation in Households decision making. Household decisions are an important factor to consider in local level planning and policy formulation, especially by government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs and NGOs) for rural areas. Nepal's rural context, particularly in relation to gender and ethnicity (Acharya & Bennett 1981) Women are lower literacy rate and household headed than men. They are only daughters, wives and mothers but were not recognized as individual with their own identity despite the facts that they were as human as men. They are economic dependent with their husband. The status of women is also determined by the patriarchal social system, norms, values, and

women's right preserved and protected by the state and state policy for development of women.

A complex society like ours with a multiplicity of religious and cultural traditions and a variety in family structure does not easily permit us to generalize about the status of women in Nepal (Subedi, 1993). Women's relative status, however, varied from one ethnic group to another. There are different cultural traits as well as different social customs within the groups. The Hindu women especially in Aryan races have been found suppressed. They are not supposed to raise voice of equality. Mongolian groups have been experiencing more liberal freedom than the Aryan groups. We found different ladders in the status of different caste women.

Dalit is one of the lower untouchable caste group. Dalit women are placed at the bottom of South Asia's caste, class and gender hierarchies as Dalit as poor, as women (Navsarjan 2013). Dalit in Nepal are a historically state victimized disadvantaged community who have been compelled to lag at the bottom of the social structure and excluded from national development mainstream due to the caste system and extreme Hinduism for centuries. The caste system was introduced in Nepal by King Jayasthiti Malla (Muluki Ain). According to 'Muluki Ain' Dalit is last caste group. Caste system declares Dalit women to be intrinsically impure and untouchable, which social exclusion and exploitation. They are exploited by patriarchal structures, both in the general community and within their family. According to census of 2011, out of the total Dalit (Hill and Madesh Dalit) population, 8.1 percent are hills Dalit populations. There are more than 26 Dalit caste groups exist in the country. Five caste groups are categorized in Hill Dalits these are; Kami, Damai, Sarki, Badi and Gaine. Population of Kami, Damai, Sarki are regularly 5.2 percent, 2.0 percent, 1.5 percent within Dalit community. Dalit's socio-economic conditions are lower than other caste groups in the society. Larger proportion of population is married below age of 18 years in village. In this community most households are headed by males. Males are dominated over the family properties. They are also discriminated by other higher caste groups. "Dalit women are suffering from three types of discrimination. On the one hand, they being women are exploited by patriarchy and being Dalit, on the other hand, they are exploited by other high caste groups. Again within the households, they suffer from

their male family members." If Dalit women would have been aware about such exploitations, they would have initiated strong movements and insurgencies.

Dalit women's position is subordinate in society. Men have dominant right over the family properties (Sunar 2012). They are low socio-economic status, food insecurity, limited access to educational and health services, political disempowerment and low access to resources and opportunities. According to census of 2011, Dalit literacy rate is 52.4 percent. Women's literacy rate is lower than men within Dalit community. In Kami population's male literacy rate is 70.6 percents and female literacy rate is 54.68 percents. In Dama population's male literacy rate is 70.81 percents and female literacy rate is 55.49 percents. In Sarki populations, male literacy rate is 69.25 percents and female literacy rate is 53.66 percents. In three castes group, women literacy rate is lower than male. It is positively associated with women's participation on decision making. Dalit women weren't do any work freely such as daily household chores, marriage, divorce, remarriage, credit and buying their production not access in market, their health services, child related activities, participation any occasion, participation in social work. Role of Dalit women was subordinate in all decision making sector. They worked from other orders and their freedoms within the household sphere were restricted. They are low participating in household decision making process.

Since the decade of seventies many of the government agencies and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) worked in women related issues. Modernization, Globalization, various political movements, Feminist movement also worked in women issue. Modernization was raised in 1950AD. After Modernization women issue were raised and formulated many policies and programmed to address the women's issue. In Nepal, Women Organization established in 1960 was directed towards social welfare activities like knitting, sewing and weaving. Although, its interest was not purely in the upliftment of women, nevertheless, its efforts to initiate an interest and concern for women and their development cannot go unappreciated. "Women in Development" (WID) approach was formulated in 1970s. It focused on women's equal participation in all social institution e.g. economic, education, employment, health service etc. It main focused on women's economic empowerment. The WID approach emphasizes participation and integration of women in development. It looks into women's role alone. In order to include women

in development WID focused on women's projects, integrated projects, women's productivity and income, and women's ability to manage their household. This approach assumed that when women become economically empowered then decrease gender inequality but it didn't. After the failure of WID concept and developed another concept of "Women and Development" (WAD). It also focused in economic growth to become gender equality. After the failure WAD approach and developed another concept of "Gender and Development" in 1990s. GAD approach and feminist movement (1990) advocacy for equality between men and women and social justice to development concern (Rathgeber 1989). After globalization, all things were globalized. So, women issue becomes globalized. Various National and International Agencies were worked in women issue. Nepal was participation in various women related commitment. It was included UN declaration of 1975-1985 as the UN decade for women. After the UN declaration of 1975 as the International Women's Year, Nepal has also commitment. This committee attracted considerable foreign funds for seminars and conferences on women issues needed by women laborers. After the historic revolution of 2062/63, there was formulate various national policies for women development. Among them the declarations of 33% of women's participation in every sector of the country was a historical declaration, which motivated women to participate in decision making process of the country. Many NGOs and INGOs have been working in various women empowerment programmed in rural area. Women are not only responsible to manage and flourish the house wives but also equally responsible to promote family, community and nation.

After various women empowering programmed there are raised many questions. These are; how is the socio-economic status of Dalit women in Sunkhani VDC in Dolakha District? How is the role of Dalit women in household level decision making? It is gap in sociological research. So, I am interested to do research in women's socio-economic status and decision making within hill Dalit (Sarki, Kami and Damai) community. So that I am interested to do research about it in Sunkhani VDC in ward no.7 of Dolakha District.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Nepalese Women are disadvantaged and underprivileged in terms of their socio-economic status and decision making as compared to their male counterparts. A complex society like ours with a multiplicity of religious and cultural traditional and

variety in family structure does not easily permit us to generalize about the status of women in Nepal. They suffer from poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and household burden. The status of women is an important factor that affects the socio-economic development in a country, without women's participation goals of the development activities cannot be fully attained. So we can say that men and women are the pillars of development. The long-standing and deep-seated impression is that women are weak, passive and home-oriented, less intelligent and less capable than men. It is vastly internalized in our society. Women's activities are generally connected with inside the house and men's in the outside sphere. Their role as managers of the subsistence sector is unproductive, their opinion in important household matters is hardly considered, their freedoms within the household sphere is restricted, leave alone the outside sphere and are overall context the status of a weak a lot. Men have major role of decision making inside the household as well as outside. Acharya and Bennett (1981) claim that economic factor affects women's role in decision making both directly and indirectly. If women have a greater economic participation she has a greater power of decision-making. Similarly, social and demographic factors also affect in decision making.

Dalit is one of the lower untouchable cast group. Dalit women are placed at the bottom of south Asia's caste, class and gender hierarchies as dalit as poor, as women (Navsarjan 2013). According to 'Mulukiain' Dalit is last cast group. Caste system declares dalit women to be intrinsically impure and untouchable, which social exclusion and exploitation. They are exploited by patriarchal structures, both in the general community and within their family. Dalit women aren't resource owner. They work as seasonal agricultural labours in other's land. Women do domestic work, reproductive work, productive (agricultural labour) work, but their role aren't counted in productive work. Women's are lower wages in same work than men. Their low socio-economic status and limited access to educational and health services, political disempowerment and low access to resources and opportunities, which are determined women's role on decision making. Dalit's are lower socio-economic status than other caste group in the society. Most of the Household headed are men. They dominated over the family properties. They are discriminated by other higher caste group. Dalit women are more oppressed by caste and gender.

There are raised various women empowerment programmed to empower such as; Modernization, various feminist movements, political movement, civil war, WID,

WAD, GAD approach, Adhibasi/Janajati Andolan, Mahila Andolan, Dalit Andolan which are mainly focused on women's economic growth, equality, social justice, sexuality, equal right for women and soon. The historic revolution of 2062/63 B.S. brought changes throughout the country. Among them the declarations of 33% of women's participation in every sector of the country was a historical declaration, which motivated to women participate in decision making process of the country.

In that time, many NGOs and INGOs have been working to women empower in rural area. They lunched various women empowerment programmed such as income generating activities, skill development programmed, microfinance, quality education and so on to improve their socio-economic, political, educational condition, health services, decision making and so on. There are raised many questions such as; how is the socio-economic status of Dalit women in study area after these programmed? How is the role of Dalit women in household decision making within Dalit community? Sociology study about social structure, social change, social relationship, social inequality, economic, religion and so on. Decision making is a Sociological issue. I want to find out the differences and changes about their socio-economic status as well as decision making level within Dalit women by sociological point of view. SO that, iam interested to do research about their social-economic status as well as role of women in Household level decision making in Dalit community about these question. So I do research about these questions in Sunkhani VDC in Dolakha District, which are presented given below:

1. How is the socio-economic status of Dalit women in Sunkhani VDC in Dolakha District?
2. How is the role of women in Household decision making in Dalit community in study area?
3. Who have major role in Household decision making in study area?
4. In which activities women are high participation and in which activities women are low participation in Household decision making?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to explore the socio-economic status and role of women in Household decision in dait community in study area. The specific objectives are presented given below:

1. To find out socio-economic status of Dalit women in SunkhaniVDC of Dolakha District.
2. To describe the role of Dalit women in Household decision making.

#### **1.4 Rational of the Study**

This study was attempted to reflect the socio-economic status of women in Dalit community. Furthermore this study found out role of Dalit women decision making in household activities. Although the study was conducted in a small area, it helped to understand the condition of the female in household level decision making process in the Dalit community in the rural setting of Nepal. This study will be useful for those individuals and institutions who are interested to know socio-economic status of Dalit women. It will be helpful for the gender studies. It will also be useful for NGO/INGOs and other organization to launch further effective programs focusing the issue of women in Dalit community mainly socio-economic and decision making sector.

#### **1.5 Organization of the Study**

This study divided into seven chapters. Chapter-I deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, and objectives of the study and significance of the study. Chapter-II deals with the theoretical and empirical literature review from the various books, journals, publications, and consist conceptual framework for the study. Chapter-III deals with the description of the study area and it gives explanation of the research design and procedure of the data generation and statistical tools used during the process and limitation of the study also.

Similarly, chapter-IV deals with the social setting of the study area, socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the households, and participatory characteristics of the women respondents in SunkhaniVDC of Dolakha district. Chapter-V deals with the analysis of the collected data regarding the women in household decision making process. Finally, chapter-VI provides the summary and conclusion of the whole study.

## CHAPTER-TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review means that review where we do critical analysis of more previous studies which is related to our research topic. Literature review is a more important part in sociological studies because it helps to me to gain new information, fill the lack of information or research gap among these studies and also helps to me determine new sociological issues. So that I review previous sociological studies which are related to the role of women in household decision making in Dalit community. In this chapter, I present a brief review of women's role and status in Nepal, international law, convention, agreement and feminist theory. Many scholars have studied on women and their status and have such aspects as the socio-economic status, educational status, health status, and women in decision making in general which are described given below:

#### **2.1 Women's Role and Status: Definition and General Overview**

Women's status is a complex issue and a hard-to-define one. The status of women is contextualized. Around the world women's status in each society and culture varies in different ways. In some societies, women's status is improving gradually. Women's status is linked with their various aspects such as their economic position, social position, their social prestige, level of education and so on. The status of women in the developed countries is also lower than men in all sectors. Leaving some exceptions of European, American and Asian countries, women in the world are socially, economically, culturally and politically dominated and they are excluded from the opportunities. Throughout the world, women face violence every day. From the battlefield to the bedroom, women are at risk from violence in all areas of life.

South Asian countries are primarily linked with the status of women in family, society and the state structures. Traditional ethical code of the society expects women to remain restricted within four walls of home, which is still a common occurrence. In the South Asian region, women are discriminated, and dominated because of son preference traditions of the society dominated by religious beliefs. Daughters are discriminated from birth to funeral ceremony. Women are also suffering from domestic violence, wrong tradition and cultural male practices.



## 2.2 Women Status in Nepal

The status of women in terms of social and economic aspect can be defined by the degree of equality and freedom enjoyed by them. Women's unequal participation with men in domestic decision-making, free expression of their views and participation in the community life help them in begin recognized in the society. The Majority of women in Nepal live in rural areas.

Social status of women is generally low, a situation attributable both to the general poverty of the countries and the gender-based distribution of power and resources in the family and society (Subedi, 1993). Nepali women are daughter, wives and mothers but are not recognized as individuals with their own identity, despite the fact that they are human as men. Society has recognized women to the lowest rank and to a supportive role, confined to the home and farm and their responsibilities due to their maternal function. They are discouraged and prevented to take part in public life (Subedi, 1993). The economic contribution of women was substantial, but largely unnoticed because their traditional role was taken for granted. When they were employed, their wages normally 25 percent less than those paid to men. In most rural areas, their employment outside the household generally was limited to planting, weeding, and harvesting. In urban areas, those migrating from rural areas or with a lower economic status were employed in domestic and traditional jobs as well as in the government sector, mostly in low-level positions. Status of women is determined by many factors such as level of education, economic situation of her and family, health, cooperation of husband, decision making process and so on. Women have unequal access to food, education, and health care, limited opportunities to earn incomes, restricted access to and control over productive resources, and very few effective legal rights. According to censuses of 2011 male literacy rate is 75.1% and female literacy rate is 57.4%. In Nepal, as in most parts of South Asia, women commonly have less power than men in making decisions in household activities. Nepalese women are further underprivileged by a lack of awareness of opportunities and their legal rights.

Decision-making is critical issue whether it is for men or women. It is different from nation to nation in terms of decision makers' multi-perspectives. According to the Oxford Advanced Lerner's Dictionary the term decision making means "the process of deciding about something important, especially in a group of people or in a organization.

”Decision-making power of women is very much neglected in our countryside than in city area. The decision-making power of women should interfere by family status. Women work longer and harder than men but they don't participate in household decision making process. Women are unequal access over resources. Women's decision making is associated with her increased age, paid employment and having a greater number of living children ethnicity, deprivation level, urban/rural classification and education. These are positively associated with women's in decision-making (Kabeer, 2002). So that women's decision making level is different from caste and ethnicity.

Dalit is one of the lower untouchable cast group. Dalit's are lower socio-economic status than other caste group in the society. Most of the Household headed are men. They are discriminated by other higher caste group. Dalit women are more oppressed by caste and gender. Dalit women are placed at the bottom of south Asia's caste, class and gender hierarchies as dalit as poor, as women. Caste system declares dalit women to be intrinsically impure and untouchable, which social exclusion and exploitation. ( They are exploited by patriarchal structures, both in the general community and within their family. Dalits are often misrecognized as being illiterate, unemployed, landless, poor, ignorant, exploited, docile, and ignored by the rest of society. The dalit community has lost its self -respect and dignity as a result of centuries of social discrimination, oppression, exploitation and suppression. However, statistics have revealed that dalits are far behind in the development process. Unlike other ethnic groups, dalits are scattered throughout the country.

Dalit's women are low socio-economic status. Dalit women's position is subordinate in society. Men have dominant right over the family properties (Sunar 2012). Dalit women aren't resource owner. They work as seasonal agricultural labours in other's land. Women are domestic, reproductive, productive (agricultural labour) labour but their role aren't counted in productive work. Women are lower wages in same labour work than men. They are low socio-economic status limited access to educational and health services, low educational status, political disempowerment and low access to resources and opportunities, which are determined women participation on decision making. There is diversity within dalit women by caste, class, marital status, region level of education, employment and so on.

### **2.3 International law, Convention and Agreement**

Gender inequality has been a subject of much concern in recent decades. Several international declarations, resolutions and conventions in favor of women were made. The United Nations has been doing several works for women since its establishment. The UN formed a commission to study the situation of women in order to promote their political, economic and social status in 1946. The UN passed various conventions regarding the women's right to convert citizenship in 1952. In 1975, the UN decided to convene the first world conference in Mexico City with policy observing women's decade till 1985. The second conference was held in Copenhagen in 1980, Denmark. The third and fourth international conference was held in 1985 and 1995 in Nairobi, Kenya and Beijing, China respectively. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women CEDAW was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1979 and came into force on September 1981. It focused on women's equality in all sectors.

Women are given more priority in International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD 1994). The ICPD emphasized the gender equality, equity and empowerment of women. The conference calls on countries to empower women and eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child and the root causes of son preference; increase public awareness of the value of girl children beyond their potential for child bearing, and promote equal participation of women and men in all areas of family and household responsibilities. The UN formed a commission to study the situation of women in order to promote their political, economic and social status in 1946.

The UN convention identifies different critical areas of concern; Decision making is one of the critical areas. UN convention declares that inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision making at all levels. UN, (2001) The Beijing conference came out with broad women issues and declared that women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace. Equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, equal sharing of responsibilities for the family by men and women, and a harmonious partnership between them are critical to their

well-being and that of their families as well as to the consolidation of democracy. The advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and should not be seen in isolation as a women's issue. Equality in decision-making is essential to the empowerment of women. In some countries affirmative action has led 33.3 percent or larger representation in local and national governments. National, regional and international statistical institution still have insufficient knowledge of how to present the issues related to the equal treatment of women and men in the economic and social spheres. In particular there is insufficient use of existing database and methodologies in the important sphere of decision making. In addressing the inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels. They is the only way to build a sustainable just and developed society.

(UNDP-2012)UNDP has been advocating for women's and girl's equal rights, combating discriminatory practice and challenging the roles and stereotypes that affect inequalities and exclusion. It focuses directly on gender equality and women's empowerment integrating it into the organization's three key thematic areas: sustainable development; inclusive and effective democratic governance; and risk prevention and resilience.

#### **2.4 Laws, Regulations and Policies Related To Women Empowerment in Nepal**

In case of Nepal the establishment of national commission for women played a vital role for improving status of women. Beside several INGOs/NGOs were established to work in the sector of women. These organizations mainly worked in the case of women violence and equal opportunities for women. They worked as mediator between government and citizen, and forced government to think about the status of women in every corner of the country. Acharya (1997) asked that women are becoming conscious of their own situation and are active in bringing about gender perspective changes in the existing discriminatory social, economic and political structures. The demand for gender equality has pervaded all shares of live including the design and content of development strategies, policies and programs.

The second conference was held in Copenhagen in 1980, Denmark. The third and fourth international conference was held in 1985 and 1995 in Nairobi, Kenya and Beijing, China respectively. In June 2000 UN General Assembly convened a special session at New York entitled Beijing +5. UN, (2000). The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1979 and came into force on September 1981. To date 139 countries have ratified CEDAW and an additional 44 countries have acceded to the treaty. Nepal fully ratified CEDAW in April 1991. UNICEF, Nepal fully ratified CEDAW in April 1991 (UNICEF, 1996).

Constitution of Nepal (1990) has guaranteed that there will be no discrimination against any citizen in the application of general laws, as well as in respect of political and civil rights, on the ground of religion, race, sex and caste. Hence, men and women are given equal rights under the constitution of votes; participate in government or inter-public services. However, the reality is different from all of those things.

The Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), an action plan adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW), for gender equality and women empowerment, identified 12 areas of critical concern: women and poverty; education and training of women and health; violence against women; women and armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights of women; women and the media; women and the environment; and the girl child. Nepal expressed her full commitment to BPFA because these were, and still are, pertinent issues in the context of Nepal. (Baidya, 2000)

The historic revolution of 2062/63 B.S brought changes throughout the country. Along with the historical movement several movements of women were also held. Adhibasi/Janajati, Dalit Andolan, Mahila Andolan, movement of equal property rights for women and so on. Among them the declarations of 33% of women's participation in every sector of the country was a historical declaration, which motivated women to participate in decision making process of the country. This historical declaration was made in 2007 A.D. However this historical declaration

forced different political parties to include women candidate in Constituent Assembly Election.

The Tenth plan (2059/060-2063/64 B.S.) has aimed at abolishing all kind of discriminations against women engrossing them at policy and decision making level as well as streamlining them in every sectors of development in accordance with Nepal's commitments on the international Women Conference (Beijing) recognizing women as the center of development to meet the objectives of the plan, economic growth, poverty alleviation and so on.

Stressing unliterary programs, health care facilities employment and income earning opportunities, the plan has set some strategies, which can be summarized as follows:

- ) To prioritize the women focused policies and programs based on gender equality to empower women for overall socio-economic development.
- ) To emphasizing the need of women education, efforts will be advanced towards women literacy programs mobilizing the local level agencies, NGOs and civil societies.
- ) To provide necessary accession and participation in the decision making level in local level agencies like primary and secondary education, hospitals, drinking water, agricultural programs etc.
- ) To enhance Women employment opportunities in government non-government and private sector.
- ) To conduct various training programs to create awareness on human rights as well as the rights of women.
- ) To emphasize appropriate technology adoption to increase the labor productivity of women in different economic activities.
- ) To ensure the empowerment of lower caste (Dalit) disadvantaged disabled women through making appropriate policies.
- ) To create awareness on sizable and manageable family structure to generate the capacity of income earning or value addition.

The Government of Nepal has developed its fourth Human Rights National Action Plan for five years. It has addressed the issues of dalits under Inclusive Development. Dalits of Nepal, the third largest communities of Nepal were considered as untouchables by the state itself until 1963. Hill dalits constitute five

sub-categories such as Gandarva (Gaine), Pariyar (Damai, Darji, Suchikar, Nagarchi, Dholi and Hoodke), Badi, Bishwakarma (Kami, Lohar, Sunar, Wod, Chunara, Parki and Tamata) and Sarki (MijarPattharkatta, Pasi, Bantar, Mushar, and Mestar (Halkhor) Sarvanga (Sarbaraiya) (Dalit Caste Indexed in Nepal: 2, 2011). It is still continuing in the society assuming Dalits as untouchables. To CasteBased Discrimination and Untouchability (OffenceandPunishment) Act,2011 isthemainlawthathascriminalizedtheactofcaste baseddiscriminationand untouchabilityinany form and anywhere.However, theimplementationisveryweak.Stilltherearenumberoflawsthatcontaindiscriminatorypro visionsagainstDalit. Therefore, Government of Nepal were these recommended Strengthen its measures to effectively implement theCaste-basedDiscriminationandUntouchability(OfenceandPunishment)Act and to eliminate all forms of discrimination against the Dalit community, as recommended by the HumanRightsCommittee(CCPR)in2014.Inparticular,by sensitizing law enforcementofficials, investigating and prosecuting thoseresponsiblefor discriminationagainstdalits and conducting awareness-raising campaigns on the rights ofdalits, as recommended by theCommitteeon Economic, Social andCulturalRights (CESCR)in2014.

## **2.5 Feminist Theory**

In patriarchal society, male position is dominant and female position is subordination in all social spheres. Women are unequal access in economic, political, social, cultural, religious, education, health services, employment, decision making and so on. They are discrimination and exploitationby men.To liberate women it is necessary to demonstrate that men and women are equal in potential that women are fully human, that the differences between men and women in our society are due to the different ways in which boys and girls are socialized (Abbott; Wallace, 1997).

Various Feminist theories raised for against patriarchal system. They work to gender equality,equity and social justice in all social sectors(economic, political, social, cultural, religious, education, health services. Which are brief description in the given below:

### **2.5.1 Liberal Feminism**

Liberal Feminism is raised in 1970s A.D. Liberal feminism views that female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints blocking women's entrance to and success in the political world. Because society has the false belief that women are by nature less intellectually and physically capable than men, it excludes women from the academy, the forum, and the market place. It has focused to equality of opportunity, the fight for women's right to be given the same opportunities as men. It is advocating for improving and liberating society from all forms of inequality, discrimination and operation. Liberal feminism propose the following strategies for eliminating gender inequality; mobilization to use existing political and legal channels for change; equal economic opportunities; changes in family school and mass media messages so that people no longer are socialized into rigidly compartmentalized sex roles; and attempts by all individuals to challenge sexism where they encounter it in daily life.

### **2.5.2 Marxist Feminism**

Marxist feminists focused class based discrimination in our society, where relationship between capitalist and working class. Capitalist are discrimination over working class because of their owner of resources like as men are dominate over women because most of the men are resource owner. Within any class, women are less advantaged than men in their access to material goods, power, status and possibilities for self-actualization. Women's social position is exploited by capital and their dependent and powerless relationship with husbands and fathers. The causes of this inequality lie in the organization of capitalism itself.

### **2.5.3 Radical Feminism**

Sexual division of labor and the sexual class system predates and is more basic than the specialized division of labor that differentiates all members of society. The economic class system divides both male and female sexual inequality is rooted in biological differences. Unlike economic class, sex class sprang directly from a biological reality; men and women were created different and not equally privileged. Women were dependent on men for their survival. Dependence on men produced unequal power relationships and power psychology, which formed the basis for all



future stratification systems. Men derived pleasure from their power over women, which led to 'power psychology' the desire to dominate others.

Radical feminism sees all society as characterized by oppression. Every institution is a system by which some people dominate others, and in society's most basic structures, in the associational patterns between classes; castes; racial, ethnic and religious groups; age and gender categories. Of all these systems of dominate and subordination, the most fundamental structure of oppression is gender, the system of patriarchy (Ritzer, 1992).

So Liberal feminism, Marxist feminism and Radical feminism are focused to gender equality, equity and social justice in all social sectors (economic, political, social, cultural, religious, education, health services.

## **2.6 Empirical Studies**

Decision making is a broad issue in our society. Many researchers are researched about household decision making. Some of them have been reviewed as following:

In Nepal, as in most parts of South Asia, women commonly have less power than men in household decisions making. Women have unequal access to food, education, and health care, limited opportunities to earn incomes, restricted access to, and control over, productive resources, and very few effective legal rights. (ADB to Promote Greater Empowerment for Nepal's Most Disadvantaged Women, 2009)

A number of significant studies have been done on women participation. Men alone cannot accelerate the pace of development unless women are given proper role in the society. Acharya and Bennet (1981) have conducted a number of studies relating to women status in Nepal. Firstly, they have revealed the time allocation pattern of men and women in household level that women perform almost all kinds of agricultural activities and their daily labor input is 9 hours against 5 hours for men. But the degree of individual varies considerably across ethnic groups and social classes. But their input decision-making in the household level is very low.

According to Rezapour and Ansari, the role and social status of women in the past were limited by tradition, norm, values, law, religion etc. Women have less opportunity to play their role in the society in comparison to men. The role of women and men in the relationship pattern of decision making and division of labour in the

family are determined based on the gender status men and women. Women's fundamental role is a housewife who has to be responsible for house caring and child rearing. In all societies, the issue of women's participation and how they participate economically, socially and culturally is considered to be important. Family decision making has changed over the last several decades. In developing countries women are vital role in family welfare and men and women are acknowledgement in family decision making. But in third world countries women socio-economic condition and decision making position are subordinated.

According to Acharya and others (2010) says that when rural women's involvement in income than to support in household decision making. Economic, education, resource owner, paid employment, gender consciousness, age are positively associated in household decision making. When women participate in household decision making than to challenge traditional norms, values and discriminated social practices.

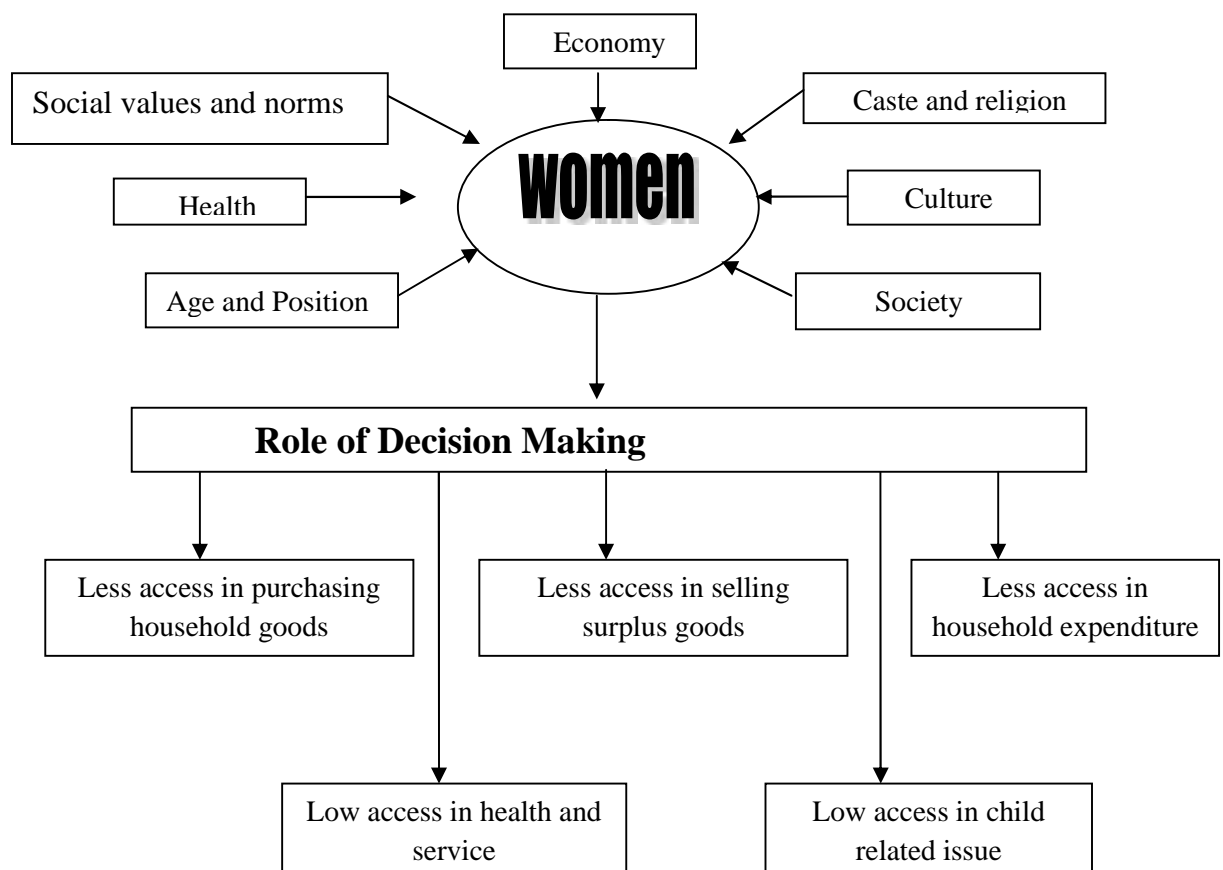
Income generating activities promotes women economic condition as well as decision making power. After this programmed small amount the women earn, they contribute to the family and they are more or less recognized in the family as income earners. This situation makes the family heads respectful to the women's choices and views. Women have to visit markets and institutions, meet and bargain with different people and participant different groups and forums. This is a promotion of individual choices and rights. So that enabling women is participating in the decision making. Maghi (2008) says that based on his study in Dohachock VDC of Bhaktapur District, Girls and women are the vulnerable groups of Nepal and the condition of Dalit women are more deplorable than other. The legal provision to protect women's rights is only in forms not in the practice at all. Household heads are mostly found the men in largest proportion of population. The study revealed that the males have higher role in family economy but the female's role is very important than male because most of the females go for wage labor for supporting financial economy in the family. Patriarchy persists strongly in the study area; males have dominant rights over the family properties. Female population has to work longer hours and do more works than male because besides the household work they have to do the agricultural work and the go to the wage labor as well.

In sum up women's socio-economic status as well as decision making is lower than men. Women's unequal access in food, education, health care, limited opportunities to earn incomes, low access and not control over productive resources, low level

participation in household decision making and very few effective legal rights. Women work harder and longer than men but their low participation in household decision making. Dalit women are also lower socio-economic status as well as decision making than men. They are oppressed, exploitation by caste, gender but I don't find that intersection analysis within Dalit community. There is diversity with Dalit community. These issues don't address in these researches and also it hasn't deeply study about household decision making like as about daily household purchases, economic related activities, child related activities, health related activities. So that I want to do research about it.

## 2.7 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is an analytical tool with several variations and contexts. It is used to make conceptual distinctions and organize ideas. It captures something real and does this in a way that is easy to remember and apply. Here, it shows that women's position in household as well as social sphere. This figure clearly shows that factors of women barriers and role of women in household level decision making, which is given below:



## **CHAPTER-THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methodology means method of data collections and forms of data analysis. 'Methodology' as a means of planning and undertaking research by making choices on the cases to study, methods of data gathering and forms of data analysis. It is more importance in sociological research like other. When we don't choose suitable methodology in research we couldn't achieve actual data, information than don't get actual find out analysis and interpretations. It guided to research to make perfect. We should choose suitable research area, sampling procedure, data collection tools, and technique based on research topic which helps to make good thesis. It can be understood as a set of strategic methods which is included various tools and techniques to gather information and evidence from specific social phenomena. In this chapter I present rational of site selection, research tools and techniques, organization of research, process of data collection, data analysis and interpretation. Discuss about these things are given below:

#### **3.1 Rational Of Site Selection**

I choose to conduct my research in a small village that is called Sunkhani. It lies in Dolakha District in the central part of Nepal, which is around 14 kilometer north far from district headquarter of Charikot. It has a population of about 7463 representing many different ethnic groups such as the Brahmin, Chhetri, thami, Kami, damai, and Sarki. Out of total populations 3707 wasmale populations and 3756 was female populations. Among these ethnic groups, Kami, Damai, Sarki were called hill Dalit. Among the total (1,194) household, 150 household were Dalit household. There was many reasons to this site selection, which are presented given below;

1. There was high number of Dalit households, which was suitable to my research.
2. It was convenient for me and there was found co-operative informants.
3. I was very easy to build report.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The research of social science needs a suitable research design before data collection, analysis and interpretation. It is not just a work plan but also an abstract tool to complete the research. In the present study, descriptive and explorative research design was applied to study the targeted Dalit women's role in household decision-making. Descriptive research design helped me to describe socio-economic background of women in Dalit community. The main theme of the research was to explore the socio-economic background, women's role in household decision making process in Dalit women in Sunkhani VDC, of Dolakha district. In this thesis, I explore the knowledge, information, experiences, attitudes, feelings, and thoughts of women from field about household decision making'.

### **3.3 Universe, Sample Size and Sampling Methods**

Dolakha district has been taken for the study. There are 51 VDCs and one municipality i.e. Bhimeshor municipality. Among them Sunkhani is one of the VDCs of Dolakha. There are 9 wards in Sunkhani VDC. Among them Dalits are living in 1 to 9 ward. The study was conducted in Dalit community in ward no.7 of Sunkhani VDC. According to VDC profile (2067), the total population of this VDC is 7463 with 3707 males and 3756 females. There were 1488 households; out of total 1488 households' 121 Dalit households. In ward no.-07 there were total 117 households. Out of total 117 households 54 were Dalit households. Among 54 Dalit household 40 household were selected. There were 40 respondents among 40 households. Among the 40 Dalit households, only one woman was selected from each household because they are taken as representative figure of a whole family, which could generalize the social, economic, decision making and outward activities of the Dalit society and three key informants from these society such as teacher, leader (Dalit women) person, social mobilize who worked in Dalit's issue in Dalit community while selecting the respondents stratified sampling method was applied.

### **3.4 Nature and Source of Data**

This research adopted a qualitative and quantitative research methodology. Qualitative method was used to explore the Socio-economic condition of Dalit

women and the role of dalit women in household decision making in dalit community. In this study quantitative method was used in background characteristics of respondents. Thus, this proposed study will be well suited for qualitative and quantitative research design because it was appropriate tool to collect necessary information with rural woman of my field.

This study depended upon primary data and secondary data. Socio-economic condition of women and role of women in household decision making in dalit community were generated through primary sources. Primary data was collected through questionnaire and key information, observation, case study. Similarly Secondary data was collected through various published and unpublished materials by related organizations such as VDC profile of Sunkhani VDC, census of 2011 and so on.

### **3.5 Data Collections Tools/Techniques**

The researcher used various techniques for collecting data. Different tools are used in different research topic. When I couldn't select suitable tools I don't collect actual data in my research. If I weren't achieving actual information, I couldn't make perfect thesis. So that Household questionnaire, Key informants interview, observation were suitable technique in my research topic which is described given below:

#### **3.5.1 Household survey questionnaire**

Household survey questionnaire is a tool of data collections. After the setting questionnaire, I went to the field to collect the information with every selected respondent. I made 40 questionnaire about dalit women's background characteristics, their economic position in family, their social position, property ownership, involvement of women in decision making in (daily household purchases, selling own products, family planning, child related activities, participation in social work) and so on. There were many types of questionnaire such as structured, semi-structured and unstructured question. Qualitative and quantitative nature of questions were needed to me gain information about their background characteristics, their economic position in family, their social position, property ownership, involvement of women in decision making in daily household purchases, selling own products, family planning, child related activities, participation in social work and so on. So that

I did household survey with sample women through this questionnaire which helped to me found out actual data of socio-economic condition as well as decision making of Dalit women.

### **3.5.2 Interview with Key Informants**

The present study has been discussed with the local teachers, VDC representatives, elder person, husband of women, social workers, etc. My main concern was with selected respondent's` (dalit women's) literacy, occupation, socio-economic status, participation in household decision making (daily household chores, child related activities, participation in social work). It helped to me found out women's actual socio-economic condition as well as decision making in Dalit community, which are described given below:

### **3.5.3 Observation**

Observation is one of the data collection tool. Observation means to observe respondent's` daily activities directly. Observation is one of the primary methods in sociological research. It captures reality of respondent. Specially, I observed women's` role of decision making in their personal and family in household. It helped to collect actual data and also to be made more valid, reliable and significant research.

### **3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Data analysis and interpretation means to statistical analysis to collect raw data from field and to classify in grouping by their nature and to find out about it. When the information was gathered from different sources and methods, these data will be analyzed and interpreted descriptively. The collected information will be analyzed through different techniques. Categorical data analyzed basic statistical technique such as bivariate analysis through cross-tabulation. The qualitative information analyzed describing the quantitative information generated. We are presented to data by table, graphics, and charts because we could well to present data and too easy for reader and we could easy to data analysis and interpretation. When we couldn't well

analysis of data we couldn't achieve well findings. So that data analysis and interpretation is one important tool of research.

### **3.7 Limitations of the Study**

The issue of role of dalit women in household decision making process is very vague issues which can't be studied at once. This study is concentrate to analyze the situation of women in decision making process especially in household, agriculture and socio-economic sectors. This study covers only the selected area of SunkhaniVDC, Ward No. 7 ofDolakha district. The study is focus the females of SunkhaniVDC Ward No. 7 having sample size 40 houses in that places with in limited time framework. The generalizations of this research may be applied or may not be applied for other places in same subject and same matter.



## CHAPTER- FOUR

### THE STUDY AREA

In this chapter we study about study area. This chapter presents about Dolakha district overview, Sunkhani VDC, natural resources, socio-economic condition, and level of education, political situation and religion of the study area. It is important for sociological study because it is a sociological issue; it helps to us to study human behaviour and women's role in household decision making. We need to study about study area before do dalit's research. So, I present it in the given below:

#### 4.1 Dolakha District: An Overview

Dolakha district, a part of Janakpur Zone is one of the seventy five districts of Nepal, a landlocked country of South Asia. The district, Charikot as its Headquarter, covers an area of 2,191 km<sup>2</sup>. It is bounded by Sindhupalchok and Ramechhap districts. The district is divided into two geographical regions, Himalayan, Hilly region. The district is different from other districts of Nepal. It is near about with China in the North. Its North region, such as Gaurishankar range as well as most of its places is covered with snow all over the year. It is a district with a strong religious affiliation. It is popularly known amongst most Nepalese for the temple of Dolakha Bhimeshwar and also Kalinchok. The total population of Dolakha is 1, 86,557. Out of the total population 87,003 are male and 99,554 are female. The total household of the district is 45,688, average Household size is 4.08 and population density is 85 per km<sup>2</sup>. There are lived various caste and ethnic groups such as Brahmin, Chhetri, Thami, Newar, Tamang, Magar, Kami, Damai and Sarki, Jirel, Gurung, Rai and so on. (Census 2011)

#### 4.2 Sunkhani VDC:- A Brief Introduction

Sunkhani VDC is one of the VDC out of total 51 VDCs and one multiplicity. It lies 14 km North far from headquarter of Dolakha. It is surrounded by Lamidada VDC in the east, by Sundrawoti VDC in the West, by Lapilang VDC in the North and Bhimeshor multiplicity in the south. It is divided into ward no 1-9. It has 77% of sloping land and some other plains and low land areas. There lived various caste and ethnic groups. The population composition by caste, ethnicity and gender base of the population residing in Sunkhani VDC of Dolakha district is listed below based on VDC Profile of 2074 in the table no. 4.

**Table 4.1**  
**Population Composition of SunkhaniVDC**

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Brahmin/ Chhetri	3186	3194	6380	85.48
Sarki	153	161	314	4.20
Biswokarma	109	112	221	2.96
Thami	111	116	227	3.04
Majhi	76	81	157	2.10
Damai	41	47	88	1.17
Badi	17	22	39	0.52
Magar	9	15	24	0.32
Tamang	3	4	7	0.09
Limbu	2	4	6	0.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>3707</b>	<b>3756</b>	<b>7,463</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: VDC Profile, 2074.

According to the record of SunkhaniVDC office, the total population of this VDC is 7,463 among the total population of SunkhaniVDC. Brahmin and Chhetri population are higher than other caste population. My study shows that all people live together and they help each other when they needed. There is harmony among these populations.

#### **4.3 Household and Population of Study Area (Ward No.07)**

In this topic, I study about dalit populations of ward No.7 of SunkhaniVDC because it is my study area. I couldn't complete my research without study about it. It is essential variable to my study because it helps to study about the distribution population of dalit household. It also helps to me find out about household size, household structure, education, economics, women's role in decision making and so on. That's why the total number of ward no.-07 of SunkhaniVDC is presented below based on their caste and ethnicity in the table no.4.2

**Table 4.2**  
**Population Composition of SunkhaniVDC of WardNo.-07**

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Number of Households</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Brahmin/ Chhetri	63	76	84	160
Sarki	36	52	58	110
Biswokarma	5	10	15	25
Damai	13	22	29	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>345</b>

Source: VDC Profile, 2074.

This study shows that among the ward no. of SunkhaniVDC most dalit lived in this ward (ward no.07). In ward no. 7 Brahmin/ chhetri household are higher than dalit household. In all household female populations are higher than male populations. Among dalit community Sarki household and population are lower than others. They lived together with harmony on their community. They help each other when they needed.

#### **4.4 Population of Sampled Household According to their Age and Sex**

It is essential to study about the distribution of Dalit household population of the study area. Age and sex structure is primary basis of demographic classification of vital statistics. It helps to find out household size and structure. Household size and structure are affected to women and it shapes the women life and determines their life. It is important in sociological research where we study about women's decision making in the household. We get actual data from this study. So it is important variable in sociological research. Here the sample of Dalit household's (ward no 7) population is presented given below in the table no.4.3

**Table 4.3**  
**Age & Sex Structure of Dalit Women's Household Populations**

Age Groups	Sex		Total No. of Population
	Male	Female	
0-15	15	17	32
16-19	12	15	27
20-29	16	18	34
30-39	13	16	29
40-49	13	10	23
50-59	11	14	25
60 and above	7	8	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>185</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

In Nepali context, there are assumed that less than 15 years and above 60 years is unproductive age. Above this table shows that unproductive people is higher than others age people. They have been taken into consideration for their less participation in economic activities due to their unproductive age. Most of them are student. In all age group women are higher than men.

#### **4.5 Classification of Dalit Women According to Family Type**

Family is the basic social institution. The structure of the family plays an important role in the women's socio-economic status. It also affect in sociological research because it shapes women's life in education, economic and their decision making position in household. There are mainly two types of families in the study area. One is nuclear family and another is joint family. Nuclear family includes husband, wife and their unmarried children and it is comparatively small in size. Joint family includes a husband a wife, their married children. Mostly, there are live three generations. The size of the family shows about individuals and it directly affects the economy of the family which is presented in the table no.4.4.

**Table 4.4**  
**Types of Family**

<b>Types of Family</b>	<b>No. of Respondent</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Nuclear family	22	55.00
Joint family	18	45.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Above the table shows that most of the people lived in nuclear family because of its effect of modernization. In this era individuals want to make their individuality and seek for their individual existence. Nowadays, many people migrate with their family from rural to urban due to access for job, quality education. Most of the household headed are male.

#### **4.6 Views of Dalit Women about Age at Marriage**

The marriage age is one of the most important variables, which affects the women's fertility. Early marriage leads to long term influences on high fertility rate, high mortality rate and low life expectancy. Age of marriage is slightly increasing at present than before. In Dalit community, marriage is done by asking the girl's parents and the practice of elopement is also prevalent. The data of views of Dalit women about age at marriage are presented in the table no 4.5

**Table 4.5**  
**Age at Marriage**

<b>Marriage age</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
15-18	10	25
18-20	21	52.50
20-25	9	22.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

The above table 4.7 shows that about more than half respondents says that their got married from 18 years to 20 years. Some years ago, most Dalit people are illiterate. They didn't go to school for education due to the poverty. They went to search for employment such as, shepherd, household work, wage labour and many more. While doing such works they select their pair and eloped to them. They didn't have the basic knowledge about the age of marriage; the vital key behind this is education which is prohibited to them due to the poverty and the lack of knowledge of their parents. Still, Dalit educational rate are increasing and also increasing marriage age due to the governmental and non-governmental organization help their education and to pay their attention towards the backward community such as Dalit.

#### **4.7 Religion of the Dalit Respondents**

Religion is a kind of belief or faith on gods or worshipping system by the people. So, it is an extreme faith on gods. There are many people having different faith on god. It is, therefore, an agnostic faith on the existence of gods. Society exists on the beliefs on religion. All my respondents are belief in only Hindu religion.

#### **4.8 Economic Condition of Study Area**

The economy is the production and consumption activities that determine how scarce resources are allocated in an area. It includes everything production, distribution and consumptions of goods and services. Here we present production, distribution and consumptions of goods and services of my study area.

Occupation is an important factor of demographic characteristics which helps to improve their socio-economic status of the people. It determines human position in society. In this study area, most of the people are farmer. They depend upon their agricultural product. They follow their traditional farming. They mainly produce crops (maize, wheat, paddy, millet, barley), fruits (orange, banana, guava, mango), vegetables (cauliflower, cabbage, chilly, pea, garlic, ginger), animal product (milk, ghee, meat). They sell their own local product in local market (Soti bazaar) and some in Charikot. They buy things from the local market when they needed. Their main source of income is agriculture but they don't have enough land for cultivation.

Limited person (especially high caste group) has control over land and natural resources.

In my study area most of the women are uneducated and jobless. Due to the lack of education, they are jobless and fully dependent upon agriculture for their life, their husband and son in case of widow. Dalit women's participation is increasing in different sector slowly like service and skill. especially, they involved in tailoring which is take by various Government and Non-government agencies(Dalit women's related programmed) but women's wage and position is lower than men in all (household and social) sphere. Dalit group have been found economically deserted, professionally agricultural.

#### **4.9 Natural Resources of Study Area**

Dolakha is wealthy in natural resources. Forestry, electricity, sand, stone, furniture and agriculture are main natural resources of Dolakha district as well as sunkhaniVDC. Among them most of the people (especially female) depend upon agriculture and some of them are involved in others. Among them most of the male are involved in forestry, electricity, sand, stone and furniture. They sell their own product in local market and some in Charikot. There are many types of natural resources such as water, forests, Religious and tourism places which brief description are given below:

##### **4.9.1 Water**

There are found ten rivers (Tamakoshi, Charnawoti, Gumukhola, singatikhola, Doltikhola, Gopikhola, Ghyankhola, Anderikhola, miltikhola, khimtikhola). Some rivers used to electricity.

##### **4.9.2 Forest**

There are many types of herbals such as Chiraito, Pakhanbet, Tholookhati, Nagbeli, Jatamashi, Allo, Majito, Sunpati, Argeli and so on. Some people sell it in local market (Soti bazar, katwachaur, Charikot). There lived various wild animals such as Tiger, Bear, Deer, Rabbit, Jackal, fox etc.

### **4.9.3 Tourism and Religious Places**

There are various religious and tourism place to visit such as temple of kaliinchock, temple of Bhimeshower, Temple of Sundrawoti, Panchpokhari, Jatapokhari, hill of Shailung, Beding village, Gaurishankar Mountain, Chhorolpa glacier lake, DeulangesworMahadev and so on. Local, national and international people come to visit these places. Many people involved in these work which help to increase people as well as social income. Some dalits are involved in these work. Especially some dalit women involved to collect herbals and to sell it.

### **4.10 Education of Study Area**

Undoubtedly, literacy and educational qualification is a demographic component. It is universally accepted that the role of an educated women is extremely significant to be educated family. Due to the lack of access of educational opportunities and negative attitude towards girls' education, women have been marginalized and forced to lack awareness regarding their rights and roles till now. However, at the present scenario has shown the indicators of change in the rooted nation. It is realized that education for women is the need of these days. Still we can notice the inequality in the educational level of women and men.

Education is most important variable in sociological research. It shapes the human life and it determines their socio-economic position in the society. Women literacy rate is low in SAARC region including Nepal. According to 2011 census the total literacy rate of Nepal is 39.6% and female's literacy rate is just 25%.

In my study area, Traditional thinking "education is for boys not for girls" had played the major role for their literacy. Girls have to be busy in daily household works and are unable to give time to study or their parents may not send them to schools because the cost of their daughter's education. The society/community has not given importance to women's education. Girls are promotes of household jobs like cooking, farming, washing, cutting etc. But, these days, there are not any traditional practices for women's education. They are schooling consciousness towards their children but



every caste women literacy rate is lower than male. Women's dependency, patriarchal norms and values, national rules, political inability, lack of job opportunity are causes of women's low literacy rate. Another cause of low literacy rate of women is adult literacy rate. Now, adult women have been liberating slowly through non-formal education. According to census 2011 dalit's education rate is 52.4 percent.

Nowadays, very few children are out of school. There are many causes of dropout the school such as: abnormal, unsuccessful in education regularly, and economically poor and so on. So *Education is the measurement of the socio-economic development of a community and the nation.*

#### **4.11 Political Situation of Study Area**

Most of the people in this area are involved in any one party. Male participation is higher than female in the politics. Nowadays, due to political reservation women's involvement has been increasing slowly. But most of the women couldn't reach in decision making process because political parties are participated to the women to fulfill only their formality.

## **CHAPTER- FIVE**

### **SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF DALIT'S WOMEN**

Socio-economic is a combining form of social and economic. It is something that involves the social and economic aspects. Socio-economic means position of person in the society and their level of income. It determines their whole life and their position in household decision making. It is essential factor in sociological study because it helps us to study about human life, inequality, social change and so on. This chapter presents education, occupation, family income and expenditure, land ownership, saving and spend money, and so on. So, a brief introduction of the area has been presented in different section of this chapter.

#### **5.1 Education**

Education is the strongest variables of the status of women. Education provides some of the basic skills and confidence to take control of their lives. But the large majority of the population of Nepal is illiterate with whom women comprise the largest group among the illiterate women. Traditional thinking – "education is for boys not for girls" had played the major role for their illiteracy. Dalit people are back warded, they are absent in the national mainstreams. Not only Dalit women rather women from every caste and ethnicity are in minority in education. Lack of job opportunity, dependency, patriarchal norms and value, national rules and laws, political inability and strategy are the responsible factors for women's education.

When we go through the study area of dalit family, there was no any tradition about the schooling consciousness towards their children and they didn't have any traditional practices to read and write for female. Dalit girl's literacy rate is increasing these days due to various awareness programmed and attentions contingency measures should be adopted. Distribution of dalit women by educational status is presented on the table no5.1

**Table 5.1**  
**Distribution of Dalit Women by Educational Status**

Level	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Illiterate	3	7.5
Able to write their own name only	24	60
Able to read & write	5	12.5
Under SLC level	3	7.5
SLC level	3	7.5
Higher Secondary level	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Above table shows that majority of the old age Dalit female are literate due to informal education. They can only write their name but most of them can't able to read and write well. Other old age people became literate (write their name) slowly. This case shows that girls education expand from some years before in Dalit community.

## **5.2 Economy**

Economy is an important factor which helps to improve socio-economic status of people. Most of the people in our country are dependent in traditional farming. Due to modernization of the technologies they are shifted in many kinds of occupation like foreign employment, skill, wage/labour, job, study and so on which are presented given below:

### **5.2.1 Occupation and Source of Income**

Occupation is another key indicator in determining the socio-economic status of women. Generally, women's employment and education are directly related. If women are higher educated, they will get higher position in service. If women's economic dependency can be reduced by their own monetary income, there will be a great change in overall status of women. The growth of women in participation the labour force has been interpreted by economic historians as logical consequences of process

of economic development. While observing during the data collection, it was found that most of the selected household's respondent's major occupation is their traditional farming. It is national indicator that most of the people in our country are dependent in traditional farming. Due to the modernization of the technologies they are shifted in many kinds of occupation like foreign employment, skill, wage/labour, job, study and so on. The data about the occupational status of the respondents have been given below on the table no 5.2

**Table 5.2**  
**Distribution of Dalit Women by Occupation and Source of Income**

<b>Types of Occupation</b>	<b>No. of Respondent</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agriculture	26	72.5
Wagelabour	5	10
Service	4	12.5
Skill( tailoring, knitting)	2	5
Others	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

In this study, most of the women are uneducated and jobless. Due to the lack of education, they are jobless and fully dependent upon agriculture and their husband and son in case of widow. Most of the respondent says that they do wage labour in construction and seasonal agricultural labour. Dalit women's participation is increasing in different sector slowly like service and skill. especially, they involved in tailoring which is take by various Government and Non-government agencies(Dalit women's related programmed) but women's wage and position is lower than men in all (household and social) sphere. Dalit group have been found economically deserted, professionally agricultural. Nepal's economy is dependent upon agriculture, unfortunately, people are suffering for food. They don't have their enough land for cultivation. Limited persons have control over land and natural resources. So that most of the male go outside (Nepal or other country) to earn money and female manage the all (within households and without household) activities.

### 5.2.2 Land Distribution

Nepal is agricultural country where more than 80 percent dependent upon agriculture as main occupation. So land is the important factor for agriculture, which determines the social as well as economic status of an individual. Generally, property is transmitted from older to younger generation through the male line. Sons are regarded as legal heirs and inherit their parental property. Daughters do not inherit property unless she remains unmarried in her whole life. So, the inheritance and property holding system in Dalit is not different from that of Nepal in general. The practice to register property in the name of women is very rare. The condition of land distribution of my study area are presented in the table no.5.3

**Table 5.3**

#### **Distribution of Households by Land Ownership**

<b>Size of Land in Ropani</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1-15	7	17.5
15-20	3	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

This study found that out of 40 respondents, *only 3* women has land property which is bought after marriage. It isn't parental property. Due to the patriarchal norms and values females have not taken as lawful heirs for their parental property but Male ownership's land is parental property. They inherit from their father. Women are under the poverty line; more are unable to buy any land whereas all the time they suffer for food. Though, the land ownership condition is very poor among this community. Most land control over Brahmin/Chhetri. So, most dalit have low land and property. Respondent says that some years ago, more dalits are servant of higher caste. They worked in higher caste's land and also lived there. Most dalit have bought their land from higher caste about some year (about three generation) ago by their own income.

### 5.2.3 Food Sufficiency

It was found that more than 80% people are dependent upon agriculture. But only few families have sufficient food for the whole year. People are facing the problem of food deficit. According to the filed study more than 92% households have the food problem. They buy food, clothes, and all household purchases from local market (soti bazaar). Distributions of food sufficiency are presented in table no.5.4

**Table 5.4**  
**Food Sufficiency Status on the Basis of Production**

<b>Food Production</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Sufficient	5	12.5
Not Sufficient	35	87.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

The table depicts food sufficiency situation of the respondents. Out of the total 40 respondents the production of 87.5% households' farm is not adequate for their survival because of the low agriculture land and traditional input on agricultural practices. They do various work to fulfill food deficiency such as service, daily wage earning, foreign employment, job, skill and so on. More income spends in food. Both husband & wife do work to fulfill food sufficiency.

### 5.2.4 Alternative Source for Fulfillment of Deficit of Food Production

It was found that 34 household have food deficit. They have to face the problem of food thought it is essential for sustaining life. They fulfill their need for food by different alternatives as service, livestock farming; wage earning and debt. The ways to fulfill the deficiency of food production are presented in table no.5.5

**Table 5.5**  
**Distribution of Households by Coping with Deficit Food Production**

Activities	No. of Household	Percentage
Services/Skill	7	20
Livestock farming	5	14.28
Wage-earning	15	42.85
Debt	5	14.28
Foreign employment	3	8.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey,2017

Above table show that the various alternative way of fulfilling the food deficiency due to low production in agriculture sector. The main means of compensation for deficit production is wage earning. They earn money which is spending in food, cloths, children's education, health treatment. Among of them more money spends in food.

### **5.3 Saving money of Dalit Women**

Saving is very important for every person to accidental events and their future life. There are opened many bank and microfinance to save the money in Nepal. More people have saved money there based on their earning capacity. In rural area of Nepal there are also save money by various local organizations such as Ammasamuha for married women, Dalit organization for Dalit women, youth club for young people, child saving for child and so on. In my study are, **all people are save the money based on their earning capacity.** They save the money on many reasons such as for secure future life, to take loan & so on.

### **5.4 Spending Money by Dalit Women**

Personal saving is important for women because of they spend more money by self where they need & to take loan for their any activities. But they haven't enough money to save because of low monthly income. They save money in various finances on their own capacity. Most of the money spends for their family. The following table no. 5.6 shows the title of spend money by dalit women.

**Table 5.6**  
**Spending Money by Dalit Women**

<b>Title of Spending Money</b>	<b>No. of Respondent</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
For family(Food, Cloths, Children's education and their health)	37	82.5
For self-betterment	2	10
Other	1	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Many of the respondent and key informant says that most of the money they spend for their family; some of them, they spent for their health treatment and over cosmetics peripherals., Some of them spent that amount for being dried foods such as biscuits, noodles and wafers too.



## CHAPTER-SIX

### ROLE OF DALIT'S WOMEN ON DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Decision-making is critical issue whether it is for men or women. It is different from nation to nation in terms of decision makers' multi-perspectives. According to the Oxford Advanced Lerner's Dictionary the term decision making means "the process of deciding about something important, especially in a group of people or in an organization." Decision-making power of women is very much neglected in our countryside than in city area. The decision-making power of women should interfere by family status. Women work longer and harder than men but they don't participate in household decision making process. Women are unequal access over resources. Women's decision making is associated with her increased age, paid employment and having a greater number of living children ethnicity, deprivation level, urban/rural classification, education and so on. So that women's decision making level is different by caste and ethnicity.

Decision has a great role to enhance the social status. This chapter presents decision making process of Dalit women in different in household's activities. It has been tried to assess the position of the Dalit women of SunkhaniVDC of ward no. 07 of Dolakha district. This presents the existing pattern of social relationship that relates power, roles and responsibilities of Dalit women, especially decision making process at the household levels, which show their status in the family as well as in the society which has been divided into different topics are given below:

#### **6.1 Distribution of Role on Household Activities by Sex**

Like women from other communities of Nepal, Dalit women residing in SunkhaniVDC of ward no.07 of Dolakha district have been engaged heavily in household activities like food preparation, firewood collection, fetching water, cleaning clothes and ranching dishes, rearing and caring kids and so on. Woman who is considered as a housewife has to perform almost all domestic works. It has been found that men do not pay attention in these types of household activities. Participation on household activities are presented in the table no 6.1

**Table 6.1**  
**Distribution of role on Household Activities by Sex**

<b>Households Activities</b>	<b>Wife</b>	<b>Husband</b>	<b>Both</b>	<b>Total</b>
Food Preparation	32	-	8	<b>40</b>
Firewood Collection and Fetching Water	26	-	14	<b>40</b>
Washing Clothes	29	-	11	<b>40</b>
Dishes	35	-	5	
Child Caring and Rearing	24	-	16	<b>40</b>
Animal Rearing	17	3	20	<b>40</b>
House Cleaning	25	-	15	<b>40</b>
Cowshed Cleaning	15	5	20	<b>40</b>
Crop Selection	10	5	25	<b>40</b>
Monitoring Grain Products	10	10	20	<b>40</b>
Selling Agricultural Production	3	7	30	<b>40</b>
Selling Animal Products	15	5	20	<b>40</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

As shown in the above table, it has been observed that where children are too small to perform such jobs in those households, where women were absent, men have performed such tasks.

It is extremely surprising fact that in most of the households whereas cleaning clothes and ranching dishes are entirely done by only women or female members of the house. Some of the respondents even complained saying they never remembered their husbands washing clothes and ranching dishes as they believed if they did such works, their prestige and honor will be lost. Grandmother and other female members of the family have been more involved in such jobs. But most of these works don't count in economic activities till now.

## 6.2 Decision on Purchasing Households Goods

It is considered that male and female are equal in family and they have equal roles and responsibilities. But males have severe dominance in decision making process and other social activities. Their male counterparts do not believe in their capacity of decision making. Without comparing men and women's status in an area, it is really difficult to find out women's status in decision making process. While making an interview to the respondents to know about decision making on purchasing households goods, find the facts are given below in table no.6.2 Males along have greater contribution over the purchasing of household things and its consumption. But the following table shows the decision on purchasing households goods of males, females and both in my study area.

**Table 6.2**  
**Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Purchasing Households Goods**

Name of Expenses	Decision Makers			Total
	Husband	Wife	Both	
Foods	10	10	20	<b>40</b>
Clothes	15	7	18	<b>40</b>
Education	11	5	24	<b>40</b>
Health Treatment	10	5	25	<b>40</b>
Crop Selection	5	10	25	<b>40</b>
Festivals	12	3	25	<b>40</b>
Selling Agricultural Products	10	10	20	<b>40</b>
Animal Products	10	10	20	<b>40</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Above the table shows that most of the women have no authority in decision making any things independently. Mother in law, old age people and employed women can take part in decision making independently in some cases (foods, clothes, health treatment, festival, crop selection). In case of widow, if there are young son, he will take decision in all things. Otherwise women take decision in all things in this case. In case of female headed household (their husband go out to work) there is take decision

by female independently in some cases and bring households goods by own. Without these case both are involved to take decision in all things but many household purchasing goods bring by husband.

Mostly female are engaged in agricultural decision making in this area. Among the total 40 respondents, only 5 respondents may produce surplus amount of agriculture-products to sell more or less. This table shows the clear picture that male dominate over female in selling the surplus agro products. All kinds of domestic hard work labor are done by female but their less participation in decision making in these activities independently. Some respondent says that male fixed market price of agro product independently and get the money. Most of the respondent says that both take decision to sell the agro products. Since, selling activities related to outside home and market which is away from their residence that dominates in this activity. Females rarely go to market to sell.

### 6.3 Decision in Sending Children to the School

In any society, in order to find out the status of women, it is very important to know about the decision making process as it determines the power. Without comparing men and women's status in an area, it is really difficult to find out women's status in decision making process. In case of Dalit women here the decision making role is very important. While making an interview to the respondents to know about the process of decision making in sending children to school, find the facts are given below in table no. 6.3

**Table 6.3**  
**Decision Making to Send the Children to School**

<b>Decision Makers</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Husband	13	32.5
Wife	6	15
Husband and Wife	21	52.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The above table 5.3 shows that in the process of making decision while sending children to school the consent of both is regarded in the community. However, some of the decision is seemed to have been made by the father and some of the decision is seemed to have been made by the mother. Economically strong, employed household headed female choose school themselves for their children in little cases. Dalit women's role is comparatively less strong than Dalit males on decision to send school their children. They are economic depend on their husband. Due to women's low economic condition they can't choose school to send their children independently.

#### 6.4 Decision on Children's Marriage

It is explicit that the role of men is greater in making every decision in the male – dominated society. The decision made by women has been paid less priority. However, the women's role in decision making is not less important. The respondents were asked who makes the decision regarding the marriage of their children. The following table demonstrates the collected facts from the respondents in table no 6.4

**Table 6.4**  
**Decision on Children's Marriage**

Decision Makers	Frequency	Percentage
Husband	5	12.5
Wife	3	7.5
Husband and Wife	29	72.5
Others	3	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

The presented data of the above table explicitly show that some man have been involved in choosing life mate for their children. In this case, mainly Widow Women and separated women independently make the decision for the marriage of their children. In most of the cases, both are needed to take decision for the marriage of their children and some others (grandfather, grandmother, their brother and so on) make the decision for the marriage of their children. While interviewing most of the

selected respondent says that their children choose their life partners by themselves. These are positive things of this study area. However, most of the respondents said that they didn't prefer inter caste marriage.

### 6.5 Decision on Giving and Taking Loan in Dalit Households

In order to find out the status and role of women while giving and taking loan, the study of their involvement in the decision making process in the household management is extremely essential. In this sphere, women's role in household's money keeping, use of household's income, giving and taking loan, money lending, buying, selling agricultural products etc. are quite significant. It is done by households in SunkhaniVDC ward no.07of Dolakha district. It has been found that women generally have moderate access to take decision or discard loan, which is given below in the table no.6.5

**Table 6.5**  
**Decision on Giving and Taking Loan**

<b>Decision Makers</b>	<b>Nos. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Wife	6	15
Husband	9	22.5
Both	21	52.5
Others	4	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

As shown above in the table, Dalit women have moderate rights to make decision on giving and taking loan for them and for their family. In the household's activities, men are found to be more involved in the decision making regarding the household management. As it is directly related with money / cash, women got a bit less involved in the decision making in comparison to men. Again, we can observe a little bit gender discrimination here although the women's case in this context is not entirely miserable. In fact, if they get opportunity of decision making about it, they have the capable. From this statistics, it is possible to assign that men & women have

equal decision in role of giving or taking loan due to they are involved in various micro saving & credit finance. Specially, widow, educated, employed, & mother in law are more powerful than other female.

## 6.6 Decision Making on Spending Saving Money in Dalit Community

We know that all Dalit women are save the money on their earning capacity but if it is spend who will decide about it? So that we needdo study about it. I have presented the data about it available with me which are given below on the table no.6.6

**Table 6.6**  
**Decision Making on Spending Saving Money in Dalit Community**

<b>Decision Makers</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Wife	9	22.5
Husband	15	37.5
Both	16	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

This table shows that highest rate of Decision making on spending saving money by both. Men are discussed with their wife to spend money. It is positive point in this study. Key informant & most of other respondents says that female take loan by saving finance & husband use it. In some cases (to buy own thing, to send other some money) female take loan & use it independently. In case of widow household, if there are young children they take decision self touse take loan. They take loan from own saving finance & sometimes they take loan from wealthy person in village, otherwise mother take decision to use it independent. In female household head (male do work (national & international), after asking with their husband they take loan from own saving and credit microfinance & village's wealthy person and to take decision to use it. Female take decision to spend money and use it independent in some little cases (to buy household expenditure such as food, cloths, some own materials).

## 6.7 Decision in Family Affairs

The role of men and women differs in family affairs decision making such as deciding the number of children, use of family planning measure of the use of contraceptives, rejection of sexual inter course, medical treatment method for sickness of the family member etc. So in order to find the women's position in the study area in these different family affairs, the collected facts have been demonstrated here than brief analysis has been presented in the table no.6.7

**Table 6.7**  
**Decision in Family Affairs**

Activities	Decision Maker			Total
	Wife	Husband	Both	
No. of children	4(10%)	22(55%)	18(45%)	<b>40(100%)</b>
Use of Contraceptives	12(30%)	17(42.5%)	11(27.5%)	<b>40(100%)</b>
Seeking treatment	6(15%)	22(55%)	12(30%)	<b>40(100%)</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Above the table shows that in case of no. of children, fewer women have participated to made decision about it. It is positive point found in the study is that both women and men need agreement regarding the decision making of how many children to have.

In case of family planning or use of contraceptives, most of the respondents who are uneducated show the sign of hesitation while in interview. Some of them seem to be reluctant regarding the family planning matter; however, they have been interviewed thoughtfully. Thus in cases of the use of contraceptives, both men and women have been found aware nowadays.

Above the table shows that regarding the decision making of medical treatment method for sickness of family members, more male members have been found to be more aware than women. Majority of the respondents agreed that their husband decide where to take and when to take the ill member in order to have better treatment. Even in this the decision was generally made by mutually. Female take



decision about it independent when absence their husband. One more interesting fact found while interviewing the respondents is that most of those women whose little kids become sick tend to take their kids to the Dhami/Jhakri at first before seeking the medical treatment. They seem to be a little bit superstitious too as they believe in such supernatural powers such as witchcrafts, ghosts, devils etc.

## 6.8 Decision on Public Social Activities

Social participation is most important for women to empower their life. This can play an important role to improve the society and women's status. Socio-cultural participation is the main base for social recognition of women. Each caste/ethnic groups has their own tradition, norms, value and morals. Under the study have their own social and cultural practices while celebrating feasts and festivals, marriage, birth and death rituals and religious functions, different kinds of VDC or Ward wise meeting like AamaSamuhameeting, TolSudhar meeting, forestry meeting, school meeting, sanitation and drinking water meeting, road construction meeting, agricultural activities meeting, where they must involve such given formal and informal actions. I have presented data of decision on public social activities given below on the table no 6.7

**Table 6.8**  
**Decision on Public Social Activities**

Social Activities	Decision Makers			Total
	Women	Husband	Both	
Attending meeting	9	13	18	<b>40</b>
Attending public function	7	9	24	<b>40</b>
Go to the market	9	11	22	<b>40</b>
Go to VDC office	11	9	20	<b>40</b>
.Attending in marriage ceremony	17	5	18	<b>40</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The above table shows that majority of the decision is seemed to have been made by the both. All this shows that Dalit women's decision making power in social

participation comparatively less strong than their husbands due to most of the uneducated women, unemployed women, and not access their over property. They are economically depending on their husband. Most of the female asked with their husband about it before attend any social function. But educated & economically strong female take decision independent in these issue.

### **6.9 Hindrances to Women in Decision Making**

In Nepalese context, women are associated with poor health, illiterate (not able to read and write well) unemployment and overloaded. Their birth of a son brings prestige, identity, entity and dignity to a mother in Nepalese society. Dispirited so many efforts directed towards their enlistment, women status is still poor due to the tradition perception of the society. Most of the women in rural areas are involved in non-economic household activities and in agricultural works. Nepalese women are facing so many problems, which are presented point wise in given below:

- ) Husband interfere
- ) No land right
- ) Hard work
- ) Not consider economic activities to household's activities
- ) Not women's self-identity

### **6.10 Views of Respondents towards Property Right to Women**

Most of the respondents have positive thoughts regarding the property rights to women however; it is not applied fully. But still it is to be applied in the practice. But as the time changed the people are aware to own the property in the name of women because of low tax system provisioned for women in Nepal. When women bought land after marriage, most of them passed the land either both or female ownership. That's why women's ownership in land has been increasing on buying land in these days. So I asked with the respondent how is the condition and view towards property right to women? I will presents to collect data by table 6.9 given below:

**Table 6.9**  
**Views of Respondents towards Property Right to Women**

Respondents View	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	34	85
No	4	10
Not clear	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Giving property right to the women is to sharing decision power with women because if a male will sell the property, he cannot sell unless complete agree with women. So it is automatically proves women can take part in decision making in normal situation. But in many cases throughout the country women are being compelled to agree through extortion. In my study area **only 3** women are land ownership which is bought after marriage. This matter shows that female's land ownership is only bought after marriage because of low tax system provision for women, changing the perspective to see female in case of female ownership slowly & male share their power towards female slowly. In case of views of Respondents towards Property Right to Women, most of them are positive think about it.

### **6.11 Views toward Women's Decision Making Role**

In order to explore the view of the respondents toward the role of dalit women in household level decision making, who should (male or female) take decision in your household level? And I got answers as shown in the table no.6.9

**Table 6.10**  
**Views toward Women's Decision Making Role**

Views	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	7	30
Female	2	17.5
Both	21	52.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

The views regarding overall decision making role was explored through the interview with respondents. More of the respondents have emphasized on both decision making role in household as well as in social sphere because of both are discussion and give their opinion in every issue which is best output. Male & female are two wheel of one cart. Husband & wife is long life partner. So that there are needed to mutual understand between them in every household activities as well as social. But some respondent says that they are support to their husband due to uneducated, lack of information about it, economically poor and so on.

## CHAPTER-SEVEN

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### 7.1 Summary

Cultural land scope is extremely diverse in Nepal. Nepalese society consists of the various cast/ethnicity tribe and communities holding different beliefs custom and culture. Hence, the status of women differs from one corner of the country to other. The socio-economic status of women also differs from rural to the urban context and caste and ethnicity.

In spite of the differences, as a whole socio-economic status of women is low due to the all property including land ownership inherited to the men line. Hence, unequal distribution of power and resources in the family and society between male and female shows the lower economic status of women. Likewise the restriction of mobility and work load within the household to women make less access to education, training, participation in social organization, politics and consequently modern avenues of income.

This study attempts to find out the role of Dalit women in household decision making in SunkhaniVDC of dolakha district. The main objective of the study is to find out the socio-economic status of Dalit women and the role of Dalit women in household decision making in SunkhaniVDC ward no.-07 of Dolakha District. Likewise the study was focused to find out the problem that dalit women have been facing and status of women in terms of participation in economic activities, participation in decision making in household activities and educational and daily family affairs of the respective SunkhaniVDC of Dolakha District.

The study is descriptive, analytical as well as explanatory research design. This is mainly based on the primary and secondary data. It tried to obtain both the qualitative and quantitative data, which are collected by different methods like systematic random sampling method as well as for this purpose descriptive and exploratory research, is conducted.

The study is carried out in SunkhaniVDC of Dolakha District, particularly in ward no.-07. The total population of the study area was 7463 whereas 3756 are female and

3707 are male which shows the population of female is more than male. There were total 1488 households; out of total 1488 households' 121 dalit households. In ward no.-07 there were total 117 households. Out of total 117 households 54 households were dalit households. Among 54 dalit household 40 household were selected. The total household of the study area was 54, out of which 40 (74.07) households were selected by using systematic random sampling methods.

Dolakha is a wealthy in natural resources. There are around 10 rivers, around 9 types of herbals, various wild animals and various temple and tourism places for visiting, which help to increase people's as well as social income. In this area, many women participation in any political party but political parties are participated to the women to fulfill only their formality.

In my study area (ward no.-7), out of total 117 households, 54 households are Dalits. Among 54 households Sarki households are only 5. They lived together with harmony on their community. They help each other when they needed.

In case of family type of dalit sampled household, 45 percent of dalit families lived in joint family and majority of the household 55 percent dalit families lived in nuclear family.

In case of education, not only dalit women rather women from every caste and ethnicity are in minority in education. There is parent consciousness in girl's education. Out of total 40 respondent only 3(7.5%) respondent illiterate, 24(60%) respondent able to write their only name, 5(12.5) respondent able to read and write, 3(7.5%) respondent have under SLC, 3(7.5%) respondent have passed SLC level, only 2(5%) respondent have passed higher SLC level respectively. This case shows that girl's educations expand from some years before in dalit community.

According to the occupational status of the respondents, 72.5 percent women are involving in agriculture whereas 12.5 percent women are engaged in service, 5 percent women are engaged in skill (tailoring, knitting) based activities and only 10 percent women are engaged in wage labour in agriculture and agriculture. They mainly produce crops (maize, wheat, paddy, millet, barley), fruits (orange, banana, guava, mango), vegetables (cauliflower, cabbage, chilly, pea, garlic, ginger), animal product

(milk, ghee, meat). They sell their own local product in local market (Soti bazaar) and some in Charikot. They buy things from the local market when they needed. Their main source of income is agriculture but they don't have enough land for cultivation. Limited person (especially high caste group) has control over land and natural resources. Now, women's participation is increasing in different activities such as service and skill based activities.

In case of Land distribution, land is transmitted from older to younger generation through the male line. Out of total 40 respondents only 3 respondents have land property, which is bought after marriage because 25% low tax system provision for women in Nepal. Most Dalit's haven't enough land. Now they bought some land from higher caste. Out of total 40 respondent 35 respondents say that problem of food deficit because of low agriculture and traditional input on agricultural practices. Among the total 35(100%) households, 7(20%) household population involve in alternative action as service/skill for food sufficiency to their family whereas 5(14.28%) respondent involve in alternative action as livestock farming, 15(42.85%) respondent involve in Daily wage, 5(14.28%) respondent involve in debt and 3(8.5%) respondent involve in foreign employment for food sufficiency to their family. They buy food, clothes or all household parches from local market.

In my study area, all people save the money on their earning capacity in local micro saving and credit finance. They save money on many reasons such as for secure future life, to take loan and so on. Key informant says that they spend their money for their family like food, clothes, health treatment, cosmetic peripherals, and dried food and so on. They spend their most money by self-decision and to take small size loan by self-decision and others take decision together.

In case of participation on household activities among 40 respondents(women) 32 respondents replied that food preparation is only women's work, whereas 8 respondents says that these work prefer for both male. Among 40 household, 26 respondents do firewood collection and fetching water, followed by 14 respondents says that do it together. 29 of the households women have been found doing their activities whereas only 11 of households both women and men have found performing washing clothes. 24 respondents involved in child rearing and caring whereas 16 respondents reported for both men and women together. 35 respondents participation

in ranching dishes and 5 respondents says that they do it together. 17 respondents says that they do animal rearing self, 3 respondent says that their husband do itself and 20 respondents says that do it together. In house cleaning activities, 20 respondents say that it is done by own and 15 respondents says that it is done by together. In cowshed cleaning, 15 respondents say that it is down by own, 5 respondents says that it is done by male and 20 respondents says that it is done by both. In crop selection, 10 respondents says that it is by own participation, 5 respondents says that it is done by male participation and 25 respondents says that it is done by together. In monitoring grain products, 10 respondents says that it is done by self, 10 respondents says that it is done by male and 20 respondents says that it is done by together. Selling agricultural products, 3 respondents say that it is done by self, 7 respondents says that it is done by male, 30 respondents says that it is done by together. In selling animal products 15 respondents says that it is done by self, 5 respondents says that it is done by male, 20 respondents says that it is done by together. This case shows that most of the household's work done by women but most of these works don't count in economic activities till now.

In case of decision on purchasing households goods, most of the women haven't authority of decision making any things independent. In case of decision on food among 40 respondents (women) 10 respondents says that it take decision by self, 10 respondents says that it is decision by male and 20 respondents says that it take by both (male and female). In case of decision on clothes 15 respondents says that it take decision by own, 7 respondents says that it take decision by male, 18 respondents says that it take decision by both. In case of decision on treatment, 10 respondents say that it takes decision by self, 5 respondents say that it take decision by men, 25 respondents says that take decision by both. In case of decision on crop selection 5 respondents say that it take decision by self, 10 respondents says that it take decision by men, 25 respondents says that it take decision by both. In case of decision on crop selection 5 respondents say that it take decision by self, 10 respondents says that it take decision by men, 25 respondents says that it take decision by both. In case of decision on celebrate festivals 12 respondents say that it take decision by self, 3 respondents says that it take decision by men, 25 respondents says that it take decision by both. In case of decision on selling agricultural products 10 respondents say that it take decision by self, 10 respondents says that it take decision by men, 20 respondents



says that it take decision by both. In case of decision on animal products 10 respondents say that it take decision by self, 10 respondents says that it take decision by men, 20 respondents says that it take decision by both. Mostly female are engaged in agricultural decision making in this area. This case shows the clear picture that male dominate over female in selling the surplus agro products. All kinds of domestic hard work labor are done by female but their less participation in decision making in these activities independently.

Majority (52.5%) of the respondent take decision with together which is remarkable for decision making system only 22.5% take decision by husband, 15% are single (personal) decision & 10 % take decision by others to take loan and spend money. Where men are absent in the family or educated women there are most women only decide to take or give loan. Among the respondents, highest percentage prefers to spend their saving money for food, clothes, children's education & family health. The second highest people refer to spend for self-betterment. Likewise, only few people spend saving money for others.

Out of total respondents, 52.5 percent of the respondents have reported that to send the child to school both father and mother's permission followed by 32.5 percent of the respondents have reported that it is only the husband that makes the sole decision in choosing and sending the school for the child, only 15 percent of the respondents have said that they themselves choose the school to send their child as the women are found to be household heads as their husbands were abroad for work respectively.

Among the respondents 72.5% husband & wife with together take the decision for the marriage of their children. Similarly, 12.5% men independently take the decision for the marriages of their children whereas only 7.5% women have the important role in making such independent decisions and 7.5 percent others take decision about it.

Out of the total 40 respondents of the sampled area of study, 32.5 percent of the women have reported that they themselves decide about food expenditure whereas 22.5 percent of the women have responded that husband only decides in food expenditure and 45 percent of the respondent have reported that that both of them husband and wife are required while deciding the food expenditure decision. In the case of clothes expenditure in household 27.5 percent of the women have reported

that they themselves decide about clothes expenditure whereas 35 percent of the women have responded that husband decides in clothes expenditure and 45 percent of the respondent have reported that both of them husband and wife are required while deciding the clothes expenditure decision.

Out of the total respondents of the sampled area of study, 10 percent of the women have reported that they themselves decide the number of children whereas 55 percent of the women have responded that they have to obey what their husband say in case of giving birth to children.

Among 40 respondents 9 respondents say that they take self-decision in participation in attending meeting, 13 respondents go there after saying their husband and 18 respondents say that both (wife and husband) take decision about it. 7 respondents say that they take own decision in participation in attending public function, 9 respondents say that they go there after saying their husband and 24 respondent says that both(wife and husband) take decision about it. 9 respondents say that they take own decision on go to the market, 11 respondents say that they go there after saying their husband and 22 respondent say that both (wife and husband) take decision about it. Women are facing many problems in the study area. These are:

- ) Husband interfere
- ) No land right
- ) Hard work
- ) Not consider economic activities to household's activities
- ) Not women's self-identity

Out of total 40 respondents of the sampled area of study 85% are in favor of property right to women, while 10% are against it. Only 5 % of respondent are not clear on this topics.

Out of the 40 respondents, 30 percent have positive thoughts on men's decision making role whereas, 17.5 percent have positive thoughts on women's decision making role and 52.5 percent have positive thoughts on both(husband and wife) decision making role in more household and out of the activities. More of the respondents have emphasized on both decision making role in household as well as in

social sphere because of both are discussion and give their opinion in every issue which is best output.

## **7.2 Conclusion**

This study was done to find out the socio-economic status of Dalit women and the role of dalit women in household level decision making in SunkhaniVDC, particularly in ward 07. The study result shows that dalit are simple and gentle but economically poor. Most of the dalit women are low socio-economic status in the family as well as in the society. Most of the household headed are male. They control over family resources. They do not have enough fertile land. Female's land ownership is rare. Only three female have land which is bought after marriage. Most of the households are affected by food deficiency. The main means of compensation for deficit production is wage earning. They are basically depending upon tailor, scavenging, leather work, beating of drumsets, wage labour at farm and construction, foreign employment. Gradually, the women of the study area have started to involve in different activities to empower themselves and to bring change in the community. The main traditional work of the dalit community is the tailoring, agriculture and wage labour but nowadays the trend of their tradition has changed although, communities are giving continuity in the inherent tradition. The socio-cultural practices of dalit women reflect their status, their life style and living standard

Many female are involved in agriculture & housewife. Some women are wage labour at farm & construction, some educated women are engaged in service such as teacher, social mobilize and so on but they get lower wage than men in same work. They earn money which is spending in food, clothes, children's education, health. Among them more money spends in food.

All female respondents & some male are save some money based on their earning capacity in various local organizations such as micro finance, Ammasamuha, Dalit organization, youth club child saving and so on. They are save the money there by many reasons such as for secured their future life, to take loan & so on. Most of the saving money spends for their family; some of them spend for their health treatment and over cosmetics peripherals. Some of them spent that amount for being dried foods such as biscuits, noodles and wafers too.

In case of marriage, many female respondents say that they got early marriage (before 20 years). They didn't get study. Nowadays, Child marriage is decreasing within the Dalit community and fertility as well as morality rate also decreases slowly by various women empowerment programmed, education, to feel themselves their pain and so on. Respondent says that the boys and girls can choose their life partners by themselves nowadays. However, most of the respondents said that they didn't prefer inter caste marriage.

Literate people are only literate they can sign only their name. There are rare Dalit parents who can both read and write. In Dalit family, there was no any tradition about the schooling consciousness towards their children. Those, who have access to send their children in school to get education based on their family status. There is awareness in the community that girls are more important in the future. They want to educate girls equal like boys. But widow female and poor parents can't be able to give higher education to their children due to economically poor & don't get help from other agencies. Some children are dropout from school. Dropping among girls is higher than men because of the economic problem, death of parents, social discrimination, early marriage, expensive education, enrollment at higher age, some student dropout school by regular unsuccessful in education, economic poor and so on. But comparatively dalit's women literacy rate drastically increase at present than past due to affirmative action, to help by various women and dalit related programmed, female consciousness for education.

In most of the households where female are washing clothes and ranching dishes. Some of the respondents even complained saying they never remembered their husbands cleaning clothes and dishes as they believed if they did such works, their prestige and honor will be lost. Grandmother and other female members of the family have been more involved in such jobs.

The study results of dalit women's decision making process in different household activities such as food preparation, fetching water, washing clothes and ranching dishes, child caring and rearing, child education, marriage of children , crop selection, selling surplus agro-products, household expenditure, giving & taking loan, save money & use it, social participation & propriety right are really significant. The study result shows that if there are young children within Widow Households they take

decision own self in all household as well as social activities otherwise mother decide it independently. In case of male are out of house do work (national & international), there are female ask with their husband before take decision any long-term affect household activities(children's education, taking & giving loan, buying expensive goods, children's marriage & so on) otherwise they decide own self about little amount household activities such as daily household purchases, clothes, agriculture related). When male return their house, both (husband & wife) take decision on all household activities. Some (educated, employed & mother in law) female decide own self in some activities (food, clothes, children's education, own materials, in agricultural expenditure, for little amount household expenditure). Dalit women are able to make decision without asking husband, includes the purchasing of daily consumer product and the saving, controlling, and use of property and money. Many respondents say that both are decide in all household as well as social activities. The study results also show the strong and close social relationship between family members. Under the socioeconomic development and a little modernization, the size and type of household have been changing from joint to the nuclear family slowly. Even though the size and type of household are changed over times, the women's status has not been yet developed drastically.

Women have been still highly influenced by men's decision-making, believe, attitude, and the approach. Dalit female were less chance to involve in household tasks. Key informant says that the main causes of lack of dalit women's participation in decision making in household activities as well as social activities are lack of self-confidence of women and the practice of patriarchal system. But nowadays, female's participation is increased in household's decision making slowly. Specially educated women, economically strong women, educated female, widow & mother-in-law are participated about it. In agriculture system female take decision in most of the agricultural activities because they do most of the agriculture activities. Men & women have equal decision in role of giving or taking loan due to they are involved in various micro saving & credit finance. Specially, widow, educated, employed, & mother in law are more powerful than other female. Female are higher participation to take decision in Household expenditure, agricultural activities, and child's education, as well as save the money & use it than others activities.

Women's involvement in decision making found low within dalitmarried women in SunkhaniVDC Ward no.7. In most of the household male plays vital role in any household level decision making. Role of decision making is positively associated with women's level of education, increased age, paid employment, having a greater number of living children ethnicity, deprivation level, and urban/rural classification. Women are more involved in household decision making process now than past but they don't dominant role in any household level decision making. In Agriculture activities women role are higher than other activities to take decision. The role of dalit women don't drastically changed but the trend of involvement in decision making process is increasing slowly.

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## APPENDIX -I

### Household Survey Questionnaire on

#### Dalit's Women's Participation in Household Decision Making

The information included in this questionnaire is only for academic purpose and will be kept secret. It helps me to achieve certificate of Master degree. It will not be used beyond the research purpose.

#### Section I: General information

Name of the respondent.....

Address:

District.....VDC.....ward

No.....

Religion.....

Main occupation.....

Generation.....

Date: .....

#### Section II: Household Information

S.N.	Name of family members	Relation with HHs head	Age	Sex		Marital status	Education#	Occupation		
				Male	Female			1	2	3
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										

**Note:** to write only literate, illiterate and level of education

Are you satisfied from your job? (If yes, go q. no.4)

.....

Why don't you satisfied from your job? What do you want?

.....

**Section-III: Economic information**

**1. Land Information**

S.No.	Types of land	Self/Family land	Cultivation land	Rent	Yearly product
1	Field				
2	Farmland				
3	Khoriyobari				
4	Others				

Who is your house owner?

.....

Do you have any land?

.....

If yes, how much land does your family have?

.....

Who decide use and sell it?

.....

Who decide to sell your house and land?

.....

### Information of field

S.No	Types of field	Workers					Decision maker
		Plugging the field	Prepare the field		Cutting	Harvesting	
1	Paddy						
2	Maize						
3	Wheat						
4	Millet						
5	Vegetables						
6	Others						

### 3. Information of income and expenditure

S.N.	Source of income	Total income(yearly)	Title of expenditure	Total expenditure (yearly)	Total saving	Decision maker
1	Agriculture		Agriculture			
2	Animal		Animal			
3	Service		Service			
4	Foreign employment		Foreign employment			
5	Business		Foods			
6	Others		Clothes			
7	–	–	Education			
8	–	–	Health			
9	–	–	Festivals			
10	–	–	Marriage/Bratabandha			
11	–	–	Others			

If you get profit who will take decision about it? If you

.....  
.....

In which person's account have save the money?

.....

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Types of saving</b>	<b>Names of organization</b>	<b>Total monthly saving</b>
1	Personal		
2	Family		

What are the objectives to save money?

.....  
.....

Where are you spending saving money and who decide it?

.....  
.....

If yes, whom did you spent that money?

.....  
.....

Have you ever take loan?

.....  
.....

If yes, from where take loan and who decide it?

.....  
.....

In which activities do you spend loan?

.....  
.....

How do you return loan?

.....  
.....

**Section- iv: Social information of respondent**

What are your main festivals?

.....  
.....

How do you celebrate festivals?

.....  
.....

How much money spend to celebrate festival and who decide it?

.....  
.....

Who prepare worship materials and who worship the Goddess?

.....  
.....

Have you ever attend any social function?

.....

If yes, in which social function you attend?

.....  
.....

Who will decide to attend social function?

.....  
.....

**Section- iv: Questionnaire for key informants**

What are your daily activities?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Who buy and brings daily household purchases such as, food, clothes?

.....  
.....

In which school your children read?

.....  
.....

In the case of sending children to school who take decision for it?

.....  
.....

In case of materials for school who buy it for children and why?

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Materials</b>	<b>Consumer</b>	<b>Why(only this person bought)</b>
1	Teaching materials		
2	School fee		
3	Dress		
4	Snacks		
5	Cost of bus		
6	Others		

From where do you collect money for children's education?

.....  
.....

Who take money and spend for children's education?

.....  
.....

If you didn't teach your children, why haven't you teach them?

.....  
.....  
.....

. In your family affairs, who makes decision in your family?

.....  
.....

While taking decision on your children's marriage who takes decision about it?

.....  
.....

How are the views of women's property in your family?

.....  
.....  
.....

In case of starting new work in your family who makes decide it?

.....  
.....

Do you involved in any social organization?

.....

If yes, in which organization do you involve?

.....  
.....  
.....

Who decide to involve any organization?

.....  
.....

If yes, what are the differences before and after involving organization?

.....  
.....  
.....



If no, why don't you involve any social organization?

.....  
.....

Are you free to work (eat, wear, speech, walk and so on) in the household as well as out of household?

.....  
.....

If No, who takes decision about it?

.....  
.....

As you think, how is the women's role in household's decision making?

.....  
.....

As you think, how is the women's role in household's decision making in Dalit community?

.....  
.....  
.....

In which household activities women's role is high and in which household activities women's role is low?

.....  
.....

If you don't satisfied role of women in household decision making, what should we do to increase Dalit's women role in household decision making?

.....  
.....  
.....

Have you been facing any problem in household decision making?

.....

If yes, what kinds of problems have you been facing?

.....  
.....  
.....

