

ROLE OF WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD DECISION MAKING

A Case Study of Saudiyar VDC, Dang District Nepal



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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

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LETTER OF APPROVAL

This thesis entitled “**Role of women in Household Decision Making A Case of Saudiyar VDC, Dang District Nepal**” prepared by Miss Yamuna Sharma has been accepted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis entitled “Role of women in household decision making: A case study of Saudiyar VDC, Dang, Nepal”. The general objective of this study is to analyze women’s role in decision-making process in Saudiyar VDC of Dang district. The specific objectives of this study are: To examine the socio-economic status of women of the study area, to identify the factors affecting women’s decision making power, to differentiate the role of working and non-working women in household decision making.

This research is based on both exploratory and descriptive research design. Exploratory research design has been applied because this research has first attempted to study women’s role in household decision making in the area (Saudiyar VDC). Descriptive research describes phenomena as they exist. Such studies involve a systematic collection and presentation of data to give a clear picture of a particular situation. Both primary and secondary data are used in this study as per the requirement. Primary data is selected from the sampled unit during the field survey by structured questionnaire and interview. Both quantitative as well as qualitative data have been collected and used in this study. While secondary data are collected from the Saudiyar VDC survey 2067.

Dang district has been divided into several (9) wards. But the present study has been concentrated only on ward 1 and 2 of this VDC. These wards are purposively selected for the research study. There are total 480 households with 2,548 populations. Among them, I have taken the sampling of only 50 households from the total number. This sample is based on women aged 16-59, among them 25 are non-working and 25 are working. The selection of the study households has been done by using judgment/deliberate non-random sampling.

It is evident from the study that most of the working women are more qualified in terms of education than non-working women. 10 of working women are in the service sector and government job holders and 15 of women private companies’. Out of the total households 35 male of working and non-working has the ownership of property.

However working women's ratio of property ownership is found to be more than non-working women. Regarding small household purchase, 15 of the working women and 11 of the non-working women are found to be the final decision makers. The male household head in working women's households is found to be participating more in household activities than non-working women.

The study also covered the factors that affect the decision-making level of women in their households. Majority of women reported that education is the most affecting factor that influences their decision making power. Educated women have more power and confidence in deciding serious matters in their households. Similarly it is found that the economic status of women also has a positive role in their decision making. Social norms are also such factors. However it is found that non-working women are more pressurized by social norms and tradition than working women.

Overall, we can say that women are still suffering from discriminatory practices in the society. They have a low status than men in their household. This study thus provided some practical recommendations consideration of which would lead to the empowerment of women and increase their participation Level and power in household decision making as well as their participation Level and power in household decision making as well as their status in the whole society and nation.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CEDA	Center for Economic Development and Administration
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
HDR	Human Development Report
INGO	International Non Government Organization
NGO	Non Government Organization
ICIMOD	International Center for Integrated Mountain Development
NPC	National Planning Commission
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
VDC	Village Development Committee

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

A household is defined as a group of persons related by blood or adoption sharing the same kitchen and whole income is pooled jointly (Keynes: 1961). Head of the household is a person who takes the responsibilities for the maintenance of the household activities and is the main decision-maker in the family. Usually, the chief earner or the oldest family member is regarded as the head of a household (NCEAH: 1976). The role of women in household decision-making and the allocation of household resources depend upon a number of factors. These factors include type and composition of the household, age and life style of the women and the number of household males absent from the village (Bennet: 1981).

According to Acharya et.al (2010) in Nepal, as in most parts of South Asia, women commonly have less power and autonomy than men in making decisions about their own health care. Moreover women often 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. Women's autonomy in decision making is associated with her ethnicity, deprivation level, urban/rural classification, education, and number of living children. Nepalese women are further disadvantaged by a lack of awareness of opportunities and their legal rights. Their low social status has been identified as a barrier towards national health and population policy progress in Nepal.

Nepal is one of the few countries in the world, where women life expectancy is lower than that of man. The reasons behind this are many. The principal one of them is, however, the matrilineal social framework holding control over all aspects of Nepalese society. Women suffer from discriminatory practices in opportunities for education, health and so on. Personal mobility, which is required, among other for skill development and independent Decision- making, is highly restricted. Although

Nepalese women work for longer than man, they have much lower opportunity to enter into gainful employment and, are deprived of property right (NESACM, 1989).

In Nepal, half the population constitutes women and ninety percent of them are engaged in agriculture and related activities. They work approximately four percent of the total land area, while average size of land holdings owned by women is only 0.65ha (Mishra, 1989). Studies have revealed that women play a major role in Nepalese household and agricultural activities both as laborers on the family farm and in the wage labor not to mention decision-making.

The economic, demographic and social factors are found as the most important factors which directly or indirectly affect the decision making process. Women's involvement in the market economy lends them greater power in terms of household decision making in important matters. This can be attributed to the contribution of women towards the household income. On the other hand, confinement of women to the domestic and subsistence sector automatically implies a low status conferred to them terms of decision making powers (SSNCC, 1977).

The socio-cultural context conditions the relationship of women's individual-level characteristics to decision making, and autonomy is a key intervening mediator between women's status and reproductive outcomes. Women have little autonomy in many cultures, so it is important to get a better understanding of the determinants of their decision-making autonomy; and variations across regions and socio-cultural contexts in the same country. Previous work has shown that women who have a significant say in reproductive matters tend to be more educated, spend more time on household economic activities and marry later. Several other studies have also shown that the poor tend to be sicker and they utilize care facilities less frequently than their better-off counterparts. (Acharya *et. al*, 2010).

Women in Nepal work 10-13 hrs against 7.51hrs for men (CEDA 1981) and hence there is a growing need to provide them sufficient say in decision-making authority within or outside home affairs. Furthermore the importance of women's participation in household management is playing an important role for upliftment of their status in the society. Therefore this study will attempt to highlight the present role of working women (those women who are economically active, have a continual source of

income and contributing economically to their family) and non-working women (house-wives) in their household decision making.

How socio-demographic factors influence women's autonomy in decision making on health care including purchasing goods and visiting family and relatives are very poorly studied in Nepal. This study aims to explore the links between women's household position and their autonomy in decision making.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Nepal, as in most parts of South Asia, women commonly have less power and autonomy than men in making decisions about their own health care. Moreover, women often 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,2004).Nepalese Women are further disadvantaged by a lack of awareness of opportunities and their legal rights. Their low social status has been identified as a barrier towards national health and population policy progress in Nepal (Tuladhar, 1997).

Acharya.et.al 2010 agree that women from the western development region are more likely to participate in health-care decision making compared to all other regions. In contrast, women from the western, mid-western and far western region are less likely to participate in decision making on daily household needs. Furthermore, a significantly lower proportion of women from the far western region reported involvement in decision making around visiting family or relatives ($p < 0.001$). There is a significant positive association between women's age and autonomy in decision making among all four measures. This association also exists for the number of living children; women with more living children are more likely to take part in decision making. Autonomy is not a homogenous construct that is represented accurately by a single measure. In Nepal, Bangladesh and India, as women get older they gain autonomy in household decision making (Senarathu).

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 influences the role of decision-making e.g. small size of children imply higher economic participation and consequently greater decision-making power for women. Acharya(1997) states that conventional social custom is one of the major reason obstructing women from participation fully in economic development, which result low decision making power in women's hand. Higher the participation of women for economic development, higher will be the decision making power of women.

Highly educated women are more likely to take part in decision making in their own health care (MullanyBC, 2005). A South Asian study has also mentioned that rural women are less likely to be involved in decision making than urban women. The more children women have, the more likely they participate in decision making in all four outcomes. From the residential viewpoint rural women are less likely to participate in the decision-making process (Senarath U, Gunawardena NS: 2009).

This study intends to find out the socio-economic status of women, to identify the factors affecting women's role in decision making power in Saudiyar VDC, Dang of Mid-Western region of Nepal. The study tried to find out the following issue.

-) What are the major factors affecting women's role in decision making role?
-) What is the socio-economic status of women in the study area?
-) What are the differences between the role of working and non-working women in household decision making?
-) What is the role of women in decision making for medical treatment?
-) What is the role of women in decision making for education of children?

1.3 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to analyze women's role in decision-making process in Saudiyar VDC of Dang district.

The specific objectives of this study area:

-) To examine the socio-economic status of women of the study area.
-) To identify the factors affecting women's decision making role.
-) To differentiate the role of working and non-working women in household decision making.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study has significance in both applied and theoretical aspects and attempts to explore and describe women's role in household decision making. This study is significant for the academic purpose and those interested in women's role in household decision making can use this study as a reference.

1.5 Limitation of the study

The Major limitations of this study are:

-) The data has been collected from 50 women of Saudiyar VDC using purposive non random sampling technique.
-) The study has been done within limited time and with limited sources. Findings of the study may not be generalized to the wide area.
-) The study is focused on the household decision making, and other aspects are not taken into consideration.

1.6 Organization of the study

The research is divided into five chapters. The first is the introduction which consists of descriptive background of women, objectives of the study, problems, significance and the limitations.

The second chapter is literature review which provides the insight and general knowledge about the subject matter of the research. It includes review of conceptual studies and review of previous related studies. It gives an idea about what other researches have been already conducted in this particular field and what more needs to be done. Similarly, the third deals with research Methodology. It includes introduction to study area, rationale for the selection of study area, research design, sample size, nature and sources of data, tools for data collection, and methods of data analysis.

The fourth chapter is demographic and socio-economic status of the respondents. The fifth is participation level in household decision making. The sixth or last chapter includes summary of the study, the major findings and conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Various literatures (published, unpublished) on the related field to the education of women such as books, journals, magazines and research reports from the government and various non-government sectors have been reviewed. Some of the related references have been included as the brief descriptions of these literatures that support to complete the objectives of this study. It has also provided a comprehensive perspective on the research.

2.1 Role of Women in Decision Making

Women have very low participation in decision-making process, 70% of household related and external decision are entirely made by male member of house (Acharya, 1995). Employment and education have always empowered women and brought a positive impact on decision making (Salway, SM2007), including reducing the inequalities among men and women.

Acharya, et.al.2010, analyze that Women's autonomy in decision making is positively associated with their age, employment and number of living children. Women from rural area and Terai region have less autonomy in decision making in all four types of outcome measure. There is a mixed variation in women's autonomy in the development region across all outcome measures. Western women are more likely to make decision in own health care (1.2-1.6), while they are less likely to purchase daily household needs (0.6-0.9). Women's increased education is positively associated with autonomy in own health care decision making ($p < 0.01$), however their more schooling (SLC and above) shows non-significance with other outcome measures. Interestingly, rich women are less likely to have autonomy to make decision in own healthcare.

Women's contribution to economic and social progress is still constrained by their limited access to education and information. For a large proportion of women, the written word still finds no meaning. Many rural women who do become literate

however, will lose their skill because there are few opportunities for them to practice. Low level of educational attainment among the women and prejudice in favor of male recruitment may also negatively affect the formal employment of women. In 1982, in government service only 7 percent of gazette officer and 5 percent of the supporting staff were women. Women constitute less than 10 percent of decision making position at the national and local level. Most of the decisions concerning activities are men. The study shows about 50 percent of decisions are made by men, 19 percent jointly and 31 percent by female, which shows very low percent of decision making power on the part of women. (UNICEF, 1990).

Acharya and Bennett (1981) give a wider overview of women's status in their decision making power in household. Acharya and Bennett 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 influences the role of decision-making e.g. small size of children imply higher economic participation and consequently greater decision-making power for women.

Acharya and Bennett (1981) have singled out "decision making" from the multidimensional concept of status which reflects the internal dynamic of sexual stratification within the household. They developed some model from the study of eight different village communities from the status of women in Nepal. In this model, the village were more conceived to be operating in such four spheres of subsistence activities as household domestic work, agricultural production activities, work in the village labour market and local bazaar and total employment in the wider economy beyond the village. Dangi (2003), in his study entitled "Women's Participation to their Household Management: A Case Study of Chuhandanda VDC, Terhathum District, concludes that Nepalese women still remain underprivileged as compared to their male counterparts. The study states that, in rural context, they work 17 percent extra hours than those of men in domestic and subsistence economy, however their socio-economic status remain both less recognized and more inferior in comparison to their male counterparts. The study concludes that women play greater role in household and domestic management process but they need final approval of their household head in this process.

Pandit's thesis entitled 'Women's Participation in Decision-Making: A Case Study of RCIW Program in Doti District,' dated 2002 based on primary data, analyzes the women's participation in decision-making activities at the local level with special focus on their involvement in the Rural Community Infrastructure Works (RCIW) program. Women's participation at local level, especially village level in development activities as well as decision-making process has increased, though is not satisfactory. It is effective where they are directly involved (e.g. in Livestock, borrowing loan, keep to earning etc). The male dominated society does not allow women to involve in decision-making, exposure visit, and representation in meeting (Pandit2002). He concludes that women's participation in the decision-making activities has been less effective due to social structure and cultural norms.

Acharya(1997) states that conventional social custom is one of the major reason obstructing women from participation fully in economic development, which result low decision making power in women's hand. Higher the participation of women for economic development, higher will be the decision making power of women .On other hand, the social conception that only women are responsible for the reproduction of human beings, conception delivery and upbringing of child has made it extremely difficult for women to participate in the development process as equal member of society. Due to all these reasons their status compared to male is very low. Even political, social and cultural development follows the economic development of a country. In this context, the committee constituted by united Nation in the status of women trying to gain for equal right for women in various field of their social and economic life, suggestion for removal of gender inequalities in legal, economic, social and educational matters.

A study on household decision making shows that 58.3 percent male and 25 percent female, and 16.6 percent of both made decision in selling agricultural products. Women were found to be actively participating in buying agricultural products but male dominated females in selling decisions. Only 46.1 percent women were decided to take job by themselves and 30.7 percent jobholder women had joined job in the decision made by their husbands. The study further shows that most of the women from higher family found literate and well educated than others but they are found weaker in decision-making power than lower caste women. Magar women are found

more decisive role than others (Pandey: 2005). The study concludes that the reason of male dominating culture but it is not only one cause because education, economic condition, opportunity can play significant role in their decision-making role inside as well as outside the households.

Culturally, women's public life is restricted and it is related to the patriarchal social system, which confines them to subordinated position. Religion, ethnicity, culture, law, tradition, history and social attitudes place severe limits on women's participation in public life, and also control in their private life. These factors have both shape and culture world view and governed in dividend self fact is largely evidenced by the reality that a negligible number of Nepalese women are involved in professional, management and decision-making position (Stree Shakti: 1995). Gender aspect is also important in decision-making in our society.

A report prepared by UNICEF highlights the women's contribution to economy and social progress is still constrained by their limited access to education and information, which restrict the full development and utilization of their intellectual and productive capabilities. Many rural but literate women have loosened their skills because of low practical opportunities (UNICEF: 1990). Women's social contribution is not highlighted in the report).

Mazumdar (1982) delineates that the Asian women who have been subjected to acute social, economic and political prejudice and oppression in the past and, which continues even to this day. There are three components to balance the inequality i.e. economic, political power and knowledge. Women's works in Asia are considered as unproductive. It is closely associated with their inferior social status and also the loss of personal freedom. Mazumdar concludes that family constraints, illiteracy, traditional barriers, attitude and women's ability are the major determinants of decision-making.

National planning commission of Nepal has summarized that there are two major quantitative indicators of women status used the relative input into two areas of decision-making viz. farm management, and involvement in local market economy and domestic activities. The commission has also analyzed that Hindu society is largely confined to non-market i.e. domestic and subsistence production, displaying a

less significant role in decision-making. Women's participation in the market economy has improved their status and this is more conspicuous among Tibet-Barman communities (NPC: 1992). Including economic factor, socio-cultural, political, educational and legal factors are also important part in the decision-making process.

The World Bank's document (1989) highlights about the Nepalese women who are living in the poor households. The conclusion of the document is that women at all ages work considerably longer daily hours than men, so that they have limited time for self-employment and education, and the opportunity cost of their time to the household is high. This reflects that school enrollment and literacy rates are much lower for females than males, and all these are indications of their poverty (World Bank: 1989). The World Bank also emphasizes on literacy and reducing poverty for enhancing women power in decision-making but social barriers are also needed to reduce.

2.2 The Status of Women in Nepal

The Majority of women in Nepal live in rural areas. Rural women, as elsewhere play multiple roles. In the domestic sphere they are household managers, mothers and wives, in community they maintain social and cultural services, pre dominantly on a voluntary basis and in economy, if they are not formally engaged as employees or entrepreneurs; they are active in family business and farms. But they have low access to income, wealth and employment, which are the main causes of their low economic status. It directly and indirectly affects their decision making power.

Nepali women are daughters, wives and mothers, but are not recognized as individuals with their own identity, despite the fact that they are as human as men. Society has neglected women to the lowest rank and to a submissive role confined to the home and farm and their responsibilities due to their maternal functions. They are discouraged and prevented to take part in public life (Subedi, 1993). Women's economic dependence on men, mainly stemming from the fact that men earn cash incomes contributing to their social status. The few women who earn a salary are often held in higher esteem than women who do not (Gurung, 1999).

When daughter grow up, they will become wives. In other words, a labourer for another family sooner or later, more over, if girls is not good at household and farm work owing to exposure to education, she might be looked down up in her husband's family when she gets married. So, investment in a girl's education is discouraged. Generally, there has been more girls' dropout than boys at the primary level (Gurung, 1999).

Women have low Degree of opportunity for their education and have hardly any access to employment. There is lack of women participation in decision making from house to the executive level. There is no positive attitude towards women's health and they do not get appropriation nutrition even in the period of pregnancy (UNICEF, 1996).

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

According to the preliminary report of population census 2001, in Nepal, women constitute more than 50% of the total population in the country (CBS, 2001). The infant and maternal mortality rates are also highest in Nepal among the countries of South Asia. The adult literacy rate of 40% (female less than 1/3 of that) is one of the lowest in South Asia (CBS, 1995). Although women who comprise half of the population of the country and have always have been involved in national development, they are still marginalized from the opportunities such as economic resources, e.g. property, income, employment as well as other resources. Illiteracy, malnutrition, poverty and conservative social taboos have been the fate of Nepalese women in general.

Many NGOs and INGO's are working to empower women through various activities. Organizations relating to women have helped to increase the involvement of women in social, economic and political fields. Since the Beijing conference the government has established the ministry for women and social welfare. The ministry has started

small farmer's development program and income generation for rural women. (Ojha, 1992).

So, if the nation wants to gain something from women, their first duty should be to give equal opportunity of education, health, empowerment etc. and control of family, by the use of family planning measures and drastic change will come in the nation automatically in every field like economic development, status of women, women's decision-making power etc.

Commenting upon the difference between pre-and post- 1990 years, almost all the women respondents stated that in the post-1990 days, "women have the opportunity to speak and exchange views with their husband, to participate in public forums, institutions and political parties, and also get elected in different tiers of local government bodies, particularly the VDCs but they also pointed out that women still are not often encouraged to participate in socio-cultural and political activities, and when they do, their 'character' is questioned and, worse, the male members of their families citizen them" (Dahal *et. al.* 1992:71).

"The constitution guarantees all citizens the equality before law and equal protection of law. No one shall be discriminated against on the basis of sex. Despite these constitutional and legal provisions, Nepalese women are suffering from social, economical and political discrimination. Major areas of discrimination include citizenship rights, property, employment, reproductive health rights, marriage, family relations and punishment and legal proceedings. Deep-rooted cultural norms and patriarchal values are themselves unfavourable to women. As a result, social preference for sons in schooling, neglect of women's health needs, child marriage and unmatched marriage bigamy/ polygamy are still part of the reality. Dowry and domestic violence are still other problems". (CEDAW 1995: 44-49).

2.3 Women and Systematic Plan

Following the United Nations call for celebrating international women year 1975, by developing various women related activities to bring the women in the main stream of the development. National working plan was prepared incorporating educational,

health and employment, agricultural, cooperatives and ensuring women's involvement in developing policy for the first time in sixth plan (1980/85).

Similarly, the seventh plan (1985-1990) also adopted national level policy and working policy for the women development to increase their participation by raising their social and economic status. The govt. after the restoration of democracy in 1990 too had been committed to equitable and meaningful participation of women in the development.

In order to foster such participation, the eighth plans (1992-97) adopted policies for women in development through institutional arrangements. The commitment was also made through wider extension of credit and technical know-how. Likewise the Ninth plan (1997-2002) having two major aims of poverty alleviation and Human resource development has made women the target group that actively needed to be addressed during the plan period. Considering the need for and enhanced participation of women in national development stream, the ninth plan has a policy to empower and to extend the institutional structure for the women development with effective co-ordination to the related sectors.

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 centre 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.

Nevertheless, we have come a long way, in changing the existing attitude towards women, through the programs launched for the development of women in the past have not been able to raise the social and economic status of women as desired. Despite efforts made for the upliftment of women as a whole, the urban women have nearly always been more benefited from such programs.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Various appropriate methods and techniques are used for the collection of data and information required for this study. Considering this methodological aspect, this chapter contains introduction to the study area, rationale for the selection of the study area, research design, sampling procedure, nature and sources of data, data collection techniques, data processing and analysis.

3.1 Introduction to Study Area

This study area is located in the saundiyar VDC of dang districts. Dang lies in the mid-western development region of the Nepal. It is located between 27⁰37' and 28⁰21' North Latitude and 822' to 8554'. The total area of this district is 2,955 square km (kilometre). Its political boundary is: Argakhanchi and Kapilvastu district in east, Banke and Surkhet district in the west, Salyan, Puthan and Rolpa district in the North and Banke and U.P of India in the South. The average temperature of the district is 32⁰C and average annual rainfall of 1706ml. The major River of the district is Rapti babai. The major parts of the district are inner Terai (about 80%) and hills (about 20%) and the climate is subtropical, (Survey of saundiyar VDC 2067).

The total population of the districts is 4, 62,380. Out of 4, 62,380 population, 2, 28,958 are male (district profile 20061B.S). The economic backbone of the district is agriculture. The literacy figure of the district is 58%.

According to Saundiyar VDC survey 2057, the total population of saundiyar is 12,557 of which 6,193 are males, and 6,364 are females.

3.2 Rational for the Selection of Study Area

The proposed area of the study is suitable to get the abundant information of my research queries. Study area being occupied by various caste and ethnic groups like Brahmin, Magar, Kami, Newar, and other. The cultural mosaic of the study area give the space to get the cross-cultural information related women's role in the household decision making. The study area is itself my own motherland where I have observed

the ignored women's decision making role. I am familiar with the local people and there are not sufficient researches available in household decision making. Therefore by selection of this area, it is believed that more accurate information could be collected during the study area.

3.3 Research design

This research is based on both exploratory and descriptive research design. Exploratory research design has been applied because I liked study women's role in household decision making in the area (Saudiyar VDC). Descriptive research describes phenomena as they exist. Such studies involve a systematic collection and presentation of data to give a clear picture of a particular situation. These studies attempt to obtain a complete and accurate description of a situation.

3.4 Sample design

Saudiyar VDC, Dang district has been divided in to several (9) wards. But the present study has been concentrated only on ward 1 and 2 of this VDC. These wards are purposively selected for the research study. There are total 480 households with 2,548 populations. Among them, I have taken the sampling of only 50 households from the total number. This sample is based on women aged 16-59, among them 25 are non-working and 25 are working. The selection of the study households has been done by using judgement/deliberate non-random sampling.

3.5 Nature and Sources of data

Both primary and secondary data are used in this study as per the requirement. Primary data is selected from the sampled unit during the field survey by structured questionnaire. Both quantitative as well as qualitative data have been collected and used in this study. While secondary data are collected from the Saudiyar VDC survey 2067.

3.6 Tools for Data collection

The following tools have been used for the collection of primary data:

a. Questionnaire Approach:

Structured questionnaire has used to get the detailed information regarding the participation level of women in household decision making. The researcher gathered information related to socio-economic profile of the respondents with the help of questionnaire. Along with it, the participation level of women in decision making has also gathered using this tool. The questionnaire form are filled by the researcher after the answer the respondents.

b. Interview:

The sampled women are also interviewed during the research. The researcher used interview method also to have face to face interaction with the respondents. Informal interviews were also conducted with the family members of the selected women to know their perception regarding various issues like property, education and decision making.

3.7 Data processing, Analysis and Presentation

Through the available data from the primary and secondary sources, basically following steps have been adopted for processing and analyzing of the data. The data has been analyzed utilizing simple statistical method. Necessary table and chart have been developed for the effective description and analysis of data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

This study area is located in the saundiyar VDC of dang districts. Dang lies in the mid-western development region of the Nepal .According to Saudiyar VDC survey2057, the total population of saudiyar 12,475populations, 6193 are males, and 6364 are females, are average household size of 2278.

This chapter deals with the socio-economic as well as demographic status of the respondents in the study area. Out of total households 50 households are taken as sample. In this chapter age composition, ethnic composition, marital status educational status, family structure, occupation, and ownership of Property are included.

4.1 Age composition:

Age is an important demographic characteristic. It determines the social status of people and it makes difference in working hours, types of work, decision making roles, social relation and responsibilities. Therefore it may influence the decision making capabilities of women. For the purpose of analysis the age of the sampled respondents are categorized into four groups which is presented in the following table:

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of the sampled respondents

Age	Working women	Non-working women	Total
16-25	6	10	16
26-46	14	5	19
46-59	5	10	15
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

4.1 table shows the age distribution of the sampled respondents selected for this study 6 working women are between 16-25 years of age. 10 non-working women belong to this group. Similarly 14 working women and 5 non-working women belong to 26-46

years of age. 5 working women and 10 non-working women belong to age group 46-59 years. It shows that most of respondents belong to age group 26-46.

4.2 Ethnic Composition

Nepal is multi-ethnic country where there are different caste/ethnic groups. Each caste and ethnic group has their own language, culture and tradition.

The area of study has very cultural and ethnic background. Brahman /Chhetri are the dominant caste in this area. The following table shows the caste/ ethnicity of the sampled respondents and their household

4.2: Distribution of sampled household by ethnic composition

S.N.	Ethnic Groups	No. of Households
1.	Brahmin	20
2.	Chhetri	15
3.	Newar	5
4.	Other	10
	Total	50

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Table 4.2 shows that the majority of the households are Brahmans. According to the table 20 women of the respondent's households are Brahmans. Similarly, Chhetri is in second majority comprising 15 women are Chhetri, 5 women are Newar followed by 10 women are other ethnic groups Tharu, kami, Gurung who were settled later in this area.

4.3 Marital Status

Marriage is the single most important event in the life of men and women. Early marriage is one of the important characteristics of Nepalese women. Marital status makes difference in women's status because it is through marriage that the women change their status from the status of daughter to daughter-in-law and wife which really increase their responsibility regarding decision making. The following table shows the marital status of the sampled respondents.

Table 4.3 Marital Status of the Sampled Respondents

Marital status	Working Women	Non-working women	Total
Married	15	18	33
Unmarried	6	4	10
Widowed	4	3	7
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 4.3 shows that 15 of working women and 18 of non-working women are married. 6 of working and 4 of non-working women are unmarried. Similarly 4 of working and 3 of non-working women are widowed.

4.4 Educational Status

Education is an important element of life. It plays an important role for the development of people, nation and economy as a whole. It is a principal mechanism of fulfilling an agent for awareness and change. Therefore it is central to the process of empowering both men and women. Education has always empowered women and brought a positive impact on decision making (Mumtaz, 2007).

Table 4.4: Educational Level of the Sample Respondents

Educational level	Working women	Non-working women	Total
Illiterate	-	5	5
Literate	-	6	6
Secondary level	-	3	3
SLC passed	10	9	19
Intermediate	10	2	12
Graduate	5	-	5
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 4.4 shows that the women in the working category are more educated than non-working women. 10 of working women are SLC passed, 10 of working are intermediate, 5 women are graduate and where as 5 of non-working women are illiterate, 6 of non-working are literate, 3 of women are educated till secondary level ,9 of them are SLC passed, 2 of them are intermediate and no non-working women are graduate . It shows from the above table that working women are more qualified in terms of education than non-working women.

4.5 Family Structure

Family structure also has an impact on the responsibilities of both male and female in their household activities. Nuclear family structure is mostly seen in urban areas where as more families in the rural areas tend to be a joint family. Women in the nuclear family structure are more liberated than in the joint family structure and have less responsibility. The following table shows the family structure of the sampled household.

Table 4.5: Family structure of the sampled household

Family structure	Working women	Non-working	Total
Nuclear	15	8	23
Joint	10	17	27
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 4.5 shows that 15 of the working women's household has nuclear family structure where as only 8 of non-working women's household has nuclear family structure. Similarly 10 of the working women's household has joint family, 17 of non-working women's household has joint family. It depicts that the women in joint family tend to be more engaged in household work than in other activities.

4.6 Occupation

Occupation or source of income is a vital factor influencing household activities. Household in which both the members earn income tend to be more affluent than the household where earning the bread for the family rests on one person. However, the household whose main source of income is their own family business then it is found that all the family members including the children provide a helping hand.

Table 4.6: Distribution of the working women according to their occupation

Occupation	Number
Service (Government job holders)	10
Private companies	15
Total	25

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 4.6 shows that 10 women are government job holders while 15 women are engaged in Private sector. It is found that most of the women work in private sector as school, co-operatives and finance and NGO. They enjoy more freedom than non-working women in household decision making because they earn money and have more information about using the fund in related aspects.

4.7 Ownership of Property

Ownership over the household property is observed as one of the very important factors determining the women's status and correspondingly to their decision asking participation within the family. It is also observed that land ownership pattern of women increases as their age increase. It is observed that the women who contribute economically have more ownership of property than economically dependent women as shown below:

Table 4.7: Distribution of the sampled women's household by ownership of property household

Ownership of property	Working women	Non-working women	Total
Male	15	20	35
Female	4	2	6
Both	6	3	9
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 4.7 shows that 4 of working women have ownership of property while 2 of non-working women have ownership of property. In 6 of working women's household both male and female have equal property ownership will in only 3 of non-working women's household, both male and female have equal share of property. It shows that greater number of males have ownership of property.

CHAPTER FIVE

PARTICIPATION LEVEL IN HOUSEHOLD DECISION MAKING

This chapter analyzes the women's status within the household, specially emphasised on their decision-making powers as compared to working and non-working women.

5.1 Possession of Household Income

Higher the participation of women for economic activities, higher will be the decision making power of women (Acharya, 1997). This study also supports this face as mentioned in the following table. The husbands of the respondents make almost all the household decisions inside the house as well as outside if they are present in the houses. Only those females, who are head of the family, decide in most of the cases especially in economic decision. But at all time, they do not decide and they consult with husbands and other family members. Sometimes, other housewives decide about the family in the absence of male guardian of the family.

Table 5.1 Distribution of sampled household by possession of household income

Household members	Working women	Non-working women	Total
	Number	Number	Number
Male	6	16	22
Female(sampled respondents)	4	3	7
Both	15	6	21
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field Survey 2011

Table 5.1 shows that most of the household income is possessed by both members in working women that is 15 in number. But 16 males possessed household income in nonworking women. It shows working women have higher decision making power than nonworking in economic activities. It is because of their earning capacity and direct involvement in financial concerns of the family.

5.2 Household Expenditure

Women from the western, mid-western and far western region are less likely to participate in decision making on daily household needs (Acharya, et.al2010). But the findings of this study are contradictory in this regard as mentioned in table 5.2. It has been found out that all the household activities like Food, Clothing, and Bazaar Purchase etc considered as unproductive in our society and are mostly done by female in both working and nonworking women.

Table 5.2: Decision maker of small household expenditure (Food, Clothing, and Bazaar Purchase etc)

Household decision maker	Working women	Non-working women	Total
	Number	Number	Number
Male	5	8	13
Female(Sample respondents)	15	11	26
Both	5	6	11
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 5.2 shows that out of 50 respondents in 15 of working and 11 of non-working women made decision of small household expenditure, however in 5 males in working and 8 males are involved of small household expenditure. This shows women have dominant role in small household expenditure. The women have a major role in purchasing those household goods because men mostly are not interested and are less familiar of purchasing such household goods.

5.3 Decision Maker of big purchase

Similarly the following table shows the role of women in the decision making of big expenditure like electronic items, luxury items, furniture, automobile etc.

Table 5.3: Decision Maker of big purchase

Household Decision maker	Working women	Non-working women	Total
	Number	Number	Number
Male	14	20	34
Female	6	2	8
Both	5	3	8
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 5.3 shows that the role of women in the decision making of big expenditure like electronic items, luxury items, furniture, automobile etc has lower power to decide it. Only 6 women in working and 2 women in nonworking decide it. Women in these matters only play a supportive role. More males are exposed to outside world and take information regarding different activities happening, so they take dominating role in decision making of big purchase.

5.4 Decision Maker of Medical Treatment

Acharya.et.al. 2010 agree that women from the western development region are more likely to participate in health-care decision making compared to all other regions. Highly educated women are more likely to take part in decision making in their own health care (Mullany BC, 2005). Medical treatment is considered as all kinds of treatment like going to the health institute and choosing doctor, buying medicine as well as adopting family planning etc. The following table shows the participation level of women in the decision making regarding treatment of household member.

Table 5.4: Decision maker of medical treatment

Household decision maker	Working women	Non- working women	Total
	Number	Number	Number
Male	5	15	20
Female (sample respondents)	4	4	8
Both	16	6	22
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 5.4 shows that 4 women and 16 of both working women have made decision in medical treatment and 4 women and 6 of both nonworking have made decision in medical treatment. It shows that working women have more consciousness towards health care decision for their medical care and they interact with their husbands than non-working women. This is because mainly of working women are more educated and they are more aware of their health concern than that of non-working women. Furthermore, non-working women are not even aware about the health and possible diseases.

5.5 Participation in general household activities (cooking, cleaning, others)

The basic household work like cooking, cleaning and looking after the children are normally the work of women in our society. The women who work outside the house and bring money in the household are also more or less equally responsible for these activities. The following table shows the participation level of women in household activities.

Table 5.5: Participation in household activities

Household member	Working women's household	Non-working women's household	Total
	Number	Number	Number
Male	-	-	-
Female	18	23	41
Both	7	2	9
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 5.5 shows that 18 of working women and 23 of non- working women take care of all the responsibilities of the household work. Similarly in 7 of the working women's household and 2 of the non- working women's household, both male and female participate in the household activities. It is observed from the above table that the male member in working women's household participate more in household activities than non-working women. However, women work and men has only some supportive participation. This is because mainly of working women participate in income generating activities where as non-working women involve in non-income generating activities of the households. The working women have less time to be involved in household activities and non-working women fully involved in household activities.

5.6 Attending social ceremonies

There are festivals, weddings and various other social ceremonies in Nepali households. The table below shows the decision making regarding these social ceremonies i.e. who shall attend or whom to invite, preparation to be made etc.

Table 5.6: Decision maker to attend/ invite in social ceremonies

Household decision maker	Working women's household	Non-working women's household	Total
	No.	No.	No.
Male	2	5	7
Female	18	11	29
Both	5	9	14
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 5.6 shows 18 women in working and 11 women in non-working have decided attending regarding the social ceremonies or inviting. Likewise, hospitality to the guests and neighbors is a duty of wives. They always welcome the guests and neighbors. It shows that working and non-working women both have both dominant roles in participation in social ceremonies. But the working class of women has more decision making role because of their education and more social contact.

5.7 Decision making of Investment and selling

Table 5.7: Decision making of Investment and selling

Household decision maker	Working women's household	Non-working women's household	Total
	No.	No.	No.
Male	8	18	26
Female	3	2	5
Both	14	5	19
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 5.7 shows in working women 8 males are the final decision maker regarding investment and selling of property while only 3 women has a right to decide. Similarly in 14 of working women's household this decision is made by both male and female equally. Similarly out of total non- working women's household, in 18 male is the final decision maker while in 5, both male and female decide together. Only 2 of non-working women have a right to decide regarding investment and selling in their respective households. Non-working women have less decision making than working women.

5.8 Education of children

Education today is considered as a primary need of every human being. Education of children is an important decision to be made in every household. However discrimination exists regarding education of girls. The following data reveals the decision making regarding children's education.

Table 5.8: Decision maker of children's education

Household member	Working women's household	Non-working women's household	Total
	No.	No.	No.
Male	5	14	19
Female	4	2	6
Both	16	9	25
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 5.8 shows that 4 of working women and 2 of non-working women make the final decisions regarding education of children in their respective households while in 5 of working women's household and 14 of non-working women's household it is decided by the male household head. And in 16 of working women's household and 9 of non-working women's households the decision is made by the joint efforts of both male and female. It shows that working women have more decision making power than non-working. It is mainly because of non-working women have no money as well as they are not aware of importance of education.

5.9 Views of the household regarding Education of women

The member of the household of both working women and non-working women are asked about their opinions regarding education of women and whether they think it is important or not. The findings are presented in the table below:

Table 5.9: Views of the sampled households regarding Education of women

Household Description	Working women's household	Non-working women's household	Total
	No.	No.	No.
Favor of	25	21	46
Against	-	2	2
No idea	-	2	2
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

Table 5.9 shows that 25 of working women’s household and 21 of non-working women’s households are in favor of educating women while 2 of non-working women’s household is against it. Likewise 2 of non-working women’s household have no idea about it. Most of working and non-working women households are in favor of education saying that “To educate a boy is to educate an individual but to educate a girl is to educate the family and society” which reflect the importance of women’s education. Education is an essential factor to make women aware of their rights, duties and enabling them to participate in the economic, political, social as well as household of the family and community. Education makes women to be self-dependent, more productive and skillful. It shows that there is arising awareness about educated female’s role in family, as job opportunity and other family’s welfare activities.

5.10 Views of the sampled respondents household regarding property rights for women

The following table shows the opinions of the members of the sampled household regarding property rights of women.

Table 5.10: Views regarding property rights for women

Description	Working women’s household	Non-working women’s household	Total
	No.	No.	No.
In favor of	20	2	22
Not favor of	2	20	22
No idea	3	3	6
Total	25	25	50

Source: Field survey 2011

It is shown in the above table that 20 of the working women and 2 of non-working women’s household are in favor of property rights for women. They think that if they have property right there will be empowerment in women’s decision making that will reduce domestic violence. Where as 2 of working women and 20 of non-working women’s household are not in favor of property rights for women. They say that there is no difference whether the property is owned by either male or female and they showed more dependency towards their husbands and males. While 3 of working women household’s and 3 of non-working women’s households have no idea

regarding it. It shows that working women are in favor of property rights for women than non-working.

5.11 Factors affecting decision making of women in household activities

Economic factor affects women's role in decision making both directly and indirectly (Acharya and Bennett, 1983) Mazumdar 1982, concludes that family constraints, illiteracy, traditional barriers, attitude and women's ability are the major determinants of decision-making. These are factors affecting decision making in household activities but it is not only one cause because education, economic condition, opportunity can play significant role in their decision-making role inside as well as outside the households.

Various factors influence the household decision-making in Saudiyar VDC like education Socio-economic status, societal structure, demography, social norms, values and traditions, family's role, employment situation, existing caste system, rights to property, economic dependency or independency, family's role, empowerment, opportunity, awareness, participation, legal provision and socio-physical infrastructure are major influencing factors of household decision-making. These factors, directly or indirectly, determine the participation and role of women inside as well as outside the house in this village. On the basis of respondents' view and the previous studies, situation of these factors in the study area are discussed below:

5.11.1 Education

Dat Kaur goes on to emphasize education and access to educational opportunities as an important factor influencing women's input in the decision making process. She observes as "educated women are better placed as compared to their illiterate counterpart" (Kaur 1987: 120).

Out of the total, majority respondents (40) view the education as the main determining factor of women's role in decision-making in Saudiyar VDC. It shows that the women who are working they are more qualified, more authority to make decision in household. They also share the economic burden of the family they are more consulted while making monetary decisions and participation more in such decisions than non-

working women in this village. Indeed, education is one of the major factors to make capable people. Thus, education is one of the major influencing factors of women's role in decision-making inside as well as outside households.

5.11.2 Social Status

30 respondent's view the Social status of the people is reflected in terms of their position, prestige in the society, family background, economic condition, educational level, participation and role in the society. Social status of the family of the working respondents is good than non-working respondents in the study area. In overall, social status of women in this village is not in good position.

Existing social norms, values and traditions of the society influence the women's role in household decision-making. The largest number of the people in is Hindu in the study area. Social norms, values and traditions are based on the Hindu religion. Besides, the social norms and values are also guided by patriarchal principle. So, definitely, women's role in decision-making is dominated by these norms, values and traditions. In conclusion, in case of this village, women's role in decision-making has also been influenced by social norms, values and traditions.

5.11.3 Caste System

Caste system also determines the women's status in the family as well as the society. The women's decision-making power in indigenous people (like Gurung, Tharu, Magar) is higher than Brahmin and Chhetri (Bhattachan, 2005). In the case most of 20 sampled families are Brahmin and Chhetri who live in joint family. The household head male does the main decision making. In joint family female members have low role in the decision making process. There are more restricted social norms and values. The women who live in nuclear family and educated have higher decision making power than joint family. In study area, most of Gurung, Mager and Tharu's male member go out of this area or country and women have more decision making power. In this case, most of sampled families are Brahmin and Chhetri women have no more autonomy and power in decision making power in comparison to the other castes' women. So, women's decision-making role depends on the caste system of this society.

5.11.4 Economic Status

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 Acharya and Bennett (1981).

Economic status of the family as well as the women is also important factor that influences the decision-making. There is positive relationship between the economic level and role in decision-making in this VDC. The women who are economically strong they are more consulted and their opinions are more valued than non-working. The women who are in governments services enjoy more freedom and power handling affairs . That's why working women have dominant role than non-working.

5.11.5 Employment Situation

Level of income depends on kind of employment. The women are employed in this VDC respectable and high earning jobs then they become empowered, economically strong and they get more power to make decision in the family.

5.11.6 Presence/Absence of Husband and Guardian

In VDC those women, whose husbands and guardians are absent, have more responsibilities and role in decision-making in comparison to those women, whose husbands or guardians are living together. If the husbands are present at house then wives' responsibility and decision-making role would be lowered or shared with husbands. So absence or presence of husbands and guardians is the main influencing factor of women's role in decision-making.

5.11.7 Rights to Property

Rights to property provide the authority to transact, sell or buy. In the study area, male members of the families hold such rights. Some females have ownership of lands (her own and family's) but they do not have complete authority to mobilize it. Some women have also the ownership of lands in the study area but they have not complete authority to mobilize it. So, they are nominal landholder, who cannot alone decide about lands. Therefore, women's real right to lands shows the more decision-making power in the household.

5.11.8 Awareness

Family members should have awareness about the role of the women in household decision-making. In the absence of awareness, female members of the family are deprived from the decision-making in the households. If the people become aware then they encourage the women to enhance their role in household decision making, otherwise they don't pay attention about the women's role in decision making. Thus, women's role in household decision-making also depends upon the awareness.

5.11.9 Family's Role

If the family provides opportunity to the female members to handle the house or provides the opportunity to participate in the decision-making activities then they can perform. If the female members are able but male members dominate in each and every decision of the family then female's power becomes low. So, family's positive role enhances the women's power in household decision-making. It is found that those family who provide opportunity to their wives in the most of the activities. Due to this cause, females are practicing the more decision-making role in their families.

5.11.10 Legal Provision

The existing legal provision also influences the women's role in household decision-making. If the legal provisions strongly exist then females can get chance to decide more inside as well as outside of the households. If the laws preserve the women's rights, (e.g. rights to property, rights to reproduction, rights to schooling, rights to participation on development etc). Then they get opportunity to enhance the decision-making capability. If the laws do not exist then they cannot enjoy the rights to decide inside as well as outside the family. Thus, legal provision is one of the major influencing factors of women's decision-making in the households in VDC. But, land registered in the name of women in only some of the working women have land but they have no complete authority to transact the lands.

5.11.11 Structure of the Family

There are two kinds of family's structure, joint family and nuclear family. The total 23 sampled families of this area are nuclear families and remaining 27 families are joint families. In the joint family, elder members of the family can play the role of guardian and wives of this area may have less responsibility in comparison to the nuclear families. In the nuclear family, and if the husbands are in foreign employment then women as a guardian have more responsibilities and also have more decision-making power. Conclude that the woman who is working and living in nuclear family have greater decision making than joint or non-working. Thus, women's role in household decision-making also depends upon the structure of family.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

In the Nepalese context, women's role in decision-making process is very low though their population covers more than half sky of the country. They daily spend their most of the working time in household activities. The main objective of the present study is to analyze the role of women in the household decision-making in Saudiyar VDC Dang in mid-western development of country.

The study tried to find out the issues of socio-economic status of women in the study area, the differences between the role of working and non-working women in household decision making and the factors affecting women's decision-making power. Both primary and secondary data are used in this study as per the requirement. Primary data is selected from the sampled unit during the field survey by structured questionnaire and interview. Both quantitative as well as qualitative data have been collected and used in this study. While secondary data are collected from the Saudiyar VDC survey 2067.

Saudiyar VDC has been divided in to 9 wards. But the present study is done in only 1 and 2 wards. The selection of the study households has been done by using judgment/deliberate non-random sampling. Total numbers of households in these wards are 480 with 2,548 populations. Among them I have taken only 50 households from the total number. They are of 15-59 ages, among them 25 are working and 25 are non-working.

The majority of Nepalese women live in rural areas where the choice for livelihood is limited to agricultural work on the farms, which are owned in most cases by their father, husband, Land lords or brothers. Since women in Nepal are deprived of property rights, they have to work on men's land from dawn to dusk for supporting them self and their family member. Hence the right for survival for women is laid on

the hands of men not only in outside affairs, but also in their own household matters which constitute an integral part of their lives.

The summary of the major findings of this study area:

-) Majority of sample respondents for this study area belong to age group 15-59 they are only women.
-) Majority of respondents are Brahmans / Chhettris (20-15) and majority of them are married.
-) Majority of working women are more qualified in terms of education than non-working women.
-) Majority of respondents for study area are married (33). So most of them have a status of wife and daughter-in-law in their household. .
-) Majority of the working or income earning women are private job holders engaged in teaching (15), administration work, banking sector etc. and the rest are engaged in government sectors.
-) The family structures of 15 of the working women are nuclear in nature where as 17 of the non-working women have joint family structure. It is also found that in joint families' women have more responsibility, less mobility and less freedom than nuclear families.
-) Male household head own most of the property in all the households, however in comparison the working women's share in household property is seen more than non-working women.
-) Income is possessed equally by men and women in 23 working women while only 6 in non-working women. However men are at liberty to spend the money where as women heavily rely on the consent of men to spend the money.
-) 25 of women of both the working as well as non-working women's household are the decision maker regarding expenditure on small household purchase. It is found that men do not like to be bothered by these matters.
-) 34 of male are the final decision maker in majority of households work regarding the purchase of expensive items like furniture, automobile, electronic items etc. However it is observed that women only support them.
-) Both men and women (16) in working family have joint decision in the expenditure to medical treatment but 15 males in nonworking have decision on themselves.

- J 41 of both Women take the sole responsibility of all the household activities like cooking, cleaning, looking after the children etc. The men only offer a helping in working women in some cases. It is found that men in both families have less participation in household activities.
- J Women are the main decision maker regarding social ceremonies, to attend other's ceremonies or inviting other people for celebration. It is found that working women are mostly consulted or given more responsibility in the decision related to attending or organizing social ceremonies than non-working women. It may be because of the social relation that a working woman has outside the house.
- J Selling and investment is a serious matter in every household. The decision to sell owns property or to buy is made by seeking the advice of all household members. Men are the main decision maker regarding these matters in every household. It is found that the level of participation of a working woman in the decision related to selling and investment is more in comparison to non-working women. Most of the working women are educated and have a social relation outside the house and are in constant touch with the changes going in the outside world. It may be because of this they are more consulted in these matters and considered more qualified to take right decisions.
- J Education of children is a priority in most of the households of both working and non-working women. The decisions related to children's education is jointly made by working women parents (16) than non-workingwomen (9).
- J It is seen that 20 of only working women of the household are in favor of the property rights for women. 20 of non-working women against the favor of the property rights for women. Some are either against it or do not have any idea about it.
- J Education is the most influencing factor that affects the decision making power of women. Educated women whether working or non-working are more consulted and have more authority to make decision in the household.
- J Economic status of women i.e. their contribution to the household economically also has a positive effect on their level of household decision making. Since they also share the economic burden of the family they are more consulted while making monetary decisions and they participate more in such decisions than non-working women.
- J Social norms and tradition is also an important factor that affects women's decision making. It usually acts as a constraint in the decision making power

of women. Non-working women are found to be more pressurized by social norms, tradition, superstitions than working women.

- J) Comparatively working women household are more in favor of educating women and property right for women than non-working women's households

6.2 Conclusion

Although women are responsible for performing all the household activities, decision making regarding household affairs however is in the hands of male household head of the family. Women have a greater participation in the decision making of only small household purchase like food, clothing, bazaar purchase, general medical treatment which are in most cases of lower expenditure. In these decisions also men play the role of an advisor. Women have the possession of household income but its allocation needs the approval of the male member of the family.

There is some difference between working women and non-working women. Working women are more conscious about their status in the household. Their participation level is more in serious matter like investment and selling than non-working women. Working women are more consulted and their opinions are more valued than non-working women. Especially the women who are in government services enjoy more freedom and more power in handling household affairs and making household decisions. It thus indicates that economic status of women does have a positive effect in their decision making power and their level of household decision making.

Though economic status helps the women to have a strong position in the household, the most influencing factor in their decision making is education. Educated women even though non-working have more power and consulted in every decision making in the household.

To conclude, we can say that though women still suffer from the discriminatory practices in their households and society, if they are educated and economically independent then they can make their position strong in terms of decision making in their household and in the society as a whole.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

ROLE OF WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD DECISION MAKING

(A STUDY OF SAUDIYAR VDC, DANG DISTRICT, NEPAL)

(A) General Information of the Respondent

- (a) Name: _____ (b) Age: _____
- (c) Sex: _____ (c) Education: Literate/Illiterate/Grade...
- (d) Marital Status: Married/Unmarried/Widow
- (e) Religion: Hindu/Buddhist/Christian/Muslim/Others (specify)
- (f) Occupation: Agriculture/Service/Business/ Others (specify)
- (h) Caste/Ethnicity _____
- Address: _____ District: _____ VDC: _____ Ward _____ No. _____
Tole: _____

B. Educational Status

- 1) Have you ever been to school?
- a. Yes b. No
- 2) Educational Level
- a. Literate b. Primary level c. Lower Secondary d. Secondary e. SLC
f. Intermediate g. Graduate h. Masters

C. Family Structure

- 3) What is the structure of your family?
- a. Nuclear b. Joint

D. Property Ownership

- 4) Do you have a house?
- a. Yes b. No

5) Do you have some land in your family?

- a. Yes b. No

6) If yes, then who owns the property?

- a. Myself b. Male Household Head c. Joint Ownership

E. Perception of household members

7) What does your family think about Education of women?

- a. Good b. Not good c. ok d. don't know

8) What does your family member think about property rights for women?

- a. Good b. Not good c. ok d. don't know

G. Socio-Economic Status of Women

9) What are the facilities available in your society? (a) School/Campus (b) Drinking Water (c) Market (d) Transportation (e) Health Institute (f) Telephone (g) Bank

10) Does your family allows the female members to go to outside the country (for any purpose)? (a) Yes (b) No.

11) Does your voice hear the male members of the family (in the process of any decision-making)? (a) Always (b) Mostly (b) Sometimes (d) Never

12) What are the main occupations of female members of your family (with number)? (a) Domestic works (b) Service (c) Business (d) Other

13) Have any fixed assets (e.g. land, house) owed by female members of your family? (a) Yes (b) No.

If yes, what and how many members have the assets?

14) Have any variable assets (e.g. cash saving, money, ornaments etc.) with female member of your family? (a) Yes (b) No.

If yes, what are these assets and quantity?

15) Do the female members earn cash in your family? (a) Yes (b) No.

If yes, who and how much she/they earn monthly?

- 16) Have any kinds of knowledge and skills with female members of your family?
 (a) Yes (b) No.

If yes, what are they?

H. Role in Household Decisions

- 17) Mostly, who does make daily household decision in your family?

(a) Yourself (b) Husband (c) Other male members (d) Other female members

- 18) How do you make decision about your family's daily household activities?

Caste/Ethnicity		All Times	Mostly	Sometimes	Never	Total
Caring Children & Disable Members	Male					
	Female					
Cooking	Male					
	Female					
Cleaning	Male					
	Female					
Washing Clothes	Male					
	Female					
Collecting Fuel	Male					
	Female					
Welcoming Guests	Male					
	Female					
Other Household Activities (not mentioned above)	Male					
	Female					

- 19) Do you know the income of your husband or other members of your family?

a. Yes b. No

- 20) Who decides to allocate and spend the household Income?

a. Myself b. Male household head c. Both

- 21) If working, how do you spend the money you earn?

a. Give to the family b. Buy food items c. Children's education d. myself e. Others

- 22) To whom you consult to spend your income?
a. Own decision b. male member c. both
- 23) Who keeps the household income of your family?
a. Myself b. Male member c. both
- 24) Do you participate in Household activities?
a. Yes b. No
- 25) What is the level of participation of your husband or other male member in household activities?
- 26) Have you owned land of the family? (a) Yes (b) No
- 27) Have you got complete authority to use it? (a) Yes (b) No
- 28) Who have complete authority to purchase and sell house/land of the family?
(a) Yourself (b) Husband (c) Consultation of both (d) other male member/s of the family
- 29) Are any income sources, which are your completely personal?
(a) Yes (b) No. If yes, what are these?
- 30) Have you complete authority to use your income? (a) Yes (b) No
- 31) Does your family ask you to sale/buy/use land and other wealth?
(a) Yes (b) No
- 32) Who mostly buy goods for daily consumption of the family?
(a) Yourself (b) Husband (c) Other male member (d) Other female member
(e) Anybody

33) In what kinds of academic institution your children study?

Kind of Institution	Governmental		Private		Total	
	School	Campus	School	Campus	School	Campus
Son						
Daughter						
Total						

Who did choose the institution for your children? (a) Yourself (b) Husband (c) Both (d) Other male members (e) Other female members

34) Are any jobholder females in your family? (a) Yes (b) No.

If yes, how many members and who did permit to join that job?

(a) Herself (b) Yourself (c) Male members (d) Whole family.

35) Does your family allow going outside from the house? (a) Yes (b) No

36) Do you think education needed to family?

(a) Yes (b) no

37) Why it is needed?

38) Why it is not needed?

39) Is it good to provide property to daughter (women)?

(a) Yes (b) No

40) Are you happy with your family environment?

(a) Yes (b) No

41) If yes, why?

42) If no, why?

43) What are the factors, which resist you to make decision independently in your house (in your experience)? (a) Illiteracy/low education (b) Family structure (c) Social norms and values (d) Economic dependency over family (e) Lack of empowerment (f) Other (specify)

44) Which are the main and secondary influencing factors of women's role in decision-making?

Influencing Factors	Main Role	Secondary Role	No Role	Total
Education				
Social Status				
Structure of the Society				
Employment Situation				
Economic Status				
Family Structure				
Presence/Absence of Husband and Guardian				
Ownership of Assets & Rights to Property				
Caste system				
Social Norms, Values & Traditions				
Family's Role				
Role of Empowerment Program				
Awareness				
Legal Provision				
Opportunity				
Socio-Physical Infrastructure				
Other				

45) What are the factors do you think affects your decision making regarding household issues?

- a. Education b. Economic status c. ownership of property d. Social and traditional culture
 e. Age f. Maturity g. Personality
 h. Others

46) Do you have any comment?