

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Nepal is a country of various geographic, cultural, ethnic, religious diversity. Across the diversity, the majority of communities in Nepal are patriarchal. A women's life is strongly influenced by her father, husband and son. Such patriarchal practices are further reinforced by the legal system. The status of women is determined by the patriarchal social system, values, and women's right preserved and protected by the state, and state policy for the development of women. Women's relative status, however, varied from one ethnic group to another. The economic contribution of women is substantial, but largely unnoticed because their traditional role was taken as for granted. Empirical data have proved that situation of Nepalese women is too severe to compare with men. Woman's situation is very poor in health, education, participation, income generation, self-confidence, decision-making, access to policy making, and human rights. Nepal is one of the countries of the world where life expectancy for women is lower than that of men. National statistics shows that the age group 5 and above the women's literacy rate is 57.4% while 75.1% to male and the national literacy rate is 65.9 percent (CBS, 2068). The enrolment of women in higher education is only 24.95 %. Women' involvement in technical and vocational education is also lower than men. This is due to the social norms and culture.

Every human being after coming into this world grows up and becomes an adult. They work hard, build their career and achieve their dreams. They also need a life partner whom they can start family. So, they get married and build their beautiful life. As death is inevitable, sometimes one of the partner may expire early.

The word 'single women 'refers to the women who has lost her husband and stays alone until she lives, known as "widow". In simple, defined as a woman whose husband has died and who has not married again (Tiwari and Bhattarai, 2018). According to feminist literatures define single women as widow, divorced or separated. Women who are unmarried over 35 years of age called single women. In the 21st century, this word refers to all women who are widows, divorced, and separated and unmarried over 35 years of

age. Widow is defined as a woman whose husband has died and who has not married again (Dhungana, 2014).

The growing number of single women in developing countries has been a big issue. In Nepal, the growth of single women unnaturally increased in the conflict period from 1996 to 2006, along with the existence of natural growth of single women. Then after, the growth of male death in foreign employment has contributed significantly, along with the growth of extramarital affairs and divorce from 1999 to present. Population Census 2011 and Demographic Statistics 2019 show 6.7 percent (2 million) single women as widows out of total population (29.9 million) and 44 percent single women as household heads (2.3 million) out of 5,423,297 households (CBS, 2019). Despite its decision-making role and contribution, the remaining single women are socio-economically vulnerable in terms of education, health, livelihood, mobility, participation, decision making etc. Therefore, vulnerability of single women is an undesired threat in the course of development policy and practices and also poverty and inequality responses and reduction. (Bista, 2019).

Birth and death is universal truth, however the single women are largely blamed for the death of husband. The several situations occur as the social elites also perceive single women are accused. The social elites also perceived single women are accused. The societal leaders don't allow the widows in participating in societal and religious work (Malik, 2013).

The death of husband makes a transition in the life of a woman from a wife to a widow. Whatever the cause of the husband's death is, in most cases, the wife has always been blamed for it. She is supposed to bring the ill-fortunes in the family. Her hard works, skills, dedication to the family is counted only as long as her husband is alive. The neglected and hated status of the widow is not the recent one. It is deep-rooted in the patriarchal Hindu structure. The society is very biased towards the widow's freedom and their life. Thus, it makes a widow feel inferior in all fields of society. Widow is a harsh and hurtful word. It is derived from the Sanskrit and it means "empty." Women for Human Rights (WHR) thus passed a national declaration to use the word "Single Women" replacing the terminology "Widows" to rephrase this "state of being single" as a natural phenomenon. The change in terminology has made many effects, particularly, to the rights of widows. However, over the time, the definition of single

women has undergone change to include divorcees, unmarried women over 35 and other single women. In spite of the several social reforms and legal enactments, the widows (especially youth widows other than elderly widows) continue to suffer the physical, mental, cultural and other social discriminations and many other social malaise (Upreti and Adhikary,2009)

Assistance from family is, therefore, essential to single women of these castes, but the structure of the kinship system and the norms governing behaviour make accessing support sometimes difficult. All are responsible for the care of these women, but may have little motivation to provide it particularly in cases of separation, divorce, or where the women is young or without offspring (therefore needing careful supervision and many years of support). Natal kin may have a greater desire to help, yet they face a number of constraints on their behaviour towards once married women; thus, they can often provide some assistance, but only rarely substantial support. Still, natal kin were found to very important at the end of a woman's marriage, a surprising finding considering the strongly patrilineal kinship system and patriarchal ideology (Weiss, 1999).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Most women and men in the world spend more than 50% of their life period married. But the fact may not be applicable for all people as the death an inevitable event that terminates the marriage life. Consequently, widowhood is also inevitable execution to all married relationship unless both spouses die simultaneously that don't break up through divorce and separation. A spouse who lives longer than other referred to as a widow (female) and widowers (Male).

Exploitation of women even though they form 50% of population is due to society, family and an individual's fault. In Nepal, our culture and traditions like 'Deuki pratha,' 'chau pratha,' 'kumari pratha', 'bidhuwa pratha', 'satti pratha', etc have promoted women's violence and discrimination. Even though sati pratha is abolished now, to after husband's death, the women were expected to dress up and behave differently than other women which is also a discrimination against women. Being widow, is a medium to discriminate women. Her desires and dreams are not taken care of. She cannot live her life according to her will. She is made to suffer after her husband's death.

It is true that there is always role differentiation and a division of labour at least according to age and sex. Adults and children, males and females are always assigned with different tasks. However, some studies (e.g., Duberman and Azumi 1975) have mentioned that in this division of labour, Nepali women are among the most deprived groups on earth. Parents are legally obliged to support sons, not daughters. Only sons can inherit. The only compensating factor is that a wife is entitled to 50 percent of her husband's property. After a wife is widowed or deserted, her in-laws steal her share. One study has reported that more than 1.6 percent of the female populations in Nepal become already widowed by the age of 29 (Acharya, 1994).

Death is inevitable. But, the bereavement due to loss of husband creates a severe problem in the role adjustment for a woman. The oppressive social structures founded on patriarchal construction make widowhood personally problematic for individual widows. Social researchers, social workers, social reformers and planners have ignored the problem of widowhood. In a male-dominated society, women are most unfortunately viewed as household workers and child bearers. Women are neither properly educated nor informed of their rights and legal procedures. This takes a worst turn after a woman is widowed (Uperty and Adhikari, 2009).

Widows were not allowed to wear red clothes, bangles, tika, garland etc. They were not allowed to talk with unknown male. All these things are considered as 'sin', according to Hindu tradition. There is also the problem of social adjustment for a single woman in the society. Especially young widows are assumed to be witches and are blamed for the death of their husbands. On the other hand; widows are the ones who are blamed for their own condition. Although their husbands have been killed in the war or an accident, most of them think that their husband died because of their misfortune. They are most likely to become the victim of human trafficking because they have lack of education and skills to work and survive (Thapa, 2007).

When a woman becomes a widow, she is further required to obey very stern and rigid rules and regulations to curb many areas of her freedom. These types of normative requirements prescribed for widows differ as per different types of castes, ethnic and religious communities. However, economic dependence is the major problem that outweighs other types of restrictions to keep them in marginal social position. Among Hindu, widows are not allowed even to wear the red colour, a colour regarded as a

symbol of luck to use in religious ceremonies. As widows are considered inauspicious, they are not supposed to participate in religious and other cultural ceremonies like worship of gods and goddesses, marriage of their own children, etc. Most widows are ignorant of any legal rights they may have about compensation or inheritance. It is pitying that widows lack self-confidence and are depressed, discriminated, afraid and immobilized in all their lives only because they are women. Those are facts for all the women, even those who are educated (WHR, 2006).

In order to cast some new light on this topic the following research questions have been the base for this study.

- 1) What is the demographic condition and socio-economic status of widow?
- 2) What is the attitude and behavior done by family and society towards widow women?

1.3 Objectives of Study

- 1) To find out the demographic condition and socio-economic status of widow.
- 2) To find out the attitude and behaviour done by society and family towards widow.

1.4 Significance of study

This study gives information and socio-economic status of widow women. In this study researcher selected Kaski district Pokhara Municipality ward no 11. In Nepal very few research had been done regarding widow woman and study area also nobody had done research about this issue before. So, researcher chose this area. Previous maximum studies have found the negative socio-economic status of widow women in the society. But researcher want to find out more factors and what exactly happened. Because in society we found few widow women get better opportunity and higher post in government office because of being widow. The research will help the widow women to get their right and will provide new perspective to their socio-economic status on society. Widow women directly can benefit from this research as its finding may improve their socio-economic status and quality of life. This study will spread awareness in the society, people and their perception towards widow women. It may help the future researchers, to study about widow women's socio-economic status. This

study may help in providing some information needed by the researchers, policy makers, government etc. Also helpful for the subject of sociological and anthropological study.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The study is undertaken with an academic purpose. It intends to assess the socio-economic status of widow women of Pokhara ward number 11. Every research work has its own limitation due to the lack of time, budget, resources and knowledge. This research was done during pandemic covid 19 period. There were many problems occurred during the data collection in the field, some respondents didn't want to participate due to covid -19. This study is limited to the widow women of Pokhara ward number 11. The data is collected only from respective community of different caste/ethnic groups who are widow women. There is not enough literature for the widow women. After taking permission and ensuring health fitness and maintain social distancing, wearing mask, data were collected.

This study is conducted within the boundaries of limited time, budget, and other resources so without any exception, this study was done as a interview schedule and case study of widow women of Pokhara ward number 11. With the objectives of partial fulfillment of master degree requirement of humanities and social sciences. Selection of the study areas are based on the majority of geographical location where they are living. This study also used limited tools and techniques.

This study is a small-scale study, so it's finding will not be generalized national level. Very few literature studies, financial limitations and time constraints were limitations in the study. Finally, this study has tried itself to reduce these obstacles and give real fact and data about this problem. This research also has tried to reduce all kinds of errors and give good information about the research topic.

1.6 Organization of the Study

This study has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction and it discusses the Background of the Study, Statement of Problem, Research Objectives, Significance of study, Limitation and Organization of the study. The chapter focuses on the introduction of the research subject matters which will make it easy to know

about the basic information of research. The second chapter presents the review of literature. This chapter gives theoretical review, previous studies, conceptual framework and relevant theories.

The third chapter presents the methodology adopted for the study. Under this chapter Rational of site selection, Research design, Nature and source of Data, sample size, Data collection Tools, Method and Instruments of Primary Data Collection (Interview, case study and key informant information). Data Analysis and presentation and reliability and validity of tools are described.

The fourth chapter presents the socio-demographic of Respondents. In this chapter, the demographic condition of respondents were analyzed. Age group of respondents, educational status, Religion composition, Nature of family, caste composition, Occupation, monthly income were analyzed.

The fifth chapter presents attitude and behavior towards widow. In this chapter, Land ownership of widow women, food sufficiency from their land, economic support to widow from their family, cause of husband death, social adjustment after husband death, participation on religious, social activities, participation on social organization, perception of widow towards cosmetic items, red cloths and widow women, concept of remarriage, violence faced by widow family and society behaviours and attitude towards respondents were analyzed. It has developed a number of subheadings and tried to find out the relationship between socio-demographic variables and socio-economic status of respondents. Finally, in the last chapter summary, major findings and conclusion are drawn effectively.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

A literature review deals with the literature relevant to the study, to the deepest knowledge and understanding about the subject of field work. Review of literature is an essential part in the development of research project. It enables the investigators to develop insight into the study and plan methodology.

2.1 Widowhood and Gender Relation

In Nepal, similar to many other countries, social issues concerning women, gender relations and gender associations have received little level of attention from the scholars. However, it has gradually been realized that there are inequalities, discriminations, subordinations and inhuman treatments in gender relations leading to many types of suffering for women. The condition of widows vastly differs in different groups of people distributed in different areas. Despite these variations, they all have one feature in common that as widow they have to bear a number of sufferings.

Widowhood and related burden of restrictive rules and regulations separate and marginalize them from their community, family and the circle of relatives. In Nepal, the consequences of socio-political conflicts of the last fifteen years (those related to Maoist insurgency and various social movements) left tens of thousands of women to become widow without their own involvement in these events. However, the conventional belief of society takes this type of their suffering also as a product of their sins committed in the past probably in previous life. How far this belief matches with the hard fact of society is a question which requires answers through empirical studies and investigations (Uprety, 2008).

Parents are legally obliged to support sons, not daughters. Only sons can inherit. The only compensating factor is that a wife is entitled to 50 percent of her husband's property. After a wife is widowed or deserted, her in-laws steal her share. One study has reported that more than 1.6 percent of the female populations in Nepal become already widowed by the age of 29 (Acharya, 1994). The risk of widowhood and related types of problems for the women tends to increase with increase in their age. The

patriarchal social values always make critiques and pose unseen restrictions to the young widows. All their activities are seriously watched with negative eyes. They are not supposed even to talk to other males in society. Together with the burdens, they have to bear the responsibility for the maintenance of their children which deprives of their freedom and orients them to think that they cannot have a better life even when they dare to remarry. Hindu social structure is such that it makes majority of women dependent on male members of the family. As a result, when a woman becomes a widow, she becomes vulnerable. Lack of adequate expertise does not permit her to run any type of earning activity independently. (Uprety and Adhikary, 2009)

Nepalese society is son-preferring. The birth of a daughter is neither celebrated nor is her death lamented much. Sayings go, 'the birth of a daughter is a fatality' and 'the death of a daughter saves her from a bad marriage'. These proverb and sentiments about girls/women and lack of their value are manifested in real life situation. Even if girls survive their infancy and childhood, they are married off at an early age. In patriarchal system of marriage, daughters are generally not considered a full-fledged member of the family they born into. Even in the family where she is married to, she does not have dignity and human rights if she does not enter into the family with adequate wealth in the form of dowry. Hindu Ideology of purity of women's sexuality dictates that parents earn 'dharma' (blessings from the God) if they marry off their daughters while they are still virgin to the extent of them being married off before puberty. Other religions such as Muslim and Buddhist that prevail in Nepal are also not better than the Hindu when it comes to the ideology of women's sexuality. Marriage is the destiny in women's life but the choice is not theirs. The so-called high caste Hindu families prohibit widow remarriage due to the ideology of the purity of sexuality. Females in some non-Hindu ethnic communities remarry after they are widowed but many male remarry even when they have their wives living with them. Women in Nepal have neither the freedom of marital choice nor they have the fertility choice. Many women still go through unwanted pregnancy and childbirth due to lack of choice and decision-making. (Bhadra and Shah, 2007)

2.2 Concept of Women and Single Women

The Nepalese society is male dominated society, where men take all the discussions and women are viewed as household workers and child bearers. It is but natural that

where such views are held supreme, women are always neglected. In the context of Nepal, Women are one of the most disadvantaged groups. The Nepali cultural and social phenomenon has been developed with the inheritably effect of traditional customs, religious books like epics, and by which women have been praised and condemned. In fact, women are neglected, isolated and dominated in our Hindu-lead society (Chamling, 2008).

According to the Marxist Feminist theory, the root cause of women's oppression is the private property, which gives rise to economic inequality, dependence, political confusion, and ultimately unhealthy social relations between men and women. It also seen gender inequality is determined by the capitalistic mode of production and gender oppression is class oppression and women's subordination is seen as a form of class oppression which is maintained because it serves the interests of capital and the ruling class. Marxist theory has also stressed about domestic labour as well as wage work for women to support their position in the given society, See (Marxismhttp://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marxism). Marx about gender, the word gender is a term which is not widely used until the late twenty.

Nepal is a highly patriarchal society and on almost every measure, women are worse off than men. In 2016, the global gender index ranked Nepal 110th out of 144 countries for gender parity. It is always culture (a set of collective experiences of ideas, norms, values and beliefs associated with a people) with its gender role inequalities and socialisation (the intricate process through which culture is transmitted from one generation to another) determines the position of women in a society. Gender roles are socially constructed. Patriarchy denotes a culture of power relationship that promotes man's supremacy and women subjugation. It encompasses institutional endorsement of man's ascendancy within the family and other social structures. It justifies the normative process pertaining to the recognition and sustainability of his dominance in society. Consequently, a boy is looked upon as the perpetuator of the family line, and a girl 'a bird of passage'. The family organisation makes discrimination between the sexes. It promotes a hierarchy of classification in which man centred issues take dominance where as women derive their personalities from their father's, husband's, brothers and sons. With a secondary status, women play but a submissive role in social life. (Bhasin, 2007)

2.3 Gender Issues and Women's Rights Incorporated in the Interim Constitution

In the introduction section along with other forms of discrimination, the Interim Constitution of Nepal (2072B.S) commits to solving the problem of gender discrimination; with following specific provisions.

Article 22: Right against Torture

There shall be no exploitation (of women) in the name of custom, tradition and culture.

Human trafficking and bonded labor is prohibited.

Article 29: Right against Exploitation

Every person shall have the right against exploitation.

No person shall be subjected to any kind of exploitation on the basis of religion, custom, tradition, culture, practices or any other bases.

No person shall be subjected to human trafficking or bonded labor, and such an act shall be punishable by law.

No person shall be subjected to forced labor.

Article 38: Right of Women

Every woman shall have equal right to lineage without any gender discriminations.

Every woman shall have the right relating to safe motherhood and reproductive health.

There shall not be any physical, mental, sexual or psychological or any other kind of violence against women, or any kind of oppression based on religious, social and cultural tradition, and other practices. Such an act shall be punishable by law and the victim shall have the right to be compensation as provided for in law.

Women shall have the right to access participate in all state structures and bodies on the basis of the principle of proportional inclusion.

Women shall have the right to special opportunity in the spheres of education, health, employment and social security on the basis of positive discrimination.

Both the spouses shall have equal rights in property and family affairs

Article 43: Right to Social Security

Economically poor, physically incapacitated and helpless person, helpless single women, persons with physical impairment, children, persons who cannot look after themselves and the citizens who belong to communities that are on the verge of extinction, shall have the right to social security as provided for by law.

Various societies including Nepalese society, in recent days have, however, initiated to show appropriate concern and respect for widow women, allowing them sizeable freedom and dignity in various dealings and existence. Until now, masculine sentiments have not entirely developed a tolerable culture. It is still persistent in many places, both in policies and practices, that women as such cannot fully exercise human as well as constitutional rights. They are (were) naturally low-grade to men and as a result have to be for all times subordinated and oppressed.

Regarding gender issues and women rights incorporated in the interim constitution made above rules but all women did not get it. In this study maximum respondents were illiterate and they didn't know about their rights. They couldn't speak openly. They are highly depended to their husband but after husband's death, their life became miserable. Only few widows, who are educated, had high family background got all their rights and opportunities and freedom even after husband's death. Well educated widows themselves are forming several programs to raise the socio-economic status of other widows and bring about the awareness amongst the general population and other authorities to eliminate the evil culture and discrimination that was imposed on them which hindered their participation in development process. But their efforts and emphasis was not offering a widow to lead a normal and respected life in society. Discrimination and ostracism are still prevailing in the villages and in more conservative household. For the betterment of the live of widow the apex body of the country – government have to take initiative action to review the discriminatory legal provision and other evil social cultures. Moreover, individual, households and some prosperous communities other groups and individuals also should take development action so that they do not feel the degradation in their status and stand up confidently in their feet.

2.4 Empirical Review

Review of previous studies:

In India, a predominantly patriarchal society, loss of a husband brings many drastic changes in the social and economic status in the life of the wife. The position of widows in many societies has been precarious because the death of a husband removes the main source of their economic wellbeing. The personal self-identity of widows is largely influenced by the husbands' status and her role revolves around home. Thus, the mind set of society views her only in relation to her identity vis-a-vis the males around her. This perception has not changed. The death of the husband almost marks the social death of the wife. This study therefore, seeks to examine this identity shift of the woman's status from 'wife' to 'widow'. The focus of this study is on young widows and how they seek to reconstruct their identity amidst this loss of her husband (Coutinho, 2020)

A study conducted by Sabri, et al, (2016) "Experiences, Coping Behavior, and Barriers in Seeking Help", examined Nepalese widows' experiences of violence, their coping strategies, and barriers faced in seeking help. Widows reported a range of violent experiences perpetrated by family and community members that spanned psychological, physical, and sexual abuse. Findings highlight the need for interventions across the individual, family, community, and policy levels. Avenues for intervention include creating awareness about widows' issues and addressing cultural beliefs affecting widows' lives. Furthermore, efforts should focus on empowering widows, promoting healthy coping, and addressing their individual needs.

The study conducted by Yadav, (2016). "White Sari- Transforming Widowhood in Nepal" explores how widows of Nepal subverted thousands of years of this oppressive practice. It also examines the challenges that they faced in the era of the white sari and the citizenship benefits that they have achieved after liberating themselves from the shroud of widowhood well-being.

The research conducted by Kiely T, Shrestha, Kafle, et al. (2016). "Social isolation and health in widowhood: A qualitative study of Nepal widows; experiences" shows that little research exists on social isolation and health among widows despite their marginalization in South Asia. Their study results provide a preliminary analysis of the

role social support plays in the well-being of Nepali widows. Between 2011 and 2012, they conducted 42 in-depth interviews in the Kathmandu valley and Surkhet district. Low social support was a common theme, principally lacking in the domains of emotional and instrumental support and was described as increasing women's vulnerability to mistreatment and economic insecurity. Policies and programs that foster these types of support may have positive effects on widows.

The case study conducted by Tiwari and Bhattarai, (2017). "Social Status of Nepalese Single Women and Perception on Remarriage" The aim of this study is to examine the social status of Nepalese single women and their perception on remarriage. The result shows that the single women faced the problem of loneliness. Majority of respondents think about remarriage without leaving children. It clearly shows that majority of the single women want to remarry not for physical pleasure but concerning about their safety, their children future and less economic burden. The study depicted that the barriers for the single women in social and religious participations have been changed slowly. It can be concluded that the social status of single women seems to be changing towards positive social status such as society has been liberal in their clothing and participation in various religious functions.

A study conducted by Dahal, (2010). "Widowhood life situation and suffering", based on the victims (who became widow) of Maoist war in Nepal. It explains how the war created situation of suffering for people mainly the suffering of the widow women. The war claimed the lives of thousands of people and many became widow. Many of them have to leave their place and live in new location. This displacement further created problem for the widow women. Widowhood itself a situation of suffering in Nepalese society because of the cultural norms and values. They are taken as different people (than normal women) and they are isolated and suffered in various ways.

A study of women empowerment among Nepalese war widows "Participation in decision making" as an indicator by Poudel, (2015). Among 15027 Nepalese who died/disappeared/were disabled; the majority (87%) were male and many were married (INSEC 2011). Hence, they left behind the large number of new single female survivors, as a consequence of the conflict. In this study these women are termed as war widows. (Basnet 2011:52) defines war widows as: "The female survivors of war who were married and whose husband were killed or made to disappear during the civil

war period (1996-2006) in Nepal. They are residing within the territory of the country and their husbands were affiliated to any political party, civil member, army, police force or Maoist.” As a poor nation in the cross-road of peace building and political stabilization, Nepal.

A study conducted by Surkan, et al, (2015) “Non-disclosure of Widowhood in Nepal; Implication for women and their children shows that, Widowhood in Nepal is highly stigmatised and therefore is a sensitive topic. This study sought to understand why and to whom women do not disclose their status as widows. Thematic content analysis of 31 in-depth interviews and 6 focus groups was conducted with primarily high-caste widows of reproductive age from the Kathmandu Valley, Surkhet, Chitwan and Kavre districts of Nepal. A codebook was developed based upon recurring concepts and applied to all transcripts using At last, Due to discomfort or stigmatisation, many women concealed their status as widows in the community through behaviours impacting their daily lives. Non-disclosure to children was frequently described, often as a way to protect them from psychological sequelae. Concealment of widowhood is a coping strategy Nepali women use to shield themselves against societal stigma and to manage bereavement in their children. Efforts are needed to support widows in dealing with mental health issues related to disclosure and the psychosocial impact on their children.

A study conducted by Basnet, Kandel and Lamichhane, (2018) “Depression and anxiety among war-widows of Nepal: a post -civil war cross-sectional study”, Shows that, thousands of Nepalese women were widowed as a consequence of a decade (1996–2006) long civil war in Nepal. These women are at grave risk of mental health problems due to both traumatic experiences and violation of natural order of widowhood. The study explores the depression and anxiety among war-widows. In 2012, a cross-sectional study was designed to interview 358 war-widows using validated Beck Depression Inventory and Beck Anxiety Inventory in four districts of Nepal *Bardiya, Surkhet, Sindhupalchowk* and *Kavrepalanchowk* with history of high conflict intensity. The prevalence of depression and anxiety was 53% and 63% respectively. Financial stress was significantly associated with depression (2.67, 95% CI: 1.40–5.07) and anxiety (2.37, 95% CI: 1.19–4.72). High autonomy of women as compared to low autonomy, high social support as compared to low social support and literacy as opposed to illiteracy was associated with less likelihood of depression and anxiety.

Their results suggest high magnitude of depression and anxiety among war-widows in Nepal.

A study conducted by Houston, Shrestha, Kafle, et al, (2016). “Social isolation and health in widowhood: A qualitative study of Nepali widow experiences” Reveals that little research exists on social isolation and health among widows despite their marginalization in South Asia. Using a conceptual framework that delineates distinct forms of social support, their results provide a preliminary analysis of the role social support plays in the well-being of Nepali widows. Between 2011 and 2012, they conducted 42 in-depth interviews in the Kathmandu valley and Surkhet district. Low social support was a common theme, principally lacking in the domains of emotional and instrumental support and was described as increasing women's vulnerability to mistreatment and economic insecurity. Policies and programs that foster these types of support may have positive effects on widows' well-being.

A study conducted by Doblaz, et al, 2018“Widowhood, loneliness, and health in old age” shows that Elderly people describe how they experience the feeling of loneliness after becoming widowed. The loss of the spouse brings an emotional vacuum that is impossible to be filled, especially at night. After long-lasting marriages, these older people are confronted with loneliness, both in the home and internally, which very often triggers depressive disorders. As regards health, 2 types of feelings were observed. On the one hand, there is helplessness for fear of accidents or unexpected illnesses when alone at home. On the other hand, they feel uncertainty about the future, as they wonder who will look after them in case of need. Both feelings contribute to activate loneliness.

A study conducted by Uprety and Adhikary, (2009). “Perceptions and practices of society towards single women in the context of Nepal” found that the death of husband makes a transition in the life of a woman from a wife to a widow. Whatever the cause of the husband’s death is, in most cases, the wife has always been blamed for it. She is supposed to bring the ill-fortunes in the family. Her hard works, skills, dedication to the family is counted only as long as her husband is alive. The neglected and hated status of the widow is not the recent one. It is deep-rooted in the patriarchal Hindu structure. Though the widower can remarry, the remarriage of a widow is considered very rare and uncommon. The society is very biased towards the widow’s freedom and their life.

The study conducted by Ramnarain, (2016). “Unpacking Widow Headship and Agency in Post -conflict Nepal” points to the necessity of disaggregating female headship to trace the contours of household vulnerability of widow-headed households, a subset of female-headed households. The inadequacy of surveys in explaining the interplay between economic vulnerability and social norms is ameliorated through the use of ethnographic data and the narratives of widow heads collected through fieldwork in 2008–9 and 2011. The study traces key coping strategies of widow-headed households in Nepal to provide insight into the processes by which widow heads mediate social institutions and patriarchal norms in their everyday struggles for survival, and the spaces of agency that emerge herein. The study concludes with implications for prevailing understandings of household headship and agency that development practitioners must be attentive to in devising policies to support widow head.

The articles by Hendrickson & etal, (2018) “Resilience Among Nepali Widows After the Death of a Spouse” said that responses to the death of a spouse vary; although some are at increased risk of poorer physical and mental health outcomes, others have more resilient responses. In light of the limited scope of research on widows’ experiences in Nepal, a setting where widows are often marginalized, they explore themes of resilience in Nepali widows’ lives. Drawing from a larger qualitative study of grief and widowhood, a thematic narrative analysis was performed on narratives from four widows that reflected resilient outcomes. Individual assets and social resources contributed to these widows’ resilient outcomes. Forgetting, acceptance, and moving forward were complemented by confidence and strength. Social support and social participation were key to widows’ resilient outcomes.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A framework is a brief explanation of theory or those portions of a theory which are to be examined in a qualitative study. Conceptual framework presents logically constructed concepts to provide general explanation of the relationship between the concepts of the research study without using a single existing theory. Conceptual framework is a device for organizing ideas and in turn bringing order to related objects, observation, events and experiences

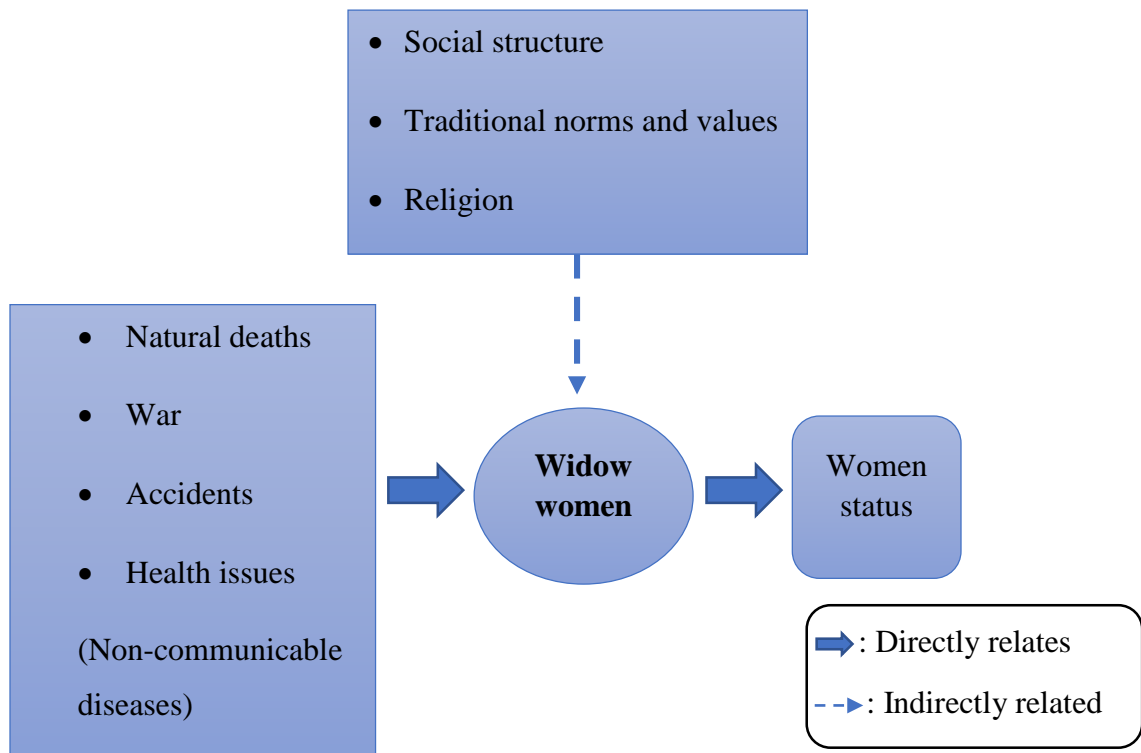


Fig 2.1: Conceptual framework

The purpose of this study was to explore the socio-economic status of widow women in the study area. Causes of husband death (natural death, war, accidents and health issues) directly related with widows. Likewise, social structure, traditional norms and values, religion and occupation indirectly influence the widows for their status in the society. As shown in the above conceptual frame-work, it has several demographic characteristics with family/social support for the widows. In demographic characteristic, it includes age, education, occupation, income, religion, and caste/ethnicity. Various empirical data have proved that situation of Nepalese women is too severe to compare with men. Woman's situation is very poor in health, education, participation, income generation, self-confidence, decision-making, access to policy making, and human rights.

Chapter III

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research methods of the study. It describes the methodology adopted to gather valid and reliable data for the study. It includes rationale of the study area, research design, nature and source of data, sample size, data collection tools, method and instruments of primary data collection, data analysis and reliability and validity of tool analysis.

3.1 Rationale of Site Selection

For the study purpose, researcher choose Pokhara city, one of the second largest beautiful metropolitan city of Nepal. Pokhara also serves as the headquarter of Kaski district. Pokhara city is one of the most developed Municipality of Nepal. There is very good access to roads, transportation, electricity, water supply, health facilities, schools, college and University. According to Central Bureau of Statistics 2068, the total population of the metropolitan was 413,934 and male population was 201,107 and female population was 212,827. This municipality is divided into 33 wards. In Pokhara, people from all over Nepal have migrated. People of different caste, culture, economy, religion, status, and ethnicity live here. So, researcher chose Pokhara ward number 11 to do own research area.

The researcher has selected ward no 11 of Pokhara city as the area of study. The total household of Pokhara ward number 11 is 4023. Among them, female population are 7597 and male population are 7119. So, the total population is 14716 (Pokhara Darpan, 2075). Many studies regarding widows had been done on other areas but not in this area. Many numbers of widow women are living here compared to other areas.

Area of the study (Pokhara ward no. 11)

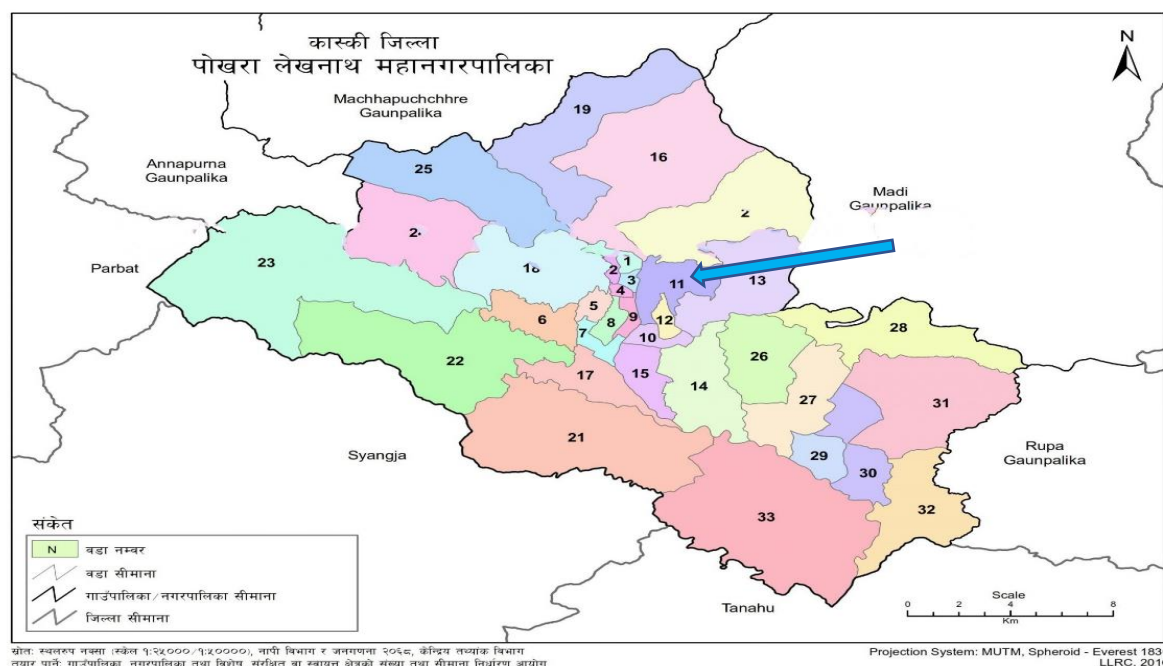


Figure 3.2: Study area in Pokhara Metropolitan

3.2 Research Design

The study has been carried out by using exploratory research design. The exploratory research design which aims at describing the various demographic and socio-economic status and social cultural practice of the widow women.

3.3 Nature and Sources of Data

Primary as well as secondary data have been incorporated in this study. Secondary data has been collected by adopting various secondary means. Beyond other means it is collected from previous studies, published and other unpublished documents from related literatures.

As per the need of the study more primary and secondary data have been collected but priorities have given to the selection of primary data which are both qualitative as well quantitative. Primary data has been collected by employing various primary hand data collection techniques. Mainly the interview and case study has been applied for primary data collection.

Secondary information is helpful enough in checking the validity and reliability of empirical field data. It may either be published data or unpublished data. The main sources of secondary data for the present purpose are the data of ward office, widower patient's history, CBS report, previous researcher's dissertation, related books, websites and published article and journals as well.

3.4 Sample Size

According to the data of ward office, Pokhara metropolitan phoolbari-11, there are altogether 100 number of widow women. The sample size for the study was 80 number of widow women who were randomly selected by simple random sampling. The sample model of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) is adapted to select 80 sample sizes by looking at statistical table. The researcher has selected 80 widow women as its sample size.

3.5 Data Collection Tools

The interview schedule was used as a tool for data collection containing 24 questions which includes both open ended and closed questions. The interview schedule was structured based upon the general information, socioeconomic status, cultural and social practices of widow women.

3.6 Method and Instruments of Primary Data Collection

The instruments adopted in the study to generate relevant data are guided by research objectives, research questions and the type of data required for the study. Following techniques were being adopted to collect primary data.

Table No. 3.6 Method/Tool of Data Collection

Name of Method/Tool	No of participants
Interview	80
Case study	5
Key informant information	4

3.6.1 Interview schedule

An interview is a conversation for gathering information. It is very useful to collect the varieties of information due to its flexible nature. This allows the interviewee to open

their problem in their own word. Researcher had collected respondent's name, address, phone number from ward office of Pokhara 11. After taking verbal consent, researcher had taken questionnaire schedule interview of 80 respondents and case study of 5 respondents.

3.6.2 Case study

Case study technique is also used in this research. Researcher had taken 5 case studies, which are closely related with the objective of the study. These life stories interviews were conducted to know the information which the questionnaire schedule didn't cover.

3.6.3 Key Informants Information (KII)

Separate interview was carried out with the key informant of the Pokhara's various office to collect rich and detailed qualitative data on social structure and widowhood. Researcher had taken 4 people as key informants. These key informants were chairman of ward office, tole committee member, women right organization member etc.

3.7 Data Analysis

The collected data were transformed into tables and used percentage method for analysis and interpretation.

3.8 Reliability and Validity of Tool

Reliability and validity of study has paramount importance in the research study. It refers to whether an instrument accurately measures what it is supposed to measure. Self-developed semi structural questionnaire consisting of different variables were used. The content validity of questionnaire was ensured through subject experts. The reliability of the data depended primarily upon the respondents. To overcome the limitation of the interview the clarity of the purpose and implication of the study was presented. The clear and short questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was prepared under the rigorous supervision of guide and the questionnaire was translated into Nepali version retranslated to English version and necessary correction was made. Still the data from household surveys and secondary sources were verified by various methods of crosschecking and triangulation to each-other.

CHAPTER: IV

Socio-Demographic Description of Respondents

This chapter is devoted to analyze the relevant research questions and certain objectives that are divided in various sub headings. The chapter, outline of the basic demographic information of all the respondent's age, caste, educational status, occupation, religion status, family structure, income source etc. All the concerning variables were developed and analyzed to know the socio-economic status of widow women.

4.1. Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age is one of the main and concerned matters of demographic factors for analysis of the study. In this study refers to the respondents who is widow women. Age distribution of widow women in table no 4.1.

Table No. 4.1 Age group of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
< 30 years	3	3.75
31 to 40 years	17	21.25
41 to 50 years	30	37.5
51 to 60 years	14	17.5
> 60 years	16	20
Total	80	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table no.4.1 shows the age composition of widow women, which 3.75 % were <30 age, 21.25% were 31 years to 40 years of age, (37.5%) were 41 to 50 years of age, 17.5 percentage were 51to 60 years of age and 20 percentage were more than 60 years of age. In this study, a greater number of respondents (37.25%) were in age 41 to 50 years. That means maximum respondents age was 41 to 50 years and only 3.75% respondents age were below 30 years.

4.2 Educational Status and Widow Women

Education is a ray of light in the darkness. It is one of the basic needs of human being. It helps to broaden human knowledge, thus making them wiser and more rational. Education helps in spreading knowledge in society. The educational status and widow women number are given table no 4.2.

Table No. 4.2 Education Status of the Respondent

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Illiterate	42	52.5
Literate	21	26.25
Primary	3	3.75
Secondary	5	6.25
Higher Secondary	6	7.5
Bachelor and above	3	3.75
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table no. 4.2 shows that the education status of widow women. It indicates 52.5% respondents were illiterate, 26.25% were literate among them 3.75% were primary levels educated, likewise 6.25% were secondary levels educated, 7.5 % were higher secondary level educated only 3.75% were bachelor and above educated. This study shows that maximum respondents were illiterate.

4.3. Religious Composition

Nepal is a country of various culture and religion. Nepalese people have their own Gods and Goddesses with their different caste, culture and religion. Most people of Nepal are Hindu. Religion is known as the base of norms, values and cultural pattern of any society and family. The concept of religion is more related to emotion and sentiments of the people that drives people towards some benevolent doings. Religion also important social institution. Generally, we found Hindu, Buddhist and others (Christian, Sachai, etc.) religion follower. Maximum Brahmin and Chhetri caste following Hindu religion and Janajati people following Buddhist religion. That Janajati like Gurung, Magar, Thakali

etc. caste women in Nepal have more social as well as economic freedom and also control on household related decision-making role. Religion composition are given in table no 4.3.

Table No. 4.3 Religious Composition of Respondents

Religion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hindu	55	68.75
Buddhist	19	23.75
Others (Sachai, Christianity, Muslim, Islamism)	6	7.5
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The table no 4.3 explores the religious composition of respondents in the study area. Among them 68.75% of respondents are following Hindu religion because our country is Hindu country and maximum people following Hindu religion. 23.75% are following Buddhism and the rest 7.5% of population are following others religion which includes Sachai, Christianity, Islamism, Muslim etc.

4.4 Division of Respondents by Nature of Family

Family is one of the most important social institutions. It is the micro institution of the society. It is an important primary group in the society. Family is the most pervasive and universal social institution. It plays a vital role in the socialization of individuals. Family is regarded as the first society of human beings. Division of Respondents by nature of family given table no 4.4

Table No. 4.4 Division of Respondents

Family Types	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Nuclear Family	50	62.5
Joint	30	37.5
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

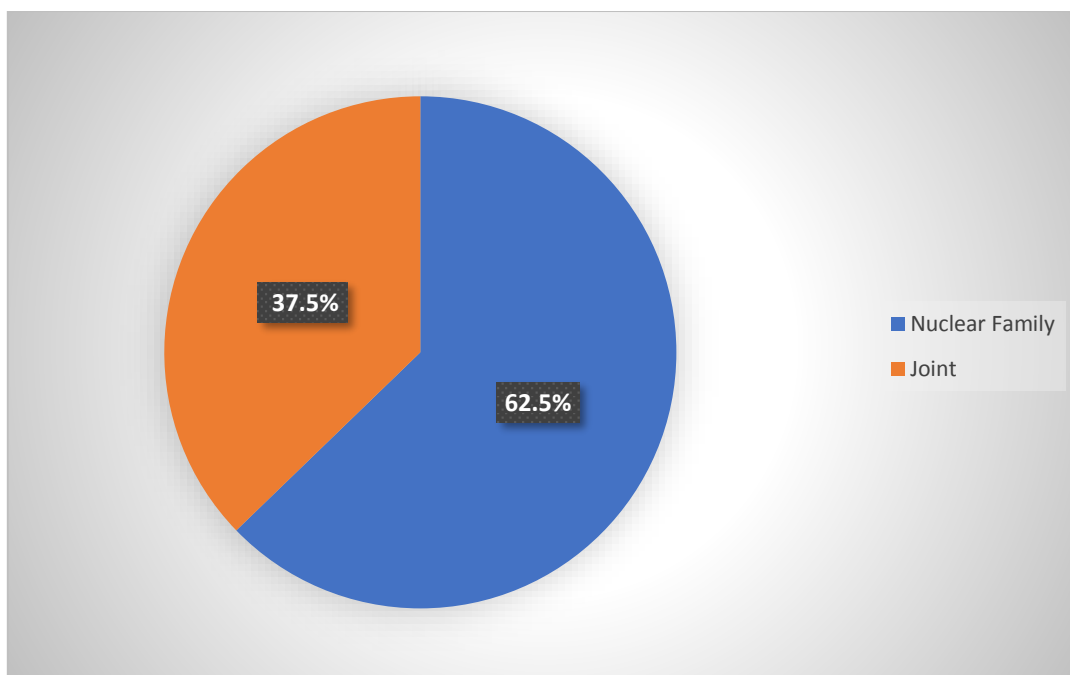


Figure 4. 3: Family Types of Respondents

Table no 4.4 and figure 4.3 reveal that family types of respondents. 62.5% of the respondents live in nuclear family because nowadays joint family system was changed into the nuclear family because of the effect of modernization and urbanization but still 37.5% lived in joint family because Nepalese society is based on joint family system.

Generally, in joint families, women's economic condition is found much poorer than in nuclear families. However, workload of women in joint family is less than in nuclear family. In nuclear family workload of female member of the family are more than male members.

4.5 Caste Composition of Respondents

Nepal's population is made up a complex mosaic of different ethnic, caste and regional identities. According to the CBS 2011 there are 123 caste and ethnic groups in Nepal speaking 125 languages. Caste composition of respondents given in table no 4.5

Table No. 4.5 Caste/Ethnic Composition

Caste Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Brahmin	38	47.5
Janajati	18	22.5
Chherti	15	18.75
Others	9	11.25
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table no. 4.5 clarifies about the Caste/Ethnic distribution of the study area. Based on Caste/Ethnicity, majority of the widow women 47.5% belonged to Brahmin caste, like that 22.5% from Janajati, 18.75% from Chhetri caste and rest of others, 11.25% were from Bishwokarma, Pariyar, Nepali, Muslim etc.

4.6 Division of widows by Occupation

Occupation is a job or profession which someone doing their ability. Most women carry out tasks both inside and outside their homes. They not only do household chores but are also actively involved in agricultural activities. This is because Nepal's economy is agriculture based, which includes farming and livestock rearing. Most of the respondent's occupation is agricultural activities which was the source of income and livelihood of the respondents and their families. They were also involved in animal husbandry. The division of widows by occupation given table no 4.6

Table No. 4.6 Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agriculture	42	52.5
Job	14	17.5
Business	13	16.25
Wage laborers (building construction sites etc.)	11	13.75
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

According to the data presented in table 4.6 reveal that majority of respondents i.e.52.5% were involved in agriculture because our country is agricultural country.

Similarly, 17.5% were doing job according to their ability. 16.25% were doing business like selling vegetables, fruits, own grocery shop etc. Rest of 13.75% widows were doing wage laborers, working in building construction sites etc. Because maximum respondents of this study were illiterate and they had to work for hand to mouth.

4.7 Monthly Income and Widow's Life

Income is the amount of money received by a person, group or company during a certain period of time. Money is an important resource to meet these needs. Standard of living depends on the income. More income leads to higher standards of living and less income to lower one. The monthly income of widow's women are given table no 4.7.

Table No. 4.7 Monthly Income of widow

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<10000	29	36.25
10000-20000	23	28.75
20000-30000	17	21.25
>30000	11	13.75
Total	80	100

Source: field survey, 2021

According to the data presented in table no. 4.7 it is clear that the monthly income of the respondents were categorized into four categories where 36.25 percentage earned <10000, 28.75 percentage earned 10000-20000, 21.25 percentage earned 20000-30000 and last 13.75 percentage earned >3000. This study clearly shows that maximum respondent's monthly income was below 10000. Only 13.75 % respondent's income was >30000 per month.

CHAPTER – V

ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR TOWARDS WIDOW

5.1 Land Ownership and Widow Women

In Nepal, only 19.7% of women own land. This is only 5% of the total land of Nepal. Of these today, only 11% have control over their land. In 2015, the government changed the law and today, there is a 25-50% discount on the registration fee when the land is registered under the women's name. After the new civil code in 2018, daughters are entitled to keep their share of their parent's property after getting married. That means equal rights for sons and daughters. Women's ownership of land encouraged men to view women as equals, which is shown to give women more decision-making in their households and decrease domestic violence.

Table no 5.1 Land Ownership and Widow Women

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	49	61.25
No	31	38.75
Total	80	100

Sources: Field survey, 2021

Table no 5.1 shows 61.25% respondents had their own land and 38.75% respondents do not have their own land. This study clearly shows that maximum respondents have their own land within same place where she lives and her parent's land. During field survey, researcher met Maya Thapa (name changed) female, 48 years old female. While interviewing her, she gave following information which the researcher cited as case study number 5 below.

CASE STUDY: 1

Mrs. Maya Thapa, 48 years old from Syangja, living in Shivashakti-tole phoolbari with her children. "My marriage was arranged when I was 16 years old and husband age was 30 years old". Everything was going well. We were running in our sixth year of marriage but unfortunately one day, my husband died by accident. I was very devastated with that sudden change in my life. In just a second, I and my four years old daughter

were left alone. I was trying to cope with everything myself and somewhere I was expecting emotional support from my in-laws. But there was this sudden change of behaviour in my in-laws. I was blamed for my husband death. They started to treat me badly including my daughter. They didn't even talk nicely with us. I wanted to tell my parent about the situation but I couldn't. At that moment I regretted for not being independent. I lost all my hopes for the future and I couldn't think of anything. Nobody cared us. We were left to suffer alone. But one day, I made up my mind to speak up for my rights. I thought that I may adjust with this suffering, hatred and pain but not my child. I needed to speak up for my daughter. Then, I took the decision to stay separately from my in-laws. To do so, I took help from my brother. I explained everything to my brother. With the support of my brother, we went to talk with the community heads and I explained the situation I was in to them. Then, they talked to my in-laws. After a long discussion with my in-laws, they decided to hand over a small plot of land to me and my daughter. And so, I got a small plot of land in Pokhara. With that I was separated with my in-laws and stayed with my parent house. After 5 years, with my father and brother's help, build a small house. They were the one to support me in my hard time both emotionally and financially. Now, I am living in my own house and feeling secure and independent.”

5.2 Food Sufficiency

Land is the key source to fulfill the family needs. Most of the women expensed most of their time and energy in household work and agricultural activities but it does not even enough only to feed their family alone. Following table no 5.2 reflects the situation of women from agriculture production to feed their family from family land.

Table no 5.2 Food Sufficiency from Widow's land

No of month	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 month	31	38.75
0-3 month	16	20
3-6 month	18	22.5
6-9 month	9	11.25
9-12 month	6	7.5
Total	80	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

According to the above table no 5.2 the highest 38.75% of the widow women were not able to feed their family from their own production because they don't have own land. These families which don't have any land manage their food by labour wages. 22.5% of the widow women get food from their land which is sufficient for 3 to 6 months, next 20 % of the widow women get food from their land which is enough for 3 month and similarly 11.25% of the widow women get food from their land which is sufficient for 6-9 month and 7.5% of the widow women get food from their production, which is enough for 9- 12 month respectively.

5.3 Economic Support to Widows

The early marriage system still prevails in many parts of Nepal. Girls are married off before they have the opportunity to stand on their own feet. And if their husbands meet untimely deaths, there comes the question for survival. So, she needs economic support from her relatives.

Table no 5.3 Economic Support to Widow:

Support from	Frequency	Percentage (%)
In-law's house	40	50
Others (government, NGOs, INGOs, etc.)	17	21.25
Maternal and in-laws house	13	16.25
Maternal house	10	12.5
Total	80	100

Source: field survey, 2021

Table no 5.3 shows that 50% widows got economic support from in-law house, 12.5% got economic support from maternal house that means they got support from their mother, father, brothers and sisters. 16.25% got both side means i.e. In-law house and maternal house too. Others, 21.25% got economic support (pension) from government of India, Government of Nepal and single women welfare society etc.

5.4. Causes of Husband Death

Though, the birth and death is universal truth, but it is common to blame women for their husband's death. The several situations occur as the social elites also perceive single women are accused. Causes of husband death given table no 5.4 below.

Table no.5.4 Causes of Death of Husband

Causes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Old age/Natural	41	51.25
Health issue	29	36.25
War	5	6.25
Accidents	5	6.25
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table no. 5.4 revealed that maximum respondents (51.25%) became widow due to the death of their old age of husband, followed by (36.25%) were death due to health issue that means chronic disease, asthma, hypertension, diabetic and 6.25% by accidents like road accidents, injury etc. and 6.25% were death by various type of war. That means Army war, Maoist war etc.

5.5 Social Adjustment after Husband Death

A definite social change alone can alleviate the trauma of widow women. Widow women needs social encouragement, supports to get over her traumas and pick up the threads of her life. Family members need to support her so that she can easily adjust to society. Social adjustment after husband death is given table no 5.5 below.

Table no 5.5 Social Adjustment after Husband Death

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Difficult	59	73.75
Normal (as usual)	21	26.25
Total	80	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table no 5.5 shows that 73.75% had difficulty in adjusting to the society after husband's death and 26.25% had normal life after husband's death. They didn't have any difficulty in adjusting to society. Above description clearly shows that maximum respondents have difficult to social adjustment after husband's death.

5.6 Participation on Religious Activities of Widow

Widows have to live a controlled life. The cultural norms and values restrict widow women to do many things. It includes restriction in many things like participation in occasions, festival etc. before but nowadays it is improving. Government policy, awareness, education have brought positive perception of society towards widow women. Participation of Religious activities of widow given table no 5.6

Table No. 5.6 Participation on Religious Activities of widow

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
More participants	31	38.75
Normal	28	35
Less participations	21	26.25
Total	80	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table no 5.6 reveals that 38.75% respondents more religious activities after husband death. When asked they said they feels loneliness and to forget her husband's memory they involved more on religious activity. Maximum old ages respondents were participating religious activity. 35% participated in normally activities as usual and 21% participant less activities. When asked, respondents said they got frustrated of their life. Nobody was there to help them. So, they participated less in religious activity after husband death.

5.7 Widow Women Participation on Social activities

During field survey, researcher asked respondents about participation of social activities, answer were given as below in table number 5.8.

Table No. 5.7 Widow Participation on Social Activities.

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Don't know	39	48.25
Not participation	24	30
Participation	17	21.25
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The table no 5.7 shows that the participation of respondents on social activity.21.25% widow said they involved social activities and 30% said they didn't involve any social activities and maximum widows 48.25% said they don't know about that. This description is clearly shows that maximum respondents are still need to empowerment.

5.8 Participation in Social Organization

In Sociology, a social organization is a pattern of relationships between and among individuals and social groups. Aspect of social organization are presented in all social situations where a few or more people are thrown into a set of interrelated activities arising from the operation of social norms.

Table no 5.8 shows that widows participated in social activities and their description.

Table no 5.8 Participation in Social Organization

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Women's group	6	35.3
Saahakari	5	29.4
Single women organization	4	23.5
School management committee	2	11.8
Total	17	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table no 5.8 participation on social institution, maximum respondents 35.3% participated in women's group, 29.4% respondents involved in Sahakari like that 23.5% widows involved in single women organization and only 11.8% widow women

involved in school management committee. This description clearly shows that widow women participation in social institution is very less.

5.9 Perception of Widow towards Cosmetic Items

The cultural norms and values restrict widow from doing many things. It includes restrictions in wearing, clothing, food, mobility, participation in occasions and so on. So, widows are forced to live controlled life. The perception of widow towards cosmetic items given below table no 5.9

Table no.5.9 Perception of Widow towards Cosmetic Items.

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bad	33	41.25
Good	29	36.25
Don't know	18	22.5
Total	80	100

Source: field survey, 2021

Table no 5.9 reveals that 22.5 % do not have any idea towards cosmetic items. 36.25 % feels good to use cosmetic items, 41.25 % feels bad to use cosmetic items after husband death. In this group maximum old age respondents were there. They still follow the cultural norms, rituals and value. They think it is against the culture.

5.10 Red Clothing and Widow's Perception

Widow women social status within and outside family in comparison of other women low. They lose social connections because of the absence of husband. In Hindu culture, after husband death women not allow to wear red clothes. But now days it is changes new generation not accept and they raised voice against such a bad culture and traditional norms, values and practice but still old ages widow women not accept to wear red clothes. Red clothing and widow's perception details given table no 5.10

Table. No 5.10 Red Clothing and Widow's perception

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Good perception	58	72.5
Bad perception	22	27.8
Total	80	100

Sources: Field survey, 2021

Table no 5.10 shows the red clothing and widow's perception. 72.5% respondents feel good to use red clothes and 27.8% respondents feel bad for using red clothes because it reminded her husband's memory.

In relation to this topic, respondents presented a case study number 2 below.

CASE STUDY 2

Laxmi Bhandari (name changed) 69 years old widow women from Phoolbari. "I got married at the age of 14 years to the men who was 18 years older than me. I have 3 sons and 2 daughters and 8 grandchildren. My husband died 18 years ago because of old age". When respondents asked her about desire of use red clothes, she said, "We live in a society. We are social being. We needed the society so we built it. And in that society the deeply rooted social norms, values, beliefs and rituals have always forbid us from doing many things. And so far, widowhood, we have our own beliefs. We were taught that wearing other coloured clothes other than white for widow is a sin and not only that we have seen that situation in our society. We are given the fear of God and goddess. And so we always thought that it was against the culture and that God will do something bad to us and to our family if we wore any other colour than white. But now, with change of time and era, we are aware of our religious values. And we are aware of our rights. Widows have now become wiser and so encourage each other in groups. We stand together. And when we do that, no one dares to say anything against us. We are supporting one another when needed."

5.11 Concept of Remarriage and Widow's Perception

Generally speaking, remarriage is not allowed in Nepalese societies due to existence of various sociocultural and religious beliefs. Remarriage after the death of husband was generally taken as sin. Nowadays, as the awareness level of people is increasing due to

educational attainment, perceptions of people towards remarriage got changed so the rate of remarriage is in increasing trend. It is also supported by government policy of giving incentives for the couple after marrying with single women (widow). Perception of widow towards remarriage given in table no 5.11

Table no 5.11 Concept of Remarriage and Widow's Perception

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Positive perception	57	71.25
Negative perception	23	28.75
Total	80	100

Sources: Field survey, 2021

Table no. 5.11 shows that concept of remarriage and widow's perception. 71.25% had positive perception towards remarriage but 28.75% had negative perception toward remarriage. During field survey, old aged people denied to remarry as they think it is a sin and young generation widows has positive perception towards remarriage. Related to this topic, a case study number 3 below.

Case Study: 3

Mrs. Bijaya K.C (name changed) female from phoolbari-11, Pokhara. I was the only one child of my parents. My parents are very old. I got married at the age of 25 with my boyfriend. Both parents were very happy for my marriage. My husband was working in USA as a supervisor. He had 2 elder brothers. My in-laws were old. I stayed in my in-law house after marriage. My husband used to come once a year for one month. I purchased my own land from my own money and husband money. My in-laws loved me very much as I forgot my parents also. After 5 years of marriage, my husband expired due to heart attack. I was shocked by my husband death. In addition, my in-laws also tortured me so I got depressed. My loving in-laws became my biggest enemy after my husband's death. Day by day, harassment from my in-law's increased. They asked to return the land which was in my name. I didn't give back the land so, my in-laws took the matter to the court. But in the end, I won the case. Currently, I am living with my parent's house. I have a job and I am also looking after my parents. It has been 7 years since my husband death. During that time, I got many marriages purpose but I rejected all. Two years ago, I was seriously ill. I couldn't even go to washroom without

some one's help. My parents were old so they couldn't take care of me. Then, I realized that I needed someone in my life whom I can share my happiness and sorrows. I realized that I needed a life partner who can love me, take care of me when I get sick and be with me in happy times. So, I felt it is necessary to remarry.”

5.12 Violence Faced by Widow

Violence against women is not a new issue for any society. For developing societies like Nepal, this issue has become a big social problem. Various study shows that women regardless of age are the victims of violence in different forms. After husband death, it is common to blame women for their husband's death. They are blamed for escaping works. They are considered uncontrolled and therefore, kept in strong control by other member of family and community. Young women (widow) are in more difficult situation because they are considered more uncontrolled by the society (Dahal, 2010). Violence faced by widow cited below table no 5.12.

Table No. 5.12 Violence Faced by Widow

Types of violence	Number	Percentage (%)
Psychological violence	57	71.25
Physical violence	16	20
Sexual violence	7	8.75
Total	80	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Table no 5.12 shows the violence faced by widows. Maximum respondents 71.25% faced psychological or emotional violence that means threatening, not believe on her, excessive checking -up on a person, saying hurtful words, isolating a person from their friends and family screaming etc. 16 % respondents said they faced physical violence that means slapping, hitting, kicking, burning etc. and 8.75% respondents said they faced sexual violence that means unwanted touching her body, forced sex etc. In relation to the topic, a case study 4 is shown below.

CASE STUDY: 4

Mrs. Man Kumari Sunar, (name changed) female 38 years old, living in Ranipauwa, Pokhara on rented house. “My husband died 6 years ago. I have two daughters. We were a happy family of four. The days were even better and everything was good with family. Things were going as planned and we were busy with our parenthood. But, suddenly one day, I lost my husband. Whenever I think of it, it feels like a dream. My husband died due to high blood pressure. I was heartbroken. With sudden rush of loads of responsibilities, I was frustrated. I was unable to face the situation and the related responsibilities. And I looked for support. My in-laws were deceased and so as a family I had my brother-in-law. After my husband’s death, I thought my brother-in-law will support me but opposite to that he had bad intensions towards me. He wanted to take advantage of the situation. Being a single parent was hard but the situation got even worst. I had to face the harassment from my brother-in-law. He wanted me to follow his order and do according to his wish. He threatened me to kick me out of the house with my children, if I didn’t follow and obey his order. He used harsh words and used to follow me around. The worst was that I was sexually harassed by him. For months, I was suffering badly but at one time I had to be strong. And I went to complain in police office. It was a lengthy process but the end matters. Keeping it short I won the case and so I was freed from him. And now, I, with my children are living a peaceful life.”

5.13 Family Behaviours towards Widow

During field survey when researcher asked about family behaviours towards them, widow women gave following answer which cited to table no 5.13 below.

Table no 5.13 Family Behaviour towards Widow

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bad than before	36	45
Normal as usual	23	28.75
Good than before	21	26.25
Total	80	100

Source Field survey, 2021

According to table no 5.13 clear about the family's behavior towards respondents. During field visited, 45% respondents said their family treated them bad and 28.75% respondents said their family treated them normal as before and after her husband death and 26.25% respondents said their family treated them good as usual.

In this context, researcher had observed a case study no. 5 which is relevant to this good behavior of family towards respondents.

CASE STUDY: 5

Mrs. Manita Gurung (name changed) female 58 years old. I got married with my cousin. At the time of marriage, my age was 22 and he was 31. My husband was an Indian army. After six years of marriage, my husband expired in war. At that time, I had one son of 2 years old. My in-laws loved me even more after my husband death. My husband had one younger brother who was 2 years older than me. My in-laws loved me because I belonged to their own family. After 3 years of my husband death, my in-laws and parents purposed me to remarry with my brother in-law. My son was only 5 years old. So, I refused to remarry but I was forced to do so. I remarried my brother in-law in force by my parents and in-laws. After my second marry, I have one daughter. My married life is going happily till date. I have 2 grandchildren. I am happy with my life.”

5.14 Society's Attitude and Behaviour towards Widows

Nepali society is still a traditional society that keeps women at a lower status than men. Widow women face many types of behaviours from society people, which are given table no 5.14.

Table no 5.14. Society's Attitude and Behaviour

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Negative attitude and behaviours	31	38.75
Positive attitude and behaviours	26	32.5
Normal attitude and behaviours	23	28.75
Total	80	100

Source: Field Survey,2021

Table no. 5.14 shows that society's people attitude and behaviour towards widow women 38.75 % said they got negative attitude and behaviour, 32.5% said they got positive attitude and behaviour and 28.75 % said they got normal attitude and behaviour from society's people attitude and behaviours. Hence it is clear that society's people had maximum negative attitude and behaviour towards widows.

During field visit, Researcher met Devi Kunwar (name changed). While interviewing her, she said "After my husband death, my neighbors always kept an eye on me and judged me about my character so, I often avoided interactions with them as a way to protect myself from them". (In -case study interview)

CHAPTER: VI

SUMMARY, MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the socio-economic status of widow women of study area. For this purpose, out of 100 respondents 80 widow women of age 20 years to 85 years from Pokhara metropolitan city ward no 11 were interviewed by using Questionnaire

schedule. According to the data of ward office, Pokhara metropolitan phoolbari-11, there are altogether 100 number of widow women. The sample size for the study was 80 number of widow women. Which were randomly selected by simple random sampling. Researcher has adopted the sample model of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) to select 80 sample sizes by looking at statistical table. Descriptive statistics was used for the analysis of the data. Majority of widow women were from age group of 41 to 50 years and above. Majority of them were illiterate and deprived from the political, social and economic participation. Major problems faced by the widow women are economic hardship, family violence (especially psychology violence given by the family and society), less freedom, deprivation of the social and economic rights and participations. Further, the majority of the widow women had very little freedom to do something and go somewhere. It is also found that the land ownership has been transferred to them but it is due to legal provision after the death of husband only. Interview schedule was structured based upon the general information, socio-economic status, cultural and social perception of widow women. Maximum respondents didn't answer openly due to cultural belief and practices. Women hide their feelings, desire and are silent due to social fear, embarrassment, hate, family's negative behaviors, etc. In conclusion, maximum respondent's socio-economic status was bad. Only few who were educated, had good family background enjoyed good socio-economic status but others had bad socio-economic status.

6.2 Major Findings

1) The age composition of widow women, which 3.75 % were <30 age, 21.25% were 31 years to 40 years of age, (37.5%) were 41 to 50 years of age, 17.5 percentage

- were 51 to 60 years of age and 20 percentage were more than 60 years of age.
- 2) The education status of widow women are 52.5% respondents were illiterate, 26.25% were literate among them 3.75% were primary levels educated, likewise 6.25% were secondary levels educated, 7.5 % were higher secondary level educated only 3.75% were bachelor and above educated.
 - 3) Religious composition of respondents in the study area are 68.75% of respondents are following Hindu religion, 23.75% are following Buddhism and the rest 7.5% of population are following others religion which includes Sachai, Christianity, Islamism, Muslim etc.
 - 4) Family types of respondents are 62.5% of the respondents live in nuclear family and 37.5% lived in joint family.
 - 5) The Caste/Ethnic distribution of the study area. Based on Caste/Ethnicity, majority of the widow women 47.5% belonged to Brahmin caste, like that 22.5% from Janajati, 18.75% from Chhetri caste and rest of others, 11.25% were from Bishwokarma, Pariyar, Nepali, Muslim etc.
 - 6) The occupation of the widows are 52.5% were involved in agriculture. Similarly, 17.5% were doing job according to their ability. 16.25% were doing business like selling vegetables, fruits, own grocery shop etc. Rest of 13.75% widows were doing wage laborers, working in building construction sites etc.
 - 7) The monthly income of the respondents were categorized into four categories where 36.25 percentage earned <10000, 28.75 percentage earned 10000-20000, 21.25 percentage earned 20000-30000 and last 13.75 percentage earned >3000.
 - 8) The land ownership of respondents are 61.25% respondents had their own land and 38.75% respondents do not have their own land.
 - 9) The food sufficient of widow women were highest 38.75% of the widow women were not able to feed their family from their own production because they don't have own land. 22.5% of the widow women get food from their land which is sufficient for 3 to 6 months, next 20 % of the widow women get food from their land which is enough for 3 month and similarly 11.25% of the widow women get food from their land which is sufficient for 6-9 month and 7.5% of the widow women get food from their production, which is enough for 9- 12 month respectively.
 - 10) The economic support to widow women, 50 % widows got economic support from

in-law house, 12.5 % got economic support from maternal house that means they got support from their mother, father, brothers and sisters. 16.25% got both side means i.e. In-law house and maternal house too. Others, 21.25 % got economic support (pension) from government of India, Government of Nepal and single women welfare society etc.

- 11) The causes of husband death were maximum respondents (51.25%) became widow due to the death of their old age of husband, followed by (36.25%) were death due to health issue that means chronic disease, asthma, hypertension, diabetic and 6.25% by accidents like road accidents, injury etc. and 6.25% were death by various type of war.
- 12) Adjusting to the society after husband's death are 73.75% had difficulty in adjusting to the society after husband's death and 26.25% had normal life after husband's death.
- 13) The religious activities after husband death are 38.75% respondents more religious activities after husband death.35% participated in normally activities as usual and 21% participant less activities.
- 14) The participation of respondents on social activity.21.25% widow said they involved social activities and 30% said they didn't involve any social activities and maximum widows said they don't know about that.
- 15) The participation on social institution, maximum respondents 35.3% participated in women's group, 29.4%respondents involved in Sahakari like that 23.5% widows involved in single women organization and only 11.8% widow women involved in school management committee.
- 16) Perception of widow towards cosmetic items are 22.5 % do not have any idea towards cosmetic items. 36.25 % feels good to use cosmetic items, 41.25 % feels bad to use cosmetic items after husband death.
- 17) Red clothing and widow's perception are 72.5% respondents feel good to use red clothes and 27.8% respondents feel bad for using red clothes.
- 18) The concept of remarriage and widow's perception were 71.25% had positive perception towards remarriage but 28.75% had negative perception toward remarriage.
- 19) Violence faced by widows are maximum respondents, 71.25% faced psychological

or emotional violence that means threatening, not believe on her, excessive checking - up on a person, saying hurtful words, isolating a person from their friends and family screaming etc. 16 % respondents said they faced physical violence that means slapping, hitting, kicking, burning etc. and 8.75% respondents said they faced sexual violence that means unwanted touching her body, forced sex etc.

20) The family's behavior towards respondents were 45% respondents said their family treated them bad and 28.75% respondents said their family treated them normal as before and after her husband death and 26.25% respondents said their family treated them good as usual.

21) The society's people attitude and behaviour towards widow women were, 38.75 % said they got negative attitude and behaviour, 32.5% said they got positive attitude and behaviour and 28.75 % said they got normal attitude and behaviour from society's people.

6.3 Conclusion

Conclusively, the data generated from field study suggest that the greatest number of participants were of age group 41-50 years in which majority of the respondents were illiterate. Most of the participants were Hindu of Brahmin caste living in nuclear family. The reason behind their husband's death was mostly because of old age after which the widow women had difficulties to adjust in the society facing mostly psychological/emotional violence. The family behavior was bad to widow women and so was also society's behavior. After their husband's death, widow women were more active in religious activities but less active in social activities. However, they were active in social institution (Ama Samuha mostly). Widow women had bad perception towards use of cosmetic items but good perception towards use of red clothes. And they do feel positive about re-marriage. Most of the widow women were depended on agriculture as most of them had their own land. Majority of them had salary of less than 10,000 per month. The economic support was mostly done by other media (government, NGOs, INGOs etc.)

From a methodological perspective, this study is only a beginning in trying to understand the socio-economic status of widow women in Nepal. It is found to be very bad. The women are being discriminated in every aspect of the society within the family and in their communities. Religious beliefs, cultural values and social norms further

prohibit the young women from taking part in any family or public activities. It is necessary to develop the widow policies regarding their inherent right, ownership and remarriage right. The government supports for the empowerment of single women by promoting the rights, participation, equality and freedom. The government and society need to work for the improvement and enhancement of widow women. As continuation of research, researcher found that maximum respondent didn't answer openly due to cultural belief and practices. Women hide their feelings, desire and are silent due to social fear, embarrassment, hate, family's negative behaviors, etc. In conclusion, a very few of the widow women had good socio-economic status in study area in contrast, most of the widows had bad socio-economic status in the study area.

Not all, few women get more freedom, self-confident, decision making, power and use of resources after husband's death. In recent years there have been encouraging policies within the INGOs/NGOs in the development of the programs to assist widows. Well educated widows themselves are forming several programs to raise the socio-economic status of other widows and bring about the awareness amongst the general population and other authorities to eliminate the evil culture and discrimination that was impose on them which hindered their participation in development process. The research will help the widow women to get their right and will provide new perspective and well socio-economic status on society. Widow women directly benefit from this research as its finding may improve their socio-economic status and quality of life. Though men and women are born equally yet discriminated in the society after their birth. They are not treated as equal in household as well as in society. Their roles and responsibilities are determined on the basis of sex difference. Male child is respected in the family while female child does not get that opportunity as that of her brother. Females are discriminated in socio-economic sector as well as decision making process. Male child has legal rights of paternal property while female child has not received that right. More or less male dominance is practiced in our society. Due to this, females are deprived from gainful social as well as economic opportunities. They are getting involved more in laborious and physical activities. Very few females are lucky get opportunity to engage in white collar job. Most are surrounded by household boundaries. They are mainly engaged in cooking, livestock caring, firewood collection, grass/fodder management child rearing, agriculture activities, household chores; they have low access to education, employment and medical facilities.

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ANNEX: Interview

**STUDY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WIDOWS WOMEN AMONG
THE WOMEN OF POKHARA WARD NO -11**

According to my study curriculum, I am Geeta Karki, student of Master's Degree second year, faculty of sociology is going to research the Socio-economic status of Widow women. All your information will be kept confidentially and information will be used for the research purpose only.

Thank you for your participant.

Geeta karki

Roll No. 22/071

Prithvi Narayan Campus

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Age

2. Address:

3. Religion

4. Ethnicity:

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|----------|-----------|
| a. Brahman | b. Chhetri | c. Dalit | d. Gurung |
| e. Magar | | f. Rai | |

5. Types of family:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| a. Nuclear family | b. Joint family | c. Remarriage family |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|

6. Educational status:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| a. Illiterate | b. Literate |
|---------------|-------------|

If literate: Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary, Bachelor, Master degree and above

7. Occupation:

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|-------------|
| a. Housewife | b. Agriculture | c. Business |
| d. Service | e. Others | |

8. Family income source per month:

- | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------|
| a. Below 10000 | b. 10000 - 20000 | c. 20000 - 30000 | d. > 30000 |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------|

9. What is the main causes of husband death?

- | | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------|-----------|
| a. Old age | b. Accidents | c. War | d. Others |
|------------|--------------|--------|-----------|
- (specify)

10. Have you got any land in your name?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. Yes | b. No |
|--------|-------|

11. Are you involved any organization?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. Yes | b. No |
|--------|-------|

12. Are you involved any social activities?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| a. Yes | b. No |
|--------|-------|

13. Did you feel any violence from family member?
- a. Yes b. No
14. If yes, by whom?
- a. Father in-law b. Mother in-law c. Brother in-law d. Others
(specify)
15. Do you feel any violence from society?
16. If yes, by whom?
- a. Neighbours b. Friends c. Society d. Government
17. Did you participation religious activity after husband death?
- a. Yes b. No c. Occasional
18. What is your perception towards cosmetic items?
- a. Feeling good. b. Feeling bad. c. Don't know.
19. Did you feel abuse of being single?
- a. Yes b. No
20. What type of abuse you feel?
- a. Physically b. Mentally c. Both.
21. In your opinion, is remarriage is acceptable for widow?
- a. Yes b. No c. Don't know
22. Did you get any financial support from your in-law house?
- a. Yes b. No
23. Did you get any financial support from maternal house?
- a. Yes b. No
24. Did you get any financial/others support from government, NGO's, INGO etc.?
- a. Yes b. No

Thank you for your valuable times.