CHAPTER: ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background

Women's participation in different sector of society is a fundamental prerequisite for gender equality and genuine democracy. It facilitates women's direct engagement in public decision making and is a means of ensuring better accountability to women. The most inhabiting factor to women's participation are rooted in culture including social attitudes, economics inequities, access to education and poor incomes. Women's economic empowerment boosts productivity, increase economic diversification and income equality in addition to other positive development outcomes. Now days increasing the political participation and female employment rate which is the precondition of sustainable development and requires sound of gender main streamed (Dr. Acharya, 2020).

Gender, Caste and ethnicity based social exclusion is deeply embedded in Nepalese society. Females are discriminated in various fields even though recently country's laws are activated. Women have low socio-economic status as well as low decision taking power. Women have to bear three responsibilities households, reproductive, economic activities. However their household roles are not considered as productive works. Decision and policies making of women is one of the most burning issues in the field of women inclusion and empowerment since women have the greatest roles to make a society more inclusive. Nepalese society is a male dominated society, where incidences of female marginalization and deprivation are uncontrolled. The discrimination of women is widespread not only in the form of gender but also it is witnessed among caste and ethnicity (Poudel, 2002).

In Nepal women comprises more than 50 percent of total population but only 57.4 percent females are literate whereas the country literacy rate is 65.9 percent. Women are heavily engaged in domestic chores along with the socio economic activities. They have major role in household management and they have to do more than 50 percent of household work but they have low decision and policies making power. Even in 21st century they are not enjoying equal decision making power with their male counterparts, they are discriminated since their parents. In adulthood they have

to under their husband. They gave no liberty to decide freely even their own. In old age they are under their children. The majority of women in Nepal live in rural areas where the choice of livelihood in limited to agricultural work on the farm's which are owned in most cases either by father, husbands, landlords or brothers. Most of female are economically dependent. They have to ask on their male partners to spend their own income also very few women are economically independent and they have little bit higher decision and policies making power (CBS, 2011).

There are various socially constructed so-called systems, which are the main responsible factors to create discrimination, prejudice against women in our society. The status of women is not well, they are compiled to face various types of injustice; these all are possible because of their low participation. Women lag far behind men in social, economic, political and legal aspects thus; they are restricted them from leading complete and dignified life. The right of women to own or inherit property is limited in many countries. Women frequently lack the right or power to make personal decisions or to participate equally with men in family decision making. Women are seldom equally represented in political or economic power structure, even in wealthier, industrialized countries (Bennett, 2002).

The greater participation of women in decision and policies making will be a greater step towards ensuring women of their rights to voluntary motherhood and in turn improve her status. There is no doubt that educated and empowered women can definitely contribute substantially to the development of her life, family, society and ultimately the whole nation. Therefore, women's empowerment is promoted in all spheres of life. Without equality and empowerment for women, the sustainable development is entirely impossible. Empowerment builds people's capacity to gain understanding and control over personal, social, economic and political forces to act individually as well as collectively to make choices about their way they want to be and to do things in their best interest to improve their life situation. It is the sharing of power to those who are marginalized to women is achieved by women empowerment. Women's empowerment means reinforcing their capacity to participate as equal partners in cultural, social, economic and political system of a society; without empowering women, actual and effective development must involve women making choices that enhance their individual as well as their families and communities. In our society, women are deprived and they need support most. Social inclusion of women

means as participation of women basically; which is the indicator of empowerment which directly affiliated on decision making process if their participation is well then they are empowered and there will be right decision (Baral, 2004).

Decision making is a prominent issue in Nepal because of the continuing deprivation of Nepalese women. In spite of Nepal's constitution and international agreements signed by Nepalese government for guarantying women's freedom from discrimination. Therefore, decision making by women cannot become sustainable without eliminating entrenched socio-cultural norms as discriminatory practices. The decision and policies making is balanced after the sustainable empowerment of women where sustainable empowerment is defined as a situation where people are empowered socially, economically and politically. Nepal have the indicators GDI is 0.520 and GEM is 0.351, where the GDI indicates that females are more excluded than males and the GEM indicates that for every 100 males only about 35 females have the same levels of empowerment in the basic dimensions of empowerment namely economic and political participation, decision and power over economic resources. The human development index (HDI) rank of Nepal in 2003 was 143 out of 175 countries. The gender related development index (GDI) rank of Nepal is also extremely discouraging (UNDP, 2004). Therefore the proposed study has an aim of obtaining information on the decision and policies making ability of women in the context of Nepal.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study intends to examine for the sustainable development, involvement of women in decision and policies making, their inclusion and empowerment is very essential. Many women in Nepal live in an oppressive, backward and feudal environment, which is caused by patriarchal system, unequal power relation and socio-religious and cultural norms and traditions. The religious, cultural as well as existing laws of Nepal permit male to be superior, which set free to man to govern over women. Therefore, women are largely excluded from education, legal aid and feel to have lost their own identity whereas half of the population is represented by women but still, treated as second grade citizens. Women have not decision-making power as well as right of their own life. There is no right of parental property, which

creates economic dependency of women, marginalization of women and breaks over all their empowerment.

Decision making maybe viewed as the process of selecting a course of action from among several alternatives in order to accomplish a desired result. The purpose of decision making is to direct human behavior and commitment towards a future goal. It involves committing the organization and its resources to a particular choice of course action thought to be sufficient and capable of achieving some predetermined objective. Women's empowerment refers to enhance the capacity of the women, which is only possible by increasing their participation in every sector. Decision making of women eliminates the inequalities and barriers. That's why participation of women itself is a challenging job in male dominant social structure. For good decision taken by women they should be empowered and empowered women can take more active roles in the household and community to confront the challenges of poverty, improve family health as well-being and increase household income.

The reality of that without participation of women in decision making, empowerment and equality of women are not possible and without equality and empowerment of women, the sustainable development of nation is entirely impossible. Women have remained voiceless and their representation in social, economic and political life has been minimal problems related to women in power and decision making have qualitative and quantitative dimensions. The first dimension involves the capacity of women to assert and exercise their rights and the lack of an enabling environment in which to do this. The overall participation of women in decision-making position is very low and remains unsatisfactory.

There have been a number of valuable studies on women related issues and their decision and policies making power in abroad but very few researches have done on it in Nepal. It is true that women are capable and they have efficient of making important and effective decision if they are given a chance. As they are the providers of basic household needs they can bear the closest association with it. Traditional social structures deny them the power to make basic decisions about the course of their lives. Low levels of education form a vicious cycle with a lack of decision-making power, each reinforcing the other to depress the social position of rural women. This research sociologically raises the issues, problems related to women's

empowerment. Therefore, it should be considered about the decision and policies making power of women and they endowed with it.

The main purpose of this study is to show that determents of decision and policies making of women in the various aspects of their role and show how decision making helps in empowerment. There is very limited sociological research is being done on women's empowerment and need to be further researched

This research is also important from the empowerment and autonomy of women and the empowerment of their political, social, economic and health status are highly important in itself. In addition is essential for the achievement of sustainable development the full participation and partnership of both women and men is required in productive and reproductive life including shared responsibilities.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of women involved in the decision and policies making process?
2. What are the motivational factors of women's involvement in the decision and policies making process?
3. What are major problems faced by rural women?
4. What types of discrimination faced by women who involve in the decision and policies making process? What are the decision making roles of women in their family as well as outside matter?

1.4 Research Objectives

This topic appears very interesting and worthy of study. In order to cast some new light on this topic the following research questions have been the base for this empirical study.

1. To find out women's involvement in the decision making process.
2. To identify challenges of rural women in the study area.

1.5 Justification of the Study

Madi Rural Municipality Ward No. 6 is at the rural part of Nepal. Women's participation in the decision and policies making is the process of achieving women's

equal access and control over economic resources. The main purpose of this research study is to find out determents of decision making of women in the various aspects of their role and show how decision making helps in empowerment. Nepal is in the turning phase in political stability so because of that reasons country is divided into seven federal provinces which have their own democratic power. Therefore many kinds of changes are happening so people are attracted towards the new phenomenon of development which eventually gives the boost up to find out the actual condition of women in study area in terms of social economic status and their decision making roles.

All the development activities are performed by people and they are the main focal point of development. However in most of the society, men have the major roles and responsibilities in development activities and female are not enjoying with equal rights and responsibilities. Women should be the subject and also actors of development because women have major duties to maintain household as well as society. If women are not treated equally in society it is impossible to achieve sustainable development and it will certainly hinder national development and it will certainly hinder national development. There should not be gender disparity in the society. It is essential to bring them in main stream of social improvement and national development. People should be aware about gender issue which is essential to protect the rights and duties of females, their roles in household, in society and in nation have great significance in terms of social justice. Integrate approach should be implemented to improve the women's overall aspects. Policies and program should direct to focus the issue of women which will be helpful to empower them socially and economically. It may be helpful for the research students and the personnel interested in gender studies appropriate policies and programs implemented by government and non-government agencies will be helpful for empowerment and development for women. There is tremendous improvement in their conditions as more and more women are getting education, entering into the labor are getting education, entering into the labor market and have access to health care facilities. However, gender inequality still persists; women's subordination in deep and wide spread. This research also provides some insights of more general use for gender-aware with considerable gender inequalities. This research will be a good resource for all those people who want to know about current situation of rural women in Nepal.

Till the date is no research has been made regarding the causes and consequences of women's involvement in the decision and policies making process and their empowerment. Therefore, the research is essential to carry out empowerment and their challenges on women.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Every research works has its own limitation due to lack of time, budget, resource and knowledge. The study is conducted within the boundaries of limited time, budget and other resources. So without any exception, my study will be done as a case study of the situation of women in decision and policies making process especially in household, agriculture and socio-economic sector of Madi rural municipality with the objectives of the partial fulfillment of master's degree requirement of humanities and social sciences. With many situations to be faced in the study has been be basically relying on primary information gathered from study area. This study has used limited tools/techniques. This issue of women's participation in decision and policies making process is very vague issue which cannot be studied at once. The study focused the females of Madi rural municipality.

The study is undertaken with an academic purpose. It intends to document and understand the role and status of rural women of decade long people's war and how it affects their further empowerment process in the society and in communities. Data were collected from rural areas, in order to present a rather diverse and reasonable representative situation of societal attitudes towards rural female. Selection of the study areas (Taprang and Chili village) were based on their majority of geographical location where they were living.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This study has been divided into seven chapters. The first chapter is introduction and it discusses the Background of the Study, Statement of Problem, Research Objectives, Justification, Limitation and Organization of the study. The chapter is especially present about the introduction of the research subject matters which can be easy to know about the basic information of research. The second chapter presents the review of literature. This chapter gives theoretical review, history, conceptual framework and relevant theories.

The third chapter presents the methodology adopted for the study. Under this chapter Research design, Rational selection of the study area, Nature and sources of data, Universe and Sampling procedure, Interview Schedule, Observation method, Data analysis and presentation, Focus group discussion, key informant's information (KII) and reliability and validity of tools are described.

The fourth chapter presents the socio-demographic profile of respondents. In this chapter, socio-economic status of the respondents is analyzed to find out the existing social and cultural practices of rural women. It also tries to find out the challenges in decision and policies making process of women. In this chapter demographic characteristic of respondents, challenges in their native communities are analyzed. To explore about the causing factors of involvement of women in the decision and policies making process in fifth chapter, it has developed number of subheadings. Likewise, to examine the consequences of women's involvement the decision and policies making process, in Sixth chapter, this research has tried to know about the past and present perception of society towards the rural women, vocational skill, trainings and financial support of the government. Finally, in the last chapter summary, major findings and conclusion are drawn effectively.

CHAPTER: TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generally, this part deals with the literature relevant to the study, to the deepest knowledge and understanding about the subject of field work. Reviewing literature will help to learn how others have defined and measured key concepts to identity data sources that other researchers have used. The purpose of literature review is to find out what research studies have been conducted in the chosen field of study. This chapter discusses the relevant literature available on different aspect of women's issues; such as women empowerment, access and control over income generation, gender and feminist perspective.

2.1 Concept Review

2.1.1 Gender Perspective

According to World Health Organization (WHO), the term gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behavior, activities and attributes that particular society considers appropriate for men and women. Gender in common usage, refers to the differences between men and women. Although gender is commonly used interchangeably with sex, with in the social science it often refers to specifically social differences, known as gender roles in the biological sciences. Historically feminism has posited that many gender roles are socially constructed and lack any biological basis. Basically, sex is biologically defined, whereas gender as socially defined. Thus, sex refers to the biological fact that a person is either a man or a woman. Gender refers to socially learned traits associated with and expected of men and women .Therefore, 'to be a men or women is a matter of sex but to be masculine or feminine is a matter of gender and refers to the differences in the treatment or behavior between male and female children.

Today the word 'Gender' has increasingly replaced the term 'sex' in discussion of socially and culturally determined differences in the behavior, role and status of men and women. The term gender is generally used to distinguish the cultural and social characteristic of being women and being men. Judith Lorber (1993) in her book 'paradox of Gender' writes that Gender is an institution that establishes pattern of

expectation for individuals, order the social processes of everyday life built into major social organization of society. Gender is a human invention like language, religion and technology and like them gender organizes human social life in culturally patterned ways. Discrimination against women means any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women of Human Rights and Fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural civil or any other field. To sum up, women have always had lower status than men, but the extent of the gap between the sexes varies across cultures and time (Some arguing that it is inversely related to social evolution). In 1980, the United Nations summed up the burden of this inequality; women who comprise half the world population do two thirds of the world's work, earn one tenth of the world's income and own one hundredth of world's property (UN, 2011).

Sociologist propose dozens of important theories and ask thousands of questions but this study has been carried out under the theoretical framework of gender perspective, which is new and an appropriate approach to analyze culture and society in (order to develop a theoretical framework for this study) the context of sociology. Basically, sex is biologically defined, whereas gender is socially defined. Thus, sex refers to the biological fact that a person is either a man or a woman. Gender refers to socially learned traits associated with and expected of, men or women. Therefore, to be a men or women is a matter of sex but to be masculine or feminine is a matter of gender and attitudes such as mannerisms, styles of dress and activity preferences. In general the term sex to refers to the anatomical and physiological differences that define men and women bodies. Gender, by contrast, concerns the psychological, social and cultural differences between men and women. Gender is linked to socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity; it is not necessarily a direct product of an individual's biological sex. Gender differences are not biologically determined, they are culturally produced. According to gender differences between men and women are caused by the psychological and social development of individuals within a society. Women and men may be physically different, but this does not mean that they are therefore innately different from each other. It is society and culture, which has decided that men and women possess different traits and attributes. Gender is an aspect of our

everyday lives as well as a social, economic and cultural category that subsumes and re-writes the meaning of human sex, the fact of being masculine and feminine. The word gender is now being used sociologically or as a conceptual category and it has given a very specific meaning in its new incarnation. This concept enables us to state that sex is one thing but gender is quite another. Everyone is born as man or woman and our sex can be determined simply by looking at our genitalia. But every culture has its ways of valuing girls and boys and assigning them different roles, response and attributes. Gender refers to the societies, which distinguish men and women and assign them social roles. It is used as an analytical tool to understand social realities with regard to women and men (Upreti, 2004).

Oakley who was among the first few feminist scholars to use this concept says 'Gender is a matter of culture; it refers to the social classification of men and women into 'masculine' and 'feminine'. That people are men and women can usually be judged by referring to biological evidence. That they are masculine or feminine cannot be judged in the same way: the criteria are cultural, differing with time and place. The constancy of sex must be admitted but so also must the variability of gender. Oakley concludes that gender has biological origin, that the connections between sex and gender are not really 'natural' at all.

Recently the realization has been spreading that any development model, which does not include women's needs and contributions, will be fatally flawed; as much model neglects half of the needs and human potential of any nation. As this awareness has spread, so too has the call to focus on gender and development. Until quite recently, development plans and programs ignored gender inequalities and thus failed to harness Nepalese women's potential for contributing to national development. The impacts of the international decades for women (1975-85) were set at the national policy level for the first time for women's participation in development.

2.2 Gender Development Approaches

a. WID (Women in Development)

The concept of women in Development was developed in early 1970s after the publication of E. Boserup's 'Women Role in Economic Development' (1970). The concept gradually shifted among the feminist academies and development

professionals about men in the course of development activities. WID refers the need to integrate women in economic system, through necessary legal and administrative changes seeks the solution to incorporate women into the development stream. It focuses on Equity (in market, employment and education), efficiency and employment (training, skill). It is an approach, which views women as the problem. Its goal is effective and efficient development of women in every field. WID while it targets women to bring them into mainstream of development, it neglects to draw attention due to the fact that women are already part of the development process. Their contribution cannot be more, already overstretched. It ignores the multiple roles of women focus solely on productivity and increase of skill and efficiency for the integration in development process. It is a reformist perspective rather than radical one (UNFPA, 1997).

b. WAD (Women and Development)

In late 1970s the participation of women in development was thought to be making them (women) beneficiaries only. So a new approach of carrying women and development together (empowerment and participation) was developed by feminists WAD. It focuses on bringing equitable international structures and emancipation main point of separation from the WID approach is that WID draws its theoretical base that women are lagged behind not because of the malfunctions of the development process but due to defective international economic unequal relations. The women of core are also exploited but women of periphery are much exploited than women of the core. It is a redistributive approach focusing on the equal and logical access of women over the sources and equal distribution, emerged during the late 1970s as a critique of WID inspired by Marxist and dependency theorists, WAD focuses on structure and socio-economic factors within which gender inequalities are embedded. (Moore, 2002). Both WID and WAD approaches focused only on the women's part in the development and hence couldn't become the holistic development strategy for the successful development process, it was essential to include man and women both in the process. Thus, the new strategy came into existence namely GAD.

C. GAD (Gender and Development)

It is theoretically based on socialist feminism. GAD is centered on the gender difference between men and women. This is derived from the 'socialist feminists'

identification of the social construction of production and reproduction as a foundation of women's oppression. The fact to appreciate GAD instead of WID was that WID approach appeared to improve women's condition but it did not really materialize into changing the position of women. In many instances it further blunder women with added workloads and extra responsibilities deteriorating their condition and position. GAD instituted a gender perspective bringing under scrutiny the whole grant of difference in power, legal rights, roles, constraints, opportunities and needs of women compared to men (Bhattarai, 2059).

2.3 Theoretical Review

2.3.1 Feminist Theory

The theory emerged in the early years of the 20th century particularly from Alexandra Kollonati in Russia 1977, Clara Zethkin in Germany and Emrna Goldman properly described as anarchist feminist in the United States. The influence of Marxism is still of immense importance within feminist theory. Marxist feminists regard the economic position of power as unpaid workers, low salary given in office, low status and part time jobs. Marxist feminists believe that the interest of women lies with the liberation of the working class and the overthrow of capitalism. The theory provides an adequate explanation for the subordination and exploitation of women in capitalist societies. They give priority to class struggle. According to them economic exploitation, dependency and powerless relationship with husbands and fathers should be reduced to strengthen their status. Gender relations are placed at the center of its analysis (Paudel, 2002).

Feminists have considered women's self-organization and feminist international links with early anthologies of global sisterhood and later collections concerned with various conceptions of international solidarity. For millions of women their involvement with national liberation struggles was a basic necessity of developing a political system free from foreign domination. Early feminism in some countries and regions grew out of the same roots around the sometime, as nationalism. Feminism is a perspective that encourages the willing to understand and explain social realities have largely been understood from the perspective of few economically, politically and culturally powerful people of their times, mostly men. It was only after the feminist movement that gained strength in the 1950s and received momentum in

1960s that voices of women became louder and began to receive attention word wide. The feminist theory which developed in the 1970s is the academic component of the feminist movement. Hence, feminist analyzes and activism aim to develop those forces which are undermining systems of male dominance by bringing gender issue in to the public arena for further consideration. The feminist movement can help women develop a sense of their identity as women help them develop a sense of self-worth, self-respect and self- confidence, which many women do not have. Feminist perspective provides incentives on women's issues for the current study on women empowerment through involvement of women in decision and policies making process (K.C.2019).

2.3.2 Socialist Theory

Socialist theory is rooted in the 19th century. This theory concern with understanding and changing the social organization of unequal and unjust social relations led him beyond the boundaries of existing social setting. This theory has been used to explain a wide range of social phenomena, including wars and revolutions, wealth and poverty, discrimination and domestic violence. It ascribes most of the fundamental development in human history, such as democracy and civil rights, to capitalistic attempts to control the masses rather than to a desire for social order. The theory revolves around concepts of social inequality in the division of resources and focuses on the conflicts that exist between classes. This emphasized the importance of the dominant social forms by which we humans economically secure our material existence in the world. These social forms, or modes of production, were said to permeate all other aspects of human social life (George, 2000).

This theorization has been of great practical and theoretical importance. Practically, political activist struggling against the material inequalities of 19th century capitalist economic relations. Theoretically, he labored to show the historical and social basis for systematic inequalities of the capitalism, as well as to identify economic, political and cultural contradictions which might (dialectically) undermine capitalist exploitation. The interpretation of history stresses the impact of relative equality or inequality in economic life on the entire social life. It has contributed greatly to sociological insights into inequality and the uses\misuses of legal power.

It holds that social order is maintained by domination and power, rather than consensus and conformity. According to conflict theory, those with wealth and power try to hold on to it by any possible means, chiefly by suppressing the poor and powerless. A basic premise of conflict theory is that individuals and groups within society will work to maximize their own benefits. Similarly, in the movement women have become guerrillas and soldiers by participating in mass-based political nationalist anti-colonial struggles to break the male dominated social system where pushing women back into the private sphere. Women and girls were facing stigma in their families and society at large because of country's traditionally patriarchal nature. Marxism regards the economic position of power as crucial to their oppression. This oppression starts in the family where women are seen as unpaid workers, low salary given in office, low status and part time jobs. Marxist believes that the interest of women lies with the liberation of working class and overthrow of capitalism. The theory provides an adequate explanation for the subordination and exploitation of women in capitalist societies.

2.4 Previous Studies

According to Acharya, (1995). Women have low degree of opportunities for their education and have hardly an access to employment. There is lack of women participation in decision making from house to the executive levels. There is no positive attitude towards women's health and they do not get appropriate nutrition even in the period of pregnancy. Women get married early and are considered as child bearing machines due to early age delivery there is high material mortality rate in Nepal. Higher rate of maternal and child mortality shows the lower social status of women. Women have lack of economic power and also have lack of decision making role over their fertility too.

The research conducted by Shtrii, (1995). On 'Women Development: a case study of the socio-economic changes in the status of women in Nepal' Women are more a point to say that their husband makes decision alone, than to consider that they are making decision jointly with their husbands or those they have made decision alone. Women have simply nodding approved or accepting their husbands decisions without questioning doesn't ,mean that a decision was made jointly, simply because they express their opinion does not mean that they make a decision. The idea is that

women express their disagreement because they have an increased sense of their own value and an increase in the level of their confidence in voicing their opinions. Women's public life is culturally restricted to the degree that it is casually related to the patriarchal social system which confines them to subordinated position. Religion, ethnicity, culture, law, tradition, history and social attitudes placed severe limits on women's participation in public life and also control in their private live. These factors have both shape the culture's worldview and governed individual self- image subsequently affecting the understanding and practice of development. This fact is largely evidenced by reality that a negligible number Nepalese woman are involved in professional, management and decision making position.

According to Barry, (2007).Women are still largely under-presented in important decision-making positions. There need to equalize representation of men and women in these positions because under-presentation forms on important obstacle to the democratic development of countries. Increasing the levels of representation by women is also seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account in decision-making, which is important for the improvement of the general level of gender equality and the position of women in society.

The research conducted by Upreti, (2020). On 'Nepali Women in Politics: Success and Challenges' Nepal has been under-going tremendous socio-political transformations over the past two decades, from civil war to negotiated peace, unitary to federal and monarchical government and ultimately to the current republican political system, where the role of women is eminent. Despite unfavorable circumstances, Nepalese women have established themselves as key actor of socio-political changes.

The research conducted by North, (1997). On 'Women, Media and Politics' there are different forms of political behavior and all are important. The low level of women's interest in formal politics, compared to men. However, women's political interests are qualitatively different to men's. There are several barriers to women's involvement and advancement informal 'representative' politics. These barriers are social (cultural norms and values), structural (connected with women's smaller share of economic and power resources), and situational (connected with women's role in the family). Women are more likely to engage in non-formal political activities (not linked to

party politics), compared to men. Women's interests are often not reflected in mainstream political debate.

According to the report of United Nations Resident and Humanitarian co-operation, (2011). Women play an important role in all spheres of development. However, the majority of families in Nepal are still guided by a patriarchal culture. This has led to a restriction of the freedom and liberty of women which is greatly curtailed from childhood, with social and cultural practices having negatively affected women in many ways. This adverse situation has affected women's access to resources and their role in society with women having negligible representation in state mechanisms and other decision making bodies. The people's Movement-II of 2006 highlighted the lack of women's participation, empowerment and inclusion in politics and governance. Consequently the Comprehensive Peace Agreement(CPA) of 2006 committed to end gender based discriminations and to especially protect the rights of women.

According to Folbre, (2001). Women's relation with work is complex and mediated by many factors. Globally the female work participation rate has rising because of economic development, rising education, increasing age of marriage and declining fertility. Economic progress led to enhanced demand for female labor and better family support infrastructure. This has been global experience but the experience in India has been the obverse of this. Economic growth has failed to boost women's work participation. A declining work opportunity in agriculture and allied sector were to some extent offset by the non-agricultural sector, in particular the construction sector, where the largest increase is recorded. In many of these occupations work is deeply gender segregated to the disadvantage of women. A women may have years of experience in construction work but she will always remain an unskilled laborer, while a man with little experience can quickly rise to become a mason and earn much more. Non-farm sector jobs have grown but not enough to absorb all the labors surplus in the agriculture sector.

According to the report of National Planning Commission (2017). The status and empowerment of women are oppressed by a patriarchal system and have to face discrimination, violence and dependency upon males on a daily basis. This may have an influence on their attitudes, in turn, may influence the possibility of taking action to become more empowered. The economic power was very low for all the women.

Their attitudes about gender equality were very progressive and contradictory to the reality they find themselves in. It shows that for a sustainable development, NGO's and social organization must take efforts to increase women's independency, self-confidence and awareness. Women find themselves in a vicious circle of lack of education creating lack of opportunities, which in turn leads to enhanced dependency upon males and a lacking self-esteem. Therefore, they are not only restricted by traditions, laws, economic restrictions and educational barriers but also often unable to change their low status and to reach more empowerment. Existing attitudes and belief systems about their inferiority uphold and further strengthen this discrimination.

The research conducted by Poudel, (2017). On 'Women's Empowerment through Small Farmers Co-Operatives' shows that the women empowerment is possible only if they are provided with the opportunities to run their business, houses and industries. Female engagement in the corporate sector provides the social and economic growth of women. The growth of women is directly related with the enhancement of development of finance. Women can be provided with the opportunities of start-up through training it can be enriched. Women empowerment is possible by providing equity of involvement in business sector. Nepal being the country where still start-up are not achieving the expected place small enterprises run by women are doing well. The women can be grown on socio-economic sector if provided with skill and training. Literacy is main key for raising the empowerment of women and is more credible through micro finance. The entering in the business world provides women to safely grab their position on society and help in socio-economic development of country.

According to report of ADB (2010). Human poverty affects the most in decision making among war widows in Nepal. Women's empowerment is a process by which women learn to gain better control over the everyday life circumstances. Women's participation in household decision making as it relates to power and control is widely accepted indicator of empowerment. It is increasing used as an objective indicator of women's household level of empowerment, particularly in demographic and health studies.

The research conducted by Bennett, (2002). On 'Dangerous Wives and Sacred Sisters' the study expressed bitter experience of rural women and their plight background. Lack of education, superstition, cultural dogmas and other social and cultural factors are responsible to make women disempowered. Women are found suffering from social, cultural and political biases in the traditional male dominated society of Nepal. Compared to male counterparts women have limited access to educational, employment and leadership opportunities. They have less power and ability to do activities like men counterparts do; even they have the least authority to do something at their own initiation. Women are economically dependent on men (father, husband or brother) as men are traditionally considered as assertive and breadwinners of the family, they are focused on materialistic success. Women are found greatly confined to household and soft nature of farmyard activities. Still largely the households and society directly and indirectly deny or discourage women's role as decision maker and leader in society.

The study conducted by Acharya, (1979). Empowerment is one of the most widely used terms in the global development, discourse on women. In international development women's empowerment has become a kin to a 'magic bullet' for a range of development goals, including poverty alleviation and economic development. Development and social change- oriented goals associated with it have been firmly enmeshed in Nepal since the 1950s. The status of Nepalese women and rural women in particular lags far behind that of men. The strong bias in favor of sons in the country means that daughters are discriminated against from birth and do not have equal opportunities to achieve development. The situation for women is characterized by low levels of access to education, healthcare, economic, social and political opportunities.

The research conducted by Adhikari, (2015). On 'Economic Impact of Microfinance in Nepal' in the present context of Nepal women occupy more than half of the population and women are not given any opportunities for involving in the economic activities. There is the miserable situation of women in many parts of Nepal. The present study is based microfinance on Kathmandu valley. Research after the involvement in the microfinance research has realized that the women have increased their confidence level. Women are involved in microfinance program and are able to improve the living standard. Women had developed the good image in the society.

Women empowerment in Nepal is possible only if the income generations of women are raised.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework is important aspect in the research work because it is the basis of foundation upon which the study is established. This study is within the framework of involvement of women in the decision and policies making process that studies about the women and women related issues in details. The specific purpose of the study is to study, investigate and analyze the causing factors and its consequences in the society so it is necessary that the theoretical framework should be revolve round around the main objectives of the research.
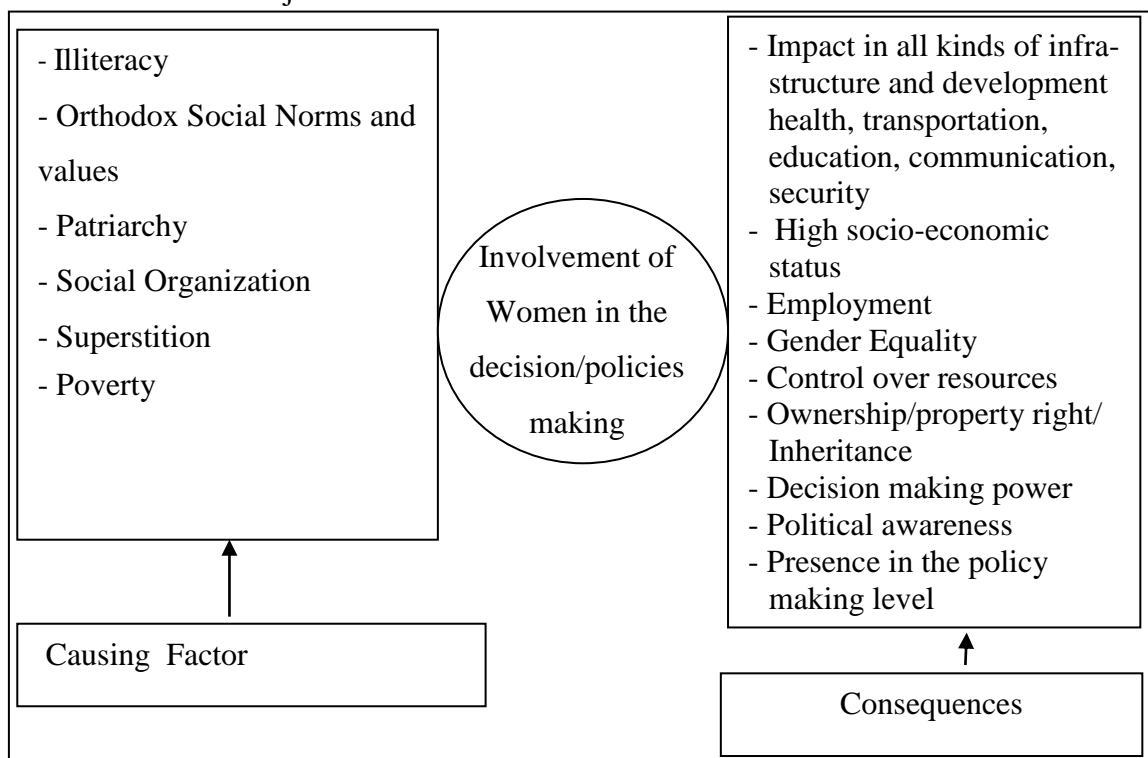
Decision making process is directly related to empowerment of women. Participation and social inclusion is related to empowerment. Therefore decision making of women is the key pathway for the empowerment and inclusion. In the framework, decision making of the women is the independent variables that determine their empowerment. Social, economic and political participation of the women play the significant role to strength their self-confidence that ultimately leads toward their empowerment.

In the context of Nepal, women have always been made victimized. From the ancient time till today's time, they have been doing struggle and exercise for their existence.

They are deprived of health, education, right and privilege, facilities and are kept away from the main stream of development. With passage of time different system and governing practices were introduced but we do not find such effective and influencing program that could change the fundamental structure of women. The women population constitutes the half of the total population of the country but their presence have been ignored and underestimated. Gender inequality is one of the major problem of Nepali society and it is the ramification of traditional norms and values; stereotype thinking, male chauvinism and domination, conservative perspective towards women as means of doing household activities and machine for producing child only ignoring their existence and exclusion of women to social activities and program. Gender inequality leads to differences between men and women especially it is general concept of understanding the unfair and unhealthy treatment towards women. Gender inequality has wide impacts. The impacts of gender inequality can be felt and seen in various aspects education, health, employment, politics, inheritance.

Women education has been negatively affected by the gender inequality. Sons are encouraged to go to school and colleges but daughters are suggested to do domestic work. Gender itself constructs a high expectation as an identity in social norms, power relationship that shapes the role of men and women and available opportunities for women. Equality basically is emphasized on equal access of opportunities services, contributions and use of rights and power regardless of age, gender, caste, race and beliefs. The term equality should not be accentuated as only women's rights and feminism but male and female both being equal citizens of the nation should be treated on the same scale according to the needs. The status of women is equally important to the participation of ethnic groups in development. Throughout the world women have less opportunity to participate in development and in leadership roles. Women today face many challenges including fewer opportunities to participate in education, maternal health risks and a lack of access to resources. They play important roles in the household and the community. Women may have low self-esteem about their ability to do. Gender is crucial in influencing livelihood outcomes. For example, gender differences exist in access to credit and resources. Often land is owned by men. Women have limited formal access to land which means little collateral for taking credit. The socio-economic position of women in societies negatively affects their participation. Typically women earn less than men and the

sexual division of labor in society also imposes burdens on women that are not normally faced by men. Women often face a triple burden when participating in politics. Most societies fail to organized in a manner that enables both men and women with families to share these responsibilities particularly considering that child rearing responsibilities tend to fail disproportionate on women.

CHAPTER: THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research methods of the study. It includes rational of the study area, Research Design, Study of population, Sample Size and Sampling Procedure, Method of data collection, Selection of the Respondents and Selection of the Respondents and Method of data Analysis. The proposed study is based on primary sources in information. Information had been collected using both qualitative and quantitative tools.

3.1 Rational Selection of the Study Area

Women constitute more than half of the total population in Nepal. Undoubtedly, the overall situation or the status of Nepali is miserable. Especially, the scenario of rural women is noticeable. They are so busy enough, talking about human right, women right and privilege and women participation in the development. seem to be far away from their reach.

Many development programmers, plans and policies have been adopted by the government and other non-government organizations but the results are not in favor. The uplift works have been impractical or fruitless. That mean to say still lots of works are to be carried on to improve the existing situation of Nepali women. The sole effort of this study is to project the real situation of women madi village. It tries to explore the involvement of women in the decision and policies making process at local level, how it has been structured and how it has been constituted in forming society. Thus it is useful for those people who want to make knowledge about the situation of women's involvement in the social issues of the village mainly in terms of empowerment of women. Both men and women are two parts of a same coin. Each other's existence and value cannot be minimized or underestimated. This study endeavors to bring women into mainstream of the development erasing all kinds of divisions and conflicts happening in between men and women. As it portrays the close and clear picture of women, hence it can be useful for different institutions and organizations, NGOs/INGOs and to the entire interested associated person.

Though the study is done at micro level but it provides necessary ideas and hints for carrying out big and macro study also. Researchers, development workers, policy makers, various organizations will be benefited to conduct the programs and issues concerned with women's empowerment and participation in social issues. Nonetheless, the importance of this study will be according to different context and aspects. Programs should be beneficial for needy and targeted people and enhance the capabilities and potentialities of women to enable them to be in main stream of social improvement and nation development with their productive capabilities of significant and effective decision making. Improvement in decision making power of female will play the vital role to make society develop and address the problem of social injustice.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is a plan of the proposed research work. It is planned sequenced of the process involved in carrying out a research study. Research design is research plan providing guidelines to researcher to get answer of the research questions and help to control experiment so it is the overall scheme of the research.

In the current study exploratory research design has been carried out to understand various aspects of the problems or issues related women's involvement in the decision and policies making process of local level of Madi village. While descriptive research design is used to describe the causing factors that hinders women's involvement at the local level and its consequences on overall social, political, economic, cultural and environmental aspect and several weaknesses, complications and consequent suffering of the rural women. Here the descriptive design is helped in discovering overlooked aspect of the social, economic and political status of rural women. This design also makes us understand the journey that women have made from home communities to where they now work.

The major emphasis in exploratory study is on the discovery of ideas and insights. As such research design is appropriate for considering different aspects of a problem under study. The approach to the research is direct contact with the respondents in the study zone. The research design for this purpose was exploration and descriptive.

3.3 Nature and Sources of Data

Both 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 with semi-structured questionnaire and field observation has been 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 purposed population census 2011, metropolitan profile, CBS report, previous researcher's dissertation, related books, websites and published article and journals as well.

3.4 Universe and Sampling Procedure

The study is mainly concerned with the women of Taprang village in Madi Rural Municipality ward no. 6. According to the rural municipality profile of 2021, there are altogether 1340 households in the study area having different caste and ethnic groups. And according to statistical table the total number of women of 670 is 242 sample sizes. It has adopted the sample model of krejeie and Morgan (1970) to select 242 sample sizes by looking at statistical table. By using of purposive sampling this research has selected 242 women as its sample size.

Rural women are understood as anyone who has been living in Madi village, representatively in the sample ultimately interviewed as in terms of age, caste, ethnicity, gender and nature of engagement with the Maoist movement.

3.5 Method and Instruments of Primary Data Collection

The instrument adopted in the study to generate relevant data that 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.

Name of method/tools	No. of participation
Interview	67
Observation method	125
Focus group discussions (FGD)	40 (Three groups)
Case Study	10
Total	242
Key informants interview (KII)	10

 Source: Field survey, 2022

3.5.1 Interview

For the primary data collection, semi-structured questions were included in the interview schedule. From this interview schedule, basic social demographic, economic and rural women -related information regarding women's socio-economic condition, their family background, psychological and physical health needs and other condition during daily life, their work time experiences, their current needs and barriers for empowerment into the society were gathered. Oral interview method has been espoused for collecting first hand data. Interview schedule has been prepared on the basis of objectives of the research study containing both closed as well as open ended. Both structured and unstructured interviews were conducted with the respondents.

3.5.2 Observation

For this study, direct participant observation overt method has been used to collect relevant data. Participant observation included establishing rapport with the people and direct collection of primary data from the field. In this study, personal observations were administrated in the field with certain behavior of respondents especially concerning with the involvement of challenges of women's empowerment process and current involvement of women in the decision and policies making process. At the same time indirect non participant method has been used for the collection of requisite data. Prior to the visit of the field a checklist was prepared for not to be confused during field study for what to be observed.

3.5.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The FGDs and interactions were organized which focused on the status of rural

women and their participation in the decision and policies making process male, women, knowledgeable civil society, key persons at local level (lawyers, teachers, ex-VDC representatives, local NGO personnel). Each of the field level FGDs was started informally while the closing was done formally after presentation of the products by FGDs groups. Three focus group discussions were conducted; one with rural women who were living in their own native society, another with those who were living outside of their native society. During the discussion, mainly three phases are covered role and experience during the work time in the group with male counterpart, their experiences and their challenges for empower in the societies and families.

3.5.4 Case Study

These life story interviews were conducted to know the information which the interview schedule did not cover. Case studies depict the psychological, economic and social aspects of the women and how they were/are stigmatized or empowered in the society as well as in their family; their personal experiences and perspectives of society; their dignity as shaped by patriarchal and caste conscious society; their present living condition; and their expectations and aspirations for the future. In-depth life history interview had been taken with some of local women.

3.5.5 Key Informants Interview (KII)

Separate interview was carried out with the key informant of the VDC to collect qualitative data on the socio-economic and political status of the local women. These key informants were: Village Administrative Officer, District and local Government Chiefs, Local Development Officers, NGO/INGO personnel, local lawyers, teachers, journalists, local civil society leaders etc. Data were obtained through participatory observations and in-depth interview.

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

After the completion of data collection both primary and secondary data have been analyzed both qualitatively as well as quantitatively manually. Quantifiable raw data were analyzed statistically. While presenting the data, simple statistical tools like frequency and percentage have been used. Likewise, tabulations were made according to the objectives. The non-quantifiable qualitative data have been managed manually and analyzed descriptively.

CHAPTER: FOUR

Socio - Demographic Information of Respondents

This chapter is devoted to analyze the relevant research questions and certain objectives that divided in various sub headings. The chapter, outline of the study area and socio- economic status of the respondent's family, contains the essence or finding of the study in table formats and some figures generated for the data analysis. The study focused on presenting social as well as economic aspects of selected women's job and occupation. The specific subheading of the chapters are physical setting of study area, population composition, religion structure, gender/sex distribution, education status of women, family income and expenditure have been analyzed with the help of primary data. All the concerning variable were developed and analyzed to know the socio-economic condition of rural women.

4.1 Age Composition

Age is important demographic characteristic playing a major role in any population analysis. Age structure is the product of past trends in fertility, mortality and migration and determines in turn the current levels of birth, death and migration rates. Moreover, the age composition of the population has significant implications for the productive potential, manpower supply, status and role and responsibility of individual in family and society.

Table No. 4.1: Age Composition of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 35 years	25	10.3
35-40years	68	28.1
40-45years	62	25.6
45-50 years	41	16.9
50-55 years	37	15.2
Above 55 years	9	3.7
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table no.4.1 shows the age composition of the demographic characteristics of women in the study area. Among the total respondents based on age, majority of population were from between 35-40 years i.e. 28.1 percent, between 40-45 years were 25.6 percent and between 45-50 years were 14.8 percent, similarly between 50-55 years were 15.2 percent and above 55 were 3.7 percent. The above table clarifies that majority of women were between 35-40years.

4.2 Marital Status

Marriage is universal phenomenon. In general, marriage can be described as a commitment between a woman and a man, which is strongly connected with love, support, tolerance and harmony. A marriage is one of the most important decisions in everybody's life. Sociologist define marriage as 'A socially recognized union between two or more people with the notion of permanence and a legal contract between two or more people that establishes certain rights and obligations' (Open Education Sociology Dictionary 2017). It is the most important institution of human society and backbone of human civilization. It creates new social relationship and reciprocal rights between the spouses.

Table No. 4.2: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Unmarried	21	8.6
Married	160	66.1
Widow	35	14.4
Divorce	26	10.7
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table no.4.2 shows the marital status of respondents. The table shows that 66.1 percent were married and 8.6 percent were single. Similarly, 14.4 percent were widow and 10.7 percent were divorce.

The above table shows the bitter reality of conservative society where majority of women have to live in society as being widow after the death of their husband and being divorced because of the unfair treatment of inter-caste marriage and their personal misunderstanding.

4.3 Religious Composition

Scott (1999) has defined religion in the dictionary of sociology as a system of belief, practice and philosophical values concerned with the definition of the sacred, the comprehension of life and salvation from the problem of human existence. But an alternative approach to the study of religion was first formulated by Durkheim in 1912, although it had been propounded earlier in a less coherent form by Fustel De Coulanges in early nineteenth century. The concept of religion is more related to emotion and sentiments of the people that drives people towards some benevolent doings. Thus it is incredibly imperative to trace the religious structure of an area to know about the level of development and progressive attitude of the people as claimed by Max Weber (1978), in Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism.

Table No. 4.3: Religious Composition of Respondents

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Hindu	140	57.1
Buddhist	87	35.1
Others	15	6.1
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The above table explores the religious structure of women in the study area are complex and diverse with 57.8 percent of population are following Hinduism while 35.1percent of the total population are following Buddhism and the rest 6.1 percent of population are following other religion which includes Bon God, Christianity. The religious pattern shows that there is less impression of Christianity than Hinduism and Buddhism. The majority of respondents were Tagadhari in the study area and they follow their own traditional religion Hinduism.

4.4 Education Status

Academic qualification plays a key role in determining life chances. Equal enrollment and Completion rates have been seen as important indicators of gender equity in education which in turn should contribute the gender equality in society. Education attainment is more worked for the younger age groups than for the older age groups. It is shown that the higher level of literacy rate can positively effect in decision making

in family resource management and equal distribution of resources for their children. In the study the researcher has tried to find out the literacy rate of the respondents and its effect on decision making role in family.

Table No. 4.4: Education Status of the Respondent

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	51	21.1
Literate	132	54.5
Primary	26	10.7
Secondary	22	9.1
Higher Secondary	11	4.5
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

With respect to education status of respondents, the above table indicates that 21.1 percent of women were illiterate, followed by primary education that shows 10.7 percent, 9.1 percent completed their secondary education and 54.5 percent belong to the respondent who were literate and very few respondents completed their higher education. The existing scenario of the educational structure clarifies that majority of the people were illiterate which of course decreased the chance of being employed and getting better jobs. On the other hand, the data reveal the difficult situation of the women in the society to get education.

4.5 Family Types

In general context a family (from Latin: familiare) is a group of people affiliated by consanguinity, affinity or co-residence. In most societies, it is the principal institution for the socialization of children. Extended from the human "family unit" by biological-cultural affinity, marriage, economy, culture, tradition, honor and friendship are concepts of family that are physical and metaphorical or that grow increasingly inclusive extending to community, village, city, region, nation, global village and humanism. A family group consists of a father, mother and their children is called nuclear family. This term can be contrasted with an extended family.

Sociologists and Anthropologist distinguish between conjugal families (relatively independent of the kindred of the parents and of other families general) and nuclear

families (which maintain relatively close ties with their kindred). First it serves as a synonym of 'consanguine family'. Second, in societies dominated by the conjugal family, it refers to 'kindred' (an egocentric networks of relatives that extends beyond the domestic group) who do not belong to the conjugal family. These types refer to ideal or normative structures found in particular societies. Any society will exhibit some variation in the actual composition and conception of families. Family is the basis of human society. Although, the nature and structure of the family vary from one society to another, without families is not known to us. Relationship between the members of the family is deliberately formed based on marriage and descent. The inter-personal relationship within the family makes the family an endurable social unit. The family is not only the basic group, it is viewed as an oldest institution of mankind, which has the power to withstand social changes. The biological and social reproductions of the family are indispensable for the society to maintain its continuity in the world context.

Table no.4.5: Family Types of Respondents

Family Types	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear Family	163	67.3
Joint	79	32.6
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Traditionally the structure of family types was seen extended. Almost all of the family members were the sources of family economy. The clear divisions of labor were seen such traditional types of families. In the context of rural families, almost families are still live within a same roof. But now a-days the belief of traditional thought and concept has been removed and the new types of families have been formatting. Educational opportunities and awareness might be the causes of having such changes in the structure of families. Here in the context of the study area 67.3 percent belongs to nuclear family and the rest 32.6 percent were from joint family

4.6 Caste/Ethnic Composition

The most striking thing of Nepal is its ethnic feature. There are many groups that live together in the same area but it is not without hierarchy. The maximum numbers of

people are Tagathari, Janajati, Dalit and others.

Table No. 4.6: Caste/Ethnic Composition of Respondents

Caste/Ethnic Group	Frequency	Percentage
Tagadhari	85	35.1
Janajati	69	28.5
Dalit	57	23.5
Other	31	12.8
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table no.4.6 clarifies about the Caste/Ethnic distribution of the study area. Based on Caste/Ethnicity, majority of the respondents were from upper caste Tagadhari that is 35.1 percent which include the Castes like Subedi, Devkota, Pandaya, Bhattarai, Sharma, Poudel, Baniya, Neupane etc. Similarly, 28.5 percent were Janajati (Gurung, Magar, Tamang, Rai, Newar, Tharu etc.) and 23.5 were Dalits (Bishowkarma, Pariyar, Nepali, Rasaili, Cenchury etc.) And the rest were other i.e. 12.8 percent. Castes like Muslim, Madhesi come under other caste group. Caste/Ethnic structure shows majority respondents were Tagadhari.

CHAPTER: FIVE

CAUSING FACTORS OF WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING

The struggle for women's empowerment women is one of the most influential factors of poverty reduction of the present globalized era. It has direct and indirect impact over development process. The meaning and definition of it varies according to socio-cultural norms and values and economic condition of the society. It is study, the term women's empowerment has been viewed through the three basic components of empowerment.

Meaning access on education and health are basic factors of social empowerment because when women are properly educated and got health facilities, they will be able to compete with others and women's empowerment which covers a wide range of consciousness not only of the people of illiterate and poor class but also of the people of educated and high ranked classes. It motivates them to provide on environment to women where women can get opportunities to empower themselves. Some respondents mentioned more than one-causing factors that hinder women's involvement in decision and policies making process.

5.1 Causes of Involvement

In the study area females are found deprived from their rights and responsibilities. They have low access to education, employment and decision making. They are dominated by males in each and every steps of life. The following are the main reasons for their backwardness in his study area as given by the respondents.

Case A: *I am a permanent inhabitant of Madi-6 village. My life has not changed structurally and functionally as before marriage and after marriage. A pile of work has always been on my shoulder. She hardly does a signature which she learnt later on. She always remains busy in household activities and agricultural works that are prevalent in remote areas. From dawn to dusk, she has hectic schedule which she wished to change but that remains almost impossible. She expressed that her time was not the time for girl. To be born as daughter was curse and a matter of unhappiness in her time. So, she regrets. She is amazed to this modern era with the new discoveries and innovations. But still relatively, the development of science and technology and new system of government has not able to keep greater impact in improving the overall situation of women in Nepal. In her view, the decade long armed conflict in Nepal has worsen the situation of Nepali women. The ten year time serves as epitome of grave human rights violations and abuses. Hundreds and thousands of populace, including women and children are directly and or indirectly affected by this insurgency. The most important factor for enlightening people is education. It ultimately empowers both men and women to amend their socio-cultural status and quality of life.*

Table No. 5.1: Causes of Backwardness of Respondents

Causes of Backwardness	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of education	123	50.8
Lack of awareness	45	18.5
Low economic status	38	15.7
Traditional culture	36	14.8
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

As above table shows that the main cause of females backwardness is lack of education i.e. 50.8 percent, followed by low economic status is 15.7 percent. The stated third cause which makes females as backward is tradition and culture which is 14.8 percent. Similarly lack of awareness is 18.5 percent all these causes contribute to keep women in low status.

5.2 Problems Faced by Women in Decision Making Process

Women in Nepal are spending lots of time in household activities. They are lacking in decision making. They are facing the problems of decision making due to the following reasons.

Case B: *She is on her 40s.Reading and writing didn't become activities of her life. Clearly to state, she was not that much fortunate to receive any formal education. Parents were illiterate, as consequences, it transferred to her also. Marriage in an early age around 17years pushed harder to remain away from the light of education Her sentences and words are testimony to her dissatisfaction. She points out superstition, traditional norms and values, male domination, stereotype thinking and religious practices as main causes for downfall of women in Nepal. In case of education, she views that previously education was not meant for ladies and daughters. They were thought to be doing household activities and meant for domestic life including rearing children. She says that such differences, inequalities and domination are the product of imbalanced relation between men and women, collectively called gender inequality. The impact of gender inequality is seen in every field including education. The provision of reservation of women to empower them can't be ignored but it is not adequate.*

Table No. 5.2: Problems Faced by the Respondents

Problems faced by women	Frequency	Percentage
Socially and Economically dependent	67	27.6
No control over resources	59	24.3
Traditional norms, values	70	28.9
Other(no confident, hesitation)	46	19.1
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Though men and women are born equally yet discrimination in our society prevails after the birth. They are not treated equal in household as well as in society. Their role and responsibilities are determined in the family while female child doesn't 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.

Above table no. 5.13 shows the problems faced by women in decision and policies making process. 28.9 percent of respondents said that due to traditional norm, values they had to depend economically, socially on male and 24.3 percent of them said they have no control over resources, no confidence to decide any decisions related to their life as well as community. They feel hesitation and shy. Actually it is not their fault of not able to take decisions, it is the society who made them like that.

5.3 Inspiring Factor to Involve in the Decision and Policies

Decade long armed insurgency's biggest success was women's involvement in the decision and policies making process to change the socio-political system through a revolutionary ideology. Inspiration is something that makes us want to make a change in our life for the better or someone who pushes us or sets an example. We are all inspired by different things and in different ways. Every woman has their own inspiration to involve in the decision and policies making process.

Case C: *She is a typical type of Nepali women. Her husband is a teacher and supports her in different activities but when it comes about freedom and independence and a life of her choice, her utterances had clear dissatisfaction and unhappiness. As she was studious and tries to keep information of current affairs, she claims that Nepalese society is still affected by traditional values norms, customs and ideal. She tried to explore the negative facets of Hindu religion and philosophy that has given birth to the patriarchal in the society. Hindu religion and culture has been granting male dominated society. She has to spend most of her time doing household activities and also involving in agricultural fields. She admits that if she was married at the right time, she would have got chance to read. Due to which education and knowledge acquirement became difficult. She questions why daughters are referred as product going to other's house and refused to acquire education. According to her, due to lack of quality education, women are denied form rules, regulations and their responsibilities. Low educational system has not only limited women skill and capability but also individual health, family health, legal right, constitutional right, its utilization and active participation are deprived from them. She paid much attention towards education and stated that unless women are educated, women cannot afford themselves and need to depend on men for survival.*

Table No. 5.3: Inspiration of Involvement

Inspiration	Frequency	Percentage
Economic excess	171	70.6
Family torture	35	14.4
Linkage of Friends	22	9.1
Self-motivated	14	5.7
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to table no.5.3, among the total respondents 70.6 percent of them have involved in the decision and policies making process because of economic excess, 14.4 percent due to family torture and 9.1 percent because of linkages of friends and relatives and 5.7 percent joined by their self-interest as well as self-motivated. From the above table economic excess is the only most common reason to involve in the decision and policies making process.

5.4 Security Issue of the Respondents

Almost all women are struggling to secure their livelihoods. Some of the women have organized 'Aama Samuha' to fight for their livelihood security.

Table No. 5.4: Security Issue of the Respondents

Security Issue	Frequency	Percentage
Sexual harassment	42	17.3
Unfair treatment	77	31.8
Physical incapability	60	24.7
Other (sometimes, Biasness)	63	26.0
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table no.5.4 represents the security issues of women, majority of the respondent said they were treated biasedly that is 31.8 percent and 17.3 percent said they were sexually harassed and 24.7 percent said physical incapability were another reason for unfair treatment and 26.0 percent of them said sometimes they were unfairly treated and sometimes they were equally treated. Above table suggest that although many

women or transformed by their experience in the decision and policies making process, they rarely gain equality

5.5 Circumstances of Moving towards Urban Centers of Respondents

Women have to face the most difficult situation than male because of patriarchal domination and rural society become more rigid to women and men. Nepalese society does not easily digest the freedom for women. In this case women were unable to cope with the situations and had to leave, moving to urban centers or other town. There are several reasons behind their movement like social status, better opportunity, good education for child, social security etc.

Table No. 5.5: Respondents' Circumstances of moving towards Urban Centers

Circumstances of Mobile	Frequency	Percentage
Social Status	24	9.1
Better opportunity	121	50.0
Good education for child	76	31.4
Other (social security, behavior)	21	8.6
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table no. 5.5 represents the factors of moving toward urban places. Out of total respondents 50.0 percent of them shifted for better opportunity, 9.1 percent for social status, 31.4 percent for good education for their children and 8.6 percent of them have other reason as they have mentioned. Other reason here included the social behavior, social security.

5.6 Safety Feelings of Respondents

Safety is the state of being 'safe' and the condition of being protected from harm or other non- desirable outcomes. It can also refer to the control of recognized hazards in order to achieve an acceptable level of risk. This research actually provides the socio-economic, political and physical status of women in the communities.

Case D: *She had dreams, aspirations and hope to become something in the future but all it was shattered as she was married in an early age and just could not continue behind class-8. She views that she is independent but in her independence also there lies in pain and sorrows. In her view, in the twenty first century, in Nepalese context, women are still in the chains of discrimination. She points that for the development of a country, men and women play vital role. To make equal contribution to the country both should be treated equally and education on equal footing. She laments that her family income is very average. On asking whether she has been helped by husband or not she expressed her bitterness openly, "No, I don't get any support of my husband." She expects help and co-operation in household activities which she is not getting. Knowing the overall situation of Nepalese women, she says that there is no alternative except educating women. Gender inequality has been fundamental characteristic of a country like Nepal where women do not have any dominant role in the family or in the society or the role of women is not considered to be dominant one. They have to depend on their husband and family. Their main jobs are cooking, washing and other household tasks only. She stresses that an educated mother can earn money and take decision about her household activities. She can manage her home in a better way.*

Table No. 5.6 Safety Feelings of Respondents

Safety Issue	Frequency	Percentage
Financially strong	60	24.7
Financially weak	21	8.6
Socially strong	23	9.5
Socially weak	50	20.6
Politically strong	20	8.2
Politically weak	18	7.4
Physically strong	40	16.5
Physically weak	10	4.1
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table no. 5.6 represents the safety of women. These women are facing the common problems related to ensuring their livelihoods, lack of resources for the investment for their children's health and education and better reintegration in their communities and society. Above table shows 24.7 percent were financially strong whereas 8.6 were financially weak, 16.5 percent of them were physically strong and 4.1 were physically weak as they shared that some of them still have bullets in their bodies, many of them are disabled or wounded and struggling to secure their livelihood. Similarly, 9.6 percent were socially strong and 20.6 were socially weak Likewise 8.2 percent were politically strong and 7.4 percent were politically weak.

The above table also shows the socially and politically weak condition of the rural women because of ignorance of the native society and state.

5.7 Support of Organization

Organizations are systems created to achieve common goals through people to people to work relationships. It creates the framework needed to reach a company's objectives and goals. The support of organization also helps them for reintegrating in society where they are living now.

Case E: *She is widow and lives in joint family, survived by three sons and one daughter. She has passed proficiency certificate level and she has been following teaching as her profession. She is very positive towards her profession earning14000 per month and does agricultural activities whenever she gets time. By all these she has been supporting her family. A long way of life devoid of husband; society's conservative and traditional attitudes, unnecessary talking, discussion, blames and accusations and all anti circumstances made her life more struggling and difficult. But this tragedy has directed her in different directions resulting in boldness and to live a meaningful life in spite of difficulties. She is fully aware about the fact that gender inequalities exists among our society. Her dream of becoming social worker is still alive. She is hopeful seeing the recent improving situation of women. She thinks that if women are given opportunities then they can also equally contribute in the development of a country. Women themselves should be alert and dynamic to uplift their status.*

Table No. 5.7: Support of Organization

Support of organization	Frequency	Percentage
Local Government	54	22.3
Aama Samuha	141	58.2
Tole bikash Sastha	23	9.5
Other (NGO,INGO, Youth club)	24	9.9
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Above table verifies that support of Aama Samuha is 58.2 percent, 9.5 percent is from Tole Biskash Sastha, 22.3 percent is from local government and 9.9 percent is from other which include the NGO, INGO and Youth club etc. The women who are involved in the decision and policies making process are viewed negatively by their native people as said by respondents.

5.8 Involvement of Local Level Group

Those women who are more actively participating or involving in social activities and in local group, they are more accepted in society but those who remain within their house and does household deeds, they are more accepted by society. Their involvement in any local group like water user committees, community forest user's groups, local sports clubs, school management committees, ward citizen forums and youth clubs help them to develop social empowerment into their communities.

Table No. 5.8: Involvement of Local Level Group

Involvement of local communities	Frequency	Percentage
Social Club	41	16.9
Community Forest	74	30.5
Aama Samuha	101	41.7
Other (school/water community)	26	10.7
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Women's involvement of local level group also helps them to empower themselves. Though the society completely denies their existence, they are struggling to get the position as men in the society.

Table no.5.8 shows the involvement of women in local level, where 41.7 percent of them are involved in Aama Samuha, 30.5 percent are in community forest, 16.9 percent of them are involved in social club and 10.7 percent are involved in other i.e. school, water user committees. In-terms of social empowerment into their community, women who are more actively participating in social activities and taking membership in social clubs, community forest, Aama Samuha, Youth clubs are more accepted in society.

5.9 Household Activities

In Nepal more females are engaged in household activities while very few males are engaged in these activities. Female are spending more time in household chores than males. In study area also it was found that more females are engaged in household chores than males. Females are mainly engaged in cooking activities, livestock, earning, agricultural-activities, child-rearing and caring, collecting graze, firewood etc. are following table shows the engagement of respondents in household chores.

Case F: *She is 40 years old and she is blessed by two sons. She remembers she was walking on her 20s years of age when she tied her knots of marriage. Concerning her education, she has done SLC. Both husband and wife are engaged in agricultural work. She expressed her vision openly. She is closed to illiterate women around her and says that illiterate women in Nepal are struggling with basic daily tasks. In every aspects of life, illiterate women suffer. She blames marital customs; patriarchal gender role and poverty are the responsible factors for the lower prioritization of educating daughters than sons. She wants to correct the thinking like education makes girls indulgent and permissive and unnecessary for daughters, daughters should be married off to their husband; women should look after the household chores and her little sisters and brothers. Though we are marching in the modern era but in the developing countries like Nepal such kind of stereotype thinking is still prevalent in remote areas and countryside. She points out, these stereotypes which have been deeply rooted in the corner of our country, must be washed out.*

Table No. 5.9: Household Activities of Respondent

Member of family	Frequency	Percentage
Male	47	19.4
Female	125	51.6
Both	70	28.9
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table no.5.9 represents the household activities of respondents. Above table shows that 51.6 percent of respondents are engaged in household activities while only 19.4 percent of males were engaged in such activities. However 28.9 percent both male and female are involving in household chores. This shows that more females are involved in non-economic activities compared to males.

5.10 Behavior of Communities towards the socially empower Women

Individual qualities matter more when choosing to establish equal existence in the society. Surrounding of the society and perception of people in it play great role. In case of Nepal as it is the traditional society it does not easily digest changes that occur after the so many movement for the right of women. Decade long movement of women did not fulfill the political, social and economic transformation they had promised.

Table No. 5.10: Behavior of Communities towards the Socially Empower Women

Behavior of community	Frequency	Percentage
Joyfully	62	25.6
Hatefully	118	48.7
Excitedly	27	11.1
Other(fearfully, humiliatingly)	35	14.4
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The above table verifies that the community does not easily accept them as their member of the society. 48.7 percent treat them hatefully, 25.6 percent with joyfully, 11.1 percent with excitedly and 14.4 percent with other like fearfully, humiliatingly. The women shared they are vulnerable and experiencing exclusion, hate,

marginalization and disempowerment. Women not only face a challenge from lack of skills but also the brunt of social discrimination.

5.11 Perception of Community towards empower Women

Perception is defined as how we look at others and the world around us. Perception affects the way people communicate with others and individual's pattern of thinking can affect their perception of others. As Nepal is a patriarchal society, inter-caste marriages, widowhood or the divorced status of women have to face social rejection. Women are viewed negatively and rejection rate of women are higher than male in society. Woman perceives themselves not as victims but very much as agents of change.

Table No. 5.11: Perception of Community towards Empower Women

Perception of community	Frequency	Percentage
Equal	67	27.6
Partiality	120	49.5
Other (depends on situations/circumstances)	55	22.7
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to the table no 5.11 most of the ex-PLA women have faced social-discrimination by their own community. Above table shows that only 27.6 percent are treated equally and 22.7 percent of them said being experienced of both. Sometimes they are equally treated and sometimes they don't. It depends on the circumstances and more than half of women are neglected i.e. 49.5 percent. It was very difficult to demolish the patriarchal thought pattern though it was well articulated at the time of insurgency.

5.12 Support from Local Government

Help or support make a life a little easier for people who are struggling and need some assistance. Women do not have strong support systems and social networks as they are often staying inside their home. Especially rural women need some sort of help from local government because they are living in exclusion, they are not able to go

against society, they had no strong social backing, no proper economic support and no psychological counseling to reconcile and rebuild their lives.

Table No.5.12: Support from Local Government

Help or Support	Frequency	Percentage
Financial	67	27.6
Emotional	101	41.7
Political	57	23.5
Other (skill, training)	17	7.0
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Help or support from local government is very essential for the livelihood of rural women. Local government should help them by providing financial and emotional support. The table no.5.12 shows the help and support from local government. 41.7 percent of respondents said that they get emotional support, 27.6 percent said they get financial support, 23.5 percent said they get political support and 7.0 of them said they get other support like employment and vocational and skill training.

CHAPTER: SIX

CONSEQUENSES OF WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN THE DECISION MAKING

Women's empowerment is a very broad and vague topic which covers a wide range of social, cultural and economic spheres of daily life. There is no single worldwide accepted definition of women's empowerment because the meaning and definition of it differ from one community to another. Necessary steps to be taken to enhance the empowerment process also vary from one community to another community. Similarly, the consequences of women's involvement in the decision and policies making also differ according to socio-cultural, economic as well as family environment (Kweinberger, 2001).

Selected Cases of Rural Women

Case A: *I was 20 years when I got married. She had expressed positive attitude towards life and overall situation of women. She clearly stressed that education is fundamental aspect to all. Regarding education of women, she expressed that a human society consists of men and women. If both men and women are educated, they can play important role in the development of the country. Normally, 50% of the total population is occupied by women. So, the presence of women and their possible role in contributing the nation building cannot be underestimated. Thus, the progress of the nation depends on the women education too. She is happy with her life partner as she continuously getting cooperation from her husband. She views that comparing to past decades, the role of women in various social and political forum have changed structurally and functionally.*

6.1 Changes due to Empowerment of Rural Women

Changes here refer to the changes in behaviors and cultural values and norms. People's behaviors, culture and tradition also changes as the women come in the decision and policies making position. Human beings differ in terms of many characteristics such as intelligence, talents, academic level etc. Therefore, depending on human potential and the specific working environment, change can be equally beneficial to the human flourish or demeaning.

Table No. 6.1: Changes in Respondents due to empowerment

Changes in	Frequency	Percentage
Economic Capacity	97	40.1
Confident	53	21.9
Life standard	49	20.2
Other (traditional norms, values)	43	17.7
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table no. 6.2 represents the changes in economic capacity, life standard, life-style. Among them, 40.1 percent of respondent said they are economically capable to empower themselves, 21.9 percent said they have confident to take any decision whether it is related to family or community. Similarly 20.2 percent replied they have changes in life standard and 17.7 mentioned other. In other respondents replied that the rules of rigidness of traditional norms and values become little bit open to them. Changes can be seen in traditional norms and values.

6.2 Women's Workload

Women's workload also describes their empowerment process. Women do not have enough time to involve in extra activities outside the domestic sphere. This also hinders them from strengthening their social status and can't work for personal and societal development. They largely remain confined to household chores.

Case B: *I am 35 years old and I was around 21 years of age when I got married. I have attended the studies up to SLC and looks after her two children-one son and one daughter and my whole family. However, I'm not totally satisfied by the overall condition of women. Women are still lagging behind in developing countries like Nepal. She shared that the present situation of women is far better comparing to past time. She is well aware about of the importance of women education that's why she has supported her daughter by every means and resources and she told that she has not been helped by her husband fully. Likewise, to have household decision, she doesn't feel that she is that much autonomous whose decision would be counted. She regrets that still Nepali society takes women as second level citizen and development of a country is impossible without the equal participation of women in social activities, politics and bureaucratic organs of government.*

Table No. 6.2: Workload of the Respondents

Workload	Frequency	Percentage
Male	80	33.1
Female	85	35.1
Both	77	31.8
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

After the empowerment of women this kind of problems are solved so far. Above table shows that 35.1 percent of women revealed that they had to do household chores while 33.1 percent of male also said they do household chores to help their spouse. And 31.8 percent of both male and female revealed that they do their work. Therefore positive aspects can be seen in every parts of personal and social life after the women's empowerment.

6.3 Awareness among women

Among many factors awareness comes as the most important factor of women's empowerment process.

Case C: *She could not continue her education besides primary level. It's been a long time since she left her study. But still coming to this age she has understood the importance of education to women. She expressed women are the mothers of future generation. If women are educated, the future generation is also educated. According to her, educated mother teach their children good values and enable them to be more responsible citizens of tomorrow. Moreover, the living standard of people increases by women education as educated women get employment opportunities and they can also contribute in supporting their family financially. Furthermore, she stresses that they no longer have to depend on men and the socio-economic condition of women improves. As a result, gender discrimination is controlled. She continues her ideas education of women can also be helpful in eradicating social evils like dowry problem, unemployment problem etc. Eventually, she says that there should be a collective women voice in order to overcome all types of uphill to women.*

Table No. 6.3: Awareness of Respondents

Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Social awareness	69	28.5
Political awareness	46	19.1
Economic awareness	71	29.3
Other(Health, hygiene)	56	23.1
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Above table shows that 29.3 percent of the respondents have economic awareness, 28.5 percent of the respondent revealed that they have social awareness and 23.1 percent of respondents replied that they have other-awareness i.e. Health, hygiene. Only 19.1 percent are political awareness which is not satisfactory among the women in the study area. Similarly most of the women in the study area who feel it is good for women to participate in politics couldn't say the proper reasons behind that thus it is most for their empowerment, women should have a certain level of political awareness. Political awareness is inevitable among women in order to understand their rights, the issues of equity and equality, inclusion and exclusion ways of safeguarding women's rights and soon.

6.4 Benefit of Women's Involvement in Social Sphere

Involvement in social sphere has contributed significantly in their empowerment. It enables them to face masses, express their viewpoint without hesitations.

Table No. 6.4: Overall Benefit of Respondents

Benefit	Frequency	Percentage
Personality Development	97	40.1
Training	83	34.2
Other(economic status)	62	25.6
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table no. 6.4 represents benefit of women's involvement in social sphere. Among them, 40.1 percent of respondents said that they have personality development

through involving in this, 34.2 percent replied with they got training and 25.6 percent mention other. In other respondents replied that the economic status is little bit higher than the general women in the village. Personally development, training and economic status increases confidence level of a person. So, it plays a vital role to enhance empowerment process.

6.5 Income Sources of Respondents

The main characteristic of economic development is the process towards an increasingly intricate pattern of labor specialization. In communities at the earliest stages of economic activities particularly all goods and services are produced and consumed within the family group, but with economic development more and more people become specialized in particular tasks and the economic autarky of the family group is superseded by the exchange of goods and services (Boserup, 1970).

Here in the study area, the researcher has tried to find the major sources of family income on the basis of occupational specialization. The researcher has categories different occupations to know about the statement of family income.

Case D: *She is 38 years old and has piles of work to do from early morning to till night, she is not free. She has a hectic schedule through-out the day. Life has come to 38 years of age but she has no breathe an air of freedom and relief. She is literate but she has done everything else to enroll their children to go to school. It means that she has known the importance of education. She mainly complained about the drinking habit her husband. He works and does his duty but his drinking habit has overshadowed his positivity. She expressed that she had so many occasions and incidents regarding untouchable with the villagers. Though she added the condition is not like that of previous time but still many reforms are to be made. It is illegal, inhumane and unfair to treat any one in terms of their castes, religion and occupation. She is happy that new rules and regulations and different organizations and institutions working for the welfare of Dalit women are doing good job. It should be appreciated. But still the advantages have not been taken by real victims. She expressed real victims should be identified and co-operated. Gender inequality has intense impact on Dalit community. She points that in upcoming CA and constitution through it, Dalit community should be privileged and abundant access for their presence. She thinks that only two castes are their men and women.*

Table No. 6.5: Income Sources of Respondents

Income Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	86	35.5
Business	41	16.1
Job	30	12.3
Bank interest	23	9.5
Other(daily wages)	62	25.6
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Rural women have different sources of income. According to above table 35.5percent of respondent said they have source of farming, 16.1 percent have business, 12.3 percent have job, 9.5 percent have bank interest and 25.6percent have other sources like daily wages, commercial vegetables selling etc.

6.6 Access and Control over Resources

Access and control over to resources is another significant factor of women's empowerment. When a women gets rights to utilize the resources as per to her interests she definitely utilizes it to fulfill her needs.

Table No. 6.6: Access and Control of Respondents

Access and Control over resources	Frequency	Percentage
Male	123	50.8
Female	119	49.1
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The access and control over resources reflects a common scenario of most of the Nepalese women where they have access to property but no right to utilize it as per their interest. Women contribute more than men in agricultural sector. They produce crops but they have to ask their male counter parts to sell it even to manage the household activities. Similarly, most of Nepalese women wear ornaments like ear ring, nose pin and others. But they have not right to sell or purchase it. They have to

consult to their husband to do so. It clarifies the status of Nepalese women over assets. But women's empowerment has made some positive sign on women's access and control over resources. Above table shows that 50.8 percent replied their resources are controlled by males and 49.1 percent revealed they themselves control their resources. Slight changes can be seen. Good things take more time to change.

6.7 Sustainable Income

 Income is an important factor of women's empowerment because if women have a decent income they do not have to depend to others for financial transactions. In fact, the sill development training has helped some women to manage the daily expenditure of house to pay, children's fee and to manage their own personal expenditure. In this context, the economic empowerment should be focused and a sound environment should be created to make empowerment process effective.

Table No. 6.7: Sustainable Income of Respondent

Sustainable Income	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	61	25.2
Foreign Employment	71	29.3
Teaching	39	16.1
Business	28	11.5
Other(sewing and cutting, pickle making, agar bati making)	43	17.7
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Above table shows that respondents involved in different occupations.25.2 percent were involved farming, 11.5 percent were in business, 29.3 percent were foreign employment. Similarly 16.1 percent were involved in teaching profession and remaining 17.7 were involved in other occupation which includes sewing and cutting, pickle making, agarbati making etc.

6.8 Women in Decision Making Process

Decision has great role enhance the social status. It plays important role in term of people's participation in different activities. In Nepalese society man has dominant

role and female has to support their male counter parts. This part deals with the women's status in term of decision making in different aspects like social, political as well as other activities. It reveals women's participation in decision making activities. Miscellaneous contains property right of women essential of education for female happiness with family and decision capacity as families and different reasons related to women's decision making process.

There is gender disparity in term of decision making process. Improvement in women's decision making power minimizes the gap between males/females status in the society. In many cases females are deprived in decision making process due to low education and economic status in the society. However women play dominate role in decision in female headed households or in nuclear family. This reflects that women are also playing an important role in decision making process. The ability and capacity of females in decision making is affected by various factors as education, occupation, employment status, age factors etc.

Table No. 6.8: Decision Making Process of Respondent

Decision Makers	Frequency	Percentage
Male	153	63.2
Female	47	19.4
Both	42	17.3
Total	242	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Above table shows that among the total respondents 63.2 percent of male are playing a dominant role in decision making process, which only 19.4 percent of female are involved in decision making process. However, there are 17.3 percent of respondent in which decision are made by both males and females. Thus shows dominant in family as well as in society.

CHAPTER: SEVEN

SUMMARY, MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary of the Study

Decision has great role enhance the social status. It plays important role in term of people's participation in different activities. In Nepalese society man has dominant role and female has to support their male counterparts. The research is mainly concerned with women's status in term of decision and policies making in different aspects of household as well as other activities. Women's involvement in all sector is negligible in comparison to men as they lack involvement in economic activities, they don't have their own income and are suppressed by their husbands. The women of poor countries are that majority of population who live with inadequate income which dominates their desire, voice and choices. Women of Nepal, particularly those of village are not involved in economic activities or their involvement is underestimated or not considered at all. The economic and social development of women is not possible without creating employment opportunities and economic self-dependency. Rural women are compressed by different social beliefs, educational discrimination, lack of resources, lack of ownership of property, household violence etc. Therefore, to find out the causes and consequences brought by the women's involvement in decision and policies making women's involvement in decision and policies making process, this topic is chosen for research.

To collect the desire information this research has applied mixed method for data collection. The interview and checklist are used. According to the rural municipality profile of 2021, there are altogether 1340 households. According to statistical table the total number of women of 670 is 242. For this purpose, with the identified respondents, the interview schedule was prepared carefully; instruction of supervisor was included and refined the question in the interview schedule. Both structure and unstructured observation were made from time to time while in field work process. Observation, interview and focus group discussion have yielded qualitative data. The collected data have been arranged manually and analyzed descriptively. Results of quantitative data analysis have been shown by using various tables.

7.2 Major Findings

During the field survey, it has been explored and examined the different aspects regarding the women's involvement in the decision and policies making process at the Madi village-6. The major findings of the study are listed below:

1) The issue of the unequal participation of women in private and public sphere of decision and policies making process is common problem and of particular concern in the pacific region. However women's political participation is a complex one.

2) Gender disparity in household decision making is common in developing countries and ethnicity culture and geographical location also influence decision and policies making processes in rural communities.

3) Women's equal participation with men in power and decision making is part of their fundamental right to participate in political life and at the core of gender equality and women's empowerment. Women have to be active participants in determining development agendas. Women who want to enter politics find that the political, public, cultural and social environment is often unfriendly or even hostile to them.

4) Due to discriminatory laws, institutional and cultural barriers and disproportionate access to quality education, health care and resources, rural women continue to be marginalized in the every aspects of society.

5) Lack of support from family members including spouse for women intending to participate cultural perceptions and attitudes about women like public space is not meant for women, it makes very hard for women to freely involve in the decision and policies making process.

6) During the research, it was also found that the women who manage their own expenses, are more confident and have played an effective role in household affairs specially in decision making process than others women who depend up on others for personal expenses and who have no any source of income. It also shows that skill development training is necessary to empower women.

7) Women are forced to ask her husband before spending their hard earned income. Similarly, the dependency culture for financial transaction is common scenario of the women in the village and also women have to work more than 10 hours a day. They largely remain confined to household chores.

8) Every decision are made by male alone so female's involvement in decision making process is in poor condition which has affected freedom and mobility of women and females have low access to education, employment and in other gainful activities and they have low status in society. There is vast gender disparity in socio-economic status as well as decision making power.

9) Personality development training and involvement outside social sphere, sustainable income, access and control over resources, women's workload, awareness among women involvement in decision making process etc. have been discovered main factors of women empowerment in the study area.

10) Employed women have played dual role as a housewife and a employed women easily. Beside office work they have done their household chores daily and they have also been able to effectively combine their various role as a wife, mother and employee etc.

11) From the study it was clear that majority of respondents had medium level of decision making. The respondents had a feeling that because of their employment, their status had enhanced and though many women employees were not in high decision making post.

12) Social and demographic factors also influence the role of decision making e.g. Small size of children imply higher economic participation and consequently greater decision-making power for women.

13) Education for women is taken an important factor in the matter of decision making process. Educated women are better placed as compared to their illiterate counter parts. Socio-economic status is closely linked with women power of decision making. The employed women have high status and expected to reduce fertility rate, while opposite for those of not employed women.

14) Decision making role is solely confined to household head. This is because of the cultural norms and low level of income.

15) Gender gap is huge in rural areas. Because of cultural stereotypes women are not allowed to study. Poverty is also determined and the circle of lack of economic independence for women is the main barrier to keep them out of the places where decisions are taken.

7.3 Conclusion

As this study is concentrated to analyze the decision and policies making power of women in-terms of social as well as household activities, it can be concluded that females have lower decision making power and they have sub-ordinate role in family power and they have sub-ordinate role in family and in the society. They are deprived from their right and responsibilities. They have low decision and policies making power than their male counterparts. In major household activities, men played a dominant role in decision making. The females who have higher education background and employed have higher decision and policies making power than merely illiterate households. As our country is male dominant, males have superior status in most of the cases and females have to follow them. It can also be concluded that females have low socio-economic status and thus lag behind men in household and social decision making so it is essential to improve their ability and capacity to participate major in decision and policies making process. This study shows that females have to work more in household having less decision making. Though they have responsibilities to complete the work, they got no chance to decide about it. If there is any difficulty to complete the work, they can't decide at the moment, they have to ask for it. It has concluded that majority of the respondents were excluded from decision and policies making in socio-economic aspects as well their political participation community and decision making process. Most of the respondents had heard about their rights which ensured by constitution but in practice they were totally excluded from their basic rights. However it was seen that educated women were more aware about their rights and also participated in social activities income generating activities and decision making process than illiterate women and females have to work more in household having less decision making.

The finding of this study shows that comparatively poor status of women comparing to men in terms of education, health, access in job opportunities, decision-making

process, access and control over resources and females have low decision making power and they are not capable of exercising their right and responsibilities. More or less this situation can be seen in other society and all over the country.

Similarly, government then after failed to address the genuine issue of rural women as a result they were again the victim of marginalization, discrimination, domination, exploitation and so on.

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APPENDIX A: Interview Schedule

Women's Involvement in Decision making at the Local Level in Madi-Municipality

2078

Namaskar! I am a research student of MA sociology at Prithvi Narayan Campus. As a course requirement, I am doing a sociological research on Involvement of women in decision and policies making process at the local level. I would like to ask you some questions related to this topic which is not for professional purpose but it is for the academic purpose only. Your co-operation will be highly appreciable. You can refuse to answer any question at any time of the study. Your information and experience sharing will make my research successful. Whatever information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and not shown to other persons.

Demographic Details

1. Name of respondent (female head member of family):

   …………………………………………….

2. Age: …………………..

3. Sex: M….☐   F

4. Marital status: a) single b) Married c) Divorced d) Separated e) other

5. Religion: ………………………………

6. Level of Education

a) Illiterate   b) literate   c) Primary   d) Secondary   e) Higher Secondary   f) Bachelor or above

7. Do you have children?

a) Yes   b) No

c) If Yes i) 1   ii) 2   iii) 3   iv) above

8. How many members are there in your family?

i) 1   ii) 2   iii) 3   iv) 4   v) above

Social and political factor

9. If married

a) Where is Your Spouse? ....

b) What does he do? ……………………………………..

10. If separated

a) What are the causes? ....

11. If widower / widow

a) How did spouse died? ....

12. Since how long have you been here?

………………………….(put in number)

13. What are you doing here?

i) Business   ii) job   iii) child education   iv) Other

14. Do you feel challenges occur in life while competing with male counterpart in decision and policies making process?

a) Yes   b) No

15. Do you feel you were equally treated among the other male in the society especially in the decision and policies making process?

a) Yes   b) No

16. Do you feel proud or regret to be involved in decision and policies making process at the local level?

a) Yes   b) No

17. Do you think women should take part in every decision making process whether it is personal or social issue?

a) Yes   b) No

18. What changes do you feel after involving in decision and policies making process at the local level?

a) social status ii) Fair Society iii) Better leadership iv) Other

19) What is your plan for?

a) Next 2 years …………………..

b) Next 5 years …………………..

20. Are you feeling Safe being competing with male dominated society?

   a) Financially b) Socially c) Politically d) Physical d) physiologically

21. If you choose where would you want to establish yourself in your community? ………………………………………........

22. Are there any organizations in your locality that are helping you to empower to engage in decision and policies making process at the local level?

a) Yes   No

b) If yes, i) social   ii) Ingo   iii) Ngo   iv)Donner/funded

 v) others…………….

23. Are you involved in any local level user group or committees?

a) Yes   No

b) If yes, i) social club   ii) Tole sudhar samiti   iii) social organization   iv) School / water community forest   v) other

c) What is your position in the user group or communities? …………………

d) What are the activities of the user group or communities? ....

24. Are the members of major political Parties friendlier and helpful to you?

a) Yes/No   b) Rarely   c) Sometimes   d) Often

25. What is your expectation from your party/ government for the uplift (boost) of women at the local level? …..

26. How the local communities are behaving with you?

a) Excitement   b) Joyously   c) Anxiety and Sorrow   d) Fear   e) Anger

27. What are your present pressing needs to empower women? ....

28.What could be your needs for the immediate future for up to 5 years?

……… ………………………..

29. What sort of assistances (exception) do you seek from the government?

....

30. How do people perceive actively involved in decision and policies making women and other women in the community?

a) Equal   b) partiality   c) I don't know d) others

31. When did you enjoy the greatest freedom and respect being involved in decision and policies making process at the local level?

……………………………………………………………………………….

32. What kind of responsibilities do you do while involved in decision and policies making process at the local level?

………………………………………………………………………………

33. What kind of help or support do you get from your local government?

a) Yes   No

b) If yes, specify…………………………..

34. What are the factors affecting women's participation in the decision and policies making process at the local level?

…………………………………………………………………….

35. What are the factors influencing women's participation in the decision and policies making process at the local level?

……………………………………………………………………

Economic Factors

36. What do you do before engaging yourself in community based decision and policies making process?

a) Farming   b) job   c) Business   d) Student   e) other

37. What type of work is carried out at the local level?

    …………………………………………….

38. Have you taken any skill training and vocational education?

a) Yes   No

b) If yes, i) When………..ii) Duration…..iii) Any use or benefit c) yes/No

    if Yes, where…………………………………….

39. How much do you earn monthly?

    a) Below 10000 b) 10000-15000 c) 15000-20000 d) above 20000

40. What are the income sources?

a) Business b) Job c) Bank interest d) Daily wages e) other…………………..

41. How much do you spend monthly?

a) Below 5000 b) 5000-10000 c) 10000-15000 d) above 15000

42. Where do you spend and how much?

a)   Food   and   Accommodation………….   b)   Health   ………c) Education…………………d) Entertainment ………………….e) Other

43. What sort of income generating skill you may need for your future living?

    …………………………………………………………………………………

Health Sector

44. Are you suffering from any disease?

a) Yes   No

b) If yes, specify………………………

45. Do you take any medicine?

a) Yes

b) If yes, specify……………………….

46. Do you have any disability?

a) Yes   No

b) If yes, specify……………………………

47. Do you any assistance as concern your health status?

a) Yes   No

b) If yes, specify…………………………..

48. What kind of difficulties do you face cause of your disability in the society?

…………………………………………………..

APPENDIX: B

<u>**Checklists for KII interview in the study area.**</u>

- What are the government plans that concern for the rural women's empowerment in every sector of society?

- What are the new policies and progress that facilitate economic development and employment of rural women?

- What changes can be seen in the life of women who are actively engage in community based policies making process?

- What are the difference between actively engaged women in decision and policies making process and general women? (Livelihood earning pattern)

- How does Society treat to women who are involved in decision and policies making process?

- If you were in decision making level, what type of local policies would you formulate for the rural women?

- What was the master plan to empower rural women and what perception develop on for the progress of women in local level?

APPENDIX: C

Madi Village