

Chapter – One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study:

According to the 2001 census, Nepal's population is 23.15 million (Central Bureau of Statistics 2003). Because approximately 85 percent of the population is rurally based, Nepal has developed social meaning as a rural nation (Ghimere 1996).

Women in Nepal experience marginalization at social, economic and political levels which impinges on their health, education and legal status. Rural women have an high work load hours per day compared to men. In the context of Nepal, due to conservative tradition, illiteracy, poverty and superstitions, women are considered to be born to serve their husbands without any comments. Our social belief is that women are basically inferior and their labour and efforts are less valuable than that of men. There are various cultural restrictions on women. In Nepal, women are trafficked into prostitution because of individual choices to search out better opportunities in cities, or other countries. They are motivated or compelled due to poverty, discrimination, inequality, and gender-based violence.

Generally the Nepalese women are involved in agricultural sector. Most of them work in their own land. The land-less women work as agricultural labour. Besides that, women have to perform all the household activities.

Urban women have little more opportunities than the rural women to improve themselves in every sector. They are physically and mentally fit to face the problems than that of the rural women. One of the reasons is due to the lack of the education and exposure.

Goals of development activities can not be fully attained without the participation of women. So, we can say men and women are two factors of development as two wheels of a cart. When Nepalese women's status is analyzed in this light, the picture is

generally bleak. In virtually every aspects of life, women were generally subordinate to men.

Women have extensive work loads with dual responsibility for farm and household production. Women's work is getting harder and more time consuming due to ecological degradation. Women contribute considerably to household income through farm and non-farm activities.

In addition to routine domestic work, women play a significant if not a predominant role in agriculture production. One participatory research project found that women do more work in agriculture than men in the high mountain areas, equal to or more than men in the middle hills and slightly less than men in the terai (Sontheimer, Basnyat and Maharjan, 1997). Women, both as participants and decision makers, share the responsibility of planting, transplanting, weeding, harvesting, carrying grains to the mill for grinding, including collecting wood, water and fodder (Axinn, 1977). Women's involvement is very significant in care and management of livestock and poultry, and kitchen gardening. However, they participate differently in hills and terai (Southern plain). In the complex social systems of the hills, women's participation in agriculture further varies tremendously across the social groups (Axinn, 1990). Despite women's important role in agriculture, traditional social norms and customary laws which generally are biased in favour of men, are a barrier to women's equitable access to productive resources. Source: Based on Kumar and Hotchkiss, 1988.

The status of women has been defined in terms of their marital status, and right to ancestral property is fragile, temporary and imperfect. A daughter is not entitle to her paternal property, simple because once married her status will change. Women's relative status, however, varied from one ethnic group to another. The status of women in Tibeto-Nepalese communities generally, was relatively better than that of pahari and Newari women. Women from the low caste groups also enjoyed relatively more autonomy and freedom than Pahari and Newari women.

The senior female member played a commanding role within the family controlling resources, making crucial planting and harvesting decisions, and determining the expenses and budget allocations. Yet women's lives remained centered on their traditional roles, taking care of most household chores, fetching water and animal

fodder, and doing farm work. Their standing in society was mostly contingent on their husbands' and parents' social and economic positions. They had limited access to markets, productive services, education, health care, and local government. Malnutrition and poverty hit women hardest.

Women's earning is substantially lower than men because of the household division of labor which assigns domestic works mostly to women due to lack of awareness. Cultural and social customs also limit female participation to work outside the home. In most rural areas, their employment outside the household generally was limited to planting, weeding, and harvesting. Their contributions are largely unnoticed because their traditional role was taken for granted.

Although the constitution offers women equal educational opportunities, many social, economic, and cultural factors contributed to lower enrollment and higher dropout rates for girls. Illiteracy imposed the greatest hindrance to enhancing equal opportunity and status for women. They were caught in a vicious circle imposed by the patriarchal society. Their lower status hindered their education, and the lack of education, in turn, constricted their status and position. Although the female literacy rate has improved noticeably over the years, the level in the early 1990s fell far short of the male level.

The level of educational attainment among female children of wealthy and educated families was much higher than that among female children of poor families. This class disparity in educational attainment was also true for boys. In Nepal, as in many societies, education was heavily class-biased.

In the early 1990s, a direct correlation existed between the level of education and status. Educated women had access to relatively high-status position in the government and private sectors, and they had a much higher status than uneducated women. This general rule was more applicable at the societal level than at the household level. Within the family, an educated woman did not necessarily hold a higher status than her uneducated counterpart. Also within the family, a woman's status, especially a daughter-in-law's status, was more parental family's wealth and status than anything else.

According to a study by Acharya and Bennett on the status of women in Nepal (1979-81), women spent on the average of 9.91 hours per day in domestic farm as opposed to 5.68 hours for men. The following finding from their study reveals women's economic position and work in Nepal.

- # Rural women's total work burden is high, on the average, women work 10.81 hours per day as compared to 7.51 hours per day for men.
- # Rural women generates more of the total household income than men, 50% of the total income contributed by women, as compared to 44% by men and 6% by children.
- # Women generally do not have legal ownership or legal domination despite their greater contribution to the household economy.
- # Women have little share in the decision making process. Men make the majority of decisions regarding household, finance, distribution of resources, education and health care. Women access to development resources and the participation in the development process is mediated through men.

Women lagged far behind in all spheres of life. It is a well-known phenomenon in the annals of our history that women are facing arduous and complex problems since the time of her birth. Mostly in the rural areas where she is in a very large number, she is struggling hard to maintain and strengthen her status. She is facing the social system of dowry and its demand, violence and crime tantamount to rape of innocent young girls. The role of society and the government is most significant.

Agriculture related employment opportunities are decreased and people are migrated to the cities as well as foreign countries for the employment. National industries are being privatized and people are losing their jobs. Bhrikuti paper Industry and Bansbari Leather Industry are the examples of the privatization. Poor growth in the agricultural sector has resulted in deteriorating living standards in rural areas and an increase in poverty.

Use of chemical pesticides has effects on human health. For example, reproductive systems and nervous systems are affected. Pesticides are easily found in the remote villages too. Women are victims of pesticides. Their cloths are more open and they do

not know about the proper use of the pesticides, because most of the rural women are illiterate and have no or low chance to participate in the training activities.

Women as producers of food and livestock, as well as primary meal makers have an important responsibility to ensure household food security. As primary managers of livestock, women ensure a supply of high quality protein to the country. Rural Women dominate home garden production and thus contribute to improved variety in the family diet. Women's role in fuel collection also has implications for household food security. Nepalese rural women's direct involvement in agricultural production and off-farm tasks contribute to the household food basket.

Livestock, particularly dairy production, is a major source of income for women (APP, 1995) and sale of livestock and livestock products accounts for nearly 55% of total farm family income (Conlin and Falk, 1979). Trading in livestock, especially sheep and goats, and wool and woolen products, is the major livelihood strategy of hill and mountain people in Nepal as food grain production in these regions is inadequate. From the early days, weaving has been a part of daily life in the hills and mountains. People in these regions still produce their own version of rugs known as radi, pakhi, and clothing material known as lukuni (Shrestha, 1990). Women have a central role in such production. Women are also extensively involved in informal trade selling food, vegetables and snacks in roadside stalls and local market. Production credit for rural women has supported women's handicrafts as income generating activities such as rice straw paper making, agro-products and handicrafts.

Nepal is facing various problems due to the Maoist movement since nine years. Men and youths are displaced from the village and women are overburdened in the agricultural activities. Rural people are unable to cultivate the land and fallow lands are increasing. Although His Majesty's Government of Nepal called for peace talk and 5 round peace talk in two phases were held, but the problem could not solved yet. It is difficult to move freely in the rural areas.

1.2 Statement of the Problem:

Due to patriarchal and conservative norms of the society women are still behind men economically and socially. This confines women within the boundaries of the home, which has a great impact on the family and changing social context. Women have been deprived or have less access to education, health services, credit facilities and productive employment opportunities provided by the government. The majorities of women in rural areas are illiterate, unskilled and over-burdened with work.

Consequently, women have before them a whole arena of activities. They can do everything which is not against the healthy conventions of their society. They should educate themselves as far as they can and contribute positively in the society through their intellect, talent and ability. Earning for themselves is certainly not prohibited. They can pursue careers just as men can.

Although the law states that Nepali men and women receive equal rights in practice this is not the case. The future of the rural Women of Nepal is far from bright and promising. The majority of these overworked women are uneducated and under privileged. They lack the self-confidence. They have the pressure of the dowry system and the guilt of being a burden to their family. Decision making in the Nepalese society is done by the male.

The degradation of the environment has already significantly affected women's lives. Continuing deforestation and degrading land fertility further jeopardize the livelihood of households in the community as it increases the daily tasks of women. As deforestation advances and forest products become increasingly scarce, women are the ones who must walk further to collect fuel and fodder, adding hours to their already long work days. Where deforestation is high, time needed to collect one load of fuel wood increase by 75% and less time is allocated to agricultural activities (Kumar and Hotchkiss, 1988).

Development of the country can not be viewed or studied without measuring the socio-economic status of women. It is evident that women's socio-economic status plays the vital role in the development activities of the nation. It will be proper in the context of the national development to include them from labour force and their participation in development activities for overall development of the country as well as for the international goodwill and understanding.

Till today, the women are thought of as ornaments of the house in theory and slaves in practice. In fact, social discrimination on the basis of caste, ethnic and gender difference plays a vital role in maintaining social inequality in Nepal. In all the family structures and social conditions suffer from low economic growth rates, high population growth rates and absence of state intervention in terms of subsidies and distributional policies.

Daughters are treated as a burden to their family, despite the fact that they run the household and work in the fields. Sons, having received education, will be the ones to leave the village to find work, often leaving wives to raise the family. The rural women have little or no self-confidence and do not consider themselves on par with men. The village women's life is nothing more than that of a servant or a possession of the family. They do not appear to know the value of their individual lives.

By offering education and skill training we hope to encourage the development of self-supportive, independent, decision-making women. Perhaps with knowledge, skills and confidence in themselves, these women will be able to bring about real change in the way women are viewed and treated in this society.

The present study will be guided by the following problems:

Women's conditions are poor and exploited.

Passive participation of women exists in household decision making in rural areas.

Rural women should perform household activities along with the agricultural activities.

There is no employment opportunity in the rural areas.

The level of sanitation is low.

The health status is low and the extent of malnutrition among women and children is high.

The productivity is low.

Decision making in the society is done by male. Women are involved heavily in agricultural production.

The degradation of the environment affects women's lives

There is a disparity between male and female literacy.

This study tends to outline the various aspects of gender equalities and discriminations between men and women.

1.3 Objective of the Study:

The general objective of the study is to investigate the role of women of Dharmasthali Village Development Committee. Following are the specific objectives:

- 1) To analyze the socio-economic conditions of the women in the study area.
- 2) To assess the status of women in rural household.
- 3) To assess and examine the level of awareness of women.
- 4) To examine the role of women in agriculture.

1.4 Rationale of the study:

This study is quite important from the view of contribution to the Nepalese society, the planners and the organization focusing on the status of women and developing new measure to uplift their life style.

The researcher's and academicians will be benefited from the study of socio-economic status of women and can go in depth of the problem.

It is supposed that this study would be representative of the study related to this area.

1.5 Organization of the study:

This study is organized into following chapters:

Chapter one includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study and rational of the study.

Chapter two encloses the literature review and third chapter describes the methodology utilized for the study.

Chapter four highlights the general introduction of the study area and analysis of the survey data.

The final chapter presents the summary, findings, conclusions and recommendations. Bibliography and annexes has been attached after the last chapter.

Chapter – Three

Research Methodology

This chapter deals with the research methodology of the present study.

3.1 Research Design:

The present study was specially designed to describe the socio-economic condition of the rural women. In this study, descriptive as well as exploratory research design was applied to describe the findings of the study.

3.2 Nature and Source of Data:

This study was based on the primary and the secondary data. The primary data was collected through questionnaire and observation, the secondary data was collected from the Village Development Committee, Central Bureau of Statistics, Population Census and relevant literature review from the library.

3.3 Sampling Procedure:

This study has been carried out in ward no. 2 of Darmasthali Village Development Committee of Kathmandu district. The sample size was determined on the basis of households population of the study area and the list of households of the area was obtained from the office of Village Development Committee (VDC). One household woman was considered as a unit analysis. There were 78 households in ward no 2. 38 households were selected by using the random sampling which represents the total population of the ward fairly.

3.4 Data Collection Techniques:

3.4.1 Household Survey:

The primary data was collected / gathered by the household survey using the structured questionnaire. The household survey was conducted in 38 households. Through survey the information about age, sex, education attainment, occupation, and family size and the like was collected.

Tool:

The structured questionnaire was the tools used in this household survey. The questionnaire included the questions about the believe on ritual & religion of women, preference of family structure, opinion towards female education, discrimination in access to health, education & employment, women age at the time of marriage, marriage within the caste or inter-caste. It comprised the questions relating to the role and status of women, types of work engaged in, the primary source of income and the participation of women in politics. In additional to it, the structured questionnaire contained the awareness of women in regards to balance diets, sanitation, health and politics and the facilities utilized by the women in the study area.

3.4.2 Key Informant Interview

Local people who had sound knowledge about the local area and resources, school teachers, educated people, leaders, village headman and the old age people was consulted for the broader information. These people were considered as the key informants.

Tool

The tool used was the Key Informants interview schedule (KII Schedule). The schedule here consists of the life patterns and daily activities of the women in the study area. The key informants were asked about the opinion towards female education, discrimination in access to health, education, employment and other areas. Apart from it, the elderly citizen gave their view on role and status of women and the level of awareness of women in the society.

3.4.3 Observation:

Relevant information in regards to status of women in the village was gathered by observing the study area.

Tool

The checklist is the tool that was used during the observation. Through the observation, it gives the information regarding the presence of the health post and its services, the availability of clean drinking water, facilities in regards to education i.e. schools and their life styles. The checklist consist of the services of the health post, availability of drinking water, utilization of electricity in various sources, levels of school and the transportation facilities etc.

3.5 Analysis of Data:

The collected data was analyzed in descriptive method as well as statistical way by using simple statistical method such as tables and percentage etc. The information collected / gathered through interview, questionnaire is transformed into quantitative data sheet and necessary tabulation was done. Qualitative Information like decision making of women etc is in the descriptive way.

3.6 Limitation of the Study:

This study has the following limitations:

1. This study is based on small sample size of Dharmasthali VDC of Kathmandu district, thus the finding may not be generalized to the national level.
2. This study is conducted to fulfill the partial requirement of M.A. Rural Development. Therefore, large area could not be incorporated in the study because of time and the resources. And it does not include all the aspects of gender relations as this study examines gender relation of some selected household.

UNDP
GDP
VDC
NGO
INGO

Chapter – Four

Data Presentation and analysis

4.1 Introduction of the Study Area

The total area of Dharmasthali, which is situated to the north of Kathmandu is 3.69 square kilometers. It is situated 550 meters above the sea level.

The population of Dharmasthali VDC is 4914 consists of 2507 male and 2407 female. There are 9 wards in the Dharmasthali VDC. The population of ward no 9 is 906, which is the highest population and the least populated ward is the ward no 1. There are 767 households in the Dharmasthali VDC, where ward no 1 has the highest no of household (127 households) and ward no 9 has the lowest no of households (60 households).

The study area, ward no 2 has the moderate no of population in comparison to other wards. The population of ward no 2 is 490 where 246 are male and 244 are female. There are 78 households in the Ward no 2.

The ward wise population and no of households are given below.

Table: 1
Ward wise Population:

Ward No.	Male	Female	Total	No. of House Hold
1	194	208	402	127
2	246	244	490	78
3	450	456	906	117
4	293	231	524	58
5	340	359	699	108
6	271	289	560	69
7	213	192	405	62
8	243	210	453	88

9	257	218	475	60
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Source- VDC Office-2062

The population in this VDC belongs to different age groups. The table below states that the highest population holding ward is 9 where 21-44 yrs age group are more in number (398) and ward no 1, the least populated ward also has the 21-44 yrs age group in more number (154).

In the study area (ward no 2), the age group 21-41 yrs comprises the highest number of population and the lowest is the age group 45-49 yrs (33).

Table: 2
Age Structure

Ward No.	Below 15 yrs	16-20 yrs	21-44 yrs	45-49 yrs	50 above	Total Population
1	129	45	154	25	49	402
2	146	65	185	33	61	490
3	269	75	398	57	107	906
4	135	70	205	41	73	524
5	238	95	178	77	111	699
6	144	47	244	38	87	560
7	143	30	145	20	67	405
8	118	44	169	48	74	453
9	140	137	105	26	67	475

Source- VDC Office-2062

Majority of the people are Hindu by religion. The Shrestha and Maharjan constitute the majority of the population in the study area. The Newari people speak Newari language in the house but Nepali language is also widely spoken in the study area.

Majority of the economic activities are based on the agricultural activities. Agriculture is the major occupation of the people living in the Dharmasthali VDC.

In Dharmasthali VDC there are two primary schools and three secondary schools where the local students go for schooling. It has one health post for the primary treatment.

Majority of the people preferred to live in the nuclear family than in the joint family. The joint family was more common in the past but still some are living in the joint family.

4.2 Age Group

The sample women were distributed into five major age groups, each with the range of eight years. Women below 18 years are not included in this study because of the fact that the women below 18 years are considered as immature and they will be easily influenced by the others.

Table: 3
Distribution by age group

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	4	11
26-33	14	37
34-41	12	32
42-49	4	11
50 over	4	11
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Table 3 shows that, of the total 38 sample respondents, the highest percentage of the respondent were 26-33 age group (37%), followed by 34-41 age group (32%) and the age group 18-25, 42-49 & 50 above comprise the least percentage of respondents (11 %).

All the respondents were married.

4.3 Educational Status

In my survey, it is observed that 53 percent women are literate where as 47 percent women are illiterate. This shows that they were aware about the education and its advantages. Table: 4 illustrates the fact that the women could read and write. Thus from the below findings we can conclude that majority of the women in the society are very much conscious about the education and can further guide their children to the path of education.

Table: 4
Distribution by Educational Status

Educational Status	Frequency	Percentage
Literate	20	53
Illiterate	18	47
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

4.4 Believe on Rituals and Religions

When asked during the survey about believe on ritual & religion, 100% of the respondents gave the affirmative answer. The findings support to the facts that the rituals and religions has a wide impact on their daily activities and they solely believe on their norms and values of the religion. All the respondents stated that they have faith and believe on ritual and religion. From the informal talk with the respondents it is found that they are closely interrelated with the religion. The women day begins and ends with the name of god and their blessings. They are very much traditional in terms of the religion.

4.5 Family Structure

The nuclear family has always been the primary family form; the joint family was more common in the past than it is today. Table: 5 shows that 79% of the respondents preferred nuclear family and 21% of the total respondents liked to live in the joint family.

Table: 5
Distribution by Family Structure

Family Structure	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear Family	30	79
Joint Family	8	21
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

The women preference in regards to joint and nuclear family had their own respective explanations. Nuclear families today are able to get services from the other institutions, such as from various government, organizations, non-government organization, colleges and schools, which make them less dependent on joint families' member. With the low earning it is quite easy to fulfill the needs of the member. On contrary to the nuclear family, women stated that they get help from all the members in joint family both economically & socially.

4.6 Opinion towards Female Education

About the opinion towards female education majority respondents (table: 6) 87 percent said there should be equal education between male and female and 8 percent said that there should be higher education than male where as 5 percent said the it should be less than male.

The table: 6 show that the opinion towards the education of female is high. This means that the women are aware of the education factor than that of the old days and have realized the importance of the education.

Table: 6
Opinion towards Female Education

Opinion	Number	Percentage
Should be higher than male	3	8
Should be equal	33	87
Less than male	2	5
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

When asked about sending the children to school, majority (95%) of the respondents said that they send their children to school which means they have understood that education is the door to innovative ideas and actions and only minority (5%) did not send their children to school (table: 7).

Table: 7
Send Children to School

Send children to school	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	36	95
No	2	5
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

The senior people of the village said that the women are very much aware about the education in terms of both boys and girls. Further they added there should be equal opportunities. The findings of the survey in this regards truly agree to the fact that women are aware as said by the senior people.

4.7 Reasons of Discrimination in access to Health, Education, Employment and other areas

Women are more exploited and get less access in terms of health, education, employment & other areas. In the survey area 89 percent of the total respondents said that the reason behind the discrimination is due to the patriarchal society, followed by lack of strong plan & policies of the government (8%) and 3 percent said it is because of the superstitious beliefs & attitude (table: 8).

Table: 8

Reason of Discrimination in access to Health, Education, Employment & other areas

Discrimination faced by women	Frequency	Percentage
Patriarchal Society	34	89
Superstitious beliefs & attitude	1	3
Lack of strong plan & policies of the government	3	8
Others	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

As stated by the senior people during the informal meetings, women in the society are discriminated and dominated by the male in access to health, education and employment. Despite increase in awareness and consciousness of women within the society, they are not given equal opportunities due to the patriarchal society, superstitious beliefs & attitudes and weak plan and policies of the government. The above statement is supported by the findings of the study.

4.8 Age at Marriage

The table: 9 prevails that 92% of the female are married at the age group of 16-25, 5% are married in the early age of 9-15 yrs and 3% above 26 yrs. In comparison to female only 66% of the male are married at the age group of 16-25 where as 34% are married above 26 yrs. This shows that women are married in early age by their parents without the secured future for themselves.

Table: 9

Age at Marriage

Sex	9-15 yrs	Percentage	16-25 yrs	Percentage	26 above	Percentage
Male	0	0	25	66	13	34
Female	2	5	35	92	1	3

Source – Field Survey-2063

In the study area, the table below prove that inter caste marriage has been some what practiced. 34% of the women said that they got married to the inter caste family where as majority 66% of them said within their caste (table: 10).

Table: 10

Marriage within Caste & Inter caste

Marriage	Frequency	Percentage
Caste	25	66
Inter caste	13	34
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

From the above table it can be concluded that women in the study area are married in the earlier age without having the secured future. Due to the various family problems and the patriarchal society forced the parents to marry their daughter in the earlier age even though they are bit conscious about the future. The women of the study area strongly forwarded their view in regards to marriage within the caste. But still few of them agreed to the fact there should be no biasness & discrimination attitude in terms of caste and marriage. They further added girls should have the rights to choose their husband may it be within their caste or inter caste. But the senior people had the different opinion; they said that we the people of the society should follow the norms and value of our religion.

4.9 Role and Status of women

The role and status of women in the society is confined within the household although the constitution offers the good and respectable role and status.

In the survey area, out of 38 respondents 82% of the women said that their role and status is confined within the household, they remain as the housewife doing the

household works and 18% of the respondents said that they are dominated by the male (table:11).

Table: 11
Role and Status of Women

Role & Status	Frequency	Percentage
Dominated by male	7	18
Socially, Politically & Economically backward	0	0
Housewife	31	82
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

The secretary of VDC and the local people urged that there are no any employment opportunity in the VDC for the women, therefore the female of the society remain as the house wife taking care of the household activities and are dominated by the male. Few of the senior citizens pointed out the status and role of the women in the study area are socially, politically & economically backward which do not match in the survey conducted. As 82% of the women said the role & status of the women is housewife and 18% of them agreed they are dominated by male.

And the table: 12 shows that the area is dominated by the male as 84% of the women said male is the head of the family where as 16% of the female are only the head of the family.

Table: 12
Head of the Family

Head of Family	Frequency	Percentage
Male	32	84
Female	6	16
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

The above findings strongly supports to the facts that the study area is no longer free from the male domination where male is the head of the family. Thus it can be

concluded that the society is the Patriarchal Society where women's role and status are confined with the household activities.

4.10 Sources of Drinking Water, Energy and Fuels for Cooking Concerning to Women

The source of energy is the electricity and the source of drinking water is the tap water in the survey area. It is found from the survey that all the 38 respondents used the energy and tap water as the sources of electricity and drinking water. This proves that there were good facilities in terms of drinking water and energy, as 100% of the women stated they used tap water and electricity as sources of drinking water and energy. From the observation it is found the women in the society were very aware of safe drinking water.

The survey shows that majority (68%) of the respondents used firewood as the sources of cooking, which means women prefer firewood because of the wide spread availability of woods and it saves money. Only 18% of the women used LP gas and 13% of the women used kerosene as the source of cooking (table: 13).

Table: 13
Fuels used for Cooking

Fuels	Frequency	Percentage
Fire woods	26	68
Kerosene	5	13
L P gas	7	18
Cow dung	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Due to the low earning and income of the family, the women in the house could not afford modern facilities available in the market which would decrease their work load and make their life easy. Therefore majority of the respondents preferred fire woods rather than other facilities available.

4.11 Exposure to Mass Media

The accessibility to mass media brought the huge difference in the daily life and in the thoughts of the women. This exposure brought the big change in the life style of rural women. Out of the total 38 respondents, 63 percent of the respondents said that they are exposed to TV, 16 percent of the respondents told that they exposed to the radio and 21 percent of them stated that they are listen to radio, newspaper and TV(table:14).

Table: 14
Exposure to Mass Media

Exposure to mass media	Frequency	Percentage
Newspaper	0	0
Radio	6	16
TV	24	63
All the above	8	21
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

There was a similarity between the respondents and the senior citizens in regards to the exposure of the mass media, both of them stated TV was widely used as the source of entertainment & news.

4.12 Consciousness and Awareness

82% of the total respondents urged that they were aware and conscious about the balance diet, family planning & sanitation where as 18% of them were not conscious about it. The table below shows that the awareness level of the respondents in the survey area is very high. This helps them to make a better life.

Table: 15
Conscious about the Balance Diet, Family planning & Sanitation

Conscious	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	31	82

No	7	18
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

It has been found from the observation that the women kept the surrounding clean and during the informal talk with the respondents they stated that they used the pit toilet which supports that the women are very conscious about the sanitation. The respondent's families were small in number, which suggests that the women used the family planning facilities. Over all the women in the society were knowledgeable about the current issue relating the health, balance diet and others.

The women in the study area is very much aware about their health and its importance, as 58% of the women consult the doctor during their ill health where as still 39% of them consulted the traditional medicine practioner and minority (3%) attended the village health worker (table: 16).

Table: 16
Attended during the Ill Period

Attended during Ill period	Frequency	Percentage
Doctor	22	58
Village health worker	1	3
Traditional medicine practioner	15	39
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

4.13 Types of Work and Source of Income

The type of work engaged in indicates that majority of households depends on agriculture. Agriculture is the important source for the livelihood for the majority of the respondents. Table: 17 presents 79 percent of the respondents are engaged in their won agricultural activities where as 21 percent are engaged in wage/salary.

Table: 17
Types of work

Type of work	Frequency	Percentage
Own agricultural activity	30	79
Wage/salary earning	8	21

Own non-agricultural activity	0	0
Do not do any economic work	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Table: 18
Primary Source of Income

Primary source of Income	Frequency	Percentage
Agriculture	28	74
Service (Gov. / Non- Gov).	8	21
Business	2	5
Others	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Majority of the respondents are engaged in the agricultural activity, which indicates that the primary sources of income is the agriculture, table: 18 indicates that agriculture is the primary source of income for 74% of the respondents where as for 21% of the respondents the primary source of income is service(Gov/Non-Gov).

The above findings suggest that majority of women are engaged in their own agriculture activities where they do not get any wages for the labour and work. By engaging in their own agricultural activities they save the money. It further gives the conclusion about the women being dominated by the male and women are not employed in the services. The primary source of income is the agriculture for the majority of the women.

4.14 Economically Dependent upon the Family Member

Despite of being engaged in their own agricultural activity, business, wage/salary & service, the women of the study area are heavily dependent upon the family member. Table: 19 presents that 76% of them are largely economically dependent upon the family member where as 24% of them are independent.

Table: 19
Economically Dependent upon the Family Member

Economically	Frequency	Percentage
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independent upon your family member		
Dependent	29	76
Independent	9	24
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Although the women participate and engage themselves in other areas for the income but still they have to depend upon their counterpart because of the low and even unpaid salary.

4.15 Legal Provision for Reservation of seats for Women

When asked about the reservation of seat for women in terms of education, employment, health and political sectors, 97% of the total respondents responded positive and only 3% of them answered negatively (table: 20).

Table: 20
Legal Provision for Reservation of seat for women

Provision of seats	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	37	97
No	1	3
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

From the view point of the senior citizens and the women it is found that a strong legal provision for reservation of seats for women should be made. Further they added there should be the strong, legal initiation taken by the government sector.

Table: 21
Women Participation in Politics

Participate in politics	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	4	11
No	34	89
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Women should participate in politics as they can address women needs and problems in the government effectively and strongly. But the women of the study area strongly

asserts to the fact that women should not participate in politics. There was a huge difference in their view in this regards, majority 89% of the respondents said no where as 11% of the total respondents agreed on women participations in the politics (table: 21).

Table: 22
Reason not participating in Politics

Participate in politics	Frequency	Percentage
Variation in political ethics	1	3
Patriarchal society	3	8
Lack of political awareness	34	89
Abuse	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

The reason of women not participating in the politics is due to the lack of political awareness in the society among the women. 89% of the total respondents agreed to this fact where as 8% and 3% of them respectively said it's due to the patriarchal society & variation in political ethics (table: 22).

The woman of the study area told that low facilities provided in terms of education is the main reason of not participating in the politics. Some of them stated that over work load and patriarchal society deprived them from participating in the politics. Unless both male and female are treated equally by the society it is very hard to exercise the power and services of politics.

4.16 No of Livestock

Livestock has always been one of the most important and an integral part of the agriculture economy of Nepal. Animal rearing and farming practices functions together as they are the inter-related and interdependent. Table: 23 indicates that goat constitute 45%, the largest percentage among the other livestock reared by the respondents followed by cow, chicken & ox 32%, 18% & 5% respectively.

Table: 23
No. of Livestock

Animal	Total	Percentage
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Cow	12	32
Ox	2	5
Goat	17	45
Pig	0	0
Chicken	7	18
Others	0	0

Source – Field Survey-2063

4.17 Involvement in work and Decision Making

Table: 24
Distribution of work

Work	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage
Ploughing	29	76	0	0
Field preparation	29	76	9	24
Seed	28	74	14	37
Sheding	26	68	23	61
Weeding	24	63	34	89
Harvesting	21	55	36	95
Storing	18	47	36	95
Baby Care	18	47	36	95
Cooking	12	32	36	95
Fetching water	8	21	38	100
Collecting fire woods	0	0	38	100
Cleaning Utensils	0	0	38	100
washing clothes	0	0	38	100
Religious work	15	39	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

At home women are busy rearing, caring babies, cooking fetching water, collecting fire woods, cleaning utensils and washing clothes. Apart from the daily house works they are busy in agricultural activities like seasonal planting and harvesting etc. The table: 24 indicate the agricultural activities are dominated by the male where as female also plays the important role in the agricultural activities. Additional to it above table: 24 suggests that both male and female share the agricultural activities according to the types of work.

Table: 25

Selection of Preservation of seeds

Preservation of seeds	Frequency	Percentage
Male	30	79
Female	8	21
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Table: 25 & 26 indicate that male has dominated female in selection of preservation of seeds & making decision. 79% of the male takes the decision in selection of preservation of seeds & making decision where as 21% female take the charge in selection of preservation of seeds & making decision within the household and external activities (table: 25 & 26).

Table: 26
Decision Making

Decision making	Frequency	Percentage
Male	30	79
Female	8	21
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Like wise, it the male who holds the position in making the decision may it either be household or external activities. Holding power in making decision is the result of the Patriarchal society. The women are not able to utilize the power in making decision. Their views and suggestion are ignored.

4.18 Women Inferiority & their Labour less Valuable

Despite of laborious and intensive workload in the daily activities women remain inferior to male and are not respected & valued in the society. The reason of women inferiority & their labour regarded less valuable is due to the illiteracy, conservative tradition & poverty, which is supported by the 74%, 11% & 16% of the total respondents respectively in the survey area (table: 27).

Table: 27
Reason of women inferiority & their labour less valuable

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Conservative tradition	4	11
Illiteracy	28	74
Poverty	6	16
Superstitious	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

No matter how educated the women are, still they have low status than their uneducated counter part. The reason behind this is the patriarchal society, and the social & cultural norms of the society, which is supported by table: 28. Majority (82%) of the women said that it is due to the patriarchal society and 5 percent stated it's due to the social & cultural norms of the society where as 13% of the women agreed that the low status of educated women than the counter part male is due to both patriarchal and social & cultural norms of the society.

Table: 28
Reasons of Lower Status of Educated women than Uneducated Husband

Reason of lower Status	Frequency	Percentage
Patriarchal society	31	82
Social & cultural norms	2	5
Both	5	13
Others	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Both the senior citizens and the respondent women agreed about the low salary and their work are less valuable than the male. Apart from this, it can be concluded that women are inferior to the male and it's always the patriarchal society that has been the barrier for the women improvement in regards to having the quality life style.

Out of 38 respondents, 97% of the respondents stated the reason behind the extensive work load is because of the responsibilities for households and 3% agreed to the fact it is due to responsibilities for farm, households and ecological degradation (table: 29).

Table: 29
Reason of Extensive work load

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Responsibilities for	0	0

farms		
Responsibilities for households	37	97
Ecological degradation	0	0
All the above	1	3
Others	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

Unlike the urban women the rural women are not in a position to solve the problem physical and mentally. The women are not in a position to sort the problem because they are physically & mentally not fit. The reason behind this is supported by the table: 30, where 92% of them said because of the lack of education they are physically & mentally not fit, on the other hand 8% of the respondents stated that it's lack of both education and exposure women are not fit to solve tproblems.

Table: 30
Women physically & mentally not fit to face the problems

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of education	35	92
Lack of exposures	0	0
Both	3	8
Others	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

From the above survey, it can be stated that the education is that instrumental factor that can modify the life style of women. Therefore immediate steps is required for educating the women and provide them with vocational training so that they can overcome the over-work load by engaging themselves in the gainful works which results in increasing the income of the family.

4.19 Degradation of the Environment

In the survey area out of 38 respondents all the respondents agreed to the fact that the degradation of the environment affects women's lives. This means that the women in the study area were aware about the effects on their lives by the degradation of the environment.

Majority of respondents (89%) agreed that degradation of the environment increases the work load of women. On the other hand 5% of the respondents said that the degradation of the environment results in the low earning, additional to it 5% of them agreed that degradation of the environment results in increase in work load and low earnings (table: 31) .

Table: 31
Effects on women’s lives by degradation of the Environment

Effects	Frequency	Percentage
Increase in work load	34	89
Decrease in agricultural & livestock production	0	0
Low earning	2	5
All the above	2	5
Others	0	0
Total	38	100

Source – Field Survey-2063

4.20 Improvement of Women’s Role and Status

For the improvement of women’s role and status the respondents gave the following opinion and view.

- Help from the family member and the male counterpart.
- There should not be discrimination between son and daughter.
- Economic problem should be solved.
- Self dependent, there should not be over burden of work to women only.
- Provide vocational and job oriented training.
- Equal opportunity in every aspect for both male and female in the society.

Chapter – Five

SUMMARY OF THE FINDING, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

Women are disadvantaged politically, legally, socially and economically.

To empower women is to give them the skills and knowledge necessary to help them take advantage of the many opportunities available to them to improve their lives. Providing women with education, job training and basic services to ease household responsibilities are ways to empower women.

The main objective of this study was to find out the socio-economic status of women in Dharmasthali VDC ward no 1 in Kathmandu district. The study has been carried out in 38 households. To select the respondents random sampling technique was used. The study is based primarily on the information collected during the field survey in the study area by administering questionnaire, interview and observations.

Agriculture is the important source for the livelihood for the majority of the respondents, along with the agricultural activity the women of the study area are also engaged in the wage/salary works for the earning. The economic contribution of women was substantial, but largely unnoticed because their traditional role was taken for granted. Their employment outside the household generally was limited to planting, weeding, and harvesting.

5.2 Findings

The objective wise findings of the study are summarized as follows.

1. It is found from the study that the inter caste marriage has been accepted in the society. 34% of the women said that they got married to the inter caste family where as majority 66% of them said within their caste. Nuclear family has been dominantly preferred rather than the joint family. Usually joint family has been the choice of the illiterate women.

2. The literacy rates of women are 53 percent. Even though they are literate it's the male dominated societies. 47 percent of the total respondents are illiterate in the study area. The reason of women inferior & their labour regarded less valuable is due to the illiteracy, conservative tradition & poverty, which is supported by the 74%, 11% & 16% of the total respondents respectively in the survey area.
3. The study prevails that majority (87 %) of women said that the education of women should be equal to men and 95% of the respondents send their children to school which means that they do not have bias attitude towards son and daughter in terms of education and are aware about the importance of education. But it still indicates and proves that it's patriarchal society where in the male is very powerful and female are dominated no matter how educated the female is in the family, they are more exploited and get less access in terms of health, education, employment & other areas.
4. All the household activities like Baby care, cooking, fetching water, collecting fire woods, cleaning utensils, washing clothes are performed by female, 95%, 95%, 100%, 100%, 100%, 100% the women are actively involved in the household activities respectively and 79% of the women are also actively involved in the agricultural activity, 21% of the women are involved in wage/salary which means the major source of income is the agriculture in the society. It is found that the respondents who are actively engaged in the agricultural activity also engaged in wage/salary for the increase in income. Despite of being engaged in their own agricultural activity, business, wage/salary & service, the women of the study area are heavily dependent upon the family member. It is found that women have been the instrumental factor both in household and agricultural activities even though they are less respected and has low socio-economic status. Majority (76 %) of the women are economically dependent in the family member. Apart from it, the role and status of women are very much confined within the household activities as house wives. The study shows that female shares the activities along with the male counter part. Women are neglected while making the decision may it be either household activities or external affairs. Only 21% of the

- total respondents were responsible for making the decision in the house and in selection of preservation of seeds.
5. The role and status of women are dominated by male and are housewives who are politically, socially and economically backwards.
 6. The level of awareness in terms of sanitation, balance diet and family planning is 82%, which means the level of awareness is high in the society. The exposures to mass media made it possible to the certain extent. 97 % of them told that there should be legal provision made for the reservation of seats for women in the education, employment, health and political sectors. But the majority (89%) of the women in the study area stated that women should not participate in the politics and the low reason for the participation is due to the lack of political awareness.
 7. 100% of the women used the electricity and tap water as the sources of energy & drinking water which suggest that they are using the basic infrastructure facilities. 68% of the women used fire woods for cooking, which suggested that fire woods are widely utilized as the sources of fuels for cooking because of the wide spread availability of fire woods which saves money.
 8. Degradation of the environment increases the work load of the women. The extensive work load is due to the responsibilities of the household and agricultural activities.
 9. Women of the study area suggested that education as the instrumental factor for the improvement of the role and status of women in the society; it's the education that prevents the women from solving the problems physically and mentally.

5.2 Conclusion

Position of women in general was of subordinate type in the Nepalese social structure. Within the family, an educated woman did not necessarily hold a higher status than her uneducated counterpart.

This study shows that women work harder than that of male. The educated women preferred nuclear family where as uneducated women preferred joint family.

Nepalese culture is rooted in discrimination which is based on religion. The overall status of women is much lower as compared to their male counterparts.

The women is lacking behind despite of exposure and access to basic infrastructural facilities in the sector of mass media, transportation, health and sanitation because of illiteracy.

Women's lives remained centered on their traditional roles--taking care of most household chores, fetching water and animal fodder, and doing farm works.

The socio-economic status of women is very low in the study area, they are dominated by male and are inferior to male because of the patriarchal society and lack of education where the exposure is must.

5.4 Recommendation

There is an urgent need for women to be in the decision-making bodies in large numbers to improve the overall status of women in our society. Below are the lists of recommendations.

-) Provide women with education, job training and basic services to ease household responsibilities. These are ways to empower women.
-) Practice public speaking. Practicing public speaking is one way to give women confidence to speak their minds and contribute to conversations and decision-making within and outside the household.
-) Women should be encouraged to participate in the external activities of the society so that they can improve other women's lives and the lives of children.
-) The government , INGO and NGOs needs implement the awareness program which encourage girl children to go to school, improve the laws to increase women's rights, encourage women to speak for the rights and provide women with micro-credit to start their own businesses.

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Interview Questionnaire:

Date:

Name of Respondents:

VDC:

Ward No:

Village:

Age:

Sex:

Religion:

Marital Status: Married/Unmarried

Educational Status:

1. Do you believe on rituals and religion?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

2. Which family structure do you prefer?
 - a) Joint family
 - b) Nuclear family

3. What is your opinion towards female education?
 - a) Should be higher than male
 - b) Should be equal
 - c) Less than male

4. Why are women facing discrimination in access to health, education, employment and other area?
 - a) Patriarchal Society
 - b) Superstitious beliefs and attitude
 - c) Lack of strong plan and policies of the government
 - d) Others

5. What was your age at marriage?

Sex	9-15 yrs	16-25 yrs	26 above
Male			

Female			
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6. Is your marriage within your?
 - a. Caste
 - b. Inter caste
7. Do you send your children to school?
 - c. Yes
 - d. No
8. What are the role & status of women?
 - a) Dominated by male
 - b) Socially, politically & economically backward
 - e. Housewife
9. Head of the family.
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
10. Sources of drinking water.
 - a) Tap water
 - b) Hand pump
 - c) River or stream
 - d) Spout water
 - e) Others
11. Sources of energy.
 - a) Bio - mass
 - b) Electricity
 - c) Micro-hydro power
 - d) Solar energy
 - e) Others
12. Fuels used for cooking.
 - a) Fire woods
 - b) Kerosene
 - c) L P gas
 - d) Cow dung
 - e) Others
13. Exposure to mass media.
 - a) Newspaper

- b) Radio
 - c) TV
 - d) All the above
14. Are you conscious about balance diet, family planning, sanitations?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
15. Who attended you during the ill period?
- a) Doctor
 - b) Village health worker
 - c) Traditional medicine practioner
16. What type of work do you usually do?
- a) Own agricultural activity
 - b) Wage / salary earning
 - c) Own non-agricultural activity
 - d) Do not do any economic work
17. What is the primary source of income in your family?
- a) Agriculture
 - b) Service (Government/Non government)
 - c) Business
 - d) Others
18. Are you economically independent upon your family member?
- a) Dependent
 - b) Independent
19. Should legal provision be made for reservation of seats for women in education, employment, health and political sectors?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
20. Should women participate in politics?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
21. If no, why?

- a) Variation in political ethics
- b) Patriarchal society
- c) Lack of political awareness
- d) Abuse
- e) Others

22. How much live stock do you have in your home?

S.No.	Animal	Total
1	Cow	
2	Ox	
3	Goat	
4	Pig	
5	Chicken	
6	Others	

23. Who are involved in the following activities?

S.No.	Work	Male	Female
1	Ploughing		
2	Field preparation		
3	Seed		
4	Sheding		
5	Weeding		
6	Harvesting		
7	Storing		
8	Baby Care		
9	Cooking		
10	Fetching water		
11	Collecting fire woods		
12	Cleaning Utensils		
13	washing clothes		
14	Religious work		

24. Who is responsible for making decision in the house, may it be either house holds activities or external affairs?

- a) Male

- b) Female
25. Who is responsible for selection of preservation of the seeds?
- a) Male
 - b) Female
26. Why are women basically inferior and their labour and effort less value able than that of men?
- a. Conservative tradition
 - b. Illiteracy
 - c. Poverty
 - d. Superstitions
 - e. Others
27. Why rural women are not physically and mentally fit to face the problems as compared to the urban women?
- a. Lack of education
 - b. Lack of exposures
 - c. Both
 - d. Others
28. What is the reason of extensive work load?
- a. Responsibilities for farms
 - b. Responsibilities for households
 - c. Ecological degradation
 - d. All the above
 - e. Others
29. Does degradation of the environment effects women's lives?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
30. If yes, how?
- a. Increase in work loads
 - b. Decrease in agricultural & livestock productions
 - c. Low earnings
 - d. All the above
 - e. Others

31. Why does the educated women do not hold the higher status than the uneducated husband?
- a. Patriarchal society
 - b. Social and cultural norms
 - c. Both
 - d. Others
32. What should be done for the improvement of women's role & status in the society?