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SUNITA ARYAL

STATUS OF KUMAL WOMEN

STATUS OF KUMAL WOMEN

(A CASE STUDY OF KUNDUR VILLAGE OF GORKHA DISTRICT)



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SUNITA ARYAL

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HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY
KRITIPUR, KATHMANDU, NEPAL

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

It is certified that Miss. Sunita Aryal has completed her dissertation on the topic “**Status of Kumal Women**” under my guidance and supervision. I, therefore, recommend this dissertation for final approval and acceptance.

Miss. Milly Joshi

Central Department of
Sociology/Anthropology

Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur,

Kathmandu, Nepal.

Date:.....

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY
KRITIPUR, KATHMANDU, NEPAL

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

The thesis entitled on the topic “**Status of Kumal Women**” a case study of Kundur village of Gorkha district prepared by Miss. Sunita has been accepted as partial fulfillment for the requirement of the degree of Master of Arts in sociology.

Dissertation Committee

Supervisor

.....

External Examiner

.....

Head of the Department

.....

Date:.....

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Status is multidimensional concept and measurement of status involves complicated exercise in grading and judgment (Acharya, 1981).

According to United Nations (1975), status of Women may be defined as to “what do Women, compared with men have access to knowledge, to economic resources and political power”. The word ‘status’ has variously been defined by different dictionaries. For the development of the nation men and Women both are important since Women play significant role for the development of the country. Women are backward in different spheres like education, Political, economic and social spheres. They are exploited and dominated in many ways by males.

In context of Nepal, due to conservative tradition, illiteracy, poverty and superstition, women are considered to be born to serve her husband smoothly without comment. Our social myth is that Women are basically inferior and their labor and efforts are less valuable than men. There are many cultural rustications to Women (Acharya, Bennett, 1981).

Literacy and educational qualification are the vital indicators of Women’s social status. There are not only crucial factors for availing of employment opportunities created by process of modernization but also for communication with the outside world as with increasing educated males within the household (Acharya,1995).

The role of Women has great importance in terms of socio-economic development. It will be certainly difficult to achieve sustainable development without full participation of Women. But, the status of Women in Nepal is in miserable condition. Most of the research works reveal that different aspects of living standard of Women as poor. Though the level of living standard of Women has been in increase day per day but the situation is not satisfactory (Thapa, 2002).

Women in Nepal as in other underdeveloped countries not only have been physically, socially, and economically weak but also they are fully deprived of the decent scripture

religious traditions and other social and cultural practices of rituals science of the immemorial. Overall several studies have found that in the course of time, women have lost their higher prestigious position in comparison to men in the context of Nepal (Tamang, 2000).

Complex society like Nepalese society with a multiplicity of religious and cultural tradition and a variety in family structure does not easily permit us to generalize the status of Women in Nepal such as but it can be stated without reservation that Nepali Women from the communities high in the Himalayan region are exploited and oppressed (Subedi, 1993).

The word *Kumal* in the Nepali language denotes a person who is engaged in manufacturing clay pots as an occupation. Some scholars have considered the *Kumals* as one of the 'tribal' peoples although more recently, they have been listed under the *adivasi janjati* category. Although *Kumals* are to be found in different parts of Nepal, their place of origin has not yet been confirmed. Their settlements are generally located in river basins and plains of lower hills and inner Terai of the country. Differentiating basically on the basis of geographic regions in which they are found today, they are recognized as *Madeshi Kumal* (i.e. those living in Madesh or the plains), *Newar Kumal* (mainly in Kathmandu valley) and *Pahade Kumal* (those from Hills) (Bhurtel and Chhetri, 2006).

Kumal is one of the approved castes among 59 indigenous groups of Nepal, which has been assigned as marginalized indigenous people. They are mostly found in the western part of Nepal, especially in *Nawalparasi, Arghakhnchi, Gorkha, Tanahun*, and *Palpa* district. According to census of 2058 B.S, the population of *Kumal* community is 99,389. Among which male are 48,883 and female are 20,507. Though, agriculture is the main occupation of this caste, now has been involved in business and other professions as well. The important traditional skill is they making clay pots (Nepal *Kumal* women organization, 2003).

Thus, this study was mainly conducted to identify status of *Kumal* Women in *Kumal* community of *Gorkha* district.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

It is known to all that the domestic work load of rural house wife is higher than that of their counterpart. She has to work easily all the household unpaid work. In the other words, they are working nearly, 15-16 hours a day, which mainly includes fetching water, collecting fuel wood, cleaning the house, preparing food besides doing farm work (UNICEF,1996).

Virtually, in every aspect of life, Women are generally subordinate to men. For this a rapid progress in building the Women's capabilities and in closing the gender gaps in those capabilities is necessary. But no society still today do women enjoy the same opportunities as men. There are general patterns of inequality in man and Women Persist-in their education, health, nutrition and even more in their participation in economic, decision making and political sphere (Rajbaidya, 2004).

Women's relative status varies from one ethnic group to another. Generally, the status of Women in Tibito- Nepalese communities is relatively better than that of pahari or *Newari* Women. Women from low caste group also enjoy relatively more autonomy and freedom than that of *pahari* and *Newari* Women (Acharya, Beentt 1995).

Generally, *Kumal* societies are backward as compared to other community/society of Gorkha District. They have low status and weak performance in role and position as compared to male counterparts. Similarly *Kumal* Women have no access in power, policy making, decision making level, higher level government post and authorities. They are mostly limited within household activities considered as unproductive.

Urban and Rural societies have the great variations in ethnicity, situations and statuses of Women. Generally, situations have been a bit changed in the context of urban areas. The situation is different in different caste groups or even within a single ethnic group. Hereby, Women status also differs in accordance with their caste structure.

Generally, this study attempts to explicate *Kumal* Women's social and economic status in the study area. Moreover, this study attempts to answer the following research question pertinent to *Kumal* Women at *Kundur* village of *Gorkha* District.

- What is the social and economic status of *Kumal* Women?
- What is the *Kumal* Women's position in decision making process within the household?

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective:

- The overall objective of study is to know the status of Women among the *Kumal* community of *Kundur* village of *Gorkha* district.

1.3.2 Specific objectives:

- To analyze the status of *Kumal* Women in the study area viz., social, economic, educational, marital, health, occupational etc.
- To examine the Women's position in households decision making process.

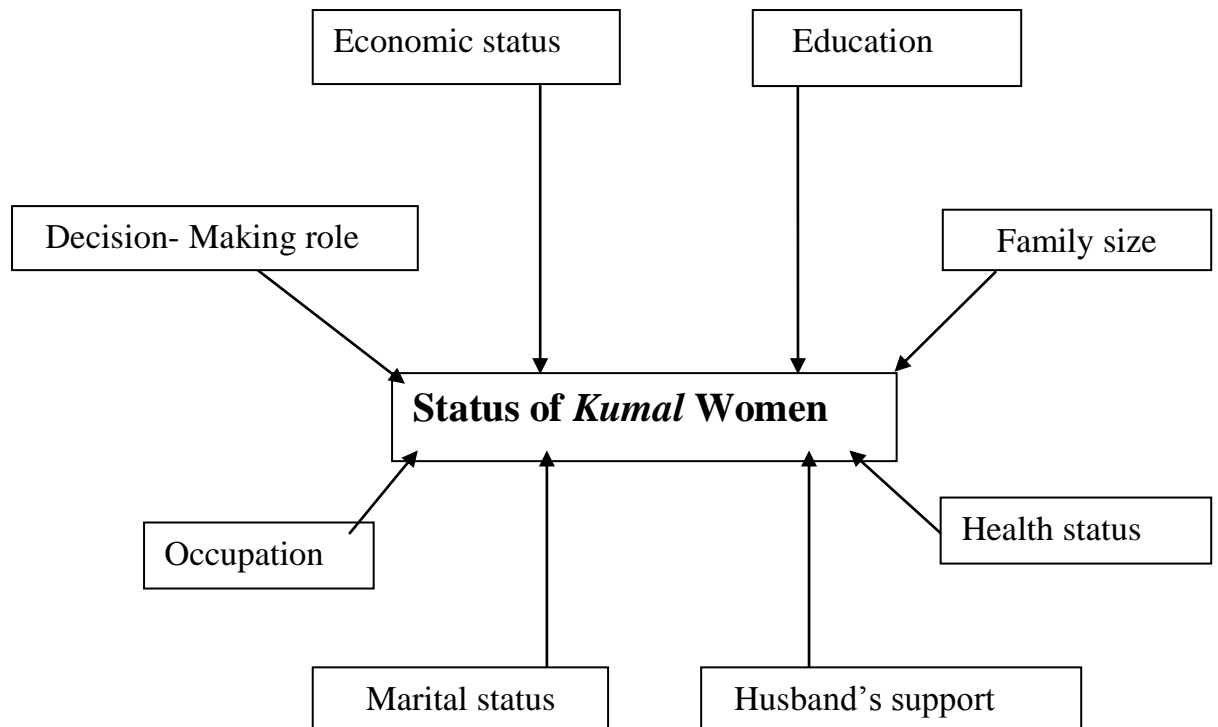
1.4 Significance of the study

Gender inequality is a typical characteristic of Nepalese society. In Nepal, Gender discrimination is burning issue and has been increasing day by day. Various researchers have found many different roles and status between male and female. *Kumal* women are under disadvantage group having the chronic problem of gender discrimination because of illiteracy and ignorance. Since, the beginning of *Kumal* civilization they had their own type of living style and gender role which were not changed yet. So, it is necessary to know the situation, role, position and promotion of *Kumal* Women in this changing condition.

This research might have great meaning in understanding the status of *Kumal* women since no research has been conducted so far about this subject in this study area. The research may be useful for the students who have keen interest to learn about the status of Women in *Kumal* community.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

This study is related to status of *Kumal* women in Kundur village of Gorkha district. This study found out the actual status of *Kumal* women in this *Kumal* community. The study following conceptual framework are formed.



The status of Women is dependent on different variable. So, *Kumal* women's status is related with these factors such as economic condition, occupation, husband's support, education, family type, health, marital status, age and decision-making role with this study. These factors are affecting on *Kumal* women status. It is also important to change the status of Women. Thus, this study is focused on the above-mentioned variables.

1.6 Definition of the key terms

Widow	: Husband has died.
Household head	: The chief of the family (may be male or female).
Status	: Role as being prestige to the person who performs them.
Employment	: Involved in active income field.
Illiterate	: Not capable to write and read.
Literate	: Capable to write and read.
Higher education	: Up to S.L.C. and above.
Patriarchy	: Family system in which authority is vested in male.
Status of women	: All the existing aspects in women's life such as social, economic, cultural, religious, health, education and women's role in household and decision-making.
Nuclear family	: A family structures consisting of adult parents and their dependent children.

CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Status of Women in Nepal.

This section has discussed mainly the past studies related to the Women's situation, status and role in the society.

Gender issues including Women's right is very significant because Women suffer from domination, exploitation, suppression, oppression, subordination and discrimination by their male counterpart (Bhattachan, 2001).

2.1.1 Women and General Social Status.

The social status of Women in Nepal is generally low, a situation attributable to the general poverty of the country and the gender-based distribution of power and resources in the family and society.

The birth of a baby boy brings prestige, identity and dignity to a mother and family in the Nepalese society, baby boy is welcome by celebrity and rejoicing at the occasion. There is a saying that "let it be late but it be son".

Nepali Women are daughters, wives and mothers, but are not recognized as individual with their own identity despite the fact they are as human as men. Society has relegated Women to the lowest rank and to a submissive role, confined to the home and farm and their responsibilities there due to a maternal function. They are discouraged and prevented to take part in public life (Subedi, 1993).

Society maintains that the husband is the wife's god and her only duty is the wife's appease him. The patriarchal family pattern continues, and the prevalent social system require Women be both protected and controlled by their male counterparts (Bennett, 1979).

The social status of Women and their access to resource varied widely depending the culture group they belonged to. Generally, Women belonging to Tibeto-Burman cultural groups had considerably greater freedom in matter such as choice as marriage

and in selection of economic activities they wished to pursue as compared to their sister belonging to the indo-Aryan cultural group (Acharya, 1994).

Traditionally Women's responsibilities have been restricted to the home, cooking, cleaning, and child rearing, and looking after the house. Women are considered to be weak, vulnerable and dependent on men (Gurung, 1999).

In *Kirati, Magar, Tamag, Sherpa*, and other hill/mountain cultural groups, there are no such restrictions imposed on Women. There is freedom of courtship, singing, dancing, walking, etc, before marriage. The cultural status of their Women is high; generally, these Women play a prominent role in the question of marriage, divorce, and remarriage (Ghimire, 1977).

In the context of Nepal all researcher found that there are many differences between male and female's general social status, In the case of *Kumal* community *Kumal* Women status also different. In *Kumal* community generally *Kumal* Women are not dominated by male as like Brahmin, Chettries and Women. This study in totality has tried to study socio-economic status of women of *kundur* village.

2.1.2 Educational Status of Women

Education is the most important factor for the development of human personality as well as for the development of a nation. As Women make half of country's population education of Women is very important and it should receive top priority in the context of development of modern Nepal.

Ghimire (1997) has further emphasized on the importance of female education. To educate a boy is to educate an individual but to educate a girl is to educate the whole family and society. Education is therefore essential for Women and girls to become self dependent, or productive, skilful, creative and to recognize their right place in the society and to enter the mainstream of the development of the nation.

"Fewer people are willing to send girls to school and among those who do send girls to school there is very few who want as much education for the girls as for boys"(Acharya,1982). Acharya says that the number of girls sending to school seems very low and on the other hand girl's education particularly family doesn't accept in higher level in our society we always think those daughters are other family members so family ignores their education.

More than 90% of the Nepalese population lives in the rural areas. Improvement in the educational status in these areas is not an easy task. Due to various cultural, social and economical factors, Nepalese Women are not able to take advantage of equal educational opportunities as their male counterparts (Subedi, 1991).

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

2.1.3 Economic Status of Women

The economy of Nepal is totally dependent on agriculture production. Women play a significant role as they actively participate in various agriculture activities. Besides the heavy load of household work, Women are equally participating in agricultural activities.

The higher the economic condition higher is the tendency of household to keep Women within household sphere. The poorer the farmer Women are the greater their role in subsistence farming. This is especially true in orthodox Hindu families. Gender based agricultural work and resources are the function of the social classes with greater autonomy to poorer Women. Women of poor economic status work longer hours per day and more days per year (Ashby, 1981).

Aleem (1996) has analyzed that the status of Women is intimately connected with their economic position which in true sense, depends upon rights, roles and opportunities for their participation in economic activities. The economic status of Women is now accepted as indicator of a society's stage of development. However, all developments do not result in improving Women's economic activities. Patterns of Women's activities are affected by prevailing social ideology and differ according to the stage of economic development.

Acharya (1998) has emphasized the daily chores of family life in rural Nepal involve Women in labor intensive farm work and time consuming domestic work to provide fuel water and food for household members and farm workers. The census definition of economy activity in theory takes into account wage labor in cash or kind, as well as

unpaid family labor. It does not however encompass activities such as water and fuel collection, food processing and child care, all of which are primarily the responsibility of Women. These activities that falls outside the formal economic, but which are essential for the survival of the household, absorb the labor of those Women who are reported as 'economically' active and classified as home-makers and dependent.

Throughout Nepal land inheritance is patrilineal. Married Women are given rights over land and property sufficient for their support during their lifetime but never ownership (Acharya and Bennett, 1981).

This study has attempted to see whether *Kumal* Women of *Kundur* village have ownership of family property or not.

2.1.4 Women and Health

Women's health is a societal issue. Improving Women's health and well being improves not only their own life but also those of their children and contributes to improvement of household and community welfare.

The Nepalese Women's health is in miserable condition in the sense that they are quite neglected from their very childhood state.

Acharya (1995) mentions about the main role of Women as a mother and says that infant and child mortality rates are important indicators of Women's status. This is because while, the one hand, infant and child mortality reflects social attitudes towards males and female children, on the other hand, they throw light on the situation of Women as mothers. A comparatively higher female infant and child mortality rate signifies social neglect of female, infants and children. At the same time, a high infant and child mortality force Women to multiple and wasted pregnancies, this depleting their strength.

The health condition of rural Women is very pathetic, as they have to get busy in agriculture, fetching firewood and drinking water, they are always over burdened with work, it is recommended medically that in last phase of pregnancy three month before delivery takes place a Women should not be involved in physically strenuous work but in Nepal, a pregnant Women keeps on working even up to the last day of delivery (Majupuria, 1996).

“In Nepalese village Women and girl illness were less recognized in relation to men and boy illness. This led to Women and girls receiving less medical care than men and boys (Bhadra, 1997).

2.1.5 Women and Decision Making

Women’s decision making power associated with the economic strata. Women with high economic strength have higher decision maker power than Women belonging to lower economic strata in house. The economic, demographic and social factors directly and indirectly affect on the decision making process of Women. The Women’s involvement in the market economy gives them greater power in term of household decision making in important matters. Women who are educated and involved in outside jobs have greater power to make decisions in the house. On the other hand confinement of Women to the domestic and substance sectors automatically implies a low status conferred to them in terms of decision making power (Acharya, and Bennett, 1982).

Generally Women have only access to resources but the actual control lies with men. Land, for example, is entirely controlled by men while Women work on it, similarly, health care is accessible to all but men are the principal decision makers and determine and control any health care services required (Gurung,1999).

Sharma (2054) states that the Women have little role in family’s decision-making due to their illiteracy and non-involvement in direct income generating works. Nepal is male dominated country where Women’s decision-making authority comes only after the men’s.

Decision making is also influenced by ethnicity. We find variation in different communities. Women’s decision-making power is relatively high in *Raj Gurung* and *Matuwali* communities than in Brahmin and *Chettri* (Acharya and Bennett, 1983).

It has been found that the weaker the Hindu value, the stronger is power in both time use and decision patterns. In other to groups Women decide what to do and who is to go where (Acharya and Bennett, 1981).

Acharya and Bennett, (1981) in their report study stated that in the developing countries like Nepal Women’s role in economic development is considered insignificant. Women’s role is considered to be that of nurturing while men’s role is

perceived as that of breadwinner. Time allocation and decision-making studies show that Women have major role both in managing the agriculture and production process and in providing the labor.

2.1.6 Martial Status

Marriage is the single most important event in the life of a woman since, in most societies, that still offers the only respected carrier opening for her. That event decides all her life options and subsequent livelihood. Marital options, i.e. the Women say in deciding to get married or not, to whom and where are important indicators of her social status. According to the Hindu tradition marriage is a most of all, whither man or Women. While man's life is in considered complete without a wife, a woman has no option but to get married. Hence, in Nepal the overwhelming majority of both man and Women are married before they are 25 year old (Acharya, 1995).

Again, Acharya (1997) has also emphasized that, marriage is important to deal in detail with marital status, because it is through marriage that Women change from the daughter to that of daughter-in-law.

MOPE (2002) has mentioned the marriage takes place at an early age and it is almost universal in Nepal. Early and marriage practice leads to long term social and economic consequences including higher fertility. The early age of marriage also adversely affects mother's death.

2.1.7 Occupational status

Acharya (1979) has analyzed employment brings financial independence which could enhance Women's status in the family as one of the main decision makers in the household once they earn the respect and the money they could pursue their own interest to a greater extent than in a purely patriarchal family.

Occupationally, more than 81 percent of the total economically active population was engaged in farming and related occupation in 1991 (CBS, 1991). Occupationally, Women lag behind to men in the group of administrative and technical and professional workers (Acharya, 1994).

The above literatures are very informative and successful in providing information about the general status of Women in Nepal. It has of course helped to study socio-economic status of *Kumal* Women.

2.2 Theories Related to Gender

The term “Gender” is used to describe a set of qualities and behavior expected from men and Women by their societies. A person’s social identity is formed by these expectations. These expectations stem from the idea that certain qualities, behavior, characteristics, need and roles are ‘natural ‘for Women. Gender is not biological-girl and boys are not born knowing how they should look, dress, speak, behave think or react. Their “gendered” masculine and feminine identities are constructed through the process of socialization, which prepares them for the social roles they are expected to play. These social roles and expectations differ from culture to culture and at different periods in history (www.swayam.info).

A. Theory of gender difference

The gender difference perspective tries to answer the question “what about the Women”, by examining how Women’s location in and experience of social situations differ from men’s, (Ritzer, 2000:450). Cultural feminists look to the different values associated with womanhood and femininity (e.g. caring, Cooperation, and pacifism) as a reason why men and Women experience the social world differently. Other feminist theories believe that the different roles assigned to Women and men within institutions better explain gender difference, including the sexual division of labor in the house hold. Existential and phenomenological feminists focus on how Women have been marginalized and defined as ‘other’ in patriarchal societies Women are thus seen as objects and are denied the opportunity for-realization. The theory of gender difference takes here three main forms.

a. Biological Explanation

Some sociologists and anthropologists argue that the biological difference between men and Women is sufficient to explain the basic gender difference in all societies. Murdock, 1983 sees biological difference between men and Women as the basis of sexual division of labor in societies. He suggests that biological difference, such as the greater physical strength of men and the fact that Women bear children, lead to gender roles out of sheer practicality. Sociologist and feminist Alice Rossi has linked the different biological functions of males and females to different patterns of hormonally determined development over the life cycle and this development, in turn to sex-specific variation in such traits as sensitivity to light and sound and to

difference in left and right brain connection. The sociologists, who explain biology as a cause of difference between men and Women, justified the fact that males remain in the most powerful position as the natural out-come of biological differences.

b. Cultural feminism

Sociologists argue that human behavior is largely directed and determined by culture that is the learned recipes for behavior shared by member of society. Thus, norms, values and roles are culturally determined and socially transmitted. From this point of view gender roles are a product of culture rather than biology. Individuals learn their respective male and female roles.

Ann Oakley comes down strongly on the side of culture as the determinant of gender roles she quotes “Not only is the division of labor by sex not universal but there is no reason why it should be. Human cultures are diverse and endlessly variable. They owe their creation to human inventiveness rather than invincible biological forces.

Otrner also claims that” It is not biology as such that ascribes Women to their status in society but the way in which every culture defines and evaluates female biology. Thus, if this universal evolution changed, than the basis for female subordination would be removed”. Cultural feminism commends the positive aspects of what is seen as the female character of famine personality. It is also a feminist theory of difference that praises the positive aspects of Women.

Different cultural values attached with men and Women



Different social status for men and Women

c. Institutional Explanation

Institutional explanation states that gender difference result from the different role the Women and men come to play with in various institutional settings. A major determinant of difference is seen to be the sexual division of labor that links Women to the function of wife, mother and household worker to the private sphere of the home and family, and thus to a lifelong series of events and experience very difference from those of men. Socialization theories look at the ways that the children

in particular are prepared for playing these various life roles according to a gendered script (Gilligan 1992, Martin 1998; Sidel 1990).

Difference in roles played by men and Women within Different institutional setting



Difference in life experience, situation of Women from men



Difference in social status toward men and Women

B. Theory of Gender Inequality

Theory of gender inequality states that Women's location in most situations is not only different but Gender-inequality theories look to answer the question "what about the Women?" by recognizing that Women's location in and experience of, social situations are not only different but also unequal to men. Liberal feminists argue that Women have the same capacity as men for moral reasoning and agency, but that patriarchy. Particularly the sexist patterning of the division of labor, has historically denied Women the opportunity to express and practice this reasoning. Women have been isolated to the private sphere of the household and, thus, left without a voice in the public sphere. Even after Women enter the public sphere, they are still expected to manage the private sphere and take care of household duties and child rearing. Liberal feminists point out that marriage is a site of gender inequality and that Women do not benefit from being married as men do. Indeed, married

Women have higher levels of stress than unmarried Women and married men. According to liberal feminists, the sexual division of labor in both the public and private spheres needs to be altered in order for Women to achieve equality (Ritzer, 2000:450).

a. Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminism, also known as "main stream feminism", hopes to assert the equality of men and Women through political and legal reform. It is an individualistic form of feminism and theory, which focuses on Women's ability to show and maintain their equality through their own action and choices. Liberal feminism looks at the personal interaction of man and Women as the starting ground from which to transform society

into a more gender-equitable place. According to liberal feminists, all Women are capable of asserting their ability to achieve therefore it is possible for change to happen without altering the structure of society.” Liberal feminism argues that Women may claim equality with men on the basis of an essential human capacity for reasoned moral agency that gender inequality is the result of a patriarchal and sexist patterning of the division of labor and that gender equality can be produce by transforming the division of labor through the re-patterning of key institutions law, family education and media”, (Ritzer, 200:454).

Patriarchal and sexist patterning of division of labor



Existing inequality between Women and men



Inequality in social status of Women and men



Inequality in social attitude toward Women and men

b. Marxist Feminism

Marxist feminism suggests that the inferior position of woman is linked to a class based capitalistic system and the family structure within such a system. It states that capitalism which gives rise to economic inequality, dependence, political confusion and ultimately unhealthy social relation between men and Women is the root of Women’s oppression.

Engel states that female subordination is a result of the emergence of private property, particular the private ownership of the forces of production. He further states that. “Monogamy arose out of the concentration of considerable wealth in the hands of one person-that of a man and out of the desire to bequeath this wealth to this man’s children and to no one else’s. Men needed control over Women to ensure the ‘undisputed paternity’ of their offspring and heirs Male dominated monogamous marriage, which involved the economic dependence of the wife upon her husband provided this control.”

Control of male on forces of production



Dependency of female upon male



Inferior social status of female than that of male

C. Theory of gender oppression

Theory of gender oppression states that Women's inferior situation is the result of a direct power relationship. Theories of gender oppression go further than theories of gender difference and gender inequality by arguing that not only are Women different from or unequal to men, but that they are actively oppressed, subordinated, and even abused by men. Power is the key variable in two main theories of gender oppression: psychoanalytic feminism and radical feminism. Psychoanalytic feminists attempt to explain power relations between men and Women by reformulating Freud's theories of the subconscious and unconscious, human emotions, and childhood development. They feel that conscious calculation cannot fully explain the production and reproduction of patriarchy. For example, the unconscious fear that men have towards their own mortality may account for why men are driven to control Women. Radical feminists argue that being a woman is a positive thing in and of itself, but that this is not acknowledged in patriarchal societies where Women are oppressed. They identify physical violence as being at the base of patriarchy, but they think that patriarchy can be defeated if Women come recognize their own value and strength, establish a sisterhood of trust with other Women, confront oppression critically, and form female separatist networks in the private and public spheres.

D. Theory of structural oppression

Structural oppression theories posit that Women's oppression and inequality are a result of capitalism, patriarchy, and racism. Socialist feminism combines Marxian class analysis with feminist social protest in an attempt to answer the question "what about the Women?" they agree with Marx and Engels that the working class is exploited as a consequence of the capitalist mode of production, but they seek to explain oppression and inequality across a variety of variables, including class, gender, race, ethnicity, and age, they make the important insight that not all Women experiences oppression in the same way. White Women and black Women for example, face different forms of discrimination in the workplace. Thus, different

groups of Women come to view the work through a shared standpoint of “heterogeneous commonality”.

The above paragraphs made the review the literature on the status of Women in different aspects. This study also focused on the same aspects which directly or indirectly affects the status of Women.

2.3 History of *Kumal*

Bista (1997) focused in majority of different ethnic groups but did not give a separate for the *Kumals*. He had included that the *Kumal* inhabit in Terai, inner Terai and close to river valley of Mid-hill of Nepal where Danuwar, Majhi, Darai etc are inhabitant. Traditionally, *Kumal* are the potters by occupation.

(Gautam, and Thapa (1994), have also contributed short descriptive cultural information about the *Kumals* of Nepal. This work is not based on fieldwork. They have used secondary data and generalized the *Kumal* culture. Although their work is focused on *Kumals* culture due to ecological influence, the *Kumals* inhabit in different regions of the country. For example *Kumal* of Palpa District speaks *Kumal* language but *Kumals* of *Gorkha* district speak both *Kumal* and Nepali language. They have forgotten their language due to the lack of practice in daily life (Gautam, and Thapa, 1994).

Kumals are found in large numbers in the districts of Dolkha, Dhading, Sankhuwasabha, Palpa and Parbat. The *Kumals*, found in the Terai, Inner Terai and the outskirts of hills, are regarded as one of the ancient indigenous peoples/nationalities of Nepal. They are scattered in various areas of Jhapa, Morang, Sankhuwashabha, Dolakha, Dhading, Chitwan, Nawalparasi, Palpa, *Gorkha*, Lamjung, Parbat, Tanahu, Syangja, Gulmi, Arghakhachi, Kapilbastu, Rupandehi and Dang Deukhuri districts. In most of the cases they have settlements of clusters at one place. The name, *Kumal*, according to experts, was derived from the Sanskrit word, 'Kumbhakar'. The *Kumals* of Mongoloid stock resemble Tharu, Danuwar, Darai, Majhi and Bote in physical structure. The traditional occupation of *Kumals* is making of clay pots. Nowadays, they have become dependent on agriculture and animal husbandry. They relish pork and buffalo. Since majority of the families do not own land enough for their livelihood, they cultivate others' land to earn their living. The *Kumals* seek assistance from the *Dhami* and *Jhakries* shamans. They either bury their dead or consign them to the flow of the rivers. According to Census 2001, their population is 99,389 (NEFIN, 2005).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Selection of Study Area

This study was carried out in a small village of *Gorkha* district located in ward no 11 of *Gorkha* Municipality. The researcher was interested to select *Kumal* community of *Kundur* village because it is the core area to know the indigenous tribe of *Kumal*. In addition to that, *Kumal* is one of the major inhabitants of the country who have been living since long time by preserving their own indigenous history.

In comparison to other place *kundur* village is the ancient historical place to know the *kumal* tradition and cultural. It can reflect the whole *kumal* community of district. It is densely populated and clumped settlement with the majority of *kumal* peoples. In this regard few number of sampling can represent the adequate information.

Among the *Kumal* people the researcher was interested to make the study of *Kumal* Women because in comparison to the *Kumal* men, *Kumal* Women do have their own customs, traditions and socio-economic institutions which have been shaping their status. Therefore, the study was suitable for the researcher to find out the answers which were raised in the course of study i.e. to analyze the socio-economic status of *Kumal* Women.

Furthermore, at the time of case study the researcher has selected different Women who have been involving in different status in the family. This was the fertile place to the researcher to find out the Women's position in decision making process within the households.

3.2 Research Design

The present study was based on the descriptive study. Descriptive research design helped the researcher to identify overall status of the *Kumal* Women and to find out the Women's position in decision making process. Such a study helps in clarifying concepts and establishing priorities for further research. Since the research is on status of *Kumal* Women, it mainly focuses to get the information about the condition of

Kumal Women. Hereby this study has descriptive research design in order to collect detail and adequate information about *Kumal* Women.

3.3 Sources and Nature of Data

Both primary and secondary sources of data are used in the study. By primary data, we imply the first hand data collected directly by the researcher from the respondents. The sources of primary data in the study are the *Kumal* Women themselves as they could provide the information accurately about how their lifestyle, and condition of Women in their societies. Secondary data were collected from the related published/unpublished documents, articles, books, reports; materials obtained via internet relevant to *Kumal* Women.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The study is based upon qualitative method. The qualitative method allows knowing and understanding of kumal attributes attitudes or behavior and the reason that govern their own behavior. Qualitative research categorizes data into patterns as primary basis for organizing and reporting results. For the purpose of studying status of *Kumal* Women it is necessary to study in more intensive manner.

As this study aims to provide deeper insights into the research problem, it is essential that only respondents that can provide the in depth information are selected i.e., only those Women who are related to the research objective. On the basis of purposive and convenience sampling methods, Out of 45 households, the study has chosen ten cases of *Kumal* Women with different occupational and educational background; those are living currently in *Kundur* village of *Gorkha* District.

Purposive sampling method is based upon researcher's judgment for sample selection. Baker (1999) defines purposive sampling as "a form of non probability sample in which the subjects selected seem to meet the study's need". Here the researcher has selected the purposive sampling method on account of her acquaintance with the respondents (*Kumal* Women).

3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

As the research is qualitative in nature, data is collected by applying case study approach and by the use of key informant.

3.5.1 Case Study

Case study is the method that “takes as its subject a single or a few selected examples of a social entity- such as communities, social groups employer’s events, life histories, families work teams, roles or relationships and employs a variety of methods to study them” (Marshall, 2004). “Case study method provides a systematic way of looking at events, collecting data, analyzing information and reporting the result. As a result the researcher may gain a sharpened understanding of why the instance happened as it did, and what might become important to look at more extensively in future research” (Flyvbjerg,2006). In this method, the researcher studies the particularity and complexity of a single case coming to understand its activities within important circumstances. The researcher has chosen case study method in order to obtain more intensive and qualitative information to know the overall status of *Kumal Women*.

3.5.2. Key Informant Interview

Understanding a particular case is greatly facilitated by finding an informant. An informant may be someone who knows a lot about the case and is willing to chat. It may be other family members within a joint family, relatives, friends, neighbors and so on who can provide information and help to get a better insight. The main objective of the key informant is to analyze positive as well as negative social status of *Kumal Women*. The information given by informant can also be use for cross checking the information given by the respondent.

Information gathered from the key informant was based on the questions related to the issue of the research. However, the questions were of structured and unstructured type, therefore questions were asked according to the situation and the key informant. The information gathered from the key informant included information throughout the same question prepared for respondents, he/she observed by oneself and the information that respondent shared with the key informants. By the help of key

informant researcher tried to understand the status of *Kumal* Women, position in decision making process.

3.6 Mode of Data Analysis

As this study is purely qualitative in nature the data collected have been presented in the form of word, images, and impressions, which represent real events or reality as it is seen symbolically or sociologically. As data generated from case study are qualitative nature. The thematic analyses of the cases were done according the need of the study.

3.7 Limitation of the study

As no study is free from shortcomings and also from limitations, this study may not be an exceptional. It is quite difficult to cover all *Kumal* community. So the prime limitation is demarcated by the selection of certain area with certain Women. So this may not be generalized to all the *Kumal* family. This study did not analyze or explore all the aspects of women's status. The study only analyzed or explored the socio-economic, ownership of the property, health, educational status, marital status of *Kumal* women. There are other variable such legal status, social crimes, trafficking, domestic violence in which can be done.

Ignorance and high illiteracy compelled them to suspense for some information regarding the question. High believe on superstition made them to hesitate the answering the sensitive question so, it limits the case study to go in depth for some extent. Similarly, the study is completed in a small scale with limitation of time and finance due to the student. This may not represent to *Kumal* Women's status all over the country.

3.8 Research Experience

Researcher selected the topic 'Status of *Kumal* Women' by dint of having keen interest in the issues of women especially that of *Kumal* community of *Kundur* village of *Gorkha*. To begin with, the researcher decided to start her research study as regarded to her scheduled time within the households and outside the households. Because of close acquaintance and familiarity with the respondent's environment and culture and traditions rendered by the researcher's belonging to the same village,

researcher however found it convenient to conduct research study with the *Kumal* women of *Kundur* village. During the course of interviewing the initial respondents, 5/6 *Kumal* women gathered with great excitement and enthusiasm to see what was actually happening and being interviewed. This added more to the conveniences for the researcher to build rapport with those *Kumal* women concurrently.

However, at times researcher did have tough time dealing with some respondent regarding questions dealing with their private affairs for instance, familial relationships. In the beginning they couldn't open up since they were not used to sharing their personal lives with outsiders besides their kith and kins. However, the gradual acquaintance and the growing closeness with the researcher made them easy to open up later. Thereby, although researcher faced some unusual responses during the initial interaction with *Kumal* women on account of the respondent's privacy concern, however researcher did manage to gather information from them giving respondents time to know the researcher more closely; this was also one reason that the researcher had to lengthen her period of field work against her expected time schedule.

CHAPTER IV

CASE STUDIES

CASE-1

Pampha Kumal

Pampha Kumal, who is 30 years old, lives in word no. 11 at Kundar Village of *Gorkha* district. She is the eldest daughter of her parents. She comes from the poor class backdrop. She has got three sisters and three brothers. Her parents' job is porter. Their economic condition was not good. They lived in joint family. They have been facing economic problems in their daily life. *Pampha's* childhood period was painful. She did not have sufficient nutritious food and she did not have any formal education. As reported by *Pampha*; her parents did not pay their attention towards her education due to their poor economic condition and due to the lack of the knowledge. There was not any school in her village she had to go another village by foot for the study.

It has been sixteen years of her marriage. She lives in her husband's house. It is a joint family where nine family members are living together under the same roof sharing the same kitchen. *Pampha* has three daughters and her elder daughter is nine years old. She again has the post infant of three months. She was not found to be healthy. Her body structure was seen thin. As she has reported that due to her poor economic condition she could not manage balance diet and she has been feeling weaker and weaker day after day. Moreover, the health condition of her youngest daughter is also not found healthy. She has been suffering from malnutrition for last 3 years but she could not go through any treatment due to her poor economic condition and lack of the support of her husband. Researcher found that she has habit of smoking and drinking alcohol so that her health condition was not good.

Pampha reported that, she has been living with her husband along with all family members but she does not have good relation with her husband after giving continuous birth of the three daughters. Not only with her husband she does not have good relation with her family members. But with neighbors she has good relation when she was suffered by illness neighbors some women cared her and suggested her

for treatment and also did economic support. She is uneducated but she was found to be helpful and co-operative with relatives and neighbors.

According to *Pampha*, now a days she does not go to her maternal house because her brother and brother's wife do not speak with her. She says that 'I am dominated by my husband so that my marital relationship is not good, if my husband love and care for me my brothers also support me but it's my bad luck '. She says that when her father and mother were alive they loved her and supported her but now a days she just remembers those days.

Despite of her poor economic condition and the lack of the family support she has been sending her children for school education as the government of Nepal has been providing free school education. She has not been found involved in any social and political activities due to lack of her family support.

She is illiterate; she didn't get the opportunity to join the formal education. Her husband passed class four from government school. She is unemployed and has confined herself to housewife. Along with household activities she has been involved in labor activities during the time of agricultural activities. Her husband is a labor. He earns approximately NRs. 1,100 in a month. However, her husband does not help her in the household activities as reported by *Pampha* but her elder daughter helps her by bringing the water from the tap.

Pampha does have to face off economic problems at times on account of low household income and lack of strong alternative sources of income. Their income is seasonal and they don't have sufficient land. They have only 4-5 *Ropaines Pakho Bari* (unfertile land) and two goats in the name of property. They were found unable to join their hands up to mouth within the year however; they cultivate land on rent as well. Normally, she works for 8 hours per day and during the time of irrigation she works for 10 hours.

However, it was found that she does not have any economic related decision making role in the family. According to her sometime she made decision about agricultural work. She has said that during the time of agricultural activities she has to go for work as advised by her mother-in-law. Her father-in-law and mother-in-law made decision regarding all types of rituals functions. Relating to the labor activities her mother-in-law was found to be taking the active role in the family to make the

decisions but in case of economic related activities her husband was found being active to make the decision in her family.

Her family members do practice Christianity. As per their religious book, children are the gift of god. "To please god we should give birth of the children as much as we can" was the prevalent concept due to which her family members compelled her to give the birth of a son, as a result she got delivery for the fourth time. She has a deep faith on god and religion. She tried to interpret her illness from a religious point of view. According to *Pampha*, whenever, she becomes ill she rushes to Church; holy place of Christian and they read different religious books and also pray to the God. She has also reported that last time due to witch my middle daughter was near to die; she was suffering from vomiting and diarrhea after praying to the god in the Church she became recovered. Sometimes she goes to health post for treatment.

Regarding the rituals of her family members they celebrate the festivals as followed by the Christianity. As reported by *Pampha* Christmas is the main holy festivals for them and they pray and worship to the raising and Sun God. Moreover, they also have the influence of Hinduism. They celebrate different festivals as followed by Hinduism but they did not celebrate as celebrated by the Hindus as reported by *Pampha*. She is not found in any social institutions.

Pampha could not make the strong ideas regarding women's disposition in her village. She had tried to interpret it in religious point of views. According to *Pampha*, women of *Kumal* families of *Kundar* village do not enjoy much privilege. They are badly dominated by the man and also suffer from vicious cycle of poverty and domination of upper caste.

CASE-2

Chini Kumal

60 years old *Chini* and 72 years old *Tika* had been married for 50 years. They belong to middle class family and they had an arranged marriage. *Chini* lives in word no. 11 at *Kundar* Village of *Gorkha* district. Her maternal home is at *Tanahau*. She is the youngest daughter of her parents. She has got four sisters and five brothers. Her parents' job is farming and they had small shop in the village. She had a joint family.

Now, she lives in her husband's house. Her husband's family is also composed of joint family. There are fourteen members altogether. She has three sons and four daughters. *Chini* conceived for the first time after 1.4 years of her marriage. Three years after *Chini's* marriage *Tika's* father, mother, elder brother, brother's wife along with their one son and one elder daughter started to live separately. Now, they have their family members only in a house. Her one son and three daughters have already got married.

Her husband migrated to India four years back to make a living but nineteen years back he left his job and now living with their family. *Chini's* relationship with her husband is good. He has become old and he can't work outside. Now a days he is helping her wife in the cooking stuffs. She is satisfied from her relation with her husband but there used to be the quarrel with her mother-in-law whenever they were in joint family. Division of work was to be the quarrel of work. However, she loves and takes care of her daughter in law.

Regarding her relationship with her maternal home, according to her, it's too good. But her father has already died. Mother is also suffering from Asthma. She takes medicine daily; even she misses her daughter all day. She says that her brother and his wife, daughters and son also love her so much. She is totally satisfied with them.

With regard to education, she is illiterate, but 2 years back she joint adult education for six months. She says that it has not improved her reading and writing power. She did not know any word. Her husband is also illiterate. She is unemployed and has confined herself to housewife. However, she does all the household chores by herself from cooking to washing clothes followed by feeding cattle.

Chini had to face great economic crisis after her family members got separated. As reported by *Chini* to solve the economic problems her husband migrated to India. According to her, her household income amount was NRs 3400 initially and at the last months of his retirement his income was NRs.8700. Moreover this is not always adequate to feed her family. But, now in whole some, they have 15-17 *Ropaines* of land, two buffalos and six goats in the name of property. His eldest son has been teaching in local school for five years. They cultivate land on rent as well. However they do not suffice to make more than subsistence. Now, she works for 6 hours per day in household activities only.

Regarding the decision making process of her family. She used to make decision regarding household expenditure whenever her husband was in India. She said that regarding expenses on daily necessities, her decision making role is main in that house. After her husband returned from India, that responsibility was taken by him. Then after the marriage of her eldest son, he has been playing this duty as reported by *Chini*. However, she was found to be taking active role in the decision making process related to household activities but her son has been involved in the decision making process regarding social and economic activities like buying and selling.

Coming to *Chini*'s family religion, they are Hindu. Although she has a deep faith on god and religion, all the same she had faith upon *Dhami* and *Jhakeris*. She interpreted her illness from religious perspectives and took the support of *Lama* and *Dhami* when she and her family members became sick. Sometimes discussions took place between *Chini* and her son because her son interpreted the cause of illness due to pathogens, but she wasn't ready to accept it easily. By last few years back some changes have been occurring so that they have been examining their illness with the local doctors in local hospital.

Regarding the rituals of her family they are Hindu. They followed all the rituals and festivals as followed by the Hinduism. They celebrate *Dashain*, *Tihar*, *Teej* as the main festivals. In addition of this as reported by *Chini* they also celebrate the indigenous rituals such as *Diwali* and *Kul Puja*. As described by *Chini*'s husband they celebrate *Diwali* in every 12 years where as *Kul Puja* in every year. During the time of *Diwali* and *Kul Puja* both males and females have been taking part equally.

Chini reported that, she has good relationship with her neighbor. The researcher found that from her village she is fanciful. And also her relation with her relative husband's side and her maternal home side is good.

Chini does have a negative outlook towards women's disposition in her village. According to *Chini*, women of Kunder village do not enjoy much privilege to men. Women are enjoying very little freedom in comparison to the past. Reasons may account to their lack of education and economic dependence on husband and sons. Most of the women do not hold the power to make important decisions at home with regard to economy and marriage. But, these days it has been becoming liberal at the time of marriage of their girls. At the same time she had reported that "after her

marriage she had not spoken with her husband for 21 days”. She is the member of *Aama Samuha* (group of mother formed locally). She has been attending her meeting regularly. She had reported that during the meeting they had discussed regarding the problems which are faced by the women in the *Kundar* village.

CASE-3

Tika Kumari Kumal

Young, energetic *Tika Kumari* and *Rajan* had been married for two years. *Tika* is 22 years old and *Rajan* is 26 years old now. They had love marriage. They had married for two years. They are from middle class. She is eldest daughter of her parents. She comes from middle class backdrop. She has got one sister and one brother. Her parents’ job is farming, animals rearing and business. They are living in a nuclear family.

She lives in her husband’s house in word no. 11 at *Kundar* Village of *Gorkha* district. In her husband’s house there are five members, including father in law, mother in law, husband, husband sister and herself. They are living in a nuclear family. *Tika*’s father-in-law is the head of the house.

Regarding the relationship with her husband’s family is good. Her family members also treat her as a daughter. Her relationship with her husband is good they have good understanding. And her relationship with her neighbors and relatives is quite good. She says “educated women entertain than uneducated women so society can’t adjust women’s freedom, our traditional concept is women is prisoner of house .which is must limited in the house so they thought I m freely going one place to another place which happens to be restricted in our customs”. She has good relation with her peers in the school. She was found to be co-operative. As her teacher reported that she was the ideal students of the school. She was found to be equally helpful and co-operative with the neighbors and families. She says that her relationship with her maternal home is also good. She goes to visit them time to time especially during occasions.

Tika was found to be the member of different local social institutions and organizations and she has been participating in the different meeting which has been conducted by the different local social institutions and organizations in the different period of time. Not only that, she was found to be encouraging local females to

participate in the activities conducted in the village. Now she is the member of *Dipros Bikas Bank* and president of *Sawalambi Bikas Bank*.

With regard to education, when she was in her maternal house she did her S.L.C. As soon as she passed SLC she got married. Her husband also passed S.L.C. Her husband always inspires her for the good study because he couldn't continue his study due to his economic condition. She is unemployed. In the morning times she goes to sewing training and day time she performs household activities. However, she does all the household chores by herself from cooking to washing clothes and cleaning house. Due to the household activities she could not continue her study. And due the nuclear family size she has more workload than other joint family's women. She says that when her husband was with her, he gives his helping hand for cooking and shopping time. *Tika* has no child and has decided not to conceive for few more years. Her husband migrated to India one year back to make a living.

At her house, father in law has been handling economic activities however he involves *Tika* in the decision making process, mainly for saving the money in local Bank. Father-in-law is household head. And also her mother-in-law has active role in religious work like *puja garne* (worship) and especially marriage decision making process. She has reported that after her marriage they have been making house hold decision in the mutual discussion of all family members. They have been depositing some amounts in the local bank. However, her husband does manage holiday from his work to make a home visit during festive seasons.

Comparing to other *Kumal* families, *Tika* did not have to face off economic problems. Now he is making good earning NRs 12,000 per month by which *Tika*'s small family has been running the normal life. Besides his husband's income, her father-in-law earns monthly NRs. 3500. He is the secretary of a college at the village. In whole some, they have more-over 12-14 *Ropaines* of land, one cow, one buffalo, four goats in the name of property. They cultivate their land by themselves but they do not cultivate land on rent. She works for 6 hours per day. Her mother-in-law is helping her for the cooking where as husband's sister helps to bring water from the tap.

Coming to *Tika*'s religion, she is a Hindu. Her husband's family is also following Hinduism. However, she does not have a deep faith on god and religion but she follows and celebrates all the festive according to Hinduism. She does not have faith

upon *Lama, Dhami* and *Jhakeris*. She never interpreted her illness from a religious point of vantage but, instead, always sought for a medical remedy. According to *Tika*, whenever, she rushes to nearby private clinic for medication if she and her family members fall sick. They make the expenditure for it by the deposited amount in the Bank nearby their house.

Tika has different opinion towards the domination of women in their society. In the views of *Tika*, women should be united themselves and the discrimination which is created for the women by the women should be ended for the empowerment of the women. She is quite interested in politics. In the future she wants to be a leader of the village working in favor of exploited *Kumal* women. According to *Tika* “it is necessary to send daughters/sisters to the school as we send our brothers / sons”. The light of education helps to reduce the gap between son and daughter. For this process the government of Nepal, Ministry for Education, Local institutions and Organizations need to promote institutions. Freedom needs to be given to our sisters/daughters to select their mate for themselves and child marriage need to be avoided strictly. Strongly she had reported that women involvement in the local institutions and organization is essential as equal to men.

CASE-4

Amrita Kumal

55 years old *Amrita* and 65 years old *Kapil* had been married for 42 years. They belong to lower class family and they had an arranged marriage. She lives in ward no. 11, *Kundar* Village of *Gorkha* district. She is eldest daughter of her parents. Her maternal home is at word no.9 in *Kundar* Village of *Gorkha* district. She comes from lower class backdrop. She has got three sisters one brother. Her parents’ job is farming. They live in joint family.

She has been living with her husband for nine years after her marriage. She had given birth to four daughters. During that time out of them two had died in their early age. Now she has been living in a separate house along with her daughters. Her elder sister eloped four years back. After the death of *Kapil*’s father he had got another marriage and had started to live separately with his youngest wife nearby *Amrita*’s house.

Considering *Amrita*'s relationship with her husband, it was good till 5-6 years of her marriage. After that, conflict arose regarding the continuous birth of daughters. Many times she had got different mental and physical trouble and torture by her husband in the name of not giving the birth of son. She could not enjoy her conjugal life for the long time. Whenever she is in the joint family she did not have good relation with mother-in-law by the same reason.

It was found that she did not have good relation with the community people. During the course of field visit by the researcher, one of the villagers reported that the villagers recognize her as talkative women. Due to which her husband used to beat her every day. She was not found to be involved in any social organization. In the question of the researcher she had replied that she does not have time to involve in social institutions. She says "if I have time I should be involved in labor".

With regard to education, she is illiterate. Her husband is also illiterate. She is unemployed and has confined herself to housewife. After the separation with her husband *Amrita* herself is doing inside and outside activities. She had small daughters. By bringing tears in her eyes she had told that "I would like to educate my daughters but I could not do so due to my poverty". She was worried about the future of her daughters.

Regarding the decision making role she had reported that whenever she was with her husband her husband used to make economic decision and she used to make households decisions. But now she has been making decisions either economic or social. She does all types of decision making in household and also out of the household concern. According to her she has face many difficulties cause of loneliness. She said "I feel alone without husband and son. Our societies also do not cooperate well with separated women".

These days her youngest daughter has been giving helping hand in the house hold activities. *Amrita* has to face off economic problems at times on account of low household income and lack of strong alternative sources of income. Her life was full of tears. According to her, her husband had given 2/3 *Ropaines Phakho Bari* (unfertile land) to her after left by her husband. For the substance of her and her sister's life she is doing labor work at the village. She had a seasonal income that is not sufficient to run her life normally. These days she felt a short of relief by the help of her youngest

sister. In whole some, they have more over 2-3 *Ropaines* of land, 4 goats and 6 hens in the name of property. *Amrita* reported that Sometimes She sells goat and hens and collect money for health treatment and household expenditure, especially for her daughter's education. Her total monthly income is around N.R.1500/-. She cultivates land on rent as well. She has been feeling difficulties for the substance. Normally she works for 12 hours per day. Neighbors do not look her positively after she was left by her husband.

Coming to *Amrita's* religion, she is a Hindu. Her husband's religion is also Hindu. She has a deep faith on god and religion. All the same she had faith upon *Dhami* and *Jhakeries*. She always interpreted her illness from a religious point of views. She mentions "due to the curse of the god I could not give birth of son and two of the daughters died". She had also reported that, "for the birth of a son I had given the blood of black goat to the god as suggested by *Lama*". Whenever she or her daughter fell sick she took the help of witch doctor and she has been applying the local *Jadibuti* (herbs) medicine for the treatment of illness and in general cases she goes to health post for the medicine.

Regarding the health condition of *Amrita*, according to her she was suffering from Asthma for last 10 years. She should take care of her body from coldness but she has not time for care herself. Due to the household tasks she found always busy. She does all types of works because she was living without husband but she has more responsibilities than others.

As *Amrita* reported that she celebrates different festivals and rituals as followed by Hinduism. But she was found to be sad whenever the festivals days come near. As to the question of the researcher she replied that due to my poor economic condition I could not celebrate the festivals happily. Beside this, I could not enjoy the festivals with the family members. Mostly at the time of *Dashain* festival she goes to her maternal home with her daughter and celebrated the festivals. She adds that, "*Tihar* is also equally bad festivals for me because I do not have son and my daughter weeps the whole day during *Tihar*."

According to *Amrita*, women of *Kundar* village do not enjoy much privilege to men. They are suppressed and dominated by the males. The society is giving the privilege to the son. Men treat woman as the machine to manufacture children. But she could

not speak even against of her husband. According to her, her husband is the god for her always. She says, “I should obey to him even if he dislikes me”.

CASE-5

Rupa Kumal

38 years old *Rupa* lives in word no. 11 at *Kundar* Village of *Gorkha* district. She is the eldest daughter of her parents. She comes from lower class backdrop. She has got two sisters and five brothers. Her parent’s job is farming and animal husbandry. They live in joint family. Both father and mother were illiterate due to which *Rupa* also could not have the formal education. She had to help her parents in household and agricultural activities.

Rupa is married to *Hari Kumal*. It’s been 21 years of her marriage. She lives in her husband’s house. It is a joint family. There are father-in-law, mother-in-law and husband’s small brother in her husband’s family. *Rupa* has two sons and one daughter, now daughter has got married and lives in her husband’s house. During the gap of 4-6 months she comes to visit her and stays for 2-3 days. When *Rupa*’s daughter was small her husband died.

Considering *Rupa*’s relationship with her husband, according to *Rupa* was good. After seven months following the marriage he had migrated to India to make good money. He used to come once in a year especially at Dashain. *Rupa* said that “he died after the six years of our marriage; god didn’t let us live for the long time”. Furthermore she has added that after the death of my husband I feel alone and helpless at home with small children. I could not stay here and been to my parent’s *Tanahau* for six months. I could not stay there also for the long time because I had already got married. The family members of my parent’s home, my relatives had suggested and convinced me to live at my husband’s house then I back here.” Her relationship with her father-in-law and mother-in-law was not found good and with neighbors, relatives also not good. She says “when I am with my husband’s family all relatives and neighbors respect and love me but after husband’s death time is changed. Father-in-law and mother-in law gives torture in the name of characterless women, but I am not

bad by nature. Those people show me as helpless women who can't do anything in the society.”

Her relation was found good with some villagers. As *Rupa* said after her husband death she left husband's house due to the torture of the family. When she returned back to her husband's house from her maternal house, the condition of the house was worse. It was not suitable to live but her neighbors encouraged her to live with her husband's family.

With regard to education, she is also literate. According to her she can simply read and write but she couldn't easily read books. She is unemployed. She had confined to housewife because she did not have any alternative job. She does all the household activities by herself from cooking to washing clothes followed by feeding goats and buffalo. *Rupa* does have to face off economic problems at times on account of low household income and lack of strong alternative sources of income.

According to her, her household income amount is NRs 2,000 which does not always suffice to feed her family. In whole some, she has more over 6-7 *Ropaines* of land, one buffalo and four goats in the name of property. She cultivates land on rent as well. However she does not suffice to make more than subsistence. She works for 10 hours per day. When her husband was with her, her husband does give his helping hands to her while cooking, washing clothes and agricultural tasks. Before the marriage of her daughter, *Rupa* was being helped by her daughter for cooking, washing and collecting wood from the forest.

Rupa reported that she makes decision herself regarding to the households expenses. When her husband was with her even that time also all types of economic related decision was made by her. She remember those days when her husband with her, most of the time her husband helped her household activities like cooking and washing time.

She is a Hindu. Her husband's religion is also Hindu. They follow all festivals and rituals as per Hinduism. Mostly, she goes to her maternal house at the time of different festivals. She has a deep faith on god and religion. As she has reported that “I was 23 years old at the time of the death of my husband but I was not interested to get married even the villagers have suggested me to remarry.” As researcher asked her the reason of not getting marriage she replied “I believe Hindu religion so think

husband as the god and also I can't live without my daughter.” She has faith upon *Dhami* and *Jhakeris*. She interpreted her illness from a religious point of vantage but, now a days she has been taking medical remedy from the health post whenever she becomes ill. Frequently, she has been suffering from high blood pressure.

Rupa was found to be involved in the different social organizations. She is the member of the *Kumal Aama Samuha* (group of *Kumal* woman). As reported by one of the villagers she has been involved in the social institutions strongly. She is one of the exemplars among the *Kumal* women even she is a widow. By the active involvement of *Rupa* before 6 months she had conducted and completed adult education in the village.

According to *Rupa*, women of Kundar village do not enjoy much privilege to men. Reasons may account to their lack of education and economic dependence on husband. Most of the women do not hold the power to make important decisions at home with regard to economy and marriage. She has added that, the government has to pay its attention and need to encourage *Kumal* along with other deprived people towards the education.

CASE-6

Bimala Kumal

65 years old *Bimala*, had got married at the age of 9 years. She is belonging to middle class family and she had an arranged marriage. She lives in word no. 11 at Kundar Village of *Gorkha* district. Her maternal home is also at *Gorkha*. She is eldest daughter of her parents. She has got four sisters and three brothers. Her parents' job is farming and they had wage labor. She had a joint family.

Now, she lives in her husband's house. Her husband's family is also a joint family. There are seven members altogether. She has one son and three daughters. All of them have got married. Her sisters are at their husband's house but her son along with his wife and two children are living together. Her husband was suffering from Asthma for last 5 years. Now days, doctor has advised him for take rest totally.

Bimala's relationship with her husband was good. She has good relation with her family members, relatives and neighbors. She was satisfied from her relation with her husband. According to *Bimala* before 7 years her son got married. Now he has given

the birth of one son and one daughter. Both of them love me equally. As *Bimala* reported that” last month I had been to my maternal home for a week. Whenever I am back to home both grand-son and grand-daughter weep for long time and they make me promise not to leave them any more in the days to come.” If I leave them even for a single day they don’t eat. They enjoy sleeping with me rather than with their parents.

With regard to education, she is illiterate. *Bimala* reported that “in our schooling days if we show our eagerness for the study our parents make us stand for the whole days tying on the pillar without giving any food.” She also said that villagers said daughter education was not necessary because they are made for married and goes another’s house. Her parents also thought daughters are other’s property .Furthermore she has added that I was just 7 years when I got married. After marriage I had to work. If I didn’t do any work my mother-in-law did not give any food to eat. I was eager to study but due to lack of family support I could not read. As reported by *Bimala* “when I was young I used to work in a hospital as a sweeper. I worked there for 12 years. But 15 years back I left my job. Now, I am old and I am suffering from asthma and blood pressure I cannot work anymore.” Now a days she cares after her nephew and helps her daughter-in-law for the cooking activities.

In comparison to others, *Bimala* has not faced great economic crisis. According to her, her household income amount was NRs 7,000. Her son had completed intermediate level and employed in a consultancy at Kathmandu. He earns NRs 6,000 per month. She has 17-19 *Ropaines* of land, two buffalos and six goats and some hens in the name of property. However they do not suffice to make more than subsistence. Normally she works 3 hours per day.

Regarding household decision as reported by *Bimala* “my husband used to make decision regarding economic activities and I used to make decision regarding households and agricultural activities, but now a days my son and daughter-in-law make decisions”. She made decision making especially the concern of religious work. And also some time in buying and selling process.

Coming to *Bimala*’s family religion, they are Hindu. They celebrate all the festivals viz. *Dashin, Tihar, Teej* and so on as followed by Hindus. Although she has a deep faith on god and religion, all the same she had faith upon *Dhami* and *Jhakeris*. She

interpreted her illness from religious perspectives and took the support of *Lama* and *Dhami* when she and her family members became sick. Furthermore, she has reported that one day before sick of her husband they sacrifice the blood of black he-goat for Devi to make her husband well. Since last few years, some changes have been occurring so that they have been examining their minor illness with the doctors of the hospital in the village in case of major illness they have been called to Kathmandu by her son.

In the present time *Bimala* does not have a negative outlook towards women's disposition in her village. At the time of interview she became a bit aggressive whenever the researcher asked her about the female education. She said that "now a days not only the school college is in the village but our daughter does not enjoy reading. "So that women of *Kundar* village do not enjoy much privilege to men but these days, women do have more freedom in comparison to the past. As she told most of the female do not hold the power to make important decisions at home with regard to economy and marriage, "women should be educated and should fight for their right for it they must be educated and should involved outside activities as male". She is the member of *Aama Samuha* (group of mother formed locally) she has been attending her meeting regularly. She had reported that during the meeting they had discussed regarding the problems which are faced by the women in the *Kundar* village.

CASE-7

Kopila Kumal

Young, energetic *Kopila* Kumari is 20 years old. She is the youngest daughter of her family. She lives in word no. 11 at *Kundar* village of *Gorkha* district with her family members. She lives in a nuclear family and she is unmarried. In her house there are four members including father mother and her eldest brother.

Regarding the relationship with her family members is good. She is cooperative, helpful and benevolent. Her family members like her a lot. She was found hard working. Not only in the family she is equally dear among the villagers and neighbors. At the time of filed study one of the upper casts (Brahiman) said that she is not like a *Kumal* girl.

With regard to education, she has been studying +2 in the government higher secondary school of the village. For last 5 years she has been standing up as the first girl in the class. She has good relation with her teacher in the school. She was found to be co-operative. As her teacher reported that she was the ideal student of the school. She was found to be equally helpful and co-operative with the neighbors and families.

Kopila was found to be the member of different local social institutions and organizations and she has been participating in the different meeting which has been conducted by the different local social institutions and organizations in the different period of time. And also found she was the active member of *Tol Sudhar Samiti*. Not only that, she was found to be encouraging local females to participate in the activities conducted in the village. At the time of field study the researcher came to know that *Tika* and *Kopila* are the class mate and have been involving in the same organization. She was unemployed until she passed S.L.C. However as soon as she passed SLC she has been teaching to the children at home tuition at her village and makes average NRs4500/-per month. By which she has been buying her books and copies for her study. In the morning times she goes to college and the rest time she performs household activities too. She helps her mother in the kitchen. *Kopila's* family has been running the normal life.

At her house, her father has been handling economic activities however she involves in the decision making process. She has reported that my mother takes my father advices before making household decisions. She said that she is involved in education making process. She has totally freedom about choosing of school and college. Her father and mother have no objection for her decision because they believe daughter's attitudes.

In comparison to others, *Kopila* does not have to face off economic problems. Her father makes monthly NRs. 3,500 profit in average from his shop. In whole some, they have more over 12-14 *Ropaines* of land, one cow, one buffalo in the name of property. They cultivate their land by themselves but they do not cultivate land on rent. She says that her parents do not force her for household works. But her helps always goes up on her mother in household activities mostly in morning and evening time.

Coming to *Kopila's* religion, she is a Hindu. Her family follows Hinduism. Mostly she goes to her mother's maternal home in Dashain along with his brother. However, she does not have a deep faith on god and religion but she follows and celebrates all the festive according to Hinduism. She has been taking *Barta* (fasting) in every Monday. She does not have faith upon *Lama, Dhami* and *Jhakeris*. She never interpreted her illness from a religious point of vintage. She takes medical remedy and goes to private clinic whenever she and her family members fall sick.

Kopila has different opinion towards the domination of women in their society. In the views of *Kopila*, not only in the *Kumal* society women are dominated every in Nepal as a whole in the world. In the context of Nepal she blames the patriarchy system where value is given to son. Moreover, in her opinion illiteracy is the root cause of domination of the females. Due to the illiteracy female could not hold power even in household activities as she involves most of the time in household activities. To make any household decisions she is dependent upon the males. In the *Kopila's* viewpoint "it is necessary to provide the equal opportunity for daughters and son while enrolling in school. Educations are the backbone to develop the women perception towards gender equity and every decision making process. To avoid the child marriage and interfere trend for independent women right she said women involvement in the local institutions and organization is essential as equal to men.

CASE-8

Chandra Maya Kumal

Chandra Maya Kumal, 25, an inhabitant of *Kundur VDC-11, Gorkha* district is a married women. Her maternal house is at Pokhara. She comes from high class family comparatively with other *Kumal* family of the village. They had a small family compare with father, mother and one youngest brother. Her father was a Indian Army. He had good income. So, she did not face off economic problem when she was at her maternal house.

As reported by *Chandra Maya* "after passing SLC I joint *Prithivi Narayan Campus* in *Pokhara*. When I was the student of certificate level I fell in love with *Ram Bahadur Kumal*; we were studying in the same class. After one year we got married. We had an

inter-caste marriage. My husband belongs to a *Kumal* family whereas I was *Kshetri*. When I talked with my family about marriage they did not accept our relation and they totally ignored our marriage. At last we had marriage in a temple and we went to Kathmandu and sat there for 5 months. After 5 months my husband family called to us and we went back to *Gorkha*. However, my maternal family members do not speak to us now days.” Her father and mother broke down their relationship in that time. She hasn't got an opportunity for attending the regular classes as she should provide much of her time in performing the household tasks. She has one son who is three years old. He is so cute and lovely. Even she joined in morning class; her study at this level is not good as that of previous years. She was a good student while she was studying at school level. She remembers the days of her schooling which she considered as the golden days of her life in compare with the present days.

Now, she lives in her husband's house with her husband. It is a small family. There are only four family members; father-in-law, mother-in-law, her husband and herself. However, her husband sister got married 3 years back. She has good relation with her family members. Her father-in-law and mother-in-law love and care her as a daughter. She has good relation and mutual understanding with her husband. As reported by *Chandra Maya* when we come back to *Gorkha* from *Kathmandu* after our marriage I was being ignored and insulted by the neighbor it is because I had made inter caste marriage. But now I have good relation with the neighbors.

Regarding my relation with my parent's house it was also bad for one year but now it is quite good I can't frequently visit my maternal house. But I don't have any regrets even I have done inter-cast marriage.”

Regarding about the economic activities of *Chandra Maya*; her husband has gone to gulf country to make good money. Her father in law works in a Community hospital as a peon for last 15 years. His income also supports the family in purchasing clothes, vegetable, oils, spices and other accessories. *Ram Bahadur* sends his savings to the account of his father which has supported the whole family greatly. She has to look after some cattle and farming as well. She is now keeping one buffalo and two goats. All the responsibilities to look after them go to her. Buffalo has been kept for the purpose of fulfilling the milk demand of the family and selling the remaining part in the local market. She sells two liters of milk daily. Her family owns 10 *ropanis* of

field where they grow rice, maize and other vegetables which can withstand her family round the year.

They don't have to invest further income in purchasing such foods. As a whole, on considering the whole *Kumal* community, *Chandra Maya*'s family is somewhat okay than other normal *Kumal* families. Concerning the health, *Chandra Maya* is suffering from gastritis as other normal women of the community. She normally goes to private clinic located in her own village in order to check-up and cure if any disorder takes place in her body. Other members of her family also go to primary health post for treatment. They don't have to bear any more burdens in treatment. Sometimes, according as the suggestion of her mother in law as a superstitions, *Chandra Maya* goes to *Dhami* and *Jhakri* to treat her in special case even if she doesn't believe in such superstitions. According to *Chandra Maya* her and her family religion is Hindu. All family members believe in Hindu traditional culture.

Chandra Maya has experienced many ups and downs so far spendurcially after she got married with *Ram Bahadur*. She used to feel to be totally emancipated before marriage in parental home but now the things are not as the same before. Many social customs have changed her attitudes. She said, people learn lesson either by studying the books or by involving in the action. Before marriage she has only crossed S.L.C level but couldn't complete certificate level after marriage. Though she hasn't studied many books, she has been involving in many activities directly from where she has acquired many bitter gruesome experiences.

Chandra Maya is mild in nature. She can mix up in any group easily without any hesitation. She is good in rapport build up. Her relationship with other member of the family is good. She obeys every matter of her mother and father in law which has led them to be happy on behalf of their daughter in law. She has been treated as a daughter by her family as there is no daughter in their family. The positive motive in her life is that she is thankful to her mother and father in law for treating her as daughter which is very unusual in most of the Nepalese villages.

All the decision makings are performed by her father in law who is household head. But, he asks to *Chandra Maya* before taking out any decision regarding indoor or outdoor concerns. Especially, indoor concerns are mostly asked to her as her husband is out of the family but outdoor concerns are rarely asked to her, but she was found in

saving and treatment of the decision making process. They go for treatment to hospital or medical in the choice of her. Generally every household matter she gets involved in decision making.

According to *Chandra Maya*, she is the member of *Tol Sudhar Samiti*. *Chandra Maya* is found good characters' women in her society. She helps other women without any selfness.

Chandra Maya's neighbors consider her as an educated woman and ask her before starting any tasks. She is ready to suggest them up to her depth of knowledge. Because of this, mostly young people acknowledge her but some elder people couldn't see her being clever in such manner as she is a daughter in law. But *Chandra Maya* may accuse them but to the traditions of the community. She hopes that such elder people will change their existing concepts very soon. Positive attitudes always guide her to go in advance which will certainly influence other younger people too. She is a good example for her community.

CASE-9

Radhika Kumal

Radhika Kumal is widow of 35years. She lives with two children in *Kundur* village of *Gorkha* district. *Radhika* is an uneducated woman she comes from middle class family backdrop. She is eldest daughter of her parents .She has got one brother. Her father was peon of the school. Her brother has completed intermediate level and is a primary level's Teacher of the government school. They are living in nuclear family. Her parent's house economic condition was quite good comparing with her husband's house.

It has been 21 years of her marriage. She had an arrange marriage. When her small son was 1 years old in that time her husband was suffering from cancer. Before 5 years, her husband died because he had blood cancer. Then after her father in law and mother in law are living separately in their ancestral house. *Radhika*'s husband was only one child of his parents. *Radhika* like Hinduism but *Radhika* husband's father and mother do practice Christian .*Radhika* says that 'we had a religious conflict with each other and also they hate me and they blamed me that I killed my husband so that we are living separately.'

Regarding the relationship, according to *Radhika*, her relationship with her husband's family is not good. Her father in law and mother in law treat her as an enemy. When, she was married in those starting days they love and also care with her. But since last few years *Radhika's* mother in law and father in law thought that she has been destroying their happiness and also after marriage their son has changed. They blamed to *Radhika* she always inspired her husband to go against his parents.

As reported by *Radhika*, whenever her husband was with her, they had understanding with each other. She mentions that her husband had a profound understanding while making the household decision. When her husband alived he made economic decision and she compelled for household decision because she is illiterate but now she does all types of decision making. But some time she agrees with her son's decision which is related with economic activities. She was always satisfied from her relation with her husband. But after her husband's death she is totally helpless. She worries thinking how she could stay alone in the society. She felt afraid and lonely. She says "in our society without husband women can't do anything, and also women are dominated by some villagers. And also she always faces many difficulties in her daily life, but she couldn't express this with her son. Mostly *Radhika* makes decision herself. She buys the things as needed in her house.

According to *Radhika*, her household total income amount is NR 3000/- which does not always sufficient to feed her family because her son is studying intermediate level. *Radhika* does have to face off economic problems at times alternative sources of income. Even her son is also engaged in part time job and his monthly income is 2500/- only. In whole some she has more over 10 rapines of land, 6 goats, 3 pigs and 1 buffalo in the name of property. She also grows vegetables and sells in the market. She works for 10 hours per day. Most of the time her son is with her, her son does give his helping hands to her while cutting grass and cooking foods.

Concerning to the health, *Radhika* is suffering from gastritis and uric acid. She normally goes to primary health post for the health treatment and some time she goes to hospital especially for uric acid case, which is located in her own village in order to check-up and cure if any disorder takes place in her body. Her son also goes to primary health post for treatment.

Radhika has different opinion towards the domination of women in their society. In *Kundur* village's single women are not secure in their society. In the views of *Radhika* single women should be united themselves and the discrimination which is created for the women by the women should be ended for the empowerment of the women. According to *Radhika* "it is necessary to send daughter/sisters to the school like we send our brothers/sons". Educations dispel the ignorance to reduce the gender discrimination. For this process concern organization need to promote the women participation and Empowerment. Women right and freedom need to be given high priority to select their own mate.

CASE-10

Asmita Kumal

Ram *Kumal* and Rita *Kumal* live in word no. 10 of *Gorkha* district. They live in a nuclear family. They have two sons and three daughters. 25 years *Asmita Kumal* is the youngest daughter of her parents. They come from middle class backdrop. Her father job is farming and animal husbandry. Her mother is a house wife. She does all the household activities from cooking, washing and cleaning. She also helps her husband during the time of cultivation. She also collects grass to the animals form the forest. Whenever *Asmita* became 21 years her parents managed the marriage with *Ishwor*.

Now, 25 years old *Asmita* lives in word no. 11 at *Kundar* Village of *Gorkha* district. It's been 3.5 years of her marriage. She had an arranged marriage. She lives in her husband's house. There are four family members in her husband's family including father-in-law, mother-in-law, her husband and herself. It is also a nuclear family. *Asmita* has no child. Her husband migrated to India 3 years back to make a living. However, her husband does manage holiday from his work to make a home visit during festive seasons.

Considering *Asmita's* relationship with her husband, according to *Asmita*, her relationship with her husband has always been that of compatible one. She is satisfied from her relation with her husband. Her relation with his husband's family is good. Both father-in-law and mother-in-law are almost 60 years old. She has taken care of them. They treat her as a daughter. As her father-in-law has reported that "we had a

daughter but she died when she was four years old.” Now, we have another daughter she is Moreover, she has good relationship with her relatives and neighbors.

Talking to relationship with her maternal house, according to her it's quite good. There is her father, mother, brothers living in own house. When *Asmita* got married in that time she had good relationship with them but now a day she says that they complain she could not visit them so she has not good relation.

She was found interested to participate in social activities but due to the lack of family support she couldn't be involved strongly with the activities by the society. She is member of *tol sudhar samiti*. She has not been involved in the politics strongly but she doesn't think that politics as the dirty game.

She mentions that her husband had a profound understanding while making the house hold decisions. She is also involved in decision making process mainly buying daily necessities. She said that all family members asked her before going for the health treatment. Her all family members are uneducated and they don't know general health knowledge. She gives some suggestions for her father-in-law and mother-in-law about good health. According to her, there is some problem because they are so conservative. They always show that religious point of view.

With regard to education, she is regarded as educated women in her society. However, she could not continue her study after marriage. She has completed her class 8 but it's been years since she passed out her eight class exam. She is unemployed and has confined herself to housewife. She says that her husband also passed class 7 from government school but cause of the poverty he did not continue his study. She always inspires especially to the girls who are bachelor towards study.

She does all the household chores by herself from cooking to washing clothes followed by feeding goats. *Asmita* does have to face off economic problems at times on account of low household income and lack of strong alternative sources of income. According to her, her household income amount is NRs 4500 which does not always suffice to feed her whole family. In whole some, they have more over 7-9 *Ropaines* of land, one buffalo and four goats in the name of property. She cultivates land on rent as well. At the time of cultivation they practice *Parma* System. (Labor exchange system). However they do not suffice to make more than subsistence.

She works for 8 hours per day normally but at the time of cultivation she works 10-11 hours. She feels more burdens during the agricultural time because she has to complete both house hold activities and agricultural activities herself. However her mother-in-law helps her in the cooking process. When her husband is with her, he does give his helping hands to her while cooking, washing clothes and collecting grass from the forest. Mostly *Asmita* makes decision herself regarding to the households and economic activities. She buys the things as needed in her house but last time when she had bought a buffalo she had asked her husband.

Coming to *Asmita's* religion, she is a Hindu. Her husband's religion is also Hindu. They follow all festivals and rituals as per the Hinduism. She has been taking fasting every Monday in the name of god Shiva. Some year *Asmita's* husband comes to home during the time of *Dashain* festivals. Mostly, at the time of festivals she celebrates with her family but in the *Teej* festivals she mostly goes to her maternal house. She has a deep faith on god and religion all the same she never had faith upon *Dhami* and *Jhakeris*. She never interpreted her illness from a religious point of vantage but, instead, always sought for a medical remedy. According to *Asmita*, wherever, she had health problems she rushed to nearby hospital for medication despite low family income.

Asmita does have a negative outlook towards women's disposition in her village. According to *Asmita*, women of *Kundar* village do not freedom comparing with men. Reasons may account to their lack of education and economic dependence on husband. Most of the women do not hold the power to make important decisions at home with regard to economy and marriage. According to *Asmita* in *Kumal* society if women had to make decision they should take permission by their husband. She has added that last time whenever I had a buffalo I asked to my husband even though I have been looking after household activities. Mostly women of *Kumal* society are dependent with the husband. *Kumal* women do not have much political updates because mostly they remain busy for their household activities.

Case No.	Marital status	Marriage age	Religion	Family types	Treatment	Decision-making	Monthly income	Education	Land (Ropani)	Working hours	Social Involvement	Health status
1	Married	14	Christian	Joint	Health post	None	1000/-	Illiterate	5	10	N.A	Healthy
2	Married	10	Hindu	Joint	Hospital	Religious work and guest invitation	3400/-	Illiterate	17	5	<i>Ama samuha</i>	Chronic
3	Married	19	Hindu	Nuclear	Private Clinic	Buying/saving health related	12000/-	S.L.C	14	6	<i>Dipros bikas bank and Swalambi b.b</i>	Chronic
4	Separated	13	Hindu	Nuclear	Health post	All types	1500/-	Illiterate	3	12	N.A	Healthy
5	Widow	17	Hindu	joint	Health post	Agricultural work	2000/-	Illiterate	7	10	<i>Kumal Ama samuha</i>	Chronic
6	Married	9	Hindu	Joint	Hospital	Religious work	7000/-	Illiterate	9	10	<i>Ama samuha</i>	Healthy
7	Unmarried	N.A	Hindu	Nuclear	Private Clinic	Study	8000/-	+2	15	4	<i>Tol sudhar samiti</i>	Healthy
8	Married	20	Hindu	Joint	Private clinic	Buying daily necessities/saving	3500/-	+2	1	8	<i>Tol sudhar samiti</i>	Chronic
9	Widow	14	Christian	Nuclear	Health post	All types	3000/-	Illiterate	9	10	N.A	Healthy
10	Married	21	Hindu	Joint	hospital	Shopping/treatment	3500/-	Class 8	7	8	<i>Tol sudhar samiti</i>	Chronic

General information of kumal women with regard to case 1 to 10.

Source: Field study, 2010

Note: N.A= (Not available)

CHAPTER-V

STATUS OF *KUMAL* WOMEN

In simple parlance, status is the position of a person given by family, community, society and nation and in a whole by the world. As well, social status is the position occupied by a person family or kinship group in a social system relative to others which determines rights duties and other behaviors.

In the present, as per the case study of the *Kumal* Women at *Kundur* village of *Gorkha* district. The researcher has found the variation among the status of *Kumal* Women such as in social, economical, cultural, religious, educational factors which have been playing the significant role to determine the status among the *Kumal* Women.

5.1 Family Status

Structure of the family plays an important role to determine Women's status. On the basis of the numbers of individuals mainly two types of family i.e. single family and joint family were found in the study area. However, they preferred the joint family because of poor economy. *Kumal* families have been practicing Patriarchic practices i.e. father is the head of the family and mother is the important part of the family who involved for caring and rearing of children.

5.1.1 Family Type

It was found that, directly or indirectly, the structure of the families was influenced by the socio-economic condition of Women within the families as well as in the society. Joint family was found one of the major characteristics among *Kumal* community, which was a major factor to determine the working capacity and time setting for economic and other household activities of the Women. Now a days, the trend of joint family structure is found to have changed due to their movement from rural areas to urban areas searching for better job.

In the case study it was found that six respondents were living in the joint family and four were living in the nuclear family. Different types of family relations were seen in joint families as well as in the nuclear families. In both joint and nuclear families different factors have brought dispute in the family relation with in the *Kumal* families.

In joint families, Women's economic status was found poorer than in nuclear families. However, workload of the Women in joint families was found less than that of nuclear families. Economic status of widow and separated women was found low in comparing with others Women. As researcher asked to the widow regarding low economic status, *Radhika Kumal* has replied that 'I do not have any support from my family, I have to do each and every thing myself moreover due to the lack of knowledge, I am unable to involve in an income generating activities' (Case no 9). The responsibilities of widows were found higher than other Women.

5.1.2 Familial Relation

It was found that, they have been giving the priority to the son in comparison to the daughter. The *Kumal* families were found to be following of traditional norms and values. Still *Kumal* community believes their own conception and primitive perception; they think that more sons are more power and wealth. It compels them to give more birth until the male is born. *Pampha Kumal* was living in the joint family but her relation with her husband was found not good after the continuous birth of three daughters. However, her relation was found good with relatives and neighbors because she was found cooperative and helpful in the social activities (Case 1).

Among the *Kumal* Women those who are educated and are involved in the different social institutions were found participating actively in the decision making role within the families. Due to the decision making role there relation was also found good within the family members as well as with other societal members (Case 3). Those women who are widow their relationship with family member was found not good. *Rupa Kumal* was exploited by her father- in-law and mother-in-law with extreme torture branded as characterless women. She said, in presence of her husband She experienced love and care, But now a days in absence of her husband she was suffered by sadness and is totally support less (Case 5).

5.2 Marital Status

Marital status makes a big difference in the status of Women. Sex status is a significant indicator for understanding gender participation in household economy as well as social status of Women. In most of the cases the women of the *Kumal* community are getting marriage at early age. It was decided by their parents without concerning,

which shows that they are not involved in decision making process even in marital case.

Here, in study one case was found unmarried. Her overall status is better than other married Women. She has completed S.L.C and joining +2, now she is studying in a government college. It shows, there are little differences among married and unmarried *Kumal* Women. Generally, there are many differences between married and unmarried Women regarding norms and values. *Kopila Kumal* who was unmarried, she enjoys more freedom for education and whatever she wants. She has less work load than married Women because she had different sympathy as a daughter of the family. She helps her mother when she is free from her studies but not compulsion even in her free time (Case 7).

It was found that Women were married at early age. Marriage at Child age before 16 and early age before 20 is one of the important characteristics of *Kumal* Women because of traditional norms and values. However, in the study area Women were married in early age so that it complicated the child bearing process. Consequently, maternity and morbidity risk were found very serious. Mal nutrition, and under nutrition is biggest problem during prenatal and post natal period (Case 1). Divorce cultures are not traditionally and legally practiced in *Kumal* community even though one woman was found living separately without economic support of their husband and families (Case 4).

5.2.1 Types of Marriage

Marriage is also one of the most universal and most important social institutions of human society. When a boy and a girl get married they enter into family life and they are socially as well as legally permitted to have sexual life. Marriage changes the roles and responsibilities of Women; it is also single most important event in the life of men and women. It determines the social status in the society.

It was found that there were different types of marriage based on age, culture and tradition. On the basis of age, three type of marriage were seen which was child, Early and mature. Similarly, love and arranged marriage also found in practice. In this study, most of the cases were found arrange marriage according to their traditions prevail in their society. Among the *Kumal* community monogamy was heavily found than the polygamy and polyandry, which is not practiced yet but they have their own type of

marriage too e.g. *Jari* marriage (paying money to their previous husband) and *Chori* marriage are also a bit seen there.

Generally, women had different perception over love marriage and arranged marriage. They felt that love marriage is most beneficial for Women than arranged marriage. But it does not mean that all arrange marriage cases are found having bad relationship. Some of the arranged marriage cases were well. In arrange marriage case women could not have freedom to choose their life partner they did whatever their parent's decided. They do not know their habits before marriage so it could create misunderstanding in their married life. But in love marriage they have freedom for selection of the life partner. Here is also good for *Chandra Maya* who got love marriage, she was being loved by the family. All family members loved and cared with her because she had great support and love of husband. They have good understanding with each other since they knew each other very well before getting married (Case 8).

5.2.2 Marital Relationship

Marital relationship is the most important factor affecting the Women's status. It was found that some of the cases Women were not in good relationship within maternal home. Women who were not loved by their husband; faces domination by other neighbors and relatives. If, women have good relationship with maternal home husband family could not dominate. *Pampha Kumal*, who was found suppressed by her husband, says that her maternal home relationship was also not good (Case 1).

It was found that inter-caste love marriage was not allowed for Women as like arranged marriage in the study area. Those Women who got love marriage, their parents did not accept easily. They followed and bounded norms and value because of concept that people should marry in among their own caste. *Chandra Maya* who belonged to the *Chhetri* family and her husband was *Kumal*. They did love married against the parents consent and support hereby her parents did not support inter-caste marriage. Still she was not well treat in her parental home (Case, 8).

5.3 Educational Status

Education is the one of the most important indicator of the development to determine the status of Women. An educated wife and mother naturally have better communication with the outsider and within the households. An educated girl

maintains better family health care, can make decision about reproductive health including safe motherhood rights.

5.3.1 Literacy Rate

Education is the strongest variable affecting the status of Women. Education provides some of the basic skills and confidence to taking control of their lives but large majority of the population of Nepal are illiterate. It was found that women literacy rate is low in the study area due to the over burden of household chores upon females as well as not good support of parents to their daughter's education. But now a days concept of parents has rapidly changed to give education to son and daughter equally.

It was found that in most cases Women are illiterate in study area. The study shows that higher the level of education, the lower the participation of people. Because of the poverty, the *Kumal* Women could not attend higher education. Old *Kumal* Women regard this lack of access to education as a major wider economic and political sphere of society. Although governmental and non-governmental agencies try to make Women literate by adult education, but it was found that *Kumal* Women themselves are not interested to educate themselves and also they are busy in household tasks and agricultural work.

It was found that now a days *Kumal* women's educational status is undergoing change in young generation compared to old generation among *Kumal* Women. Because old women are not found literate; they are almost illiterate. Most of the old respondents gave same answer about the causes of illiterate. They said that the first cause was poverty and the second cause of the tradition values, culture. Some cases found that now a days conception of parents is rapidly changing regarding giving education to son and daughter equally, but not at all cases. In case 7, *Kopila Kumal* who was studying +2 levels, she had much freedom for education as equivalent as her brother. Her parents do treat equally to their children (case7).

But the situation has changed now a days *Kumal* women are interested for education of their children. In case 6, *Bimala* reported that "in our schooling days if we show our eagerness for the study our parents make us stand for the whole days tying on the pillar without giving any food". So she could not join to school but she gave the education opportunity for her son. As a result, her son was a good jobholder and earns good money. She thought that he was strong support in her livelihood (case 6).

It was found that, among the *Kumal* Women there are little difference between married and unmarried women, who are married were not much free than unmarried Women. After marriage they did not continue their study due to the responsibilities of household work and responsibilities of whole family. So that most of the married *Kumal* women did not have much freedom in all aspects like unmarried women. They are bounded by traditional beliefs and culture because traditional beliefs stress that married women must hold the household responsibilities (Case 3 and case 8).

Like most of the backward indigenous groups, *Kumal* are also far from education. In spite of various development programs that have been lunched for the up-liftment of the *Kumals* from various governmental and non-governmental organizations, the overall development indicators for *Kumal* are low.

5.4 Health Status

Hygienic care of body, clothing and shelter are important for human health. It was found that Women of this study area falls much below in this regard to these hygienic requirements. At this condition, most of the Women suffer many types of diseases. The major causes of these diseases are poor sanitation, malnutrition, and under nutrition.

Majority of *Kumal* Women in study area have very limited access to modern health services. Usually, they didn't follow the hospital due to the lack of awareness, money and traditional faith. Most of the women still believe in traditional healers like, " *Dhami* and *Jhakries*" for the treatment of their diseases. Beside it some women are getting immature death and chronic health problems because of wrong treatment of midwives.

5.4.1 Nutrition

Food is the most important basic needs on which all living beings exist. Frequency of food taking differs according to economic status of family. Most of the women have not proper balance diet because they have not sufficient land for growing foods and not enough income sources which shaped their nutrition. It was found that high incidence of under nutrition, early marriage and high number of child bearing, poor housing condition; insufficient sanitary facilities and high rate of smoking and drinking alcohol contribute to the poor health of *Kumal* Women in study area e.g. it was seen that high risk of miscarriage and infant death. It was seen that most of the *Kumal* women use the same type of food variety rather that proper composition; consequently it lacks the

balanced diet. As they are poor group, they do not get medical facilities too due to the poor economic condition and lack of the awareness of health problem (Case 1).

5.4.2 Treatment

The treatment is directly linked with the economic condition of family. Moreover, it plays directly with the health. So this is the factor, which affects the status of *Kumal* Women. Treatment place was the most important factor for treatment process because it shows illness improvement. Families care and support is important during illness. Support from husband and family members also effect the status of Women. But most of the cases were found that women are not totally getting care from their husband and other family members.

It was found that those families who are educated and have strong income sources go to private clinics/hospitals for treatment. But, those families who are not aware and do not have sufficient money for treatment, they only go to health post for treatment. And it was also found that people have deep faith on *Dhami* and *Jhakries*, they called *Dhami* and *Jhakries* whenever they suffer from illness (Case 3 and 7).

5.5 Economic Status

Economic aspect is one of the key factors in determining the status of Women. It includes the occupation of respondent, possession, source of income.

It was found that since ancient time, *Kumals* were specialized in making clay-pots. But now a day this practice is almost non-existent. Majority of *Kumal* family is dependent in agriculture; possesses only a nominal piece of land and some are still involved in river fishing. Most of them are poor and uneducated. They cultivate the land on rent and landowner on the basis of *Adhiya* and *Thekka*. In *Adhiya* system, they have to pay half of the total production to landlord where as in *Thekka* according to the agreement between landlord and tenant. They have not strong income sources and they are not educated, so obviously most of the *Kumal* women have not good economic status.

5.5.1 Occupation

Occupation of Women also plays vital role in determining the status of Women. In Nepalese society the main occupation of Women is household activities. But their contribution is not confined within the household activities alone; they perform agriculture works equal to their male counterparts.

It was found that *Kumal* Women are mainly confined in the four walls of house and most of their time is spent in the household activities. Even if they have to spend their more time in different activities their works are not counted in the economic level. Their works are not regarded as the productive one. Most of the Women have no direct link with the income generating aspect of the family; even they have much indirect support to their husband or the family. Their main occupation was found to be housewife. All cases Women were found not engaged in any job due to the lack of the education and skill.

It was found that wage labor; vegetable productions are side jobs of *Kumal* Women for earning cash, whereas *Gorkha Bazaar* is the main market to sale their production. They are skillful for growing vegetables and sell them in the market. They produce potato, tomato and seasonal vegetables. It was seen that most of the *Kumal* women involved in wage labor and it was found rare involvement in high income oriented job. Both male and female are involved in labor work. Many households are dependent on labor work for their livelihood.

5.5.2 Main Source of Family Income

An income source also depends on status of women in their livelihood. As traditionally *Kumals* belong to the claying pots, but now a days the main source of earnings for their livelihood is from agriculture. Even though the agriculture is the main source of income they do not have sufficient production due to the increase cost of land and they do not have insufficient amount their own land, most of the *Kumal* families cultivate land on rent. So people are also engaged in non agricultural occupation. Wage labor is also their temporary income source. In some of the cases, it was found that *Kumal* men who migrated to India and other countries for earning money, their family economic status was found higher than other *Kumal* women. Women are involved in agriculture works especially in vegetable production besides household activities; and agriculture is the major source of income in majority of the family. The women have high contribution in economic status of the family.

5.5.3 Ownership of Land

Land is considered as a key component among various properties. It was found that most of the *Kumal* Women work in the agricultural sector and major field of agriculture is land. Women do not have any legal right over land, so they do not have

land on their own name. The head of the family is the proper owner of the whole land and he uses it whatever way he wishes. After his death all his property is transferred to his son's name in place of his wife. Only in few cases were found where land ownership had transferred to women due to death of her husband (Case 9).

It was found that Women do not have ownership of personal property (*Pewa*). Most of the Women do not have to do the source of income of the family. They have to do whatever their household's head decides. They are unable to get income generating training and quality education. So, there is the lack of good health service and their mortality rate is high. If they have "*Pewa*" they can generate more income and fulfill their extra needs. So, *Pewa* is also considered as one of the significant tool to uplift their living status. It shows that there is no access of female in the land of their family due to patriarchal system prevalent in *Kumal* community and lack of awareness in the society.

5.5.4 Division of Labor

Women have to involve in the household activities as well as other activities. Even in the normal days they have to look after all the household activities and agricultural works. It was found that the male and female have fixed types of work whatever they do in their daily life. Males do hard types of labor work i.e. chopping of firewood, plugging, digging in the field, carrying load from place to place, and other income generating activities whereas female do soft types of work i.e. household chores like food preparation, fetching water, fuel wood, cleaning dishes, clothes rearing and caring of children and cleaning house. Beside these everyday works, they work in field in planting and harvesting seasons. They also engage in rising of live-stocks.

It was found that Women are mostly busy in house hold chores and other agricultural activities. Thus, they have high contribution in household and agricultural activities. They have very less time to spend in other productive activities or other learning opportunities. Most of the Women have to work more than 8 hours a day, which means they have very less time for rest and time to spend other activities. And also found that the wage labor cost was differential between men and women. Women are paid low wages in same type of works.

5.5.5 Household Chores

Generally, Women have more work load than men in household chores. In totality, Women involve in household chores such as cooking, cleaning, rearing children, regular house maintenance, grinding, fetching water and fire wood, feeding animals as extra work than male. Plugging and digging the field, are only work that male alone do, but both male and female do rest of the agricultural work. Among these works, agricultural works are the seasonal but the household activities are regular. So, the burden of workload is more to female. It was found that there is no doubt that the contribution of Women in household activities is 4 hours more than that of male.

It was understood by all case studies women social as well as economic status was not satisfactory in the study area.

5.6 Position of Women in Households Decision -making Process.

Involvement in family decision-making process is also important to change the status of women. Comparatively status of daughter is high than daughter- in -law. When they enter in the status of daughter-in-law, their status also drops down. When particularly at their old age, performing mother or mother-in-law, she can take part in decision-making processes. Except for a few percentage most of the Women have no authority over economic decision-making.

It was found that *Kumal* Women have been assigned a subordinate status to men in their society. They are not allowed to act as a decision-maker in the family. The role of Women in the household decision making and allocation of household resources depends upon the composition of household and Women's decision is limited only on the certain part.

Here, it was found that those Women who make all types of decision were single (widow) Women. Single women had active role in decision making process. They did all types of decision whatever in household and out of the household due to the absence of the husband and being small children. But generally women are not found in all of the decision making process. In some cases, Women made some decision in certain spheres like marriage, religious work, household expenses and, economic allotment.

5.6.1 Religious Work

Kumal community celebrated *Dashain* and *Tihar* as a national festival like other peoples. Besides they had their own type of cultural practice which is *Dewali puja* indigenous festival celebrated with in every 12 years. Both male and female had equal participation. Similarly they celebrated their peat caste festival (*Kulyan puja*) in every year. It was found that most of the Women made decision only on the household matters. They have only less opportunity in huge decision like financial or the economic matter of the house. They regarded that those matter are responsible to the men. But Women are more ahead on saving the money for they are more conscious on the future of the children and family as well. Besides, they are more bounded by the tradition and culture so they usually save for the rituals and celebrations and some religious works.

It was found that old age Women like grandmother, mother-in-law or mothers are found active in making decision regarding religious works. They decided that about *Puja* (worship), birth ceremony and marriage ceremony in the family, other family members also support their decision. They have deep faith on god and believe on traditional cultures, So that they know more than other family members about religious work and rituals, many types of ceremonies. And also they are respected by all family members. It shows that it is the social aspect where old persons are respected by small person in the family (Case 2 and case 6).

5.6.2 Household Expenses

Supportive attitude of husband or the other family members is very important while making decision by the Women. If the family members are more supportive to them they can easily take a role of decision-making. Thus it is important that they discuss while making decision in household expenses. Women in some cases were found having active role in decision-making process regarding the buying of daily necessities and clothes. But here, it was found in most of the cases, that women did not have total support from husband because of the patriarchal nature of the society. In most of the cases it was found that before making household expenses women did consult with male member where male allotted the resources.

5.6.3 Saving

It was found that some educated Women were involved in saving process, when their husbands sent money from their working place for household expenses. In that time they collect the money in Bank for future. Even, they did not have total authority on economic activities; they could do just saving not spending. They were found active in family for awareness of health problems and educational awareness. They are much conscious for saving process. All family members have respect to the views of educated women about their saving concerns for health maintenance (Case 3 and case 10).

In this study, it was found that those Women who make most of the decisions by herself are single and separated Women. It means where the men are absent, Women could be head of the family. When men had gone out of house to earn money in that situation Women could make all types of decision themselves (Case 4, 9). It shows that if, they got opportunity they can easily handle like financial decision but where men are not absent, they could not get chance for handling the decision making responsibility. In this study area most of the women had no important role of economic sphere regarding decision making.

It was understood by all cases that women have less decision-making authority in comparison to their male counterpart within family. *Kumal* Women made more decision of food preparation, fetching water and firewood, cleaning dishes and clothes and child care. They could play role in decision making through their husband. But the head of the family household deserves the authority to the final decision making. Hence, *Kumal* women do not have equal role in decision making and statuses are also complex. It was found that their authority in decision-making varies in different types of activities of their day to day life; in some context causes of their less decision-making authority are illiteracy, traditional belief, social norms and values and lack of knowledge

CHAPTER-VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The research was undertaken to find out the status of *Kumal* women. Its major objectives were to analyze the status of *Kumal* women in the study area. And it also aimed to examine the women's position in decision-making process within household. The major quest of this research was to analyze the economic, social, educational status of *Kumal* women.

6.1 Summary

Nepalese society consists of the various caste ethnicity, tribe and communities holding different beliefs custom and culture, hence the status of women differ from one corner of the country to the other. The status of *Kumal* women also differs from rural to the urban context. *Kumals* are one of the socio-economically back-ward communities in Nepal. So, the women have socially and economically lower status in comparison with male *Kumals*. *Kumal* Women are mostly dominated and suppressed in different aspects within the households as a whole in the society. They were limited in household and agricultural activities because of their illiteracy, poverty and unconsciousness.

By caste *Kumals* are regarded as the potter and their occupation was making clay pots but now a days their main occupation is based on agriculture. So obviously, they have much workload. Due to this they have less time or opportunity or the access to education and other facilities. So that *Kumal* women are backwards in terms of education, awareness and other aspect. Their monthly income was not sufficient for their livelihood because just some of men are found jobholder and Women are jobless. Most of the *Kumal* family depends on agriculture labor. The majority of the women are housewife however they have to give their time in agricultural work and some of them in other alternatives of work. Women have high contribution in economic level of the family but it was not counted. The average monthly income of the family is Rs.1000-12000. Assets ownership is one of the important indicators which determine the status of women in the society. Only some cases households are reported having women ownership of assets as land, house and livestock. Most of the women do not have ownership of their property.

The study shows that *Kumal* women have high work load for instance they have to be busy in household chores for about 10 hours per day normally and these time may increase time of festivals, cultivation and harvesting. They get support in some of these works from their husband too. However they get support of their husband in cooking food, cleaning house, preparing children for school. But those women who had not husband they were found support of the children.

This study was done with 10 cases, whereas their literacy rate was found low. Due to the poverty and cultural practices women were uneducated. Cause of the poverty is that they have insufficient land; most of families were not engaged in any job. They cultivate land on rent and they depend on wage labor. So, generally *Kumal* women's illiteracy rate was found high in the study area. But the situation was found changing in present context. Youths were found educated; some of them had even completed S.L.C due to the impact of the awareness of education. But married and unmarried women had still differences in the matter of education. It was found that married women did not continue their study due to the household tasks and responsibilities of all family, they are confined in house.

In terms of health, the diet consumption was not found satisfactory. Since they are in the joint family, they gave less priority to the illness and treatment. Majority of them go to health post for treatment. Only some of them would go for treatment in private clinic. Since they are in rural place where there is not proper access for health caring due to the household tasks. It was found in the study area that sanitation system was not good. They are still careless of their health concern due to the lack of the health awareness and load of the agricultural works. Few women from nuclear families with strong income source were found conscious about their health.

While focusing on the process of decision-making, most of the women make decisions regarding agricultural and buying utensils, household necessities, religious work and saving process by their own. But they discuss with their husband or respected person before taking any decision. The control on the decision-making process is taken by the men. It was also found that those women, who were separated and widow their responsibilities and decision making power were more than other women. But they are found suppressed and dominated by other family members. Hence the study shows that the women in *Kundur* village are less aware of political information but they are much aware of the necessity of their representation to advocate on the women issues.

6.2 Conclusions

It was revealed that, in each and every aspect women have to bear inferiority than men in study area. *Kumal* women have to play only sub-ordinate role in the society. They have low status in family, health, education, economic, decision- making role and political participation. They are disadvantaged, uneducated, deprived, discriminated, exploited socially as well as economically within society and even in family due to the poverty and lack of the knowledge.

The early marriage is prevailing in the society. Early marriage creates the early child bearing complicated process. As early child bearing inhibits the women's opportunities to education, occupation and other advantageous activities so health status was very low. Due to son preference, a traditional superstitious belief, husband-wife relationship was not good. They are unconscious about health awareness due to lack of the education and workload of their daily life. Their health becomes worse and suffering from malnutrition and different types of diseases which makes poor status in their families.

Kumal women's economic status was low due to their involvement in household activities which is not directly related with income generating activities. Joint family is changing into nuclear family due to the rapid change of their occupation and movement from rural areas to urban areas. Although their work load is still growing up, their status has not changed as required/desired due to patriarchal system. Besides that they do not have full access to family's property, their economic status is still low. The discrimination in labor cost also shows the lower status of *Kumal* women.

Educational status of *Kumal* was low, because *Kumal* society is not in the favor of girl's education; they think that girls have to go to their husband house after marriage. Due to poverty, discrimination of education for male and female women become lower status in the study area.

Women have to participate in household and also in the economic matter like agriculture but women make decision only on the household matter. They have no control on decision making regarding of the financial or the economic matter of the house. They said that these matters are the responsibility of the men. Even, Women are more conscious of the future of the children and family as well.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Respondent male/Female....., Caste/Ethnic group.....
 Religion....., Natal village/tole....., VDC..... Word no.
 District.....

Please provide some information on individuals who belong to this household (begin from the oldest Persons).

Individual ID(full Name)	Relation to respondent	Sex	Age	Marital status	Occupation	Education	Residential status

Relations: R= Respondent. Hu= Husband, Wi= Wife, Fa= Father, Mo= Mother, So= son, Da= Daughter (use combination of these for others relation)

Marital Status: UM= unmarried, M= married, Wid= Widowed, Sep= Separated, Div= Divorced.

Education Status: Illiterate, Literate (those who can read and write), and Class. Level Degree (if applicable).

5. What do you grow in your land?

Grain	Cash Crops	Main Vegetable	Fruit / Roots

6. Do you have cattle?

Yes.....

No.....

If yes, please provide information:

Name	No.	Name	No.	Name	No.	Others	No.
Cow		Buffalo(H)		Horse			
Ox		Goat		Calf			
Buffalo(S)		Pig		Sheep			

7. Had any member of your family gone for foreign employment or outside for last ten years?

Yes.....

No.....

If yes, in which country and what was the occupation.....

8. Do you have any individual property like 'Daijo, Pewa'?

9. How is your average income per month?

a. Below Nrs3000 b. 3000-6000

c. 6000-9000 d. above Nrs 9000

10. How many hours do you work per day?

a. Four hours b. Eight hours

c. Ten hours c. Other

11. Who makes the necessary expenditure at your house?

S.No	Name	Sex	Title of expenditure	Total expenditure

Health Status

1. Are you suffering from any disease since last three years?

Yes: write the name of disease and time.....

No:.....

2. Where do you go for the treatment?

- a. Hospital
- b. Private clinic/hospital
- c. Health post
- d. Witch doctor

4. Do you have toilet?

- a. Yes
- b. No

5. Do you use any means of family planning?

Social Status

1. Are you involved in any social institution or organization?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If yes by when..... and in which.....

If no why.....

2. How many children do you have?

- a. One
- b. Two
- c. Three
- d. more than three

4. What was your age when you got marry?

- a. Below 15
- b. 15-20
- c. 20-25
- d. Above 25

5. In which types of family are you living?

- a. Single family
- b. Joint family
- c. Extended family

6. Which religion do you fallow?

- a. Hinduism
- b. Buddhism
- c. Christianity
- d. Islam

7. Mention one of the major festivals of your society?

- a. Dashain
- b. Tihar
- c. Indigenous festivals
- d. Others

Decision-making process

1. Who played the vital role to make the decision at your house?

- a. Grandfather/mother
- b. Father/mother
- c. Son/daughter
- d. others

2. Do you have any role in the decision making process at your house?

If yes mention the role:

If no why.....

3. Do your husband or other male partner of your family assist you in your household work?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

If, yes describe:

- (a) Food preparation
- (b) Child rearing
- (c) Agricultural work
- (d) Others

4. In your community, who makes the decision regarding the selection of life partner?

- (a) Parent
- (b) Self
- (c) Others