

CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Women are the major part of society. Although it is said that men and women are the wheel of the same chariot and they must be treated equally, in practice we don't find that. There are many western developed countries where men and women are treated equally, they enjoy the right and freedom equally but in others developing and underdeveloped countries like ours we find women's condition miserable compare with them.

Nepal is a country of great geographic, cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. Across the diversity, the majority of communities in Nepal are patriarchal and patrilocal. A women's life is strongly influenced by her father, husband and son. Such patriarchal practices are further reinforced by the legal system. Marriage has a great importance in women's' life. The event of marriage determines the way of her life. The early marriage generally depreciates the women's life. A woman's power to accept or reject marriage partner is evidently an index of the degree of freedom she exercises in the management of her own life, and thus also of her status. The status of women is determined by the patriarchal social system, values, and women's right preserved and protected by the state, and state policy for the development of women.

Women in Nepal constitute 50.03% of the total population. However, the social system that defines access to resources and opportunities leaves women more disadvantaged than men. The low status of women, systems of patriarchal descent, patriarchal residence and rules of inheritance interact to isolate and subordinate women throughout the country. Gender issues are thus interwoven systematically into the basic social structure of Nepalese society, as are other traditional cultural values. Deeply embedded, they obstruct the empowerment of the poor and the disadvantaged groups throughout the country including women. One of the fact is that Nepal is the only country in the world where women's life expectancy is shorter than men.

It is obvious that women constitute half of the population of world. Hence their equal participation in every aspect of the development activities is most desirable. Until the

women are not participated practically the slogan of development remains only in papers.

Women have long been categorized as “housewives” until now in Nepalese society. Women’s role as a housewife and the care giver to family is prominent in Nepal. The concept of housewife applies to women whose activities are limited to household and domestic chores categorized as “reproductive” or “unproductive” work.

Women’s status in Nepalese society is low. Many factors are responsible for women’s subordination in Nepalese society. The gender gap and the inequalities still exist. Women in Nepal lag far behind men in economic, social and political position. While they are largely poor due to shared common poverty, their access to the knowledge, skill, resources, opportunities and power has ever been low. Female literacy rate, 42.8 percent is much lower than the male literacy rate, 65.1 percent (Census report, 2001). Enrollment ratio of girls at primary and secondary education is lower than those of boys and their dropout rates are even much higher. Women’s life expectancy at birth is 63.3 years, are year shorter than that of men 64.1 years (CBS Report, 2006). How socio-demographic factors influences women’s autonomy in decision making on health care including purchasing goods and visiting family and relatives are very poorly studied in Nepal. This study aims to explore the links between women’s household position and their autonomy in decision making.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Nepalese Women are disadvantaged and underprivileged in terms of their socio-economic status as compared to their male counterparts. The long-standing and deep-seated impression is that women are weak, passive and home-oriented, less intelligent and less capable than men. It is vastly internalized in our society. Women, mostly, are engaged in their household activities.

The fact is that women are oppressed and suppressed lots in our society. They are discriminated in all the sector of decision making and are not considered as main parts of development activities. Decision making is an important factor which measures the relative status of the household’s members. Men have major role of decision making inside the household as well as outside. Men ask female only for formality and their

decision has not prominent part in any activities in household and in society. Only very few women get opportunity to be leading decision maker.

Despite the innumerable policies and programs regarding gender mainstreaming the women in Nepal could not have the access of roles responsibilities and results to their family, society and country. The researcher has some important research questions regarding the access of decision-making role of women in the study area, which area as follows.

-) What is the socio-economic background of the study area?
-) What is the access to women in household decision making level?
-) What is the women's autonomy in decision making associated with their age and position in family?
-) What are the constraints in women's access of decision-making role in the study area?
-) What are the views regarding supporting aspects of women for the households decision-making?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to analyze women's role in household level decision-making role in the study area. The specific objectives of this study are:

The specific objectives of the study are,

-) To find out socio-cultural and economic background of women in chunnikhel VDC.
-) To find out the sectors of women in their household decision making
-) To examine the variation on women's involvement in the area of household decision making level
-) To find out the constraints of women in decision making at household level.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

Considering the importance of household decision making role in the socio-economic development of women my study is focused on generalizing the awareness to make capable and to get access of household decision making role, which comprises a large

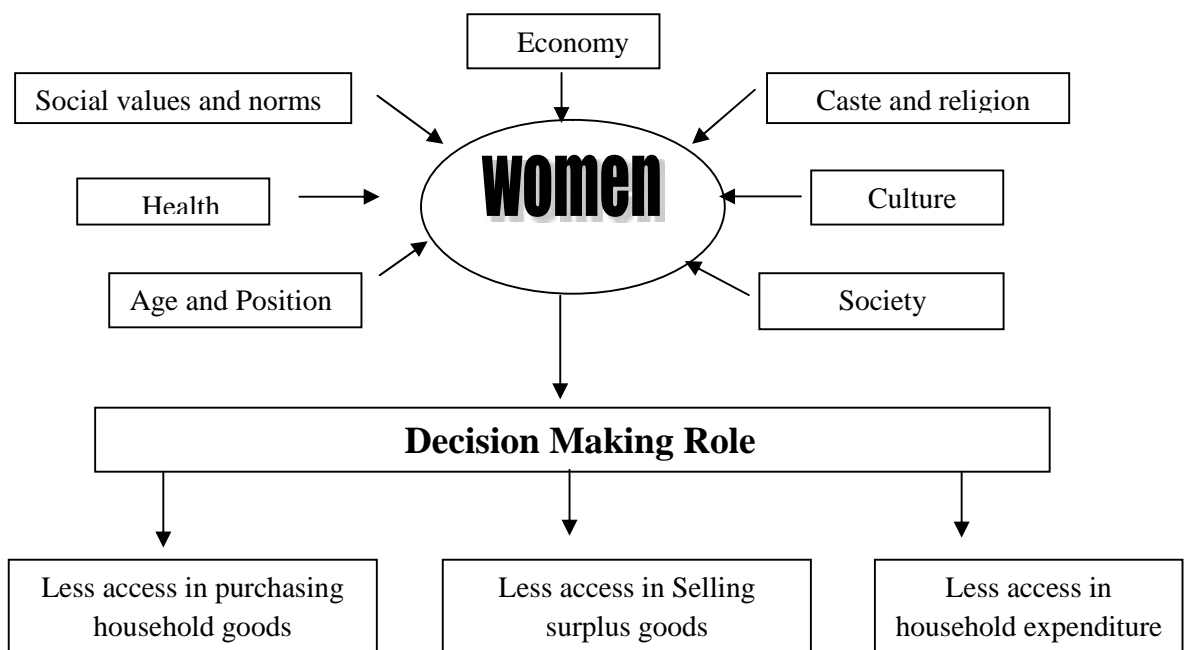
portion of rural areas and majority of the rural people with low level of socio-economic living.

In reality, the state of deprivation, domination, lack of the authority and power in property, and decision-making may occur to the female of the ward of the Chunnikhel VDC, where the researcher is focused on the study of household decision-making role on the study area. So my study is concentrated on this issue, which would be an apt exercise to raise the awareness to make the equitable status of men and women in the decisive role at the household to the national level.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

-) Every study has limitations. The present study has also some limitations.
-) The study has been conducted within the given time frame and financial limitations. This is a micro level partial study and limited to a small cluster in a rural area.
-) Thus, the findings of this study may not be representative in other rural areas. The study basically has been concerned to a specific area to analyze the women's participation in a ward of a Chunnikhel VDC

1.6 Conceptual Framework



Nepalese women are said to be doing all the house works, feeding kids, cleaning the houses taking care of the livestock and domestic animals, washing dishes and doing laundry. Men don't so dishes and don't do laundry. She also takes care of husband's mother, brothers and sisters. In many cases her works are never rewarded, everyone complains. While life's all decisions are made by nepali man, she goes about her daily monotonous life, in her home and backyard, she works harder then men and she dies earlier. The above diagram explores the roles and responsibility of women in society and family as a whole. We find that women in centre is bounded and suppressed by social norms and values, caste and religion, social institution and their rules, economic condition, culture, her health condition etc. all these factor leads her to less role related to economy, household expenditure, occupation and decision making on health. Thus we find the position and the autonomy of women indecision making level very poor.

CHAPTER - TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Development approaches; A Review about women's participation in Development:

The term gender was first coined by British sociologist Ann Oakley in 1944. After the industrial revolution during 1950's there, was big change in human kind. After the French revolution there was question raised about women's status in the society. Women found all over inequality between the sexes in every sphere of life. Women demanded to define their position and sought space in home and society based on equality principle. During 1950's there was high growth in service sector, which brought the high no of women working in public sector. Women's traditional role in the family was changed. During 1950's to 1960's several movements like, Black civil rights movement, New left (radical) movement (against capitalism and state socialism), War resistant movements played vital role in building women's status equal to men. Similarly National Organization for Women (NOW) was established in 1966, which raised most of the issues then, some of are:

-) Equal rights in all spheres of life (legal reforms)
-) Equal opportunities
-) Issues of sexuality (reproductive rights, abortion, contraception, body politics)
-) Violence against women
-) Equal wages
-) Educational reforms
-) Patriarchy

Similarly several feminist theories defined women's status in society in different ways. Theories like, Radical, Liberal, Marxist, Socialist, Psychoanalytic, are there and among them radical theory was the most prominent one. This theory was able to describe concepts like body politics, autonomy, and patriarchy more profoundly.

In this way different woman movements became the way to bring the equality between men and women. The major impacts of women movements were the

organization of UN conferences for women, in Mexico-1975, in Copenhagen (Denmark)-1980, in Nairobi (Kenya)-1985, in Beijing-1995. Several international declarations, resolutions and conventions in favor of women were made.

In case of Nepal the establishment of national commission for women played a vital role for improving status of women. Beside several INGOs/NGOs were established to work in the sector of women. These organizations mainly worked in the case of women violence and equal opportunities for women. They worked as mediator between government and citizen, and forced government to think about the status of women in every corner of the country.

The historic revolution of 2062/63 B.S brought changes throughout the country. Along with the historical movement several movements of women were also held. Adhibasi/Janajati Mahila Andolan, movement of equal property rights for women and so on. Among them the declarations of 33% of women's participation in every sector of the country was a historical declaration, which motivated women to participate in decision making process of the country. This historical declaration was made in 2007 A.D. However this historical declaration forced different political parties to include women candidate in Constitute Assembly Election.

In CA Assembly the political parties tried to include 33% of women candidate. The election was held in 2064 B.S, 24th of Chaitra.

Liberal Feminism

The observable differences between the sexes are not innate but a result of socialization and sex role conditioning. The ways, in which boys and girls are treated differently, from about the moment of birth, arguably discourage women from developing their full potential as human beings.

To liberate women it is necessary to demonstrate that men and women are equal in potential that women are fully human, that the differences between men and women in our society are due to the different ways in which boys and girls are socialized (Abbott; Wallace, 1997).

Liberal feminism asserts the equality of men and women through political and legal reform. It is an individualistic form of feminism, which focuses on women's ability to

show and maintain their equality through their own actions and choices. Liberal feminism uses the personal interactions between men and women as the place from which to transform society. Acc, to liberal feminist, all women are capable of asserting their ability to achieve equality, therefore it is possible for change to happen without altering the structure of society (Source; Wikiepedia)

Liberal feminism sees nothing of particular value about the private sphere, except perhaps that it permits emotional openness. Instead, the private sphere consists of the endless round of demanding, mindless, unpaid and undervalued tasks associated with housework childcare, and the emotional practical and sexual servicing of adult men. The true rewards of social life money, power, status freedom, opportunities for growth and self-worth are to be found in the public sphere. The system that restricts women's access to that sphere, burdens them with private sphere responsibilities, isolates them in individual households and excuses their mates from any sharing of private-sphere drudgeries is the system that produces gender equality (Ritzer, 1992).

Liberal feminism propose the following strategies for eliminating gender inequality; mobilization to use existing political and legal channels for change; equal economic opportunities; changes in family school and mass media messages so that people no longer are socialized into rigidly compartmentalized sex roles; and attempts by all individuals to challenge sexism where they encounter it in daily life (Ibid, 1992).

Liberal feminism views that female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints blocking women's entrance to and success in the so called political world. Because society has the false belief that women are by nature less intellectually and physically capable than men, it excludes women from the academy, the forum, and the market place. As, a result of this policy of exclusion, the true potential of many women goes unfulfilled, liberal feminism seeks to reform the laws and customs that have included women and gain access for women on an equal basis with men (Tong, 1998).

Marxist feminism

The relational basis for women's subordination lies in the family, an institution aptly named from the Latin world for servant, because family as it overwhelmingly a system of dominant and subordinate roles (Ritzer, 1992).

Marxist feminists acknowledge that within any class, women are less advantaged than men in their access to material goods, power, status and possibilities for self-actualization. The causes of this inequality lie in the organization of capitalism itself (Ibid, 1992).

Women, then, are unequal to men not because of any basic and direct conflict of interest between these genders but because of the working out of the class oppression, with its attendant factors of property inequality, exploited labour, and alienation. The fact that within any class women are less and advantaged than men, rather than vice-versa, seems in Marxian feminism to have no immediate structural cause (Ibid, 1992).

Women's social position is exploited by capital and their dependent and powerless relationship with husbands and fathers. Patriarchal relationships need to be incorporated into class analysis; that is, it is necessary to recognize that men have privileges as men and wield power over women even within the working class (Abbott & Wallace, 1997).

Radical Feminism

Sexual division of labor and the sexual class system predates and is more basic than the specialized division of labor that differentiates all members of society and the economic class system that divides both male and female sexual inequality is rooted in biological differences. Unlike economic class, sex class sprang directly from a biological reality; men and women were created different and not equally privileged. Because women bore children they were dependent on men for their survival. Dependence on men produced unequal power relationships and power psychology, which formed the basis for all future stratification systems. Men derived pleasure from their power over women, which led to 'power psychology' the desire to dominate others (Firestone, 1945).

Radical feminism sees all society as characterized by oppression. Every institution is a system by which some people dominate others, and in society's most basic structures, in the associational patterns between classes; castes; racial, ethnic and religious groups; age and gender categories. Of all these systems of domination and subordination, the most fundamental structure of oppression is gender, the system of patriarchy (Ritzer, 1992).

Women are a useful labor force, as the Marxian's have noted. They also can be ornamental signs of male status and power, as carefully controlled companions to both the child and the adult male; they are pleasant partners, sources of emotional support, and useful foils who reinforce, over and over again, the males sense of their own central social significance. These useful functions mean that men everywhere seek to keep women compliant. But differing social circumstances give different rank orders to these functions and therefore lead to cross-cultural variations in the patterning of patriarchy (Ibid, 1992).

Radical feminism rejects the social reform as the means for women's liberation contending that nothing short of a revolution in human consciousness that dismantles the sex-gender system (there by dismantling patriarchy) can bring about women's oppression is the most widespread, existing in virtually every society and cannot be removed by other social changes such as the abolition of class society (Tong, 1998).

2.2 Empirical Review

Ethnographers tend to view politics as a male past time, with the exception of a few queens, powerful matriarchs, or talented courtesans, women are seldom seen as political actors, but rather as pawns to be used in the political maneuvers of men: hoarded for their productive, reproductive and prestige-enhancing value, or traded to created and cement alliances. This view has surface validity for male informants often speak of women as pawns, and women are usually excluded from political gatherings, ineligible for political office, and occupied with child rearing and domestic tasks (Collier, 1974)

Women may never achieve political offices or hold recognized authority, but their actions constrain the choices open to politically active men. Although male informants may treat women as politically irrelevant, the anthropologist who seeks a deeper understanding of political processes cannot ignore women's goals and strategies (Ibid, 1974)

Women are always at a disadvantage in competing for power and prestige, but their handicap is least in those political systems where leadership rests on ability and where there is little separation between domestic and public spheres. In such fluid systems, women's efforts to achieve power and to influence decisions may even be recognized

as recurring and acceptable aspects of political life. But in political systems where decisions are made outside the home and where leadership rests on control of resources available primarily to men, women are often excluded from direct political participation (Ibid, 1974)

According to the political scientist Lester Millbrath (1965), there are basically three levels of political activism. The lowest level, Spectator activities, includes wearing campaign buttons or putting a bumper sticker on your car. Millbrath also considers voting a Spectator activity because it requires minimal effort. In the middle are Transitional activities, such as writing to public officials, making campaign contributions, and attending rallies or meetings. The highest level of political activity, what Millbrath calls Gladiator activities, include working on a political campaign, taking an active role in a political party, or running for public office. Gladiator activities require maximum effort and commitment (Renzetti, Curran, 2003).

Contrary to popular myth that men are more interested and active in politics, there are actually few differences between the sexes in their level of political activism. In general, both women and men are fairly uninvolved in politics. Historically, women have been slightly more likely than men to engage in the Spectator activities of wearing buttons and displaying bumper stickers, while men have been more involved in transitional activities, especially contributing money to political campaigns (Lynn, 1984)

When it comes to getting into school and colleges Nepalese women don't get same opportunity as that of males women literacy rate is 34% which is half of that of male. Since 1990 many Nepalese women have been able to uplift their social life through efforts by the government as well as NGOS and INGOS. In 1990 Nepalese women increased their role in village councils. Government thus allocated 20% seats for female at village level and continues to do so in other government offices, party level and so on.

Status of Female in Public and Private Domain

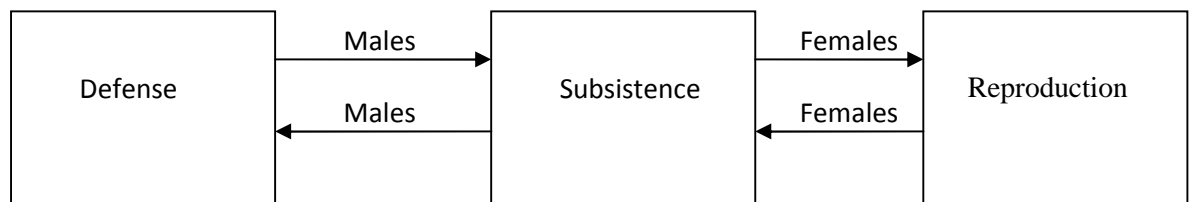
In developing an operational definition of female status, it is necessary to distinguish between the domestic and public domain and to decide whether to focus on the degree to which women are respected and revered in the domestic and public domains or to

concentrate only on the degree to which women hold power and/ or authority in one of these domains (Sanday, 1974).

The domestic domain includes activities performed within the realm of the localized family unit. The public domain includes political and economic activities those take place or have impact beyond the localized family unit and that relate to control of persons or control of things (Ibid, 1974).

A Theory of female status in the public domain

The basic argument for the theory, presented in the figure below postulates that initially female energy is concentrated in the reproductive and child-rearing sphere, whereas male energy is concentrated mainly in the subsistence sphere.



The flow of male and female energy in three task activities

Over time the presence of human predators causes men to move out of the subsistence sphere and into the defense sphere. Depending on the nature of the warfare, its prolongation, and its interference with male subsistence activities females move into the subsistence sphere to replace the displaced male energy. Females remain in the subsistence sphere according to whether males continue in warfare activities or become involved in other activities resulting in prolonged male absence. Even if men move back into the subsistence sphere, some women may remain. Over time their number may grow as men periodically flow in and out of the subsistence sphere. This process may in time give rise to a condition of balanced division of labor, i.e. both sexes contribute to subsistence activities (Ibid, 1974).

The major argument of feminists has been that ‘the personal is the political’ – that is, that politics is concerned with the dynamics of power relationships in society and

must therefore be concerned with the power relationships between men and women. Thus in the public sphere the power that men exercise over women is often ignored while their domination in the domestic sphere is even less often considered (Abbott & Wallace, 1997).

The feminist definition of politics puts on the agenda not only power relationships between men and women at the personal level, but also the importance of patriarchal ideology in controlling women's lives. Feminists argue that the very division between public and private is a patriarchal idea used to exclude women and women's concerns from politics. They argue that women have been excluded from participation in politics and public life and that the state has constructed the family as private- as an institution outside state intervention (Ibid, 1997).

Status of Women in Nepal

Women have always constituted about half of the population and the fact that a society can not advance without their moving forward along with men has been recognized from the beginning of the planned development. Nevertheless, initially women were viewed as a welfare issue as all human development issue was. Expenditure on education and health and other social items was categorized as was the expenditure on improving women's access to such services. This was the 1st phase of attention to women's needs. They were viewed just as consumer's mothers & wives. Their well being and education was considered necessary primarily because they were mothers and companions to men (Acharya, 2004).

The Nepalese social system is based on patriarchal Hindu philosophy that empowers men and subordinates women. It is therefore that women are weak and dependent on men and derive their social status (including inheritance right, ritual status and access to property) from their fathers, husbands and sons. Her only property in her home (where she is married) is her ability to work. The more she works to sustain the subsistence economy the more prestige she gains in the family (Luitel, 2001).

The cultural barriers against Nepalese women restrict them from freely participating in the main stream of development. Women face inferior socio-cultural status than men, more particularly amongst the caste groups. Similarly, patriarchal ideology of the society has imposed discriminatory sexual taboos against women, particularly

with regards to virginity, marriage, divorce and widow. The patriarchy system has domesticated and subjugated Hindu-women and Non-Hindu women through coercive process (Bhattachan, 2003).

Women empowerment issue has been a hot cake at present. But there does not seem any significant difference from the welfare approach of the program conducted during the women's decade. After 1975 was declared as women's year and women's issues were formally addressed (Luitel, 2001).

The women have been given subsidiary roles in decision making by our society, but they carry a heavy burden of work in supporting the family structure call it a feudal system or a patriarchal society. The women have been denied the role they deserve. They family wealth or property is traditionally divided or inherited only by the male descendents. The daughter does not even inherit the family name of her marriage. If she remains unmarried, the society does not give her respectable status she is despised by her siblings and abused by her sisters-in-law. In the lowest rung, the daughter is deprived of education and respect in the family. It is, therefore no wonder that she is completely unaware about her rights (Sharma, 2007).

The political exclusion of Nepalese women is another area of gender disparity. Women are marginalized from the mainstream of development and hence from the decision making process. This marginalization is prominent both in public and private realm obstructing their empowerment process. Female participation in the House of Representatives was just 3.41% and in the Upper House it was only 8.33%. Likewise, they have very little participation in civil service at 8.55% and judiciary being 2.04% (NPC, 2002).

Women's Participation Nepalese Political Parties

Nepalese women who comprise of more than 50% of the total population sustain very poor status in health, education, political participation, income generation self confidence, decision making, access to policy making and human rights (Jagaran, 2007).

According to a survey done by Jagaran Nepal, involvement of women in district level committee is found to be much negligible. Hardly 12% inclusion of women in the

district committees of the selected parties was identified. Almost similar (9.1%) of the women was identified in the central committees of the selected parties (Jagaran, 2007).

The identified DCMs are involved in their respective party politics for improving the status of the women themselves in the current democratic era as they claimed they can bring holistic changes to the society by involving in the party activities so that the concept of equality between men and women can be achieved in a realistic way. Almost all the identified and selected DCMs were satisfied with the involvement in the party politics. They were involved in the parties due to the motivation of the family members such as parents. However, some of the women DCMs were found to be self motivated. Many of the selected men DCMs were influenced by their friends. Many of them were students before involving in the political parties. A few of the women cadres were housewives. None of the DCMs were found in DM level and none of them were in key posts like chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers. Despite being in the central committees almost none of the selected women members were involved in the decision making level of the respective political parties (Ibid, 2007).

2.3 Review of Previous Studies

A. Studies Related to the Women's Participation in Decision-Making

Women's autonomy in health-care decision-making is extremely important for better maternal and child health outcomes, and as an indicator of women's empowerment. (International Conference on Population and Development, 2009). Gender-based power inequalities can restrict open communication between partners about reproductive health decisions as well as women's access to reproductive health services. This in turn can contribute to poor health outcomes. (Power in Sexual Relationships: An Opening Dialogue among Reproductive Health Professionals, 2009)

In Nepal, as in most parts of South Asia, women commonly have less power and autonomy than men in making decisions about their own health care. Moreover, women often have unequal access to food, education, and health care, limited opportunities to earn incomes, restricted access to, and control over, productive

resources, and very few effective legal rights. (ADB to Promote Greater Empowerment for Nepal's Most Disadvantaged Women, 2009)

The first study done by Acharya and Bennet was related to the condition of rural women of Nepal. The study highlights the time allocation pattern of women and men at household activities. Women's performance almost all kind of agricultural activities expect ploughing and they spend 9 hours, however, men spent only 5 hours. The degree of involvement varies considerably across ethnic groups and social classes. The study concludes that women's involvement is more than men in farming and they perform almost all domestic task of household (Acharya and Bennet: 1981). The study does not highlight the situation of women living in urban and non-agriculture sectors.

Ahooja focuses on the women's participation on development. He presents the statistics about the women's contribution in various sectors. The women constitute the largest number of food producers (i.e. approximately 50 percent) in Africa, 30-40 percent in Asia, then in Latin America. The least qualified jobs are filled by women. Women get low wages in comparison to the men counterparts. One billion women in the third world's countries cannot read. Education is one of the major factors of determining the decision-making (Ahooja: 1982). This study focuses on the contribution of women in various sectors but does not analyze their role in decision-making in these sectors.

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

In a study done by Acharya and Bennet developed a model of the status of women in Nepal. The findings of that model were the first sphere women's participation in farming and domestic activities. The model reveals that women participation in

farming and domestic activities constitutes 86 percent of their total work. Their contribution in household income was 50 percent; however men's and children's contribution was 44 percent and 6 percent respectively. There is different degree of female participation in market economy in different communities and this subsequently relates to their decision-making power in the household.

They also found that women from Hindu society largely participate in domestic and subsistence production but they have less important role in major household decisions, however, in the case of Tibet-Burman communities, women's participation is found more in the market economy (buying and selling in terms of money) and have more power in household decision-making. The study further reveals that dowry has much more influence in decision-making, small number of children has higher economic participation and greater decision-making power (Acharya and Bennet: 1983).

National planning commission of Nepal has summarized that there are two major quantitative indicators of women status used the relative input into two areas of decision-making viz. farm management, and involvement in local market economy and domestic activities. The commission has also analyzed that Hindu society is largely confined to non-market i.e. domestic and subsistence production, displaying a less significant role in decision-making. Women's participation in the market economy has improved their status and this is more conspicuous among Tibet-Burman communities (NPC: 1992). Including economic factor, socio-cultural, political, educational and legal factors are also important part in the decision-making process.

A country report of Nepal describes that women are responsible for a very large share of home, farm, agricultural production but have disproportionate access to all inputs and resources. The high rate of illiteracy, economic dependence, lack of access to property, heavy work-burden and patriarchal norms and values imply the extent of female poverty (NPC: 1994). Women's actual labor force participation is under reported or estimated because much in the work women do in the subsistence farming category is not classified as economically active.

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

Acharya states that conservative social custom is one of the major reason obstructing women from full participation in economic development, which results low decision-making power in women's hand. Higher the women's participation in economic development, higher will be the decision-making power of women. On the other hand, the social conception is that only women are responsible for the reproduction of human beings, conception delivery and upbringing of child has made it extremely difficult for women to participate in the development process as equal member of society (Acharya: 1997). Due to all these reasons their status compared to men is very low.

Sharma, in his Ph. D. dissertation entitled "People Participation in Local Development Planning: A Case Study of Five Districts in the Western Development Region", describes that people participation is the involvement of people in the process of decision-making, which directly or indirectly influences their lives. Participation makes people feel belongingness which in turn brings a sense of ownership and it imports knowledge, idea and skill along with its involved experience. There is inter-relationship between local development and people participation. It cannot be achieved and rationalized without putting the people first. People are the end and means of development. He emphasized on the local people's participation in local level development planning. For it, local people should be empowered and aware of the local development and their participatory role in it. The involvement of people in the decision-making process depends basically upon the socio-economic and political milieu of the institutions. Finally, he concludes that until and unless the development of rural economy and socio-economic enhancement of the grass root people are not accomplished, the national development cannot be achieved (Sharma: 2000). This

study focuses on the people participation at local level but it does not highlight the women's role in the local level development planning.

A report of Enabling State Program states that Nepalese women's participation in decision-making level remains negligible, however, despite constitutional assurance and the flowery words of the leaders. After the election of 1999, only 5.8 percent parliament members and 2.4 percent of high level bureaucracy post as special class in Nepal were women who state minister of the cabinet. Less than 10 percent women are in the working committee of the political parties. Only 8 percent of the civil servants are women and most of them are in lower and middle level of jobs (ESP: 2000). Therefore, women's participation is very negligible in national level of decision-making.

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

Dangi in his study entitled "Women's Participation to their Household Management: A Case Study of Chuhandanda VDC, Terhathum District, concludes that Nepalese women still remains underprivileged as compared to their male counterparts. The study states that, in rural context, they work 17 percent extra hours than those of men in domestic and subsistence economy, however their socio-economic status remain both less recognized and more inferior in comparison to their male counterparts (Dangi: 2003). The study concludes that women play greater role in household and domestic management process but they need final approval of their household head in this process.

A study done by Thapa is focused to analyze the decision-making power of women in terms of social as well as household activities. The study concludes that women have lower decision-making power than their men counterparts. They have sub-ordinate role in family and in society. They have deprived from their right and responsibilities. In the major household activities, men play dominant role in decision-making. The women, who have higher educational qualification and employed have higher decision-making power than merely illiterate as well as economically dependent women (Thapa: 2004). The women's decision-making power is positively related to the socio-economic status.

A study on household decision making shows that 58.3 percent male and 25 percent female, and 16.6 percent of both made decision in selling agricultural products. Women were found to be actively participating in buying agricultural products but male dominated females in selling decisions. Only 46.1 percent women were decided to take job by themselves and 30.7 percent jobholder women had joined job in the decision made by their husbands. The study further shows that most of the women from higher family found literate and well educated than others but they are found weaker in decision-making power than lower caste women. Magar women are found more decisive role than others (Pandey: 2005). The study concludes that the reason of male dominating culture but it is not only one cause because education, economic condition, opportunity can play significant role in their decision-making role inside as well as outside the households.

A study on indigenous knowledge systems and practices, with gender perspective, on resource mobilization among Magas in Tanahun District has been conducted in 2005/06. The study finds that males and females have different levels of understanding about the knowledge systems. Females have been playing important role in managing resources like forest, water but their participation is not more income generation activities than males. Women do all most all household works but final decisions of the household are left to male counterparts (Thapa: 2006). Opportunities and empowerment is essential for women to enable for decision-making in their involved sectors.

CHAPTER - THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Rationale of the Selection of the Study Area

People from different caste, community and religion live in Chunnikhel VDC, Kathmandu. All sort of accesses and facilities are available there. Most of the people are employed in agriculture, services and other physical works. Most of their wives are engaged in household activities. So the females only stay at home in the daytime and they are most responsible to decide the household affairs. So, in the absence of male head the female has to take responsibilities to run their families. This locality is chose because this area is the nearer to my resident. In Kathmandu valley, majority of the people are Newar who are living as aboriginal residents. As the stereotypes, the male people go for the outdoor activity like in farms, jobs; other labor works and female stay at home keep eye on their child and operate household chores. The reason for the selection of the study area are as follows.

-) Limitation of time frame
-) Nearer to my residence
-) To explore the similarities of women's condition of city dwellers and village no far away from the city.
-) To explore the links between women's household position and their autonomy in decision making.

3.2 Research Design

In the present study, descriptive research design has been applied to study the targeted women's participation in decision-making. This research design has been considered as appropriate to know and delineate the existing situation of decision-making process among these women inside as well as outside their households and influencing factors of decision-making.

3.3 Universes and Sample Size

There are 250 households of this community have been residing in this village. Out of total, 100 respondents were sampled applying simple random selection process from the **38 households (15%)**.

3.4 Nature and Sources of Data

In the present study, data are quantitative as well as qualitative in nature. Both types of data were collected from the field by preparing questionnaire interview, key informant interview and women group discussion. Primary data were collected from the field. Similarly, secondary data were collected from the published and unpublished documents like books, journals, bulletins, reports and Chunnikhel VDC office.

3.5 Data Collection Techniques and Tools

The researcher collected required information by using techniques. Some appropriate as well as well-known techniques like Household Survey, Key Informant Interview (selected household females.) and Focus Group Discussion have been applied to collect primary information from the field. The primary data were collected using tools like questionnaire for household survey, interview schedule for key informant interview and checklist for Focus Group Discussion were administered. The primary data collection tools used in the present study is discussed below:

3.5.1 Questionnaire Interview

A schedule interview was developed for household survey in such a way that it covered participant's background, her role in decision-making, influencing factors, family's support and participation in non-household sectors. For the household interview the researcher divided whole the area into the four clusters and interviewed with Newar people randomly 25 numbers from each clusters.

3.5.2 Key Informant Interview

Key Informant Interview was taken with women engaged in house hold activities, housewives, mothers, outdoor working women both educated jobholders and uneducated women working in fields and farms, social workers etc. Interview scheduled covers the women's participation in household decision making, process of decision making, their role, influencing factors, support family members etc. Researcher interviewed 10 key informants of the study area belonging community. These KIIs taken in order to know the factors and social functions of the

3.5.3 Women Group Discussion (WGD)

Women of different caste and culture of the Chunnikhel VDC were participants in the focus group discussion. Total participants were divided into two groups, 7 to 10 participants were in each group. Participants were gathered and researcher played the role of facilitator. WGD was conducted about their role in household decision-making, participation in gender basis, process of decision-making and overall objectives of the study.

3.6 Data Processing, Analyzing and Presentation

In order to analyze the collected data, suitable tables and diagrams have been drawn according to the nature of the objectives of this research. For this simple computer software excel have been undertaken. After processing the data, some of the information was presented applying simple statistics such as tabulation, percentage and ratio, and most of the analysis rests descriptive.

3.7 Limitation of the study

Every study has limitations. The present study has also some limitations. The study has been conducted within the given time frame and financial limitations. This is a micro level partial study and limited to a small cluster in a rural area. Thus, the findings of this study may not be representative in other rural areas. The study basically has been concerned to a specific area to analyze the women's participation among the Newar community. Families of non- Newar families are excluded in this study. Quantitative analysis of the present study is based on only 100 respondents of Newar Community of the study area. Information and data collected from the other respondents are used for qualitative analysis in the present study. Finally this is the thesis for master degree in Sociology

CHAPTER – FOUR

THE SETTING AND THE RESPONDENTS PROFILE

4.1 The Setting

Chunikhel is a village in Kathmandu Districts in the Bagmati Zone of Central Nepal. It is 10 km north from the Kathmandu. In east and south it is surrounded by Gokarna, in west Kapan and in north Budhanilkantha. Chunikhel V.D.C. is an underdeveloped village of the Kathmandu Valley. There is least development of the infrastructure. The Dhobi Khola separate it from the Bubhanilkantha .the study area is full of natural beauty. An indigenous community Newars was the settlers of these areas.

The total population of the study area is 7500. Maximum people are involved in the agricultural activities. And the remaining portions are involved in business, services, labor work etc.

4.1.1 Physical Feature

Kathmandu valley lies at 1, 300 meters from the sea level, and is located between latitudes 27 32' 13' and 27 49' 10" north and longitudes 85 11' 31" and 85 31' 38" east. The climate is sub tropical temperature and cool temperature, with four distinct seasons: spring from March to May, summer from June to August, autumn from September to November, and winter from December to February. In general the annual maximum and minimum temperature are between 29 in June and 1 in January. The comparative monthly maximum and minimum temperature are varied.

4.1.2 Social Institutions

There is only one poorly equipped health post run by the local V.D.C. officials. But its operations are irregular and services limited. It deprives the Chunikhel V.D.C. people of health services. Coming to the city centers even for the minor health problem, they believe in the fate which is inaccessible for them at times due to their poor economic condition. The village is need of health related services within their easy reach.

There are only three schools in the study areas. Two have been run by private sectors and one is running under the governmental support. But this institution doesn't give

the quality education for the children. They have to move far from their home town for the quality educations.

Considering the common biases the conducted study area had been selected. It is the nearer area of the researcher. So it had been assumed to gather the accurate information and so on, the finding of the study will be reliable. The time and resources constraints to a student did not permit to go away from the residential areas, thus accessible area was selected. Women should participate and plays the role in decision making process of the household activities as well as extra-household activities in the absence of the husband

This chapter deals with the socio-economic as well as demographic aspects of respondent of the study area. Out of the total 250 household, 100 respondents were taken as sample .Questionnaire interview were asked to respondent both male and females. In this chapter age-sex composition, ethnic composition, education, marital status, family structure, types of HHs, land distribution, occupation and other activities are included.

4.2 Ethnic Composition

In the study area, there were different ethnic groups such as Newar, Brahmin, Chhetri and few Dalits. But the researcher has made participated only the Newars because Newars are the focus of the study. But in the study area the composition of the households as per the ethnic diversity has been shown in the table and the figure 4.2 and 2 respectively.

Table 4.1
Distribution of Respondents by Ethnicity

| Caste-ethnic Group | Total | Percentage |
|--------------------|-------|------------|
| Newar | 80 | 32 |
| Chhetri | 75 | 30 |
| Brahmin | 60 | 24 |
| Other | 35 | 14 |
| Total | 250 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of respondent by ethnicity. Out of 250 household 80 were Newar, 75 were Chhetri, 60 were Brahmin and Othere consist 35 houses in the research area.

4.3 Age and Sex

The age is most important factor in demography and it makes difference in working hours, types of work, decision making roles, social relation and responsibilities. Age determines the social status of people. Age has great influence in terms of decision making and taking part in social activities.

The age groups divided as 10-20, 20-30, 30-40, 40-50, 50-60 and above 60 years of age. The following table shows the age composition by sex of respondents of the study area.

Table 4.2
Distribution of Respondents by Age and Sex

| Age Group | Male | Female | Total | Percent |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|
| 10-20 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 6 |
| 20-30 | 9 | 10 | 19 | 19 |
| 30-40 | 7 | 20 | 27 | 27 |
| 40-50 | 13 | 12 | 25 | 25 |
| 50-60 | 7 | 8 | 15 | 15 |
| 60 + | 4 | 4 | 8 | 8 |
| Total | 44 | 56 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Table 4.1 and shows the age distribution of respondents by sex in the study area. Out of the total 100 respondents 44 were males and 56 were females. There were a highest proportion of respondents in age group 30-40 years. It was followed by age group 40-50 years. The lowest proportion of respondents was in age group 10-20 years. In our society proportion of females respondents was highest in age group 30-40 while proportion of males in age group 40-50 years. The table above simply gives visage of the sampled participants as per the age basis applying simple random sampling procedure. Majority of the respondents who have gotten married and adult women

participate in the decision making process. In the case of unmarried women they even have been forced to get married under the will of parents.

4.4 Structure of Family

Family structure is one of the influencing factors of the decision-making process. There are two types of families found in the study area. One is nuclear family, in which family parents and children are members and live together. Another type is jointly, in which family parents, children and others like grandfather/mother, uncle-aunt, cousin etc. live together. Out of the total 100 sampled respondents 44 families are nuclear (i.e. 44 %) and remaining 56 families are joint families (Table no. 4.3). This figure shows that parents and children are the members of the family living together in the most of the families and family size is small.

Table 4.3
Distribution of the respondents by structure of Family

| Family Structure | No. of Families | Percent |
|------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Nuclear | 44 | 44 |
| Joint | 56 | 56 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Causes behind to be nuclear families are for the future of children, to live easy life with access to facilities, to reduce economic burden and responsibilities in large size joint family. This plays the vital role in the decision making process that and the researcher have tried to find the involvement of women for making household decisions.

4.5 Education

Education is the key indicator for reforming society and upgrading its economic and social status. Education enhances the ability and capability of human process in the society. In most of the case, it can be seen that higher educational status played dominant role in decision making field. Those voices are respected who are educated and having higher educational background.

Table 4.4
Distribution of Respondents by Educational Status

| Level | Male | Female | Total | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Illiterate | 18 | 29 | 47 | 47 |
| Literate | 17 | 18 | 35 | 35 |
| Under SLC | 2 | 5 | 7 | 7 |
| SLC | 3 | 2 | 5 | 5 |
| Above SLC | 4 | 2 | 6 | 6 |
| Total | 44 | 56 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

The researcher has tried to know that how level of women's education influences in the household decision making. Among the sampled households, 25 women are literate and 29 women are illiterate.

In the study area, among the sampled population I chose majority of them illiterate because to get the actual data and the information regarding this study. The educational status is divided into 5 categories which are illiterate, literate, under SLC, SLC and above SLC. Those who can read and write kept in literate and having school education but did not pass the SLC are kept under SLC. Above SLC, represents are all who have attained all the level above SLC level education.

Table 4.4 represents the educational status of the respondents. Out of the total 100 respondents 47% are illiterate consisting 18 males and 29% females. It was found that only 35% are literate among them 17 are males and 18 are females. Only 4 percent males and 2% females have attained above SLC education. This table shows that higher proportion of females is illiterate. It is because, the literacy rate and educational attainment of female is lower than males in Nepal. Only 42.5 females are literate in comparison of 53.8 of literate male in Nepal.

4.6 Marital Status

Marriage is the single most important event in the life of men and women. According to Hindu tradition, marriage is compulsion for the all whether man or woman. A man's life is not considered complete without a wife and a woman has no option but

to get married. Marriage is one of the universal social institutions. In our society, marriage determines the social roles and responsibilities of people. It is essential for legitimate birth. Females' role also increases in family only after marriage. It enhances their decision making power.

Table 4.5
Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

| Marital Status | Male | Female | Total | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Unmarried | 2 | - | 2 | 2 |
| Married | 38 | 51 | 89 | 89 |
| Divorced/Separated | - | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Widow /Widower | 4 | 4 | 8 | 8 |
| Total | 44 | 56 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

The table shows the marital status of respondents. Out of the total 100 respondents, 89% respondents are married, among them 38 are males and 51 are females. Only two percent are found unmarried (male) and one (female) is in divorced/separated. Similarly, 4 males and females are in widow/widower category. All the respondents are once married except two male respondents. This data intends to know how married people draw household decisions and whether they include women in making household decisions or not.

4.7 Types of Houses

Basically there are three basic needs of human being which are food, clothing and housing, though now-a-days education, health and human right are also considered as basic needs. Housing has great contribution in maintaining the quality of life of people. It emphasizes the standard of living. In this study, mainly three types of housing are considered, such as: concrete, semi concrete and Mud (not Concrete). The concrete house is defined as having stone and mud wall and state or link roof, semi concrete consists stone and mud wall having grass roof, other categories except these two categories were considered as not concrete.

Table 4.6
Distribution of Households by Types

| Types | Total res | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------|------------|
| Concrete | 20 | 20 |
| Semi-concrete | 60 | 60 |
| Not Concrete (Mud) | 20 | 20 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Out of the total 100 respondents 60 are semi-concrete which comprise 60 percent. There only 20% concrete households and 20 percent not concrete .However, all the families have their own residence whether it is concrete, semi concrete or Mud (not concrete). This poses the involvement of the women in the decision making in order to maintain the house. And it is found that 100 percent of the women who have no concrete houses have been taking decisions and 30 percent of the women among the sampled women take decisions for maintaining house and building new houses. And merely, 10 percent women take sole decision in order to maintain the house and for new construction.

4.8 Land Distribution

Nepal is agricultural country where more than 65% people depend on agriculture as main occupation. Land has great contribution in agriculture and it measures the economic status of people. The question had been asked regarding the possession of land (as cultivated and household). But both types of land are combined due to which every household has their own land.

Table 4.7
Distribution of Households by Land Ownership

| Amount of Land | Respondents | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| More than 10 Ropani or above | 8 | 8 |
| 5-10 Ropani | 32 | 32 |
| 1-4 Ropani | 40 | 40 |
| Less than 1 or landless. | 20 | 20 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Table 4.7 reveals the distribution of households by land ownership. As shown in the table, Majority of the respondents(40%) have a lesser amount of land (1-4 Ropani) whereas,8% households hold more than 10 Ropani of land. 32% have less than 10 Ropani and more than 5 Ropani of land and last but not least 20% have 1Ropani or landless. It can be assumed through this table that the majority of the respondents were relying on their other activities for survival because they do not have adequate land. It has made some constraints on the decision making role of women such as rights of exposures for additional income and authority to spend on their basic desirable needs through the limited resources. This data depicts the land ownership occupied and making decisions in order to plant crops and other agro related decisions by women those will be discussed in next chapter.

4.9 Food Sufficiency

It was found that more than 80% people are dependent upon agriculture. But only few families have sufficient food for the whole year. People are facing the problem of food deficit; however, the study area lies in the fertile land area of Kathmandu Valley. According to the filed study more than 92% households have the food problem. The table below has shown the food sufficiency status of the study area.

Table 4.8
Food Sufficiency Status on the basis of Production

| Food Production | No of Res | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|------------|
| Sufficient | 8 | 8 |
| Not Sufficient | 92 | 92 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

The table depicts food sufficiency situation of the respondents. Out of the 100 respondents the production of 92% households' farm is not adequate for their survival. It is because of the low agriculture land traditional input on agricultural practices. In order to overcome the food insufficiency, what activities have been implementing for this and how far women are being involved for this and also how women are being involved for making decisions to overcome the starvation. Decision making practice of women to arrange food will be described in next chapter.

4.10 Occupation and Source of Income

Occupation and source of income represents the economic status of people. Occupation is considered as main source of income. Out of the 100 respondents, agriculture and livestock farming has occupied the first position as the source of income. 48% respondents are dependent upon agriculture and livestock farming for their income. It is followed by wage earning and service (16%).The wage earning category has higher proportion as main source of income because most of indigenous nationalities have no other alternatives except work as wage labor. Similarly, 12% people are engaged in business, while 8 percent people are relying on both agriculture as well as other income generating activities like, small business, wage earning or other part time engagement. Table 4.9 presents the occupation and source of income of the respondents.

Table 4.9
Distributions of Respondents by Occupation and Source of Income

| Occupation/ Source of Income | No of Res | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Agriculture and Livestock Farming | 48 | 48 |
| Business | 12 | 12 |
| Service | 16 | 16 |
| Wage-earning | 16 | 16 |
| Farming and Other | 8 | 8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

The above table shows the occupation and source of income out of 100 respondent 48% depends on agriculture and livestock farming, wage and service consists 16% business occupies 12% and farming and other consists 8%. There are different types of income generating activities operated by families of the respondents. But, main concern of this study whether the women take part in decision making those mentioned activities which will be discussed in next chapter.

4.11 Land Cultivation

The study shows that in most of respondents land is cultivated by male members (52%). In some case both male and female members cultivated the land (25%) while only 23% female members are found cultivators the land. It shows that females are active in farming compared to male members. It is because most of the Nepalese women are engaged either agricultural activities or household activities than in other outdoor income generating activities. But in the concern of Newari women the male take responsibility of the farm but few women assist their husbands other male member of the family. Males are found engaged in both types of works, farming and non-farming. Sometimes they are found to be engaged in fun and relax however; their wives have been facing the double load in the work at that time.

Table 4.10
Distribution of Respondents by Land Cultivation

| Cultivator | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| Male | 52 | 52 |
| Female | 23 | 23 |
| Both | 25 | 25 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

The main occupation of the community people of this VDC is farming. People have to choose seeds, select crops and other activities for good production. So people have to decide in lots of aspects and the major concern of this research is to find the women's participation in making decisions regarding cultivation of land. It will be discussed in chapter five.

4.12 Cooking Activities

In Nepal most of the females are engaged in household chores and agriculture activities. They have less access to education and hence lower proportions were involved in gainful economic activities. They are surrounded by household activities. The following table shows the involvement of males' females in cooking activities in the study area.

Table 4.11
Distribution of Respondents by Cooking Activities

| Members of HH | No. of Respondents | % of HHs |
|---------------|--------------------|------------|
| Male | 4 | 4 |
| Female | 84 | 84 |
| Both | 12 | 12 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Above table shows that out of the 100 respondents females cook food (84%). Both males and females cook foods in 12% respondents. However, only few males were engaging in cooking. Only in 4% respondents, males' members are engaged in cooking activities. Thus, it was found that cooking food is the activity of females. They are the cook of households. But choice of the food should have decided for cooking. This will be discussed later.

4.13 Household Activities

In Nepal, more females are engaged in household activities while very few males are engaged in these activities. Females spend more time in household chores than males. In study area also, it was found that more females are engaged in cooking activities, livestock caring, agriculture activities, child rearing and caring, collecting grass and firewood etc. The table shows the engagement of respondents in household chores.

Table 4.12
Distribution of Respondents by Chores

| Members of HH | No. of Res | Percentage |
|---------------|------------|------------|
| Male | 4 | 4 |
| Female | 76 | 76 |
| Both | 20 | 20 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Out of the 100 respondents 76% females were engaged in household activities while only in 4 percent males were engaged in such activities. However, in 20%

respondents both males and females are involved in household chores. This shows that more females are involved in non –economic activities than the male. The works in which females have been engaged are key important task of the economic outcomes however, they are ignored from the authority of economic resources blaming them that they are not the source of income. However, majority of the females are engaged in household activities, but concern is that whether female have absolute power to make decision on it or not.

CHAPTER - FIVE

ROLE OF WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD DECISION MAKING

This chapter deals with the women's status in terms of decision making in different aspects of household as well as other activities. It reveals women's participation in decision making household activities. Decisions regarding to purchase household things, cropping pattern, selling surplus, borrowing and lending money, household expenditure, expenditure in children's education, business investment, seeking and treatment. Miscellaneous contains property rights of women, essential of education for female happiness with family and decision capacity of families and different reason related to women's decision making process.

It is the contemporary scenario of whole Nepal in all ethnic and non-ethnic groups. But in my study area I tried different way to analyze than the previous research in other parts of the nation. First, I tried to envisage the community to know socio-economic-cultural level through scheduled questions, those have been discussed earlier in chapter four. In this area the focus of my study belongs to Newar community and the role of women's participation in their household decision making. For the fulfillment of the projected goals the researcher went through many scheduled and offhand questions in the study area

5.1 Decision on Purchasing Household Goods

It is considered that male and female are equal in family and they have equal roles and responsibilities. But males have severe dominance in decision making process and other social activities. Males along have greater contribution over the purchasing of household things and its consumption. The following table no. 5.1 shows the decision on purchasing household things of males and females.

Table 5.1

Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Purchasing HHs Goods

| Caste | Decision makers(male) | Decision makers(female) | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Newar | 55 | 45 | 100 |
| Chhetri | 60 | 40 | 100 |
| Brahmin | 70 | 30 | 100 |
| Others | 75 | 25 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Among total respondents males are enjoying a dominant role in decision on purchasing household goods as T.V, radio, ornaments as well as consumption other materials. In 65% respondents, decision is made by males while only in 35% respondents females decide for it. This shows male's domination in family as well as in society. I ask with the respondents why male people have been enjoying decisive power. They replied male earn money and they have full right to make expenditure for buying major items and expensive items. And another reason for this they are highly driven by the cultural phenomenon i.e. male dominated.

5.2 Decision for Cropping System

Mostly females are engaged either in household chores or in agricultural activities. There is more involvement of females in agriculture, provided capable in decision making regarding cropping pattern.

Table 5.2
Distribution of Respondents by Decision for Cropping System

| Caste | Decision makers(male) | Decision makers(female) | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Newar | 60 | 40 | 100 |
| Chhetri | 65 | 35 | 100 |
| Brahmin | 80 | 20 | 100 |
| Others | 70 | 30 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Out of the total respondent from different caste and community 31% of the decisions for cropping pattern were made by females; while 68% decisions were made by males. However, in 24% respondents both males and females jointly take decision for cropping pattern.

5.3 Decision Making in Selling Surplus Food Grains/Agricultural Products

Among the total 100 respondents, only 10 respondents may produce surplus amount of agriculture-products to sell more or less. Since, selling activities related to outside home and has to market which is away from their residence that dominates in this activity. Females rarely go to market to sell. The following table no. 3 shows the

participation on decision making by male and female for selling surplus agro products.

Table 5.3

Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Selling Surplus Agro-Products

| Caste | Decision makers(male) | Decision makers(female) | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Newar | 60 | 40 | 100 |
| chhetri | 70 | 30 | 100 |
| Brahmin | 75 | 25 | 100 |
| Others | 65 | 35 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

In the above table shows the clear picture that male dominate the female in selling the surplus agro products. Among the respondents 67.5% decision is made by male members while only 32.5% decision is made by female. All kinds of domestic hard work labor is done by female but the male takes the product in market fix the price and get the money for it.

5.4 Decision on Borrowing Money and Goods

Respondents had been explored to find out the decisional status on borrowing money and essential goods. Among total respondents, 69% replied that they borrowed from others to fulfill their needs. Regarding borrowing money and goods, in most of the households decisions were made by males. Due to patriarchal culture of our society males are supposed to be more responsible in the economic cases.

Table 5.4

Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Borrowing Money and Goods

| Caste | Decision makers(male) | Decision makers(female) | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Newar | 75 | 25 | 100 |
| Chhetri | 80 | 20 | 100 |
| Brahmin | 65 | 35 | 100 |
| Others | 55 | 45 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Among total respondents, in 69 % respondents, decisions were made by male members while only 31% respondent's decisions were done by females. Male have been enjoying major role for making decision on borrowing money because male are providing money to the family in most of the houses. And culturally male have been taking parts for this type of affairs from the ancient time. So female just can decide if she has been running the family like widow or her husband is away from the house.

5.5 Decision on Money Lending

Decision about lending and borrowing money and goods for fulfillment the requirements of household are very important task. Females play the very important role in the household decision-making because of the absence of the husbands in house. If husbands are present in the house then females make decision in his consultation. Males are performing leading roles than females in deciding on money lending.

Table 5.5
Distribution of Respondents by Lending /Provided Loan

| Caste | Decision makers(male) | Decision makers(female) | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Newar | 75 | 35 | 100 |
| Chhetri | 80 | 20 | 100 |
| Brahmin | 70 | 30 | 100 |
| Others | 60 | 40 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Among total respondents, 71.25% loans were provided by decisions of males while only 31.25% females were found in the position of decisions for providing loan. Most of the decisions regarding providing loan were made y male because, males are more active in economic activity and they earn more than females. The following table was the situation of decisions for lending money.

5.6 Decision on Household Expenditure

Most women are engaged in household chores and they spend more time for these activities than other activities where the exposures exit. Males play the dominant role in decision on household expenditure. The table below shows the decisional status on

household expenditure of the respondents. Among total respondents 54% decisions on households' expenditure are made by male members. Only 46% decisions are done by female. However, there is leading role of female headed household and nuclear family. In male headed households and with joint family females have lower role to decide in household expenditure

Table 5.6
Decision on Household Expenditure

| Caste | Decision makers(male) | Decision makers(female) | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Newar | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| Chhetri | 55 | 45 | 100 |
| Brahmin | 60 | 40 | 100 |
| Others | 50 | 50 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Among total respondents 54% decisions on household's expenditure are made by the male members. Only 46% decisions are done by female. This figure shows that there is some mutual understanding in making decision related to household expenditure.

5.7 Decision on Expenditure of Children's Education

The decisions on expenditure of children's education have also a significant role in the gender mainstreaming. The priority and discrimination takes place during the investment of children's education on the basis of gender. Out of the total 100 respondents male members have dominant role in deciding children's education and expenditure for them were made by male in most cases. It was found that 52 %decisions were made by males and only 24% decisions were made by females. Similarly, 24 %decisions were made by mutual decision of both male and female. Though both male and female members are equally responsible for the children's future only male members decide in most cases. It is because of the low level of educational status of female and lack of economic authority.

Table 5.7

Decision on Expenditure of Children's Education

| Caste | Decision makers(male) | Decision makers(female) | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Newar | 60 | 40 | 100 |
| Chhetri | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| Brahmin | 60 | 40 | 100 |
| Others | 70 | 30 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

In the above table among total respondents male members dominate the role in deciding children education It was found that 60 %decision is were made by male members only 40 %decision were made by the female members.

5.8 Decision on Treatment for Sickness

Health is a very sensitive factor for human being and it affects all the other activities. The life expectancy of people has been increased due to the modern medical treatment of diseases. In terms of decision related to treatment for sickness of family members, males have dominant role. Mostly, male members decide the treatment to be practiced to care the disease.

Table 5.8

Decision on Treatment for Sickness

| Caste | Decision makers(male) | Decision makers(female) | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Newar | 60 | 40 | 100 |
| Chhetri | 60 | 40 | 100 |
| Brahmin | 70 | 30 | 100 |
| Others | 55 | 45 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

5.9 Miscellaneous

To explore the issues which are related on household decision making role of women some aspects are studied in this section. The views towards property rights for women, education for women, and toward women's decision making role were asked to the respondents.

The Nepalese society is traditional and most of the traditional and cultural aspects play effective role to enhance the status of women in the society. Females have no property rights and low access to education and economic activity. They are considered as the supporter to the males and they have to follow their male counterparts. Husband is considered as god for wife and she has to respect him in every step of life. Indeed, it is ridiculous in modern society where both male and female are equal having equal rights and responsibilities. Though, males and females are considered equal, female have low access to education, employment and in other gainful activities and they have low status in the society. There is vast gender disparity in socio-economic status as well as decision making power.

5.10 Views of Respondents towards Property Right to Women

Most of the respondents have positive thoughts regarding the property rights to women however; it is not applied in actions. Out of the 100 respondents 81% are in favor of property right to women, while 15% are against it. Only 4 % of respondent are not clear on this topic. The changing awareness status on the study area may have affected in such cases on the attitude of respondents but still it is to be applied in the practice. But as the time changed the people are aware to own the property in the name of women because of low tax system provisioned for women in Nepal. And the study area is in Kathmandu valley so respondents of this area are cautious for this.

Table 5.9

Views of Respondents towards Property Right to Women

| Respondents View | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Positive | 81 | 81 |
| Negative | 15 | 15 |
| Not Stated | 4 | 4 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

Out of the 100 respondents 81% are in favor of property right to women, while 15% are against it. Only 4 % of respondent are not clear on this topics. Giving property right to the women is to sharing decision power with women because if a male wills to sell the property, he cannot sell unless complete agree by the women. So it is

automatically proves women can take part in decision making in normal situation. But in many cases throughout the country women are being compelled to agree through extortion.

5.11 Views toward Women’s Decision Making Role

In order to explore the view of the respondents toward the women’s decision making role in the household level, who should (male or female) take decision in your household level? And I got answers as shown in table no.5.11.

Table 5.10
Views toward Women’s Decision Making Role

| View | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|--------------------|------------|
| Male | 63 | 63 |
| Female | 31 | 31 |
| Both | 6 | 6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2012.

The views regarding overall decision making role was explored through the interview with respondents. Out of the 100 respondents, 63 % have positive thoughts on men’s decision making role whereas, 31% state there is no objection to give the decision making role to women and 6% do not have any clear view on the very topic.

CHAPTER – SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

In the country that of like ours, a male plays the predominant role in every aspects of the live survival either that is small type of religious function or a huge type of socio-economic tribal because our country is still remained to be develop ideologically, culturally and socially. Being itself a patriarchal nation, women are highly deprived in the process of making decisions regarding to both indoor and outdoor.

In the Nepalese context, women's role in decision-making process is very low though their population covers more than half sky of the country. They daily spend their most of the working time in household activities. The main objective of the present study is to analyze the role of women in the household decision-making among the sampled households. Chunnikhel VDC ward no-5 of Kathmandu district is the selected study area and 100 respondents as the sample size to explore the required information as objective of this research paper seeks. But, for more realistic data the researcher has selected 100 people of the study area

In the present study, descriptive research design was applied. Qualitative method as well as quantitative method was applied to collect primary data. Data collection techniques like Key Interview, Focus Group Discussion and Observation were applied to collect primary information from the field. The total 100 respondents were collected from ward-5of Chunnikhel VDC of Kathmandu District by using random sampling methods. Major findings of the present study are as follows:

(A) Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

During the study the respondents were chosen through simple random sampling method dividing the community into four clusters. Among 100 respondents 44% are male and 56% are female. Among the total, 56% respondents are belong to joint family and 44% are from the nuclear family. Newar community is purposively selected to give perfect meaning of this research. Among them only two males were unmarried. Out of the total respondents 47 percent are illiterate. House construction

in the area is 20% concrete, 60% semi-concrete and 40 percent is muddy (not concrete). Food sufficiency among the respondents is 8% sufficient and 92% respondents depend on other income generating activities. Occupation, 48% respondents depend directly agro related activities. Cooking activities 84% women involved out of the total respondents. Chores 76% women involved out of the total respondents. Purchasing of goods male dominates female constituting 56% of the total respondents while 24% women in the study area go market to buy their required goods and 20 percent both male and female go market to buy their needed goods. Out of the total households 60 percent male decide to sell their surplus production. Decision on borrowing money 54 percent male decide and remaining both female and male decide only few of the household decide for this purpose. 72% male decide in lending money among the total respondents. 56% male of the total respondents decide toward expenditure in the major activities of the household like education, health, insurance etc.

(B) Women in Decision Making Role

In most of the cases women have low roles in decision making power in comparison to males. Males have higher decision making power for purchasing household good. Higher proportion of females (60%) is engaged in decision with regard to cropping pattern. More than two third males decide for selling surplus production. Male's decision has dominant roles in borrowing money and lending money compared females. More than 50% decision for household expenditure is taken by male. 60% decisions are made by males for sickness treatment while only 24% decision by females.

(c) Miscellaneous

81% respondents are in favor of proving property rights to women. 78% respondents are happy with their family members and environment.

6.2 Conclusion

The decision-making role of women at household level depends on the absence or presence of husbands and male guardians, educational level, family type, employment and economic condition, involvement in the organizations etc. In household decision-

making, the women have been playing more roles in the absence of husbands rather than the presence of husbands in the households. Some factors influence primary role and some factors influence secondary role in the decision-making process.

Among the sampled respondents, role of both male as well as female are found significant in decisions making at most cases. These types of case are primarily buying and selling house and lands, lending and purchasing money, investing money, choosing school and college for children etc.

If the husbands are present in the house, women's role is found comparatively lower than those women whose husbands are outside the house. They are not work as a household head but they have role to play in decision-making at household level. In this case also, women become a significant part of decision-making with their husbands. In the economic point of view, decision-making role of the women depends of the amount of the money. If the decision is associated to the small amount of money then women can decide alone and if the decision is associated with large amount f money then she cannot do alone without consultation of husband. The most important aspect is found that both male and female decide in the consultation of each other for all important cases of the families. Among the sampled respondents, a very few females have more authority for decision-making process or they have been playing significant role on decision-making at household level. They take place good position in case of household decision-making in their families.

6.3 Recommendations

As a student of sociology I have not been able to dig out the roles of women in household decision making. Women's participation in household decision-making issues must be encouraged. Women should have access over land and property to improve women's decision-making role. There should be increased the access of women for gainful economic activities. Awareness programs should be launched to eliminate the gender discrimination, traditional norms, value and tradition, which are in existing in the society. There should be respected the voices of the women in the society as well as in state. Women should be brought into the main stream of the development, moreover in the nation building. Women should be participated in the restructuring Nepal through the social inclusion. Encouragement should be done to

the women to participate in the social activities. Women should not be bounded only in household activities. Opportunities should be given to the women in decision-making inside as well as outside their houses. Policies and programs related to the women's participation, their empowerment should be implemented effectively. Legal provision should be practiced in behavior.

Academic Suggestions

Researcher also recommends carrying out further research in other fields. The present study is only focused on the access and role of women's on household decision-making among the sampled respondents residing at Chunnikhel VDC ward no. 5, Kathmandu District. For policy implication in the field of enhances the women's role in decision-making through household, community level and the national level as a whole, there is needed to carry out the further research in the same topic but in the other areas. Likewise, there are open many fields of research in the study area. There is needed to undertake the research related to the women such as socio-economic status of the women, women's participation in politics, community development and resource mobilization, other influencing factors of the women's role in decision-making, gender issue, women's participation in decision-making in the ecological basis and in deferent level and fields, women's participation in nation-building through social inclusion.

APPENDIX - I

SCHEDULE FOR WOMEN AND HOUSEHOLD DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AMONG NEWAR WOMEN

(A) General Information of the Respondent

Name: _____ Age: _____ Sex: M/F Education: _____
Literate/Illiterate/Grade... Marital Status: Married/Unmarried/Widow

Religion: Hindu/Buddhist/Christian/Muslim/Others (specify)

Occupation: Agriculture/Service/Business/ Others (specify)

Address: _____ District: _____ VDC: _____ Ward No. _____ Tole: _____

(B) Information of the Family

1. Type of family: Nuclear / Joint

2. Total population of the family by age-group and sex:

| Age Group | < 6 | 6-15 | 16-25 | 26-40 | 41-60 | 60-75 | >75 | Total |
|-----------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| Male | | | | | | | | |
| Female | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | | | |

3. Educational Status of the Family-members (Completed level and sex):

| Education | Illiterate | Literate only | Below SLC | SLC | I.A. | B.A. | M.A. & above | Total |
|-----------|------------|------------------|--------------|-----|------|------|-----------------|-------|
| Male | | | | | | | | |
| Female | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | | | |

Note: Educational condition of family-members, whose age is above 6 years.

(C) Socio-Economic Status of Women

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

2. Does your family allow the female members to go to outside the country (for any purpose)?
(a) Yes (b) No. (why? for both yes or no)
.....
.....
.....

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

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

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

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

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

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

If yes, who and how much she/they earn monthly and how (service, farming wages, handicrafts, tailoring, shop etc.)?

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

If yes, what are they?

9. Have they total authority to mobilize it?
10. Do you have been participating your female members of your house in household decision making? How? (ask following 10 questions only with male respondents or head of the family)
- Do you discuss with your female members of your house in terms of education related affairs?
 - Do you discuss with your female family members of your house in terms of health related activities?
 - How do you participate your females of your house for purchasing of goods?
 - Do your family female members go outside to discuss regarding social affairs of your community. If no why?
 - Are they following different political parties than you?
 - Who conducts your daily cooking activities in your house?
 - Do your female members of your house participate in farm related activities?
 - Do you support in the matters of household cleanliness of your house? If not who?
 - If you suggested that to participate your females of your house ahead in future will you follow it? In no what will be the major barriers?
 - What should be done to participate females to participate in each activity of the community and home itself?

(D) Women's Role in Household Decision-Making

1. Mostly, who does make daily household decision in your family?
- (a) Yourself (b) Husband
(c) Other male members (d) Other female members

2. How do you make decision about your family's daily household activities?

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

3. In average, how many hours do you spend daily in domestic work?

4. Do you have any other job besides domestic works?

(a) Yes (b) No

If yes, who did decide to do this job?

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

5. Have you owned land of the family?

(a) Yes (b) No

6. Have you got complete authority to use it?

(a) Yes (b) No

7. Who have complete authority to purchase and sell house/land of the family?

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

17. Are any females in your family to do private business?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

If yes, who did permit to run that business?

- (a) Herself
- (b) Male members
- (c) Whole family.

If no, what was then main cause?

- (a) No need
- (b) Inability
- (c) No permitted
- (d) Other

18. Are any jobholder females in your family?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

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

- (a) Herself
- (b) Male members
- (c) Whole family.

19. Does your family allow going outside from the house?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

20. Has any family member (except your husband) gone abroad (either for job/business or for study)?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

If yes, who did decide to send him/her?

- (a) Yourself
- (b) Husband
- (c) Other male member
- (d) whole family

21. Do you have invested your family's income in any productive sectors?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No

22. If yes, which are these?

- (a) Individual Business
- (b) Partnership Business
- (c) Service sector (school/college/bank/finance/cooperative/other)

23. Do you have invested in insurance for your family members or assets?
 (a) Yes (b) No
 If yes, who did decide about it?
 (a) Yourself (b) Husband
 (c) Consultation of both (d) other family members (e) other
24. Who have decided to invest in this/these sector/s? (a) Yourself (b) Husband (c) Other male members (d)consultation of both husband-wife(e) other
25. What are the factors, which resist you to make decision independently in your house (in your experience)?
 (a) Illiteracy/low education (b) Family structure
 (c) Social norms and values (d) Economic dependency over family
 (e) Lack of empowerment (f) Other (specify)
26. Which are the main and secondary influencing factors of women's role in decision-making?

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

27. Do you have any comment?

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