

ROLE OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN POVERTY REDUCTION

(A Case Study of khalanga VDC 3 of Darchula District, Nepal)

A Thesis

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By

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

The thesis entitled "Role of Women's Empowerment in Poverty Reduction : A Case Study of Khalanga VDC 3 of Darchula, Nepal" has been prepared by Miss. Kopila Khatri under my supervision. I hereby recommend this thesis for the final approval by the thesis evaluation committee as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Rural Development.

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APPROVAL SHEET

We hereby certify that the thesis entitled "Role of Women's Empowerment in Poverty Reduction: A Case Study of Khalanga VDC 3 of Darchula, Nepal" written and submitted by Miss. Kopila Khatri to the Central Department of Rural Development, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University Campus in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Rural Development has been found satisfactory in format, Scope and quality. We, therefore, accept the thesis as a part of the said degree.

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May, 2011

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ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

CBS :	Central Bureau of Statistics
CEDAW :	Convention on Elimination of all kinds Discriminations against Women
DDC :	District Development Committee
GDI :	Gender Development Index
GoN :	Government of Nepal
HHs :	Households
INGO :	International Non-Government Organization
MoWCSW :	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
NDHS :	Nepal Demographic and Health Survey
NGO :	Non-Governmental Organization
No. :	Number
NWC :	National Women Commission
PAF:	Poverty Alleviation Fund
Ph.D.:	Doctors of Philosophy
Rs. :	Rupees
SAARC :	South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation
SLC :	School Leaving Certificate
SSNCC :	Social Service National Coordination Council
TU :	Tribhuvan University
UN :	United Nations
UNDP :	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA :	United Nations Population Fund
VDC :	Village Development Committee
WID :	Women in Development
WSCC :	Women Service Coordination Council

ABSTRACT

The study on the "Role of women's Empowerment in poverty Reduction", a general study about the women's empowerment and its role in poverty reduction, was conducted in Khalanga VDC 3 of Darchula district. It presents the general status of women in the study area.

The government and private sectors in Nepal have been engaged in relentless promotion of Nepalese women's empowerment through education, training and various other programs and research since long, but still most of the women's social status seems awfully poor. Their representation in social, economic and political life has been minimal. As a result, they are living in wretched condition. It is national scenario of the country which seems in the study area too. Educational attainment one of the most crucial factors of development, was not found satisfactory in the study area. Among total respondents, only the 25 percent respondents' educational status was found above SLC. Similarly, women's access on health services was also found poor. 64 percent respondents' replied that they have access on Health services.

On the other hand, most of the women of the study area were found heavily engaged in agricultural and other household chores mostly of unproductive works. The data reveals that women contribute more than men in household activities but these are not counted in monetary value. Women work 11 hours in an average in day in Nepal and the same scenario seems in the study area. The excessive workload has badly affected their daily life. In fact, It has created various types of obstacles in the empowerment process of women. Women's access and control over resources was also found poor. The data shows that 60.71 percent respondents replied that women have not personal assets such as land, bank balance, and cottage industry.

Awareness about women's rights to reproduction was also not found satisfactory in the study area. Among total respondents, still 42.85 percent were found not properly aware about women's right to reproduction which is guaranteed by the interim constitution. On the other hand, one interesting fact was found that 46.42 percent respondents express their view over the provision of women's right in parental property that is does not solve the problems faced by women in a sustainable way. The emphasized to provide better education and opportunities rather than parental property. Like wise, most of the people were found positive about the increased involvement of women in politics which is a good sign of increased awareness. But the response about women's role in decision making was found awfully poor because among total respondents 50 percent total decisions were made by male alone while the percent of female in the same work found only 21 percent. It shows a real picture of male dominated society.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background

The cultural construction of Nepali society is shaped by Hindu theology, which advocated and promoted patriarchal attitudes and practices that exclude women from a variety of functions. This has resulted in gender stereotypes where women's role as unpaid productive and reproductive labour is assigned negligible power or control over economic resources. Therefore, the active and meaningful participation of women in all spheres of daily lives is the felt need of today as well as the rights and opportunities of women to fight against the poor plight of human life and society. So, the women should be empowered providing the appropriate rights and opportunities. Women's empowerment is the crucial aspects of the development process of society because until and unless the women are empowered the society cannot go ahead in a progressive way. There will be neither peace nor brotherhood. Therefore the empowerment process Should be given top priority. A person or a society alone can't achieve such a miracle goal. This needs was realized by the international community years ago and many seminars and conferences were organized in international level.

According to the 2001 Census, women constitute half (11587502) of the total population (231514236) in Nepal. The female literacy is 42.80 percent which is very low compared to male. Literacy is a basic element for the formation of the progressive and cultural society, literacy is acknowledged as benefiting the individuals and the society is associated with a number of positive outcome for health, nutrition and overall well

being of both men and women (NDHS, 2065). Similarly, health is another crucial indicator from which we can generalize the status of women. Due to the poor literacy condition, in indicators of the qualitative development Such as gender equality and equity, freedom of expression, meaningful participation in social, cultural and political spheres and decision making process are not in improved condition in Nepal. The unfair and unjust status of this half of the population has forced people to live a life of endless misery. On the same way, due to the lack of sufficient infrastructures and skilled human power the health status of Nepalese women is not satisfactory. According to the "State of the world population, 2003 Report," Published by the united Nation's Population Fund (UNFPA).

Women have not become empower to participate in the social and economic development in a full-fledged manner as they are excluded from the development process. The deep rotted gender/stereotyping in the socialization pattern and role models has consistently intribited women from coming out of their traditional cocoons.

Empowerment means transforming existing power relations in favors of those (women, disadvantaged group and more generally the poor) who faced severe limitations in exercising power and making voluntary choices. Empowerment concerns the transformative use of power, in which a dominant agent also exercises his power in such a way that the sub-ordinate agent learns certain skills that undercut the power differential between him/her and the dominant agent. In this sense, the notion of empowerment is inescapably bound up with the condition of disempowerment and refers to the processes by which these who have

been denied the ability to make choices acquire such ability (UNDP, 2004)

Women empowerment is the process of generating an building capability of women to exercise control over one's own life. It is generating understand to mean the ability of women to make choices to improve their well beings that of their families and communities.

Empowered women take more active roles in the house and community. When women take active roles in the household and community decision-making, their families will be better equipped to confront the challenges of poverty, improve family health and well-being and increase household income. In this context, women's empowerment is helpful to reduce the current issues of poverty (Dhakhwa, 2001).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nepalese communities are heterogeneous in culture. Women are economically dependent of family husband and more members of the society. Women have less opportunity to enhance their own capacity and only big talks and plans cannot empower women. Empowerment process of women for one community may not be applicable to other community. The breaking barriers towards empowering women can't be possible with one single approach. The empowerment of community women is a complex process it needs a holistic approach to measure the desired level of empowerment from the specified climate. Women have less opportunity to enhance their own capacity and boost their won morals. Discriminatory socialization shapers women's lives. Women have a range of skills required to successfully introduce, manage implement and evaluate social changes.

Nepalese society assigns some strict gender rules for men and women that lead to the discriminatory practices against them. Studies have shown that Nepalese women are predominantly engaged in the professional, technical and managerial fields. Most of the Nepalese women are deprived from the decision making authority which is the major and decisive part of women's empowerment. It is an astonishing fact that still a daughter can not take decision about her life partner even in the so-called educated family. It clarifies the real social status of Nepalese women. Therefore, it is not difficult to understand about the gender discrimination and its impact to the development process of the society. That is why, current status of the gender discrimination is a serious threat to the society and the state itself.

On the other hand, many legal provisions have been made to empower women since longtime but the overall condition is not improved yet satisfactorily. The newly issued Interim Constitution of 2063 has made some provisions about female culture and rights. In part 3, article 13, it has been quoted that "All women are equal in the eyes of law and no one will be discriminated from the treatment of the legal provision." In article 13 (3), it has been quoted that the state will not discriminate any people on the basis of religion, caste, gender, origin and principle of individual. The Interim Constitution has accepted the female rights as fundamental rights of the first time in the history of Nepalese constitution. The article 20 has made the following provisions:

- ❑ There will be no discrimination to female on the basis of sex and gender.

- ❑ All female do have the rights to reproductive health and rights over the reproduction.
- ❑ There should not be any kind of violence physically, mentally to the female. If so, that is illegal in the law of Nepal and that will be punishable.
- ❑ There will be equal rights to son and daughter to parental property.

The government and private sectors have made number of efforts to enhance the speed of women's empowerment since long time but until we haven't got the remarkable achievement. In fact it doesn't concern how much the programs are implemented but it concerns the achievements and its contribution to transform the society towards the modernity. So, the study is concerned to seek the appropriate answer of the following questions which keep deep concern over women's empowerment and its contribution of poverty reduction?

1. Are the people of study area conscious about women's empowerment?
2. What is the overall socio-economic status of women of the study area?
3. What are the inter linkage between women's empowerment and poverty reduction?

1.3 Objective of Study

The general objective of this study is to analyze the impacts of women's empowerment in the poverty reduction of the study area. Specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- ❑ To find out the level of awareness about women's empowerment.

- ❑ To explore the socio-economic status of women of the study area.
- ❑ To find out the affecting factors of women's empowerment.
- ❑ To find out the relation between women empowerment and poverty.

1.4 Rational of the Study

Generally, economic sphere is taken as a key indicator of development but until and unless the social infrastructures are well developed, we can't build a peaceful and progressive society. Therefore, the social infrastructures should give top priority. The gender equality and equity, provision of equal rights to son and daughter in parental property, equal opportunities of education and employment to the males and females, freedom in decision making authority are some of the important social indicators of the qualitative development of the society.

Nepal is considered as a poor country in the world not only in economic perspective but also in socio-cultural development. The current state of gender discrimination, domestic violence against women and deprivation from decision making authority may prove this vary fact. It points out that still the Nepalese women are forced to live in miserable condition. This condition exists in almost parts and each class of the country are the khalanga VDC can't be its exception. Indeed, the study has tries to seek the rationalistic solution of the hindrances and obstacles of the process of women's empowerment. So, it helps to build a peaceful progressive and cultural society.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

- ❑ The study is done within the geographical boundary of the khalanga VDC ward no. 3 darchula district. Only one ward of khalanga VDC has been selected as sample.

- ❑ The researcher doesn't have any purpose of financial benefit in this study. It is done only for the academic purpose.
- ❑ Basically, It is focused to study about the role of women's empowerment to reduce the poverty of the society.

1.6 Organization of the Study

This study is divided into six chapters. First chapter introduces the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective, limitations and rational of the study. The second chapter is divided into conceptual framework of the study, theoretical framework of the study and policies and program. Similarly, the third chapter is about the research methodology and the fourth chapter depicts a short description of the study area. The fifth chapter is about the data analysis and findings and the last sixth chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter Two

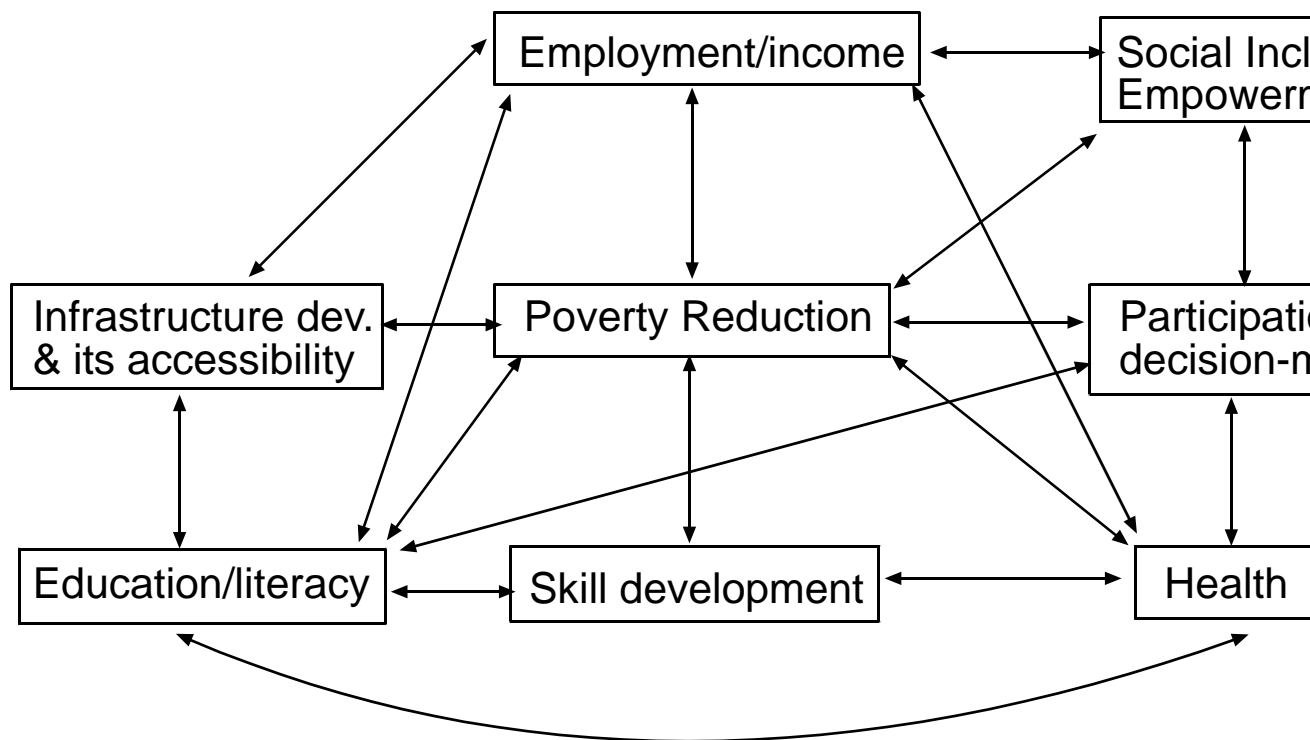
LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature Review is one of the major components of any study programs in a process of learning things of the proposed study area. The other purposes to carry out literature review in any study is to identify the sources of data used by other researchers, to identify appropriate research methodology, tools of data interpretation, to properly illustrate the set hypothesis and make recommendations for future researchers. This literature review was carried out to gain background knowledge of the subject matter of the proposed study, to depend understanding on the proposed subject, to gain required information and make recommendation for new researchers for future study about women's empowerment. In this study, literature review "women empowerment" and "Poverty reduction" has been kept in the following format.

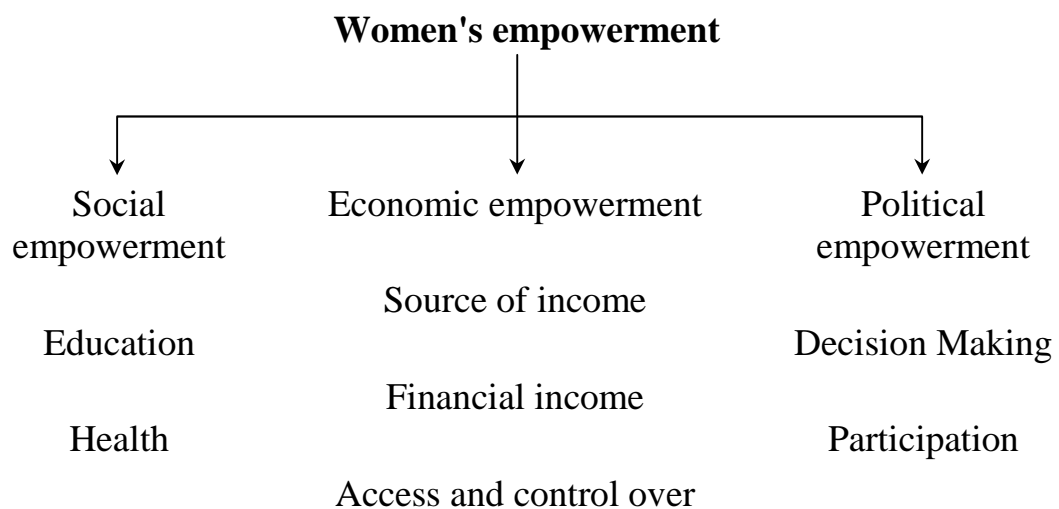
- ❑ Conceptual framework of the study.
- ❑ Theoretical framework of the study and policies and programs related to women's empowerment.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Dimensions of Poverty Reduction



Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon. It is the bundle of different socio economic problems caused by many factors. Poverty is not only the state of having low income but also having low level of living followed by poor health and lack of sanitation, low level of education, poor/low level of development infrastructures and less or no access of people on these resources. Therefore, all these factors are the dimensions poverty reduction. Improvement and growth on these reflect reduction of poverty (Karki, 2005).



Awareness

resources

Rights

Empowerment

Women empowerment is one of the most influential factors of poverty reduction of the present globalized era. It has direct and indirect impact over development process. The meaning and definition of it varies according to socio-cultural norms and values, and economic condition of the society. It is study, the term women's empowerment has been viewed through the three basic components of empowerment. These are social empowerment, economic empowerment and political empowerment (Bhattarai, 2009).

Social Empowerment : Meaningful access on education and health are basic factors of social empowerment because when women are properly educated and got health facilities, they will be able to compete with others and women's empowerment gives us positive result. Moreover, awareness is another crucial factor of social empowerment which covers a wide range of consciousness not only of the people of illiterate and poor class but also of the people of educated and high ranked classes. It motivates them to provide on environment to women where women can get opportunities to empower themselves.

Economic Empowerment: It denotes women's access and control over economic sectors such as sources of income, financial authority etc. Economic empowerment is the most influential opportunities to boost up the whole empowerment process of women.

Political Empowerment: Political Empowerment is another factor of empowerment process. Conceptually, both negative (freedom from arbitrary arrest, exclusion) as well as positive/freedom to vote, participate

in political life) aspects of political freedom should be captured by focusing on both the formal availability and actual exercise of political freedom by the people. It advocates about the meaningful participation of women in decision making process and social activities. Moreover, it advocates about the provision of rights to women (Sharma, 2061).

All of these factors affect directly and indirectly the process of women's empowerment. If women get a conducive environment to the above mentioned sectors, women's empowerment smoothly goes ahead. It enhances the development process of both rural and urban sectors. Therefore, Women's empowerment is a necessary tool to uplift the living standard of Nepalese women and to enhance the development process of Nepalese society. In fact, it is a reliable tool to enhance the qualitative development of Nepalese society and to ensure the bright future of modern Nepal (Bhattarai, 2009).

2.2 Theoretical framework

Poverty reduction

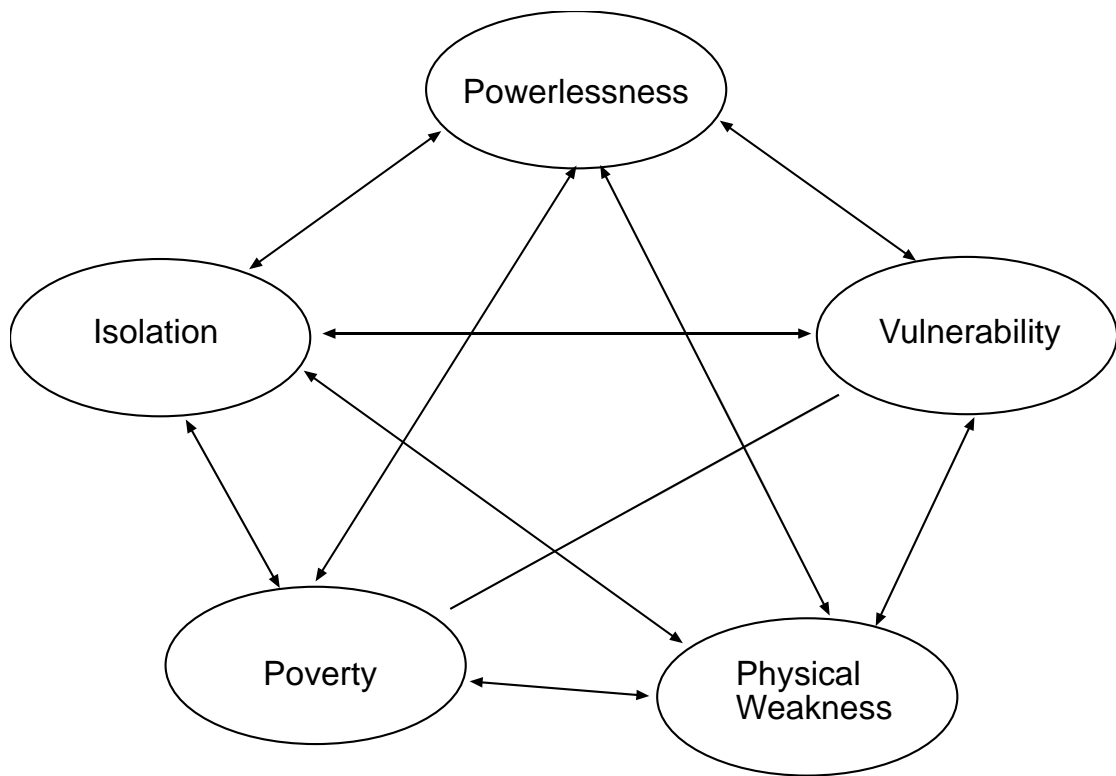
The word 'poverty' has been defined by different writers, scholars and institutions in different ways. There is no universally acceptable definitions of poverty. However some commonalities are found in their views and definitions. Poverty is, infect, a state of not getting the minimum basic needs and perceived as undesirable by the persons or the people.

According to Cutler (1984), poverty is defined on the basis of availability of basic needs. Those who fall to acquire those needs are led to poverty. Basic needs can include food, shelter, cloth, fuel, health, lighting and security of both life and property.

According to World Bank (1998), poverty is a state of economic, social and psychological deprivation occurring among people or countries lacking sufficient ownership control or access to resources to maintain minimal acceptable standards of living it represents an exclusionary relationship where individuals or states are denied access to an adequate package of resources.

Poverty is a strong determinant of people or community. It contributes to physical weakness of people through lack of food, small/weak body, malnutrition leading to low immune response, inability to pay for health service, isolation because of the inability to pay the cost of schooling, radio or bicycle, inability to afford to travel or to live near center or main road, and vulnerability through lack of assets. Poverty leads to powerlessness because due to lack of wealth the poor have no voice (Chamber, 1983). Chamber has explained this phenomenon in terms of the poverty (deprivation) trap.

The poverty or deprivation trap (Chamber, 1983)



Thus, poverty is a relative term and may be defined as an economic condition that is inadequate to meet basic needs of person (Kunwar, 2003). Generally, following types of poverty has been defined.

1. Absolute poverty occurs when people fail to receive sufficient resources to support a minimum level of physical health and efficiency that is often expressed in terms of calories or nutritional values.
2. Relative poverty is the general standard of living in different societies culturally stated as being poor rather than same absolute level of deprivation.
3. Hardcore or ultra-poverty is the line below the absolute poverty line, its half by the gestation as the rule of thumb.

Issues and problems of poverty reduction

World Development Report (1990) mentions the burden of poverty is spread unevenly among the regions of the developing world, among countries within those regions, and among localities within those countries. Nearly half of the world's poor live in south Asia, a region that accounts for roughly 30 percent of the world's population. Within regions and countries, the poor are often concentrated in certain places: in rural areas with high population densities often the problems of poverty, population, and the environment are intertwined, earlier patterns of development and the pressure of rapidly expanding populations mean that many of the poor live in areas of acute environmental degradation. The weight of poverty falls most heavily on certain groups. Women in general are disadvantaged. In poor households, they often shoulder more of the workload than men are less educated, and have less access to remunerative activities (Shakya, 2000).

In this connection, Robert chambers also highly appreciate people's participation in development activities so as to empower them, uplift their socio-economic condition and ultimately to alleviate the poverty. In this connection UNDP (2000) highlights the significance of poor people's organization and their participation in development programs to alleviate poverty. The institution believes that foundation of poverty reduction is self-organization of the poor, at the community level.

Similar to these, Hasan Moradi (1999) suggests that poverty alleviation requires expanding people's access to participation in decision-making and to knowledge, training, markets, and other productive resources for income generation such as land, technology, credit and information. He argues that securing a decent livelihood for people living

in poverty requires attacking the many interrelated forces that keep them trapped in a state of deprivation. In this way, he has highly advocated for people's participation and their initiation to alleviation poverty (Shakya, 2000).

Poverty in Nepal is also closely related to the degree of social, political and economic exclusion. Women and ethnic groups, by and large are left out of the mainstream of development, because they lack voice, empowerment, representation and access to economic opportunities and resources. Similarly, the remote districts and regions are further away from centers of power and influence and are the most neglected. Another key determinant, which cuts across and exacerbates the impact of these factors on the poverty patterns is weak governance, which includes ineffective government, poor resource allocation, weak implementation and service delivery performance and corruption and leakages among others (GoN/NPC, 2003 : 36).

The World Bank Report (1990) concludes that reducing poverty is the fundamental objective of economic development. Knowledge about the poor is essential if governments are to adopt sound development strategies and more effective policies for attacking poverty. How many poor are there? Where do they live? What are their precise economic circumstances? Answering these questions is the first step toward understanding the impact of economic policies on the poor.

The role of women in the strategies of poverty alleviation is regarded as central point, which calls for priority on women empowerment and their mainstreaming. The Tenth plan perceives poverty from different perspectives. According to it, income based poverty,

weaknesses in different aspects of human development and social exclusion are the main aspects of poverty. The main indicator of income based poverty is the percentage of people living below poverty line. Human development capacity indicators are also equally important because these indicators do not change as per the change in income-based indicators. The typology of these capacities includes access to existing resources, human resource development and participation in social/political decision making process etc. The society bestows all individuals entitlement to participate in social/political decision making process and do possess right to live with human dignity. But any group or community deprived of such right by whatsoever reason it may be belongs clearly to identified poverty group or community. It is essential, therefore to bring them in the main stream of development with the identification of such deprivation. The evaluations of this type of causes also fall under the purview of analysis of poverty status (Karki, 2005).

Empowerment

The term empowerment refers to arrange of activities from individual self-assertion to collective resistance, protest and mobilization that challenge basic power relations, for individuals and groups where class, caste, ethnicity and gender determine their access to resources and power, their empowerment begins when they not only recognize the systematic forces that oppress them, but act to change existing power relationships. Empowerment therefore, is a process aimed at changing the nature and direction of systemic forces which marginalize women and other disadvantaged sections in a given context.

Empower is a process of awakening and regenerating dormant potentials that are inherent in people/human. It is not arming them with weapons rather recognizing and respecting them as equal dignified human beings. Empowerment call for liberating them from the orthodox, superstitious and conservative constraints imposed on legislation for protection of equal legal rights, and abolition of gender inequalities are the tools of empowerment (UNDP, 2004).

World Bank defined, "Empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives"

UNDP defines as, "Empowerment is about full participation of people in the decisions and processes that shape their lives. It is viewed in the context of politics and programmes designed to strengthen people's capacity to respond to their needs and priorities and civil society organizations are viewed as mediators or catalytic agents for people's empowerment and focus on strengthening these mediating structures."

It is process of gaining control over self, ideology and the resources which determined power. Empowerment means sensitization to misbelieve and mal-practices and their rejection. It means recognizing that women's subordination and men's superior status are not part of natural order of things but is imposed by a system of discrimination which is socially constructed and can be altered.

In other word, empowerment indicates the sufficient provision of power to those who are powerless disadvantaged, marginalized to take control of their lives. It is also a state to be able to provide them and take care of their food, clothing and lodging. Poverty is on extremely complex

issue. It encompasses not only poverty measured by lack of income but also human poverty characterized by deprivation in a long healthy life, in knowledge, in a decent standard of living and in participation of the development process that effects every day life. Hence, poverty and empowerment are also closely associated in enabling to make the choice of one's life.

Indicators of Women's empowerment (Hashemi & Schuler 1993)

According to Hashemi and Schuler, main indicators of women's empowerment are as follows:

1. Mobility: A women is considered empowered if she is able to visit places such as markets, medical stores, go outside the village if she can visit these places alone then she is considered more empowered.
2. Economic Security: A women is considered empowered if she owns land, houses and other productive assets, if she owns cash and has savings.
3. Ability to make small purchase: if a woman can purchase small items, household goods, small personal items if she can do it on her own without asking her husband especially purchasing her own earned money she can be empowered.
4. Ability to make larger purchase by her own earned money. What she has brought indicates her increased purchasing capacity.
5. Involvement in major decisions mostly two types of decision like house repair, small animals, leasing land or buying vehicles, rickshaws especially with her earned money then she can be considered empowered.

6. Relative freedom from domination and violation within family from her in-laws and husband especially, restricted mobility for example to antenatal care, to fathers place battering and access to resource within the will of the women then she can be considered empowered.
7. Political and legal awareness, a woman can be given a point each for knowing the name of the local government officials, a member of parliament or even the prime minister. Further points can be given if she has attended a led a Champaign and started to advocate.
8. Participation in public protest and political campaigning. A woman is empowered if she has campaigned or protected against social issues as wife beating, unfair wages, unfair prices etc.

While we talk about ability, mobility, access to resources, purchasing capacity, bargaining capacity as some indicators of women's empowerment Nepalese community women fall into a minimum level, however, some economic independency has been achieved through saving and credit programs but are not economically sound yet which determines economic status of women. The above mentioned indicators of women's empowerment are applicable in Nepalese context too but till now we have less achieved due to various socio-cultural obstacles. It indicates that Nepalese women have still had a far away to be empowered (Bhattarai, 2009).

Other indicators for women's empowerment can be her meaningful participation in development programs and saving programs, decision making at the household, community and state level. How women participate and at which level do they participate remains still a big question in the process of women's empowerment in Nepal. Women's

empowerment process through participation is another school of thought that gives women direction for her actions. If a woman is able to assess how she acts and reacts, express her thought and feelings freely then that is also one frame of empowerment. It determines her ability and performance that places her in some criteria of setting to achieve her set goals and her set of values will develop that way. For example, women who contribute in agriculture and production working mostly 10-12 hours a day without paying, if she starts to analyze her own work and bargain with her household head for some resources she wants for her personal use, then that is also one level of empowerment. Her confidence raises and it increases her participation next time in family setting and decision-making (Bhattarai, 2009).

Policies and Programs related to Women's Empowerment

In Nepal, a number of efforts have been conducted to enhance women's empowerment since 1975 to till now.

1975-79

-) International Women's Year/participation in the First World Conference on women.
-) Formation of women Service Coordination Committee (WSSCC) in Social Service National Coordination Council (SSNCC).
-) Amendment of "Mulki Ain" to grant inheritance to unmarried daughters of aged below 35 years.

1980-84

-) Participation in Second World Conference on Women.

-) WID Chapter in the Sixth Five Plan. "Efficiency policy".
-) Women Development Section (Later upgraded to Division) in the ministry of Local Development.
-) Plan of action for Women in Development by WSCC.

1985-89

-) Participation in Third World Conference on Women
-) WID Chapter in the Seventh Five Year Plan. "Efficiency/Productivity+ Active Participation Policy"
-) Women Development Division in the Ministry of Labour

1990-99

-) People's movement - Restoration of multi party democracy.
-) Incorporation of WID in Home Science and Women Development curriculum, Tribhuvan University.
-) Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal of 2047
-) Ratification of CEDAW without reservation.
-) Women Farmers' Development Division in the Ministry of Agriculture.
-) WID Chapter in Eighth Plan, "Mainstreaming Policy".
-) Child and Women Development Section in NPC
-) Women Education Unit in the Ministry of Education.
-) National Women and Child Development Council
-) Participation in the fourth World Conference on Women/Participation in NGO forum.

- Ministry of Women and Social Welfare. "Equality and Empowerment Policy".
-) National Plan of Action
-) Draft of Women's Equality Bill
-) National Women's Convention
-) Post Graduate Diploma in Women's Studies, Tribhuvan University.
-) Mini Beijing Conference

Ninth Plan

-) Women's Equality Bill at the Parliament.
-) Country status Report on CEDAW
-) CEDAW Committee hearings
-) National Planning and Consultation Workshop on CEDAW

Tenth Plan

-) Policy and legal reform. coordination of regional entities and NGOs engaged in gender related fields.
-) Leadership development.
-) Participation of women in conflict resolution and the peace process, preparation of a national action plan for the social rehabilitation of women affected by the conflict and its implementation.
-) Psycho social counseling service for transformation of emotional disturbances.
-) Legal aid.
- Gender awareness and advocacy

Interim Plan

Interim Plan has specially concentrated to bring Nepalese women in the mainstream of national development. In fact, it has taken some special policies to boost up the living standard of Nepalese women which are as follows:

-) Women will be encouraged to actively participate in the institutionalization of democracy and the electoral process.
-) Gender management and a gender management information system will be launched and enforced, and the policies and legal reforms will be closely monitored and evaluated.
-) Advocacy and public awareness activities in favor of gender equality, mainstreaming and women's empowerment will be

conducted as a campaign. In addition, activities will be focused on forming partnerships and collaborations among the government, private and non-government sectors to mobilize state/national machinery.

-) In the annual development plan/programming exercises, gender analysis and a gender sensitive budget process will be made compulsory.
-) Mechanisms will be developed and adopted to institutionalize gender analysis, monitoring and evaluation in macro economic framework as well as sectoral and local development.
-) In local level planning and programming, as well as implementation monitoring and evaluation, at least 33 percent participation of women including representation of those from the backward groups will be secured.
-) Important development sectors like education and health, agriculture, water resources, forest, tourism and local development, will be engendered.
-) Measures will be taken to ensure that 33 percent of the beneficiaries of the programs run by the ministries are women.
-) At least 33 percent women representation in the state machinery will be ensured through legal, policy and institutional reforms. Composition of women representation will be proportionate to the structure and diversities of women in the society.
-) Especially designed courses will be conducted at the national, regional and district levels to promote the capacity of women in

general and those of the marginalized communities in particular, to contest in the appointment and promotion of public office posts.

- J Industrial enterprises with women as chief executive officers and 50 percent women in their managing board as members will be given special incentives.
- J To implement the international commitments of the State, all unacceptable discriminatory acts related to women will be eliminated.
- J Specialized gender analysis, gender auditing, budget implementation and monitoring of national, regional and local development plans and programs will be strengthened.
- J To check and control all kinds of violence against women including human trafficking, acts related to women's rights will be reformed and pro-rights perspective collaboration at cross-border points will be promoted.
- J Skill development trainings and psycho-social counseling programs to remedy emotional suffering will be conducted for women who are victims of violence and at risk.
- J To protect and control violence against girl, children and women, legal provisions will be tailored to promote and mobilize the community on initiatives to seek legal remedy and for setting up Para-legal committees.
- J Special measures will be taken to socially and economically empower single women.

- J Women's access and control over natural resources will be ensured for their economic empowerment.
- J Special program, to protect the rights of women engaged in the informal and unorganized sectors and to develop their professional skills, will be conducted.
- J An intensive program targeted to employment and income generation for rural women of backward groups will be extended to the Village Development Committee level by increasing involvement.
- J To upgrade the professional skill of rural women in their economic pursuit, steps will be taken to develop their entrepreneurial capacity, through an increased access to economic resources and information, market management, technology transfer and innovation.
- J A targeted program to ensure women's rights to reproductive and sexual health will be launched.
- J Initiatives will be taken to enhance gender issue dealing with the capacity of working women at the policy and decision-making levels, including those in political leadership to address gender issues.
- J The Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare (MOWCSW) will be restructured and its institutional capacity will be strengthened in order to develop it as an exclusively specialized national entity for coordination, facilitation, and monitoring and information management in its areas of operation.

- J The National Women Commission (NWC) will be strengthened and made autonomous in order to make its function effectively. The capacity of the monitoring and coordination network as well as the Task Force set up for effective implementation of the National Action Plans related to the CEDAW trafficking will be activated and enhanced. Infrastructure, staffing and institutional capacity of women development offices functioning as focal points of contact for gender issues at local levels will be strengthened for effective coordination, facilitation and monitoring of gender equality and women empowerment activities.
- J Capability of community level entities working for women empowerment and the women's NGO agencies as well will be enhanced and made accountable.
- J A special scheme will be set up to deliver basic services at the local level for the benefit of women in the poverty group.
- J Social, economic and political empowerment of women categorized as the backward groups, Adibasi Janajatis, Madhesis, single women, Muslims, women with disability, marginalized and poverty-stricken, will be empowered to actively take part in all fields.
- J In order to better utilize the skills and experiences of senior women, appropriate programs will be run at the community level.
- J Rehabilitation centers will be opened and special programs will be launched in collaboration with NGOs for the protection of the rights of conflict-affected women, displaced women, single women and women with disability, and for their social security.

J National Action Plan as per the UN Declaration on social rehabilitation of conflict-affected women will be made ready and a process of facilitating a secure and courteous return of dislocated women will be set up in motion.

J Services and facilities such as free education and skill development training, free basic health services, psycho-social counseling, easy access to financial investment and legal help will be extended to conflict affected women.

Gender disparities are wide in Nepal. Government efforts have been focused on empowering women, but gender-based social exclusion remains strong. Women are other groups. Who are deprived and left behind in terms of access to resources. It is not limited to any particular caste or area but to overall sectors of society.

A woman comprises 50.1 percent of the total population of Nepal of per census 2001. Patriarchy pervades most of the country's castes and ethnic groups; Nepal has one of the highest indices of son preferences in the world. Boys not only pass on the family name, but represent "insurance" for parents in their old age and can carry out important rituals when parents die. Girls generally work at home and in the fields, considered too unimportant and risky - to educate, given the high value attributed to virginity and the dangers the schooling in the company of boys and men outside the home hold might pose to virginity. By contrast, early marriage constitutes a kind of virginity insurance (UNDP, 2004 : 51).

Chapter Three

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Selection of the Study area

The study was conducted in the Khalanga VDC, Ward No. 3 of Darchula district.

Many effective programmes have been implemented there, which is helpful to empower women.

Many people from different castes and ethnic groups are living in Khalanga VDC Ward no. 3, So it is easy to find out the actual status of women.

3.2 Universe and Sampling

The universe of the population is the people of Khalanga VDC ward no. 3. 40 percent of the total households in the Khalanga VDC, Ward no. 3 were selected using stratified random sampling method.

There are 70 Households in ward no. 3. There are 6 different castes in Khalanga VDC ward no. 3. 30 HH Thakuri, 23 HH Brahmin, 7 HH Chhetri, 3 HH Bhote, 3 HH Damai and 4 HH Kami. So, the samples are taken purposively 40 percent from total universe which comes to be 28 households. 28 respondents have been taken as sample in the study. 16 respondents are male and 12 respondents are female. In the study area, 12 Thakuri, 9 Brahmin, 3 Chhetri, 1 Bhote, 1 Damai, and 2 Kami are taken from stratified random sampling method.

3.3 Research Design

The research has been carried with descriptive and exploratory research design. In order to fulfill the objective, information has been collected from the field study, household survey; interview and

observation are the main techniques that have been utilized to obtain the information from women of the study area. Families have been taken into consideration for interview. Primary as well as secondary data has been utilized. Analysis of data has been made from the average and percentage.

3.4 Nature and Source of Data

This study is conducted mainly on the basis of primary data. Primary data are collected from structured and unstructured questionnaire, interview, observation to target group, discussion, key information interview.

However, some information obtained through secondary sources, the sources of secondary information are the published and unpublished document of the government, NGOs, PAF, UNDP, HDR and Others.

3.5 Data Collection & Techniques

The major techniques used to collect data were household survey, key information interview and observation.

To collect the information or data through the household survey the sample population was divided into different strata based on the geographical and socio-economic setting covering of people from different villages, toles (further division of villages), dalits and ethnic minorities.

The household survey questionnaire (see Annex -1) was used with household lead of the family. Prior to ask the questions set in the questionnaire, an effort was made to create some favourable environment by giving introduction, objectives or intentions of the researchers and gossiping with some matters which may be extremely useful to build up rapport with him/her. Some practical tips from PRA and appreciate

inquiry was always, kept in mind and practiced such as: "Listen to the people", "encourage the people", "facilitate, don't teach", "respect the people", "always smile", "appreciate what they (community/ people) have" etc.

The questionnaire was designed to cover the wide range of subjects to assess the socio-economic situation such as income or employment, had, food production and its adequacy, education, health, and peoples accessibility etc.

Key informants interview was applied to health post in-charge, school teachers, VDC representatives empowered women and social workers. Key informants were asked about government's efforts/investment in the VDC to reduce poverty, women empowerment process, socio economic change occurred over the time, NGOs effort/investments. The sample of checklist is annexed in Annex 2.

Besides, observation techniques was also undertaken in order to identify or assess the housing condition, health and household/ environment sanitary condition, geo-social settings, condition of development infrastructure and so forth.

3.6 Data Analysis

The qualitative data have been analyzed in descriptive way and the quantitative data have been analyzed using the computer program MS-Excel and SPSS. The data collected from the field were coded numerically and filled them into the MS-Excel and SPSS program in to two levels of entry-household level and individual level.

After the preparation of database at two levels, the variables were sorted, filtered and cross tabulated so as to find out the frequencies,

average, percent and other statistical functions and to assess and analyze the correlation between or among different variables.

The result of the research 'study has been interpreted into different headings and sub-headings using tables and figures, such as pie-chart, bar-diagram etc.

Chapter Four

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AREA

Geographical Setting

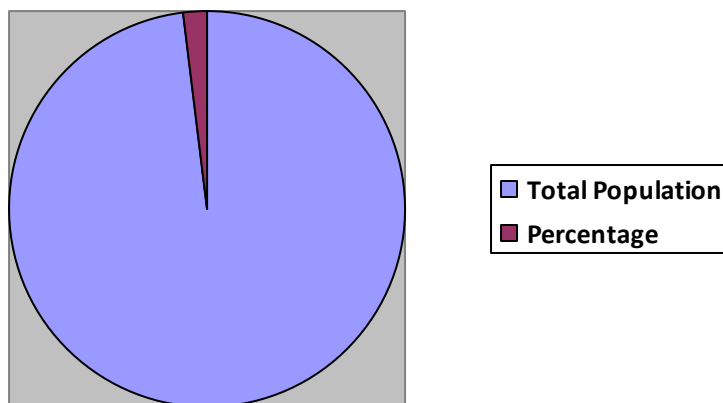
Khalanga (VDC) is one of the VDC of Darchula district. Khalanga VDC is situated in the center part of Darchula district. It covers an area of 2322 sq. km. It is covered by Bajhang District in east, Pithauragadh District. Uttrakhanda, India in west, Tibet, China in north while Baitadi District in the south. It represents the hill geographical structure. 61215 hectares land is suitable for agriculture and 72982.3 hectares land is covered by Jungle area other 73823.16 land have been used for other purpose Mahakali, Chaulani, Tinkar, Tusarpani, Kalagadh, Thaligadh, Bhartolagadh, Agarigadh, Gokulegadh and Lasku Khola are the main source of water for agriculture. Most of villagers and depend on agriculture.

The VDC lies in the area No. 3 of Khalanga district. The total population of VDC is 5360, 2522 and 2838 are covered by female and male respectively. There are altogether 569 households and each family contains 5.39 members in an average. The communities mainly Brahmin, Chhetri, Thakuri, Bhote, Damai & Kami. Main religions of the VDC are Hindu and Buddha.

4.1 Distribution by sex

Table 4.1 : Distribution of population by sex

Sex	Total Population	Percentage
Male	2838	52.94
Female	2522	47.05
Total	5360	100



Source: District Profile of Darchula, 2066

Figure 4.1 : Distribution of population by sex

The table depicts the total population of Khalanga VDC where the gender disparity looks to similar profile of national figure of Nepal. The total population is 5360 where there are 52.94 percent males and 47.05 percent females.

4.2 Ward-wise Distribution by Sex

Table 4.2 : Ward-wise Distribution by Sex

Ward	Male	Female	Total
1	454	467	921
2	406	372	778
3	128	121	249
4	359	272	631
5	464	259	723
6	191	179	370
7	241	292	533
8	314	283	597
9	281	277	558
	2838	2522	5360

Source: District Profile of Darchula 2066

Of the total nine ward of the VDC, Ward no. 1 occupies highest number of population which hold 921 and Ward no. 3 occupies the lowest population where the number of population is only 249.

4.3 The Distribution of Household on the basis of caste/ethnicity ward no. 3

Caste is that extreme form of social class organization in which the position of individuals in the status hierarchy is determined by birth. Ethnicity is a concept that is purely social in meaning. It refers to the cultural practices and outlets of a given community of people that set them apart from others.

Table 4.3 : Distribution by Caste/Ethnicity

Caste/Ethnicity	HH	Total no. of population	HH%	T.N.P %
Thakuri	30	173	42.85	46.13
Brahmin	23	115	32.85	30.66
Chhetri	7	34	10	9.06
Bhote	3	12	4.28	3.2
Damai	3	18	4.28	4.8
Kami	4	23	5.71	6.13
	70	375	100	100

Source: District Profile of Darchula, 2066

As shown in the above table, there are altogether 569 HH in Khalanga VDC ward no 3, where priority of the population is of Thakuri. There are 30 HH of Thakuri communities. Likewise, there are 23 HH of Brahmin, 7 HH of Chhetri, 4 HH of Kami, 3 HH Damai and 3 HH of Bhote.

Chapter Five

ANALYSIS OF DATA

5.1 Socio-economic information of the Respondents

Socio-economic information of the respondents represents the socioeconomic status of a particular community, society and a geographical locality. Different socioeconomic characteristics represent the different socio-cultural norms, values and tradition of the society which have been carrying a community, society or a geographical area with a guidance of the certain ethics and system approaches. In this research study, the researcher is being focused on women empowerment and its inter connection with the poverty reduction. So, have the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents are explored to interconnect women's empowerment and its role in poverty reduction of Khalanga VDC of Darchula district.

5.1.1 Composition of Respondents by Sex

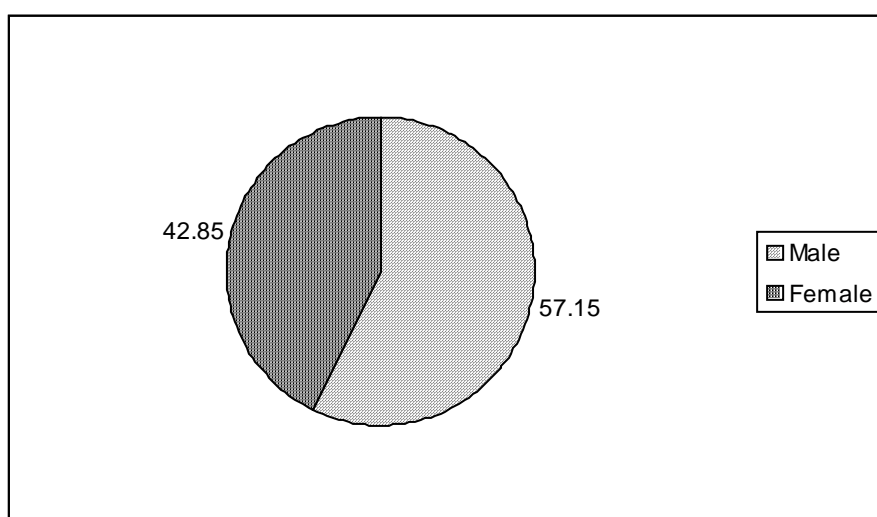
Sex is the biological differences between male and female. It plays a vital role to determine the success or failure of any development programs and without development no poverty reduction. Similarly, to take the exact date of any subject matter. It is necessary to analyze both sexes. In the topic like women's empowerment, it is inevitable to take information from both male and female. Therefore, in this study too, both males and females are taken as respondents. The composition of respondents by sex has been show below.

Table 5.1.1 : Composition of the Respondents by Sex

Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	16	57.15
Female	12	42.85
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011.

Figure 5.1.1 : Composition of the Respondents by Sex



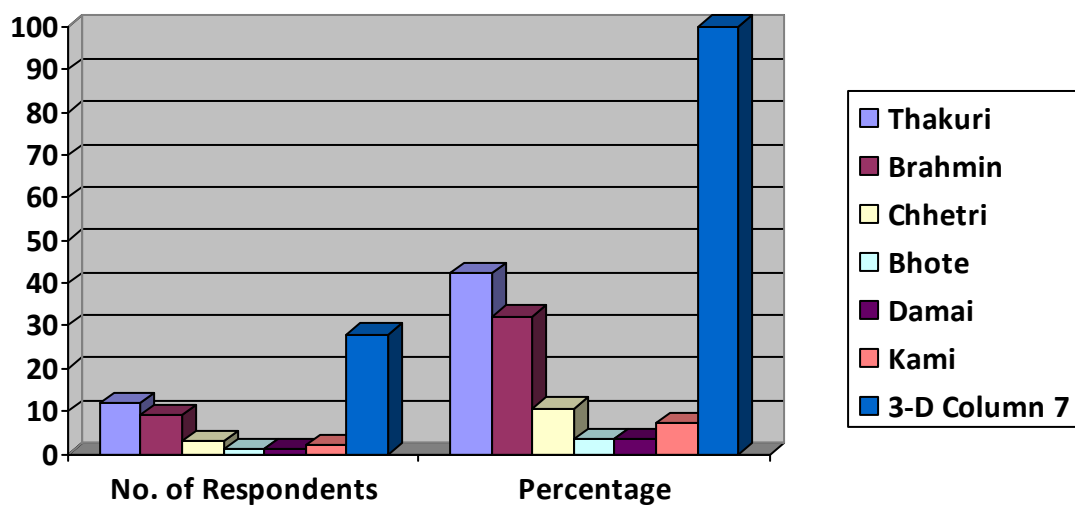
The table 5.1.1 remarks that there is very much unequal distribution of population of the respondents. Out of the 28 respondents, 12 respondents are female and 16 respondents are male. So we can observe that due to the hierarchical position of the family and lack of education, the female are seen quite back warded and vulnerable, they didn't show so much interest in responding the researcher while studying the concerns of this research. The composition of the respondent by sex is shown in the following figure.

5.1.2 Composition of Respondents by Caste and Ethnicity

During the study, different types of cast and ethnic groups were found so, there is diversity in caste, ethnicity, language, culture and tradition in a community, society or a geographical location. All the system of socio-economic living varies according to the norms and values of every distinct nature of a community. In the study area majority of the respondents represents from Thakuri, Brahmin and chhetri. One most appreciable matter of the area is that there is no any domination of particular community instead, there is a harmony amongst the Brahmin, Chhetri, Thakuri community but still these is a domination of them to the so called marginalize dalits who are socio-economically, culturally and politically backward.

Table 5.1.2 : Composition of Respondents by Cast & Ethnicity

Cast/Ethnicity	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Thakuri	12	42.35
Brahmin	9	32.14
Chhetri	3	10.71
Bhote	1	3.57
Damai	1	3.57
Kami	2	7.14
	28	100



Source: Field Survey, 2011

Cast/Ethnicity	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Brahmin/Chhetri/Thakuri	24	85.71
Janjati	1	3.57
Dalits	3	10.71
	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.2 : Composition of Respondents by Cast & Ethnicity

The table 5.1.2 shows the composition of the respondents by cast ethnicity where 1 households are of Janajati that posses 3.57percent of the total respondent, 24 are of Brahmins, Chhetri,Thakuri which posses 85.71 percent, similarly, 3 household are of Dalits which cover 10.71 percent of the total respondents.

Social Empowerment:

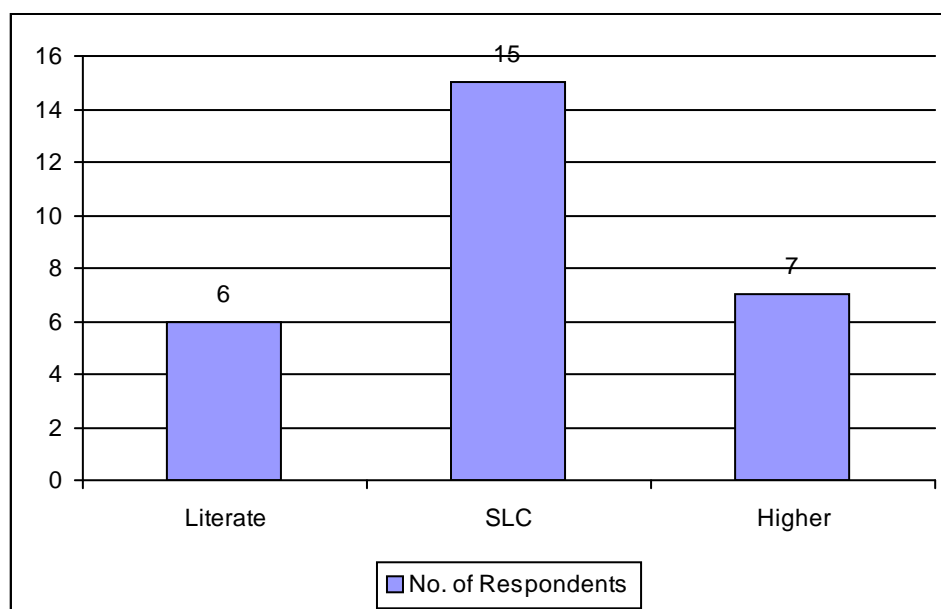
To find out the social empowerment of women in the study area, the study was focused on the following topics.

Table 5.1.3 : Distribution of Respondents by Educational Status

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Literate	6	21.43
SLC	15	53.57
Higher	7	25
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Fig. 5.1.3 : Distribution of Respondents by Education Status



The table presents the educational status of the respondents. Here, Literate indicates to the people who can read newspaper. As shown in the

table, 6 respondents who have passed SLC is 15 and the number of respondents of higher education is 7. Education is the fundamental rights of the people and without education the development can't be possible. The data shows that people haven't get easy access as higher education. There can be many factors in the poor educational attainment of the people. It is clear that until and unless the people can get on opportunity of higher education, the qualitative development of society can't be possible. Without development no poverty reduction. Due to the illiteracy, a number of socio-cultural norms and values art in existence which has created lots of hinderness and obstacles in the process of women's empowerment. It is national scenario of Nepal and same scenario seems in the study area also.

**Table 5.1.4 : Distribution of Respondents by their access
on Health Services**

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	18	64.28
No	10	35.71
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

**Figure 5.1.4 : Distribution of Respondents by their access
on Health Services**

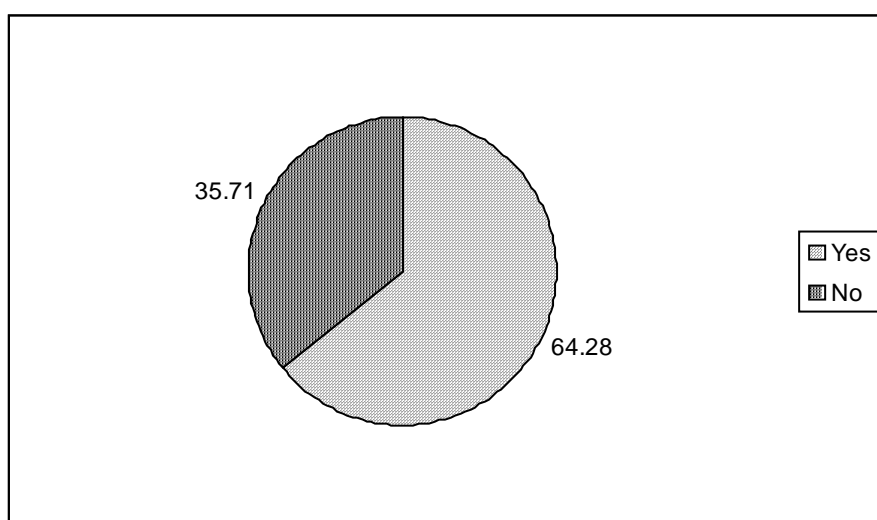


Table shows the people's access about health service. As indicated in the above table 18 respondents out of 28 replied. They have got health facility which is 35.71 percent. When the people have easy access on health facility and benefitted, real development takes place. But the data shows that still 35.71 percent people have no access to health services. During the study, it was found that still many people can't be go hospital and private clinics for serious types of operations and other disease due to the poverty. Some of the respondents told they can't pay the bills. On the other hand, there is no proper provision of health facility by the government in the area. Such scenario clarifies that health facility is still too far from the access of poor people of the study area. Their social status was also found poor. Due to the poor health, it was also found that people where suffering from different diseases resulting heavy expenditure of their hard earned income.

Table 5.1.5 : Involvement in Social Organization

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Aama Samuha	10	35.71
Micro Credit	14	50
Co-operative	2	7.14
Others	2	7.14
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

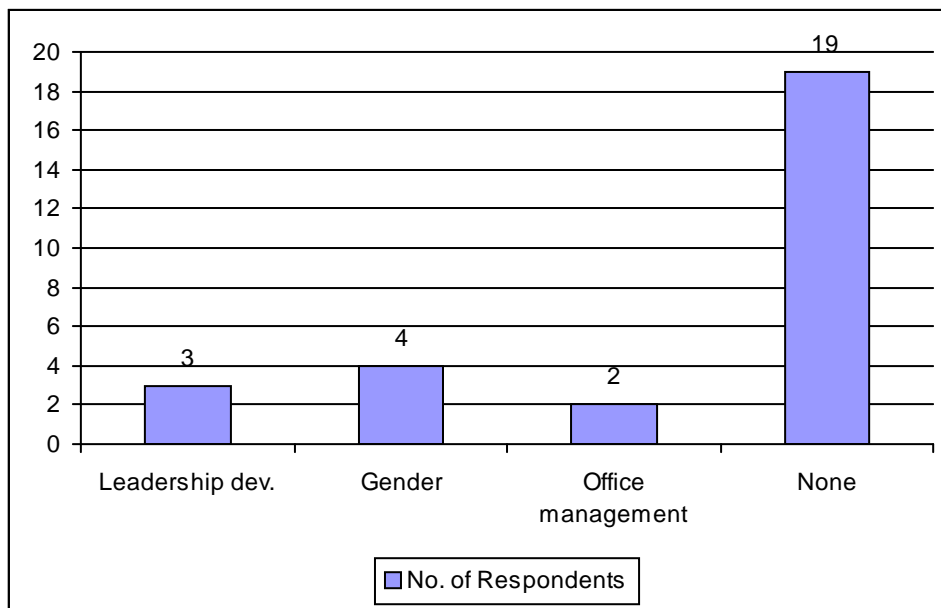
The above mentioned table shows that the majority of the respondents are involved in Micro credit, which constitutes 50 percent. Similarly, there are 35.71 percent respondents involved in Aama Samuha. It is found that 7.14 percent respondents replied to involve in co-operative and 7.14 percent respondents said that they are involved in others organizations. All respondents said that after involve in organization. Their economical status has been changed. Which helps to empowerment and the poverty reduction.

Table 5.1.6 : Personality Development Training

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Leadership dev.	3	10.71
Gender	4	14.28
Office management	2	7.14
None	19	67.85
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.6 : Personality Development Training



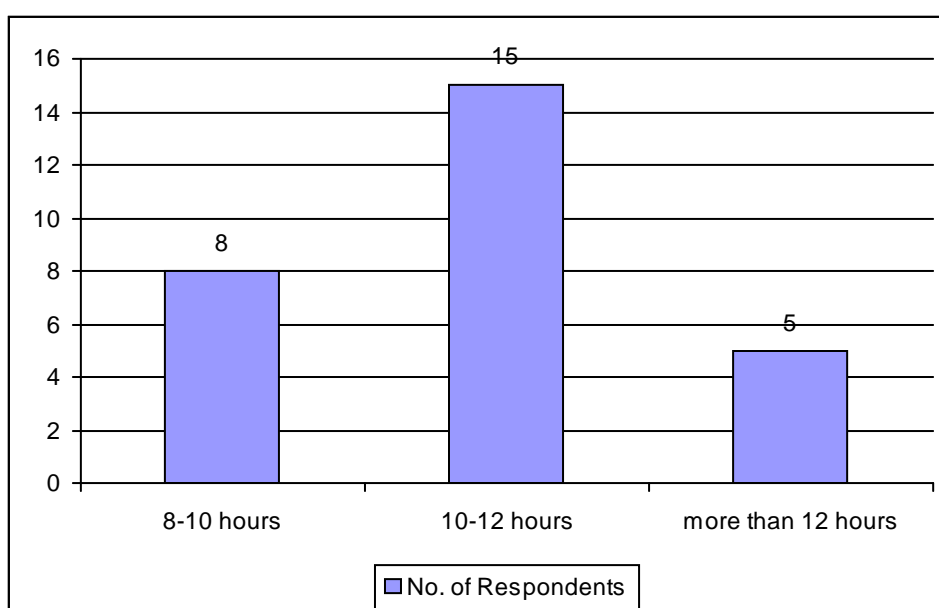
The total number of women who have taken personality development training is less than that of total respondent. As shown in the table, 10.71 percent have taken leadership development training, 14.28 percent have taken gender and 7.14 replied they had taken the training of office management. Similarly, 67.85 percent women found they had not taken any type of trainings. Training is importance for personality development. It increases confidence level of a person. So, it plays a vital role to enhance empowerment process. But it was found that most of the women had not taken personality development training. During the survey, those women who had not taken trainings were found passive in financial transactions, and also found their poor presence; in decision making process. Actually, these women were excluded from important matters of house. The women who have taken leadership development training they are in respected positions not only in house but also in offices.

Table 5.1.7 : Women's Work Load

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
8-10 hours	8	28.57
10-12 hours	15	53.57
more than 12 hours	5	17.85
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.7 : Women's Work Load



The table presents the daily working hours of women in the study area. As shown in the table 8 respondents replied women works 8-10 hours in a day. One the same way, 15 replied 10-12 hours, 5 replied women work more than 12 hours as the daily working hours of women. It shows a heavy work load to women. The scenario of women's work load seems executively that of national data. In average, women work more

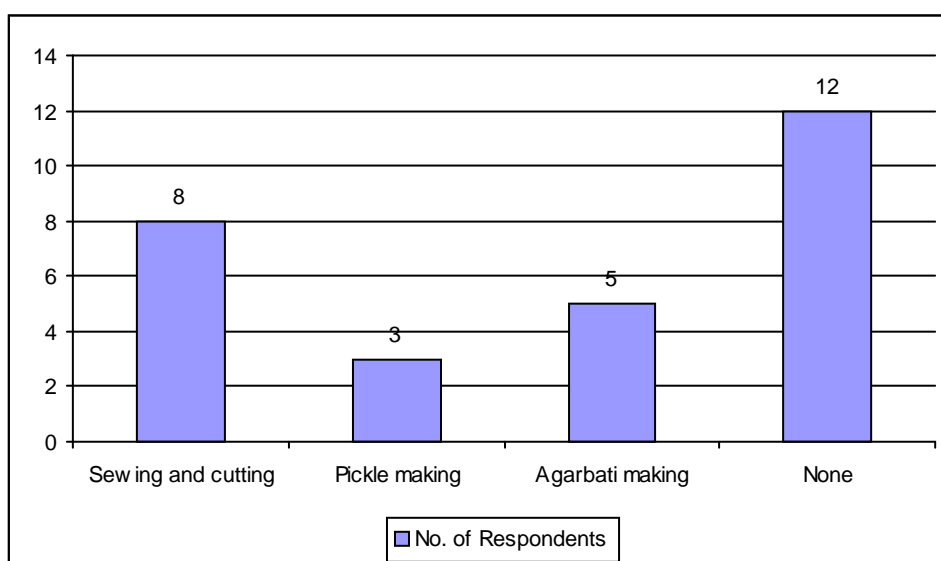
than 11 hours a day in Nepal. Women's work is more physical. In addition, they have to take care of their children and family too. The daily life of these women work more than 11 hours a day in household is really miserable. It was found that due to the excessive work load women of the study area hadn't get appropriate environment and time to involve into capacity building activities so the empowerment process of them didn't seem satisfactory. That is why, if we have to make our society prosperous, we have to empower these women who are bearing necessary burden household work.

Table 5.1.8 : Income Generation Training

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Sewing and cutting	8	28.57
Pickle making	3	10.71
Agarbati making	5	17.85
None	12	42.85
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.8 : Income Generation Training



The table shows the status of skill development training that women have taken in the study area. As shown in the above table among 28 respondents 28.57 percent respondents replied they have taken sewing and cutting training, 10.71 percent pickle making and 17.85 percent Agarbati making. Similarly 42.85 percent of women found who had not taken any types of training. The number of women in pickle making and Agarbati making is relatively lower than sewing and cutting. During the survey. Some of the respondents who are engaged in sewing and cutting said they have managed their household properly and to do so their profession has helped them. Likewise, the women who are engaged in pickle making said they sell their products in local markets and it has become a reliable source of income for them. Similarly, the women who have taken the training of Agarbati making also replied of a reliable source of income. In fact, the skill development training has helped women to managej the daily expenditure of house, to pay children's fee and to manage their own personal expenditure. During the research, it was also found that the women who manage their own expenses, are more confident and have played an effective role in household affairs specially in decision making process than others women who depend up on others for personal expenses and who have no any source of income. It also shows that skill development training is necessary to empower women. Therefore, all women should be given various types of skill development trainings.

Economic Empowerment

Economic condition is an important indicator of empowerment. It determines the people's status in the society. Therefore, to examine the

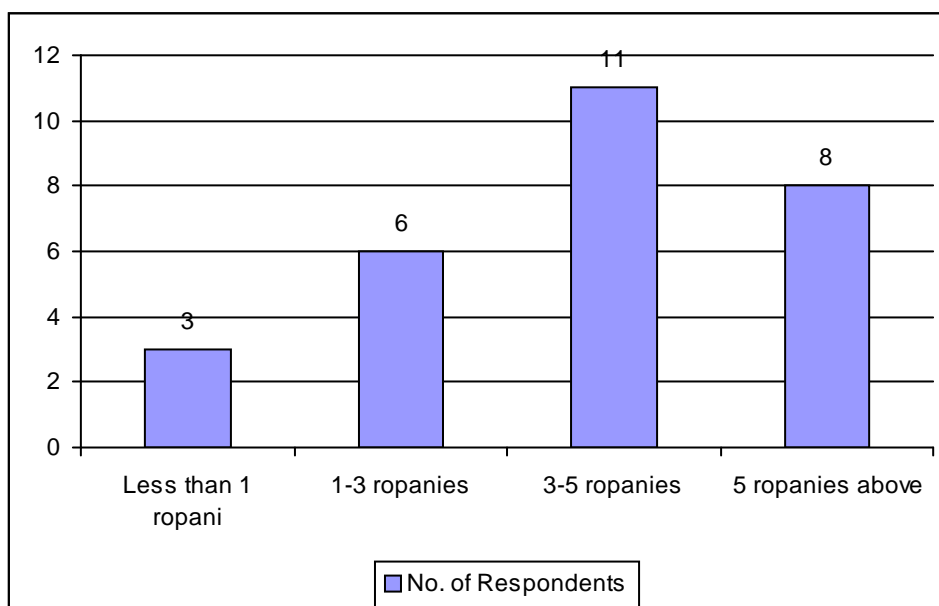
economic empowerment of the women of the study area, the study was mainly focused on the following questions.

Table 5.1.9 : Land holding pattern of Respondents

Amount of Land	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1 ropani	3	10.71
1-3 ropanies	6	21.42
3-5 ropanies	11	39.29
5 ropanies above	8	28.57
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.9 : Land holding pattern of Respondents



The table shows the status of landholding patterns of the respondents. The authorized landholder respondents of the study area are

shown in the table. Among 28 respondents 10.71 percent respondents (do) have less than 1ropani of land, 21.42 percent respondents occupy 1-3 ropanies of land. Similarly, 39-29 percent respondents have 3-5 ropanies of land and 5 ropanies above of land holder respondents are 28.57 percent. The land holding pattern of the respondents later mine the status of production and economic status of them which represents the social status and affects in living standard.

Table 5.1.10 : Food sufficiency of Respondent

Response	No. of respondents	Percentage
0-3 months	4	14.28
3-6 months	12	42.85
6-9 months	4	14.28
9-1 years	8	14.28
1 years above	8	14.28
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

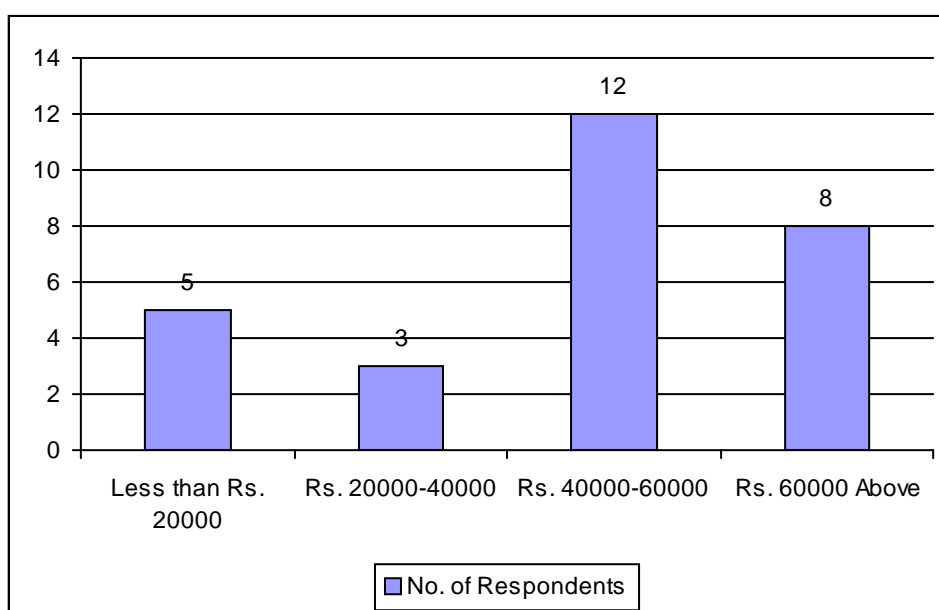
The above table reveals that majority of household (42.85%) can consume food up to only 6 months from their own production. Similarly, 14.28 percent household's agricultural production is sufficient for 6-9 months. It is found that 14.28 percent household's food production lasts only up to 3 months. Likewise, 14.28 percent households have food adequacy for 9 to 12 months. The households which agricultural production lasts for more than 12 months is 14.28 percent.

Table 5.1.11 : Distribution of Respondents by Income

Annual Income Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than Rs. 20000	5	17.85
Rs. 20000-40000	3	10.71
Rs. 40000-60000	12	43.
Rs. 60000 Above	8	28.57
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.11 : Distribution of Respondents by Income



The table 5.1.11 depicts the situation of annual income of the respondent on the basis of their all efforts regarding their daily practices of economic activities as production of field and other services what they possesses in additional work of economic activities. As we set, 17.85

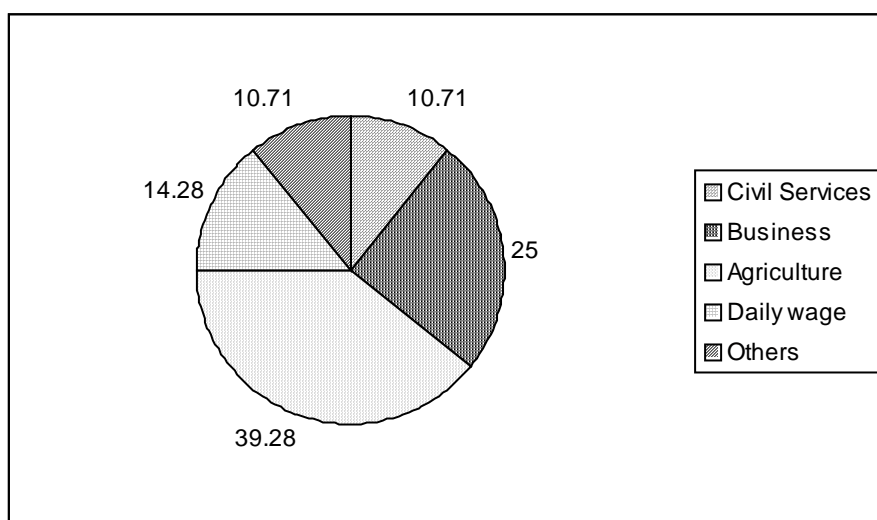
percent respondents have the income of up to Rs. 20000 and per year, 10.71 percent people earn Rs. 20000-40000 per year. Similarly, 43 percent respondents earn Rs. 40000 - 60000 per years 28.57 percent respondents have annual income of Rs. 60000 and above per year.

Table 5.1.12 : Distribution of Respondents according to the source of income

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Civil Services	3	10.71
Business	7	25
Agriculture	11	39.28
Daily wage	4	14.28
Others	3	10.71
	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011.

Figure 5.1.12 : Distribution of Respondents according to the source of income



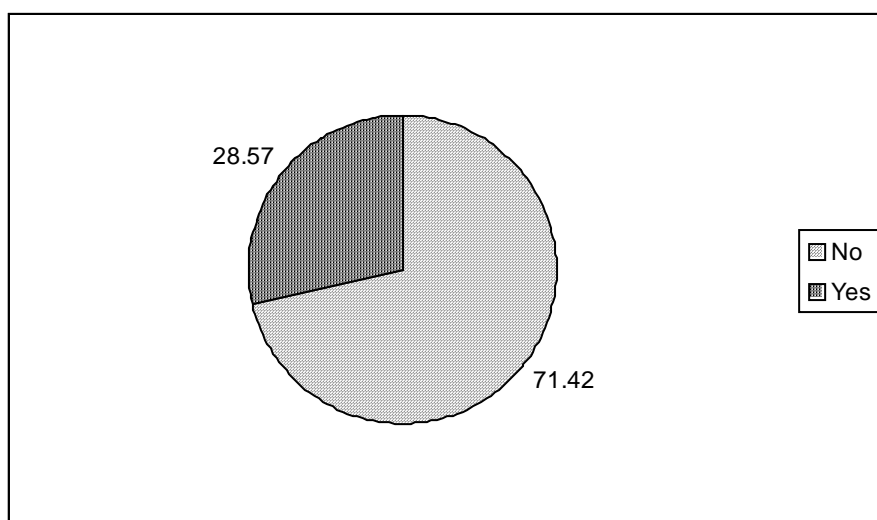
As indicated in the table 3 respondents responded civil service as their main source of income and of replied as business, while 11 and 4 respondents replied as agriculture art. Daily wage respectively as their main source of income. 3 respondents replied as other services are main their income source (abroad, Land, etc) Here, among 28, only three respondents are found to be engaged in civil service so we can easily assume that civil service, a reliable and in creative source of income is to for from the access of Nepalese women. Similarly, there is high number of women who replied agriculture and daily wages as their main sources of income. It seems that female have poor access in government service and most of them are involved in low graded sectors such as agriculture and daily wages which is the national scenario of the country. Main occupations of Nepalese women are agricultural works and the household choose and the same scenario seems in the study area too. Due to over age old socio-cultural norms and values, women are still considered as inferior comparing to men. So, they cannot get an appropriate environment to boost up their life.

Table 5.1.13 : Status of financial Authority of women in family

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
No	20	71.42
Yes	8	28.57
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.13 : Status of financial Authority of Women in Family.



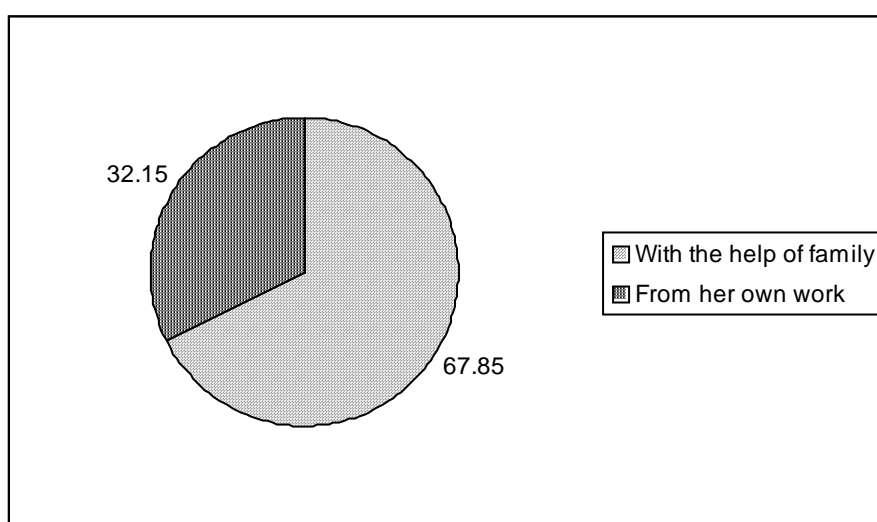
The table shows the general status of females in financial transaction of their income. It discloses a hidden fact of male supremacy over female where females are compelled to ask their male counterparts even to expend of their own income. According to the table, 20 respondents out of 28 replied women ask their husbands before spending it. It is 71.42 percent. Similarly, 8 respondents replied they do not ask to their husband before spending it. Analyzing the data, it can be said that women are not able to make financial transaction even of their own income. They have to ask their husband to spend it. It can be explained that women earn money but they have not right to spend it. So, women are highly dependent on their male counterparts for financial transactions. The females are tied up with the chain of slavery by the male dominated social structure since centuries ago which is still in existence in various forms in our society and the compulsion to ask to others to expend own income is an example of it.

**Table 5.1.14 : Distribution of Respondents by the management of
Women's personal expense**

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
With the help of family	19	67.85
From her own work	9	32.15
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

**Figure 5.1.14 : Distribution of Respondents by the management of
Women's personal expense**



Among 28 respondents, 19 replied women manage their personal expenses from support of their family which is 67.85 percent. Similarly, 9 respondents replied women manage it from their own work. The data shows that still most of the women depend upon that husband or the family members to make their personal expense which shows that women are dependent to others. It is definitely not a good sign in the field of women's empowerment. From the above data it can be said that women

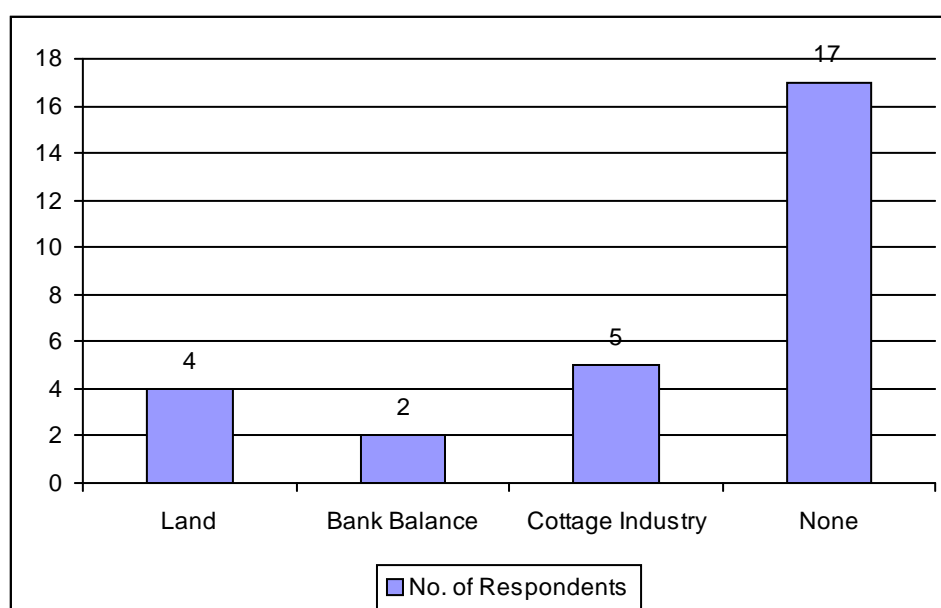
are very weak in the case of financial sector. So, they are not economically empowered. The vast dependency prove this very fact. In this context, the economic empowerment should be focused and a sound environment should be created to make empowerment process effective.

Table 5.1.15 : Distribution of Respondents by women's personal Assets

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Land	4	14.28
Bank Balance	2	7.14
Cottage Industry	5	17.87
None	17	60.71
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure. 5.1.15 : Distribution of Respondents by women's personal Assets



The table depicts the status of women's personal assets. Among the total respondents, 14.28 percent replied land as personal assets and 7.14 percent replied as bank balance. 17.87 percent replied cottage industry as the assets of women. Most interesting thing is that among total respondents 60.71 percent replied that women don't have personal assets. The table shows that still a large portion of women of the study area have no real access and control over resources. It presents a common scenario of most of the Nepalese women where they have access to property but have no right to utilize it as per their interest. Women contribute more than men in agricultural sector, they produce crops but they have to ask to their male counterparts to sell it even to manage the household activities. Similarly, most of Nepalese women wear ornaments like ear ring, nose pin and others. but they have not right to sell or purchase it. They have to consult to their husband to do so. It clarifies the status of Nepalese women over assets. It can be explained from the above data that only 14.28 percent of the respondents replied that women have land. On the same way, women's presence regarded to bank balance and cottage industry is also nominal. As a result, the overall status of empowerment of women in the study area found poor. It is clear that without women's access and control over resources, women's empowerment can't meet its goal. Therefore, to empower women, it is necessary to provide equal rights over resources.

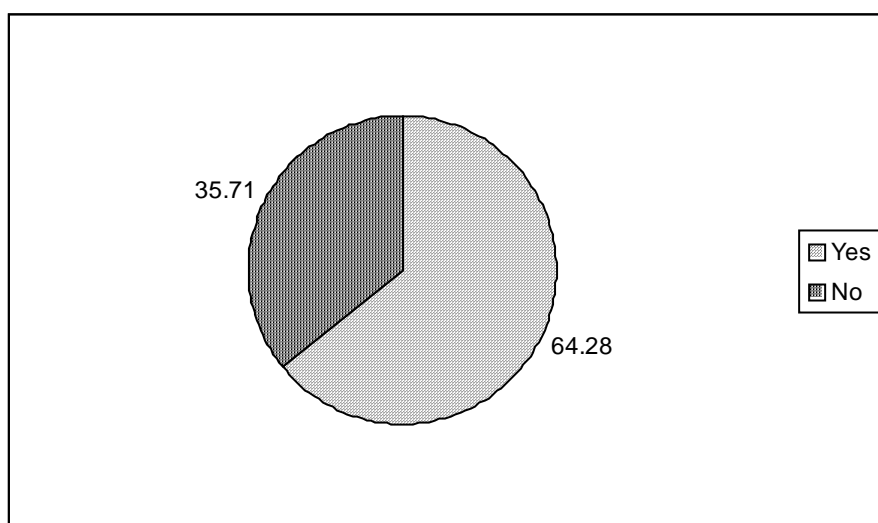
Political Empowerment. Politics is one of the most influential factors of women's empowerment. It also helps women to raise voices against exploitation, and also encourage fighting for rights. Moreover, it helps to identify the social status of women, their representation on national politics, their present in decision making level etc.

**Table 5.1.16 : View of Respondents in women's involvement
in politics**

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	18	64.28
No	10	35.71
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

**Figure 5.1.16 : View of Respondents in women's involvement
in politics**



While asking the questions whether women should take part or not in politics 18 out of 28 replied yes and 10 replied no. Majority of the people replied women should take part in politics while nearly 35.71 percent people are against of it. Still many people are not aware about the importance of women's participation in politics and do not take it seriously. Such scenario can be seen in the above table. As a result, they are always logging begin men to achieve the socio-economic benefits.

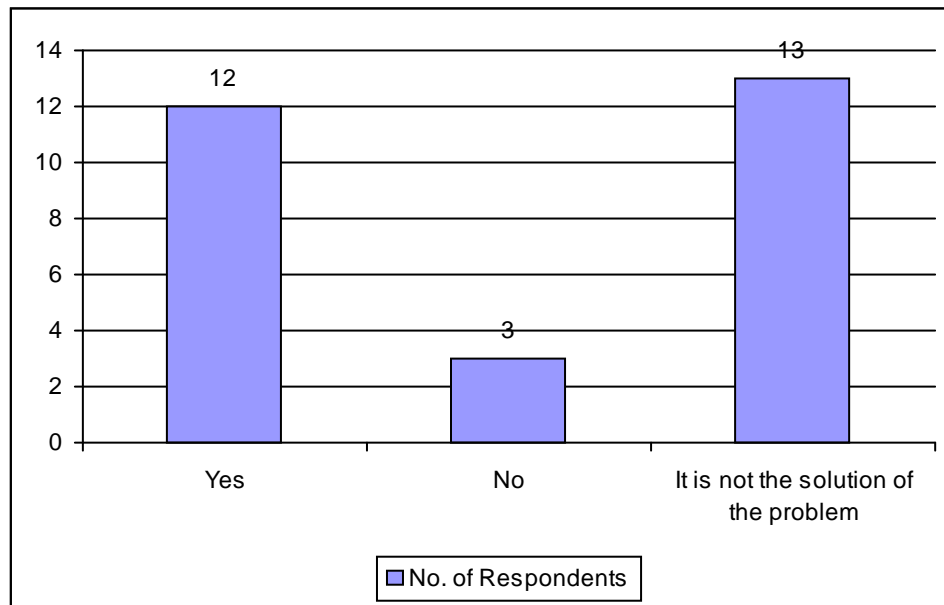
Now-a-days there is gradual increase of women's involvement in politics but still their presence is nominal. Until and unless women makes a strong presence in decision making process they can not get rid from discriminations and exploitations. Politics generates awareness among the people which is very significant to empower them and to change their daily life. But it doesn't seem in the study area where the people have poor level of awareness and they do not think women's participation in politics necessary. As a result, their overall living standard is also very low. It can be proved with the fact that women's involvement in civil service, upper level political sphere and in other important fields is minimal. Therefore, to distribute the fruits of development, it is inevitable to make women able to compete with men in every field of daily life. To do so, women's empowerment is must. That is way, the participation of women in politics is not only necessary but also inevitable. And now it is the turn of women to lead the national politics and to maintain peace and harmony in the country.

Table 5.1.17 : Distribution of Respondents by their view about female Right in Parental Property

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	42.85
No	3	10.72
It is not the solution of the problem	13	46.42
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.17 : Distribution of Respondents by their view about female Right in Parental Property



The table shows that 12 respondents out of 28 replied women should be provided parental property which is 42.85. Similarly, 3 respondents replied women should not be provided parental property and 13 respondents expressed their view as it is not the solution of the problem which is 10.71 and 46.42 percent respectively. The table present the general view of the people of the study area about the parental property where most of them said that only the provision of right over parental property does not give a proper solution of the current problems faced by Nepalese women. They told it doesn't solve problems in a sustainable way. During the survey, some of the respondents told they were really afraid because the provision of right to parental property is no more than the legalization of dowry system. They said that is creates unnecessary tension in the society rather than solution of the problems. They emphasized to create a sound environment such a higher education,

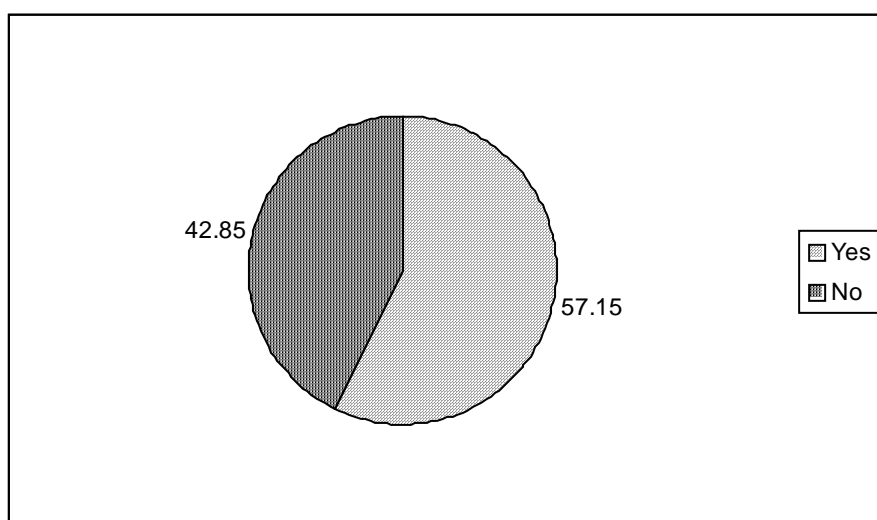
job opportunities, vocational training etc to empower women instead of giving the parental property.

Table 5.1.18 : Distribution of Respondents by their knowledge about women's Right to Reproduction

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	16	57.15
No	12	42.85
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.18 : Distribution of Respondents by their knowledge about women's Right to Reproduction



As indicated in the above table, 16 respondents out of 28 responded they know the new provision made by the interim constitution of 2063 which is 57.15 percent. Similarly, the remaining 12 respondents replied they do not know about this. Reproduction health is really a

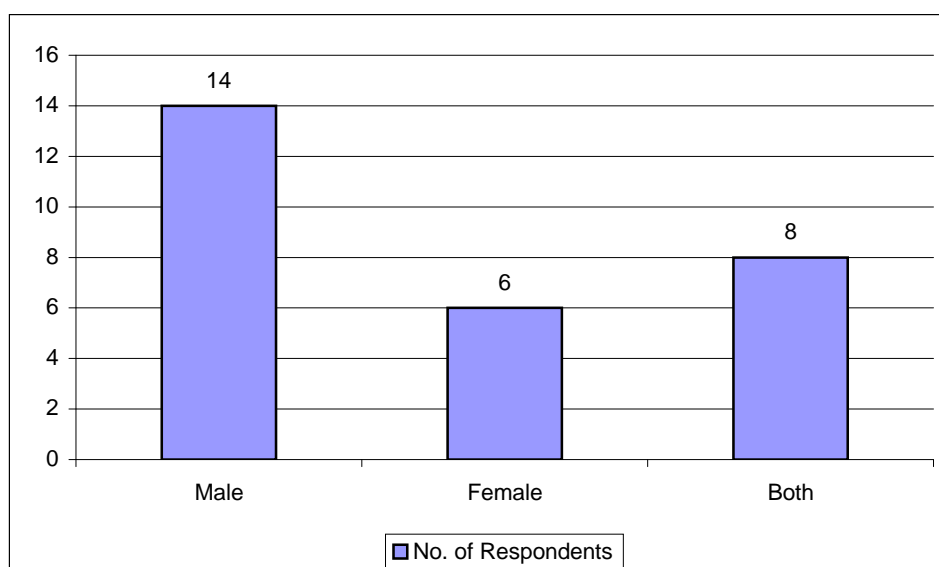
serious issue but the people have little knowledge about it. According to the table, nearly half of the people are not aware about women's right to reproduction. In this context, women can't decide about the children they want to give birth instead they are forced to give birth children according to the desire of their husband and family which causes negative effects in their health. They can not perform daily routines. The data disclose a fact that still the government's programs are too far from the access of most of the people.

Table 5.1.19 : Distribution of Respondents according to Decision making Authority

Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	14	50
Female	6	21.42
Both	8	28.57
Total	28	100

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.1.19 : Distribution of Respondents according to Decision making Authority



Although there should be equal participation of both male and female in decision making process to make a prosperous family, it does not seem like this in the study area. There is higher degree of male dominance in decision making process. As shown in the table, 14 respondents told males alone make decisions while the number of female in the same work is only 6. Similarly, 8 respondents replied both participate in the decision making process. It shows that females are not equally participating in the decision process. They are excluded from decision making process and such exclusion restricts women to participate in different community works too. This data discloses a hidden fact that still women are considered as inferior to men because women are not easily permitted to do work they want to do. To do some new work, they have to ask their guardians, especially to their husbands but they are not easily permitted. Asking permissions restricts women's mobility and makes her dependent to others. A husband, who is the nearest and dearest person of a married women, rarely permits her to involve into extra activities such as applying for a job, to involve in social work etc. During the research, some of the respondents, who were educated, said their husbands but they are not easily permitted. Asking permissions restricts women's mobility and makes her depends to others. A husband, who is the nearest and dearest person of a married women, rarely permits her to involve into extra activities such as applying for a job, to involve in social works etc. During the research, some of the respondents, who were educated, said their husbands did not permit them to engage in jobs saying earning is of men's work not of women. It makes us clear that still the women are living as bonded labor. They can not take decisions themselves because the lay of decision making authority is in

the clutch of men. It again shows the male supremacy over female. It raise questions to personal freedom. Freedom and mobility are bases of human rights. But as long as women have subordinate status to their male counterparts, the empowerment process of women can not go ahead properly. Therefore, freedom, mobility and meaningful participation in decision making process are key elements of empowerment and these can play a crucial role to grant power and to make equal social status of women to men.

5.2 Factors Affecting Women's Empowerment on the Basis of Data Analysis

Women's empowerment is a very broad and vague topic which covers a wide range of social cultural and economic spheres of daily life. There is no single worldwide accepted definitions of women's empowerment because the meaning and definition of it differ from one community to another. Necessary steps to be taken to enhance the empowerment process also vary from one community to another community. Similarly, the factors affecting women's empowerment also differ according to socio-cultural, economic as well as family environment. Some of the important factors affecting women's empowerment on the basis of data analysis are as follows:

- Income is an important factor of women's empowerment because if women have a decent income they do not have to depend to others for financial transactions. But during the study, it was found that most of the respondents were not engaged to the government service and business, which are considered as lucrative source of income.

- ▶ Access and control over to resources is another significant factor of women's empowerment. When a women gets rights to utilize the resources as per to her interests she definitely utilizes it to fulfill her needs. But the study shows that women are forced to ask her husband before spending their hard earned income. Similarly, the dependency culture for financial transaction is another affecting factor of women's empowerment.
- ▶ Women's workload also disturbs their empowerment process. The data shows that women have to work at least 11 hours a day. In this condition, women do not have enough time to involve in extra activities. They are confided into household chores. Therefore, women's empowerment can't go ahead smoothly.
- ▶ Among many factors, awareness comes as the most important factor affecting women's empowerment process. The awareness is not satisfactory in the study area. Because still 35.71 percent expressed their view as women shouldn't take part in politics.
- ▶ Involvement in decision making process is another important affecting factor of women's empowerment. As shown in table 5.1.19, 50 percent have replied that decisions are made by male alone female's involvement in decision making process is in poor condition which has affected freedom and mobility of women. So, personal freedom is inevitable to empower women.

5.3 Contribution of Women Empowerment in rural poverty reduction

Table 5.3 : Contribution of Women Empowerment in Rural Poverty Reduction

Annual Income before Women Empowerment	No. of Respondents	Annual Income After women Empowerment	No. of Respondents
Less than Rs. 20000	14	Less than Rs. 20000	5
Rs. 20000-40000	8	Rs. 20000-40000	3
Rs. 40000-60000	4	Rs. 40000-60000	12
Rs. 60000 Above	2	Rs. 60000 Above	8
Total	28	Total	28

Source : Field Survey, 2011

Figure 5.3 : Contribution of Women Empowerment in Rural Poverty Reduction



Economy factor is important factor of poverty. So increase income level of respondents help to reduce poverty. After women empowerment only 28.57 percent respondents income have less than 40000 and other 20 respondents income level have more than before women empowerment. It shows, without women empowerment can't be reduce poverty. Women empowerment not only help to increase income level also, it's help to develop social and political condition of society.

Half of the total population are women in Nepal. Development programmes are not possible in the absence of women's contribution. So, It is necessary to empower women. Condition of empowered women is better than those who are not empowered and which help and to reduce poverty.

Social Contribution

Social condition is very good where the empowered women live. The condition of their family is also good because their family member are educated as well as health aware due to the empowered women members. They are aware about their social status. It is shown that the involvement of women in different activities from my field study and it is true that the improved social condition helps in poverty reduction.

Economic Contribution

Empowered women are in better economic condition than the others who are not empowered. They improve their income by using their skills in production works. Economic condition is the main thing for the development of society. Empowered women are economically strong than before so, their contribution in economic field is invaluable.

Political Contribution

It is also necessary to involve the women in politics because the politics is a governing power of the nation. Political freedom is necessary to improve social status of women. Role of women is very important in decision making process. Empowered women are aware about their voting right so that there are many women leader in representative level of the nation.

Therefore, role of the empowered women is very important in poverty reduction.

Chapter Six

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Summary

- ▶ This study was conducted in the Khalanga VDC of Darchula district where 16 respondents were males and rest of the 12 were female of 28 respondents.
- ▶ Education status doesn't seem satisfactory in the study area. As shown in table, 21.43 percent are literate, 53.57 percent have passed SLC and 25 percent have passed higher level of education.
- ▶ Women's work load seems higher still more than 17.85 percent women of the study area work more than 12 hours in a day. Similarly, 53.57 percent work 10-12 hours, and 28.57 percent work 8-10 hours in a day. It shows miserable condition of women.
- ▶ The status of personality development training seems poor in the study area. Because it was found that among total respondents 10.71 percent had taken leadership development training. 14.28 percent had taken gender and 7.14 percent had taken the training of office management. Similarly, 67.85 percent women had not taken any type of trainings.
- ▶ Regarding food adequacy, majority of the household's production lasts only up to six months. Dalits are found to have least food sufficiency.
- ▶ Since Brahmins , Chhetris and Thakuri own larger land size, majority of them are engaged in farming profession, majority of Dalits and other ethnic minorities are found involved in wage

labor. Dalit population are not found having service (Jagir) and business profession. It is found that because of the low income, poverty is widespread among these castes.

- ▶ During the study, it was found that females were not free to make expenses to their own income. As shown in the table, 67.85 percent respondents have to ask their husband before spending it. Similarly, 32.15 percent respondents replied they don't ask to their husband before spending it.
- ▶ Most of the women of the study area have no personal assets. Out of total respondents, 14.28 percent have land as personal asset, 7.14 percent have bank balance, and 17.89 percent have cottage industry most interesting fact is that among total respondents, 60.71 percent women have no personal assets.
- ▶ People are not well conscious about females role in the society because 35-71 percent respondents replied women should not take part in politics.
- ▶ Most of the people are seemed against to the provision of female rights in potential property. As shown in the table, 46.42 percent expressed their view that the right to parental property doesn't solve the current problems faced by Nepalese women. They had suggested, providing opportunities rather than property.
- ▶ Male supremacy over female seems in higher degree in the study area. It can be explained from the table 5.1.19 where women's participation in decision making process seems poor comparing to male. According to it, 50 percent respondents replied that male

alone take decision while the percentage of female in the same job in only 21.42.

- Empowered women family's condition is improved, their annual income level, social, political awareness also increase. But too, 28.57 respondents income have less than Rs. 40000.

6.2 Conclusion

Gender disparities are wide in Nepal. Government efforts have been focused on empowering women, but gender-based social exclusion remains strong. Women are other groups who are deprived and left behind in terms of access to resources. It is not limited to any particular caste or area but to overall sectors of society. Nature has created only biological difference between these two opposite sexes but the century old patriarchal culture has determined the fixed gender roles and responsibilities to male and female, and these gender roles and responsibilities have created a wide gap between male and female, actually, such gender roles have formed a socio-cultural chain which prohibits women to move into the outer world from household chores. There are some specific norms and values for both men and women. A man is supposed to be outgoing, aggressive, brave, independent and intelligent while a woman is expected to be shy, motherly, fragile, emotional, courteous, and dependent. Such format of gender roles since birth leads women to an endless discrimination that women's place is home and dearth. Due to such social environment, Nepalese women are forced to live a measurable life. It is the national scenario of the country which is also reflected in the study area.

It was found comparatively poor status of women comparing to men in terms of education, health, access in Job opportunities, decision making process, access and control over resources etc. Still most of the women are not aware about their rights and duties. The women have no right over their own body while the government has granted women right to reproduction but most of the people are not aware about this. And the females are facing a number of physical problems due to this condition. Various forms of violence against women exist in Nepal, among them the following.

- ▶ Traditional violence (deuki, Jhuma, Baadi, chhoupadi)
- ▶ Violence based on superstition, such as torture for alleged witchcraft,
- ▶ Sexual violence (trafficking and sexual harassments)
- ▶ Family violence (domestic violence, polygamy, child marriage, and
- ▶ Dowry-related violence (torture, both mental and physical).

The violence and exploitation against women vary with religion, caste, class and geographical location. Likewise, many women's are facing different violence in the study area. Which cause, women are always backwards and empowerment process aren't successful launched. Without women participation the development process aren't success in the study area. Many people of the study area do not take women's involvement in politics as positive. It was found that still most of the people specially the male show the "boss mentality" which has badly affected the daily life of women. Due to such behaviour, the women are deprived from decision making authority, as a result, they can't take decision about their earnings because such scenes were seen during the research in the study area. On

the other hand, the economic condition of women is not satisfactory in the study area because their presence in civil service, business seems very low. Similarly, their status in financial authority is also not satisfactory. The table no 5.1.11 shows that 60.71 percent have no financial authority in their own income. Likewise, most of the women have no access on the lucrative source of income such as civil services, business etc. instead they are engaged in agriculture, daily wage labour and other seasonal labour so, their economic empowerment seems poor. Women, who are involved in different services, take training their social, economically and political conduction is changed so that they help to reduce poverty.

To conclude, actually women empowerment means to make women capable to compete with men in every sectors of human life either it is in household level or in the fields of national importance such as civil services, legislature, politics, entrepreneurship etc. until and unless women get a conducive environment to equally participate in there sectors, their life style cannot be changed. Therefore, to change the living standard of Nepalese women, it is necessary to make them capable to grab opportunities which is possible only through the proper implementation of women's empowerment. Most of the problems faced by women can be solved through women's empowerment. Most of problems faced by women can be solved through women's empowerment. In this context, women's empowerment is one important part to reduce poverty and empowered women know about their role in development process.

6.3 Recommendations

The United Nations has defined the status of women in the context of their access to knowledge, economic resources and political power, as well as their personal autonomy in the process of decision making. When Nepalese women's status is analyzed in this light, the picture is generally bleak. In the early 1990s, Nepal was a rigidly patriarchal society, in virtually every aspect of life, women were generally subordinate to men.

Women's relative status, however, varied from one ethnic group to another. The status of women in Tibeto. Nepalese communities generally, was relatively better than that of pahari and Newari women. Women from the low caste groups also enjoyed relatively more autonomy and freedom than pahari and Newari women.

At the policy level, Government of Nepal GON has included international concerns and accepted that women as half of the nation's population need to be empowered in their own right, and not only for increasing the efficiency of development programs and projects. The government and private sectors have made a number of efforts to uplift the living standard of Nepalese women, the overall socio-economic condition of them still remains awfully poor. It is not only in remote and rural areas but also in the so called urban areas and cities. Due to the meaningless representation of women in social, economic and political spheres, they are suffering from backwardness, extreme poverty, discrimination and prejudices. The main reason behind such condition of Nepalese women is the poor empowerment process. Because the different activities carried out to empower women are not properly managed. So, the social status of Nepalese women is not satisfactory. In this context, it

is necessary to enhance the speed of women's empowerment in rampant way including the women of all sectors and classes, particularly the disadvantaged and marginalized rural women. If we make such a rationalistic effort, the empowerment process of Nepalese women really gets an appropriate way which ultimately leads the traditional and superstition Nepalese society towards the modernity and civilization of 21st century. The half of total population are covered by women population so, women are necessary to involve development process. Women participation determine the development, with out development no poverty reduction. That is why, to ensure the bright future of Nepal. It is necessary to adopt and implement following recommendations honestly.

- ▶ To reduce income based poverty, which is rampant in the study area, the following initiatives and arrangements are necessary.
- ▶ Poverty should not be considered a solely economic phenomenon rather it should be re-envisioned in terms of access and control over resources, education, health, nutrition etc.
- ▶ Income generation programs (vegetable farming, mushroom farming, poultry farming, sewing and cutting, etc) should be enhanced and expanded in order to uplift the daily life of disadvantaged women of the study area.
- ▶ Programs based on practical based and productive based should be launched to the needy women in the study area. These programs can address the women for the access practical needs (exposure, rights, leadership) and productive needs (income generation).

- ▶ Compulsory primary education must be accomplished and all textbooks must be revised to eliminate gender bias and include positive portrayals of women.
- ▶ Women should be given technical education and vocational training so that they themselves can create employment opportunities.
- ▶ Gender specific and Gender sensitive policies should be developed and implemented practically to reduce the gap between men and women.
- ▶ Special program of awareness about the significance of gender equality should be launched to make equal participation of both male and female in decision making process and other household activities.
- ▶ To extent of poverty is high among dalits. Therefore, the concerned agency/institutions should focus on these groups with special/targeted programs to uplift their condition and bring in the main stream of development.
- ▶ Female should get right to decide about reproduction. Strict laws should be formulated and instantly implemented to guarantee females rights in reproduction.
- ▶ An extensive program related to female rights should be launched to create awareness among people.
- ▶ Our country is mainly agricultural and women are mainly involved in agriculture. However, we lack facilities. The government should provide irrigation facilities, and they should get training.

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