

STATUS OF WOMEN AND FERTILITY

(A Case Study of Tharu Community in Amuwa VDC, Rupandehi District)

**A THESIS
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DECLARATION

Except where otherwise acknowledged in the text, the analysis in this thesis represents my own original research.

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RECOMMENDATION

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Status of Women and Fertility

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ABSTRACT

This study entitled "**Status of Women and Fertility**" a case study of 115 ever married Tharu women of reproductive age (15-49 years) of Amuwa VDC, Ward no 1, 2 and 8, Rupandehi District. The total population of study area is 860 out of total male 416 and female 444 with sex ratio 93.7. Population below 14 years age is 38.7 percent and above 60 years is 4.3 percent. Around 75 percent population with age higher than 5 years are literate. More than 53 percent population with age higher than 10 years are engaged on agriculture and 65 percent are married.

Out of 115 women respondents 37.4 percent are married in age between 10-14, 46.1 percent are married in age 15-19 only 4.3 percent are married in right age 20-24. The total ever married women age 15-49 years are 115 in the study area, mean number of Children Ever Born (CEB) is 2.3 with lowest mean number of CEB (1.0) for women age 15-19 years and highest mean number of CEB (4.0) for women age group 40-44.

Respondents' occupation, decision making power, land ownership, health status, age and marriage, use of contraception and child loss experience are chosen variable to show the status of women and determinants of fertility, percent and mean of the variables.

The major findings of the study are education attainment of women as well as husbands is the powerful tool to reduce fertility, the women and their husband engage in agriculture / business / daily wage labour have highest CEB than those engage in professional work, women with land holding household have lower CEB than those who are landless, increasing number of child loss is found strongly association with increasing number of CEB and the mean age of marriage is 14.37 years.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AM	-	Age at Marriage
CBS	-	Central Bureau of Statistics
CDPS	-	Central Department of Population Studies
CEB	-	Children Ever Born
CEDA	-	Center for Economic Development and Administration
FP	-	Family Planning
GO	-	Government Organization
HA	-	Health Assistant
HH	-	Household
ICPD	-	Internal Conference on Population and Development
IMR	-	Infant Mortality Rate
INGO	-	International Non-Government Organization
LP	-	Liquefied Petroleum
MCHW	-	Maternal and Child Health Worker
MMR	-	Maternal Mortality Rate
MOPE	-	Ministry of Population and Environment
No.	-	Number
SMAM	-	Singulate Mean Age of Marriage
STI	-	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TBA	-	Traditional Birth Attendant
TFR	-	Total Fertility Rate
TT	-	Tetanus Toxoid
TV	-	Television
UN	-	United Nations
UNFPA	-	United Nations Population Fund
VDC	-	Village Development Committee

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background

Women in Nepal constitute half of the country's total population but the condition of the majority of them is not satisfactory. Despite equal rights and opportunities guaranteed by the constitution, women, in real life have not been able to enjoy the same. The condition in the rural areas is even worse. Women are discriminated against and lag far behind in many areas, barring a few exceptions, mainly because of our long-held social and cultural structure and attitude. The status of women in Nepal must be enhanced.

However, women have seen changes in the attitude of the society regarding women in recent times. It has been realized that without development of women, the long-term and sustainable development of the country is not possible.

The term "Status of Women" is defined as the unification of the position of women occupies as a worker, a student, a wife and a mother, the power and the prestige attached to their positions and the right and duties. She is expected to exercise (UN 1984). Women status is a multidimensional phenomenon which shows that the status of women is conceptualized at two different levels, the micro level; or the status of women within the household and the macro level; their status in the society, education and female labour force participation are as measurement of women status within the household and in the society too. Women approach on social resources is measured by their level of education while their material resources can be measured by their level of labour force participation and degree of the economic independence to earn by themselves; which consequently established their status in the society. Gaining

an education and occupation may enable women to be a decision maker and control over social and material resources within the household their indicators can provide women economic independence which helps to raise their socio-economic status.

The different historical period's women regarded as subordinates and supporting hands of their husbands or whom they depend for most of their needs. Their dependency shifts from father to husband and finally to son throughout their lifecycle. The economic position of women was unequal to men in almost all the country of the world. The status of women in the society was assumed to be more important of the first major UN conference on women held in 1995. After this conference many activities has been done to enhance the status of women in many countries.

According to the census 2001, women constitute more than half of Nepal's population. Traditionally women status in Nepal, compared to men has always been low. They lacked proper nutrition and weren't enrolled to school for education. Their access to health services was very limited. Moreover, they were denied property inheritance and even reproductive rights. In recent years, things have been changing and the status of women in Nepal is also improving. A few legal provisions were made to enhance the status of women.

A women status, both in household and within society, can reduce fertility through spacing and limiting fertility. As fertility is the major component of population change, it contributes for the increase in the size of population. Fertility is defined as the actual birth performance of women and it is mainly guided by women's reproductive behavior.

The empowerment and autonomy of women and improvement of their political, legal, social and economic and health status are important. The equal participation and partnership of both women and men are required for both

productive and reproductive life. The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994 has emphasized women empowerment as a basic tool for country's overall development. The ICPD has declared that advancing gender and empowerment women and elimination of all kinds of violence against women and ensuring women ability to control, their own fertility is corner stones of population and development related program (UNFPA, 1998)

The high rate of population growth in Nepal is primarily due to persistent high fertility and declining mortality (CBS). There are a number of factors contributing to high fertility. The major factor is the low status of Nepalese women. Women employment is another indicator of status of women. Female age at marriage and use of contraception is directly related to fertility.

Human rights to women Nepal's constitutions accords equal right to both men and women. Nepal has amended many laws to improve the human rights of women. The ministry of women and social welfare is an important step in the institution building towards women's power and decision-making. Moreover, during 2002 HMG organized a National Commission for Women. The government's commitment to general mainstreaming and several others programs such as micro-credit are bringing women to mainstream of the economy. Nepal's commitment to this is fully reflected in her attempts to bring about change in legal provision budgetary, efforts, to gender equality (MOPE, 2004).

Nepal is a society made up of many kinds of people, from different historical backgrounds and social cultural settings. The different ethnic and caste groups generally have some what different values, orientations, beliefs and traditions.

Of all the ethnic groups that form the Nepalese nationality the Tharu are one. Though they are one of the most primitive races inhabiting Nepal, nothing can be said with historical accuracy as regards their origin. Their origin is still obscure. No one has yet been able to throw much light on their origin. Moreover, there is no unanimity of opinion about it. Some say that as they have come from 'Thar' in Sindh, they began to be called 'Tharu' some are of opinions that they are the descendants of the Rajputs whose women fled to Nepal with a view to projecting themselves from the rapacious attack of the Muslims and married their pages and the aborigines of Nepal. Still others hold the opinion that they are the disintegrated parts of the Shakya clan which spread in the interior parts of the Terai whatever theories may have been advanced as regards their origin, there is no doubt that they are the aborigines of Nepal.

In a homogenous community situation where an ethnic group such as the Tharus are in the majority they are expected to have stronger group solidarity and hence are more capable of dealing with inter ethnic competition. Tharus are indigenous people (community). They are most ancient, simple honest and backward community.

Tharu constitute 6.5% of total population in 1991 census and 6.8% in 2001 census. Tharus are spread over in good numbers from the west to the east of the Nepal Terai Districts. The population size of the Tharu group is highest in 4 Districts (Sunsari, Dang, Bardiya, Kailali).

Their main occupation is agriculture and animal farming, though their women engage themselves in making bamboo baskets and beautiful 'Dhaki' (a kind of receptacle made of cane) and nice fans of wheat straw. They set traps for the wild animals that come to destroy their crops and when caught they are put to death by means of spears and lathis (staves)

Women have a special status among the Tharus communities. Historically, they enjoyed full freedom from the early period and they hate to see it being eroded. So they resist. If a wife feels that she is not being given due care and respect by her husband in the home or feels that she is not treated well by her mother-in-law, it might be a sufficient cause for her to run away and get settled with someone else who is more reasonable. Sometimes a mis-matched husband (generally a very young and physically immature husband or a more grown up for a youthful wife) is a reason for her to leave him. Among the Tharus, women enjoy more freedom. Men are for more concerned about happiness of women and women are more conscious of their freedom. Most of the Tharu people believe in animism and worship spirits.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The inter relationships between population and status of women are complex involving the interaction of a multiplicity of factors. Hence it is not possible to isolate particular aspects of the population process in order to identify their influence on women's status.

The impact of women's status on fertility is substantially found in Nepal. Nepal's high rates of population growth possess a serious challenge to the achievement of objectives and target to socio-economic development. There are parallels between demographic characteristics such as high growth rates, high fertility and high dependency on one hand and low levels of females educational attainment, high infant mortality, lower female life expectancy and low rates of female labour participation on the other.

The religion culture and existing laws of Nepali society permit male to be superior which set free to govern over women. Men feel superior to women since the process of upbringing.

In Nepal, it is believed that women and girls are not subjected to be independent in all spheres of life. She is under the control of parents and after her marriage she becomes property of husband. So, her husband deserved right to decide about her life. After the death of husband or in her old age she has to be under control of her son or children. Such situation is established in our culture, society and family which are the great discrimination against women.

One of the most important indicators of women status is control over their own fertility. Women's body have been used and abused on account of their fertility. To an extent, social control over women's sexuality is also related to their fertility. In Hindu tradition, women are worshipped for their fertility. Pregnancies, childbirths and lactation force women to withdraw from active economic works, which makes them dependent on other members of the family. Frequent pregnancies impinge on their health and sometimes even on their very lives. It is, therefore, most important to examine whether women have control over their own fertility. Hitherto, no research has focused on the degree of control that women exercise over their own fertility (Population Monograph of Nepal 1995, 444).

The fertility performance is quite effectively influenced by the educational status of female. The higher the education of women higher the level of making power among women. The fertility rate of educated women is lower than of uneducated women. Women are more vulnerable in terms of health risk. One of severe pain of the state and the society is maternal mortality. This incidence is proved because most of mother delivers their baby at home. The majority of them don't receive any antenatal checkup. The low level of health services increases the health vulnerability of women and the infants. In Nepal high infant death rate is also one of the factors of high fertility.

Unwanted pregnancy is another indicators which makes vulnerable to terminate her pregnancy. Unwanted pregnancies lead to induced abortion and induced abortion is the second major cause of maternal mortality in the world and so in Nepal. Early marriage is wide spread in rural areas because of traditional behavior. Women in rural area were married 17 years earlier than the urban women (Population Monograph of Nepal, 1995).

If the women are given right to decide their fertility performance, they will decide in the response of the existing socio-economic resources, the practice of birth spacing and finally, they will have low fertility.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to identity overall scenario of the status of women and its impact on their fertility in Tharu Community of Amuwa VDC in Rupandehi district. The study has the specific objectives as follows.

- To identify the fertility behavior according to the social status of women in the study area.
- To find out the relationship between status of Tharu women and their fertility performance.
- To determine the educational status and age at marriage of women in the study area.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

Each and every research has own limitations. The following are the limitations of the study.

- The study is limited to the Tharu Community of Amuwa VDC (Ward No. 1, 2, 8) of Rupandehi District.

- The study is limited to women among reproductive ages (excluding widow) having at least one child.
- The study is based on a case study of the selected area therefore; the findings cannot be generalized to the whole nation.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Fertility is natural element of population change. The status of women plays a vital role in fertility differentials. In spite of the national policy to control fertility, the plans are not getting successful in reducing fertility which is the major problem of the current population management in Nepal. This study tries to focus the issues of inherent fertility performance pattern. Therefore, this study is examined the relationship between the extent of women's status and their fertility in the study area.

The development processes is impossible without empowerment of women. Women's status is a key of reducing women's vulnerability and finally it reduces their unwanted fertility. The study consists of socio-economic status, health status, educational status, age at marriage in Tharu community in Amuwa VDC of Rupandehi district. So the study finds out the actual status of women in the study area. Further, the study also shows reproductive health behavior so this study will be useful for the local government for policy formulation and implementation.

Without the control over the fertility behavior, Nepal's population growth can't be controlled. Therefore, the study will be beneficial for academicians, policy makers and the other related stakeholders.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

Human fertility indicates the actual reproduction performance of women. It is a complex process, which is responsible for biological maintenance of society. But there are several social, cultural, psychological, economic and political factors to determine of fertility of the process of fertility. These factors are responsible to determine level and differentials of fertility (UN, 1973, PP64).

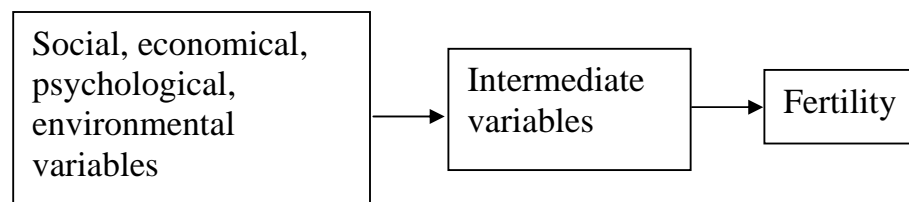
The theory of demographic transition is one of the important theories of fertility. It is developed by Frank W. Notestein in 1945 is the pioneering theory movement of population from a condition of high fertility and high mortality to low mortality along with socio-economic development. The conceived socio-economic development includes communication, income generation facilities and participation of women in all aspect of life as advocated by the threshold hypothesis of fertility decline (Iichman 1975, 225-228). The changes in demographic trends especially in birth and death follow the process of modernization, which involves income, rising standard of living and advances in sanitation and medical knowledge which eventually result in raising the status of women and rising the age at marriage. (Bhende and Kanitkar, 2003: 130-134).

In 1956 Kingsley Davis and Judith Blake proposed eleven variables which they defined as “intermediate variables six among them are affecting sexual intercourse, three affecting conception and remaining, two affecting gestation and parturition. They concluded that any social or cultural factor which affects fertility must do, so, through and only through one or more of these intermediate variables. (Davis & Blake, 1956: 211-235)

John Bongaarts and Robert Potter (1985) designated the intermediate variables proposed by Davis & Blake as proximate determinant of fertility consisting seven variables; (i) Marriage & marital disruption use (ii) effectiveness of contraception (iii) induced abortion (iv) postpartum amenohorea (v) spontaneous intrauterine mortality (vi) frequency of intercourse of fecundability (vii) menopause or permanent celibacy. They also raised the age at marriage and marital disruption, postpartum infecundability contraception and induced abortion affects fertility directly.

The following simple diagram summarizes the relationship among the determinant of fertility.

Figure 2.1: Socio-economic intermediate variable and fertility



Source: Bongaarts and Potter, 1985: 180

The United Nations has attempted to study the relationship between the level of fertility and various indicators of the level of socio-economic development, which is known as “Threshold hypothesis of fertility decline.” This study was based on the data collected from various countries having different levels of the gross reproduction rate. The following twelve indicators of socio-economic development were per-capita income, energy consumption, degree of urbanization, proportion of economically active males employed in non-agricultural activities hospital beds per thousand population, life expectancy, infant mortality rate, proportion of women married in the 15-19 age groups, female literacy rate, newspaper circulation/thousand population, radio receiving sets per thousand population and cinema attendance. It was

observed that the average value of each of these indicators of the high fertility countries differed widely from that of the low fertility countries. This theory explains that the countries of the very highest fertility are on that account at a disadvantage in development or that a very low level of development is conducive to exceptionally high fertility (Bhende Ashasa 2003: PP 336).

Harvey Liebenstein, in his well-known work *Economic Backwardness and Economic Growth* Published in 1957, has formulated a theory that explains the factors which determines the number of children derived by each couple. This theory is based on the assumption that people make, rough calculations' regarding utilities and disutilities of children and then decide on the no. of children they would like to have. Such calculation take into account the balance between the satisfactions or utilities obtained from an additional child and the "cost" both monetary and psychological of having an additional child.

According to Liebenstein three type of utilities are derived from and two types of costs are involved in, having and additional child.

The types of utilities are:

1. The utility of the child as a "Consumption good", that is, the child is here considered as a source of personal pleasure to the parents.
2. The utility of a child as a productive unit, that is the child it is expected, would enter the labour force at some point of time and contribute to the family income.
3. The utility of a child as a source of security in the old age of the parents or even otherwise.

The two types of costs involved in having an additional child are:

1. Direct costs in the sense of commotional current expenses of bringing up a child, according to the conventional standard until the child become self-supporting.

2. Indirect cost, which includes opportunities due to the appearance of an additional child, such as the mother's inability to work, inability to purchase a television set, or a motor car etc.

Liebenstein also mentioned the three changes occur during the course of economic development, which affects the utilities and cost of an additional child. The effects of these changes are

- i. Income effects
- ii. Survival effect
- iii. Occupational distribution effects.

Source: Bhende Asha 2003, 327-328

Caldwell (1977) argued that mass education might be a fundamental determinant, which will bring fertility from high to low levels. The effect of education works through the restructuring of family relationship that in turn affect family economics and the direction of the net wealth flow. He suggested that education have an impact of fertility because

- Education reduces the child's potential work inside and outside the home.
- It increases the cost of children.
- Schooling creates dependency, both within the family and within the society.
- It speeds up cultural change and creates new cultures.

Caldwell (1980) argues that mass education may be a fundamental determinant, which will bring fertility from high to low levels. The effect of education works through the restructuring of family relationships, which in turn affect family economics and direction of the net wealth flow. He suggests that education has an impact on fertility because:

- I. Education reduces the child's potential work inside and outside the home.

- II. It increases the cost of children.
- III. Schooling creates dependency, both within the family and within the society.
- IV. It speeds up cultural changes and creates new culture.
- V. The school serves as a major instrument for propagating the values not of the local middle class, but of the western middle class. He further points out the demographic change are unlikely to perpetrate if the movement toward mass schooling is restricted to males only (Tuladhar, 1989).

Differential fertility hypothesis of fertility declines assumes that people's choices are affected by their experience and circumstance. The differential fertility hypothesis seeks differences in people regarding their real fertility. A study conducted in some of the Latin American Countries in 1974 revealed that education is the most powerful mean to reduce the fertility status of women and improving occupational status of women and her husband has significant effect on fertility decline. (Ichman 1975). The socio-economic back ground and norms about family size differ from one community to another. As the reproductive needs are different, so that the demand for children is the major concern of differential fertility hypothesis.

The model of Easterline (1976) is related to the economic cost benefit analysis of the children. It use natural fertility, desired fertility and optional fertility. Natural is the no. of births of a family that is entirely depending on health and sexual behavior of the family members. The no. of children as desired by a couple in which cost of fertility remains zero is the desired fertility. Optional fertility is the result of maximization of utility with budget remaining constant (Easternlin, 1976, Cited in Pan, 2000).

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

The United Nations has defined the status of women in the context of their access to knowledge, economic, resources and political, 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 subordinates to men (Lewis Johnson).

Women constitute about half of the world population and a major part of the unrecognized labour force in the world. It has been a matter of great concern during the last few decades that conventional statistics reflect neither the substantial contributions of women in labour input and management of household production nor their progressive marginalization from modern forms of asset ownership and employment avenues (United Nation, 1992, Beneria, 1982, Cited in population Monograph 1995).

In Nepal, "The status of Women" study series published between 1979-1981 by Center for Economic Development and Administration (CEDA) established that women constitute the backbone of Nepalese agriculture, especially in the hill areas. The contribution to household production and income was found to be at par with men, both in terms of labour input as well as in decision-making roles. (Acharya, 1995).

A major recommendation running through "The Status of Women" study series called for improving statistical methods of data gathering and processing so as to underline the differential impact of various developmental interventions among men and women (Acharya and Bennelt 1981). A recent review of 1981 and 1991 census data reveals the substantial improvements have been made in the methodology of data collection, but still a large gap remains (Acharya, 1994).

Women in Nepal constitute half of the country's total population but the condition of the majority of them is not satisfactory. Despite equal rights and opportunities guaranteed by the constitution, women in real life, have not been able to enjoy the same. The condition in the rural areas is even worse. Women are discriminated against and lag far behind in many areas, barring a few exceptions, mainly because of our long-held social and cultural structure and attitude. The status in Nepal must be enhanced. However, there have been changes in the attitude of the society regarding women in recent time. It has been realized that without development of women the long term and sustainable development of the country is not possible (Singh 2002).

The status of women as reflected in their legal right, education, employment, health, family decision making power and position in household affects demographic behavior such as age of marriage, fertility and infant, child and maternal mortality. There is turn have an impact on the improvement of women's status and their participation in the development process (UN, 1992: 13).

The women empowerment have been very much emphasized by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and suggested that it is a basis tool for a country's overall development and improving the quality of people's life. The ICPD has also declared that advancing gender and the elimination of all kind of violence against women and ensuring women ability to control their own fertility are corner stones of population and development related programs (UNFPA, 1998).

The social status of women in Nepal generally low, a situation attributes both to the general poverty of the country and the gender based distribution of power and resources in the family and society. Although the constitution of Nepal guarantees equal rights, the imbalances between the legal provision

(particularly regarding poverty and in the interpretation and application of law (Maskey, 1995).

“Chhara Paye Khasi, Chhori Paye Pharsi”, a popular saying which suggests having a feast of mutton when a son is born and eating modest pumpkin when a daughter is born, sums up the different values the society has places on sons and daughter. In such a situation, a mother regrets when she gives birth to a daughter. If she doesn't give birth for husband is likely to marry a second wife in hope of a son. On the other hand women having more sons enjoy higher status in the family (Bennelt, 1981).

Women are seen as daughter, wives and mothers. They are not recognized as individual with their own identity. Women's social position is entirely defined by the status of her father, husband and son. (Acharya, 1981).

The status of Nepalese women improved to some extent by the law of the land codified in 1910 B.S., during the regime of king Surendra. According to the code, if a certain crime was committed by a woman she had to suffer only half of the punishment prescribed for the men. Besides, the Sanskrit literature propagates that women would be exempted from capital punishment if she committed the greatest crime. Many Sawals and ordinances were issued for the purpose of exempting women from capital punishment. Under the constitution of 2004 B.S. Men and women were granted voting right. But the constitution is not implemented.

The constitution of the kingdom of Nepal 2015 B.S. announced no discrimination on the basis of caste, creed and sex. Equal rights are granted to male and female by the constitution of 2019 B.S. The civil code (Muliki Ain) of 2020 B.S. has brought revolutionary change on the social status women. It legalized inter caste marriages banned polygamy, strengthened the position of divorce women and conferred a few inheritance right to property. The

amendments of the civil code of 2020 B.S. has farther extended the social and economic rights of women in Nepal (Kandel, 2005)

The position and the status of women seem to be changing from age to age in different ways in different regions. The attitude of society towards women could not remain the same in different historical period and different places. The status of women as mentioned in the Hindu religious scriptures is appreciated and they are regarded as goddess but later on in practice, they were dominated and exploited. The women in Hindu society were bound by a no of social, legal and religious barriers. However, women's role in the family is enviable and without them a family or society can never be imaginable (Kandel, 2005).

Population census results in gender perspective in the population census 2001 in volume III shows that the pattern of the status of women is society. Reproductive status of women might be the cause of disruption in marital status. Very often women are suffered from marital dissolution due to failure to give birth of children of desired sex as well as infecundity situation. Cultural and religious belief prevailing in the society leads to get married at earlier ages for women as compare to men. In this way, there is gender difference in the age of first marriage. Again reproductive status of women differs according to literacy status and ethnicity. Therefore attempts are made to bring out gender differences in marital status, age at first marriage and living arrangement with spouse.

The level of fertility is one of the important indicators of the status of women. There is inverse relation between age of first marriage of women and number of their children ever born. Marriage of women is an exposure to become pregnant in Nepalese society. So, women who got married at earlier age have higher probability of having more children. Higher number of children means hardship of life to the respective mother. The fertility pattern of

the country indicates that women have higher fertility in the early part of childbearing age. But adolescent fertility is a major concern of maternal and child health. Teenage pregnancy cause more complication that relates to the health and survival of both mother and child. (CBS, 2001).

One of the most important indicators of women's empowerment is control over their own fertility. Women's bodies have been used and abused on account of their fertility. To an extent, social control over women sexuality is also related to their fertility. In the Hindu tradition, women are worshipped for fertility, in the exalted status of mother. Goddess, while infertility is considered a curse (Bennett, 1983) pregnancies childbirth and location force women to withdraw from active economic work, thus making them dependent on their member of the family frequent pregnancies impinge on their health and sometimes even on their very lives. It is therefore most important to examine whether women have control over their own fertility (Kandel, 2005).

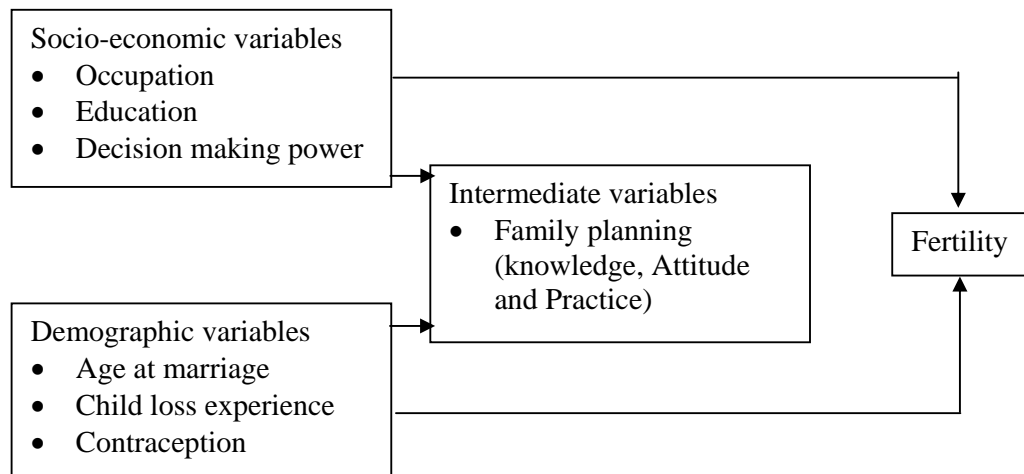
Family and cultural norms as well as religious beliefs vary from one ethnicity to others. So the degree of gender disparities will also differ among various ethnic groups. Some ethnic groups of Nepal do not practice child marriage or they do not marry at younger ages whereas it is often practiced in other ethnic population. Similarly, activities concerning to take care of reproductive health of female Household member is obviously, differed among various ethnic population. It is noted that women are more pressure to have more children in the case of some ethnic groups. Ethnic difference can also be observed in sex preference of children ever born. In some ethnic population ever married female will get full social status only after having a son. (Population Census Result in Gender Perspective, 2001).

2.3 Proposed Conceptual Framework

The literature review provides sufficient background to conceive a conceptual framework of the study by establishing relationship among various socio-economic and demographic variable. In socio-economic variable, (education, occupation and decision making power) demographic variables (age at marriage, child loss experience and contraceptive) which have direct influence on fertility are considered in this study. This framework includes occupation, decision making power and education as independent socio-economic variables and age at marriage, child loss experience and contraception prevalence as intermediate demographic variables which have direct influence on dependent variable on fertility.

The conceptual framework deals with different selected socio-economic, demographic and intermediate variables relating with fertility of Tharu community, which is presented in below as:

Figure 2.2: Proposed conceptual framework



The study of socio-economic determinants on fertility is a very complex phenomenon which is justified by the preceding discussion of various literatures. However, this study has been trying to find out effect of independent variables (Socio-economic and demographic determinants) on dependent variable mean CEB.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As for as the methodology is concerned, this study is primarily based on survey method. The data is obtained through primary as well as secondary source. The secondary data were obtained from the previous research works, journals, magazine and other relevant publications.

3.1 Study Area

The history of Ruapndehi largely is a part of hill to Terai migration and forest encroachment. Different cultures are intermingled with in the District in recent years and thus, have created some fascinating opportunities for social research on developmental process of change.

The Tharus, indigenous, to the District were most affected by the cultural intrusion of this enormous migration stream. The situation was changed as modern technology was brought to the Terai. Today there are more non-Tharus living in this District than Tharus. Amuwa is one of the sixty-nine VDCs of Rupandehi District.

3.2 Research Design

This study is designed to describe the status of women particularly Tharu community. It is based on the descriptive research design. In order to fulfill the specific objective of the study, the analysis is based mainly as primary and secondary data of each variable such as economic and socio-cultural aspects of their present and past status which have been identified and described to light on the status of Tharus women of the study area.

3.2 Sample Size

The sample size, 115 ever married Tharu females (excluding widows) aged 15-49 years, who has at least one child. From the selected ward no. 1, 2 and 8 randomly 40, 35 and 40 households are selected respectively. My desired sample is became 115 households.

3.4 Questionnaire Design

Household and individual questionnaires are designed to collect data from the survey. The household questionnaire is introduced for collection of household information and individual questionnaire gathered the information about the women status, educational status, economic activity, health access, decision making power, occupation, knowledge, age at marriage and use of family planning methods among the Tharu ever married women.

3.5 Method of Data Collection

Out of the total households of this VDC only 115 households are taken in to study. The sample random sampling method is used to collect the information of Tharu ethnic group in the study.

3.6 Analysis of Data

The collected data are entered into Computer Data Base program. Entire data from both questionnaires were manually edited before entering the computer. Require tables are generated by SPSS software program. To analyze the collected data, frequency table and cross tabulation are generated to examine the relationship between status of Tharu women and their fertility.

CHAPTER FOUR

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE STUDY POPULATION

This chapter deals with information of demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the study population of Amuma VDC which may be represent socio-economic status affecting fertility among Tharu community.

The study cover 115 house hold and total population was found 860. Regarding the total population by sex, the study found 444 were female and 416 were male with sex ratio of 93.7.

4.1 Age and Sex Structure

Age and sex are basic characteristics or the biological attributes of any population which affects fertility, mortality and migration behavior. Age and sex structure not only reflect the present demographic situation of population but also given the basis for the study of past as well as future demographic situation of the population. Age, sex and migration play very important role in the study of population dynamics.

Table 4.1: Distribution of study population by age and sex

Age group	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-4	41	9.9	40	9.0	81	9.4
5-9	62	14.9	73	16.4	135	15.7
10-14	50	12.0	67	15.1	117	13.6
0-14	153	36.8	180	40.5	333	38.7
15-19	35	8.4	37	8.3	72	8.4
20-24	36	8.7	46	10.4	82	9.5
25-29	48	11.5	53	11.9	101	11.7
30-34	28	6.7	36	8.1	64	7.4
35-39	47	11.3	33	7.4	80	9.3
40-44	12	2.9	9	2.0	21	2.4
45-49	15	3.6	11	2.5	26	3.0
50-54	8	1.9	18	4.1	26	3.0
55-59	14	3.4	4	0.9	18	2.1
15-59	243	58.4	247	55.6	490	57.0
60-64	10	2.4	13	2.9	23	2.7
65 and above	10	2.4	4	0.9	14	1.6
60 and above	20	4.8	17	3.8	37	4.3
Total	416	100.0	444	100.0	860	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The percent of total population is found highest (15.7%) in the age group 5-9 followed by age, group 10-14 and 25-29 (13.6%) and 12.2% respectively. The lowest percent of population 1.6 percent are observed in the age group 65 and above. The percent of three age groups is highest in the age group 15-59 (57%) and lowest in the age group 60 above (4.3%).

The percent of male population is highest in the age group 5-9 and lowest in the age group 50-54 representing 14.9 % and 1.9% respectively. Likewise, the percent of female population is highest in the age group 5-9 and

lowest in the age group 55-59 and 60 and above years representing 16.4 and 0.9 percent respectively of the total population in the study area.

4.2 Occupational Status

Occupation refers to any works which are applied for the conduction of their life. It has also direct connection to fertility. It is determined by tradition, skills and qualification which affect fertility. The question about the occupation was asked to the population who were at the age of 10 and above.

Table 4.2: Distribution of study population by occupation and sex (Aged 10 years and above)

Occupation of the family member	Sex				Total	
	Male		Female		Number	Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Own agriculture	133	42.5	209	63.1	342	53.1
Wage labour	21	6.7	17	5.1	38	5.9
Service	25	8.0	2	0.6	27	4.2
Study	87	27.8	98	29.6	185	28.7
Foreign employment	25	8.0	0	0	25	3.9
Business	17	5.4	3	0.9	20	3.1
Others	5	1.6	2	0.6	7	1.1
Total	313	100.0	331	100.0	644	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Occupation of the study population is classified into seven categories. Majority of the population is 53.1 percent are own agriculture followed by 28.7 percent students, 5.9 percent wage labour, 4.2 percent service 3.9 percent foreign employment, 3.1 percent business and 1.1 percent engaged in others occupations. The highest percents of male population are own agriculture followed by student and the lowest percents of male population are engaged in others. Similarly, the highest female populations are own agriculture followed

by study and lowest female population are engaged in service and other and no one engaged in foreign employment.

4.3 Literacy Status of the Study Area Population

Education is one of the most important variables which plays a vital role in all developing society and indirectly affects variables like fertility, mortality, health condition, income, occupation, living standard and so many others. Thus, it is necessary to know the situation of education in the study area. The distribution of education status of study population with five years and above is shown below.

Table 4.3: Percent distribution of population by literacy status and educational attainment and sex (5 years and above)

Literacy Status	Sex				Total	
	Male		Female		Number	Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Literate	335	89.3	246	60.9	581	74.6
Illiterate	40	10.7	158	39.1	198	25.4
Total	375	100.0	404	100.0	779	100.0
Education Attainment						
Less than Primary	12	3.6	15	6.1	27	4.6
Primary	147	43.9	144	58.5	291	50.1
Lower Secondary	102	30.4	60	24.4	162	27.9
Secondary	64	19.1	24	9.8	88	15.1
Intermediate (10+2)	4	1.2	3	1.2	7	1.2
Bachelor and above	6	1.8	0	0	6	1.0
Total	335	100.0	246	100.0	581	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Majority of the population are literate in the study area. More than 74 percent population are literate and only 25.4 percent of the population are illiterate.

Among the literate more than 50 percent have completed primary level, 27.9 percent have completed lower secondary level, 15.1 percent have completed secondary level, 4.6 percent could only read and write or less than primary, 1.2 percent have completed higher secondary or intermediate level and only 1 percent population have completed bachelors and above. Among the total population more than 89 percent males and 60.9 percent females are literate.

4.4 Marital Status of the Study Area Population

The study of nuptiality deals with the frequency of marriage, where union between persons of opposite sexes involves rights and obligations fixed by law and custom, with the characteristics of person united in marriage and with the dissolution of such unions. The marriage is the primary events in process of family formation. The marital status of the study area population of aged 10 years and above is shown in table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Distribution of the study population by marital status and sex
(Aged 10 years and above)**

Marital Status	Sex				Total	
	Male		Female		Number	Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
Married	205	65.5	218	65.9	423	65.7
Unmarried	101	32.3	105	31.7	206	32.0
Widow (er)	7	2.2	8	2.4	15	2.3
Total	313	100.0	331	100.0	644	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Majority of the population are married in the study area. Nearly 66 percent population are married 32 percent are unmarried and 2.3 percent are widow/widower. Among the total male population, 65.5 percent are married, 32.3 percent are unmarried and 2.2 percent are widow/wider. Similarly, nearly 66 percent females are married, 31.7 percent females are unmarried and 2.4 percent females are widow/widower.

4.5 Types of Family

Type of family is another important aspect of socio-economic status of household. In this community, nearly 61 percent households were constituted with joint family and 39.1 percent households were constituted with nuclear family.

Table 4.5: Percent distribution of the study population by their types of family

Types of family	Number of household	Percent
Joint	70	60.9
Nuclear	45	39.1
Total	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

4.6 Land Holding Status of Households

Nepal is an agriculture country. Land is considered as the symbol of economic well being. Table 4.6 displays the landholding.

Table 4.6: Distribution of households of the study population by land ownership

Landholding	Number of Household	Percent
Yes	111	96.5
No	4	3.5
Total	115	100.0
Land size with yes percent in (Kattha *)		
0-4	8	7.2
5-9	15	13.5
10-14	18	16.2
15-19	6	5.4
20 and above	64	57.7
Total	111	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

* One Kattha is equivalent to 0.033 hectare

In this study above table shows that the 4 houses have not access their own land. Among the total land holder majority of the houses have 20 and above kattha land with 57.7 percent. Lowest percent i.e. 7.2 percent has between 0 to 4 kattha of land followed by 13.5 percent between 5 to 9 Kattha. 16.2 percent have between 10-14 kattha, 5.4 percent have between 15 to 19 Kattha.

4.7 Food Sufficiency of Households

Food sufficiency status also indicating the socio-economic status of household.

Table 4.7: Displays the Food sufficiency

Food sufficiency	Number of household	Percent
Less one moth	8	7.2
One to five months	35	31.5
Six to eight months	19	17.1
Nine to twelve months	49	44.1
Total	111	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Above table shows that 7.2 percent of household reported their food to be sufficient only less than one month like that 31.5 percent household reported their food to be sufficient one to five month, 17.1 percent household reported their food to be sufficient six to eight months and 44.1 percent household reported their food to be sufficient nine to twelve month.

4.8 Physical Facilities

In this study, information are collected about the physical facilities of households, such as source of drinking water, toilet facilities, sources for cooking foods, electricity, radio, television, telephone which indicate living standard of population and show the status of household economy.

4.8.1 Sources of Drinking Water

A source of drinking water is also an important indicator of the health status of the population. Health status of the study population directly affects the fertility behaviour. So, it is necessary to observe the situation of drinking water of the study population which is given in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Distribution of households by sources of drinking water (Tube well)

Source of drinking water (Tube well)	Number of Household	Percent
Own	73	63.5
Public	26	22.6
Sharing (private)	16	13.9
Total	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 4.8 shows that 63.5 percent households used own tube well water, 22.6 percent households used the public tube well water and around 14 percent households used sharing tube well water.

4.8.2 Toilet Facilities

A toilet facilities, is one of the important indicators of health status and civilization of the households. Situation of the toilet facility in the study area is given in table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Distribution of households by toilet facility

Toilet Facility	Number of Households	Percent
No toilet	95	82.6
Ordinary toilet	19	16.6
Flush/modern toilet	1	0.9
Total	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

16.6 percent families have ordinary toilet, only 0.9 percent or 1 household have flush/modern toilet and 82.6 percent families have no toilet facilities.

4.8.3 Mass Media Facilities

Information and communication is the most essential factor in modern age. It is the era of information and communication. So, radio, television, phones are the mass media facilities. These facilities show the socio-economic status of households and these facilities help to regulate fertility. Mass-media facilities of households are presented in table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Distribution of households by mass media facilities

Household Facilities	Yes		No		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Electricity	105	91.3	10	8.7	115	100.0
Radio	86	74.8	29	25.2	115	100.0
Television	53	46.1	62	53.9	115	100.0
Mobile phone	54	47.0	61	53.0	115	100.0
Land line phone	3	2.6	112	97.4	115	100.0
Others	102	88.7	13	11.3	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 4.8.3 shows that out of 115 respondents, most of the households have electricity and radio which is 91.3 percent and 74.8 percent. Similarly, 46.1 percent have the television facilities, like that most of the people's hands we can find mobile phone, 47 percent have mobile phone and only 2.6 percent have land line phone. 88.7 percent enumerated in others (Tractor, Motorcycle, cycle, VCD. etc).

4.8.4 Energy Source for Cooking

Firewood, kerosene, LP Gas, Bio-gas, cow dung (Guitha) are the various sources of fuel used for cooking. Energy source for cooking of the study population which is given in table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Distribution of households by energy source for cooking

Source of Energy for Cooking	Yes		No		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Firewood	115	100	0	0.0	115	100.0
Biogas	4	3.5	111	96.5	115	100.0
LP Gas	1	0.9	114	99.1	115	100.0
Stove/kerosene	0	0.0	115	100.0	115	100.0
Guitha (cow dung)	77	67.0	38	33.0	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

All families use firewood for cooking foods followed by 3.5 percent families for Bio gas, 0.9 percent families for LP Gas and 67 percent families using cow dung (Guitha) for cooking food.

CHAPTER FIVE

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

This chapter deals with information of demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the Tharu women (15-49 years) living in the study area.

5.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

Age of women is one of the demographic factors which influences on fertility. The general age pattern of women of fertility is that the level of fertility increased with the increment of age of women. Table 5.1 shows the respondents' age classified by five years of age group.

Table 5.1: Distribution of respondents women (15-49 years) by five years of age group

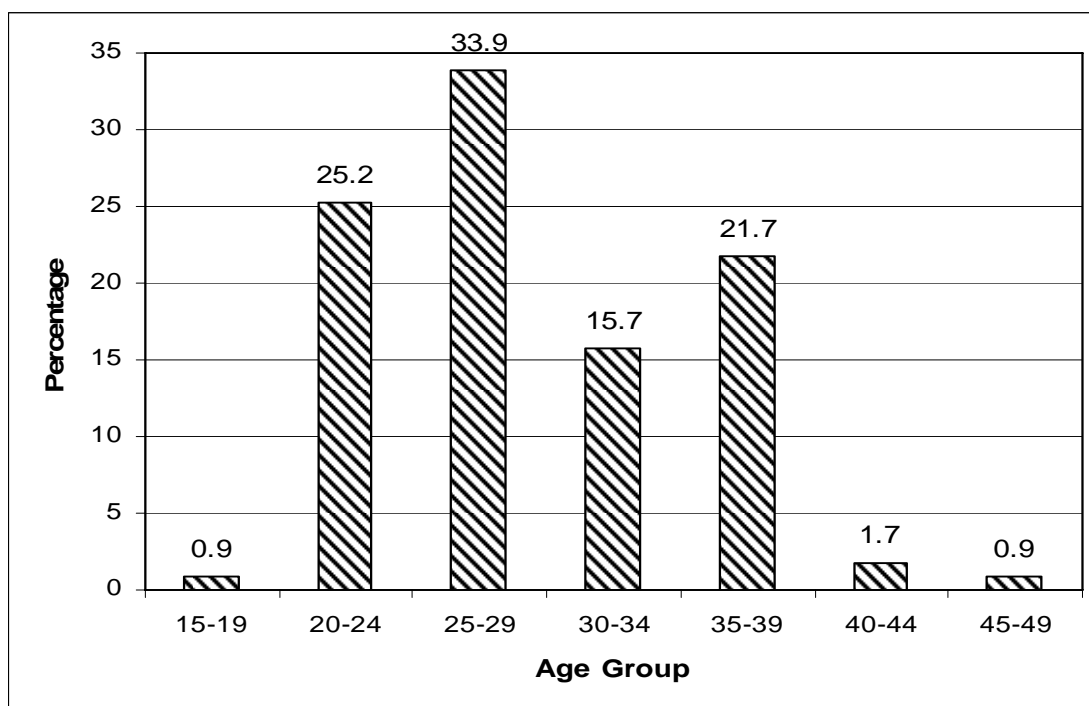
Age Group	Number of Respondent	Percent
15-19	1	0.9
20-24	29	25.2
25-29	39	33.9
30-34	18	15.7
35-39	25	21.7
40-44	2	1.7
45-49	1	0.9
Total	115	100

Source: Field Survey, 2008

For interview of the study 115 women were selected. Data shows that maximum number of women 33.9 percent are found in 25-29 years age groups. This is followed by age group 20-24 years 25.2 percent and 30-34 years age group with 15.7 percent.

Lowest numbers of women are in 15-19 and 45-49 years (0.9 percent) each of age group and 40-44 years (1.7 percent) of age groups.

Figure 5.1: Distribution of respondents women (15-49 years) by five years of age group



5.2 Age at Marriage of the Respondents

Age at marriage is one of the major factors for determinants of fertility. In Nepalese society where marriage is thought to be universal and is taken as a main task of parents, it is almost universal that high age at marriage results high number of children everborne.

Table 5.2: Distribution of the respondents by their age at marriage

Age at Marriage	Number of Respondent	Percent
Less than 10 years	14	12.2
10-14	43	37.4
15-19	53	46.1
20-24	5	4.3
Total	115	100

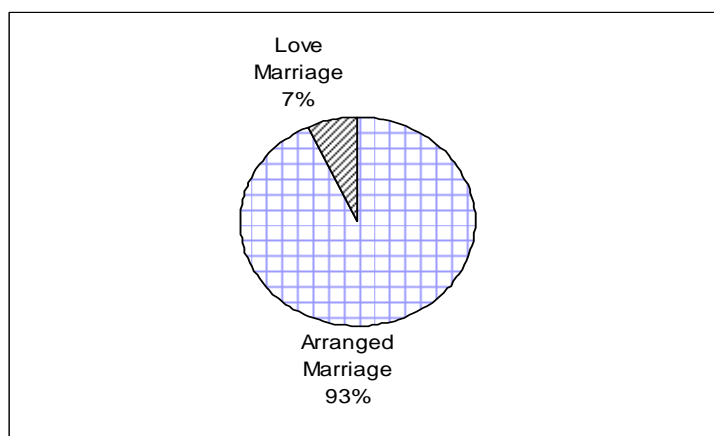
Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 5.2 shows that mean age at marriage is 14.37. Respondents' age at marriage is between 15-19 years 46.1 percent of the respondents have age at marriage between 15-19 years followed by 37.4 percent between 10-14 years, 12.2 percent between less than 10 years and 4.3 percent between 20-24 years. It shows that in study area early marriage is almost in practice.

5.3 Types of Marriage

There are two types of marriage in the Tharu society. Arranged marriage by the parents and love marriage by themselves. 93 percent marriage was arranged by the parents and only 7% are love marriages.

Figure 5.2: Distributions of the respondents by their types of marriage



5.4 Ever Use of Family Planning Method

Family planning is one of the important factors that directly determine the status of women and fertility. Family planning helps to regulate fertility and it can protect status of women. So, respondents' knowledge, attitude and practice of family planning are necessary to study. The respondents and their husbands by ever use of contraception is presented in table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Distribution of the respondents by ever used of contraception

Ever Used of Contraception	Number of Respondent	Percent
Yes	95	82.6
No	20	17.4
Total	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 5.3 shows that out of 115 respondents, 82.6 percent are found to be users of contraception against 17.4 percent of non-users.

5.5 Use of Different Family Planning Method

Use of Family planning method directly affects the fertility. Ever use of contraception refers to use of a method at any time with no distinction between past and present use. It reveals the success of program promoting use of family planning.

Table 5.4: Distribution of the respondents by use of different family planning method

Method of Family Planning	Number of Respondent	Percent
Female sterilization	21	22.1
Male sterilization	5	5.3
Pills	18	18.9
Condoms	13	13.7
Injectable	33	34.7
Norplants	5	5.3
Total	95	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 5.4 shows that highest 34.7 percent of respondents use injectable followed by female sterilization 22.1 percent, condom 13.7 percent, pills 18.9 percent, narplat 5.3 percent and male sterilization 5.3 percent.

5.6 Literacy Status and Educational Attainment of the Respondents and Their Husband

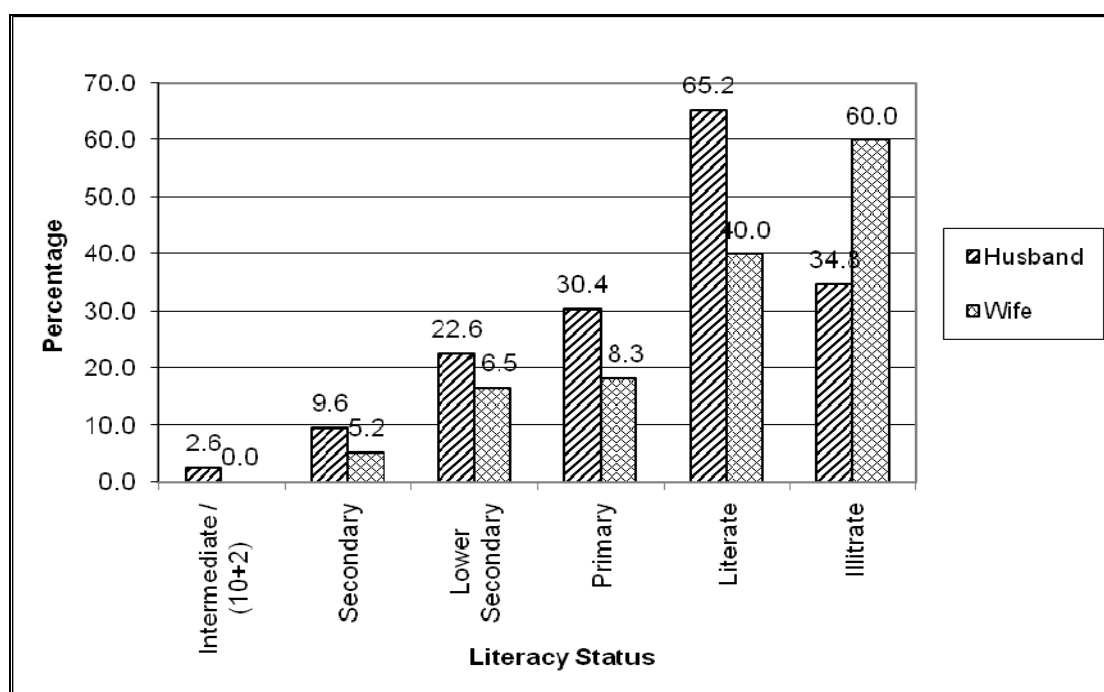
Education is a very important factor for development. Without education we can't think about development. Majority of the respondents and their husbands are literate in the study area. Literacy status and educational attainment of the respondents and their husband is presented in table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Percent distribution of the respondents and their husbands by literacy status and educational attainment.

Literacy Status	Husband		Wife	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Intermediate / (10+2)	3	2.6		0.0
Secondary	11	9.6	6	5.2
Lower Secondary	26	22.6	19	16.5
Primary	35	30.4	21	18.3
Sub-total (Literate)	75	65.2	46	40.0
Illiterate	40	34.8	69	60.0
Total	115	100.0	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Figure 5.3: Distribution of the respondents and their husbands by literacy status and educational attainment



Forty percent respondents are literate and rest 60 percent are illiterate. Among the literate respondents 40 percent, 18.3 percent are educated up to primary level, 16.5 percent are educated up to lower secondary level and 5.2

percent are educated up to secondary. Similarly, 65.2 percent husbands are literate and 34.8 are illiterate. Among the literate husbands 65.2 percent, 30.4 percent are educated up to primary level, 22.6 percent are educated up to lower secondary level and 9.6 percent are educated up to secondary and only 2.4 percent are educated up to higher secondary / intermediate and above.

5.7 Occupational Status of the Respondents and Their Husband

Occupation is one of the most important factors to determine the status of people. In the study, there are different kinds of occupation. Most of the respondents are engaged in agriculture wage labour which is shown in table 5.6.

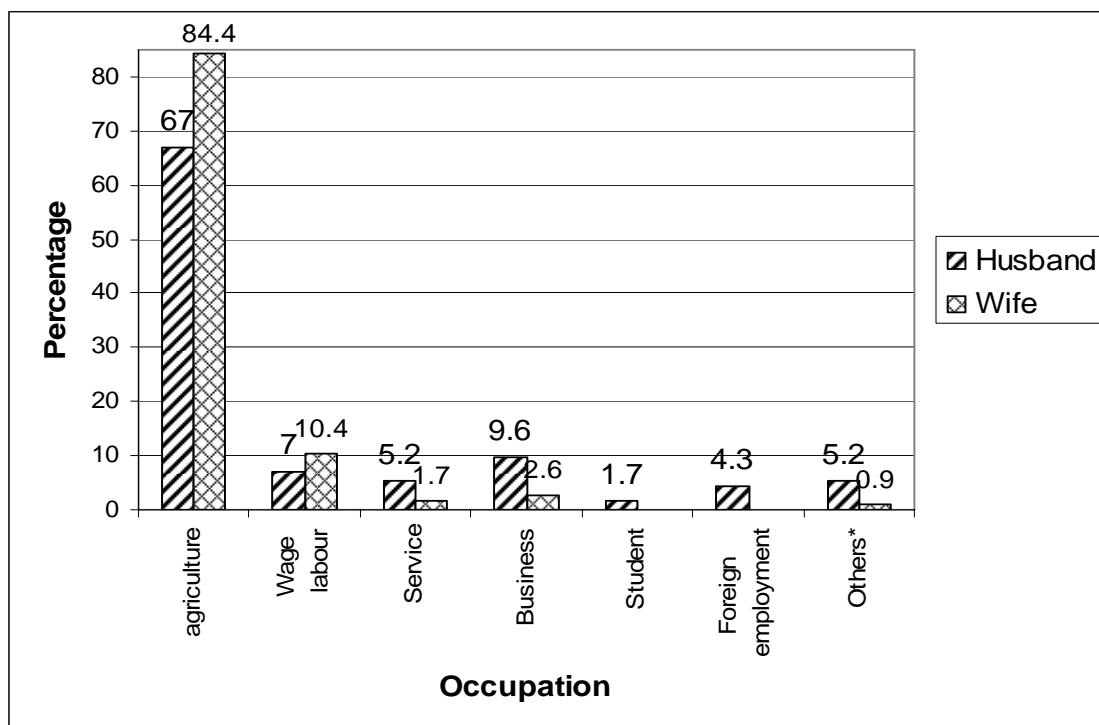
Table 5.6: Percent distribution of the respondents and their husbands by occupation status

Occupation	Husband		Wife	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Own agriculture	77	67.0	97	84.4
Wage labour	8	7.0	12	10.4
Service	6	5.2	2	1.7
Business	11	9.6	3	2.6
Student	2	1.7		
Foreign employment	5	4.3		
Others*	6	5.2	1	0.9
Total	115	100.0	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

* Tailoring, Teacher, Driver

Figure 5.4: Distribution of the respondents and their husbands by occupation status



* Tailoring, Teacher, Driver

In the above figure, more than 84.4 percent respondents are reported that they are engaged in the agriculture, 10.4 percent reported that they are engaged in wage labour, 1.7 percent reported that they are engaged in service, 2.6 percent reported that they are engaged in business and 0.9 percent reported they are tailors and others.

Similarly, most of the respondents' husbands are engaged in agriculture. 67 percent respondents' husbands are engaged in agriculture, 7 percent are engaged in wage labour, 5.2 percent are engaged in service, 9.6 percent are engaged in business, 1.7 percent are student, 4.3 percent are in foreign employment and 5.2 percent reported they are tailors, teachers, drivers.

5.8 Women's Ownership of Land

Equal property distribution between male and female plays an important role in the status of women. The discrimination in property deprives women of skill development education and decision making.

Table 5.7: Distribution of the respondents by ownership of land

Land in own name	Number of Respondent	Percent
Yes	5	4.3
No	110	95.7
Total	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

In the above table 5.7 majority of women have no land ownership. Only 4.3 percent respondents have their own land, more than 95 percent have no land ownership (Lalpurja in their name)

5.9 Child Loss Experience

Child loss experience is also a positive factor for having more children. In the study, majority of the respondents have no child loss experience, which is shown in table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Distribution of the respondents by child loss experience

Child loss experience	Number of Respondent	Percent
No	95	82.6
One child	16	13.9
Two children	3	2.6
Three or more than three children	1	0.9
Total	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

In the above Table 5.8, more than 82 percent of the respondents have no child loss experience, 13.9 percent respondents have one child loss experience, 2.6 percent respondents have two children loss experiences and nearly 1 percent respondents have three children loss experiences.

5.10 Decision Making Power

Higher the participation of women in decision making, higher the status of society and lower the fertility. In this study decision making power includes the indoor decision and outdoor decision making. These include work items inside household such as meal preparation, daily shopping, schooling of children, land purchase and sale, livestock purchase and sale and consulting doctors in sickness etc. From this study majority of the respondents participate in decision making which is shown in table 5.9.

Table 5.9: Distribution of the respondents by their decision making process

Decision making	Husband		Wife		Both		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
Education (School enrollment and school fee)	50	43.5	22	19.1	43	37.4	115	100.0
Daily shopping	22	19.1	29	25.2	64	55.7	115	100.0
Meal preparation	21	18.3	27	23.5	67	58.3	115	100.0
Land purchase and sale	105	91.3	3	2.6	7	6.1	115	100.0
Livestock purchase and sale	12	10.4	8	7.0	95	82.6	115	100.0
Consult doctor while sickness	1	0.9	6	5.2	108	93.9	115	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Six issues were raised to the 115 respondents to determine the involvement in decision making process. The percent of decision making in

three different categories were presented in the table above. Male are dominated in all issues except daily shopping and meal preparation. The highest percent in male decision making is in land purchase and sale issue, which is 91.3 percent. The lowest decision making by the female is in the issue land purchase and sale where as highest in the daily shopping issue. The result shows that decisions in the few issues were made by consultation of both. In case of sickness 93.9 percent of consultation of doctor decisions was made by mutual consultation.

Male decision dominated in the issues of long term effect like land purchase and sale & education. Female have domination in the issues of short term effect like daily shopping & meal preparation. This shows that status of female is low in the house and in the society.

CHAPTER SIX

DEFFERENTIAL IN FERTILITY BY BACK GROUND

CHARECTERISTICS OF THE STUDY

The chapter presents fertility behaviors of ever married women of reproductive age (15-49 years) in Amuwa VDC by some selected demographic and socio-economic characteristics. A fertility behavior of ever married women is presented in terms of number of children ever born (CEB) which measures the lifetime fertility experience of women.

6.1 Mean CEB by Age

Mean number of CEB varies significantly with age of mother. It is expected that higher the age of mother, higher the mean no. of CEB. It is obvious that older women have experience of longer period of reproductive life than younger ones. Confirming this fact, younger women are expected to have less no. of children than older ones. Mean CEB increases for age group to 45-49 years which is shown in the table 6.1

Table 6.1: Mean CEB by five years age group of women

Age Group	Number of Women	CEB
15-19	1	1.0
20-24	29	1.7
25-29	39	2.2
30-34	18	2.7
35-39	25	3.0
40-44	2	4.0
45-49	1	2.0
Total	115	2.3

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 6.1 shows that higher the age of women higher the no. of CEB. Mean CEB varies by the age of women. The highest mean CEB 4.0 is found for age group 40-44 and the lowest mean CEB 1.0 for age group 15-19. The second lowest mean CEB is found for age group 20-24 (1.7), followed by 2.21, 2.72, 2.96 and 2.0 for age group, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39 and 45-49 years respectively.

6.2 Mean CEB by Age at Marriage

In the context of Nepal, fertility is considered within marriage. So, marriage is essential component for fertility. Age at marriage is one of the most important factors which bring significant difference in mean CEB of women. Age at marriage and fertility are inversely related higher the age at marriage, lower the fertility and lower the age at marriage, higher the fertility which is shown in table 6.2

Table 6.2: Mean CEB by age at marriage

Age at Marriage	Number of women	CEB
Less than 10 years	14	2.8
10-14	43	2.3
15-19	53	2.3
20-24	5	1.8
Total	115	2.3

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The highest mean CEB 2.8 is found among those women, whose age at marriage is less than 10 years followed by 2.3, 2.3 and 1.8 for those women age at marriage is 10-14, 15-19 and 20-24 respectively.

6.3 Mean CEB by Literacy Status and Educational Attainment of Women

Educated women are more conscious of their family size and more prone to family planning and health facilities. Literacy plays a vital role for regulating fertility. Women with increasing level of education increase the age at marriage. So, education of women is one of the most important variables for lowering fertility level which is in the table 6.3 below.

Table 6.3: Mean CEB literacy status and educational attainment of women.

Literacy Status	Number of Women	CEB
Literate	46	2.1
Illiterate	69	2.5
Total	115	2.3
If literate level of education		
Primary	21	2.2
Lower Secondary	19	2.1
Secondary	6	2.7
Total	46	2.1

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The average mean CEB 2.5 for illiterate women is found to be higher in comparison to mean CEB 2.1 for literate women. Among the literate the highest mean CEB, 2.7 is found for secondary level and the lowest mean CEB 2.1 is found for lower secondary level, followed by mean CEB 2.2 is found for those women who are educated at primary.

6.4 Mean CEB and Occupational Status of Women

Occupational status of women is an important variable to determine fertility and level of society. Women involving in white colour job have higher living standard which helps to increase their income and education that helps to reduce fertility which is shown in the table 6.4.

Table 6.4: Mean CEB by occupational status of women

Occupational Status	Number of Women	CEB
Own agriculture	97	2.4
Wage labour	12	1.9
Service	2	1.5
Business	3	2.0
Others*	1	1.0
Total	115	2.3

Source: Field Survey, 2008

* Tailoring, Teacher, Driver

According to the study, mean number of CEB is the highest for those women who are engaged in agriculture (2.4) followed by wage labour (1.9), service (1.5), business (2.0) and others (1.0).

6.5 Mean CEB and Child Loss Experience

The relationship between CEB and child loss experience is expected to be positive. Higher infant and child mortality is found to be associated with high fertility. Parents want to replace the dead children with new ones which are found to be true in this study which is clearly in the table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Mean CEB by child loss experience of women

Child loss experience	Number of women	CEB
No	95	2.1
One child	16	2.4
Two children	3	4.3
Three or more than three children	1	1.0
Total	115	2.3

Source: Field Survey, 2008

According to the study mean CEB of women is found 2.1 for those women with no child loss, 2.4 with one child loss, 4.3 with two child loss and 1 is found for those women whose child loss have 3 and above.

6.6 Mean CEB by Ever Used of Contraception

Contraception is one of the proximate determinants of fertility. Fertility is directly determined by contraception. It helps to reduce fertility by spacing and controlling birth. There is inverse relationship between use of contraception and mean CEB (fertility) which is presented in table 6.6.

Table 6.6: Mean CEB by ever used of contraception

Use of Contraception	Number of women	CEB
Yes	95	2.4
No	20	1.9
Total	115	2.3

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 6.6 shows that contraceptive users' mean number of CEB is 2.4 and non contraceptive users' mean number of CEB is 1.9.

6.7 Mean CEB by Decision Making Power of Women

Women decision making power has also influenced fertility. Distribution of mean CEB by domestic affairs decision making power of ever-married women is aged 15-19 years in Amuwa VDC. Decision sharing about it makes couple aware for fertility regulation, which is presented in table 6.7.

Table 6.7: Mean CEB by decision making power of women

Decision making	Husband		Wife		Both		Total	
	No.	CEB	No.	CEB	No.	CEB	No.	CEB
Education (School enrollment and school fee)	50	2.5	22	2.3	43	2.1	115	2.3
Daily shopping	22	2.3	29	2.3	64	2.3	115	2.3
Meal preparation	21	2.3	27	2.1	67	2.4	115	2.3
Land purchase and sale	105	2.3	3	2.3	7	2.3	115	2.3
Livestock purchase and sale	12	2.4	8	2.4	95	2.3	115	2.3
Consult doctor while sickness	1	3.0	6	1.8	108	2.3	115	2.3

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Six issues were raised to the 115 respondents to determine the involvement in decision making process. The CEB of decision making in three different categories were presented in the table above. The CEB of the husband in the issues are range from 2.3 to 3.0. The CEB of the wife in the issues are range from 1.8 to 2.4. Whereas, CEB of the decision making by both in the issues are range from 2.1 to 2.4.

6.8 Mean CEB by Women's Ownership on Land

Land ownership is one of the most important variables to determine the fertility. It is observed that mean number of children ever born varies significantly with the women's ownership on land which is presented in table 6.8.

Table 6.8: Mean CEB by women's ownership on land

Land in own name	Number of Women	CEB
Yes	5	2.2
No	110	2.3
Total	115	2.3

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Majority of the respondents have not owned land. About 96 percent respondents have no land in their own name. Women who have their own land have lower children ever born (2.2) compared to those who have no land (2.3) (Table 6.8).

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Summary

This study tries to show the demographic, socio-economic and health status of women in Amuwa VDC in Rupandehi District and their relationship with fertility behaviour in terms of mean number of Children Ever Born (CEB) among the ever married women of reproductive ages (15-49) years.

This study is mainly based on primary data collected from the field survey. Out of the total study population, 115 ever-married women of the age group 15-49 from 115 households were selected. The respondents were selected from the random sampling method. Individual and households questionnaire were used for data collection. The findings were drawn by analyzing the data of demographic and socio-economic factor affecting status of women and fertility such as education, occupation, age at marriage, use of contraception, child loss etc. Some of the findings drawn from the study are presented below.

- ◆ In the selected 115 households, there are 860 persons. Among them, 416 are males and 444 are females.
- ◆ In the study area, around 75 percent people are literate out of the population 5 years and above. Among them, 61 percent females and 89 percent males are literate.
- ◆ Among the total study population of age 10 years and above, there are only 32 percent people who are unmarried.

- ◆ In the study area of the selected households, only 17.4 percent households have toilet facilities but also most of them have ordinary toilet.
- ◆ Out of the total population, 59 percent are involved in agricultural sector. More than 4 percent are involved in service sector.
- ◆ More than 96 percent of the respondents reported they have land. Among them 16 percent have between 10-14 kattha of land and around 58 percent have 20 kattha and above land.
- ◆ Majority of the households (63.5 percent) used own tube well water, 22.6 percent households used the public tube well water and around 14 percent households used sharing tube well water.
- ◆ Majority of the households (16.5 percent) have ordinary toilet, only 0.89 percent or one household have modern / flush toilet and 82.6 percent families have no toilet facilities.
- ◆ Among the housing facilities like electricity, radio, TV, telephone etc., most (75 percent) have radio for getting information, 11 percent households have none of these facilities.
- ◆ Majority of the households has nuclear family (60.9 percent) structure. Only around 39 percent households have joint family.
- ◆ In the study area, all the households use fire wood for cooking. 67 percent household also uses dried dung (Guitha) for cooking. Few households have another alternative source of energy to cook. 3.5 percent have biogas and 0.9 percent has LP gas.

Findings Related to Education

- ◆ Most of the respondents in the study area are illiterate (60 percent) and only 40 percent are literate.
- ◆ Only 40 percent respondents are literate, around 46 percent are educated up to primary level, 41.3 percent are educated up to lower secondary level and only 13 percent are educated up to secondary level.
- ◆ Around 65 percent husbands of the respondents are literate. Among them 46.7 percent are educated up to primary level, 34.6 percent are educated up to lower secondary level and only 4 percent are educated up to higher secondary level / intermediate and above.

Findings Related to Occupation

- ◆ Majority of the respondents (84.3 percent) are involved in agriculture.
- ◆ Majority of the respondents' husbands are involved in agriculture (67 percent), 7 percent in labour, 9.6 percent in business, 4.3 percent in foreign employment and 5.2 percent are involved in service sector.

Findings Related to Family Planning

- ◆ Majority of the respondents women heard about family planning but 82.6 percent respondents ever use of family planning. Majority of the respondents (60 percent) replied that main cause of family planning is birth limiting and only 40 percent replied that birth spacing. The main sources of information about family planning are radio, TV, other life media like health MCHW etc.

- ◆ More popular family planning means of current use is injectable, which is used by 34.7 percent respondent and 22.1 percent use female sterilization. Around 19 percent respondents use pills and 13.7 percent use condoms. Other currently used methods are male sterilization, nartplant, etc. Among the contraceptive non users, 17.4 percent don't use family planning means and services because of the lack of knowledge, awareness and out of reach.

Findings Related to Age at Marriage

- ◆ The mean age at marriage is 14.37 years.
- ◆ Most of the respondents (46.1 percent) got married at the age of 15-19 years, followed by less than 10 years (12.2 percent), 10-14 years (37.4 percent) and 20-24 years (4.3 percent). This indicates that majority of the women are married in early ages.
- ◆ In the case of their marriageable age, all Tharu women are married within 15-16 years of age which shows a tendency of child marriage.
- ◆ Tharu women has 93 percent arranged marriage and rest 7 percent have love marriage.
- ◆ Tharu women can marry again upon their interest after widowhood.

Findings Related to Fertility

- ◆ Majority of the respondents gave birth to their first child at the age of 15-19 years.

- ◆ Majority of the respondents (76.5 percent) give births to children in their house, only 22.6 percent go to hospital to give births to their children.
- ◆ Around 17.4 percent respondents lose their child / children.
- ◆ The mean number of CEB of women whose age at marriage is less than 10 years is 2.8 and below 14 years is 2.3.
- ◆ The mean CEB of contraceptive non-users is 1.9, where as the contraceptive users mean CEB is 2.4.
- ◆ The mean CEB of the illiterate women in the study population is 2.5.
- ◆ The mean CEB of the women who lost 2 children is 4.3
- ◆ The mean CEB of the women whose main occupation is agriculture is 2.4.

7.2 Conclusions

Lower the age at marriage higher the number of mean CEB, illiterate women has high number of CEB and women who are engaged in labour and agriculture have higher mean CEB than those who are students and others.

There is inverse relationship between contraceptive use and fertility, educational attainments of women as well as husband are the powerful tool to reduce fertility, the availability of modern facilities such as radio, T.V. etc. is contributing factors to reduce fertility and higher standard of toilet, energy sources of cooking and tube well drinking water are the evidence of reduction in fertility.

Family planning service is not available everywhere. The proportion of unmet population is still very high which suggests that family planning has not been targeted in the places where the service is most desired. Lowering fertility and mortality demand higher education which influences the age at marriage, number of children, women wishes to have despite pressure from her family and lower level of fertility.

7.3 Policy Recommendation

Women who constitute more than half of the total population are playing an important role in every society. Discriminations, male domination, social believes and traditions are major issues of persistence of high fertility in Nepal. Some recommendations are proposed based on the study for taking steps towards lowering fertility and raising the socio-economic status of women.

- ◆ Education exposes women to outer society, increases innovative behavior and improves the individual and family's quality of life. Higher education has a significant effect for the female participation in family decision-making and age at marriage. Therefore, free school education is not sufficient it should be made compulsory, especially for girls.
- ◆ Women's occupation and working status are found to be one of the main determinants of fertility level. Women's participation in income generating activity should be enhanced through skill development, training and vocational education. This will raise their capability and decision making power within the households. Thus, certain environment should be created for women to work outside the household. The government should create opportunity and reserve special seats in employment. Rural women should get special loans (without collateral) for income generating activity.

- ◆ Child loss experience is found to be associated with increased number of children ever born. So, effective health services to women should be provided by qualified maternal and child health personal. Maternal and child health education should be provided through media and in school. Furthermore, the government should improve nutrition, sanitation, free mobile medical services and awareness of immunization to reduce fertility, infant and child mortality.

7.4 Recommendation for Future Research

This study has shown the relationship between the status of women and fertility. However, it is based only on Amuwa VDC of Rupandehi District. The same type of study can be conducted for large area or other VDC of the country.

This study is based only on the limited socio-economic and demographic variables applying bivariate analysis to the data from field survey. The selected variables may be insufficient. So, for better result it is recommended to use other appropriate variables like social, economic, migration, income, land holding, food sufficiency and availability of modern amenities etc. It will not doubt the outcome would be highly useful for further policy formulation.

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APPENDIX

Tribhuvan University
Central Department of Population Studies
Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal
"Status of Women and Fertility"

Questionnaire

Section A: Introducing Background

District

VDC

Ward No

Tole

Name of Respondent

Position of the Respondent in the family

Respondent No

Date of Interview

Section B: Household Information

S.N.	Name of Household Member	Relation to HH head	Sex	Age	Education	Marital Status	Occupation
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							

1. Size of the family

2. Type of the family

1. Joint ☐ 2. Nuclear ☐

3. Main occupation of the family

.....

4. Source of drinking water

1. Tube well	Own
	Public
	Sharing
2. Well	Own
	Public
	Sharing
3. Others	Own
	Public
	Sharing

5. Availability of toilet facilities

1. No toilet ☐ 2. Ordinary toilet ☐
3. Flush/Modern toilet ☐

6. Types of facilities available in the household

1. Electricity ☐ 2. Radio ☐
3. Television ☐ 4. Mobile phone ☐
5. Land line phone ☐ 6. Others ☐

7. Source of fuel for cooking

1. Firewood ☐ 2. Gobar gas ☐
3. LP gas ☐ 4. Stove/Kerosene ☐

8. Do your family have own land?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

9. If yes, how many?

1. Bigha ☐ 2. Kattha ☐
3. Dhur ☐

10. How many months does it maintain your food?

Months

11. How many livestock do you have?

Livestock	Cow	Buffalo	Ox	Goat	Hen/Chicken	Other
No.						

Section C: Individual Information

Background

1. Age of respondent
2. Education
3. Occupation
4. Religion

Marriage

5. Have you been married only once or more than once?

1. Only once ☐ 2. More than once ☐

6. Age of marriage (first)

.....

7. Were you consented for marriage?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

8. What types of marriage is yours?

1. Love ☐ 2. Arranged ☐

Fertility behaviour and Save Motherhood

9. What was you age of first birth?

.....

10. How many children have you ever born?

Living with you	Not lining	Dead	Total
Son	Son	Son	Son
Daughter	Daughter	Daughter... ..	Daughter

11. Who decided for your previous birth?

1. You ☐ 2. Your partner ☐
 3. Both of you ☐ 4. None of you ☐

12. When you were pregnant did you see any one for antenatal care?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

13. If yes, to whom?

1. MCHW ☐ 2. Doctors ☐
 3. Nurse ☐ 4. Others ☐

14. Have you received TT during pregnancy?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

15. If yes, how many times?

.....

16. When you were pregnant did you take iron tablets?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

17. Where did you go to give birth?

1. At home ☐ 2. Hospital ☐
 3. Health post ☐ 4. Clinic / Nursing home ☐
 5. health Center ☐

18. Was your delivery normal?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

19. If no, what was the problem?

.....

20. Did you receive check up from anyone within 48 hours following the delivery?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

21. Do you have following problem?

1. Uterus prolepses ☐

2. White water discharge ☐

3. Other STI problem ☐

22. If yes, from whom?

1. Doctors ☐ 2. Nurse ☐

3. TBA ☐ 4. Others ☐

Family Planning

23. Have you ever heard about any FP method?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

24. Have you or your husband ever used any method of contraception?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

25. If yes, which method did you use?

1. Female sterilization ☐ 2. Male sterilization ☐

3. Pills ☐ 4. Condoms ☐

5. Injectable ☐ 6. Norplant ☐

7. Others ☐

26. Are you currently using the FP method?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

27. If yes, since how long are you practicing?

Months

28. For what reason, have you used the method?

1. Birth spacing ☐ 2. Birth limiting ☐

3. Others ☐

29.If no, what was the reason for termination of the FP method?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Want another child | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Side effect | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Not accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Not affordable | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Husband opposed | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Others | <input type="checkbox"/> |

30. Who decided to use the family planning method?

- | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 1. You | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Your husband | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Both | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

31. How many children do you actually want?

.....

Women Status and Decision Making

32. Do you have your own property?

- | | | | | |
|--------------|--------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| 1. House | 1. Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Land | 1. Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Livestock | 1. Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

33. Do you have cash or bank balance in your name?

- | | | | |
|--------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| 1. Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|

34. Do you involve in any IG (Income Generating) activities?

- | | | | |
|--------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| 1. Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|

35. What type of activities do you involve in?

.....

36. Where do you work?

- | | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. At home | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Away from home | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|

37. What was the main reason for not working?

- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. You don't like | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Your partner didn't like | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. No time for work | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

38.What is your husband occupation?

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Business/Trade | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Tailor | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Student | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Official work | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. Others

39. Is your family totally supported by your husband's income?

1. Yes 2. No

40. Who decides for the following matters?

Particulars	Male	Female	Both
Education (school enrolment and school fee)			
Daily shopping			
Meal preparation			
Land purchase and sale			
Livestock purchase and sale			
Consult doctor in sickness			

41. Are you involved in any micro credit group?

1. Yes 2. No

42. How many micro credit groups do you involve in?

.....

43. How much money do you save in a month?

.....

44. In your opinion, what should be done to improve the status of women?

.....

Thank You