

**WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AAMA SAMUHA  
(MOTHERS' GROUP)**

*(A Case Study of Hanshposha VDC, Sunsari District)*

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social  
Science in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts in Sociology**

**By**

**Tanka Mani Poudel**

**Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology**

**Tribhuvan University**

**Kirtipur, Kathmandu**

**June, 2011**

**TRIBHUVAN UNVIERSITY**  
**HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**  
**CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY**  
**KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU, NEPAL**

**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

This is to certify that Mr. Tanka Mani Poudel has completed this dissertation entitled "**Women's Empowerment Through Aama Samuha (Mothers' Group): A Case Study of Hanshposha VDC, Sunsari District**" under my supervision and guidance. I, therefore, recommend this dissertation for final approval and acceptance.

Date:

---

**Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan, Ph.D.**

Lecturer

Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology

Tribhuvan Unviersity

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Nepal

**TRIBHUVAN UNVIERSITY**  
**HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**  
**CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY**  
**KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU, NEPAL**

**LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE**

This dissertation entitled "**Women's Empowerment Through Aama Samuha (Mothers' Group): A Case Study of Hanshposha VDC, Sunsari District**" submitted by Mr. Tanka Mani Poudel has been accepted as the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

**Dissertation Committee:**

Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan, Ph.D.

External Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lecturer , Dambar Chemjong

Head of Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
Prof. Dr. Om Gurung

Date:

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe much to my father Bhim Prasad Poudel, mother Cheetra Kumari Poudel, and brother Dhaka Mani Poudel for their love and faith in me. I know they have sacrificed much on their part so that i could meditate to write my dissertation.

I express my sincere gratitude to my dissertation supervisor Dr. Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan, lecturer, Central Department of Sociology/ Anthropology for his guidance to help me structure this dissertation. It would be impossible to complete the work without his kind help and insights that I got from his.

I am thankful to the Head of Department, Prof. Dr. Om Gurung and external evaluator of my dissertation, Lecturer Dambar Chemjong for approving my dissertation and providing insights to further improve it.

I would like to acknowledge to my teacher Arjun Uperti for providing various helpful suggestions. I also wish to thank Ms. Kamala Khadka and Bishnu Gurung for their kindness cooperation while carrying out my fieldwork.

I am equally grateful to the all members of the mothers' Group of Hanshposha who had kindly cooperate me providing in depth data required to carry out the research despite their works.

I would like to thank my dearest friends Dipesh Timalina, Khagendra Poudel, Akash Subedi and my brother Ajaya Poudel for their cooperation to complete this dissertation. I express my heartfelt thanks to Mr. Rajiv Maharjan of "Friends Computer Service" for making my dissertation presentable.

**Tanka Mani Poudel**

## CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<i>Letter of Recommendation</i>	
<i>Letter of Acceptance</i>	
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	
<i>Contents</i>	
<i>List of Tables</i>	
<i>List of Figures</i>	
<i>Abbreviations</i>	
<b>CHAPTER - ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1-9</b>
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Objectives of the Study	5
1.4 Theoretical Framework	6
1.5 Conceptual Framework	7
1.6 Rationale of the Study	8
1.7 Limitation of the Study	9
<b>CHAPTER-TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>10-25</b>
2.1 Overall Status of Nepalese Women	10
2.2 Origin of Mother's Groups	15
2.3 Characteristics of Mothers' Groups	17
2.4 Mothers' Groups in the Community Development	18
2.5 The Notion of Empowerment	19
2.6 Women Empowerment Measure (WEM) in Nepal	23
<b>CHAPTER - THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>26-29</b>
3.1 Research Design	26
3.2 Selection of the Study Area	26

3.3	Sampling	26
3.4	Nature and Sources of Data	27
3.5	Tools of Data Collection	27
	3.5.1 Survey Questionnaire	27
	3.5.2 Interviews	27
	3.5.3 Focused Group Discussion (FGD)	28
	3.5.4 Key Informant Interview	28
	3.5.5 Case Study	28
3.6	Data Analysis and Interpretation	28
3.7	Definition of Key Terms	29
<b>CHAPTER -FOUR: THE SETTING AND BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS</b>		<b>30-41</b>
4.1	General Topography of Nepal	30
	4.1.1 Introduction of Sunsari District	30
	4.1.2 Introduction of Hanshposha VDC	30
4.2	Mothers' Group of Hanshposha	33
	4.2.1 Organizational Structure of Mothers Group	33
	4.2.2 Resource Generation	34
	4.2.3 Resource Mobilization	35
	4.2.4 Registration	35
	4.2.5 Frequency of Meeting	35
	4.2.6 Activities of Hanshposha Mothers' Group	35
4.3	Background of the Respondents	36
	4.3.1 Age composition	36
	4.3.2 Educational Background	37
	4.3.3 Caste and Ethnic Composition	38
	4.3.4 Religious Composition	39
	4.3.5 Family Background	40
	4.3.6 Occupation	41

**CHAPTER -FIVE: MOTHERS' GROUP AND EMPOWERMENT  
OF WOMEN** **42-59**

5.1	Women Empowerment Programme	42
	5.1.1 Saving and Credit Groups	45
	5.1.2 Aama Saving and Credit Co-operative Ltd.	47
5.2	Activities Related to Social Development	48
5.3	Attitude of Males Towards MG	51
5.6	Attitude of Non-member Mothers Towards Mothers Group	54
5.5	Problems of Mothers' Group	56
	5.5.1 The problems faced by Mothers Group Members While Working in MG	57
5.6	External Support	58

**CHAPTER - SIX: IMPACT ANALYSIS OF MOTHERS'  
GROUP** **60-63**

6.1	Change in Social Status	60
6.2	Involvement in Social Activities	60
6.3	Decision-Making Capabilities	62
6.4	Change in Attitude of Family Members and Neighbors	63

**CHAPTER -SEVEN: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS** **64-67**

7.1	Summary	64
7.2	Conclusion	66

**REFERENCES**

**APPENDICES**

## LIST OF TABLES

	<b>Page</b>
Table No. 1: Educational Attainment by Sex in Nepal	14
Table No. 2: Women Empowerment Measure in Nepal by Region	24
Table No. 3: Education Status of Hanshposha VDC	31
Table No. 4: Occupation of Hanshposha VDC	32
Table No. 5: The Source of Fund, Programs and Result	36
Table No. 6: Age Composition of the Respondents	37
Table No. 7: Educational Background of the Respondents	38
Table No. 8: Caste and Ethnic Composition of the Respondents	39
Table No. 9: Religious Composition of the Respondents	40
Table No. 10: Family Background of the Respondents	40
Table No. 11: Occupation of the Respondents	41
Table No. 12: Training Conducted by MG	43
Table No. 13: Problems Faced by MG Members	56
Table No. 14: External Support Received by the MG Members	58



## LIST OF FIGURES

	<b>Page</b>
Figure No. 1: Conceptual Framework	8
Figure No. 2: Organizational Structure	34
Figure No. 3: Mothers' Group and Others Institution	61

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ACAP	:	Annapurna Conservation Area Project
CBS	:	Central Bureau of Statistics
CEDAW	:	Convention on the Elimination all forms of Discriminations Against Women
CRC	:	Convention on the Right of the Child
DDC	:	District Development Committee
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
GDI	:	Gender -related Development Index
HDI	:	Human Development Index
INGO	:	International Non-Government Organization
LSG	:	Local Self Government
LSGA	:	Local Self Government Act
MF	:	Micro Finance
MG	:	Mothers' Group
MWSCW	:	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
NGO	:	Non-Government Organization
SAARC	:	South Asian Association of Regional Co-operation
SCG	:	Saving and Credit Group
UNDP	:	United Nations' Development Program
UNGASS	:	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNICEF	:	United Nations International Children Education Fund
USAID	:	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	:	Village Development Committee
WAD	:	Women and Development
WEF	:	Women's Empowerment Framework
WEM	:	Women empowerment Measure
WID	:	Women in Development