



**Role of Married Women in Household Decision-Making**  
(A case of Tanglaphant, Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu)

By  
Pramila Sharma

A Dissertation  
Submitted to the Central Department of Population Studies,  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in Population Studies

Tribhuvan University  
Kirtipur, Kathmandu  
Nepal  
July 2008



TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
**CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF POPULATION STUDIES**  
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY  
KIRTIPUR

**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

This is to certify that Ms. Pramila Sharma has completed this dissertation entitled "Role of Married Women in Household Decision-Making" conducted at Tanglaphant in Kirtipur Municipality under my supervision. This is one of its kinds of study that analysis the decision-making status of women in household activities, especially in the changed national context of Nepal that encourages the inclusiveness even in academic studies.

To the best of my knowledge, the study is original and carries useful information in the field of participation of women in household decision-making. I, therefore, recommend this dissertation for the final approval and acceptance to the Dissertation Committee.

.....  
Mr. Yougendra Gurung  
Lecturer

Date: July, 2008

## **APPROVAL SHEET**

### **Role of Married Women in Household Decision-Making**

(A case of Tanglaphant, Kirtipur, Kathmandu)

Submitted by Ms. Pramila Sharma

has been accepted as the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts in Population Studies.

Approved by:

.....  
Professor Dr. Bal Kumar K.C.  
Head of the Department

.....  
Mr. Laxman Singh Kunwar  
External Examiner

.....  
Mr. Yougendra Gurung  
Supisivor

July 2008

**Dissertation Committee**

**Central Department of Population Studies  
Tribhuvan University  
Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors Mr. Yougendra Gurung and Dr. Govind Subedi, Lecturers of the Central Department of Population Studies for their valuable guidance and proper supervision to carry out this study successfully. Their wide knowledge and logical way of thinking have been of great value to me. Their understanding, encouraging and personal guidance have provided a good basis for the present thesis.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Prof. Dr. Bal Kumar, KC (Head, Central Department of Population Studies) for his valuable suggestions and encouragement throughout the work. I am thankful to all the faculty members and staffs of CDPS for their co-operation and suggestion to complete this research.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my friends Rainu Kumari Gurung, Sapana Pradhan, Ambika Baral, Manju Gautam, Tej Neupane and Bhola Koirala for their company, suggestions and great help. Special thanks also go to librarians of CDPS, CBS, UNFPA, StriiShakti, Beyond Beijing and Central Library who supported me to complete this research. I am also grateful to all the respondents for their co-operation, opinions, thoughts, experiences as well incidents, which helped me to acquire in-depth information regarding the issue through the interview and questionnaire.

My sincere thanks also go to my parents, my husband and all my family members who supported in every step of my study. Last but not the least, I would also like to express special thanks to my senior Mr. Ramesh Adhikari, for useful suggestion and help with SPSS program.

**Pramila Sharma**

July 2008

## **ABSTRACT**

The present study is an analysis of "Role of Married Women in Household Decision-Making". The study area is Tanglaphant that covers ward number 1, 2 and 3 of Kirtipur Municipality. This study is based on primary information of 80 married women among 4052 females in the selected area, taken purposively as sample. The information has been collected by direct interview with the help of both structured and non-structured questionnaires. The processing of the collected data has been done using software package SPSS. The study has attempted to reveal the decision-making power of married women in household chores, socio-economic activities, educational aspects and family planning measures in the study area.

It has found that though women are lagging behind in terms of land ownership and income generating activities, they have satisfactory access in terms of using the modern household energy resources, household income possession and family planning measures. Their participation in social activities is in the bottom line. Also, age wise, women of age greater than or equal to 30 years; education wise, women with under SLC level of education; migration wise, migrated women and caste/ethnicity wise, Rai women are found in a better self-decision making position.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Map of the Study Area

### **CHAPTER – I: INTRODUCTION.....ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

1.1 General Background .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
1.3 Objective of the Study .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
1.4 Significance of the Study .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
1.5 Limitation of the Study .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
1.6 Organization of the Study .....	6

### **CHAPTER – II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

2.1 Historical Background .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.2 Socio-Cultural Situation.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.3 Economic Status.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.4 Educational Status.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.5 Current Situation.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.6 Women's Participation in Decision-making .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.7 Conceptual Frame work.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

### **CHAPTER – III: METHODOLOGY.....ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

3.1 Introduction to the Study Area.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.2 Sample Design .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.3 Questionnaire Design.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.4 Data Collection and Processing .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
3.5 Data Processing and Analysis .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

**CHAPTER-IV: INTROUDCTION TO THE STUDY POPULATION ... ERROR!**  
**BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

- 4.1 Characteristics of Household Population..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.1.1 Age Sex Composition ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.1.2 Marital Status ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.1.3 Educational Composition by Sex..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.1.4 Occupational Characteristics ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.2.1 Age composition ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.2.2 Age at Marriage ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.3 Social Characteristics of Respondents ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.3.1 Family Structure..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.3.2 Religious Composition..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.3.3 Cast/Ethnic Composition ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.4 Economic Characteristics of Respondents..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.4.1 Land Holdings..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.4.2 Legal ownership of House ..... 30
  - 4.4.3 Household Energy Consumption ..... 31
  - 4.4.4 Engagement in Income Generating Activities ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.4.5 Source of Family Income..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.4.6 Possession/Keeping of Household Income. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.5 Educational Status of Respondents ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- 4.6 Family Planning Status of Respondents ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.6.1 Knowledge about Family Planning..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
  - 4.6.2 Use of Family Planning Method ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.6.3 Methods of Family Planning.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.7 Participatory Characteristics of Respondents .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.7.1 Local Mother's Committee.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.7.2 School Management Committee.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.7.3 Drinking Water Committee.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.7.4 Political Parties .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.7.5 Religious Institutions .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## **CHAPTER – V: WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD DECISION-MAKING PROCESS .. 40**

5.1 Decision-Making on Household Purchases .....	40
5.1.1 Decision on Buying Food Products. ....	40
5.1.2 Decision on Buying Clothes .....	41
5.1.3 Decision on Using Type of Fuel for Cooking...	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.2 Decision-Making on Economic Activities.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.2.1 Decision on Involvement in Income Generating Activities	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.2.2 Decision on Household Expenditure .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.3 Decision-Making on the Use of Family Planning Methods..	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.4 Decision-Making on Consulting with Health Workers during Pregnancy .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.5 Decision-Making on Schooling of Children .....	51
5.5 Decision-Making on Polling .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.6 Decision-Making on Participation in Social and Developmental Activities ..	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
5.7 Cause of Deprivation of Women .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## **CHAPTER – VI: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION ERROR! BOOKMARK**

6.1 Summary of Findings.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.1.1 Characteristics of Household Population.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>



6.1.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents ..	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.1.3 Social Characteristics of Respondents .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.1.4 Economic Characteristics of Respondents .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.1.5 Educational Characteristics of Respondents .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.1.6 Family Planning Status of Respondents .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.1.7 Participatory Characteristics of Respondents ...	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.2 Women in Household Decision-making Process .....	60
6.3 Final Interpretation.....	62
6.4 Conclusion .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.5 Recommendation .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.5.1 Recommendations for Policy Implementation..	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.5.2 Recommendation for Family Members .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
6.5 Future Research Issues.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b> 4
<b><u>REFERENCES.....</u></b>	<b><u>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</u></b>
<b><u>APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE.....</u></b>	<b><u>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</u></b>

## LIST OF TABLES

- Table 2.1: Women's Time Input and Decision-Making Role in Entrepreneurial Activities (in percent of total) ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table 2.2: Participation in Decision-Making: Percentage Distribution of Currently Married Women by Person Who Usually Makes Decisions About Four Specific Issues, Nepal 2006. .... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.1 Distribution of Household Population by Age and Sex... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.2 Distribution of Household Population by Marital Status **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.3 Distribution of Household Population by Education. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.4 Distribution of Household Population by Occupation..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.5 Distribution of Respondents by Age..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.6 Distribution of Respondents by Age at Marriage ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.7 Distribution of Respondents by the Type of Family . **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.8 Distribution of Respondents by Religion ... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.9 Distribution of Respondents by Caste/Ethnicity..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Table: 4.10 Distribution of Respondents by Land Holding..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table: 4.11 Distribution of Respondents by Size of Their Land .....	30
Table: 4.12 Distribution of Respondents by Land Ownership .....	30
Table: 4.13 Distribution of Respondents by the Nature of House They Live In .....	31
Table: 4.14 Distribution of Respondents by Legal Ownership of House .....	31
Table: 4.15 Distribution of Respondents by the Type of Fuel for Cooking .....	31
Table: 4.16 Distribution of Respondents by Their Engagement in Income Generating Activities .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Table: 4.17 Distribution of Respondents by the Type of Income Generating Activities .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Table: 4.18 Distribution of Respondents by the Position at Job.	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Table: 4.19 Distribution of Respondents by Monthly Income ...	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Table: 4.20 Distribution of Respondents by Source of Family Income .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Table: 4.21 Distribution of Respondents by Keeping of Household Income .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Table: 4.22 Distribution of Respondents by Education	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Table: 4.23 Distribution of Respondents by the Knowledge about Family Planning .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Table: 4.24 Distribution of Respondents by Source of Information They Received About Family Planning .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Table: 4.25 Distribution of Respondents by the Use of Family Planning Methods. .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

Table: 4.26 Distribution of Respondents by the Method of Family Planning They Use  
..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table: 4.27 Distribution of Respondents by Participation in Local Mothers'  
Committee ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table: 4.28 Distribution of Respondents by Participation in School Management  
Committee ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table: 4.29 Distribution of Respondents by Participation in Drinking Water  
Committee ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table: 4.30 Distribution of Respondents by Participation in Political Parties .....**Error!**  
**Bookmark not defined.**

Table: 4.31 Distribution of Respondents by Participation in Religious Institutions  
..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table 5.1: Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Buying Food Products. .... 41

Table 5.2: Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Purchase of Clothes for  
Family ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table 5.3: Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Using Type of Fuel for  
Cooking ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table 5.4: Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Involvement in Income  
Generating Activities ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table 5.5: Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Household Expenditure **Error! Bookmark not de**

Table 5.6: Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Use of Family Planning  
Methods ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table 5.7: Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Consulting with Health  
Workers during Pregnancy ..... 51

Table 5.8: Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Schooling of Children ..... 52

Table 5.9: Distribution of Respondents by Decision on Polling **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table 5.10: Decision on Participating in Social and Developmental Activities **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Table 11: Distribution of Respondents by the Reasoning in Cause of Deprivation of  
Women ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Figure 5.1 Distribution of Respondents by Reasoning on the Cause of Deprivation of  
Women ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

## **ACRONYMS**

**BBC:** Beyond Beijing Committee

**CBS:** Central Bureau of Statistics

**CDPS:** Central Department of Population Studies

**CEDA:** Center for Economic Development and Administration

**CREHPA:** Center for Research on Environment Health and Population Activities

**FP:** Family Planning

**FWLD:** Forum for Women, Law and Development

**GDI:** Gender Related Development index

**HDI:** Human Development Index

**HMG:** His Majesty's Government

**ICIMOD:** International Care for Integrated Mountain Development

**IFAD:** International Fund for Agricultural Development

**MoF:** Ministry of Finance

**NDHS:** Nepal Demographic and Health Survey

**NFHS:** Nepal Family Health Survey

**NGO:** Non-Government Organization

**NHDR:** Nepal Human Development Report

**SLC:** School Leaving Certificate

**SPSS:** Statistical Package for Social Sciences

**TU:** Tribhuvan University

**UN:** United Nations

**UNDP:** United Nations Development Program

**UNFPA:** United Nations Population Fund

**UNICEF:** United Nations Children Fund