

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

There have been growing concerns today on women rights, their empowerment and their economic condition. The literature on women and their socio-economic statuses has grown with the increasing awareness that women's development is vital for the overall development of the society. The phrase "overworked and underpaid" is a harsh but true description of women throughout the world. Women's labour accounts for two third's of the world's work hour yet they receive only ten percent of income and less than one percent of property. (UN, 1980). In any society the roles and responsibilities of women and men vary. Women usually have less access to resources and benefits due to various socio economic constraints, this is more observed in developing countries where there is a clear demarcation of rules and responsibilities and more prominently male domination's. Women, in developing countries are merely respected as their role of mother and housekeeper.

Women have been significantly participating to the cultural and social development of the mankind throughout the history despite their roles often been seen as secondary to those of men. Women played important roles in the advancement of civilization since the pre-historic period by their unique character in accepting the coexistence of all living beings, which perhaps, led to the domestication of animals and the system of agriculture cultivation in the family or community unit. Since time immemorial female participation, whether from household viewpoint or in the out sphere have remained significant., even in this post modern era, the participation of women whether in economic or social and political arena, have remained vital.

Women now have more influence than ever before in the world, but for all their gains they are still struggling for parity with men. Women still have fewer social options for survival other than marriage. According to culturally defined ideas, getting married and producing children are the ultimate goals for women. All other options including education and employment are only secondary (Acharya, 1997). Women are involved in politics but they still do not have an equal influence in policy making. Men continue to

hold the majority of parliamentary seats and key government positions throughout the world.

The situation of Nepalese women is no different. Nepalese women are underprivileged and disadvantageous in terms of their socio-economic standing compared to their male counterparts. However, the universal declaration of Human Rights has crossed a half century along with the global call for Gender Equity. Nepalese women, who constitute even more than half of the population, are still confined within the four walls of their houses. Likewise the estimated literacy rate of men is 65.1 percent but that of women is only 42.23 percent (CBS 2001). Most literate women are situated in urban areas while majority of women are situated in urban areas while majority of them live in rural areas where choice of livelihood is limited to agricultural work in the fields which are mostly owned by their father, husbands, brothers or landlords.

As women do not have land in their name due to lack of other sources of income, they are dependant upon their husbands. Women have the accessibility regarding land resources but when it comes to control of benefits it is the male who still exercises the control because our society is male dominated where major decisions are taken by the male household head. In Nepal unequal rank and power in decision making and benefits are legitimized by traditional society norms.

However Nepalese women statuses vary according to their socio-economic condition. Their problem role and responsibilities differ and cooperate in terms of their region in which they live in, their education and their economic dependency upon their male counterparts.

The needs to uplift women in Nepal were realized lately and the steps to meet these needs were taken only recently. Various incentive programs have been launched along with the call for greater awareness to overcome prevailing stigma- attached social plight women. New schemes introduced to a new situation. Some of the major activities are surveying of households, formation of groups, preparing village profiles and involving women in educational, health and income generating activities both at the district and field levels. Efforts are made to develop women's social prestige, self confidence and feeling of equality by educating them and aiming to set their commanding status over the society as well as their family.

As a result the women's participation in decision making has increased today. It can be observed in political fields where few of them are in decision-making position due to allocation of percent of candidacy of women in parliamentary election by each political party.

Besides, women in Nepal work 10-13 hrs against 7.51hrs for men (CEDA 1981) and hence there is a growing need to provide them sufficient say in decision-making authority within or outside home affairs. Further more the importance of women's participation in household management are playing an important role for upliftment of their status in the society. Therefore this study will attempt to highlight the present role of working women (those women who are economically active, have a continual source of income and contributing economically to their family) and non-working women (housewives) in their household decision making.

1.2 Statement Of the Problem

At present Nepal faces many challenges participating in the field of women's and decision making power where illiteracy ignorance and civil aspect of the patriarchal systems are deeply rooted in Nepalese households. Women's representation in terms of decision making is very poor in the whole of the south Asia especially in the countries like Nepal, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

More and more interests are being diverted towards women to identify their involvement in decision making, considering them as a very integral part of development of country. But the expected outcomes regarding the women as a beneficiary has yet to be realized.

In Nepal even educated and economically active women's decision making power is very low as compared to men because social norms define this activity as a male task.

Kirtipur municipality is chosen as the study areas for this research. Kirtipur has very rich culture and ethnic background. The women are also seen involved in work outside their home and contributing economically to their family. But their level of participation is yet unknown.

So the study tried to solve the following problems.

1. What are the socio-economic statuses of women in the study area?
2. What is the participation level of women in household decision making?
3. What are the differences between the role of working and non-working women in household decision making?
4. What are the factors affecting women's decision-making powers?

1.3 Objectives of the study:

The specific objective of this study is to examine the role of Nepalese working and non-working women towards their household decision making. The general objectives are as follows:

1. To examine the socio-economic statuses of women of the study area.
2. To examine their level of participation in the decision making process within the household
3. To differentiate the role of working and non-working women in household decision making
4. To identify the factors affecting women's decision making power.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study has significance in both applied and theoretical levels. This study attempts to explore and describe women's role in household decision making. Number of research studies has been done on decision making process. Although Nepalese women have been empowered in paper, they have not been wholly translated into a way of life. Hence the result is that only a few women are in the decision making position.

Now a day, it is widely discussed among politicians, planners and bureaucrats that women are exploited, oppressed and isolated from the development main stream. The participation of women is very low in social, political and economic founds. This study, by exploring and examining women's actual role in household decision making will be useful for proper identification of women's role in household decision making, for the planners and development participation so that they can make better plans, policies and

implement them to uplift the Nepalese women's status and their role in the development of the country.

1.5 Limitation of the study

The Major limitations of this study are:

-) The sample size is small in comparison to the population hence it may not be generalized to the whole population.
-) It is the study of the women living only in Kirtipur municipality hence it may not represent the decision making level of women of the whole country
-) Time and financial factor may also be a limitation of this study.

1.6 Organization of the study

The research is divided into five chapters. The first is the introduction which consists of descriptive background of women, objectives of the study, problems, significance and the limitations.

The second chapter is literature review which provides the insight and general knowledge about the subject matter of the research. It included review of conceptual studies and review of previous related studies. It gives an idea about what other researches have been already conducted in this particular field and what more needs to be done.

Similarly, the third is research Methodology. It includes the population, sample size, tools for data collection, and sources of data that are required for this study.

The fourth chapter is data interpretation and analysis. In this chapter the primary and secondary data collected from the various sources are presented tabulated, analyzed and interpreted for attaining the stated objectives of this study.

The fifth or last chapter includes summary of the study, the major findings and conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this study, the researcher has gone through two types of research namely

-) Review of conceptual texts
-) Review of Previous Studies

2.1 Review of Conceptual Texts

It is basically the review of books and other magazines, journals , articles etc for developing conceptual aspect of the researcher.

2.1. Decision Making

The Decision making process is simply seen and understood as primarily in terms in office management. It is a process of problem solving by choosing among one or more alternatives. After the entry of sociological knowledge, this term is viewed mere as a sociological process, which involves household and institutions, which are fused together through the concept of roles. Broadly speaking, their function at the family level is a process that follows the four interrelated steps in participation: planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation. These same steps occur in the family but in their own way because of the smallness and the intimacy of the group involved. In the family too, the key to participation is to make decision itself, together with the planning process which precedes it.

There is however a major difference, which puts family decision making into an entirely different category from large assembly decisions: the active presence of women. In large assemblies few women only take part. The rest leave it to their male folks the job of participating in the public decision making process. But at the family level women are certainly present.

Economic Participation and household decision making in Nepal has highlighted that women are the primary supporters of the domestic and subsistence sector. The decision making data shows woman's major role in agricultural production both as

labourers and managers of the production process. It has been singled out 'Decision making' from multi Dimensional concept of status which reflects the internal dynamic of sexual stratification within the household. In the study, the village women were actively participating in the four activities, local market economy and shorter migration to employment in the wider economy beyond the village. (Acharya and Bennett, 1983)

Women's contribution to economic and social progress is still constrained by their limited access to education and information. For a large proportion of women, the written word still finds no meaning. Many rural women who do become literate however, will lose their skill because there are few opportunities for them to practice. Low level of educational attainment among the women and prejudice in favour of male recruitment may also negatively affect the formal employment of women. In 1982, in government service only 7 percent of gazetted officer and 5 percent of the supporting staff were women. Women constitute less than 10 percent of decision making position at the national and local level. Most of the decisions concerning activities are men. The study shows about 50 percent of decisions are made by men, 19 percent jointly and 31 percent by female, which shows very low percent of decision making power on the part of women. (UNICEF, 1990)

2.1.2 The Status of Women in Nepal

The Majority of women in Nepal live in rural areas. Rural women, as elsewhere play multiple roles. In the domestic sphere they are household managers, mothers and wives, in community they maintain social and cultural services, pre dominantly on a voluntary basis and in economy, if they are not formally engaged as employees or entrepreneurs; they are active in family business and farms. But they have low access to income, wealth and employment, which are the main causes of their low economic status. It directly and indirectly affects their decision making power.

According to the constitution of Nepal, all citizens of Nepal are equal under the law, regardless of sex, caste and ethnicity. Nevertheless in actual practice, illiteracy, poverty, deep rooted socio-cultural values and traditions especially cost prejudices and political factors have all often combined to prevent women from exercising their human

rights. While human rights are common to men and women, there is a large area in the human rights of women that are either not recognized or neglected.

“The Constitution guarantees all citizens the equality before law and equal protection of law. No one shall be discriminated against on the basis of sex. Despite these constitutional and legal provisions women are suffering from social, economical and political discrimination. Major areas of discrimination include citizenship rights, property, employment, reproductive health rights, marriage, family relation and punishment and legal proceedings. Deep rooted cultural norms and patriarchal values are themselves unfavorable to women. As a result, social preference for sons in schooling, neglect of women’s health needs, child marriage and unmatched marriage, bigamy/polygamy are still part of the reality, Dowry and domestic violence are still other problems” (CEDA, 1995)

Nepali women are daughters, wives and mothers, but are not recognized as individuals with their own identity, despite the fact that they are as human as men. Society has neglected women to the lowest rank and to a submissive role confined to the home and farm and their responsibilities due to their maternal functions. They are discouraged and prevented to take part in public life. (Subedi,1993).Women’s economic dependence on men, mainly stemming from the fact that men earn cash incomes contributing to their social status. The few women who earn a salary are often held in higher esteem than women who do not. (Gurung, 1999).

The social status of women and their access to resources varied widely depending on the cultural group they belong to. Generally, women belonging to Tibeto-Burman cultural groups had considerably greater freedom in matters such as choice of marriage partners, deciding the time for marriage and in selection of economic activities they wished to pursue, as compare to their sisters belonging to the Indo-Aryan cultural group. The Tibeto-Burman groups included in the study were Mustang Bhote (Tibetan) women, Kham Magars, Rai and Tamangs. The Indo-Aryan group included high and low cast Nepali, speaking hill groups, as well as , Maithali, Tharus and Newars, while Indo-Aryan women were married early, had no choice in their life partners and were severely restricted in their social mobility. Such findings did not generally apply to women belonging to Tibetan-Burman groups. In all cultural groups, however, it was found that

women's access to modern resources in the form of knowledge(education, training etc.) and traditional and newly created assets (e.g. land, machines, employment) was severely limited.(Acharya, 1994).

Women in Nepal, as elsewhere, hold the triple work responsibilities of reproduction, house holding and farm work. However, reproduction is not treated as work by and house holding is not considered as productive work by the government system. Women also suffer from discriminatory practices in opportunities for education, personal mobility, which is required among other for skill development and independent decision making. (UNDP, 1995)

Discrimination between males and females start in their family. Females are not included in the decision making process, and the opportunities and benefits available in the society are monopolized by males. Women's participation in socio-cultural and political activities depends upon the attitudes of their husbands/ father/ parents/ male relatives. (UNDP, 2003)

Women have low Degree of opportunity for their education and have hardly any access to employment. There is lack of women participation in decision making from house to the executive level. There is no positive attitude towards women's health and they do not get appropriation nutrition even in the period of pregnancy. (UNICEF, 1996)

A number of significant studies have been done on women participation. It is because men alone can't accelerate the pace of development unless women are given proper role in society. Acharya and Bennett have conducted a number of studies relating to women status in Nepal. Firstly, the rural women of Nepal has revealed the time allocation pattern of men and women at household level, while women perform almost all kind of agricultural activities and their daily labour input is 9 hours against 5 hours for men. But the degree of involvement varies considerably across ethnic group and social classes. Women are greatly involved in farming as well as in the household chores. But their input in decision making in the household level is very low.

A survey conducted by UNICEF on the status of women and children in Nepal reports that gender disparity starts right from the birth and continues through various rituals (Ghimire, 1996). On the other hand, unequal rank and benefits are legitimized by

traditional societal norms which confines to cooking, washing, taking care of children and restricts them from the domain of traditional male activities.

'Children and women of Nepal' highlighted the women's contribution to economy and social progress is still constrained by their limited access to education and information, which restricts the full development and utilization of their intellectual and productive capacities. Many rural but literate women have loosened their skills because of low practical opportunities. (UNICEF, 1990).

Many NGOs and INGO's are working to empower women through various activities. Organizations relating to women have helped to increase the involvement of women in social, economic and political fields. Since the Beijing conference the government has established the ministry for women and social welfare. The ministry has started small farmer's development program and income generation for rural women. (Ojha, 1992)

2.1.3 Women and Systematic Plan

Following the United Nations call for celebrating international women year 1975, by developing various women related activities to bring the women in the main stream of the development. National working plan was prepared incorporating educational, health and employment, agricultural, cooperatives and ensuring women's involvement in developing policy for the first time in sixth plan (1980/85).

Similarly, the seventh plan (1985-1990) also adopted national level policy and working policy for the women development to increase their participation by raising their social and economic status. The govt. after the restoration of democracy in 1990 too had been committed to equitable and meaningful participation of women in the development.

In order to foster such participation, the eight plans (1992-97) adopted policies for women in development through institutional arrangements. The commitment was also made through wider extension of credit and technical know-how. Likewise the Ninth plan (1997-2002) having two major aims of poverty alleviation and Human resource development has made women the target group that actively needed to be addressed during the plan period. Considering the need for and enhanced participation of women in national development stream, the ninth plan has a policy to empower and to extend the

institutional structure for the women development with effective co-ordination to the related sectors.

The Tenth plan (2059/060-2063/64 B.S.) has aimed at abolishing all kind of discriminations against women engrossing them at policy and decision making level as well as streamlining them in every sectors of development in accordance with Nepal's commitments on the international Women Conference (Beijing) recognizing women as the centre of development to meet the objectives of the plan, economic growth, poverty alleviation and so on.

Stressing unlitrary programs, health care facilities employment and income earning opportunities, the plan has set some strategies, which can be summarized as follows:

1. To prioritize the women focused policies and programs based on gender equality to empower women for overall socio-economic development.
2. To emphasizing the need of women education, efforts will be advanced towards women literacy programs mobilizing the local level agencies, NGOs and civil societies.
3. To provide necessary accession and participation in the decision making level in local level agencies like primary and secondary education, hospitals, drinking water, agricultural programs etc.
4. To enhance Women employment opportunities in government non-government and private sector.
5. To conduct various training programs to create awareness on human rights as well as the rights of women.
6. To emphasize appropriate technology adoption to increase the labour productivity of women in different economic activities.
7. To ensure the empowerment of lower caste (Dalit) disadvantaged, disable women through making appropriate policies.
8. To create awareness on sizable and manageable family structure to generate the capacity of income earning or value addition.

Nevertheless, we have come a long way, in changing the existing attitude towards women, through the programs launched for the development of women in the past have not been able to raise the social and economic status of women as desired. Despite efforts made for the upliftment of women as a whole, the urban women have nearly always been more benefited from such programs.

2.2. Reviews of Previous Studies

The review of previous studies in this research includes the objectives and finding of the previous researches relevant to this research.

Gita Kumari Gharti has done a study on gender awareness focusing on women's involvement in decision making power: A case study of Lekhnath municipality, Kaski, Nepal. It has the following objectives:

-) To examine the socio-economic status of women in the study area.
-) To find different causes and factors affecting women's decision making power.
-) To recommend policy measure for empowering women in decision making.

She has the conclusion that women may have a greater say in many issues, but which may be of lower importance, for example decision making only in small expenditure of household. Women heavily rely upon the approval and consent of their husbands for the execution of both important and unimportant matters.

Satnam Kaur, (1987) in a case study carried out in Haryana State, emphasize upon the need to give due recognition to female decision making specially in the case of home and farm affairs among the rural families.

She claims that women are never found as final decision maker in many matters except for cases of food and nutrition of the children. Ironically women are not even free to decide about participating in women's organizations such as Mahila Mandals. Financial decisions are found as solely manipulated by husbands except in few cases.

Kaur goes on to emphasize education and access to educational opportunities as an important factor influencing women's impact in the decision making process. As she observes, "educated women are better placed as compared to their illiterate counterparts."

She concludes, saying women are not bestowed with adequate status (in terms of decision making) in proportion to task they perform. Therefore, planned programs, should be designed which support women's potentials as capable and worthy decision makers.

Similarly, Ishwari Prasad Dangi conducted a study on "Women's economic participation to their household management" It has the following objective.

-) To study the socio economic condition of the women.
-) To assess the role of the women in their economic support to their family.
-) To study their participation in the decision making process within the household.
-) To suggest measures for uplifting their status in society.

His Major findings are:

-) The area in which the study was undertaken is found composed mainly by three casts and ethnicity viz. Limbu, Tamang and Brahman/Chhetri.
-) They are mainly dependent on agriculture and small business activities.
-) Women are found relatively backward both in terms of involving remunerative economic opportunities and social standing category vis-a-vis their male counterparts.
-) There seem greater say of women in household and domestic management process and hence they enjoy greater decision making role but it is found that they need final approval of their male head household on this process. In this regard women are seemed the manager rather than the controller over this process.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the methodology adopted for the study. To achieve the objectives of this study and to make the study more systematic, certain research procedures or methods have been applied to explore the role of women in household decision making, which are as follows:

3.1 . Site Selection

Kirtipur was selected as the study site. The area was selected due to different reasons namely:

-) The women of Kirtipur seemed to be highly involved in household decision making.
-) The women living here are very traditional and respect their cultural values. At the same time they are working outside their house and provide economic contribution to their household. Hence it seemed suitable to carry out a comparative study between working and non working women in this area.
-) The study site is also accessible and safe considering in the present conflict situation.

3.2 Research Design

This study was based on exploratory and descriptive research design. It describes the socio-economic practices of women under study. It was exploratory in the sense that the researcher explores the women's participation in household decision making process and differentiates between working women and non-working women. Similarly this study also explores the factors which affect women's participation in decision making at their household.

3.3 Population and Sample Size

As this study is to explore the decision making power of women in household affairs, all the women both working as well as non- working women and their respective households within the periphery of Kirtipur municipality are considered as universe of this study. However the exact number women were unknown. Therefore the researcher used non probability sampling. The respondents were selected according to purposive sampling method.

Similarly, the total number of 50 women (25 working and 25 non-working women) and their respective households were selected as the sample size for the study.

3.4 Nature and Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary data were used in this study as per the requirement. Primary data was collected from the sampled unit during the field survey while secondary data were collected from various sources such as published books and periodicals, publications and reports, newspapers, reports of various national and international organizations, journals, research works and magazines. The secondary data helped to understand the overall status of women in Nepal, theoretical perspectives to look at women's position and participation and decision making of women in household management activities.

3.5 Tools for Data Collection

The following tools were used for the collection of primary data:

-) **Questionnaire Approach:** Structured questionnaire were used to get the detailed information regarding the participation level of women in household decision making. The researcher gathered information related to socio-economic profile of the respondents with the help of questionnaire. Along with it, the participation level of women in decision making was also gathered using this tool.
-) **Observation:** The observation method was used during field visits. It was used to collect qualitative information like the behaviour of women in their own household as well as the behaviour, involvement in decision making of their family members as

well. Observation also helped the researcher to recheck the information, which is collected through other tools.

) **Interview:** The sampled women were also interviewed during the research. The researcher used interview method also to have face to face interaction with the respondents. Informal interviews were also conducted with the family members of the selected women to know their perception regarding various issues like property rights and education of women.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis:

The Information and Data collected during the field visit was first processed through validation then edited carefully and then hand tabulated. Finally the data were interpreted using additional information. Simple Statistical tools like percent and ratio has been used to present data.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the data and information collected from the samples are presented, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted for attaining the stated objectives of the study. In particular, this section includes the analyses and interpretation of the following:

4.1 Socio Economic status of the sampled respondents

4.1.1 Age composition:

Age is an important demographic characteristic. It determines the social status of people and it makes difference in working hours, types of work, decision making roles, social relation and responsibilities. Therefore it may influence the decision making capabilities of women. For the purpose of analysis the age of the sampled respondents are categorized into four groups which is presented in the following table:

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of the sampled respondents

Age	Working women		Non-working women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
16-25	6	24	5	20	11	22
26-46	13	52	6	24	19	38
46-59	5	20	9	36	14	28
60 and above	1	4	5	20	6	12
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The above table shows the age distribution of the sampled respondents selected for this study. 24 percent of working women are between 16-25 years of age. 20 percent of non-working women belong to this group. Similarly 52 percent of working women and 24 percent of non-working women belong to 26-46 years of age. 20 percent of working women and 36 percent of non-working women belong to age group 46-59 years where as

the remaining 4 percent of working women and 20 percent of non-working women are at the age group above 60.

4.1.2 Marital Status

Marriage is the single most important event in the life of men and women. Early marriage is one of the important characteristics of Nepalese women. Marital status makes difference in women's status because it is through marriage that the women change their status from the status of daughter to daughter-in-law and wife which really increase their responsibility regarding decision making. The following table shows the marital status of the sampled respondents.

Table 4.2: Marital Status of the Sampled Respondents

Marital status	Working Women		Non working women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Married	17	68	20	80	37	74
Unmarried	5	20.0	4	16	9	18
Widowed	3	12	1	4	4	16
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The above table shows that 68 percent of working women and 80 percent of non-working women are married. 20 percent of working and 16 percent of non working women are unmarried. Similarly 12 percent of working and 4 percent of non working women are widowed. It is found that Newari women belonging to Brahman's and Chhettri's household are married earlier than Newari women.

4.1.3 Educational Status

Education is an important element of life. It plays an important role for the development of people, nation and economy as a whole. It is a principal mechanism of fulfilling an agent for awareness and change. Therefore it is central to the process of empowering both men and women. The table below depicts the educational status of the women chosen in this study.

Table 4.3: Educational Level of the Sample Respondents

Educational level	Working women		Non working women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Illiterate	-	-	-	-	-	-
Literate	-	-	2	8	2	4
Secondary level	-	-	3	12	3	6
SLC passed	2	8	11	44	13	26
Intermediate	10	40	6	24	16	32
Graduate	9	36	3	12	12	24
Mothers	4	16	-	-	4	8
Others	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

Table 3 shows that the women in the working category are more educated than non working women. 8 Percent of working women are SLC passed, 40 percent are intermediate, 36 percent are graduate and 16 percent are at the master's level where as 8 percent of non working women are only literate, 12 percent are educated till secondary level 44 percent of them are SLC passed, 24 percent of them are intermediate and only 12 percent are graduate. It is seen from the above table that working women are more qualified in terms of education than non-working women.

4.1.4 Ethnic Composition

The area of study has very cultural and ethnic background. Newars are the dominant caste in this area. The people living here despite of being from other ethnic group are well aware of all the festivals and rituals of the Newar community. The people of Newari community are very popular for organizing various social events in their house commonly known as 'Bhoj'. But despite the dominancy of Newars people from different communities are found to be residing here. The following table shows the caste/ ethnicity of the sampled respondents and their household.

Table 4.4: Distribution of sampled household by ethnic composition

Caste/ Ethnicity	No. of household	Percentage
Newars	28	56
Brahman	7	14
Chhettri	11	22
Others	4	8
Total	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The above table shows that Newars are the most dominant caste/ ethnic groups living in this area. More than half of the populations are Newars. According to the table 56 percent of the total respondent's households are Newars, 14 percent are Brahmans, 22 percent are Chhetris followed by 8 percent of other ethnic groups Kiratis, Rai, Gurung who were settled later in this area.

4.1.5 Family Structure

Family structure also has an impact on the responsibilities of both male and female in their household activities. Nuclear family structure is mostly seen in urban areas where as more families in the rural areas tend to be a joint family. Women in the nuclear family structure are more liberated than in the joint family structure and have less responsibility. The following table shows the family structure of the sampled household.

Table 4.5: Family structure of the sampled household

Family structure	Working women		Non working		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Nuclear	17	68	14	56	31	62
Joint	8	32	11	44	19	38
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The above table shows that 68 percent of the working women's household has nuclear family structure where as only 56 percent of non-working women's household has nuclear family structure. It depicts that the women in joint family tend to be more engaged in household work than in outer activities.

4.1.6 Occupation

Occupation or source of income is a vital factor influencing household activities. Household in which both the members earn income tend to be more affluent than the household where earning the bread for the family rests on one person. However, the households whose main source of income is their own family business then it is found that all the family members including the children provide a helping hand in running at the following table however shall the occupation of the sampled working women of this study.

Table 4.6: Percentage distribution of the working women according to their occupation

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Service (Government job holders)	19	76
Private companies	6	24
Total	25	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The following data shows that majority of working women i.e. 76 percent are government job holders while the rest 24 percent are engaged in other private companies. It is found that most of the women in government sector enjoy more freedom in household decision making.

4.1.7 Ownership of Property

Ownership over the household property is observed as one of the very important factors determining the women's status and correspondingly to their decision asking participation within the family. It is also observed that land ownership pattern of women increases as their age increase. It is observed that the women who contribute economically have more ownership of property than economically dependent women as shown below:

Table 4.7: Percentage distribution of the sampled women’s household by ownership of property household

Ownership of property	Working women		Non working women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Male	12	48	17	68	29	58
Female	6	24	3	12	9	18
Both	7	28	5	20	12	22
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

As shown above 24 percent of working women have ownership of property while the percent of non working women having property ownership is only 12 percent. In 28 working women's household both male and female has equal property ownership will in only 20 percent of non working women's household, both male and female have equal share of property.

4.2 Participation level in Household Decision Making

In every household there are certain responsibilities for both male and female members however it is observed that female member tend to look after the household activities and male members on the other hand are concerned with the responsibilities outside the house i.e. to earn money. Similarly whenever there is any decision to be made the final say is from the male member and the women play only the advisory role. There are various household decision to be made that could range from small bazaar expenditure to serious investment, looking after the children and other many such activities. The research thus presents the participation level o women in household decision making which are shown in the tables below:

4.2.1 Possession of Household Income

It is an important issue in every household. Generally the female member of the household has the task to keep money but to use the money is a totally different thing. It is observed that women usually have to take permission from men to use household

income where as men are free to do so without even consulting anybody. Hence for this reason women play the role of managers while men are controller of everything in the households.

Table 4.8: Distribution of sampled household by possession of household income

Household members	Working women		Non working women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Male	17	28	10	40	17	34
Female(sample d respondents)	6	24	3	12	9	18
Both	12	48	12	48	24	48
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field Survey 2009

The above table shows that in most of the sampled household income is possessed by both the member. Male passes household income in 28 percent of working women's household and 40 percent of nonworking women's household. While in 48 percent of working women's household and 48 percent of the non-working women's household, both the members have control over the household income. But in most cases, according to the survey women have to take permission from men or male member to use it.

4.2.2 Household Expenditure

Women are considered to be main initiator for the expenditures in food and clothing in both the rural and urban areas mostly in developing countries. The decisions regarding these kinds of expenditures have to be made in a daily basis in every household and which involves less amount of money. Men normally leave it to their wives to make these kind of decisions and do not want to be bothered by it. The following table shows the decision maker on small household expenditure in the sampled household.

Table 4.9: Decision maker of small household expenditure (Food, Clothing, Bazaar Purchase)

Household decision maker	Working women		Non working women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Male	5	20	2	8	7	14
Female (Sample respondents)	13	52	20	80	33	66
Both	7	28	3	12	10	20
Total	25	100	25	100	40	100

Source: Field survey 2009

Table 9 shows that in 52 percent of the working women's household and 80 percent of the non working women's household, the decision regarding small household purchase expenditure is made by the female member i.e. 52 percent working women and 80 percent of non working women make the final decision where as in 20 percent of working women's household and 58 percent of non working women's household the decision is made by male household head while in 28 percent of working women and 12 percent of non working women's household, the decision is made jointly by both the member.

Similarly the following table shows the role of women in the decision making of big expenditure like electronic items, luxury items, furniture, automobile etc.

Table 4.10.: Decision Maker of big purchase

Household Decision maker	Working women		Non-working women		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentages
Male	13	52	18	72	31	62
Female	6	24	3	12	9	18
Both	6	24	4	16	10	20
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

Table 10 shows that in 52percent of the working women's household and 72percent of non working women's household male is the final decision maker regarding purchase of expensive items. Similarly 24percent of working women's household and 16percent of non working women's working women and 12percent of non working women have a final say in the purchase of expensive items. The table shows that the big decision in the household which involves a great deal of money is made by the male members. Women in these matters only play a supportive role.

4.2.3 Decision Maker of Medical Treatment

Women in most of the developing countries are quite unconscious or careless regarding their health. They are more concerned regarding the welfare of their children or their spouse. Moreover women in countries like Nepal do not want to spend extensive amount of money on their own ailment and ignore their pain for the luxury of other member of the family. The following table shows the participation level of women in the decision making regarding treatment of household member.

Table 4.11: Decision maker of medical treatment

Household decision maker	Working women		Non- working women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Male	8	32	8	32	16	32
Female (sample respondents)	7	28	6	24	13	26
Both	10	40	11	44	21	42
Total	25	100	100	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

Table 11 shows that in 32 percent of working women's household and 32 percent of non working women's household, the decision regarding medical treatment of household members is made by the male household lead. Likewise in 40 percent of working women's household and 44 percent of non working women's household the decision is made by both the members. Where as 28 percent of working women and 24 percent non working women are the decision makers in their respective households regarding seeking medical treatment.

4.2.4 Participation in general household activities (cooking, cleaning, others)

The basic household work like cooking, cleaning and looking after the children are normally the work of women in our society. The women who work outside the house and bring money in the household are also more or less equally responsible for these activities. The following table shows the participation level of women in household activities.

Table 4.12: Participation in household activities

Household member	Working women's household		Non-working women's household		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	percentage	Number	percentage
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female	17	68	22	88	39	78
Both	8	32	3	12	11	22
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The above table shows that 68 percent of working women and 88 percent of non-working women take care of all the responsibilities of the household work. Similarly in 32 percent of the working women's household and 12 percents of the non- working women's household, both male and female participate in the household activities. It is observed from the above table that the male member in working women's household participate more in household activities than non-working women. It may be due to the fact that working women have the responsibility outside the home too and they also take responsibility of outside matters hence to care of all the household matters is not possible for them hence they seek and demand more help from their male counterparts.

4.2.5 Attending social ceremonies

There are festivals weddings and various other social ceremonies in Nepali households. The table below shows the decision maker regarding these social ceremonies i.e. who shall attend or whom to invite, preparation to be made etc.

Table 4.13: Decision maker to attend/ invite in social ceremonies

Household decision maker	Working women's household		Non-working women's household		total	
	Number	percentages	Number	percentages	Number	Percentage s
Male	2	8	3	12	5	10
Female	17	68	10	40	27	54
Both	6	24	12	48	18	36
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

As the above table says, in 8 percent of the working women's household and 12 percent of the non-working women's household the decision regarding attending social ceremonies or inviting others is in the hands of the male household head. In 24 percent of the working women's household and 48 percent of the non-working women's household decision making is done by the joint effort of both male and female where as 68 percent of working women and 40 percent of non-working women have the final say in attending social ceremonies or inviting others in their respective households.

4.2.6 Selling and Investment

Apart from general disposal of money to small household purchase or big purchase, there are certain other investment related decisions to be made in the household like investment in land or automobiles or buying another house or selling owns property etc. These are such decisions that involve great deal of money and hence every household member is consulted while making it. The following table shows the final decision maker regarding investment and selling of property.

Table 4.14: Decision maker of Investment and selling

Household decision maker	Working women's household		Non-working women's household		Total	
	Number	percentages	Number	percentages	Number	Percentages
Male	6	24	11	44	18	36
Female	4	16	2	8	6	12
Both	15	60	12	48	27	54
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The above table shows that among the total households of working women in 24 percent, male is the final decision maker regarding investment and selling of property while in 16 percent household only women has a right to decide. Similarly in 60 percent of working women's household this decision is made by both male and female equally. Similarly out of total non- working women's household, in 44 percent male is the final decision maker while in 48 percent, both male and female decide together. Only 8 percent of non-working women have a right to decide regarding investment and selling in their respective households.

4.2.7 Borrowing and lending money

Regarding matters related to money men are the decision maker in any household. Even where decisions are made by women, men are consulted in all way possible. Table below shows the decision maker in lending and borrowing money.

Table 4.15: Decision maker regarding lending and borrowing money

Household decision maker	Working women's household		Non-working women's household		Total	
	Number	percentages	Number	percentages	Number	percentages
Male	5	20	8	32	13	26
Female	4	16	2	8	6	12
Both	16	64	15	60	31	62
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

Table 14 clearly shows that in 20 percent of working women's household and 32 percent of non-working women's household the final decision maker regarding borrowing and lending money is made by men while in 64 percent of working women's household and 60 percent of non-working women's household the decision is made by both men and women where as only 16 percent working women and 8 percent non-working women have a final say in this matter in their respective households.

4.2.8 Education of children

Education today is considered as a primary need of every human being. Education of children is an important decision to be made⁴ in every household. However discrimination exists regarding education of girls. The following data reveals the decision maker regarding children's education.

Table 4.16: Decision maker of children's education

Household member	Working women's household		Non-working women's household		Total	
	Number	percentages	Number	percentages	Number	percentages
Male	5	20	10	40	15	30
Female	3	12	2	8	5	10
Both	17	68	13	52	30	60
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The above table shows that 12 percent of working women and 8 percent of non-working women make the final decisions regarding education of children in their respective households while in 20 percent of working women's household and 40 percent of non-working women's household it is decided by the male household head. And in 68 percent of working women's household and 52 percent of non-working women's households the decision is made by the joint efforts of both male and female.

4.3 Views of the household regarding Education of women

The member of the household of both working women and non-working women were asked about their opinions regarding education of women and whether they think it is important or not. The findings are presented in the table below:

Table 4.17: Views of the sampled households regarding Education of women

Household Description	Working women's household		Non-working women's household		Total	
	Number	percentages	Number	percentages	Number	Percentages
Favour of	23	92	22	88	45	90
Against	-	-	1	4	1	2
No idea	2	8	2	8	4	8
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

Table 17 shows that 92 percent of working women's household and 88 percent of non-working women's households is in favour of educating women while 4 percent of non-working women's household is against it. Likewise 8 percent of working women's household and the same percent of non-working women's household has no idea about it.

4.4 Views of the sampled respondents household regarding property rights for women

The following table shows the opinions of the members of the sampled household regarding property rights of women.

Table 4.18: Views regarding property rights for women

Description	Working women's household		Non-working women's household		Total	
	Number	percentages	Number	percentages	Number	percentages
In favour of	9	36	7	28	16	32
Against	11	44	12	48	23	46
No idea	5	20	6	24	11	22
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

It is shown in the above table that 36 percent of the working women and 28 percent of non-working women's household are in favour of property rights for women where as 44 percent of working women and 48 percent of non-working women's household are against property rights for women while 20 percent of working women household's and 24 percent of non-working women's households have no idea regarding it.

4.5 Factors affecting Decision making of women in household activities

Like other developing countries, in Nepal also the women are lagging behind men in many aspects. The fact may be fewer opportunities that they receive in life. Early marriage, lower literacy rate, social norms are many other factors due to which women are dominated. This influence is also seen in the role played by women in household decision making. The women were asked about their opinion regarding the factors affecting decision making that is presented in the table below.

Table 4.19: Factors affecting decision making

Influencing Factors	Working Women		Non-working women		Total	
	Number	percentages	Number	percentages	Number	percentages
Age	1	4	2	8	3	6
Education	7	28	6	24	13	26
Economic Status	6	24	4	16	10	20
Property ownership	3	12	3	12	6	12
Marital Status	3	12	2	8	5	10
Social Norms	3	12	6	24	9	18
All	2	8	2	8	4	8
No idea	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

Data included in table 16 shows the opinions of the sampled respondents regarding the factors that influence their decision making. According to the table 6 percent of women think age is the most influencing factor that affects their decision making in household. As they mature they are more consulted in household decisions and with age the gain more power to make final decisions. 26 percent of women consider education as the most influencing factor. 20 percent of women consider economic status to be the most influencing factor. If they contribute economically in the household then they gain more power to make decisions regarding investment and selling of property and other serious money related matters. Similarly according to 12 percent of women owning

property makes their status more strong in the households. In the same way 10 percent of women think that marital status mostly affects their decision making in household affairs. Likewise 18 percent of women think they have less power in decision making because of social norms. They are thought as inferior to men and society demands them to be less efficient than men and take a backward seat in every decision to be made in the households. Similarly 8 percent of the women believe all the factors equally influence their decision making regarding household issues.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summary

True human development is possible only when in every community everyone is respected equally for what they are and for the gift and potential within them. In this, women in all over the world especially in developing countries, are lagging behind and dominated by men in every aspect of life. Women are also excluded from most of the development activities. It is usually the men who interact with the outside world and the women slips back into her traditional roles as housewife within the household.

Nepal is no different in this matter. The majority of Nepalese women live in rural areas where the choice for livelihood is limited to agricultural work on the farms, which are owned in most cases by their father, husband, Land lords or brothers. Since women in Nepal are deprived of property rights, they have to work on men's land from dawn to dusk for supporting them self and their family member. Hence the right for survival for women is laid on the hands of men not only in outside affairs, but also in their own household matters which constitute an integral part of their lives.

The summary of the major findings of this study are

-) Majority of sample respondents for this study are married. So most of them have a status of wife and daughter-in-law in their household. Though this area has very strong social and traditional culture, the women in this area are married at the right age. Especially in comparison Newari women enjoy more freedom than Brahmans and Chhettris.
-) Majority of working women are more qualified in terms of education than non-working women.
-) Newars are the dominant caste or ethnic group in the study area.

- J The family structure of most of the working women is nuclear in nature where as non-working women mostly have joint family structure. It is also found that in joint families women have more responsibility and less mobility and freedom and hence women are confined mostly on household work than in outside affairs.
- J Majority of the working or income earning women are Government job holders engaged in teaching. Administration work, banking sector etc. and the rest are engaged in private sectors.
- J Male household head own most of the property in all the households. Studied however in comparison the working women's share in household property is seen more than non-working women.
- J In majority of both the household, income is possessed equally by men and women. However men are at liberty to spend the money where as women heavily rely on the consent of men to spend the money.
- J The women in majority of both the working as well as non-working women's household are the decision maker regarding expenditure on small household purchase. It is found that men do not like to be bothered by these matters.
- J Male is the final decision maker in majority of both households regarding the purchase of expensive items like furniture, automobile, electronic items etc. However it is observed that working women have a greater position in decision making in their household than non-working women.
- J Men and women in both the households have an equal say in the expenditure related to medical treatment.
- J Women take the sole responsibility of all the household activities like cooking, cleaning, looking after the children etc. The men only offer a helping hand in some cases. It is found that men in the working women's household participate more in household activities than non-working women.
- J Women are the main decision maker regarding social ceremonies to attend other's ceremonies or inviting other people for celebration. It is found that

working women are mostly consulted or given more responsibility in the decision related to attending or organizing social ceremonies than non-working women. It may be because of the social relation that a working woman have outside the house.

) Selling and investment is a serious matter in every household. The decision to sell owns property or to buy is made by seeking the advice of all household members. Men are the main decision maker regarding these matters in every household. It is found that the level of participation of a working woman in the decision related to selling and investment is more in comparison to non-working women. Most of the working women are educated and have a social relation outside the house and are constant in touch with the changes going in the outside world. It may be because of this they are more consulted in these matters and considered more qualified to take right decisions.

) Both men and women are found to be equally involved in decisions related to borrowing and lending money.

) Education of children is a priority in most of the households of both working and non-working women. The decisions related to children's education is jointly made by both the parents i.e. men and women after knowing the desires of their children. It is found that working women have more power in deciding about their children's education than non-working women.

) Majority of the households are in favour of the education of women. In some of the non-working women's household however more emphasis is given to the marriage of girls. In some of the household there is a common view that education of women and her getting a job depends upon the willingness and desire of her husband.

) It is seen that only 1/3 of the household are in favour of the property rights for women. Most of the households are either against it or do not have any idea about it.

-) Education is the most influencing factor that affects the decision making power of women. Educated women whether working or non-working are more consulted and have more authority to make decision in the household.
-) Economic status of women i.e. their contribution to the household economically also has a positive effect on their level of household decision making. Since they also share the economic burden of the family they are more consulted while making monetary decisions and they participate more in such decisions than non-working women.
-) Social norms and tradition is also an important factor that affects women's decision making. It usually acts as a constraint in the decision making power of women. Non-working women are found to be more pressurized by social norms, tradition, superstitions than working women.
-) Comparatively working women household are more in favour of educating women and property right for women than non-working women's households.

5.2 Conclusion

Although women are responsible for performing all the household activities, decision making regarding household affairs however is in the hands of male household head of the family. Women have a greater participation in the decision making of only small household purchase like food, clothing, bazaar purchase, general medical treatment which have in most cases lower expenditure. In these decisions also men play the role of an advisor. Women mostly have the possession of household income but its allocation needs the approval of the male member of the family.

There is some difference between working women and non-working women. Working women are more confident about their status in the household. Their participation level is more in serious matter like investment and selling than non-working women. Working women are more consulted and their opinions are more valued than non-working women. Especially the women who are in government services enjoy more freedom and more power in handling household affairs and making household decisions. It thus indicates that economic status of women does have a positive effect in their decision making power and their level of household decision making.

Though economic status helps the women to have a strong position in the household, the most influencing factor in their decision making is education. Educated women even though non-working have more power and consulted in every decision making in the household.

Social norms and traditional culture are also the factors that are holding back the women to move forward. Superstitions are a major drawback Nepalese society. Women have always been considered as an inferior sex. The girls found to have been taught to remain as silent spectator from their childhood. Gender bias lesson rings in their ears since their childhood which leads them to loose their confidence and self esteem and eventually they are compelled to think themselves as weak and unfortunate sections of the society.

To conclude, we can say that though women still suffer from the discriminatory practices in their households and society, if they are educated and economically independent then they can make their position strong in terms of decision making in their household and in the society as a whole.

5.3 Recommendations

-) More education opportunity should be provided to women as educating them implies empowering them and conferring them a greater status within the household. This educational status would earn them the household decision making power on important matters since they would then be thought capable of making effective decision by their male counter part.
-) The encouragement of the cooperative forms of social organization such as credit societies, marketing cooperatives and mother's club in order to mobilize women should be employed.
-) Steps should be taken to make men and the society it self aware regarding the capabilities of women as effective decision maker on important issues as well. The male member of the family should not restrict the mobility and freedom of women to take part in income generating and community activities.
-) Employment opportunities should be made available for the educated girls and women who would encourage their economic participation and hence elevate their status within their respective household.
-) Reforms should be made regarding various women related government policies and programs. The existing laws, customs regulation and practices should be abolished which are discriminatory against women to establish adequate legal protection for equal right of men and women.

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Appendix-I

Questionnaires

(A survey format for Women of Kirtipur regarding their role in household decision making)

01 Serial Number of Respondent

02 Economic status a. Working b. Non-working (House wives)

A. Personal profile

1.Name

2.Age

3.Caste

4.Household member

B. Educational Status

5. Have you ever been to school?

a. Yes b. No

6. Educational Level

a. Literate b. Primary level c. Lower Secondary d. Secondary e. SLC

f. Intermediate g. Graduate h. Masters

C. Occupation

7. If working, What is your occupation?

a. Service b. Business c. Others

D. Family Structure

8. What is the structure of your family?

a. Nuclear b. Joint

E. Property Ownership

9. Do you have a house?

a. Yes b. No

10. Do you have some land in your family?

a. Yes b. No

11. If yes, then who owns the property?

a. Myself b. Male Household Head c. Joint Ownership

F. Perception of household members

11. What does your family think about Education of women?

a. Good b. Not good c. ok d. Don't know

12. What does your family member think about property rights for women?

a. Good b. Not good c. ok d. Don't know

G. Role in Household Decisions

13. Do you know the income of your husband or other members of your family?

a. Yes b. No

14. Who decides to allocate and spend the household Income?
a. Myself b. Male household head c. Both
15. If working, how do you spend the money you earn?
a. Give to the family b. Buy food items c. Children's education d. For myself e. Others
16. To whom you consult to spend your income?
a. Own decision b. male member c. both
17. Who keeps the household income of your family?
a. Myself b. Male member c. Both
18. Do you participate in Household activities?
a. Yes b. No
19. What is the level of participation of your husband or other male member in household activities?
a. Does all the work b. Helps c. Does not participate
20. Who is the decision maker in small household purchase?
a. Myself b. Husband/ Male member c. Both
21. Who is the decision maker regarding serious household purchase?
a. Myself b. Husband/ male member c. Both
22. Has your family invested in buying some land?
a. Yes b. No
23. If yes, who made the final decision?
a. Myself b. Husband c. Both d. Other members of the family
24. Have you ever borrowed or lent money to others?
a. Yes b. No
25. Who decides the matter related to lending and borrowing money in your household?
a. Myself b. Husband/ Male member c. Both d. Other members of the family
26. Has your family attended/ organized any social ceremonies?
a. Yes b. No
27. If yes, did you spend money in buying presents or in organizing?
a. Yes b. No
28. If Yes, Who was the decision maker?
a. Myself b. Husband/ Male member c. Other members d. Joint Decisions
29. Have you fallen sick during last six months?
a. Yes b. No
30. If Yes, Did you see the doctor?
a. Yes b. No
31. Who makes the decision to visit doctor when your family members fall sick?

a. Myself b. Husband/ male member c. Joint decisions

32. What are the factors do you think affects your decision making regarding household issues?

a. Education b. Economic status c. ownership of property d. Social and traditional
culture e. Age f. Maturity g. Personality

h. Others