

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:

Throughout the world, women are involved in the tourism sector through employment in travel agencies, hotels ticketing and advertisements. However, in Nepal, women hold negligible positions in the field of trekking and mountaineering. In the context of Nepal, women are restricted and limited due to moral structures and have limited exposure to the public life. In the tourism industry, very few women work as trekking guides. Records show that Sherpa women accompanied British women in mountaineering during the time of British rule in India. Sherry B. Ortner (1999) said that Sherpa women started to get involved in mountaineering in the period between the 1950s to 1970s. At the same time, she points out that "the documentation of such activities of women is small in number and outside of the Sherpa community; there is no record of women from other groups and communities in Nepal until very recently" (1999:217). But now women from other caste and ethnic groups are climbing. Very recently, few private tourist agencies are trying to promote women as trekking guides. These women are mainly trained to guide female tourists and trekkers. Three Sisters is one such trekking agency that has offered this kind of training for women since 1994. Later, the Three Sisters became a non-governmental organization (NGO) called Empowering the Women of Nepal (EWN). Other women, after having participated in a training program, joined the Three Sisters and began working as trekking guides and porters. In this regard, these women are "brave" and "special" because they are going against the grain of society, which advocates independence and mobility for only men (Daddi 2002: 9). Additionally, the trekking business in Pokhara is known as a 'boy club' which has its roots in the trekking and mountaineering tradition that accompanied Nepal's' development and exposure to the "outside" world (meaning the western world) since the 1950s.

The pioneers in the field of women working as guides are Three Chhetri sisters, who have engaged in untraditional activities and become guides based in Pokhara. Though it was

only in 1998 that they opened a trekking agency, they started a business in Pokhara in 1994. They began working as trekking guides due to repeated requests from women trekkers and friends. It is at this point that they recognized the opportunity to include other women in their quest for independence and self-sufficiency in order to achieve those goals. In July 1999, the Three Sisters created an NGO, EWN training centre and hostel for women for the training of women to the trekking business. EWN's mission and aim is to provide knowledge and skills to women, for self and community development, through action-based training and to raise awareness regarding personal potential.

I intend to assess how women participate in this sector, and better understand their family backgrounds. What rights have women gained in the profession of trekking guides? What kind of rights and facilities do the trekking agencies provide to female trekking guides? I focus on the causes and consequences of the participation of women in this profession. At the same time, I also examined what these women feel about their empowerment after joining this field. I have also attempted to understand the role of women guides in changing the perceptions about women's identity in a male dominated society in Nepal.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Tourism, being a form of development, cannot and should not ignore women. Women constitute half the population, and if we look at development as a process in which we can reach a more just society, this process demands gender equality. In order to better understand the role of women in tourism, specifically trekking, it is important to explore the attitudes and predispositions toward women in this field. Common stereotypes and assumptions include the belief that men and women are fundamentally different; men are superior to women both physically and intellectually. Also, there is the belief that men and women think differently and are naturally capable of different activities. Against this backdrop, tourism research from the gender perspective is still largely an understudied area of development in Nepal. Gender equality is generally measured on the basis of changes in five criteria: control, mobilization, awareness, access and welfare. The level of equality may change on the basis of ethnic differences, and such differences should

always be kept in mind when looking at tourism and its impacts from the gender perspective.

The Constitution of Nepal, 1990 states that men and women should have equal opportunity. However, this statement is vague and there is very little implication of the law. Manu Smriti has discriminatory perception towards female which states: The Aryan–Vaishnava system, have no property: a wife declared to have no property: the wealth, which she earns, is (acquired) for him to whom they belong. In this Manu Smiriti women are defined as slaves (Manu Smiriti VIII 371-372, Cited from Hyoju 2005:4).

Nepali women are not often seen in public life, their voices are not heard, their work is not valued, and their future depends upon the decisions made by the men of family, government, and communities. They perform food production tasks, household and child caring tasks and carry fuel and water for the family. Women's participation in income generating away from home is very low in Nepal. The work done by women in household care and their contribution in agriculture are not considered an economic activity and thus remain unreported. Women, therefore, find themselves as powerless citizens. Women's living standards are very low. Many women cannot carry out a decision on their own; male family members continue to guide women. Even the energetic and educated women cannot do their work without assistance and guidance of their male guardians. It is this perception that must be changed in Nepal to empower women in the workforce.

In 2007, the Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management kept records of the people who took their training courses. A total of 990 women and 4,455 men took hotel sector training, 536 women and 2796 men took travel and tour sector training and 64 women and 5,500 men took the trekking sector manpower production training by Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (MoTCA 2007:54).

Tourism is clearly thought to be a male domain in a patriarchal society like Nepal. According to Ortner (1999), there were some women engaged in this sector by the 1970s.

These women were few in number and predominately Sherpas; other caste and ethnic women did not work as trekking guides and porters. Nepal's patriarchal society is assumed to be responsible for women's absence from tourism, trekking in particular. Very recently some women have come into this sector, but they are still lagging far behind men. Men are culturally allowed the independence and mobility of a trekking guide, and because the trekking business in Nepal is a "boys club".

According to the weekly magazine "Samaya, 2064 VS", the number of female trekking guides is increasing. There are a few studies that study tourism using a gender perspective, but there are almost no empirical studies of female trekking guides. There was neither textual works nor research concerning this topic. Women guides are a new and controversial phenomenon. Ortner (1999) dedicated one chapter to Sherpa women trekking guides in her book. Today, there remains a need to study the nature of women's participation in tourism, especially in trekking to better understand the hindrances and opportunities for women as trekking guides.

It is often assumed that women respond to the patriarchal society and domination by the state by leaning toward revolutionary ideas. However homogenization of Nepali women into a single category might be erroneous. There is huge socio-cultural economic diversity among Nepalese women. The interest of caste Hindu women might not be the same as the interest of Dalit and Janajati women. There might be differences in the personal causes and motivations for participation in this field for women of different age. The detailed research with these women flushes out different narratives and explores the multiple layers and factors of women's participation in the context of Nepal. This research also examines the family and community perceptions and treatment toward the participants. This research shows that it is difficult for women to challenge the society and its restrictive work and values. However the fuller understanding of the nature of female involvement we need to answer the questions raised below:

) What is the individual socio-economic and family background of participant?

-) What are the causes or what exactly motivated them to join this sector? Why they do not go for other kind of jobs?
-) Which caste and ethnic groups do they represent in this profession?
-) Which districts of Nepal do they mostly represent?
-) How female guide perceives herself after participating in this field and how she is treated and perceived by her family and community?
-) What are the problems faced by female trekking guides during duty hours?
-) What changes they feel in their life doing this job?
-) What kind of alternative do they have if they don't work in this profession?
-) What kind of opportunities are women getting in this profession?
-) What they are thinking of their own profession?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this research is to study the situation of female trekking guides in Nepal. The specific objectives are:

-) To identify the factors which motivated women to join this field and, at the same time, what social factors posed hindrances and their consequences.
-) To examine the experience of some pioneer female trekking guides.
-) To assess the perspectives and treatment of community people/society towards the female trekking guides.

CHAPTER-II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 EMPRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 Women and Development

2.1.1.1 Nepali Women

Women carry the historical burden of inequality all over the world in the every aspect of life. In countries like Nepal, women participation in economic, social and political life is low. The educational status of women is a good representation of how disadvantaged women are. Women's educational status is low due to their poor economic condition and low literacy rate.

Nepal has a population of 23,151,423 of which 11,563,921 are male and 11,587,502 are female. Females constitute more than 50% of the population (CBS, 2001:3). The social status of the women's differs in various communities in Nepal. Women's status could also be measured through rights and the authority they are provided.

Women are lack education and typically poor and untrained. After the implementation of the fifth plan (1975-1980), development is focused on women education. Hence, the educational status of Nepalese people had improved significantly in the last three decades. But, women have hardly benefited from the massive investment made in the education sector.

While discussing the economic status of women, we must include the contribution of women in national development process. Women are employed in almost all sectors of economy, which is notable. In general, women have less access to income, wealth and employment. Women are mostly employed in the carpet, garments and dairy industries where they work as semi skilled or unskilled laborers. Other economic areas where women are involved in include woodcarving, metal work, agriculture, fishery, restaurant,

casinos, and hotel and travel trade industries. Very few women are able to reach the policy making level.

Limited access to education and economic resources had resulted in poor economic productivity for many women. Men and women are still not treated equally by our society. The socio-cultural taboos that regarded men as the breadwinner and women as the homemaker still persist in rural Nepal. Women are also involved in politics but no more than 10% of those participating in the central committees of any political party are woman. The sector-wise comparison of the labor force indicates that 94% of the women labor force is employed in agriculture, as compared with only 79% of men. On average, women work 7.1 hours and male work 7.7 hours in agriculture per day (Acharya 2000:40). There is still discrimination of wages and salaries both in agriculture and non-agriculture sectors. In view with the status of agriculture workers and other sectors indicates the economic status of women work force is lower than male work force (Acharya 2000: 48.50).

In Nepali society, men are the dominant decision makers within both the family and society. Women are subordinate to men. According to the Nepal's constitution of 1990, men and women have equal rights. The law must strictly adhere to this principle. However, gender inequality is a much more concerning subject these days. The global communities is showing interest on the welfare of women, and now support values viewing the process of development from a gender perspective. Women are becoming increasingly conscious of their own situation and are more active in bringing about changes in gender perspectives. The gender empowerment measure (GEM) reflects the participation of women in economic, political and professional spheres by using percentages of men and women in administrative, managerial professional, and technical and decision-making sectors. On the basis of GEM, Nepal has a very low percentage of women participation, which is due to low literacy rates, lack of training and the domination of men in almost every sector and way of life. This is because of low literacy rates, lack of training, and the domination of men. Society criticizes women when they try to behave outside their "gender roles" or take on more traditional male behaviors

within the society. The societal response to these actions is by saying that these women are uncontrolled (Pradhan 2003:23).

Currently women have jobs in different sectors both in governmental and non-governmental (private sector) organizations. Among the private sectors, the tourism industry is one where both men and women are involved. In 1996, Three Sisters Adventure Trekking Agency created a space for women in a new sector where Nepali women and western women can share a unique culture and experience.

2.1.1.2 Women in Tourism

In trying to develop an understanding of women in tourism in Nepal's context it is necessary to be aware of the basic social, cultural and economic framework that influences the gender ideology of men and women, their attitudes and predispositions and the stereotypical assumption, towards men and women.

The number of mountain women involved in household activities has declined, due to their increase in portering and marketing activities. Mountain tourism has offered the scope for diversifying the participation and involvement of women in favor of non-traditional activities. The most encouraging trend is the increased exposure of women to marketing activities. The general development of infrastructure and public utilities in the tourists' areas, such as drinking water, has eased the burden of women. As a result most women have experienced increased productivity, which has, however, barely been reflected in an improvement of nutrition of women. The depletion of forest resources in the mountain trekking areas and lack of alternative sources of energy, on the other hand have increased the time women spend in the collection of fuel wood and fodder.

Trekking tourism is promoted by development agencies that affect women from various walks of life. Lodges and tea-shops bring in the highest revenues and are run by the most affluent people in the community because of the large initial funds required. The men received the most benefits from trekking because, with income from trade, military service and other forms of work overseas; they were able to make the most investments.

In contrast, men and women of lower income, especially from occupational castes and from off-trekking routes, participated in the other activities that are not as prestigious or remunerative. Even though various NGOs, such as the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP), implemented admirable projects and facilitated women's involvement, the disparity between various groups of women, as well as between women and men, still exists (Gurung 1995). The development plan implemented in this region perpetuates, and at times reinforces, not only gender inequalities, but also class and caste inequalities. Third World feminists (Pradhan and Shrestha 1983:1) have criticized development strategies for ignoring the different kind of inequalities that oppressed women. The situation in the Annapurna region is a practical example of the consequences of such ignorance. However, in recent years, a development program that seeks to overcome some of the shortcomings of WID projects has emerged and that program is EWN. The women's development scene in the Annapurna region provides an important background into which EWN came into existence.

Compared to many, EWN is certainly an original project that brings women's development and empowerment into both the public sphere and the market sector. EWN welcomes women of all caste and social standings. In the past year, EWN has begun a promotion campaign to recruit women of diverse backgrounds, from high-caste Brahmins to Low-caste Dalits, from educated women to illiterate women. In the scenario created by mountain tourism as a mean to development for women, EWN, for its innovative approach, is rising to fame, in reference to Nepal's development discourse, as a success story of women's empowerment.

Historical and political events influenced the reality of western women traveling through the Himalayas. In the case of Nepal, and of other Third world countries, we must take into consideration the convergence of political imperialism, colonialism and global capitalist expansion. Global powers relations, of which women are part of at all levels, from development planners, to consumers and producers of tourism (Chauduri and Strobel, 1990; Enloe 1989; Mohanty; Russo and Torres 1991), heavily influence and permeate women's travel and feminist oriented tourism.

It is no surprise then that the Nepali government and other NGOs have encouraged women to earn an income by using their “domestic” skills and “nurturing” qualities. Women’s development projects in Nepal have seen women become lodge runners, continental cuisine cooks, waitresses and craft- producers (as opposed to farmers or porters).

2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

With this research, I provide an original understanding of the role of women in trekking tourism in Nepal. Tourism is an agent of change and my studies examine the nature of this change as represented by women working as guides. My analysis of the interaction between women guides and foreign women trekkers sheds light on the complexities of global interactions as played out in tourist practices.

2.2.1 Inside-Outside Dichotomy

There have been many theoretical discussion and explanation on status of women. Bennett and Acharya (1982:56) have applied the model of “Inside-Outside dichotomy” to describe the extent of the participation of caste and ethnic women of Nepal in households and economic activities.

The “inside/outside” dichotomy that influences women’s activities, control and access to power relations, both within and outside the family, varies from community. For example, women in dichotomous communities such as the Maithali and Parbatiya, have more restrictions in decision-making processes, compared to non-dichotomous communities such as the Rai, Thakali, Gurung and Kham-Magar (Hyoju 2005: 20). Within the confines of their physical, cultural and development setting respondents of study-male and female have generally addressed their own world vision in terms of their own life-experience: body, people, place, family, friends, peers and physical world.

2.2.2 Empowerment Theory

Women’s empowerment approach brings out changes by mobilizing women to become aware of their own traditional subordinate roles and taking action. Strengthening women’s self-confidence, this is an indicator for the rise of women’s self-esteem and

increased capacity to interact with world beyond the domestic circle (Acharya, 1979:38). Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievements of equality, development and peace (Beijing Declaration cited in Hyoju and 2005:20).

CHAPTER-III

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 RATIONALE FOR THE SELECTION OF POKHARA AS STUDY AREA

I have chosen Pokhara and surrounding area as my field site because the Three Sisters Adventure Trekking Agency and its affiliated NGO, Empowering the Women of Nepal (EWN) provides trekking guide training and trekking employment opportunities for women. According to EWN, more than 600 women have received trekking guide training already and some of them are still working as trekking guides. This type of training is provided twice a year and after the training, work is provided too. Fifty seven women received the government license through the Nepal of tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM).

Only in Pokhara and the Annapurna region were women found trekking in significant numbers. Everest and Langtang have shown lower number of women trekking guides. Because of this, I chose to do my research where I have the most people to interview. Additionally, the geographic natural beauty and cultural diversity of the region have made the Annapurna conservation areas the most popular trekking in Nepal. Lastly my own experience of working as trekking guide for more than six years in this region has provided me with many contacts in Pokhara and the Annapurna region.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

I used descriptive research in order to qualitatively describe the situation of the female trekking guides as well as explore their perception of themselves and their profession. Qualitative data were presented in narrative form, which included interviews with informants and field observations. Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed using the statistical package for the social sciences, as most of the data obtained from the questionnaires was ordinal; these were directly entered into a spreadsheet. The continuous data such as age and income were broken down into a discrete form and

nominal data such as occupation, ethnic groups and country of origin were grouped and coded in order to do the processing.

3.3 NATURE AND SOURCES OF DATA

To complete my study, different primary and secondary sources of data were used. I collected primary data by interviewing trekkers, local people and women guides, which help to fulfill my research objective. I collected quantitative data to identify the socio-economic background of women working as trekking guide. Different sources were used from Union of Trekking Travel Rafting Workers, Nepal (UNITRAV), the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), the Trekking Agent Association of Nepal (TAAN), Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM) and other NGOs that focused on trekking guides.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES/TOOLS

I spent two weeks with women guides, two weeks in guest houses and three weeks on the mountain trail with women guides' trekkers. I wanted to talk to all trekkers, women guide's local people and guest houses owner because I felt that this would provide a more complete picture of what issues were most relevant for a variety of women. Some of the techniques for the collection of data include during my study period are as follows:

3.4.1 Interview with Informants

During my stay in the field, I took interviews of 60 women guides and trainees from different age groups and caste/ethnic backgrounds. I mainly took interview of those women who were working for a long time and others who just started working. At the same time, I took interviews of both unmarried and married women. At first, I asked them general questions about their family background and then moved on to asking them about experience of the profession. Likewise, 30 local house, 30 trekking agencies, 15 trekkers both male and female who are staying at the guest house of the Three Sisters and 10 owner of the guest houses in the trekking route. I interviewed and filled questionnaires of these people because they know about the

women guides. I also had many informal conversations with EWN's staffs, to leading a deeper understanding of the functioning of this NGO and their company.

3.4.2 Field Observation

In order to gather information on the female guide's situations, field observation was necessary. I established rapport with the female guides and guesthouse owner and staff in order to better immerse myself in their culture. Field observation was achieved by staying with the women guides and by trekking with women guides for three weeks, visiting guesthouse owners on trekking route who know about women guides. I completed a teahouse trek from Nayapul to Ghorepani, Ghandruk, Chhmorong and Annapurna base camp to Muktinath and back to Beni. During the trek, observations were also taken as to how men guides and trekkers related and how the male guide treat the women guides.

3.4.3 Informal Discussion

I had many informal conversations with EWN's staff, leading to a deeper understanding about the situation of women trekking guide and the functioning of this NGO (EWN). For the required data, the respondents were asked to speak freely as much as possible. Activities were not restricted for certain conditions. I spoke informally with the respondents about this subject in the comfort of their own rooms.

3.4.4 Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion was conducted to get collective information on various aspects of the research questions. I arranged three group discussions with participants from different caste and ethnic groups. There were 10 trekking agencies owner, 10 local people and 10 female trekking guides and 4 male trekking guides. Most of the respondents in the focus group discussions were educated. During focus group discussion, I primarily paid attention to gender related issues such as why women have bad reputation in society? What is the difference between men and women? How can the society change people's views of gender roles?

3.4.5 CASE STUDY

I collected 6 case studies about education, family background of respondents, socio-economic situation of their families and their relationship with family, neighbors and employer. I also made history about the Three Sisters to document their personal life and also their agencies. Case studies helped in obtaining qualitative data. This method was used to get the personal experiences of the women trekking guides and Three Sisters.

3.5 DATA ORGANIZATION, PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

The collected primary data was classified and verified on the sheet of paper, which simplified the data for processing. In this process, the data was rechecked with the field notes. The validated data was tabulated in different tables and presented in different forms such as tables of the percentage average of various socio-economic profiles.

The task of analysis is to bring order out of the chaos of the notes to pick out the central themes of the study and to carry them across to the written work (Baker, 1999). Therefore, my qualitative data was analyzed and interpreted descriptively. Data collected by various methods were analyzed through numerical and analytical process.

3.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This is an academic work for the partial fulfillment for the requirement of M.A. degree. The limitations I encountered during my research were mainly related to time due to the busy time of key-informants.

I conducted my research during the trekking season, and many guides and trekkers were unavailable because they were away trekking. The guides were particularly busy, working as both guides as well as studying and weaving caps, sweaters, purses and water bottle holders. Comparatively, despite the high trekking season, male trekking guides were available for interview because they spent many hours of the day in Lakeside. This is an example of the different role and expectations of men and women. The owners of the guesthouses on the trekking route were also very busy so it was difficult to interview

with them. The scheduling of the interviews had its benefits: I was able to explore the field sites and observe the interactions between the hosts and guests.

The interviews produced different kinds of limitations. Sometimes the interviewee would not volunteer an answer and I had to probe. I planned on interviewing clients of the Three Sisters however I ran into several obstacles. Primarily, it was difficult to organize meetings with clients because many did not stay in the Three Sisters lodge where I planned on meeting and interviewing potential interviewees.

CHAPTER-IV

THE STUDY CONTEXT: TOURISM AND POKHARA REGION

4.1 AN INTRODUCTION

Pokhara is the district headquarters of Kaski district and is 200 kilometers by road from Kathmandu. It is situated at an altitude of 827 meters from sea level. The city is known as a center for adventure tourism. Pokhara is a major tourist destination and is famous for natural beauty. It is also the entry and ending point of the trekking routes to the Annapurna region. This enchanting city has several beautiful lakes and offers stunning panoramic views of Himalayan peaks. Today the city has not only become the starting point for most popular trekking and rafting destinations, but also a place to relax and enjoy the beauty of nature. People come from many different parts of Nepal as well as outside of the Nepal whose caste and cultural background are different each other, come for sightseeing, vacationers, pleasure, rest and recreation, business travel, pilgrimage, sporting traveler, medical treatment, educational and cultural travel. In regards to female trekking guides, many women came from different parts of Nepal (See Table 6). They are especially staying at Lakeside and new trainees' guides got an opportunity to stay at EWN's Hostel in Lakeside. They can stay in free cost at hostel for six to one year and had to stay independently when they began to earn money. Pokhara is composed of various caste and cultural group which is new society for them. The local people have positive and negative thoughts in female trekking guides' profession (See Chapter VII).

The climate of Pokhara is slightly warmer than Kathmandu with day time temperature hovering around 15⁰ Celsius in winter and 35⁰ in summer. The monsoon season which runs from mid-June to mid-September are very wet, in fact, Pokhara records the highest rainfall in the country (Adhikari and Seddon 2002: 1-9). The best time to visit is between October and April. The activities of foreign visitors to Pokhara focus around Dam-side and Lakeside (or Pardi and Baidam, in Nepali, respectively). These two areas with their strips of hotels and restaurants are a few kilometers South West of the main Pokhara bazaar. This is the land of Gurungs and Magars, hard working farmers and valorous

warriors who have earned world wide famous Gurkha soldiers. The Thakalis, another important ethnic group here, are known for their entrepreneurship, similar to Newars, and their traditions add flavor to society. Pokhara is the only valley in the world with the view of mountains above 8000 meters from a close proximity. Out of the 14 highest mountains of the world above 8000 meters, Annapurna, Dhaulagiri and Manasulu can be seen from Pokhara valley.

My study site was also in the Annapurna region (Annapurna Century trek), which started from Nayapul and ended at Phedi. The ecology of the Annapurna ranges from hill and mountains, and varies from tropical rainforests to 8,000 meters peaks and high altitude plateaus. Different ethnic groups inhabit these valleys. These groups include the Magars, Thakali and, Gurung being the predominant ones. This diversity, both ecological and cultural, is the most attractive feature for the tourists who come to Nepal in search of exotic nature and people. The most popular way of exploring these areas is Tea-house trekking.

Tea-house treks in the Annapurna region last from three to twenty-three days, depending on the destination of the trekkers. Trekking go to the different place including Everest, Helembu, Lang-tang Valley and Annapurna region and others controlled areas. Comparatively more tourists go to Annapurna region from Pokhara. A total of 66,931 trekkers were registered in 2006. Out of the total number of trekkers, 37,901 (56.6%) visited Annapurna areas and those visiting the Everest and Langtang regions accounted for 20,693 (30.9%) and 4,562 (6.8%) respectively (MoTCA 2006: 45).

Annapurna area is the most popular trekking route in the country. Around 25% of the total tourists visiting Nepal come for trekking. Just for example, in 1994 out of 3, 26531 total tourists visiting Nepal 76,856 trekked different mountains in Nepal. Out of this, about 57% visited Annapurna region while 17.9% and 13.2% went to the Khumbu region and Langtang areas respectively (Satyal 1988:89).

Pokhara emerged as the out door-recreation capital of Nepal. About 80% of all trekking permits are issued for the Annapurna region alone. From an entrepreneur’s point of view, Pokhara is the most logical place for women to enter the trekking business because the majority of the trekkers in Nepal come to Pokhara to start and end their treks. Pokhara is the gate way for Rafters and Kayakers and for everyone else, it is arguably the most beautiful place in Nepal that is easily accessible (i.e. people do not have to trek to reach there).

4.2 SOCIAL PROFILE OF THE FEMALE GUIDES'

4.2.1 Caste/Ethnic Distribution

Caste and ethnicity of people in Nepali society play a vital role in career development. The Caste system was developed in society to maintain the division of work. The system dictates, specifically, which particular work each caste group performs. For example, if we talk about Caste/ Ethnicity groups of Brahman, Chhetri, Newar, Gurung, Rai Magar, their tradition and culture vary. This variance affects anyone in selecting their career. The details of the Caste ethnicity’s composition of the respondents are given in Table 1.

Table 1 Distribution of Female Guides' by Caste/Ethnicity

| Caste/Ethnic Group | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------|--------|------------|
| Rai | 16 | 20 |
| Gurung | 14 | 17.5 |
| Magar | 13 | 16.25 |
| Dalit | 13 | 16.25 |
| Chhetri | 12 | 15.0 |
| Brahmin | 11 | 13.75 |
| Newar | 1 | 1.25 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field survey, 2008

Table 1 show that the majority of the population in Three Sisters Adventure Trekking Agency is made up by Rai, which represented 20% of the total respondents. Followed by Gurung (17.5 %,) Magar (16.25 %,) Dalit (16.25%), Chhetri (15%), Brahmin (13.75%) and Newar (1.25%). This figure also shows that the ethnic people of Nepal, which

include Rai, Magar and Gurung, occupy significant positions in tourism in comparison to Chhetri and Brahmin.

4.2.2 Distribution of Female Guides' by Religion

Religion plays an important role in making people pursue a particular career. The distribution of respondents by Religion is given in Table 2.

Table 2 Distributions of Respondents by Religion,

| Description | Number | Percentage |
|-------------|--------|------------|
| Hindu | 40 | 50 |
| Buddhist | 26 | 32.5 |
| Christian | 8 | 10 |
| Kirat | 6 | 7.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field survey, 2008

Table 2 shows that 50% of the respondents are from the Hindu religion background, 32.5% Buddhist, 10%, Christian and 7.5% from Kirat.

4.2.3 Educational Attainment of Respondents

The literacy rate of the women trekking guides is quite high. Education is the most vital aspect of any human being, and it shapes their personality and career. The educational level of the respondents' is given in Table 3.

Table 3 Educational Status of Respondents

| Educational Grade | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------|------------|
| 5 class passed | 5 | 6.25 |
| 8 class passed | 24 | 17.5 |
| S.L.C passed | 10 | 12.5 |
| P.C.L. running | 30 | 37.5 |
| Bachelor running | 21 | 26.25 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

To be a trekking guide, one is required to study from basic to higher level. The above figure shows the respondents from P.C.L. and Bachelor level is quite high in comparison to other grades. The respondents who have passed grade 5 is only 6.25%, followed by grade 8 is 17.5%, and S.L.C. is 12.5% while P.C.L. and Bachelor's level is represented by 37.5% and 26.25% respectively. During my research, I also found that some of the respondents' family could not afford to educate their women, so the women wanted to work by themselves.

4.2.4 Distribution of Female Guides' by Age

Age is also an important factor of choosing a job. Especially when it comes to women to get any kind of profession, it is different than for men. Generally girls are not free from household boundaries at an early age. Boys are regarded as being grown-up or mature at the age of 15 or 16, whereas girls are still perceived immature to go out for work. The finding regarding age composition is presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Distribution of Female guides by Age

| Age Group | Averages | Percentage |
|-----------|----------|------------|
| 15-20 | 20 | 25 |
| 21-25 | 30 | 37.5 |
| 26-30 | 26 | 32.5 |
| 31-35 | 4 | 5 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 4 shows that 25% of the respondents are belong to the age group of 15-20. This shows a significant number of younger women are involved in this profession. 37.5% of the respondents are in the age group of 21-25, which is the main age for work as stated above, 32.5% of respondents are in the age group 26-30 and 5% of the respondents are in the age group of 31-35.

As revealed by the data presented in table 4 young women are more likely to get this kind of job than older women. Of those women in the 31-35 age groups, most of them are married. Trekking Agents also want to appoint young women because young women are generally more energetic and have decision power. To be a trekking guide, the women must be good-looking, energetic, physically fit, smart, and neat and clean. They should have a better knowledge of culture, tradition, history, first-aid, etc. They must be able to handle situations adroitly during the trekking and be able to make prompt decision and solve problems.

4.2.5 Distribution of Female Guides' by Work Duration

Women started as working trekking guide mostly after 1996 when the Three Sisters first started. The first Women trekking Guide was trained in 1994. The duration of involvement of the respondents in this profession is given table 5.

Table 5 Distributions of Female Guides by Work Duration

| Time Duration (year) | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------------|--------|------------|
| 01-4 | 50 | 65 |
| 5-9 | 25 | 31.25 |
| 10-14 | 5 | 6.25 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 5 shows that the longest involvement of respondents in this profession is 13 years for which 6.25% of the respondents have been working as trekking guide. 31.25% of the respondents have been working in this profession for 5-9 years. 65% of the respondents have been working in this profession for 1-4 years.

4.2.6 Women Guides from Different Region Working in Pokhara Area

Table 6: The number and percentage of the women represented from different regions.

| Location | Number | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Myagdi | 11 | 13.75 |
| Solukhumbu | 10 | 12.5 |
| Bhojpur | 8 | 10 |
| Kaski | 8 | 10 |
| Jumla | 6 | 7.5 |
| Kalikot | 6 | 7.5 |
| Mugu | 6 | 7.5 |
| Humla | 6 | 7.5 |
| Lamjung | 4 | 5 |
| Tanahu | 4 | 5 |
| Baglung | 3 | 3.75 |
| Dolpa | 3 | 3.75 |
| Nawalparashi | 3 | 3.75 |
| Syangja | 1 | 1.25 |
| Lalitpur | 1 | 1.25 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 6 shows that Myagdi women representative in the highest level (13.75%). The reason is that it is near by the EWNs' office and it is one of the popular trekking routes. Additionally, their colleges and relatives recommended to them in joining this profession. Solokhumbu represents 12.5%, which hold the second position, followed by Bhojpur and Kaski 10%, Jumla, Kalikot, Mugu and Humla 7.5%, Lamjung and Tanahu 5%, Baglung, Dolpa and Nawalparanshi 3.75% and Syangja and Lalitpur which are the lowest percentage of the female trekking guides. The cause might be positive impact of training, impact of education, economic condition and impact of Maoist movement.

CHAPTER -V

FEMALE TREKKING GUIDES AND THEIR WORK-RELATED PROBLEMS

This chapter deals with female guides work problem in Nepal. These difficulties and challenges are faced through their families, societies and male guides. Despite these, I also describe about economic background of unmarried, married and divorced female trekking guide who are participated in trekking as their major profession in Nepal. Additionally, I also illustrate some example in tables about their job satisfaction/dissatisfaction and how their relation with the employer.

5.1 MARITAL STATUS OF FEMALE GUIDES'

Many of the women who decide to join the job market are not married. Among all the respondents, some of their family member supported their decision to become a trekking guide while some women went against their family's wishes and decided to become a trekking guide (See; Case 1, 3, 5, 6). Some women stop being a trekking guide after they get married. There are more unmarried women than married women in this profession. The marital status of respondents is shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Marital Status of Female Guides'

| Description | Number | Percentage |
|-------------|--------|------------|
| Unmarried | 48 | 60 |
| Married | 18 | 22.5 |
| Divorced | 14 | 17.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 7 shows that 60% of the respondents are unmarried and most of them have chosen their profession by themselves to be independent women, some of them were encouraged by their family and friends and some of them were encouraged by the EWN training. Most of the respondents choose this profession due to economic conditions of the family. The unmarried women had chosen this job because of their interest and the poor

economic condition of the family. Some of their families do not want to send their daughter in this field because of the tradition and cultural values. 22.5% of the respondents are married. Most of them have chosen this profession after marriage, encouraged by their husband and families, because only the head of the family's income is not adequate to support the family. 17.5% of the respondents are divorced. They got divorced because some of their husband beat her always and some of them continue this profession against their husband decision. There was misunderstanding between themselves and their husband. Their husband has doubt about their character when they went with trekkers as guide; their husband raised many questions with her and which created conflict at home because trekking guide must go with trekkers in difficult places. Due to negative thinking he thought his wife is disrespecting him. Male always would like to control women sexuality and keep under their domination. Some of them divorced before participating in this profession. They participated in this profession because of the desire to survive by themselves.

5.2 CHANGING RELATION OF THE FEMALE GUIDES' WITH THEIR FAMILY

Attitude of the family directly affects the profession and career of anyone of the family. So far as the women are concerned, family support is a must. It is very difficult for a woman to go against her family. The amount of the support received by the respondents from their family regarding their profession is given in Table 8.

Table 8 Relations of the Female Guides with their Family

| Description | Number | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------|------------|
| Full Co-operation | 45 | 56.25 |
| Don't care | 20 | 25 |
| Partial | 0 | 0 |
| Don't like job | 15 | 18.75 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field survey, 2008

Table 8 shows that 56.25% of the respondents' families provide full support regarding the trekking job and their family is happy with their job. 25% of the respondent's families do not like their profession and wanted them to leave this profession. The families of 18.75% of the respondents are not happy with the job they have chosen, but the families of 25% of the respondents do not care about their job. They do not have another cash-earning job, and because of this, do not oppose this profession.

5.3 FEMALE GUIDES' DECISION MAKING POWER AT THEIR HOME

The decision making power is still limited to educated women of advanced urban society. Especially in patriarchal society, male heavily influence decision making regarding family matter, career, and their future. I used such words as 'medium', 'high', and 'not at all' to scale the decision making power of the respondents at home. High decision-making power means a woman has equally participated in the family's serious matters. Medium decision-making power means a woman can influence the family decision in the field of schooling of the children, dressing up, marriage of the daughter, and expressing the opinions towards serious matters in the family such as selling and buying land. Low decision-making power means a woman can not influence the family even in the tiny household matters such as schooling of the children and dressing up. 'Not at all' decision-making means a woman can't participate in the household matter in the family, where women are taken as inferior. The respondents' decision-making powers at their home are shown in Table 9.

Table 9 Female Guides' Decision Making power at their Home

| Description | Number | Percentage |
|-------------|--------|------------|
| High | 15 | 31.25 |
| Medium | 30 | 37.5 |
| Low | 25 | 18.75 |
| Not at all | 10 | 12.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The above table shows that the level of the respondents' decision-making power at their home regarding their profession and family matter. Only 31.25% of the respondents have high decision making power, 37.5% have medium level to take decision in the family, 18.75% have low level to take decision in the family and 12.5% of the respondents have no decision-making power.

5.4 ECONOMIC ASPECT

In general, women have less access to income, wealth and modern avenues of employment. This is partially due to their limited access to education and information and partially due to traditional view of general public about women's activities. In addition to this, the everyday tasks of family life in rural areas throughout the country required women to involve in labor-intensive farm work and time consuming domestic chores to fulfill the needs of such things as fuel, water, and food for their children and other household members. Women's specific activities like water and fuel collection, kitchen gardening, childcares and small manufacturing are not included in formal economy though they contribute a big share to the household's income. Such activities are not being computed in term of its value.

5.4.1 Annual Income of Female Guides

In this profession, it is very difficult to calculate the monthly income. This is seasonal work and during the off-season, women may not have steady work. Therefore, I studied the respondents' income (income/wages) as an important aspect to be considered to go in any profession for any individual and to analyze within the profession. Most of the female trekking guides work from 120 days to 150 days in a year. The range of annual income of the respondents is given in Table 10.

Table 10 Annual incomes of Female Guides

| Income in NRS | Number | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------|------------|
| 25,000- 50,000 | 40 | 50 |
| 15,000- 30,000 | 20 | 25 |
| 40,000- 60,000 | 10 | 12.5 |
| 70,000- 90,0000 | 10 | 12.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The data summarized in table 10 reveal is that 12.5% of the respondents have annual incomes ranging from 70,000 NPR to 90,000 NPR. Most of these women are holding a government license and permanent job. Those guides' represent 12.5%, who do not work regularly though they have a license and earn money ranging from 40,000 NPR- 60,000 NPR in a year. About 25% respondents do not have a license; those are called as an assistance guide. They earn 15,000 NPR up to 30,000 NPR and 50% women are working and studying who earn annually 25,000 NPR to 50,000 NPR.

5.4.2 Family Background of the Female Guides'

Those people who are participating in this profession are from the countryside and most of their parents were farmers and few of them are from rich backgrounds. To analyze the family background of respondents, I used the word in 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low'. High means those people whose family worked in administrative sector, project and private business and worked abroad. Medium means those person who are enough land to grow the crops and also who have animal and low means there is not enough land to grow and has to labor for others.

Table 11 Distribution of Family Background of Female Guides'

| Description | Number | Percentage |
|-------------|--------|------------|
| High | 15 | 18.75 |
| Medium | 55 | 68.75 |
| Low | 10 | 12 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 11 shows that 18.75% of the respondents are from rich family backgrounds. These types of respondent want to travel to difficult parts of Nepal and practice their English with trekkers. 68.75% of respondents are from medium types of family background. These respondents want to support the family and want to become independent women. 12.5% of respondents from the low family. These types of respondents want to earn the money and want to support her family. This table shows that majority of the respondents are from medium family backgrounds.

5.5 INTERPERSONAL RELATION BETWEEN CUSTOMERS, EMPLOYERS, AND WOMEN TREKKING GUIDES

5.5.1 Female Guides' Inter-personal Relation with Male

The majority of the people in this profession are male. Male workers and their behaviors directly or indirectly affect the working atmosphere for women in this profession. The nature inter-personal relation of the female trekking guides with male guides is indicated by data given in Table 12. The situation of the respondents' has been categorized as very good, good, average and bad to analyze the inter-relation. Very good means male workers are helping women do their work in an efficient way by encouraging, sharing ideas and providing work. Good means male guides are co-operative and helping women. Average means male workers are either encouraging or don't support the women. But bad means, male worker want to dominate trekking guide and they tease women by using rough words.

Table 12 Female Guides' Inter- relation with Male Co-workers

| Description | Number | In% |
|-------------|--------|-------|
| Very good | 30 | 37.5 |
| Good | 25 | 31.25 |
| Average | 15 | 18.75 |
| Bad | 10 | 12.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 12 shows that 37.5% of respondents have very good inter-relation with their male colleagues. 31.25% of the respondents said they have good inter-relation with male guides. 18.75% of the respondents have average inter-relation with male guides. 12.5% of the respondents have bad inter-relation with male companions. It is due to competition and the dominant to women. This finding indicates that the inter-relation of the respondents with their male companions in this profession, on the average is good.

6.5.2. Respondents' Relation with their Employers

It is very important for the employer and employee to have good relations. This is essential to keep people in the profession and encourage others to pursue this career. I conducted an analysis of the employer-employee relationship by asking the employees how they saw their relationship. The words 'very good', 'good' and 'bad' are used. 'Very good' means that the employer is helpful, encouraging and provides and satisfactory salary and the employee feels positive toward the employer. 'Good' means that the employer provides work, but the employee finds it difficult to share all their problems with their employer. 'Bad' means that the employee finds it difficult to share their problems with their employer and they are unsatisfied with their work. More than that employer suppressed the employee by giving low salary and also including provision for life insurance. The nature of the relationship between respondents and their employers is given in Table 13.

Table 13 Female Guides' Relation with Employers

| Description | Respondents' Number | Percentage |
|-------------|---------------------|------------|
| Very Good | 45 | 56.25 |
| Good | 25 | 31.25 |
| Bad | 10 | 12.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

As shown in the Table 13, inter-relationship the respondents with their employer are very good in 56.25% of the respondents. 31.25% have a good relationship, and 12.5% of the respondents had bad relation with their employer.

5.6 PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL PROBLEMS FACED BY THE WOMEN TREKKING GUIDES

5.6.1 Job Satisfaction of Female Guides'

Job satisfaction is important in any profession. Satisfaction regarding money, working atmosphere, and working hours are related to it. To analyze the job satisfaction, I have used the word like 'Very much' 'No' and 'Yes'. The level of job satisfaction of the respondents is given in Table 14.

Table 14 Job Satisfactions of Female Guides'

| Description | Number | Percentage |
|-------------|--------|------------|
| Yes | 30 | 37.5 |
| No | 20 | 25 |
| Very much | 30 | 37.5 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 14 shows that 37.5% of respondents are satisfied with their profession as a trekking guide. They can earn money and also exchange culture knowledge with foreigners. They can introduce our culture, tradition, and history in public level in international society.

25% of the respondents are not satisfied with this profession as their family does not like this profession, and they have a bad reputation in society. Another reason behind their dissatisfaction includes difficulty, few days work and challenging work. 37.5% of the respondents are satisfied very much with this job. Their family and friends support them because their earning forms the backbone of their family economy.

5.6.2 Female Guides’ Advice to Others about Trekking Guide

The respondents have their own opinion regarding their profession while advising others to join this job. The findings are presented in Table 15.

Table 15 Female Guides’ Advice to Others about Trekking Guide

| Descriptions’ | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------|--------|------------|
| It is good | 25 | 31.25 |
| Develop Confidence | 20 | 25 |
| Welcome to all | 10 | 12.5 |
| Not good | 10 | 12.5 |
| Challenging | 15 | 18.75 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 15 shows that 31.25% of the respondents advise others to join this field because this profession is good for women. 25% of the respondents advise others to join this job because this profession can develop the confidence and self-independence of women. 12.5% of the respondents’ advise others to join because for all women, the job brings experience. 12.5% of respondents do not want others to join this profession if their parents, guardians do not like them to join this profession. Because probably those who are working as guide would have bad reputation in society. 18.75% of the respondents said it was a challenging job for women to join this profession because anything can happen in trekking (e.g. Avalanche, landslide, altitude sickness and hard walking).

5.6.3 Female Guides' by Job Recommendation

In our society, women have always been under the control and guidance of guardian like fathers, brothers, husbands or sons. Few women have the opportunity to choose the profession they like. The Respondents by job advice is given in Table 16.

Table 16 Female Guides' by Job Recommendation

| Description | Number | Percentage |
|-------------|--------|------------|
| EWNS' | 40 | 50 |
| Friends | 20 | 25 |
| Parents | 10 | 12.5 |
| Uncle | 5 | 6.25 |
| Brother | 5 | 6.25 |
| Total | 80 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Table 16 shows that 50% of the respondents joined this profession because they received EWN's training. EWN's brought the training to many hometowns. 25% of the respondents joined this profession because of advice given by friends already in the sector. 10% of respondents choose this job with the advice and encouragement of their parents. 6.25% of the respondents chose this job with the advice of their uncle because their uncle was already in the tourism sector. 6.25% respondents selected this profession because they saw their brothers already working as trekking guides. The study shows that majority of the respondents joined this profession because of the influence of and the training given by Empowering the Women of Nepal (EWN).

CHAPTER–VI

THE THREE SISTERS AS FEMALE GUIDES AND TRAINERS

6.1 HISTORY ABOUT THE THREE SISTERS

Three sisters named Lucky, Dicky and Nicky run the Three Sisters' organization. They were raised in Darjeeling, India. They have five brothers. Their parents were farmers. Both their parents were illiterate and cared very much that their children received an education. With growing up and attending school in India through the university level, the most influential people in their lives were their father. The youngest sister is 38 years old, the middle sister is 41 years old and the eldest is 43 years old. Their father stressed the importance of education for his daughters because if they did not find good husbands, they could be independent and capable of living their own lives. Therefore, he made sure the three sisters received good education. The eldest sister completed her Master's Degree in Geography. She also took a course in Himalayan Mountaineering. She has field work experience by working with Nepali NGOs in the health sector. She was a teacher at primary school and high school. She worked in the administration sector of the South Korean embassy, as a volunteer in an NGO in Orissa (India) and worked in New Era in Kathmandu. From a very early age, Three Sisters were adamantly encouraged in their academic endeavors as well as were supported in their interests. They also were constantly exposed to their father's generosity and love for his family as well as his continuous kindness and generosity within their own community. Growing up in India, the sisters were continuously encouraged to pursue their own endeavors. While definitely in touch with their Nepali identities, the sisters continued to commit to their own ideologies. They saw that most of the women had to stay always at home, look after the children and cooking for the whole family. It happened almost everyday. Sometimes husbands would frequently take frustrations out on their wives by beating them.

Many women trekking guides felt they had no freedom while living with their families. Additionally, their neighbors and people from their hometown were conservative and wanted the women to also follow the conservative culture. Their neighbors did not want to see the women going away from home to work. But the three sisters always wanted to

be independent women and help other women to be independent. Their parents encouraged them and sent them to school even when they did not have lot of money. From the very beginning, the three sisters actively participated in most of the sectors and were interested in becoming social workers. Their neighbors didn't like when women were clever, so they didn't listen to them. They always saw other women working inside the house, without freedom and suppressed by their husband or mother in law. The three Sisters always wanted to change from this kind of burden. Contrary to customary tradition, none of the sisters decided to be married. The middle sister explained that the primary reason for not wanting to marry was a result of seeing her sisters-in-law and acknowledging that "when you marry, you don't just marry a husband; you marry a whole family, and you have to please everyone". As a result of this realization as well as having other types of aspirations for their future, the sisters did not marry, and their family and parents were supportive of their decisions. This decision would stand to be the beginning of their endeavor to test boundaries and attempt to give women the freedom of choice and life that they wish to have. For the community and for their neighbors, it was unusual to have women breaking traditional and superstitious beliefs. According to the sisters, some people were supportive but most people were not.

In 1993, their father died in India and was a very painful experience for the entire family. Remaining in India was very sad and difficult for the sisters, so they decided to move to Pokhara with the intention of starting a school there, as they knew that they wanted to establish a project that would benefit the community. Very cleverly, they initiated conversations with local community members before setting up their project in order to gauge how necessary and beneficial a school would actually be in the area. They had been completely ready to establish a school, but after speaking to various community members, they realized that a school was not necessary or even wanted in the community. As one community member described it, there were "too many schools coming, they are like mushrooms". This opinion is actually very interesting when taken from the view point of the potential aid giver, and I think stands to say a lot about how important it is to not only involve local people in the project but in face to listen to what they actually

think they need. As a result of this experience, three sisters decided to open a restaurant in 1993 as the tourism economy was very prominent in Pokhara at this time.

Having very little experience in the restaurant business, the Chhetris faced various challenges at the beginning. Unfortunately, they also quickly came to realize how vulnerable young unmarried, working females are in Nepal. Things unfortunately turned sour in Pokhara quite quickly, as Nepali men frequently came in asking for sexual favor, or insulting them for having their own business. According to the middle sister, one of her worst experiences was when a young man dressed in monks' robes came in and acted very inappropriate toward her. Needless to say, such experiences did not create much hope for the future and made them quite upset.

Cultural barriers and entrepreneurial ingeniousness almost made them quit and return home. Nonetheless, with persistence and determination, they were able to overcome most difficulties. They started doubting their business and ultimately their life in Pokhara until a friend recommended that they move their business to the tourist sector of Pokhara in Lakeside. Taking this advice, they rented a building in lakeside where they opened a lodge and restaurant in 1993. Due to issues with their landlord, they were forced to move from that location and set up elsewhere. At their lodge, the sisters had many female trekkers with them and many of them relayed stories about the bad experiences with male guides. From those conversations, the sisters realized that not only had they come upon an unexplored market in the trekking industry, but also, and perhaps more importantly, they had realized that female trekkers were not experiencing trekking to the fullest and that this situation was not right. Their friends suggested to them to open the trekking agency.

In 1990, Lucky was trained at the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling, India and was intrigued and excited by adventure tourism. As a result of their conversations with female trekkers, they learnt that there was a market for female trekking guides. From previous trekking and traveling in Nepal and India they were brutally aware of the plight of poor isolated young women in the more rural and isolated

areas of Nepal, and longed to help them. They realized that this was an opportunity to do so, and took advantage of it. The sisters brought a few women in from the rural areas to train. This small step was in fact the beginning of their independent organization, 'Empowering Women of Nepal'(EWN) and the beginning of their journey towards revolutionizing the trekking industry and at the same time promoting the women of Nepal and enabling them to further themselves. First of all they started trekking by themselves for few years. Over the next four years they worked very hard to build a trekking agency run by women for women creating businesses which is not an easy task, especially in the male dominated society of Nepal. Many obstacles and barriers have been overcome regarding traditional beliefs about women and their place in society.

In 1999, three sisters founded the Empowering the Women of Nepal training center and hostel for women in order to train other Nepali women to become trekking guides. The sisters' intentions at that point were to provide female trekking guides for women trekkers who wanted more security and companionship than they felt they would be able to have with a male guide. However, as the organization grew, they began to realize how beneficial this was for their guides as well.

In the beginning it was very hard because for women trekking was "not a respectful job" and therefore, for the first few years, very few women wanted to be involved. Many people did not believe in this occupation and kept saying women can live at home and be as a sister or wife, women are weak. However, many of the women who did come to the training brought friends with them and told others. This growing training program led to a realization that this endeavor could in fact keep growing in order to create legitimacy and further the training for the women. The sisters attempted to register of training at a local trekking training center. Female trekking guides were basically unheard of, and sisters and their guide trainees were not allowed to attend the classes. However, this did not impede their plans for the organization, and they soon found a way to receive training and certifications. At this point the Three Sisters had ten Nepali women training with them and decided to take the next step. They closed their restaurant and lodge down for two months in order to open an official training center in Pokahra and continued training.

At this point, word spread about their training center and female guides. They had succeeded in breaking through the gender barriers and continued to create new sectors for female trekking guides in gender dominated industry. Finally in 1994, their women's trekking service was officially opened, "Three Sisters Adventure Trekking".

By 1999, Three Sisters Adventure Trekking was thriving but the sisters wanted to expand even further. In light of the benefits that the trekking agency was creating for local Nepali women and the sisters desire to further the support and opportunities available to the trekking guides, the sisters created an NGO, "Empowering the Women of Nepal" (1999) and registered their trekking agency as an affiliate of it.

6.2 EWN PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

"Empowering Women of Nepal" (EWN) and Three Sisters Adventure Trekking work together to promote and empower women through adventure tourism. They have also succeed in having under-privileged Nepali women to take advantage of one of the strongest industries economically in Nepal and more importantly, encouraging and providing opportunity to those women in their growth and learning process towards becoming more independent and confident individuals. Currently they are running a guest house and restaurant- "Three Sisters Guest House", out of which, they also run the trekking agency, guide hostel and training center. The training program is the most important aspect on the road to becoming a guide. The training schedule has two primary training times, organized around the spring and fall trekking season where skill and techniques necessary to become a trekking guide are taught to the female trainees. Skill training includes flora and fauna of the difficult areas, culture and religion, geography, technical trekking skills, ecologically friendly techniques and first aid.

After completing the training female guides are all to enter the field. Since the inception of training school, more than 600 guides from more then 36 district have come through the trainings. Now more than 100 women are doing trekking from their agency. Three sisters are working on a program that can inform prospective employers about certain standards that must be met, even in terms of general behavior towards the women. Thus,

women are in demand among other agencies in Pokhara because increasingly, more and more trekkers are requesting and looking for reliable female guides. The other project that was recently taken on by EWN is an orphanage that is now located in between the guest house building and EWN building. One of the most prominent goals that the Sisters are working towards is the expansion of guide training to the more isolated part of Nepal. Sisters originally were inspired to create more opportunities for underprivileged women and now they are looking to draw even more women especially from the Humla and Jumla areas in the far western region of the country. The sisters are currently in the process of making plans and designing a new building for a larger training facility to be located in Pokhara and looking to create more class rooms, more interactive training equipment, and rock-climbing training facilities, and a larger hostel in order to accommodate more women.

Primary financial supports of EWN are an organization called the mountain fund which is international organization that works to increase the sustainability of various non-profit and non-governmental organizations. Sisters have attended various conventions and partnered with various organization both Nepali and international for instance, Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), Trekking Agent Association of Nepal (TAAN), Marketing Assistance for Sustainable Tourism (MASTA) project in Nepal have been huge influence in helping the Sisters to attain legitimacy in the trekking sector. Another organization that had an immense amount of influence on the Sisters and EWN is an organization known as the Ashoka foundation. This organization has served a dual role for EWN as a huge financial supporter, as well as sustainability and networking supporter. In 2004, after Ashoka's annual renowned, very rigorous search and selection processes, Lucky Chhetri was named an Ashoka fellow for her work with EWN. As a fellow, the Chhetri's were immediately made part of a huge international network of support, both financial and other, which enabled them to continue in their expansion and promotion of EWN with Ashoka's added support. The sisters have access to a huge network of other fellow organizations in Nepal as well as internationally and also economic funding directly from Ashoka. The Chhetri's maintain very open contacts with all of the other organizations they are involved with, including other agencies and businesses that they are associated

with indirectly. All of the tea houses that they use for their treks, airlines, transportation agencies, and suppliers are maintained with very open communication, which allows them to provide the most comfortable, safe, enjoyable experiences for their clients and also their guides.

By entering new territory and encouraging others to join the profession of trekking guides the 3 Sisters have played a critical role in changing the stereotypical attitudes of men in Nepali society towards women to a considerable extent. The gradual increase in the number of female trekking guides in recent years can be attributed to the inspiration and trainings provided by 3 sisters and EWN.

CHAPTER-VII

PERCEPTIONS OF WIDER SOCIETY TOWARDS FEMALE GUIDES IN TOURISM

I completed my fieldwork by conducting questionnaires with my key informants in the trekking routes in Annapurna region and Pokhara. These routes include Birethanti, Syaulilibazar, Ghandruk, Chhomorong, Bamboo, Dovan, Deurali and Annapurna Base Camp. Based on fieldwork, I come to the following conclusions.

7.1 PERCEPTION OF LOCAL PEOPLE

The trekking occupation is a challenging and an adventuresome profession. However, it brings many changes to the women's lives. This profession makes women empowered with greater sense of self-independence. Women can work like the men and hold the same positions as men. Changes in traditional beliefs and practices must be changed in order to break down the cultural barriers to women in this profession because these beliefs and practices naturally subordinate women. Some of my informants said that women should not participate on trekking because there can be sexual harassment which directly impact on social reputation. To avoid such kind of problem, at first the family should give education and awareness and empowerment program should launch within society. Nonetheless, as women are well minded, they can handle the situation in a better way than men they also should go ahead in this direction, added my key-informants.

7.2 PERCEPTION OF TOURISTS'

I took 15 interviews with foreigners. Among these respondents, 10 were single and 5 were couples. The single respondents were randomly chosen from groups. All the respondents were from U.S.A., U.K., Canada, Australia, Belgium, French, Swiss, Finland and Holland and I met them in Pokhara. They all went trekking with a female guide.

The female clients said that they felt that Nepali women are socially, culturally and economically marginalized. These clients chose to hire the female guide because of this

marginalization. Some of the clients said that they feel more comfortable with woman guides and would like to support women project for empowering women. In one client's opinion, women are able to be more personable and shared stories about their life. She did not believe she could share that kind of intimacy with a male guide. Most of the trekkers said that their guide was very respectful and friendly. In comparison to male guides, they said that female guides are friendlier and more generous.

Similarly, all women trekkers said that they chose women guide to go trekking with because they felt they could better communicate with women than men. While trekking, the trekkers said that they saw some male guides who they thought were doing a good job, but they saw others who were less responsible with his guests. On the other hand, all the trekkers said that their female guide was attentive and kind in comparison to most male guides. They thought that this is great example of other opportunities for women along the route.

Some female trekkers said that men would be much stronger and faster even though, they are not as attentive. Sometimes they would like to walk fast but their guide could not walk very fast. She further said she sometimes could not communicate with her guide due to the language barrier. Most of the trekkers suggest that if client is single woman, female guides are good and safe i.e. they know they will not be harassed and that is a fear associated with having a male guide. During the trek, sometimes some trekkers were angry with their guide by their self, but their guide's politeness made them happy. Almost all trekkers found that women guides were honest, responsible to their duties and took care in looking after their clients.

I randomly chose male client from the different groups and I found following facts. They knew about the women trekking guides from the Lonely Planet book series. They found that their guides were fantastic, supportive, helpful and honest. They choose women because they would like to support women projects and feel that women are more honest than men. Their guide made sure the entire group never got lost, and she taught them some Nepali making it easier for her to share about the trek and her life. The male clients

thought it was excellent that Nepali women are working as trekking guides. They saw during the trek some male guides who were drunk and didn't care about his clients. Also he gave the order to his client which made his client's irritate. Some male guides are good but some are less responsible with his guests but hid guide was very attentive and kind comparison to the male guide.

7.3 PERCEPTION OF TREKKING AGENCIES

Most of the trekking agencies agreed that women also should participate in this profession. However, they are anxious about whether women are weak biologically. On the other hand, a little more number of trekking agencies concerned about low salary of women guide received from various trekking offices.

7.4 PERCEPTION OF THE GUEST HOUSE

Although there could potentially be equal opportunities of traveling in new places and chances to make self-independence to the women, due to the lack of education and blind faith still there is little number of female trekking guides in Nepal.

Some local guesthouse owners said that male guides were likely to arrive at the guesthouse and get drunk and noisy with their clients. Additionally, they make rooms dirty and tease females. With female trekking guides, owners are not presented with these problems. Some of the male guides treat the female guides as if they were their sisters. Some of the owners said that many people in this sector get married to each other. However, those who are marriage and has been involving in this occupation, which has not social prestige; rather different occupation has social dignity (it means women can work such as teaching weaving and housewife).

Accordingly, another key informant said that there should equal rights for women and men as they both are holding important roles in society. "It is great to see that now women are also involved in this sector and I encourage to women to participate in this occupation. Although it has also some challenges like negative perspective of little

people towards women, I feel proud myself because women are also getting so many opportunities through this occupation”.

Others have a different perspective about women professionals in this sector. Mr. Ramesh Dahal (name changed) said owing to the lack of encourages of the society and domination of the male, women have hold a minor position. To bring the mainstream of male position, they need more education and social awareness. He further said that women are not weak; rather they are made weak by society. Similarly, Mr. Dil Bahadur (name changed) said that men, including sexual teasing and harassment, view women in the trekking business negatively, which encouraged bad behavior.

Women and men are equally holding important roles in society, but due to the conventional thoughts and believe, it impacted on women profession in trekking. Many people including foreigner would like to see women participation in trekking profession. However, there is lack of encouragement and awareness program which resulted women further marginalized in tourism. If women work freely in this profession, more likely they would be empowered with the greater sense of self-independence.

CHAPTER-VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The tourism industry of Nepal was developed after the 1950s. The development of tourism provided employment for both men and females, and these employment opportunities increased as trekking became popular. The workers in this profession are of temporary nature and the female workers' employment depends on the wish of the employer. As per the record of NATHM 2008, there are altogether 5,167 trekking guides who have completed the trekking guide training. Among them, 5,114 are male and 53 are female and only 20-25 female guides are continuing in this profession. However, the number of female trekking guides from EWN, a private organization, trains many more female trekking guides and provides them with employment. According to their records, among 80 female trekking guides, maximum of women were Rai (20%), followed by Gurung (17.55%), Magar (16.25%), Dalits (16.25%), Chhetri (15%), Brahmin (13.75%) and Newar (1.25%). These all guides were been working for eight years and rest of the women guide were ranging from one to three years.

Women who work in the trekking tourism industry are socially considered to be immoral in our society because of conservative thinking. Women trekking guides go away with tourists to different places and stay in hotels. In Nepali culture, generally, this is socially unacceptable. Attitude of the family directly affects the profession and career of anyone of the family. However, I found that 48.25% of the respondents' families provide full support regarding their job from their family and their family is happy with their job. The families of 22% of the respondents do not like their profession and wanted them to leave this profession. The families of 14.75% of the respondents are not happy with the job they have chosen, but the families of 15% of the respondents do not care about their job. They do not have other cash-earning job and, therefore, do not oppose this profession.

During my field work I found that 60% of the respondents are unmarried and most of them have chosen their profession by themselves to be independent women, some of them were encouraged by their family and friends and some of them were encouraged by the EWN training. In modern times, to survive everyone has to do hard work and cash earning is necessary. Most of the respondents choose this profession due to economic conditions of the family. Also, unmarried women chose this job because of their interest and the poor economic condition of the family. Some of their families do not want to send their daughter in this field because of tradition and cultural values.

The majority of the people in this profession are male. Male workers and their behaviors directly or indirectly affect the working atmosphere for women in this profession. In the study area, 37.5% of respondents have very good co-relation with their male companions, 31.25% of the respondents said they had good co-relation with male guide, 18.75% of the respondents have average co-operation with male guides and 12.5% of the respondents have bad co-relation with male companions. It is due to competition, the dominant ideology. This finding indicates that the co-relation of the respondents with their male companions in this profession, on the average is good.

In our society, women have always been under the control and guidance at guardian like father, brother, husband or son. Few women have opportunity to choose this profession they like shows that 50% of the respondents joined this profession by the EWN's training because EWN brought the training in their home town. About 25% of the respondents joined this profession with the advice of their friends because their friends already in this sector. Similarly, 10% of respondents choose this job with the advice and encouraged their parents, 6.25% of the respondents chose this job with the advice of their uncle because their uncle was already in the tourism sector, and 6.25% respondents selected this profession because they saw their brothers already working as trekking guide. The study shows that majority of the respondents joined this profession from of the EWN.

In regards to the Trekking Agencies, although 20% female or groups offered to the female guide, the required numbers of female guides are very low. The reason of this

issue is that society themselves see negative perspective towards the female trekking guide. Trekking agencies are not giving the chance to the women apart from EWN. Likewise, in the past, there were few female trekking guides, but the number has been changed specially after the establishment of 3 Sisters Trekking Agency. So that most of the women guides are feeling comfortable working in three sitters trekking agency.

While I observed in the trekking route of Pokhara, I found the numbers of female trekking guides are increasing in comparison to before. I also found past gender guidelines are breaking day by day. The reasons are included the 3 Sister's worked in trekking and brought project (EWN), impact of education (they are more educated in compared to the past), unemployment and low income sources, the long-decade of Maoist Movement (Maoist movement significantly changed in the Nepalese society especially in terms of women that brought women into public. One of the reasons behind it might be the Maoist's ideology to make equality in the position of men...). Similarly, self consciousness, interested in travel and western culture including English language, to get equal rights, would like to represented own nation, to be an independent, support the women, impact of western people are the other supporting factors that significantly challenged to the conservative thoughts.

In regards to this profession, women get the chance to explore many new opportunities. The female trekking guides feel empowered by themselves because of the training received and from the work experience through the EWN, which help them to be empowered, and extremely new phenomenon to them. They also interacted with foreigner that helps to be closed friendship which helped to them in two ways. At first, they could improve their English. On the other hand, some of their children or even they themselves got sponsored for their education. Additionally, they also got chance to visit many places including domestic and international that helped to change their previous thoughts. When they travel from one place to another they also learnt the different cultures which are one of the important subject matter of anthropology. Now they can manage by themselves where some of them are paying for their education and some of them are now financially supporting their families.

Although many female trekking guides are benefited from this profession; there is still equally challenge to them which made sometimes worried to them and it is the one of the hindrances factors to the female to participate in trekking profession. More than half of the guides and neighbors are always very amazed when women go away for trekking. Very few of the neighbors they have positive think and support the women guides. Some guides families are also don't trust them and hard to accept them and their job. For most of the guide it was so difficulties to return at home and stay with neighbor. They will used to say these women are "impure" and they even say, Oh! They are doing something wrong and choosing the bad path. They thought badly, talked badly and made them so sad and frustration. Some of the guides' family didn't want to send them away from home because some of them are too young. While on the other hand, some male guide was teasing, insulting and dominant to them and at the same time some male guide get drunk and talk a lots and also offered sexual harassment by the guides on the field which makes them really upset and some of they discussed with them. Most of the male guides were teasing, insulting and dominant to them especially for unmarriageable girl. In addition, few of the male guides discouraging the profession of female trekking guide by rising question like this is the ground for the male. This story shows that how women are neglected by the Nepali society in regards to their profession and facing a one of the challenging job though women perform the same job as done by the male.

The trekking agencies and guest houses have little different concept though some of them are still conventional thought like women are physically weak, may they can't solve the problem may arise in the field. Women rather choose other job then trekking. But some trekking agencies said that it is good idea that women are working trekking guide. Because most of the trekkers trust the women and may they give right information. More than that I found that all trekkers are very supportive and they are positive of women profession. Accordingly, guest house owner which represented over the fifty percent has a positive thinking and they also said male guides come with the trekkers some of they generally make noisy environment by drinking an alcohol. Additionally, they make a dirty room, tease to female which are not done by female. However, some of the male guides behave as their sister. Nevertheless, on a contrary, most of the female guide

wanted freedom in their life and to be independent women. Some of their neighbors' and friends had queries and curious about their future career as society felt negatively which is rooted since long decades which are the hindrances factors of trekking profession to the women.

Whatever mentioned in the above on the basis of the case study and interview, as my own experiences as female trekking guide and from the field I found that although some of the respondents have positive thought in regard to the female trekking guide profession, it has lots of challenges. I argue that still Nepalese society do not accept to women are out form their door and the demands of female trekking guide by the different trekking agencies only for fulfill for their business purposes. In others words, they (not all) did not offered heartily to the women in this profession.

8.2 CONCLUSION

The tourism industry of Nepal was developed after the 1950s which provided employment for both males and females. Women who work in the trekking tourism industry are still socially considered to be immoral in our society because of traditional thinking. However, my research shows that many of the respondents' families provide full support regarding their job which means that traditional thinking are changing due to the impact of education, unemployment and low income sources and self consciousness. It has direct impact on traditional type of gender rules and regulations which resulted increasing the number of female trekking guides in compared to the past.

Most of the respondents including single women choose this profession due to economic conditions of the family. Also, unmarried women chose this job because they want to be independent women. Three Sisters' worked themselves in the trekking and brought EWN's training (See Chapter VI) is one of the major factors that help females to join this profession quiet easily. In other words, 3 Sisters have played a critical role in changing the stereotypical attitudes of men in Nepali society towards women to a considerable extent. Many female trekking guides have benefited from this profession but there is still equally challenge to them which made sometimes worried to them and it is the one of the

hindrances factors to the female to participate in trekking profession. More than half of the guides and neighbors are always very amazed when women go away for trekking. Very few of the neighbors have positive thinking and support to the women guides. Some guides' families also don't trust them and find it hard to accept them and their job. For most of the guides it was so difficulties to return at home and stay with neighbor. While on the other hand, some male guides were teasing, insulting and dominant to them and at the same time some male guide get drunk and talk a lot and also sexually harass the female guides which makes them really upset. Most of the male guides were teasing, insulting and dominant to them especially for unmarried girls. In addition, some of the male guides discourage the female trekking guide by raising questions about their choice of this profession.

So my conclusion is that unmarried and educated women are joining in this profession as they wanted to be independent, gain freedom and want to earn money needed to run their life. However, due to the patriarchal thinking, behaviors and male dominated society, women still find that working in the tourism sector as guides is a rather challenging profession.

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ANNEXES-I

Case Studies

Case: 1

My name is Mina Chaulagai. I am 30 years old and I am originally from Kalikot (Jumla district). I have three sisters, five brothers, mother and father. My parents are farmers and they are liberated. I don't have an income source in my family. My sisters studied until primary level and my brothers studied in certificate level. I studied at grade eight. I got an arranged marriage when I was 16 years old. I left school because of marriage. My husband is also a farmer. After a few years, my husband married another woman. I have two sons. One is seven years old and another is eight years. My parents are religious and belong to the Hindu religion. The people in my village and community are also very conservative. When my husband got second marriage, I divorced from him. My husband didn't look after me. After that, it was very difficult to manage everything by myself. I worked in a carpet factory near hometown. I received a very low salary. Later, I found my way to Pokhara by Empowering Women of Nepal's training (3 sisters) in 2003.

My parents didn't send me away from home; it was my own decision to go to Pokhara. First, I received training from the 3 sisters and I started working as porter because I knew very little English and I couldn't speak well. My wage per day was Rs. 350 without food. Slowly I improved a lot and gained more knowledge. This helped me to earn more money.

At the beginning I faced a lots difficult by male guide who got the drunk and talk lots with me. I discussed with them often. Some of them said to me this is men job! Better you can choose other job or stay at home and to be a wife, sister and mother. At the same times her neighbors said, Oh! I am doing something wrong. They said I am choosing bad path. They thought badly, talk badly and made me so sad and frustrated. Sometimes I got really upset because male guides offered sexual harassment on the trail which impacted my profession. However, I think being a woman it is so hard to do everything. I decided again "No I have to work continued".

My neighbors are always very amazed with me. My family sometimes does not trust me and it is hard for them to accept me and my job. For me, it was so difficult to return to home and stay with neighbors. They used to say I was an “impure” woman. But I knew I needed to be confident and face the difficult situation. I am guide for my own Nation. I am fighting with the society. I wanted always freedom from family and society. My children are with me and they are studying here in Pokhara. I have to pay for their education. Sometimes my family asked me to leave this profession because other people talk about me negatively. Sometimes I am so worried because of misunderstanding from my family. This work helps Nepali women build confidence and be empowered. Otherwise, in Nepali society, women are just sitting in the house, cooking and look after the children. They never get free from home. I don't really know what the other people are saying. But sometimes we have to very careful because trekking is a risky and challenging job. Trekking is an untraditional job when lady is out of house; people talk badly and think badly. This kind of talk should be stopped and equal rights of men and women are a goal that must be attained. I am satisfied with this job which provides me many opportunities and I feel empowered by myself. We have to change the conservative ideas of the society and we need to fight for equality. Women can do everything.

I had faced many difficulties during the treks. Some male guide was teasing, insulting and dominant at me. My neighbor and friends saying I was doing something ‘bad’ because of conservative society makes me very difficult to work. Any way I didn't listen what the other people said I had to be a porter till speaks English and learn the other thing which called trainees’ guide. I don't want to advise others to join this profession until and unless their family agrees with their decision. Especially for unmarried lady it is very difficult to get married because men usually do not want to in array girls who got for work and stay over night away from the home. Males do not like women to go far away from them. I got the opportunity to travel different places interacted with people of different culture, friendship with western women and I have got the sponsored for my children for education. Now I am gaining the knowledge every day. I had freedom for the first time in my life. I think here is equal opportunities, right and equal decision making

between male and female. Only I am not very satisfied with the salary. I completed three training from three sisters and it is my 6 the work experience season.

When I went to home in the off -season I found my society don't like my work and talk negatively. I wanted to keep continue and challenge the society. A man is allowed to work and nobody cares but for women it is always hard because of conservative society.

Case: 2

My name is Sabita Karki. I am 25 years old. I am originally from Mugu district. I am studying for my B.A in Pokhara. I have two sisters, one brother, my father and mother. I am the eldest daughter in my family. My brother and sister are studying at certificate level. My mother is a farmer and my father works in the administrative sector in Mugu.

I am Hindu. My family is religious but I am not very religious. When I was at home, I always had to stay inside and I had to cook. I had no freedom in my family. When I was 18 years old, my parents wanted me to get a marriage but I didn't want to. This was a big struggle with my family. When Empowering the Women of Nepal (EWN) brought training at Mugu, I had the opportunity to be trained by this organization. I was really impressed by this training and decided to go Pokhara. My family didn't want to send me away from home. I wanted to have freedom in my life and to be an independent woman. I convinced my family that this was important for me, and in the end they supported me in my decision to come Pokhara. I arrived in Pokhara in 2004.

I always told my parents "if you support me I will go somewhere to do something good". I can say this because I had the opportunity to go school. Those women who did not go to school have a harder time convincing their family to let them leave the home for employment.

A female guide is a new phenomenon in Nepal. People don't support us because of the cultural belief that only men are supposed to do this job. Also, when men leave for 7 or 8 days without his parents knowing where he is, they don't care. But if we ladies leave for

7 or 8 days, our parents and extended family think differently about the time we spend away. Our families are less likely to welcome us back into our home because they think we went somewhere with a man. This stems from cultural beliefs of women's role in society. If I meet a friend who is a boy, my family will send my brother with me, even if I am just friends with the boy. We, females, can not go trekking with men because our family and our community think we are engaging sexually with the men. Sometimes my hometown friends would comment and say, "Oh you leave the house and don't come home at night". However, other friends are more supportive and tell me that I am doing the right thing and gaining valuable experience from my profession.

When I came to the Three Sister then I took trekking guide training and started working. It was really difficult at the beginning. It was difficult to walk and difficult to communicate with foreigners because of my limited language capabilities and I was not confident. Adding to the stress, male guides got drunk and would say derogatory things toward me. Some men would insult me and sexually harass me. This upset me greatly and so I told them. Western trekkers supported me and encouraged me to stand up for myself.

Some people said you mustn't do this work, which is so hard for women rather you should go home do something different, be a sister or wife and pressed down most of the time. I didn't care what the other people are saying and I worked continuing. Slowly my English also improved and I built up my confidence. I feel empowered. My society does not like that women are doing this job and women go far from home. This is not respectable job for women. Which I already feel this work. Of course I feel so bad sometimes. My parents are really supported to me doing this job but sometimes they are very worry because neighbors are saying so many bad things. And the other hand, they are worried because I am unmarried and young girl. Sometimes they think probably it will be difficult for me to get a marriage. I always like to struggle against the neighbors to be an independent woman in my life. During the trek I saw some male guide got drunk and they don't care his clients and insulting the women a lot. Sometimes when people see a women guide Oh women guide! They are suppressed. Most of my clients were

supported me and encouraging being a self dependent. Now I feel more confident, physical exercise, visited different part of Nepal and earning the money. Now I can manage my self where I am paying for my education and sometimes support for my families too. It is good opportunity to shared a knowledge and travel all over the world and good to know about the own country. I would like to share my experiences with my friends and encourage joining this profession. My dream is to be a good woman trekking guide and social worker.

Through the training and working experiences now I have an ability to deal with any difficult that might arise in my future. I am satisfied with this profession but sometimes too risk and it can be happened anything in an anytime. Everything is dependent on you so we have to careful that what we are doing? Besides trekking I am studying and I used to teach to orphans the Three sister Hostel. I earned per day Rs. 600. During the treks I had to fully responsible for my client to give information, sometimes to be a mother, doctor, friend and porter. I am enjoying with my job and got lots of opportunities in my life.

I saw how mountain people are surviving? I got the chance to learn the western culture.

There is need to be participate more women is this sectors but there is need t to awareness training to women. In my view education play the vital role to change conservative perspective.

In my family before my brother he went away for seven days where, we didn't know. He went to play football with his friends but we didn't know. He didn't give a phone call too. Two days later he came back. If I would have done like that my parents would not have been able to let me in because they want to know my friend, where I had been with whom I had gone. They want to define all the things clearly. And may be even if I tell them all my friends names, the place also, may be they still won't let me go. But for my brother there's no problem when he came back. Mother said, "Oh you're back"! And she made tea for him. But if I did like him they would say: "why did you do this? If you do like

this, how will we be able to marry you? What kind of boy will be finding for you? In our culture it's really important to be respectable, when we are ladies especially.

Some educated young women also can't do trekking even they want because they don't want against with their family. Same case happened in my friends' home. She has to be a porter till speak English and learn the other thing which called trainees' guide. Sometimes Men said: "You're a lady and should do what ladies do" most of them are not supportive but always my uncle is supportive. When I go to home I listen so many things, probably will be difficult to get marriage in my hometown so that my parents are worry. Some of my women client sponsored for her education. My confidants and knowledge influences greatly. I completed three training from three sisters and it is my 6 the work experience season.

Case: 3

Hira Rai is from Bhojpur. I am twenty-one years old and I am not married. I have mother, father and two brothers. They are all farmers and illiterate.

I studied in intermediate level at Pokhara. I participated in this sector in 2005. I learned about the 3 Sisters Adventure trekking agency through a friend working with the company. My family and friends were very supportive of my decision to come to Pokhara and train, but my neighbors were less supportive because they felt women should not work outside the home. Once my training was complete, I started working. At the beginning, I got extremely difficult because I had low on confidence and my language ability was less than proficient. At the same time male guide get drunk and talk a lots. Some of them were insulting and also offered sexual harassment by the guides. I feel upset and I discussed with them. But western trekkers were supported and encourage to the Nepali women. During the treks I have to fully responsible for client. I have to give the information, chose the guest house make a sure they are ok or not, and I have to carry her bag pack. I had to be a porter till I could not speak English and learn the other thing. I got Rs. 450 per day without food. But sometimes if lucky I gets the tips from my client.

When I went to home in the off-season, I found my society don't like my work and talk negatively. I wanted to keep continue and challenge the society. A man is allowed to work and nobody cares but for women it is always hard because of conservative society.

From this profession got the opportunities to learn different western culture and got the opportunity to learn English with the trekkers, to travel different part of Nepal, earn the money. Some times my parents are worry might be I am in wrong path and she always try to convince them. I would like to be an independent woman.

Trekking is seasonal job so very difficult to manage me self because am staying with friend. At the beginning I was staying in three sister's hostel for six months and after that I had to move. In off-season I am studying and sometimes weaving a bag, hate and even selling water bottle to the trekkers.

I am satisfied with her work. I think they have equal rights between male guide and women guides in three sisters. My English and confidence improved a lot. I will suggest the other women to participate in this sector.

Case: 4

Mina Chaulagai is 21 years old. I am originally from Kalikot (Jumla). I had an arranged married and my husband is farmer. I had mother and father. Mother is farmer and my father is worked in administrative section in their hometown. I had three sisters and four brothers. I studied in the B.A. I came to the 3 Sisters by the Empowering the Women of Nepal's training. I had own decision to come Pokhara and luckily my family supported to my decision.

I took trekking guide training and started to work. When I was in training I had no idea what is trekking like? After training I started to work. At the beginning I found so hard because of language and I had to carry the client's backpack and also has to walk up and down hill. During the trek I faced lots of difficult by the male guide. Some of they said

this is male's job why you are doing trekking better you can work other things and stay at home. Any way I am doing this work continues. I had become a really confident and improve a lot. I got nice opportunity to practice the English and earn the money, chance to learn the western's culture and learn about the own country's.

I completed three training from 3 Sisters and it is my 6th work experience season. After working sometimes I went to home for off-season I found my neighbors were saying that I am 'impure' women and they talk negatively and were saying I am doing something bad. My family question me "why are you doing this job"? Better you should be a housewife. But more or less my husband supported my profession. Honestly, Men do not like to women to go far a way from the home and them and also stay overnight way from the home. Sometimes my husband say "this is not good for us because my friends ask a lot of questions where I can't answer them". I need to find the compromise with my family and society, said by my husband. I had to struggle against the society and myself. Now I am able to support with financial help to my families. Some of my friends say nice some of my friend say bad job and some of them said I am stranger women.

Sometimes I was really upset in the trekking because of sexual harassment in the trail by the Nepali guide and look negatively you should do other job of stay at home and be house wife. I think it is very risk and challenging job. I am improving a lot economically, physically and socially. This work helps for me to be confident and independent. Most of the trekkers were supported t and encourage to me. I think trekking is untraditional job because "when lady is out of house, people talk badly and think badly in the society. Cultural barriers and conservative think make her difficult. If "I listen to other people I can get forestation myself and I can't do anything". But I have to think what is right and what is wrong.

I am bit hesitate to talk with owner and I don't know I have insurance or not. Sometimes I can't tell anything with the boss where I would like to tell something. We have equal right between male guide and female guide in their trekking agency. Sometimes I would

like to work as Freeland from other agency but I can't go without permission from my present trekking agency. This profession helps me to build confident and independent.

Case: 5

I am 24 years old and I came originally from Jumla. I passed class eight and she left the school because of marriage. I had arranged marriage, after a few years my husband married another women. Often my husband drunk and bit me always and my mother in law also scolded me always. After that I divorced him. I have one brother who is studying and my sister left the school before I came to three sister's adventure trekking office I was learning. I found my way to three sisters by as empowering the women of Nepal's training in 2007. Now I completed three training and it is my four working season. I had own decision to come Pokhara. My parents were supported at my decision and my profession. But my neighbor talks negatively. Now I am 'Impure' women which my societies think.

Most of the trekkers encouraged me and Nepali women to be independent women. I am searching for good job and to increase self- confidence and her English improve greatly.

I am interested in continuing this career. Now I support parents also. I recently am improving a lot, economically, physically and socially. I am become really confident.

I am always hesitating to talk with the boss. But I am satisfied with my profession. This is seasonal worked so it difficult to manage in up season because I am not permanent guide.

My confidence and English have improved greatly. I am interested in continuing this career. Now I am economically supported to my family.

Case: 6

I am 28 years old and original from Solukgumbu. I am unmarried women. I am studying bachelor level in Pokhara. I found her way to three sisters through my relative who was working in the same company. I came to Pokhara in 2001.It was my own decision to come Pokhara. After I took training I started to work. I had faced lots of difficulties

during the trek. Now situation is better then before. It was really hard to work because of conservation thinking of the people but now they understand more. I am running eight years being in Pokhara, and completed four training from three sisters and took a government license. I had always wanted to be a trekking guide when I was younger while watching my uncle go on many treks as a guide, but I was never allowed to go because I was female. My family was very supportive to my decision to come Pokhara. My younger sister wants to come to Pokhara to become a guide when my schooling will finish. I have one sister and one brother. My sister is studying at school and my brother is farmer. I have mother and father. My parents are farmer and illiterate.

I was a farmer and student before coming to Pokhara. I have been trekking in numerous times in Manang, mustang, Everest and Langtang region. At the beginning I faced many difficulties male guides had negative intension and insulted me lots. On the other hand was language difficult for me. Still now where I am staying the people don't like women are doing trekking and say this is not respectful work. In my hometown also some people talk so negatively. But some of them respect me now a day.

I was really upset and almost returned to home but now, I have much more confident and I feel like "I can do it". Now I don't care what the other people are saying. I took rock climbing training and climbed some peak. I will be continuing my profession in future. I have got nice opportunity from this profession (like exchange the culture, chance to travel own country, lots of exercise and income) some women client sponsor for my education. My confidents and knowledge influences greatly. Now I many western friends and they are supported and encourage me always. Now a day I supports to my family too.

I am permanent guide of three sisters and earn 650 during the treks and almost 4000 per month. Still I satisfied with her profession. They have an equal right in the office.

ANNEXES-II

TOURIST QUESTIONNAIRE

We highly appreciate your efforts in completing the following questions as listed below.

Name of Respondent:

Nationality:

Home Address:.....

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Marital Status | Married | Unmarried | Separated | Divorced |
|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|

| | | |
|-----|------|--------|
| Sex | Male | Female |
|-----|------|--------|

1. How did you hear about women trekking guides?

2. Why did you choose to go on a trek with a women trekking guide?

3. What were your impressions about the trekking crew?

4. How did your (female) guide relate to the male guides?

5. What services did your guide provide for you?
If male,
 - (a) Was your guide same serve like female?

 - (b) Was you found any different to have female guide compared to male?

6. When did you feel close to or distant from your guide?
7. While trekking, how did you relate to the Nepali people?
 - What did you talk about to the other Nepali people?
 - For how long did you talk with them?
 - Were they male or female?
8. In your opinion, are there any differences between trekking with a women guide or a man guide? If yes, please explain further.
9. What did you talk about with your guide?
10. What do you think about Nepali women working as trekking guide?
11. What mostly did she ask with you?
12. What was your guide like?
13. How did your guide relate to the other people on the trek?
14. What are your impressions of the women in Nepali in trekking crew?
15. What culture differences did you most notice?

16. Did you face any difficulties with your guide on trek?
17. Did you enjoyed with your guide on trek?
18. Have you seen male guide, porters and male trekkers act inappropriately toward your female guide?
19. Did your guide have conflict or arguments with male guides?
20. How did she relate to the guest house owner?
21. What western and which local values did you recognize in your guide?
22. What do you think she can learn from a western women like you?
23. In what moments did you feel particularly comfortable with your guide?
24. In what moments did you feel uncomfortable with your guide?
25. What role your guides play in the way you're related to the country and the people?
26. How did your guide behave with you?

27. Would you prefer to have female trekking guide or male why?

28. Do you have any suggestions for the guides or trainees guides?

Thank you for your co-operation!

Bishnu Thapa
Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Tribhuvan University
Kirtipur, Kathmandu

ANNEXES-III

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPOWERING THE WOMEN OF NEPAL (EWN)

Date of Interview:

Age:

Name of Respondent:

Address:

Ethnicity/Caste:

Religion:

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Marital Status | Married | Unmarried | Separated | Divorced |
|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|

| | | |
|-----|------|--------|
| Sex | Male | Female |
|-----|------|--------|

Family background

| | Mother | Father | Brother | Sister |
|-----------|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| Education | | | | |
| Age | | | | |
| Work | | | | |

Duration of Involvement in EWN:

History of Company:

1. When was your company established?
2. Why did you open this company for women?
3. Which factors motivated you to get involved in the trekking sector?
4. How and why did you get involved in the trekking sector?
5. When you started trekking, what did other people say?
6. What obstacles/ hindrances did you face when you started this profession?
7. What did you do before you became involved in this sector? Why did you choose this business rather than other sectors?
8. Who supported you when you decided to participate in this sector?
a. Family () b. Neighbors c. Friends () d. Others ()
9. Who discouraged you from joining this sector?
a. Family b. Neighbors c. Friends () c. Others ()
10. At the beginning, how many women participated in trekking guide training in your office? How many of them worked as a trekking guide?

11. Which districts were most of the women from? What was their family background?
12. Did you motivate these women to join the training? If yes, how?
- 12.1. Did these women continue trekking guide work?
- If not,
- 12.2 In your opinion, why did they not continue work?
- a. Family problems () b. Society () c. Religious beliefs d. All of above ()
- e. Other ()
- 12.3 Did the women feel self-empowerment?
- a. yes () b. No () c. confused ()
13. When you were guiding, how were you treated by guides, trekkers, porters and other people involved in the tourism sector?
14. Trekking is traditionally men's job but now women are also involve in this sector. How do you feel about this change?
15. What are the problems do you face in this profession?
16. What kind of opportunities you are getting in this profession?
17. How many guides are there are in your organization? Please write numbers.
- a. Women guide () b. Trainees guide () c. Male guides () d. Male porters ()
17. How did the women learn about the training?
- a. Advertisements () b. Media () c. News () d. Self visited related area ()
18. Does female guide work the same as male? What differences you found between women work and men work in guiding? At the same time, what are the differences in client feedback in male and female guides?
19. How many permanent guides in your organization? Please write numbers.
- a. Female () b. Male guides ()
- 19.1. Do you give the same salary for both male and female?
- If not, why?
20. What types of trekkers request female guides?
- a. Single women () b. couple trekkers () c. single men () d. groups ()
- 20.1 Around how many trekkers demand female trekking guides per year? Around how many women guides you are supply for them?

21. Do you have plan to employ more women guides in your organization?
a. yes () b. no () c. Depends on situation ()
22. If other trekking agencies want female guides, could you provide/ supply them?
If yes,
22.1 How you motivate/ encouraged to women to go to other trekking agencies?
23. Does trekkers supported your idea as doing this work?
24. Have you ever found difficult by trekkers and guides?
25. Are trekkers talk about Nepali women?
26. How do you feel you represent for Nepal and Nepali women?
27. Are you going to these types of empowerment training in future also?
a. Yes () b. No () c. Depend on situation ()
28. In your opinion how many more women could join this field?
29. Do you have witnessed or experienced sexual harassment of your female guides by trekkers, guides and other people?
a. Yes () b. No ()
30. Have you received any social awards? If yes, what kind and how many times have you received this award?
31. In your opinion, why do western women travel by their self?
31. What is your plan for future?
32. What kind of support you receive and from whom?
33. What do your family, friends and neighbors' say to you?
34. What is your situation with marriage?
35. Could you share some your memorable experiences?
36. Do you have any suggestions?

Thank you for your co-operation!

Bishnu Thapa
Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Tribhuvan University
Kirtipur, Kathmandu

ANNEXES-IV

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FEMALE TREKKING GUIDES
AND TRAINEE GUIDES**

Date of Interview:

Age:

Name of Respondent:

Ethnicity/Caste:

Religion:

Mother Tongue:

Place of Origin:

Address:

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Marital Status | Married | Unmarried | Separated | Divorced |
|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|

| | | |
|-----|------|--------|
| Sex | Male | Female |
|-----|------|--------|

Family background:

| | Mother | Father | Brother | Sister | Husband | Son | Daughter |
|-----------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|-----|----------|
| Education | | | | | | | |
| Age | | | | | | | |
| Work | | | | | | | |

Work Experience:

| S.No. | When | Location | Company | Type of work | Income | Per month/year |
|-------|------|----------|---------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Company now:

| S.No. | When | Location | Company | Type of work | Income | Per month/year |
|-------|------|----------|---------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

1. How long have you working in this sector?
2. How did you become involved in this sector?
3. What exactly motivated you to join this field?
4. What did you do before to join this field?
 - a. Student () b. Farmer () c. Other ()

5. Why did you choose this field rather than other sector?
6. What kind of hindrances did you experience when you joined this field?
If you left the school,
7. Why did you leave the school?
 - a. Due to economic difficult in family () b. Parents didn't help () c. Due to the marriage () d. Did not want to continue studies
8. Do you have any relatives in this field?
 - a. Husband () b. brothers () c. Sisters ()
9. From whom you supported by when you join in this field?
 - a. Family () b. Neighbors' () c. Friend () d. self decision ()
10. How did your family, community and friends treat you after you joined this field?
11. Did you face any difficulties joining this sector because of family members, friends and neighbors? If yes, what kind of difficulties did you face?
12. Trekking is traditionally man's job women has might be physically weak; if they go out their reputation might be damage. In you opinion what do you think?
12. How many times you took training from EWN?
13. How did you participate in this training?
 - a. Media () b. Relatives () c. friends () d. EWN's, training
14. Do you have government license for trekking?
15. Trekking is challenging job, women rather can do other job, what do you think in this statement?
16. Are you doing fully guide or you are carry clients bags also?
 - a. Only guide () b. Carry the client's bag ()
17. What is your responsibility in the field?
18. Do the trekkers ask about women in Nepal?
 - a. yes () b. No () about what?
19. Did the trekkers support your work?
 - A. Yes () b. No () how?
20. Have you ever been misbehaved by clients, guides and other people during the trek?
If yes could you mention the nature of the misbehavior?

a. Teasing () b. Scold / Threatened c. Sexual harassment () d. Torture () e. Using the bad word () d. Other ()

21. How do local people treat you while you are on duty?

a. In a respectful way b. Badly ()

22. Have you ever found any difficult environment by guide?

23. How do shop/ restaurant guest house staffs behave with you?

24. Could you share some memorable experiences?

26. What kind of problems to you encounter with this job?

27. What kind of opportunities you are getting in this profession?

28. Have you ever worked as a trekking guide at any other agency than the 3 Sisters?

a. Yes () b. No ()

If other trekking agencies wants women guide would you go?

If yes,

1. Do you get permission from present office

2. Self decision

29. How is your relationship with employer?

a. Scared () b. hesitate () c. Good ()

30. Is there equal right between male and female guides in your company?

a. Decision making () b. Salary () c. Participated in meeting ()

31. What changed you feel in your life doing this job?

a. Feel empowered () b. Independent ()

32. What do you think about your profession?

33. Do you encourage other women to join this field?

If yes, how?

If not, why?

34. What else you do when you are not trekking?

35. Are you satisfied with your profession and with your company?

36. What kind of alternative do you have if you don't work this profession?

37. What do you think will happen in the future in this field? What is your plan for future?

38. How do you think you represent Nepal and Nepali women?
39. In your opinion what should do to increase the participation of female guide in trekking sector?
- If not marriage,
40. What is your situation with marriage?
- If married,
41. Is your husband also trekking guide?
- a. Yes () b. No ()
42. Does you husband support your profession?
- If husband is in other sector,
43. What does your husband do?
44. Was your career as a trekking got affected after getting marriage?
45. How many children do you have?
46. Do you think there is equality in the relationship between you and your husband in every aspect of life?
47. What is your husband's behavior to you as you are involved in trekking sector?
48. Why do you think trekkers want women guide?
49. Who shows you encouragement towards your job?
50. How do you treat differently male and female trekkers?
51. What do you think is the trekker's opinion of Nepali women when they see you and the other women guide?
52. Your position as decision making at
- a. high) b. Low () c. Medium () c. Not at all ()
53. Do you get monthly salary from your company?
54. Have you ever gone abroad?
55. You family support and their attitude"
- a. Very supportive and appreciate what you are doing.
- b. They don't like your profession.
- c. They don't care about but cannot do anything about it.
56. Personal security during trekking

a. Accommodation b. Insurance

57. How do the employers behave with you?

58. Do you have a any suggestion?

Thank you for your co-operation!

Bishnu Thapa
Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Tribhuvan University
Kirtipur, Kathmandu

ANNEXES-V

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

Date of Interview:

Name of Respondent:

Sex : Male/Female

Address:

Age:

Marital Status: Unmarried /Married/Separated/Widow

1. What do you think about women working as trekking guides?
2. Do you have any relatives in the tourism sector?
 - a. Son () b. Daughter () c. others () d. none ()
3. Do you motivate your relatives to participate in this sector? If yes, how?
4. “Trekking is challenging job so women should not do this work.” What do you think about this statement?
5. “If women go out to work as trekking people, it will hurt their reputation and it will be difficult for them to get married.” What do you think about this statement?
6. In our society, many people say women are mentally and physically weak but men are adventurous. Do you agree with this belief?
7. In your opinion, what could be done to increase the participation of female guides in the trekking sector?
8. Even in 21st century, there are many negative attitudes toward professional women. In your opinion, why is this so?
9. Do you have any suggestions?

Thank you for your co-operation!

Bishnu Thapa
Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Tribhuvan University
Kirtipur, Kathmandu

ANNEXES-VI

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TREKKING AGENCIES

Name of the organizations: _____ Date of Interview: _____
Sex: Male
Name of Respondent: _____ Female
Year of established: _____
Address: _____
No. of staffs ()
Male () Female ()

1. Have you employed women as trekking guides?
a. Yes () b. No () c. Sometimes ()

2. Could you employ women as trekking guides?
a. Yes () b. No () c. I don't know ()

3. When you appointed a female trekking guide, which of the following characteristics did you consider?
 - a. Education qualification ()
 - b. Physical appearance ()
 - c. Language efficiency ()
 - d. Age ()

4. Approximately how many women guides can you employ?
If none, why?

5. Do tourists prefer to have female trekking guides?
a. Yes () b. No ()

6. What are tourist's attitudes towards female trekking guides?

7. If you employ women as trekking guides, do you pay the same salary for both men and women?

8. Around how many trekkers demand female trekking guides per year?
9. Which types of trekkers are demands female trekking guide?
a. Single women () b. Couples () c. Single men () d. Groups ()
10. Do you think women also can work like men?
11. How many permanent guides are in your organization? Please write number.
a. Female () b. male ()
12. What do you think of women working as trekking guide?
13. Trekking is traditionally men's job, if women works as a guide, they might have a bad reputation in society.” What do you think about this statement?
14. Do you have some relative's in this sector?
a. Son () b. Daughter () c. Other ()
15. Do you motivate your relatives or friends to join this field?
If yes, why?
If no, why?
17. In your opinion, what could be done to increase the participation of female guides in the trekking sector?
18. Do you have any suggestions?

Thank you for your co-operation!

Bishnu Thapa
Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Tribhuvan University
Kirtipur, Kathmandu

ANNEXES-VII

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GUEST HOUSE/RESTARUANT

Date of Interview:

Age:

Name of Respondent:

Ethnicity/Caste:

Religion:

Place of Origin:

Address:

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Marital Status | Married | Unmarried | Separated | Divorced |
|----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|

| | | |
|-----|------|--------|
| Sex | Male | Female |
|-----|------|--------|

1. Have you seen women working as trekking guides?
2. What do you think of women working as trekking guide?
3. Do you have any relatives in this sector?
4. Would you motivate to your friends/ relatives to join this field?
If yes, why?
If no, why?
6. Whose number is more in trekking sector?
a. Male () b. Female ()
7. Do you see any differences behavior of males and females when they come to your guesthouse?
If yes, what kind of different behaviors have you experienced?
8. As you have seen in your guesthouse, how do trekkers, guides and other people treat the female trekking guides?
9. Were trekkers/ guides/ normal people acting inappropriately toward the women trekking guides?
10. Have you ever seen sexual harassment towards women guides at your place?
11. What do you think of women working as trekking guides?
12. "Women are mentally and physically weak, but men are strong and adventurous" Do you agree with this statement? If yes, why? If no, why?

13. In your opinion, what could be done to increase the participation of female guides in the trekking sector?

14. Do you have any suggestion?

Thank you for your co-operation!

Bishnu Thapa
Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology
Tribhuvan University
Kirtipur, Kathmandu