Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Demography is a statistical and mathematical study of the size, composition and spatial distribution of human population and of change over time in this aspect through the operation of five processes; fertility, mortality, migration, marriage and social mobility (Bogue, 1969, cited in Harried, 1997). Among the processes of population change, fertility is one which occupies a central position in the study of population for several reasons. Human fertility is responsible for biological replacement and the maintenance of the human society (Bhende and Kanitkar, 1994).

Today almost all countries of the world are facing the problem of population growth. It is a hindrance on the path of capital formation. Without capita there can be no economic development. Increasing population gives birth to food problem. Then another effect of growing population in a developing country is that expenditure goes very high. It is also

believed that in a developing country increase in population is bound to result in unemployment. With the growing population there is an increase in environmental degradation. Other aspects such as resources and productivity, saving and investment, manpower utilization, health, education, social welfare, social security, child-development etc are also affected. This results into an obstruction in developmental efforts (K.C, 1996).

Till census year 1930, the population growth rate was negative but after 1930, it started increase rapidly. The population of Nepal grew at the rate of 1.1% between census years 1930 to 1941. Between 1941 and 1952-1954, the population of Nepal grew at the rate of 2.33%. So, the population of Nepal grew at the rate of 1.65% between census Years 1952/1954 and 1961. Between 1961 and 1971, the population of Nepal grew at the rate of 2.07%. An unprecedented rate of growth of 2.66% between the 1971 and 1981 census followed this. But between the 1981and 1991 census, the population growth rate came down to 2.1%, it will double in about 33 years if the existing trend continues in future (CBS, 1995).

Nepal is facing problems of high fertility especially in different caste/ethic groups, characterized with distinct characteristics. The high fertility is also more pronounced in backward and depressed communities who are backward and depressed communities such as *Damai, Kami*, and *Sarki*, the lower caste group. Those communities who are back warded in the context of economic, social, cultural, educational and all other conditions are known as *Dalit* community who ate supposed to be untouchables. Among the total caste/ethic group of Nepal, about 20 percent are in the *Dalit* community (Manab-Maryada, 1999)

Nepal estimates the unemployment rate at 4.9 percent. Also the rural urban gap varies considerably 4.4 and 12.2 percent respectively. The survey also reveals that one fourth of the employed person do not work even 20 hours a week and another quarter of the working force work only for 20-39 hours a week. The remaining half of work force work

for 40 hours or more (CBS.1996). It is noted only 20% of total land is cultivated while unprecedented population growth leads to reduced size of land holdings. There are sizeable differences in terms of land/man ratio and productivity in physiographic regions, the mountains, hills, and Terai. As a result of excessive population growth there has been deforestation in need of cultivable lands (K.C, 1996).

Job opportunities, occupation and income are negatively related with fertility and positively related with status. About 90 percent population of Nepal live in rural areas and 81 percent people depend on agriculture as their subsistence (K.C, 1996). The latest report of the World Bank shows that per capita income of Nepali people is nearly about $21, which is very low in context of others Asian countries. Similarly, it is well known that rural area have low level of income than that of urban. Besides agriculture, other types of job opportunity are very low. These conditions are responsible to the increase in the fertility rate.

Fertility behavior is the process of giving birth, which interacts with the ambient environment and the environment is different for different societies. Besides the degree of interaction, the environmental variable is different within the biological limits of human fertility. Several social, cultural, psychological as well as economic and political factors are found to be operated and these are responsible for determining the levels and differentials of fertility (Bhende and Kanitkar, 1994).

The status of women is understood in terms of opportunities for education, alternative to domestic roles, freedom of movement and related issues which are usually considered by demographers in relation to fertility (Ross, 1992). Generally, the status refers to women's overall position in the society. The rights and obligations of women also indicate their social, economic and demographic behavior. Therefore, the status of women has been frequently considered as one of the influencing variables in the study of fertility behaviors.

 The socio- economic status of women defined by the United Nations includes the status

of women as labour, student, wife and mother. It also includes the empowerment and prestige connected with the women's right and duties which are related to the extent of women's command over the social and economic matters in household and extra household circumstances that have great influence on human life (UN, 1984).

Nepal is the only one Hindu kingdom in the world. Being a deeply religious country most of the custom, traditions and laws are strictly followed according to Hindu scriptures. According to Hindu tradition, marriage is a must for all, whether man of women. Thus, marriage has been regarded as marking the initiation of sexual activities and the beginning of exposure to reproduction, the ability to bear children. This ability in Nepal is the aim of every married couple as children play a very significant role in a family both in economic and social terms.

Nepal is a multi caste and multi ethnic country. Fertility behaviour differs according to caste/ethnic groups. The high fertility is also more pronounced in backward caste groups including *Damai*, *Kami* and *Sarki*. Among the total cast/ethnic group of Nepal, about 20 percent are within the *Dalit* community (Manab & Maryada, 1999). The contribution to the high level of fertility rate made by the different cast/ethnic group needs to be addressed urgently.

The Ignored, Oppressed and *Dalit* Group's Welfare Development committee has identified 23 different *Dalit* communities- *Damai* , *Kami Sarki*, *Lohar, kasai, Badi, Kusule, chyame, dhobe, dusadh, Badi , Musahar, sattar, Sunar , gaine Kuche, Chamar Paswan, Tatma, Santhal and halkhor* (Bhattachan:2003). We can divide *Dalit* caste in different groupings in accordance with the type of work the groups limited to. For example, communities engaged in tailoring or played musical instruments, communities involved in washing clothes or in making clay pots , working with metal will be given different family names.

Three major occupational castes: *Kami Damai* and *Sarki* traditionally artisans. These castes have their own occupation. Especially *Kami* are skilled in ironwork. They make

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agricultural tools, utensils and weapons for home. The other *Dalit* caste *Damai*s are the tailor: they sew and made the clothes of the village people. In a traditional system, *Damai* and the ones who create a very exciting and pleasant atmosphere by playing traditional musical instruments (panche baja), Lastly , the *Sarki*s are who leather worker, they make and repair the shoes and other leader goods. These people are the only Hindus that eat dead cows (carcasses). They make just about any leather item if you give them a design (Darnal, 2002).

About 12.9% of the whole population constitutes the service castes (so called untouchables and *Dalit*s) who are assigned the traditional hard jobs and unclean works like cleaning dirty places, making shoes, wiping out the dirty things and removing dead animals(NDC, 2060). These occupied works result hurtful degradation and subject to humiliation and discrimination. *Dalit*s are therefore becoming victims from entering into the temples, participating with social rituals and mainstreaming with state development. They also are depriving to have the share if distribution of state facilities. They largely excluded from Nepal's army, administrative, diplomatic and political structures.

The caste system has been illegal in Nepal for about forty five years by the new Civil code but it continues to shape people's lives. The constitution has also provisioned that no person shall , on the basis of caste, be discriminated against as untouchable, be denied access to any public place or be deprived of the use of public facilities. Any contravention of this provision shall be punishably by law. The government has formed marginalized., oppressed and *Dalit* welfare Development Committee in 2054 to formulate, design and execution of appropriate police and programmed for the socio-economic development of marginalized, oppressed and *Dalit* communities. The national *Dalit* commission has also been formed on 6 chaitra 2058 (19 march 2002). Many NGOs and INGOs have launched empowerment programmers to improve the condition *Dalit*s. The government has adopted the inclusive policy in every sector and reservation for *Dalit* is an attempt to bring the *Dalit*s in the mainstream.

Caste/ethnicity is a determinant explanatory variable to determine the way of life and fertility behavior of Nepali women. The other studies show the life time fertility or children ever born (CEB) was found to be the highest among the untouchables (Niraula & Shrestha 1997). This study tries to explore the fertility behavior of *Dalit* community in Nepal particularly focusing on *Kami* community of Malma VDC of Baglung district in western Nepal.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Today, the world is facing a crucial problem of population growth. Present population growth as certainly frightened many fertility countries, particularly south Asia. In one side, population is growing and the other side, the food population has not been able to catch up the pace of population growth. Population growth ever brings different problems such as deforestation unemployment, carious environmental problems so many (UNICF, 1996).

The total population has been divided into many types of ethnic groups. People from different ethnic backgrounds have different tradition and value system governing their daily life, including their reproductive behavior but relation between ethnicity and the fertility has been hardly explored.

Ethnicity is a major determinant of fertility in Nepal which implies that ethnic group has different fertility behavior. The mean CEB was found 3.41 for the Chhetri community whereas for *Dalit* community it was 6.50 per women. Fertility is high in poor traditional societies because of high mortality, lack of opportunities for the individuals, less advancement and higher economic value of children.

Most of the *Dalit*s reside in the rural areas and their livelihood comes from caste based occupational works and agriculture. Both activities are labor intensive and largely rely on the traditional means of the production such as human and animal labor such as bulls use for ploughing and there is a high demand for children, which ultimately affects their

fertility rate.

*Dalit*s also considered as the poorest of the poor population of the country. They have less access and knowledge to the health related facilities. They are very poor to spend money on the health. *Dalit* women are far behind with respect to decision making even in household behavior, even though several development programs are running concerning empowerment of women which is another most important factors for their higher fertility rate.

However, the relation of fertility behavior with in socio-economic, demographic and cultural variables has not yet been fully understood in Nepal. The persistence of high fertility rate is not known within the community also. As no remarkable efforts have been laid down to examine the fertility of the *Dalit* community with respect to demographic characteristics and socio-economic variables, the study attempts to find out how *Dalit*s have experienced their fertility behavior. This scenario of fertility behaviour of *Dalit* women raises some questions about the real socio-demographic situation of *Dalit* and the causes of higher fertility rate. Major research questions are as follows:

a) What are the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of *Dalit* women?

b) What is the nature of fertility behavior among *Dalit* women?

c) What is the relationship between age at marriage and fertility behaviour?

d) What is impact of education on fertility behavior of *Dalit* women?

Population growth rate is one of the challenging problems of Nepal. Growth rate depends on fertility behavior. Whether it differs according to caste/ethnic group or not is the major concern of this study.

1.3 Objective of the study
The general objective of this study is to describe socio-economic, demographic characteristics of *Dalit* women and to assess their fertility behavior in relation to age at marriage and education. The following are the specific objectives of the study:

1   To find out the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of *Dalit* women in the study area

2   To assess the nature of the fertility behavior among *Dalit* women in the study area

3   To find out education and female age at marriage its relationship with fertility of *Dalit* women in study area.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Low fertility condition of woman improves woman health and maintains high social status of woman in every society. It is new and open secret that low fertility improves woman's health by reducing the livelihood of disease transmission and protecting against certain cancer and other health problems.

Better understanding of the fertility behavior is necessary to have control upon the fertility rate. Understanding differentials of fertility helps to identify the group of different area and sectors, which may need special attention with respect to fertility control and other development programs. This study helps to identify major socio-economic and demographic characteristics of *Dalit*s women and their fertility behaviour. These characteristics help to formulate policy related to fertility. The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of fertility differential may help academicians, researchers and policy makers in their respective field.

The study of fertility behavior of *Dalit* community would assist to have distinct population policies. This frame work will compare the reasons for high fertility behavior in *Dalit* community with recent and concurrent reference that will be more interesting and necessary for Government of Nepal (GON), non-government organizations (NGOs) and international non-government organization(INGOs) working in fertility behavior in the backward community.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

This study has following limitations:

1. This study is confined to *Dalit* (*Kami*) women of Bangeshalla at Malma VDC of Baglung district.

2. This study will cover only one fertility behavior of *Dalit* women (*Kami*) of study area.

3. Limited methodological tools like questionnaire and interview were used in data collection. Similarly tables, figures are used to present the data and simple statistical techniques are used as method of analysis.

4. This study was based on data obtained *Dalit* women from the sample selected in Bangesalla at Malma VDC only. Thus, this finding may not be generalized for other caste of women and other parts of people.

5. Selected demographic and socio-economic variables are considered to explain the fertility behavior.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

This study is related to fertility behaviours among the *Dalit* women in Bangesalla village at Malma VDC of Baglung district. This study has found out the actual situation of fertility behavior. According to statements of empirical problem and objectives of the study following conceptual framework is formed.

This study is related with fertility behavior of *Dalit* women. In this study, fertility behavior is dependent variable decision authority, education, occupation, practices of family planning, marriage system, mass media, economics, religion, poverty and so on.

There are different factors that affect the fertility behavior of women. It is believed that higher the education lower the fertility. Occupation play vital role in fertility behavior involving various kinds of income sectors contribute positive fertility. Property is one of ranking indicators in Nepalese society. Property can affect on every fertility behavior such as high reproduction rate, basic need for child and so on. Practices of various methods of family planning contribute low production of offspring. Age at marriage is a major indicator of reproduction. Early marriage help high reproduction and late marriage can control low reproduction. From this study, I have tried to find out how is the fertility behavior of Dalit women in the study area.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 *Dalit*s and Untouchability

Untouchability has been regarded as one of the worst forms of discrimination resulting from the caste system. Untouchable feeling on a Brahmin has brought the so called *Dalit*s several punishments (Anand, 1970).

Bista in the book "People of Nepal" speaks that Nepali is also a mother tongue of the small number of occupational castes, the *Kami*, *Damai*, *Sarki* and Sunar and such other castes as Sanyashi and Giri. He adds that manuscript code of Hindu behavior stated that they were to be treated as Sudra; low cast because of their neglect of caste rules. He adds that Chamers (low caste) have charge of direct manual works in the community and eat any animals caracas except dog, cat and horse (Bista, 1996).

The term '*Dalit*' is derived from Sanskrit word 'Dal' which means to sit, break crack and so on. When used as an adjective, it means 'spilt, broken, burst, destroyed and crushed' (Guru, 1993). The *Dalit*s form the lowest caste in the Hindu caste hierarchy. *Dalit* refers to members from an untouchable 'lower' caste. The upper class group has created an image of *Dalit* who is unchanging, uneducated and untouchable. This process of imagination is again the part of the power relation between *Dalit* and *Non-Dalit* community (Devkota,2002).

Devkota (2002) has elaborated the *Dalit* movement in Nepal highlighted the social economic conditions of *Dalit* and described about to different issues of *Dalit* community from the socio- political, cultural and economic perspectives.

Kisan (2002) says that the movement of *Dalit* has started since 2004 B.S. and it is still going on. This convention is deeply existed in the society due to the Hindu Myth. The movement of *Dalit* could be success in two movements, firstly from reformation and secondly from revolution. He also focused that some clever *Dalit* groups are attractive in

the movement for their personal benefit so that the movement is not becoming success. He claims that reservation for *Dalit* is necessary for certain duration.

Caplan (1972) made a study of the priest and cobblers (Brahmin and *Sarki*). In this study, he analyzed the socio- economic interrelationship between the backward and exploited community represented by the *Dalit*s and the people of higher caste represented by Brahmins and Chhetri. The village society throughout this area is highly stratified through the idiom of caste. The writer focuses that the Brahmins who obtained the resources from their cling invested the surplus in Loans and so become richer. The *Sarki*s people mostly go to India for seasonal work. The land reformation as not effected to cobblers in this area. In the same book he also describes that credit (Loan) became a media for Brahmin to exploit the *Sarki*s. Brahmins provide them loan and take theirs' land as collateral. If Brahmin provides them 100 rupees, they will make the agreement of 1000 rupees. Due to the lack of education, Brahmins easily cheat them. Brahmins don't accept the loan repayment amount by *Sarki*s and lastly grab their land. Caplan has quoted that. *Sarki*s are Hindu, however Tagadhari never thought as they are Hindu. They behave them at low scale.

Being an agricultural based country, Nepal has 81 percent of the total population engaged in agricultural activities (CBS 1995). The literacy rate is only 54.1 percent of the total and only 42.8 percent women are literate (CBS 2002).

Davis (1957) explored factors that kept underdeveloped areas at high fertility levels even though many countries have experienced a sharp decline in mortality. He hypothesized that institutional factors were responsible for high fertility in the developing world.

More than 86% of women and 61% of men were married before they were 25 years of age. Mean age of marriage nevertheless has been increasing steadily since 1961, for women it increased from. 15.4 years in 1961 to 18 years in 1991. The change is most pronounced among young girls between 18-24 years. In1961, almost 25% of girls in this group were already married. In 1991, only 7.4% of regional perspective a higher

proposition of female are married of an earlier age in the Terai that in the hills and mountain. The eastern development region is socially most advanced with mean age of marriage of 19.2 years and for western development region least advanced with 19.9 years (CBS, 1995).

Poor health among women is also a consequence of many closely spaced pregnancies. For families with subsistence farming, large families are an economic and social asset. The expectation that some children may die encourages parents to have more children. Sons are particularly desired, therefore parents who already posses many daughters may still keep trying to produce a son. Temporary contraception and child spacing are poorly understood concepts. Therefore, mothers and infants rarely have sufficient time to grow strong before the next child is born (UNICEF, 1990).

The total fertility rate (TFR) is 4.1 between 1991 to 2001.Total fertility has actually increased among 15-29 age group in rural areas, in spite of an increase in mean age of marriage and higher education status of the girls (CBS,2001).

Aryal (1997) Identified the mechanism of demographic change which is connected with economic development. He argued that in a traditional society, fertility was kept high by high mortality. With the onset of modernization mortality level fell rapidly because of economic and social changes including higher level of living, better nutrition, education and control of diseases. However, fertility level responded slowly to modernization, but ultimately began to decline through the widespread use of contraception (Netestein, 1945, as quoted in Aryal, 1997).

Education is one of the most important factors on fertility. Inverse relationship between the educational attainment of couples and fertility has been observed. Education may affect fertility indirectly by raising the age at marriage. Educational attainment may be taken as an indicator of the modernization of the society as well as the scale for measuring the status of the women is the society. The higher the level of female literacy in the community means the lower the fertility rate and vice versa.

Age at marriage is an important factor to determining the fertility level of Nepal. Fertility differences according to background variables such as geographical region, ethnicity, religion, education and so on. But the background variable explains fertility differences very little compare to age at marriage (Tuladhar, 1985).

The high rural fertility of Nepal can be reduced significantly only through proper education of women and work opportunity outside the home. The relationship between work status and fertility also varies by type of occupation and social class. It is found that lower fertility is more pronounced among the higher occupation and education groups that among blue collar worker as lower education groups (chaudhury, 1982). Son preference is considered to be an important is contributing to the high desired family size norm consequently leading to high fertility, particularly in the developing countries of Asia, (Chaudhary, 1982). By ecological zone, mountain women have the highest total fertility rate at 6.6, hill women follow with 5.8 while those in the Terai have the lowest 5.4 lower fertility rate in hill and Terai areas are attributable primarily to better health facilities and family planning publicity in these areas as compared to the mountains. This indicates a gap that could be rectified by better publicity and expansion of health and education facilities. Development regions with higher female literacy rates (Eastern, Central and western Development region) have lower fertility rates than other two mid-eastern and far- western regions (Tuladhar, 1995).

Several researches (WB, 1994, Tuladhar, 1989, UN 1992) reveal that education is supposed to play the most important role in the fertility. Education brings the feeling of social upgrading which affect the fertility.

According to Nepal's Muluki Ain, a husband is permitted to remarry if his wife has incurable venereal disease of if she has no child after a child is interpreted to means son. Urbanization and education seem to have made a significant impact a fertility behavior. Urban women on an average on an average give birth to 2.3less than rural women. In urban areas there is a consistent decline in the fertility rate across all age groups. Thus,

the rural urban difference in fertility behavior has increased through the 80s. The average number of children number of children ever born married decreases with the level of mother's education also, with the highest difference 0.9 per married women in 15-1-49 ages occurring between the literature and illiterate women (CBS, 1995).

In Nepal husbands status of work plays an important role in declining the fertility level, for example, women whose husbands were engaged in farm occupation had higher fertility (3.27 mean), CEB than that of non-farmer (3.19 mean) CEB for women (Neupane, 1997).

Early marriage is another serious problem that some girls must face. The practice of giving away girls for marriage at the age of 10 to 14, after which they must start producing children, is prevalent among certain ethnic groups. Early marriage for many girls in Nepal leads to high rates of maternal and infant mortality. Early marriage robs a girl of her childhood time necessary to develop physically, emotionally and psychologically. In fact, early marriage inflicts great emotional stress as the young woman is removed from her parent's home to that of her husband and in laws. Her husband who will invariably be many years' seniors will have little in common with a young teenager. It is with this strange man that she has to develop an intimate emotional and physical relationship. She is obliged to have intercourse, although physically she might not be fully developed (UN, 1995).

Nepali women marry at an early age, being having their children soon after marriage and are sterilized at an early age. Fewer than half the married women who have been sterilized has used a temporary family planning methods to space births. As a result of the emphasis placed on sterilization services and not sufficient emphasis placed on temporary family planning method for spacing births, there is small but growing evidence from rural Nepal that male and female sterilization can have severe negative implications on females (karkis, 1999).

Socio- economic development increases the work participation rate of women. There are

several ways in which work and fertility may be related. Firstly, there will be a conflict between work and child bearing of women ,which will reduce the desired family size. However, the conflict between work and child bearing depends upon the alternative means of childcare. Secondly, work may enhance the status of women in their families, which may increase their ability to limit fertility successfully. Finally, work may increase women's exposure to various birth control measures. However, what is more important is the nature and place of work (Shrestha and Rayappa,2000).

Most of the countries in the orient, the size of the family plays an important rate in the social structure of Nepal. In a predominantly agricultural country like a Nepal where main source of income livelihood in agriculture, where large number of persons are required for agriculture activities and where the need of someone to look after the aged is of great importance, large and extended families are inevitable. Thus the size of household becomes large with increasing dependency on agriculture (Bista, 1967).

Fertility and Health Survey (1996) reported that about 28 percent of both ever married and currently married women of age group 15-19 years know at least one method of family planning. Among them only 38 percent of currently married women have been reported ever use of contraception and 35 percent having use of modern method.

Social and economic factors are the major factors that play an important role in determining the family size, especially in an agricultural county like Nepal. The education of the couple, employment opportunities, income of the couple, etc affects the fertility pattern. Higher education and greater employ opportunities may effect by delaying the birth and also by low level of fertility. But sometimes the higher income level may not result in low fertility, because of the notion that "children are the God gifts". Thus, these cultural factors may affect the fertility level and thus it may remain high (K.C.1996)

Women's education is associated with contraceptive use. There is significant difference in rate of contraceptive use between education of wife and husband. Similarly,

occupation of women is also associated with contraceptive used. The rate of use almost doubles in women involved in non-agricultural activities 45.24 percent in comparison to women involved in agricultural activities, 23.2 percent, (Subedi, 1996).

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Selection of Study Area

The study area is located in Malma-3, Baglung, of western Nepal. This is a mountainous area which is 40 Km west from Baglung Bazaar; headquarter of the district. This location was selected due to two important reasons. Firstly, the researcher is familiar to the *Dalit* community. Secondly, fertility behaviour of this *Dalit* community highly differs than the other caste/ethnic community of neighboring VDC and it might represent other *Kami* community of Nepal.

3.2 Research Design

This study follows descriptive research design. The whole methodological process was planned as describing data to meet the stated objectives. The study is based on field survey in order to fulfill the specific objectives of the study. Researcher has tried to explore and investigate the socio–economic and familial issues of the study area in terms of fertility behavior of *Dalit* women through description of information.

3.3 Nature and Source of Data

Both qualitative and quantitative data have been used in this study. Those data were obtained from primary as well as secondary sources. Primary source of data collection was field survey. Secondary source of data collection were relevant literature such as books, journals, articles and different publications of government and non government organizations. Library was the source of secondary sources.

3.4 Universe Sampling

All the households of *Dalit*s' in Bangesalla village are taken as the universe of the study. There are 23 households of *Dalit*'s in the study area. Due to the small size of household

of *Dalit*, census survey is taken to gather the information related to socio-cultural and economic characteristics. Interview was taken with one person from each household. The higher priority is given to the female respondent of the study area as my study demand.

3.5 Data Collection Techniques

From the samples selected data were collected through specific data collection techniques. They are as follows:

a. Household Survey

Household Survey also is an important tool of data collection. Household survey schedule provided quantitative data. So, in this study, I was prepared a household survey schedule before going to the field for the information about their socio-cultural, economic condition and their family size, marital status, occupation, age, sex, education and so on. The data was collected from respondents during the field work of the household level.

b. Interview Schedule

Interview schedule was the major data collection technique. It was structured interview schedule. Information on socio-economic and demographic characteristics was generated through interview schedule. Semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect data related to marriage and education. With the help of this technique, information about the fertility behavior of *Dalit* women was collected.

c. Observation

Observation was another tool of data collection in this study. External cultural characteristics including house type, dress, food pattern, and environment as well as their behavior of male and female were carefully observed. It was also verifying tools of data collection technique. The researcher has appeared closer to *Dalit* women to observe the behavior.

3.6 Data Presentation and Analysis

The collected data were presented through table and charts only. Those data were analyzed through simple statistical techniques like percentage and proportion. Secondary data analyzed descriptively.

Chapter Four

Socio-Economic and Demographic

Characteristics of the Respondents

This chapter basically describes socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the *Dalit* women in the study area. It also includes total population, age sex and occupational characteristics.

4.1 Study Area

The study area is located in Malma-3, Baglung of western Nepal. This is a mountainous area which is 40 Km west from Baglung Bazaar, district headquarter of the district. This VDC is surrounded by Hatiya VDC in the east, Righa VDC in the west, Kandebash VDC in the South, and Pandapkhani VDC in the North.

This VDC has diverse caste/ethnicity. Major caste/ethnicity includes Brahamin, Chhetri, Magar, Thakuri and other so called lowest castes, e.g., *Kami*, *Damai* and *Sarki*. The VDC has male population 3,198 and female population 3,974. The average family size is 5 persons per household. The total population of *Dalit* includes 1,128 in which male 519 and female 609. Other caste/ethnic groups in the VDC are Magar, chhetri and Thakuri.

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood of the people of Malma VDC. Main crops include rice, wheat and maize. People plant fodder on the bounds of the agricultural field.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

The study area is located in the Malma VDC of Baglung district. Particularly study is confined to ward no. 3 of the VDC. Total population of the village is 494. Out of this total population, 219 are men and 275 women. The *Dalit* population is 188. Out of this population 87 are male and 101 are female.

Table No. 1: Total population of study area.

Castes	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Brahmin	113	147	260	52.63
Chhettri	18	27	45	9.10
Kami	88	101	188	38.05
Total	219	275	494	100

Source: VDC Record, 2004

According to the table 1, Brahmin consist 52.63% is the dominant caste group by number in the study area. They are followed by *Kami* (*Dalit*) 38.05%and *chhetri* 9.10% of the total population in this village.

Table: 2 Age and Sex wise population of *Dalit* Women

Age group	Total population					
	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-9	22	25.28	26	25.74	48	25.53
10-19	22	25.28	19	18.81	41	21.80
20-29	14	16.09	27	26.73	41	21.80
30-39	9	10.22	14	13.86	23	12.23
40-49	8	9.19	6	5.94	14	7.44
50-59	7	8.84	6	5.94	13	6.91
60+	6	6.89	4	3.96	10	5.31
Total	87	100	101	100	188	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

4.2.1 Age and Sex Distribution

Age and sex are regarded as main social and demographic characteristics of population. It has meaningful relationship with income and occupation. Age determines working condition of people. Similarly sex determines occupational status of the population. Besides this it is meaningful to the fertility behavior of women.

In table no 2, the highest proportion of population was found in age group 0-9 (48 or 25%) and 10-19 of total population 41(21%). It shows that population of children is higher than other. It indicates that fertility rate for a *Dalit woman is* higher. Similarly, population of age 60+ is lower than other. Average life expectancy of *Dalit* people is lower than other. Total population of age group 60+ is 10 in which male are 6 and female are 4 which very low.

4.2.2 Distribution of the Population by Occupation

Occupation is the basis of livelihood of people. It is regarded as one of major sources of income. Living standard depends upon consumption which is determined by income. So occupation has important role in human livelihood. The occupation of any population is useful for framing the human resources. Planning is considered as an integral part of socio-economic development and policy making which needs capable human resource.

As shown in Figure.1, majority (28%) of the population is engaged in wage labour. They do not have enough agricultural land. They therefore use to go wage earning. Active population is nearly 50 percent. The wage earning (agriculture) activities include as their caste wise works like ploughing, *aaran* (traditional iron working through fire). The second major occupation was found to be student 40 (21%). This is recent trend to send their children at school. It is difficult from them to support economically as they do not have enough income. In the field it was found that luckily one male found to have job of army.
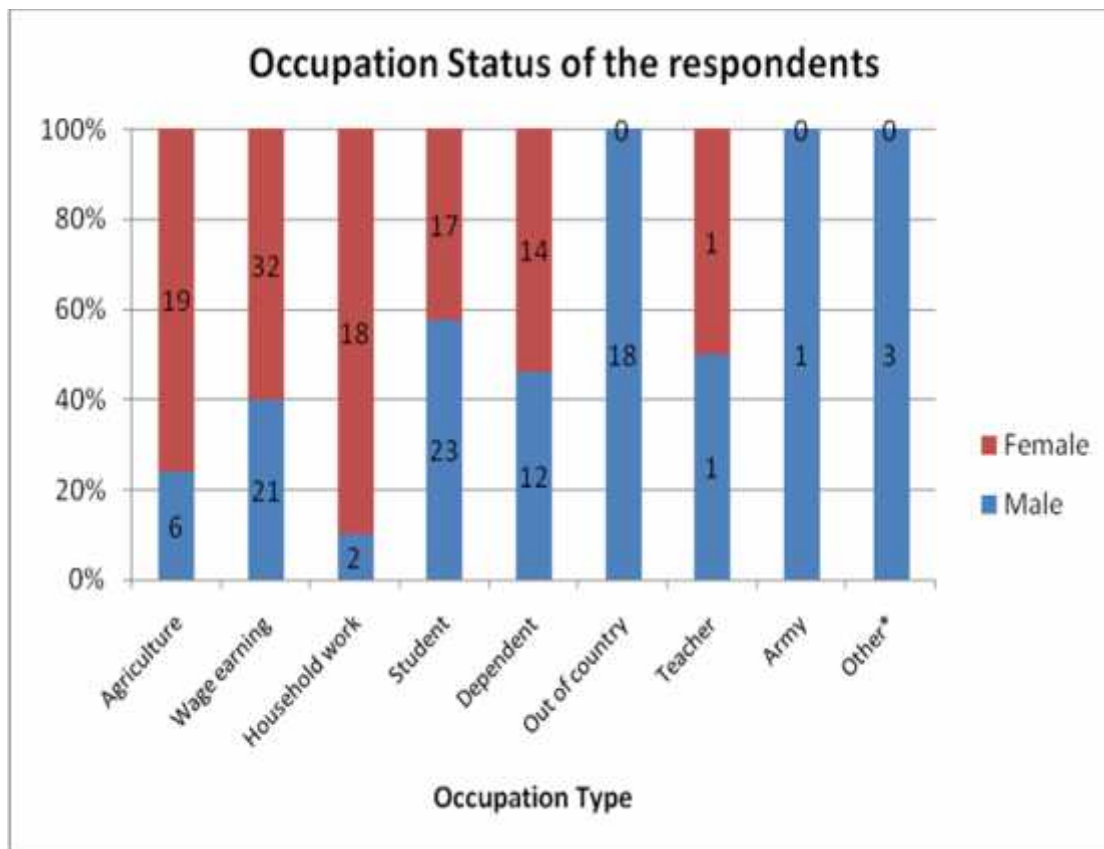
Figure 1. Showing the occupational Status of the respondents in the study area.

Source: Field Survey, 2010

4.3 Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Major socio-economic characteristics show general status of people. It indicates socio-economic condition of people. Therefore this study includes major socio-economic characteristics like; education, religion, occupation, marriage, transport, family size and communication.

4.3.1 Education

Education is an important variable in accounting for demographic behavior and education is one of the social characteristics of persons covered in the study. Education statistics will be useful in analysis relating education to change in fertility.

The populations were interviewed to obtain the education status of the total study

population by sex. Education status is generally considered as associated with other various factors as occupation and income.

Table No. 4: Literacy Status of the study population

Education	Male		Female		Total	
Status	N.	%	N	%	N	%
Literate	48	55.17	43	42.57	91	48.42
Illiterate	39	44.83	58	57.43	97	51.60
Total	87	100	101	1000	188	100

Source: Field survey 2010

The above statistics shows higher percentage of illiterate women (57.43) than literate (48.41) in both sexes calmingly. We see it sex- wise, females or illiteracy of women is higher than of males. It is common scenario of Nepalese population.

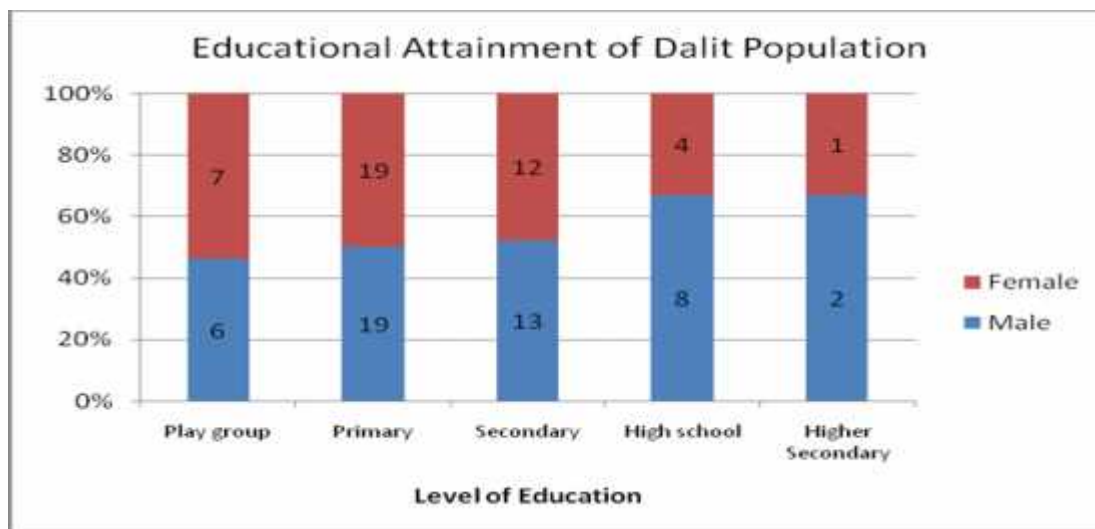## 4.3.2 Education attainment the sex wise of the literate population

Figure No 2: Education attainment the sex wise of the literate population. Source: Field Survey, 2010

In general, the number of female attending school is decreasing with increasing the level of education as shown in the figure 2. Though the percentage of male attending school with increasing the level has increased, the actual number attending the school

has decreased. The number of male at primary level is 19, which has been decreased to 2 in higher secondary level. The number of male and female in primary level is 19 each, which is 2 for male and 1 for female in higher secondary level.

4.3.2 Educational Status of Respondents

Education plays an important role in determining fertility level. It increases the decision making capacity of people. For this educational status of respondent has been recorded in this study. Table 6 shows that among the 23 respondents, literacy of women is 39.13 percent while 60.86 percent of women respondents are Illiterate.

Table No. 6: Distribution of respondents' women by education

Education	Number	percentage
Literate	9	39.13
Illiterate	14	60.86
Total	23	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

4.3.3 Distribution of Study Population by Marital Status

Marital status is a demographic characteristic of a population. It involves biological, social, economic, legal and religious aspects. It is most important factor in population dynamic as it affects fertility tremendously. This sub section provides the information on marital status of the study population by sex.

Table No. 7: Distribution of study population by marital status.

Marital Status	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Unmarried	51	58.62	35	34.65	86	45.74
Married	34	39.08	65	64.35	99	52.65
Widow/widower	2	2.29	1	0.99	3	1.59
Total	87	100	101	100	188	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

From table no 7, out of the total population, 188 are considered at the marital status. They are categorized in different marital status groups. Married population accounts for the highest percentage (52.65) followed by unmarried percent (45.74) . We can also see that unmarried males (58.62) percent are more than females (34.65%) but married females (64.35%) are more than males (39.08%) widow percentage 2.29are more than widower percentage 0.99.

4.3.4 Distributions of Respondents Women by Age at Marriage

Table no 8 shows that the marriage has started from the age 11and has ended at the 21 years in the study respondents. Out of the currently married women, 30.42 percent of them are married at the age of 17 followed by the age 15 (13.04) and the age 12,13,14,16 (4.34 percent). The proportion of currently married *Dalit* women's age at marriage shows the bit skewed towards the early rather than late marriage.

The currently married women by age at marriage shows that 2 women have married at the age 20 and 21 and no women found who has married below 11 years and above 22 years.

Table No. 8: Distribution of respondents by age at marriage

Age	Number	Percentage of total
11	1	4.34
12	2	8.69
13	2	8.69
14	2	8.69
15	3	13.04
16	2	8.69
17	7	30.24
18	2	8.69
19	-	-
20	1	4.34
21	1	4.34
Total	23	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

4.3.5 Communication

Communication is the social part of our society by the means of which we should aware about the happenings around us, we can know the various information and dispense and share our views. There are different modes of communication few examples are newspaper, Radio, Television, Telephone, Email, Internet, Katale(found in remote villages').But all of these facilities are not available in all parts of the country urban areas are blessed with these modern modes of communication while in rural areas we cannot find all these facilities. The place where the research study was conducted is a remote

village where all the modes of communication were not available only the few households did have TV and Radio while other household have to depend on *katale* (A person appointed by the villagers to relay message by shouting) for information about village.

Table No. 9: Described the channel of communication

Channel	Population	
	Number	percentage
T . V	2	8.69
Radio	13	56.52
Katale	8	34.78
Total	23	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

From the above table we can see that 3 modes of communication are available in the village i e Radio, TV and katale. The total percentage people using Radio is 56.52% while people relying on katale for information is 34.78%. Only 8.69% of people have TV in the home. The respondents using TV as means of communication were found to have occupation of wage earning and army. This might be due to having higher income and land ownership.

4.3.6 Impact of Communication on the Birth of Children

The flow of information via various modes of communication has impact on the fertility style of women. The people watching TV are listening to Radio come to show about the various methods of family planning and the benefits of family planning. They also get information about the use and availability of the techniques of family planning. Also they get frequent information on a regular interval which helps them to set their mind to .Because of the impact of the information; they give birth to less number of children.

Table No.10: Description of number of children of those with communication facility and

without communication:

Channel	Total No of person		Total No of Child	
	No	%	No	%
Radio	13	56.52	54	49.54
T.V	2	8.69	6	4.58
Katale	8	34.78	49	44.95
Total	23	100	109	100

Source: Field survey 2010

In table 10, we can see that the women having facility of TV gave birth to 5 children while 13 women who have the facility of radio gave birth to 54 children. Likewise 8 women who have to rely on *katale* (local messanger) for information had 49 children. The reason why the average no of children of the women having the facility if TV and Radio is smaller than that of women totally relying on other local means of communication is that TV and Radio can give the knowledge of family planning much more easily than other means. Also because of the information provided by the T.V and Radio people knew about the disadvantage of giving birth to too many children. They get the information about family planning and the benefits of having fewer children. They also get knowledge about the availability of facilities of family planning and the way to use them. But the women who do not have these facilities are unaware of the way of family planning and the availability of the same so they unknowingly give birth to too many children's.

4.3.7 Family Structure

Family is a social institution and most important primary group in society. It is the simplest and the most elementary from of society. It is the most basic of all social

graphing. It is the first and the most immediate social environments to which a child is exposed. It is an outstanding primary group, because, it is the family that the child develop its basic attitudes. Further, of all the groups that affect the lives of individuals in society none touches them to intimately of so continuously as does the family. From the moment of birth to the moment of death the family, exerts a constant influence. The family is the first group in which we find ourselves. It provides for the most enduring relationships in one form of other.

There are two types of family based on number. Nuclear family is a small group composed of husband and wife and immature children which constitutes a unit of the community. Joint family which is also known as undivided family normally consists of members who at least belong to three generations such as husband and wife, their married and unmarried children and their married as well as unmarried grand children. The joint family system constituted the basic social institution in many traditional societies, particularly in the eastern societies. In Nepalese context this joint family system prevailed among the Hindus as well as non-Hindus. The following table shows family types in society.

Table No. 11: Family Type

Family Type	Number	Percentage
Joint	6	26.08
Nuclear	17	73.91
Total	23	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

Table no 11 shows that out of 23 households, 6 are joint family which is 26.08 percentage and nuclear families have been found 17 out of 23 households which is 73.91 percentages. Among the 23 households, most of the families are nuclear, which is 17 (73.91%). During survey period, it is known that in the past these *Kami* people used to

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live in joint family and some of the families were nuclear but today these joint families are changing to the nuclear families. High fertility and high reproduction was a major case in the past. It was due to lack of knowledge about family planning, which leads to the joint family. Again, the culture of practicing endogamy marriage within *Dalit* community resulted early marriage and this lastly resulted to the more children and more family members. Low fertility helps in making family size smaller. But it is changing to nuclear family these days.

4.3.8 Religion

Religion has the direct impact on the fertility rate. In our society most of the people have their belief in Hinduism. Hindu religion speaks for too many children. It is said that too many children are blessing of god. Because of this the people in our society are motivated to give birth to many children. Another fact is that Hinduism says that lease one son is necessary to carry on religious rituals after the death of parents. There are special rituals which are only preformed by son and culturally daughters are not allowed for those rituals. So in the desire of a son, people give birth to too many daughters increasing the overall population.

Table No. 12: The priority of children

Children	No. of parents	Percentage
Son	21	91.30
Son and daughter	2	8.69
Total	23	100

Source: Field Survey 2010

In the table 12, we can see that total women believe that their religious emphasis is on getting son. Out of 23 respondents 21 preferred sons while believing the equality between son and daughter are 2 which is 9.69 percent. The women in the field believe that only daughter can also do well is Zero .This illustrates that there is a role of religion in the birth of children.

4.3.9 Transportation

Transportation is the back bone of development. Without the help of transportation it is almost impossible to develop the society. Transportation helps easy access to the place and the people of the place with rest of the world. It is easy to develop other infrastructure projects if the place is accessed with easy mode of transportation. In Nepal, Roadways is the main mode of transportation. The availability of road helps the local people to build schools campus and other projects which help people to be more informative and knowledgeable. The local people can sell their agricultural products to the big markets. These are as motivators. The market is developed and the opportunity of employment also increases. People can earn more, learn more and buy and use modern technologies of communication. These all things help people to be aware of family planning and benefits of having fewer children.

The area where the study was conducted is a hilly region. The track road is available there about 30minutes walking distance of the village and people use Jeeps (four wheeled vehicle plying in hilly area with capacity of 10 people) as a means of transportation. The jeep fare is too high and people do not often use this transportation of business purpose. The village is the hilly area and it takes almost 45 minutes walking from the village to reach the road and nearby market. Although not of much use, this track has helped the local people to be more active and informative. The awareness has increased.

4.4 Decision Making in *Dalit* Women

Dalit women's position and status in decision making in household matters and especially in reproductive system is poorer than other castes and ethnic groups. So decision making in household's matters in *Dalit* women is very low in the study area. The decision making system in fertility is given in the following table.

Table no. 13 Decision Making of *Dalit* Women

Type	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Only by male	18	78.26
Only by female	1	4.34
Both male and female	4	17.39
Total	23	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

In regard to the decision making at household level, out of 23 respondents there were 18 respondents who said that the decision is made by male, 4 respondents said both and only one respondent told about the female decision. It clearly shows that the fertility decision is primarily dependent on the male, like other patriarchal society. This is one of the major factors of high fertility rate in the study area.

Chapter Five

Fertility Behavior Among *Dalit* Women

5.1 Fertility

Fertility is one of the three principal components of population dynamics that determines the size and structure of the population of a country. The number, shape distribution and increment of the population are highly influenced by reproduction. The fertility rate is very important in the study of population. The fertility rate is found to be different in different ages.

Table No. 13: Age wise fertility rate of Nepal 2001

Age	Fertility rate
15-19	0.110
20-24	0.248
25-29	0.208
30-34	0.136
35-39	0.081
40-44	0.034
45-49	0.007

Source: CBS1995, 2003, cited by population report of Nepal 2061 BS

There is an inverse relationship between age and fertility rate. In the initial age of fertility rate is low while in the middle rate is again low. Similarly, in the middle of the life fertility rate was higher .In Nepal, there is a problem of early marriage and because of this early marriage women also give birth to children at smaller age from the above table we can draw the conclusion that most suitable age for fertility in between 20-24, the fertility rate 0.24 at the age group of 20-24. The fertility rate goes in decreasing after the

age of 25. The fertility rate at the age group of 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49 are 0.2.5,0.136,0.081,0.034 and 0.007 respectively. The lowest age of fertility rate lies between the age of 45 and 49.

According to population census 2001, the total fertility rate of Nepal is 3.8.The fertility rate age in the decreasing trend in comparison to before the reason behind this are:

1.   The increment of use of family planning.

2.   The decrease in the age of early marriage.

3.   Improvement in the women education.

4.   Increasing urbanization.

5.   The fertility rate varies in different cast. This rate is more in *Dalit* caste in comparison to other castes. The reasons for high fertility rate in *Dalit* women are lack of education, poverty and lack of awareness.

Table No. 14: Age wise child born of study Area

Age Group	Total Number of child born	
	No	percentage
15-19	22	20.38
20-24	36	32.03
25-29	27	26.21
30-34	14	11.65
35-39	6	5.82
40-44	3	2091
45-49	1	0.97
Total	109	100

Source: Field survey, 2010

In table 14, we can see that in the age 20-24 there are highest number of children (36) born. Likewise 27 children were born in the age range of 25-29. Another fact shows that

22children were born in the age range of 15-19. After the age of 30 the fertility rate is continuously decreasing. It means that in the earlier age of life the fertility rate is higher than the latter age of life.

5.2 Knowledge of Family Planning

The different means of family planning are oral pills, Condom, IUD, male/female sterilization, Depo-Provera, Norplant, Foaming tablets, withdraw and tradition methods. Most of the people are unknown to these methods .The table 15 shows knowledge of family planning.

Table No. 15: Knowledge of family planning

S.N	Knowledge	Number	Percentage
1	Known	20	86.95
2	Not Known	3	13.04
	Total	23	100

Source : Field survey, 2010

Methods of family planning are basically two types; permanent and temporary. Permanent methods are related to long life and temporary method is related to short term in nature. But the purpose of both methods is to reduce fertility rate in society. Among the total, 20 respondents have basic knowledge of temporary and permanent family planning methods and its advantage and disadvantage. And only 3 respondents do not have any knowledge of both permanent and temporary family planning methods which could be due to lack of education, Ignorance with modern mass media and not nave interaction with educated people

5.3 Use of Family Planning

Fertility depends on the using condition and contraceptives. Contraption, devices to prevent from fertilization, is used when couples desire either to stop giving birth of to increase the birth interval. Both of these purposes help to plan a family. It is expected to

have low fertility level for those women who use family planning methods than those who do not use family planning methods high level of fertility, the indicator of fertility behavior, is used here to explain the degree of use and non use of contraception method among *Dalit* Women.

Table No.16: Use of family Planning

Type	Number	Percentage (%)
User	7	30.43
Nonuser	16	69.56
Total	23	100

Source: Field survey, 2010

In the above table clearly shows that majority of the respondents have the use and no use of family planning method. Most of the people none uses the family planning methods are 16(69.56%). Only 7(30.43%) respondent are using the family planning methods.

Table No. 17: Methods of family planning

Method	Number	Percentage
Sangini	2	28.57
Female sterilization	2	28.57
Male sterilization	1	14.28
Pills	1	14.28
Condom	1	14.28
Total	7	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

In the above table, we can see 2 respondent are using *sangini*, 2 respondent are using female sterilization, and three respondent are uses similarly, Male sterilization, Pills and condom.

5.4 Age at Marriage and its Relationship with Fertility

Marriage is one of the universal institutions. It is established by the human society to control and regulate the sex life of human being. It is closely connected with the institution of family. So, family and marriage are complementary to each other. Marriage is an institution of society, which can have every different implication in different cultures. Its purposes function and form may differ from society to society, but it is presented everywhere as an institution

Late marriage is a major means of fertility control, which contribute reduction of population increasing. age at marriage has important implication for fertility and family planning. The legal age for marriage in Nepal is 16 years for girl with concept from parent and 18 users without consent from parents. According to medical philosophy, reproduction age of women is after 20 years and of man is 25 years. But people in Nepal could not borrow these approaches properly; the following table shows age at marriage

Table No. 18: Age at marriage

S.N	Marriage age	Number	percentage
1.	11 -14	7	30.43
2.	15-19	14	60.86
3.	20-21	2	8.69
	Total	23	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

It can be seen in the above table that 14 women out of 23 women were married in between the age of 15-19 which is 60% of the total sample, like wise 7(30.43%) were married in between age of 10-14, and 2(8.69) were married in between the age of 20-21 .by the analysis of data in above table the latest age of women in this area is 21. The age

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between 14-149is found to be most suitable for reproduction Due to the early marriage there is a long period available for reproduction and more children are born. There for there is a impact of marriage age in fertility rate.

5.5 Education and Relationship of Fertility

When women become educated their view about family size also changes shifting from high family size to low family size .Education changes way of thinking and in turns also affect fertility . An education status woman plays an important role in lowering fertility. Education influences he fertility in different way. It leads to awareness of birth control measures thus directly affects fertility. Education is considered as the best contraption. It is inversely associated with fertility .It has been widely accepted that education has a strong direct and indirect impact on the fertility behavior. Fertility behavior in terms of child ever born is explained by literacy status if eligible women has considered with literate and illiterate to distinguish categories. Child ever born by literacy status of the study population is displayed below.

Table No. 19: Number of child by literacy status of eligible women

Literacy status of eligible women	Cases		No of child born	
	No	percentage	No	percentage
illiterate	14	60.86	79	26.60
literate	9	39.14	30	72.47
Total	23	100	109	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

In the above table, we can see that out of 23 women14 (60.68) were illiterate. While 9(39.14) women have only the basic knowledge of reading and writing. We can see that the total children of 14 illiterate women were 79(60.86) and this is 5.64 children per women. Also we can see that the 19 (39.14) women with simple knowledge of

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writing and reading accounted for total 30(72.47) children which is 3.33 children per women. So we can draw a conclusion that the illiterate women gave birth to more children. So the one reason for giving birth to too many children is illiteracy.

Table No. 20: Number of child by education status of household women

Education status	Cases		No. of child born	
	No	percentage	No	percentage
Informal	3	33.33	12	37.93
primary(1-5)	5	55.55	15	51.72
secondary(6-8)	1	11.11	3	1034
Total	9	100	30	100

Source: Field Survey, 2010

In the above table we can see that the total number of literate women is 9. Among the literate women, we can find that the number is different in different class. There are 3 women who have gone through informal classes. The numbers of children given birth by there are 5 women who have attended primary school. The numbers of children born by these 5 women were 15 which are 3 for one woman. There is one woman who has attended secondary school and she gave birth to 3 children. We can draw a fact that the women with higher level of education had fewer numbers of children. The various reasons behind this fact are;

〕 The lack of knowledge of family planning

〕 The lack of knowledge of using the me trials used for family planning

〕 The felling of shyness while talking family planning

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ﺝ The belief that the children's are the blessing of god.

Therefore, illiterate women have more children while literate women have the knowledge about the drawbacks of having too many children and because of this they give birth to fewer numbers of children.

Chapter Six

Summary, Major Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Summary

Nepal is facing problem of high rate of population growth. To overcome such problem the actual pictures on population composition, fertility rates, mortality rates, immigration and emigration, relation between socio-economic factors and fertility etc. of small administrative areas are essential. This study of fertility behavior among the *Dalit* women was conducted in Malma VDC, Ward No-3, Baglung district. The major objectives were following:

1. To study the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of *Dalit*.

2. To assess the nature of the fertility behaviour among *Dalit* women.

3. To observe female age at marriage and its relationship with fertility

4. To assess the impact of education on fertility among *Dalit* women.

This is a descriptive cum exploratory study. Data of this study basically are both descriptive and quantitative in nature. This study mainly based on primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from observation, interview and key informant interview. Information is collected from 23 married women. The collected data from field were tabulated and analyzed by number, percentage and graphs.

In the total population of 7,172 in the VDC 3,198 are male and 3,974 are female. Similarly, in the study area of ward No-3, there are 219 male 275 are female. The total number of *Dalit* households is 23 and the population of *Dalit* is 188 out of which 87 are male and 101 are female. 48(25.53%) people are in age group 0-9. In total *Dalit* house hold of the study area 97 people are illiterate which is 51.60% and the people attending the higher secondary level only 3 which 3.29% of total population. The total number of people attending High School is only 12(13.18%), those attending Secondary School are

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only 25(27.47 %) and those attending primary school are 38(41.75%). Out of 23 household women 14(60.86%) of the them are illiterate

The production of food from their land of 20 households among 23 is insufficient. Major income sources of family are labor wages, agriculture, animal husbandry and foreign employment. Medical treatment is taken by the service of local health post and the traditional local herbal treatment prevailing in this community.

All the people are married to the same caste partner. Joint family is changing into nuclear family. Most of the respondents were married in between 11-18 years which is 91.31% out of total population.

Out of 109 children, 61 are born before the age of 24. The findings show that illiterate woman has given birth to most of the children. The number of children born by total illiterate women is 79(72.47%). The main mode of communication is Katale (Local messenger). Newspapers are not available and the facility of other means of communication is also not affordable by these people. Hinduism is the main religion of the people residing in this area. The people give preference to son than daughter. It is seen that 21 women out of 23 had given preference to the birth of son and the value of son is extra ordinarily greater than that of daughter in this community. Most of the woman in the study area is aware of the methods and usefulness of family planning but they are not using them because of lack of proper education and encouragement by their partners. Only 7 respondents are using the methods of family planning.

There are no other means of local transportation other than walking. Although the Baglung – Burtibang highway passes through some part of Malma VDC, only long route jeeps passes through this place. Since this highway is yet to be blacktopped, local buses and other such means of transportation are not in use frequently.

6.2 Major Findings
Major Findings of this Study are as follows

1. The population of women is greater in the *Dalit* community of the study area. Out of the population of 188 people, 101 are women while 87 are men.

2. The population of children is greater (25.53% of total) in this *Dalit* community of the study area. This show that the population of dependent people is greater and this might be one of the reasons of poverty in this community.

3. The main source of income is wages from agricultural labor (41.5%). The poverty is seen to have been prevailing since long ago.

4. The level if knowledge and education is very low. Only 39% of them are literate. The age at marriage is also seen to be very earlier that prescribed by medical science. 92.27% of total population marries at the age of less than 18 years. The prevailing illiteracy and culture has given more priority to the birth of son rather than daughter. This might be one of the reasons for the high rate of fertility.

5. Though, the number of female and male attending primary school was same, the number of female attending higher class is decreased in comparison to male. This might be one of the reasons of higher fertility rate of the area.

6. The decision for giving a birth to a child was found to be done primarily by male.

7. People of the study area seem to be aware of the methods and usefulness of family planning but they are not using those methods. Only 30.43% of the total population is using birth control techniques. This might be one of the reasons for the high rate of fertility.

6.3 Conclusions

This study 'fertility behavior of women of Bangeshalla Village of Malma VDC' was conducted in *Dalit* (*Kami*) community of Baglung District. After Study, the following conclusions can be made:

) The numbers of female are more in compare to male and the finding shows there are still existing concept on priority of male child.

) The number of dependent population; child is found to be higher in comparison to self dependent population.

) The people employed as wage earning (AG) is higher. The earning from such

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occupation is just enough for their living hence doesn't have significant role in improving their economic status.

⟩ The level of education is low in this community which is leading to high fertility rate of the women.

⟩ The higher school dropping rate of school by female is due to low awareness level of the community.

⟩ The use of family planning is very less leading to higher fertility rate of the women.

⟩ The age at marriage of the female is found to be another factor leading to higher fertility rate.

⟩ The subsistence level of agriculture is still not being commercialized

⟩ Decision making by male in most of the respondents is increasing the fertility rate of the female of the area.

⟩ The awareness level of use of family planning measures is very low leading to higher fertility rate of the female.

6.4 Recommendations

It is seemed that the diversity of social, economic, Cultural and demographic features among people are causes of variation in fertility. In this connection, in order to achieve the goal of fertility, the following strategies are recommended on the basis of the finding of the study.

⟩ This is the fact that Nepalese society prefers sons. It is found from the demographic survey conducted in Nepal that Nepalese women want more son. Therefore reduce the number of sons to only one and to bring the feeling of equality between son and daughter among the women of village area a rigorous awareness campaign should be implemented.

⟩ A specific economic program should be launched to raise the economic status of the socially and economically deprived section of the village area. The program should be launched aiming to increase participation of women on working outside the home as in service or in social work.

◌ It is true that 'higher the education lower the fertility rate'. Therefore, an extensive and effective program of adult education for these groups is a must for the purpose of making them at least literate.

◌ The wide educational opportunities for children and young of both sexes should be promoted in this area, which would be helpful to control fertility rate.

◌ The government should establish some incentives to those families having adopted permanent birth control measures. The incentives programs such as payment for the use of contraceptives, sterilization, rewards for the poor parents having two of less than two children, the reserved security fund on the death of children of those parents who have adopted permanent birth control measures etc. will be effective in order to reduce the birth rates of the study area.

◌ To control high fertility rate low, the age of marriage should be fixed and implemented strictly from local government.

◌ NGOs, INGOs and Government organization should utilize local leaders and social workers to conduct family planning activities.

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