

CHAPTER- ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The social relationship between men and women is termed as Gender Relations. Likewise assigning of task, activities and responsibilities according to sex is termed as gender division of labor. The social status of women belonging to any cultural group in a society is determined basically by factors like her access to resources, sex ratio, marital status, fertility and family planning, education etc. Economic and social issues are closely intertwined, one reinforcing the other. For example the key issue of access to land for women is closely linked to the socially determined inheritance rights and religiously ritualized need to give away daughters from one's own clan to some other clan (Bhattachan and Mananadhar, 2001).

In Nepal generally women belonging to Tibeto- Burman groups have considerably greater freedom in matters of the all the above status determining factors as compared to women belonging to Indo-Aryan group. Women in Nepal generally have equal status except among Bahun- Thakuri and some middle and upper level Chettri. Since the population of such high caste people is not large the percentage of women who are underprivileged in comparison to men is relatively small. However, the educated and articulate section of women invariably come from among the high caste Hindus and tends to present the situation differently (Bista, 1991).

In all cultural groups, however it was found that women's access to modern resources in the form of knowledge (education, training, etc.) and traditional and newly created assets (e.g. land, machines, employment) was severely limited. This is an outcome of the deep rooted patriarchal structures in Nepalese society that leads in the unequal social status of women in the society, in her family (Asian Development Bank, December, 1999).

In spite her immense fulltime contribution made to her family household work also termed as reproductive work, the status of a working woman is not equal to her male counterpart at home. The lack of respect first, in its initial step comes from the family itself. In both the public and domestic spheres patriarchy refers to the institutionalization of men's power over women within each and every arena of social life.

Due to the patriarchal norms and values, the gender division of labor is strictly implied over our society (Tuladhar, 1997/98).

A woman might be the breadwinner in the family, performing the role of a father (traditionally who earned and brought money home) but her status remains unchanged as a subordinate. This might again be because of the valueless categorization of her work at home as “mere housework”, “Women’s- role” or “Wife’s- role”. Those who lack power are expected to confirm to the decisions made on behalf of the group by those who have power within it (Maithreyi and Chanana, 1989). Women are therefore considered to be subservient to men, no matter what input she makes in the family through her reproductive, productive work, she is expected to confirm to the norms and maintain family cohesion.

If the working-women adjust themselves according to the demand of their in-laws, they are happy otherwise they face psychological tension in the joint family (Sharma, 1980). Efforts made while maintaining a balance between old obligations and new demands usually occurs in the conflicting roles of a women leading to such psychological tension. It is usually seen that working-women usually try to adopt to modernization but not at the cost of tradition. Also the psychological and physical stress that a woman feels regarding her workplace and household responsibilities is incredible. This kind of a mental stress comes in as a barrier in the progress of her career that remains static throughout her entire life as a working-woman. The reason behind her career remaining static with very less promotion chances could be because of her lack of efficiency, punctuality, creativity put in her job. Also her family commitment and sex will not allow her to work at odd hours or do over time unlike men for promotions. Looking at it in a little thoughtful manner we can again find the vicious circle of insurmountable amount of domestic responsibility that stands ahead of her career as a barrier to her intellectual and personal development. It is often seen that being open to the outer world, working-women often go through the feeling of social seclusion under her stressful schedule.

The development efforts raised on Women empowerment issues have certainly brought in a number of changes in the overall profile of women in public sphere. However the age long belief that a woman who adheres to the traditional norms and practices is an “ideal woman” is still very much inherent in our society. It is more deeply rooted among Hindus with no exception to other forms of caste and ethnic groups in Nepal. As mentioned by Bhattachan, religious, cultural and social dominance of Hinduism and Hindu values and ethnic fairness and justice have negatively affected to non-Hindu women. Thus male dominated patriarchal Hindu family system provides very little scope and opportunity for a woman’s individual identity.

The traditional belief of “women in the hearth and men out in the field” is seemingly becoming non-existent. Women today are occupying their seats in public sector coming out of their so called designated “unproductive” and “unremunerated” domestic spheres. Every educated woman today wants to be working women because the supporting argument given for it is that it brings respect and recognition in their overall status. The traditional notion held about women stepping out of the house to earn money for the family as “shame to the social prestige” is definitely crumbling; however there is no any substantial changes seen in the status of such educated working women at household level. She still continues to live on the sole prerogative of the senior male members in the family. In Nepal households are very authoritarian or undemocratic as it is highly centralized and men have full control over its power and authority therefore, one of the preconditions for reducing or if possibly eliminating gender inequality is the decentralization at the household level (Bhattchan and Manannndhar, 2001).

Majority of educated working women are concentrated in Kathmandu. In order to understand the position and status of women it is necessary to examine intra household relationship and gender division of labor at household level.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The educated and ambitious women are very much career oriented today. The common answer to the question “WHY CAREER”, would be, to be self-supportive, independent, economically secured, to practically apply and further develop one’s creativity and knowledge, and to avoid one from being just confined to domestic spheres and be termed as “A HOUSEWIFE”, the most devaluated categorization of an educated women in a 21st century era. Therefore career is inevitable today for educated women who are aware about gender equity and equality.

However, is this equity and equality seen, felt, applied or practiced at every woman intra household level? Has career been able to act as a breakthrough for working women from the traditional stereotypes that have predominantly been inherent, asserting women’s status and roles as inferior, sub-ordinate and subservient to her male counterpart in the family? Have they been able to find career as a breakthrough, as mentioned in the first paragraph? This was the specific research questions of the study with other following research questions that were explored.

- How does a working woman assess her job?

- Having education and employment to her benefit, has she any privilege over the non-working women? Does she see any difference between working and non-working women's status and role in the family?
- How does she feel about existing sexual division of labor in her family?
- How does she, being a woman feels about being open to the outside world and meeting other males in the workplace? Has this kind of thing created any problem in her family, especially with her husband or in laws?
- How often does she go through the psychological, mental stress and physical fatigue of being overloaded by the work?

1.3 Rationale of the Study

A number of studies have already been done on the status of women in general and the status of working-women in context to their workplace or public spheres.

Therefore this study was not merely there to give the statistical profile on the workplace conditions and the marginalization of women workers from certain avenues of production and management. It was an endeavour to understand the existing pattern of working-women status, which more or less stand as a role model to the upcoming aspiring women generation in our society. The study has tried to understand the problem related to the working-women issues not in context to their work or workplace condition at public spheres but in context to their status, role and gender division of labor exercised through patriarchal familial ideology. The root of de-valuation and gender biased categorization of women's status starts from the family as first. So the need is felt to generate knowledge substantiating the issue raised on the problems of urban located, educated working-women of the middle class families in Kathmandu.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to explore the ground reality of the status of educated married working women in context with their gender division of household labor within the family. The study attempted to examine the actual positioning of those women professional who at a surface glance seem to be independent, economically safe and secured with their existing situation. The study also aims in finding out following specific objectives:

- To find out the kind of division of household labor and decision making in the household of working women with respect to gender equality.

- To examine if with growing economic independence has there been a marked change in the attitudes of women towards traditional norms and values.
- To explore different agents/ factors and changes influencing working women intra household lifestyle.

As all the respondents will be women with hectic schedules, so managing time, according to the respondent's convenience could be another limiting factor for the researcher. The study will be done in any areas of Kathmandu valley where the respondents might be working or residing. This is a micro study and may not be applicable at the national level representing working women of all kinds (single, divorced or unmarried) countrywide.

CHAPTER- TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The role and status of women in society can be best understood within the cultural context by the operation of various historical, political, economic and educational factors molding the society within the framework of time and space (Pruthi and Sharma, 1994). There is very less mention, significance, presence, participation and acknowledgement of women in the historical, political, economic and educational sector of Nepal which alike any South Asian country, has deeply embedded patriarchal system in its orientation. With the advent of human civilization into more complex societies of today we can find many evidences of socio- cultural practices that give a clear picture of women's status in the society. The discriminatory practices of sati, foot binding, purdah, genital mutilation in the name of culture led to the women's lowest status globally.

1. Socio-Cultural Status of Women in Nepal

Despite the fact that Nepal is rich in its cultural diversity, majority of communities in Nepal are patriarchal. Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burman are the two main culturally diverse race of Nepal. In terms of attitude toward women, the Maithili and the Abadhi who live mostly in the Terai region are the most conservative communities of the Indo- Aryan group. In such communities, mobility of women outside the household is strictly restricted and regulated by men resulting in their limited access of education and consequently to work outside home. Arrange marriages, child marriages, purdah, dowry system, restriction on widow remarriage, prevail widely in such communities. Among the Tibeto- Burman group who live mostly in hills and mountains of Nepal, the social status of women are better than the Indo- Aryan women. Tibeto- Burman women have more freedom in mobility outside household, marriage/ remarriage options, in choosing their marital partners, in social mixing, in pre- marital sexual relations, income generating activities and employment outside household.

In spite of these cultural diversity, in both of these groups land and property inheritance is patrilineal, the residence patrifocal. All this results in the strong influence of a father and a husband in a woman's life. Women in both Indo- Aryan and Tibeto- Burman groups, lag far behind men in access to property, credit and modern avenues of employment, skill development, education and knowledge. (Asian Development Bank, December, 1999)

Education and employment for women continues to remain secondary to men. This gender gap in education in India (Rao, 1996) shares many similarities with Nepal. Education of the boy is seen as enhancing his future employment prospects and participation in the labor market whereas the intransigent nature of girl- child in her parents' house and the cost of schooling do not support this great investment. When resource constraints arise in the household, the first casualty is female's education. The economic value of the girl- child labor at household outweighs the perceived benefit of education. Thus the author suggest that the obstacles in raising the educational status of women can be attributed to " the persistence of traditional attitudes towards the appropriate role of women", which act as a deterrent in educating a girl- child. Until and unless these discriminatory gender roles are changed, women's status will remain secondary (A Journal of Women's Studies, March 2003).

2. Working-Women in Formal and Informal Sectors in Nepal: A Socio- Economic Status.

The proportion of economically active women in Nepal constituting 40% has always been high compared to other South Asian countries. They are mostly involved in agriculture which is also being more feminized with the increase of more women than men in it. The predominance of subsistence agriculture and male migration from the hills in non-farming sectors, poverty and the cultural composition of the large population (a large proportion of which does not observe taboos on female seclusion) partly account for such high activity rates (UNFPA, 2007). Due to restrictions on the mobility, women access to education and income is limited in Indo- Aryan group while women in Tibeto- Burman groups are more engaged in income generating activities and businesses activities like tourism and related sector, outside household. Women are also involved in the organized manufacturing which is expanding.

However in all these sectors, women are concentrated in lower levels due to lack of educational and management skills. Women experience the double day, double burden, double shift and bear the burden of "paid work" (as a part of the workforce) and "unpaid work" (in the home). This double burden also makes it difficult for women to get better jobs, to get training and to move up the professional ladder. Because of fewer opportunities for education, women get into less skilled and lower paid jobs. Men have very less household responsibilities because of which they have time to think about new avenues of expanding their career and income while women by the time they are done with their household responsibilities have no time to ponder over their professional growth. This is a commonplace situation in almost every urban educated household where both husband and wife work outside equally but an unequal division of work exists inside the household.

Invisibility of women in economy is a worldwide phenomenon, but in south Asia its impact on women is pernicious. Because their labor- in such activities as family care, household maintenance and the informal

sector market- is excluded from systems of national accounts, the work they do remains unappreciated and inadequately remunerated (Haq, 2000). A key site of unpaid work is Household.

Women's access to credit is limited because both formal and informal credit institutions cater to property owners who can provide collateral. Women are effectively excluded from institutional credit since women have little access to inherited property. Women's access to institutional credit is further restricted by their confinement to household activities, their lack of mobility and their lower level of awareness and educational attainment. Access to institutional credit is one major stumbling block for women entrepreneurs in all sectors, including agriculture in Nepal (Asian Development Bank, December 1999).

Women's work outside the home is often an extension of their work in the family. For example, a large number of women work as kindergarten and primary school teachers or nurses and airhostesses. Jobs which entail authority; power and control are considered men's job and jobs involving caring, nurturing, servicing are seen as women's jobs. Women are subservient at home; they continue to be subservient outside. Men are in a position of power and control at home; they continue to be in similar positions in the outside world (Bhasin, 2004).

3. Invisibility and Insignificance of Women's Work caused by Gender Stereotypes and Gender division of labor.

It is clear that women participate and contribute to the market economies; it is also clear that women's contributions are rendered invisible. A gendered division of labor reinforces unequal and discriminatory practices. Although women perform some of the heaviest, dirtiest and most labor intensive work, much of that labor remains invisible as it occurs either within the household or in the unregulated informal sector. The vast majority of south Asian women work in the informal sector or in unpaid family assistance, with the informal sector accounting for the employment of 75 percent in Nepal (Mahbub, 2000).

The main problem of gender based division of labor, that is women confined in private spheres and men having privileges in public spheres, is primarily because of industrialization and urbanization. Therefore, in urban and industrial areas, men also should do works at private spheres and women also should do work in public spheres (Bhattachan and Manandhar).

The gender division of labor is also responsible for statistics like: globally, women hold only 14 percent senior managerial positions (UNDP, 1995). Gender division of labor or sexual division of labor, refers to the allocation of different roles, responsibilities and tasks to women and men based on societal ideas of

what men and women should do and are capable of doing. Different tasks and responsibilities are assigned to girls and boys, women and men according to their sex- gender roles, and not necessarily according to their individual preferences or capabilities.

Men and women, boys and girls learn and master only those skills considered appropriate to their gender roles. Thus, different skills and aptitudes are created in women and men, girls and boys, and are then ascribed solely to one another. Gender division of labor also leads to hierarchies and inequalities in statuses because men and women labor is not valued or rewarded equally. Even now, equal pay for equal work is not the norm in most countries; housework is unpaid; and women are the first to be fired when recession hits the workplace (Bhasin, 2004).

4. A Historical Context on Gradual Confinement and Invisibility of Women's Work marked by Public and Private Sphere Dichotomy.

It is believed that women have more equal status in the societies where production takes place within the household and where there is no separation between private and public spheres. Public and private spheres are artificially constructed categories that segregate certain facets of life like family, home, social relations, community etc from political and economic activities undertaken outside the four walls of home. The demarcation is constructed to justify the "attribution of lesser economic, social or political value to the activities of women within what is defined as the private sphere" because of the "gendered nature of this division". The separation also helps treat the two arenas as discrete to side step the application of similar values or comparison between the two. Hence, women's work at home which enables their husbands to go out to earn and create assets is not attributed any economic value on account of being carried on within the four walls of the house, i.e. within the private sphere. On the other hand, the work of the men outside their homes is attributed greater economic value since it contributes to the growth of GDP of the country (CEDAW, 2004).

Man the hunter theory assumes that men everywhere and at all times have been women's superiors and that the work men do is more important or more highly valued than women's work. Not surprisingly, this theory was developed largely by western male anthropologists who were viewing other societies through the tinted lenses of their own culture. Assuming male dominance, they often overlooked women's roles in the societies they were observing or they on relied male informants for data on women (Gailey, 1987; Rogers, 1978; Ward, 1996).The question, then, bears re-asking; are Western construction of gender universal? More than seventy years ago, the pioneering anthropologist Margaret Mead answered that

question in the negative based on her field research among three societies in New Guinea. Mead observed cultures in which men were expected to be timid and nurturing, but women could be described as aggressive and competitive (Mead, 1935). The role of women especially for large hunting was restricted because they could not hunt simultaneously with carrying infants, food and weapons. But it was possible for women to do the gathering easily combined with looking after young children which was followed by a regular pattern of dividing subsistence task resulting in the merely equal status of men and women.

Every known society has a division of labor by sex (and also by age). However, what is considered men's work versus what is considered women's work varies dramatically from society to society. In pre-industrial societies, child bearing and child rearing do not isolate mothers as they frequently do in societies like our own. "The tasks are absorbed by a broader range of people, and children are more incorporated in public activities. Moreover, motherhood (either through childbirth, adoption, or fosterage) often conveys an increase in status, giving women a greater say in matters than when they were not fully adult" (Gailey, 1987).

It appears, then, that non biological factors- among them environmental resources, size of the group, the economy, and, of course, ideology- play a more significant part in determining what the members of a society define as appropriate "men's work" and "women's work" than do biological factors(Renzetti and Curran, 2002).

In foraging group the division of labour was not rigid. Men hunted and women gathered while men gathered and women hunted sometimes. Their status was rather autonomous than equal. A complementary and interdependent division of labor existed with both men and women contributing to subsistence. In herding societies which was predominantly patrilineal, patrilocal and polygynuous; men basically controlled the ownership, care and management of the herd. In horticulturists mostly women did planting, cultivating and harvesting while men were more into arts and crafts, tool making, religious and ceremonial activities and war. The development of horticulture around 12,000 B.C. was an outgrowth of women's gathering activities that in effect were the first farmers and dominated the food production in such societies. Horticulture society was much more diverse in terms of gendered division of labor, family patterns and gender stratification than other societies. The status of women was lower with gendered social customs like polygyny, bride wealth and menstrual taboos in practice. Compared to horticulture society the agrarian society had more uniformity in gender division of labor. Both were responsible for large scale agricultural work. It was later that male dominated such large scale agricultural which required more labor and strength for surplus which was not possible by women who had to look after children.

Women started being more close to home and children and had less time for full time farming. Such exclusion on the full time participation resulted in the economic dependency of women on men and their institutionalization into domestic spheres.

It must be understood public private dichotomy was not so marked before the industrial revolution. Most production took place within the household and all members participated in it. Everyone was a breadwinner. The household was the site of both production and reproduction. There was co-operation and complementarity between men and women. Industrialization created a distinction between paid work done in the market and unpaid work done in an around home. The advent of market economy and industrialization dramatically upset the unity between private and public, the harmony between nature and human beings. Gradually production moved out of the household and into the factories, commercial farms, and so on, and the market rather than nature became the controlling force in the lives of ordinary people.....the economic man moved out of the household and the domestic women remained in it....the distinction between the public and the private opens up new horizons and opportunities for men, but limits the place and functions of women. A new division of labor was developed where men did the wage work in the market and women did the domestic work inside the house consequently the idea of a housewife and breadwinner was also strongly emphasized (Bhasin, 2004).

Capitalism uses this argument based on the view that a man as head of the household is paid a "family wage"- i.e. a wage that covers subsistence for himself, his wife and his children. According to this view, women engaged in productive work are merely supplementing the family income and can therefore be paid less than men, even for work of equal value. The reality is somewhat different. Studies have revealed that in many countries as many as 25 to 40 percent of all families either live primarily on the earning of women or are single- parent household headed by women. Most of these women live in poverty or hold poorly paid jobs, and are discriminated against in the workplace by capitalist, patriarchal assumptions (Bhasin and Khan, 2005).

The process of dichotomization of production and reproduction must be stopped. This could happen in two ways. First women's access to better quality jobs in the organized production sectors could be facilitated by improving their access to education and improving their mobility by provision of easier transport facilities. Secondly, assistance in their reproductive responsibilities by work sharing and introduction of simple technologies at home and provision of childcare facilities at workplace in the modernized sector would improve greatly their access to jobs (Bhattachan and Manandhar, 2001).

5. Apparent Changes in Women's Role and Position in a Transitional Society.

Tradition and modernity co-exist, at times blending and at times conflicting. This results in a transitional society that is neither fully modern nor fully traditional. Tradition and modernization represent a continuous process. None of them at the same time can be regarded as static phenomena. Tradition cannot be completely identified with the past or modernity with the present. An element of modernity today can be enshrined as a tradition tomorrow. Social change is inevitable in a transitional society where the change is manifested more at the micro level of the society such as family, social relationships and in the ideological and stereotypical construction of male female roles.

Traditionally women's occupational status has always been closely associated with the home and the family. But after independence along with the rapid spread of girls' education, there has been a steep rise in the number of educated women in employment outside home. There are an increasing number of women engaged in administrative jobs. They are also the one who are prone to experience internal conflicts. This is due to the incompatibility between the old conceptions of women's role and the new occupational role. The working women, however, are not a new addition to the Indian scene which is similar to Nepal as well. Women in lower strata of society have been working since long predominantly in informal sector. It is only the women of middle or upper classes who were confined to homes and taking up jobs were considered derogatory for them. The level of economic equality and independence are the real indicators to measure the status of women in any society. In a complex and highly stratified society like ours, the status and position of women naturally differ from region to region, class to class, caste to caste and from one occupation to other. Consequently even women's own perception of their condition varies although the overall picture is one of domination and discrimination (Sharma, 1990). For example low caste women are more dominated than high caste women who are single victim of their high caste men. Due to the Hindu values of purity and pollution of caste and foods and hierarchy, dalit women have become triple victims by high caste men and women, by their own caste group men and other. Likewise, women of Matwali or liquor drinking caste or indigenous ethnic groups are double victim, one as women by men and another as group with their own culture, religion, language by the dominant groups who follow Hindu religion. Similarly on the class basis, poor women are more discriminated than rich women. The women of high class have maids to take care of most of the household chores and other menial work and thus work far less than men and women in lower socio- economic groups. In addition educated women had access to relatively high status position in the government and private sectors, and they had a much higher status than uneducated women (Bhattachan, 2000).

The introduction of widely available new consumer products in low- income nations has begun to change the process by which social status is judged and aspiration for a good life formulated especially in urban culture. Consumer products, modern gadgets, equipments that make work and life easier and comfortable indicate the economic status of a modern urban oriented family. As aspirations rise, men's income are often unable to meet them, as a result, women of the middle range, who have not previously participated in paid employment in significant may be "pushed" into the labor market by their family needs and aspirations in addition to being "pulled" by increased labor demand (Maithreyi and Chanana, 1989).

The most significant and obvious reasons of why middle class women have sought employment are to supplement the family income and utilize their education. Many middle class families prefer working women as a daughter in law. She is considered a perpetual dowry. She then, not only contributes to the nuclear family after marriage in various ways, but is an added asset. She helps in bringing in more modifications in the families lifestyle with her income. Her role as an additional bread-winner cannot be considered in isolation. Her income is not just a supplement now but is equally important since without it the family's status wouldn't remain the same. The joint income gives the family a higher status (Sharma, 1990)

6. Economic Independence of Women and Changing Family Patterns.

An oft- employed development strategy, as early as 60s and 70s, the logic is that increasing earning capacity for women will have a run-on effect to improve the overall status of her family. Studies have found that women will invest their increased income on their families whereas men tend to siphon expenditure on personal pursuits including alcohol, gambling and in some cases the frequenting of prostitutes. Economic empowerment is important but it should not be taken in isolation to other areas of empowerment (Hamro Sansaar, 2003). For example: had it just been for economic independence, the educated working women would have opted for joint families while still working. But it's not the general case for educated women in most instances these days who desire to live separately in nuclear families for it grants them the opportunity to break away from stringent family norms, obligations and allows them an independent life. Nepali society takes for granted women's domestic role integral and inextricable part of traditional behaviors whether she is in a state of jointed ness or nucleus. Joint families give maximum decision making power to eldest male who is often time father or the grandfather- in- law. Similarly mother- in- law and other senior female members exert power on junior female, daughter-in- laws, as well as young boys and girls in the joint family. Women are more or less looked upon as attachments to men and their income a supplementary. Economic changes and family tensions have been the main reason resulting in the break up of joint family systems in Nepal. Husband brings societal status and power even

in the city where working women have ample means to live life on their own. The women's movement of 1990 has not directly challenged the subordinate role of women within marriage: it seeks the visibility of women in public life (Thacker, 1997/ 1998). The point that emerges is that removal of gender inequalities does not depend on levels of income; what is required is firm political commitment to bring changes in the household level inequalities (Hamro Sansaar, 2003).

The oppression and exploitation of women within families cannot be dismissed as the "personal matter" of families and remain unaddressed, unanalyzed or unchallenged. Given the fact, that oppression is rooted in the home, family, sexuality and man-woman relations, the claim that the personal is political is an assertion of the systemic nature of women's oppression (Bhasin and Khan, 2005). The divide between personal and political or domestic and public, is both unreal and problematic. Everything public has an impact the personal/ domestic lives of any individual and vice versa. The public and domestic domains and spaces are not separate; they flow into each other all the time. Public policies, debates, program influences people's personal and domestic lives and what people learn and do within families follows them into public arena. It is out of such understanding the family relations that are fraught with inequalities, oppression and subordination are experiencing changes especially in educated urban settings.

7. States Negligible Concern on Bringing Improvements on the Status of Women in the Private Spheres.

Most states show little real commitment to delivering substantive change to women's lives. Women are seen as economically weak, not least because of the way national statistics are produced. These often leave out the calculation of the "work generated value" the work done by women in subsistence agriculture and in private family enterprise. This in turn reinforces the idea of women as economically unproductive and renders them socially powerless (Banda, 2005).

Nepal has reached a stage on women's issues where the implementation aspects are most crucial. Right policy enunciation has been made at the macro level, but there are no mechanisms to implement them either at macro or micro levels. Women have gained somewhat in terms of educational and health status and political awareness, but gender difference in terms of access to resources and position of power has changed little, in spite of much rhetoric. Attitudinal changes required for effective implementation of policies and programs of women have been rather slow to materialize. The social attitude towards women haven't changed much either where the responsibility of women and good marriage and motherhood as the ultimate goals for them are still primary to her (Bhattachan and Manandhar, 2001)

Not much change is visible on allocation of household responsibility, irrespective of whether women are economically active or not. Women contributed 86 percent of total household care in rural areas in 1984/5 (NRB, 1988). Similar estimates from the Nepal Labor Force Survey (1999) show that women contributed 84 percent of such time on a national level. Even urban working women accounted most of the time spent on such activities (UNFPA, 2007).

8. Conflicting Dual Demands Resulting on the Subordinate Positions of Working- Women.

The home and relations between family members, it is argued, should be exempt from the government regulation. Everything that happens within the four walls of the house is considered a personal matter and no outside intervention is encouraged. Glaring inequalities and grave assaults on women are thus allowed to continue. The divide between the domestic and public spheres also creates problems for women who take up jobs outside the home. These demand from them independence, mobility, competitiveness and long hours of work; the family demands the opposite- subservience, service, and co-operation. Scores of working women have talked about these almost irreconcilable demands and the physical and emotional tensions and stress they lead to. The role of a good wife and effective boss are difficult to combine. No such demand is made on men, to combine the role of a good husband and an effective boss (Bhasin and Khan, 2005).

Typical studies note the conflict between motherhood and careers or family work and outside work. But these terms tend to be used more for middle class women for whom outside work is relatively new than poor women who have always had to earn. In other words, there is a presumption both in social science and in popular conceptions, that for some reason, role conflict is experienced more often by middle class women (Maithreyi and Chanana, 1989)

Confronted with about appropriate female roles and maternal responsibilities, most women apparently turn away from highly rewarding professional careers and select less demanding occupations in order to be able to place family roles first. Anticipated and perceived conflicts in status also discourage women from pursuing prestigious professional careers. In the United States, females as a class are assigned a status subordinate to that of males. A woman in high ranking professional field, therefore, simultaneously holds two contradictory major statuses. That is, she juxtaposes a low ranking sex-role status with a high ranking occupational status. Highly visible displays of status inconsistency such as this generate contradictory expectations for persons in reciprocal roles as well as role incumbents. Since sex-roles status is ascribed and therefore a relatively fixed rank, a reconciliation of status ranks can most easily be accomplished if

women lower their aspirations and select lower ranking occupations. Women do, in fact, disproportionately occupy lower status semiprofessional and nonprofessional occupational roles (Broschart, 1978)

Out of 70,000 employees in public enterprises in Nepal, 10,000 are women. The proportion of women in public sector enterprise has increased over the years, but mostly in the non-professional and support staff categories. At the professional and managerial level, there are less than 300 women compared to over 30,000 men. At 25 percent, there are more Nepalese women in the private sector managerial positions than in the public sector. One of the main reasons for this preference is that private sector is perceived by job seekers to be more performance oriented and less influenced by patriarchal conventions. Thus, women have better chances of promotions and recognition of their work there than in public sector (Haq, 2000)

9. Necessity and Importance on the Equal division of Household Work.

A major reason for the subordination, lack of autonomy and ill health among women in south Asia is the extreme burden of household work. According to the UNDP Human Development Report the total value of unpaid work done by women, globally, is USD 11 trillion. We see that the result of burdensome household work is beneficial to state while it is mostly not beneficial to one who does it, the women. Yet most working class women are on the verge of collapse due to overwork. Why do we hear so less about reducing women's household responsibilities? Most program end up increasing women's work and responsibilities in the name of women's development and empowerment, but we have to accept one reason why women are absent from public office and senior management positions is that they have more than full time work at home. Since reproduction and caring for children and families are not likely to disappear, it is necessary to start a parallel movement of men towards family kitchens and homes. If we want women managers, politicians and civil society leaders then we need more men to be mothers, care takers, nurses and cooks. Women can exercise autonomy over their bodies and lives only when the burden of reproductive work is reduced (Bhasin, 2004)

A substantial proportion of women are confined to household work due to social and reproductive reasons. Even if homemaking activities such as household maintenance and childcare do not fall within the production boundary defined by the system of National Accounts (UN 1993), such activities are nevertheless necessary for human reproduction and no economy can survive without them (UNDP, 1995). For Nepal, Acharya (1998) shows that valuing such services even at minimum prices would yield an amount equivalent to measured gross domestic product. If housework gets the respect, the recognition and the value that is its due, men would not only start to acknowledge it but might also start doing it.

CHAPTER- THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the comprehensive research methodologies that have been followed in conjunction to the main objectives of the study for collecting the primary and secondary data and to interpret the finding of this study.

3.1 Research Design

The present research has been carried out to present the existing pattern of socio- economic status of educated married working women of Kathmandu. Descriptive and exploratory methods have been applied for this study to understand the problem related to the working women issues in context to their status, role and gender division of work in the family. Through descriptive research design respondents caste/ ethnicity, education, years of marriage, family size and type, number of dependents, working sector, working hour at home and work and income has been presented while working women involvement in different kind of household activity, workload, decision making in the family, empowerment of working women status, present status at home, attitude toward traditional practices etc have been done using exploratory research method.

3.2 Selection of Study Site

The study has been carried out only among the respondents living in and working in different areas of Kathmandu. It represents working women's status in a more wholesome way as it has the concentration of largest number of job opportunities available to educated women in varied sectors. It also being a metropolitan city with its expanding upper middle class and middle class urban life has the largest numbers of educated working women who have migrated permanently or temporarily from different region of the country for better economic and professional opportunities and education.

The researcher herself being the resident of study area was able to carry out her research well under time and money constraints.

3.3 Sample size

A small portion of working women population was taken for the study as a statistical sample to attain the objective of the study. In total 35 working women from different working sectors were selected who had qualification of bachelors and above. Working women from both nuclear and joint families were selected for the study.

The study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The focus of the study was on finding the apparent situation of working women only. Therefore the study does not represent the gender based problems and issues of the entire population of the entire area.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

A purposive sampling technique is applied in selecting the respondents from both joint and nuclear families belonging to any kind of professional sector who are highly educated. This has helped in providing an overall picture of economically independent women's status, attitude and views and perceptions regarding gender related issues. The sample thus selected through non probability sampling has been able to meet the study and researcher's need.

3.5 Nature and Sources of Data

Data have been collected both from primary and secondary sources. However, primary source of data have been more important for the purpose of the study while secondary sources were able to provide a strong base to the study.

The primary information was collected through different data collection tools like questionnaires and interviews, observations, discussions etc during field survey. In-depth interviews and observation has been carried out with exactly ten respondents who has hectic schedule. The respondent for case studies was selected out of researcher's network and contacts with which the researcher could apply observatory methods on her household level. Informal discussion and interviews were also carried out with all the respondents to meet the need of the study.

The relevant secondary source of information like published books, journals, magazines, articles, reports and newspapers were used to attain the objective of the study.

3.6 Data collection method

Various techniques were applied to collect data from primary sources which have been described as follows.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

Taking into account the objective of the study, a structured questionnaire was prepared for all of the respondents as a source of data. Except some, mostly all of the questions were close- ended in nature to control interviewer's bias and in effective use of statistical tools for data analysis. Such questionnaires were given to the respondent and collected after few days.

A separate questionnaire was also prepared for those ten respondents with whom the researcher did her case study. An open- ended questionnaire was given and asked to be filled by the researcher in her presence.

The entire questionnaire was prepared in English keeping in mind the intellectual capability of educated women. It was comprehensive and was divided into four parts with each part meeting the objective of the study.

3.6.2 Pre- test

To check the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, pre- testing was done with few respondent other than the actual respondent who were not taking part in the in the final version of research. Based on the pre- testing , required modifications and alterations were done then and there to assure to the reliability and validity of the finding.

3.6.3 Observation

The study of non- verbal behavior was made possible through observation which helped to make some empirical inferences and generalizations in the study which otherwise would not have been possible. The attitude of working women towards different gender related issues and her status in the family could be detected through the method of observation during informal discussion and interviews done with all of the respondents.

3.6.4 Informal discussions and in- depth interviews

In- depth interviews also known as unstructured interviews were carried out with the respondent of case study which helped in probing into the other facets of respondent's life. Similarly flexible methods like informal discussion were carried with the entire respondent.

3.7 Analysis and Presentation of Data

The data and finding have been put together and have been presented and analyzed in a descriptive manner using different research techniques and methodologies to prepare the final report. Data have been presented in table and presented in percentages. A neutral objective standpoint was maintained by the researcher while collecting, tabulating analyzing and interpreting the firsthand information and data.

3.8 Limitations of the Study

This research was done as a partial fulfillment of Masters Degree; therefore the researcher had to restrain the time apportioned for the completion of her study. The researcher also lacked any previous experience of the field. Thus time can was a limiting factor.

Since the sample size taken was comparatively small in size, the finding of this study is not applicable in representing working-women of all regions and all types. It is only a part of whole social problem.

As all the respondents were women with hectic schedules, so management of time according to the respondents convenience was another limiting factor for the researcher during her field research. The study was done in Katmandu valley where the respondents worked and resided. This is a micro study and is not applicable at the national level representing working women of all kinds (single, divorced or unmarried).

CHAPTER- FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter analyses and interprets the finding of the study during field research through primary data collection method. The findings have been presented in tables and interpreted accordingly.

4.1 SOCIO-CULTURAL SETTINGS OF WOMEN RESPONDENTS

The socio- cultural status of the women respondents has been analyzed and interpreted in this chapter through their caste/ ethnicity, education, marital years, family structure, household size, fertility, mobility and access to resources which are the basic factors in determining the social status of women in any society.

4.1.1 Caste/ Ethnicity of Respondents

Katmandu, being the only metropolitan city of Nepal, has turned out to be a melting pot where women from all over the country live and work. The population of educated working women belonging to upper middle class and middle class in Kathmandu has been selected randomly and the table below shows caste/ ethnicity of the respondents.

Table 1: Distribution of sample according to caste/ethnicity

Caste/Ethnicity	No of Respondents	%
Brahmin	14	40.00
Chhetri	6	17.14
Newar	11	31.43
Janajati	4	11.43
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that Brahmins predominated the professional sector constituting 40% with Newars, being the original settlers of Katmandu followed the second lead by constituting 31.4%. Only 17.1% of the respondents were Chhetri. However, the presence of Janajatis population was rising constituting 11.4% in the study site.

4.1.2 Education of Respondents

As education levels increase, the number of women with comparable educational degrees decreases. According to the UNFPA report of 2007, in 2001 only 23 women had graduate degrees or higher per hundred men with similar education while 77 women had primary education per hundred men with similar education. However, the Katmandu valley has the highest female literacy rate and highest female/ male literacy ratio. The table below shows the educational attainment of the sample respondents of Katmandu

Table 2: Distribution of sample according to educational attainment

Educational Level	No of Respondents	%
PhD	1	2.86
Master	20	57.14
Bachelor	14	40.00
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

It is clear by the above table that the highest numbers of respondent, constituting 57.1% out total sample respondent were degree holders. Only 2.8% of the respondents had PhD while the rest of the sample respondents had Bachelors qualification comprising 40%.s

4.1.3 Respondents' years of marriage

Marriage is still culturally compulsory for all men and women in Nepal. The mean age of marriage for women in Nepal was reported to be 18 years in 1991. There are significant differences in the mean age of marriage between rural and urban women, among women of various ecological zones, and between educated and non educated women. According to the report of Asian Development Bank, Urban women marry later than rural women do. The table below shows the respondent's years of marriage.

Table 3: Distribution of sample according to years of marriage

Years of Marriage	No of Respondents	%
0-1	4	11.43
1-5	5	14.29
5-10	12	34.29
10-15	9	25.71
15 & above	5	14.29
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The majority of the respondents constituting 34.2% fell under 5- 10 years of marriage group followed by 25.7% falling under 10-15 years of marriage group, while the numbers of respondents belonging to 0-1

years of marriage group were at the least by comprising 11.4% only. The numbers of respondents were same in both 1-5 and 15-above group by both the group comprising 14.2%.

Through informal interviews the researcher came to know that all of the respondents falling in the 15-above group joined work after marriage unlike the rest of the group where majority of the respondents had started working before marriage.

4.1.4 Respondents' family structure

Two types of family system prevail in Nepal: the joint family and the nuclear family. Stress and tensions are often evident in joint families. Breakups of joint family system have resulted both from economic changes and family tensions (Thacker, 1997/98). The table below shows the respondents family structure

Table 4: Distribution of sample according to family structure

Family Structure	No of Respondents	%
Nuclear	19	54.29
Joint	16	45.71
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

Out of the total sampled population majority belonged to nuclear family structure constituting 54.2% while joint family with not very disappointing crumbling down results constituted 45.7% of the respondents who still lived in nuclear family.

Despite the fact that most of the respondents were economically independent, the trend of living in joint family was still prevalent. Majority of Newar respondents came from joint families. However, nuclear family prevailed more in number among Brahmin, Chettri and Janajati.

4.1.5 Respondents' household size

Joint families these days, unlike earlier does not have too many members. In urban areas joint family often is made up of three generations, grandparents, parents and grand children. There are also great grandparents in some cases. The size of joint family has definitely shrunk with more working women opting for fewer children in the family. As parenthood lays heavy burden and responsibilities on working couples the nuclear family today has shrunk to maximum of six members in the family. The table below shows the size of respondents household.

Table 5: Distribution of sample according to the household size

Household size	No of respondents	%
1- 3	10	28.57
4- 5	13	37.14
6-7	4	11.43
8-9	5	14.29
10 & above	3	8.57
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

It is clear from the above table that household having 4-5 family members constituting 37.1% was more in number followed by household having 1-3 family members which constituted 28.5%. 14.2% of household had 8-9 members while 11.4% had 6-7 members in the household. Household having 10 & above family members had the least ratio constituting 8.5% out of the total sampled respondents.

4.1.6 Respondents' number of dependents (children)

Women professionals bear fewer children than other women in the population. It is assumed that conflicts between occupational and family roles are easier to adjust in small or nuclear families. The following table shows the fertility of sampled respondents.

Table 6: Distribution of sample according to number of dependents

No of dependent	No of respondents	%
0-1	19	54.29
2-3	12	34.29
3-4	3	8.57
4 & above	1	2.86
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that majority of the sampled respondents had only one dependent. The respondent falling under 0- 1 category who had only one dependent is greatest constituting 54.2% while that of 2-3 category follow the second league by constituting 34.2%. 8.5% of the respondents who fell under 3-4 category were much lesser than the above two category while surprisingly, there were still 2.8% respondents who fell under 4- above group had more than three dependents. Thus it is evident that in a patriarchal society like ours, motherhood lays a heavy burden on working women, who choose to lessen her familial responsibilities of child rearing by having lesser number of children.

4.1.7 Respondents' working sector

The vast majority of South Asian women work in the informal sector or in unpaid family assistance, with the informal sector accounting for the employment of 75 percent in Nepal. At the professional and managerial level, there are less than 300 women compared to over 30,000 men. At 25 percent, there are more Nepalese women in the private sector managerial positions than in the public sector. One of the main reasons for this preference is that private sector is perceived by job seekers to be more performance oriented and less influenced by patriarchal conventions. Thus, women have better chances of promotions and recognition of their work there than in public sector (Haq, 2000). The table below shows the respondents working sector.

Table 7: Distribution of sample according to working sector

Working Sector	No of Respondents	%
Private School/College	6	17.14
NGO/INGO	14	40.00
Bank	2	5.71
Govt Office	7	20.00
Medical	2	5.71
Technical	2	5.71
Self employed	2	5.71
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

As mentioned above majority of working women were concentrated in the private sectors like NGO/INGO and private school and colleges which are mushrooming in Katmandu like anything with 40% and 17.1% respectively. Similarly the number of sampled respondents in bank, medical, technical

and self employed sectors all had same number of respondents by all of the sectors constituting 5.7%. The government office alone stood with 20% out of total sampled respondents.

4.1.8 Respondents' monthly income

Statistics show that as pay, status and decision making authority increases female representation drops. Studies have revealed that in many countries as many as 25 to 40 percent of all families either live primarily on the earning of women or are single- parent household headed by women (Bhasin and Khan, 2005). The table below shows the monthly income of respondents.

Table 8: Distribution of sample according to monthly income

Monthly Income	No of Respondents	%
1000-5000	1	2.86
5000-10000	2	5.71
10000-15000	6	17.14
15000-20000	3	8.57
20000 & above	23	65.71
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

As seen in the above table the majority of women earned well being highly educated or being concentrated in private sector which had better pay than public sectors. 65.7% of sampled respondent had monthly salary exceeding 20000 Nepali rupees while only 2.8% had least paid monthly salary falling under 1000-5000 group. 17.1% of the respondents who fell under 10000- 15000 group had higher ratio than those two group of respondents in 5000- 10000 and 15000- 20000, who constituted 5.7% and 8.5% of the total sampled population respectively

CHAPTER- FIVE

5.1 HOUSEHOLD DIVISION OF LABOUR, DECISION MAKING AND WORK SCHEDULES OF WORKING WOMEN

5.1.1 Time spent by respondents in household chores

The 1995 Human Development Report of UNDP put the total value of unpaid work (household work) done by women annually at 11 trillion US dollars. (One trillion is 1000 billion and one billion is 1000 million). The public and private dichotomy has helped in increasing the workload of working women especially because the household chores is considered a women's responsibility therefore a working women faces double burden of workplace and familial duties and responsibilities. The table below shows the time spent by the respondents in her household activities on daily basis.

Table 9: Distribution of sample according to the time spent on household chores daily

Working hours at Home	No of Respondents	%
0-5 hrs	25	71.43
5-10 hrs	9	25.71
10-15 hrs	1	2.86
15 hrs & above	0	
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows the majority of sampled population that is 71.4% spent 0-5 hours daily in the household activities while only 2.8% of the respondent spent 10-15 hours daily in her household activities.

25.7% of the respondent spent 5-10 hours and none of the respondent spent 15 hours and above time in the household activities.

5.1.2 Time spent by respondents on office work

Women experience the double day, double burden, double shift and bear the burden of "paid work" (as a part of the workforce) and "unpaid work" (in the home). This double burden also makes it difficult for women to get better jobs, to get training and to move up the professional ladder. The table below shows the time spent by respondent at work outside home.

Table 10: Distribution of sample according to the time spent on office work daily

Working hours at Office	No of Respondents	%
0-5 hrs	3	8.57
5-10 hrs	28	80.00
10-15 hrs	4	11.43
15 hrs & above	0	
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

It is clear from the above table that majority of women comprising 80% of the total sampled population worked for 5-10 hours outside home or at the office. Only 8.5% fell under 0-5 hours work category while 11.4% of women worked 10-15 hours per day at office. None of the respondent worked for 15 hours & above at their office.

5.1.3 Respondents' involvement in household activities

Women who work outside the home perform dual roles as wife, mother, house- keeper and office worker. Though they are economically independent and strive towards betterment in life they are aware of their duties and do not run away from their duties at home despite of hectic schedules at office. They are always trying to maintain a balance between their office and household work schedules. The table below shows the respondents involvement in the kind of household work she does daily, often or sometimes.

Table 11: Distribution of sample according to respondent's involvement in household activities as per the time frequency

Household Chores	Daily	%	Often	%	Sometimes	%
Cooking & giving foods to family members	25	18.52	4	3.45	6	3.95
Cleaning & mopping/ sweeping	13	9.63	8	6.90	10	6.58
Laundry	3	2.22	8	6.90	20	13.16
Shopping for food provision & household goods	10	7.41	14	12.07	11	7.24
Dish washing	11	8.15	4	3.45	18	11.84
Preparing children for school	18	13.33	3	2.59	5	3.29
Helping children with homework	15	11.11	6	5.17	6	3.95
Feeding children	20	14.81	2	1.72	1	0.66
Maintenance of house	10	7.41	10	8.62	13	8.55
Payment of bills like electricity, telephone, water, school etc	5	3.70	10	8.62	13	8.55
Attending/ entertaining guests	2	1.48	17	14.66	13	8.55
Attending to elders/ siblings while sick or unwell	3	2.22	14	12.07	17	11.18
Attending & participating in social & religious functions	0	0.00	16	13.79	19	12.50
Total	135	100.00	116	100.00	152	100.00

Note: The numbers exceeds due to multiple answers

Source: Field Survey 2008

The highest ratio of involvement of respondent on "daily" category were found in household chores like cooking and giving away of food to family members and the least involvement of respondents were found in the chores like attending/ entertaining guests on a daily basis. Similarly the second and third highest ratio of involvement of respondents was found in feeding children and preparing children for school respectively on daily basis.

The highest ratio of involvement of respondent were found on "often" category in attending and entertaining guests and the least involvement of respondent were found in feeding children on the often category. Similarly the second and third highest ratio of involvement of respondent were found in attending and participating in social and religious function and attending to elders/siblings while sick or unwell on often basis. Shopping for food provision also fell under third highest ratio of involvement of respondents in household work on often basis.

The highest ration of involvement of respondent on "sometimes" category was found in laundry and the least involvement of respondent was found in feeding children on sometimes basis. Dishwashing had the third highest ration of involvement of women on sometimes basis.

However, all the respondent performed activities like cooking and giving away of food to family members, shopping for food provision and household goods and attending and participating in social and religious functions on either daily, often or sometimes basis.

Involvement on activities like payment of telephone bills, maintenance of house was done by most of the women on sometimes basis.

Due to the domestic help and other members help in the family the ratio of involvement is not found by the total sampled respondent in many activities.

5.1.4 Respondents' feeling of additional workload

Career, no doubt, has added additional workload on women. Working women often find her daily routine of maintaining a balance between the household schedule and office schedule stressful. Her triple work responsibility of reproduction, household and employment can lead to overload of work for her. A woman's feeling of additional workload depends basically on the amount of time spent on work inside and outside house, the working environment in and out of the house.

Table 12: Distribution of sample according to respondents' feeling of additional workload on working outside the house

Additional Workload	No of Respondents	%
Yes	14	40.00
No	21	60.00
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

It is clear from the above table that out of the sampled respondents 60% felt no additional workload being a working woman while 40% felt that working outside the family has added workload.

5.1.5 Respondents satisfaction with the prevailing division of household work

Working woman do not shirk off their duties of household work and do it without complaining most of the time. They are aware of and have accepted their supposed dual role set by societal norms and values. No wonder they welcome the support and help of other family members in her household activities. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the major role and responsibilities a woman is expected to perform usually develops the way she is socialized and how she internalizes such socialization in their life.

Table 13: Distribution of sample according to respondents' satisfaction on the prevailing division of household work in their family

Satisfaction with the division of household work	No of Respondents	%
Yes	23	65.71
No	2	5.71
No complains	10	28.57
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that 65.7% of working women were satisfied with the prevailing division of household labor in her family while 5.7% were not satisfied with such division of labor in the family. 28.5% of the respondents did not want to make any comments or made no response to the prevailing division of household labor in the family.

It is clear from the above table that only 5.7% of the working women were not satisfied with the existing division of household labor in the family. Surprisingly, two respondents who were not satisfied were women with different earning. One earned very well and the other was with a mediocre salary. One was a lower level staff in her office while another was in a managerial level in her office. One came from a joint family another from nuclear family. Both of them said that they made attempts in their own way and especially talked with their husband in the family for change but neither of their attempts was implemented in the family. One felt that since her income was considered supplementary in the house she was asked to give up her job while another was asked to give up her job because it was thought that the child was getting less time and socialization.

5.1.6 Role of different family members in decision making over different activities

Across the cultural diversity the majority of the communities in Nepal are patriarchal. A women's life is strongly influenced by her father and husband. In spite of these cultural diversity, in both Indo- Aryan and Tibeto- Burman groups, land and property inheritance has been patrilineal, the residence patrilocal, and early marriage the rule rather than an exception. Women in both cultural groups lag far behind men in access to property, credit and modern avenues of education, skill development, education and knowledge.

However, things have been changing especially in urban educated family. Women enjoy greater freedom in mobility, in decision making over familial matters and their income. The table below shows the decision making level of working women along with other members in the family.

Table 14: Distribution of sample according to decision- making role of respondent and family members over different activities in the household

Decision making in	Self	%	Husband	%	FIL	%	MIL	%	AE	%
Capital transaction	19	11.05	21	13.55	8	22.86	7	13.73	-	-
Your income	35	20.35	4	2.58	-	-	-		-	-
Husband income	6	3.49	35	22.58	-	-	-		-	-
Children schooling	24	13.95	18	11.61	1	2.86	1	1.96	-	-
Mobility of other family members	20	11.63	23	14.84	10	28.57	12	23.53	-	-
Social religious function in the family	18	10.47	14	9.03	7	20.00	15	29.41	-	-
Rendering modern facilities equipment	25	14.53	21	13.55	5	14.29	7	13.73	-	-
Buying and giving away of expensive gifts	25	14.53	19	12.26	4	11.43	9	17.65	-	-
Any other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-
Total	172	100.00	155	100.00	35	100.00	51	100.00	-	-

Note: Multiple answers, FIL: Father in law, MIL: Mother in law, AE : Anyone else

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table illustrates that the total number of sampled respondents had their own decision making in their income and their husband had in his income. The lowest ratio of both working women and her husband decision making were in activity like husband's income and wife's income respectively.

Husband's decisive role was also found more in keeping capital transaction and in the mobility of other family members. Regarding children's schooling, social and religious function in the family, rendering modern facilities equipment and buying and giving away expensive gifts, working women role was found more in such decision making in the family. The highest ratio of mother in laws decision making was in activity like social and religious function in the family and the lowest ratio of mother in laws as well as father in laws decision making was in children's schooling. The highest ratio of father in laws decision making were in activity like mobility of other family members.

5.1.7 Respondent's feeling about their household chores

Apart from the office work, the household work keeps working women busy at home all the time and especially during week days. They are especially busy if there is less help from family members and if the work division is not properly done in the family. The table below shows how a working woman feels about her daily routine in the house.

Table 15: Distribution of sample according to respondents feeling of her daily routine in the house

Daily routine in the house	No of Respondents	%
Overloaded	1	2.86
Satisfactory	13	37.14
Busy all the time	16	45.71
Not busy all the time	5	14.29
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

As shown in the above table majority of the respondents felt that their daily routine at home was busy all the time constituting 45.7% while 37.1% found it satisfactory. It was good to see that 14% of the working women were not busy all the time while only 2.8% of the respondent found their routine overloaded at home.

5.2 WORKING WOMEN'S VIEW ON HER ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE, HER SELF VALUATION AS WORKING WOMEN ALONG WITH HER ATTITUDES TOWARDS TRADITIONAL NORMS AND VALUES

5.2.1 Respondents view on whether women should join work outside the family

Social change is an inevitable process. Women earlier were confined to home and hearth, their role being subservient. Girls were socialized to be a good wife and daughter in law first. Her identity was of no concern. Patriarchal values and norms also gave a mind set that men should be career oriented and women domestic or home oriented. Nowadays educated urban women feel unworthy being confined to home as housewives. A career thus, is equally important for educated urban women of today for her identity and gender equality. The table below shows the respondent view on whether women should work outside the family.

Table 16: Distribution of sample according to respondents view on whether women should work outside the family

Women Should work outside the family	No of Respondents	%
Yes	35	100.00
No	0	-
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

It is evident from the above table that the total number of respondents felt that women should work outside constituting 100%.

5.2.2 Respondents reasons to why women work outside the family

The most significant and obvious reasons of why middle class women have sought employment are to supplement the family income and utilize their education. Alike men, career is equally important for women today. The table below shows respondents view on why women should be employed or work outside the family.

Table 17: Distribution of sample according to respondent's reason for why women should work outside the family

Reasons for joining work outside	No of Respondents	%
Economic Independence	24	21.62
Empowerment of Status	25	22.52
Contribute to family income	19	17.12
Not to be a housewife	15	13.51
Utilize education	28	25.23
Total	111	100.00

Note: the numbers exceeds due to multiple answers

Source: Field Survey 2008

As shown in the above table majority of the respondent thought that women should join work outside home to utilize ones education most importantly while least ratio of women thought that women should work outside for not confining oneself as housewife. There was a slight difference in the ratio of women

who thought that women should work for economic independence with that of who think that women should work for economic independence. Contributing to family income was also considered important by women on the second last category among all those mentioned above.

5.2.3 Preference to the family system

Working women prefer having fewer children because motherhood lays heavy responsibilities on women whose schedules are already hectic handling dual roles and responsibilities. Similarly for the very same reason of having fewer members in the family so that they can have more time for work, have freedom in doing things on their own way career women basically opt for small or nuclear family. Though many of them still think that joint family has its own charm and advantages, they still prefer nuclear family. The table below shows respondents preference of nuclear or joint family.

Table 18: Distribution of sample according to respondent's preference of the family system

Family Preference	No of Respondents	%
Joint	14	40.00
Nuclear	21	60.00
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table makes it clear that 60% of the working women respondents preferred nuclear family and 40% preferred joint family. The researcher through the informal interviews got to know that majority of Newar respondents preferred joint family while caste group and Janajati preferred more to be in nuclear families.

The most common reason provided by 60% of the respondent who preferred nuclear family was that it's easier taking and making decision in nuclear family and there was less conflict and clash of ideas. Another significant reason was that there was more economic and personal freedom and less work because of less people in the house. While few were also of the opinion that there was more time for personal growth in nuclear family.

The most common reason provided by 40% of the respondent who preferred joint family was that in joint families children had more love and protection and the workload was divided among family members. Another significant number of respondent came up with the reason that there was great family bonding and togetherness in the nuclear family while few opined that there was less economic burden in the joint family and it was ideal for woman who wanted to work.

5.2.4 Respondents economic independence

Career often brings economic independence to women. However, we see that when a woman starts earning in the family the children gets better education, the living standard increases, the husband facilitates himself with modern gadgets and equipments while the woman in the house more or less remains in a static position making a meager saving out of her income. The table below shows whether a woman is economically independent being able to earn.

Table 19: Distribution of sample on respondents' economic independence

Economic Independence	No of Respondents	%
Yes	33	94.29
No	2	5.71
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

As illustrated from the above table, 94.2% of the respondents were economically independent while only 5.7% of the respondents were not independent. Those who were not economically independent had less salary than those respondents in this study who earned well.

5.2.5 Respondents feeling of empowerment being economically independent

Removal of gender inequalities does not depend on high levels of income always. Increased economic participation of women should not be taken at face value sign of increased empowerment. The following table shows the working women feeling of empowerment being economically independent

Table 20: Distribution of sample on respondents feeling of empowerment being economically independent

Feeling of Empowerment	No of Respondents	%
Yes	28	80.00
No	3	8.57
Undecided	4	11.43
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that in spite of economic independence there were still 8.5% of women who did not feel empowered. 80% of women did feel empowered being economically independent while 11.4% were still undecided about it. The point here is while the 90% of respondent were economically independent on table 19 only 80% out of economically independent respondents felt empowered.

5.2.6 Respondents status in the family in comparison to non working women

Working women though have more workload in urban areas in comparison to non employed women; they have certain privileges over women who are confined at home. Working women are much more economically independent than non working women and they have more personal mobility. Being economically independent means not being dependent on husband's income which in turn helps in building certain status women in the family who is along with the so called male breadwinner of the family, is also able to contribute to family income. The following table shows whether working women think they are privileged over non working women with respect to the kind of status she has in the family.

Table 21: Distribution of sample according to respondent's status in the family being privileged or not with respect to non working women

Privilege over non working women	No of Respondents	%
Yes	28	80.00
No	3	8.57
Undecided	4	11.43
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that 80% of the sampled respondents felt they had privilege over non working women in their family while 8.5% thought that they were not privileged and 11.4% were undecided about being privileged or not than non working women with respect to the kind of status they had in the family.

5.2.7 Respondents preference of role models

Working women try to adopt to modernization but not at the cost of tradition. In other words they want to maintain a balance between the modernity and the tradition. Their income brings modification in the family lifestyle. More modern gadgets and comforts are acquired and children get better education in better schools. At the same time a modern urban located working women also teaches a children that tradition should be revered and certain set of traditional norms and values in the family is followed. The following table shows what kind of role is preferred by working women.

Table 22: Distribution of sample according to respondents' preference on the kind of role models

Preferred Role	No of Respondents	%
Being home as Ideal mother, wife, DIL	1	2.86
Being a busy working women	3	8.57
Keeping a balance between both	31	88.57
Total	35	100.00

DIL: Daughter in law

Source: Field Survey 2008

It is clear from the above table that 88.5% of the working women wanted to keep a balance between their dual roles- inside the house and at the work place. Only 8.5% of the women wanted to be a busy working woman while surprisingly, 2.8% of the women wanted to be at home as an ideal mother, wife and daughter in law.

5.2.8 Respondents views on mixing freely with opposite sex at work place

Respondents were asked how they felt about mixing freely with opposite sexes in the work place. There were mixed answers however majority of the respondents answered that they felt comfortable, normal, and natural and friendly mixing with opposite sexes at the work place. In addition to it another significant number of respondents said that they believed in team work and felt that while at work one should be professional be least concerned about people's sexes. Few of the respondents didn't respond to the question.

The in-depth and informal interviews were further helpful in eliciting that work place harassment wasn't felt by any of the sampled respondent. One of the respondents was rather harassed by the female folks of this community of far western region where she worked as a field assistant.

5.2.9 Respondents following menstrual taboos

There are many discriminatory customs in Hindu culture which have been formulated to keep women in certain position ascribing certain roles. Menstrual taboos are one of them. Menstrual blood is considered to be impure while the consumption of husband's foot water and his leftover food is occasionally made obligatory for women to consume. Still today even in urban areas educated working women are bound to follow such discriminatory practices. The following table shows if working women follow menstrual taboos in the family or not.

Table 23: Distribution of sample according to respondents following menstrual taboos at home

Follow of menstrual taboos in the family	No of Respondents	%
Yes	18	51.43
No	17	48.57
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that more than half of the sampled respondents constituting 51.4% followed menstrual taboos in the family while 48.5% of them did not follow menstrual taboos in the family.

5.2.10 Respondents doing daily puja

Doing daily puja at home is a customary practice in our society. Though priesthood is a tabooed profession for women in Hindu culture doing daily puja at home is done by women. The following table shows if working women do daily puja at home or not.

Table 24: Distribution of sample according to respondents doing daily puja at home

Doing daily puja at home	No of Respondents	%
Yes	14	40.00
No	10	28.57
Occasionally	11	31.43
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that 40% of working women did daily puja at home while 28.5% of the women didn't and 31.4% of women did it occasionally at home. Those who did it occasionally told that in the absence of in laws they did it occasionally.

5.2.11 Respondents belief in fasting

Fasting during different religious festivals as well as once in a week is also customary among Nepali women. These days fasting for scientific reason (fasting once in a week has been proved beneficial for health) apart for religious reason has also gained popularity to fasting trend. The following table shows if respondents believe in taking fast or not.

Table 25: Distribution of sample according to respondent's belief in fasting

Believe on Fasting	No of Respondents	%
Yes	16	45.71
No	19	54.29
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that 45.7% of respondents believed in fasting while 54.2% didn't believe in fasting. It is clear that less working women were involved in fasting since working dual responsibilities took a lot of physical energy so fasting was not easy for working women unlike non working women.

5.2.12 Importance of family members in upbringing a child in the family

Maternal responsibilities are high on women in our society. It is women who primarily do the child caring activities. Men's participation at home in child care task is very low in our society. It is mother rather than father who decide about children well being and needs in the family. The following table shows the respondent view on who they think is more important in a family in upbringing a child.

Table 26: Distribution of sample according to respondents view on the importance of different family members in upbringing a child in the family

Importance of family member in a child upbringing	No of Respondents	%
Mother	11	31.43
Father	2	5.71
In laws	1	2.86
All of the family members	21	60.00
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

It is clear from the above table that majority of the respondents constituting 60% thought that all of the family members were important in bringing up a child in the family while 31.4% of the respondents thought that mother and 5.7% thought that father was important in a family in upbringing a child. Only 2.8% of the respondents thought that in laws were responsible in upbringing a child in the family.

5.2.13 Respondents attitudes towards following norms, values, practices, beliefs prevailing in our society

We live in a patriarchal society where most of the traditional orthodox practices that are prevailing are mostly in favor of men and their dominance, discrimination and control is over women's lives. The pedagogical and stereotyped male and female characteristics, attributes and behaviors are also further imposed on children through conventional norms, education, media etc. Confidence and self-esteem are not cultivated during the socialization of girl children. The portrayal and practice of self-denial, self-effacement, gentleness, sacrifice, unassertiveness and other “feminine” qualities are encouraged in their upbringing. Decision-making, strength of expression, opinion-formation and assertion of their needs and interests are implicitly discouraged in the socialization process. In terms of social interaction, girls are for the most part confined to the “inside world” of the home (UNICEF, 1996). The table below shows whether working women agree, disagrees or is undecided about the following norms, values, practices and beliefs prevailing in our society.

Table 27: Distribution of samples according to respondents' attitudes towards prevalent norms, values, practices, beliefs in our society

Norms, Beliefs, Practices	Agree	%	Disagree	%	Undecided	%	Total	%
We live in patriarchal society & therefore women is & should be inferior to men	2	5.71	32	91.43	1	2.86	35	100.00
Working or not women should be protected controlled & regulated by men	1	2.86	33	94.29	1	2.86	35	100.00
Men should control women, labor, income & mobility			35	100.00			35	100.00
Women are biologically a weaker sex than men	10	28.57	19	54.29	6	17.14	35	100.00
Son should be preferred over a daughter			35	100.00			35	100.00
Son's education is important than daughter			35	100.00			35	100.00

Boys should have more nutritious food than girls			35	100.00			35	100.00
Boys should be extrovert, dauntless and fearless while girls should be shy & more introvert			34	97.14	1	2.86	35	100.00
Women sexuality should be controlled			31	88.57	4	11.43	35	100.00
Girls should be married at early age to find eligible husband			34	97.14	1	2.86	35	100.00
Boys should be active to the outside world while girl should be more active at household skills			34	97.14	1	2.86	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

As clear from the above table, 100% of the respondents disagreed on practices, norms and values like son should be preferred over daughter, son's education is important than daughter, boys should have more nutritious food than girls and men should cover women income, labor and mobility.

Majority of the respondents disagreed constituting 91.4%, 94.2%, 97.1%, 88.5%, 97.1%, 97.1% and very few respondents were undecided constituting on norms and beliefs like: we live in a patriarchal society and therefore women is and should be inferior to men, working or not women should be protected, controlled and regulated by men, boys should be extrovert, dauntless and fearless while girls should be shy and more introvert, women's sexuality should be controlled, girls should be married at an early age for eligible husband, boys should be active to the outside world while girls should be more active at household skills respectively.

There was a mixed response on the belief that women are biologically weaker sex than men. More than half of the respondents disagreed to it with 54.2% while 28.5% agreed to it and the rest with 17.4% were undecided about it. 11.4% of the women were undecided if women's sexuality should be controlled. 5.7% of the respondents agreed that we live in a patriarchal society so women is and should be inferior to men.

5.3 AGENTS, FACTORS, CHANGES INFLUENCING WORKING WOMEN INTRA HOUSEHOLD LIFESTYLE

5.3.1 Respondent's employment span

The event of marriage determines a woman's life options and livelihood. A woman might give up her career after marriage sometimes while she might feel the need to start working out because of economic

crisis, she might never get to work out her marital life responsibilities sometimes. The table below shows when the respondents started with their work outside did.

Table 28: Distribution of samples according to respondents beginning of career

Respondent start of career	No of Respondents	%
Before marriage	27	77.14
After marriage	8	22.86
Total	35	100

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that a significant number of respondents constituting 77.1% started working outside before marriage and gave continuity to it even after the marriage while 22.8 of the respondents started working after marriage.

5.3.2 Respondent's view on socialization

Working women unlike non working women are unable to be with their child for longer time. They are often criticized for leaving the child in care of others while at work and the blame is laid on them if the child doesn't get proper socialization on physical, psychological and cognitive development and growth. The generally believed notion is that the child does or acts or behaves according to what is taught in the family especially by his/ her mother. The table below shows if working women can or can't give enough time in her children socialization.

Table 29: Distribution of sample according to respondents view on being able to give enough time and socialization to her children

Working women cannot give enough time & socialization to her children?	No of Respondents	%
Yes	16	45.71
No	16	45.71
Undecided	3	8.57
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

It is clear from the above table that there were equal numbers of respondents, both constituting 45.7% on the generally held assumption that working women can or working women cannot give enough time and

socialization to her children. There were 8.5% who were not decided about whether working women can't give enough socialization and time to her children.

5.3.3 Respondents adjustment patterns

A working woman caught up in role conflict, with that between family work and outside work is expected to make adjustment on her own. There are few adjustment made by husband and the family sometimes but most of the time a working women makes adjustment in her daily routine. The table below shows the kind of difficulties a working women faces in adjusting herself to play a dual role.

Table 30: Distribution of sample according to respondent's difficulties in the adjustment pattern in playing a dual role

Difficulties in adjustment with a dual role	No of Respondents	%
Less time for children	21	33.87
Less time for husband company love & demands	6	9.68
Less time for self	19	30.65
Less time in attending in laws demands & needs	16	25.81
Total	62	100.00

Note: the numbers exceeds due to the multiple answers

Source: *Field Survey 2008*

The ratio was highest in the adjustment pattern with children among working women while another significant number of respondents felt that they had less time for self. The number of respondents who had difficulties in adjusting time with in laws was higher than adjusting time with husband.

5.3.4 Respondents changed status at home

Working women experience a change in their status in the house most of the times with their increase in earning, with their financial help to the family income through career. She is respected as never before or respected more for being economically independent which in turn boost her status at home and society. She is much more respected as a mother, daughter in law and wife. The table below shows whether career has brought more respect to the respondent in their family or not.

Table 31: Distribution of sample according to respondents view on her enhanced status in the family brought by her career

Career enhancing respect in the family	No of Respondents	%
Yes	27	77.14
No	1	2.86
Undecided	7	20.00
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that 77.1% of working women's career has brought more respect to her status in the family while only 2.8% of the respondent's career has not brought respect to her status in the family. 20% of the respondents were undecided about it.

5.3.5 Respondent feeling of mental and psychological stress

Caught up in a role conflict in her dual role of being a working women and familial expectation of what a good woman does, many working women go through psychological and mental stress. Sometimes overworking at home or office leads to physical fatigue and ill health as well. Traditional and Cultural assumptions about gender roles within society are used to justify continued oppression and subordination of women, as are various religious doctrines. Challenging these is even seen as socially destabilizing and as a threat to the family and social cohesion. The table below shows the respondent feeling of stress to quit her job.

Table 32: Distribution of sample according to respondent view on her feeling of stress leading to quit the job

Feeling of Stress	No of Respondents	%
Yes	10	28.57
No	25	71.43
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

As illustrated by the above table 71.4% of the women had not gone through the feeling of mental and psychological stress of quitting her job while 28.5% had felt such stress to quit the job.

28.5% of the respondents who had felt the mental and psychological stress to quit their job were asked to answer about what lead to such stress in them out of their own experiences. Majority of the respondents answered that their lack of time adjustment to spend with children caused such stress.

Second highest number of women answered that the dual demands made on them lead to their imperfection on both public and private spheres. Such respondent felt that long hours of office work, pending work, less salary and job dissatisfaction also caused such stress.

5.3.6 Respondent stress management

Working women, often stressed out with their daily routine, search for some kind of outlet to reduce their stress. It's generally with close friends, husband and maternal parents with whom they seek for help and counseling during such emotional ups and downs. The table below shows what do those respondents (28.5%) who feel the mental and psychological stress do to manage their stress.

Table 33: Distribution of sample according to respondent's way of stress

Managing Stress	No of Respondents	%
Show dislike and anger to husband & family members	2	15.38
Discuss it with family members & husband	5	38.46
Share your problems and feeling with friends, colleague and peers	3	23.08
Take psychiatric help	1	7.69
Keep it to yourself	2	15.38
Total	13	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that most of the respondents constituting 38.4% managed their stress by discussing it with family members and husband while another significant number of respondents comprising 23.8% shared problems with friends, colleague and peers. Equal number of respondents comprising 15.3% managed their stress by showing dislike and anger to husband and family member and, by keeping it to themselves. Only 7.6% of the respondents took psychiatric help.

5.3.7 Respondent agent of help with household work

Urban centered middle class working women prefer to hire a domestic help at home. With such help she is able to devote more time and efficiency to her work at office while at home she is able to maintain a less

busy routine and is able to spend time with children and family members. The table below shows if working women has a domestic help at home or not.

Table 34: Distribution of sample according to respondent having a domestic help

Domestic help	No of Respondents	%
Yes	26	74.29
No	9	25.71
Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2008

The above table shows that about one third of the total sampled respondents constituting 74.2% had hired a domestic help at home while 25.7% did not have a domestic help at home.

5.3.8 Respondent understanding of Gender Equality in their own words

It was a subjective question where each respondent answered their understanding of the term "gender equality". The entire respondent wrote their understanding of gender. There were similarities as well as differences in their understanding of gender. However, it was good to know that everyone had an idea of gender and were more or less able to understand what gender equality means.

The answers were as follows.

- It means equal status, rights, responsibilities, opportunities for men and women
- It means equality in decision making and rights
- It means participation and presence of women in every field
- It means female access in development, in political and legal provisions along with men
- It means men and women being two important part of the society have to act equally for its betterment
- It means no discrimination based on sex
- It means allowing women to choose her way of life whether she wants to work or stay at home looking after the child and is still given the same respect.
- It means no discrimination, disparities and domination among sexes.
- It is a tool to increase opportunities and improve the lives and well being of both the sexes. It means equality in education, income, property inheritance, social values, and political participation. It means a feeling where women should know that nothing is impossible for them.

Thus Gender equality meant equal status of men and women or a boy and girl and no discrimination on any grounds based on sex, to most of the respondents. They said that women must have equal opportunity,

presence and participation in field like politics, policy making and decision making level. Autonomy over ones life and body and way to choose life opportunities by self also meant gender equality.

CHAPTER- SIX

6.0 Findings and Conclusions

6.1 Summary of the Findings

In Nepal, the status of women is not equal to her male counterpart in the family because of the deep rooted patriarchal structures that leads to the institutionalization of men's power and dominance over women. The traditional belief of "women in the hearth and men out in the field" is becoming almost non-existent with more women entering the public spheres in Nepal today. Educated Working Women especially from the urban located middle class families enjoy much freedom in term of mobility, economic independence, decision making etc. However, such visible changes may have a different picture of advancement and development of educated working women. By being competitive and open to the public sphere, she definitely goes through the additional burden of maintaining dual responsibilities properly. She has now multiple role functions. Unequal traditional responsibilities and roles and her new role in the office demands two different personalities. She might feel torn between these two different responsibilities by often missing out on her identity.

Thus the purpose of this study was to look at the actual positioning of educated married working women of Katmandu metropolitan city.

Other than this, the broad objective of the study was to find out the gender equality in division of labor at household, decision making of working women at household, her economic independence and empowerment influencing her attitudes towards traditional norms and values and the changes witnessed in her lifestyles brought in by additional workload.

For the above mentioned purpose and objective of the study, thirty- five working- women in Katmandu falling under different professional fields were selected. This study is based on the responses of those thirty- five working women selected randomly from the working women population of Katmandu where majority of them were Hindu despite of their caste and ethnicity. Out of such randomly selected population, Brahmin women (40%) dominated the field with Newar women (31.4%) following them on the second place. Chettri women (17.4%) were slightly above the Janajati women (11.4). Except for that (2.8%) of respondents who had PhD, majority of the respondent had Masters Degree (57.1%) and Bachelors Degree (40%). Respondents who were married for ten years (34.2%) ranged highest in the working sector while only (11.4%) of respondents who were married for a year were last in the ratio in working sector. Majority of the working women came from nuclear family with (54.2%) and the rest from nuclear family(45.7%) with the largest number of respondent (28.5%) belonging to the smallest group of family size of 1-3 members and the lowest number of the respondents (8.57%) belonging to the largest group of family size of 10 & above members. More than half of the respondent (54.2%) had only one child while the least number of respondents (2.8%) fell under the group of 4 & above children. Most of them worked at NGO/ INGOs (40%) with a slight difference in government sector (20%) and Private school /college (17.1%) in second and third place respectively. The ration of respondents involved in bank, technical, medical and self-employed were all same with 5.7%. The largest number of women respondents (65.7%) had highest scale of salaries ranging 2000 & above with least (2.86%) having the lowest scale of salary falling in 1000-5000 group.

The largest proportion of respondent (71.4%) worked for less than five hours at home while none worked for more than 15 hours at home on household chores while more than one third of the respondent (80%) worked for 5- 10 hours in the office and none worked for 15 hours or more than that at the office.

Household activities Cooking and giving away of foods to family members ranged highest in the daily action of respondents while attending and participating in social and religious function is something they didn't do daily. Attending and entertaining guest ranged highest in the often action while feeding children seemed to be the lowest activities done often. Laundry ranged highest in the sometimes action while feeding children ranged lowest in the sometime action of women. However, all the respondent performed

activities like cooking and giving away of food to family members, shopping for food provision and household goods and attending and participating in social and religious functions on either daily, often or sometimes basis.

More than half of the respondent (60%) didn't feel additional workload while the rest (40%) did feel the additional workload similarly more than half of the respondent(65.1%) of the respondent were satisfied with the division of work at home while (28.5%) had no complains. Only few (5.7%) were not satisfied about the household division of work.

All of the respondents had their own decision making over their income while husband had on his own. Apart from managing husband income the lowest involvement of decision making of the respondent was in social and religious function in the family which was done by mother in law. Decision making of father in law in the mobility of family members was highest among other activities. Similarly the decision making of husband was significant in the capital transaction. Both Father- In – Laws and Mother- In- Laws decision had insignificant role in children's schooling.

Daily routine of most of the respondents (45.7%) were busy all the time in the house while only (2.8%) of the respondents daily routine in the house was overloaded. Significant number of respondents (37.4%) found their daily routine was satisfactory. All of the respondents thought that women should work outside the family and the highest reasoning given out for joining work outside was to utilize one's education (25.2%) while the lowest reasoning was for not being a housewife (13.5%).

More than half of the respondents (60%) preferred nuclear family while the rest (40%) preferred joint families. With an exception of (5.7%) of the respondents, almost all of the respondents (94.2%) were economically independent. However despite of such high ration of economic independence, only (80%) of the respondents felt empowered.

Majority of the respondent (80%) thought that their status in the family was privileged compared to non working women. More than one third of the respondent (88.5%) of women wanted to keep a balance between their traditional role at home and professional role outside. There were still few who thought that traditional role is more important. Surprisingly the numbers of respondent who followed menstrual taboos were more (51.4%) than the one who didn't follow it (48.5%). Respondent (40%) who did daily puja at home were more than the one who did it occasionally (31.4%). Women who never did it told that they had mother- in – laws who did it at home. The number of respondent (45.7%) who believed in fasting were more than who didn't believe in it (54.2%). Generally women are thought to be more important for child's

upbringing in a family. However the study revealed that (60%) of the respondent thought that all of the family member were important in a child's upbringing. In- laws had less importance in the upbringing of a child.

With changing time, there has been a great deal of changes in the perceptions and attitudes of working women towards orthodox traditional beliefs. Almost all of the respondents disagreed on beliefs and values which were discriminatory to women and girls based on gender while many were undecided and agreed that women were biologically born weaker than men and few thought that women's sexuality should be controlled as well.

The number of respondents (77.4%) were much more than the one who had joined work after marriage while the number of respondent who thought that working women can give and working women cannot give enough time for the socialization of her children were equal (45.7%) in number. While asked what kind of difficulties they go through in adjusting their hectic schedules most of the respondent (33.8%) said that they had less time for children and less time for self (30.6%).

Career had been helpful in enhancing the status of majority of the respondent (77.1%) at home while many were still undecided about career bringing any positive changes in their status at home. It was good to see that there was majority of the respondents (71.4) were not stressed out to an extent where they had felt like quitting their job. However the rest who did feel such stress had done something to manage such stress. It was obvious that more preferred to talk with family members and husband especially to manage such stress. Lastly majority of the respondent had domestic help at home.

6.2 Conclusion

The finding of this study can be concluded as follows:

Despite of the equal opportunity schemes in most of the professional sectors it was found that the so called "high- caste" women still predominated the professional sector in Nepal. It was found that more Newar and Janajati women employed in NGO/INGOs while the educational, medical and Technical sector was dominated by Brahmin women in this study. Since the working women in this study were highly qualified their income consequently was also high and which in turn led to their economic independence. Good education, better income and economic independence helped in the enhanced status of working women at home. Those who thought that status at home had nothing to do with their career were the one who thought that their status at home was the same as that of any non working women. Thus they didn't feel empowered. However, it was also found that sometimes women with very high professional potentials still

didn't feel empowered because they lived in a joint family where they felt inferior to male counterparts often.

It was found that older women with more than fifteen years of marriage were the one who had joined work after marriage. It thus makes it clear that with the increase in girls education in varied sector and impact of modernization, women today, immediately after the completion of their studies seek for career. Their busy schedules and expensive, qualitative education of children makes professional women bear one or just two children. Qualitative socialization was emphasized by most of the working women who preferred to have only one child. In spite of the preference for nuclear family it was found women thought that almost all the family members are responsible in a better socialization of a child in the family. Though many women came from nuclear family, there were significant numbers of women from nuclear families who still preferred joint family and thought that children had better socialization and work could be divided among the members. It was found that more Newar women preferred joint families.

In regard to the working hours on household chores or at office, none of the women were seemingly overworking. Most of them worked for five or less than five hours at home while at office they worked for five to ten hours. This is why there was a positive response by most of the women regarding not feeling additional work at home and being satisfied with the prevailing division of household work in the family. Of those who felt additional workload at home were the one who had no domestic help at home and they came from both joint and nuclear families. However, it was women who did almost all of the housework. In nuclear families husband helped more in the household work than in the joint family. Helping one's wife was often done uncomfortably by husband's which was thought to be shameful womanly act in the presence of traditional parents in joint families.

Both in Nuclear and Joint family, it was found that highly qualified working women had higher decision making authority. Both working couples were more active in nuclear and joint family in taking decisions than any other member. In laws basically were confined to making decision regarding religious and social function and sometimes the mobility of family members in joint family. However, working-Women still had less freedom in taking decision regarding capital transaction in comparison to her working husband.

Regarding working women attitude towards traditional norms and values, it was found that they wanted to be modern working women but also believed in customs and beliefs that were not discriminatory. All of the working women thought that women have to work today especially for utilizing one's education and for enhanced status in the society with better living standard. Though many followed menstrual taboos at

home, they said that they did it out of age old obligations in joint family. Women for nuclear family hardly followed menstrual taboos. They also believed in both scientific and religious importance of fasting. However, working women thought that age old customs which are not discriminatory are to be revered and respected. They hardly agreed on following any kind of discriminatory values and beliefs in the society that were in favor of men which ascribed an inferior and secondary status to women.

Working women had above all less time for self desires and hobbies when it came to adjusting time out of their hectic schedules. Many thought that their life was privileged than non working women in certain aspect but they too had problems and their life was routine like. It was their husband especially with whom they shared their emotional ups and downs. Apart from that most of the working women said that they shared their problems with their maternal parents rather than in laws or other members in the joint family. However, most of them also relied on friends to manage their stress because they believed that every working woman has problems in managing her time and thus it's friends and colleague who understood well each other problems when it came to managing stress by sharing or talking about it.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

THE STATUS OF EDUCATED MARRIED WORKING WOMEN IN THEIR PRIVATE SPHERES

Please provide the following information correctly. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for academic purposes.

INTRODUCTION

Name:

Caste/ Ethnicity:

Education:

Years of marriage:

Family Structure:

Household size:

Number of dependents (children):

Working sector:

Monthly income:

Part I

1. How much time do you spend on your household chores daily?

- J 0 – 5 hrs
- J 5 – 10 hrs
- J 10 – 15 hrs
- J 15 – 20 hrs

2. How much time do you spend on your office work daily?

- J 0 – 5 hrs
- J 5 – 10 hrs
- J 10 – 15 hrs
- J 15 – 20 hrs

3. Please tick the kind of household activities you are involved in according to the time frequency given in table below.

Household activities	Daily	Often	Sometimes
Cooking and giving away foods to family members			
Cleaning and mopping/ sweeping			
Laundry			
Shopping for food provision and household goods			
Dish washing			
Preparing children for school			
Helping children with homework			
Feeding children			
Maintenance of house			
Payment of bills like electricity, telephone, water, school fee			
Attending/ entertaining guests			
Attending to elders/ siblings while sick or unwell			
Attending and participating in social and religious functions			
Specify if any other here:			

4. Do you feel working outside the household has added additional workload?

- Yes
- No

5. Are you satisfied with the prevailing division of household work in you family?

- Yes
- No
- No complains

6. If no, have you made any attempts to change the prevailing household division of work in your family? How? Please explain?

7. Who makes the following decision in the family? Please tick in the right boxes.

Decision making in	Self	Husband	Father in law	Mother in law	Anyone else, specify
Capital transaction					
Your income					
Husband income					
Children's schooling					
Mobility of other family members					
Social religious function in the family					
Rendering modern facilities, equipment					
Buying and giving away of expensive gifts					
Any other: please specify here.					

7. How do you find your daily routine in the house?

- Overloaded
- Satisfactory
- Busy all the time
- Not busy all the time

Part II

1. Do you think women should work outside the family?

- Yes.....
- No

2. Why do you think women should work outside the family? Please tick in the blank spaces.

- For economic independence
- For the empowerment of one's status in the family and society
- To contribute to family's income
- To merely not confine oneself being a housewife
- To utilize ones education and skill

1. What type of family do you prefer to live in?

- Joint family
- Nuclear family

2. Specify your reasons for preferring joint or nuclear family?

3. Are you economically independent?

- Yes.....
- No
- Undecided

4. Do you feel empowered being economically independent?
 Yes
 No
 Undecided
5. Do you think you are more privileged than a non- working women with respect to the kind of status you have in your family?
 Yes.....
 No
 Undecided
6. Which one do you prefer?
 Being home as an ideal mother, wife and daughter in law
 Being busy working woman
 Keeping a balance between both
7. How do you feel mixing freely with opposite sexes at work place? Please specify.
8. Do you follow menstrual taboos in the family?
 Yes
 No
9. Do you do daily pooja at home?
 Yes
 No
 Occasionally
10. Do you believe in fasting?
 Yes
 No
13. Who do you think is more important in upbringing a child in the family?
 Mother
 Father
 In laws
 All of the family members
14. What are your attitudes towards the following norms/ values/ practices/ beliefs prevailing in our society? Please tick the appropriate box in the table below.

Details	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
We live in a patriarchal society and therefore women is and should be inferior to men			
Working or not, women should be protected, controlled and regulated by men			
Men should control women labor, income and mobility			

Women are biologically a weaker sex than men			
Son should be preferred over a daughter			
Son's education is important than daughter			
Boys should have more nutritious food than girls			
Boys should be extrovert, dauntless and fearless while girls should be shy and more introvert			
Women's sexuality should be controlled			
Girls should be married at early age to find eligible husband			
Boys should be active to the outside world while girl should be more active at household skills			

Part III

1. When did you start working outside?
 - Before marriage
 - After marriage

2. Do you think a working woman can't give enough time and socialization to her children?
 -) Yes
 -) No.....
 -) Undecided

3. What sort of difficulties do you have in adjusting yourself to play a dual role?
 -) Less time for children
 -) Less time for husband company love and demands
 -) Less time for self
 -) Less time in attending in laws demands and needs

4. Has career brought more respect to your status in the family?
 -) Yes.....
 -) No
 -) Undecided

5. Do you ever feel the mental and psychological stress to quit your job?
 -) Yes
 -) No

6. What is it that causes such stress? Please explain it in your own words.

7. What do you do to manage such stress?

-) Show dislike and anger to husband and family members
-) Discuss it with family members and husband
-) Share your problems and feeling with friends, colleague and peers
-) Take psychiatric help
-) Keep it to yourself

8. Have you hired a domestic help at home?

-) Yes
-) No.....

9. What do you understand by the term "Gender Equality"? Please explain it in your own words.

Thank you very much for your valuable time and participation in filling out this questionnaire.