

**ROLE OF RURAL WOMEN IN FOOD CROP
PRODUCTION**
(A case study of Shankarpur VDC, Darchula District)

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of
Rural Development for Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Rural Development**

**Submitted by
Narbada Joshi
Exam Roll No – 2782
Registration No.- 9-2-29-722-99**

**Tribhuvan University
Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal
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TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATION LETTER

The dissertation entitled “The Role of women in food crop production” Darchula District has been prepared by Narbada Joshi in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Rural Development under my supervision. I forward it with recommendation for approval.

Dated: 27 September 2008

Dr. Mangla Shrestha
(Thesis supervisor)
Associate, Professor
Central department of rural development
Tribhuvan University Kirtipur Nepal.

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ABSTRACT

The research entitled “Role of women in food crop production” was carried out in Shankarpur VDC of Darchula District. The main aim of the study was to find out the main role of women in food crop production and their role in decision making also in the study area. Agriculture is the backbone of the Nepalese economy. It contributes to the supply of food raw-material and exportable products. Nepal used to export food grains to the neighboring countries, but now has become a net importer of food grain in less than a decade. Nowadays this situation seems due to rapid population growth in contrast to the tradition agricultural system, many other socio-cultural and economic condition that the prevailing in our country. The main objectives of the thesis are:

- a) To find out the role of rural women in farming in the study area.*
- b) To analyze the contribution of rural women in principal food crop production.*
- c) To identify the extent of women involvement in decision making for food crop production.*

Generally in this study the situation of food crop production will be analyzed especially paddy, maize and wheat in this region. Now women are getting equal rights in the theory, but in practices no society provides equal status between male and female this study tries to expose the gender discrimination, which is one of the major issues in the context of agricultural development. Rural women’s vital role in the Nepalese agriculture can not be ignored. For the propose, this study aims highlighting the contribution of women food crop production, it is necessary to identify and analyzed the farm activities and other voluntary activities of rural women. So far limited studies have been conducted, which directly focus on the analysis of women involvement in food crop farming.

The main focus of the study was to examine the farm women’s role in terms of decision making and physical labour participation in food crop production .This study was carried out among 100 sampled farm households, at Shankarpur VDC of Darchula district. Interview of one of the respondent from each sampled household was taken by using pre-tested structured schedule.

The study area Shankarpur village development committee lies in the far western part of Nepal at Darchula district. In this village, food crop accounts for the major part of agricultural production .The major food crops grown in Shankarpur VDC are paddy, wheat and maize. This study indicates that women have a comparatively greater involvement in the production of food crop. This study indicates that, in overall term, the majority decisions

concerning crop production activities are made jointly by male and female. Regarding crop production decisions made alone, women dominated in deciding about the seed selection, weeding time and harvesting and men take a pre-dominant role than women in decision regarding wage labour arrangement. In this way, farm women have a significant role in making decisions related to food crop production.

Most of the farm women being illiterate, could not analyze how assess to education could influence or improve the level of their participation in farming. Through they mutually accepted the fact that given proper training, their role in farm activities could be up graded to a great extent.

Direct observation, participatory resource mapping, key informants interview, face to face questionnaire, and group discussion are used for the primary data collection. Secondary data were collected through the review of various books, published and unpublished literatures. The data thus collected were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The study was designed to examine the extent of labour involvement of women in crop farming. The productivity of male and female labour using production function analysis was estimated for the major crops in Shankarpur VDC, Darchula District.

This study is aimed to generate information and understanding about the women's roles and factors affecting the women in the food crop production. In this way, this study attempts to analyze the food crop production and population to find the situation of food in the VDC.

The study reports the following factors as: increasing the involvement of women in farming, nuclear family, high altitude farming, and active age group of farmers. The present study shows that rural women actively participate in the various activities in food crop production, but their participation in ploughing is the only one activity in farming in which women are not actively involved. Women's participation is found higher in operations like; transplanting, manuring, weeding and harvesting. The participation is from their own family labour, Parma system and from wage labour system. Besides farm activities, rural women are also involved in different activities such as milking buffaloes, cleaning animal sheds and grazing animals. They also have to do household activities and child care with little or no assistance. Since women's participation in agricultural development activities is presently very poor, the concerned agricultural office should focus on increasing women's participation in training, group visits, demonstrations, and exhibitions etc. Therefore rural women are the main driving force in crop production system in the study area.

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Map of Nepal
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ABBREVIATION

CBS	-	Central Bureau of Statistics
DDC	-	District Development Committee
VDC	-	Village Development Committee
RS	-	Rupees
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
HHs	-	Households
GN	-	Government of Nepal
IG	-	Income Generation
S.NO	-	Serial No
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
MOAC	-	Ministry of Agriculture
NPC	-	National Planning Commission
PPP	-	purchasing power parity
SPA	-	Seven Party Alliances
GLOF	-	Glacial lake outburst flood
NLSS	-	Nepal living Standard Survey
APP	-	Agriculture perspective Plan
FY	-	Fiscal Year
NGOs	-	Non-Governmental Organizations
INGOs	-	International Non- Governmental organizations
CEDA	-	Center for Economic and Development Administration
FAO	-	Food and Agricultural Organization
UNICEF	-	
UN	-	United Nations
ADB	-	Agricultural Development Bank
GEM	-	Gender Empowerment Measure
FYM	-	Farm Yard Manure
SFDP	-	Small Farmer Development Programme
WFP	-	world food programme
ILO`	-	International labour organization