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**The Changing Status of Working Women
of Kathmandu, Nepal**

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Sunita B. Upreti

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of the requirements for

Master's degree in Sociology

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THE CHANGING STATUS OF WORKING WOMEN
OF KATHMANDU, NEPAL

By
Sunita B. Upreti

"A THESIS"

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

THE CHANGING STATUS OF WORKING WOMEN OF KATHMANDU, NEPAL

By

Sunita B. Upreti

This study is an attempt to find out the changing status of working women of Kathmandu. Its aim is also to study the socio-economic characteristics of the working women and their adjustment in the dual role of house work and office work. Furthermore, this study is an attempt to provide some insight for the upliftment of the status of working women of Kathmandu.

The findings of the study are based on the observation technique, and analysis of the data collected. A total number of sixty women respondents were selected using a simple random sampling technique. A questionnaire technique was used to collect the quantitative information; an interview technique was also applied where necessary. The result was descriptively analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency distribution, percentage and mean.

Majority of the respondents had a Master's degree. They preferred the nuclear type of family and a small family too. This finding indicates the change that has occurred among the working women.

Majority of the respondents were satisfied with their job and opined that they were independent after taking a job and also argued that their status was equal to that of their male counterparts.

Majority of the respondents have been able to make an adjustment between the house work and office work. This shows that persons who earn a living outside the home occupy a better status in the society. So women should be encouraged to work and prejudices against women should be removed.

"ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS"

The completion of this study has to be attributed to a large number of people with whose help it was completed. I would like to express my warmest appreciation to all those who contributed to the completion of this study. My sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the late Dr. Artis, who was my advisor, and a constant source of encouragement.

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Study

In Nepal, due to conservative tradition, illiteracy, ignorance, poverty and superstitions, women have been treated as second class citizens. Thus women had less prestige, power, and privileges than their male counterparts in the society. In the past education was not considered necessary for women and working outside the home was not considered honorable. Economically and socially women had very little prestige in the society and their traditional role was that of the housewife and mother only. This had led to a state of limited opportunity for female education and employment. Though females constitute 49.7 percent of the total population, the 1981 census shows that only 11.5 percent females have received education (Population Monograph : 1987, p. 128).

In the modern developing society, men usually do not perform a dual role. They think that the housework is only for women. In modern society women frequently have to play the dual role of a working woman and a housewife. In today's context there is a high rate of inflation, so the added source of income by the women is very helpful indeed. Society should try to encourage women who want to work to do so on their own terms (Musgrave and Wheeler : 1972, p. 10).

Once women start, earning income, their economic condition too will improve and their earnings will help them maintain a normal standard of living. For these reasons women have started to take work outside the house while continuing to perform their traditional role of a housewife. Nepalese women are beginning to know that they have equal legal rights as men, women in the rural parts of the country too are aware of the legal rights .The new civil code of 1963 and the sixth amendment of the new civil code have given them equal rights (Shrestha : 1982, P.4). This change has given them self confidence too.

With this confidence women can use their legal rights to solve their problems. This is only possible when they are educated; with the help of good education women would be better able to use their skills and talents.

From the new Nepalese society has emerged a new group of women who perform a dual role, that of a housewife and a working women. This is a emerging social phenomenon in our country. This change has infused self confidence among this section of the human population (Social Change : 1985, p.29).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There has been a steady increase in the number of economically active females between 1961 to 1971. The primary occupation of the females of that period was in fact of a housewife. It

was just 10.31 percent in 1961 and in 1971, 32.29 percent. From 1971 to 1981 the economically active females increased by 66.2 percent (Population Monograph: 1987, p.203). Hence women started becoming conscious of their ability and joined the work force outside their home.

In Nepal an urban area is that area which has a population over 10,000. Kathmandu town has a total population of 235,160 out of which the female population is 105,634 (Statistical Pocket Book: 1986, p.18). There are more educated females in urban areas than in rural areas. In Nepal 31.48 percent of the urban labor force are females (Population Monograph: 1987, p.210).

With these facts in mind, I would like to investigate the changes taking place among women in Nepal. Changes have taken place in all spheres of the life of women: social, economical, political and educational and others. This study mainly attempts to study the changes that have come about in the women of Kathmandu who have are employed. It examines the changes in their role and the adjustment they have made.

In most of the families a woman has to perform multiple roles and has to face the situation and adjust in the society. It is a problematic phenomenon and hard to distinguish all the complex factors involved. However, this study will try to find out the changing status as well as the adjustment pattern in

a complex situation, dominated by the prevalent patriarchal attitudes of men.

The traditional conception regarding women as a child bearing machine and a houseworker is changing in Nepal because of education and modernization. Actually it is the new economic pattern which is mainly responsible for this trend. The new economic pattern has emerged in two phases. In the first phase, a woman had to choose between her career and marriage; and because of culture and tradition she opted for marriage and family. In the second phase of the economic pattern, there is no question of choice, but to combine work and family (Kapur: 1970.p.4). This trend became more common in our developing society.

Now that the educated have come out of the house to work outside, problems have started to arise in the family. This change has confused the working woman because it is not easy for them to combine the traditional role and the new role.

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

(a) What are the socio-economic characteristics of the working women of Kathmandu (e.g. age, education, marital status)?

(b) Whether there is change among the working women in terms of their working pattern in the household chores, washing, cooking, looking after the children and family.

(c) How do the working women assess their job? Do they see it as an asset to meet their household expenses?

(d) Has the working woman made an adjustment between the dual role? Do they manage well with both the work, by keeping a helper at home to do the housework so that they can work freely at work.

(e) What are the ways that will help improve the status of working women in Kathmandu?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Generally this study will attempt to find out the changing role of working women of Kathmandu Nepal.

More specifically, the following are the specific objectives of the study:

1. To develop a socio-economic profile of the working women of Kathmandu Nepal.
2. To isolate the changes in their working pattern in terms of the household chores.
3. To study the attitude of the working women towards their new job situation.
4. To study the working women's adjustment pattern within the dual role of house work and office work.
5. To suggest some viable means to improve the status of working women of Kathmandu Nepal.

1.4 Importance of the Study

Women, who constitute half of the total population, have been largely ignored politically, socially, and economically. In virtually every type of society males have more power, prestige and privileges than females. If women are economically independent, their position will become better. According to Shrestha, employment of women is of vital importance for increasing the status of women in the family or in the society. Since the woman becomes an earner too her ideas and role cannot be ignored by the family in matters of important decisions made in the household (Shrestha : 1982, p.65).

Once women start working, their status becomes better because of their earnings. Yet in Nepalese society, an ideal woman is the one who spends most of her time at home, doing the household works, pleasing her husband and her in-laws.

The Nepalese society does not object if she happens to take a job or enter the labor market, but they equally expect her to perform the traditional role of a housewife and a mother.

The change in societal attitude towards women employment has occurred because of the economic strains of the time and with this change as well as with the change in the attitude of educated women, employment of women has increased. Women in the past were driven by poverty to work. Now this has changed.

Women may work out of economic necessity or out of their own choice too.

According to Kapur (1970, p.10), the process of industrialization and urbanization has brought about socio-psychological changes in the attitude and values of the people of Nepal especially among the urban population. And this has brought about change in the attitude of the educated women.

Due to this change in their attitude, the joint family system has changed to a nuclear family system in the urban areas. The working women have increased in number and have challenged the old view of "men for the field and women for the hearth". Now this trend has changed and women, whether out of economic necessity or out of their own choice, have come to combine the two roles of home and work. However, this is not an easy task.

In Nepal, the average work in and out household for women in labor force is 10.81 hours per day and 7.51 hours per day for men (Acharya and Benette: 1982, p. X). Women in our society work harder than men. Thus we know that women have not been able to lead an easy life. Given these long hours of work, it is very important to study the changes that have taken place in women's role and the adjustment made between the housework and outside work.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the changing status of working women of Kathmandu Nepal, and how these women have adjusted between the housework and outside work. All research problems have limitations due to error of logic, measurement and omission. For the purpose of the study sixty respondents were selected by the random sampling method .

1.6 Defining the Terms Used in the Study

The different terms and concepts used in this study are defined as follows:

a) Age

Age refers to the age of the respondents at the time of the interview.

b) Education

Education refers to the years of schooling completed by the respondents at the time of the research.

c) Marital Status

Marital status means whether the respondent was married or single, widowed or divorced at the time of the research.

d) Fertility

This refers to the ability to produce a child. So this study refers to the total number of children of a respondent at the time of the research.

e) Size of the Family

This refers to the number of persons living together in a family. So in this study the number of individuals living with respondents at the time of study, has been considered.

f) Household Chores

This refers to the activities done in the house to maintain it. So in this study the various activities like cooking, washing clothes, washing the dishes, looking after the children has been considered.

g) Attitudes

The study also investigated certain kind of attitude of the respondents toward the job, family; like their feeling towards their job and adjustment with the family.

CHAPTER II

2. Review of the Literature

Status of women is an important factor which affects the socio-economic development of a country. As we know that status is not a fixed rigid concept, it changes with time.

So the status of women also changes with time. Status has been defined in different ways. As cited by the population monograph -- the United Nations has given the definition of womens' status as " the conjunction of position a woman occupies as a worker, student, wife, mother daughter,..... of the power and prestige attached to these positions and of the rights and duties she is expected to exercise" (Population Monograph:1987, p.243).

The study of Biswa Nath Mukherjee opined that the term "status" will denote not only the conjunctions of the rights and duties as reflected in woman's several roles as mother, wife and daughter-in-law but also the degree of her subordination in home, her education, the number of sons she has, the economic status of her family as measured by numbers of utility items found in her house, her degree of participation in public life, her role in decision - making in family affairs and her self-perceived status in the home and the community (Social Change: 1974, p.4).

A woman has to play different roles throughout her life and maintain her status too in every sphere where she is involved. According to Pradhan (1979, pxii)

"Women have been traditionally regarded primarily as consumers and not producers. It is only with the advent of the 1970's that they have been regarded as a global resource for development and social changes. Women's limited role in the society reflects the secondary role assigned to them in the household nexus, which forms the deep core of almost all social relationships in traditional societies like Nepal".

Women have always been given a secondary position to that of men in our traditional society. She is seen as a good housekeeper, and a good mother. This shows that women had very limited role to perform in the traditional society. However, in the modern times, especially in the urban areas women have to perform dual role function, i.e. to take care of the whole household activities and to work outside the home for extra income to support the family.

According to Shrestha (1982, p.5)

"Nepalese society, regards male members as an asset and does not object to women entering into the labor market but expects to receive her traditional domestic role equally".

They expect the woman to manage this because housekeeping is considered to be an exclusive role for her, and taking up of a job outside the home is expected to be done at her own initiative. So women must find a proper place in the society so as to effectively and harmoniously contribute to the socio-economic modernization of the society and the country as a whole.

The different independent variables affecting women's work have been considered and are as follows:

a) Age

We know that age is such an important factor which directly effects any individual's ability to work. It has been found out to be the most important and positive factor which affects the subsistence production in Nepal. According to Acharya and Benette (1982,p.26) " Age on the whole is a positive factor in determining women's work burden".

A woman is liable to take on more responsibilities as her age increases. The study of the United Nations for Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (1987, p.20) shows a different finding,

"Female economic participation in the developing countries peaks only once, between the age of 20 and 24 years, after which statistics show that a large segment leaves the paid labor force, never to return, unlike their counterparts in the industrialized countries".

Once women enter the middle age they return to doing only household chores.

b) Education

Shrestha's study (1982, p.16) reveals that

"education and employment for women has a positive relation. Education not only facilitates employment but it is a manifestation of and a stimulation to the achievement of motivation".

Once the women are educated they seek employment for upward social mobility, and to use their education they seek employment.

There is another study done by Manjit Singh (1985, p.32), which shows that

"by making a female literate we educate the whole family. Female literacy brings more awareness in the house. Literacy among female brings remarkable changes and is mainly responsible for qualitative changes in the society".

Education brings about a change in an individual, which in turn brings changes in the whole society too. If the women are educated this in turn will educate the next generation too. Education gives awareness to women, women with high academic qualifications will influence the development of the country and the quality of life itself.

c) Marital Status

Marital status of does affect women's work. According to Srestha's findings (1982, p.61)

"A married woman should be able to keep a fair balance between the work world and home world. She can neither give less importance to the household responsibility nor to the job responsibility. In the case of an unmarried woman the work burden of home will be lesser than the burden of work for married woman".

A married woman has many tasks to fulfill and she has to bear a greater burden than an unmarried woman. A single woman is

able to take part in the outside work more freely without any hesitation than a married woman.

d) Fertility

Fertility also affects the working woman. The employment of women and fertility is negatively correlated.

According to the study of Oppong and Abu (1987, p.3) " with regard to women's work, a simple view expressed frequently and supported with large and expensive data sets has been that fertility is inversely associated with women's labor force participation, leading two decades ago to the idea that the expansion of female employment would lead to fertility reduction".

And the report of the United Nations on Fertility Survey (1985, p.5) also shows a negative relationship between the employment and fertility

"If economic and Social life are structured such that it is difficult to combine both child - bearing and employment an inverse relationship between fertility and work will emerge".

e) Size of the Family

Size of the family does affect the financial condition of the family, which in turn affects the work of the women. Larger families need more resources and put increasing pressure on women to work. According to Acharya and Benette (1982, p.28)

"The larger the family size the lower the participation rate of women in production". Women with large families have to give attention to all the members of the

family, so that she will have less time to devote to her work and herself.

f) Job

From the report of ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific:1987, p.29) we can see that while "balancing the twin demands of the need for cash income and of domestic task including child care, compels women to find work that is compatible with the latter chiefly in terms of working hours or conditions that do not distance them from their children".

And again Shrestha's study (1982, p.229) also shows that

"employment opportunity for women is limited. There are only a few who hold high paying , prestigious and decision-making jobs".

This shows that women are given very limited opportunity to enter into high -level jobs, which are dominated by the males.

g) Household Chores

There are various studies indicating that household work does affect a woman in taking up a job.

Shrestha's study (1982, p.234) reveals that there is a view in our society that

"home making is considered as the main career of women, and so she should be prepared to sacrifice her work career for the upliftment of home making career".

Such myths diminishes women's prospect of professional development. Such beliefs hinders women in taking up jobs. Because of culture and tradition women usually opted for

marriage and family. In the second phase of the economic pattern, because of economic necessity, there is no question of choice, but to combine work and family (Kapur: 1970.p.4). This trend became more common in Nepal.

Now that the educated have come out of the house to work outside, problems have started to arise in the family. This change has confused the working woman because it is not easy for them to combine the traditional role and the new role.

CHAPTER III

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

3.1.1 Place of the Study

This descriptive study was conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Kathmandu valley covers an area of 218 sq. miles. It is situated at 4,423 ft. above the sea level. The Kathmandu valley itself consists of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhadgaon, but this study will be confined to Kathmandu only. Because the researcher herself comes from Kathmandu, doing the study there met the limitations of time and money, thus making it convenient for her.

3.1.2 Sampling Procedure

Before proceeding to the sampling procedure, keeping in view the nature of the problem, the researcher selected randomly four wards out of thirty six, of the Kathmandu Town Panchyat. These four wards were widely dispersed in the city; and from these wards sixty respondents were randomly selected for the study.

These respondents were taken from a list of employees provided by the H.M.G.(national civil service) and the semi-

governmental corporations. Four wards were equally represented in the sample, fifteen respondents were selected from each.

3.1.3 Data Collection Method

In this study both primary and secondary data has been used. The researcher collected the data employing various research techniques such as the interview, and questionnaire method.

3.1.4 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to collect the necessary data which were suitable for the study concerned. Here the structured questionnaire was used. (See Appendix for a copy of questionnaire.)

3.1.5 Interview

Specifically for the qualitative information, the interview method was used. Here too the similar questions as in the questionnaire was asked, and some informal questions about their family and job and about suggestions were asked.

3.1.6 Reliability

For the reliability of the study, the research instruments were prepared in English, and then translated into Nepali when necessary. A ten percent sample of the sampled respondents, that is twenty four, other than the actual

respondents but living in the same area were interviewed to check the instruments. When found necessary, some modification and alteration were introduced into the tools. Hence, the tools were reliable and the interpretation should be generalizable for the area concerned.

3.1.7 Method of Analysis

Collected data were tabulated and classified according to their attributes on the basis of the study. The analysis of the data were done with the help of descriptive statistical tool, such as the frequency distribution, percentage and Mean. Dichotomization or categorization of the variables were done in the following manner:

a) Age

Age was categorized into three groups:

20 to 29 years

30 to 39 years

40 and above

b) Marital Status

This was categorized into four groups:

Married

Unmarried

Divorced

Widow

c) Education

This again was categorized into four groups:

School Leaving Certificate (S.L.C.) passed.

**Intermediate in Art, Science, Commerce, (I.A.;I.Sc.;I.Com.)
passed.**

**Bachelor in Art, Science, Commerce, (B.A.;B.Sc,B.Com.)
passed.**

Master in Art, Science, Commerce, (M.A.;M.Sc.;M.Com.) passed.

d) Fertility

Fertility was categorized into three groups:

One child

Two children

Three children and above

e) Job

Job was categorized into three groups:

His Majesties Government (H.M.G.)

Semi-Government (Corporations)

f) Size of the Family

This was categorized into three groups:

2

3-4

5 and above

g) Household Chores

This was categorized into different forms such as washing clothes, cooking, taking care of the children etc.

CHAPTER IV

4. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

a) AGE

Table - 1

Distribution of the Respondents by Age

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
20 - 30 years	31	51.7
30 - 40 years	25	41.7
40 years and above	4	6.6
Total	60	100.0

Mean age: 30.5 years

The age of the respondents of the sample population ranged from twenty to forty years. I was surprised that nobody was under the age of twenty. Out of the total sample population, majority of the respondents were (51.7 percent) in the age group of 20 to 30 years, then 41.7 percent were in the age group of 30 to 40 years, and 6.6 percent of the respondents were forty years or more of age.

The mean age of the respondents was 30.5 years of age. This finding reveals that women in Kathmandu have started to hold jobs at a young age. To share the rising economic burden as

well as to maintain their status women have started to take up jobs from a young age, and continue to do so through their middle age.

This finding contradicts the finding of the United Nations study for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (United Nation's: 1987, p.20). In this study, they have shown that in developing countries, female economic participation peaks only once between the age of twenty and twenty four years and after that most of the working women leave their work, unlike their male counterparts.

In Nepal, however, we find that women take up work at a young age and continue to work through their middle age. Today women have realized that their status is equal to that of their male counterparts and they can equally contribute to their household income as well as expenditure. This might be one of the reasons why women do not stop working even when they enter their middle age.

This finding does resemble the finding of Acharya and Benette (1982, p.26) where they have shown that age is a positive factor in determining women's work burden. This shows that in today's context working women have realized their status so

that they do not sacrifice their work even if they enter their old age.

Table - 2

Distribution of the Respondents by Education

Education	No. of Respondents	Percentage
S.L.C.	6	10.0
Intermediate	7	11.7
Bachelor	18	30.0
Masters	29	48.3
Total	60	100.0

Mean:14.33 years of schooling

The above table presents the educational status of the working women of Kathmandu. From the table it is evident that women in Kathmandu start working at a young age, that is after finishing school, colleges and university. The finding shows that the majority 48.3 percent of the respondents) had Master's degree, then 30.0 percent of the respondents had bachelor's degree, 11.7 percent were intermediate passed and only 10 percent of them were S.L.C. passed.

The mean education level of the respondents was 14.44 years of schooling. This indicated that women, once they are educated, tend to seek employment, for their upward social mobility. This finding resembles that of Neeru Shrestha (1982, p.16) where she has mentioned that education and employment for women have positive inter-relationship. It has helped women to get employment. It, in a way stimulates them to achieve their goals.

Likewise this finding also resembles that of Manjit Singh, where the researcher has shown that female literacy brings awareness about their status in the house and in the society. Female literacy can bring a change in the society, and it can change the status of women on the whole (Social Change: 1985,p.32)

It is also evident from the data that in Kathmandu most of the women in the labor force are literate, this proves that there is a better chance for a literate woman who wants to work and maintain her status.

Table - 3

Distribution of the Respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Married	41	68.3
Married	18	30.0
Divorced	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Most of the respondents (68.3 percent) were married, 30.0 percent of the respondents were unmarried working woman and only one respondent was divorcee.

This indicates that most of the women who were holding jobs were already married. It is safe to state that the married work women, though they have to bear more responsibilities, still intend to work outside the home. This finding resembles the finding of Neeru Shrestha where she says that a woman has to keep a fair balance between her home and office work, and neither can she give exclusive importance to the household responsibilities.

Nepal is the only Hindu Kingdom in the world, most of the respondents of Kathmandu to be Hindu (88 percent). But a small percent were Buddhist too.

Table - 4
Distribution of the Respondents by Caste

Caste	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Brahmins	20	33.3
Chhetries	9	15.0
Newars	31	51.7
Total	60	100.0

Brahmins rank highest in the caste hierarchy, they are also known as the priest caste in traditional Hindu Caste System. Chhetris are the warrior caste and are ranked second to Brahmin in the caste hierarchy (Bista: 1967, p.1). The Newar people are the indigenous inhabitants of the Kathmandu valley. They are the small shopkeepers, the big businessmen, importers, exporters, taxi drivers, farmers, carpenters etc. They are a unique and interesting people and one of the oldest known groups in Nepal (Bista: 1967, p.15).

Here the table presents us that most of the respondents are Newars, 51.7 percent , 33.3 percent of them are Brahmins and 15.0 percent are Chhetries.

As the study was conducted only in Kathmandu city, most of the respondents were found to be Newars. The Newars are the indigenous people of Kathmandu valley, their population is the largest inside the valley. But the main reason is that in our social structure women do not tend to leave their localities to take up jobs, and they want to stay in their home town to hold a job. So as to manage the house work and office work, women take up jobs in their home town. As Newars are the indigenous people of the valley, naturally most of the working women would be Newars.

Table - 5

Distribution of the Respondents by Family Types

Types of Family	No.of Respondents	Percentage
Joint	27	45.0
Nuclear	33	55.0
Total	60	100.0

Most of the respondents, 55 percent out of the total sample population preferred to live in a nuclear type of family. And 45 percent of the respondents preferred to live in a joint family system.

This finding reveals that a change in the thinking of the working women has occurred. Working women prefer to live separately and independently. Here we find that most of the working women of Kathmandu prefer to live independently with their husband and children, away from the extended family. The reason behind this is that they have to bear a lesser burden of the housework while working outside.

Table - 6

Distribution of the Respondents by Their Family Size

Size of the Family	No. of Respondents	Percentage
2	2	3.3
3-4	18	30.0
5-6	22	36.7
6 and above	18	30.0
Total	60	100.0

Of the total respondents of the sample population, 36.7 percent had 5 to 6 members living together in their family. 30.0 percent of them had a family size of two to four and more than six. And only 3.3 percent had a family size of one to two. The mean size of the family is 4.86.

This finding contradicts the finding of Acharya and Benette (1982, p.28) where they have mentioned that the larger the family size the lower the participation rate of women in production. The family size does affect the work of women. The family size affects the economic condition of the family and in turn this will affect an individual also. So as to maintain

the economic condition of the family, a woman too has to take up a job.

b) Fertility

The fertility of the respondents of the sample population ranged from one to three. The fertility of the respondents as indicated in the Table 7 was categorized into four groups -- working women without children, working women with one child, working women with two to three children and women with four or more children.

Table - 7

Distribution of the Respondents by Fertility

No. of Children	No. of Respondents	Percentage
None	19	31.7
1	13	21.7
2-3	28	46.7
4 or more	0	0.0
Total	60	100.0

This table shows that women with two to three children are the majority, 46.7 percent, and women having only one child were

21.7 percent, and women with no children were 31.7 percent, they were mostly single women or just married.

This finding shows also that today working women of Kathmandu have become more conscious of their individuality so they prefer a small nuclear family. And they know that to combine child caring with employment is a difficult task. This might be one of the reasons why majority of them have two to three children. This is one of the example of their changing status.

This finding resembles that of Christine Oppong and Katherine Abu (1987,p.3) where they have shown that fertility and women's labor force participation has an inverse association. Likewise it resembles the report of the U.N. on fertility survey where they show a negative relationship between employment and fertility.

Table - 8
Type of Employment

Nature of the Job	No. of Respondents	Percentage
H.M.G.	26	43.3
Corporation	34	56.7
Total	60	100.0

This table indicates that women holding corporation jobs constitute the majority, 56.7 percent and H.M.G. job holders were 43.3 percent.

As compared to government jobs the corporation pays good salary so the women tend to work for the corporations.

Table-9

Distribution of the Respondents According to Their Official Position

Official Position	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Officer	40	66.7
Non Officer	20	33.3
Total	60	100.0

The above table shows us the official position of the working women. Forty percent of them were officers and 20 percent were non-officers.

Table - 10

Salary Ratio of the Working Women

Salary	No. of Respondents	Percentage
* Less than 1000 Rs.	13	21.7
1000 --- 1499	21	35.0
1500 --- 1999	16	26.7
2000 and above	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0
Mean : Rs. 1459.16		

*** American Dollar \$ 1 is equivalent to Nepalese rupee 46.**

This table shows the salary ratio of the working women. Most of the working women 35.0 percent are paid between Rs. 1000 to 1499 ; then 26.7 percent are paid between Rs. 1500 to 1999; 21.7 percent are paid above Rs. 2000. The Mean Salary of the respondents is Rs. 1459.16.

This finding reveals that women intend to work to meet the family's economic demand's, as well as for their independence. With Rs.1459.16 one could maintain the monthly grocery and buy some household goods.

Besides working at the office, women go in for some recreational activities too.

Table - 11

Recreational Activities of the Respondents

Extra Activities	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Sports	3	3.2
Social activities	17	18.2
Reading/writing	33	35.4
Watching movies	23	24.7
Charity work	17	18.2
Total	60	100.0

Percentage is based on the frequency mentioned.

The above table shows that most of the respondents of the sample population 35.4 percent spend some time in reading and writing; 24.7 percent of the respondents spend some time in watching movies; 18.2 percent of them spend the time for social work as well as in social activities and only 3.2 percent spend time on sports. Sports seems low compared to

other recreation because it is not in our culture for women, to play sporting activities.

This reveals that women are aware of their status and they feel that besides working, it is equally important to go in for recreational activities to break the monotony, just as their male counterparts do.

Table - 12

Time Spent on Household Chores

Hours per Day	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.9 - 2.9 hrs	9	15.0
3 - 3.9 hrs	28	46.7
4 - 4.9 hrs	23	38.3
Total	60	100.0

✓ A working woman who is tackling the dual responsibility of a job and a family establishes a system of domestic priorities at the beginning.

Table 12 presents the time spent by the working women in household chores. Most of the respondents of the total sample population 46.7 percent spend at least 2 to 4 hours every day

in domestic chores. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents spend four to five hours per day, and fifteen percent of them spend only two hours in household chores. The reason behind this finding is may be that those who spend more time in household chores might be from the middle class family and those who spend only two hours per day might belong to the well-to-do family or their family members might be educated and understanding and helping. No matter what, a woman has to spend some time on household duties.

Similarly Table 13, shows the opinion of the working women whether they get enough time for household activities or not. A large number of the working women 55 percent opined that they did not get enough time for household activities; 35 percent of them opined that they got enough time; and only 10 percent of them did not give any opinion.

Table - 13

Time Spent in Household Activities by the Respondents

Enough Time Spent in Household Activities?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Yes	21	35.0
No	33	55.0
No opinion	6	10.0
Total	60	100.0

From this finding we can say that any woman who has decided to take up outside work has to give careful thought to their domestic work as they have to maintain their houses whether they get enough time or not.

Table 14, again shows us that the working women apart from their household chores have to give some time to their children too.

Table - 14

Time Spent on Children by the Respondents

Sufficient Time Spent on Children?	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	19	31.7
No	19	31.7
No opinion	22	36.7
Total	60	100.0

Out of the total sample population, 31.7 percent of the married women who had children opined that they got enough time for their children, and similarly 31.7 percent opined that they did not get enough time to spend with their children. And lastly the other respondents who did not give any opinion were mostly unmarried and some were married without children. So all these three table show that the working women have to maintain their houses by performing the household activities as well as by looking after their

children. In Nepalese society a woman has to play several roles such as a housewife, a mother, a sister, daughter -in-law. etc; because of these several roles women have to allocate their time judiciously to discharge these functions.

But despite of these roles, the working women of Kathmandu valley are becoming capable of adjusting their time doing several activities. Because of this capacity they are in a position to change their status. Hence it is safe to presume that this might be one of the indicators of the changing status of working women of Kathmandu.

Table - 15

Domestic Help at the Household Level of the Respondents

Helper	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	42	70.0
No	15	25.0
No Opinion	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

Majority of the respondents, 70 percent out of the total sample population had servants to help them in the house, 25

percent of them did not, and only 5 percent of them did not give any opinion. This finding corroborates our expectations, that with the help of a servant at home, a working woman could work more freely outside the house, in her office. The monthly pay of these servants ranges from rupee fifty to hundred, including footing and lodging.

When asked whether they enjoyed physical and material comforts, like having a freezer, sofa, other kitchen gadgets, a helper, after holding a job, in table no.16; majority, 60 percent, of the respondents gave a positive answer. Whereas 26.7 percent of them gave negative answer and only 13.3 percent of them gave no opinion

Table - 16

Views Regarding the Physical Comfort After Holding a Job

Physical Comfort	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	36	60.0
No	16	26.7
No opinion	8	13.3
Total	60	100.0

Table - 17

Communication Pattern of the Respondents at Household Level

Change in the Communication Pattern at the Household Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Increased	44	73.3
Decreased	8	13.3
Constant	8	13.3
Total	60	100.0

According to Table 17 a large number of the respondents, 73.3 percent opined that after holding a job they have been able to communicate more easily with their household members, 13.3 percent gave the negative reply. The reason for this might be due to their counselling and convincing capacity at the office, which in turn helps them to communicate more freely at home too.

These findings show the changes which working women have undergone at the household level. With the help of their jobs, they can keep a helper to help them maintain their house. It follows that with the improvement in their financial

condition they could have some of the modern facilities at home, and they could communicate more easily with their household members too. They could talk to their husband more easily on different matters concerning the house matter and with the other members of the family also.

Table - 18

Feelings of the Respondents Towards Adjustment With Other Household Activities

Feeling	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Difficult	11	18.3
Easy	27	45.0
No opinion	22	36.7
Total	60	100.0

Table 18, reveals the feelings of the respondents towards the adjustment with other household activities at the household level. Most of the working women, 45 percent, said that it was easy for them, 18.3 percent of them found it to be difficult, and 36.7 percent did not give any opinion.

Though most of them found it to be easy to adjust, many of them found it to be difficult. This might be because of the traditional thinking of their in laws, that is they expect the daughter-in-law to do most of the house work and not complain.

Table - 19

Perception of the Respondents Towards Their Job as an Asset

Asset to Solve the Household Problems	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Yes	37	61.7
No	17	28.3
No opinion	6	10.0
Total	60	100.0

Table 19 shows the perception of the respondents towards their job as an asset to solve most of the household problems. Majority of the respondents 61.7 percent gave a positive answer, 28.3 percent gave negative answers, and 10 percent gave no opinion. This finding reveals that most of the respondents saw their job as an asset, to solve their household problem.

Table - 20
Job Satisfaction

Satisfaction	Respondents	Percentage
Satisfied	32	53.3
Dissatisfied	20	33.3
Neutral	8	13.3
Total	60	100.0

Of the total sample population a large number of the respondents, as can be seen in Table 20, 53.3 percent were satisfied with their present jobs, 33.4 percent were dissatisfied, and only 13.3 percent were neutral.

Table - 21 presents the level of dependency of the working women.

Table - 21
Level of Dependency

Level of Dependency	No.of Respondents	Percentage
Independent	45	75.0
Dependent	15	25.0
Total	60	100.0

The working women answered seventy-five percent the very much independent category and 25.00 percent found no change and were still dependent upon their family members.

This finding shows the change that has taken place in the status of these women. Here we find that most of them have found themselves to be independent. This is also one of the indicators of the changing status of working women of Kathmandu.

Table 22. and 23. show an account of the financial position of the working women of Kathmandu.

Table - 22
Financial Position

Separate Bank Aaccount	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	48	80.0
No	12	20.0
Total	60	100.0

Table - 23
Financial Position

Maintain the Household Account	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	29	48.4
No	31	51.6
Total	60	100.0

Majority of the working women, 80 percent had a separate bank account, and only 20 percent of them did not. And 48.4 percent of the respondents did maintain the household account whereas 51.6 percent of them did not. These facts reveal that though most of the working women have a separate bank account, they usually do not wholly maintain the household account.

Kathmandu is an urban city. Yet, when one enters the household, it is hard to find urban characteristics, such as, a telephone, refrigerator, television in every household. Women have to seek suggestions from their male counterparts and other family members on spending the money they earn. Even though the working women have a separate bank account and are financially independent, they have to seek suggestions concerning the household account.

But we can say that this is also one of a positive symptom for the changing status of the working women. Maybe after some years they will be able to make their own decision on household matters and household account too.

Table - 24
Landholding of the Respondents

Land in Their Name	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	26	43.4
No	34	56.6
Total	60	100.0

In Table 24, majority, 56.6 percent of the respondents did not have land registered in their name; whereas 43.4 percent of them did. Women who had land in their name might be the ones who got it as dowry gift from their parents, or some might have some people in the family who allow them to buy lands in their own name for financial security.

But the problem is those who do not have land in their name constitute the majority. The reason behind this is the prevalence of the patriarchal attitude of the society, so the male members of the family keep land in their own name.

Table - 25

Involvement of the Respondents in the Household Decision-Making Process

Answer	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	36	60.0
No	1	1.7
No opinion	23	38.3
Total	60	100.0

This Table 25 indicates that a large number, 60 percent of the respondents are involved in the household decision-making process, 38.3 percent had no opinion, and only one percent gave a negative answer.

This shows that now a days most of the working women are involved in most of the important matters in the house. Their opinions and decisions are valued by other members of the house. This is a positive sign of the changing status of the working women of Kathmandu.

The status enjoyed by the working women of Kathamndu is presented in Table 26.

Table - 26
Status as Compared to Their Male Counterparts

Status	Respondents	Percentage
Low	3	5.0
Equal	42	70.0
High	4	6.7
No opinion	11	18.3
Total	60	100.0

Respondents were asked to rank their status, if they enjoyed equal, low, medium or high status compared to their male counterpart. A majority, 70 percent of them opined that their status was equal to that of their male counterparts. Five percent believed that they had low status, 6.7 percent even argued that they enjoyed high status as compared to their male counterparts, and 18.3 percent of them gave no opinion.

We can say that change has taken place among the working women. Women who took up jobs in the past, had to maintain a

low profile because of the structure of the society of that period, but in today's context most of the working women are regarded as equal to their male counterparts. Traditionally women were regarded as consumers and not producers, but in today's modern society women are considered to be producers and not merely consumers. The traditional thinking has been slowly changing. This too is a positive sign for the changing status of the working women.

Table - 27

Adjustment Between Housework and Office Work

Adjustment	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	31	51.7
No	19	30.0
No opinion	10	18.3
Total	60	100.0

This table presents the adjustment pattern of the working women between housework and office work. Majority of the respondents, 51.7 percent, have been able to make some adjustment between the housework and the office work. Thirty

percent of them still have not been able to adjust, and 18.3 percent gave no opinion on this matter.

This finding proves that most working women of Kathamndu have been able to make adjustment between her housework and office work.

Those who could not make such an adjustment said that they could not give full attention to their children, husband and in-laws.

Table - 28
Value on Job

Work Necessary to Meet the Household Expenses	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	35	58.4
No	25	41.6
Total	60	100.0

Table - 29
Value on Job

Work for Independence	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	38	63.4
No	11	18.3
No opinion	11	18.3
Total	60	100.0

These Tables 28 and 29 show the value placed on the jobs by the respondents. Majority of the respondents 58.4 percent found work necessary to meet the rising cost of living as well as to share their husbands economic burden . Forty-one percent of them were of negative opinion.

These facts reveal that most of the working women find work necessary in today's context.

Table 29 shows that 63.4 percent of the respondents work for independence, 18.3 percent were of negative opinion, and 18.3 percent had no opinion.

These facts reveal that working women of this modern age work for independence, and they do not intend to be a burden on the

society. All the women in the sample work for economic necessity or independence.

CHAPTER V

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of the Findings

To summarize, this study was an attempt to find out the changing status of working women of Kathmandu. Specifically, the objectives of this study were to draw up the socio-economic profile of working women of Kathmandu; to determine the changes taking place in their working pattern at household chores; to see the working women's adjustment between the dual roles of housework and office work; and to suggest some viable means to uplift the status of working women of Kathmandu.

The main focus of the study was on working women, the study having been carried out among 60 sampled working women. These respondents were selected by using the random sampling technique.

Questionnaire and interview method was also used to collect the necessary information.

The result was descriptively analyzed for which descriptive statistics, such as frequency distribution, percentage and mean were used.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Women getting into out-of-home employment situation is a recent phenomenon in Nepal. The present study was undertaken to examine the changing status of the working class of women of Kathmandu.

The study has tried to examine how successfully the educated working women have been able to make an adjustment between the dual responsibility of the house and office, and if this has brought about a change in her status in the society too.

From the finding of the study it may be concluded that majority of the working women are graduates and married. And these educated married women of Kathmandu, get into employment for economic reasons as well for their independence. Once the women start getting into offices they can no longer stay home-bound as housewives.

From the study it was found that whether out of economic necessity or out of their own choice, women have taken up jobs and they have been able to effectively combine their various roles as mother, wife, sister and employee. The reason behind this might be the modern attitude of the women in our society who feel that a woman should make efforts to adjust to the house work and office work.

From these findings, it is safe to state that in Kathmandu among working women, one can see not only their changing status but also how successfully they can coordinate and adjust their several roles in their daily lives.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations can be made to uplift the status of working women of Kathmandu:

(1) Once the women start working, changes do come about in the social complexion and the living pattern of the family, so all the members of the family should try to adjust and not rely upon them totally. More television and radio program about family adjustment should be implemented, by the government.

(2) To help the working women, government and the society should open more nurseries and day-care centers near the offices and other places of work, where the young children are looked after with love and affection so that the working mothers can be relieved of the tension with regard to their young children, as suggested by the working women themselves, while interviewing them informally.

(3) Concerning the household chores, the working women should be advised to buy labor saving devices through television and radio, and such labor saving devices should be made available at low costs by the government, it could be arranged for the working women on instalment basis.

(4) Women should be encouraged to work on jobs by every member of the society, and prejudices against the "working women" should be removed. As the consequence of the study, from the informal conversation with respondents, the best way to encourage the women to work is to make them educated and show them example of women working in all the fields of the society.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCHERS

This study is entirely based on descriptive approach, hence it is suggested that future researchers adopt some sophisticated statistical tools to test the relationship between the variables involved.

The researcher being a student was handicapped by time and economic factor, hence a large number of respondents from a wider area could not be included, and had to limit herself in preparing a device for selecting the respondents from only four wards from widely dispersed areas of the city. Hence for future researchers in this field it is suggested that some of

the working women coming from the rural areas must also be studied. Only then it may give the real picture of the working women adjusting their dual roles thereby making it possible to make a conclusive remark about the changing status of working women in the Nepalese context.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Date:

Area of the Office:

Site:

Schedule No.:

1. What is your age ?

(Please check)

16 - 19

20 - 29

30 - 39

40 and above

2. What is your marital status?

(Please check)

Married

Single

Divorced

Widowed

3. What is your qualification ?

(Please check)

S.L.C. passed

Intermediate passed

Bachelor passed

Master's passed

4. What is your religion ?

(Please check)

Hindu

Muslim

Christian

Buddhist

5. What is your caste ?

(Please check)

Brahmin

Chhetri

Newar

Magar

Gurung

Tamang

- | | |
|---|---|
| 6. What is the nature of your job ? | (Please check)
H.M.G.
Corporation
Private |
| 7. Your official position ?
..... | (Please write down) |
| 8. Could you please mention
the scale of your salary ? | Less than Rs. 1000
1000 - 1499
1500 - 1999
2000 and above |
| 9. Could you please tell us
about your family ? The number
of people living with you at
present? | 2
3 - 4
5 - 6
6 and above |
| 10. How much time do you spend
on your job daily ? | 7 hours
8 hours and
above |
| 11. Do you spend your time in extra
curricular activities too ? | (Please check)
Sports
Social activities
Reading/writing
Watching movies
Charity work |
| 12. How much time do you spend on
your household activities ? | 2 hours per day
3-4 hours per day
5-6 hours per day
7 and more |
| 13. How many children do you have? | None
1 child
2 - 3 children
4 and more |

- | | |
|---|--|
| 14. What type of family do you prefer to live in? | (Please check)
Joint family
Nuclear family
No opinion |
| 15. Do you have a helper at home ? | Yes
No
No opinion |
| 16. After holding a job, has it helped you to communicate more easily with your household members ? | Yes
No
No opinion |
| 17. Do you feel holding a job is an asset for your mental perception of your household problem ? | Yes
No
No opinion |
| 18. How do you feel after taking a job, at home ? | Difficult
Easy
Not sure |
| 19. Are you satisfied with your job? | Yes
No
Not sure |
| 20. Do you think holding a job has made you more independent ? | Yes
No
No opinion |
| 21. Do you usually maintain the household account ? | Yes
No
No opinion |
| 22. Do you have any property, (land, house) in your name ? | Yes
No
No opinion |
| 23. Does your husband consult you for almost all important decisions ? | Yes
No
No opinion |

- | | |
|---|--|
| 24. As a working woman what sort of status do you enjoy ? | Low status
Equal to your male counterpart
High status
No opinion |
| 25. Do you find enough time to spend in your household after holding a job? | Yes it is enough
No it is not enough
No opinion |
| 26. Do you find enough time to spend with your children ? | Yes
No
No opinion |
| 27a. Is it easy to make an adjustment between your office work and house work ? | Yes
No
No opinion |
| 27b. If not, what sort of difficulties do you have in adjusting yourself to play a dual role ? | You cannot give full attention to your children.
You cannot give full attention to your husband's demands.
You cannot give full attention to your in-laws demands. |
| 28. Do you regard working outside the home as necessary for meeting the rising cost of living and sharing the husband's economic burden ? | Yes
No
No opinion |
| 29. Have you employed yourself for the sake of independence ? | Yes
No
No opinion |

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation, good understanding and patience in filling out this questionnaire.

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