

CHAPTER III

WOMEN HANDICRAFT ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurship, Handicraft and women Empowerment in Nepal

"The modern empowerment is not only extremely productive economically, but also one of the prime carriers of peculiarly modern modes of cognition and behaviour that are fundamental to modern industrial society" (Berger, 1991).

The different aspects of entrepreneurship like the functions of uncertainty bearing, condition of productive resources, introduction of innovation and the provision of capital are recognized as the primary or at least socially most significant functions of entrepreneurs which was selected as typical and regarded as the unique contribution of entrepreneurs in the process of production.

Thus an entrepreneur is defined as "One who promotes a new venture, raises the wherewithal for it, assembles various factors of production and sets of business going" (Birto, 1973). An entrepreneur is really one who has a lot of confidence in a new idea and has the energy and courage to see this idea put into effect.

Basically the informal sector constitutes the arena of the barefoot entrepreneur who is understood here as a self employed person engaged in both traditional and non-traditional activities. This type of entrepreneur performs the basic functions of organising and maintaining a small business enterprise and, irrespective of the level of capital employed, is responsible

for decision making and financial risk taking. Thus the term "entrepreneur" applies to any one who directs for his/her own account an industrial taking or even an enterprise producing non-industrial goods or services and who employs labour (Rajpruti and Sharma, 1995).

Entrepreneur in this study has been taken as a self-employed person engaged both in traditional as well as non-traditional activities. The informal urban sector tends to function as an educational arena where entrepreneurs get their first experience in setting up and managing a small business enterprise before they can qualify for entry into the ranks of the middle class (Bogaret, 1977). The informal sector is also known as the traditional or unorganised and unremunerated sector.

In Nepal entrepreneurship does not only refer to big trading but also a small scale business such as furniture industry, soap factory, food processing, catering services, tailoring, beauty parlour, hotel management, transport and contract, training as well as big commercial activities particularly run by women. Such entrepreneurship is carried out by family networks, friendship networks, religious networks, etc. Such networks are found to play a role in all aspects of the business from the provision of initial credit and stock to help behind the counter to import/export contracts.

Basically a self employed person who is engaged on his/her own farm or non-farm enterprises is considered as an entrepreneur. Where some operate without any hired hands while others may hire workers and some operate by exclusively hiring workers and they are termed as "employers".

The entrepreneur is thought of as being the dynamic element in the capitalist order in his/her role as an innovator, he/she makes his/her entrepreneurial provides by seizing upon and opportunity to secure a temporary monopoly for himself by successfully changing market products

and process. Participation, however is unevenly distributed among sectors offering "female specific" activities (spinning, weaving, knitting, carpet making and tea and food processing) and large manufacturing industries (textiles, carpets, bakeries, fruit processing etc.). Women not only are unrepresented in the formal industrial sector but they are also involved in jobs requiring relatively simple skills. Mechanisation, too tends to marginalise women even further as few women are laboratory technicians or quality controllers.

Handicraft is a manual skill or unskilled work with the hand, more generally designating those visual arts which are actually practiced by hand and associated with wearing apparel or decoration in the home. In a sense handicraft may be considered as synonymous with arts and crafts including those arts which are practiced by hand and those which are practiced with the aid of machine (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1963). But Stroutenburgh (1956) has clearly stated that handicraft means the work not usually done with machines rather with hand-tools which at times may even be made themselves by hand.

Women have existed in this world as long as men. Along with men they have participated in the evolution of human society and along with them they have also witnessed the rise and fall of civilization. This institution of the family which is an unique universal character of human society can not be conceived of without the existence of women. Yet the fact is that women in almost all the known societies of the world, past or present, have not enjoyed the same status, privileges, rights and powers as that of men. Rather there are ample evidences to suggest that not only women have been accorded unequal and inferior social position in the society but they have also been subordinated, subjugated and exploited (Mittal, 1995).

There are certainly common features found among women all over the world, regardless of cultural differences, for example, domestic tasks including child rearing are largely done by women and now in all modern societies the gradual emancipation of women in various fields is undeniable trend though there are numerous obstacles. But women's place in society varies considerably from society to society in different time and in different strata within a society too.

There is no proper recognition and appreciation of the role performance of a women, the contribution she has been making to the progress of the society. The perpetuation of the status hierarchy based on the concept of man as "superior" and woman as "inferior" has made the woman a subservient, self-effacing fatalist. This hierarchy is still being maintained in our male dominated society, inspite of woman's expanding role in household and economic activities. Though agricultural mechanisation has largely replaced woman labour in certain ways, her labour participation is still concentrated on labour intensive activities. This is an evidence of her lower status. Apart from question of fairness or unfairness the present situation is likely to react unfavorably on social and economic progress (Chakravorty, 1975).

It is very interesting to mention the view of Grendon (1969) regarding the lower status of women. He says the history of human development depict that it is easy to see how the social tradition of women's inferiority got the better of the moral tradition of her equality. When our super-ape ancestor was striving to become human he faced a world of physical dangers and terrors in which brute strength seemed to be his chief asset in the struggle for survival. No doubt his invisible brains were more significant than his very visible brawn and muscle. Therefore primitive tribe-people were ranked higher or lower according to their brute force quotient. In this respect the males, exempt as they were from the burden of child bearing,

had an enormous advantage over the females. The whole female sex was therefore set down as lower than the whole male sex. And the men rubbed it in by compelling the women to do the most distasteful drudgery and accept stamp of distinctly lower social status.

The term empowerment is defined differently, such as, it is the reservation to service and political appointment, the equal right upon paternal property, free sex etc. But, infact, women empowerment is a movement for the emancipation from social, economic, political, cultural and psychological disparity. It is a talent through which she can take decision for her own personal as well as familial progress and development for which she can control over the environment and take step. To be self-dependent in every aspect is women empowerment.

Empowerment is the creation of such condition where a woman can control over the decision of property as well as household and familial concern in general. Thus empowerment refers to take decision over the main issues of personal life. In other words empowerment is not only to be economically self dependent but also socially and politically dependent for self security and access to the every subject related to personal affairs. It is the development of ability of decision and the process of giving power of strength for the work. The process of empowerment is multidimensional and it enables individuals and groups to realise their full destiny and powers in all spheres of life (Narayana, 1998). He has quoted from the country paper of Bangladesh (1995), that "A Woman's empowerment begins with consciousness perceptions about herself and her rights, her capabilities and her potentials, awareness how gender and socio-cultural and political forces affect her". Political empowerment, economic development and social upliftment of women is necessary to fight myriad forms of patriarchal domination, exclusion and alienation.

Thus the important factors of women empowerment are education, health, access to the productive resources and capital, earning opportunity and information. Except these permanent control over their income, power of decision, freedom and mobility of movement, control over the productive resources, right to the property are the basic factors which enables women empowerment. But the situation of Nepalese women is just reverse of the above. They lag far behind man in education, economy, politics, religion etc. due to the lack of equal opportunities in these sectors. At the same time they are over burdened by the household works. Due to the male migration from the residence, the responsibility of child and aged care as well as the home management is totally the responsibility of women. They are used to expense most of their time in basic subsistence work and they have no time to think and involve to develop their own human resources. Due to the lack of access to the technology and training their production is beyond subsistence though they work hard. Having the patriarchal social, political, economic and legal structure women have no control over the access of productive resources regardless of the investment of the most part of their life in productive work. Their role to the family, to the country and the government seems worthless. They have no right over their personal affairs. Due to the lack of freedom on movement and control upon mobility they can not take part in the market economy. Thus they are deprived from earning opportunities. Regardless of the hard work they are dependent upon the male member.

The women's movement in the West has brought the realization that without recognition and use of women's potential contribution the integrated development of human being in any country is not possible. With the realization, the movement for women's empowerment was started and it was endorsed in other countries through the UN resolution and declaration

on the elimination of all kinds of discrimination against women (18 December, 1979) and through the UN convention on the right of children.

"Women's empowerment and women's development is not an indigenous concept. It has not yet germinated here. The seed of it was dispersed in Nepal in 1975, by the UN through the declaration of the year 1975 as the International Women's Year. So the concept of women's development is still hanging in the air which has not entered into the ground of Nepalese soil to grow like a tree" (Shrestha, 1994). But no substantial development/progress has been achieved hitherto in terms of investment by different international donor agencies in the name of women's development in the real sense by planners, policy makers and implementers. Because the horizon of their thinking is still narrow and conservative regarding women development and are treated as object and not as the subject of development. In fact, the women issue in Nepal has not yet taken its tempo neither in terms of its investment nor in terms of the attempts made by the different channels like government organisations, non-government organisations and international non-government organisations.

Development of Women Entrepreneurship in Nepal

Most studies of women and development have recognised that their involvement and participation in various schemes are essential elements for the development programmes to become appropriate if they are to respond to their actual needs and their benefits are to be accessible to them. Such a change is viewed as essential because the prevailing social, cultural and economic restrictions in many societies undermine the contribution of women (Sedek, 1985).

Everywhere women's position in respect of income, education, employment and social prestige is lower than that of men. In a country like Nepal lower status and illiteracy, low nutrition and other facts of poverty affect them more than men.

Though the traditional role of women has prevailed for many years, even then, in recent years, due to the higher educational levels, economic hardships and breakdown of traditional norms and attitudes increased female participation can be observed in non-agricultural activities.

Till 1950 in the period of Rana regime Nepal was totally detached with the outside world and the society changed in a very slow motion. After the political change of 1950 open contact with Western countries and modernization as well as the flow of foreign aid in the terms of Westernization society changed rapidly. From this time the voice of women's right also was raised.

In the 1970s the UN focused world attention on the status of women. Member countries were asked to appoint committees that could gather statistics and produce reports on this topic. As Nepal and other countries set up commissions to study the status of women, equal pay for men and women for equal work was legislated under minimum wage for industrial workers in 1976.

The socio-economic status of women is still low though it seems rising. They are still suffering from the inadequate access to employment, income, education, health care, nutrition and skill development despite impressive legislative and constitutional provisions favouring their equal right to equal work, employment and education. The gender gap in terms of their economic opportunities and participation in public life and decision making prevails wide spread.

Regarding the organizations related to women development in Nepal Pradhan (1977) has clearly stated that the women's group stated as early as 1913, championing both political causes and improved status of women. By the 1950s, the groups multiplied rapidly leaving behind few permanent structures, but a core of leaders still dominate women's organisations. In the past decade a number of organisations have tried to catch up with the number of available leaders. The result is a plethora of well intended organizations with complicated hierarchical structures, part time, statuesque oriented leaders, sporadic fundings and unimaginative and overlapping programmes which often bear little relationship to either the expressed goals of the organisations or the needs of the women they are pledged to serve. The objectives of all the institutions concerning women are well intended. However there is much duplication with such overlapping, it is no wonder that many functions are duplicated as well.

After the UN declarations of the International Women's year many development programmes and projects included women as a special target and many specific ones such as the Production Credit for Rural Women, Women Development Programme Under Small Farmer Programme, Education for Girls and Women of Nepal were also increasingly implemented. There is currently a considerable momentum to specifically target women as a significant group and such momentum needs to be sustained.

A marked shift in the perception of women as receivers of social welfare to active producers contributing to household production and national income began to emerge with the incorporation of a set of policy directives aimed at increasing women's participation in the Sixth Five Year Plan as it emphasized employment on additional agricultural programmes for women, their increased participation in cottage industries stepping up of female

literacy, creation of equal job opportunity and abolition of legal constraints hindering women's effective participation in development (HMG, NPCS, 1993). Similarly the Seventh Plan retained the basic thrusts of the Sixth Plan with additional focus on recognition of women's role in the market economy, for providing them better access to capital, technical support and marketing facilities whereas Eighth Plan also stressed on encouraging women to become leaders, managers and entrepreneurs. But these policies are far from implementation.

The slow industrial transformation which is pushing women into the manufacturing sectors has both positive as well as negative implications for them. In the process women have gained mobility and access to income, but only within the limits set by the dominant patriarchal culture and the feudal value system which denigrates physical labour and people associated with it. At the same time women are being eased out of managerial and proprietorial positions associated with household and cottage level industries and are being converted into industrial wage labours dependent on exports.

Obviously it can be observed that the different women related committees of the different Ministries of Government and Social Welfare Council implemented only the welfare programmes basically in the rural areas. But not so distinct plan and program has been implemented to make women empowered in the real sense. The activities of the Ministry of Women and Social Welfare, established in 1996 (now the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare) also seems as old wine in new bottles, though it takes time to evaluate its achievements.

Thus within the end of this 20th century, democracy, human right, environment development, empowerment, open market economy, gender equality etc. are the basic issues which are raised highly but limited as a

slogan and not so distinct and satisfactory empowerment is realised in the grass root level.

Women Entrepreneurs Involved in Handicraft Production

Boscrup's (1970) saying that with further economic development and improvement in the transport system, markets for professionally made artisan products may widen, and some villages, where such things are made for sale, may grow into small towns, with an economy based partly upon market trade, for the surrounding region is still relevant for the underdeveloped countries like Nepal, because in such a centre of home industries appears to have specialized in products which are traditionally produced by women with a high female participation.

As women entered the business world, they found themselves in positions consistent with the roles they played at homes, supporting the work of others, and in functions like communications or human resources where they have relatively small budgets and few people interacting directly with them.

Women entrepreneurs who have formal authority and control over vast resources, still share power and information as asset rather than a liability. They believe that although pay and promotion are necessary tools of management, what people really want is to feel that they have the opportunity as individuals to learn and grow. The women believe that employees and peers perform better when they feel they are part of an organisation and can share in its success. Allowing them to get involved and to work to their potential is a way of maximising their contributions and using human resources most efficiently.

The entry of women in organised business is a fairly recent phenomenon. In reality, women have been associated with economic activity since ages. Women have all along participated in outdoor occupations, in the fields, and on the farms tending to cattle. They have also played an important part in the production process by working in cottage industries such as handloom, power-loom, pottery, embroidery, handicrafts etc. This economic participation of women went unacknowledged and their labour almost unremunerated mainly because it was carried out at home. But this taught them the art of entrepreneurship. Though their involvement may be mostly in small business and trade activities, they are in significant numbers. However their activities are normally associated with women's requirements, namely garments, cosmetics, interior decorations and the like. But in the field of export business, women are also slowly emerging even in exports of such industrial goods and machinery.

Women entrepreneurship was an unknown phenomenon till the decade of 1970s in Nepal. They confined to the household chores. They were taught to be delicate, enduring, tolerant, submissive and downright stupid (Shrestha, 1979). Women in South Asian region have entered to the entrepreneurship world following the western trend. The trend affected women in Nepal too and they were seen entering into this field in the decade of 1980s.

Similarly male entrepreneurs are generally of the middle income class as compared to the lower middle class of female entrepreneurs. Thus the enterprises run by women are generally micro level or cottage industries. Women, starting enterprises, are rarely technically trained, but based on their existing skills and talents.

A significant number of women generate employment for 2-10 individuals. In most cases, they start their enterprises as a means of self employment and which limits the possibilities for their business expansion.

Women entrepreneurs prefer a sole proprietorship form of business, which impedes the further expansion of their operations. It is said that the risk bearing factor in women is low and the achievement motive is also average. However, the rate of success is higher in women than that of men, since the motive behind women entrepreneur is economic gain. Lastly, women entrepreneur face more problems than their male counterparts due to the limitation of mobility, socialisation pattern and lack of adequate training.

Most women entrepreneurs are involved in food processing, handicraft or agro-industries. Beautifying the house and its surrounding environment are the speciality of women. They have a natural talent and experience in creating gift items. When a women is forced into a situation whereby she has to start an enterprise, the practical solution is the development of the particular handicraft in which she has some knowledge and expertise.

Regarding the women entrepreneurship involved in handicraft are mostly in textile, especially in weaving, tailoring, knitting, woollen and cotton garments, kitchen crafts, boutiques and macrame products. Likewise doll making, paper products, recycled craft product, wood carving, basketry, block printing, fabric painting, jewellery etc. are other handicrafts where women are involved. At the same time women are attracted towards handicrafts business due to the demands in international market, low capital investment, utilisation of traditional skill and possibility of diversifying handicrafts for practical use.

According to the source of the Department of Cottage and Rural Industry of Nepal altogether 1108 industries are running from the beginning to 1989 by

women entrepreneurs. among them the highest number (195) is of handicraft. Similarly. other industries run by women are mills (177), food industries (89), copper and brass industries (71), textile industries (70), furniture industries (69), garments (65), service industries (40), stationary (39), iron goods (18), steel industries (09), plastic and leather industries (05), and others (21).

This figure proves that among those industries women are more interested in the product of art and craft goods.

Similarly according to the recent data of the Department of Cottage and Rural Industry of Nepal in the fiscal year 1998-1999 (till July 1999) total 263 industries are registered in the name of women entrepreneurs. Among them handicrafts are 39, service industries are 125, food industries 13, woollen thread industries are 8, restaurant 7, leather industries 7, mills 6, garment 6, furniture 5, cattle farming 4, soap industries 2, tea packing 3 and others 48. But it has not been proved that whether these industries are really run by women entrepreneurs or are just registered in the name of women and practically run by male entrepreneurs. Even then in recent time the service industries have a growing tendency and are more than other type of cottage industries.

Even then it is obvious that after the restoration of democracy in 1990 in Nepal the inspiration of women regarding the self employed work has been increased highly. Because the data provided by DCRI in 1989 and the 1998 has a vast difference and has an increasing trend. Women still face many problems in this field. As an entrepreneur she has to face the constraints of paucity of capital. Property rights as well as law of inheritance have always been more favourable to men rather than women. That is why women require the help of law and society to be placed on an equal footing with male entrepreneurs. In modern times with the large population and

widespread unemployment, with economic set backs, inflation and finally the acute struggle for survival and progress, women established their rights as wage earners in competition with the male population.

According to the Women Entrepreneurs Association of Nepal (WEAN) Secretariat (1994), only 44.44 percent of the business run by women in Kathmandu valley are in handicraft sector. Large number are involved in service and training business. Some even have ventured out into non-traditional enterprises.

The positive changes of the world view on women and their role in development and the emerging trends in international globalization has proved that women are equally capable, competent and strong minded to operate their own enterprises.

Inspite of the increase in the labour force, women continue to work in low paying jobs. However most women have not been content with such traditional limited scope or opportunities, and have in due course of time, extended their resources toward entrepreneurship. They have opted for professions once considered entirely as a male territory. Quite a few women have ventured into non-traditional areas such as electronics, engineering, consultancy etc. Getting into the competitive world of business and achieving economic independence involves considerable effort and risk. This risk is higher for women entrepreneurs, who have the additional problem of operating in a male dominated arena.

Though some women have ever increasing awareness of their rights, yet most of them are affected by the hazards and the tremendous tensions brought about by the multiplicity of roles, competition, and constraints - both visible or invisible; felt or otherwise, on the other hand, the conflict between modern and traditional values poses a real threat and a mental

health hazard to women, who are then liable to suffer from depression, alienation and anxiety.

Some government organisations like Cottage and Small Industry Development Board, Cottage and Industry Development Board, Trade Promotion Centre, associations like Women Entrepreneurs Association of Nepal Hastakala Mahaguthi, Handicraft Association of Nepal, Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Association of Nepalese Cottage and Small Industry, Small Business Promotion Projects etc. and many NGOs and INGOs has also started concentrating their attention in handicraft development in Nepal.

Socio-Economic Background of Women Entrepreneurs Involved in Handicraft Production

It is often observed that an individual's background plays a significant role in the formulation of his/her attitudes, beliefs, commitment to his/her work and it all makes up his/her entire personality. His/her family, caste, school, neighborhood, level of education, type of occupation and income derived therefrom, all determine to a great extent the type and quality of his/her attitudes and values. Similarly the social class from which they come from has a significant impact on motivation for work which in turn determine their status. This is more true in the case of women in Nepal.

Like in other South Asian Countries Nepalese women also represent a more traditional section of society and have been neglected throughout the ages. Therefore their participation in any walk of life is viewed as a sign of progress. In this context it is necessary to know from what strata of society

the women entrepreneur are drawn. The analysis of socio-economic background of these women provides an insight into the social processes of a traditional society.

Thus the level of socio-economic condition of women entrepreneur indicate their level of status in the society.

The existing inequalities and imbalances had resulted in differences in the impact of the various forces of changes of different groups of women. To understand the nature, constraints and disabilities that affect women in the performance of their multiple roles in the society, the economy and the polity, they have to be seen not as homogeneous group, but as members of different sections of the population, according to the differences in their levels of social existence. So I have tried to analyse the socio-economic background of women entrepreneurs involved in handicraft production.

Age :

The interview schedule was asked to all 36 married and unmarried women entrepreneurs where the proportion of married women is high. Most of the entrepreneur women are married, widowed and separated. Only a very little portion of unmarried women are found engaged in handicraft production as an entrepreneur. These women belong to different age groups, ranging from 24 years to 60 years.

A cross section of women from all age-grades is found in the sample.

Table 1 : The age grades of women entrepreneur

| Sl. No. | Age Group | Total Sample | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| 1 | 21-25 | 8 | 22 |
| 2 | 26-30 | - | -- |
| 3 | 31-35 | 6 | 17 |
| 4 | 36-40 | 4 | 11 |
| 5 | 41-45 | 6 | 17 |
| 6 | 46-50 | 10 | 28 |
| 7 | 51-55 | - | -- |
| 8 | 56-60 | 2 | 5 |
| Total | | 36 | 100 |

The table 1 shows that women in the middle age group are found in greater number in entrepreneurship. 22 percentage of the entrepreneur are of 21-25 age group, 17 percent each are of 31-35 and 41-45 age group, 11 percent are of 36-40 age group and the highest 28 percent are between 46-50 age group. Thus women below 21, 26-30, 51-55 and above 60 age group are not found in the sample. This shows that women entrepreneurship is not a quite new phenomena in Nepal and it has inspired the unmarried and the lesser age group women to enter into the field of handicraft as an entrepreneur.

Caste/Community :

Right from the olden days the Newars have been the pioneers in business and trade and also in the field of education and employment. In the present situation, the women in the sample mostly belong to Newar caste followed by the Brahmin caste.

Table 2 : Caste/Community wise Distribution

| Sl. No. | Caste | Respondent | Percentage |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Brahmin | 12 | 33 |
| 2 | Chhetri | 4 | 11 |
| 3 | Newar | 14 | 40 |
| 4 | Gurung | 2 | 5 |
| 5 | Others | 4 | 11 |
| Total | | 36 | 100 |

According to the table 2 the highest involvement ratio in handicraft production is from Newar family which is 40 percent. 33 percent of women are from Brahmin family, 11 percent from Chhetri caste, 5 percent from Gurung community and 11 percent are from other communities like Tamang, Bhujel etc. Brahmins are also pioneers in the intellectual fields and also in the pursuit of education and employment. These women in the

sample occupy the second highest position in handicraft production. It is due to the caste background that other castes/communities fall behind them.

Family :

Most of entrepreneur respondent in the sample have a nuclear family both in parental house and husband's house. Only very few families still have joint and extended family.

Table 3 : Types of family

| Sl. No. | Family | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|----------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Nuclear | 24 | 66.7 |
| 2 | Joint | 9 | 25 |
| 3 | Extended | 3 | 8.3 |
| Total | | 36 | 100 |

Table 3 highlights that among the total entrepreneur families 66.7 percent women are from Nuclear family, 25 percent have joint family and only 8.3 percent have extended family. Most of the Brahmin and Chhetry family have nuclear family. Next to it most of the Newar, Tamang and Gurung families belong to joint family and the extended families has been observed in Newar family though some of them are from nuclear family too. A good family and loving atmosphere has been found within the family of respondents. Similarly very good understandable and harmonious relation

has been found between the father and mother of the most of the respondent. Very few respondent's parent's relationship has been found unsatisfactory. Some of the respondent have already missed their parents or either one of them in their early age.

Most of the household is headed by the male member of the family except in the case of separated family. Those who are widowed and have mature son, their families are also headed by the son. All the families are patriarchal.

Education :

Regarding the educational background all of the respondent entrepreneurs family are educated in the sample, mostly those married women who are involved in handicraft industry as an entrepreneur has highly educated husband, and the unmarried entrepreneur girls have at least literate father and some have literate mother too though still some have illiterate mother.

Table 4 : Educational Background

| Sl. No. | Education | Respondent | Percentage |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Educated Husband | 22 | 61 |
| 2 | Literate Father | 5 | 14 |
| 3 | Literate Mother | 4 | 11 |
| 4 | Illiterate Mother | 5 | 14 |
| Total | | 36 | 100 |

Above mentioned table 4 has shown that 61 percent entrepreneur's husband are highly educated, this group belongs to intermediate to master degree of education. Among the unmarried entrepreneurs 14 percent father and 11 percent mother are literate but 14 percent mother are illiterate. This data proves that those entrepreneurs whose husbands are educated are highly inspired to work independently outside the strong household chores according to their ability and interest. On the other hand new generation who are educated and whose parents are not educated have also accepted the challenges of entrepreneurship and started their work.

Family Occupation :

Family occupation plays an important role to direct the occupation of women. Those women who are involved in handicraft production as entrepreneurs, their family involvement is either in business or in service.

Table 5 : Family Occupation

| Sl. No. | Family | Occupation | | Percentage |
|--------------|----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | | Service | Business | |
| 1 | Father | -- | 3 | 8.3 |
| 2 | Mother | -- | -- | -- |
| 3 | Husband | 17 | 9 | 47.2/25 |
| 4 | Sibling | -- | 3 | 8.3 |
| 5 | Children | -- | 4 | 11.1 |
| Total | | 17 | 19 | 100 |

The table 5 indicates that most of the entrepreneur's husbands are either service holder or businessman. 47.2 percent women's husbands are service holders and 25 percent women's husband have their own business. Similarly 8.3 percent women's fathers are involved in business but none of them are involved in service and none of their mothers are involved in service or business. they are purely housewives. 8.3 percent women's siblings are involved in business and 11.1 percent women's children are also involved in business. Thus the entrepreneur's family occupation has highly inspired them for their present work.

Political Background :

Though, the entrepreneurs are not politically involved in state power but they are engaged in different organisations related to handicraft. Their families are also not directly involved in politics except a little number, but aware about the politics of the state and the surrounding. Indirect involvement in the politics can be observed while asking the questions to the respondent.

Economic Background of Their Family :

Most of the families are economically sound and falls upon the category of upper middle class. The upper middle class usually includes 10-12 percent of the population of the average small town. They are made up largely of professional persons like doctor, lawyer, professors, and successful merchants, career oriented, involved in different organisations, education needed for satisfaction, early acceptance of a democratic approach to family life etc.

Similarly lower middle class is made up largely of small businessmen, salesmen, clerks, and foremen. They are active in fraternal, religious and veteran organisations, mostly graduates, rigidly moralistic and almost puritanical.

Table 6 : Economic Background

| Sl. No. | Class | Respondent | Percentage |
|----------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Upper middle | 12 | 33 |
| 2 | Lower middle | 24 | 67 |
| 3 | Lower | - | - |
| Total | | 36 | 100 |

The table 6 shows that among the total entrepreneur of the sample 33 percent women's families are from upper middle class and 67 percent women entrepreneur's families are from lower middle class. The monthly income of these families ranges from 4000 to 10000 while in upper middle class the range is from 18000 to 10 million. Similarly the entrepreneurs ear 8000 to 12000 per month from handicraft production only.

Residential Background :

Most of entrepreneurs are the indigenous Newar women of Kathmandu city, originally from Patan - a well known handicraft city. Similarly some Brahmins are also from proper Kathmandu city. Only few women entrepreneurs are form outside the Kathmandu valley and they are Gurung, Tamang, Bhujels, etc. Due to the immense flow of people to the city area from different parts of the country, people are compelled to join either kinds of job for their livelihood and for the better future of their children.

These groups of women are regarded as a higher class of society where few women have joined the challenges of managers. They are ones who have received education from their enlightened parents and got the opportunity to follow the vocations of their choice, yet it is in this strata of society that innumerable women need release from the traditional caste ridden feudal hierarchy and get an outlet for their creative abilities.

Present Status of Women Entrepreneurs

Women entering into entrepreneurship is not a new phenomenon, because they were found to take part in agriculture and artisan occupations since time immemorial. The industrial revolution in Europe and subsequent developments in the rest of the world attracted educated women to various positions in private and public enterprises. The growth of middle-class further accentuated the process of development.

Earlier the middle-class women used to look after the children and house work alone, whereas the growth of education and parent encouraging women to pursue education further led to recognising the fact of giving equal opportunities to eligible women. The opportunities of employment are however uneven in the entrepreneur sector and only a few section of the society enjoy these entrepreneur benefits. In developing countries the problem is further intensified due to increasing scarcity and widespread competition in the handicraft market. Women naturally stand at a disadvantage. Despite all these factors many women are coming forward to make their presence felt in the field of entrepreneurship.

The traditional concept of women being a bondage to the household of child bearing, child rearing and domestic miscellanry is now gradually challenged. The process of emancipation from age-old male domination in women's life and social restrictions imposed on her from time to time while elevating her from domestic chores has been speeded up. But despite all these changes women's position has not been totally improved. Male domination still persist to haunt the woman's life from both inside and outside the home. The male member, in fact, could not tolerate the progress of womenfolk because of the fear whether female progress may push the male member down and should be deprived from the dominating power, which now they are enjoying without any disturbance.

The modern women, while gradually entering into all field to emancipate herself from the traditional bonds, has to wage a protracted struggle within her own family and along with others in a larger social system. In the process of struggle she has made significant contribution to the social changes which shock the very foundation of the society at large.

I have tried to analyse the present status of women entrepreneur involved in handicraft production in Kathmandu city which are as follows :

Educational Status :

Education is the basic tool for improvement of the status of women as well as fulfillment of their roles as member of society. Raising the level of education among women is important for the welfare of the society in general and family in particular. Highly educated women, usually found in urban areas, are influenced in a particular way by current of changes. Education as an important factor has played an important role to raise

awareness, competitiveness, confidence in work outside the house as an active member of the society. Among the entrepreneur women involved in handicraft the highest number falls upon graduate degree but literate and M.A. degree falls on the same number whereas high school and S.L.C. are lowest, not a single women has found to be involved from the illiterate group.

Table 7 : Entrepreneur's Education

| Sl. No. | Education | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| 1 | Literate | 7 | 19.44 |
| 2 | High School | 3 | 8.33 |
| 3 | S.L.C. | 3 | 8.33 |
| 4 | Intermediate | 5 | 13.88 |
| 5 | Bachelor | 13 | 36.11 |
| 6 | Master Degree | 5 | 13.88 |
| Total | | 36 | 99.97 |

The table 7 highlights that among the total 36 women involved in handicraft production 36.11 percent are from graduate level whereas 19.44 percent are from literate group and 8.33 percent each from high school and S.L.C. group respectively and 13.88 percent each from intermediate level and master degree. But not a single women has been found from illiterate group involved in handicraft production as an entrepreneur.

Types of Handicraft :

The type of involvement where women are involved in handicraft production as an entrepreneur shows that the highest percent of involvement is in woolen cloth weaving then in knitting and others.

Table 8 : Types of Involvement

| Sl. No. | Education | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Cotton cloth knitting | 6 | 17 |
| 2 | Woolen cloth weaving | 10 | 28 |
| 3 | Jewellery | 4 | 11 |
| 4 | Knot craft | 4 | 11 |
| 5 | Paper product | 5 | 14 |
| 6 | Wood carving | 3 | 8 |
| 7 | Dhaka weaving | 4 | 11 |
| Total | | 36 | 100 |

The table 8 indicates that most of the women entrepreneurs are involved in woolen cloth weaving where the percent is 28 and is the highest. Similarly women are involved in knitting crafts like cotton cloth knitting. The entrepreneurs are trying to develop the traditional skill of women by employing the housewives of the neighborhood and the periphery as workers. In woolen cloth weaving they have included "Pashmina Shawl",

"Sweater", "Socks", "Trousers", "Caps" etc. as essential items of winter wear and export. 14 percent women entrepreneurs are involved in paper making and its production i.e. Nepali paper made from "allow" a forest raw materials. husk etc., 11 percent each, are involved in jewellery, knot crafting and Dhaka weaving whereas only 8 percent are involved in wood carving. Though the table has shown the different types of handicraft production where women entrepreneurs are involved but there is no hard and fast rule in the production of handicraft goods except in paper making and wood carving. Knitting, weaving, designing, garment, doll making, knot crafting, bid and silver jewellery are done side by side. Similarly bone and horn carving is done side by side with wood carving which involves button, jewellery, gift items, decoration items etc. Nepali paper production involves file, greeting cards, visiting cards, envelope and other stationary goods. All these goods are produced for export and its local market depends upon the flow of the foreigners in Kathmandu. But common Nepali people are not able to buy and use these products locally, due to their low economic condition and high price.

Caste Occupation :

It has been found that there is no caste restriction for women involvement in handicraft production as it was done before as a traditional artisan work. Women from all castes are entering into this occupation as an entrepreneur.

Table 9 : Caste Occupation of the Respondent

| Sl. No. | Occupation | Respondent | Percentage |
|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Caste occupation | 4 | 11 |
| 2 | Non traditional Occupation | 32 | 89 |
| Total | | 36 | 100 |

The table 9 shows that the caste occupation as an artisan work is found very less. Non-traditional caste occupation is high in handicraft and the percent is 89. Only 11 percent women are involved as traditional artisan and it includes Dhaka weaving and Pashmina Shawl weaving which are the tradition in Eastern part of Nepal within the peasant family. Because in "Terathum" (the Eastern part of Nepal) Limbus used to weave clothes for their family use and at that time the process of weaving the cotton in handloom was a lengthy process and it was just for family use, whereas at present the process is easy due to the availability of raw materials. But now there is a high competition in the market. Similarly the traditional Radi and Pakhi were woven in another part of Eastern Nepal namely "Rumjatar" among the Gurungs, though the families were peasant and the purpose was commercial and not only for the household use. But now the trend has changed because Gurung people are shifting from Rumjatar to different city

areas of Nepal and those who are shifted to Kathmandu have given up Radi-Pakhi weaving and started woolen shawl weaving in a mass scale hiring the labour force as a small scale industry. It has also a high competition in the market. The rest are non-caste occupations and the caste people have accepted it as a work.

Peoples' Attitude to the Non-traditional Occupation of the Females :

Generally it has been observed that in the urban and complex city like Kathmandu, people are not so rigid about their caste occupation and they accept it as a work and think that people should be engaged in either kind of occupation for the betterment of the family even though the worker may be women.

Table 10 : People's Attitude Towards the Non-Traditional Occupation

| Sl. No. | Attitude | Caste People | Percentage |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Accept as work | 8 | 22.2 |
| 2 | Appreciate it | 12 | 33.3 |
| 3 | Work is not good | 2 | 5.5 |
| 4 | Feel insult | 2 | 5.5 |
| 5 | Did not care | 10 | 27.7 |
| 6 | Respondent do not care | 2 | 5.5 |
| Total | | 36 | 99.7 |

According to the table 10 it has become clear that people appreciating the present entrepreneurial work of women is highest in number and that is 33.3 percent. Similarly 27.7 percent people did not care about it whether it may be caste occupation or may be non-traditional caste occupation, people's acceptance of women's involvement in handicraft as a work is 22 percent. Some people feel this work as not good for women and some feel insult involved in it and this percent is very small, that is, 5.5 percent each. The sample shows that these people who feel the work as not good and insulting are traditional people because some of these entrepreneurs explained that their work were a result of great struggle within the family members and outside the larger society. The entrepreneurs are quite aged and have a very good experience in this handicraft work, working as non-traditional caste occupation, We really should appreciate their struggle which make easy to the present generation to enter in this field. Some of the respondent feel that in the beginning people use to neglect and hate them and their work but now when they have earned good reputation as an entrepreneur in the society people have started respecting them because they have successfully established themselves in the field of handicraft production. Among these entrepreneurs some of them least bothered regarding the attitude of the caste people towards their present work. These women are quite educated and are hardly concerned about other comments. They continue with their work smoothly and try to establish themselves as an efficient entrepreneur in the field of handicraft production and this percent is also 5.5. Thus it has become very clear that the caste peoples attitude towards women work outside the household chore is changing rapidly. They feel proud of the women's challenging work as entrepreneur.

Duration of Involvement :

Women's involvement in handicraft production as an entrepreneur is not new in Kathmandu city. Since the past 39 years women are seen working in this field though they suffered a lot in the process.

Table 11 : Duration of woman's Involvement in Handicraft Production as an Entrepreneur

| Sl. No. | Duration | Respondent | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 1-4 | 12 | 33.3 |
| 2 | 5-8 | 13 | 36.1 |
| 3 | 9-12 | -- | -- |
| 4 | 13-16 | 5 | 14 |
| 5 | 17-20 | 2 | 5.5 |
| 6 | 21-24 | 2 | 5.5 |
| 7 | 25-28 | -- | -- |
| 8 | above 30 | 2 | 5.5 |
| Total | | 36 | 99.9 |

The table 11 highlights that some of the women are involved in handicraft production since 30 years and the percentage of such women are only 5.5 in the sample. Similarly, women's involvement since 21-24 and 17-20 is also 5.5 percent each. But 5-8 years of involvement is quite high and the

percentage is 36.1 and the involvement just before 1-4 years is 33.3 percent. Thus after the restoration of democracy the tendency of women involvement towards handicraft production is increasing. They feel free in this occupation where they can work without any interruption of male members. This work pattern shows that women can do and manage very well independently and confidently if they got the free environment of work without any other's shade.

Cause of Involvement in Handicraft Production :

Most of the entrepreneurs in the sample have mentioned their interest as the prime reason for involvement in handicraft production, others being the employment of women, their own skill and talents and the availability of raw materials.

Table 12 : Causes of Involvement

| Sl. No. | Causes | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|-------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| 1 | Interest | 10 | 27.7 |
| 2 | Skill | 5 | 13.8 |
| 3 | Availability of raw materials | 5 | 13.8 |
| 4 | To help destitute women | 3 | 8.3 |
| 5 | To export | 2 | 5.5 |
| 6 | For newness | 4 | 11.1 |
| 7 | To create job opportunities | 2 | 5.5 |
| 8 | Traditional work | 5 | 13.8 |
| Total | | 36 | 99.5 |

The table 12 indicates that 27.7 percent women have started this handicraft occupation because of their interest. 13.8 percent women's involvement was due to their skill in the concerning handicraft and again 13.8 percent women's involvement is due to the easy availability of raw materials in the local market. Some of the women entrepreneur are ready to help the destitute women who have no way out for their livelihood, and to some extent their traditional skill can help them, such women entrepreneur are 8.3 percent. Some of the entrepreneurs want to work on the field of newness and these are 11.1 percent, 13.8 percent are traditionally involved in this field as a caste occupation, but 5.5 percent each are involved for export and

to create job opportunity. This involvement trend shows that most of these women are interested towards women's development while others are for purely business motive. In spite of all these factors they want to use and mobilise their traditional skill in a creative work. According to the sample it has become clear that there is no distinct profit in handicraft production in relation to last year's profit, because it depends on export market and not in the local market. Likewise, most of the production has no special season and some of them are seasonal in relation to export market. In off-season they produce goods and in prime season they export it. Though to some extent it has local market but is negligible in comparison to export market. In case of cotton and woollen clothes it has local market too in the peak season.

Job Satisfaction :

Job satisfaction is really an important factor in every occupation. Because without job satisfaction a person can not perform his/her obligations and rights accordingly in his/her work where he/she is bound. In the present study the sample shows that all of the women are found satisfied with their job and few are extremely satisfied because the present job has helped to identify themselves as an entrepreneur and are well established in the society. Similarly all the entrepreneurs in the sample involved in different handicraft production are found affording their full time.

Family Participation in the Production :

We can find that most of the enterprises - in a developing country like Nepal - are run in a family, caste, class, religion, basis. And this study is also not an exceptional case. Basically we can find here the family base enterprises more.

Table 13 : Family Participation

| Sl. No. | Male Member | Respondent | Female Member | Respondent | percentage |
|---------|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | 1-4 | 9 | 1-4 | 18 | 25 / 50 |
| 2 | 5-8 | - | 5-8 | 3 | - / 8 |
| 3 | 9-12 | - | 9-12 | - | - |
| 4 | No | 3 | No | 3 | 8/8 |
| | | | | 36 | 99 |

The table 13 shows that 50 percent women have 1-4 female participants from their own family and 25 percent have 1-4 male member participants from their own family. Similarly, only 8 percent have 5-8 female member participant but 17 percent have no male or female family member participant. Among these female participants mostly are daughters then sister-in-laws. But among male members the participants are son, brother, brother-in-laws and son-in-laws. None of the sample women have their husband participant, though some of them help indirectly in the production. None of the entrepreneur named their husband in helping to the production directly in either kind of work, such as raw materials management, marketing, labour hiring etc. None of them have found child labour working

in their workshops as a wage earner. Male participation is very less in comparison to female participation. Most of the women entrepreneur's children are found grown up and very few married women have school going children. So they did not feel the problem of child care in the house in their absence.

Initial Investment :

The entrepreneur have a great deal of problem with money yet they have proved that though the economic factor is one of the most important factors, it is not the only one. Women are found to be working, because they want to have an individual status of their own, to satisfy their intellectual needs, creative work, recognition and fame, for socio-psychological needs and interests. Women are gradually realising that they have personalities of their own as human being, and that their lives have a wider and more outward and outdoor interests as well as priviledges and obligations towards the country and society. The present sample data shows that most of the women entrepreneur has started their work with a minimum amount of investment. Women are deprived form property rights and they do not have enough money to run a business. So they have started the present work with a little amount using their traditional skill.

Table 14 : Initial Investment

| Sl. No. | Amount | Respondent | Percentage |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 100-500 | 5 | 14 |
| 2 | 600-1000 | 3 | 8 |
| 3 | 1100-5000 | 12 | 33 |
| 4 | 6000-10000 | -- | -- |
| 5 | 11000-15000 | -- | -- |
| 6 | 16000-50000 | 7 | 19 |
| 7 | 51000-100000 | 3 | 8 |
| 8 | 200000-600000 | 2 | 6 |
| 9 | 700000-1100000 | 2 | 6 |
| 10 | 1200000+ | 2 | 6 |
| Total | | 36 | 100 |

According to the table 13 it has become clear that 33 percent women entrepreneur have started their work with NC Rs. 1100-5000 and 19 percent have expend Rs. 16000-50000 amount in the initial stage. Likewise 14 percent have invested only Rs. 100-500, 8 percent have expended Rs. 51000-100000 which is a big amount for the Nepalese women and without family consent they can not manage this amount. Likewise 6 percent each have expended initially Rs. 200000-600000, 700000-1100000 and more

than 1200000 amount. These handsome amounts are managed by those women basically who are widowed and who have some paternal property. Some of them have managed bank loans too. These initial amount thus ranges from Rs. 100 to above 1200000, which distinctly shows the different economic status among the women entrepreneurs involved in handicraft production. The handsome amount is invested in paper making and its production.

All the entrepreneur in the sample have expressed that their own responsibility lies on the management and marketing of the product goods and nobody is involved from their family member. Similarly the final products are sold from their own shops, personal contact with the consumer, regular buyer and exhibition and none of them are selling their product through wholesaler. According to the entrepreneur, people prefer their product due to its good quality, artistic design, originality, manual work, attractiveness, good colour combination, good finishing etc. All the entrepreneur manage the raw materials needed for their product by themselves and nobody is there to help them from their family members. In this regard all of the women want to do their work by themselves and they do not require any family members help, they want to be self dependent and confident in their work. Besides this the raw material is available in the local market except "lokta" for paper making. Lokta is available in the forest and the village people bring it to the concerned paper workshop with whom they are given contract.

Sharing of Income :

The women entrepreneur are able to earn a good amount from the handicraft using hire labour force. Most of them used to share income with their families and some of the families depend totally upon their income but some of the entrepreneur have none to share their income. So, they invest it in their workshop.

Table 15 : Income Sharing

| Sl. No. | Sharing | Respondent | Percentage |
|--------------|-------------------------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Equally with male counterpart | 14 | 39 |
| 2 | More than male counterpart | 6 | 17 |
| 3 | Partly | -- | -- |
| 4 | Personally | 5 | 14 |
| 5 | Nobody to share | 3 | 8 |
| 6 | According to the need | 8 | 22 |
| Total | | 36 | 100 |

The table 15 shows that 39 percent entrepreneurs used to share their income equally with their male counterparts in the household management, whereas 17 percent women have to expense or to share their income more than their male counterparts in the family. It means they are earning more than their male members of their family. 22 percent women entrepreneur used to

share their income according to the need of the family. It means that they are in the position of helping their family if they are in need of money or in case of married women who spend on children according to the need. 14 percent women expense their income personally or for their personal use only and their family do not need their sharing or economic support. But at the same time there is traditional saying that the family should not use female earning in household management or consumption. Only 8 percent women have none to share their income in the family due to widowhoods or separation. Such women reinvest their income in handicraft production and flourish their workshop rapidly than other women sharing their income with the family. All the sample women feel free to decide the work which they want to do and they decide their work by thinking on their own. Mostly all of the respondent's family members take initiation on their activities outside the home and inspire either directly or indirectly. Only few women's family members neither initiate nor inspire their female member for their creative activities. It may be due to the jealousies and difference of attitude towards women's work. But those who are inspiring women for their creative activity, are managing the house and business side by side, are economically helping the family, are helping to raise the family prestige, are being self dependent on the work, and are earning their livelihood. The neighbours are also taking interest in their job as a self employed women as well as creating job opportunity to other women. Most of the neighbours are ready to support and work with them. But some of those neighbours who used to harass women entrepreneurs in the workshop, are now respecting them. It means the situation, attitude and environment is now changing rapidly and women are getting supportive atmosphere for their work outside the household chores in a large society. Family members also respect their work and advice.

Family Budget Keeping :

The sample data have provided the fact that now the women are getting the facilities of family budget keeping though they may not be free to expense it according to their own will but the trust is built up positively and perhaps it is due to the breaking up of joint families and the practice of nuclear family in the urban areas.

Table 16 : Family Budget Keeping

| Sl. No. | Budget Keeping | Respondent | Percentage |
|---------|----------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Self | 25 | 69 |
| 2 | Husband | 4 | 11 |
| 3 | In-laws | 2 | 6 |
| 4 | Joint | -- | -- |
| 5 | Separate | -- | -- |
| 6 | Others | 5 | 14 |
| | Total | 36 | 100 |

The table 16 highlights that the 69 percent women keep their family budget with themselves and only 11 percent women's husband keep the family budget and do not hand it over to their wives. 14 percent women's family budget is kept by the male members like father or brother and most of these women are unmarried whose elder male member keep the family budget and only 6 percent women's in-laws keep this amount and basically their

family budget is kept by daughter-in-laws because the entrepreneur may be widowed and are not allowed to keep the family budget and their sons hand over their income to their wives for the family management.

Almost all the entrepreneurs keep their earning with them and do not hand it over to any other member of their family. It shows that the economic freedom of women is taking place in a growing urban area. It is the result of urbanization and education. Only few women keep their earning equal with their husband. Among the total entrepreneur respondents 44 percent have to earn to run the family. Whereas 56 percent do not need their income to maintain their family. It means without their earning their family can be maintained. yet they have entered into the handicraft production for their self identity, prestige, fame, career, utilisation of educational degree, personal satisfaction, to use the valuable time for creating employment opportunity to women, to do new things etc. They want to mix up with all type of people such as working people, educated, helpful, friendly, frank, businessmen, social worker, honest, high level, own level, intellectuals, ordinary people, national and international personnel, understandable, etc. Thus the women entrepreneurs are not specific to mix-up with a particular type or group of people. They mix up with the people other than those whom they have to meet in relation to their work. They spend their leisure time on going through the design book, craft creation, household work, dream and think over the country and community, good and bad analysis of the event. enjoy with friends, listen music, give time to small children, to watch finishing part of the craft, meet relatives, social visit, social work, marketing, reading, to move with family etc. This shows that most of the entrepreneurs are involved in craft creation even in their leisure time too, and these women are concerned with big workshops with a huge amount of money. Those who are unmarried they want to enjoy with friends and those who are married and have small children they want to sit and play with their

children. Those who have more free time from household work and those whose children are grown up they spend their free time doing social work, paying social visits and meeting relatives.

Happiness from the Present Work :

Most of the sample women entrepreneurs are happy with their present job, only a few entrepreneurs are found neither happy nor unhappy and those very little in number are unhappy and they are ready to change the present work.

Table 17 : Happiness

| Sl. No. | Happiness | Respondent | Percentage |
|---------|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Extremely happy | 16 | 44 |
| 2 | Happy | 16 | 44 |
| 3 | Neither happy nor unhappy | 2 | 6 |
| 4 | Unhappy | 2 | 6 |
| | Total | 36 | 100 |

The table 17 indicates that 44 percent women entrepreneurs are happy with their present work and 44 percent are extremely happy. Only 6 percent each are neither happy nor unhappy and unhappy too, these unhappy women want to change their present work and shift to food processing as well as to start training centre on their own, to start cold store and baby's item shop

because there is tough competition and duplication of production in present work and is very difficult to cope with the present situation.

All the respondents have not saved money for their future because they consider their workshop itself as their future. So they invest it in the enterprise regardless of what profit they earn from it. Some of them have to pay back the loans. Some of them buy gold instead of saving money because of the fear of husband's and other family members' jealousy.

Most of the women entrepreneur feel that their status within the family and society has improved through their present work. This percent is 78 and among these women some feel that their involvement in the present work has extremely changed their status within the family but 22 percent feel no change. In the present work they are in the same position still now as was before. It is because of the unchanged attitude of family members and their caste people. All the respondent's family need suggestions from these women in some important activities, whereas most of the women's participation in the important activities of the family is high. They have to manage all the household necessities. Only few families obey these women according to their need and not in all sphere.

Political Status :

Though the constitution has provided the equal right of voting to women since 1951 even then the women's participation in the state politics is negligible. The new constitution 1991 after the restoration of democracy has mentioned the political participation of women as 5 percent from each political parties in the parliament through election. But the political leaders are not liberal (even ready) to provide ticket to women in national election.

They provide ticket to women to those constituencies from where it is very difficult to win. This is the scenario of national politics for women but in the local level it is still horrible and in the grass-root level it has almost no meaning. Regarding the women entrepreneur's political status it has become very clear from the sample that they are not involved in the national politics directly. But they are involved in different kinds of organizations related to handicraft production line HAN, WEAN, FNCCI, ANCSI, SBPP, CSIDB etc. and related to many other NGOs and INGOs. Most of them are very much familiar with international donor agencies and can draw a handsome amount for their programmes related to women training and empowerment. Women are able to get their decision making roles in these organisations through their own capabilities and dedication to their work. Being in the higher political status in the sense of power regarding handicraft production these women feel positive attitude of the male member of the association or organisation toward women at work. Male member do not dare to harass or exploit women sexually in the organisation while working together.

Regarding the religious status of women, there is no practice of religious education except in Christianity in Nepal. Traditionally people learn it within the family as a part of their daily life and culture.

Though almost all the women in the sample are religious minded and their religious background is not sound, but none of them are from the priest family. These women are involved in the religious activities of the society. They believe in fate but also think that work is most important to make own fate positive. Though most of the respondents are from Hindu religions they do not believe in orthodox Hinduism nor do they hate any other religion.

Role in Women Empowerment

Many studies have proved that there is a great discrimination between men and women employment. Educated men are preferred for some of the special jobs instead of educated women because men are thought to be more productive and physically fit. Women are exploited in low paid jobs usually. Such employment discrimination between men and women must be eliminated and they should be offered reasonably good jobs so that women can become economically independent and productive. The findings of the present study has proved that the working women feel more satisfied being independent, self reliant, financially sound to support the family and be a co-partner in the management of the household along with their male counterparts. Being on the traditional stage and emerging out to that of modernity, with high educational and career aspirations among urban home makers could also be the reason for such life satisfaction among working women. This contributes to the better mental satisfaction of the women and in turn probably to the greater work performance.

As it has been already understood that empowerment bears the meaning of self decision making power regarding one's own concern, his/her children and his/her family. Basically it is the process of power exercise on decision making. In this regard many of the International Non Government Organisations are launching programmes as "Women Empowerment Project" (WEP) in different 21 districts of Nepal, expending a huge amount of money on administrative part. But those women entrepreneurs who are running different kinds of handicraft industries have employed a large number women in their workshops and are not only paying salaries for their respective jobs but also have played a disguised role in empowering them through different kinds of activities. These women (worker) can get the

chance to mix-up with each other and also can get exposure outside the house.

Most of these women entrepreneurs have created job opportunity by using the traditional skill to those uneducated as well as illiterate women of the city who have neither more household work nor farming land to cultivate and who could not enter in other kinds of job because education and training are the basic qualification to enter into the areas of progress in all spheres of life. But in a developing country like Nepal where female illiteracy is higher in relation to SAARC countries, it is very difficult to find educational achievement of women. In such a scenario those uneducated could not get job opportunity in other fields except in labour work where educational unemployment is high. But handicrafts do not require so much of hard physical labour. It is the work of art and skill and internal talent where an uneducated person also can do it and create new designs and items through the imagination. In this regard women entrepreneurs have helped them (women) to strengthen their economic as well as social empowerment by providing skill oriented job opportunities. It has stopped to some extent, in one had, the idle sitting (wastage) of uneducated women and raised their earning capacity on the other. Similarly, it has also helped to change the attitude of women as well as men regarding the work of women outside the home. These women, who work outside, though uneducated feel free to talk with the outsider. They are found rational and conscious about their work and their children's education. They have understood the values of smaller family size which can contribute to the educational advancement of the children as well as their own vocational training and work.

Thus the women entrepreneurs have indirectly tried to harness the human resources of the community and aimed at an integrated development of the nation. It will be more fruitful if these entrepreneurs think over it broadly

without exploiting the women workers but by utilising the human power. Now it is high time for the society to recognise the role of women and consider that they have as much to contribute to the family as men. Their mind should be set free from ignorance so that they can develop a sense of pride in their work.