

CHAPTER IV

WOMEN WORKERS IN HANDICRAFT PRODUCTION

Women constitute an integral part in the sphere of work everywhere. Each society regulates entry of women in the labour force though some societies permit women to work in familial environments and are strictly forbidden to enter the alien land. This restriction excludes them from paid employment outside the domestic terrain. Similarly other societies allow women to work in on-financial setting on condition that the job is an extension of their ordinary household duties. Only a few societies encourage women to enter into forbidden male domain, and allow women to work in broad spectrum of occupation. But the basic characteristics of labour market is that certain jobs are performed only by men, while others are performed only by women all over the world.

Often much of women's work is grouped together under "domestic work" which is specifically excluded from the definition of "work" in the UN census manuals. This results in the exclusion of many women from the labour force. Females spend most of their time on "home production" activities as own education, child care, house work and on other activities like sewing, knitting, mat-making, making cow dung cakes for house use as fuel and tutoring of one's children (Mukhopadhyay 1990). Women are thus regarded as part of the domestic or private sphere rather than as belonging to the economic sphere.

In fact "Work is an activity that is carried on under conditions in which they are normally demand with respect to time and place and in which effort is directed to the production of goods and services... work contributes

something which other are willing to pay for (or for which others would have to be paid if one did not do itself)"... (Parker & et al 1972)

Work can best be regarded as a very general, all embracing term, used to refer to all those physical and mental activities which are intended to transform natural materials into a more useful form, to improve human knowledge and understanding of the world and/or to provide or distributed goods and services to others, in whatever context such activities are carried out (Brown, 1978).

The working women those who are educated want to utilise their education and develop their personality to the fullest extent. But all of the working women, though not educated, want to take part in adult social, economic and political life, within the limits of their individual interest, aptitudes and abilities. And at the same time want to fulfill their roles in their own family.

Though most of the studies have emphasized on the economic factor for the women to enter the labour force and sometimes it becomes true for them who value economic security, are more likely to work. But the other factors that cause women to work are the community in which they live, the size of their family, number of children, their field and past training and their educational level are equally important. The more educated a women, the more likely she is to enter the labour force.

Socio-Economic Background and Status of Women

Workers in Handicraft Production

Mostly all women work though it may be household work or work outside the home. But working in the unorganised sector means working without legal protection, without job security and for low wages. Women working in the unorganised sector is the compulsion of the dire socio-economic need.

In the decade of 70s-90s Kathmandu has not only remained a capital of the country but also a big commercial centre. The ethnic group of proper city are shifting to the periphery by leaving their traditional residence and personal business by lending on rent and thereby constructing another building in the periphery for the residential purpose. At the sametime people from the different districts of the country are coming to the city for different purposes and settling down and this trend is increasing. In this way the arable and fertile land of Kathmandu valley is rapidly converting into mushroom growing building without any urban plan of the municipal corporation creating the problem of environmental degradation, shortage of drinking water, transportation, etc. In fact the city is expanding uncontrollably inviting the rural people with the facility of road transportation but without the other facilities in the valley. This has resulted the flow of women to the city with their husband/relatives/for the labour work taking their children for better education which directly create the problem of urban unemployment, maladjustment etc.

Mostly the women workers involved in handicraft production in Kathmandu are of two categories, the first one is regular employees who work in other's enterprises and get in return salary or wages on regular basis

but get in return wages according to the terms of daily or periodic or seasonal work contract. Their earning is considerably lower than those of the regular employees owing to large groups in wages and number of days of work between the two categories or workers.

Social Background :

Age :

The interview schedule was asked to all 264 married and unmarried women where the proportion of married women is high. Because most of the women worker involved in this work are married, then unmarried and only few are separated and widowed. These women belong to different age groups, ranging from 16 to 55 years. A cross section of women from all this age grades is found in the sample.

Table 18 : The Age Grade of the Women Workers

Sl. No.	Age Group	Total Sample	Percentage
1	16-20	37	14.01
2	21-25	85	32.16
3	26-30	59	22.34
4	31-35	44	16.66
5	36-40	18	6.81
6	41-45	6	2.27
7	46-50	12	4.54
8	51-55	3	1.13
	Total	264	99.95

The age specific breakdowns show that among the total respondent 14.01 percent women are from the age of 16-20 which shows the early involvement of women in the field of work in handicraft production. Likewise 32.19 percent women are from the age group 21.25 and this is the highest percent and most of these women from 16-25 are unmarried, they have least household responsibilities and have more free time to involve in such work. Then 22.34 percent are from the age group 26-30 and most of the women of this age group are married and have more family responsibilities. Similarly 16.66 percent women are from the age group 31-35 and almost all are married and have grown up children. Whereas 6.43

percent women from 36-40 age group who are almost free from childcare responsibility. Likewise 2.27 percent women are from 41-45, 4.92 percent are from 46-50 age group and only 1.13 percent are from 51-55 age group. These women have also more free time and they are involved in this work not only for the economic need but spend their free time in a creative work. Thus women below 16 years and above 55 years of age are not found in the sample. This age structure of the working women proves that 21-40 is the most energetic age and women's involvement from this age group is highest and women working outside the house is not a new phenomena in Nepal.

As Nepal has the system of 4 *Varnas* and 36 Castes, we can find many subcastes and creeds. Though the modernization has affected the caste system basically in urban areas even it plays an important role in the social system. In the present study most of the working women are found from Newar community and then Brahmin caste in the sample.

Table 19 : Caste/Community wise Distribution of the Sample

Sl. No.	Caste/Community	Respondent	Percentage
1	Brahmin	53	20.07
2	Chhetri	38	14.39
3	Newar	83	31.43
4	Limbu	23	8.71
5	Tamang	17	6.43
6	Gurung	15	5.68
7	Khawas	9	3.40
8	Magar	8	3.03
9	Others	18	6.81
	Total	264	99.95

According to the table 19 it has become clear that the highest percent involvement in handicraft production is from Newar community and that is 31.43. 20.07 percent women workers are from Brahmin caste. Similarly 14.39 percent women are from Chhetri community 8.71 percent are from Limbu community, 6.43 percent are from Tamang community, 5.68 percent are from Gurung community, 3.40 percent are from Khawas community, 3.03 percent are from Magar community and other 6.81 percent are from Rai, Thani, Majhi, Sherpa, Nepali, Das and Sunuwar community. Thus the data proves that there is no caste/community rigidity for women to involve

in handicraft production through there is a majority of Newar and high caste Brahmin and Chhetri caste. Newars, Gurungs, Magars and Limbus are the traditional artisans of Nepal basically involved in cotton cloth weaving and woolen cloth weaving, especially the Dhaka (a kind of cotton cloth), Radi & carpet.

Type of Family :

Most of the women worker respondent have nuclear family both in their parent's house and husband's house and others have joint family. Not a single respondent has been found from extended family.

Table 20 : Types of family of the Working Women Involved in Handicraft Production

Sl. No.	Family Type	Respondent	Percentage
1	Nuclear	191	72.34
2	Joint	73	27.66
	Total	264	100

The table 20 indicates that among the total working women respondent 72.34 percent have nuclear family and 27.66 percent have joint family. As in the entrepreneurial class most of the Brahmin and Chhetri have nuclear family whereas most of the Newar have joint family as well as nuclear family too. Similarly other communities like Gurung, Magar, Tamang etc.

have both joint and nuclear family. But the trend of family pattern is changing rapidly from the traditional type.

Most of the household is headed by the male member of the family except in the case of separated and widowed. Even then those who are widowed and whose son are grown up and matured their family is headed by their son. All the families are patriarchal.

A good unity and loving atmosphere has been observed within most of the respondent's family. Very good, harmonious and understandable relation between father and mother has been found among some of the respondent's family. But some of the respondents have lost their parents/father/mother at their early age. And some of the respondents do not find a very good relationship between their father and mother because of alcoholism, having no male child etc.

Among the total 264 working women respondent 141 has expressed harmonious relationship between parents and the percentage is 53.40. Likewise 15 respondents have expressed good relation between their parents and this percent is 5.68. But 25 respondents have expressed neither harmonious nor unharmonious relation between their parents and other 25 respondents have expressed unharmonious relation between their parents having 9.46 percent respectively. Similarly out of 264 respondents 66 i.e. 25 percent have expressed happy atmosphere in their parental home, 20 percent have expressed neither happy nor unhappy atmosphere and this percent is 7.57. But another 20 respondent have expressed unhappy atmosphere (7.57%), whereas 43 respondent could not feel their parents relation and the happy atmosphere and this percent is 16.28 and 3.78 percent have no parents.

Marital Status :

The main base of the status of women is viewed as marriage in the Nepalese society, whether she is married or unmarried or widowed or separated. Traditionally women in Nepal get married in early childhood and it is still being practiced in the remote villages though the urban situation is different due to the different factors because of which changes take place rapidly here than in the rural areas. In this study most of the working women are found married in their early teen age. Some of them are unmarried and very few are widowed and separated.

Table 21 : Marital Status

Sl. No.	Marital Status	Respondent	Percentage
1	Married	155	59
2	Unmarried	98	37
3	Widowed	8	3
4	Separated	3	1
	Total	264	100

The table 21 highlight that out of 264 working women 59 percent are married which is the highest number. Similarly 37 percent are unmarried whereas 3 percent are widowed and only 1 percent are separated. It means the involvement of widowed and separated (divorced) women as worker is very less in comparison to married and unmarried women. On the other

hand, though the society has changed even then the practice of separation among married couple is very less in Nepal.

Caste Occupation :

It has already been understood that those women who are involved in handicraft production are not strict on caste occupation.

Table 22 : Caste Occupation

Sl. No.	Occupation	Respondent	Percentage
1	Caste Occupation	7	2.65
2	Out caste Occupation	257	97.35
	Total	264	100

According to the table 22 among the total women worker 97.35 percent are involved in outcaste occupation whereas only 2.65 percent are involved in caste occupation, because the castewise production is organised by their own relatives.

People's Attitude toward the non-caste Occupation :

Caste people are not so rigid regarding the non-caste occupation as it happens in the traditional villages. Caste people in the city area believe in work which can help the family as well as the women involved in outside work.

Table 23 : People's Attitude toward non-caste Occupation

Sl. No.	Attitude	Respondent	Percentage
1	Accept as work	196	74.24
2	Appreciate it	14	5.30
3	Work is not good	15	5.68
4	Feel insult	4	1.51
5	Did not care	35	13.25
	Total	264	99.98

As the table 23 indicates that 74.24 percent working women's caste people accept their work not as a caste or outside occupation but as a work necessary for their livelihood. to use their leisure time as well as to help their family income, 5.30 percent caste people appreciate the work. But 5.68 percent caste people do not feel the work good and only 1.51 percent feel insulted while working in outcaste occupation, whereas 13.25 percent caste people do not care about the work done by women whether it is caste occupation or not.

Duration of Involvement :

Women's increasing involvement in handicraft production as a worker is a new phenomena in the Kathmandu city, because only for the last 16 years they have been working in this field. It is the result of Urbanization and change regarding the traditional concept of women and their work outside the home.

Table 24 : Duration of Involvement

Sl. No.	Duration	Respondent	Percentage
1	6 months - 1 year	51	19.31
2	2 years - 3 years	100	37.87
3	4 years -5 years	45	17.04
4	6 years -7 years	47	17.80
5	8 years -9 years	5	1.89
6	10 years -11 years	5	1.89
7	12 years -13 years	5	1.89
8	14 years -15 years	4	1.51
9	16 years +	2	0.75
	Total	264	99.98

According to the table 24 it has become clear that 19.31 percent women are working in different handicraft workshop since 6 months to 1 year, i.e., the trend of entering into the handicraft industry is increasing now. Women from the different districts are coming to Kathmandu with some artistic skill and prefer to work in those handicrafts in which they are used to. 37.87 percent women are working since 2-3 years in different handicraft industries. This also proves the recent trend to enter into the handicraft industry. Similarly 17.04 percent women's duration of involvement is 4-5 years and 17.80 percent are working since 6-7 years. But the duration of 8-9, 10-11 and 12-13 years is 1.89 percent each respectively. 1.51 percent are working since 14-15 years whereas only 0.78 percent are 16 and above years. Thus the figure shows that womens entering into the handicraft industry is increasing recently. The highest duration is found 16 years but the number is negligible whereas recent involvement is remarkable.

Types of Involvement

Women's involvement in handicraft industries are found as a service, contract and labour. Some are entering as a salary base job, whereas some are getting money in terms of piece basis and some of them are found as a labour working in different manual work e.g. dying, drying, counting, spinning etc.

Table No. 25 : Types of Involvement

Sl. No.	Involvement	Respondent	Percentage
1	Service	100	37.87
2	Contract	154	58.33
3	Labour	10	3.78
	Total	264	99.98

This table 25 shows that 37.87 percent women are involved in handicraft industries as a service holder whereas 58.33 percent are working in contract basis. It means most of the women worker has to work hard to get more money. Because as much pieces or meters they can prepare they will get more money in return. But only 3.78 percent women are involved in handicraft industries not as a skill worker but as a manual worker who has indirect hand in the process of production

Causes of Involvement in Handicraft Production :

There are so many causes for the involvement of women in handicraft industries e.g. interest, skill, compulsion, lack of education, lack of job opportunity, self satisfaction, to use the free time, to support the family etc. Not only one cause can be considered as important to pull women worker in the respective works where they are involved.

Table No. 26 : Causes of Involvement

Sl. No.	Cause	Respondent	Percentage
1	Interest	48	18.88
2	Lack of education	105	39.77
3	To be independent	21	7.95
4	To pass free time	25	9.46
5	Easier to housewife	27	10.22
6	To learn the work	6	2.27
7	For newness	6	2.27
8	Family support	26	9.84
	Total	264	99.96

The table 26 highlights that 18.18 percent women are involved in this work according to their own interest. It means they like the respective work what

they are doing at present. 39.77 percent women's involvement is due to the lack of education, and there is no way out nor can they get better job opportunity apart from the present work. 7.95 percent women want to be independent so they prefer the present work. Thus very few women are conscious about their freedom and economic dependency is the main hindrance for it. 9.46 percent women are involved in this work because they have enough free time and they want to use it in a creative work. 10.22 percent women are involved in this work because it is not necessary to stay at the workshop while preparing the goods of entrepreneurs and they can do it in their own house, so it is easier for the housewives to prepare the goods assigned to them by the respective entrepreneurs in the spare time from household duties. They get the remuneration of work on the piece basis. It is the city life where people can not get company to pass their free time nor do they have farm land for agricultural work where they can keep themselves busy. And most of these women are married and have small children too. 2.27 percent women want to learn the work and develop their skill for future scope. Similarly another 2.27 percent women are working in the present handicraft for newness i.e. they want to change their type of work which they were doing previously, whereas 9.84 percent women are involved in the present work to support their family economically.

Job satisfaction :

Among the total working women 70 percent are satisfied with their present work because they feel they are earning their bread, they have used their skill, using their free time in a creative work, started their career through the present job as an employee, independent work for the contractor, no disturbance from the outsider, work is easier, learning the work etc. Whereas 30 percent women are not satisfied with their present work because the payment and salary is less, owner's is nagging, too many small children and more household work and less time for the work, bad effect on health, monotonous work, no clear response of the owner, no profit in terms of labour even then they have to work for their livelihood, not knowing other skill has compelled them in present work, though they are not interested. Thus those women who are not satisfied with the job are working under compulsion because there is no way out for them due to the lack of better skill and education. They have to bear every ups and downs. Some of them even can not go back to their home into village because they have missed their family members nor do they have enough capital to run their own business or work which they are doing now. Those who are involved in this work as a contractor and have no profit are compelled to continue the present work due to the lack of education and better skill, lack of job opportunity and employment in other field, they are interested in the present work for the future scope, to use their free time and better to sit idle in the house, the work place is safe and provide medical facility too. 40 percent women worker do not know about the market and even the product produce by them at present.

Types of Involvement in Relation to Time:

Most of the working women are involved in the present work as full time workers and only a small number are part timers.

Table 27 : Types of Involvement in Relation to Time

Sl. No.	Time	Respondent	Percentage
1	Full time	230	87
2	Part time	34	13
	Total	264	100

The table 27 shows that 87 percent women worker in handicraft production are working as a full time worker. Most of these women are unmarried and among the married women having grown-up or school going or married children, as well as less household work. Whereas 13 percent women are part time worker and most of these women are married and have more small children, joint family and more household work to do at the same time to fulfill the social obligations, side work like stitching, maid- servant, farming etc.

Similarly women workers can not manage their own workshop in the respective work which they are doing right now because neither it is profitable nor they have enough money to invest and technical know how. They can not explore the market of the product due to the lack of education, knowledge, uninterested family members, having no enough space but they feel tension free and easy to work in the workshop.

Child Care in the Absence of Respondent :

Child care is a big problem for the working women who are married and have small children. Due to the break down of traditional joint family system and establishment of modern nuclear family system many commercial child care centres are being established in the metropolitan cities where working women can manage for a certain hours but these centres are not desirable by the people due to their carelessness to the children as well as expensive too. So those working women with a low wage or salary can not afford this and they have to manage any how in their residence at the period of their absence.

Table No. 28 : Child Care

Sl. No.	Child Care Responsibility	Respondent	Percentage
1	Grown up	61	36.74
2	School going	71	42.77
3	Married	4	2.40
4	Self	9	5.42
5	Sister-in-law	4	2.40
6	Parental member	9	5.42
7	Other	8	4.81
	Total	264	99.96

Among the total married women including divorced and separated (166) 36.74 percent women's children are grown up and 42.77 percent women's children are school going, so these women have less problem of child care. Whereas 2.40 percent women's children are already married. 5.42 percent women can take care of their children side by side at the time of work because their workshop is in their own house as a contractor. 2.40 percent and 5.42 percent women have sister-in-law and parental member respectively to take care of their children. But 4.81 percent women's children are looked after by their mother-in-law, daughter, servant and day-care centre. Only 7 percent women are getting the facility of childcare in workshop and rest are not. Most of the women workers are working alone in the present work without the support of their family. Very few women have some female members working in the same workshop and this percent is 24 including entrepreneur having male members working in the same workshop. Some organizations who are running handicraft industry have managed hostels for the single women who have the problem of accommodation and 8 percent women are enjoying this facility.

Decision Making Process :

The status of women could be better evaluated by the nature of decision making on their own, on their children or on their family or on different aspect of household as well as social activities. It indicates the influence over her family work and other matters. Normally the head of the household take important decisions on household economy and activities.

Regarding the decision making on their work most of the women do not decide by themselves. They ask their elders or guardians and this percent is 76 because they think they do not have to worry about it. Some women who have recently come to the city and do not know much about the environment and also due to the lack of education they are not that clever. Some are just married and they have not understood totally the new family, so they have to wait for it, some women are afraid of their family members while taking decision by themselves. Some of them have no confidence and feel inferior than others. Most of the married women have to ask their husband while taking decision and few of them are afraid of their husband. Some of the guardian think that women can not decide alone and can do wrong. Even some of them have to ask their land lady while taking decision. Some of them think that to decide by asking is a tradition and they have to maintain it otherwise family understanding will break. Some of them feel that they can not decide themselves because they do not know anything and they are helpless. But 24 percent women can decide by themselves confidently according to the nature of work, experience, need, situation, family members advice etc. Some of these women are not afraid with any one and do not like domination too. Some of them decide according to their own interest, choice and value of work.

Family Members' Initiation in Women's Work :

Most of the women's family members take initiation on the work of women of their family but some family members do not. Whereas some women can not say about it whether their family members take initiation or not in their work outside the house in handicraft industries.

Table 29 : Family Members' Initiation

Sl. No.	Initiation	Respondent	Percentage
1	Positive	164	62
2	Negative	78	30
3	Not sure	22	8
	Total	264	100

The table 29 justifies that among the total working women of the sample 62 percent of women's family members take initiations and appreciate their work as well as inspire for the work which they are doing now, because women can economically be independent, support the family, involve and get themselves busy in good and productive work and better to sit idle inside the house, encourage and confident build up and for exposure. Similarly women are doing household work, child care, and economic activities side by side. Some of them are involved in traditional work and family members are also involved in the same workshop, working in own house and not necessary to go outside for work which help to manage the family, the workplace outside the house is also good and there is homely environment, they can carry their small children in the work place to care, work is suitable to women specially for the housewives with small children, getting job though the worker is leper and work is essential to survive etc.

On the other hand, 30 percent family members are not showing interest about their female members working outside the house because some of the male members are jealous of women's work and difference of occupation. Some of them want to discard their family members from the family and

want to seize her property though they are relatives. Some of them are not getting economic support from the female member and they listen to others. Some of them do not like women's working outside the house. Some of them have step relation with the female worker. Some of them feel insult in this work and some do not care. Some of the female member have to work in the farm, to care the family, to study and to get married. Similarly 8 percent women can not say about the initiation taken by their family members in their work.

Similarly most of the neighbours of working women are happy with their work and show interest in it because the working women are busy in their work, do not disturb others, and get employment, etc. Whereas some of the neighbours of working women do not show interest with women's work because it is the characteristics of the city life. On the other hand, the neighbours are not from the same caste, they do not have any interaction with their neighbours, some of the neighbours are jealous and speak behind their backs, and some of them have not seen their work at all to show any interest.

Among the total respondent only 31 percent have saved a little bit of their income for future but 68 percent have not saved because they have no surplus amount to save, whereas, some of them do not believe in future but believe in their own skill and God.

Evaluation of Work by Family Members and Caste People :

As it has been already clear that the work is initiated by the family members no doubt they evaluate women's work positively but some of the family members evaluate negatively. 65.33 percent working women's family members and caste fellows evaluate their work positively by regarding as an economic earner, involvement in a good work, taking suggestions, they work inside the house, managing the family and work, family members asking for money, appreciating the work, getting social prestige and satisfaction, trust building etc. Where as 10.66 percent women's family members and caste fellows evaluate their work negatively because they do not like it. But 24.01 percent women even can not say whether their work is positively evaluated or negatively by their family members and caste people.

Improvement of Status Within the Family :

The family status of working women has not changed in equal proportion. Some of them feel that there is change but there is negative change too.

Table 30 : Change in Family Status

Sl. No.	Change	Respondent	Percentage
1	Positive	96	36
2	No change	165	63
3	Negative	3	1
	Total	264	100

The table 30 has highlighted that 36 percent working women feel some changes positively on their prestige within the family after involving in the present work but 63 percent working women do not feel any change whereas 1 percent working women feel negative change on their respect within the family because family members do not like the present work and involvement of female member on it. Mostly these women are widowed or separated and their children do not like mother's involvement in such a low wage work.

Female Members' Suggestion to Their Family :

In this study it has been found that most of the family needs suggestion from the female member but some of the family members do not need so, and some of the working women can not say whether family members need their suggestion or not because nobody has asked them for suggestion, some of the family members listen to the female members too but do according to their own interest and some of the family do not need suggestion from the female member every time.

Table 31 : Female Suggestion

Sl. No.	Suggestion	Respondent	Percentage
1	Positive	172	65
2	Negative	48	18
3	Not knowing	16	6
4	Listen only	20	8
5	Not always	8	3
	Total	264	100

According to the table 31 it has been proved that 65 percent women's families need suggestion from the female member and mostly such families are nuclear family. But 18 percent women's family do not need suggestion from their female member and most of these families are joint, whereas 6 percent women do not know whether their family need suggestion from

them or not and most of these women are unmarried. 8 percent women's family listen to the female member's suggestion but do according to their own interest, whereas, 3 percent women's family ask female members for suggestion but not always.

Obedience by Family :

Most of the working women's family members obey them fully but some of them obey only at times, whereas some of them are not sure whether their family members obey them or not, some of their family members do not obey at all.

Table 32 : Obedience by Family Members

Sl. No.	Obey	Respondent	Percentage
1	Obey fully	90	34
2	Obey partially	82	31
3	Not sure	43	16
4	Disobey	49	19
	Total	264	100

The table 32 indicates that 34 percent women's family members obey them and 31 percent of the working women family members obey little bit or partially. 16 percent working women are not sure whether their family

members obey them or not and 19 percent working women's family member do not obey them at all.

Regarding the decision making on social and economic activities of the families 33 percent women decide themselves according to their need, situation, discussion with the family member's suggestion specially the elder member etc. but some of them can decide independently because they are the elder member of the family and some have more economic activities than that of male member. Whereas 67 percent women can not decide independently on the matter of social and economic activities of the family, because the family member do not require their decision, they have no confidence to decide due to the lack of education and experience, they have elder family members to decide, usually the male members.

Most of the women workers want to mix up with all kind of people other than those related to the work, basically, the same level. According to their view the people whom they want to mix up should be honest, frank, friendly, liberal, helpful, social worker, equal status, religions, simple etc. but some of them want to mix up with their relatives only and very few have no circle to mix up. In fact such women want to be alone and do not want to share their feelings and experience with any one.

Most of the working women spend their leisure time in household work and this percent is 41, some of them want knitting and this percent is 7.57, some want to watch movie and television (13.25%), some go for marketing (11.36%), some meet relatives 9.8%), some listen to music (3.03%), some enjoy with their friends (4.54%), some spend their leisure time on religious activities, very few women want to play with their small children (1.89%), some sit alone (1.51%). Similarly some women roll Nepali Dhoop and Bati or incense (1.89%), some move with their family member (2.65%), some

spend their leisure time in shop keeping (0.75%) and still some spend their leisure time in talking with their mother-in-law and land lady (0.75%).

Happiness from the Present Work :

Most of the sample women workers expressed their happiness with their present work. Some of them are found neither happy nor unhappy and few are extremely happy.

Table 33 : Happiness from the Present Work

Sl. No.	Happiness	Respondent	Percentage
1	Extremely happy	30	11.36
2	Happy	186	70.45
3	Neither happy nor unhappy	35	13.25
4	Unhappy	13	4.92
5	Extremely unhappy	Nil	Nil
	Total	264	99.98

The table 33 indicates that among the total working women involved in handicraft industry 11.36 percent are extremely happy and 70.45 percent are happy from their present work but 13.25 percent are neither happy nor unhappy. they are just doing the work because it is essential and they can not get opportunity for other work due to the lack of education and better skill. and 4.92 percent are unhappy with this job, Some of these women want to change this job because they need better job than the present job in

relation to their pay. Some of them want to join police job, some want to learn new technical work, some want to be a service holder, some want to start tailoring, some like social work, some want to start business on painting and tailoring, some are interested in teaching job etc.

Educational Background and Status :

The present study has found the following educational background of women worker involved in handicraft production.

Table 34 : Educational Background of Women Workers' Family

Sl. No.	Happiness	Respondent	Percentage
1	Educated father	10	4.58
2	Educated mother	--	--
3	Educated husband	121	55.50
4	Literate father	23	10.55
5	Literate mother	19	8.71
6	Literate husband	20	9.17
7	Illiterate father	--	--
8	Illiterate mother	19	8.71
9	Illiterate husband	6	2.75
	Total	218 (264)	99.98

The table 34 highlights that 55.50 percent working women's husbands are educated, among them mostly are graduate and passed high school. Some are intermediate and few are M.A. degree holder too, but 9.17 percent are literate whereas only 2.75 percent are illiterate. Likewise 10.55 percent women's father are literate and 4.58 percent are educated, among them very few are intermediate and M.A. degree holders and none of them are from graduate level and illiterate whereas some of them are high school educated. Similarly none of them have educated mother but 8.71 percent each have literate as well as illiterate mother. This data reveals that those women workers whose husband are educated are highly inspired to work outside the strong household chores according to their skill, ability and interest. Similarly, the girls from new generation who are either educated or uneducated have also accepted the challenges of the work outside the house.

Educational Status :

If man is educated, only one individual is educated; but if a woman is educated, the whole family is educated (Mahatma Gandhi). Although education is not compulsory the government provides free primary education for all children between the ages of 6 and 12, but many families can not afford the school requirements or uniforms.

Although there is no legal barrier to equal access to education, boys are given preference over girls for socio-cultural and economic reasons. Female literacy of 25 percent and enrolment in formal education continues to be very low compared to that of males (NPCS, 1994). It is already understood that low level of education and lack of suitable training has highly affected

the availability of jobs and they are regarded as less qualified in comparison to men.

Table 35 : Educational Status of Working Women in Handicraft Production

Sl. No.	Education	Respondent	Percentage
1	Illiterate	38	14.39
2	Literate	97	36.74
3	High School	80	30.30
4	S.L.C.	34	12.87
5	Intermediate	13	4.92
6	Bachelor	2	0.75
	Total	264	99.97

The data of the table 35 shows that among the total 264 women 14.39 percent are illiterate, most of them are involved in spinning and weaving section of handicraft. 36.74 percent are literate and these women are also involved in woolen and cotton cloth weaving, and bead ornaments production. Similarly 30.30 percent women are high school qualified and these section of women are also low wage earners. 12.87 percent are S.L.C. qualified, 4.92 percent are intermediate and only 0.75 percent are bachelor (graduate) and these section of women are employees in the handicraft enterprises. But not a single master degree women is involved in manual

work and as an employee because knitting, weaving, stitching etc. do not require high educational qualification.

Economic Background :

The family of the most of women workers involved in handicraft production are not economically sound. Their economic condition is moderate. They belong to lower middle and lower class.

Table 36 : Economic Class of the Respondent's Family

Sl. No.	Economic Class	Respondent	Percentage
1	Lower middle	124	47
2	Lower	140	53
	Total	264	100

The table 36 highlights that 47 percent respondents are from lower middle class. The monthly income of these families ranges from 4000-10000. Likewise 53 percent women are from lower class and the monthly income of these families ranges from 2000-4000. Thus the available data proves that most of the women i.e. more than 50 percent are from lower economic strata of the society whereas near about 50 percent women are from the lower middle economic strata of the society.

Family Occupation of the Women Worker Involved in Handicraft Production :

It has become already clear that family occupation is an important factor which affects the life of a person. Those women who are involved in handicraft production as an employee or a contractor their family's occupational involvement is either in service or in labour work.

Table 37 : Family Occupation

Sl. No.	Family Member	Occupation		Total	Percentage
		Service	Labour		
1	Father	5 (1.89)	5 (1.89)	10	3.78
2	Mother	1 (0.37)	1 (0.37)	2	0.74
3	Husband	92 (34.84)	68(25.75)	160	60.60
4	In-laws	22 (9.33)	8(3.03)	30	11.36
5	Siblings	25 (9.47)	7(2.65)	32	12.12
6	Children	29(10.98)	1 (0.37)	30	11.36
	Total			264	99.96

The table 37 shows that 34.84 percent women workers' husband's occupation is service which is high in number in relation to other occupations and 25.75 percent women workers' husband's occupation is labour work. Likewise 1.89 percent women's father are involved in labour

work and 0.37 percent each women's mother are involved in service and labour work and 9.46 percent women's siblings are involved in service and 2.65 percent women's siblings are busy in labour work. Lastly 10.98 percent women's grown up children are also involved in service and only 0.37 percent are involved in labour work and 8.33 percent women's in-law's are involved in service and 3.03 percent women's in-law's are busy in labour work.

Economic Status of Working Women in the Handicraft Production :

Women's work is not perceived as economically gainful, though women work more: "Man work from sun to sun but a woman's work is never done" (Chakravorty, 1975). But efforts have not been made to measure their share in the process of production, distribution and consumption. Women workers have been discriminated within and outside labour market. Within the labour market discrimination can be found in the entry in higher level jobs as well as in wages, status and advancement of women labour. Thus women are segregated mostly in less prestigious occupation.

Women are concerned in weaving, knitting and stitching industries. In fact female employment is high in the cottage industry sector. Rural and urban households derive 14 percent and 34 percent of their income respectively from the informal sector, and Kathmandu has the highest concentration of female informal sector workers (NPCS, 1994). Another data provided by NPC's (1995) shows that 2964003 women are economically active among the total female population 9270123. Among the total economically active female population 10764 (0.36%) are unpaid family workers. 91 percent of economically active women are categorised as farm/fisheries workers, 4

percent services, and 2 percent productive labour workers. Women in professional or technical categories do not constitute even 1 percent. They lag behind men in all category, 25 percent of the service category, and less than 10 percent of the administrative clerical category. Obviously women are concentrated in the informal sector and in the lowest paid jobs.

The cost of living is increasing and a male member alone of the family can not meet the requirements of his family. So, the work of women outside the house has become economically necessary. Earlier middle class women's main responsibility was child bearing, caring and household duties. But the growth of education has compelled to recognise the equal opportunity to eligible women, and the traditional job of women has been challenged now. Thus, though the emancipation from age-old male domination and social restrictions imposed on women from time to time while elevating her from domestic chores has been speeded up. But despite all these changes women's position has not improved satisfactorily (Kumar, 1992).

Types of Handicraft :

The type of involvement in handicraft shows that the highest percent among the total respondent is in woolen cloth weaving than in cotton cloth weaving and stitching and paper product. But working women's involvement in other handicrafts like wood carving, boutique print, knitting, jewellery and knot craft is less in comparison.

Table 38 : Types of Involvement in Handicraft Production

Sl. No.	Handicraft	Respondent	Percentage
1	Woolen cloth weaving	135	51.13
2	Cotton cloth weaving	66	25
3	Paper production	40	15.15
4	Boutique Print	8	3.03
5	Jewellery	6	2.27
6	Knitting	5	1.89
7	Others	4	1.51
	Total	264	99.98

The table 38 highlights that among the total 264 sample women workers 51.13 percent are involved in woolen cloth weaving. In this woolen category I have included all the woolen items like sweater, trouser, socks, Pashmina shawls etc. Similarly 25 percent women workers are involved in cotton cloth weaving. It includes Dhaka weaving and cotton cloth weaving in the loom. Likewise 15.15 percent women are involved in paper industry. But 3.03 percent are involved in boutique print whereas 2.27 percent and 1.89 percent women are involved in different kinds of artistic jewellery and knitting respectively. But only 1.51 percent women are involved in wood carving and knot craft. The details of the handicrafts has been already discussed in the previous chapters.

Monthly Income :

Most of the women workers involved in handicraft production have no fixed amount as their monthly income, because they are working in contract basis. Sometimes they can prepare more goods because of simple design as well as get more time, whereas some times they can prepare only few pieces because of complicated design and consume more time but they could not afford the time required. Only those women get fixed amount who are involved as a service holder.

Table 39 : Monthly Income

Sl. No.	Income	Respondent	Percentage
1	Less than 500	24	9
2	600-1000	30	11
3	1100-1500	36	14
4	1600-2000	71	27
5	2100-2500	39	15
6	2600-3000	36	14
7	3100-3500	19	7
8	3600-4000	3	1
9	4100-4500	--	--
10	4600-5000	6	2
	Total	264	100

The table 39 indicates that 9 percent women's monthly income from the present work is less than Rs. 500 which is very low even though they are involved in this work under compulsion because on the one hand, they are new comers in the work and on the other they are uneducated and can not get better job than the present one. 11 percent women's monthly income is between 600-1000, these women work on contract basis and basically the married women fall in this category having less education and less time. Similarly 14 percent women get monthly income between Rs. 1100-1500. These women are a little bit skilled and experienced. 27 percent women get the amount between 1600-2000 per month and this is the highest percentage in the figure. These women are skilled worker and among them some are working in the handicraft industry as an employee and some are working as a contractor. These women are skilled and somewhat educated too. Similarly 15 percent women are earning Rs. 2100-2500 per month. These women are also both employees and contractors. Similarly only 14 percent women are earning Rs. 2600-3000 and these women are working as employees and not as contractors, likewise only 7 percent women are getting 3100-3500 per month as an employee and these women are working on the responsibility of supervisor, whereas 1 percent and 2 percent are getting 3600-4000 and 4600-5000 per month respectively and these women are also taking the risk of being a supervisor in the workshop, but not a single woman has been found in the sample who gets Rs. 4100-4500 per month.

Family Budget Keeping :

Regarding the family budget keeping most of the working women keep their family budget with themselves whereas some of their family budget is kept by their family members such as father, mother, husband, in-laws etc.

Table 40 : Family Budget Keeping

Sl. No.	Budget Keeping	Respondent	Percentage
1.	Self	86	32.57
2.	Father	40	15.15
3.	Mother	30	11.36
4.	Husband	50	18.93
5.	Siblings	30	11.36
6.	In-laws	28	10.60
	Total	264	99.97

The data of the table 40 has pointed out that among the total working women respondents 32.57 percent keep their family budget with them. 15.15 percent women's family budget is kept by their father, 11.36 percent women's family budget is kept by their mother and 18.93 percent women's family budget is kept by their husbands. Similarly 11.36 percent women's family budget is kept by their siblings and 10.60 percent women's family budget is kept by their in-laws and mostly the father-in-laws. It shows that

due to the increasing nuclear family system women are being more empowered than in the joint family system in the case of budget keeping.

Self Earning Keeping :

Most of the working women keep their earning with them and some of them hand it over to their family members e.g. husband, parents, siblings but none of them hand it over to in-laws.

Table 41 : Self Earning Keeping

SI. No.	Self Earning Keeping	Respondent	Percentage
1.	Self	175	66.28
2.	Equal with husband	17	6.43
3.	Husband	30	13.25
4.	Parents	35	2.65
5.	Siblings	7	--
6.	In-laws	--	--
	Total	264	99.97

The table 41 shows that among the total working women respondent 66.28 percent keep their earning with them, 6.43 percent keep equally with their husband. 11.36 percent with their husband, 13,25 percent to their parents and 2.65 percent to their siblings and non of the working women in-laws

keep their earning with them. Similarly for 64 percent working women earning is essential whereas 36 percent is not that necessary to run their family. But they are working for their self satisfaction, prestige etc.

Income sharing:

Most of the women worker have to share their income equally with their male counterpart and some families are totally dependent on their income whereas for some it is not that necessary to share with the family members.

Table 42 : Income Sharing

SI. No.	Income Sharing	Respondent	Percentage
1.	Complete (Total)	18	6.81
2.	More than male counter part	5	1.89
3.	Equal with male counter part	141	53.40
4.	Partly	19	7.19
5.	Personally	81	30.68
	Total	264	99.97

According to the Table 42 it has become clear that out of 264 working women involved in handicraft production 6.81 percent have to expend their total amount of income on their family, which proves that these women have no economically supporting hand and their family depend upon them.

Only few women have to expend more than their male counterpart and this percent is 1.89, i.e. these women earn more than their male member. But 53.40 percent women have to share their income equally with their male counterpart to run the family. 7.19 percent women use their income partly for their family, i.e. they expend their income to fulfil the need of the family but not always. 30.68 percent women use their income personally, and family do not ask for their income. Mostly these women are unmarried and parents do not want to use their daughter's income in family concern, but indirectly this is also a support to their parents because these women fulfil their need by themselves and parents need not be worried about it.

Political Background of the Women Worker's Involved in Handicraft Production :

Present study shows that almost all the women workers (involved in handicraft production) families are not directly involved in state level politics neither in grassroot level. They seem only to be the voters of the different political parties of the country. Even then the male members of the concerned respondent are politically conscious to some extent in comparison to female member. It is very difficult to express any comment on their family politics too, because the respondents are so innocent that they can not even say about their own exercise of power within their own family concern.

Political Status :

Women constitute a vital human resource component which needs to be mobilised if the economy is to achieve all round development. Unfortunately, in Nepal so far, the participation of women in various spheres of public life and decision making positions, both within the government machinery or elsewhere, it has continued to remain low (CBS, NPCS, 1994). Though there is some improvement on political activities of women since 1917 through different women's organisations but it has less effect on the grassroots level. The level of political awareness among these women is extremely low. Regarding the political status of sample working women in handicraft production in Kathmandu it is useless to talk about it, because they can not even say about the organization where they are involved at present. They just come to the workshop, as a labour, and go back to home in the evening . Their innocent behaviour and ignorant condition is helping the organization to exploit-them economically. It is a myth to imagine about their direct participation in state politics, whether it is district or village level. They cast their vote according to the suggestion of their guardian in the national as well as local elections. They do not know about the prevailing political parties of the country and their candidate in the elections.

Political status, thus, here in this study refers only to the knowledge about the organization or industry where they are working now, its market, whether their involvement in a particular handicraft is political, which GO, NGO or INGO is supporting to their organization etc. In this regard not a single working women is politically involved in such production. It is totally their socio-economic urge. They think that to work in a handicraft industry is better than to sit idle in their home. A work is work inspite of it being higher or lower. Their low educational qualification has forced them to do

the present work. They are so simple and innocent that they are unaware of the labour organization that fight for the rights and benefits of the labourers, which even their employer do not want. According to the women worker they have no time to think about it because they have to work hard for their family on the one hand and on the other they are uneducated, do not have a political environment within their house, are not aware about it, no interaction with political or labour organization's workers, no exposure and do not get opportunity etc.

Most of the women workers do not know whether the male members attitude is positive or negative towards women at work place. Only few of them can say about it, In many handicraft workshops run by female entrepreneurs have no male members working.

Religious Background of Women Workers Involved in handicraft Production :

Most of the women worker are religiously from the Hindu family than from Buddhist family whereas few are from Christian family and not a single women are from Islam family has been found. All the women worker of the sample are not a strict follower of either religions nor do they hate any other religion. We can find religiously liberal attitude among these women.

Table 43 : Religious Background

Sl. No.	Religious Involvement	Parents	Percentage
1.	Very religious	28	10.60
2.	Quite religious	80	30.30
3.	Somewhat religious	137	51.89
4.	Somewhat not religious	15	5.68
5.	Not religious	-	-
6.	Not knowing	4	1.51
	Total	264	99.98

According to the table 43, 10.60 percent women worker's parents are very religious. They believe in orthodox Hinduism and are busy in traditional religious activities but 30.30 percent women's parents are quite religious. They also believe in traditional activities but not so rigid as the first group. Similarly 51.89 percent women worker's parents are somewhat religious. They perform religious activities to a little extent and are not so rigid and traditional like the first and the second group. They are more liberal regarding religious concern. Only 5.68 percent women workers do not know about their parent's religious attitude, because they have lost their parents in early childhood.

Regarding the family background most of the respondent have expressed the family unity as the most important advantage of their parent's house. Likewise changing attitude, loving behaviour, economic support, happy

environment, honesty and inspiring attitude, providing education to their children and making them capable, mother's unbiased behaviour to girl child, religious minded, joint family are also equally important factor to make them easier to involve in the present work. Whereas parents' lack of self decision making power, misunderstanding among family members, parents negative attitude towards girls education, early death of parents, domination, tension, bad environment, separated parents, step relation, bad economic condition, early marriage, lonely atmosphere, bad relations with relatives, biased behaviour to girl child and more daughter, sick parents etc. are the negative factors that make women's life serious and compel them to work outside the house.

Religious Status :

Among the total working women mostly are from Hindu religion than from Buddhist religion and only a few are from Christian religion and not a single woman has been found from Islam religion though a high percentage of population in Kathmandu are from this religion. It shows that still the women from this religion are not stepping out from their house for socio-economic activities and are confined within the four walls of their house.

Table 44 : Religious Status of Working Women

Sl. No.	Religion	Respondent	Percentage
1.	Hindu	217	82
2.	Buddhist	31	12
3.	Christian	16	6
4.	Islam	-	-
	Total	264	100

The table 44 indicates that among the total working women 82 percent are from Hindu religion, 12 percent are from Buddhist religion whereas only 6 percent are from Christian religion. There is no religious teaching practice in Nepal, but it is a part of cultural life where youngsters learn it as cultural heritage from the elders of the family as good work, truthfulness, worship of God, work is good etc. But those who are from the Christian religion are found to be converted from Hindu religion through the preaching by the missionaries in schools and villages, whereas there is no hard and fast rigidity among Hindu and Buddhist and there is a religious harmony among different people in Nepal.

Belief in Religion :

Most of the working women believe in God, worship and fate, while some of them believe highly and some do not believe at all.

Table No. 45 : Belief in Religion

Sl. No.	Degree of Belief	Respondent	Percentage
1.	Very religious	15	6
2.	Quite religious	75	28
3.	Somewhat religious	151	57
4.	Somewhat not religious	18	7
5.	Not religious	5	2
	Total	264	100

The table 45 shows that among the total working women 6 percent women are very religious, 28 percent are quite religious and 57 percent are somewhat religious whereas 7 percent are somewhat not religious and 2 percent women are not religious. This category of religious belief proves that whether it may be very religious or quite religious of some what religious higher percent of women worker are religious and only few women do not believe in God.

The causes for their belief in God and fate are mostly because of the positive and negative incidents, accidents, experience and happenings of life, such as intercaste marriage, involvement in present work, work not

according to self interest, early losing of parents and husband Karma is related to fate, to get what was supposed to get through "Swasthani Brat" (fasting and worship of God Shiva by Goddess Parvati), having no children, to suffer by vulnerable diseases, to win the case of property through court etc. They have strong belief on fate, God is powerful who leads our life, what is lotted can not be blotted, God's grace is essential to run the life successfully and smoothly, are the concept of women workers. Some of them believe only in work and not on fate and God, According to them good work is God and time is most important to make one's fate.

Attitude of the Family Members (basically male) in Women's Involvement in Handicraft Production :

The attitude of the Family members plays an important role in the working situation of women outside the house. In this concern it has been found that the family members, basically the male members, of the city area like Kathmandu are interested to send their female members to work outside. In the process of filling the questionnaire schedule among total 264 working women 54 (20%) family members (male) were included to know their attitude towards women's work and their response show that total 42 male member (78%) have positive attitude whereas 12 male member(22%) have negative attitude toward women's work outside the house.

Those family members who are in favour of women's present work have the broad concept, such as, to be independent, to use their skill and time in a productive work, sitting idle inside the house is to spoil the time and energy, family support, male member's single income may not be sufficient to run the family, women will get exposure and will be quite aware of the

situation outside. For some families there is no way out to manage the family other than both male and female work and women will learn how to earn and utilise it properly.

But those male members who have negative attitude toward women's work have expressed the following grounds, such as traditionally their female members of the family do not go outside for earning purpose and it is the matter of insult within their family and caste people, because it is not fair to use women's income in family concern. Some of them think that women will be more talkative if they go outside for work and it will be the cause of quarrel between husband and wife. Some of them think that women are not safe outside the house and they are also not strong for self protection and people will exploit them and work inside the house is good and enough. Some say that women will lose their character if they work outside and also that to earn livelihood is the responsibility of the male member of the family.

Those male members whose female members are inactive economically, opines that to manage the family is not only difficult but very difficult. They say that the family has to be managed any how. Moreover to get work outside is also a difficult task. Some says that to manage the family economically is the responsibility of male members and not of female i.e. work outside the house is the domain of the male members only. Some has not found it difficult to manage the family alone economically. Some feel they will suffer from starvation if their female member do not work outside, so they should be motivated for outside work other than household duties. Some have no practice in the family to send their female member outside for economic activities. Some of them think women can not use their freedom. Some want the female members engagement only in farming. Similarly 78 percent male members fell the burden of raising the family by

working alone whereas 22 percent do not because they think that it is their responsibility. Thus 22 percent people do not like their female members working outside but 78 percent felt very bad to sit idle inside the house and these people suggest that their female members should be involved in a creative work whether it may be handicraft or any work except vulnerable activities like call girls or prostitution.

Residential Background of the Women Workers Involved in Handicraft Production :

Residential background also affects the working pattern of women outside the house. Most of the women workers involved in handicraft production in Kathmandu city are from outside the valley whereas most of the entrepreneurs are from Kathmandu valley. Those women workers who are from outside the valley are basically from the nearest districts of Kathmandu e.g. Sindhupalchowk, Dhading, Kabhre, Nuwakot, Chitwan and from the eastern part of Nepal like Ramechhap, Morang, Phidim, Panchthar, Dhankuta, Dharan, Okhaldhunga, Taplegunj, Terathum etc. Similarly some women workers are from the central region of Nepal like Udaipur, Siraha, Birgunj, Janakpur etc. and some are from the Western side of Nepal like Gorakha, Nawalparasi, Surkhet, Mahdneranagar etc.

Table No. 46 : Residential Background of the Women Workers Involved in Handicraft Production

SI. No.	Region	Respondent	Percentage
1.	Kathmandu valley	92	34.84
2.	Nearest District	39	14.77
3.	Eastern Region	100	37.87
4.	Central Region	18	6.81
5.	Western Region	15	5.68
	Total	264	99.97

The table 46 indicates that 34.84 percent women workers in handicraft production in Kathmandu city are from proper Kathmandu valley, who were born and brought up there and passed their school and college years, likewise 14.77 percent are from the nearest districts of Kathmandu valley, whereas 38 percent are from eastern region of the country. Similarly 6.81 percent are from central part and 5.68 percent are from Western part of Nepal. The table has highlighted that most of the women worker in handicraft are from Eastern region because eastern part is traditionally famous in this area, as they used to produce Radi-Pakhi, carpet and other art and crafts since long back. But it does not mean that the Western part of the country is not renowned in handicrafts, only the flow of women workers in Kathmandu in handicraft from western part is lesser than the eastern & central region.