



## Impact of Marriage on Career Development of Women: A Study of Newar Community of Kirtipur

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### Abstract

*The main objective of the research entitled Impact of Marriage on Career Development of Women: A Study of Newar Community of Kirtipur was to study the effects of marriage particularly on married women of the Newar community of Kirtipur and its impact on their career development.*

*Both quantitative and qualitative approach were used as a mixed method. A cross sectional survey questionnaire was administered among the Newari married women of four wards - 3, 5, 9 and 10 ranging their ages from 24 to 45 to represent the total population of Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu. By purposive sampling method, 100 responses were collected and analyzed through SPSS V.20 for quantitative data and four cases were interviewed for qualitative data analysis. The data were analyzed on the basis of auto-ethnographic design.*

*The study reveals the married women pursue less demanding jobs such as part-time and less effort making jobs due to household responsibilities. They cannot focus on career development to get opportunity in better workplace. The major contribution to the impact of marriage is engagement in household chores after marriage including taking care of their children until they are grown up for school.*

**Keywords:** *Newari women, impact, marriage, career development*

### Introduction

Marriage is a matrimonial wedlock, a sociably and culturally accepted unification between spouses that establishes rights and obligations resulting biological or adopted children. In marriage, basically brides and grooms are chosen as per their caste and religion. Arranged marriages are conducted within the same caste, religion,

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*Gotra* (*Gotra* - the lineage or clan into which a Hindu is born. Like a surname, it is patrilineal and a born child normally adopts the father's Gotra. A woman usually adopts Gotra of her husband after marriage. If an inter-caste boy and the girl falls in love to tie the knot, then their relations may or may not be accepted by the family of both, yet, she acquires her husband's Gotra. As Sunuwar (2020, p.2) writes "Newars are one among 59 indigenous people recognized so far by government of Nepal". Newar community reside in every part of the country but they are the original inhabitants of Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal and thus, they have a society of cultural orthodox within their own caste and culture.

Singh (2018) says "the girl is never widowed even if her husband dies, as her husband in form of Lord Vishnu is immortal". Before the age of puberty, the second marriage is performed with the Sun which is called "*Ba:ra:*" in Newari language and "*Gufa*" in Nepali Language. The ceremony lasts for almost 12 days where they are put in a cave like surrounding in a dark room for 11 days to prove their purity and then on the 12<sup>th</sup> day, the girl is married to the Sun, which is a symbol of eternity. And, finally, after she enters into the age of puberty and adulthood, she is eligible to marry a human being.

Following the culture, Bajracharya (2010, pp. 418-428) writes "In a traditional marriage, however, the father employs friends to search for suitable girls for his sons and when one is found he sends an intimate friend as a Lami to commence negotiations with her family", 418. In Newar society, the father searches for a suitable girl for his son through friends or relatives, and when found, they chose a family friend to check if the horoscope of the boy matches with the girl. The family of the boy assigns a Lami (family friend who can negotiate and assist in finding the match between the horoscope of the girl and boy). Once the horoscope matches, further talks progresses through the Lami until the day of marriage.

According to Oxford English Dictionary, career is defined as a person's course or progress through life (or a distinct portion of life) and is related to remunerative work. Women have been very significant contributor in any organization, they chose to either continue their education, or continue their career or few more chose to carry on with their social responsibilities.

Marriage is considered as a source of support, entertainment and satisfaction to the married couple. Nevertheless, members of society spend less time together and gradual dissatisfaction develops among them that often leads to marital disruption.

Especially, financially independent women are less happy. Due to the need to survive, the couple are compelled to go far from their residence for job which generates gap between them and are resulting it to be “the unhappy marriage life”. (Acharya, 2010, p. 5)

The association between women and soil created a notion of women being less mobile and “women are often portrayed as rooted to the soil”, (Codesal, 2018). Family responsibilities may also reduce physical mobility. Women are less mobile than men because women are depicted as rooted to the soil, due to their physical reasons and expected to give birth to the offspring only. Culture is the strength of Newar community, however, they are changing slowly, yet, they still resist to their culture.

As Villier’s (2001, pp. 251-265) report says, “Emotional maturity needed to do work of real importance was needed twenty years ago”, 260. Women who had a break in their career after marriage for the sake of family formations proved average achievers. The women who start their second career realize the need of such maturity in their early years of their career.

According to Luitel (2001, p. 111) “Women’s contribution in the subsistence economy has not been considered as economic activity”. Women have to face at the household chores and thus, they have not been able to participate in the better income generating works and their contribution is still not considered as economic activity in the society. Issues on women’s empowerment have been raised every year in the national level but it the pace of implementation is taking time. Although the plans have been proposed strategically in the education, health, agriculture, employment and other legal systems by the government and the non-government agencies, it has yet to be addressed in the local level to reach the local households for increased recruitment of women at all levels.

In the Newar community, the oldest male is always the head of the family and takes sole responsibility for decision making irrespective of any issues in the family. Some of the Newars are in many ways more liberal but hold very traditional beliefs and tend to be more conservative, while those with education and better opportunities for social participation and economic engagement tend to be more liberal (Shrestha et al., 2015, pp 53-63). The Newar women fall victim to social and economic obligations if they belong to the traditional conservative family and thus, they are excluded or discouraged from involvement in household and family decision making processes because of patriarchal values and power structure in the family. The women who belong

to educated family are tend to get opportunity to continue their education and also participate in income generating activities, which assist them in career development as they preferred.

Pradhan (1981, p. 84) states “The main occupation of the villagers is agriculture, hence the major source of income is derived from agriculture . . .”. Although the literature showed that the Newar women from Bulu are involved in agricultural labour for wages and pass their time in trading in shops to sell stuffs where trading is done exclusively by men, the women of Newar community of Kirtipur have yet to be explored in what way they do their earnings. Hence, the purpose of this study is to explore married women’s status in Newar community of Ward 3,5,9 and 10 of Kirtipur to bring out what impact has their marriage created on their career development as the central part of study.

### **Statement of Problem**

Kirtipur is a *ghetto (city near to the capital city)* area of Kathmandu city where the biggest as well as largest University, Tribhuvan University, is located. Kathmandu city dwells with a majority of Newar community. Things are slowly evolving towards education and since Kirtipur is a predominant city of Newar community. However, no research has been conducted on the impact of marriage of women and its effects on their career and this keeps the women and their position under the carpet.

### **Objective of the Study**

The study aims is to find out the effects of marriage particularly on married women of the Newar community and its impact on their career development in general. Specifically, the study aims:

- to identify perceptions of the married women and its impact over career development.
- to assess contributing factors that affect the career of married women.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study aids in finding out the perception of married women of Newar community on the effects of marriage over career development and decision-making, and the perceived factors that promote and hinder the career among married women of Newar community.

This research will be an important asset for the policy makers of Kirtipur

Municipality where pre-dominantly reside the large population of Newar community. The new policies can be formulated taking in to consideration of the respondents' attitude towards education, exposure to the community, domestic affairs, opportunities for the employment for the women and their socio-demographical status. It's outcome will be very helpful to the entire community of Kirtipur.

Women, whether they are jobless or jobholders, require various opportunities for their professional career and socio-economic growth that will be helpful for their family members, their ward, their workplace, the Municipality and ultimately, the whole Kirtipur valley.

### **Methods**

By purposive sampling method, the qualitative and quantitative approach were used as mixed method. A cross sectional survey questionnaire was issued among the married women of four wards - 3, 5, 9 and 10 ranging their ages from 24 to 45 to represent the total population of Kirtipur Municipality, Kathmandu. Altogether 100 responses were collected and analyzed through SPSS V.20 for quantitative data and four cases were interviewed for qualitative data analysis. The data were further analyzed on the basis of auto-ethnographic design.

### **Findings and Discussions**

The socio-demographic data clearly illustrates information of the respondents based on caste, age, religion, marital status and their family type from the different four wards-3,5,9 and 10 of Kirtipur. Municipality in the Newar community. Among the 100 respondents, predominantly 95% of the women were married to Maharjans in all four wards. This showed undivided bonding in language, culture and religion. Some five percent incorporates all other 17 different castes. Similarly, given that the career development starts from the respondent's age 24 and maximum age of 45. The majority of the respondents were Hindus by 73%, whereas approximately three-fold less were Buddhists. Interestingly only 3% were Christian. Nearly half of the study population were living in a small/nuclear family whereas the other half were living in a joint family.

### Age of Participants and Perception on Education After Marriage

The respondents were asked about their education after marriage. To find out the association between different age groups and their education after marriage, the demographic characteristics of respondents have been tested formulating following hypothesis:

$H_0$ : There is no association between demographic characteristics of respondent's age and their education after their marriage.

**Table 1**

*Age of Participants and Perception on Education after Marriage*

	Education after Marriage				Total	Chi-Square	P-value
	Grade 10	Grade 12	Bachelor	Masters			
<35 Years	0	8	17	27	52	9.976	.019
> 35 Years	1	16	19	12	48		
Total	1	24	36	39	100		

Table 1 exhibits the association between age of the respondents and their level of education after marriage. The educational level after marriage found statistically significant with age group (The P value is 0.019).

The result showed that about 50% respondents completed their education even after marriage. The respondents below 35 years were 52% and above 35 years were 48%. Those who were below 35years completed their education after marriage. Out of total 100, 27% of the respondents below 35 years of age successfully completed Master's degree whereas only 12% above 35 years completed Master degree. Women under the age of 35 years focused on developing their career by achieving higher degree of education but with the growth of age, the interest and passion for completing higher degrees diminishes.

### Age Group of Participants and their Perception on Skill-based Training

The respondents were asked if they attended skill-based training despite their age after marriage. The demographic characteristics of respondents have been tested formulating following hypothesis:

$H_0$ : There is no association between demographic characteristics of respondent's age and their statement for skill-based training; the Chi-Square value, degree of freedom and p value have been presented in Table 2

**Table 2**

*Association between Age Group of Participants and their Perception on Skill-based Training*

Age Group	Attended Skill-based Training			Total	Chi-Square	P-value
	SA/A	N	D/SD			
<35 Years	45	5	2	52	13.350	0.010
> 35 Years	28	14	6	48		
Total	73	19	8	100		

(A= Strongly Agree; A= Agree; N=Null; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree)

Table 2 presents the association between the age group of the respondent and participation on skill-based trainings. The participation on skill-based training is found statistically significant with age group (The P value is 0.010).

The result showed that out of 52% of the respondents below 35 years of age, 45% agreed to the need of skill-based trainings, but five percent showed their confusion if they really need it, and as less as two percent perceived that they do not need it.

Similarly, among the 48% respondents above 35 years of age 28% agreed to the need of skill-based training, 14% did not agree to the need of such trainings but five percent disagreed to the need of skill-based education.

### **Study Continuity and Education after Marriage**

The respondents were asked if they are continuing their education after marriage. The demographic characteristics of respondents have been tested formulating following hypothesis:

$H_0$ : There is no association between demographic characteristics of respondent's status on continuing studies at present and their education after marriage; the Chi-Square value, degree of freedom and P value have been presented in Table 3

Table 3 depicts the association between education after marriage and the continuity of studies at present. The association is found statistically significant (The P value is 0.028).

**Table 3***Study Continuity and Education after Marriage*

Continuing Studies	Education after Marriage				Total	Chi-Square	P-value
	Grade 10	Grade 12	Bachelors	Masters			
Yes	0	3	11	18	32	9.139	.028
No	1	21	25	21	68		
Total	1	24	36	39	100		

The respondents were asked if they are continuing studies at present, three percent who were studying at present completed grade 12, 11% completed Bachelors, 18% completed Masters. Among the respondents who were not continuing education after marriage, one percent had grade 10, 21% had grade 12, 25% had Bachelor's degree and 21% had Master's degree after marriage. The result showed that there was a huge impact of marriage on the continuity of education of the respondents. The majority of the respondents as many as 68% dropped the idea of continuing education whereas the rest of the respondents were continuing.

### **Association between Decision Making (DM) in Family, and Family Cooperation and Encouragement**

The respondents were asked if they make decision in family and whether they get family cooperation and encouragement. To find out the association between women's freedom in decision making in family and the family cooperation and encouragement, the demographic characteristics of respondents have been tested formulating following hypothesis:

$H_0$ : There is no association between demographic characteristics of respondent participating in decision making in family and family cooperation and encouragement; the Chi-Square value, degree of freedom and P value have been presented in Table 4

Table 4 illustrates the association of Family Cooperation and Encouragement with Decision Making in Family. This association is found statistically significant (The P value is 0.034).



**Table 4***Decision Making and Family Cooperation in Family*

DM	Family Cooperation and Encouragement				Total	Chi-Square	P-value
	SA	A	N	D			
Very Often	17	14	4	2	37	13.634	0.034
Occasional	16	32	7	1	56		
Not at All	0	3	3	1	7		
Total	33	49	14	4	100		

SA= Strongly Agree; A= Agree; N=Null; D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

The result showed that out of 37 respondents who very often made decision in family 17% strongly agreed and 14% agreed to having family cooperation and encouragement but as few as four percent out of the total made neutral remarks and two of the total disagreed that they get family cooperation and encouragement. Among the total 56% who occasionally make decision in family, 16% strongly agreed and 32% agreed to get family cooperation and encouragement, whereas seven percent did not participate in decision making and as few as one percent disagrees that they get family cooperation and encouragement. Interestingly, among the seven percent who never made decision in family, three percent agreed to family cooperation and encouragement and another three percent had neutral opinion whereas only one percent disagreed to family cooperation and encouragement. None of the respondents strongly disagreed that they get family support and encouragement.

### Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative approach was administered in four cases of different four wards-3,5,9 and 10 each respondent representing a ward. The semi-structured interview was scheduled to elicit the information from each respondent in various themes already set such as impact of marriage marriage, their education, career, career break, family environment and decision making. The recorded responses were tallied with the perceptions collected from the quantitative data to discover similarities and differences among other respondents on the above themes. The respondents were coded by their pseudonyms and the responses were narrated by the researcher tinged with her own observation being as a part of the Newar community.

The scheduled interview was administered to crosscheck the gap of perception and socio-demographic status. The collected data were analyzed. The qualitative data were felt as a part of research by the researcher to bring out the responses independently, which the tables might have been unable to answer.

The main aim of the study was to find out the current status of married women of Kirtipur, their education and family cooperation and support for their career development to clear out the inquisitive assumption about the career, education and life style of women married in Kirtipur.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The major findings of the study were drawn on the basis of quantitative and qualitative data analysis and interpretation.

More than 95% married Newari women of Kirtipur agreed that they were well supported by all family members and concerned on their career development. They got opportunity in decision making and career development, but due to age, time management and family responsibilities, they lost opportunities in obtaining preferred profession. As Bhalalusesa writes “A woman who is seriously interested in preparing for a professional career is disadvantaged from the start”, 31. Women get pressure from society and her own thoughts from early childhood that she cannot compete in the male dominated society. Woman feels the responsibility for her family first rather than career. If the husband supports, then only she can pursue better in her career.

This finding is similar to the finding of women from urban areas and the hilly region where women with no education have a higher say compared to those having primary or secondary education. In development regions, women’s response showed mixed variations. My findings opposed to this finding because according to the education status and family structure, the decision power of the women varies. There have been researches done in Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts on comparative economic status of women but so far the research has not been carried out in women of Newar community of Kirtipur. Women, who are living in joint family, are given opportunity to make decision as needful.

In context of career development, married women in Newar community are given opportunity to persevere their career and advancement in education continuation. As per the tradition in Kirtipur, most of the residents adopt farming as their profession

and thus, least important is education for the entire family. The women of Kirtipur have to support their family in whatever profession they are involved in. Becker says “The earnings of women are adversely affected by household responsibilities even when they want to participate in the labor force as many hours as men, because they become tired, must stay home to tend to sick children or other emergencies, and are less able to work odd hours or take jobs requiring much travel”, S43. The earnings of women at their workplace are affected due to household responsibilities despite their willingness to work as much as men do.

Many of the residents are understood as illiterate, and very few are involved in farming rather than white collar jobs. People of Kirtipur are dominated by people of other cities because people of other cities, apart from farming as their profession, also focus in education and career development whereas people of Kirtipur are engaged in farming as their profession. But the data gave amazing output such as, the women of Newar community of Kirtipur are literate, continuing their studies after marriage. They are continuing their education to Masters level or beyond and most of these women are working in paid jobs but less adopted farming as their profession.

### **Conclusion and Implication**

Most of the women in Newar community, are found to have been engaged in household responsibilities and thus, lost chances of grabbing good job opportunities of their choice and competency. In the early years of marriage, they could not put their voices for themselves and thus, they have faced difficulty in getting along with the new family. Marriage in early years, family ties, household chores, child bearing and rearing, social protection, lack of freedom to expose their capabilities, burden of large family, lack of employment skills, discouragement on second career and decision making are key factors to have an impact of marriage on their career. As a result, the Newari women have to stay content in handy jobs. Nevertheless, the research shows that the women are encouraged by the partners with the change of time either to continue their education or to work in good organization. Yet the central point is to grow their family line for future generations. After the children are grown up, these caring mothers of the children and wife of caring husband also get matured, and thus, they happen to lose opportunity in grabbing competent jobs due to the age barrier. The responsibilities in joint family and nuclear family are alike in nature. The only

difference is that in joint family, women have to take permission from elders whereas in nuclear family they could decide on their own in many occasions. Firmly those girls who are working before marriage and are conscious of them are found to be strong in the Newari community.

For facilitating the career development, the women in Newari community should be empowered with the decision making. They should be assured with psychological strength to resume their second career. Similarly, Newar family should change their thoughts toward girls by giving them time to complete their education before getting them married however well off the family she is going to live with.

Many changes have come in Newar community in Kirtipur where married women are found to have been continuing their education beyond Bachelor's degree. Those women should be made as role models should be given to lead in the community to encourage other women. Whether they are living in a joint family or small family, they should be motivated and given good exposure in the outside world. Trainings should be given to them to boost up their confidence with their self-esteem and generate income to become self-reliant.

In Newar society, social changes are very challenging. The research showed that Kirtipur is dominated by Maharjan castes. The concerned authority can bring outreach programs focusing the Maharjans, which would definitely become more effective. There are more Hindus than Buddhists and few Christians are dwelling permanently. Therefore, programs that focus on these religions will be more effective.

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