

Socio-cultural position of women in Nepal and Korea: A comparative approach

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In this study, a part of the social and the economic condition of Nepali women is introduced with a short comparison to the socio-cultural position of the women of Korea. A relative definition of the condition of the past and now: this also briefly introduces the ideas of some of the Nepali women that we have collected through the questionnaire. A comparative literature reviews about the position of women in the past as well as the review of the position of women in present is made. Various articles are used for this as the method of analysis. A quantitative analysis of the status of women (Nepal) taking 24 households through the questionnaire method was done. The answers given by the women are the base for the article. However, the answers to the questionnaire are used to compare the past and the present. Analysis of the received data and their explanation through the tables and graph are done. The charts and tables are followed by a detailed explanation. Conclusively the briefing of the condition of women in both the countries, the changes that are brought or not brought by development; in their life's status and position in society, is mentioned.

Keywords: Socio-economic position; South Korea; Nepal; women; comparative review; remedies

Introduction

Women all around the world are the source of creation and life and their role and importance in the development and progress of culture as well as generations is inevitable. However, it is also a fact that women all around the world are treated as a second class citizen: subordinate to men. They are being thought to be born to serve men and naturally as the assistant of males. Therefore, the scenario, all around the world is same and challenging. The condition of women is miserable and worth attention, except in some European and American countries. In every field, women have been facing challenges and obstacles that need attention and improvement.

Women in Nepal are always being considered as the secondary citizens born to serve man and reproduce. The patriarchal society never lets the women have their own voice. A lot of women

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have been abused since history in the name of culture and social norms. Their existence mattered only till they could serve their husband and their in-laws. The husband was the sole purpose of women's existence and life. Such system was customary in the older days in the name of religion and rituals (Cain and Harrison 2001). 'Sati Pratha' is one of such practices where women were forced to burn themselves alive on the pyre of their dead husbands (Wendy 2009). If a man died leaving his wife as a widow the woman was supposed to sit along with the dead body of her husband and get herself burnt to death. However, a man was free to get married again even if his wife was dead or alive. He was free to marry other women at whatever age he liked (Catherine 1999). The 'Sati Pratha' took lives of many innocent women leaving their children orphan until it was finally abolished and made illegal by Rana Prime minister Chandra Sumsher Rana on 8 July 1920.

However, even today women led their life according to the wish of their fathers or husbands. Except in some developed cities, even now, they do not have the right to decide the age of their marriage or the number of children they wish to have. This is why there is a huge mortality rate of mothers' and infants' in Nepal. Due to the lack of education and early marriage, the mortality rate is higher. Firstly, they are married in small age and secondly, they have no idea about what and how are they supposed to take care of themselves. Therefore, the result is the early death of women. Although the government has made laws for women education and the age of marriage but the remote part of the country still have many shreds of evidence of school dropouts and early marriage.

Education for girls was prohibited by the tradition as they were thought to have been born to serve their husband and family. Sending them to school was considered to be against the rules of society and religion. However, in those days getting the girls married in small age were customary in the name of religion. These dogmatic views were slowly moved away with time and development but, in some remote parts of the country illiteracy among women is still prevalent. Though there are laws for women's education, however, various factors like poverty and family issues target a girl's career first. A lot of girls in the remote parts are sent to school initially, but they drop their school before the secondary level. Women benefited with higher education are found only in the developed areas.

Another serious problem that has been risen, for Nepalese women, in the past few years is girls trafficking. A lot of young women of 18 to 30 years are been taken to the neighbouring country India. They are either sold in the markets of India or taken to the gulf countries. The girls are easily trapped due to the lack of education and poverty. A lot of people in Nepal live below the poverty line and the only source of earning for many people is agriculture. Agriculture is a seasonal job where people remain unemployed for most of the part of a year. In such circumstances, girls get attracted to the easy job with a lot of money without actually knowing what kind of work they are supposed to do.

The girls, being taken across the border are usually school dropouts; who actually, have no idea what they are going to face ahead. Many of them are sold by their so called husband who had married them only for the sole purpose of selling. The lack of education among these innocent teenagers is the basic reason for this. Though there are strict laws against girls trafficking and there many N.G.Os are working on this but the situation is getting more and worse day by day.

On the other hand, women are also facing problems like sexual harassment, of smaller or bigger levels. Violence within or outside the house has been a part of women's life. Even educated

and earning women face violence either domestic or sexual. In many cases, it is seen that a woman learns to accept and adapt to the circumstances and accepting violence as something normal and usual. This makes the man more confident to suppress a woman, and the women to be more insecure and confined to her own boundaries, as she finds safe to remain within it. Because of these circumstances women in Nepal are still lacking back in comparison to men. Therefore, the progress and the position of women is not satisfactory in Nepalese society and their status is still of the secondary citizens till today.

As per in the Korean society also the condition of women is same. Development has somehow changed the scenario. However, the status of women as a second class citizen is still a challenge in the society, though it may not be legal. There are strict laws for the protection of women in Korea, however socially a woman who serves her husband and his family well is considered as a good woman. Originally women's were supposed to stay within the home and maintain the home of her in-laws. Her sole duty was to please them with her service. If she was not able to do so the husband would have the good reason to divorce and it was also justified in the society. Though now a day's women have the right to divorce her husband but the consequences makes her life more horrible. Moreover by 2015 adultery has also become legal in South Korea giving more advantages to males.

The difficulties that women face throughout their life are endless. However, here we are trying to put a small effort in analyzing the socio-cultural status of women in the societies of Korea (especially south) and Nepal. This paper would be a relevant analysis in make comparative study of the position of women in the societies of these two countries socially and culturally.

This paper hence would, therefore, be a small effort to bring out some of these difficulties of women and their position in society. This would be a comparative study of the position of the women of Nepal and Korea, in the past and now. The focus of the subject will be on finding the social and cultural position of women in the society.

Literature Review

Historical Scenario

Historically women in Nepal had a very weak position in society. They were supposed to give birth to the child or serve their husband. Women were also the major targets of all the defective rituals or the dogmatism. One of the important examples regarding this is the 'Sati Pratha'. Sati is a word originated from Sanskrit. It is a Hindu custom of a widow burning alive on the pyres of her dead husband. However, religiously Sati is a voluntary act. A woman who herself wished to die along with her husband were only allowed to do so. On the contrary, women who were pregnant or having small children were prohibited from doing so. However, during the middle ages (popularly known as Malla Age) sati system was wide in practice in Nepal. The religious practice was then used for the social dogmatism and selfish motives by some pundits. Initially, the practice was limited to the monarch; however, later it spread to the local communities too.

There are also instances were Kings and some of their Queens rejected to be sati or protested it. King Prithivi Narayan Shah the great was also against this practice. Similarly, queen mother Rajendra Laxmi did not become sati after the death of her husband but ruled the country on behalf of her son Rana Bahadur Shah. Similarly, the first Rana Prime minister Junga Bahadur

Rana was also against this practice. He had managed to make some strict laws against the system but could not totally abolish it. After his rule, the women wishing to be sati had to get permission from the government. If it was found that a woman was forced to be sati without her own wish this would be an illegal act, punishable according to law. Before these laws, any woman trying to avoid being sati or trying to run away would be caught and beaten to death or was thrown stone till death.

The sati system became more popular during the era due to the Muslim invasion of India. Indian women preferred death than to be humiliated at the hands of the invaders. This also highly influenced the then Nepalese society and the custom became more popular. However, as the abolition is concerned, it was abolished 90 years after that of India. Though Lord William Bentick abolished it in the year 1829 A.D in India but it took 100 more years to be abolished from Nepal. Finally, in the year 1920, it was abolished from Nepal by the Rana Prime minister Chandra Shumsher Rana.

This shows that historically the life of women in Nepal was very miserable. They were married in early age, in the name of religious values, when they even didn't know what marriage actually was. There was also no education for women and moreover they lived their life serving an unknown family where they were not actually born. On the other hand, we have no evidence about a male sacrificing his life for his wife or standing against society for the protection of women. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that women of Nepal had a very pathetic position in the past.

Status of women in current society

With the change of time, there has been some improvement in the superstitious view of the society, but the position of women in the society is still not satisfactory. "Many of Nepali women's pre-existing problems stem directly from inequality and underdevelopment (Aguirre and Pietropaoli 2008)." Women are still being treated as a second class citizen and their primary duty is looking after the family. Even educated and working women's is expected to give priorities to her family rather than her job and career. The rate of education among females is seen somehow good in the developed cities, but the condition of villages is still lacking back.

The lack of education is hence, the most important reason for women's weaker position in the society. The patriarchal society still thinks that women are weaker sex and they need to be guided. According to Sushan Acharya, marriage is a cultural obligation and thus compulsion, childbearing is the most important part of a women's life and is a compulsion and giving birth to a son is related to the women's security as sons are supposed to give continuity to the lineage of the family (Acharya 2004). So, the important decisions of the woman's life are also not taken by the woman herself, but her family especially, her father or brother does it for her. Among the total female population in Nepal, the number of the unmarried women above the age of 10 or so is only 31.1 per cent. A large part of the female population in Nepal gets married at the age of 18 to 25. There are very few women who are not married even at this age.

The male is always the head of the family and takes all the decision of the member of his family. The number of women who take their own decision is also very few. Otherwise, the whole female population is economically dependent on the male member of their family. "However, indecision about the disposal of household production and major capital transactions which are by far the most important in terms of real power in the household, men assume the lead (Acharya and

Bennett 1983)." Because of this, a woman always lives according to the ideals of others because she has no economic independence to choose her own way of life. A study of the socio-economic changes in the status of women in Nepal was also highlighted in the early 1980s in one of the books entitled women, development, and democracy (Shtrii Shakti 1995).

A woman also does not have a strong position on the issues of childbirth and family planning. Almost all the married women follow the decision of their husband or her in-laws in the matter of childbirth. Her husband or her in-laws decide how many child she needs to have or at what age. Therefore, a large number of women give birth to the child at a very young age. This is the cause of high rate of the maternal and infants mortality. Lack of education for the care of mother before and after delivery has caused a large number of mothers to die. It has been seen that the level of education has a direct relation to the percentage of mother's receiving the prenatal care and the successful and healthy delivery. The living condition and environment of the women also have a large effect on the life of a mother and a large number of mothers are seeing risked to it.

In the past few years, however, there has been a considerable effort put in the issue of the maternal mortality. But this has however not put an end to the seriousness of the problem because the number of the death of women is still high and many women have their life at risk. Due to the male dominated social system and the dogmatic religious values women continue to risk their life and health for the childbirth even with their critical health conditions. A married woman with no child is still a big social and religious issue in Nepal hence adopting a child in cases of severity is still not an option for a woman.

Women in Nepal suffer more also because of lack of education. Education gives power and confidence in a human being. However, an uneducated person easily believes and surrenders to the every powerful thing. Education has answers to every question, but an uneducated person does not always understand the reason behind everything. Hence, s/he believes everything that comes to him/her as the will of god or the power of supernatural. Women of Nepal have been facing this tragedy since ages. Traditionally, education was prohibited for women. They were supposed to get married at an early age (mostly at childhood) and serve their in-laws. Some of the women in royalties though learned from the priests or gurus but their education was confined to the upbringing of their children or their own purpose of learning new things. They had no right to speak in the family matters or other business. This practice has strengthened its root quite strongly and still has its effect. This is proved by the fact that only 57.7 per cent of the female is literate in the country. Less than one percent of them reach the higher position in society.

Educated women make their way to the higher positions in the society. They also gain higher positions in the government services. However, the number of women gaining higher education and position is very few and confined only to the cities. The rural parts are still facing the problem of girls early school drop outs. The patriarchal system of society is still a big hindrance for the educated women too. A highly educated woman may gain a higher position in the society but her position in the family is same as uneducated ones. They still do not have the decision-making power of their family. A married women's position in the society is determined by her husband's position in the family. Her voice has no value in the family unless her husband's support." Nepal is also experiencing a traditional patriarchal society which means that women are confined to the domestic environment and duties. With this dilemma the women of Nepal have

limited access to the different skills, resources, power and opportunities to remain low" (UK Essays 2015).

On the other hand, girls in the rural parts drop their education either for getting married or for monetary purpose. Poverty has become a big hurdle for the girl's education in the villages. "The poor and the marginalized suffer most when the ecological conditions are poor (Nightingale 2003)." A lot of girls are married before they go to college because their education could be no longer be supported by their family. Hence their parents wish to get them married and settled properly. On the other hand, large numbers of girls leave education to earn living for themselves and their family. So in one or the other way a girl's education is the target. However, this is not exactly same with the boys as they have the freedom to make the decision of their own life.

These are the factors that have been contributing to the present day problem in Nepal; the issue of girls trafficking. Girls trafficking have come out as a very severe and serious problem in Nepal in the past few years. The girls being controlled by the strict patriarchal system have no access to proper education making them less participative in decision making. As well, because of extreme poverty, some families send their daughters to work in some factories in urban places resulting in being a victim of human trafficking. The greater part of girls being trafficked is being taken to Indian brothels while a considerable number of them are also found in the gulf countries (UK Essays 2015).

The labour migrant as the important part of the social structure in Nepal covers a major part of remittance support for the country. Both male and female move to various other countries for work, but a majority of female migrants are the victim of human trafficking. A lot of women are trapped by their relatives including their uncle, aunt, step-fathers, cousins and husbands. The lack of enough education among the girls and their families has become the benefit for the traffickers. The young girls suppressed by the burden of the hard life and poverty, are easily lured to the false stories of job in urban cities and high income. They are then very easily taken to the Indian brothels where they meet the hell. The open border between India and Nepal has also made easier for girls to be brought to such fate because they can be very easily taken to other countries through India.

A lot of girls are also kidnapped and forcefully taken across the border. However, the open border system and highly corrupted officials make the trafficker's job easier. In India, they are sold in brothels which are the extreme centre of trafficking, drugs supply as well as underworld connections. A lot of girls end up their life at the brothels or are sent back to Nepal with HIV when they are no more able to work. Once they are taken to Indian brothels they have no hope of escaping. In India, police and local officials patronize brothels and protect brothel owners and traffickers. Brothels pay protection money to bribe the officers and prevent raids (Human Rights Watch/Asia). The severity of torture given to the girls is so extreme that one or the other way they are put into it.

The most important thing is the lack of awareness among people. Unless the girls who are basically targeted are brought to the light of education the problem of trafficking cannot be eradicated. Unless the suppressive system of society, poverty, lack of awareness and the political instabilities are put to end the effort of some handful people would not be effective. Unless women get equal participation in the society they will continue to remain ignorant about their surroundings and get lured and fooled to such circumstances.

This is also due to the male dominance that gives rise to the concept of viewing women as an object. This has also marked the beginning of a new problem in the urban areas. The urban girls have been facing a new kind of problem of sexual harassment. Verbal or physical harassment has now grown to be common in the urban teenage as well as adult groups. Nepal is still a traditional society where culture matters a lot. In the kind of highly traditional society, the effect of mass media and globalization has come up as something unnatural. There are a group of people who want extreme boldness; as well another group is not finding it adjustable. Hence, this conflict is leading to the imbalance in the society where the youth is getting attracted to something that is not acceptable. Finding the vast gap between where they are living and what they see in the outside world, they are losing the control over the ideologies of life and are heading to something extreme. Handling of the sexual issues is also one of them. As the uncensored effect of mass media, the society is losing its control over the matters of morality resulting to the sudden increase in the number of sexual harassment, rapes, and abuse.

The urban traffic is one of the examples of harassment faced especially by girls. Traveling in the public vehicles can be the biggest nightmare for a girl in Nepal. A majority of girls and women from middle-class family background go to their work and colleges through public transport. The abusive behaviour by the vehicles' staffs and other passengers are common to every girl. Public does not even resist as they have started to accept it as something normal and usual. This has also become common in workplace, colleges and market places. The youngsters usually take it as a part of their life. There have been laws against sexual violation, however, in past few years; the numbers of rapes are increasing in the different parts of the country.

The most important reason behind this is the uncensored effect of media and the deep-rooted male mentality of seeing women as the object. Male ego, that never wanted to see women to the same level as them, has been highly nourished by the patriarchal system of Nepalese society. Therefore, they give rise to such violence including a number of incidents of domestic violence as well. Violence by the husband or in-laws that may be physical to mental is still prevailing in the society. The customs and traditions of the society yet do not allow women to have the control over the system of society.

In the remote parts of the country, there are still people who believe that a son is the only heir of the family and will take the families name further. All the rituals and customs of life from birth to death demand a son. Though there are events of girls coming to the fore and going against the rules of society, however, it is still a challenge for every single girl to fight against the customary rituals. There are still such families who want a son, as the final cremation are not supposed to be done by a daughter according to Hindu rituals. Even education has also not been able to eradicate the taboos of the society still putting the lives of women in the mercy of the man. "Women empowerment requires a systematic transformation in not just any institutions, but fundamentally in those supporting patriarchal structures (Malhotra and Schuler 2005)."

In the urban and the developed parts of the country though women are getting equal rights and opportunities but they are subjected to one or the other problems. If they are treated equally in the family and get the better life they may be facing problems in their workplace. Either they may be struggling with the society or they may be finding difficulties in arranging their family and work. To find out about the common lifestyle of simple middle-class working women we have made a survey about some 24 working women about some simple aspects of their life. Their

answers would be helpful in finding the life of a common woman and the position of a girl in the society and family.

Method

We have made a survey of some 24 working women living in Kathmandu ranging from 20 to 55 years of age. The survey was done through the paper questionnaire method based on theory. The respondents being chosen for the survey were selected through random sampling method. As the purpose of the research was to find out the lifestyle of common Nepali women, in the present context, so the random sampling method was thought to be more appropriate. To analyze the data and make the graph, we have used OriginPro 8.5, OriginLab Corporation, and Operating system: Microsoft windows, as a statistical tool so far. The data has been classified to show how the women were treated in their family and how it affected to what position they are able to make in the society.

There were some twenty questions that asked the women about their life and important events. They were asked about some simple aspects of their life as how were they treated in their family or how their husband and their in-laws treat them. With the help of their answers, we made a simple table showing the factors that affect the life of women and her progress and position in society.

The women selected for the survey were the married working women living in Kathmandu. The working women in Kathmandu comprise from all the region of the country. They represent those women who have come from various regions and have made their way towards success. Also, they are the women from middle-class society. However, making a survey of women without a job would include women living in Kathmandu as housewives. This group would not be inclusive as these women are basically from Kathmandu.

In the same way, the women selected in the current survey include women from various caste and ethnic groups including Bhramans, chettris, newars, mongolians, ethnic Terai women as well as various others. However, focusing the study on a particular group will not be effective as it would not be inclusive.

Table 1 shows the life of common working women in Nepal surveyed among 24 households. It shows that the younger generations have been getting better treatment from their family on being a daughter. The kinds of behaviour they receive from their family determine their perspectives towards life and hence with the positive attitude and support they have been able to progress in life.

Table 1. Socio-economic status of 24 surveyed women in Kathmandu.

Age (Yrs)	No. of persons	Frequency (%)			
		Education	Occupation	Income	Treatment
25-30	6	Higher	Officer	High	Superiorly
31-35	6	Higher	Teacher	High	Equally

36-40	6	Higher	Banker	Medium	Equally
41-45	3	Secondary	Banker	Medium	Equally
46-50	1	Primary	Sister	Low	Inferiorly
51-55	2	Primary	Unemployed	Low	satisfactory

During the survey, four variables that are most important determinants of the life standard of a woman were taken into consideration; the level of education, the type of occupation, the level of their income and the type of treatment they receive from their family and society. Among the factors affecting the life of a woman, these are the most important determinants that play a crucial role in strengthening and weakening her position in the society.

Similarly, these variables are also closely interlinked with each other as the presence of one affects the other. As it is clear that the educational and economic achievements of a woman depend on the type of treatment she gets from her family and also her education, occupation, and income level may lead to better treatment towards that she receives from the society.

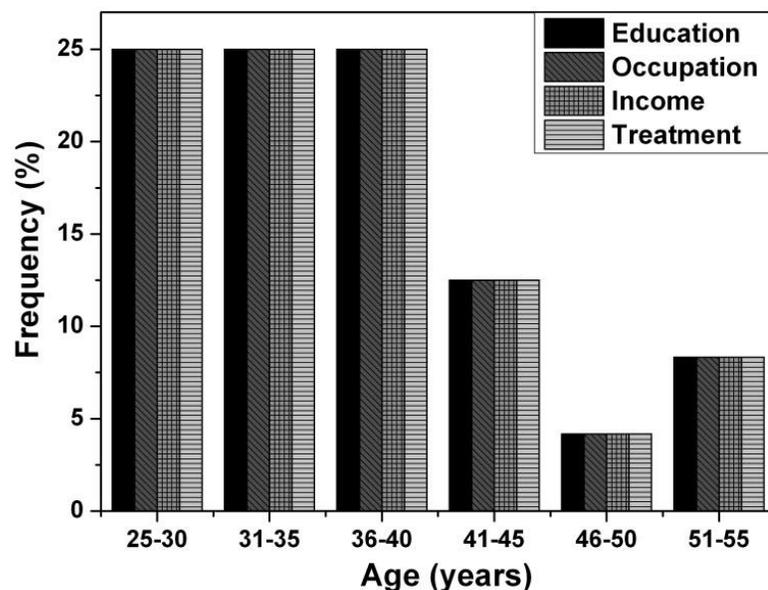


Figure 1. Graph of different ages of 24 surveyed women along with their education, occupation, income, and treatment as a daughter. In the figure, the X-axis shows the category of the women in the survey and the Y-axis shows the frequency of women in different age group. The different bars show the level of their progress they have achieved in the different aspects of life along with their family status.

However, the women of the older generations were not treated equally as a daughter and that affected their progress in life. They were taught to be subordinate; hence they are living their

life as housewives or ordinary people. The kind of position these women have maintained in the society is the outcome of the attitude their family has towards them. The same thing can also be explained through a graph. Figure 1 shows the position of the women and the aspects of their life. The graph shows the equal distribution of occupation along with the obtained education which ultimately led to the good income. It can be inferred that the daughter can also make better opportunity if she has been well treated and educated in order to sustain independently in the society.

Results

The present scenario of the position of women in Nepal is very complex as the system of the society. Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multilingual and multi-cultural country. The position of women in the society is guided by the cultural principals and customs of a particular cultural community. Therefore, the position of women is not same among all the groups and castes. Women in one community may exercise absolute power while others may be completely helpless. However, the above-given table shows a simple survey of the collective situation of the country. As the survey includes women from various ethnic communities it represents the common position of the women in the society.

As the table shows that the position of women has changed a lot compared to the past. It shows that girls in past were not treated equally by their family and were deprived of every opportunity of standing firm in the society. However, it is seen in the table that the perspective of the society has changed and also the lives of women. It is seen in recent times girls are also getting an equal position in the family as boys do. Hence, they were able to get a good education and good position in the society with a reputed job. But this was not so in the past. As the table shows that life of women for fifty years and now also has a great difference as the position they have maintained in the society is so different. It is all because the perspective of the society towards girls has been changing.

Accomplishments

Some of the changes and achievements in the above-discussed issues are as follows:

- (1) According to, the census of 2011, the literacy rate of female in Nepal is 57.7 per cent. However, this is only the statics of the literate women above the age of 6. This does not show about the females attaining higher education, because, according to the census, only 10.2 per cent of the total population is said to have got higher education including both male and female (CIA 2011).
- (2) This can also be seen more clearly by the fact that the number of women having the fixed assets or properties in her name is so few. Only 19.71 per cent of women have properties or assets in their name.
- (3) Government and a lot of NGO's and INGO's have been working on the issue of maternal mortality. Due to this, the number of mother's death in 2006 was estimated to be only 281 out of per 100,000 live births, by the demographic health survey (DHS). This was a considerable improvement in the sector as it was 50 per cent lesser than the statics of 1996.

For this Nepal was honoured at millennium development goals review summit in 2010 (Shrestha 2012).

- (4) The government has also brought the law of 33 per cent reservation for women, with the motive of inspiring women and bringing them to the forefront.
- (5) In the present context there are hundreds of NGOs working against girls trafficking, however, the situation is still worse. The government has imposed some laws against trafficking but this is not strictly implemented in action. The lack of proper investigation or prosecution, the laws are just written sentences on the papers. There are many NGOs like Maiti Nepal, Ashasamuha, and Shakti samuha that work for rescuing and rehabilitation of girls.
- (6) It is also for the first time in the history that Nepal got its first women president Mrs, Bidhya Devi Bhandari in the year 2015.

However, these are the changes from the government level and are strictly supervised with stronger laws for the uplifting of women. But, the real challenge is to remove the backwardness that has been rooted in the ideologies of people. As mentioned above Nepal is a multi-cultural country. Therefore, while one community celebrates womanhood at the same time other does not. So, the basic need is to change the ideas of people in those communities.

Comparative Position of women in Korea

The aim of the paper is also to show the comparative position of the women in Korea and Nepal; so given below is the short glimpse of the life of Korean women especially in modern days.

Korea is a well-developed country with high advancement in technological as well as social sectors. Along with the advancement in technologies and rapid growth in industrialization the country and its society has also become modernized. Society has become more open in many senses and as a result, the role of women has also changed with time. Women have become more powerful than in the past. They have become more educated and able to participate in the socio-economic activities than in the past giving rise to strong self-identity.

However, it is also seen that rapid industrialization also has its negative effect on the lives of women. These conflicts are the result of two key factors: the changing condition and enhanced consciousness of women and the unchanging social attitude towards gender equality and gender role (Shim 2014). According to Connie Chung, an industrialized society views everything as a market economy where all products are commercialized and exchanged. In this form of the society, women are given the role of producing labor to sustain the capital society. Traditionally, the position of women in Korea and Nepal was almost the same. This can be shown by saying that "If the hen cries the house is ruined" that was popular in both the countries. However, a lot of things have changed in Korea and become easier to women compared to Nepal.

After industrialization, the participation of women in socio-economic activities has seemed to increase. But according to Shim et. al, this is not because of the change in social perspectives but because there was a huge demand for labour in the market for massive production. According to him the participation of Korean women in economic the activities is 47.0 per cent in 1998, but they have been mostly confined to "women's work". He argues that men take all the important positions and women have been confined to "duty suitable to women" that are quite possibly not of the matter of interest to men. This can be the reason for Korean women for having low

participation in the corporate world compared to that of men. "Women in Korea make on average 39 percent less than man," writes Michelle Kwon in his article (Kwon 2014), which shows that whatever the kind of work may be but women are paid unfairly compared to men.

Another difficulty that women have been facing in the modern Korean society is creating the balance between their gender role and their wishes go out beyond the boundaries of house. As Connie Chung writes that the Korean society still assumes that the first duty of a woman is to look after her child. According to her, a mother alone is held responsible for a child's emotional and educational growth (Chung 1997). This proves that unless the society uproots dogmatic concepts regarding gender roles life would be still a struggle for women, however, developed a country may be. However, developed the country may be but it with society having its roots in the Neo-Confucian orthodoxy has yet to accept and amend the gender roles and changes with them. The social and cultural values in the country are governed by Confucianism which defines one's rights and opportunity according to one's sex. "It teaches that Father gets careers, and mother governs house and Girls must be gentle, obedient and Boys ought to be brave, Valiant (Kim 2013).

Politics in Korea is mainly controlled by males. The constitution and the law of the country grant equal political rights to both men and women. Women can vote, run the office and get high-level political positions. However, the practical political scenario is quite different than the written laws. According to Archie Resos, "From 1948 to 2004 the percent of women in South Korean National Assembly averaged 2.9 per cent" (Resos 2014). This shows the actual position of women in society in comparative to what has been said in the law. However, the election of Han Myeong has given a new hope and direction to the history of Korean politics. As Madhebi Bhatta writes in her article that, "If she puts in a good performance that will influence next year's local elections, for which a women leader is waiting to become the first female mayor of Seoul, the capital of South Korea, among her male counterpart" (Bhatta 2006).

Hence we can see that the Korean society has come out of its traditional form and heading towards advancement. The social system and norms are also changing with the growing impact of modernization and westernization. People have become more career oriented and individualistic. However, the patriarchy still seems to have its influence in the society.

As compared to that of Nepal though the Korean women do not face the problems that existed in the dogmatic traditional society but the idea of weaker sex still prevails in the society. Though the women may not be confound to the four walls of the house but she is facing more troubles in the open competition with her male counterparts. Because a woman is supposed to give her first attention to her family she is entrapped in making the balance between her two roles; inside the home and outside the home.

When comparing the two societies it is seen that Korean society is more advanced in form of technology and infrastructures. Hence, it is no more traditional therefore women in Korea are not facing cultural domination by the society and the system (as in Nepal). However, when we look at the comparative position of men and women within the society the women have less influence and say in the fields of life, than their male counterparts.

Challenges and remedies

However, the condition of Nepal is completely than that of Korea. The society is still cultural and deeply rooted in its cultural values. However, educated a woman or her family may be but they

still believe in the culture and customs. Hence, a bigger change in the ideologies of people is necessary to make women survive according to her free will. There are major steps to be taken to make the society more broad-minded in the perspectives of women.

- (1) The awareness of the idea that women should not compromise with her self-dignity under any condition is the most. For example, many women still believe that men were made superior to women, whereas some others think that though they men and women should be treated equal but they can't help it. They believe that it has been the system of society and the society expects so from them, hence they have to let it remain as it is so that there will be peace and stability in the family and society. There are women in Nepal who tolerate the inequality and suffering because they believe that their refusal may bring unrest in their family and a negative environment for their children.
- (2) The other types of suffering that woman of the Nepal faces like girls trafficking and sexual abuse are the result of modernization. Modernization in Nepal has not come as awareness but as a social defect. The society, on one hand, is still traditional with the stronghold of its customary values and beliefs, whereas the new generation is trying to liberate itself from the hold of these strict rules of society. Hence, there is a big gap between the social culture and the thoughts of people. There are the incidents of the female sexual violence as well the trafficking of girls. Firstly, respect to one's cultural values should be developed while women, on the other hand, should be encouraged to speak and fight for her.
- (3) The society's conservative ideology of not accepting a woman's identity outside and without the circumference of a family and society needs to be challenged and changed. Nepal is a country with ethnic and cultural diversity. Different tribes and groups have their own culture and traditions. In some community, women have stronger position compared to others. But the larger part of the population is Hindu and their social system is governed by the patriarchal Hindu culture. The Hindu culture has basically created differences between the role and position of men and women. The culture has provided all the basic rights and duties to the men whereas it has featured women only as a servile to men. The only task she is supposed to accomplish is to assist her husband in doing all these jobs and give birth to a son who would succeed his father in all these.
- (4) The most urgent necessity of Nepalese society is education. Education creates awareness and hence would be a strong measure for the empowerment of women. It is only through education that women would understand to respect and learn to speak for themselves. But the biggest tragedy in Nepal is that though the government has made basic education free or very cheap in price but most of the girls drop their studies. To bring the girls to the school is not the actual problem but to keep them reach the higher levels is a big challenge. The numbers of N.G.Os that have been working in this field are also not having the satisfactory result as much they ought to be.

Conclusions

Seen as a whole the position of women in Nepalese society is not satisfactory in many aspects. Since the society is still in a traditional phase women undergo various discrimination as well many women are also the victim of modernization. The various issues like gender inequality, domestic

violence, women education etc are due to the traditional form of the society where not only male are responsible but even women also believe that they have been to serve and it's their duty

Even today these concepts in the society have not yet been changed. Even education has not been able to change certain concepts like the role of a daughter -in-law. Even educated women suffer through this. The girls seem to have a new birth after marriage was everything they know and they do is being described from the different point of view. Even though a girl may understand the differences between the correct and incorrect but she is supposed to perceive things from her in -laws point of view. Moreover, even the identity of women is changed after her marriage. The newly launched constitution in Nepal 2015 has made the provision of providing citizenship from a mother's name. However, in the social level even highly educated women also change their surname after their marriage. Any refusal to it would be a radical step unacceptable to the society.

So to say in a nutshell, the position of women in Nepal and their role in their family, community, and the society cannot be described as a whole. Various factors like ethnic traditions, economic condition, and education shape the socio-economic position of the women in the society. However, the most common factor is that in every aspect the defaults of the society targets women first. For example, either it is the political unrest or the cultural transition women are the victim of any change. Though there may be movements in the society for equalization and empowerment but it is the male that comes to the forefront and takes the benefit. The making and implementing of laws is not enough until the deeply-rooted concepts of gender role and perspective of the society is changed. The need is not making women equal to women or putting them to the standards of men but it is rather to make men respect the women as they are.

Bringing women to the forefront and including in the decision-making level is only one aspect of the problem which is been focused till now. However, understanding women as they are and learning to respect them is also a must. Giving rights to women and empowering them is only the half phase of the task and will only put things to male standards. However, the necessity is to realize that the works women do are not inferior. Empowering women does not mean that she holds a greater position in the society but it is actually respecting the role and job of women they have been doing since ages. Unless a woman is respected as she is, however, a stronger position she might have in her job her business this will not bring actual dignity to her.

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