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**THE EMPOWERMENT OF NEPALESE WOMEN THROUGH
EMPLOYMENT**

Case study of Hana Garments Factory

Thesis

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ABSTRACT

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<p>The thesis was commissioned by Pasupathi Dev Dande who is currently working as the Managing Director of Hana Garments Factory. The purpose of this thesis was to study and investigate the challenges related to the women workforce in the organization. Research was done on how company manages the work and mitigates its challenges. Moreover, in the company the importance of workforce was studied. For this purpose, a case study of women's empowerment was conducted. For the research process, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. To collect, analyse and interpret the data, semi-structured interviews, and a questionnaire survey with a series of questions were used.</p>		
<p>According to the Women's Empowerment Study (UN women 2004), the diversity of the company's workforce is very crucial to fostering a healthy work atmosphere in which all workers, regardless of their various origins, are treated and appreciated equally. Holistic management approaches were also discovered to foster this atmosphere by enabling individuals to make decisions at work. The study looked at women's roles, opportunities, decision-making, and responsibilities, as well as numerous gender issues and social statuses such as domestic tasks, economic situations, education, health, and involvement in political and decision-making processes.</p>		
<p>The primary objective of the study was to examine the state of women's empowerment, with an emphasis on gender inequality, socio-economic, political, and demographic factors. The research found that women's empowerment requires support and assistance not only from their family and society but also from the government. Women lack various opportunities for income, employment, access to decision-making, property ownership, and participation in political parties. The socio-economic status of Nepalese women is poor as majority of them are limited only in household work. Therefore, empowering women is key to addressing their issues and attaining economic growth in the community and the country.</p>		
Key words Conducive, Demographic, Empowerment, Gender inequality, Multidimensionality, Rural Development		

CONCEPT DEFINITIONS

CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

ICCPR International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICESCR International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

NAPS National Action Plan

ABSTRACT
CONCEPT DEFINITIONS
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1 INTRODUCTION

Empowerment refers to the act of changing the current balance of power and obtaining more authority over the means of power (United Nations 2022). Women's empowerment involves ensuring that women have access to and may fully exercise their rights. Both men and women must be equally developed for a country to attain overall development. This requires increasing women's access to social, economic, cultural, and political resources. The international community has made efforts to enhance women's participation in various fields, resulting in Nepal achieving progress in areas such as employment, health, and education. Despite these efforts, there is still a long way to go in achieving gender equality. Giving individuals the authority and power to regulate their life and express their rights is what empowerment needs.

Women's empowerment is advocated for by a variety of stakeholders, including government agencies, development partner organizations, civil society, women's groups, and other voluntarily created organizations, to attain gender equality in decision-making processes. Women in Nepali society are influenced by tradition, beliefs, religion and values, particularly social norms and traditions that determine their roles and status. Gender discrimination is a major consequence of the weak position of women in rural communities across Nepal. Targeted budget projects are being launched to change traditional behaviours and attitudes and increase women's decisive role in the social, economic, and political development of the country. (UN women Nepal 2019.)

2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

Empowerment of women is the capacity to use the internal power within women and they should be given the chance to demonstrate their strength, and the same level of environmental compatibility should be obtained so that they can use their internal power in activities of social benefit. Even in today's era, women use their strength only in domestic work, childcare, and unproductive agricultural labour. As women, they suffer from social, cultural, and political prejudices and are with the head of the household. They must perform a full traditional role with additional responsibilities of household and production management. Furthermore, women have limited access to education and employment opportunities compared to their male counterparts. The households and society directly or indirectly deny or discourage women's role as decision-makers. Issues of women's empowerment should be addressed locally, nationally, or internationally. Government intervention along with non-governmental organizations including IGP have been providing various types of women's empowerment programs. Even now, the situation has not improved. Women are always left behind and opportunities are being sought. (Enhancing Women's Economic Empowerment through Entrepreneurship and Business Leadership in OECD Countries, n.d.)

Minority women can't do anything politically and socially. Without the representation of women of all castes and regions, the situation of women is not improving in the current interim constitutional situation. It does not mean that women cannot do the same as men in the subject. For that, there is a need for various works to empower women, such as budgets, training, awareness, and participation. An attempt has been made to focus this research on this context where Hana Garment Factory's women within the designated factory have been selected to be researched. This research answers the following questions:

1. How have women achieved to express their inner forgiveness in factories?
2. How have women used the opportunities provided and what is the impact?

2.1 Objectives of the study

The objective of the study is to analyse the role of employment in empowering Nepalese women, particularly in the context of Hana Garments, a garment factory located in Nepal. The study aims to inves-

tigate how employment has impacted the social and economic status of women working at Hana Garments and to identify the challenges and opportunities for further empowerment. Additionally, the study seeks to understand the perspectives of women workers and management towards women's empowerment and to explore the strategies that have been adopted by Hana Garments to support women's empowerment through employment.

Similarly, the research additionally seeks to examine the impact of government policies and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on the empowerment of Nepalese women through employment. Furthermore, the study aims to analyse the extent to which government policies and CEDAW have been implemented in Nepal and to assess their effectiveness in promoting women's economic empowerment. The study also seeks to explore the challenges and opportunities for further progress in this area and to identify potential strategies for enhancing the role of government and CEDAW in promoting women's empowerment through employment in Nepal.

2.2 Importance of study

In Nepalese society, women are not granted the same decision-making rights as men. This study aims to investigate the role of women in household decision-making and the factors that hinder their participation in such activities. Through gathering information about the social and economic status of women in underdeveloped areas, the study intends to decrease gender discrimination and empower women. NGOs and INGOs can use the information collected to design programs and initiatives that address the actual conditions, issues, and solutions of women in these areas and align their efforts with the main development plan.

It's important to note that this study does not represent the entire diverse Nepalese society. Instead, it aims to identify the factors that influence decision-making and the social, cultural, and economic environments that relate to women. By studying the relationships between women and their families within society, this study aims to fill a gap in sociological knowledge and empower women. Women's empowerment is crucial for the overall development of the country, as they represent almost half of the population and are responsible for half of the country's development.

Although the study only covers a city and a factory within Nepal, it can serve as a guide for development planning, identifying the current condition of women, the programs required for their empowerment, and helping decision-makers at the district level. We believe that the development committee, planners, and other stakeholders can support this initiative.

2.3 Rationale for the study

By 2015, many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had been achieved, yet there remained a need for continued efforts towards realizing these goals and addressing emerging issues. To this end, the United Nations member states agreed on a new set of 17 objectives, known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), one of which is gender equality. As a member of the UN, nations are striving towards achieving the SDGs, with gender equality being the fifth priority goal. Despite progress, research has revealed that women continue to face social, political, and economic subordination, resulting in significant disparities. Gender-based discrimination manifests in various forms, including preference for male offspring and unequal treatment of girls across the globe. (Intern 2015.)

Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) practices represent a significant step toward addressing gender inequalities, particularly in Nepal's current federal context. As a result, there is a growing interest in researching and implementing Targeted Budget Programs (TBP) to empower women. Consequently, this study seeks to examine the effectiveness of recently conducted TBP among beneficiary women in Nepal. (Intern 2015.)

2.4 Conceptual framework of the study

In this thesis, we analysed targeted programs to increase women's empowerment and assessed their effectiveness. They followed a conceptual framework that was guided by international human rights instruments such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The focus of the study was on employment as a means of promoting women's economic empowerment and improving their social status and well-being.

We chose a textile company in Nepal as a case study due to its significance as a major employer, particularly for women, and its issues with labour rights, including gender discrimination and violence. By examining how companies can promote gender equality in the workplace through CEDAW and UN Women Empowerment Principles, the study aims to provide insights into the challenges and opportunities for women's empowerment through employment in Nepal.

We used open-ended questions to explore women's empowerment and gender equality, covering personal experiences, family dynamics, gender roles, government policies, and international principles. The questions aimed to understand the factors contributing to women's disempowerment and explore strategies for empowering women and promoting gender equality, including the role of government policies and international principles such as CEDAW.

The study also used quantitative methods with selected options in questionnaires to explore the impact of women's employment on society, the role of education in empowering women, the challenges faced by women in the workplace, and the role of government and companies in promoting gender equality. Some questions were specifically related to the garment industry and its impact on the lives of Nepalese women. The questions aimed to provide a qualitative and quantitative understanding of the current state of women's empowerment and employment in Nepal and the challenges they face.

Overall, the study aims to provide insights into the challenges and opportunities for women's empowerment through employment in Nepal and to develop more effective policies and programs to support women's economic empowerment and promote gender equality in Nepal and beyond.

3 APPROVED INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT

Nepalese women are protected under various international commitments that have been authorized by the government of Nepal. These commitments are intended to promote gender equality and ensure the protection of women's rights in the workplace.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), enacted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, is one of the most important international commitments. In 1991, Nepal adopted CEDAW, making it legally obligatory in the nation. CEDAW mandates states to take action to eradicate gender discrimination and promote gender equality, especially in the workplace. The Convention also requires nations to take affirmative action to guarantee that women have equal work opportunities and are protected from sexual harassment and other types of discrimination. (United Nations General Assembly 1979).

Furthermore, Nepal has ratified the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Convention on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, which requires equal pay for equal work (International Labour Organization 2017). The ILO Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities also promotes gender equality by mandating employers to provide support for workers with family responsibilities, including childcare.

Nepal is also a signatory to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which represents a commitment to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender inequality is recognized as a serious impediment to development, and gender-responsive policies and programs are required to promote gender equality. (United Nations 2022.)

3.1 Universal declaration of human rights, 1948

On December 10, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It establishes a universal standard of human rights for all people and nations and represents the first time in history that fundamental human rights have been acknowledged on an international level. The declaration is made up of 30 articles that explain the fundamental rights and freedoms to which every individual is entitled, such as the right to life, liberty, and security of person, freedom

of thought, conscience, and religion, and the right to labour and education. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been translated into over 500 languages and is a key reference point for the preservation and promotion of human rights worldwide. (United Nations 2022.)

3.2 Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW)

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an international treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, which aims to eliminate discrimination against women and promote gender equality worldwide. Nepal ratified CEDAW in 1991, making it legally binding in the country. (United Nations General Assembly 1979.)

As a party to CEDAW, Nepal has taken steps to promote gender equality and protect women's rights. The country has implemented measures to address issues such as violence against women, gender-based discrimination, and unequal access to education and employment opportunities. (United Nations General Assembly 1979.)

For example, Nepal's National Strategy on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (2018-2022) includes a range of initiatives aimed at advancing women's rights and promoting gender equality. These initiatives include promoting women's participation in political and decision-making processes, improving access to education and health care for women and girls, and addressing violence against women and girls. (United Nations General Assembly 1979.)

Nepal has introduced laws and policies aimed at safeguarding women's rights and advancing gender equality. For example, the Domestic Violence (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2066 (2010), criminalizes domestic violence (Constitution of Nepal 2015). Another measure is the Women's and Children's Service Centre Operation Directive, 2069 (2012), which enables the establishment of service centres to support women and children impacted by violence. (Constitution of Nepal 2015).

3.3 Submission of the CEDAW initial and periodical reports

Submission of government reports on the implementation of CEDAW is an effective mechanism to make governments accountable for their commitments. The government submitted an initial report in 1997 and presented the report in 1999 and submitted the combined second and third periodic report on the CEDAW convention in October 2002 and presented the report in January 2004. The CEDAW Monitoring Committee, an informal network of NGOs working on the CEDAW Convention that is coordinated by FWLD, submitted a Shadow Report. In both reports, the expert members of the CEDAW Committee raised concerns relating to the existing discriminatory laws and practices. (United Nations 2022.)

In its concluding remarks, the CEDAW Committee has urged the government to promote action and to establish a specific timetable for amending discriminatory laws without further delay and to repeal or amend Article 9 of the constitution, which permits discrimination against women in citizenship (United Nations 2022).

3.4 International covenant on civil and political rights 1966 (ICCPR)

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is a human rights treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966. The ICCPR attempts to promote and protect civil and political rights, including the right to life, freedom of expression, and the right to a fair trial, among others. (UN General Assembly 1966.)

Nepal ratified the ICCPR in 1991, indicating its willingness to be governed by the treaty's terms. The ICCPR has also been integrated into the national laws of Nepal, notably the 2015 Constitution. As a state party to the ICCPR, Nepal is expected to report to the UN on the implementation of the treaty and the efforts taken to promote and defend civil and political rights on a regular basis.

The ICCPR has been applied in Nepal to promote and protect human rights in various ways. For example, the treaty has been solicited by human rights defenders and civil society organizations to advocate for the protection of freedom of expression, assembly, and association, and to call for an end to torture

and other forms of ill-treatment by the police and security forces. The ICCPR has also been used in legal cases to challenge laws and practices that are inconsistent with the treaty's provisions. (Nepal's Obligations under International Law n.d.)

3.5 International covenant on economic, social and cultural rights 1966 (ICESCR)

The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) is a human rights treaty that the United Nations General Assembly adopted in 1966. The ICESCR aims to promote and defend economic, social, and cultural rights, including the right to work, the right to education, and the right to an adequate standard of living, among others. (UN General Assembly 1966.)

Nepal ratified the ICESCR in 1991, indicating its willingness to be bound by the treaty's obligations. The ICESCR has also been included in national laws of Nepal, notably the 2015 Constitution. As a state party to the ICESCR, Nepal is expected to report to the UN on the implementation of the treaty and efforts taken to promote and preserve economic, social, and cultural rights on a regular basis. (Constitution of Nepal 2015.)

3.6 Concluding observations of the committee on economic, social and cultural rights on the initial report of the government of Nepal

The Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights is an independent organization that monitors the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). In 2011, the Committee released its concluding observations on the initial report of the Government of Nepal regarding its implementation of the ICESCR. (UN Economic and Social Council 2017.)

The Committee acknowledged the progress made by Nepal in different areas, including the adoption of policies and laws aimed at safeguarding economic, social, and cultural rights, and the establishment of organizations to promote these rights. However, the Committee also expressed concern over several issues, such as the persistence of discrimination against marginalized groups, including women, Dalits, and indigenous peoples, and their limited access to essential services. (UN Economic and Social Council 2017.)

The Committee also emphasized the need for Nepal taking efforts to alleviate poverty and inequality, enhance access to education and healthcare, and protect workers' rights, including migrant workers. The Committee also suggested that Nepal address child labour and trafficking concerns, as well as enhance access to adequate drinking water and sanitation. (UN Economic and Social Council 2017.)

3.7 Concluding comments on initial report of Nepal on 15th and 18th of June 1991 by CEDAW committee

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an independent agency that supervises the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The Committee considered Nepal's initial report on its implementation of the Convention in 1999. (UN 2022.)

In its final remarks, the Committee acknowledged the efforts made by Nepal to improve the situation of women, including the adoption of laws aimed at safeguarding their rights and the establishment of institutions to promote gender equality. However, the Committee expressed concern over several issues, such as the persistence of discrimination against women, particularly in rural areas, and the prevalence of harmful traditional practices. (UN 2022.)

The Committee also emphasized the importance of Nepal addressing issues of violence against women, particularly domestic abuse, and trafficking, and ensuring women's involvement in decision-making at all levels. The Committee also suggested that Nepal take steps to increase women's access to education, health care, and employment, as well as to secure their equal rights to land and property. (UN 2022.)

4 WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN NEPAL'S CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of Nepal 2015 prohibits discrimination based on gender, ensures equal protection of the law, and guarantees equal rights and opportunities without discrimination, indicating the country's efforts to improve the status of women. (The Constitution of Nepal 2015, Article 18.)

The Constitution also grants women the right to participate in all state structures and processes, and access education, healthcare, and employment opportunities (The Constitution of Nepal 2015, Article 42). Additionally, the Constitution ensures women's rights to reproductive healthcare, safe motherhood, and the right to inherit property (The Constitution of Nepal 2015, Article 43). The Constitution of Nepal also reserves 33% of seats in the Constituent Assembly for women (The Constitution of Nepal 2015, Article 84). Despite these provisions, patriarchal social values and discriminatory behaviour towards women continue to persist in Nepalese society, affecting women's economic, social, and political conditions. Therefore, active participation of both men and women is necessary for equitable and sustainable national development.

4.1 Issues on women's empowerment

Human culture recognizes men and women as equal partners. Men's and women's lives would be incomplete in the absence of another since a family is a social structure through which people may obtain all their needs (UNFPA 2017). However, Nepal is primarily a patriarchal culture, which has been identified worldwide as one of the most significant impediments to national development (UN Women 2019.)

The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was established in 1979 to address this issue. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is hereinafter referred to as "CED". The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women is referred to as the "SID Committee". (UN Women 2019.)

The SID Committee issued a final remark with numerous proposals for Nepal's sixth periodic report on November 14, 2018. Nepal is obligated to implement the recommendations of the SID Committee on several matters including women's rights as a signatory to the Convention. It is also a moral obligation

to keep the international community updated on the status of the SID Committee's recommendations. Nepal must persuade the international community of the importance of the connection. (UN Women 2019.)

The National Women's Commission monitors the implementation of laws related to women's rights or the obligations under international treaties or agreements to which Nepal is a party and can make recommendations to the Government of Nepal for their effective implementation (National Women's Commission 2017.)

The National Commission for Women issued this report after conducting a mid-term assessment with the assistance of UN Women on the level of implementation of the SID Committee's conclusions and recommendations on Nepal's sixth periodic report filed in 2018. The government of Nepal is required to submit the seventh periodic report to the CID committee in November 2022. This mid-term report is designed to help the Nepalese government in taking the required further measures based on the recommendations that have yet to be implemented. (UN Women 2019.)

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4.2 Gender equality policy environment in Nepal

Nepal adopted the Women's Development (WID) strategy in the 1980s to encourage women's participation in policy formulation, and since then, women's empowerment and gender equality have been included in the nation's development plans. The Nepalese government has made global commitments by signing international treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). (Nepal gender equality and empowerment of women project gender equality results case study, n.d.)

The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) recognizes gender equality and prohibits discrimination against women of all socio-economic categories. The Local Self Government Act (1999) mandates women's representation in local government, and amendments to the Civil Service Act (2007), Police Rules (2007), and Armed Police Rules (2007) reserve a certain percentage of seats for women. The Gender Equality Bill of 2006 grants equal rights to sons and daughters in inheritance, as well as a 25% reduction on land registration costs for women, scholarships for girls, and allowances for single and elderly women. (Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007.)

In 2002, the Nepalese government created a gender-responsive budget, and in 2010, it issued a national action plan to combat gender-based violence. Several government ministries have a policy mandate to formulate, implement, monitor, and coordinate gender-based violence prevention awareness and response activities. Despite a relatively appropriate policy environment, there are still disparities in understanding, knowledge, and attitudes toward women's issues (Government of Nepal Submission for the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and Adoption of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) Review Report 2019.) For example, a significant proportion of women are victims of gender-based violence, and women's representation in public service and property ownership is lower than that of males.

4.3 The voice of Nepalese women and empowerment

Empowering Women of Nepal (EWN) is a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering Nepalese women and assisting them in overcoming the several societal hindrances that impede them from reaching their full potential. EWN believes that women in Nepal face several challenges, including discrimination, a lack of education, and a lack of job possibilities, and it tries to empower them with the skills they need to overcome these complications (Empowering women of Nepal 2013.)

One of the most significant ways EWN empowers women is by giving them a voice. In Nepal, women are regularly silenced and denied the freedom to speak up or make life decisions for themselves. EWN's training programs are intended to provide women with the confidence and skills necessary to speak up and be heard. EWN thinks that by doing so, it can promote gender equality and combat traditions that prevent women from completely empowering themselves. EWN's many training programs help Nepalese women become more knowledgeable, efficient, and hardworking. The training courses

offered by the organisation are Women's Development, Tourism Development, Unemployment Reduction, Promoting Social Work, Poverty Reduction, and Discrimination Reduction. These courses are designed to empower women with the knowledge and skills they need to become self-sufficient, competent, and independent. (Empowering women of Nepal 2013.)

EWN also strives to provide job opportunities for unemployed Nepalese women. The company believes to stimulate economic and social progress in the country's rural areas by doing so. Women in Nepal should be at the forefront of social and economic development according to the EWN spokeswoman. By providing career opportunities and training, EWN aims to help women become financially independent and break the cycle of poverty that many Nepalese women are trapped. (Empowering women of Nepal 2013.)

4.4 Feminist approach

Using a feminist interpretive approach, this research aims to understand the dynamics of gender equality through women's empowerment by investigating and understanding concerns about women's position, patriarchy beliefs, and women's experience and transformations.

We utilize the theory of feminist perspective, which respects the knowledge and experience of people (Hana Garment Factory) where they are located to examine the diversity of experiences that women bring to their concept of empowerment. This study is appropriate for assessing the daily life experiences of women in Nepal from our point of view.

Therefore, we have tried to bring out the experience and understanding of what women's empowerment means at the Hana Garment Factory through the study and personal interviews. However, this approach requires a nuanced understanding of people's experiences of empowerment and the perceived idea of change in their life which is obtained through an in-depth interview method. This study is an attempt to explore and build on our commitment to studying women's development and advancing the local understanding of the empowerment of Nepalese rural women from a female perspective.

6.3 Women's educational status

Education is a crucial role in providing women with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to fully participate in the development process. Female literacy in Nepal grew from 0.7% in 1954 to 57.4% in 2019, according to the 2019 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey. There is still a significant gender gap in literacy, with male and female literacy rates diverging by 23 percentage points. Surprisingly, one in every three women between the ages of 15 and 49 has no education, while 17% of females and 19% of males have only completed primary school. This indicates how Nepalese culture still regards girls as having little educational possibilities. Tuition fees, clothing and school supplies are usually too costly for many students. (Gorakha Patra 2023.)

Another concern in Nepal is that health professionals continue to dominate professions such as administration (83%) and education (77%), with the highest proportion of degrees at all levels. Despite gender parity in primary school enrolment, girls are more likely to drop out for a variety of reasons, including living in rural areas, coming from low-income homes, early marriage, gender-based violence, and a poor learning environment. (Gorakha Patra 2023.)

5 HANA GARMENTS FACTORY

Hana Garment is a manufacturer and supplier company for women's fashion clothing since 2011. It is a family business that relies on offering high-quality apparel for the public. They want to please their consumers and bring their items to the warehouse so that they may be displayed on their shop shelves. Their ideas come to life, and their brand guarantees that visual identity is upheld and properly labelled. They provide inexpensive apparel, eliminate the middleman, and guarantee that their firm remains competitive by offering ready-to-wear quality items. The firm has competent management, skilled personnel, and all the necessary production machinery. The company produces seasonal clothes for a variety of corporate and government sectors and businesses. "Made in Nepal" is their mission, and they ask that they accept it wholeheartedly. Their objective is also to export the items to assist the country's economy flourish. This will only be possible with the assistance of their valued consumers; thus, they anticipate their assistance. They all place a premium on women's development and family life. They treat all their employees with dignity, provide a good salary, health insurance, and provide adequate living circumstances. They are assessed on a regular basis by high street merchants and may demonstrate compliance with the following principles (not exhaustive) Employment is freely chosen, as is the freedom of organization and the right to collective bargaining. The working environment is safe and clean. There is no utilization of child labour. (Hana garments n.d.)

5.1 Government initiatives and policies regarding the Nepal garment industry

The Nepalese government has taken various initiatives and implemented policies to support the development of the garment industry in the country. Some of the key initiatives and policies are duty free access to international markets. The Nepalese government has granted duty free access to a few overseas markets. As a result, the Nepalese clothing sector is now more competitive in these areas like USA, Canada, and another European Union. Export-oriented policies: The government has implemented several export-oriented measures, such as tax exemptions and other incentives for garment makers and exporters, to support the expansion of the apparel sector. Capacity building and training programs: To improve the skills and expertise of garment workers and manufacturers, the government has implemented several capacity-building and training initiatives. These programs cover topics including product design, marketing, and quality control. Access to finance: The government has devised

several financing initiatives to help garment producers and exporters gain access to capital. Credit facilities, loan guarantees, and other types of financial assistance are examples of this. Infrastructure development: The government has invested in the development of infrastructure, including roads, electricity, and water supply, to support the growth of the garment industry. This has helped to improve transportation and logistics, reduce production costs, and increase the competitiveness of the industry. Labour laws and regulations: The Nepalese government has created rules and regulations to safeguard garment workers' rights, including minimum pay, working hours, and social security protections. The government has also initiated several programs to combat gender discrimination and violence in the clothing sector. Promotion of ethical and sustainable production: In the garment business, the government has supported ethical and sustainable production techniques, such as environmental sustainability, fair labour practices, and gender parity. This has helped to attract a rising number of foreign clients looking for socially and ecologically responsible apparel providers. (Hana garments n.d.)

5.2 Products of Hana Garments

Hana Garments is well-known for its high-quality goods and use of environmentally friendly and sustainable materials in its manufacturing procedures. The firm places a great emphasis on ethical and fair-trade procedures, and its goods are well-known both locally and globally. Hana Garments manufactures the sweaters, Hana Garments is well-known for its high-quality wool, cotton, and other materials sweaters. Crew neck, V-neck, and cardigan sweaters are available for purchase. Jackets and coats, Hana Garments manufacture jackets and coats for men, women, and children. These items are constructed of leather, denim, and wool and available in a variety of designs and colours. T-shirts and tops, Hana Garments produce a variety of t-shirts and tops for men and women. These items are constructed of cotton, rayon, and polyester and available in a variety of colours and styles. Dresses and skirts, Hana Garments also produce a range of dresses and skirts for women. These products are made from materials such as cotton, silk, and rayon, and come in various styles and colours. Accessories, Hana Garments also manufactures accessories such as hats, scarves, and gloves in addition to clothes. (Hana garments n.d.)

6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A case study of Hana Garments Factory has been conducted to study and find out how employment can empower women. The thesis also aimed to know employment and what changes bring to the living standard of the family, their relationship with the family and friends, their decision-making process, their voice, and personal and career development. There are more than 70 women working in this factory. All the employees are from different age groups and with different marital statuses. They must engage most of the time with doing household work and are always dominated by the husband, the whole family, and society. Their whole life is limited inside the peripheric of the family and hesitates to speak in public.

They leave all the decisions in the hands of the husband even while extending the family. So, this research is carried out to find out how empowerment through employment can bring a drastic change in their life. Therefore, Hana Garments Factory was chosen as a case study for the research purpose. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are used in this thesis.

6.1 Qualitative research method

Qualitative research is based on people's beliefs, experiences, and feelings in a certain topic, allowing them to speak without the intervention of a researcher and without being too confined by the researcher's framework. In the research process, the qualitative research method is a methodology and technique that uses qualitative data rather than quantitative data. Participant observation, in-depth interviews, group interviews or focus groups, textual analysis, biographical approaches, and ethnography are all common qualitative methodologies. Quantitative research uses limited information from each massive instance, but qualitative research uses in-depth comprehension of a few situations. (Veal 2006, 193.)

In this thesis, the semi-structured interview will be considered to conduct qualitative research. To collect in-depth information and reliable answers to the study questions, we conducted semi-structured interviews with a range of people. Semi-structured interviews are ideal for a variety of tasks, especially when more than a handful of open-ended questions necessitate follow-up inquiries (Adams 2015). Thus, semi-structured questions provide responders with the opportunity to express their opinions in

their own words. The semi-structured interview themes and questions are mentioned in appendix 1 of this thesis.

The methods and purpose of the study were studied carefully to prepare the research questions for sampling and collecting the data from the participants. The interview targeted professionals from various grounds. A total of three interviews were conducted with different women who are working in management position in different department in Hana Garments

All the interviews were carried out in English. The purpose of the research project and ethics of confidentiality and anonymity of the respondent's information was clearly informed to the interviewee. The interview was recorded with the permission of the interviewee.

The interviewee's thoughts, perspectives, sentiments, and impressions were added to the recordings using notes made during the interview. Furthermore, the interviewees were informed that after transcribing the interviews, the recordings would be destroyed.

The interview was arranged according to the respondent's time schedule and convenience. They were conducted during the month of March and April in 2023. The interviews lasted for approximately 15 to 20 minutes. All the interviews were done through phone survey method.

6.2 Quantitative research method

Statistical or numerical analysis is the quantitative approach to research. It draws conclusions or tests based on numerical evidence. To be certain that the results are reliable, it is essential to examine a significant number of people and analyse the data using computers. The information can come from questionnaire surveys, an observation that involves counts, or secondary sources. (Veal 2006, 40.)

For this thesis a questionnaire survey was used questionnaire survey with a set of questions for collecting and analysing numerical data for the quantitative research method. Like the qualitative research methods applied for the research process in this thesis, the purpose and aim of the research was considered while sampling questions. The interview questions related to qualitative were asked from the women who the head of the different departments in the Hana Garments are, but the questionnaire survey was distributed to the employees at Hana Garments. We conducted quantitative research to collect

data from employees regarding the empowerment of Nepalese women through employment. Therefore, a questionnaire survey was conducted to collect and analyse the data from women. The confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were always preserved. The questionnaire consists of 26 closed-ended questions. The questionnaire is included in appendix 2 of this thesis.

We utilized phone surveys to collect data from a sample of people using telephone interviews. Then the data collected is analysed using statistical methods. Phone surveys are a popular quantitative research method used to collect data from a sample of people using telephone interviews. In quantitative research, the data collected is numerical and analysed using statistical methods. We wanted to reach the number of women working in the Hana Garments as many as possible but only 20 of them were responded. Then the collected data were presented in a pie diagram.

6.3 Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are the standards by which a quantitative technique or method is evaluated. Reliability means that the measurement results are consistent across time, always presuming that the other factors stay the same. Validity is the state in which the variables that were measured precisely reflect the methods used to gather the data. (Newby 2010, 121.)

For validity and reliability, the qualitative researcher employs the words credibility and dependability, respectively. The notion of credibility necessitates that the data's original subjects hold the interpretation in high regard from their own point of view. But since credibility is how validity is verified, this may be simply assumed within the context of validity. The word dependability refers to the concept of reliability. The audience's capacity to concur with the conclusions depends entirely on how well the researcher describes the context of the study. (Newby 2010, 121.)

The foundation of any research is its validity and reliability. The researcher needs to be certain that the collected data accurately reflects the circumstances that it was intended to study as well as the findings would be the same if another researcher used the same methodology. For that intent, two factors are taken into consideration; first, the methodology and procedures employed are suitable; and second, the techniques possess a consistency that any typical variance in researcher influence cannot undermine. (Newby 2010, 121.)

We carried out a questionnaire survey to ensure the validity of their argument. The data and research topics in this thesis were systematically surveyed with the women of Hana Garment which ensures the validity of the research. The evidence acquired accurately reflects the empowerment of women through employment which established the research component of this thesis as reliable.

The qualitative technique in this thesis was done using a semi-structured interview with the specialists who are working as the head of different departments as empowering women through employment. Since the information and data in this thesis were gathered from professionals working in the management positions, it may be assumed that the data is credible and dependable. As a result of the experts' knowledge, experience, and personal participation in empowering women through employment, the research's findings are trustworthy and accurate. Furthermore, the interview data were further analysed and interpreted to draw the conclusions on the thesis topic.

7 ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter includes the analysis and findings of the interviews and surveys that were done at Hana Garments Factory. The data interpreted from interviews and surveys are presented in this chapter. The research was done with the women working in Hana Garments and other women who were in the head of the departments in same factory through questionnaire surveys and interviews respectively. Therefore, the analysis and findings of the research are furthermore divided into further sub-headings to clearly understand the research on empowering women through employment.

7.1 Interview analysis

A thematic analysis approach has been applied to transcribe the recordings and results of the interviews. The respondents' statements about the facts and information in this study project are cited by using letters instead of their real names. Anonymous names of respondents A, B, and C are given to the interviewees. In this thesis, the thoughts and data from the informants are reported using a thematic analysis approach. Each topic illustrates the fundamental idea underlying the view of the interviewee.

7.1.1 Theme one: personal experiences of empowerment and strategies empowering others

We posed a query as the first question; how can you empower both yourself and the other women in your life? Here are their responses:

Interviewee A explained that she empowered herself by pursuing education and gaining knowledge. She also added that she tried to empower the women around her by educating them about their rights and encouraging them to speak up for themselves. Interviewee B explained that she empowered herself and the women around her by participating in community initiatives that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. She also added that she tried to lead by example and encourage other women to take on leadership roles. Interviewee C explained that she empowered herself and the women around her by being financially independent and self-sufficient. She also added that she tried to encourage other women to pursue their own goals and dreams.

We offered a question; what makes you strong women? What fulfils you? And their responses are explained here:

Interviewee A explained that she considers herself a strong woman because of her resilience and ability to overcome challenges. She also added that she felt fulfilled when she was able to make a positive impact on the lives of others. Interviewee B explained that she considered herself a strong woman because of her determination and passion for achieving her goals. She also explained that she felt fulfilled when she was able to make a positive contribution to her community. Interviewee C explained that she considered herself a strong woman because of her ability to adapt and be resourceful in difficult situations. She also explained that she felt fulfilled when she was able to provide for her family and create a better life for them.

We asked each of them about what are the strategies have they used to empower themselves when facing with challenging situations and the answers are:

Interviewee A explained that she used to empower herself by breaking down the problem into smaller, more manageable parts when faced with a challenging situation. She also added that she looked out for advice and guidance from others who have faced similar challenges as this could provide her with valuable insights and perspectives. Interviewee B explained that she used to empower herself by engaging in self-reflection and introspection in challenging situations. She also added that she found taking the time to examine her own thoughts and feelings about the situation can help her to gain clarity and perspective and to identify any negative thought patterns or limiting beliefs that might be holding her back. Interviewee C explained that she used to empower herself by engaging in physical activity or exercise in challenging situations. She also added that moving her body and getting her blood pumping helps to release tension and stress and can also help to boost her mood and energy levels.

7.1.2 Theme two: family dynamics or relationships

We asked about the family's power dynamic. Do the females feel more at ease now? Here are their responses:

Interviewee A explained that the power balance in her family is relatively equal between men and women. She also added that however there are still instances where men have more decision-making

power. Then she finally added that she felt comfortable expressing her opinions and ideas, but she knew that some women mightn't feel comfortable. Interviewee B explained that men tended to have more power and decision-making authority in her family. She also added that however she felt comfortable expressing herself and advocating for what she believed in. Interviewee C explained that men hold most of the power and decision-making authority in her family. She also added that the women are expected to fulfil traditional gender roles, but she always tried to challenge these norms and assert her own opinions and ideas.

We asked, "Can you describe the time when you empowered a female family member to take control of her own life and make important decisions?" and their answers are explained below:

Interviewee A explained that she could think of a time when she empowered her younger sister to make an important decision regarding her education. She also added that her sister was unsure about which major to choose in college and was feeling overwhelmed by the many options available to her. She added that she encouraged her to do own research, to speak with academic advisors, and to explore her passions and interests. Interviewee B explained that she recalled a time when her aunt was experiencing health issues and was hesitant to seek medical care due to financial constraints. She added that she encouraged her to speak with her doctor and provided her with information about community health resources and financial assistance programs. She also added that helped her to navigate the healthcare system and advocated for her needs. Interviewee C explained that she had a cousin who was experiencing domestic abuse in her marriage and was hesitant to leave due to fear and insecurity. She added that she provided her with emotional support, resources for counselling and legal aid, and helped her to plan a safe exit strategy.

7.1.3 Theme three: gender inequality

We asked about the factors causing women's disempowerment? The responses are described below:

Interviewee A explained that there are many factors contributing to women's disempowerment in Nepal including poverty, lack of education, traditional gender roles, and social norms that prioritize men's voices and opinions over women. Interviewee B explained that some of the main factors causing women's disempowerment include gender-based violence, discrimination, and unequal access to resources and opportunities in her opinion. She also added that these issues need to be addressed at both

the individual and systemic levels. Interviewee C explained that the biggest factors causing women's disempowerment in Nepal is lack of representation and participation in decision-making processes in her opinion. She also added that women's voices aren't heard or taken seriously, which can lead to policies and programs that don't meet their needs.

We asked them to response on what is a key factor that contributes to the gender pay gap and gave them some options:

- a) Women choosing to work in lower-paying fields
- b) Women being less qualified or experienced than men
- c) Discrimination and bias against women in hiring and promotions
- d) All the above

Similarly, all 3 interviewees described that all the above were a key factor that contributes to the gender pay gap. It meant that women choosing to work in lower-paying fields, women being less qualified or experienced than men and discrimination and bias against women in hiring and promotions were the key factor that contributes to the gender pay gap.

7.1.4 Theme four: gender roles

We asked them if woman dare to speak in public. The responses were:

Interviewee A explained that some women do feel comfortable speaking in public, while others may be hesitant or feel that their voices aren't valued in her opinion. She also added that it really depends on the individual and their level of confidence and self-assurance. Interviewee B explained that many women in Nepal are hesitant to speak in public because of social expectations and norms that prioritize men's voices and opinions. She also added that however there are also many women who are working to challenges these norms and assert their own voices and ideas. Interviewee C explained that women in Nepal are often not given the same opportunities or platforms to speak in public as men are. She also added that this can make it more difficult for women to gain confidence and experience in public speaking but there are also many women who are breaking down these barriers and speaking out on important issues.

We asked them what advantages men's participation might bring, and how can we urge men to be allies in the struggle for gender equality and women's empowerment? Their answers were:

Interviewee A explained that the one way to encourage men to become allies in the fight for gender equality is through education and awareness-raising efforts. She also added that these efforts included workshops, training sessions, and public campaigns aimed at challenging harmful stereotypes and promoting gender equality. Interviewee B explained that one way to encourage men to become allies was by modelling positive behaviours and attitudes towards women. She also added that these efforts include speaking out against gender-based violence and discrimination, promoting gender-based leadership and actively listening to and supporting the voices of women. Interviewee C described that the best way to encourage men to become allies from women's experiences and perspectives. She also added that the men should be open to listening and learning from women, acknowledging their privilege and the biases they might hold.

7.1.5 Theme five: the relationship between government policies and programming

We asked them if the government have a policy programming linkage? The responses were:

Interviewee A explained that the government does have a policy programming linkage but there is a huge gap between policies and their implementation. She also added that more needs to be done to ensure that policies are being implemented effectively. Interviewee B explained that the government does have a policy programming linkage but there is a lack of communication and co-ordination between departments and levels of government. She also added that this can lead to confusion and inefficiencies in policy implementation. Interviewee C explained that the government have some policies in place to address various issues, but these policies aren't well known or accessible to the locals. She also added that there needs to be more transparency and information sharing so that public are aware of their rights and entitlements.

We offered question; What role can civil society organizations and advocacy groups play in influencing government policies and programs related to women's empowerment and gender equality? Here are their responses:

Interviewee A explained that civil society organizations and advocacy groups could play a critical role in mobilizing public support for policies and programs related to women's empowerment and gender equality by engaging with communities, raising awareness of key issues, and advocating for policy changes. She also added that these groups could help build momentum for reform and encourage government to act. Interviewee B explained that civil society organisations and advocacy groups could play an important role in holding governments accountable for their commitments to women's empowerment and gender equality by monitoring policy implementation, conducting research and analysis, and providing feedback to policy makers. She also added that these groups could help ensuring that government were living up their promises and taking concrete steps to promote gender equality. Interviewee C explained that civil society organisations and advocacy groups often represent a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, including those of marginalized communities that might be excluded from decision-making processes by bringing these perspectives to the table and advocating for the needs and rights of these communities ensuring that government policies and programs related to women's empowerment were inclusive and address the needs of all women, regardless of their background or identity.

7.1.6 Theme six: international principle

We offered question; How does Hana Garments comply with the principles of the CEDAW? Here are the responses:

Interviewees A, B and C had the similar thought on this question. They explained that Hana Garments comply with the principles of the CEDAW by promoting gender equality in the workplace, by providing education and training opportunities for women, by ensuring safe and healthy working conditions, by providing equal pay and benefits for men and women and by promoting women to leadership position.

We offered question; What role do you see the Nepalese government playing in promoting the principles of CEDAW in the Hana Garments and what actions do you think the government should take? Here are their responses:

Interviewees A, B and C had the similar thought on this question. They explained that the Nepalese government plays a critical role in promoting the principles of CEDAW in the garment industry and

ensuring that women's rights are protected. They added that the government must take actions to promote CEDAW principles in Hana Garments to strengthen and enforce existing laws and regulations related to women's rights in the workplace, including equal pay, equal opportunities for employment and promotion, and protection from sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination. Conduct regular inspections of garment factories to ensure that they comply with CEDAW principles and take strong enforcement actions against factories that violate these principles. To provide training and capacity-building programs for factory owners, managers, and workers on CEDAW principles and how to implement them in the workplace. To establish a complaints mechanism that allows women to report cases of discrimination or harassment in the workplace and ensure that complaints are promptly and effectively addressed. To provide support services such as childcare facilities and maternity leave to enable women to balance their work and family responsibilities. To work with civil society organizations, labour unions, and other stakeholders to raise awareness about women's rights in the workplace and promote CEDAW principles.

7.2 Survey analysis

The result is evaluated according to the respondents' responses. Each obtained response is represented in written form and most of them are presented in figures as well. The collected findings are shown in percentage-based mathematical computations.

The total number of respondents was 20. Related to the respondents' various age groups, all the respondents were female and from the age group 40 + (40%) whereas 20-30 (30%) and the rest of 30-40 (30) %) respectively. Similarly, 65% of females are married and 35% are unmarried respectively.

Theme one was family life.

Respondents were asked what the reason was to do the household work in their family. Most of the respondents answered, All of the Above (50%), Being Women (20%), Male Dominating (15%) and Family Dynamics (15%) respectively. It is clearly shown that all the following points are the reasons to do the household work in women's family.

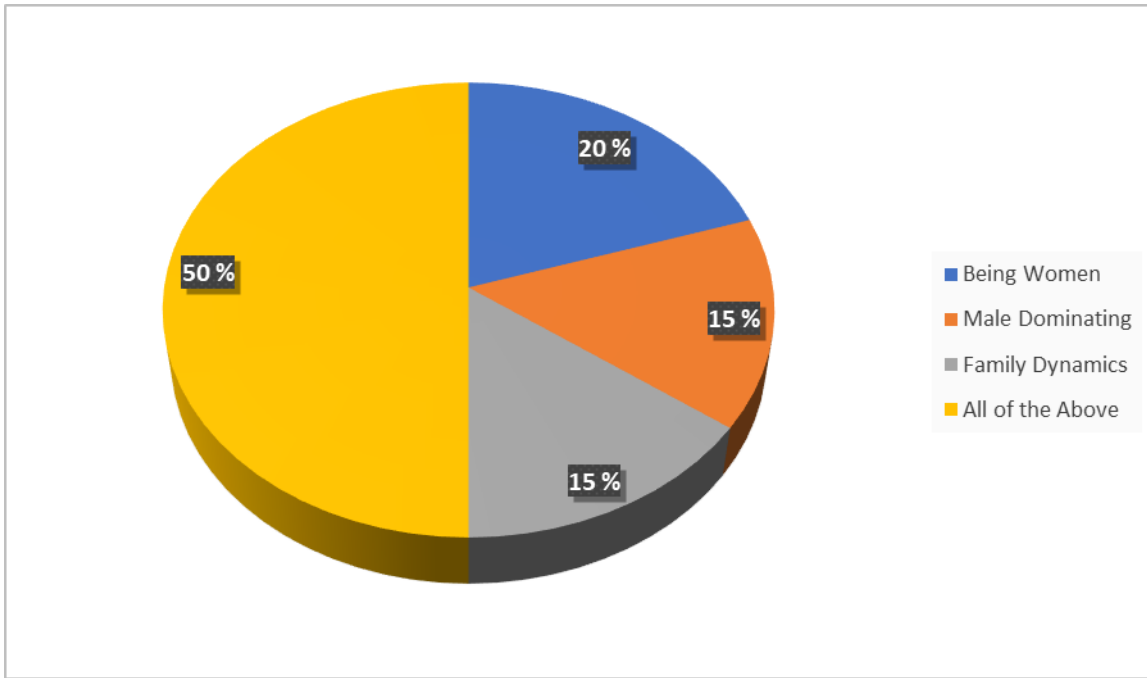


FIGURE 1. Reasons for household work

Respondents were asked what they could do if they got good opportunities for employment. Most of the respondents answered, All of the Above (40%), I Would Carefully Evaluate the Opportunities to determine my career and personal goals (25%), I Would be Guiding Family in Proper Way (20%) and I Would Reform Economic Condition of Family Better than Present (15%) respectively. It is clearly shown that women can reform the economic condition of the family better than present, guide the family in a proper way, and would carefully evaluate the opportunities to determine their career and personal goals once they got good opportunities for employment.

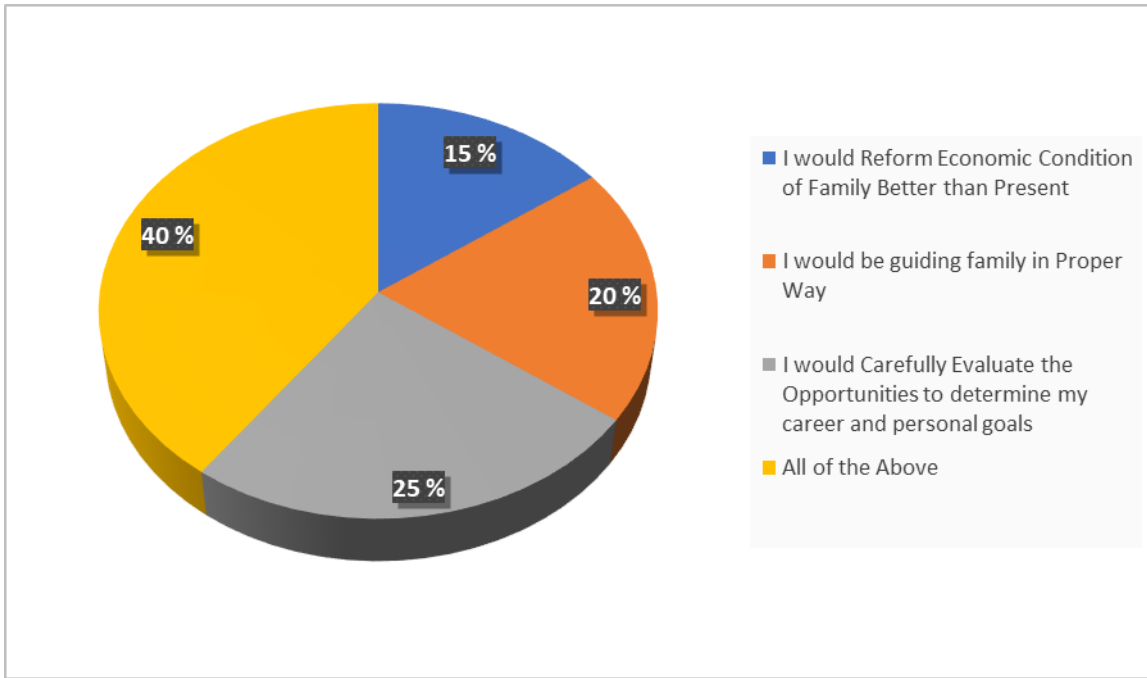


FIGURE 2. Several plans with opportunities for employment

Theme two was access to role.

Respondents were asked who was responsible for either success or failure in the household work. Most of the respondents answered, All of the above (50%), All the Family Members (20%), You (15%), and Husband (15%) respectively. It clearly shows that all the family members are responsible for either success or failure in the household work.

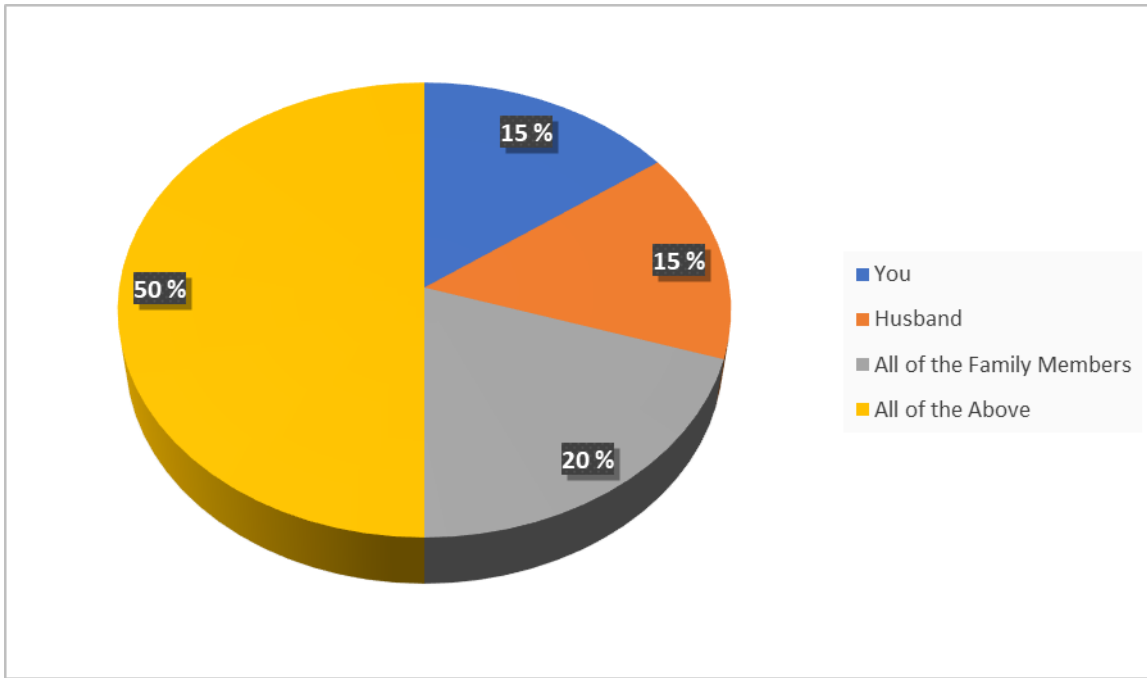


FIGURE 3. The responsible person for success or failure in the household work

Respondents were asked what the constraints were to perform the role in household work design. Most of the respondents answered, All of the Above (40%), Family (25%), Cultural Norm (20%), and Social Value (15%) respectively. It is clearly shown that family, cultural norms, and social values determine to perform the role of household work design.

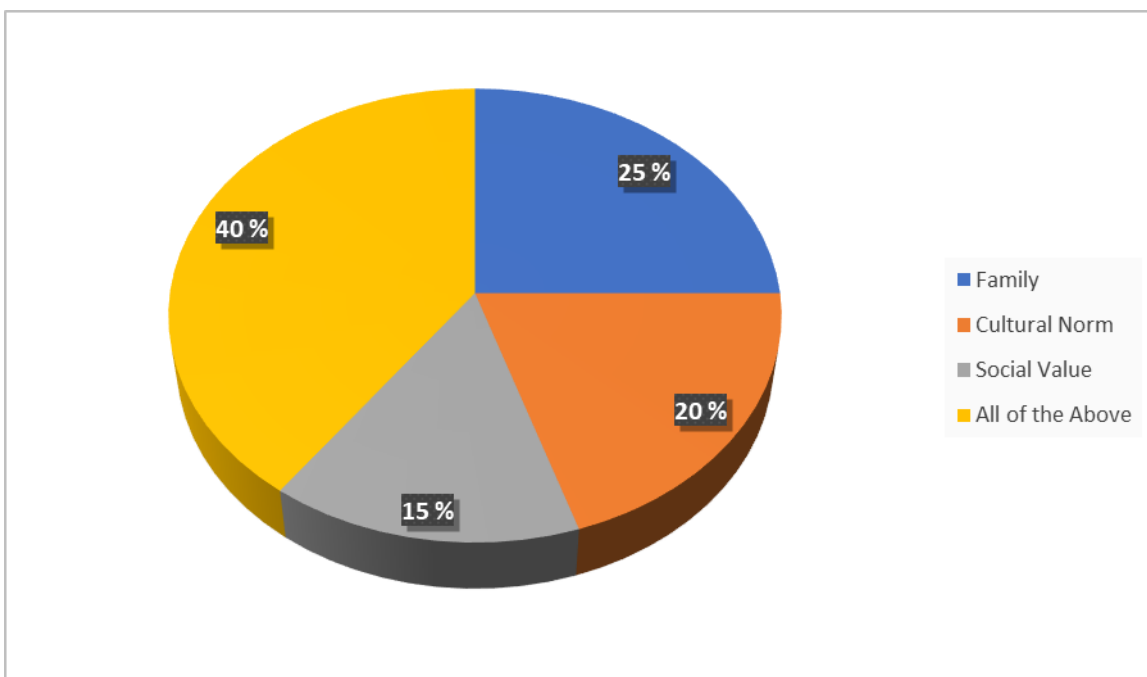


FIGURE 4. The factors to perform role in household work design

Theme three was empowerment of women.

The respondents were asked what benefits Nepalese society gained from empowering women through employment can. Most of the respondents answered , All of the above (55%), Improved Gender Equality (20%), Economic Growth (15%), and Social Development (10%) respectively. It indicated that Nepalese society could gain improved gender equality, economic growth, and social development altogether.

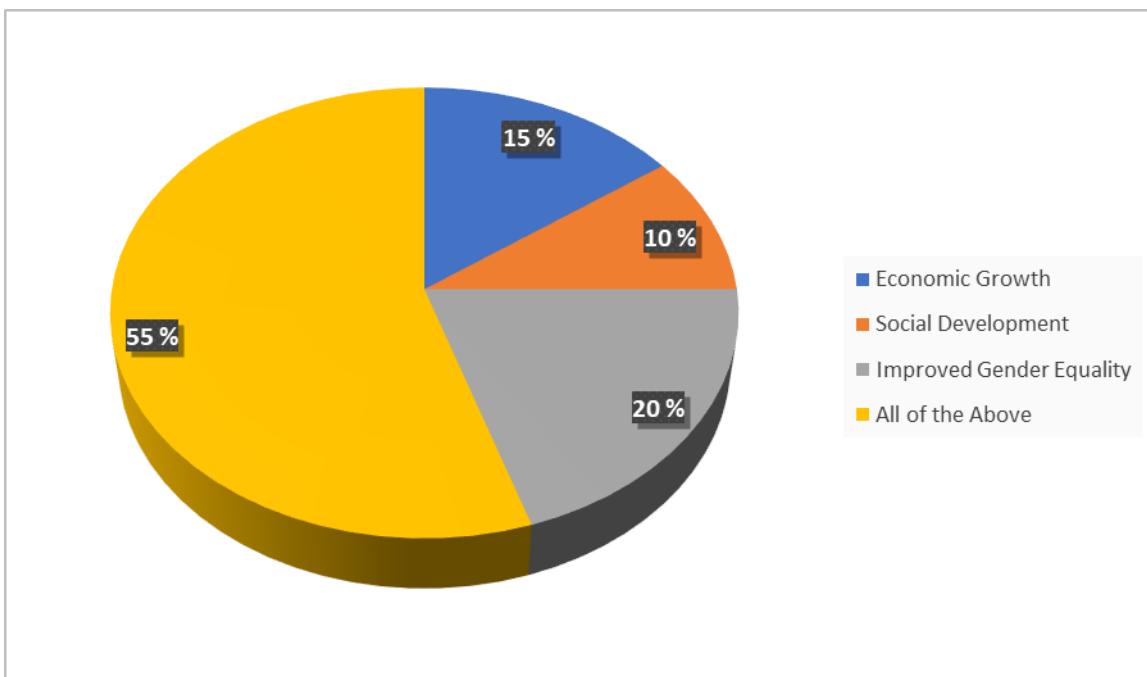


FIGURE 5. The benefits that Nepalese society gained from empowering women

Respondents were asked how important the role of education was in empowering Nepalese Women through employment. Most of the respondents answered, Very Important (65%), Somewhat Important (25%), Not Very Important (5%), and Not Important at All (5%) respectively. Education plays a keen role in empowering Nepalese Women through employment.

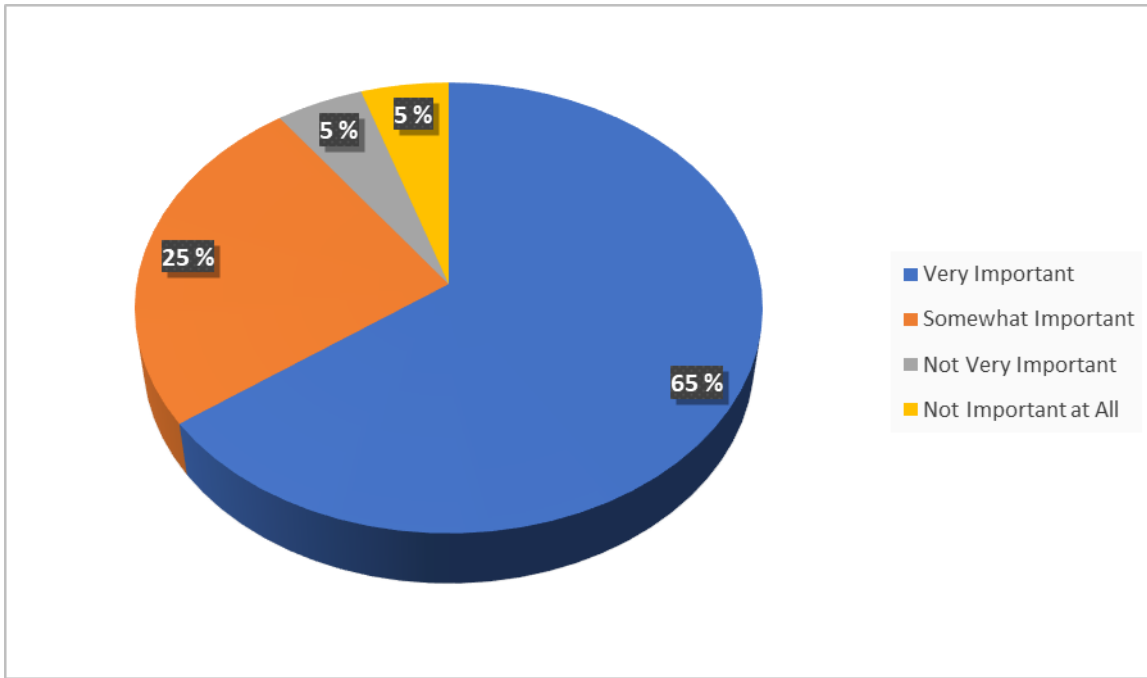


FIGURE 6. The importance of education in empowering Nepalese women

Theme four was impact of working life.

Respondents were asked how working in the garment factory impacted the lives of Nepalese Women. Most of the respondents answered, positively (55%), It is unclear (25%) and Negatively (20%) respectively. Working in the garment factory has impacted positively in the lives of Nepalese women.

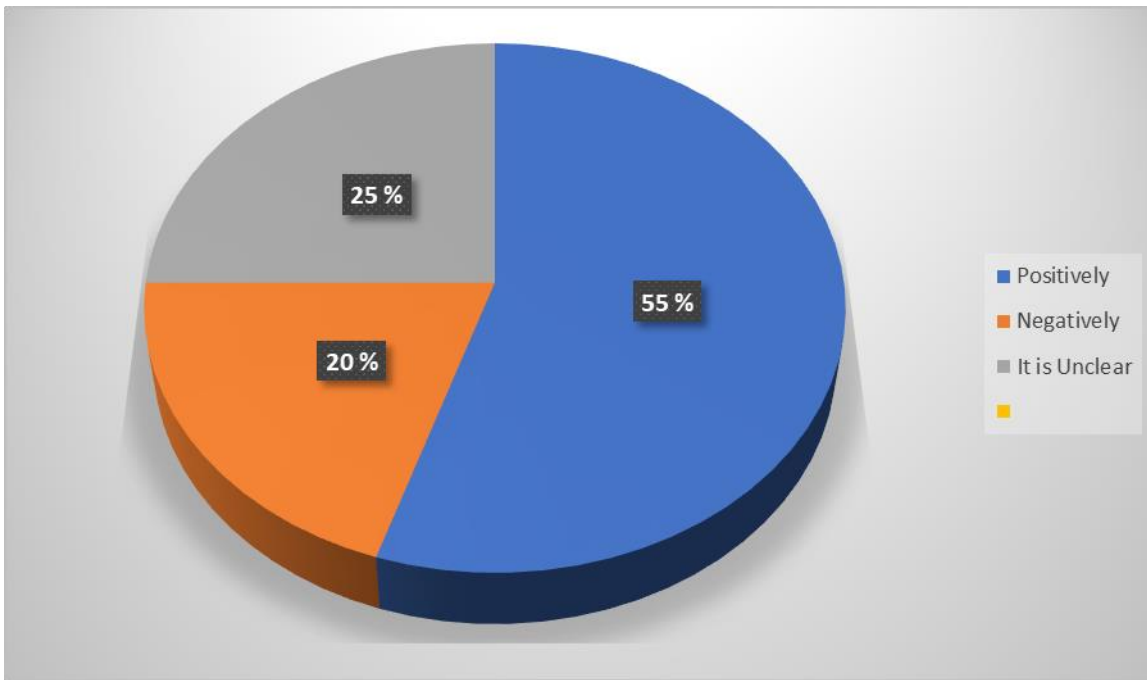


FIGURE 7. The impact on the lives of Nepalese women

Respondents were asked where they noticed any changes in the attitudes or behaviours of men towards women in their community or country because of women's empowerment initiatives. Most of the students answered, Strongly Agree (60%), Agree (25%), Strongly Disagree (10%) and Disagree (5%) respectively. It is clearly shown that the women notice some changes in the attitude or behaviours of men towards women in their community or country because of women's empowerment initiatives.

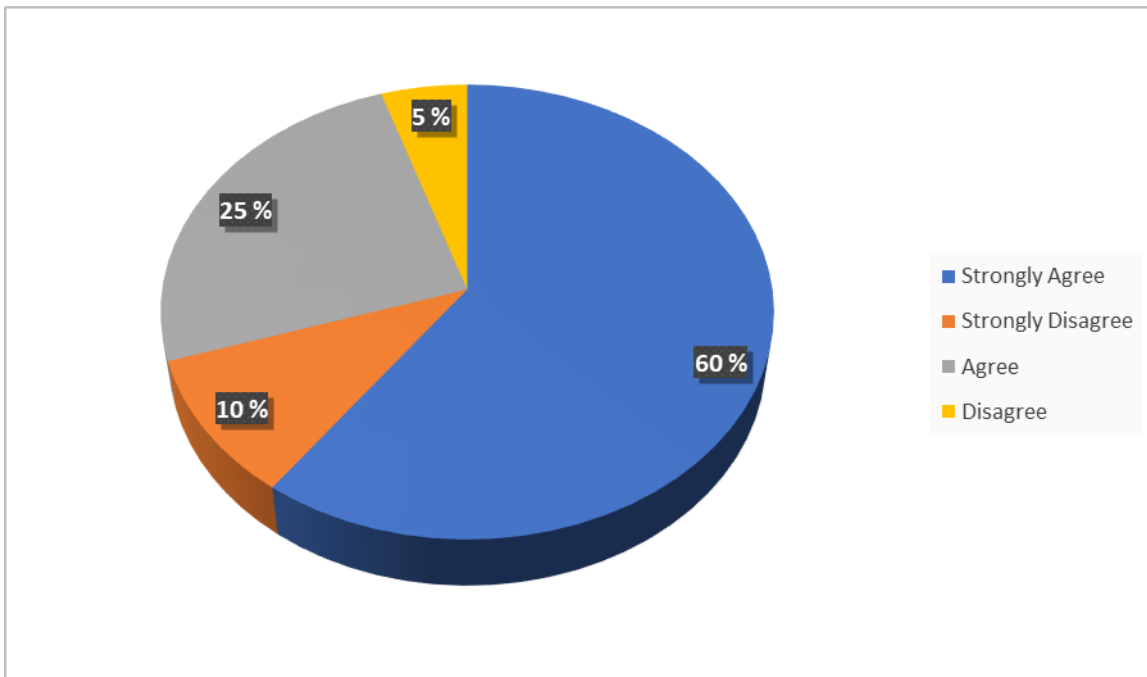


FIGURE 8. The changes in the attitude or behaviour of men

Respondents were asked how empowerment through employment might impact individuals. Most of the respondents answered, All of the Above (40%), Improved Self-Esteem, Confidence and Dare to speak in Public (25%), Improved Financial Stability and Decision-Making Power (20%) and Improved Relationship with Family and Friends (15%) respectively.

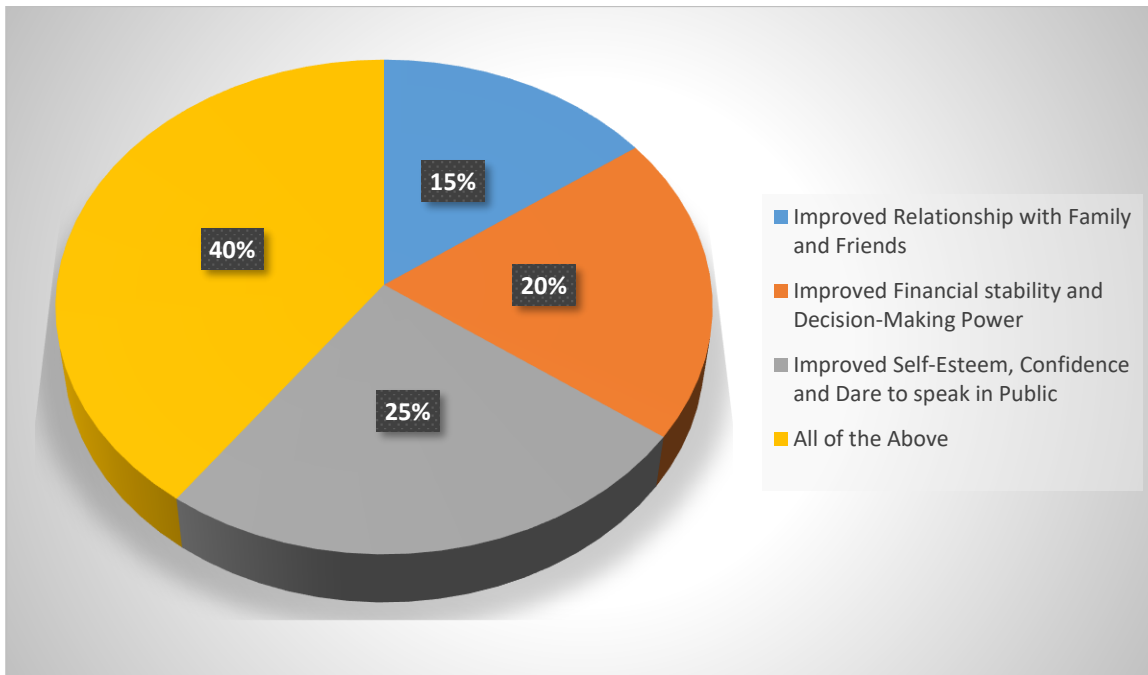


FIGURE 9. The impact of empowerment on individuals

Theme five was career development.

Respondents were asked what advice they would give to young Nepalese women who are just starting their careers and want to succeed in the workforce. Most of the respondents answered, All of the above (49%), Be confident and Assertive (25%), Find Mentors and Networking Opportunities (16%), and Focus on Education (10%) respectively. It meant that focusing on education and skill building, finding mentors and networking opportunities, and being confident and assertive are the key factors who are just starting their careers and want to succeed in the workforce.

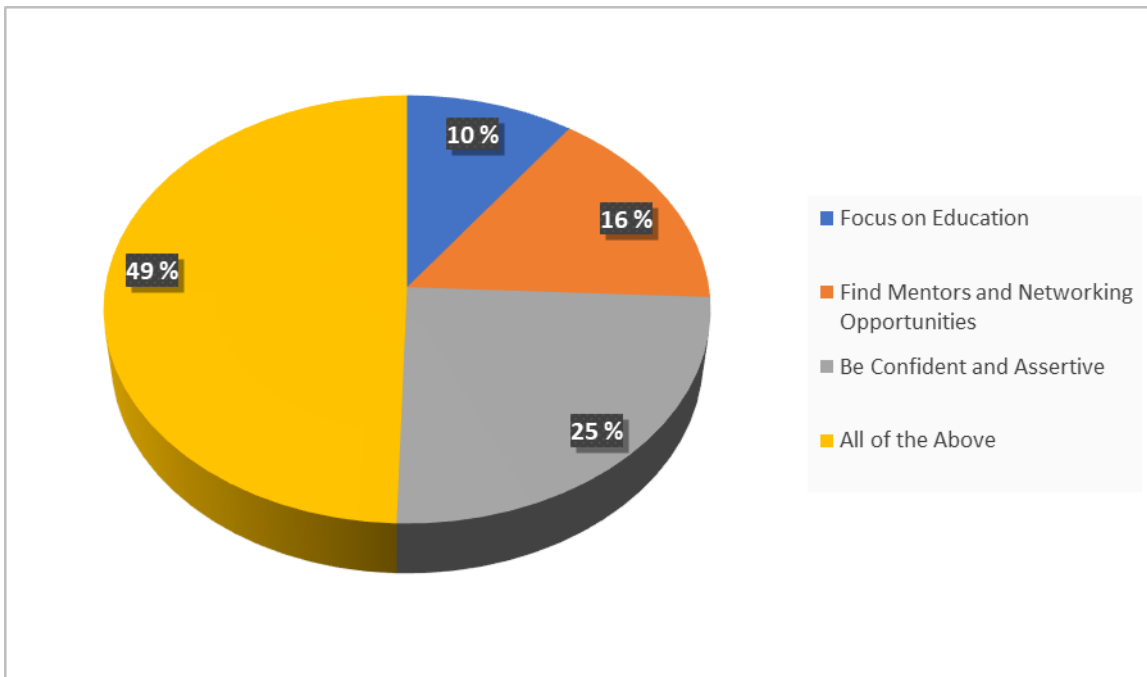


FIGURE 10. The advice to young Nepalese women who are starting their career

Respondents were asked if they can share any success stories of Nepalese women who have overcome significant obstacles to succeed in their careers. Most of the respondents answered, yes (60%) and No (40%) respectively.

Respondents were asked if they could provide examples of Nepalese women who achieved success in leadership positions in the garment factory. Most of the respondents answered, yes (65%) and No (35%) respectively.

Respondents were asked if they would give advice to young Nepalese women who were interested in working in the garment factory. Most of the respondents answered, All of the Above (40%), Focus on Education and Skill-Building (25%), Find Mentors and Networking Opportunities (20%), and Be Assertive and confident (15%) respectively. They advise strongly focusing on education and skill-building, finding mentors and networking opportunities, and being assertive and confident to young Nepalese women who are interested in working in the garment factory.

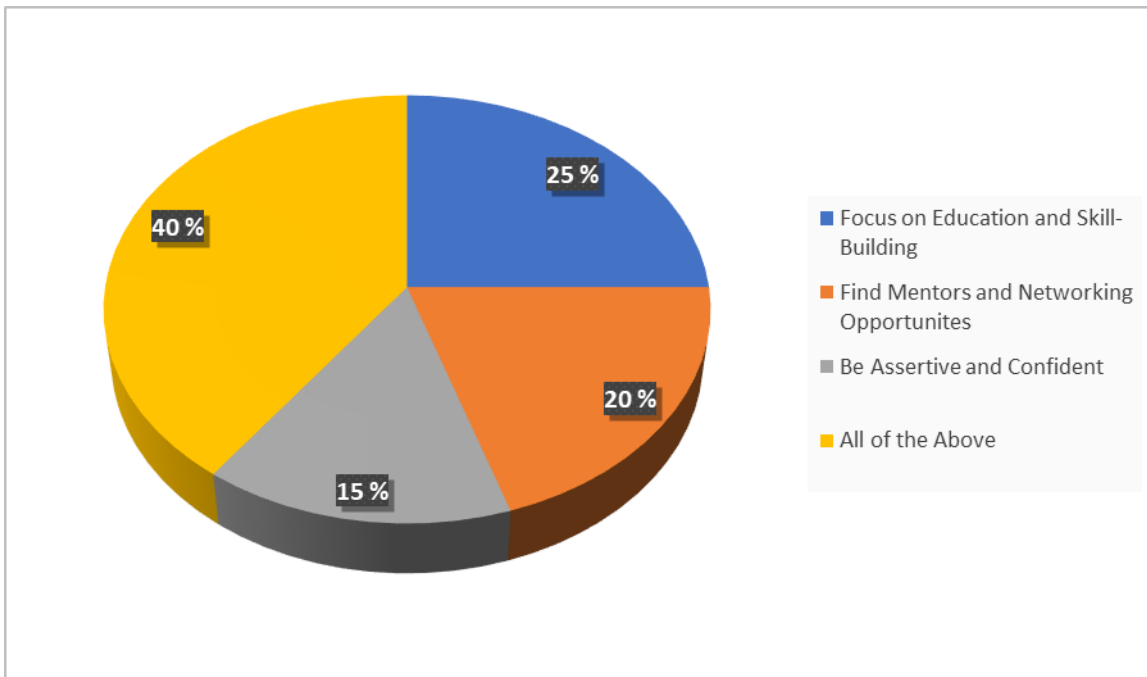


FIGURE 11. The advice to young Nepalese women interested in garment factory

Theme six was leadership.

Respondents were asked how important is to have more women in leadership positions in Nepal. Most of the respondents answered, Very Important (60%), Somewhat Important (20%), Not Very Important (20%), and Not Important at All (5%) respectively. It is clearly indicated that more women must be in leadership positions in Nepal.

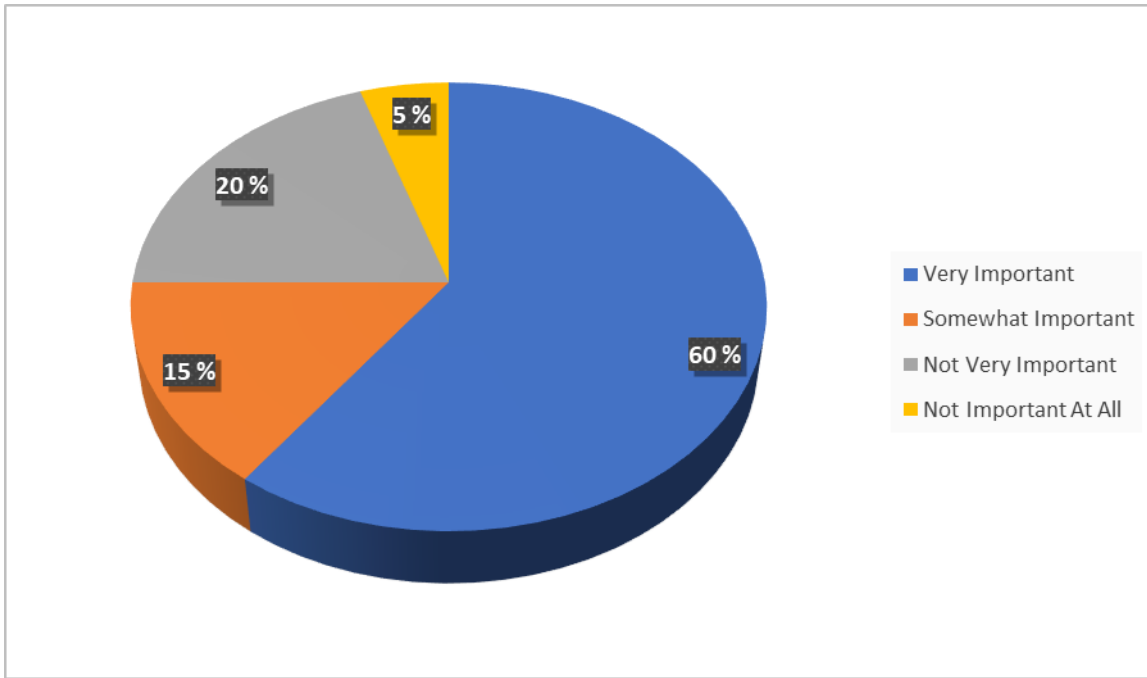


FIGURE 12. The importance of leadership position in Nepal

Respondents were asked how Nepalese women could use their employment and leadership positions to empower other women in their communities. Most of the respondents answered, All of the above (40%), Advocating Policies that Promote Gender Equality (25%), Mentoring and Networking Opportunities (20%), and Providing Training and Education Opportunities (15%) respectively. Nepalese women could equality and employment and leadership positions to empower other women in their communities by mentoring and networking opportunities, advocating for policies that promote gender equality, and providing training and education opportunities.

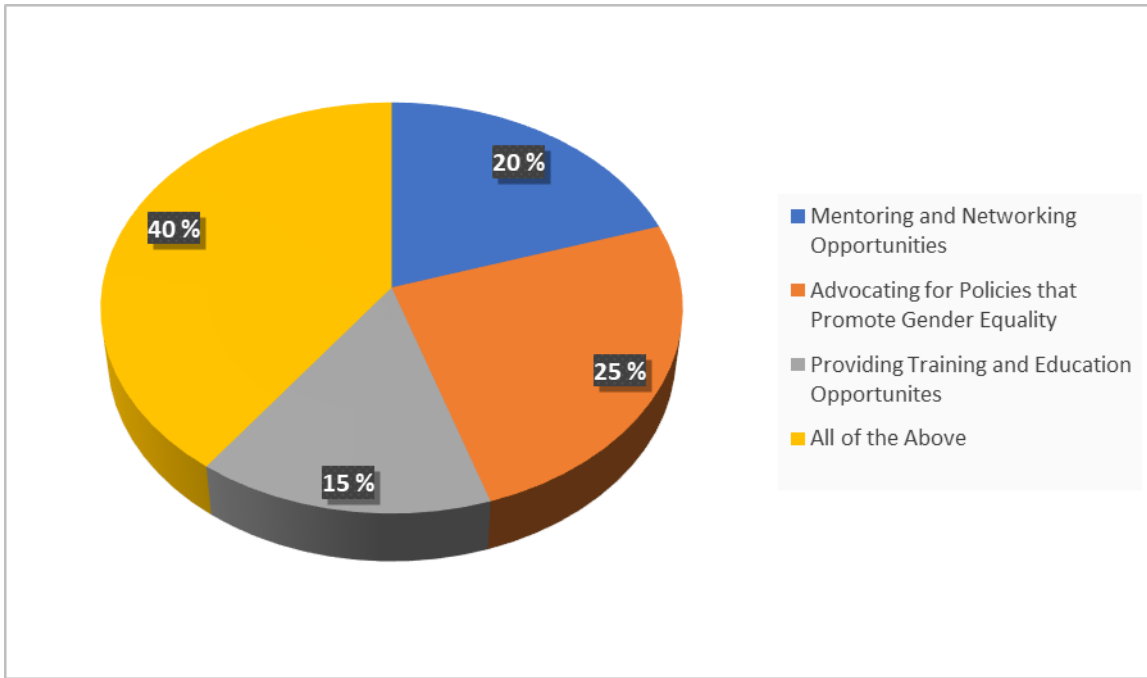


FIGURE 13. The use of employment and leadership in communities

Theme seven as working condition.

Respondents were asked what they thought were the biggest challenges Nepalese women face in the workforce. Most of the respondents answered, All of the Above (35%), Lack of Education (25%), Cultural Attitude towards Women (20%), and Lack of Job Opportunities (20%) respectively. All three points are the biggest challenges where Nepalese women face in the workforce.

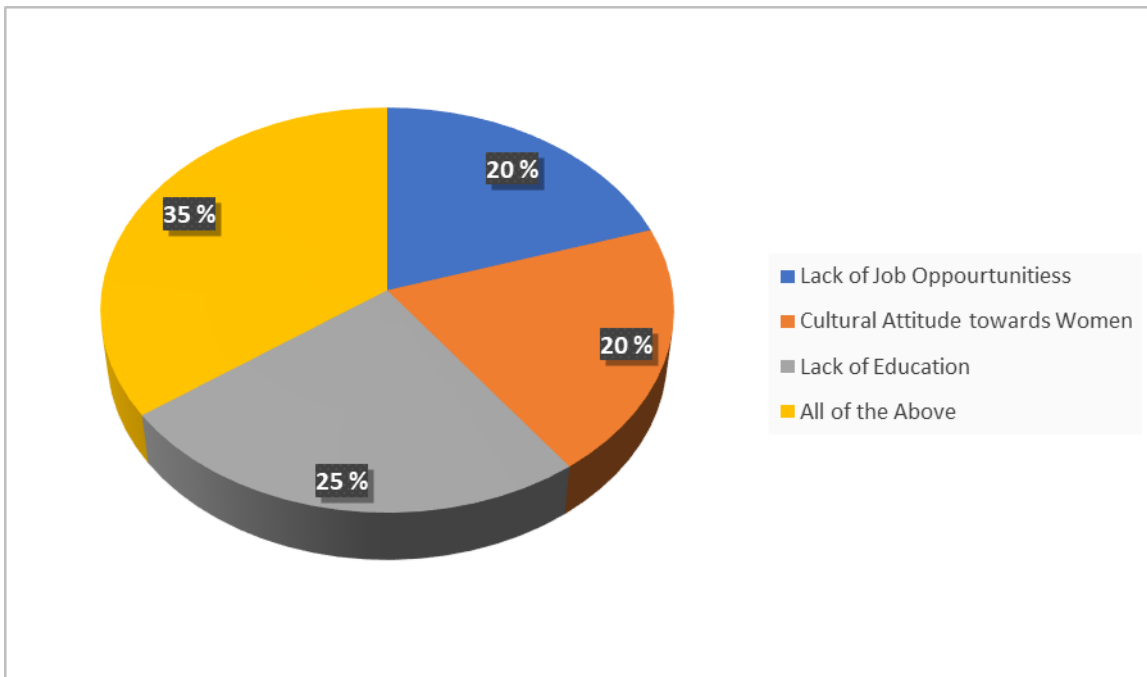


FIGURE 14. The challenges faced in the work place

Respondents were asked if they could describe the working conditions in the factory where they work. Most of the respondents answered, Safe and Comfortable (65%), Somewhat Safe but Uncomfortable (25%), and Unsafe and Uncomfortable (10%) respectively. The working conditions in the factory where they work are safe and comfortable.

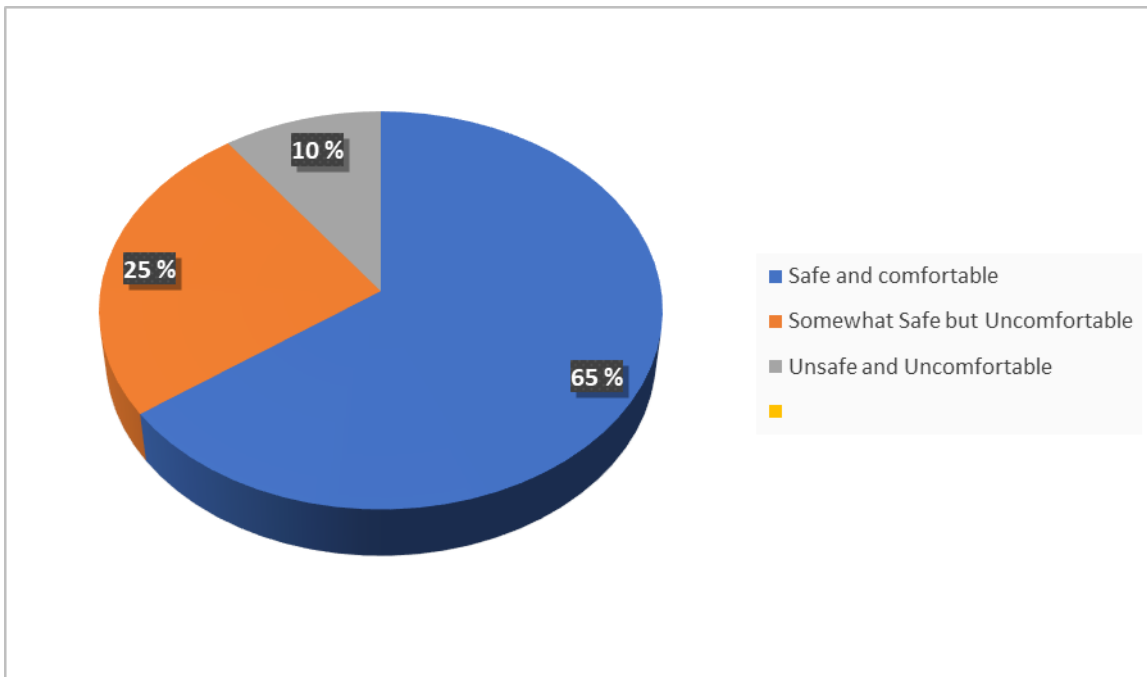


FIGURE 15. The working conditions of the factory

Theme eight was organisational commitment.

Respondents were asked how companies could help to promote gender equality and empower Nepalese women in the workforce. Most of the respondents answered, all of the above (45%), Providing Equal Pay and Benefits (25%), Offering Mentorship and Networking Opportunities (20%), and Implementing Diversity and Inclusion Policies (10%) respectively. The company must follow the following points to promote gender equality and empower Nepalese women in the workforce.

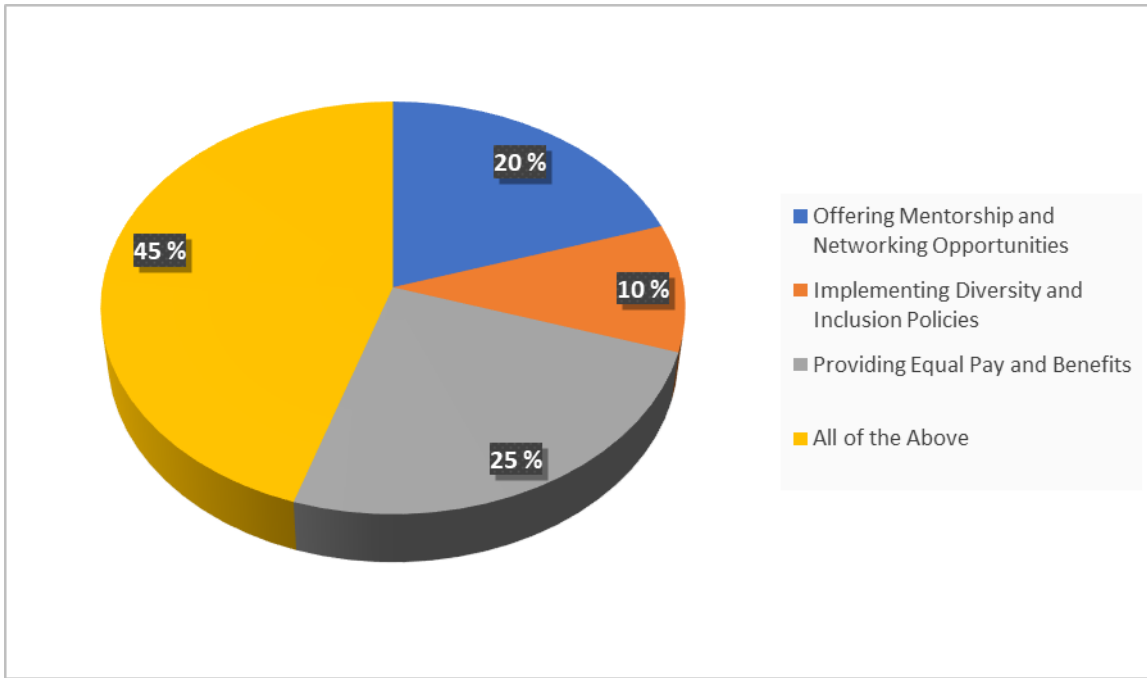


FIGURE 16. The role of company to promote generate equality

Respondents were asked how the garment factory promoted the health and well-being of its female employees. Most of the respondents answered, All the Above (40%), By Providing Health Insurance and Benefits (20%), By Ensuring Safe Working Conditions (20%), and By Providing Counselling Services for Mental Health Support (20%) respectively. Considering the following points, the factory promotes the health and well-being of its female employees.

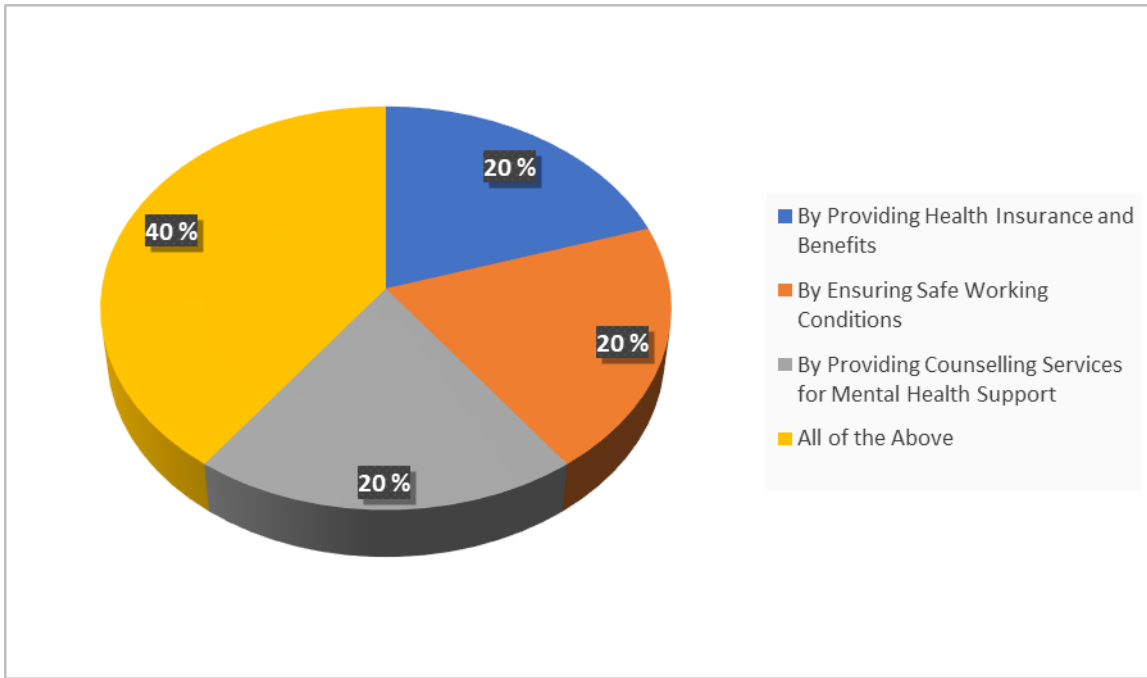


FIGURE 17. The concern of the company for health and wellbeing

Theme nine was national commitment.

Respondents were asked what role the government could play in promoting the empowerment of Nepalese women through employment. Most of the respondents answered, All the Above (40%), Implementing Laws and Policies (25%), Providing Education and Awareness Programs (20%), and Encouraging Women to enter Male-Dominated Fields (15%) respectively. The government must implement laws and policies which promote gender equality, provide education and awareness programs, and encourage women to enter the male-dominated field in promoting the empowerment of Nepalese women through employment.

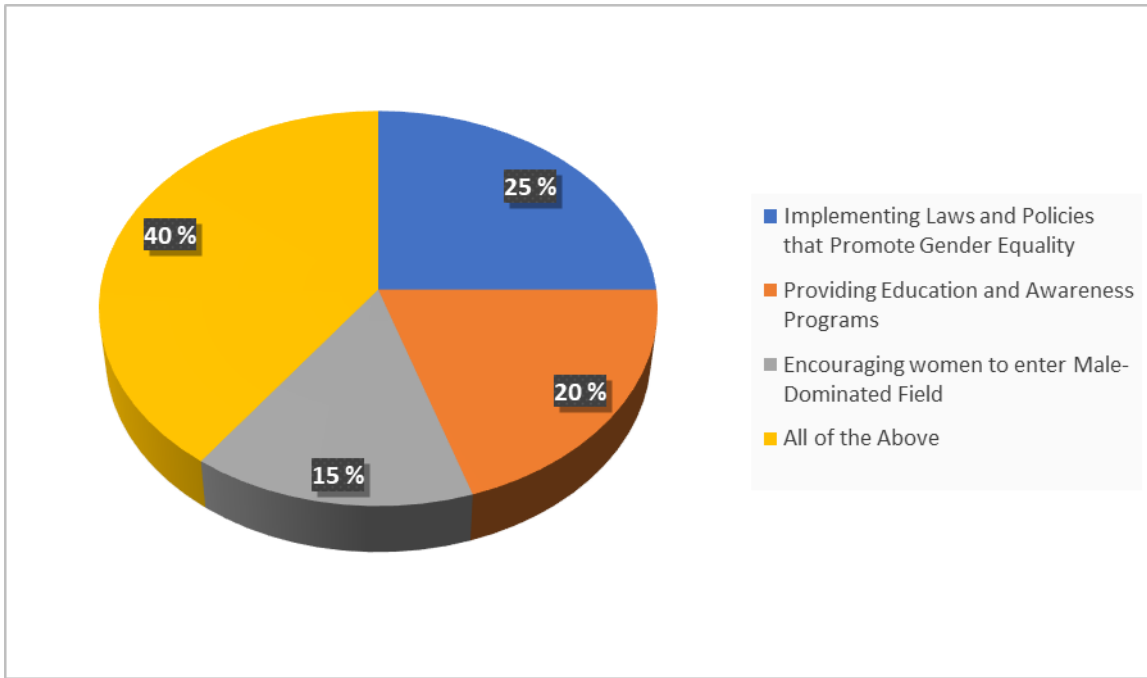


FIGURE 18. The role of government for women empowerment

The respondents were asked what role they perceived the Nepalese government as having in promoting the CEDAW principles at the clothing factory and what steps they believed the government should take in that regard. The most common response from respondents was All of the Above (55%), followed by Promoting Awareness and Understanding of CEDAW Principles Among All Stakeholders in the Garment Industry (15%), Providing Financial Support and Incentives for Garment Factories that Align with CEDAW Principles (15%), and Enforcing and Monitoring Compliance with CEDAW Policies and Guidelines (15%). The following factors are taken into consideration as the government actively promotes CEDAW's principles in the apparel sector.

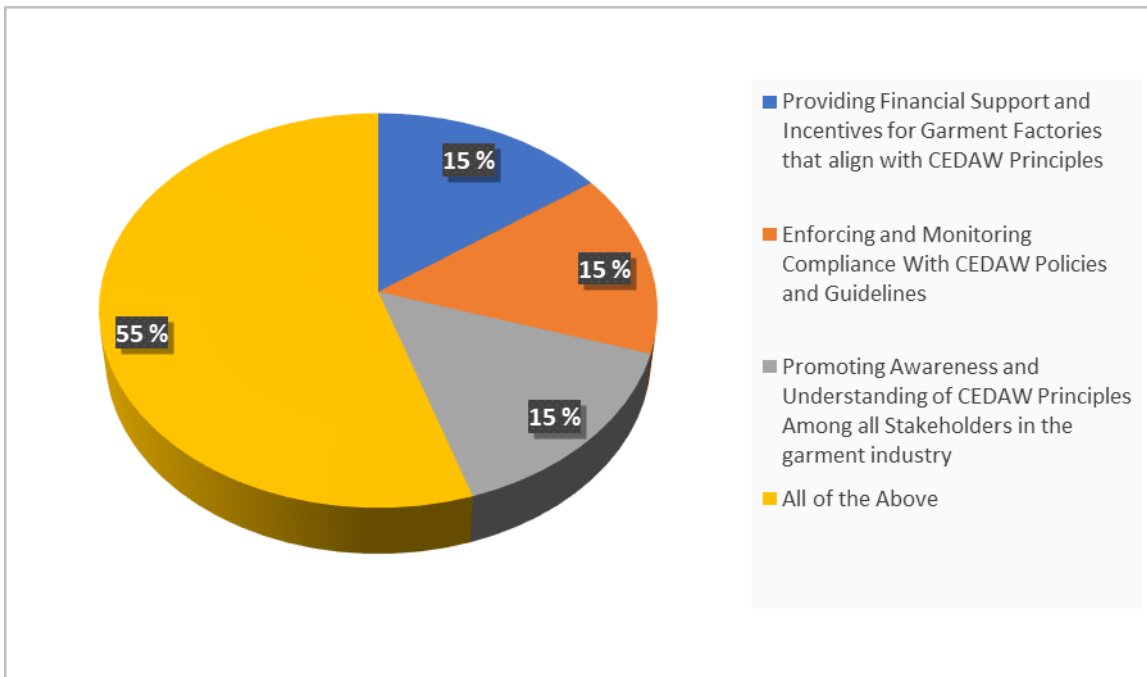


FIGURE 19. The principles of CEDAW in garment factory

Respondents were asked how the garment factory in Nepal improved to further empower Nepalese women through employment. Most of the respondents answered, all of the above (40%), By Providing Education and Training Opportunities for Women (25%), By Promoting Women to Leadership Positions (20%), and By Ensuring Safe and comfortable working conditions (15%) respectively”. The garment factory in Nepal can be improved by providing education and training opportunities for women, ensuring safe and comfortable working conditions, and by promoting women to leadership positions to further empower Nepalese women through employment.

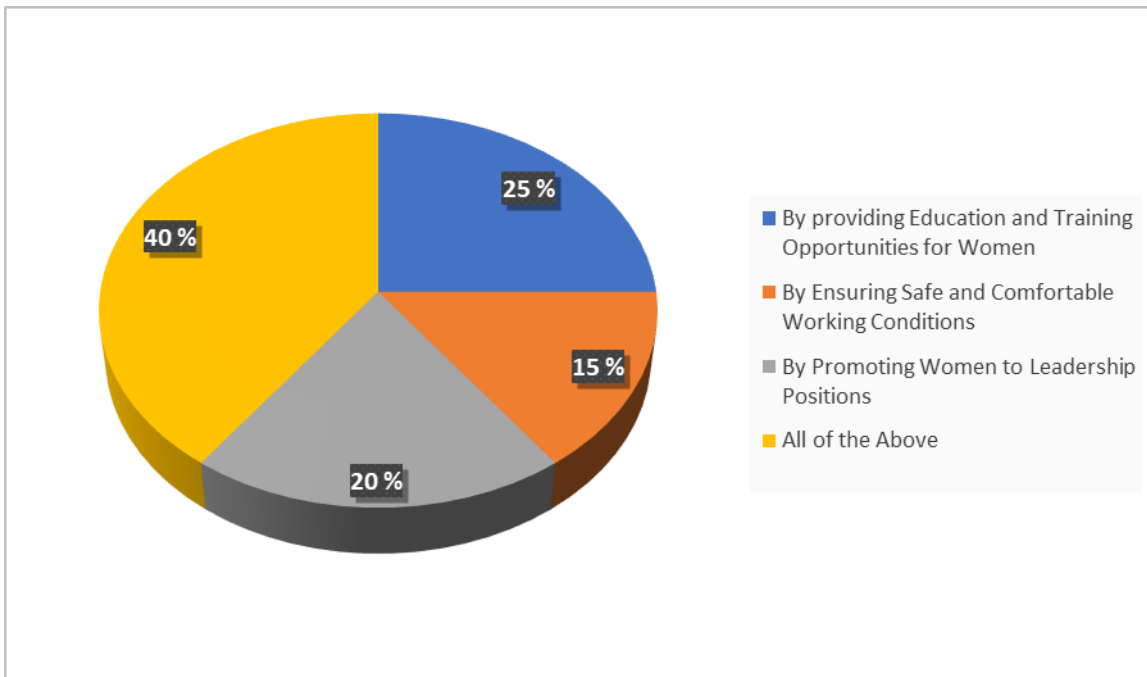


FIGURE 20. The improvement of the company for empowering women

Theme ten was an international commitment (CEDAW)

Respondents were asked how the garment factory aligned with the principles of CEDAW where they worked. Most of the respondents answered, All the Above (45%), By Providing Education and Training Opportunities for Women (25%), By Promoting Gender Equality in the Workplace (15%), and By Ensuring Safe and Healthy Working Conditions (15%) respectively. The garment factory aligns with the principles of CEDAW by providing education and training opportunities for women, promoting gender equality in the workplace, and by ensuring safe and healthy working conditions.

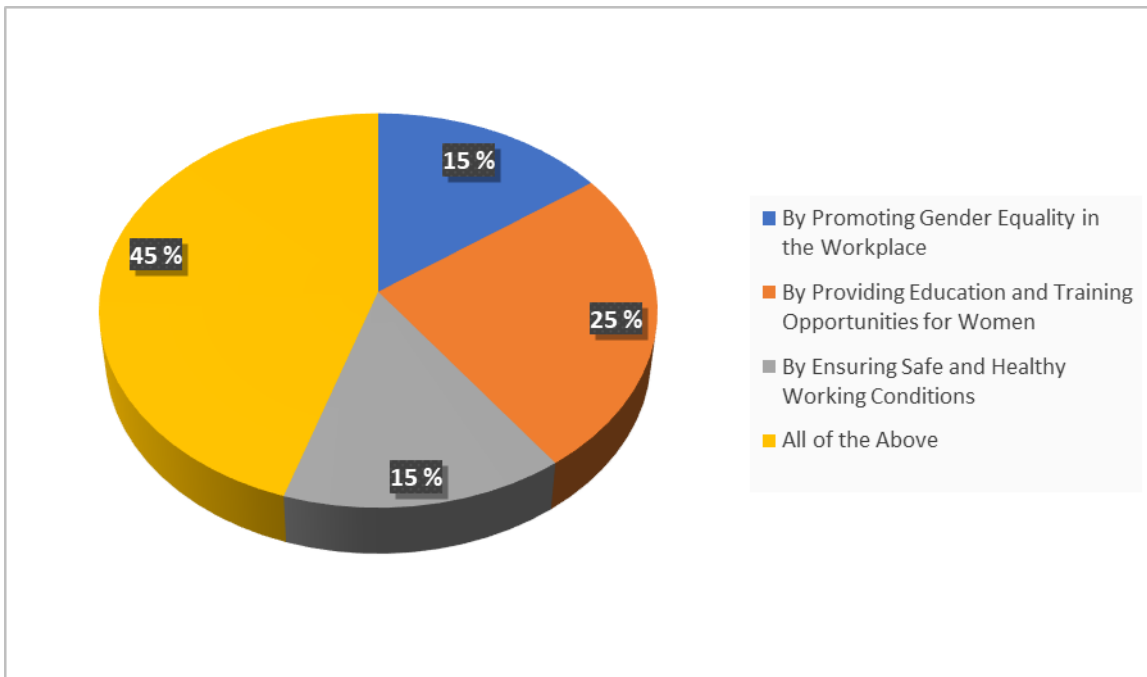


FIGURE 21. The garment factory aligned with the principles of CEDAW

Respondents were asked what the garment factory faced in fully implementing the principles of CEDAW and how it addressed these challenges. Most of the respondents answered, all of the above (60%), Lack of Awareness or Understanding of CEDAW Principles (20%), Resistance from Employees or Management (10%), and Limited Resources and Capacity (10%) respectively. The garment factory must understand the challenges like limited resources and capacity, resistance from employees or management, and lack of awareness or understanding of CEDAW principles to address it.

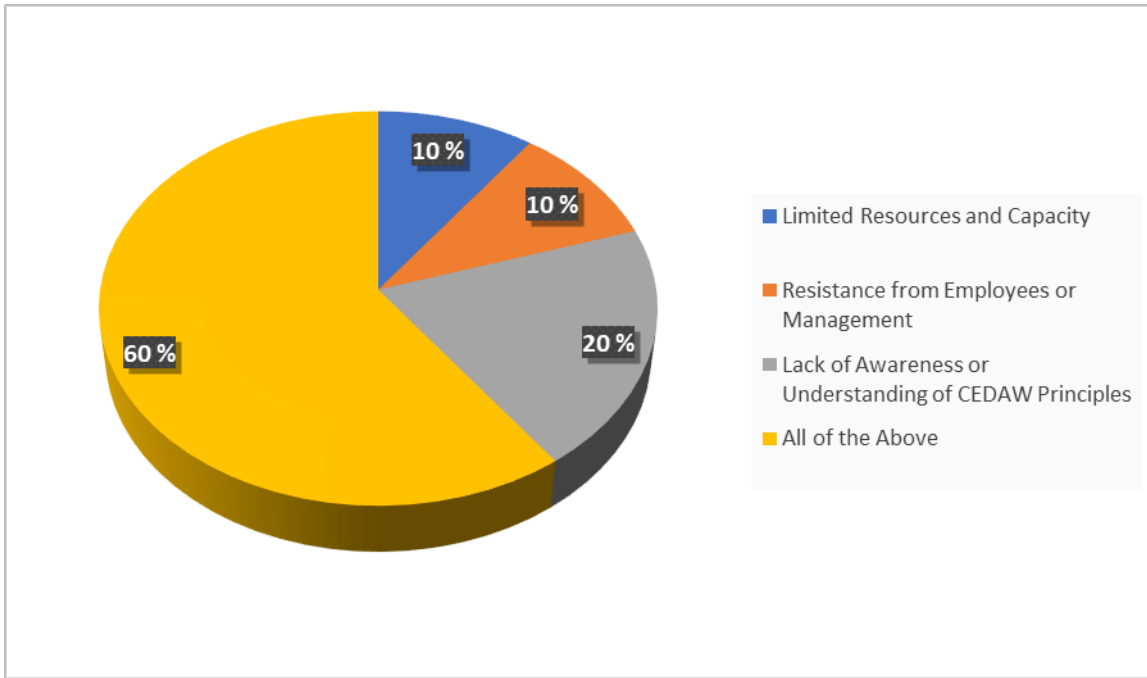
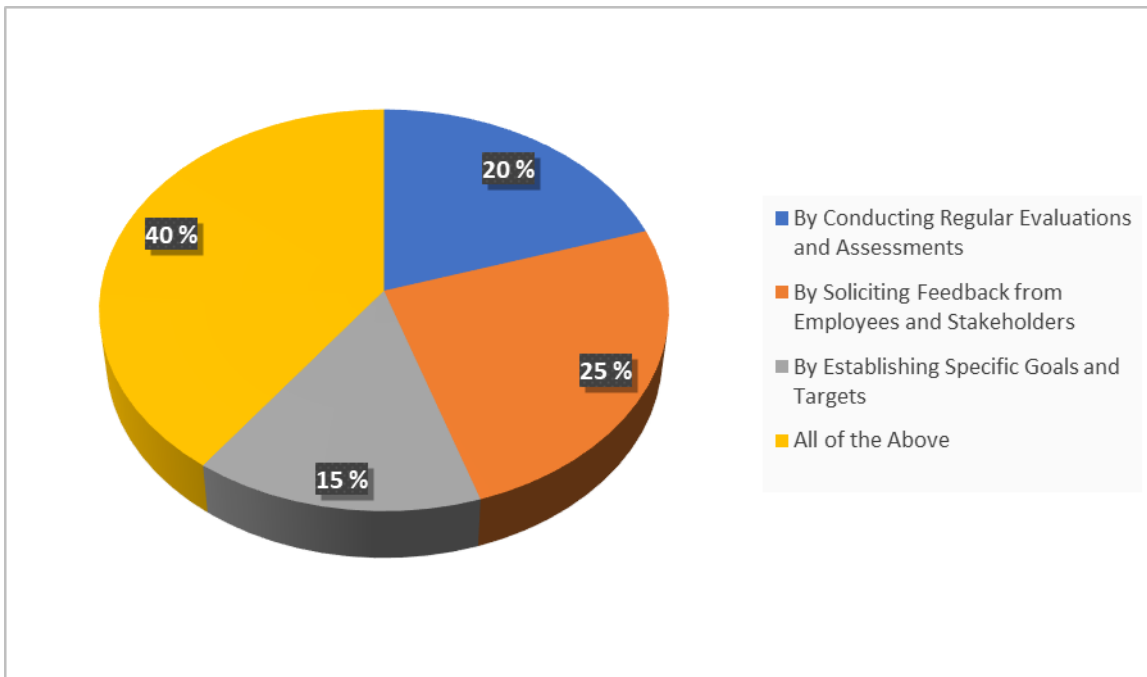


FIGURE 22. The challenges for fully implementing CEDAW

Respondents were asked how the garment factory measured its progress in implementing CEDAW principles and what actions it took to address areas for improvement. Most of the respondents answered, All of the Above (40%), By Soliciting Feedback from Employees and Stakeholders (25%), By Conducting Regular Evaluations and Assessments (20%), and By Establishing Specific Goals and Targets (15%) respectively. The factory must measure its progress in implementing by the following points.



FIGURES 23. The measurement of progress by implementing CEDAW in company

Respondents were asked what the benefits were of implementing the CEDAW policy in Nepal for the empowerment of women through employment. Most of the respondents answered, All of the above (40%), Increased Economic Growth (25%), Improved Gender Equality (20%), and Enhanced Social Development (15%) respectively. The implementation of the CEDAW policy helps Nepal for increasing economic growth, improving gender equality, and enhance social development.

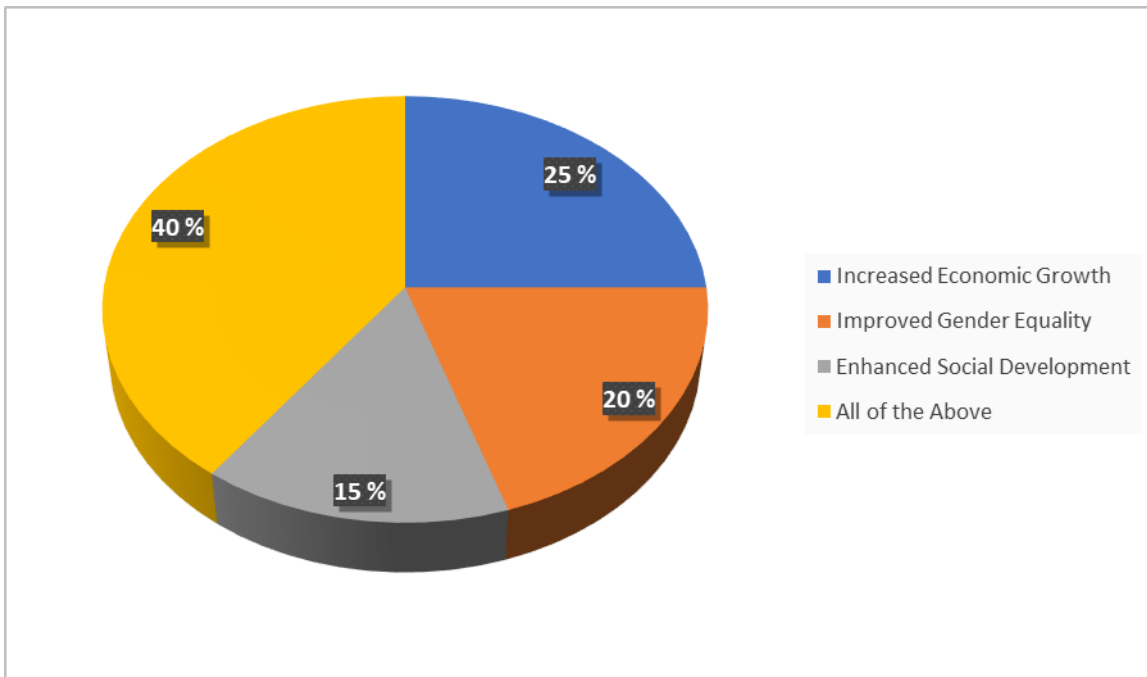


FIGURE 24. The benefits of CEDAW policy implementation

7.3 Findings based on interviews

Based on the responses provided by the three women interviewed, there are several findings that can be drawn regarding women's empowerment and disempowerment in Nepal.

Firstly, all three women underlined the value of education and information in empowering themselves and other women. They also underlined the need of encouraging other women to speak out for themselves, follow their goals and objectives, and assume leadership positions. This emphasizes the significance of fostering a supportive atmosphere for women in which they may express themselves and demand their rights.

Secondly, the women who were interviewed recognized many elements that lead to women's disempowerment in Nepal. Poverty, a lack of education, conventional gender roles, societal norms, gender-based violence, discrimination, and uneven access to resources and opportunity are among these causes. Addressing these difficulties at both the individual and structural levels can aid in the empowerment and equality of women.

Thirdly, the women interviewed discussed the power dynamics in their families and society. While some women felt free to express themselves and challenge established gender norms, others believed that males possess majority of the decision-making authority. This shows that greater gender equality in Nepalese society is still needed, and that more needs to be done to enhance women's involvement and representation in decision-making processes.

Fourthly, the ladies also discussed the significance of government policies in empowering women. While they agreed that the government had policies in place, they also emphasized the importance of greater implementation, coordination, and communication among various departments and levels of government. Greater transparency and information exchange are also required to ensure that individuals are informed of their rights and entitlements.

Finally, the women discussed the difficulties that women experienced while speaking in public. While some women were at ease speaking in public, others were apprehensive or felt unappreciated. This emphasizes the need of fostering a more inclusive atmosphere in which women's opinions are heard and treated seriously, and in which they are given the same chances and platforms as men to speak on important issues.

In conclusion, the findings indicate that Nepal still has a long way to go in terms of boosting women's empowerment and gender equality. Addressing the different causes that contribute to women's disempowerment, as well as fostering education, leadership, and representation, can contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society. Governments must also improve policy implementation and information exchange to ensure that women understand their rights and entitlements. We can build a more empowered environment for women in Nepal by working together to address these concerns.

7.4 Findings based on questionnaire

This section of the thesis describes the survey's findings. Only the employees' viewpoints were considered in the questionnaire survey's findings. The survey's key findings focus on the empowerment of Nepalese women through employment at Hana Garments Factory. Employment plays a significant role in empowering Nepalese women. Research shows that working women have more control over their lives and can make decisions about their future. Access to education is also an important factor in em-

powering Nepalese women. Educated women are more likely to seek and find work and are more capable of making informed decisions about their lives. The Nepalese society can gain economic growth, social development, and gender equality by empowering women.

The survey had the participation of only female employees altogether 20. The employees between 20-30, 30-40, and 40 above participated in the survey. The study found that most employees had a better understanding of empowerment. To thrive in the workforce, they advised focusing on education and skill development, seeking mentors and networking opportunities, and being confident and aggressive. They also recognized that more women needed to be in positions of leadership to empower other women in their communities and lobby for legislation that promote gender equality. Most employees said Hana Garments provided safe and comfortable working conditions. The Hana Garments were also in accordance with CEDAW guidelines. It meant that Hana Garments advocated gender equality and offered women educational and training possibilities. The greatest problems Hana Garments had in properly adopting CEDAW principles were limited resources and ability, employee and management opposition, and a lack of knowledge or comprehension of the CEDAW principles. Most workers stated that the government was actively supporting Nepalese women's empowerment by enacting laws and policies that promote gender equality and encouraging women to enter male-dominated fields. Likewise, the Nepalese government assisted Hana Garments through providing financial assistance and incentives that are consistent with CEDAW principles, enforcing and monitoring compliance with CEDAW rules and standards, and raising awareness and comprehension of CEDAW principles among all factory stakeholders. Most of the employees saw that men's attitudes or behaviours toward women in their community were changing as a result of women's empowerment programs. We discovered that few workers felt that being a woman and having social worth were the primary reasons for doing home chores in their family.

7.5 Discussion and recommendations

The thesis topic, "The empowerment of Nepalese women through employment", with a case study of a Nepalese garment factory, is an important and timely research topic. The garment industry has emerged as a significant employer of women in Nepal, and as such, it has the potential to empower women by providing them with economic opportunities and increasing their decision-making power.

The case study emphasizes the multiple ways in which employment in the garment industry may empower women, including financial independence, increased skills and knowledge, and social standing. The survey does, however, highlight some of the barriers that women encounter in the business, such as prejudice, a lack of training and education, and bad working conditions. These issues must be addressed if women are to be really empowered via work in the clothing business.

One significant proposal for the Nepalese clothing industry is to implement policies and practices that promote gender equality in workplace. This might involve giving women with chances for training and education, guaranteeing equal pay for equal labour, and combating gender-based discrimination and harassment. Women's progress can also be aided by the industry's provision of leadership training and mentorship programs, as well as by actively involving women in decision-making processes. Another suggestion is for the Nepalese government to be more proactive in promoting gender equality in the clothing sector. Enforcing labour laws and regulations that safeguard women's rights, providing support services such as childcare and healthcare, and establishing policies and programs that promote gender equality and women's empowerment are all examples. The government can also collaborate with industry partners to create and execute gender-sensitive policies and initiatives that meet the unique demands and problems that women confront in the garment sector. It is critical to address socio-economic and cultural elements that may lead to gender disparity in Nepal. This might involve encouraging education and awareness efforts to challenge established gender roles and stereotypes, as well as encouraging women's participation in political and decision-making processes at all levels.

Finally, employing Nepalese women in the textile industry is an essential route for fostering gender equality and sustainable development in Nepal. The Nepalese garment industry and the government of Nepal can create an enabling environment for women to participate more fully in the workforce and achieve greater economic, social, and personal well-being by adoption policies and practices that promote gender equality, as well as addressing the broader societal and cultural factors that contribute to gender inequality.

When considering the empowerment of Nepalese women through employment in the context of the Nepalese garment industry, it is critical to incorporate CEDAW principles. One of the basic objectives of CEDAW is that women should have equal access to employment and should not encounter workplace discrimination. To guarantee that women in Nepal's garment sector are empowered via employment, all types of discrimination against women, including gender-based discrimination and harassment, must be eliminated. The industry should establish gender equality policies and practices, such as

equal pay for equal labour, providing women with training and education opportunities, and resolving gender-based discrimination and harassment.

8 CONCLUSIONS

In a nutshell, women's empowerment is an important idea that has received a lot of attention in recent years. It is a process in which women are given the tools and resources they need to achieve gender equality and promote their rights and well-being. Individuals, families, communities, and society as a whole all gain from women's empowerment. It has the potential to improve women's economic, social, and political standing, resulting in higher involvement in decision-making and improved representation in leadership posts. It can also help to improve gender equity, eliminate gender-based violence, and contribute to general social development. To achieve women's empowerment, however, all parties, including governments, civil society groups, and individuals, must work together to address the core causes of gender inequality and discrimination. Women's empowerment must be promoted indefinitely, since it is a critical aspect in the achievement of human rights and the building of sustainable communities. Over the years, Nepal has achieved considerable strides toward women's emancipation. There are various benefits to women's empowerment in Nepal, including increased access to education: Women currently has better access to education in Nepal, with more females attending school and enrolling in higher education. As a result, women now have more options to seek occupations and better their economic standing. Improved health outcomes: In Nepal, women's empowerment efforts have improved maternal and child health outcomes. Women now have better access to healthcare services and information, which has resulted in lower maternal death rates and better child health outcomes. Increased participation in decision-making: Women are now actively participating in decision-making processes at the village, municipal, and national levels in Nepal. This has resulted in higher female leadership representation and enhanced gender equity. Economic empowerment: Women's empowerment projects have boosted women's access to capital, training, and resources, allowing them to establish and grow enterprises. As a result, women and their families have fared better economically. Reduced gender-based violence: Women's empowerment programs in Nepal have helped to reduce gender-based violence, such as domestic abuse and sexual harassment. Women are more aware of their rights and are more prepared to confront gender-based abuse.

Overall, women's empowerment has aided Nepal's social and economic progress. However, more effort needs to be done to address the issues that women confront, particularly in rural regions and underprivileged populations.

The Nepal government and CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women) have played significant roles in promoting women empowerment in Nepal.

The Nepal government has taken several measures to promote women empowerment, including Legal reforms: The government has enacted legal changes to repeal discriminatory laws and practices against women and to promote gender equality. Women's empowerment policies: The government has developed policies and programs to support women's empowerment in areas such as education, health, economic empowerment, and political participation. Gender-responsive budgeting: Gender-responsive budgeting has been introduced by the government, with the goal of ensuring that government budgets are gender-sensitive and that resources are allocated to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Institutional mechanisms: The government has developed institutional institutions to promote women's rights and address gender-based violence, including as the National Women's Commission and the Ministry of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens.

CEDAW, an international treaty approved by Nepal in 1991, has also played an important role in fostering women's empowerment in Nepal. CEDAW has given the government with a framework for developing policies and initiatives to enhance women's rights and gender equality. It has also been used to advocate for and raise awareness among civil society groups and the public.

CEDAW has assisted Nepal in the implementation of legislative and policy changes, the development of institutional structures to address gender-based violence, and the promotion of women's involvement in decision-making processes. In addition, CEDAW has given Nepal with technical and financial assistance to boost women's empowerment projects and initiatives.

Overall, the Nepalese government and CEDAW have been crucial in fostering women's empowerment in Nepal. However, more effort must be done to overcome the remaining obstacles and guarantee that all Nepalese women may reach their full potential and enjoy their rights and freedoms.

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Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Theme One: Personal Experiences of Empowerment and Strategies for Empowering Others

- Q.1. How do you empower yourself and the women around you?
- Q.2. What makes you a strong woman? What fulfils you?
- Q.3. What strategies have you used to empower yourself when faced with challenging-situations?

Theme two: Family Dynamics or Relationships

- Q.4. What is power balance in the family? Does the woman feel more comfort?
- Q.5. Can you describe a time when you empowered a female family member to take control of her life and make important decisions?

Theme three: Gender Equality

- Q.6. What factors are causing women's disempowerment?
- Q.7. Which of the following is a form of violence against women that can contribute to their disempowerment?

- a) Physical assault
- b) Sexual harassment and assault
- c) Emotional abuse and manipulation
- d) All of the above

Q.8. What is a key factor that contributes to the gender pay gap?

- a) Women choosing to work in lower-paying fields
- b) Women being less qualified or experienced than men
- c) Discrimination and bias against women in hiring and promotions

APPENDIX 1/2

- d) All of the above

Theme four: Gender Roles

Q.9. Do the women dare to speak in public? What benefits can come from men's involvement in this movement, and what benefits can come from men's involvement in this movement?

Theme five: The Relationship between Government Policies and Programming

Q.11. Does the government have a policy programming linkage?

Q.12. What role can civil society organizations and advocacy groups play in influencing government policies and programs related to women's empowerment and gender equality?

Theme six: International Principle

Q.13. How does the Hana Garments comply with the principles of the CEDAW?

Q.14. What role do you see the Nepalese government playing in promoting the principles of CEDAW in the Hana Garments and what actions do you think the government should take?

APPENDIX 2/1

Select any of the options:

1. What is your age group?
 - a. 20-30
 - b. 30-40
 - c. 40+

2. What is your marital status:
 - a. Married
 - b. Unmarried

3. What is the reason to do household work in your family?
 - a. Being Women
 - b. Male Dominating
 - c. Family Dynamics
 - d. All the Above

4. What can you do if you have got good opportunities for employment?
 - a. I would reform economic condition of family better than present.
 - b. I would be guiding family in proper way.
 - c. I would carefully evaluate the opportunities to determine my career and personal goals.
 - d. All the above

5. Who is responsible either success or failure in household work?
 - a. You
 - b. Husband
 - c. All the Family Members
 - d. All the above

6. What are the constraints to perform the role in household work design?
 - a. Family
 - b. Cultural norms
 - c. Social value
 - d. All the above

7. What benefits Nepalese society as a whole gain from empowering women through employment?
 - a. Economic growth
 - b. Social development
 - c. Improved gender equality
 - d. All the above

8. How important is the role of education in empowering Nepalese women through employment?
 - a. Very Important
 - b. Somewhat Important
 - c. Not very Important
 - d. Not Important at all

APPENDIX 2/2

APPENDIX 2/2

9. How has working in the garment factory impacted the lives of Nepalese women?
- Positively
 - Negatively
 - It is unclear.
10. Have you noticed any changes in the attitudes or behaviours of men towards men in your community or country because of women's empowerment initiatives?
- Strongly Agree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
11. How might empowerment through employment impact on individuals?
- Improved Relationships with Family and Friends
 - Improved Financial Stability and Decision-Making Power
 - Improved Self-Esteem, Confidence and Dare to Speak in Public
 - All the above
- APPENDIX 2/3
12. What advice would you give to young Nepalese women who are just starting their careers and want to succeed in the workforce?
- Focus on education and skill-building.
 - Find mentors and networking opportunities.
 - Be confident and assertive.
 - All the above.
13. What advice would you give to young Nepalese women who are interested in working in the garment industry?
- Focus on education and skill-building.
 - Find mentors and networking opportunities.
 - Be assertive and confident.
 - All the above
14. How important is to have more women in Leadership positions in Nepal?
- Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Not very important
 - Not important at all
15. How can Nepalese women use their employment and leadership positions to empower other women in their communities?
- Mentoring and networking opportunities
 - Advocating for policies that promote gender equality.
 - Providing training and education opportunities
 - All the Above

APPENDIX 2/3

16. What do you think the biggest challenges Nepalese women face in the workplace?
 - a. Lack of job opportunities
 - b. Cultural attitude towards women
 - c. Lack of education
 - d. All the above

17. Can you describe the working conditions in the factory where you work?
 - a. Safe and comfortable
 - b. Somewhat safe but uncomfortable
 - c. Unsafe and uncomfortable
 - d. All the above

18. How can companies help to promote gender equality and empower Nepalese women in the workplace?
 - a. Offering mentorship and networking opportunities.
 - b. Implementing diversity and inclusion policies
 - c. Providing equal pay and benefit
 - d. All the above

19. How does the garment factory promote the health and well-being of its female employees?
 - a. By providing health insurance and benefits
 - b. By ensuring safe working conditions
 - c. By providing counselling services for mental health support
 - d. All the above

20. What role the government can play in promoting the empowerment of Nepalese women through employment?
 - a. Implementing laws and policies that promote gender equality.
 - b. Providing education and awareness programs
 - c. Encouraging women to enter in male-dominated field.
 - d. All the above

21. How can the garment factory in Nepal be improved to further empower Nepalese women through employment?
 - a. By providing education and training opportunities
 - b. By ensuring safe and comfortable working conditions
 - c. By promoting women to leadership positions
 - d. All the above

22. How does the garment factory where you work align with the principles of CEDAW?
 - a. By promoting gender equality in the workplace.
 - b. By providing education and training opportunities for women
 - c. By ensuring safe and healthy working conditions
 - d. All the above

23. What challenges does the garment factory face in fully implementing the principles of CEDAW and how does it address these challenges?
 - a. Limited resources and capacity
 - b. Resistance from employees and management

APPENDIX 2/4

- c. Lack of awareness or understanding of CEDAW principles
 - d. All the above
24. How does the garment factory measure its progress in implementing CEDAW principles and what actions does it take to address areas for improvement?
- a. By conducting regular evaluations and assessments
 - b. By soliciting feedback from employees and stakeholders
 - c. By establishing specific goals and targets
 - d. All the above
25. What are the benefits of implementing the CERDAW policy in Nepal for the empowerment of women through employment?
- a. Increased economic growth.
 - b. Improved gender equality
 - c. Enhanced social development.
 - d. All the above