



Laxmi Kandel

WAGE DIFFERENCE IN GENDER: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Author	Laxmi Kandel
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Gender pay gap is still significant issue all over the world with variations due to social-cultural, economic and policy differences. This research explores gender pay disparities in Nepal comparing with Finland to understand how different approaches towards gender equality have economic impacts on women. The study investigates the extent of wage gap between men and women with similar qualification and experience in Nepal and analyse the contributing factors such as social norms, occupational segregation and policy effectiveness.

The research is based on comparative analysis using mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data from secondary sources of labour market statistics are analysed, while qualitative data are gathered from interview and questionnaire.

The findings disclose the deeply rooted social norms and economic structures in Nepal. The study concludes with policy recommendations for Nepal with focusing strong need of legal frameworks and enhances enforcement mechanisms.

Keywords wage pay gap, wage disparity, gender equality, women empowerment, labour market policies

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1 INTRODUCTION

Women have about two-thirds of the rights of men and that nowhere in the world do women have the same legal rights as men. (The World Bank, 2024). Wage disparity between genders remains a pressing global issue, with its causes and consequences varying significantly across nations due to cultural, economic and policy-related factors. Gender wage gaps originate from occupational segregation, educational attainment, and labor market experiences: hindering women's economic outcomes (Blau and Kahn, 2017). The gender wage gap often results from a combination of direct and indirect discrimination, occupational segregation, and unequal access to career advancement opportunities. The gender wage gaps are caused by deep-rooted social norms about gender roles, the undervaluing of women's work, and obstacles preventing women from entering higher-paying jobs typically dominated by men. (ActionAid, 2024).

In this context, comparing Nepal, developing country and Finland, a developed country presents an opportunity to examine how socio-economic and cultural differences influence wage inequality providing insights into pathways for achieving equitable wage pay. In Nepal, one-third of women have no education, fifty-two percent of women are involved in non-paid jobs, and women are less likely than men to own a home or land (Dahal.P, Joshi.S.K. and Swahnberg. K, 2022). Women are often concentrated in low-wage, informal sectors such as agriculture and domestic work, where their contributions are undervalued. In contrast, Finland, as a developed country, has implemented advanced gender equality measures, including subsidized childcare, pay transparency, flexible work hours and proactive anti-discrimination laws, have enabled more women to enter and sustain careers in professional and managerial roles. However, horizontal and vertical occupational segregation persists, as women are overrepresented in traditionally lower-paid sectors such as education and healthcare (Eurostat, 2024).

Nepal struggles with traditional norms and limited institutional support contrast sharply with developed country's proactive approach, demonstrating the critical role of policy interventions in addressing wage inequality.

As we can scroll our past, women have made extraordinary contributions to leadership in various sectors of development. Many of them are unrecognized and some of them are highlighted in the pages of history for their contribution they have made to shape the progress we see today. It is impossible to acknowledge all the contributors in this paper, but their dedication to the fight for equality deserves huge respect. The rights and duties of women since early civilization stand as evidence to their courage shaping the progress we honor today. Later those days, women are one of the objects of slavery from their husband who has the power of life and death in their hands. It is said that women developed the culture of agriculture from the principal of occupation in domestic living like preparing food, dresses skins, making clothes, gathering vegetables, roots, berries etc. Gradual development of society changes the way of thinking into the men. Today 836 million people still live in extreme poverty affecting women and girls with their health, employment and safety. These are some example of great initiation in the way of equality that brings a slow and continuous change where now every man and women have the voice for equality and equity. Now, Men and women are considered as a part of coin, with the meaning that the existence will elope with another extinct. But a bitter truth is there is still gap between man and woman in terms of wages, education, rights etc.

Globally, women earn approximately 33% less than men on average, a phenomenon that persists across different regions and industries (The World Bank, 2024). In Nepal, deeply rooted socio-cultural norms and economic structures have contributed to significant gender-based wage disparities (Khanal. A., 2023). Conversely, Finland is often regarded as a leader in gender equality due to its progressive policies and high la-

bor market participation rates for women (World Economic Forum, 2023). Despite this, even Finland is not immune to wage disparities, as subtle structural inequalities and occupational segregation continue to influence wage gaps (Yanatma. S., 2024). The average gender pay gap of Finland is 16% (Sandt. M., 2023) whereas Nepal has average gender pay gap is 33% (Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, Government of Nepal, 2024).

Understanding the root causes and persistence of wage disparities in these two diverse contexts will highlight how socio-cultural and policy frameworks can either reinforce or mitigate economic inequality. This comparative analysis aims to uncover actionable strategies that can be tailored to different national settings to close the gender wage gap effectively.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to compare the factors contributing to gender wage differences in Nepal, with a focus on socio-cultural, economic, and policy dimensions. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Analyze the extent and trends of the gender wage gap in Nepal.
2. Assess the impact of gender wage disparity on economic growth, workforce participation and gender equality.
3. Identify the key socio-cultural and economic factors influencing wage disparities.
4. Evaluate the role of policies and initiatives aimed at promoting gender wage equality.
5. Provide recommendations for reducing the gender wage gap, drawing insights for potential adaptation in Nepal for policymakers and organizations.

This research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how different approaches to gender equality impact economic outcomes for women across diverse socio-cultural settings.

1.2 Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. What is the current state of gender wage disparity in Nepal?
2. What socio-cultural and economic factors contribute to wage differences?
3. How effective are the policies and initiatives in Nepal in addressing gender wage gaps?
4. What lessons can Nepal learn from Finland to promote wage equality?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The wage difference in gender is a measurable indicator of gender inequality. Almost all the country has ratified "Equal Remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value" of The International Labour Organization Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100). But yet, the gender pay gap still exists. Today, beside the progress, the gender difference in wages often reflects complex social, economic and cultural factors than simple discrimination.

Numerous theories are relevant to the analysis of gender pay inequalities and one of them is the Human Capital Theory which asserts that differences in education, training, experience and age between male and female workers are the main causes of wage difference (Becker, 1964). Mincer and OFEK, 1982 has stated that women as a group tend to have access to lower levels of education and job training thereby earning less. The Gender Role Theory (Eagly & Wood, 1999) is another important and related theory that states behaviours are considered acceptable for either men or women affect the jobs they do and their salaries. The Discrimination Theory stresses about the preconceptions held against a certain group of people, which causes differential payment for similar job categories (Oaxaca & Ransom, 1994). The Motherhood Penalty discusses how women experienced wage penalties as a result of "motherhood" breaks or part-time work, while men are said to experience a fatherhood bonus in earnings. A cumulative disadvantage for women over time is especially in countries with limited parental support policies (Budig & England, 2001).

It is true that gender pay gap has been a topic of research for a long time, and still there are some areas which are unexplored like cross-country comparisons such as Finland (Developed country) and Nepal (Least Developed Country). My research aims to bridge this deficit by comparing Nepal and Finland on the basis of gender wage discrepancies how the variables like cultural, economic, and policy. This study

will build upon the existing literature by undertaking a cross country comparison, which enhances the understanding of gender wage inequality and provides useful information for policy applications in both countries.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a collection of existing theories, models and frameworks that provides a foundation of core knowledge-a "lay of the land", so to speak from which you can build a research study. (Jansen, D., 2023). This study is focused on gender pay disparities in Nepal comparing with Finland in economic and socio-cultural aspect that explains the wage differences and labour market inequalities. The foundation of this research is based on Human Capital Theory, Gender Role Theory, Theory of Discrimination and Motherhood Penalty Theory. Human capital theory explains how the earning between gender is influenced by education, skills and work experience. Gender role theory explains how society norms and cultural expectation affects the occupational segregation na gender pay. Additionally, Discrimination theory explores the contribution made by employer's preferences and organizational structure. Motherhood theory explains the disadvantages of being women in economic and professional career due to maternity or being mother in the workplace. Integrating with all these theory, this research aims to analyze socio-economic and policy factors which affects pay gap in Nepal and learn from Finland's wage equality.

2.1.1 Human Capital Theory

Human Capital refers to financial and physical assets invested for education, skills, training, Medical care and so on to be productive in workplace. (Becker, n.d.) According to this theory, wage differences between men and women often arise because of variations in "human capital" the education, skills, and experience that individuals bring to the workplace (Becker, G.S., 1964). Married women have lower hourly

earnings than married men with the same market human capital as the responsibility of women for child care and housework has major implications for earnings and occupational differences. (Becker, G. S., 1985).

This research provides a comparative analysis of supporting policies such as maternity and paternity leave, equal access to education and child care support in Finland and their absence in Nepal. This research will focus on foundational explanation to why there is a disparity in wages by highlighting on the social expectations in education and career progression. In the case of Nepal, societal norms may encourage women to opt for less-paying jobs which are more respectable than others. On the other hand, since Finland has more progressive policies on education and parental leaves, it is possible that women in Finland would have invested in more human capital and causes less wage disparity. Nevertheless, even in Finland, there are still some gaps in wages, meaning that working age men and women are not exactly equally portrait as human resources.

2.1.2 Gender Role Theory

This theory suggests that in the emerging post-industrial societies the division between men's wage labour and women's domestic labour is breaking down with the increase in women's paid employment, education, and access to many formerly male-dominated occupations. (Eagly and Wood, 1999). Men and women are often socialized from a young age to fulfil the roles considered to be appropriate for their gender, leading to differences in educational pursuits, job selection, and professional ambitions.

The Gender Role Theory offers an understanding on the disproportionate entry of women into so-called 'feminized' occupations like nursing, teaching, and office management, all of which are associated with lower salaries than male-dominated professions, say, engineering or finance. It is possible that societal expectations make them do so in the

first place because men are expected to take up better paying jobs contributing to occupational segregation and sustaining the wage disparity. This study can therefore look at the similarities and differences in gender roles and earnings as well as career choice across two countries (Nepal and Finland) and analyses the effects of modern and traditional views on gender equality in the work environment.

2.1.3 Discrimination Theory

Discrimination Theory explains how biases and unequal treatment based on gender, race or other characteristics contribute to wage differences and job segregation even when men and women perform similar roles (Becker, 1957). Culture, Tradition, and overt Discrimination tend to make restrictive the terms by which women may participate in labour force which influences to generate an unfavourable occupational distribution of female workers versus male workers to create pay differences within same occupation. (Oaxaca, R., 1993). In the scenario of wage differences in gender, Discrimination Theory argues that women's experience both explicit discrimination i.e. Explicit biases such as in unequal pay hiring biases or promotions barriers and maternity discriminations) and implicit discrimination (unconscious or 'soft' biases about how a woman is viewed in terms of her skills or leadership capabilities).

2.1.4 Motherhood Penalty

The penalty of motherhood is incurred for various reasons. First, women tend to seek long leave or even short work days for child care, which leads to loss of skills and missed promotions. Secondly, hiring practices as well as pay increases and promotion decisions may suffer because mothers are lacking in commitment or being unproductive. Finally, there is little or no available childcare and work is rigid, mothers often have to accept low-skilled jobs that do not pay well or they work for a few hours a day. The cultural beliefs about the tension between motherhood and ideal worker roles may contribute to perpetuat-

ing gender inequality enduring pattern like "glass ceiling," which restricts women's career progression in organizations and firms. Employers view mothers as less committed to their jobs and less "promotable," potentially a motherhood ceiling. (Correll, S. J, Benard, S. and Paik, I., 2007).

Motherhood is associated with lower hourly pay, but the causes of this are not well understood. Mothers may earn less than other women because having children causes them to (1) lose job experience, (2) be less productive at work, (3) trade off higher wages for mother-friendly jobs, or (4) be discriminated against by employers. Or the relationship may be spurious rather than causal-women with lower earning potential may have children at relatively higher rates. (Budig, M.J. & England, P, 2001). This theory connects with the problem of investigation about labour policies between Finland and Nepal.

2.2 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF GENDER PAY DISPARITIES

The gender pay gap is not solely a result of economic factors but is deeply influenced by social and cultural structures. Social and cultural factors are deeply rooted in Nepalese society limiting women's access to economic opportunities. Men are usually considered the breadwinners while women are expected to devote their time to household and care. This societal expectation further limits women's ability to work outside the home and reduces their chances for career growth. Traditional gender roles and social norms like the Patriarchal system limit women's access to paid work, keep them in domestic roles, restrict their inheritance rights, and reduce their economic. People from lower castes, especially Dalits, often face pay discrimination which hinders their economic growth (The World Bank & DFID, 2006).

A large number of women work low-skilled jobs like factories, construction, and agriculture to support the income to their husbands in income generation to meet the needs of the household expenditure (Dhungel, S., Dhungel, P., Dhital S.R. & Stock, C., 2017). Females hold lower positions in communities due to the social and cultural barriers that prevent women from taking up leadership roles (Limbu and Shrestha, 2023). The patriarchal system limits women's access to paid work, keeps them in domestic roles, restricts their inheritance rights, and reduces their economic opportunities.

2.3 Social Aspects

The traditional societal norms and expectation, work-life balance and networking opportunities affects gender pay gap and career progression. Traditional norms prioritize family responsibilities over career growth. The policies including parental leave, childcare support ease women in her life which supports her professional and personal life. But the traditional social beliefs doesnot support them, hence creates a economic burden to women. Social expectation and household responsibilities limits women in participating in various networking events, mentorship programs, and leadership which leads to women to step-back in their career progression. These social factors continue to force wage disparity and limits financial independence.

2.3.1 Social Norms and Expectations

Social norms influence gender pay disparities in shaping career choices, work behaviors, and wage pay negotiations in the workforce. Nepal's social patterns of living styles are guided by traditional norms, values, beliefs, and attitudes which are extremely related to social consciousness and the environment. (Baral, 2017). In many societies, women are expected to prioritize family responsibilities over career aspirations, which often results in reduced work experience, career

breaks, and part-time employment. In contrast, Finland promotes gender equality through policy measures, yet implicit biases still hinder women's leadership progression as high-paying industries remain male-dominated despite efforts to encourage more women into STEM fields.

2.3.2 Work-Life Balance and Family Policies

Work-life balance policies, such as maternity and paternity leave, childcare support, and flexible work arrangements, significantly influence gender pay disparities. The labour market of Nepal is characterized by traditional gender roles which are primarily responsible for household chores and caregiving which leads to difficulty in balancing work and family life. Maternity leave in Nepal is generally 14 weeks (98 days), in which 60 days is paid by employer and an extra 38 days is optional if they desire to extend the leave which is unpaid. However, most private institutions shrug off the provision of this right and deprive women, employees of the leave. (Khanal, 2021). Additionally in rural areas, due to limited childcare facilities and social expectations of the role of women as primary childcare, women face barriers to entering the workforce.

In contrast, Finland is known for its strong and progressive work-life balance policies and family support system. "A woman has the right to maternity leave of up to 100 calendar days if a certificate for maternity leave has been issued for her under the Family Benefits Act." (Employment Contracts Act, 2022). In addition to maternity and paternity leave, Finland has an allowance for shared parental leave, enabling both parents to take time off to care for their children. Finland's approach to work-life balance is rooted in its recognition of the importance of both family and career, which helps to reduce the burden on women as primary caregivers.

2.3.3 Networking and Career Progression

Networking is a crucial aspect of society and careers, often encouraged and seen as a barrier for women to advance in their careers. Men are more likely to participate in professional networking events, mentorship programs and leadership development initiatives while, Women, particularly in Nepal, often face restrictions due to cultural expectations and domestic responsibilities. Networking plays a crucial role in career progression in Finland, but gender differences continue to influence professional opportunities. However, women face challenges in accessing high-level networks, which are still predominantly male-dominated, particularly in industries like technology, finance, and engineering. Finland has made efforts to bridge this gap, but women are still underrepresented in top corporate positions, reflecting ongoing challenges in achieving full workplace equality.

2.4 Cultural Aspects

Cultural factors plays an important role in gender pay gap. This includes deeply rooted traditional beliefs in different factors like biasness in hiring, promotion and leadership positions in high-paying job markets. Cultural practices like women are mostly representating in lower-paying jobs like teacher, healthcare and social services whereas man are working in higher-paying fields like engineering, finance and technology. These factors suppressed in decision making and increases economic dependence with men.

2.4.1 Cultural Perceptions of Women's Work

Cultural perceptions towards work differ significantly between Finland and Nepal. In Nepal, women are responsible for caregiving and household and the contribution to grossly underestimate to the socio-economic life. In some areas of job sectors such as the finance, technology, and politics, women are discriminated against by cultural bias

that questions their competence. 80% of Nepalese women are working in agriculture, which is low return subsistence work. (World Bank & Australian AID, 2021).

Finland, with more progressive policies, still sees gendered differences in occupational choices. The cultural aspects that perpetuate wage differentials include the fact that women usually choose jobs in lower-compensated areas like care and education, whereas men dominate the higher-paid occupations like technology. Even with policy declarations from the government assuring equal pay, there are still profound disparities in wages.

2.4.2 Gendered Occupational Segregation

One of the many embedded reasons for occupational segregation is gender-based cultural stereotypes. Nepalese women also incidentally experience discouragement from entering any of the fields regarded as male-dominated like finance, aviation, engineering and so on. Also women are encouraged to pursue careers in education, healthcare and administrative roles. (Adhikary, 2016). Even though in Finland, female education has boomed in recent decades, women remain underrepresented in study fields such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) both in the number of students as in the number of graduates. (Jankova, 2025). Women are, however, not concerned as the working conditions in Finland would create barriers for women to reach executive positions. Some barriers include traditional gender attitudes and interruptions to career progression due to child-rearing responsibilities.

2.4.3 Religious and Traditional Influences

Religious beliefs and traditional practices provide quite a lot of impact in determining gender roles in the workplace. In Nepal, the influence of religion and tradition play a significant role in shaping gender roles on women and their economic participation. Hinduism, the religion domi-

nant in Nepal, is believed that women are in inferior position in the family and societal circle, leading women to education and employability at very low levels. Traditional customs like dowry have labeled a gender division of labor where women are unconsciously bound to give preference to family duties over any career, thereby confronting financial independence. (Fuller, S., 2020).

In Finland, the religious and traditional influences on gender roles are temporarily less visible due to the very secular society and consistent emphasis on gender equality within public policy. Gender equality promoted in the law and in culture reduces the merit of religious and traditional influences of gender pay differentials in Finland.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

This research applies mixed methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative methodology which helps to analyse in comparing gender pay disparity within two countries. Quantitative research method focuses on statistical data from various secondary sources to measure gender wage gap whereas, qualitative approach focuses on in-depth interview, surveys, case studies to investigate the experiences and views of employees, HR professionals and policymakers which identify the social and cultural factors. Combining both approach of research methods, this study aims to provide comprehensive analysis across various socio-economic factors by integrating statistical evidence and understanding gender prospective of individuals.

3.1 Research Method

Research is a cyclical process that starts with an unanswered problem, articulates its goal, divides it into manageable sub-problems, identifies hypotheses, develops a plan, collects, organizes, analyzes data, and interprets the meaning of the data related to these problems. (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). Research methodology is a structured scientific approach for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to answer research questions or test hypotheses, with three types: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method, chosen based on objectives. (Sreekumar D, 2023).

The study will use a comparative research design to examine gender pay disparities in Nepal and Finland, focusing on wage differences between men and women. Comparative research are carried out on different levels including regional, national or wider geographical boundaries based on specific subjects or areas of interest to describe explore and explain similarities and differences of their one's knowledge and

understanding of culture, country or system. (Iranifard & Latifnejad, 2022). I will use a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the wage gap in these two socio-economic and cultural contexts. This helps to analyze for an in-depth understanding by combining statistical wage data with cultural and policy-related explanations on gender pay disparities in Nepal and Finland.

- Quantitative Data will examine statistics from different secondary data such as average wages, gender pay gap percentage in different sectors.
- Qualitative Data will explore individual experiences and thoughts of gender based discrimination, social attitudes and effects of caregiving on career development through semi-structured interviews.
- Mixed methods research is a versatile approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative methodologies to understand complex research question which enhances the validity and reliability of findings by facilitating triangulation and exploring phenomena from multiple perspectives, identifying patterns, trends, and associations through quantitative data. (Saraswati & Devi, 2023).

3.2 Data Collection

In mixed methods research, data collection involves systematically gathering both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. "Thus mixed method approaches are not simply those where one or more methods are used (e.g., observation and interviews), but are those where both qualitative and quantitative approaches are combined into one study (or a multi-phased study)." (Lackey, J. F., Daley, B., Welnetz, T., Moberg, D. P., Merkel, J., Rivas, P., Kaufman, K., & Black, A. 2007 p5.2).

The data collection for this research has been collected by interviewing by video call which the participants preference either Zoom or Microsoft Teams. The author has chosen this method because the author is currently living in Finland. The interview was conducted in Nepali or English. Each interview is planned to take within 30-45 minutes. All the video calls are recorded and transcribed which allows helped to compare participants answer in relation to each other. The recording and transcriptions have been securely stored safely and cannot be accessibly by other individuals.

3.2.1 Quantitative Data

Quantitative data, which includes numerical variables, can be analyzed using tools like tables, graphs, and summary statistics for descriptive statistical analysis. (Abdulhakeem, 2022). This research will collect data gathering measurable evidence to analyze wage differences statistically from government reports (labour ministries national statistics), online databases and research studies from sources like the ILO, World Bank, OECD, Eurostat helps in collecting data regarding wages, indexes of gender equality and labour market.

3.2.2 Qualitative Data

Qualitative research offers a more extensive range of data sources, including open-ended interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials that can be text or images, and new forms of sound. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Interviews with HR professionals and employees provide insights into workplace challenges, salary negotiation experiences, and career progression barriers. This research also collects data from focus groups from where we get their experiences and perceptions of wage disparities among employees in different industries. Document analysis of labor laws, company policies and media reports helps understand the regulatory and social frameworks affect-

ing gender-based wage inequality. These qualitative methods provide a deeper understanding of wage disparities.

3.2.2.1. Interview as a method

This research focuses to explore employee's experiences, workplace policies and perception of wage differences. "The main types of qualitative interviews are semi-structured and unstructured interviews." (Bryman, 2012, p.469). Typically Semi-structured interviews are open-ended that the researchers ask general questions and participants can freely share their views. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

As we know that the semi-structured interviews are flexible, therefore this method is chosen. As we are conducting this research comparing to countries, using semi-structured interview will be a best method because of its flexibility. A semi-structured interview involves a researcher asking specific questions, often referred to as an interview guide, with the interviewee having significant flexibility in their responses. (Bryman, 2012). The questionnaire should be arranged in logical sequences, starting with general, relevant questions and progressing to specific ones, ensuring a comfortable flow and grouping similar questions for better understanding. (Yeshaswi, 2024).

The language of the questionnaire is English and Nepali as this thesis is written in English. The Nepali language is seen relevant and easy to make participant to communicate. Based on the theoretical framework of the questionnaire, questions are prepared. A total of 14 questions are in the questionnaire which are allocated in five themes i.e. general background, Career professionals and workplace experiences, workplace attitudes and leadership challenges, wages and salary experience and future perspectives and recommendations.

3.3 Data Analysis

For statistical data, SPSS will be used to analyze data and capture insights in wage variation by gender, education and work experience. SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) is a user-friendly statistical application used for the analysis of data and make data-driven decisions. (Awati, R., 2024).

To analyze the qualitative data from interview responses and questionnaire, thematic analysis will be applied focusing on gender roles, discrimination and societal expectations. Thematic analysis is a research method that helps to find out people's views, opinions, knowledge, experiences, or values from a set of qualitative data such as interview transcripts, social media profiles, or survey responses.

3.4 Ethical Concerns and Informed Consent

The research will be conducted ethically, and participants were thoroughly explained about the topic, research aims and their rights and asked their interest to participate in the interview or questionnaire. Participants remain anonymous throughout the analysis and informed about the recording for the interviews. We follow the guidelines of the Vaasa University of Applied Science (VAMK) i.e. Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity TENK, 2023 on Good Scientific Practice and Ethical Recommendations for higher Education Institution Theses Arene, 2020. Traditionally, ethics has been concerned with the avoidance of harm, and most established ethical clearance processes focus on this. 'VIP' is a useful mnemonic for the main concerns, **V**ulnerability, **I**nformed consent, and **P**rivacy. (Blandford, 2013. p18).

The ethical principles will help safeguard participant's rights and ensure the integrity of the research process i.e.

- Informed consent: Interviewees will be informed about research purpose and the role of the study before participation.
- Confidentiality: All the information will be confidential.
- Right to Withdraw: Participants can withdraw from the interview or questionnaire at any stage.

3.5 Thematic Analysis

Thematic Analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.6). According to Braun & Clarke, it involves six phases: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and writing up. (Caulfield, J., 2023). We utilize this process to examine the responses collected through a questionnaire on gender pay disparities and workplace challenges. The data provides the insight into participant's education, their current and past job history, income levels, and perspectives on gender-related issues in professional career.

3.5.1 Educational and Professional Background

We collect the responses from the 40 participants from different educational background i.e. PHDs, Master's degree, bachelor's degree, higher secondary education and primary education. Also, the participants are from diverse field of job like social work, physician doctor, nurse, farmer, factory worker, manager, trainer, actress, GESI Expert, teacher, business analyst etc. Also, the responses are collected from all three geographical regions Himalayan (20%), Hilly (65%) and Terai (15%) region.

3.5.2 Gender Influence on Career Progression

The respondents speak their clear views and experiences that gender affects their career growth. One of the respondent says "Fear of own Character, which is influenced by society". Table 1 show that women

are influenced by their family members or family structure. They are restricted in developing their career goals. Other respondent speaks by heart and express "All decisions are made by men in every sector either household or personal interest. We depend on the decision made by male senior member who is available at the time." But during the workplace as a mentor or building networks, most of the respondents found male co-worker are supportive. "Majority of male co-workers are supportive, eager to teach, support on computer knowledge and other parts."

Table 1. What kind of support you have experienced from your male co-worker as mentor or networks?

Supportive	Not treated well	Some are supportive and some are not
33 (82.5%)	4 (10%)	3 (7.5%)

Table 2. In what ways women are influenced in their career growth?

Cultural Norms	Family	Policies	Social
5 (12.5%)	13 (32.5%)	11 (27.5%)	11 (27.5%)

3.5.3 Gender discrimination in Workplace

Gender discrimination in workplace refers to unequal treatment sex, gender, identity, age, disability, religious beliefs, ethnicity, or race. (saminathan & Dhamodaran, 2023).The discrimination may be during hiring process, promotion, increment in salary and overall workplace opportunities. One respondent response as she has faced discrimination in promotion on her job history. She expressed as "Yes I have experienced in promotions. It took seventeen years to get promotion from third class to second class and another fourteen years to become

first class officer. There was delay tactics like not taking any decision till the desired candidate qualify as well as misplacing the file several times .A male colleague who qualified the same year became my boss after joining service in five years. I had to serve under a male colleague who was twelve years junior to me.” Most of the women response that they feel difficult to work in their workplace and said “I have witnessed a widespread tendency to give women lower or higher marks based on their behavior when evaluating women's individual performance.”

Table 3. Can you describe any experiences of gender-based discrimination or bias you have faced in hiring, promotions, or workplace treatment?

Hiring	Promotion	Workplace	No Discrimination
7 (17.5%)	7 (17.5%)	17 (42.5%)	9 (22.5%)

Women have adopted various strategies to address workplace difficulties which include discussion, self-motivation, skill development and financial independence. Another question is asked what you will do to overcome these challenges, 3 of them quit their job. She said “Though I have complained to the formal mechanism but it was not yet resolved. But I did apply in other organization and quite from the existing one”. But most of the respondents are motivated themselves. They are struggling to enhance their career by involving in different programs, seminars and involve in various trainings. They also seek mentorship to build networks for their growth. “More study, earn money, be self-sustain and make good network”. “I joined different leadership skills training to improve my leading quality and also in every gender discrimination situation, I spoke for myself instead of feeling nervous and sad”.

Table 4. What strategies have you used to overcome career challenges related to gender discrimination?

Dialogue/ Discussion	Self- Motivation	Economic Stability	Quit Job	No Discrimination
8 (20%)	23 (57.5%)	2 (5%)	3 (7.5%)	4 (10%)

3.5.4 Recognition and value of women in workplace

Nepal have made progressive steps in adding recognizing and valuing women in workplace, but still need to face significant challenges. "10 /20 year back less value, now I can argue logically, but still difficult to get same recognition." With the total of 40 respondent only 7 women did not face discrimination. "I have been at the equal footing with the men of the IT Company. I have not faced any discrimination at the time." While 9 women focus to prioritize equal in work and stress to build confidence to men that women also can do equal task as men do. "While my contributions are generally recognized, I do feel that male colleagues often receive more visibility for their work, especially in leadership roles or high-profile projects. Additionally, many people hardly believe me to be a civil engineer and often question my expertise because of my gender."

Table 5. How would you describe the recognition and value given to your contributions and skills compared to your male colleagues?

Prove your- self that you can do	Award & Reward	Salary/ promoti on	Skill Developm ent	No discriminatio n
11 (27.5%)	9	6 (15%)	7 (17.5%)	7 (17.5%)

Prove yourself that you can do	Award & Reward	Salary/ promotion	Skill Development	No discrimination
	(22.5%)			

3.5.5 Workplace policies and its implementation

Workplace policies significantly influence women's career growth and leadership opportunities. Supportive policies like equal pay, paid maternity leave, flexible work arrangements, and leadership development programs help women balance work-life responsibilities. Diversity and inclusion initiatives also create pathways for women in leadership roles. However, rigid structures, lack of parental support, and unconscious bias can hinder progress. Respondent noted that "There is no support workplace policy as women's career growth and leadership opportunities in the male dominated society". During our survey, 7 women find lack of policy and 4 of them feel that the policy supports in their workplace and 4 of them seek for emotional support in their professional career. But maximum number of women i.e. 62.5% stress in policy implementation. The effective implementation of policies requires regular monitoring mechanisms, increasing awareness, and encouraging organizational accountability.

Table 6. How do workplace policies support or hinder women's career growth and leadership opportunities?

Supportive Policies	Need policy support	Policy implementation	Emotional Support
4 (10%)	7 (17.5%)	25 (62.5%)	4 (10%)

3.5.6 Salary disparity and observation

“Women often earn less due to systemic biases, lack of salary transparency, and differences in negotiation opportunities. Even with equal qualifications and experience, men are more likely to receive higher starting salaries and faster promotions. Factors like career breaks for caregiving and limited access to leadership positions further widen the gap.” There is a still salary disparity in Nepal which remains significant issues in gender, sector and level of employment. As respondent noted that “At starting both are often paying equal but at senior levels, men are paid higher”. A total of 67.5% respond in salary disparity either in formal or informal sector. “I have observed government nurses salaries are often fixed, but private hospitals pay less salary compares to male nurse. Female nurses usually struggle to negotiate better pay.” Whereas, 7.5% women faces discrimination in additional facilities like bonus, extra hour paid, trip bonus etc. 25% says there is no discrimination in payment at all. One of the respondent responses that the salary should be based on capacity neither judge by their sex. “It should be depend on individual's capacity and skill but in practice it is rarely applied”.

Table 7. What observations have you made regarding salary differences between men and women in similar roles?

Informal Sector	Formal Sector	Both Sector	Additional Facilities	No Salary Difference
5 (12.5%)	5 (12.5%)	17 (42.5%)	3 (7.5%)	10 (25%)

3.5.7 Challenges in Salary Negotiations and Pay Transparency

Employees, particularly women, often struggle to advocate for fair compensation due to societal norms, lack of negotiation skills and job

insecurity. Pay transparency issues further contribute wage disparities, as many organizations don't disclose salary structures. "When negotiating my salary, I had to justify my contributions in detail and even I have to prove my expertise before promoted, whereas men in similar roles received raises without much questioning." To address these issues, a culture of open salary discussions, clear compensation policies and negotiation skills are needed, thereby bridging wage gaps. "Most organizations have non-transparent pay scales, where employees are unaware of each other's salaries. This lack of transparency makes it difficult to negotiate effectively, as employees don't have clear benchmarks to understand whether they are being paid fairly or in line with industry standards. Without knowledge of what others earn, it becomes challenging to advocate for oneself and ensure equitable compensation, leading to potential wage disparities that often go unaddressed." 2.5% women quit the job that they found the difference in salary while 5% are speechless because they fear of losing job. "Management often expects women to accept lower salary offers. And women hesitate to negotiate due to fear of rejection."

Table 8. Can you share any personal experiences or challenges you have faced in salary negotiations or issues related to pay transparency?

Quit job	Hidden job contract	No transparent salary	Fear of rejection	Not found
1 (2.5%)	6 (15%)	8 (20%)	2 (5%)	23 (57.5%)

3.5.8 Reaction to equal pay

Wage disparities affect employees differently, often influenced by workplace culture, job security concerns, and individual confidence in

negotiation. 10% of the women avoid questioning salary differences due to job loss fear and prioritize job stability over potential job conflict. "I have raised this issue in our community meeting and encourage them to demand equal pay but they hesitate to speak due to societal norms and fear of losing work." 30% participants raise their voice either successfully resolving the issue or facing resistance from management. One participant stated that "While working in an INGO, men were paid more than women for the same position, women were paid less, and male employees were told not to disclose their salaries to anyone and I lost my job when I raised the question of equal pay for equal work". Despite speaking up, 12% employees still face no results. "I have raised, still we are working on salary transparency but there take a long way to go before the male-dominated perspective changes". However, 55% of the participants did not face the challenged in negotiating issues related to pay transparency.

Table 9. Can you describe any instances where you have questioned or challenged your salary in comparison to male colleagues or discussed it with managers?

Fear of losing job	Raised & Solved Later	Raised but no result	Not faced
4 (10%)	2 (5%)	12 (30%)	22 (55%)

3.5.9 Actions for equal pay

Companies and unions must take proactive measures to ensure equal pay and career opportunities for women working in an organization. Participants find lack of action from unions and they said no unions take any action to make equal payment. Besides that, organization can implement transparent and equal pay policy to eliminate gender wage gap. "Labor legislations, rules, and trade unions have to formulate the

proper laws and regulations to develop a better workplace for the employee". By creating clear salary criteria based on skills, experiences and job responsibilities can ensure fairness in workplace. "They should have clear policies, program and implementation regarding equal treat". Additionally, leadership training and mentorship programs can significantly improve career growth opportunity which helps to empower women on their own. Participants from farming background said that, to ensure equal pay, women should have equal access to land ownership, farming training and financial support. Also, government should have fair wages for agricultural workers. On the other hand, 12.5% women say that the salary should be based on their skills and experience rather than gender. "Pay should be based on merit, not gender, and a policy should be established to ensure that caregivers of senior citizens with disabilities are also compensated fairly".

Table 10. What actions should companies/unions take to ensure equal pay and career opportunities for women?

Nothing has done by unions	Transparent & Equal pay Rate Policy	Women Empowerment	Pay based on skills & Experience
2 (5%)	31 (77.5%)	2 (5%)	5 (12.5%)

3.5.10 Advice for Young women

Young women entering the workforce must understand the basic terms and conditions which should be mentioned in the Terms of Reference (TOR) to understand their rights, salary structure and job descriptions. They must be knowledgeable and active in securing fair treatment and taking opportunities with their ability. "Contract paper should be signed before starting work. If no written contract, everything including salary, food, residence, breaks during the working hour, Occupa-

tional Safety and Health Standard (OSH) etc. should be clear before starting work.” Also, participants stress to raise their voice against any unfair treatment or pay gap which builds their advocacy skills and to speak confidently. “Raise voice and advocate, building network, regular learning, aware on worker rights etc.” Another participant inspires young women as “You are equally good as other men so work without any compromise. Speak up and face any gender based violence and support all women workers in such situation.” Additionally, respondents suggests young women to participating in different skills development programs, networking and leadership trainings can empower your self- confidence which helps to grab your destination and achieve your career goal. One of the GESI Expert says “My advice to young women entering the workforce is to embrace confidence in their skills and potential. Don’t be afraid to negotiate for what you deserve, whether it’s in terms of salary, benefits, or career growth opportunities. Be open to learning and growing, but also know when to set boundaries to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Above all, trust your instincts and don’t let gender biases hold you back your voice matters, and your contributions are valuable. Stay resilient and keep pushing for the opportunities and recognition you deserve”. Similar to her, another participant motivates by saying, “Dear all ladies, believe in yourself and give your best in your field.”

Table 11. What advice would you give to young women entering the workforce?

Study before contract sign	Raise Voice	Self-Empowerment
3 (7.5%)	14 (35%)	23 (57.5%)

4 CONCLUSION

This research explores gender pay disparities in Nepal, highlighting the factors that contribute to wage pay gap and the challenges faced by women in workforce. The findings confirm that gender based wage gap still persists in both countries in different degree and for different reasons.

Summarizing the participant's views and experience, only 4% women did not face any kind of discrimination in their workplace. This strongly supports by the theories mentioned in the theoretical framework. The research made by Becker (1964) explains how the deep rooted society restricts women's career development align with the finding on occupational segregation. We can prove from the participant who is still working as Administrative head says "According to my experience, women sometimes don't get chance to show their expertise in senior roles, women have to come from junior level. But men got easily hired in senior position with similar qualification for same applied roles". Adding to this, another participant said "Women in HR have good career opportunities, but they are often limited to support roles rather than leadership positions like Chief HR Officer." Also, Becker (1985) research finds and states in his theory that women are less economical stable than men because of their added responsibility for maternity. For that a social activist and researcher shared her experience as "I have witnessed a widespread tendency to give women lower or higher marks based on their behavior when evaluating women's individual performance". That means women are busy somewhere in their personal matter that is caring children or managing households. Also, participant having over 30 years of experience in the field of agriculture, food security and GESI share her own pain as "1. I was questioned for not exposing my pregnancy, 2. Cut my salary for the baby sitter, 3. Did not support for travel". We can conclude that as we explained in human capital theory and motherhood penalty, women are discriminated either they have high education and experience as compared to

men or biased during their maternity and child caring periods by not allocating flexible time for work or provide limited facilities.

The next theory is gender role theory (Eagly and wood, 1999) which explains the role of women and is recognized by job title such as nurse, teacher etc. Respondent express as "I have noticed male nurse are often given leadership roles, good salary than female nurse, and female nurse are expected to focus on patient care only". She again added, Nursing is a female-dominated field, hospital's administrative roles are easily get by men. Only women contributions are appreciated but not always rewarded with promotions. Similar with that an artist and a model expressed that male leading actor get higher pay than female. Additionally, Becker (1957) developed his discrimination theory from his research that women are treated based on gender, race or other characteristics. A social worker of an NGO shares her experience, "Once I had applied to an UN job. I successfully crossed all the tests. However, in the final interview, Male was selected saying that since it (project) is in Nepalgunj, Male can handle it." We can verify Oaxaca, R. (1993) that women are biased during hiring or in promotion and are also discriminated in their skills or leadership capabilities.

The finding of the study also shows that socio-cultural norms, traditional beliefs, work-life balance policies and networking opportunities are the other factors that influence gender wage disparity. The traditional social norms, wage pay transparency, limited career development opportunities show the factors contributing to wage inequality. Due to fear of job loss and lack of confidence in negotiation to salary and not promoting the positions held in an organization are the other challenges faced by women in workplace which demoralize their value of being women. "I do feel that male colleagues often receive more visibility for their work, especially in leadership roles or high-profile projects. Additionally, many people hardly believe me to be a civil engineer and often question my expertise because of my gender" an engineer shared her feelings of being women. This means that every

96% of women feel discrimination in their workplace during their professional career.

The study investigates the gender disparity in Nepal and compare with Finland to understand better its causes, impacts and potential solutions. The findings of the research provide a direct response to the following research questions:

4.1 Current Status of Gender Wage gap

In Nepal, women earn less than men in similar roles and qualifications particularly in private and informal sectors. 4% of the women only experiences they get equal pay in their workplace. According to Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, Government of Nepal, 2024 Nepal's average gender pay gap is 33%. Whereas, according to the YLE NEWS, Finland has 16% less than Men. Finland has made significant progress in reducing the gender wage gap but it still facing challenges in male dominated and high-ranking sectors. This wider pay differences is due the weaker enforcement of policies.

4.2 Contributing factors to Socio-Cultural and Economic

The wage gap in Nepal is highly influenced by the deep rooted gender norms. Moreover, limited access to quality education, unequal payment to informal sectors, lack of skills and development and occupational segregation are other factors that contribute to wage difference in gender. Still women are prioritized in household responsibilities over education, skill development and career aspirations. This leads women to be presented in low wage occupation like caregiving, teachers, nurses and other informal sectors. Even women are undervalued and provide limited opportunities in workplace. Lacks of supports, many women are forced to leave their jobs or reduce working hours after having babies.

The gender pay gap still exists but a very less comparing to Nepal. The strong institutional support, progressive gender based polies and high awareness to gender equality and pay transparency are the key factors that promotes equal opportunities to both men and women. The effective implementation of gender equality laws and regular monitoring in company and awareness reduces pay gap. A childcare support and parental leave policies helps to balance family responsibilities. Besides these, occupation segregation narrows the participation in high-pay and technical fields.

4.3 Effectiveness of existing policies

In Nepal, there are many lays and regulations that supports gender equality, such as Labour Act, various national gender policies and the guaranteed equal pay for equal work in constitution but the implementation is week and inconsistent. Due to lack of monitoring and strict enforcement in private and informal sectors, these laws are ineffective in practice. Additionally, maternity benefit, childcare facilities and flexible working hours do not support fully in existing policies. Maternity leave is somehow addressed in the policies but the implementation is only in formal sectors (do not represent in informal sectors). Childcare facilities are mentioned only in the paper but the implementation is not seen in the organization. Labour Act does not support remote work and part-time option especially for mothers. There are policies of gender equality formulated in workplace but the implementation and monitoring is very weak.

Finland, on the other hand, demonstrates a successful strategy for addressing gender pay disparity through effective implementation, regular monitoring and cultural support for equality. The government of Finland encourages transparency in equality in hiring, promotions and overall skills and development of staffs in all sectors. Finnish government supports of parental leave and childcare benefits in workplace.

This helps to encourage women to work without sacrificing career progression. As a result of regular monitoring and strict enforcement of policies serves as a model of how effective implementation of policies can bring meaningful change.

4.4 Lesson learned from Finland

Finland's proactive and organized approach to promote gender wage equality offers Nepal to learn and adopt some lessons. Those lessons can be:

1. Policy implementation and enforcement: A strict regulation, enforcement and effective monitoring of gender equality policies are necessary to tackle with unequal pay to women. By creating a gender equality plan, implementation of policies, and mandatory wages pay audit are required for every companies to strengthen gender equality.
2. Wages Pay Transparency: Finland ensure pay transparency by allowing employees to access and request information about wage levels across various roles in a company. This transparency enables employees to demand fair pay and expose hidden pay disparity. A fair and transparent policy regarding hiring, promotions and pay scale helps to build organizational trust and encourage working with dedication.
3. Childcare facilities: Finland promotes shared parental leave and affordable childcare service for Finnish parents which helps women to return to work or continue work smoothly. The publicly funded childcare services are high quality and affordable.
4. Social Awareness and cultural change: The progress of gender equality comes not only from strict legal frameworks but also from cultural shifts. Equal opportunities to education, media, public campaign, trainings and mentorship programs are the key factors to change the attitude of people. Investment in gender

equality education, community programs and awareness campaign helps to change the deep rooted patriarchal mindset and encourage equal opportunities for all.

5. Flexible working hours: In Finland, most of the companies offer flexible working hours and remote work option for employees which helps to balance professional and personal responsibilities. This flexibility helps women to manage household duties and childcare. This is also helpful to companies that increase productivity that the stress of employees is reduced and frequent changing of job is discouraged.

The comparative study of gender wage disparity in Nepal and Finland highlights the critical necessity for effective policy implementation, cultural change and strong institutional support to eradicate wage inequality. Structured policies, transparency, socio and cultural consciousness results the measurable progress. Wages difference does not only show the fairness in gender, it is also the reflection of economic development and social justice.

4.5 Reliability, Validity and Objectivity

Reliability relates to the consistency of a measure. A participant completing an instrument meant to measure motivation should have approximately the same responses each time the test is completed. (Twycross, A. & Heale, R. 2015). This means participants must have the same responses every time. There are three attributes of reliability. They are internal consistency (Homogeneity), stability and equivalence. Internal consistency argues that the several components of the collectors have been measuring the same concept. Stability refers to the consistency of measurement over the time while equivalence concerns uniformity in measuring across different groups or conditions. The questionnaires are set to get the information from practical expe-

riences and opinions about gender equality and difference in gender. In this thesis, questions are sent only once to the respondents.

Validity and reliability are key aspects of all research (Brink, H. 1993. P1). Validity is the quality of research that refers to how well the results gathered from analyzing the data of the study participants represent true findings among similar individuals outside the study's population (Intellectusconsulting, nd). The research question is valid for the desired outcome, the choice of methodology is appropriate for answering the research question, the design is valid for the methodology, the sampling and data analysis is appropriate, and finally the results and conclusions are valid for the sample and context (Leung, L. 2015). There are three major types of validity: content, construct and criterion validity (Twycross & Heale 2015). Content validity means the research instruments are measured accurately in all steps. The content of the questionnaire in this research covers all the aspect of this research. Construct validity is the measure related to the concept being studied. The questionnaires are designed open-ended question as the respondents are flexible to answer the questions and hence the result reflects the answers are true and accurate to their experience and views. Criterion validity evaluates how well a test can predict a concrete outcome, or how well the results of your test approximate the results of another test (Middleton, F. 2023). There are several studies published on gender inequality but very less in comparison of wage difference especially developing and developed countries.

Objectivity is a key requirement for reliable results. Striving for objectivity helps you present your findings in a way that truly reflects the realities being studied, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness and value of your work (QDAcity. nd.). This thesis utilizes verified, unbiased sources of data and presents results without personal influence or assumption. The goal is to ensure that the conclusions are based on factual evidence. For example, data are analyzed by using official data from labor departments and international organizations without favor-

ing one country's policy or cultural context over other country. The research ensures that the results are based on actual gender pay difference. This commitment to objectivity contributes to the credibility and integrity of the academic study.

4.6 Suggestions for further research

This study provides valuable observations regarding gender pay disparities. This research aims to support policymakers and managers in identifying the root cause of payment difference in genders. Wage difference in gender as well as gender inequality is very interesting research themes and consists of various perspectives that could be researched further. Future research should focus on longitudinal studies to track pay disparities over time and again. This refers to the study could be helpful to track how gender pay disparities have changed over time and assist in the formulation and effectiveness of policies and social reforms in reducing inequality. A sector-specific sector like education, banking, specific industries or agriculture can disclose the gender pay gaps thereby helps to identify industrial wise differences that need targeted interventions in Nepal.

Moreover, further studies could explore the impact of motherhood, unpaid child care, family responsibilities effects on women's earning potential in traditional societies like Nepal. The underlying factors like caste, ethnicity, and rural-urban segregation thoroughly related to wage discrimination would also uncover hidden layer of discrimination. This research could add depth to statistical data findings like workplace culture, gender norms, and perceptions of equality. Future research may assess how existing laws and policies such as equal pay, GESI etc. are implemented in developing and developed countries and how successful international strategies are adapted for successful strategies to reduce wage inequality. This research also leaves the area to investigate how women are accessing quality of education and get the op-

opportunities of vocational training affects the ability to enter high-pay jobs in current job market. The success of existing gender equality policies would also be evaluated to find out how successful methods are applicable for closing the wage gap.

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APPENDICES

Questionnaire (प्रश्नावली):

A. About You (तपाईंको बारेमा भन्नुहोस् ?)

Could you please tell me your education background and your occupation? (कृपया तपाईंको शैक्षिक पृष्ठभूमि र पेशाको बारेमा बताउनुहोस् ?)

- a. What is your geographical regions? (तपाईंको बसोबास कुन भौगोलिक क्षेत्र अर्न्तगत पर्दछ ?)
 - i. Himalayan Region (हिमाली क्षेत्र)
 - ii. Hilly Region (पहाडी क्षेत्र)
 - iii. Terai Region (तराई क्षेत्र)
- b. Please describe in short about your job history? (कृपया तपाईंको जागिरको इतिहास छोटकरीमा बताउनुहोस् ?)
- c. What is your Monthly income? (तपाईंको मासिक आम्दानी कति हो?)
 - i. NRS 10,000 or less (रु १०,००० वा कम)
 - ii. NRS 10,001 to NRS 15,000 (रु १०,००१ देखि १५,००० सम्म)
 - iii. NRS 15,001 to 25,000 (रु १५,००१ देखि २५,००० सम्म)
 - iv. NRS 25,000 above (रु २५,००१ माथि)
 - v. Prefer not to say (खुलाउन चाहन्न)

B. Career Progression and Workplace Experiences (क्यारियर, प्रगति र कार्यस्थलका अनुभवहरु)

- a. What kind of support you have experienced from your male co-worker as mentor or networks? (तपाईंले आफ्नो कार्यालयको पुरुष सहकर्मीबाट मेंटर वा नेटवर्कको रूपमा कस्तो सहयोग पाउनु भयो ?)
- b. In what ways women are influenced in their career growth, positively or negatively? (महिलाहरुको क्यारियर विकासमा सकारात्मक वा नकारात्मक रूपमा कस्ता असरहरु पर्छन् ?)
- c. Can you describe any experiences of gender-based discrimination or bias you have faced in hiring, promotions, or workplace treatment? (जागिर पाउने, पदोन्नति वा कार्यस्थलको व्यवहारमा लैङ्गिक भेदभाव वा पूर्वाग्रहीको अनुभव गर्नु भएको छ ?)

- d. What strategies have you used to overcome career challenges related to gender discrimination? (तपाईंले लैङ्गिक भेदभाव सम्बन्धी चुनौतीहरूबाट टाढा रहन कुन कुन रणनीति अपनाउनु भयो ?)

C. Workplace Attitudes and Leadership Challenges (कार्यस्थलको दृष्टिकोण र नेतृत्वका चुनौतिहरू)

- a. How would you describe the recognition and value given to your contributions and skills compared to your male colleagues? (तपाईंको योगदान र सीपलाई पुरुष सहकर्मीहरूको तुलनामा कतिको मूल्यांकन र मान्यता दिईन्छ ?)
- b. How do workplace policies support or hinder women's career growth and leadership opportunities? (कार्यस्थलका नीति नियमहरूले महिलाको क्यारियर विकास र नेतृत्वको अवसरलाई कसरी सहयोग गर्छन वा अवरोध पुऱ्याउँछन् ?)

D. Wages and Salary Experiences (पारिश्रमिक र तलव अनुभवहरू)

- a. What observations have you made regarding salary differences between men and women in similar roles? (समान काममा पुरुष र महिलाको तलवमा कस्तो फरक देख्नुभएको छ ?)
- b. Can you share any personal experiences or challenges you have faced in salary negotiations or issues related to pay transparency? (तलव सम्बन्धी वार्ता वा पारदर्शितासंग सम्बन्धित समस्याहरूको कुनै व्यक्तिगत अनुभव छ ?)
- c. Can you describe any instances where you have questioned or challenged your salary in comparison to male colleagues or discussed it with managers? (तपाईंले कहिलै तलवको सन्दर्भमा पुरुष सहकर्मीहरूसंग तुलना गरेर प्रश्न उठाउनु भएको छ वा प्रबन्धकसंग छलफल गर्नुभएको छ ?)

E. Future Perspectives and Recommendations (भविष्यको दृष्टिकोण र सिफारिसहरू)

- a. What actions should companies/unions take to ensure equal pay and career opportunities for women? (महिलालाई समान तलव

र क्यारियर अवसर सुनिश्चित गर्न कम्पनी अथवा युनियनहरूले के कदम चाल्नुपर्छ ?)

- b. What advice would you give to young women entering the workforce? (श्रम बजारमा प्रवेश गर्ने युवतीहरूलाई तपाईंको सुभाव वा सल्लाह के छ ?)