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CONDUCTING RESEARCH ON INEQUALITY AND EXPLOITATION IN WAGES BASED ON GENDER IN NEPAL

FINAL REPORT
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Submitted by:



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ABBREVIATIONS

AAIN	Action-Aid International Nepal
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
DAS	Dalit Awareness Society
DS	Deurali Society
DJKYC	Dalit Janakalyan Youth Club
EDC	Equality Development Center
EPR	Employment Population Rate
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GoN	Government of Nepal
GEFONT	General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions
HH	Household
HNN	Home Net Nepal
ILO	International Labor Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KII	Key Informant Interview
KMJS	Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Samaj
LFPR	Labor Force Participation Rate
NMES	Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj
NPR	Nepali Rupees
NTUC	Nepal Trade Union Congress
MLESS	Ministry of Labor Employment and Social Security
ODK	Open Data Kit
SRDCN	Social Resource Development Center Nepal
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
ToR	Terms of Reference
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UN	United Nation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wages are of fundamental importance for the living standard of wage earners and their families. They are one of the most important indicators of economic progress and social justice. Female workers are often paid a lower wage rate than their male counterparts in all kind of employment category.

The increasing participation of women in the paid labor market activities can be viewed positively as it has helped improve women's status and their involvement in economic sector. However, participation remains inadequate due to gender based discrimination and exploitation also exists in these informal sector which results in women being more discriminated and having to suffer wage gap. This research is presented by assessing the type of exploitation and inequality in wages in three areas i.e. agriculture, construction and factories in six districts of Nepal namely; Palpa, Kathmandu, Terhathum, Bardiya, Doti and Siraha.

One of the main findings of the whole research is that wage discrimination exists in all six districts both in rural as well as urban municipalities. Despite the provisions of equal pay between men and women, persistent gender- biased wage gap in all six districts are visible in all three sectors; agriculture, factory and construction. The survey has also shown that half of the respondents 49.7% (74, n=149) believed that there is wage discrepancies and the wage provided is different to male and female. The percentage of women who stated that the difference of payment is between NPR 100- 200 was relatively high with 37.8 % (28) as shown by the survey.

Factors on wage gap between women and men have been identified by research are that women's skills are undervalued, so women frequently earn less than men for doing comparable labor work / activities. Another factor on wage gap based on gender also reflects the gender division of household labor, whereby caring for the sick and elderly, bringing up children and housework are considered women's work. Survey also resulted that 56.8% (21, n=37) respondent did not receive any support from their family and were pressurized to complete all of the household chores before leaving home for work.

The research reveals that there are no other benefits or any extra facilities (not even medical facility, apart from if any sever injury occurred they are taken to the hospital) other than the regular wages in informal sector; construction and factory wage labors. The findings from the survey has also indicated that 55.7% (83, n=149) respondents were not provided with any facilities. Survey also resulted that 48.3% (72, n=149) of the respondent stated that no committee exists inside their workplace. Similarly, 85.9% (128, n=149) reported that they do not know about the existence of any groups in the community. Likewise, majority of women laborers 85.9% (128, n=149) indicated that there are no groups which could help raise collective voices against the discrimination and exploitation.

Furthermore, the scenario can only be changed with the governments' intervention, by implementing the act, laws and policies strictly. There should be a system in place to monitor contractors/ employers to abide them with the existing policy and acts. There should be complaining mechanism and action that has to be taken against all those who exploit, discriminate and harass the women workers.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1 BACKGROUND

Literally, the meaning of discrimination is an unfavorable treatment to anyone based on sex, caste/ ethnicity and so on. It is considered as an obstacle for the achievement of the objectives of equality. As a male dominated society discrimination against women in Nepal is related to the traditional culture deeply rooted in the society; that establishes the hierarchical relationship between male and female. Discrimination has been a cultural tradition that is accepted by women and applied by men as social value.

Wages are of fundamental importance for the living standard of wage earners and their families. They are also important indicators of economic progress and social justice. Female workers are paid a lower wage rate than their male counterparts in each employment category (casual and regular/ salaried) and location (urban and rural), disparity in minimum wages. Governments have legislated to guarantee equality of treatment between men and women in remuneration. There are provisions and laws that ensure equality, reducing insecurities, and preventing discrimination on the basis of gender. However, the effective implementation of existing legislation and policies and monitoring system is inadequate from the central level to the local level.

In this context, through this research's findings and recommendations, AAIN intends to eliminate exploitation and discrimination that exists on wage pay practices based on gender in informal sectors in Nepal by influencing government at various level for the effective implementation of existing labor act, legislation and policies and as well as to strengthen program in six districts with the same purpose.

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives were to:

- Assess the type of exploitation and inequality in wages in three areas i.e. agriculture, construction and factories.
- Assess the challenges in the institution, policies and practices that exploit and contribute to the labor wage
- Understand how the wage, gap in wages among male and female is allocated by the wage fixation committee.
- Prepare key recommendations based on the analysis and findings of the research.

1.3 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

There were several limitations to this research. Firstly, this research could reach only few (three) KII key representatives in central level and they attended the virtual KII. Some of these key

representatives who were approached did not answer to the calls whereas some of them have changed their phone numbers. This has hindered to come into contact with many KII respondents and get their insights as expected.

Unavailability/ inaccessibility of Factory and Labor Union Committee in the study municipality of some districts, the FGD with women working in factory and Labour Union Committee could not happen. This has limited to complete the defined numbers of FGDs as specified in the ToR.

During the virtual training for field researchers, the training was interrupted and discontinued due to network problem of virtual participants from few districts. The time taken by interruption has also caused problem to retain training participant's attention and get their quality time for their active participation during the course of the training.

As the FGD demands skilled facilitators, social mobilizers and youth volunteers who were mobilized as field researchers were new to qualitative research. This has challenged to collect the specific information as well as to maintain the quality of the data collection from the research districts. Consequently, social mobilizers has regular office work and this assignment has doubled their responsibilities hindering the timely data collection from their end. (Out of 30 HH survey, Palpa district completed 22 surveys only).

However, given all the above adverse circumstances, overall the fieldwork was conducted and completed as smoothly as possible.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

Primarily, this report is structured in four sections;

1. First section describes the methodology of data collection and procedures of the research including the background, research objectives and research limitations.
2. The second section describes brief description on the background information and literature review.
3. The third section presents the analysis and findings of quantitative HH survey in two parts i.e. Construction/ Factory and Agriculture survey respectively
4. The fourth section presents the analysis and findings of qualitative study in three parts:
 - Findings from FGDs (enclosed testimonies from participants)
 - Findings from KII with key representatives
 - The fifth section describes on the conclusions and key recommendations.

1.5 OUR APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY

The research uses both quantitative and qualitative mixed research methods. This study utilized amalgam of a systematic combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques and tools to get valid and reliable information from different sources. Both primary and secondary information was collected and analyzed to complete this study.

1.5.1 Methods of Data Collection

Basically, primary sources of data were collected by using following methods;

1) The Quantitative tool - Household Survey

The primary data collection was performed by designing an appropriate household survey questionnaire through Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) platforms. The research variables were finalized in line with the objectives of this research and review of the literatures. The survey questionnaires were programmed into ODK collect application. Field Researchers used Android devices and the ODK Collect application to administer the surveys.

2) Qualitative Tools Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

FGDs were administered with separate groups of project beneficiaries working in informal sectors; construction, factories and agriculture sector. Primarily FGD were commenced with women from rural and urban municipalities and Labor Union Committee members. FGDs were also conducted separately with men and women working in informal sectors. Eight to ten women and men participated separately in each FGD sessions. A guideline for conducting FGD was developed and applied.

3) Key Informant Interview (KII)

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with key stakeholder representatives from Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MLESS), International Labor Organization (ILO) and Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC). A guideline for conducting the KII was prepared and applied. The report builds on primary research, supplemented by available literature on inequality and exploitation wage based on gender and data available on policy/ Labor Act in Nepal.

1.5.2 Research Sites

A total of six project districts (Bardiya, Doti, Kathmandu, Palpa, Siraha and Terhathum) were purposively selected for this research. Further, one rural and one urban municipalities were also purposively selected from each six districts. This research, therefore, includes six urban municipalities, and six rural municipalities, from the above six districts (Please refer Annex for further detail).

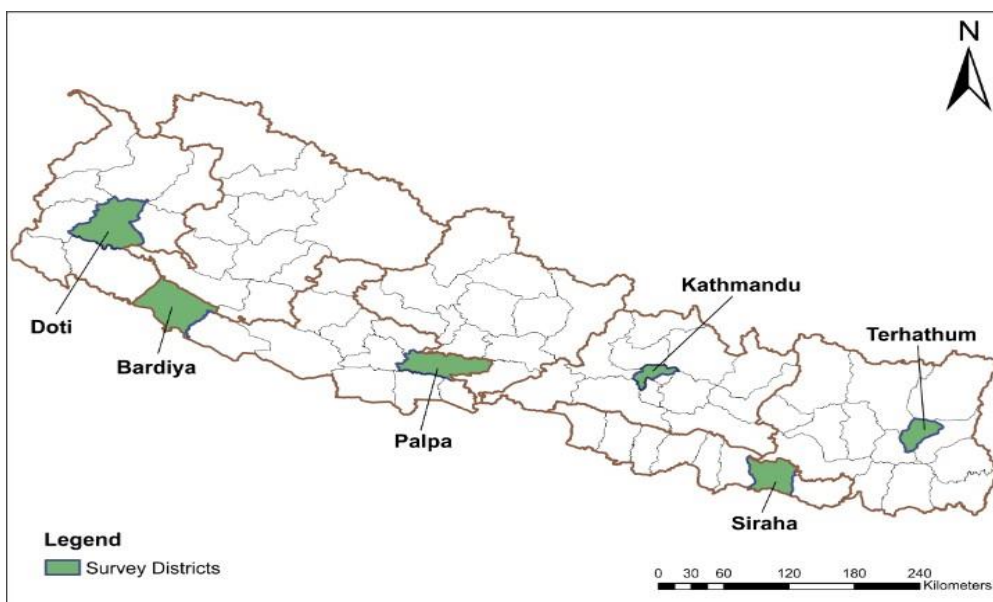


Figure 1: Survey Districts

1.5.3 Sampling Strategy

The quantitative part of the research uses two different sets of survey tools, designed specifically to gather data from women working in informal sector i.e. Construction and factory and women working as wage labor in agriculture sector in the community. The research population and sample size was determined jointly by the research team and the AAIN. This was based on targeted beneficiaries, feasibility and access to the research population.

In consultation with the AAIN, the research team prepared a list of qualitative guide questionnaires including survey tools. These were designed for the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and all the tools were specifically targeted to different beneficiary groups. Data collection took place from 12th July to 14th August 2021.

Out of 270 surveys, a total of 261 surveys were carried out, of which 50 surveys each in Siraha and Doti, 80 surveys in Kathmandu. Similarly 29 surveys in Bardiya, 30 Terathum and 22 surveys in Palpa districts were carried out respectively.

The research is complemented by qualitative data; including 15 FGDs (3 FGDs in each in six research districts) with women wage labor working in factory, construction and in agriculture in the community. A separate FGD was conducted with the Labor Union Committee members. Each FGD consisted of 8-10 relevant women and men participants.

Given the focus of the research, particularly, women working in informal sectors were purposively selected using purposive sampling strategy. Within this, a conscious effort was made to reach out to women facing specific marginalization in addition to gender; Dalit women, Single women, women from other marginalized groups.

Three KIIs were conducted with representatives from Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security, Nepal Trade Union Congress and International Labor Organization (ILO) in central level.

District /Types of Respondents	Bardiya	Doti	Kathmandu	Palpa	Siraha	Terathum	Total
Focus Group Discussion (FGD)							
Women working in Factory	1			1		1	3
Women in Construction	1		1		1	1	4
Women wage labor in Agriculture	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Labor Union Committee		1			1		2
Total FGDs	3	2	2	2	3	3	15
Key Informant Interview (KII)							
Representative from MLESS			1				1
Representatives from NTUC			1				1
Representative from ILO			1				1
Total KIIs			3				3
Survey/Construction / Factory	15	26	49	12	30	17	149
Survey Agriculture	14	24	31	10	20	13	112
Total Survey	29	50	80	22	50	30	261

Table 1: Overview of FGDs, KIIs and HHs Survey by Districts and Respondents

1.6 PREPARATORY TRAINING

Given the COVID – 19 pandemic situations, three-day virtual training was provided to the Field Researchers to familiarize them with the quantitative survey and qualitative research tool on FGD. The training was convened by two lead facilitators consisted of two separate sessions, one focused on undertaking the quantitative research using the HH survey questionnaires that were programmed into ODK application and another session for the qualitative research FGD.

Field Researchers were trained specifically on data collection techniques, applying the household survey tools through Android devices, to enable them to administer the survey efficiently. Similarly, Field Researchers were trained on building rapport with research participants, ethical considerations, and consent from participants and FGD facilitation skill underpinning the research.

The training sessions contained presentations, discussions and mock sessions which provided time for the Field Researchers to practice, share their views and clarify any questions they have. They were familiarized and practiced using the questionnaires for the HH surveys and FGDs. Additionally, a pre-test for survey was conducted to test the acceptability and validity of each tool and each question, and corrective measures were taken, essentially in terms of awareness and presentation of the research objectives.

1.7 FIELDWORK AND TEAM COMPOSITION

AAIN and the eight partners organizations' (KMJS, EDC, DS, DAS, DJKYC, SRDCN, HNN and NMES) District Coordinators prepared and arranged fieldwork plan in all six research districts. The fieldwork team consisted of 17 Field Researchers for quantitative Survey and 18 Field Researchers for qualitative FGD study.

Survey and FGDs in the districts were conducted in physical presence following COVID-19 safety protocols (e.g. wear mask, remain in open spaces, social distancing etc.).

1.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Following concerns and activities were given priority to maintain the validity of the research;

- Research tools specifically HH survey tools were pre-tested and necessary modification were done based on the feedback received from testing of the tools.
- Field Researchers were trained about the objectives, methodology and tools along with whole research process for three days.
- Questionnaires/ guidelines were developed and provided to field researchers.
- Tools were translated in Nepali language and were used to minimize the biasness, as far as possible.
- Effective and purposeful rapport building with participants was in high priority during research.
- Purpose of the research was made clear to all respondent before the collection of information.
- Research team tried to adopt the social-cultural setting and activities of research area during research.
- Field Researchers being local focused on to build a rapport with women wage workers.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A participant consent form was developed to ensure ethical standards which also contained detailed information on the purpose of the research. All Field Researchers were familiarized with the form, and the ethical considerations underpinning the research. Written approval of the research participants was obtained prior to administering the questionnaires, or conducting discussions and survey interviews. It was made clear to the participants that they would not be coerced to participate, and everything they shared would remain confidential. All the participants signed the informed consent forms for their conversations to be audio-recorded for the purpose of this assignment.

1.10 DATA ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT

Once the data collection was completed, all the relevant information was collected for data entry and analysis. The quantitative survey data was cleaned and analyzed using Microsoft Excel according to standard statistical methodologies and analytical standards along with preparation of table of frequencies cross tabulation and statistical analysis of data.

Similarly, qualitative data was transcribed by Field Researchers and collected and compiled to analyze by research team in Kathmandu. The qualitative data was organized for thematic analysis. The thematic analysis was based on five distinct themes including: 1) Discrimination in wages and exploitation in the workplace 2) Facilities/ benefits for Women Wage Labors 3) Gender roles affect the wage pay 4) Challenges for women; insecurity, harassment at work place and support mechanism 5) Covid-19 pandemic and its affects to work and wages in informal sectors

Key findings were then summarized and finally integrated into the relevant sections. Testimonies /quotations illustrating the views of the research respondents were extracted from the original transcriptions of FGDs and KIIs.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 CONTEXTUAL

The review of literature is pertaining to some of the important articles and survey documented by various researchers regarding the construction, factory and agriculture wage differences of women in these sectors. The focus of review is on the factors such as wage disparity based on gender, harassment, exploitation and discrimination in the workplace of the women. The literature review is categorized in to following sections to have insight regarding discrimination and exploitation in wages of workers based on gender.

a) Gender parity Laws and Act of Nepal b) Women's participation in economic activities and wage discrimination based on gender c) Exploitation and harassment at the workplace d) Economic opportunities for women e) Facilities for women labor f) COVID-19 effects on women laborers

2.1.1 Gender parity laws and act of Nepal

The constitution of Nepal has in its Preamble, guaranteed equal status to men and women, promising to eliminate all kinds of discrimination based on class, caste, region, language, religion and gender and all forms of caste-based untouchability. Article 34 of Constitution articulates on the right to labor which states every laborer shall have the right to fair labor practice, right to appropriate remuneration, facilities and contributory social security and right to form and join trade unions and to engage in collective bargaining, in accordance with law. Likewise, article 18 states no discrimination shall be made on the ground of gender with regard to remuneration and social security for the same work.

Additionally, the constitution includes several provisions related to labor and employment such as the Right to Live in Dignity, (Article 16.1), Right to Freedom (17.2.d), Right to Equality (Art.18) including Right against Exploitation (Art. 29).

Nepal has taken responsibility for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and set targets and strategies to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. However, programs and strategies need reviewing, refining and reorientation in the context of SDG 5 on gender equality.

Similarly, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) also ensures the right to the same employment opportunities, free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service, right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, right to social security (Article 11). International Labor Organization has mandated to advance social justice and promote decent work by setting international labor standards. In this context, ILO has passed the provision of no gender-based discrimination on wages and services

in the area of labor and the right to choose employment and opportunities, which has been ratified by Nepal on 2051.

The Department of Labor under Government of Nepal (GoN) can impose fine not exceeding one hundred thousand rupees if any person/employer/company discriminates labors while employing them inside their working area. (Labor Act, 2017).

Nepal has amended a number of discriminatory legal acts and enacted gender parity laws. However, challenges and obstacles remain in putting these laws into practice. Numerous civil society organizations have recognized that, owing to the prevalence of patriarchal mind-sets in Nepali society, efforts to advance gender equality are often limited to policy papers. In addition, large numbers of women particularly in rural areas, remain unaware of the laws that exist to protect their rights. Nepal also suffers from several capacity constraints.¹ Main challenges to informal sector

are the implementation of labor laws. Despite legal provisions for equal wages between men and women, discrimination remains in terms of cash or in kind remuneration. In 2010/11, male wage earners (cash and in kind) received on average NPR 50 and NPR 90 per day more than female wage earners in agriculture and non-agriculture sectors, respectively.²

Existing equality legislation is not adequately implemented. Evidence points to the positive impact of women's access to and full engagement with work contributing to long-term poverty alleviation. However, the women workers from informal sector i.e. women working in the construction sector, agriculture sector and also women working in the factories experience exploitation in payment of wages; the wages paid to them by their employers are unequal, unfair, under paid, and even no pay, this is exploitation of human rights. Unless existing obstacles / exploitation and violation of women's rights are not addressed, women working as wage labor will be adversely affected.

2.1.2 Women's participation in economic activities and wage discrimination based on gender

Women account for half of the total population of the country. 81 per cent of Nepali population is rural based, of which around 43 percent are women.³

There are huge disparities in other labor market indicators between females and males, in that female employment-to-population (EPR) is 22.9 percent, which is 25.4 percentage points lower than male EPR. The female labor force participation rate (LFPR) was 26.3 percent compared to the male LFPR (53.8 percent).⁴

The pay gap based on gender is a measurable indicator of inequality between women and men. Gender equality remains as the spirit of the country's law, but in practice, gender-based

Section 19. Extra remuneration for overtime work. (1) If any worker or employee is engaged to work for more than eight hours in any day, or for more than 48 hours in any week, she/he shall be paid remuneration for such overtime work at the rate of 150 per cent of his usual remuneration. Provided that no worker or employee shall be compelled to work overtime. Nepal Labor Act

¹UN Women, 2014a

²(CBS, 2014c).

³World Bank collection indicators, 2016

⁴Nepal Labor Force Survey, 2017/18

discrimination largely prevails in every sector in the context of Nepal and women face discrimination in terms of wages in the labour market.⁵ Women's pay was also estimated to be 59.5 per cent of men's pay, though this partly attributes to the difference in the number of hours men worked.⁶

As per census data, wages in agriculture as well as in non-agriculture sectors have increased more than fourfold over the period 1995-2011 (CBS, 2014c). The wage gap is higher in rural areas, where women's wages normally are lower by 25 to 50 percent than those of men (UNESCO, 2015).

In addition, manufacturing sector, hotel and tourism, garbage cleaning, transportation and construction are the most important source of non-farm employment for the workers of different skill categories mainly because of rapid urbanization as well as construction of physical infrastructure in the country. (Gautam, 2014)

i) Wage gap in Agriculture Sector:

One of the major economic activities of Nepalese people is agriculture as it provides livelihood to majority of the population. Women play an important role in agriculture sector as employment opportunities in other sectors are quite limited. Also, Nepal has been experiencing feminization in agriculture sector as majority of the women are being involved. This is largely because men are either shifting to non-agricultural work or migrating abroad in search of better job opportunities. This leaves woman to take over the entire agriculture related activities which was traditionally shared between men and women.

Women in Nepal constitute of 51.5 % of total population out of which 75% of women are engaged in Agriculture as their primary occupation (IOM, 2016). Regardless of their engagement in the agriculture sector, some of them are not provided specific payment as they are employed within their family's farm.

Different studies show that there is an increasing dominance of women in agriculture due to increasing male out-migration, especially in rural areas. This forces women to take on increased workloads at home and in agriculture, and limits them from participating in alternative income-generating activities. Studies have also shown a persistent gender-biased wage gap throughout the country that is especially visible in agriculture as women receive wages about 25 percent lower than men, despite legal provisions for equal pay between the sexes. (FAO, 2019)

ii) Wage gap in Factories and Construction Sector:

In Nepal, after agriculture, and including the public sector, construction is the third largest sector by employment (15%) after manufacturing (24%), and wholesale and retail trade (18%), (ILO, 2005). The construction sector in Nepal is large in terms of both i.e. employment engagement in the sector and their contribution to the national economy. Many construction jobs are seasonal; hence, those working on this sector also look for work in other sectors.

⁵Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)

⁶ILO Labor report

A recently published report by the World Bank indicates that, in the last two decades majority of the men have started working in construction and manufacturing sectors, despite of these sectors contributing largely to the informal economy it is still considered to improve livelihoods of people who were previously solely focused in agriculture. However, women on the other hand have not been able to make transition like men, although majority of women in Nepal are working, they are doing works that are unpaid. Hence, the jobs with better wages are occupied by men. This also results in inequality as women are not being able to work according to their productive capacity.

Women do work for Informal Sector which comprises of construction sector, agriculture sector and factories. 1,11,000 women are engaged in construction work (National labor Force Survey, 2019). However, women work in the worst jobs in construction where their works comprises of carrying bricks and sand, breaking stones and working with heavy machinery without protective gears. Despite taking on the tough works, women still earn almost 30 percent less than men for the same work, and sometimes far below the minimum wage of Rs13,450 per month.⁷

Differences in pay between men and women are related to the lower labor force participation of women, as well as greater intermittency of employment among working women. Ultimately this is traceable to differences in gender roles at home, as women are more apt to take part-time work or cease work altogether to devote more time and effort for home work like child rearing. This may be consistent with findings reported in Dacuycuy and Dacuycuy (2017) from a 2002 survey, showing that husbands devote less time for house work compared to wives, although wives do roughly the same amount of time for market work as their husbands, even as they earn a lower wage.

2.1.3 Exploitation and Harassment at the Workplace

Harassment is a problematic issue where women and men work together. It is being recognized as a violation of human rights and human dignity which undermines the equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women. The research conducted by International Labor Organization (ILO) in Nepal showed that 40% of female employees were aware of sexual harassment and 54% of the female workers had experienced sexual harassment in the workplaces. General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) research which also reported that majority of female workers are victimized by their co-workers in all forms of harassment followed by outsiders and managerial staffs. The insecurities women experienced in these various spaces posed significant challenges to their security and safety as well as their performance at their jobs.

In 2009, Gita Dhakal conducted a research of women working in carpet factories and found that 72 per cent of women had heard of sexual harassment while 52 percent reported that they had experienced it themselves; teasing, vulgar comments, and obscene jokes consisted of 87 per cent of women's experiences of harassment.

The Government of Nepal has enacted a specific legislation addressing sexual harassment at workplace with the objective to protect the right of every individual to work in a safe environment. The Sexual Harassment at Workplace Prevention Act, 2015 (2071). However, despite this

⁷ <https://kathmandupost.com/money/2021/06/16/wage-gap-between-men-and-women-persists-report-says>

Prevention Act here is a lack of implementation of such act supporting women's right to work in a safe environment.

2.1.4 Economic opportunity for women

Nepal has demonstrated small but positive progress throughout the years. In comparison to other South Asian countries, Nepal along with Bhutan were the only countries which demonstrated positive progress towards gender parity. According to the report published by Global gender gap report, 2021 the reason for the positive growth is because 85% of women participate in the labor force.⁸

According to reports, the Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen has set a new approach to social mobilization, institutional building and rural business promotion to uplift women and give them more income generating opportunities.⁹ Although, things are changing, it is in a slow pace and it is losing out on much of the production potential of women. Hence, fast progress for women is important. A report published by the World Bank suggests that, more jobs within firms, especially in small and medium sized enterprises with relatively high productivity, and higher level of domestically added value in goods and services which will be competitive in the global stage in the coming future.¹⁰

2.1.5 Facilities for women labor

The Labor Act of 1992 makes several provisions for women, including the right to gender-segregated toilets, safe transport from their places of work at night, and child care in workplaces with more than 50 female employees. Maternity leave is also provided for in other legislation. However, despite these provisions there is a lack of implementation of policies supporting women's right to work.

2.1.6 Covid-19 effects on women laborers

Under the circumstances of lockdown in Nepal, almost everyone had a hard time trying to make their ends meet. The lockdown has been tougher on people working in informal sectors. According to a report published by ILO, in total 6, 31,000 female jobs (24.3% of the 2018 female work force) are estimated at risk in the higher impact scenario. As majority of them were engaged in informal work, they were not provided with formal job including social protection coverage.

⁸http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

⁹<http://interactions.eldis.org/economic-empowerment/country-profiles/nepal>

¹⁰<https://blogs.worldbank.org/jobs/job-quality-nepal-improving-women-lag-behind>

CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS FROM QUANTITATIVE (HOUSEHOLD) SURVEY

3.1 CONSTRUCTION AND FACTORY

Background Information

The survey on construction was carried out with a total of 149 females, working as a daily wage laborer on six different districts of Nepal as a part of this research. The following graph represents the demographic information (age, caste) of the respondents.

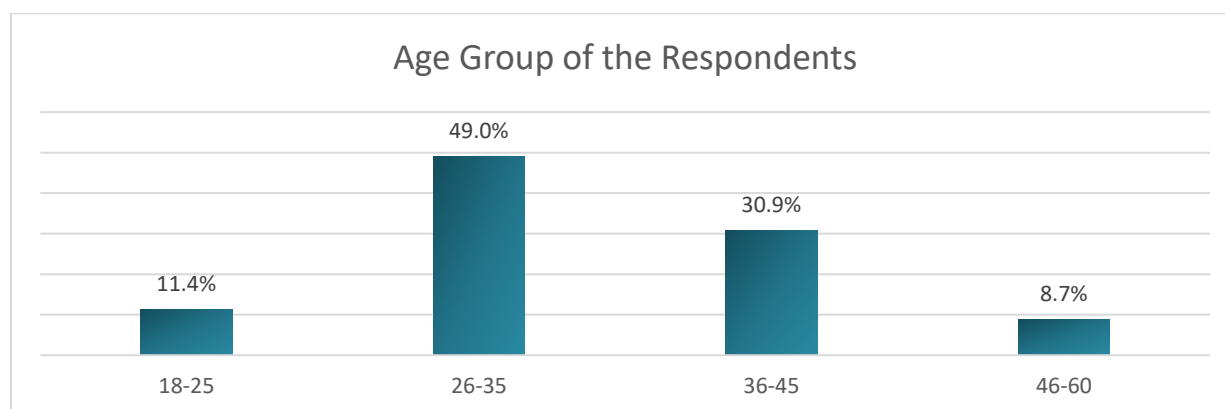


Figure 2: Age Group of the Respondents

Almost half of all the respondents were from age group 26-35 (49.0%) followed by 30.9% (46) and comparatively very few of them belonged from age group 46-60 i.e. 8.7 % (13).

Respondents by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Percentage (%)
Hill Brahman/Chhetri/Thakuri/Sanyasi	20.8
Hill Janajati	25.5
Hill Dalit	30.9
Tarai Janajati	12.8
Terai Dalit	10.1

Table 2: Respondents by Ethnicity (Factory and Construction)

Respondents by Level of Education

Level of education	Percentage (%)
Literate	42.3
Up to Secondary Education	22.1
Bachelors and above	12.8
Illiterate	22.8

Table 3: Respondent by Level of Education

Percentage of Respondent in each District:

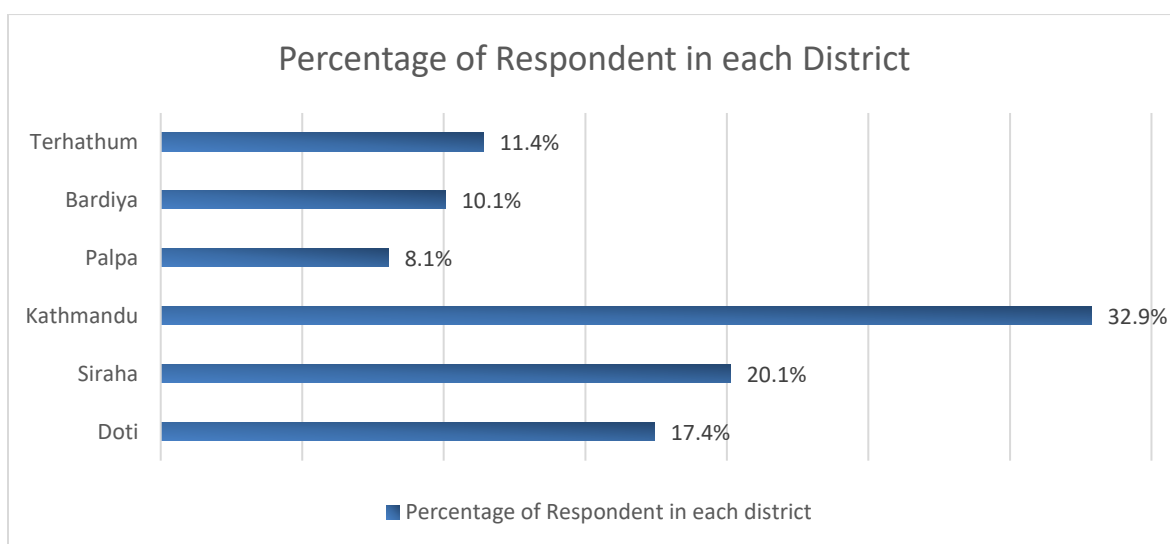


Figure 3: District wise Percentage of Respondent (Factory and Construction)

The sample size was derived using Probability Proportional to Size (PPS). From this technique, the district with the highest population was designated the largest sample, hence, Kathmandu has the highest percentage of respondents i.e. 32.9% (49) whereas Palpa has the lowest with 8.1% (12).

Employment Status

Current Employment Status	Percentage (%)
Fully Employed	22.1
Time related Underemployment	29.5
Unemployed	22.8
Unavailable Job seekers	18.8
Available Potential Job seekers	6.7

Table 4: Employment Status (Factory and Construction)

Majority of the respondents 29.5% (44) were employed under the basis of time related underemployment whereas almost equal number of respondents were fully employed and/or unemployed with 22.1% (33) and 22.8% (34) respectively.

The respondents in this sector were further segregated into two work sectors namely, factory and construction.

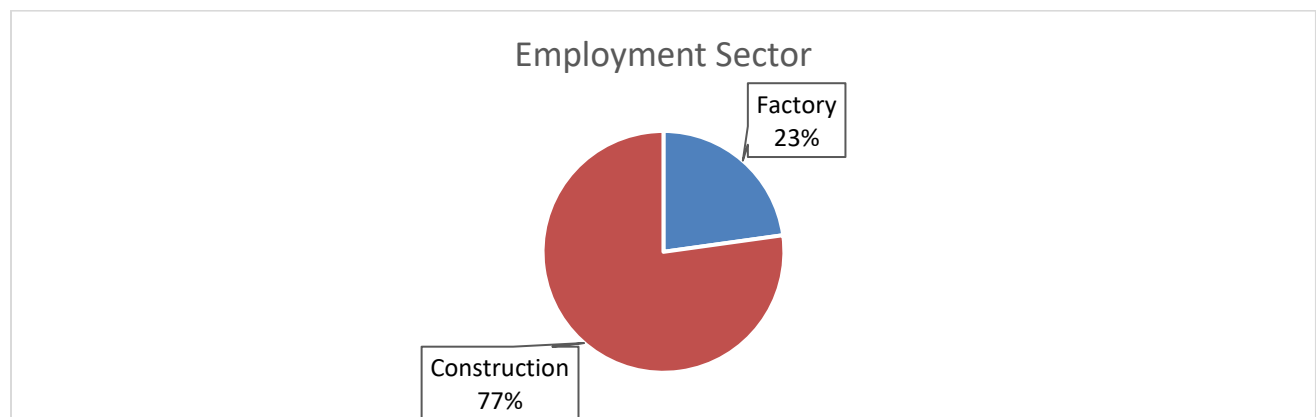


Figure 4: Sector of Employment

This survey is based on 77.20% (115) respondents from construction and 22.80% (34) from factory.

Workplace Description:

Over half of the respondents 51.0% (76) stated that their workplace was situated in a geographically accessible area, which made commuting easier for them. However, a remaining large portion 41.6% (62) shared that their workplace was relatively farther than their respective houses.

With majority of the respondents working in construction sector, most of the respondents 54.4% (81) stated that their work place is a construction site whereas 18.8% (28) stated that they work in fixed place i.e. factory. On the other hand, closer to one-fourth 26.8% (40) of the respondents

stated that there is no fixed location for their work. This clearly shows the instability and unpredictability of their work.

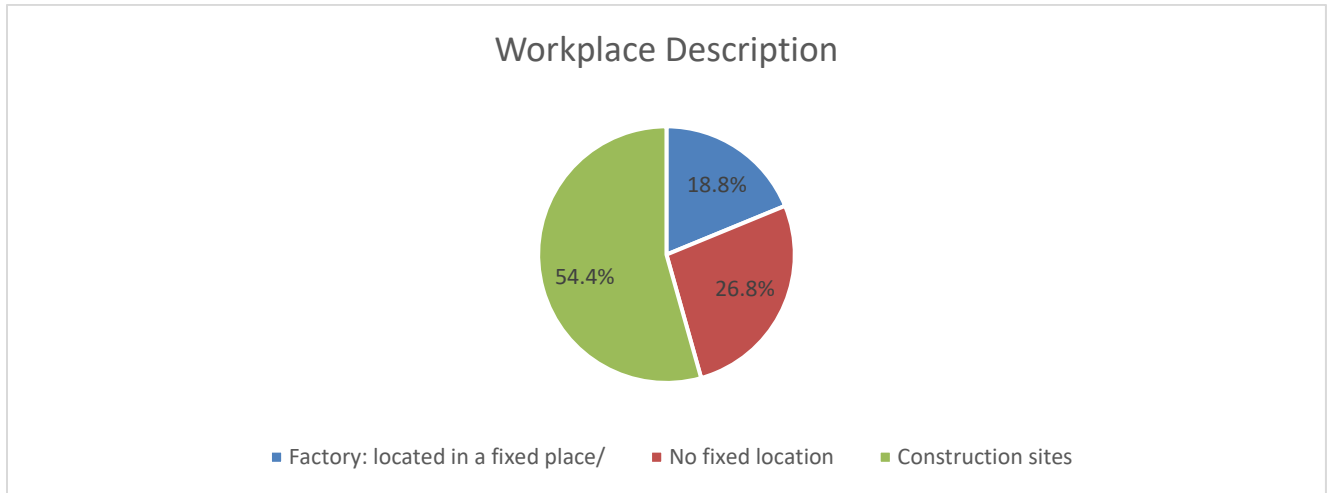


Figure 5: Workplace Description

The work in construction and the type of factory varied amongst the respondents.

Type of Factory	Percentage (Frequency)
Textile	26.5% (9)
Food and Beverage	50.0% (17)
Brick Kiln	14.7% (5)
Breeding Farm	5.9% (2)
Others	2.9% (1)

Table 5: Type of Factory

Here, amongst factory workers, a significant portion 50.0% (17) of them stated that they work for food and beverage factories, followed by Textile factories with 26.5% (9).

Similarly, the work done by respondents working on construction site was also described as follows:

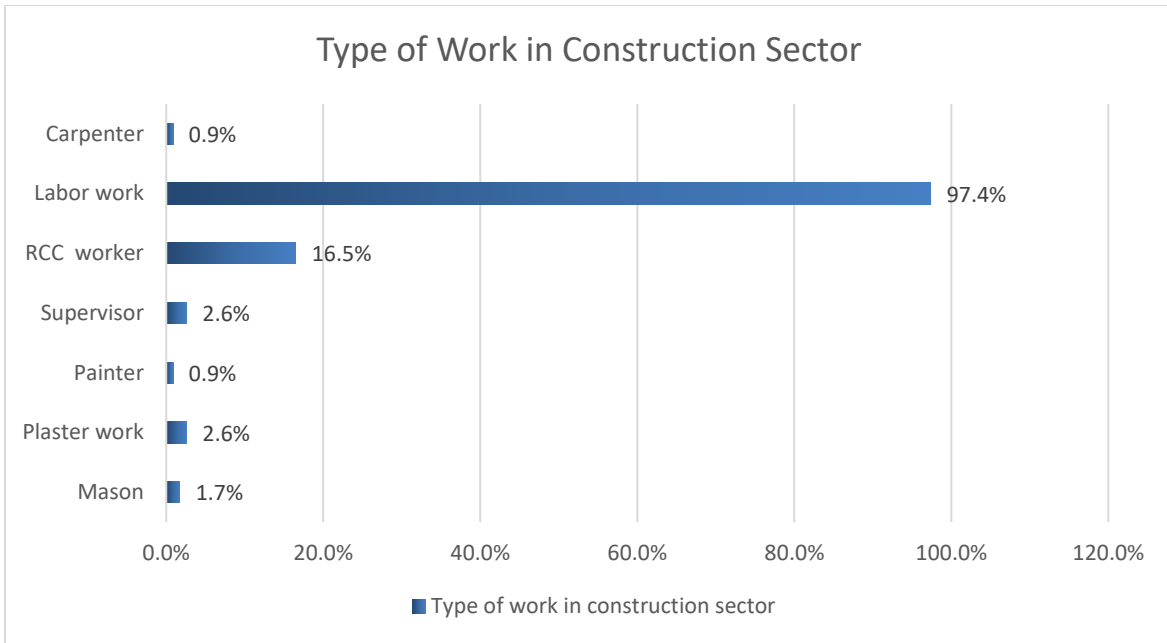


Figure 6: Type of Work in Construction Sector

Almost all of the respondents i.e. 97.4% (112) stated that their job was that of a labor worker. This means that their major work is to do non-skill physical labor. A relatively skilled work like supervisor only consisted of 2.6% (3) of the respondent, which shows that women laborer are mostly focused on physical labor than working in more skilled work.

Inequality during recruitment

The task of providing employment to laborers is mostly done by male as from the chart above it can be clearly seen that a very significant portion 90.6% (135) of employers are male.

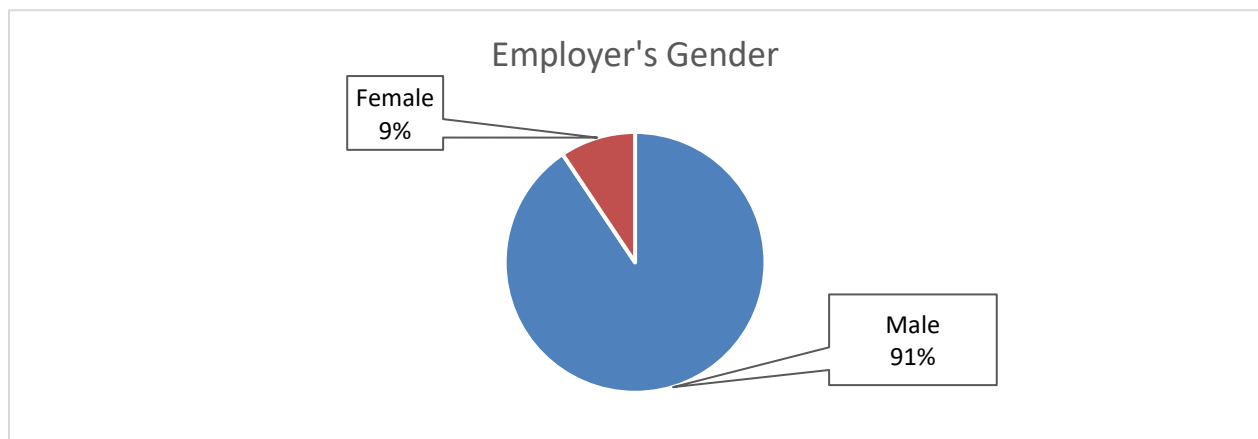


Figure 7: Gender of Employer (Construction and Factory)

This probably might be a reason as to one third of the women laborers i.e. 33.6% (50) were not informed about their wages before starting work. However, on a positive note 66.4% (99) of the women laborer stated that their wages were discussed beforehand. Further, stating that they even bargained with their employers regarding the wages. Almost the entire respondent i.e. 94.9% (94) whose wage was discussed prior to them joining their work, bargained with their employers regarding the same.

Job Recruitment

To understand the pattern of recruitment to work as daily wage laborers, information regarding their recruitment was also gathered through this survey, for which, the following responses were received.

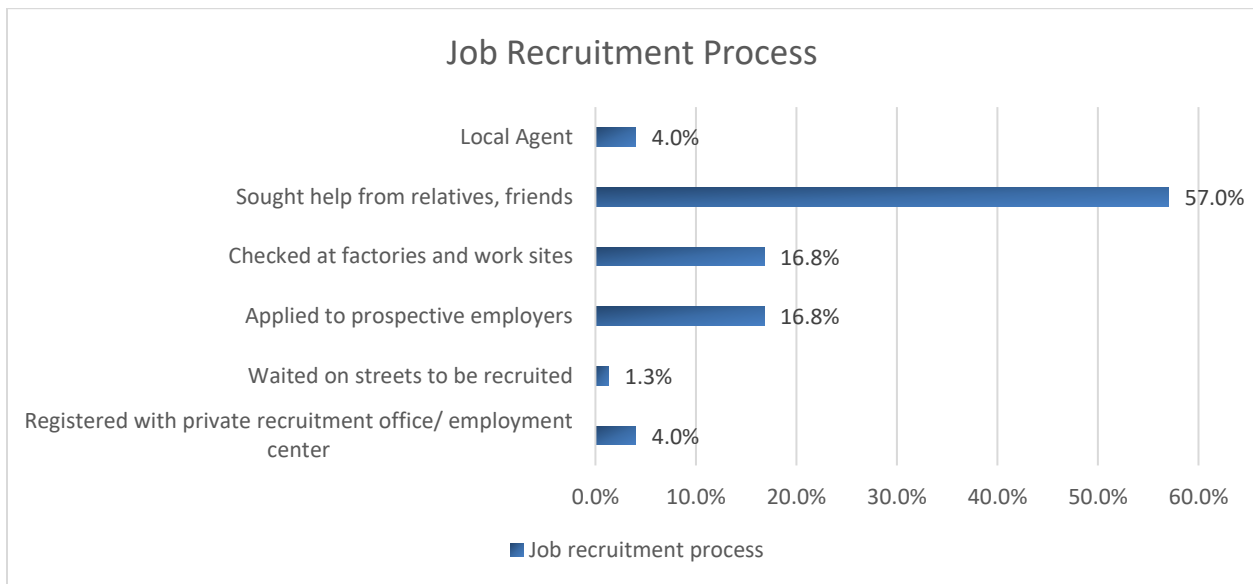


Figure 8: Job Recruitment Process

The most common practice of searching for a job by wage laborers is to seek help from relatives and friends as more than half of the respondents i.e. 57.0% (85) agreed so. Likewise, it is equally followed by the laborers checking on work sites/ factories and applying to prospective employers with 16.8% (25) respondents stated that they got their jobs through that process. Although very less i.e. 4.0% (6), the trend of finding job through a local agent and registering with private recruitment office is also stated by the respondents.

Nature of Employment

More than one-third of the respondents i.e. 35.6% (53) have regular working hours of 10 am- 5 pm, followed by 21.5% respondents working from 9 am-6 pm. Unlike, working hours in agriculture sector, working hours in construction and factory is more systematic. Although, 18.8% (28) of them stated that there is no fixed time duration for the work they do.

The monthly income of the respondents also varied. About one-third of the respondents i.e. 33.6 % (50) earn half of what has been fixed by the government of Nepal as they earn below NPR

7600 per month. Similar number of respondents 30.9% (46) stated that they earn in between NPR 7,600-10,000 per month.

Average Earning (Monthly Basis in NPR)	Percentage (%)
<7,600	33.6
7,600-10,000	30.9
10,000- 13,500	16.8
13,500- 15,000	9.4
15,000- 25,000	8.7
>= 25,000	0.7

Table 6: Average Earning on Monthly Basis (Construction and Factory)

From the table above, it can be seen that only 9.4% (14) of them work for the government's estimated wage to the laborers of NPR.13500- 15000.

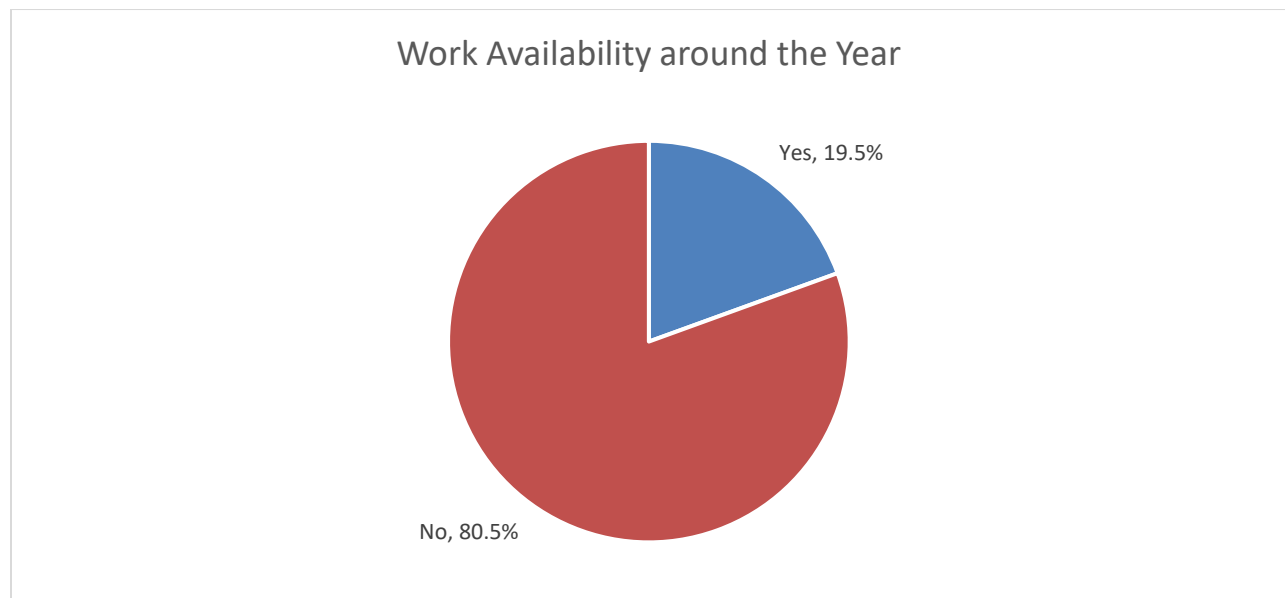


Figure 9: Work Availability around the Year

The instability in wages and work can also be noticed among the wage laborers as only 19.5% of people have worked all around the year whereas a significant amount of respondents i.e. 80.5% (120) of them stated that they do not have work all around the year. It signifies that there is no fixed source of income for laborers throughout the year.

Unstable work resulting in unstable payment is a major problem for many. Due to inconsistency of work and payment, most of the respondents stated that their earning is only sufficient for few days. The following graph presents the timeline till which their earning is sufficient for them.

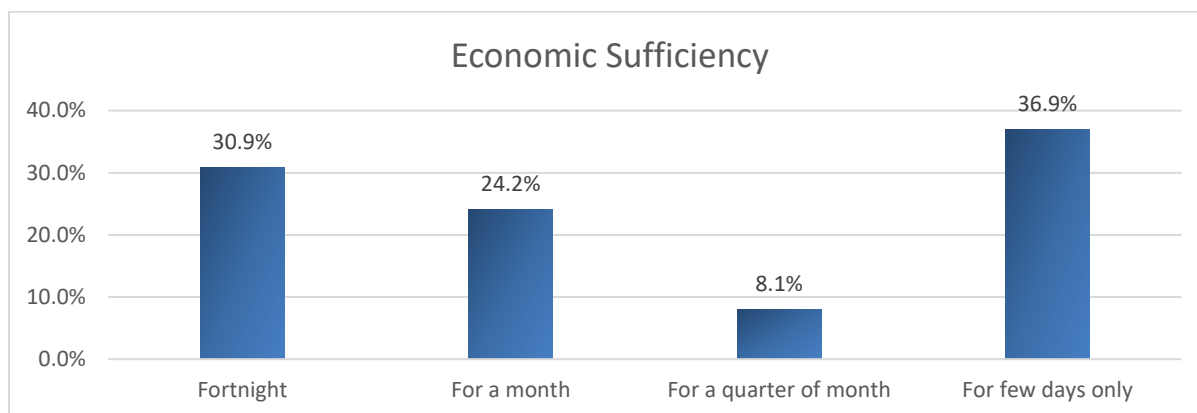


Figure 10: Economic Sufficiency (Construction and Factory)

More than one-third of respondent i.e. 36.9% (55) stated that their earning is sufficient for few days only whereas 30.9% (46) of them stated that their earning is enough for a fortnight. Close to one-fourth of the respondent i.e. 24.2% (36) had their earning sufficient for a month. This indicates that majority of them are underpaid and cannot afford basic amenities from their income for an entire month.

Women laborers spend most of their income on food. Almost every respondent i.e. 90.6% (135) of them stated that most of their income is spent on food. With the increasing prices of food and cooking materials, it is no surprise that a very significant portion of their earning goes to food. The findings from FGD also suggests that women workers are not satisfied with the wage they get per day which is not enough to purchase two packets of oil.

Access to finance

The percentage of women laborers who required loan exceeds those who did not require one in the past one year. Out of all the respondents, 63.8% (95, n=149) of them have accessed credit in the past year. Amongst all the possible places where one can receive credit, a significant portion of respondents i.e. 58.9% (56, n=95) preferred saving credit group. It is evident that the practice of taking loans from friends, relatives and farmers is prevalent amongst women laborers as 43.2% (41, n=95) of them stated that they receive it from them.

Among those respondent who did not take any credit in the past year stating that they have issues constraining access to finance, referred to interest rate being one of the main reason. 75.4% (52, n=69) stated that interest rate was a major issue for them which held them from taking any credit.

Inequality in work

There are facilities which are specific to men according to the women laborers. From the survey, it can be seen that almost half of the respondent i.e. 49.7% (74, n= 149) agreed that few of the facilities inside their work place has prioritized men workers over women workers. As seen in the

chart below, a huge portion of respondent believed that men are provided with higher salaries than them for the same work. The findings from FGD also suggests that wage discrimination exists in all six districts both in rural as well as urban municipalities.

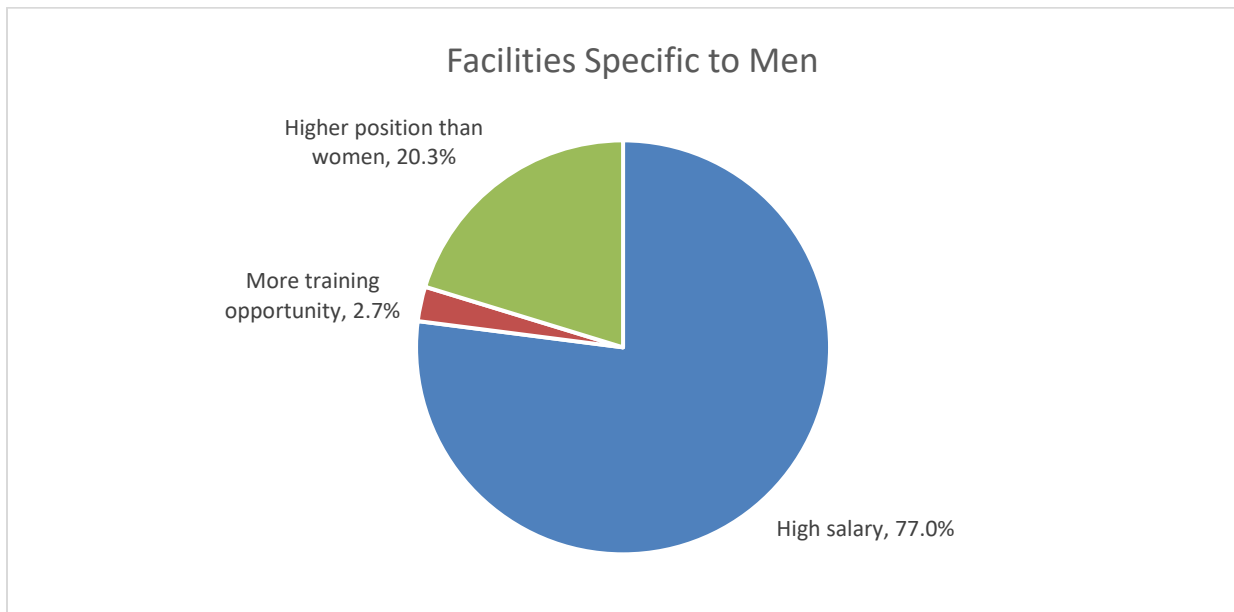


Figure 11: Facilities Specific to Men

From the study we can also note that, most of the respondents are deprived of many basic facilities from their factory/construction sector.

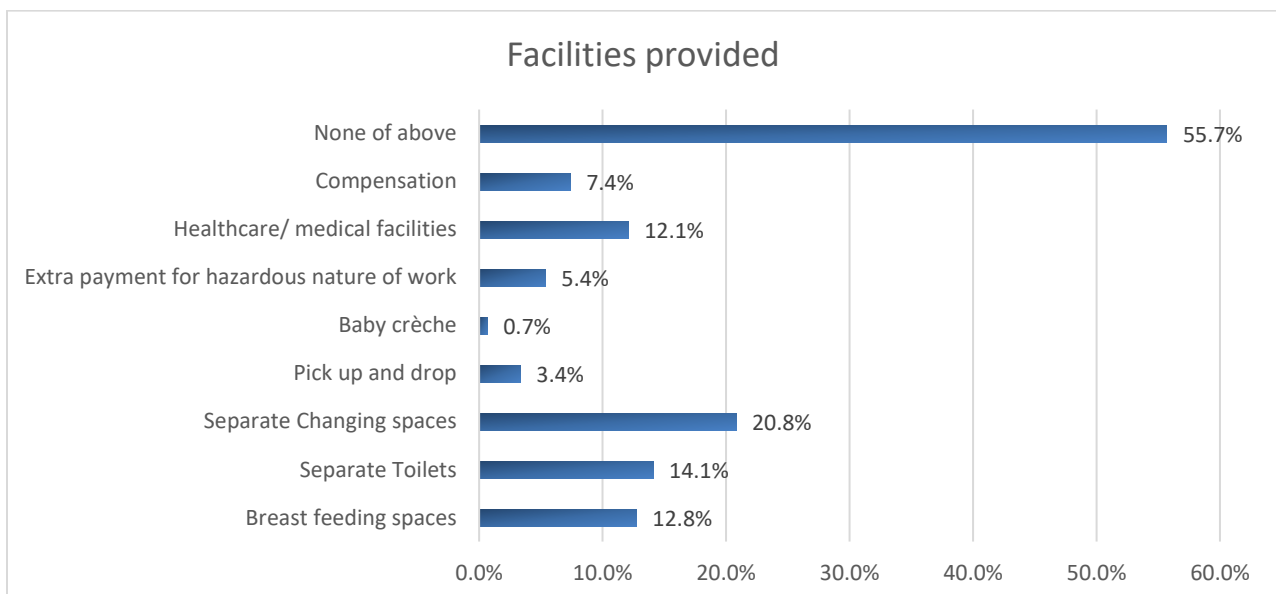


Figure 12: Facilities Provided to Labourers

From the graph it can be seen that, 55.7% (83, n=149) respondent stated that they were provided with none of the facilities. Few of the respondents agreed that they were provided with basic

facilities as separate changing spaces (20.8%), separate toilets (14.1%) and health care medicinal facilities (12.1%). Respondents from focus group discussion also shared that there are no other benefits or any extra facilities (not even medical facility apart from if any severe injury occurred they are taken to the hospital) other than the regular wages in informal sector; construction and factory wage labors. Concerning facilities; separate toilet for women, baby crèche etc. are far beyond women worker's knowledge and were unaware about the facilities and rights to these facilities. While Union Committee members reported that lack of separate toilets to male and female in the worksite has created insecurity for women, few of the committee members were aware of women's rights to such facility.

Likewise, skill development training is not provided to both men and women, however, in comparison between the two genders, women are still lagging behind.

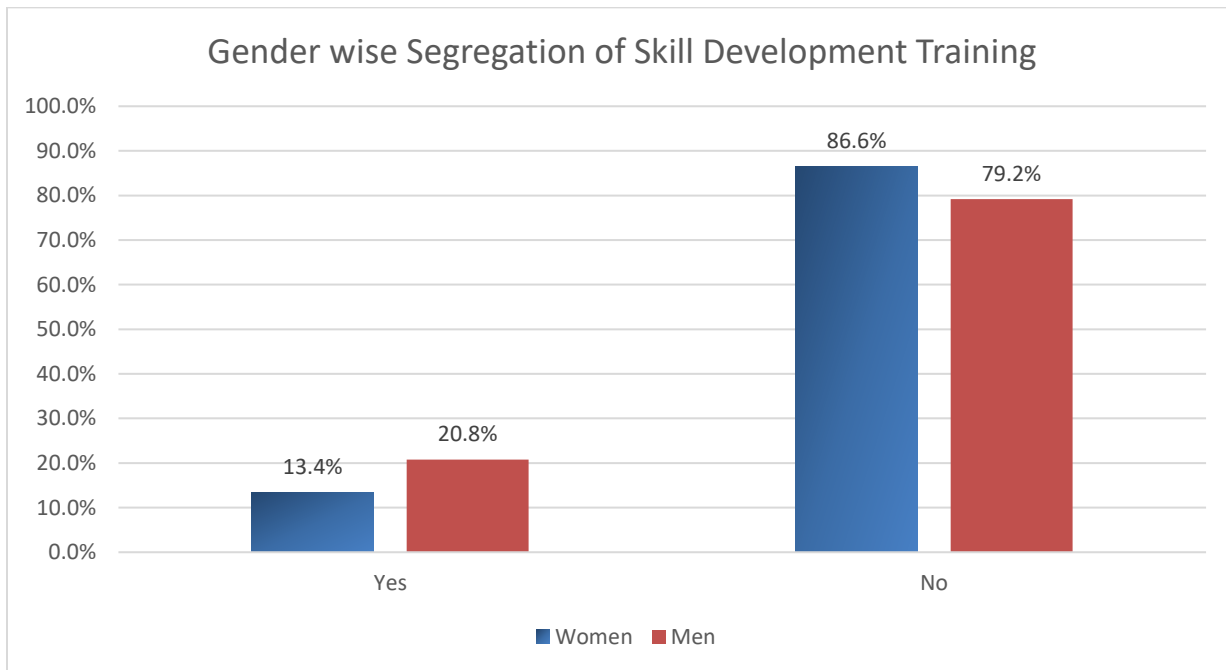


Figure 13: Gender wise Segregation of Skill Development Training

According to the respondents, only 13.4% (20, n=149) women were provided with skill development training prior to joining the work. On the other hand, they firmly believed that 20.8% (31) men received specific skill related training. However, most of the respondents stated that neither men nor women were provided with any type of training before starting the work.

On a very positive note, only few of the respondents i.e. 16.1% (24, n=149) accepted that they faced some type of insecurity inside their workplace. The types of insecurity stated by the respondents are as follows:

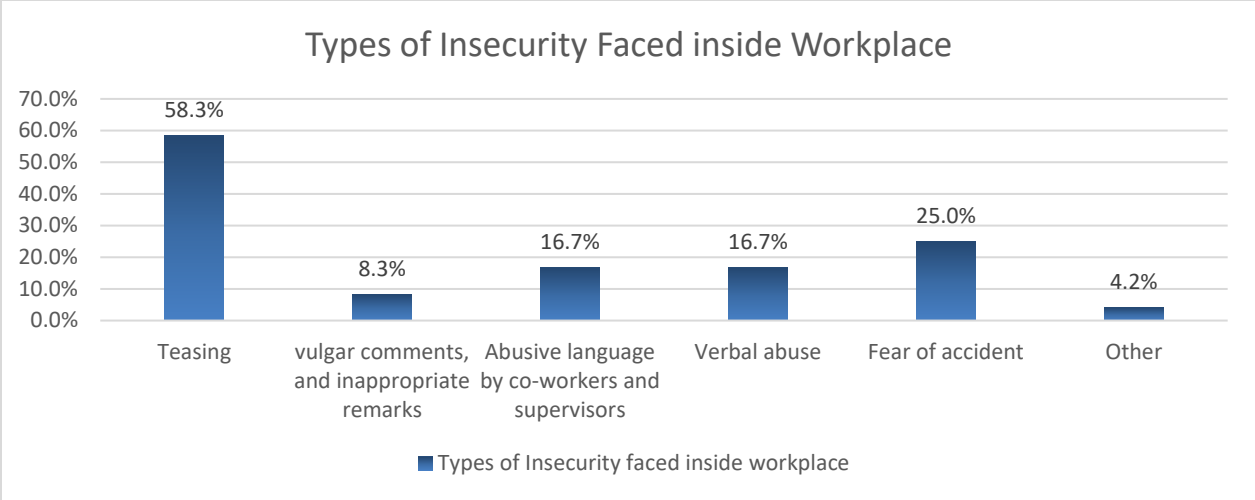


Figure 14: Types of Insecurity Faced

Out of 24 respondent, 58.6% (14, n=24) noted that they were victim of inappropriate teasing inside the workplace, followed by 25% (6,n=24) feared accident and felt insecure. Similarly, 16.7% (4) women expressed facing verbal abuse and abusive language by their co-workers and supervisors respectively. The findings from FGD also suggest that, women are facing exploitation, insecurity and harassment at work place more in construction sector. Women are sometimes given more pressure in their work. Male colleague often makes fun of female workers and tease them. They also make inappropriate and vulgar remarks and try to inappropriately touch when women are working late in the worksite.

From the findings of the study, it can be noted that relatively very few women i.e. 13.4% (20, n=149) agreed that they had faced some sort of exploitation and/or discrimination inside their workplace. They further added that most of the time it was their employer who discriminated them as 60% (12, n=20) stated the same. The below given graph gives information on the type of discrimination the respondents had faced.

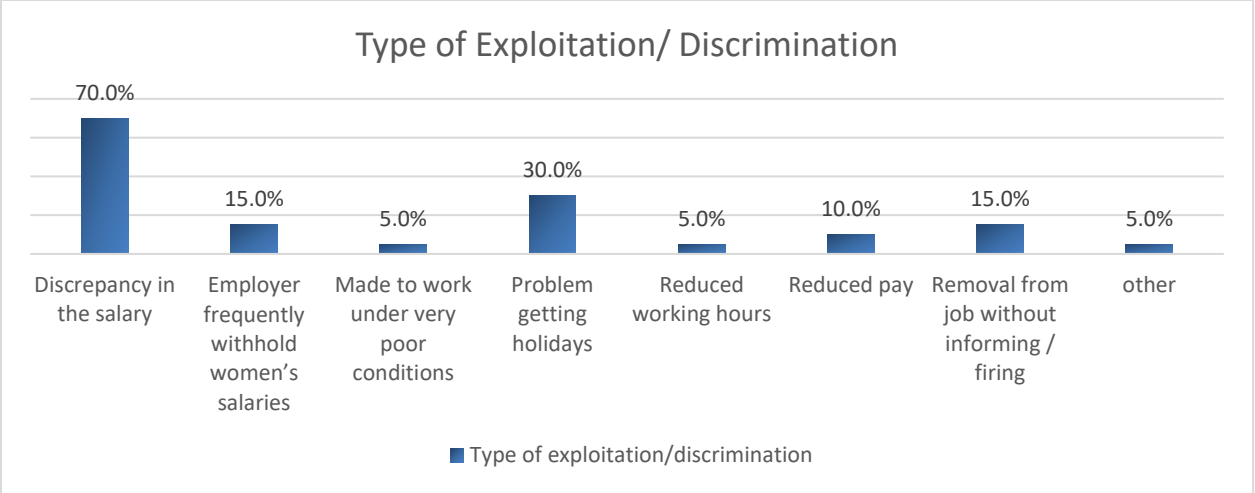


Figure 15: Type of Exploitation/ Discrimination

Discrimination in wage is one of the major types of discrimination faced by the respondents. As seen in the graph, majority of the respondents i.e. 70% (14, n=20) stated that they faced discrepancies in salary. They further added that there was problem getting holidays, followed by employer's withholding salary of women employees and removal from job without informing. The findings from FGD also support the above findings. Research clearly reveals that the wages which are received by the women are fairly less than their male co-workers but also less likely to be hired as permanent worker at the factory.

Similarly, half of the respondents i.e. 49.7% (74, n=149) believed that there is wage discrepancies and hence, the wage provided is different to male and female. The other half, 50.3% (75, n=149) of them stated that there is no wage difference for the different gender.

Those who agreed that there's wage discrepancies stated the differences as follows:

Difference of Payment (In NPR)	Percentage (Frequency)
100-200	37.8% (28)
201-300	24.3% (18)
301-500	29.7% (22)
501-999	1.4% (1)
>=1000	6.8% (5)

Figure 16: Difference of Payment

The percentage of people who stated that the difference in payment is in between Rs.100- Rs.200 is relatively high with 37.8% (28). Similarly, 29.7% (22) of them shared that the wage discrepancy was in between NPR 301- 500. This finding is evident as the findings from FGD also suggest that the pay gap mostly ranges from NPR 100-150. The female from Bardiya districts stated that they get NPR 300 per day whereas their male counterpart get NPR 450. The same goes for other districts as well.

From the findings it can be noted that there were various reasons behind wage discrepancy. The below given chart further state the reasons mentioned by the respondents.

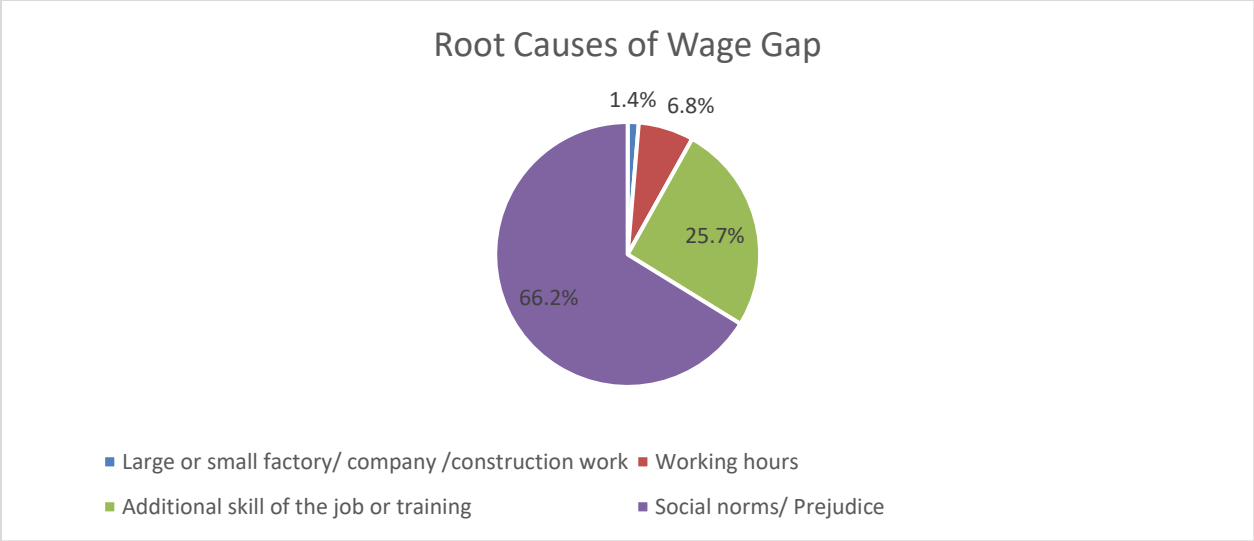


Figure 17: Root Causes of Wage Gap

From the chart, it can be noted that a significant percentage of respondents i.e. 66.2% (49, n=74) stated that the major reason behind wage difference inside the factory and construction center is because of the existing social norms and prejudices. This reason is followed by additional skill of the job or training as 25.7% (19) of the respondent stated so. The findings from FGD suggest that the contractor believes that females are weaker and women are paid less for the same work. Women were also less likely to be trained with any skilled based training. The contractor offers more work opportunity to male workers than to the female workers. The contractors put more pressure to the women and demand to complete certain work on certain time-period.

Women laborers can take various actions against wage differences in first place. The findings from the study suggest the following action considered by the respondents.

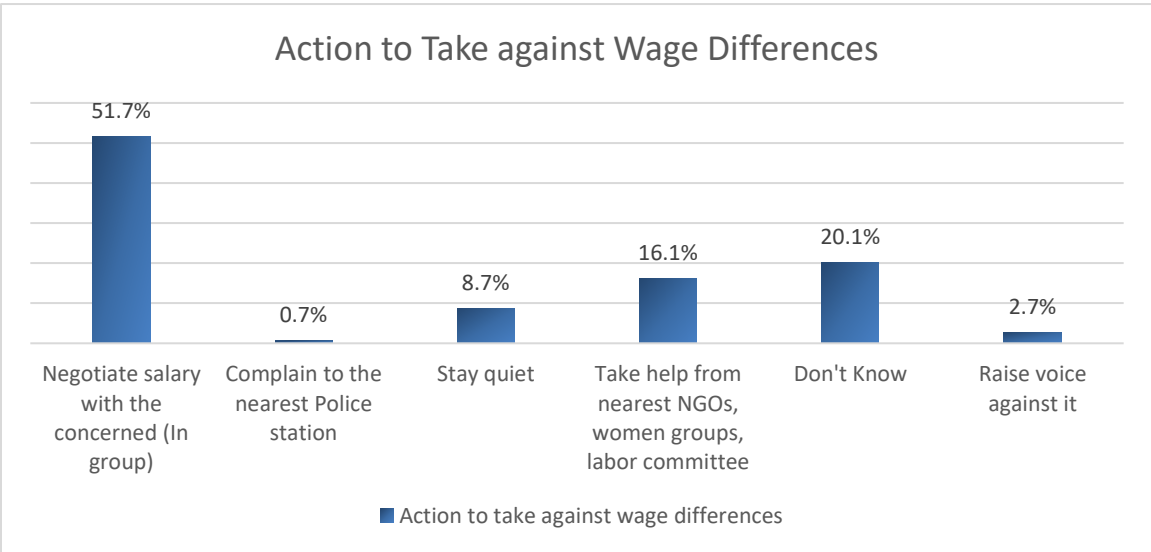


Figure 18: Action to Take against Wage Differences

The graph above indicates that half of the respondents i.e. 51.7% (77) would prefer to negotiate salary with their employer by voicing their opinions in a group. This finding suggests that people are aware on what step to take as soon as possible. On the other end of the spectrum, 20.1% (30) aren't aware of what action could be taken if they find out about wage discrepancy. This shows lack of awareness on possible actions amongst women laborers.

Furthermore, the respondents take on ways to improve wage gap were also questioned in the survey. The following chart presents information on how respondents think the wage gap and exploitation between men and women could be improved.

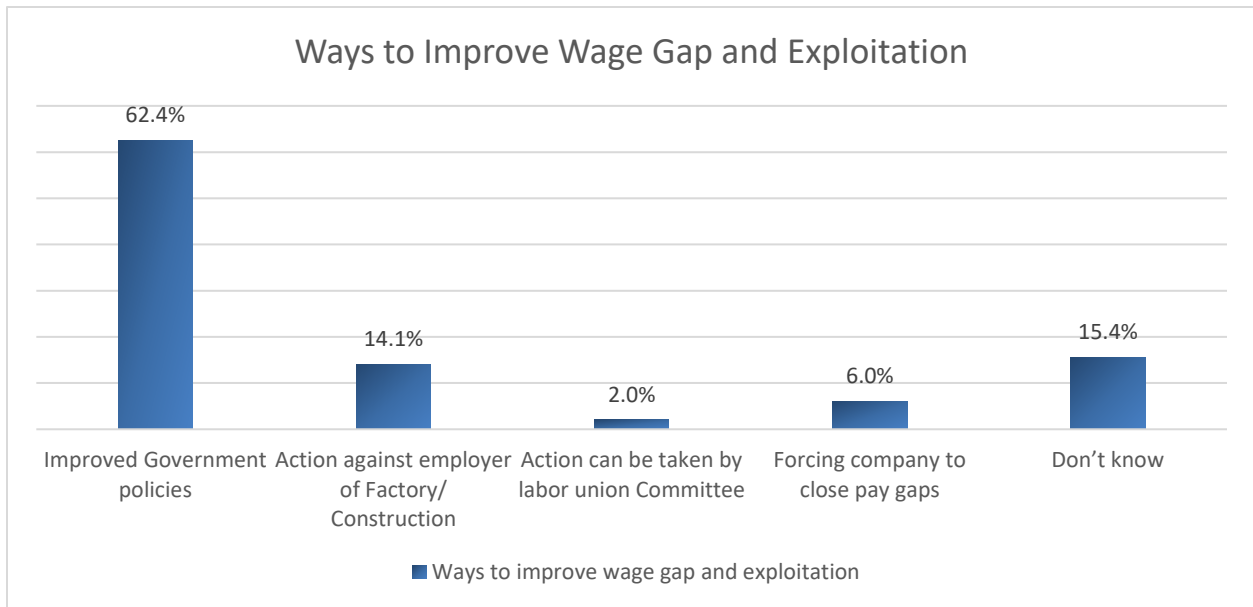


Figure 19: Ways to Improve Wage Gap and Exploitation

Many considered improved government policies as the best way to improve wage gap and exploitation. 62.4% (93, n=149) stated that if the government policies were better, it could help decrease the wage discrepancy and exploitation. However, 15.4% (23) of them stated that they did not know what the best option to improve the pay gap was. This is evident as, the study highlights that many female workers in three sectors are unaware concerning the act and policy of equal wages. They have limited understanding on how provisions and laws that ensure equality, prevent exploitation and address inequality in wages based on gender.

Surprisingly, very few laborers seem to have faith in labor union committee as only 2.0% (3) of them stated that action against the gap should be taken by the committee itself.

Support Mechanism

The respondents were asked about whether or not they were provided with support mechanism from their family members including husband, in-laws while they are doing their jobs.

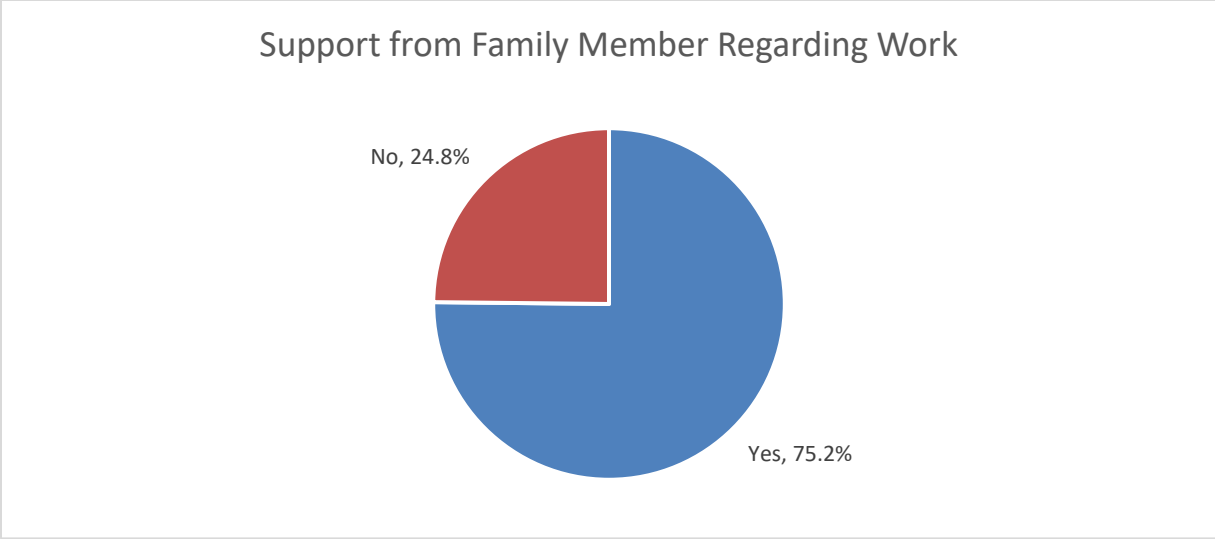


Figure 20: Support from Family Member Regarding Work

Here, a significant portion of respondents i.e. 75.2% (112, n=149) stated that they receive support from family, while rest of the 24.8% (37, n=149) responded otherwise.

The type of support received by the 75.2% (112, n=149) is expressed as follows:

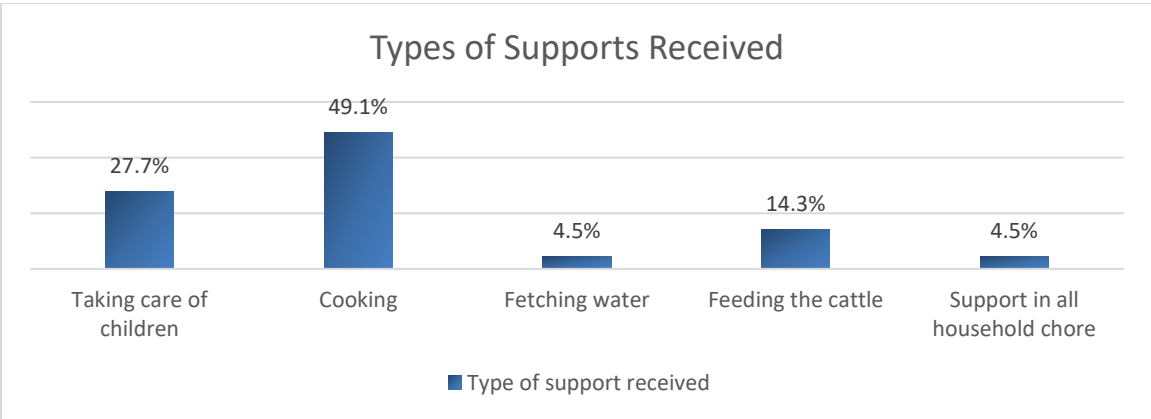


Figure 21: Types of Supports Received

As seen in the graph above, most of the respondents 49.1% (55) family supported them with cooking, followed by 27.7% (31) of them received support by their family members taking care of their children. Very few of the family members i.e.4.5% (5) supported the women in all of their household chores.

On the other hand, the 24.8% respondent who stated that they did not receive any support from family further added the pressure they faced.

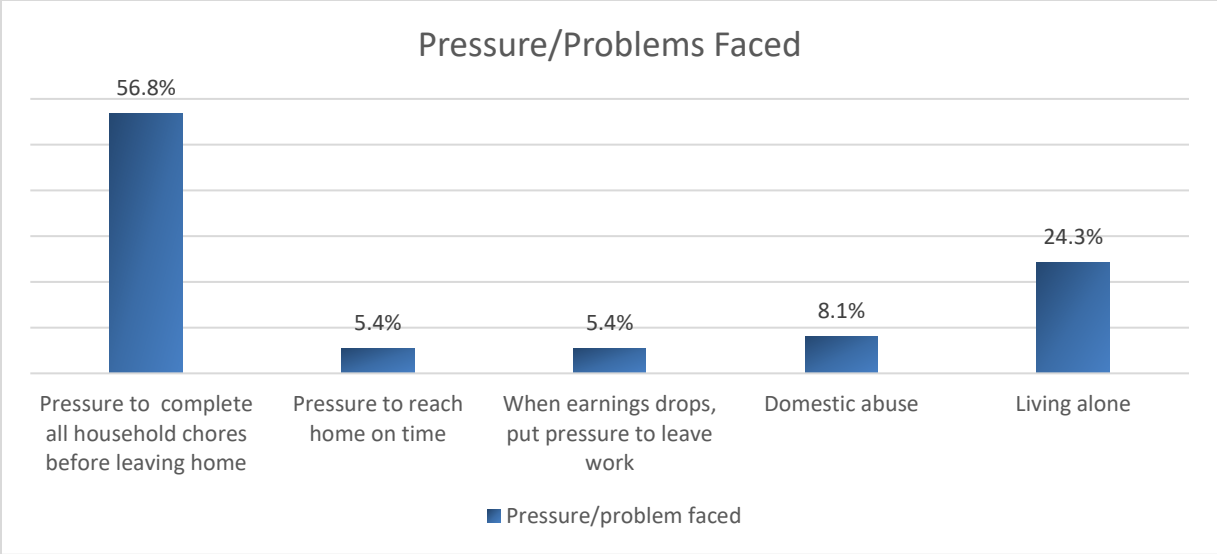


Figure 22: Pressure/ Problems Faced

More than half of the respondents 56.8% (21, n=37) who did not receive any support from their family stated that they were pressurized to complete all household chores before leaving home for work. 5.4% (2, n=37) respondent stated that they were pressurized to reach home on time and to leave work if ever the earning drops. The findings from focus group discussion on all six districts also suggests similar as gender division of household labor, whereby caring for the sick and elderly, bringing up children and housework are considered women’s work. Also, household chores and other works keep women occupied and create obstacles when she goes out to work. Women have more frequent breaks from her work, mostly to bring up children.

Support mechanism in work place

There's no committee formed inside construction center and factories. 48.3% (72, n=149) of the respondents stated that there is no committee inside their workplace. Similarly, 36.9% (55) of them stated that they had no idea on the existence of any type of committee. Surprisingly, only 14.8% (22) of them said that there were committees inside their workplace. The participants from focus group discussion also noted similar responses as many female respondents are unaware on the existence of Labor committee, any group, organizations or any reporting mechanism to report and complain and seek support and take action against their complain. Neither, women have come together/ united to raise collective voice and for collective action against dissemination and exploitation they are facing.

The type of committee explained by the respondents who were aware of one, are as follows:

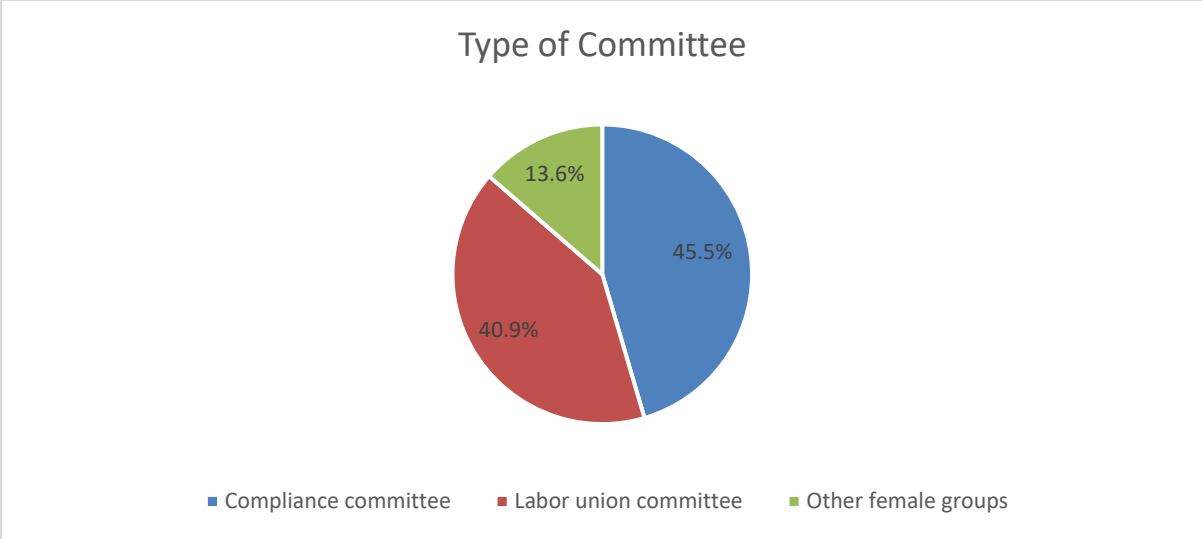


Figure 23: Type of Committee

From the given chart we can see that 45.5% (10, n=22) of respondents stated that their company had Compliance Committee, followed by 40.9% (9, n=22) with Labor Union Committee and the remaining 13.6% (3, n=22) stated that there were other female groups.

Similarly, a large majority of women laborers i.e. 85.9% (128, n=149) noted that there are no groups which could help raise collective voices against the discrimination and exploitation. Only, 14.1% (21, n=149) stated that they had a group that would raise collective voices against the discrimination and exploitation experienced by women inside their workplace. They further added that, majority of them i.e. 81% (17, n=21) meet on a monthly basis and conduct meetings.

Covid-19 effects

The COVID-19 pandemic and the mobility restrictions imposed by the Government of Nepal have affected the regular life of everyone. The restriction has been more difficult to wage laborers due to their unstable works and finances. Out of 149 respondents, more than half of them i.e. 54.4% (81) stated that Covid-19 had severely impacted their livelihood.

Further, out of all the 137 respondents, who stated that their lives was somehow affected due to Covid-19 accepted that their work at construction/factories has also been affected because of the same. 89.8% (123, n=137) accepted that their job had been severely affected due to the government imposed lockdown. The problem the respondents encountered is stated below:

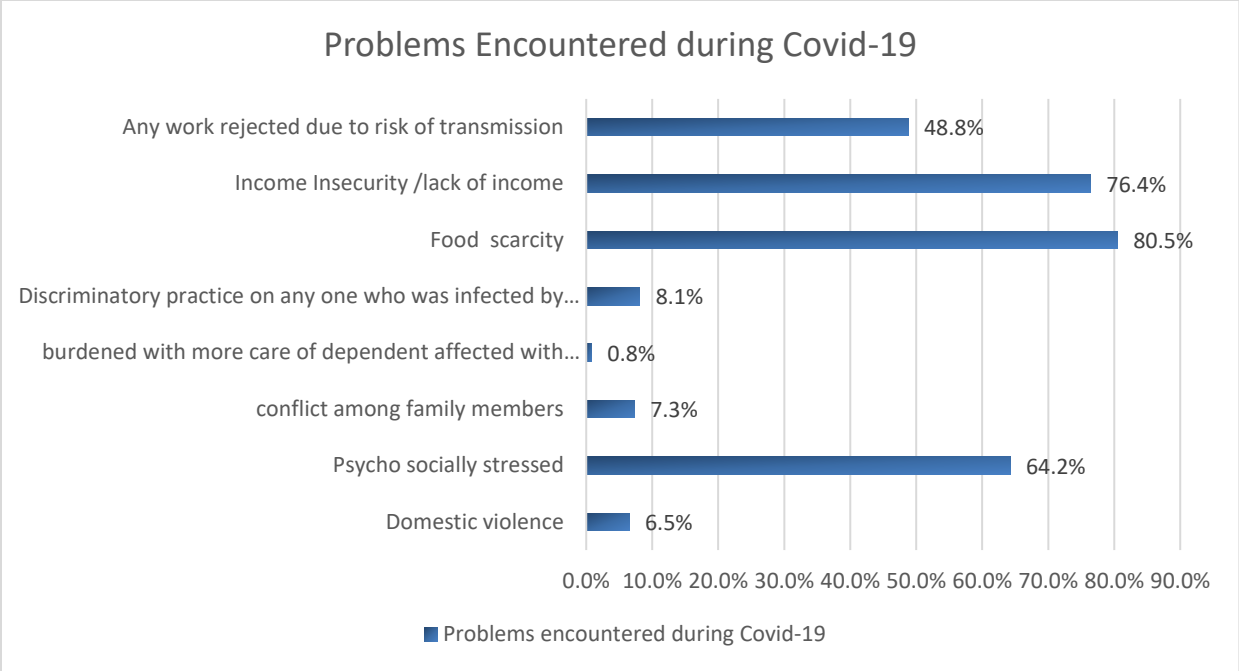


Figure 24: Problems Encountered during Covid-19

Food scarcity and income insecurity has become one of the major issues for all the respondents. This is mainly due to their job/work which was halted throughout the lockdown. Also, confining themselves in four wall room and not being able to perform the daily task in regular manner has made many respondent psychosocially stressed.

To handle the financial situation of their homes, the respondent stated that they took the following measures:

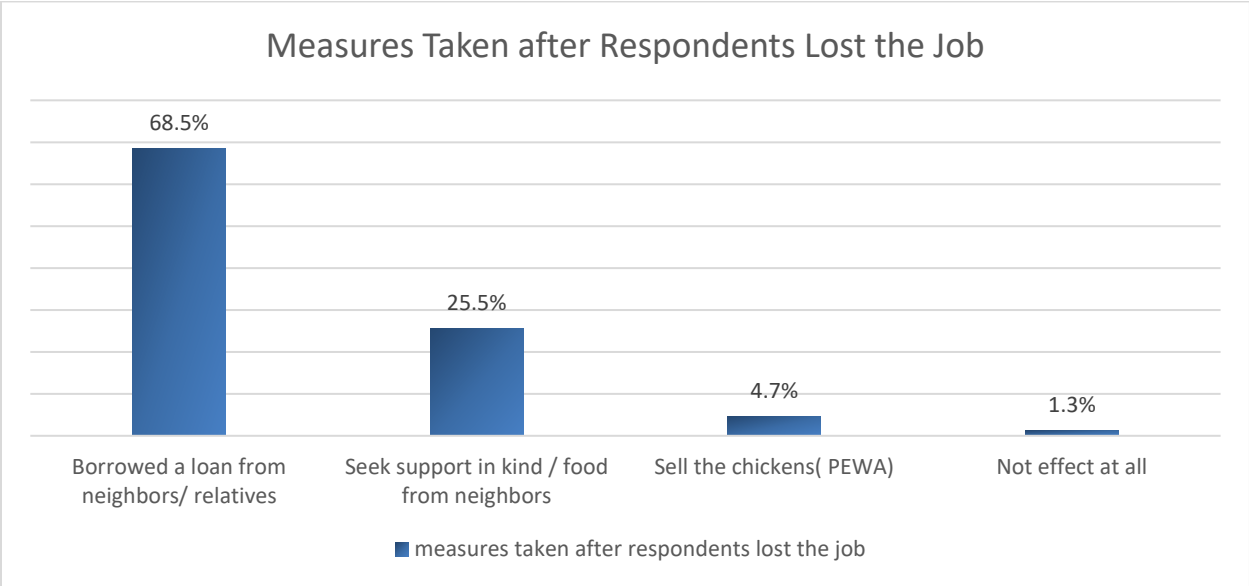


Figure 25: Measures Taken after Respondents Lost their Job

3.2 AGRICULTURE

General Information:

A total of 112 females, working as laborers in agriculture from six districts of Nepal were interviewed for quantitative questionnaire. The respondents are daily wage earners working in the field of agriculture. The following graph represents information on the sampled respondents from the six study districts of Nepal.

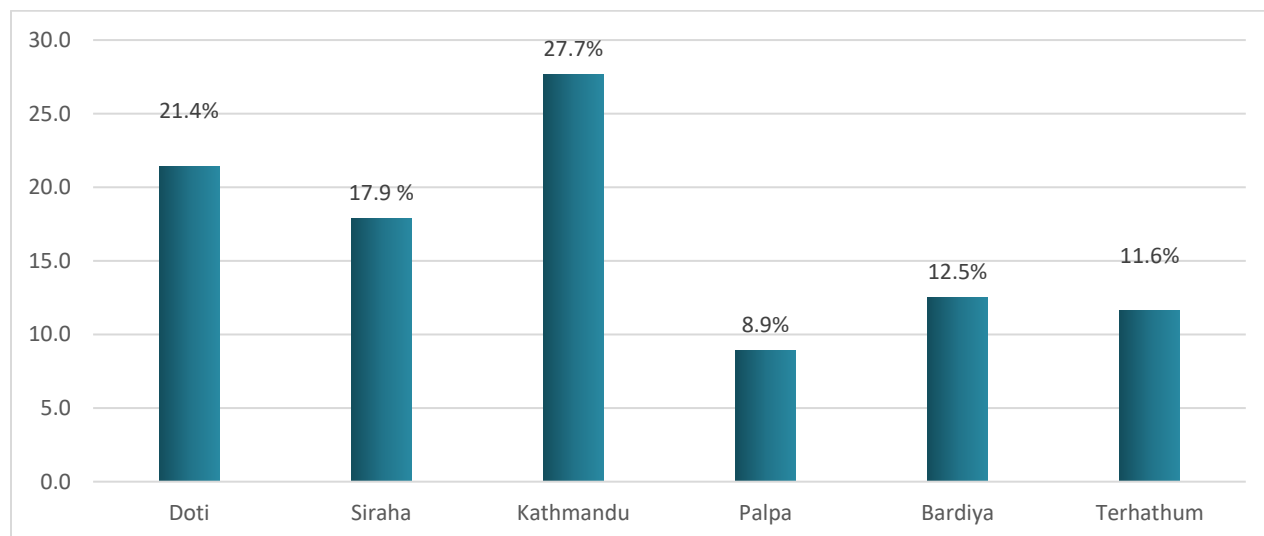


Figure 26: District wise Percentage of Respondents (Agriculture)

Majority of the respondents i.e. 39.3% (44) belonged from the age group 26-35 followed by the age range 36-45 i.e. 28.6%, 45-60 i.e. 17% (19). Comparatively, very less number of female i.e. 15.2% (17) from the age group 18-25 were working as laborers in agriculture. Similarly, in terms of marital status, almost all of the respondents i.e. 91% (102) were married followed by widow i.e. 8% (9) and only 0.9% (1) of the respondent was unmarried. Information on the education level of the respondents has also been collected from 112 respondents. The graphical representation of the education level of respondents is given below.

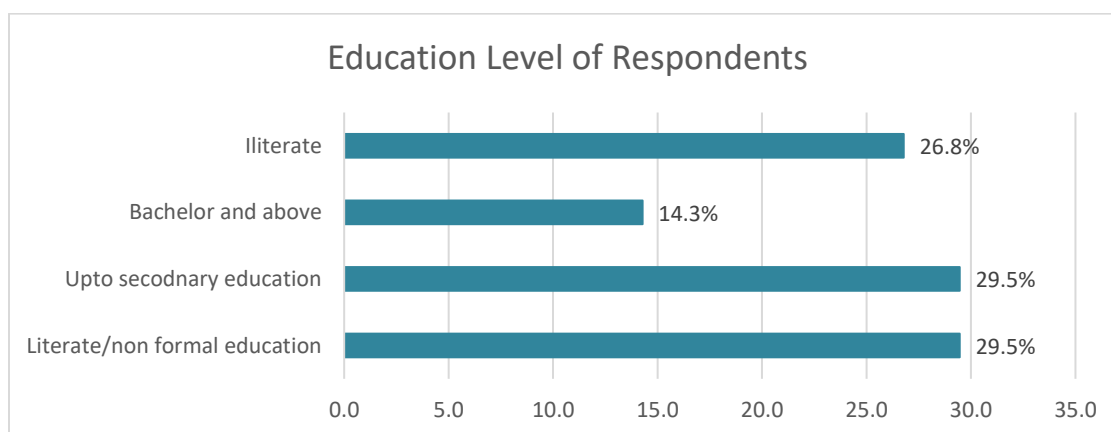


Figure 27: Education Level of Respondents (Agriculture)

As the respondents were daily wage based laborers, their current employment status was also asked. From the survey, we could identify that almost half of all the respondents i.e. 37.5% (42) were fully employed followed by time related underemployment i.e. 26.8% (30). Available potential job seekers were least in number with 9.8% (11). The graph below precisely depicts the data for the employment status:

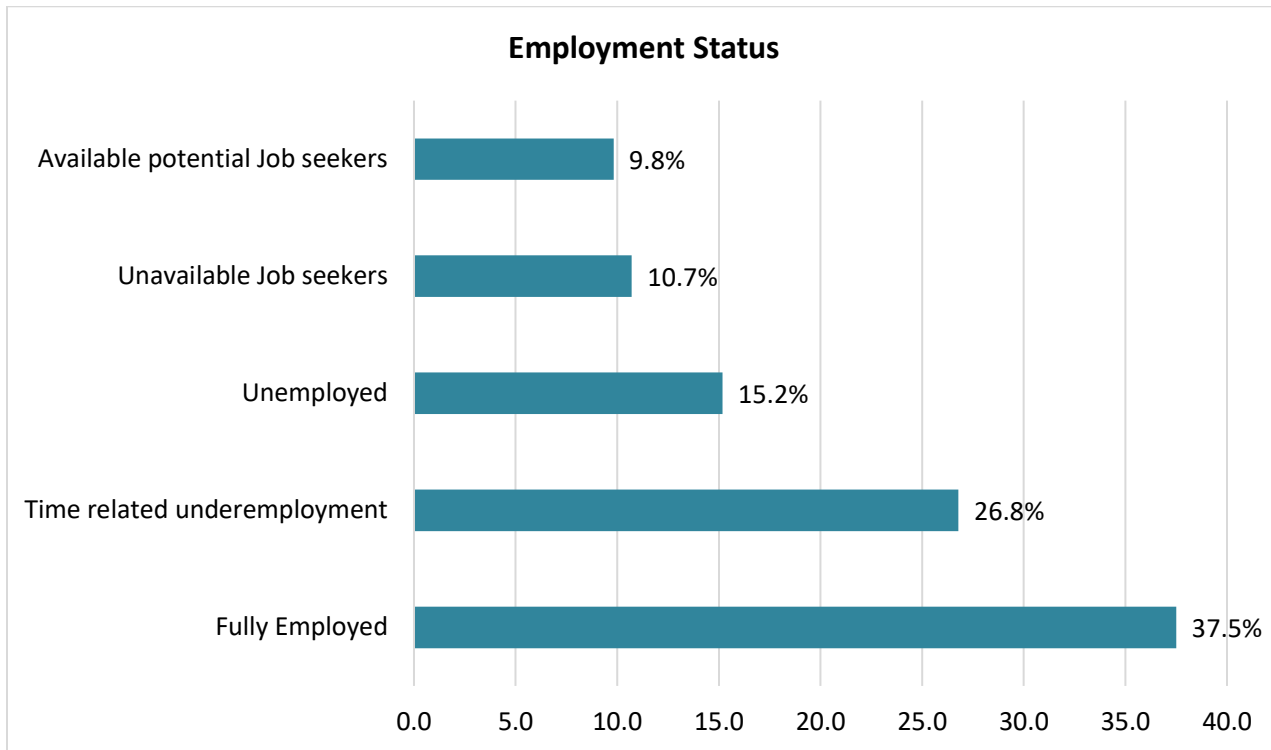


Figure 28: Employment Status of Labourers (Agriculture)

3.3 NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

The given section of the report will explore the nature of employment for laborers. This section will thoroughly present the timeline of their work, their primary roles in the field, the payment method and so on. Respondents were asked to share the basic information regarding their work, through the structured questionnaires. According to the survey, 50% (56) respondents own land whereas the other 50% (56) do not own land. However, when asked if they work on other people's land, almost all of them 93.8% (105) responded that they do work on other people's farm.

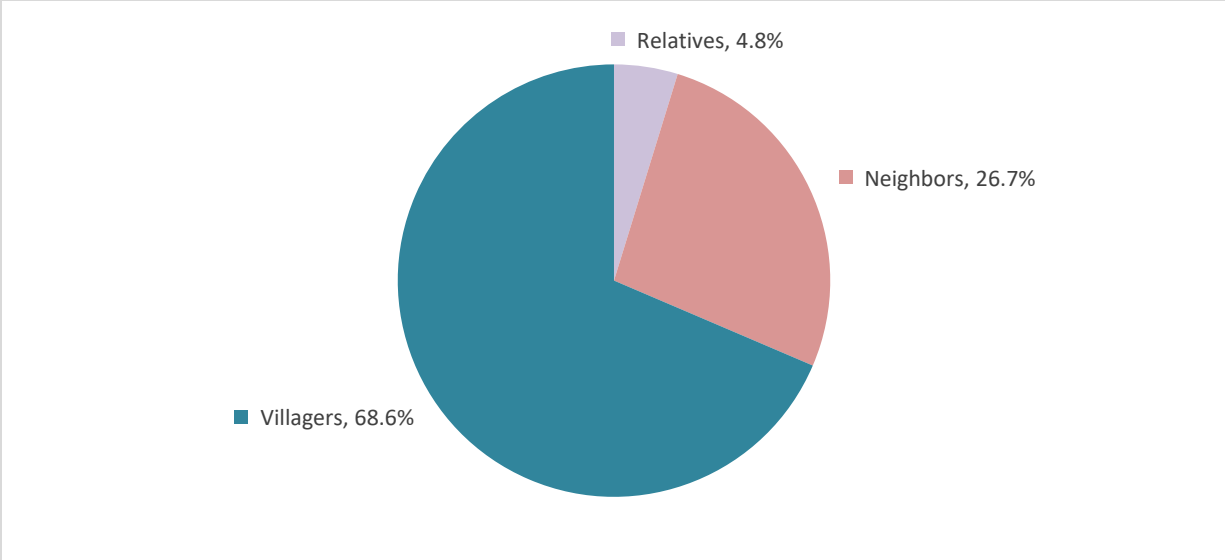


Figure 29: Agriculture Land in which Labourers Work

As shown in the graph above, out of 93.8% (105) respondents, majority of the respondents i.e. 68.6% (72) laborers worked on the agriculture land of their villagers, followed by 26.7% (28) for their neighbors and 4.8% (5) of them worked for their relatives respectively.

The primary roles and working hours were also discussed during the survey. More than half of the respondents 59.8% (67) work for 5-8 hours a day followed by 31.3% (35) worked for more than 8 hours a day and only 8.9% (10) respondent worked between 3-5 hours.

The primary roles of the women were also discussed. The following graph illustrates the data on the primary roles.

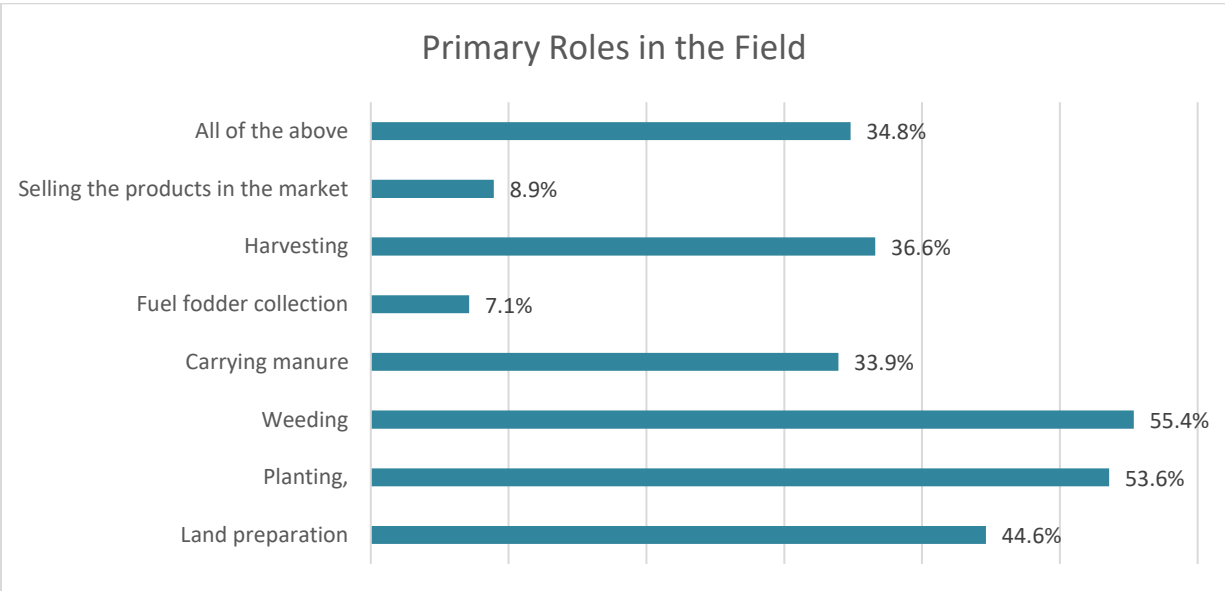


Figure 30: Primary Roles in the Field

As per the above graph, respondents were allowed to multiple answer among which, most of the women were involved in planting 53.6% (60) and weeding 55.4% (62), followed by land preparation 44.6% (50). Women were least involved in works that required them to be strong physically like the collection of fuel and fodder. Only 7.1% (8) respondent collected fuel and fodder. Similarly, the involvement of women was rather less in marketing and selling of the agricultural products. This shows that although women are trusted to produce the crops, they haven't been able to effectively deliver the products in the market.

From the FGD, it can be noted that in the agriculture farms; primarily transplanting, weeding, manual harvest, and post-harvest are activities shared by men and women. Female labor is concentrated on the planting stage (including pulling and bundling of seedlings), followed by harvesting.

There's uncertainty in the labor market and the work of laborers because of which 66% (74) women responded that they do not have work all around the year. Likewise, similar number 69.6 % (78) of the women laborers also expressed that they would generally prefer to work full-time over a part time job whereas closer to one-third of the respondents i.e. 30.4 % (34) shared that they would prefer part-time work over full time work.

Similarly, doing payment through cash is the most common medium of paying to the laborers as 90.2% (101) of the respondents agreed to have received cash as a remuneration for their work.

Food being the basic necessity of every individual occupies utmost from the earnings of women laborers. 90.2 % (101) respondents agreed that majority of their earning is spent on food. Further, when asked about having other sources of income, close to 85% of respondents i.e. 84.8% (95) respondents answered that they do not have any alternate source of income.

Access to finance

Through the quantitative evidences provided through the questionnaire, this section will explore current financial situation of women laborers.

Information on loan

The percentage of women who have applied for loan in the past 12 month is relatively higher. Out of 112 respondents, 69.6% (78) of them have taken access to credit to support their livelihood. Amongst them, more than half of the respondents 55.1% (43) took out loan from saving credit group and 46.2% (36) of them had taken loan from either their friends, relatives or neighbors.

On the other end of the spectrum, comparatively very few respondents i.e. 38.4% (43) stated that access of credit was an issue for them. The reason constraining their access to finance varied.

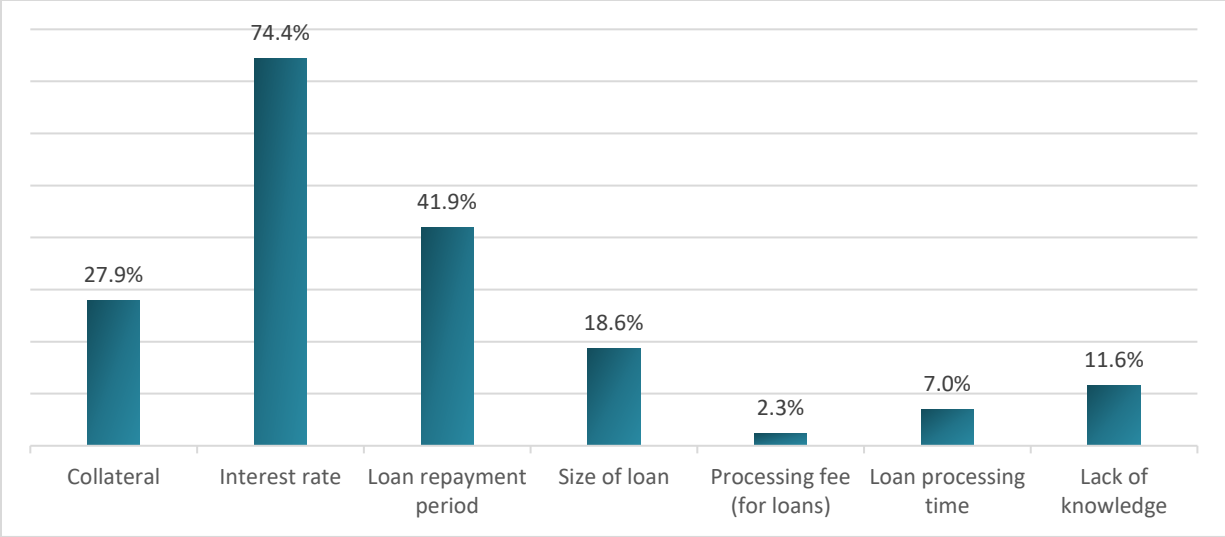


Figure 31: Reason Constraining Access to Finance

Amongst 38.4% (43), almost 3/4th of the respondents i.e. 74.4% (32) stated that interest rate was one of the main reason constraining their access to finance whereas a very small portion of respondents i.e. 2.3%(1) stated that processing fee for loans held them from receiving access to finance.

3.4 INEQUALITY DURING RECRUITMENT:

This section of the report will give insight on inequality faced by woman laborers during recruitment process. More than half of the respondent i.e. 58% (65) stated that their employer is a male figure, rest of the 42% (47) of them were employed by a female. On a positive note, this shows that many female were also involved in providing jobs and economic stability to women.

Further, 67.9% (76) of women labors stated that the wages that were to be provided to them were discussed prior to giving them work. Out of them, 90.8% (69) of them agreed to have bargained regarding the wages to their employer. When asked if they ever felt that they have been turned down on job because they are female only 21.4% of women stated so, whereas 78.6% (88) of them did not agree on being rejected from a job just because of their gender. However, the 21.4% (24) women added further reasons as to why they were rejected.

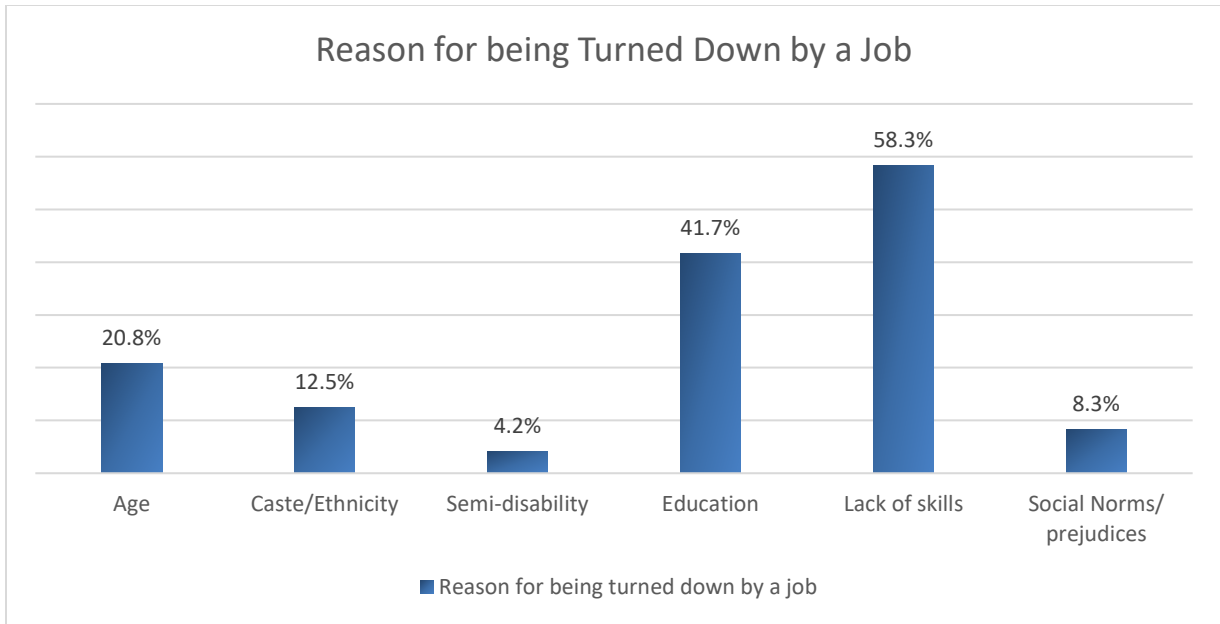


Figure 32: Reason for being Turned Down by a Job

The 58.3% (14) of them stated that lack of skill was the major reason for them to be turned down by a job, followed by education i.e. 47% (10) and the least stated reason was semi-disability with 4.2% (1). Participants of FGD also stated the same, as factors on wage gap between women and men have been identified by research are that women’s skills are undervalued.

Inequality in work environment:

This section of the report will discuss the type of inequality women laborers face in their work environment.

Agricultural work is primarily divided into production and marketing/ sales of the product. The respondents were asked which gender was mostly involved in the production and the marketing of the same. Surprisingly, according to the respondents, females were most involved in both the task i.e. production and marketing of the agriculture products. 71.4% (80) of the female laborers agreed that female themselves were more engaged in the production. Likewise, a similar number i.e. 72.3% (81) of them believed that female were more active on marketing of the produces.

Out of all the respondents, 81.3% (91) had prior experiences of working in the field whereas 18.8% (21) of them were working for the first time. Amongst those who had prior experience also stated the reason to leave their previous work?



Figure 33: Reason to Leave the Work Place

As the work of laborer is not a stable one, majority of the respondents i.e. 61.5% (56) of them stated that end of temporary activity was the reason behind leaving their previous work, followed by family responsibility 37.4% (34). The least reasons to leave their work before was difficulty in getting holidays and abuse. Only 1 (1.1%) respondent expressed that they faced verbal abuse in their work place and decided to quit.

Few women also believe that they faced some sort of insecurity while working in the farms. 21.4% (24) of them agreed that they had faced some sort of insecurity during their work.

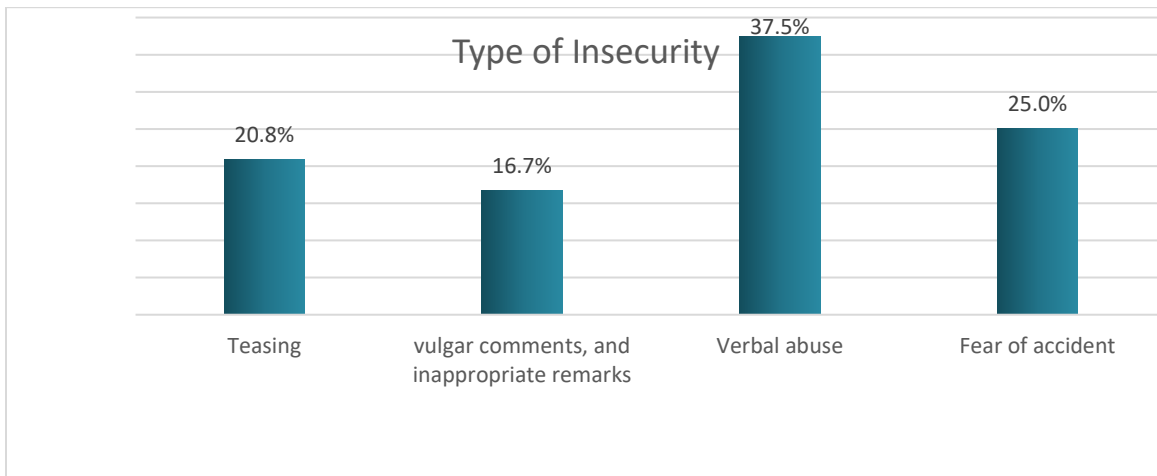


Figure 34: Type of Insecurity Faced by Women inside Workplace

Here, more than one-third of women laborers i.e. 37.5% (9) stated that they faced verbal abuse and were insecure, followed by fear of accident 25% (6). Comparatively, few i.e. 16.7% (4) faced vulgar comments and inappropriate remarks inside their work place.

Discrimination and exploitation in a workplace is no new term for people in Nepal. Although, astonishingly, from this research it could be seen that very few women i.e. 20.5% (23) agreed to have been discriminated or exploited in comparison to 79.5% (89) who had never experienced any kind of discrimination. Amongst those who were discriminated, a follow up question on who was the exploiter was asked. For which, 73.9% (17) of them responded that their employers exploited and/ or discriminated them. Further, the grounds of discrimination/ exploitation was also asked, for which the respondents gave the following answer.

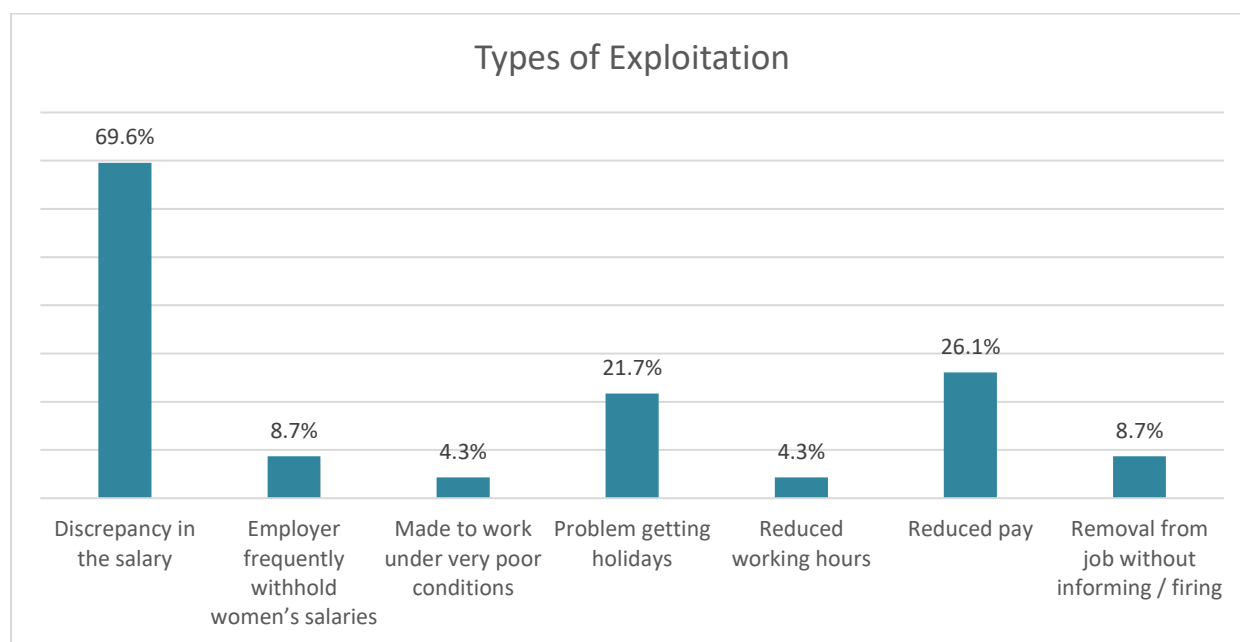


Figure 35: Types of Exploitation

Here, significant portion of the respondents i.e. 69.6% (16) of them stated that the discrepancy in salary is one of the major exploitation that they had been facing which is followed by reduced pay i.e. 26.1% (6). Only 1 (4.3%) women stated to have worked under very poor and difficult condition and their workplace had reduced their working hours respectively.

Wage Inequality

This section of the report will discuss the wage inequality among men and women. Through an in-depth analysis of the wages they receive, the amount of differences in the wage, the action taken against it (if any) and the factors that contribute to inequality in wages according to the respondents.

The government of Nepal revised and announced that the minimum wage of workers will be NPR 15,000 which were previously 13,450. ¹¹ However, the findings from our survey suggests that majority of them are receiving half the amount or less than half the amount stated by the government. 62.5% (70) of them stated that their income per month was less than NPR 7,500 close to one-third of the respondents i.e. 26.8% (30) received wages in between NPR 7,600- 10, 000. Only 0.9% (1) respondent stated that they receive wage in between NPR 13,500- 15, 000. This shows that only 1 person in the agriculture field receives the amount that was announced and stated by the government.

Despite already getting less wage than required, a significant portion of women laborers i.e. 88.4% (99) also expressed that the wage they receive is different from the men who do the same job receive.

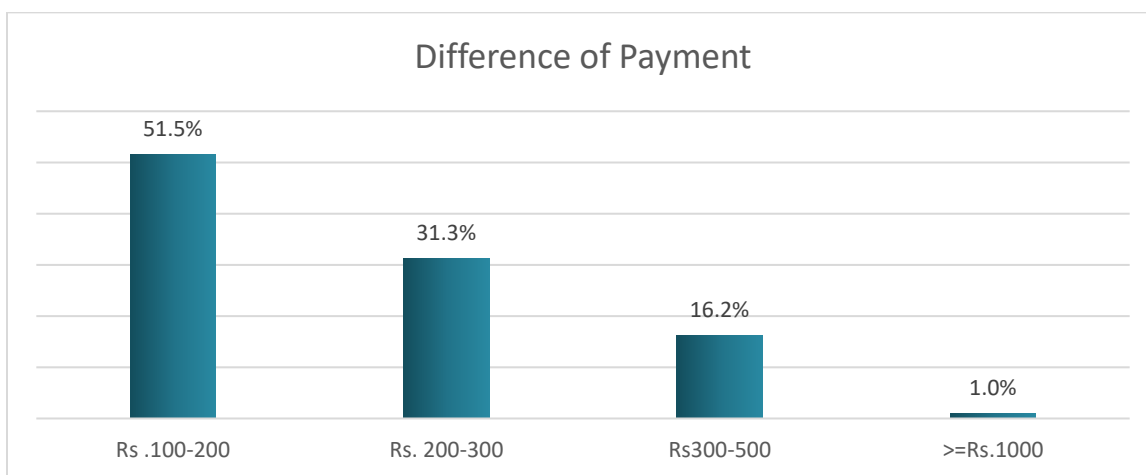


Figure 36: Differences in Payment

More than half of the respondents (51.5%) believe that they receive unequal payment and differences of NPR 100-200 rupees on a per day basis, when compared to male. Subsequently, followed by the wage difference of NPR 200-300 per day are 31.3% respondents. The findings from FGD also support this as participants stated the following:

"We do the same work however, our wages are different."

Women Agriculture wage labor, Terhathum

Regardless of believing that wage difference exists, only 19.2% (19) of the respondents have voiced their problems about the inequality in wages to their employer. Out of which only 31.6% (6, where N=19) of the employers were stated to have taken action against it.

¹¹<https://thehimalayantimes.com/business/minimum-monthly-wage-of-workers-raised-11-per-cent-to-rs-15000>

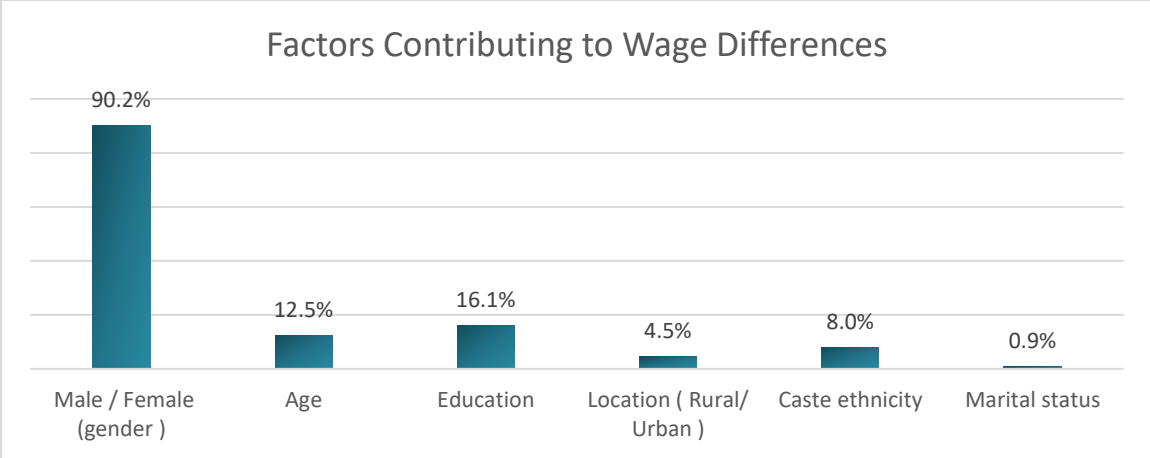


Figure 37: Factors Contributing to Wage Differences

Gender has played a primary role in affecting the wage provided to them. With the stagnant gender inequality and differences, almost all the women laborers i.e. 90.2% (101) believed that the main reason behind being given unequal wages is their gender. Comparatively, very few respondents believed on, education 16.1% (8), age 12.5% (14), caste ethnicity 8.0% (9), location 4.5% (5), marital status 0.9% (1) as a contributing factor for wage differences.

While women have been suffering due to inequality in wages, question on possible actions that can be taken against it was also asked. For which, the respondents agreed on the following options that could be taken as an action.

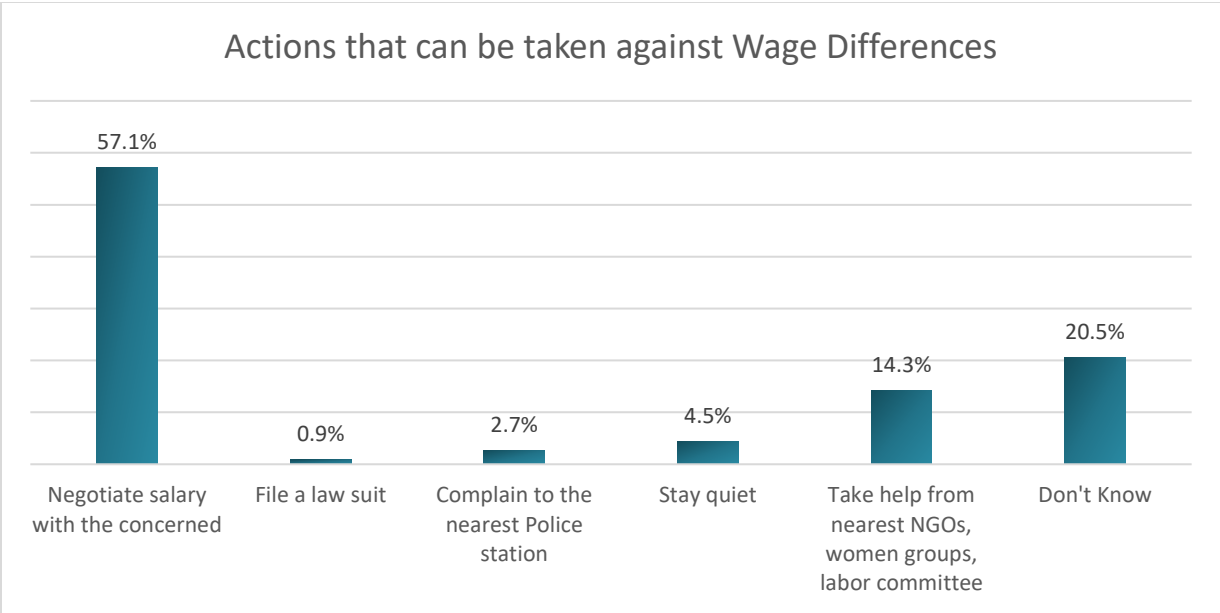


Figure 38: Action to be taken against Wage Difference

The common response was to negotiate salary with the concerned person as 57.1% (64) people stated that it was the best way to take action. More than one-fifth 20.5% (23) of the respondents

shared that they were unaware on what action to take, which shows lack of awareness amongst the respondents. 14.3% (16) of them stated that they would prefer taking help from various organization including NGOs, women groups and labor committee. Only one respondent out of all believed that filing a law suit would be a better option out of all.

Support Mechanism from Family

The support women get from family is on a very positive side as 83 %(93) women stated that their husbands, in-laws and other family members are very supportive of their work whereas the remaining 17% (19) women explained that they their family doesn't provide them with the required support.

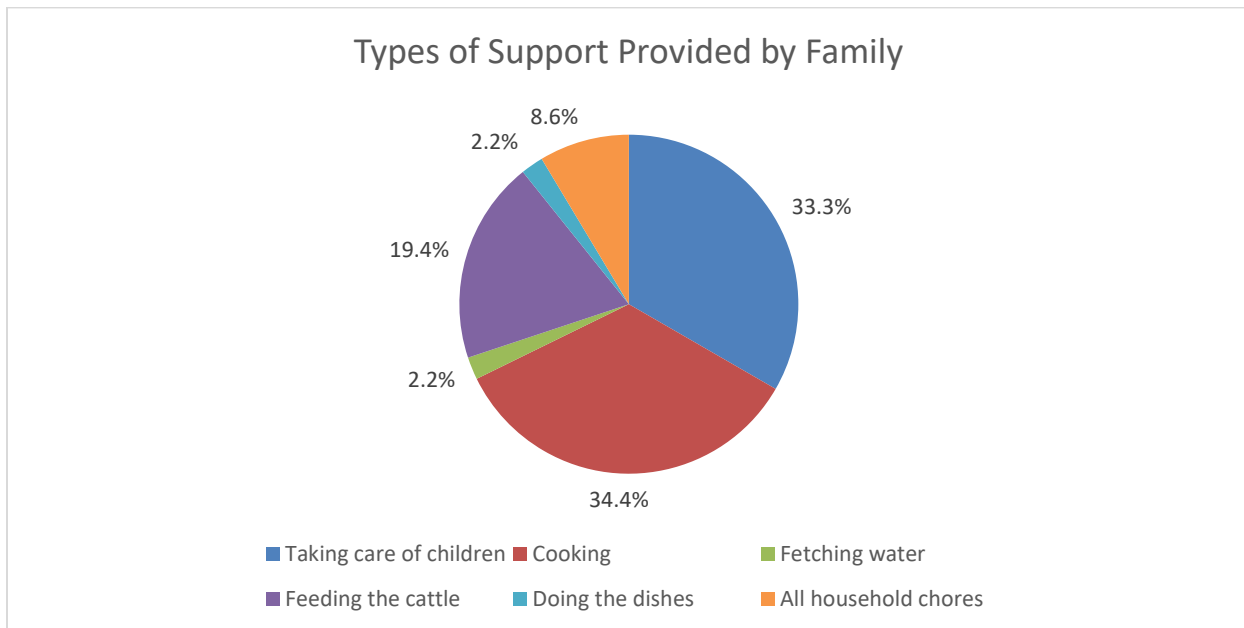


Figure 39: Types of Support Provided by Family

More than one-third of the respondents (34.4%) said that their family members showed their support by cooking for them. Similar number of respondents (33.3%) stated that their family provided support by taking care of their children.

On the other end of the spectrum, the 17% (19) women revealed that they received no support from family, further adding that they were facing various problems or pressure in their household.

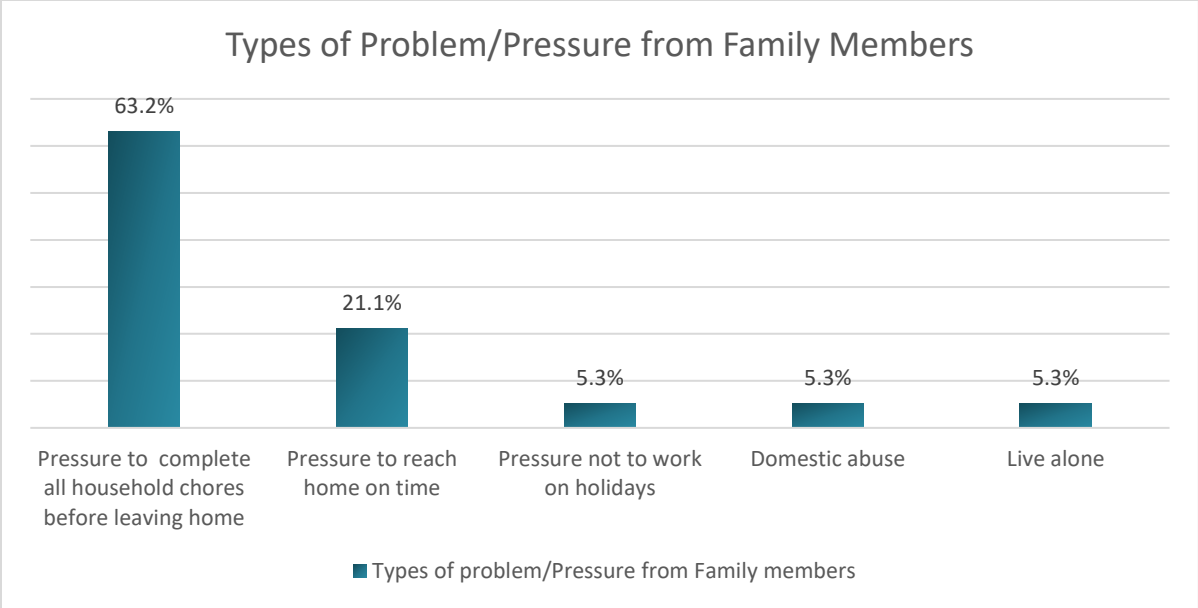


Figure 40: Types of Pressure given by Family

As seen from the chart above, it can be depicted that significant portion of women 63.2% (12) of them faced pressure to complete all household chores before leaving home. While woman are primarily the ones engaged in preparing food, doing all kind of household chores, the other member of the household are more dependent on the woman and expect them to complete household chores before they leave for their work. This is followed by pressure to reach home on time as 21.1% (4) of them stated so.

The findings from FGD also support that women are responsible for all the household chores. Even when both husband and wife go to work together and do the same work, the wives are expected to complete the household chores. So if a woman steps out of the home leaving her daily household chores behind, a disruption is bound to happen.

3.5 COVID-19 EFFECTS

Covid-19 certainly affected the livelihood of many all around the globe. Despite of agriculture being a steady business with plantation going on all around the year, 46.4% (52, n=112) stated that it severely affected them. Similarly, 22.3% (25, n=112) stated that the effect of Covid-19 was rather moderate. Surprisingly, 31.3% (35, n=112) stated that Covid-19 did not affect them in any way.

The respondents who claimed, that they were either severely affected or moderately affected mentioned facing various difficulties because of Covid-19. The problems stated by the respondents are mentioned below:

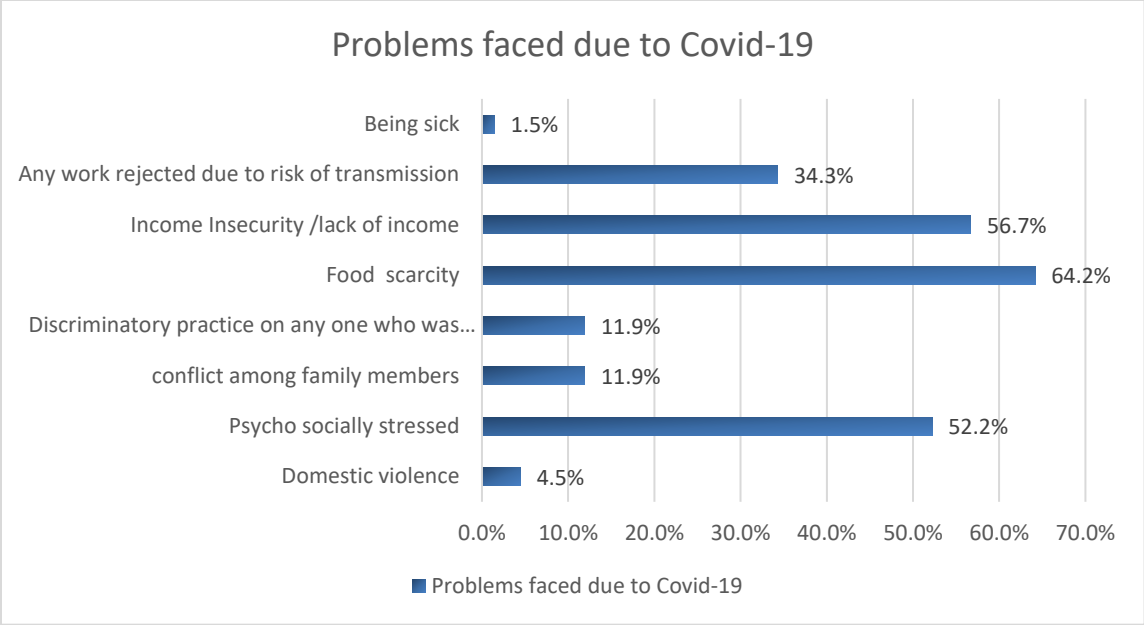


Figure 41: Problems Encountered due to Covid-19

The line above depicts that the main problem faced by most of the participants was food scarcity, followed by income insecurity. Moreover, many of them also admitted to being psychosocially stressed due to Covid-19 and the government imposed lockdown.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS FROM QUALITATIVE STUDY

4.1 FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

4.1.1 Description of the participants in the research

A brief description follows the profiles of the participants.

Profile of wage labor in agriculture sector tended to be largely female as compared to factory and construction work in the study districts. Women have been working in these sectors for one year to approximately thirty years or more. Education levels of the participants of all three sectors have completed formal classes ranged between class four to class ten, literate from informal adult literacy classes and illiterate as well.

Participants' roles were described being responsible for the labor work as it differs from factory to factory. In the survey 97.4% (112) stated that their job was that of a labor worker. This means that their major work is to do physical labor. Physical work /activities such as loading, carrying, cleaning bottles, filling medicines, labeling and packing in cartoon set care few examples of the factory sector. Where as in the agriculture farms; primarily planting, weeding, manual harvest, and post-harvest are activities shared by men and women. Female labor is concentrated on the planting stage (including pulling and bundling of seedlings), followed by harvesting. The survey resulted that women were involved in planting 53.6% (60) and weeding 55.4% (62), followed by land preparation 44.6% (50).

Female labor from Siraha said that there will be a problem in the family if they get paid less. They cannot save a penny. But on the other hand the boss says to us "You can work if you want, if you don't want you can leave the work".

4.1.2 Discrimination in wages and exploitation in the workplace

The increasing participation of women in the paid labor market activities can be viewed as a positive outcome for improving women's status and their involvement in economic sector. However, increase in participation remain inadequate unless gender based discrimination and exploitation becomes existence in the informal sectors as consequences women are more discriminated and exploited in the wages.

One of the main findings of the whole research is that wage discrimination exists in all six districts both in rural as well as urban municipalities. Persistent gender- biased wage gap in all six districts are visible in all three sectors; agriculture, factory and construction despite the provisions for equal pay between men and women. The survey has also shown that half of the respondents 49.7% (74, n=149) believed that there is wage discrepancies and the wage provided is different to male and female.

FGD revealed that women work for 8 hours which is the same for everyone and apart from agriculture wage labor, women are also involved in other labor work in construction during off agricultural season. Survey has resulted that more than one-third of the respondents 35.6% (53) have regular working hours of 10 am- 5 pm, followed by 21.5% respondents working from 9 am – 6 pm. Research clearly reveals that the wages which are received by the women are fairly less

than their male co-workers also less likely to be hired as permanent workers at the factory. The percentage of women who stated that the difference of payment in between NPR 100- 200 was relatively high with 37.8% (28) as shown by the survey.

Despite of women working as much as men, men are paid 150 rupees more than woman in construction work. The contractor believe that females are little weak and women are paid less for the same work. Women were also less likely to be trained with any skilled based training. According to the survey, only 13.4% (20, n=149) women were provided with skill development training prior to joining the work. On the other hand, 20.8% (31) men received specific skill related training. However, most of the respondents stated that neither men nor women were provided with any type of training before starting the work.

The contractors offer more work opportunities to male workers than to the female workers. The contractors put more pressure to the women and demand to complete certain work on certain time period. 60% (12, n=20) respondents stated in the survey that most of the time it was their employer/contractors/supervisors who discriminated them.

As reported, women workers are not satisfied with the wage they get per day which is not enough to purchase two packets of oil. More than one-third of respondents from survey 36.9% (55) stated that their earning is sufficient for few days only. Sometimes women engage in overtime work till evening 6/7 p.m. and need to prepare meals for entire family at home although she is physically exhausted.

"When we ask our boss to increase our wage, they respond us by saying; if you want to work, you can, if you don't want to work, you can leave. To feed children and selves we have to work."

- FGD women Labors in Siraha

"We do the same work however, our wages are different."

- Women Agriculture wage labor, Terhathum

"Contractor gives us the wage they had promised. If they fail to give us the wage that was promised earlier, we go if we want and we won't go if we don't want to. We go once, and if we were ill-treated we won't go anymore."

- Women labor, Kathmandu

"We get paid less if we have to leave work early".

- Women Terathum

"Once the Contractor/Thekedar promised to give NPR. 500 per day however, ended up receiving only 450 as the contractor said that they went on a loss."

District wise Wage disparity for same work done by female and male

- Bardiya Female NPR 300 - Male NPR 450
- Doti Female –NPR 250 Male- NPR 300
- Palpa Female –NPR 450 male – NPR 500
- Siraha Female NPR 300 Male – NPR 450
- Terathum Female NPR 350 - Male NPR 400
- Kathmandu Female- NPR 750 – Male NPR 1,500 (12 hours of work)

4.1.3 The factors/ causes/ prevailing social norms that make inequality in wages

The factors or causes and prevailing social norms concerning discrimination and exploitation in wages of women workers are categorized in to following sections that are based on the findings of the analysis on the topic of;

- i) Lack of skill and experience
- ii) Gender roles affecting the wage pay
- iii) Challenges for women; insecurity, harassment at work place
- iv) Facilities/ benefits for women wage labors
- v) Level of awareness on the existing labor act /provisions
- vi) COVID -19 and its impact on wage labors

I. LACK OF SKILL AND EXPERIENCE:

Factors on wage gap between women and men have been identified by research are that women's skills are undervalued, so women frequently earn less than men for doing comparable labor work / activities. Pay scales for requiring similar skills or experience tend to be lower when they are done by women. Few Labor Union Committee members are more concerned that there are no skillful women workers, women lacks skill and only male are skillful. The work is specified on the basis of physical strength.

"Men are stronger and skillful therefore, they get all the work. We lack skill, if we were given skillful training we feel that we would get as employment opportunity and salary as men." Women Agriculture, Siraha

This research also found that disparities in pay were more often recognized by women and men to wage discrimination and to a lesser extent a difference in the physical capabilities of men and women.

The following statement by women further elaborates that difference in the physical capabilities and skill matters for wage discrepancy;

"While we work on farms, we get NPR 300 rupees including food. In factories people earn about NPR 10,000 rupees per month, and people who work as labors engaged in construction gets NPR 500 rupees. Wage differs according to the physical strength. Men who know how to use axe/ hoe and dig get NPR 200 extra in the agricultural activities. For construction building/ houses the majority of men are more skilled and they earn NPR 1,000 daily"

"Due to household chores, responsibilities of children, women are always backward." FGD women Dhaka Weaver, Palpa

II. GENDER ROLES AFFECTING THE WAGE PAY:

Another factor on wage gap based on gender also reflects the gender division of household labor, whereby caring for the sick and elderly, bringing up children and housework are considered women's work. Household chores and other works keep women occupied and create obstacles when she goes out to work. Women have more frequent

"We have to finish all the household chores before going to work. We have to look after our children and come home and look after everyone and cook food and feed them." Women Bardiya

breaks from her work, mostly to bring up children. Consequently, household work burden has restricted opportunities for women to manage work both at home and setting-up schedule for productive activities and this in turn has a negative impact on their earnings and getting better wages. Women are constrained by their weak decision-making and bargaining power.

The research highlights that women are responsible for all the household chores. Even when both husband and wife go to work together and do the same work, the wives are expected to complete the household chores. So if a woman steps out of the home leaving her daily household chores behind, a disruption is bound to happen. Survey also resulted that 56.8% (21, n=37) respondent did not receive any support from their family and were pressurized to complete all of the household chores before leaving home for work. 5.4% (2, n=37) respondent stated that they were pressurized to reach home on time and to leave work if ever the earning drops. The women reported that they expect their husbands to be more helpful. If women ask their husbands to contribute in domestic chores, this is clearly viewed as not respecting the husband. The in-laws find it unacceptable too.

"Get scolded if we reach home late from work. Husbands will work as much as we do but will not help us out in any household chores".

Agriculture Terhathum

"We have to wake up early in the morning and come to work; we also have to return on time to finish all the household chores as none of our family members will help us with the work."

-Women, Dhangadhi, Siraha

"We tend to reach late like 10, 15 minutes due to household chores, in such cases they add working hours for us".

- Women labor, Kathmandu

Further analysis have shown that lack of family support for household responsibilities is another major reason that leads to stress and conflicts for female workers who are trying to balance both work and family. Women believe that the existing culture, norms and family values has restricted them in finding jobs. Pregnancy discrimination at the workplace was also reported that an employer /contractor discriminates a female worker on the basis of pregnancy or childbirth.

"Due to the working hours, and their household responsibilities and care of children there is less participation of females in this sector."

- FGD, Labor Union Committee, Terathum

Women in Palpa stated that they need to continue to work as soon as the baby is delivered or when they are sick, they cannot take break. When they take break for a day the contractor will scold them to work.

"If there was policy regarding wage equality our wages would be the same. Our wages would also be comparatively good." Terathum

"We get paid less if we have to leave work early." Women Bardiya

III. CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN; INSECURITY, HARASSMENT AT WORK PLACE:

When analyzed it becomes evident that women are facing exploitation, insecurity and harassment at work place more in construction sector. Women are sometimes given more pressure in their work. Male colleague often makes fun of female workers and teases them. They also make inappropriate and vulgar remarks and try to inappropriately touch when women are working late in a worksite. Similarly, the survey also stated that 58.3% (14, n=24) were teased inside their workplace, followed by 16.7% (4) who were abused by their co-workers and/or supervisors.

Major challenges experienced by women are having difficulty to get holidays. Subsequently, sometimes it will take few days to find new labor work in new sites. Contractors /Thekedars take actions that are so rigid and do not pay wages regularly and sometime the workers are underpayment. Thekedar/Contractor use inappropriate and vulgar words while scolding.

When women work for longer hours till late night in the worksite they are compelled to sleep in the grits and sand which was taken negatively, judged by other people more than their own husband. Some women shared that when they have to work late it gets scary as their husband might beat them. They were also scared of the alcoholic, druggists on their way back to home. Their neighbors also ask questions, why is your daughter-in-law coming home so late? Who is the man she was talking to in the market? Family members constantly face such queries, abrupt in the norms that the community follows. This interference of neighbors becomes another form of harassment over women. This also can be noted from the survey that 66.2% (49, n=74) stated that the major reason behind wage difference inside the factory and construction site is because of the existing social norms and the prejudices.

Women have unique experiences because of their age, class, religion, caste/ ethnicity and gender identity. The study reveals that women from disadvantaged groups faces multiple and intersecting forms of structural discrimination based on the continued weight placed on caste system in Nepali society.

FGD revealed that people from marginalized and Dalit community are still discriminated. It was reported that some people believe in caste system and do not eat together with Dalit people whereas some don't. Employers discriminate young people for the same work. Workers between the age of 15-16 years old are getting NPR 200/300 for the same work,

"They do not treat Dalit people properly, they might treat a dog properly but they do not treat us properly."

- Women, Siraha

IV. FACILITIES/ BENEFITS FOR WOMEN WAGE LABORS

The research reveals that there are no other benefits or any extra facilities (not even medical facility apart from if any sever injury occurred they are taken to the hospital) other than the regular wages in informal sector; construction and factory wage labors. The findings from the survey has also indicated that 55.7% (83, n=149) respondents were not provided

According women in Dhangadhi Siraha; They get 8 kg of rice or NPR 300 from agriculture work. . Both male and female get equally paid but if anyone knows how to use hoe/ axe and dig they get extra payment.

with any facilities. Agriculture wage labors gets meals/ food at work and no any other benefit reported. If the labors took holidays (off from the work) for more than two days, their wage is deducted.

Concerning facilities; separate toilet for women, baby crèche etc. are far beyond women worker's knowledge and were unaware about the facilities and rights to these facilities. While Union Committee members reported that lack of separate toilets to male and female in the worksite has created insecurity for women, few of the committee members were aware of women's rights to such facility. However, action to address the issues and basic facility for women has not been initiated by any Labor union committees.

Many female respondents are unaware on the existence of Labor committee, any groups, organizations or any reporting mechanism to report and complain and seek support and take action against their complain. (Except a group of women from Terathum and Palpa are affiliated in women's group). Neither, women have come together/ united to raise collective voice and for collective action against discrimination and exploitation they are facing. Individually, they were hesitant to complain and were afraid that they might lose their jobs.

Survey also resulted that 48.3% (72, n=149) of the respondent stated that no committee exists inside their workplace. Similarly, 85.9% (128, n=149) reported that they do not know about the existence of any groups in the community. Likewise, majority of women laborers 85.9% (128, n=149) indicated that there are no groups which could help raise collective voices against the discrimination and exploitation.

"There's no one to raise collective voices and a laborer alone cannot raise voice against wage difference to the employer." Women labor, Kathmandu

"I would like raising voice but as I feel like there will be no difference.

"Women labour, Siraha

"There are mother groups and other groups related to finance and cooperatives. We are members of mothers group; we save our money there and take out loan when needed. The members of mother group work as a mediator and help us solve fights/ problems with other people."

- Women, Terathum

V. LEVEL OF AWARENESS ON THE EXISTING LABOR ACT /PROVISIONS:

The study highlights that majority of female from respondent workers in three sectors are unaware concerning the act and policy of equal wages. They have limited understanding of how provisions and laws that ensures equality, prevent exploitation and address inequality in wages based on gender.

The research also highlights that employers / contractors also have limited understanding about existing labor act and provisions and not aligned with the Act /policy and wage pay is determined by self-decision. FGD shows that there is reluctance from the employers/ contractors side to implement legislation and there are no other mechanisms against exploitation and inequality in wages at the workplace as the employer sees the provisions mainly as additional restrictions, or financial burdens or losses.

Similarly, many stakeholders, including the Labor Union Committee members and laborers are unaware of the existing act and provisions and some of them are unaware of their own role and responsibilities as a Labor Committee, there is a lack of action by government institutions to address this issue. Women's representation in Labor Union Committee is less considerable. (Only one committee has women member)

"Women should all come together to speak on inequality. They have to be taught about policies."

-Labor Union Member

"None of the organization government offices has spoken about wage differences in our area."

- Women Doti

"If we get along, we can't go all together and raise voices. In such cases, we wish we had a committee hence, we could raise voices together things would have been completely different but we cannot."

- Women, Doti

"How to approach the local government should be taught by the organization as we have recently been onboard in this committee."

- Labor committee

VI. COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON WAGE LABORS:

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown on all three sectors have been affected to a great extent. The evidence for factory work was mixed with some workers. As they reported, Covid-19 severely affected their work but they were involved in their own farms activity for livelihood. Survey also highlighted that 89.8% (123, n=137) of the respondents had been severely affected due to pandemic.

Some of the workers get their pay during the lockdown while others did not get their pay. Since agriculture is an essential service, the impact seemed to be less severe than in construction and factory work.

These impacts were particularly severe for people who were already disadvantaged prior to the lockdown. Low wage workers and women workers who were severely affected by lockdown, two out of three people who lost their jobs were women.

"Due to Covid-19 the laborers are hungry and left on the streets." FGD with Trade Union Committee, Terathum

Minimum criteria of Labor Act should be followed strictly

- *Fixing the working time period of every time of work (not more than 8 hours)*
- *If anyone continuously work for 5 hours, half an hour leisure time or overtime payment if he/she does not take a break in between the work should be provided.*
- *One day holiday in a week*
- *Compensation in case of any accidents, health issues related to the work should be given, health and social security.--*
Representative, Nepal Trade Union Congress(NTUC)

"Due to Covid-19 the price of each and everything started increasing whereas our pay is same. Our pay increases by NPR 50 or NPR 100 every 2/3 years, nothing can be done with that money". FGD with women wage labor Agriculture, Terathum

"Covid-19 Affected our lives a lot, many women couldn't work, however, we did not get to hear any form of violence or oppression faced by women." Palpa Factory women

4.2 FINDINGS OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

4.2.1 Limitations and challenges in the existing system, institution, policies and practices that exploit in wages:

Challenges in the existing system, institution, policies and practices that exploit in wages are categorized in to following sections that are based on the findings of the analysis on the topic of;

- i) Existing Acts, policy, regulations and mechanism in place to close gaps in wages based on gender
- ii) The role of Wage Fixation Committee and wage allocated among male and female
- iii) Awareness level of the Employer in informal sectors
- iv) Coordination among National and Sub national level
- v) Monitoring and Supervision mechanism
- vi) COVID -19 and its impact on wages labors

I. EXISTING ACTS, POLICY, REGULATIONS AND MECHANISM IN PLACE TO CLOSE GAPS IN WAGES:

Minimum criteria of Labor Union should be followed strictly

- *Fixing the working time period of of work (not more than 8 hours)*
- *If anyone continuously work for 5 hours, half an hour leisure time or overtime payment if he/she does not take a break in between the work should be provided.*
- *One day holiday in a week*
- *Compensation in case of any accidents, health issues related to the work should be given, health and social security.*
 - *Representative, Nepal Trade Union Congress(NTUC)*

KII with key representatives has illustrated that the Nepal government has enacted the minimum wage policy which is prevailed and encompassed the equal value for equal work and gender equality. But the minimum wage act/ policy has not been implemented to all private or informal sectors. Gender based wage difference is still existing in informal sector especially in factories and industries.

"We have adequate laws and rules in Labor, structural body exists and their roles are well defined. But the lacking point are the willingness and the commitment of Nepal government itself. Next issues noticed are lack of morality in employment/job providers."

Representative, Nepal Trade Union Congress

In ILO perspective, the government of Nepal has integrated ILO conventions in laws, but the implementation part is found to be weak due to law implementation authority not being able to

implement it by 100%. In the federal structure, primarily, in provincial level laws are not endorsed and existing institutions capacity is weak or insufficiency of capacity are some of the major challenges encountered to run these laws. In provincial level, some policy is obstructed which is essential for them to empower.

KII further indicated that Employers in government (i.e. construction, enterprises, factories) in these aforementioned sectors disparity are observed less compared to the private sectors, where wage discrimination is utmost high.

The representative further opined that employers need to make aware that discrepancies in wages based on gender will result in less production rate and competitiveness in labor/people will cut off their efforts and capacity. Similarly, Trade Union has important role in it, they also need to create awareness, include these in their agendas to address it. Capacity building of Trade Union is also another significant part.

II. THE ROLE OF WAGE FIXATION COMMITTEE AND WAGE ALLOCATION:

The major role of Wage Fixation Committee is to decide fixed wage in every two years irrespective of gender, caste/ethnicity and location. Equal wage for equal work is a core principle.

On the basis of market structure and other economic activities the committee fixed the minimum wages for labor.

The allocation of minimum wages are determined under tripartite agreement mechanism that includes all stakeholders from the Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Industry, Nepal Rastra Bank, Labor Union Committee and other experts.

Wage Fixation Committee does not have provision to take action on the issue relating to those employers of informal sectors for not adhering the provisions/ regulations enacted by it. Labor department and labor offices are the authorized entity to intervene on such issues.

Minimum wage fixation needs to be included in the policy, rules and regulation of the informal sector's respective institution to avoid wage inequalities based on gender. Building capacity of the institutions that are responsible for implementation of act and policy provisions are measures for the improvement for addressing inequality and exploitation in wages in the workplaces.

As opined by ILO representative, in the current context it is essential to empower Minimum Wage Fixation Committee by providing necessary technical support and resources.

Usually, the wage is fixed with negotiable method rather than scientific or based on survey report or any evidences. The Wage Fixation Committee has no role in monitoring part hence this committee should monitor the implementation part via survey/ research. This committee needs to be strengthened to make it more powerful, resourceful and proactive, which may add value to reduce the inequalities in wages to some extent.

III. AWARENESS LEVEL OF THE EMPLOYERS IN INFORMAL SECTORS:

The KII illustrates that Employers of three informal sectors are aware/ knowledgeable to some extent on the regulations/ provisions of labor acts and policies hence they are not implementing these policies.

The existings major gaps identified are; New transition of Nepal government in Federal structure, which still is in transition form. The Laws are not developed as per new federal structure in this sector.

Employers are needed to be aware on the importance of equal wages irrespective of gender, caste and other, which will ultimately result them in more production, more profit and discrimination free working environment.

IV. COORDINATION AMONG NATIONAL AND SUB NATIONAL LEVEL

KII representatives including the representative from Ministry of Labor confer that coordination is the major constraint within central level among Ministry of Labor, Department, Fixation Committee, Minimum Wage Standardization Committee and other stakeholders. Representative from Ministry has specifically suggested the measures of improvement are; the amendment of laws and acts to include all the three levels of government (federal, provincial and municipal). Forming a body/committee at local level (municipality) to look after/address and monitor labor issues which are under reporting. Further, emphasized on delegation of authority to local government.

Currently, there are total 11 labor offices in Nepal. Very few cases are being reported may be due to fear of losing job. These offices need to be decentralized in sub-national level. Necessary to execute the actionable provision from local level on labor related cases.

-Representative from the Ministry

V. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION MECHANISM:

It was highlighted that labor department and labor offices are the authorized unit for monitoring and supervision. However, these parts are lacking to a very great extent. The labor offices and its human resources are limited in sub-national level and have not delegated the authority to local government so far. Therefore, monitoring and supervision mechanism are not adequate in all tiers of the new federal structure and policy has to be revised to make it applicable for federal context.

At province level, Labor Advisory Committee has formed in only three provinces; Further, it needs to be developed and strengthened in all the provincial level.

It is apparent that there exist gaps and issues in the current federal structure. Therefore, few measures for the improvement of the federal structure are suggested/highlighted by the representatives as follows; coordination mechanism should be strengthened in the province and municipal level; decentralizing of the authority to develop laws and mobilization of human resources; labor issues/complaints addressing units/labor desk should be formed; sensitization and awareness program/campaign on rights and

Major role of Labor union committee:

- *Advocacy to respective institutions*
- *Management of Law: To put on the labor voice*
- *Supports in gender-based inequalities and exploitations - ILO Rep.*

responsibilities of employee should be conducted in local level and capacity building of Local level government should be initiated.

The role of the Trade Union has pointed out as an imperative. They are considered as the first contact for every employee to report and response to any issues and complaints. Since most of the union committees are inactive and not functional with their roles and responsibilities it is suggested to make them more functional and responsive.

Expansion of trade union in both informal and formal sectors (there are less number of Labor Union Committee in current situation), registration of employees (informal and formal sectors) and participation/inclusion of trade union in policy formation by government and implementation of labor audit at the end of every fiscal year are prime areas highlighted by the representatives.

"Labor Union Committee is responsible to enforce the constitutional provision and should not be bias on political issue. Labor Union Committee should be responsible for labor rights and provisions." Representative MLESS

*"The area/places where trade union has no access, government should lead it."
Representative NTUC*

"In every 2 years, new minimum wage amount should be reviewed and allocated starting the review process from Baishakh month and ends by Ashad." Representative NTUC

VI. COVID -19 AND ITS IMPACT ON WAGES LABORS

The KII highlights that Covid-19 pandemic has severely impacted both employers and employee of all sectors but as compared to others, employee of informal sectors are found to be highly affected. To secure jobs/ wages of labors it has opined by representatives that inclusion of Social security fund must be applied in every sector of labor during this type of pandemic situation, primarily focusing to the employees of informal sector and also to formalize the labor market. During pandemic situation extensive use of digitalization in all levels is suggested for smooth information dissemination and making information accessible to all.

The finding exhibits that despite of existence of equality law and policy it is not adequately implemented. There are challenges and gaps considering monitoring and supervision mechanism and institutional structure. In addition, lack of clear accountability mechanism and insufficiency of capacity within structure are some of the prime areas of concerns

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident that both quantitative and qualitative findings indicated a range of gaps and issues that exists in informal sectors. In order to eliminate the wage gap based on gender and to address the discrimination and exploitation that women are currently facing in three informal sectors; the research/ survey findings highlights following key recommendations and the recommendations will add value to the project in its advocacy at the policy level and program implementation in the six working districts.

Considering, prioritizing and act on the recommendations presented in this report could be the way forward to address gaps that are targeted to three core levels as follows:

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL – FOCUSING WOMEN WORKERS AND UNION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Build and strengthen the capacity of Labor Unions to make them more functional and responsive to take action on behalf of women workers or proactive in handling the grievances. Labor union also facilitates to increase women workers representation in the committee and ensure their meaningful participation and decision making role within the committee.
- Build awareness among women workers in all three sectors on the existing labour act, and on their equal rights so that they can report /complain in case of exploitation and discrimination and seek support and take action against their complain tactfully.
- Strengthen and empower women workers to join unions and enhance their ability to collectively bargain and negotiating with contractors/ employers for equal pay, claiming compensation for injuries, prevent from exploitation, harassment in the workplace.
- Organize and help women workers to form in a group at worksites for collective voice and collective action, where women could meet to support each other, find work for each other.
- Establish linkages of women labors with active women's groups (mother's group, saving credit groups, women's cooperatives) in the community to seek support to garner social pressures, financial support when needed.
- Raise awareness and sensitize the employers/ contractors in informal sectors on the existing labor act, legislation and policies that ensure equality in wages and prevent discrimination/ exploitation at the workplace as well to comply the regulations/provisions of labor acts and policies ensuring the rights of employee/ workers.
- Make formal linkage mechanism between workers and deputy mayors to listen to their issues and provide necessary support.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL – CENTRAL, PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPALITY LEVEL

- Orientation and awareness program for Human resource of all three sectors in related to Labor Act and Law, basic facilities health security, social security should be included in the orientation package and this orientation package should be applied to the employers as well.
- Support and ensure efficient collaboration among national mechanisms i.e. Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security, Wage Fixation Committee, Minimum Wage Standardization Committees and Province to Local Government level for the implementation of existing labor act and policy provisions.
- Provide technical support to provincial government for the development and enforcement of the policy and strategy adhering the Labor Acts 2017 and support to establish and strengthen monitoring and supervision system focusing the informal sectors.
- Provide technical support and build the capacity of local government/ municipalities to take measures to abolish wage gap based on gender that it would implement equal wages across the district, including the agricultural and construction sectors.
- Support and promote close and efficient collaboration among province, local government and Labor Union Committee and concerned contractors of informal sectors.
- Sensitization and awareness program/ campaign on rights and responsibilities of employee/ labors in local level.

POLICY ADVOCACY

- The laws are not developed and enforced as per federal structure. Thus, provide support to amend laws/acts/policy to include three tiers of government (Federal, Provincial and Municipal) for the delegation of authority to local government and to strengthen local structure and mechanism to enforce labor laws and systems in place.
- Generate more evidences/ data on wages paid differences and wages paid by activity to women labors and disseminate information for policy advocacy at different level for the enforcement of the labor act and its provision that are implemented, regulated and monitored effectively.
- The Labor Act contains provisions that require employers to maintain health and safety standards and compensation for both women and men workers. Carry out the policy advocacy for the enforcement of the Occupational Health Safety Policy and provisions in informal sectors.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Large group of female worker works in three sectors; factory, construction and agriculture laborer in order to support to their husband in income generation, for meeting their house hold expenditure. Within the workplace they have to face several adverse situations such like harassment, wages discriminations and exploitations even though women work hard, but lag behind the men and remain unskilled even after hardship of years. The scenario only can be changed with the government intervention, by implementing the act, laws policies strictly. There should be a system in place to monitor contractors/ employers to abide them with the existing policy and acts. There should be complaining mechanism and action that has to be taken against all those who exploit, discriminate and harass the women workers. The rights of the women wage labors will be protected and gender equality ensured when major transition in the local level occurs and that can be achieved by collective efforts from all levels.

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ANNEX I: RESEARCH DISTRICTS AND TEAM DETAILS

Research Districts and Municipalities

District	Urban Municipality	Rural Municipality
Doti	Shikhar Municipality	K I Singh Rural Municipality
Siraha	Dhangadhi Mai Municipality	Aurahi Rural Municipality
Kathmandu	Kathmandu Metropolitan, Dakchinkali	Shankarapur Municipality
Palpa		Begnaskali and Rainadevi Rural Municipalities
Bardiya	Rajapur Municipality	Geruwa Rural Municipality
Tehrathum	Laligurans Municipality	Athrai Rural Municipality

TEAM DETAILS

Research Team

Ms. Shova Lama - Team Leader

Mr. Bholu Koirala - Data Manager

Ms. Rozina Dahal - Research Associate

Mr. Surendra Mohan Yadav - Labor Market Practitioner

Field Researchers

Quantitative -Survey	Qualitative -FGD	District
Ms. Champa Chaudhary	Ms. Bhumi Chaudhary	Bardiya
Ms. Sushmita Chaudhary	Ms. Monika Tharu	
Ms. Janaki Bista	Mr. Sher Bhul	

Ms. Hema Dharni	Mr. Bigyan Dewal	Doti
Mr. Dipak Acharya	Mr. Dipak Acharya	
Ms. Yashoda Niraula	Ms. Yashoda Niraula	
Ms. Mina Nepali	Ms. Mina Nepali	Terathum
Ms. Sita Nepali	Ms. Sita Nepali	
Mr. Janak Pariyar	Mr. Kaleshwor Yadav	Siraha
Ms. Anita Chaudhary	Mr. Prem Ram	
Ms. Manisha Darlami	Ms. Sunita Khati	
Ms. Sunita Gaha	Ms. Kamala Thapa	Palpa
Ms. Anita Kumal	Ms. Durga Pandey	
	Ms. Sharmila	
Ms. Shova Chaulagain	Ms. Yesudha Bisunkhe	KTM
Ms. Nabina Gurung	Ms. Krijana Desar	
Ms. Nirmala Pariyar	Ms. Babita Puri	
Ms. Devaki Dhungel	Ms. Dipa Bhujel	

ANNEX II: QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Conducting a research on “Inequality and exploitation in wages based on gender in Nepal”

Household questionnaire

Introduction: Namaste! My name is _____. I am carrying out a research to identify Inequality and exploitation in wages based on gender in Nepal on behalf of Action Aid Nepal. The aim of this study is to identify forms of income inequality and exploitation on three informal sector i.e. Agriculture, Factory and Construction. The provided information will be used solely for the study and your personal information will be kept confidential. This interview will take around 30-45 minutes depending on the pace of conversation and your time availability. We hope that you will be willing to help us in this assignment. If you are happy to take part in this discussion, please give your consent by signing the consent paper.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.	Province	
2.	District	
3.	Municipality/ Rural Municipality	
4.	Ward	
5.	Name of Tole	
6.	Contact Number	
7.	Date of Interview	

1.	Name of the respondent	
2.	Who is the household head of your family?	Male
		Female
3.	Ethnicity of respondent	Brahmin/Chhetri/Thakuri/Sanyasi
		JanajatiNewar
		Janajati (other)
		Dalit
		Muslim
		Madhesi
4.	Age of the respondent	15-24
		25-34
		35-44

		45-54
		55-64
		65+
4.	Level of education of respondent	Tertiary
		Secondary
		Basic
		Literate (level less)
		Illiterate and No schooling
5.	How many members are there in your family?	2
		3
		4
		5
		6
		7
		8 or more
6.	How many members of your family are employed?	1
		2
		More than 2
7.	What is your relationship/ status?	Un-married
		Married
		Divorced
		Living separately
		Widowed
8.	In which sector are you employed?	Agriculture
		Factory
		Construction
9.	What is your current employment status?	Fully Employed
		Time related underemployment
		Unemployed
		Unavailable Job seekers
		Available potential Job seekers
10.		Yes

	Does any member of your household have any disability?	no
10.a	If yes, How many of them have disability?	
10.b	Type of disability :	Physical Disability- Problem with Mobility
		Physical Disability – Other Physical Disorder
		Disability related to vision
		Disability related to hearing
		Disability related to voice and speech
		Mental or psycho social/ Intellectual disability
		Disability associated with autism
		Multiple Disability

(CONSTRUCTION AND FACTORIES)

WORKPLACE DESCRIPTION:

1.	How far is your work place from your home?	Far from my home
		Geographically in an accessible area
		Away from home and staying here temporarily for work
		Any other (please specify)
2.	How much time does it take you to reach your workplace?	Half an hour walk
		An hour walk
		Two hours walk
		One full day
3.	Under which description does your workplace belong?	Factory: located in a fixed place
		No fixed location
		Construction sites
		Others(Specify)
4.	If you are working in a factory, what type of factory are you engaged in?	Textile
		Jute Factory
		Food and Beverage
		Rice Mill

		Sugar Mill
		Other(Please specify)
5.	If it is Construction related work? What types of work are you engaged in?	Mason
		Concrete finisher
		Plaster work
		Painter
		Plumber
		House wiring
		Supervisor
		RRC worker
		Labor work
		Carpenter
		Others (Please specify)

INEQUALITY DURING RECRUITMENT

1.	Who is your employer?	Male
		Female
2.	Did your employer discuss the wage you'll be provided with, prior to starting work?	Yes
		No
2.a	If yes, did you bargain with him/her regarding the wage?	Yes
		No
3.	How were you recruited in this job?	Registered with private recruitment office/ employment center
		Waited on streets to be recruited
		Applied to prospective employers
		Checked at factories and work sites
		Sought help from relatives, friends
		Local Agent
		others
4.	Do you feel that you have ever been turned down from a job because you are women?	Yes
		No
4.a	If yes, what do you think was the reason?	Age

		Caste/Ethnicity
		Semi-disability
		Education
		Lack of skills
		Social Norms/ prejudices
		Others

NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT:

1.	When does your work start and end?	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
		9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
		7 a.m. – 5 p.m.
		6:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
		There's no fix time
2.	What type of work are females mostly engaged in inside the construction sites?(Multiple choices)	Carrying cement
		Carrying Bricks
		Carrying Grit
		Polishing of Marble
		Polishing of Granite
		Cement and sand mixing
		Applying primer
		Supervision
		Others
3.	Through which medium are you paid for the work you do?	Paid in Cash
		Paid by providing food items
		Provided shelter and cash both
		Others
4.	On what basis are you paid?	Daily
		Weekly
		Monthly
		Semi-annually
		Annually
5.	How much do you earn on an average (monthly) basis?	<7600

		7600-10000
		10000-13500
		13500-15000
		15000-25000
		>=25000
6.	Do you have work all around the year?	Yes
		No
7.	How long is your earning sufficient for?	Fortnight
		For a month
		For a quarter of month
		For few days
8.	Where do you spend majority of your earning?	Food
		School fees
		Medicine
		Rent
		Others
9.	Do you have other sources of earning?	Yes
		No
10.	If yes, what is your other sources of earning?	My spouse and myself work as wage labor
		Selling vegetables
		Selling Chicken/eggs (pewa)
		Working extra time
		Others

ACCESS TO FINANCE:

1.	Have you (or have you had in the past year) accessed credit to support with your livelihood?	Yes
		No
1.a	If yes, where did you get your credit from? (multiple)	Saving Credit Group
		Local financial institutions
		Formal lending agencies
		Credit union
		Friends/relatives/neighbors

		From employer
		Others (please specify)
2.	What is the maximum amount you think you can borrow? (in NPR)
3.	Is lack of access to finance a problem for you?	Yes
		No
3.a	If yes, what are the issues constraining your access to finance?	Collateral
		Interest rate
		Loan repayment period
		Size of loan
		Processing fee (for loans)
		Loan processing time
		Requirement of detailed business plan
		Lack of knowledge
		Others (please specify)

INEQUALITY IN WORK ENVIRONMENT:

1.	Did you work anywhere before?	Never worked before
		Worked before
1.a	If you had worked before, why did you leave the workplace?	End of temporary activity
		Pregnancy,
		family responsibility
		Forced to work longer hours
		Untimely payment
		Problem getting holidays
		Withhold of salaries for a long time
		To look for better job
		Barred from being permanent employment in factories
		Abuse
		Others
1.b	If Abuse, what type of abuse did you face?	Verbal Abuse

		Sexual abuse
		Physical abuse
		Harassment
		Others
2.	Are there any facilities specific to men that are different to women workers	Yes
		no
2.a	If yes, Please specify	
3.	Are you receiving any of the following facilities from your company/factory?	Breast feeding spaces
		Separate Toilets
		Separate Changing spaces
		Pick up and drop
		Baby crèche
		Extra payment for hazardous nature of work
		Children allowances
		Healthcare/ medical facilities
		Compensation
		Others
4.	Did you /women worker receive any skill trainings prior to doing the work you are doing now?	Yes
		no
	If yes, who provided you with those training?	Employer
		Local NGOs
		Friends
		Trainings provided by Local Government
		Others
4.	Do men workers specifically receive any skill training?	Yes
		no
4.a	If yes, who provided them with those training?	Employer
		Local NGOs
		Friends
		Trainings provided by Local Government

		Others
5	Do women face insecurity inside the workplace?	Yes
		no
5.a	If yes, what type of insecurity have you faced?	Teasing
		vulgar comments, and inappropriate remarks
		Abusive language by co-workers and supervisors
		Verbal abuse
		Any other
6.	Have you ever experienced discrimination or exploitation in you workplace	Yes
		no
6.a	If yes, what type of discrimination /exploitation have you experienced?	Discrepancy in the salary
		Employer frequently withhold women's salaries
		Made to work under very poor conditions
		Problem getting holidays
		Reduced working hours
		Reduced pay
		Removal from job without informing / firing
Any other (please specify)		
7.	Did you or your colleague ever speak up about the exploitation with your employer/concerned?	Yes
		No
7.a	If yes, who put forward the issues /problem with the employer/concerned authority?	Senior Male Colleague
		Male colleague
		Members of committee
		Senior Female colleague
		Female colleague
		Myself
others		
8.	Did your employer take action on it?	Yes
		No

8.a	If yes, what did they do?	
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WAGE EXPLOITATION

1.	Has there been an instance where you were promised certain amount for a work but were not paid for it later on?	Yes
		No
1.a	If yes, what action did you take?	
2.	Is the wage paid to you different from the wage paid to male for the same work?	Yes
		No
2.a	If yes, what is the difference of payment between male and female for the same work and hours?	Rs .100-200
		Rs. 200-300
		Rs300-500
		>=Rs.1000
3.	According to you, What are the root causes of wage pay gaps between men and women?	Large or small factory/ company /construction work
		Working hours
		Additional skill of the job or training
		Any other(Please specify)
		Social norms/ Prejudice
4.	What can a woman do against wage differences?	Chose a company that provides facilities for their partner and children
		Negotiate salary with the concerned
		File a law suit
		Complain to the nearest Police station
		Stay quiet
		Take help from nearest NGOs, women groups, labor committee
		Don't Know
		Others
5.	Have you ever received support related to wage gap between men and women?	Yes
		No
	If yes, whom did you receive the support from?	NGOs/ Local organization
		Local Political Parties
		Municipality

		Labor committee
		Others
6.	How do you think these wage gap between men and women and exploitation could be improved?	Improved Government policies
		Action against employer of Factory/ Construction
		Action can be taken by labor union Committee
		Forcing company to close pay gaps
		Don't know
		Other (please specify)

SUPPORT MECHANISM FROM FAMILY

1.	Are your family members (husband, In-laws) supportive of your work?	Yes
		No
1.a	If yes, what type of support are you getting?	Taking care of children
		Cooking
		Fetching water
		Feeding the cattle
		Doing the dishes
		Any other(please specify)
1.b.	If no, what type of problem / pressure are you facing?	Pressure to complete all household chores before leaving home
		Pressure to reach home on time
		Not allowed to work in more distant point
		When earnings drops, put pressure to leave work
		Pressure not to work on holidays
		Domestic abuse
		Others(please specify)

SUPPORT MECHANISM IN WORK PLACE

1.	Is there any committee in your workplace?	Yes
		No
1.a	What type of committee is it?	Compliance committee
		Labor union committee
		Others(please specify)
2.	Are you member of any committee?	Yes
		No
2.a	If yes, what is your role?	Secretary
		Treasurer
		Member
		others
3.	Do women have a group to raise collective voice against discrimination / exploitation	Yes
		No
	If yes, how often do you meet?	Monthly
		quarterly
		fortnightly
4.	How often do you raise your concerns?	Regularly
		When needed
		Never
5.	How often is your concern heard and taken action?	Mostly
		Few Times
		Never
6.	Does labor union committee exist in your workplace?	Yes
		No
6.a	If yes, What type of support has Labor Union Committee provided against wage, discrimination / exploitation?	Filed a case
		Arranged meeting between employer and workers
		Supported to provide compensation
		Any others (Please specify)

PERCEPTION ON INEQUALITY: To what extent do you agree or disagree to the following statements

1.	Women should be paid less for doing the same job as man because they are more productive than women	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree
2.	I chose to work in this sector because it gives me more flexibility and is not time-bound	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree
3.	I work less hours in comparison to men because I have to look after my family	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree
4.	Men deserve better pay because of their hard work	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree
5.	Men deserve better because they are more educated and/or skilled	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree
6.	Employer recognize male performance better than female performance (attitude -unseen biasness)	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree

AGRICULTURE:**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1.	Province	
2.	District	
3.	Municipality/ Rural Municipality	
4.	Ward	
5.	Name of Tole	
6.	Contact Number	
7.	Date of Interview	

1.	Name of the respondent	
2.	Who is your household head?	Male
		Female
3.	Ethnicity of respondent	Brahmin/Chhetri/Thakuri/Sanyasi
		JanajatiNewar
		Janajati (other)
		Dalit
		Muslim
		Madhesi
4.	Age of the respondent	Others
		15-24
		25-34
		35-44
		45-54
55-64		

		65+
4.	Level of education of respondent	Tertiary
		Secondary
		Less than secondary
		Basic
		Less than basic
		Literate (level less)
		Early Childhood Education
		Illiterate and No schooling
5.	How many members are there in your family?	1/2
		3
		4
		5
		6
		7
		8 or more
6.	How many members of your family are employed?	1
		2
		More than 2
7.	What is your relationship/ status?	Un-married
		Married
		Divorced
		Leaving separately
		Widowed
9.	What is your current employment status?	Fully Employed
		Time related underemployment
		Unemployed
		Unavailable Job seekers
		Available potential Job seekers

NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT:

1.	Do you own an agricultural land?	Yes
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		No (if no, continue from question 2)
1.a	If yes, what is the area of the land you own?	
2.	Do you work on others farm?	Yes
		No
2.a	If yes, Whose farm are you working on?	Family members
		Friends
		Relatives
		Neighbors
		Villagers
		others
3.	On an average, How many hours a day do you generally work in the field?	Less than 2 hours
		Between 2-3 hours
		3-5 hours
		5-8 hours
		More than 8 hours
4.	What are your primary roles in the farm?	Land preparation
		Planting,
		Weeding,
		Carrying manure
		Fuel fodder collection
		Harvesting
		Selling the products in the market
		All of the above
		None of the above
7.	Through which medium are you paid for the work you do?	Paid in Cash
		Paid by providing food items/ kind
		sharecropper
		Others (please specify)
8.	On what basis are you paid?	Daily
		Weekly

		Monthly
		Semi-annually
		Annually
9.	Do you have work all around the year?	Yes
		No
10.	How do you generally prefer to work?	Part-time work
		Full-time work
11.	How long is your earning sufficient for?	Fortnight
		For a month
		For a quarter of month
		For few days
12.	Where do you spend majority of your earning?	Food
		School fees
		Medicine
		Rent
		Repay Loan
		Others
13.	Do you have other sources of earning?	Yes
		No
13.a	If yes, what is your other sources of earning?	My spouse and myself work as wage labor
		Selling vegetables
		Selling Chicken/eggs (pewa)
		Working extra time
		Others

ACCESS TO FINANCE:

1.	Have you (or have you had in the past year) accessed credit to support with your livelihood?	Yes
		No
1.a	If yes, where did you get your credit from? (multiple)	Saving Credit Group
		Local financial institutions
		Formal lending agencies
		Credit union

		Friends/relatives/neighbors
		From employer
		Others (please specify)
2.	What is the maximum amount you think you can borrow? (in NPR)
3.	Is lack of access to finance a problem for you?	Yes
		No
3.a	If yes, what are the issues constraining your access to finance?	Collateral
		Interest rate
		Loan repayment period
		Size of loan
		Processing fee (for loans)
		Loan processing time
		Requirement of detailed business plan
		Lack of knowledge
		Others (please specify)

INEQUALITY IN WORK ENVIRONMENT:

1.	Who works mostly on production?	Male
		Female
2.	Who works mostly on marketing/ sales?	Male
		Female
3.	Did you work in the field prior to working here?	Yes
		No
4.	If you had worked before, why did you leave the workplace?	End of temporary activity
		Pregnancy,
		family responsibility
		Forced to work longer hours
		Untimely payment
		Problem getting holidays
		Withhold of salaries for a long time

		To look for better job
		Abuse
		Others
4.b	If abuse, what type of abuse did you face?	Verbal Abuse
		Sexual abuse
		Physical abuse
		Harassment
		Others
5.	Do women face insecurity while working in the farm?	Yes
		no
	If yes, what type of insecurity have you faced?	Teasing
		vulgar comments, and inappropriate remarks
		Abusive language by co-workers
		Verbal abuse
		Any other
5.	Have you ever experienced discrimination or exploitation in you workplace?	Yes
		No
	If yes, what type of discrimination /exploitation have you experienced?	Discrepancy in the salary
		Employer frequently withhold women's salaries
		Problem getting holidays
		Reduced working hours
		Reduced pay
		Any other (please specify)

INEQUALITY DURING RECRUITMENT

1.	Who is your employer?	Male
		Female
2.	Did your employer discuss the wage you'll be provided with, prior to starting work?	Yes
		No

2.a	If yes, did you bargain with him/her regarding the wage?	Yes
		No
3.	Do you feel that you have ever been turned down from a job because you are women?	Yes
		No
	If yes, what do you think was the reason?	Age
		Caste/Ethnicity
		Semi-disability
		Lack of skills
		Social Norms/ prejudices
		Others

WAGE EXPLOITATION

1.	How much do you earn on an average (monthly) basis?	<7600
		7600-10000
		10000-13500
		13500-15000
		15000-25000
		>=25000
2.	Is/ the payment different from the wage paid to male for the same work?	Yes
		No
2.a	If yes , what is the difference of wage paid between male and female for the same work and hours	Rs .100-200
		Rs. 200-300
		Rs 300 - 500
		>=Rs.1000
3.	Did you or your colleague ever speak up about the inequality in wages with your employer?	Yes
		No
3.a	If yes, Did your employer take action on it?	
3.b	If yes, what did they do?	Increased your wage (personal)
		Provided with other supplements like food
		Increased wage of all the woman collectively

		Others
4.	What are the factors that make inequality in wages between men and women?	Male / Female (gender)
		Age
		Education
		Location (Rural/ Urban)
		Caste ethnicity
		Marital status /
		Others
4.a	If others, Please specify	
5.	Have you ever worked voluntarily without getting paid?	Yes
		No
5.a	If yes, who persuaded you to work?	Friends
		Family
		Relatives
		Ex-employee
		Colleagues
		others
6.	Has there been an instance where you were promised certain amount for a work but were not paid for it later on?	Yes
		No
6.a	If yes, what action did you take?	
13	What can a woman do against wage differences	Negotiate salary with the employer
		File a law suit
		Complain to the nearest Police station
		Stay quiet
		Take help from nearest NGOs, women groups, labor committee
		Others

SUPPORT MECHANISM FROM FAMILY

1.	Are your family members (husband, In-laws) supportive towards your work?	Yes
		No
1.a	If yes, what type of support are you getting?	Taking care of children
		Cooking
		Fetching water
		Feeding the cattle
		Doing the dishes
		Any other(please specify)
1.b.	If no, what type of problem / pressure are you facing?	Pressure to complete all household chores before leaving home
		Pressure to reach home on time
		Not allowed to work in more distant point
		When earnings drops, put pressure to leave work
		Pressure not to work on holidays
		Domestic abuse
		Others(please specify)

SUPPORT MECHANISM IN WORK PLACE

1.	Is there any committee/group for women engaged in agriculture?	Yes
		No
1.a	If yes, What type of group is it?	Farmers group
		Women's group
		Women Cooperative
		Others(please specify)
2.	Are you member of those groups/committee?	Yes
		No
2.a	If yes, what is your role?	Secretary
		Treasurer
		Member
		others
3.	How often do you meet?	Monthly

		quarterly
		fortnightly
4.	How often do you raise your concerns?	Regularly
		When needed
		Never
5.	How often is your concern heard and actions taken?	Mostly
		Few Times
		Never

PERCEPTION ON INEQUALITY: To what extent do you agree or disagree to the following statements

1.	Women should be paid less for doing the same job as man because they are more productive than women	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree
2.	I chose to work in this sector because it gives me more flexibility and is not time-bound	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree
3.	I work less hours in comparison to men because I have to look after my family	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree
4.	Men deserve better pay because of their hard work	Strongly Disagree
		Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree
5.		Strongly Disagree

	Employer recognize male performance better than female performance (attitude -unseen biasness)	Disagree
		Neutral
		Agree
		Strongly Agree

ANNEX III (FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION CHECKLIST)

Focus group Discussion (FGD) with Women Workers (Construction, Factory worker and Farmer group)

District:

Total number in group discussion:

Municipality:

Date and time:

Please complete the Introduction and Consent Process with each participant before beginning this discussion.

1. What is the highest grade you completed?
2. Which caste /ethnicity you belong to?
3. How long have you been working in this factory/ construction area / as wage farmer? What are your primary roles and responsibilities in this working sector? How long do you work? From when to when (Time, hours) in a day /week?
4. What wages /salary are you paid / Is it different than the wages paid to male in the factory/ construction / agriculture activities? What is your impression on the unequal wage pay against women workers?
5. What are other facilities / benefits are you getting in addition to your salary? Are those facilities / benefits different from male colleague in the factory / construction site? If yes, please explain. (Probe: compensation, allowance, bonus etc. including access to training).
6. In your opinion, what are the factors/ causes/ prevailing social norms that make inequality in wages between men and women? How do you think these inequalities could be improved?
7. How do women's work schedules or gender roles (family and child-rearing) affect the wage pay?
8. How do women of different caste /ethnicities, age and location (urban/ rural) experience the wage gap?
9. Have you ever experienced any types of discrimination and exploitation in the work place, if yes, what are they and what type of exploitation and discrimination you faced?
10. What are the challenges do you see for women to work in the factory/ construction / agriculture sector? (probe: at work place insecurity, harassment ; a common experience for women)
11. Are there any committees exist in your work place? If yes, what are they and what is their role? Are any of you member of that committee? If yes, in which committee? How is your participation and decision making role within the committee? If no, how women have organized in a group to raise collective voice against discrimination / exploitation or insecurity that you are facing? (Probe : for any success / action taken by the group)
12. What support mechanisms are in place to respond to discrimination and exploitation within your working place /institution? How do you report and complain to whom and seek support / action against your complain?
13. Are you / women workers aware on the existing labor act, legislation and policies that ensure equality in wages and prevent discrimination on the basis of sex and gender in the workplace? What other information are you familiar with?
14. Do you feel that women workers are adequately supported by Labor union committee? If yes, please specify.
15. Are there any barriers (socio-cultural) / challenges (family, community) for women in general and marginalized women in particular in accessing any wage job or being wage labor in three informal

sectors ? (Probe: home / family: domestic abuse, mobility restriction, pressure, stigmatization) If yes, please explain?

16. Are you getting any support from community, local government and local political party or any organizations to promote women worker's equal wage rights? Please explain.
Any specific suggestions from your end.

Thank you for your time and sharing your valuable ideas with us

Focus Group with Labor Union Committee

(Construction, Factory worker and Farmer group)

District:

Number of person in group

Name of Palika:

Date and time:

Please complete the Introduction and Consent Process with each participant before beginning this discussion.

1. How long have you been serving as a Labor Union Committee Members? What are your key roles and responsibilities?
2. Are there any women members in the Labor Union Committee? What is the level and quality of participation of women /marginalized * women in these structures? Have you made any changes to promoting women's participation and their decision making in this committee? If yes what are they? If not do you have any plan for the future? Can you specify those plans? (Probe)
3. What is your understanding and knowledge about the Nepal Labor Act 2074 / policy, provisions that are in favor of equal wages between men and women in informal sectors?
4. What are the provisions for ensuring that Labor Act 2074/ policy /provisions are implemented effectively in these three sectors?
5. As a Labor Union, what challenges do you see for the implementation of existing Labor Act, policies for equal wage between men and women in informal sectors i.e. Construction, Agriculture, Factory workers) Can please you explain.
6. What are the existing wages pay practices and pay differentials in informal sectors? If disparity exists, what actions have been undertaken by union committee members to bring changes in unequal wages or to comply with Act/ policy / provisions?
7. Do you think that male and female wage workers are equally effective/have similar performance in the working sector? What are the factors or prevailing social norms that make inequality in wages?
8. What do you know about the type of exploitation and inequality in wages in your district? I.e. Construction, Factory and Agriculture? If yes, what are they?
9. What do you know about the type of insecurity that women are facing in the workplace of these three informal sectors?
10. What supportive mechanisms are in place to respond to inequality, discrimination/ exploitation and insecurity within your working sector /institution? And how many cases/issues have been addressed by above mechanism (in last two years)
11. Any initiation or specific action carried out by the union committee members to address inequality and exploitation against women workers. Probe
12. What do you think would help you be more effective in your role to address inequality and exploitation/ discrimination?
13. Do you think that Employers have understanding on the provisions of labor act and policies that promotes / ensure gender wage equality and prevent exploitation /discrimination in the workplace? How this can be improved?

14. Please describe your relationship with Wage Fixation Committee, Minimum wage standardization committees, Department of Labor and Occupational safety, concerned Province / Municipality? How do you interact with them, why and how often? How do you report /address on wage issues?
15. In your opinion, are there any opportunities (ways) how can women workers are adequately supported by community, local government and local political party, provincially and nationally to promote women workers equal wage rights? Please explain.
16. Do you have any suggestions comments that you think are relevant to address wage gaps?

Thank you for your time and sharing valuable insight with us.

*Marginalised women: Dalit women, widows and single women, indigenous women, Madhesi women and women with disabilities.

ANNEX IV (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW CHECKLIST)

Key Informant Interview (KII) with:

Rep from Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security, Rep from International Labor Organization (ILO, Chairperson of Labor Union Committee and Wage Fixation Committee, Minimum wage standardization committees

1. Please could you tell us a little about your background and for how long you have been engaged in work in this sector?
2. What are the existing Acts, policy , regulations and mechanism in place to close gaps in wages between men and women in informal sector (construction, factory and farm wage)?
3. What approaches are executed for the compliance and enforcement of labor act/ policy? Are there any issues/gaps at the implementation level that you think need to be addressed/ improved?
4. Do you think that inequality and exploitation in wages based on gender exists in the workplace specifically, in Factories, Construction and in Agriculture sector? How do you think this inequality and exploitation could be improved?
5. Do you think that wage disparity is based on age, gender, location (urban /rural) and social groups (castes/ ethnicity)? What could be other causes or reason?
6. What efforts have been undertaken to close the gender based wage gaps in a changing environment? How this can be improved?
7. What is the role of Wage Fixation Committee? How the wage among male and female is allocated by the Wage Fixation Committee? How and what actions have been undertaken by Wage Fixation Committee to those employers of informal sectors for not adhering the provisions/ regulations enacted by of fixed wages committee?
8. Do you think that Employers of these three sectors are aware /knowledgeable and complying the regulations /provisions of labor acts and policies? What are the existing gaps and how these gaps can be addressed?
9. How Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security Wage Fixation Committee, Minimum wage standardization committees, Department of Labor and Occupational safety are working together in central level and have established linkages with local movement i.e. Province / Municipality?
10. What is your view of the monitoring and supervision process that is carried out by the Department of Labor /Wage Fixation Committee/ Minimum wage standardization committees? Are these Committees sufficiently proactive? Probe: Do you think adequate monitoring and supervision mechanism are in place in each tier of the federal structure? What are the ways to improve?
11. How Labor Union Committee is made responsible to respond to inequality and exploitation in wage based on gender? What are the ways to improve to make them more functional and responsive?
12. Do you have any other comments that you think are relevant?

Thank you for your time.