

“Doing Gender”: Women Labor Migration and Households Transition in Nepal

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Abstract

The increasing trend of women migration in transnational space doesn't open a new discourse in global labor market but also assists in social construction of gender. Though government of Nepal doesn't have any objection over men migration but it dispirited female labor migration due to various reasons. The growing incidents of physical assault in foreign land and patriarchal ideology such as: prevalence of male breadwinners, female homemaker, managing work within the domestic space and cultural restrictions restricts on women to participate in public spaces. This paper examines the reconstruction of households structure and the changing roles, with a focus on gendered power relation in the slum community of Pokhara Metropolitan City, Nepal. Particular, attention is paid to the transformation of breadwinner power of men to women and increasing women participation in decision making process. The evidences presented here use data from both secondary literature and primary sources. The data have been purposively selected from the 199 households of the women migrants families who have been migrated at least three years before the study conducted in between March and July 2022. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were chosen for the data collection and analysis. The results explain changing scenario of gender role and households transition due to access of social, cultural and economic capital accumulated by migrants. Once women depart for labor migration, the family left behind especially mother and husband are more responsible to carry both inside as well as outside activities along with childcare. In joint family, mother/mother-in-laws were replacing the role of migrant and doing migrants tasks; whereas in nuclear family husbands is more responsible for all conducts performed by their wives and acts as like that. The study also provides a more nuanced understanding of the involvement of migrants women in decision-making power in household's domain and the way of dealing with upcoming socio-cultural obstacles that hinder their participation in public sphere.

Keywords

Doing Gender, Breadwinner, Households Transitions, Women Migrants

1. Introduction

Arguably, there are more people on the move than ever before which assists in accumulation of social, cultural, symbolic and economic capital. Today, around 3.4 percent of the world's population live in a country that is different to their home country (IOM, 2020). Gender is one of the most significant factors in shaping migration. Nevertheless, a review of literature shows that migrants are predominantly occupied by young males (Deshingkar & Grimm, 2005) and there are relatively smaller number of female migrants. The proportion of males or females migrants varies across the region. For instance, sub-Saharan Africa has more male migrants whereas, in Philippines there are more female migrants (Zhao, 2003). The context and experiences of migrants roles, behavior and relationship that society assign them being male and female are different (Oppong, 1983). The increasing trend of female migration open a new discourse to traditional roles performed by men and women from long historical period where women are taking role of breadwinner and acquire independent income; thus take up new social position both in family and society (IOM, 2005). The strength of the study lies among the relationship between households rearrangement and increasing decision making power of women in the households affairs due to migration process. More specifically, this paper will explore how women labor migration impacts on gender roles and responsibilities within families.

The recent demand of labor in global market smash the traditional gender attributes due to increasing number of female migrants. The global figure of women migrants is about 12% and the ratio of Indian female migrant constitute 23.6%, Bangladeshi is about 49% whereas in the Philippines and Sri-Lanka the ratio is 70% - 90% (Sijapati, Mak, Zimmerman, & Kiss, 2019). In Nepal, more than 176,000 women have been received permits for labor migration since 2008, and their subsequent destination was Gulf countries, Dubai and Malaysia (DoFE, 2016). However, the data maintained by Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) does not include records of individuals who leave the country for foreign employment illegally via India border due to open border policy and with support of middlemen. Therefore, female migration and women's absences may undermine the stability households structure and challenge traditional gender doing roles. On one facet, women migration significantly changes their status and improves their economic independency whereas on other side, it challenges the traditional notion of gender: breadwinner task, homemaker job, childcare responsibilities, decision making power, husband-wife relationship and so many other things. So, the objectives of present study is to explain the nature of Nepalese households formation interface with migration process and various strategies

adopted to maintain the families left behind. Additionally, the study focuses on how the traditional gender roles alter in transnational spaces. To meet the objective of the study, the analysis is based on the women labor migration whose families have been left behind in home country. Before turning to the analysis, I first discuss the analytical framework for understanding how women's migration impacts of the households formation and gender transformation in Nepalese society.

2. Women Labor Migration and Households Transition

In this section, I discuss how women migration may assists to and impacts on reconstruction of traditional households structure. For this, I use the term, "doing gender", as a tool for analyzing how migrants women uphold the role of breadwinner and the family left behind, especially husband are taking the roles of wives as "huswife" or "houseband" while sealing the vacuum created by migrants women. However, before expanding on analytical framework, I briefly reflection contemporary reconfigurations of the Nepalese households structure.

2.1. The Resilience of Nepalese Households Ideals and Practices

During several historical epoch and contexts, the diversification and differentiation in and among household began throughout the world development. In developing countries like Nepal, the process of reformulation of households structures starts with the rise of globalization, particularly during the last fifty years has prove the birth and rise as well consequent transformation of households economies, politics and societies (Mishra, 2017). In an article written by Smith and Wallerstein (1992) they adhere that, the nature of households changes in relation to cyclical movement of the world-economy whether a household is located in the core or the periphery of the world economy. Following this line of thought, I could well argue that the households formation and it restructuring aren't an individual determination but it's a construction of large historical process i.e. world capitalist market. Thus, one couldn't have stable family, households as well as society. The rules that governed the households formation were particularly accessibility of members over the ownership of resources. These rules were mostly predominated by the customs and traditions attached with gender practices, e.g., all the households ownership and resources were owned by men from long historical time. In Nepal, the households structure and the guiding ideals of what is a "good" households have been modified considerably during the past 50 years although patriarchal households structure and practices may not have disappeared. Traditionally, the Nepalese households structure have been characterized by the Hindu model of patriarchal family hierarchy based on gender, generation and age. Fathers, husbands, sons and brothers have authority over women though it doesn't matter how juvenile is a son or brother. Men are considered to be central figures in the family as the pillar of the home and are expected to act as the main breadwinners in the family where a women should obey all the decision made by men. Thus, households are socially and historically

create identities and its always in flux.

According to [Mishra \(2017\)](#), the nature of households and household-related institutions, e.g., those related to gender relationship, marriage, and fertility, parent-child relationship, inheritance and bequests, lineality and post-marital locality, etc. shape the nature of economy and the state and in turn it shapes the households formation. Furthermore he argued that, the household is site of resource pooling and its members functions as purposeful agents for adding the resources. The head of household especially, men does hold the place of power and pride as well as decision making power-in the household hierarchy due to inheritance they own (*ibid*). The reconstruction of households may depends on the way of income earning by its members; for instance if an individual depends upon farming activities then households members may live in joint family but when the members enter in capitalist market separation of family begin with changing gender nature. I will focus on how the increasing trend of women migration (i.e., in between 1985 and 2001, only 161 women migrated and by 2014-2015, the figure shot up to 21,421) helps in reformulation of households structure. Thus, the impact of the female migration on households domain should be examined in relation to two main development. First, migration has an impact on the control systems within the household, e.g., leading changes in the household authority and power structure. This in turn affects the role and status of individual members, especially the husband. Second, households have to find alternative strategies to fulfill traditional role and responsibilities of women who migrate. Thus, the overall focus study is to understand specific forms of gender formation triggered by capitalist market where women's involvement in migration for employment may undermine men's breadwinner roles in more fundamental ways and lead to new labor market and intra-household divisions of labor that challenge the households institution.

2.2. Doing Gender: Women Migration and Gender Transition

In this section, I will discuss how research can assists in the exploration women migration, gender transition and households formation. In Asian context, family as an institution along with households structure has shifting due to transnational women's migration ([Asis et al., 2004](#)). During transnational space, it is emphasized that how an individual members practice family and how women migration is interfering into the micro world of households ([Devasahayam et al., 2004](#)). Households are being sustained despite the long terms separation of women members and not able social and cultural changes are taking place in response to global restructuring.

Gender is not absolute, but also changes and thus, it is both socially constructed and reconstructed through time. The feminist view of gender as a "social construction" has raised two concerns. First patriarchy gives men preferential access to the resources available in society and thereby determines the choice of over households functioning according to their will. The second concern focuses on the interpersonal relationships between men and women, how women's rela-

tionships to family members, including spouses, and their productive and reproductive responsibilities change with migration (Kabeer, 1999). The women exposure to labor market creates a discourse in the traditional gender role assigned to male and female.

In order to explore how female migration helps in doing gender, I draw on three related analytical lenses: how the gender division of household labor is negotiated; how power relations between wives and husbands are molded in response to changing gender roles; and how this impacts on gender roles and relations. Increase rate of women participation in capitalist labor leads to alter in the traditional gender division of labor. However, the trend of research focus has been changed as female migrants began to appear in the literature from the mid-1970s. Previously they were often portrayed as “followers, dependents, unproductive persons, isolated, illiterate and ignorant” (Morokvasic, 1983: p. 16). The important difference from the classical situation is the combination of women’s new economic roles as main breadwinners and their simultaneous absences from home (Fan, 2003). Consequently, women are unable to continue their traditional reproductive tasks, which may then be transferred to the fathers left behind (Resurreccion & Van Khanh, 2007), often supported or even replaced by their extended families (Murphy, 2000).

Dreby (2006) asserts that, men seriously engaged in their households tasks and taking care of children in absence of their wife, however the continuation of their tasks end with their spouse return back to the home (Resurreccion & Van Khanh, 2007). In the succeeding analysis, I will explore how the changing gender division of labor helps in reconstruction of households formation.

The overall concern here is how a household relationships are sustain and what variety of ways migrants establish, maintain or restrain relational ties with family members left behind (Bryceson & Vuorela 2002: p. 14). All the affine and consanguine relation in transnational space equally plays an important role in functioning of households formation. Households as an institution consciously constructed through the emotional feelings among the families left behind for the proper performance of routinised everyday practices. The revitalizing family ties in transnational space molded through frequent communication between migrants and non-migrants that pave the way for construction of new gender role, especially women as breadwinner and husband play a role of houseband of the households structure. In migrant families, the role of breadwinner is highly appreciated as these women become independent and strengthen their decision-making power within the family (Be’langer & Pendakis, 2010). When women takes the role of wage earner into the family, they gain upgraded their position in the family as well their decision making power over economic and domestic matters also increased (UNESCAP, 2010; Resurreccion & Van Khanh, 2007). Accordingly, part of “doing gender” consists of the processes in which women provide for their families while negotiating power relations and household decision-making in response to their new roles as breadwinners.

This directs to the third a sect of the overall re-configuration of gender roles

an relationship in favor or against the formation of roles in family. When male experiences an inability to play their traditional role as breadwinner or provides an opportunity to women in labor market that eventually breakup family (Francis, 2002). Pingol (2001) adhere that, men experiences threat due to loss of breadwinner power in households and for which they have pay by working or maybe even claim back in aggressive ways. The way gender role are valued and reproduced results in conflicting valuation both in households and local communities due to new division of labor; and/or condemn women's lack of caring responsibilities and/or men's "unnatural" engagement in childcare and domestic work (Dreby, 2006). In the following, section I will apply the three related analytical lenses listed above to explore the Nepalese households practices of female migrants and how they are doing gender. First, though, we will present the location of the study and its methodology.

3. Methodology and Study Site

The fieldwork was conducted over a total of five month from March to July in 2022 in Pokhara Metropolitan City, Gandaki Province. According to 2021 census conducted by Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Pokhara Metropolitan City had total population of 457,792, and this figure is one of the highest population in metropolitan city. The city has become hub for internal migrants due to it space of development in every sectors such as: facilities education, health, employment, peaceful climate, and so many others. So, the current study was conducted among internal migrants i.e. in the slum community who had been settled before 35 to 40 years back from the people of other region in a search of better opportunities. Nevertheless, the desire of living with high standard of life in city area itself doesn't meets their entire goals due to poverty, unskilled profession, illiteracy, barrier of language, caste issues and so forth. As a result they have been excluded in social, cultural, economic, and political sphere of city life and went for other option to ease their life smoothly. So, the community preferred international migration to solve their everyday problem. The current study has focused on the women's labor migration; the reconstruction of households institution and transformation of traditional gender role. Snowball chain method was adopted to identify suitable respondents whose women members from the family have been migrated at least three years before the study conducted. I asked each of the migrants family whether they identify anyone in the community who had meet the objective of the study.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used for the data collection to address the research question. There was no official record by the government about the female migrants households from the slum community. In such a situation where there was unidentified sample Cochran (1963: p. 75) has developed the equation to yield a representative sample size, which I used for the calculation. So, using the Cochran formulae the predicated size of indefinite sample for the study area is 196. I had found about 12 non-response respondents in the field site, who didn't like to participate and answers the research questions so, I had

rejected all those sample.

However, I had purposively selected a total of 199 households that includes individuals from different cultural background; having different socio-economic characteristics and living in the Pokhara from last ten year. 125 migrants' households were selected for the survey study to identify household characteristics in terms of demography, migration, assets, and livelihood activities whereas 48 in-depth interviews were conducted among migrant's husbands. The in-depth interviews aimed at exploring the experiences and perceptions of husbands in negotiating their gender roles and relations, in response to the consequences on their relationships in accommodating the migration of the wives. 15 case study were taken among the returnee women migrants to share their live experiences in doing gender during migration. 11 migrants' children's (aged 20 to 30) were included because they would provide further explanations for their father role negotiation in absence of mother. Five focus group discussion (FGDs) were held with the community people to know the reasons behind increasing trend of women migration in their community and discuss the changing trend of breadwinner role and decision-making power among the households. All of the statistical information has been processed, analyzed and presented in tables and interpreted in descriptive manner. Whereas the qualitative data were analyzed using manual thematic method, where the responses were transcribed with some catchy phrases retained in their original versions and contexts in the form of extracts or excerpts.

4. Discussion

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

In this section, I will discuss the demographic characteristics of women such as: age, education, religion, caste, marital status, and country of destination are discussed. Though the government of Nepal hasn't totally banned the women labor migration but change its policy about the age limitation of women migration to 24 who intend to go for Gulf and other countries for work and for mothers, their children must be over two years of age.

Demographic Characteristics of women migrants:

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age group	Less than 24	39	19.8
	25 to 35	92	46.2
	35 to 45	45	22.6
	More than 45	21	10.6
	Total	199	100
Education	Illiterate	33	16.8
	Formal	17	8.5
	Primary level	44	22.3

Continued

	Secondary level	36	18.1
	Higher Secondary	31	15.7
	Others	38	19.1
	Total	197	100
Religion	Hindu	147	73.9
	Buddhist	19	9.5
	Christian	22	11.1
	Other	11	5.5
	Total	199	100
Ethnicity	Brahmin	8	4
	Chhetri	13	6.5
	Newar	6	3
	Gurung	41	20.6
	Magar	14	7
	Dalit	117	58.8
	Total	199	100
Marital status	Single	16	8
	Arrange marriage	43	21.6
	Love marriage	62	31.2
	Separated	18	9
	Widowed	7	3.5
	Unmarried	44	22.1
	Divorce	9	4.5
	Total	199	100

Source: Field survey, 2022.

The study found that most of the women migrants workers were in between the age of 25 to 35 years, 46.2% and only about 10.6% migrants age were above 45 years. Though, the government policy clearly indicated that the female who intend to migrate for work to abroad must more than 24 years but in the field site, about 19.8% of the women migrants workers were below 24 years. The intensive in-depth interview with family members stated that, some of migrants went for visit visa whereas other go through Delhi Airport. Regarding the education qualification, about 22.3% of the migrants attend primary level of education, whereas 8.5% attend formal education and 19.1 attend more than higher education. In addition to that, 73.9% of the migrants follow Hindu religion, whereas 11.1% were Christian and 5.5% follow Bon religion. The ethnic compo-

sition of migrants is very notable that shows, about 58.8% of migrants belong from Dalit community, that is followed by Gurung 20.6% and only 4% from the Brahmin community. The reasons behind this is the slum community has mostly occupied by Dalit people and due to low education, lack of skills and caste these people were not getting proper wages after work and so choose migration as an option to meet their basic needs. Considering the marital status of migrants, about 31.2% of women did love marriage, followed by 21.6% did arrange marriage. It is interesting to note that, 22.1% migrants were unmarried and 8% single whereas 3.5% were widowed and 9% of the migrants were separated.

4.2. Changing Households Relations

In this section, I present how women migration impacts on the households formation in transnational space. The pattern of households compromises all the familial relationships and activities performed by households members on the basis of position and status in the family along the ownership of resources and its management. Generally, the operation of households is maintained by its kinship ties and the social and cultural practices and ideologies. Commonly, all the households decisions and the management of were made by owner and breadwinner of the households. The traditional gender assumption is based on men as the key decision makers due to his breadwinner ability and women as economic dependents over men. Women have lower access to and control over household resources and they have less power in household decision making, even for decisions related to their own activities. Therefore, ownership over any type of assets play a dominant role in determining the position of an individual both inside and outside the house. One of the main features of the women migration is whether it enhances the women decision-making power in households activities or not? It therefore requires planning and implementing context specific strategies that draw on and make use of resources and skills possessed by family left behind especially, household head. Chi-Square test has been used to establish the relationship between age, education, marital status, land ownership, family type in which a migrants live in and decision-making power taken by the migrants. **Table 1** shows the descriptive data indicating how respondents has followed the decision-making power (DMP) of migrants in their households formation.

While using chi-square test to find out whether there is relationship between age and decision making process of migrants or not, the computed value of chi-square is 31.148 and the level of significance p -values as 0.000. Since 0.000 is less than alpha value 0.05, were reject the null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis. This mean there is statistically significant relationship between age and decision-making process. Most of migrants i.e. 152 are above 35 years old and only 37 are below 35 which shows the increasing age play a vital role in decision making process back to the family. Most of the migrants are households head and due to poor economic condition and responsibilities of families drive them for foreign labor migration. Similarly, the computed chi-square value for

Table 1. Chi-square test results of decision-making power and migrants.

Variables	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Age and DMP	31.148	6	0.000
Education and DMP	16.704	10	0.081
Marital status DMP	91.272	12	0.000
Relationship and DMP	53.838	16	0.000
Saving and DMP	5.895	2	0.052
Family and DMP	2.379	2	0.304
Ownership and DMP	4.071	4	0.397

migration and decision-making process is 16.704 and significance level is 0.081. This shows there is statistically no significant relationship between education and decision-making process. This means the education of migrants doesn't play a dominant role in taking decision in their family, they left behind. The patriarchal structure of society doesn't easily accept women as decision makers though they are breadwinner. The field site observation showed that, most of migrant women attend only primary level of education. Despite the fact that, the family allowed women to struggle in capitalist market but conservative practices in society doesn't thrust their decision-making power. After meeting several times with same respondents, I found the exclusive case who herself live in Saudi for eight years and return. But due to high debt and death of her husband, she wants to go again for foreign migration but her daughter doesn't allowed her. Then Sunita, Mina daughter migrate to Qatar and left her school while in grade nine. Subsequently, Sunita take the responsibilities of whole family and pay the loan that was borrowed for her father treatment and house construction. Mina stated that:

“Sunita works for us and regularly sends money but she never interfere in the households decision making process and use of remittances. She asked me to took all the necessary decision, and take care of her siblings. She had observed me from near and knew how I manage all things and cope struggles as her father never become breadwinner to our family due to poor health. So, she knew I will properly handle all household as well as outside activities as dutiful mother.”

The chi-square results for marital status and decision making is 91.272 at the level of significance 0.000. There is statistically significant relationship between marital status and the women. The married women strongly influence decisions on education of children, purchases and investment for the entire family. They are independent in making their own decisions regarding personal expenses, and even make decisions in sending remittances to whom without consulting their husbands' opinions. This change in decision-making power is largely explained by the large financial contribution the wives make. The position of migrant women in their families increases significantly. A 48 year Santosh Gurung adhere that, his wife has enjoyed autonomy over remittances:

My wife sent money every month to me as well as her own mother, she lost her father when she was 12 years. So, she has bear all responsibilities of her mother and two siblings. Me and my family do not have any objection to this. Whatever decision is taken in the family, we consult with Manima and then only we implement. We build this house and open small grocery but I discuss with Manima before opening grocery.

The migrant's relationship with respondents play a significant role in decision making process ($p = 0.000$). The field survey results shows that most of the respondents are migrants' mother and spouse. Before taking any decision in family, they consult with migrants as these family usually depends on the remittances. Nevertheless in case of divorce and separated migrants, maternal parents bear all responsibilities of children and make decisions over the use of remittances. Saving made by migrant doesn't play significant role in decision making process in the households ($p = 0.052$). The survey results showed that 61.4% of the respondents do not have any type of saving as they spent remittances over the daily expenditure and schooling of children. During the field observation, the respondents are enjoying high standard of life with no culture of saving. The type of family and decision-making process doesn't have any significant relationship ($p = 0.304$). The households structure either nuclear or joint determine the level of migrants participation in the decision making process. Women living in nuclear family and playing the role of breadwinner are equally participating in the households decision made by husband. Most of husbands mentioned that they consult with their wife while spending the remittances for various purposes. Nevertheless, the migrants living with their in-laws have different experiences as the family consults with migrants but decides themselves. A 37-year-old migrant spouse named Dinesh Upreti who lived with his parents and sibling and own daughter explained:

My mother used to manage all the households chores and buys all the necessary stuffs for house. My wife (Anju) sends remittances to me as well to her maternal parents too. We didn't object why she is sending money to her mother and didn't every time consults Anju about the households affairs as she will be stress in foreign land. Nevertheless, me and Anju combine take decision about our daughter schooling and my personal things. She was very familiar with our financial matters at home and always discuss with me about the activities going in home. I work in medical shop so, don't have time to look after households chores just do my outside work and I do not have to worry about households tasks as my mother manage the things.

Ownership over house and decision-making process doesn't have any significant relationship ($p = 0.397$). The survey results show most of the respondents own residential property whereas migrants women do not have such type of land assets. The respondents has to depend upon the remittances for the livelihood survival and so, do not interfere in any type of decision made by migrants but instead consults with them. Generally, the households head made decisions but they often consult with migrants for implementation of decisions. A migrant

about 58 years age old who returned before 1.5 years back to Nepal, spent almost 22 years of her life in two different countries very innocently explains how her parents along with her brothers family rely on remittances sent by her every month. She clearly stated that, she didn't got married due to her parents. Her parents never ask to get married and she only becomes breadwinner to whole families.

There is an inevitable connection between migration and household's transition. It is through the succession of decision made by migrants in the families, who were replacing the roles of migrants in their absence, and from the actor's perspective, it is successive generations of human beings that continually recreate history (Mishra, 2017) and the traditional role assigned to men and women changed due to invasion of migration. A transit in households formation can be seen as a point where migration and an individual's interact together. It is necessary that each of the generation in households formation is situated in a historical time and as such, is altered with a definite set of historical and structural opportunities acquired by its members in a transnational space. It should be noted out that, the traditional assigned role to both men and women as breadwinner and house maker respectively changed due to women migration. Because of the role transformation i.e. women as breadwinner and men as husband or houseband, the traditional norms attached with gender notion has been on changing and thus, there has been shift in decision making power from men to women. This often, although not always, happens as the women migrants return back to the home and take over their previous responsibilities, where again retained their old position in the family. Most of the returnee migrants reported that, they found different behavior made by the family after they returns. After asking the logic behind their negligence by family, these women thought that, they do not save any money and do not acquire any personal property. It is also possible due to long time separation from the family suspicion over the relationship exits.

How households are able to articulate different elements of the old and new gender roles- and what hold its members together and how do they create sustainability among their members is crucial to the present study. The households were very impressively manage the gap created in absence of migrants and they often have communication with migrants through use of different social media. Communication is only a way that diminish the gap created between migrants and their family, and thus reassure their relationships. It is very worth noting that, the transition created in households formation due to migration always doesn't remain same after women migrants return back to the home i.e. either due to ownership over resources or the level of reliance over the association among family as well as in community. The transition in households are also formed upon much more patriarchal norms and values towards the gender construction. This shows that, it is all due to remittances or breadwinner power by women makes them more empower and boost up decision making power in the family. The empirical data shows that, interviewees from returnee migrants did

indeed lacks money for the investment and so didn't asset from the work they perform.

4.3. Doing Gender: Role Substitution and Change in Position

Households remain vacant in absence of migrants and the family left behind physically separated from the beloved on. This creates in gap in operating the households affairs which is resolved only through adjustments to the roles and position of the existing members in the family or with through the help of others from kinship network. The changing division of labor and power relations reconstruct the gender roles and relations. For instance: as wife is taking role of breadwinner and the husbands are engaged with households affairs and child caring along with their other own business but they have been assists by other in the family. Similarly in case of married and joint family, mothers-in-law are taking the responsibilities of migrant's spouse and children. Nevertheless, the children of divorce and separated parents are take care by migrants mother and she is the person who is responsible for the migrants households affairs. The following illustrated that selecting mother as focal person in performing the activities. A 39 years Bibek Upreti. Living in joint family with his two children clearly explain his role substitution by mother to bear all his responsibilities:

While I was away my mother took care of all the responsibilities of home. She looked after my children and did cooking, washing, and everything. I was not worried as my mother was there to take care of children. My wife regularly sent money to me and I give to mother: she dutifully play mother role by take care of me as well my children and other members in the family. My wife is also happy that me and my children are taking food on time and have routine way of life under the supervision of mother.

However, when a husband living with his children, then he is fully responsible for all the inside as well outside activities. In the study site, the husband generally took over the domestic functions of the migrants women as most of they are unemployed and depends on remittance sent by migrants for their survival. Due to poor health condition and also not getting proper job, husband has to depends on wife earning. The case of Raz Pariyar is very interesting to note that due to his severe health condition, he is not able to engage in wage earning work:

Me and my wife decided for Nikita foreign labor migration before 14 years. We started to face hand to mouth problem after my accidents and then continuous poor health, I do not play breadwinner role for family. I have to take care of our three children: the young girl is only two years when her mother left. I have to prepare meal for the children, wash their clothes, clean the house and everything. All the children go to school so, I have to do all the work on time.

Some of the husbands are busy with their households works and taking care of their children. These works do not put them in stress and considers these tasks as regular activities. The most important of thing is that the financial dependency of the husband on the wife in running the households activities and schooling purposes is commonly observed in the study area. Yet, there other groups of

husbands who is taking the help of other members in the family in conducting the domestic chore and take care of children, highly, dependence on remittances doesn't contribute positively to the family but also adversely affects. The field site observation and intensive in-depth interview with most of the husbands explain the fact that, they didn't get good wages and so not working anymore after their wife migration. They are busy with households affairs and take care of children and do not have any financial burden. Migrants are sending money regularly for the households expenditure and child schooling. Throughout my field visits, I found these men always gathered in a public place and idling with their friends by playing cards and taking alcohol. These men do not any future plan and expectation but have desires that migrants will continue for foreign labor until their children matured and take their responsibility. Doing gender and performing different tasks than in the past changes their position in both family and society. The changing gender from breadwinner to house maker doesn't only shift the gender norms and expectations but also empower women by taking the economic responsibilities of family left behind. Both men and women dutifully play their changing gender roles for the survival of families. It has become acceptable for husbands and wives to play the career and breadwinner roles, respectively. These husbands and wives share not only financial burden but also households affairs.

The changing gender roles don't always convey optimistic perspective due to patriarchal nature of Nepalese society which still place men in hierarchy than women. The women migration that left family behind especially, husbands find themselves low self-esteem in front of their wives. During in-depth interview with 48 years Hari Thakuri repeatedly explains, he is own who make all the arrangements for his wife migration before 12 years. Though, he desires for his migration but due to poor health condition he was fail in health check up and then after decides to send his wife to solve their hands to mouth problem. He clearly accepts the economic contribution but feel humiliated while asking money with his son as her wife send money to son. It is important to note that husbands left behind face the problem of low self-esteem in front of community member due to losing their breadwinners role. Nevertheless, the men do not bother in carrying out households works and take care of children but find themselves losing their decision-making power and position in the family. However, the case is different for other women in the family left behind, as they do not find any changes in their roles before and after migration. Amid total 63.1% of the women respondents, most of them stated that women migration do not bring any transition in their households role and responsibilities. The role substitution by the same gender either mother of migrants, a sister, or grown-up female child takes over the duties of the migrants women without any burden and pressure as they are performing domestic tasks as part of their daily life. So, for these people the status and position remain same as before the migration, nevertheless they found themselves lucky that their daughter, sister and mother become the pillar of their households. By doing gender and playing different role

in various context not only challenges the very fundamental structure of the patriarchal society but also knock on the traditional role assigned to men and women by their society. The thing is all about the socialization process of their children who is growing up with changing gender relations and experiences different type of society as their parents experienced.

5. Conclusion

Women migration has come to add new bricks in Nepalese economic development since the government approved liberal policy in 2015 despite restriction to the women migration, and the policy pass the minimum age to 24 for women migration (ILO, 2015). The frustrating socio-economic condition and no proper placement by the government push the women in search of foreign labor migration. “There are no genuine reasons behind the women labor migration except the financial problem faced by family”, a 55-year man from the community stated during an in-depth interview. The statement itself opens succession dialogue at different level pointing the weakness of the government policy to basic human right needs. However, the present work doesn’t focus on the structural matters instead it emphasis on everyday activities perform by men and women: and explains how migration play a catalytic role in uplifting the poor and disadvantaged group life with the help of remittances. This paper has investigated how women migration changes the traditional gender roles and assists in reconstruction of households affairs. Women migration empower women through their breadwinners power in transnational space while the family left behind, especially the husbands have found managing the domestic work and take care of children. The paper has also revealed the changing trends of households structure due to high dependence on remittances by the family. In a developing country like Nepal, remittances become main sources of survival and for the daily expenditure to the migrants family so, the family doesn’t have objection towards changing power and position both inside as well as outside house. The changing status of women i.e., from housewives to breadwinner increases their pride, worthiness and respect among the family. Conversely, the men are struggling to maintain their predetermined position due to loss of breadwinner power while accepting the changing patriarchal gender roles for the sake of the survival of entire families. Though, women migration alters in gender roles and relations within households members but this rarely results in separation of family; nonetheless the men became idle and alcoholic due to high dependence on remittances end by women.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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