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Analysis of Relationship between Women's Land Ownership and Women Empowerment in Nepal

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Abstract

Using the data from 2022 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) this study analyses the relationship between women's land ownership and women empowerment in Nepal. The major independent variable is women's land ownership, whereas women empowerment is taken as dependent variable. Land ownership variable is created from the question whether a women owns a land or not (either independently or jointly), women empowerment scale is created using six different questions asked to women related to household decisions. Empowerment score index is simply the total number of decisions that a woman usually has the final say alone or jointly, ranging from zero to six. Internal reliability of these questions used to create empowerment score index is tested using Cronbach's Alpha test. Ordered logistic regression model is used to explore the association between land ownership and empowerment. Akaike information criterion (AIC) is used to compare the relative quality of these regression models.

This empirical analysis suggests that women's land rights empower women and benefit family welfare including the children's health status. These results show significant associations between women's land rights and empowerment. Women's with higher education, wealthy family and women who own land are more likely to be empowered. These results suggest that, women's land rights improve the empowerment of women in Nepal. The result shows land ownership and ownership of other properties doesn't appear to be superior to mother's education and wealth status of family but it may be just as effective as them. These results have important policy implications which points that it is required to end land rights discrimination through legal reform and effective implementation whereas governments should give continuity to gender responsive land administration systems that enhance women's participation at all levels. Another way to enable women in rural areas to have a greater say in family decision making is to provide them with more education.

Keywords: *empowerment score index, land rights, women empowerment, women's land ownership*