A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick

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Exploring Gendered Work and Women’s Empowerment:
A Study of Hotels, Resorts and Casinos in Nepal

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Women and Gender Studies

Centre for the Study of Women and Gender
Department of Sociology
University of Warwick

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Last but not the least; I dedicate this thesis to my mom Sushila Udas and dad Hira Udas who have been inspirational in my life. To be patient, calm and to listen from my heart has always been my mom’s advice in life. My dad always pushed me to have my own professional identity and to maintain perseverance in every walk of life. He had a dream of completing the highest possible academic degree that he could not complete himself. He, then, passed on the mantle to me. I am grateful to them for germinating the seed of dedication and confidence and believing in me.
Declaration

I declare that this thesis is all my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at another University.

Mona Shrestha Adhikari
August 2012
Abstract

This thesis explores gendered work and women’s empowerment in interactive service work in Nepal, focusing on two five-star hotels, two deluxe resorts and two casinos. It develops a conceptual framework to explore how gendered work and women’s empowerment are related, paying attention to the interactional and structural levels. This feminist research uses mixed methods of 21 questionnaires to gather quantitative data that shed light on the gendered workforce. Qualitative data is derived from 65 interviews (semi-structured and in-depth) with male and female workers, managers, male family members and policy experts, two focus group discussions with women working in two casinos and observations in the six sample establishments.

The study makes three arguments. First, gendered work is constructed by three distinct but related dimensions, namely: the gender division of labour; the gendered ideologies of managers and workers; and the gendering of skills provided through training. Second, workers, to a variable extent, perform gendered emotional, aesthetic and (hetero) sexualised labour and such performances shape and are shaped by gendered work. Third, women’s paid work empowers them to some extent at an individual level; however, structural constraints continue to impede their empowerment.

The thesis makes theoretical as well as empirical contributions to existing knowledge. Theoretically, it contributes to understanding of the relationship between gendered work and empowerment in which structural context is of critical significance. At the empirical level, this makes an original contribution to the analysis of interactive service work in Nepal.

The thesis finds that women doing gendered work are to some extent empowered at the individual level and perhaps ‘doing’ gender per se is not a problem. However, structural constraints continue to impede women’s empowerment, despite some gradual changes. The thesis also finds that the hotel and casino sector are not feminised in contrast to studies conducted in the ‘West’.
### List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAN</td>
<td>ActionAid Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANHRWU</td>
<td>All Nepal Hotel and Restaurant Workers’ Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSA</td>
<td>British Sociological Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>Central Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMC</td>
<td>CEDAW Monitoring Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPN-M</td>
<td>Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPN-UML</td>
<td>Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist-Leninist party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FWLD</td>
<td>Forum for Women Law and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEFONT</td>
<td>General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GoN</td>
<td>Government of Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAN</td>
<td>Hotel Association of Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIDS</td>
<td>Institute for Integrated Development Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISIC</td>
<td>International Standard Industrial Classification</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoF</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoICS</td>
<td>Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoLTM</td>
<td>Ministry of Labor and Transport Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoTCA</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoWCSW</td>
<td>Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATHM</td>
<td>Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIHCRWU</td>
<td>Nepal Independent Hotel, Casino, and Restaurant Workers’ Union</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NLFS  Nepal Labour Force Survey
NPC  National Planning Commission
NTB  Nepal Tourism Board
Pro Public  Forum for Protection of Public Interest
UCPN-UML  Communist Party of Nepal – Unified Marxist-Leninist party
UCPN-M  United Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist
UNCTAD  United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP  United Nations Development Fund
UNFPA  United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM  United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNWTO  United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WEF  World Economic Forum
Introduction

This thesis is an exploration of gendered work and women’s empowerment in two five star hotels, two deluxe resorts\(^1\) and two casinos in Kathmandu, Nepal. This feminist research uses mixed method of questionnaires, interviews (semi-structured and in-depth) with men and women, focus group discussions with women and observations to gather both quantitative and qualitative data for analysis. While work in hotels and casinos is a growing sector of employment for women in Nepal, to the best of my knowledge there is very little research on women’s employment in the hotels and none in casinos. At the same time, work elsewhere on gender and the hospitality industry suggest that it is important to pay close attention to the nature and conditions of women’s labour force participation in this industry.

In this introductory chapter, I begin by discussing what motivated me to do this research followed by an explanation of why researching the tourism industry and women’s empowerment in Nepal is relevant. I then highlight the research questions and outline my arguments, before concluding by describing the structure of this thesis.

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\(^1\) In Nepal, resorts are similar to hotels however they are distinct in terms of location, volume of business and the efforts made to promote natural and cultural heritage.
Motivation for the Study

While working in a commercial bank in Nepal in the 1990s, I visited hotels and resorts as a form of leisure. Then, when I shifted my career to take up a position in a non-governmental organisation working on women’s rights in the early 2000s, I started taking a keen interest in the terms and conditions of employment in the hotels and resorts, particularly of women. This interest developed and grew with time. As part of my job working in the field of women’s rights and gender equality, I frequently visited hotels and resorts where I organised and attended several seminars/conferences. I was further motivated to understand women’s experiences of their work in hotels as I found, through research I was doing as part of my work, that in hotels women were employed in lower level jobs and employers and women workers themselves considered women to be good in certain departments such as housekeeping and reception. Women also expressed satisfaction with the income they earned which brought material changes in their life; for example, they could contribute towards household expenses, children’s education and buy things for themselves (see Adhikari and Ghimire, 2003). Apart from my own research, I found only one other study, Khanal (2005) on women’s work in three five-star hotels of Kathmandu.

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2 The study included 30 business establishments including 10 hotels where questionnaires were used to gather information about employment practices. A total of 20 workers each (ten men and ten women) were interviewed during the course of the research that formed a part of a study commissioned by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in South Asia.

3 This is a post graduate diploma thesis.
Moreover, while working with ActionAid Nepal, an international non-governmental organisation, I coordinated research on cabin restaurants\textsuperscript{4}, which were then well-known for employing young girls to attract male customers to drink and eat in these establishments; thereby increasing their business and gaining more profit (see AAN, 2004). The findings of the research raised further questions about the safety and security of women workers and motivated me to explore women’s work in the casino sector. This was because I assumed it was a similar setting where employers are known for the recruitment of young girls to attract male customers.

My knowledge about women’s work in the casinos was limited to information contained in popular media that portrayed women working in casinos in a negative light. At a personal level, I also observed changes in the life of my female cousin and her family after she started earning money working in a casino, having migrated to Kathmandu from their hometown. For example, she earned money that was used to support her parents and siblings; she was the breadwinner in her family. I came across a number of such cases of young women migrating to Kathmandu, working in casinos and earning more than in other sectors where they could have alternatively been employed, such as in sales and marketing of consumer goods. For example, when I spoke informally to three women working in casinos in Nepal in 2006, they said it had been easy for them to get a job in a casino and that they earned more money (as tips from guests) than if they worked elsewhere. However, they also mentioned that since young girls had been joining the

\textsuperscript{4} Cabin restaurants are local restaurants where compartment-like spaces are created using wooden planks and/or curtains such that customers are able to eat and drink in a somewhat private environment.
casinos in increasingly high numbers in the past few years, jobs in this sector were becoming more competitive.

Another study I conducted on women workers in the garment industry in Nepal also added to my growing inclination to take up this issue. The study showed that when women lost their jobs in the garment industries, due to the phasing out of textiles and clothing quotas by the World Trade Organization, they became vulnerable and were forced to take up other jobs with a high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, such as working in massage parlours or as sex workers. This is because they had limited education and few of the skills needed for employment in other sectors. However, the study also showed that although women’s work in the garment industries was physically tiring and demanding, the work was better in comparison with other sectors. It is important to note that the garment industries were one of the main sectors of employment for women and also important for the economy (see Adhikari, 2007).  

Moreover, on the one hand, there was the growing dependence of the Nepalese economy on the tourism industry, and, on the other hand, there had been some positive government initiatives to enhance the status of women and mainstream gender into policies and programmes (see Chapter Two). This was also reflected in women’s increased participation in the hotel and restaurant sector. For example, in 1998/99, 45

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5 This study compared women’s experiences of work in the garment industries with that of women who had earlier worked there but had lost their work due to changes in the international agreement on textiles and clothing. This latter group of women workers were vulnerable to HIV/AIDS as they were increasingly being employed in sectors such as massage parlours, cabin restaurants and sex work.
percent of the workforce in the hotel and restaurant sector was women, which increased to 52 percent in 2008 (see CBS, 1999 and CBS, 2009). However, there was no (feminist) research that explored women’s work in casinos and very little on hotels which is why I was motivated to take up this area as the focus of my research.

Hence, a number of factors motivated me to conduct this study and to explore gendered work in hotels, resorts and casinos, also examining women’s empowerment in relation to their paid work. I also wanted women’s voices and lived experiences to be heard through my research. I now turn to what makes this research academically interesting and relevant, i.e., the focus of the research.

**Focus of the research**

The focus of this research is to understand the kinds of work that men and women do when providing services to customers in hotels, resorts and casinos and how it is gendered, and further to examine the extent to which doing such paid work has implications for women’s empowerment. This research brings together the literature on the sociology of service work and on women’s empowerment by analysing both of these themes concurrently. Moreover, this study, which explores gendered work and women’s empowerment, is to the best of my knowledge the first of its kind in the context of Nepal. Furthermore, this research focuses on and makes women’s voices and experiences heard.
There have previously been studies that explore women’s work in manufacturing and service industries and on how such work has implications for women particularly in the context of trade and investment liberalisation. On the one hand, one of the benefits of liberalisation is an increase in women’s employment opportunities as a result of the expansion of trade (both goods and services). As Elson (1999) notes, liberalisation of trade and investment is well known for creating jobs at the same time cutting into the livelihoods of many people. On the other hand, many programmes and initiatives that focus on women’s entry into paid work (securing jobs in the labour market) assume that this is the solution to women’s poverty and that it will empower them (see Esplen and Brody, 2007). Moreover, some studies also suggest that it is important to analyse the process of women gaining access to jobs, as well as to explore what kind of jobs they do and the consequences they face as a result of doing paid work (see Elson, 1995; Kabeer, 2007).

There has been longstanding interest amongst feminists (both academics and practitioners) about the conditions under which women are involved in these economic activities and the extent to which these new jobs change women’s lives (see Elson and Pearson, 1981; Kerfoot and Korczynski, Esplen and Brody, 2007; 2005; Kabeer et al., 2011). While the creation of jobs per se could be a positive outcome, it is important to analyse the nature and conditions of gendered labour force participation in the labour market (see Sen, 1999; Esplen and Brody, 2007). The nature of the jobs created needs to be unpacked as ‘labor market institutions are not only bearers of gender they are also reinforcers of gender inequality’ (Elson, 1999: 613).
Moreover, globally, there has been an expansion in the service sector, which, according to McDowell (2007: 408), ‘has been associated with significant changes in the gender divisions of labour and in the significance of gender relations and embodied performances in workplaces’. Likewise, studies on (interactive) service work (see Hochschild, [1983]2003; Enarson, 1993; Adkins, 1995; Pettinger, 2005; Deshotels and Forsyth, 2006; Wolkowitz, 2006; McDowell, 2009) have explored how emotional labour, aesthetic labour and sexualised labour are gendered. In addition, there is a growing interest among sociologists who research service work (see Wolkowitz, 2006; Otis, 2008; Wolkowitz and Warhurst, 2010) in understanding the rise in global consumerism and the manner in which the pursuit for capital accumulation have implications for the commodification of women’s bodies, and the need to analyse ‘embodied labour’ within labour process theory.

In Nepal, tourism is an important sector of the national economy and a major foreign exchange earner; it is firmly based on the comparative advantage enjoyed due to the uniqueness of the landscape and the religious and cultural attractions the country has to offer to tourists (MoICS, 2004). Moreover, government policies in Nepal have focused on the economic development of the country by harnessing, among others, the potential of the tourism industry. They have also recognised women’s contribution to the economy through their engagement in the tourism industry. However, there is very little gender disaggregated data that ‘counts women’ and their participation in the workforce and in organisations. As I explain in Chapter Two, there are data that demonstrate the increased employment of women in the hotel and restaurant sector since 1991.
However, there is an acute dearth of data in the case of the casino sector. So while the number of women joining the workforce of hotels, resorts and casinos in Nepal seems to be on the rise, no focused research has been conducted that unpacks women’s work in these establishments.

There are various policies formulated and programmes conducted by government, non-government organisations and the private sector organisations that are aimed at empowering women by providing them with resources (seed money), skills training and job opportunities. In this context, understanding who does what work in different sectors of the economy and further identifying how such work relates to empowerment becomes both interesting and relevant for various stakeholders working in the development sector.

Hence, I believe my research provides an insight into the nature of service work where women are said to be increasingly taking up employment as full time paid workers and, further, examines the extent to which such work empowers women. I also believe that my research will contribute to policy debates that have implications for women’s lives, particularly in relation to paid work and empowerment in Nepal. Hence, I position this research as a contribution to knowledge in the field of gendered work and women’s empowerment, both in general and, in particular, in the context of Nepal.

Several characteristics of this research make it distinctive in relation to: the analysis of the construction of gendered work (see Chapter Four); the exploration of the extent to
which men and women workers perform emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour (see Chapter Five); and the examination of women’s empowerment in relation to their paid work (see Chapter Six). Moreover, this research highlights the interrelatedness of gendered work and women’s empowerment, contributing to a richer understanding of the linkages between these themes, raising some important questions for future research (see Chapter Seven).

This research uses mixed methods to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. The questions asked and the themes explored could form the basis for similar research on other service sectors like banking and other tourism sectors such as travel/trekking agencies.\(^6\) While there has been a growing recognition of the importance of using mixed methods in feminist research, I believe my experience in doing this research also contributes to debates and discussions of feminist methodologies in general. I find that the use of mixed methods in feminist research helps enrich the quality of data gathered and furthermore provides a deeper understanding of the issues at stake.

There are three questions that I aim to address in order to explore gendered work and women’s empowerment in the context of hotels, resorts and casinos in Nepal. With a view to exploring gendered work, I ask two questions: first, how is gendered work constructed; and second, to what extent do men and women perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour? Likewise, to explore women’s empowerment, I ask to what extent paid work empowers women.

\(^6\) In Nepal, these sectors are considered to increasingly employ women.
Based on my research findings, I make three arguments. First, that gendered work is constructed by three distinct but related dimensions, namely: the gender division of labour; the gendered ideologies of managers and workers; and the gendering of skills provided through training. Second, men and women to a variable extent perform gendered emotional, aesthetic labour and (hetero)sexualised labour and such performances shape and is shaped by the gendered work. A third strand of my argument is that women’s paid work empowers them to some extent at the individual level; however, structural constraints continue to impede women’s empowerment.

**Thesis Structure**

Following this Introduction, the first chapter discusses five key concepts: gendered work; emotional labour; aesthetic labour; sexualised labour; and women’s empowerment. This is followed by a brief analysis of the core literature that relates to the themes of paid work and women’s empowerment; the gendered labour market; and tourism work and gender. I then develop a conceptual framework that I use to explore gendered work and women’s empowerment in this research, which emerges from the literature review.

The second chapter describes the Nepalese context in which the research has been conducted. It highlights the focus of the Nepalese economy on tourism and provides an overview of hotels and casinos. I also discuss the labour force participation of women in different sectors followed by an explanation of the status of women focusing
on government plans and policies. Since the advent of democracy in the early 90s, and even more so after 1996, political instability in the country has had a range of implications for people’s everyday lives. I discuss the implications of this political instability for the tourism industry and women and point to some labour disputes, as well as the role of trade union in hotels and casinos, as emerging issues.

The third chapter discusses my research methodology – the process as well as my experience of doing feminist research. Since this thesis is positioned as feminist research, women’s voices are central to the analysis. I explain why and how I used mixed methods of questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and observations to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. I also highlight how I gained access to the sample establishments, constructed my sample and analysed my data. Finally, I provide a description of my sample (establishments as well as research participants).

Chapters Four through to Six relate to the analysis of gendered work and women’s empowerment. Chapter Four focuses on the first research question – How is gendered work constructed? In this chapter, I present a snapshot of the gendered workforce in hotels, resorts and casinos in Kathmandu; such data had not been compiled and made available in the public domain when I started my research. In Chapter Two, I highlight a recent study (Upadhayay et al., 2011) which provides a snapshot of gendered workforce in five-star hotels and casinos in Nepal. However, when I conducted the field work, there was no gendered workforce data in these sectors. I

I analyse the gender division of labour in all sample establishments, looking at both the vertical and horizontal segregation of workers, while also exploring the gendering of the hierarchies and jobs. I

In Chapter Two, I highlight a recent study (Upadhayay et al., 2011) which provides a snapshot of gendered workforce in five-star hotels and casinos in Nepal. However, when I conducted the field work, there was no gendered workforce data in these sectors.
also examine how the gendered ideologies subscribed to by managers and workers are used to legitimate and naturalise the gender division of labour. Finally, I explore the training provided to men and women in the different establishments, which contributes to the gendering of skills.

Chapter Five deals with the second research question – To what extent do men and women workers perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour? In the first section of this chapter, I analyse the extent to which men and women perform emotional labour followed by aesthetic labour and, furthermore, I explore the gendering of such labour. Similarly, I examine the extent to which women perform (hetero)sexualised labour in casinos. I find that men and women to a variable extent perform gendered emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour. I also find that the performance of gendered emotional, aesthetic labour contributes to the construction of gendered work which in turn is shaped by the latter.

In the second section of this chapter, I discuss how workers (mainly women) adopt various strategies to resist organisational policies and practices at work. To provide ‘customer satisfaction’, the management of establishments control workers’ behaviour and performance at work. However, the emerging role of the trade union seems to have partly contributed to workers’ resistance of organisational policies and practices in general. Moreover, it is largely women workers who resist certain aspects of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour; they rely on the support of the trade union. This has implications for women’s empowerment. I conclude this chapter with a section
discussing the points of similarity and disagreement amongst scholars who write about emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour based on my research findings. I also highlight the ways in which my findings relate to the cultural specificity of the context in terms of how different forms of masculinities and femininities are performed.

In Chapter Six, I address the third research question – To what extent does paid work empower women? This chapter takes into account real and perceived changes in women’s lives as a result of their employment and highlights the problems they face at work and at home as a result of doing paid work. I also discuss how managers, male workers, male family members and policy experts view women’s empowerment in relation to women’s paid work in the hotels, resorts and casinos. I analyse the extent to which women’s paid work in the sample establishments has empowered them at the individual and structural levels. I find that women are to some extent empowered at the individual level but there are barriers that constrain their empowerment at the structural level.

Finally, Chapter Seven provides the theoretical and empirical contributions of this research. It synthesises the findings and the core arguments that enrich the understanding of the experiential linkages between gendered work and women’s empowerment. Moreover, it underlines that what sector women are employed in, what they do at work and how they do such work all have implications for their empowerment. It revisits the concept of ‘doing’ gender (West and Zimmerman, 1987) by extending it from gendered work to women’s empowerment. It concludes by highlighting various areas that can be considered for future research.
Chapter 1: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Introduction

Very little research has been done in Nepal on either women’s employment in hotels, resorts and casinos or on women’s empowerment in relation to such work. Therefore, I begin this chapter by looking at studies conducted in other parts of the world, while bringing in existing research on gendered employment in hotels and casinos in Nepal where relevant. Following this, in Chapter Two I discuss the existing literature on hotels, casinos and women’s empowerment in the Nepalese context.

This chapter focuses on five key concepts that have been useful in formulating my conceptual framework and for understanding women’s work and empowerment in the hotels, resorts and casinos of Nepal. These are: gendered work; emotional labour; aesthetic labour; sexualised labour; and women’s empowerment. I also pay attention to the structural and interactional levels in which these concepts have been discussed. I discuss how the first four concepts have evolved and are used in research focusing on a wide range of occupations within the realm of paid work, drawing on the sociology of service work. I also discuss how empowerment has been conceptualised, used and contested in the context of women and paid work. Next, I concentrate on three sets of core literature on: paid work and women’s empowerment; the gendered labour market;
and tourism, work and gender, followed by setting out the conceptual framework I use in this research. Finally, I present the research questions that emerge from the literature review; questions that I aim to address in this thesis.

**Gendered Work**

Gender underpins sets of assumptions regarding masculine and feminine behaviour that is associated with being a male or a female and that are guided by socio-cultural norms of different societies (see Charles, 1993; Forseth, 2005; McDowell, 2009). These gendered expectations or assumptions also prevail at work as ‘workplaces are dynamic and changing and are themselves embedded within wider social structures and attitudes and assumptions about gender and sexuality’ (McDowell, 2009: 54). In addition, research on gender, sexuality and work (see Hochschild, [1983]2003; Adkins, 1995, 2001; Dellinger, 2002) shows that men and women do different kinds of work when they are in the same occupation. At the workplace, there are assumptions and expectations around what a man should do and what a women should do, as noted by McDowell (2009: 53): ‘[I]f femininity structures less-regarded jobs, masculinity is associated with management of skills’. Moreover, Adkins (2001: 672) asserts that ‘gendering is by no means fixed but rather it is continuously made, remade and contested’.

Acker (1990: 146) argues ‘to say that an organisation ... is gendered is to say that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and
identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. She further suggests that ‘a systematic theory of gender and organisations’ is needed for a number of reasons that help unpack organisational practices and processes and examines organisations ‘as gendered processes in which both gender and sexuality have been obscured through a gender-neutral, asexual discourse’ (ibid.: 140). She highlights gender as an integral part of (rather than an addition to) ongoing processes and argues that gendering occurs in at least five interacting processes (Scott, 1986 cited in Acker, 1990: 146), as follows: 1) ‘the construction of divisions along lines of gender’ (e.g., division of labour, of allowed behaviours, structures of labour markets); 2) ‘the construction of symbols and images that explain, express, reinforce or sometimes oppose those divisions’ (sources for example are dress, language); 3) ‘interactions between women and men, women and women, men and men, patterns that enact dominance and submission’ (e.g., men as actors and women as emotional support); 4) ‘gendered components of individual identity’ (such as choice of language use, clothing and presentation of self as a particular gender) and 5) ‘gender is implicated in the fundamental, ongoing processes of creating and conceptualising social structures’ (ibid.: 146-47).

In addition, Acker (1990: 149-50) asserts that the concepts of both ‘a job’ and ‘hierarchies’ are gendered. While ‘a job’ contains the gender-based division of labour and the separation of the public-private sphere, ‘hierarchies’ are also constructed on the assumption that those who are committed to work are more suited to authority and responsibility, therefore are in higher ranks (invariably men), and those whose
commitments are divided are in lower ranks (largely women). Moreover, Elson (1995: 1) writes, ‘an emphasis on gender highlights the fact that work is gendered; that some tasks are seen as ‘women’s work’, to do which is demeaning for men; while other tasks are ‘men’s work’, to do which unsexes women’.

Furthermore, Dellinger (2002: 21-24, emphasis in original) argues ‘where you work matters as much as what you do’ as she illustrates that workers do not simply bring to work their ideologies about gender and sexuality but also that ‘organisations have their own norms regarding gender and sexuality built into their structures and workplace cultures’9 (also see Acker, 1990). Trautner (2005) demonstrates that women in erotic dance clubs in south-western United States are ‘doing gender’ and ‘doing class’ and that the way in which women use their sexuality (which they see as power over men) varies between different dance clubs. Hence, context is paramount when studying gender and sexuality at the workplace. A country’s laws and norms regarding sexual harassment are also likely to impact on the way sexuality and gender interacts at different workplace cultures (Williams, 1999).

Thus, understanding the organisational context in which men and women do different kinds of work helps unpack gendered work and examine how gender and sexuality may be related. Moreover, a general consequence of organisational sexuality is that: ‘young women are defined as (hetero)sexually attractive ... [are often the] preferred workers in

9 Dellinger’s (2002) research is a comparative case study at a heterosexual men’s pornographic magazine and at a feminist magazine in New York where she examines organisational and occupational dress and appearance codes of men and women focusing on one aspect of workplace culture.
certain serving jobs ... [and] many women find pleasure in this recognition of their sexual attractiveness, and some profit from it’ (Williams et al., 1999: 90). Following this, she argues for an understanding of ‘the pleasures and perils of sexuality at work’, as there is a possibility of ‘dangerous or damaging outcomes’ such as sexual harassment and exploitation in ‘ways that deny their sexual agency and self-esteem’ when workers engage in sexualised interactions (ibid.: 91).

**Occupational Segregation**

In order to understand gendered work at the structural and interactional levels it is useful to consider as Acker (1990) has highlighted, that one of the five interacting processes in which gendering occurs is the division of work along gender lines. I find occupational segregation to be a useful concept that provides insight into the different kinds of work done by men and women. Charles (1993) notes that the gender division of labour relates to social and economic structures in society and that gender ideologies are important to legitimate and/or contest gender divisions of labour. Using the concept of ‘occupational segregation’ (Hakim, 1981) unpacks the gender division of labour at work, positing that occupational segregation consists of two dimensions: vertical and horizontal. While vertical segregation looks at who is employed and where in the organisational hierarchy, horizontal segregation looks into who is employed in which kind of work in the different departments within an organisation and more widely across the labour market. While analysing occupational segregation provides an insight into who does what, it is also crucial to further investigate how workers ‘do’ and ‘undo/redo’ gender at work.
‘Doing’ Gender

Gender has long been understood as a social construction. I borrow from Charles (2006: 72) in claiming that ‘[G]ender refers to those behaviours which define individuals as male or female in particular social and cultural contexts’. West and Zimmerman (1987: 126) present their understanding of gender as ‘a routine, methodical, and recurring accomplishment’ and propose that it is both men and women who ‘do’ gender, which is ‘an ongoing situated process, a “doing” rather than a “being”’ (West and Zimmerman, 2009: 114). Furthermore, they argue that: ‘[I]n so far as a society is partitioned by “essential” differences between women and men and placement in a sex category is both relevant and enforced, doing gender is unavoidable’ (West and Zimmerman, 1987: 137). Finally, they note that, ‘[D]oing gender involves a complex of socially guided perceptual interactional and micro political activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine “natures”’ (ibid.: 126). These understandings point to gender as an ongoing process that depends on context, by comparing interactions that display so called ‘natural’ or ‘essential’ masculine or feminine traits associated with the gender of a person.

Deutsch (2007:122) proposes using ‘...the phrase “doing gender” to refer to social interactions that reproduce gender difference and ...the phrase “undoing gender” to refer to social interactions that reduce gender difference’. Further, Risman (2009: 82-83) stresses the need for sociological research to document ‘different kinds of gender, how

10 West and Zimmerman (1987: 127) distinguish sex, sex category and gender. While sex is a biological criteria, sex category ‘is established and sustained by the socially required identificatory displays that proclaim one’s membership in one or the other category’ (the sex binary) and gender ‘is the activity of managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one’s sex category.’
doing gender may be changing or whether it is being undone’ as her arguments rests on a ‘gender structure’ that privileges men. However, West and Zimmerman (2009: 117) view this expansion of ‘doing’ to ‘undoing’ gender as ‘a change in the normative conceptions to which members of particular sex categories are held accountable’ further pointing to ‘a shift in accountability: Gender is not undone so much as redone’ (ibid.: 118, emphasis in original).

While acknowledging the significant contributions of West and Zimmerman (1987) in ‘highlighting the importance of the interactional level for understanding the persistence of unequal gender relations’, Deutsch (2007: 114) pleas for a shift in ‘inquiry about ongoing social interactions to focus on change’. According to Deutsch (2007: 123), paying attention to ‘undoing gender’ may help us to consider the following problematic: ‘how can we dismantle the gender system to create real equality between men and women?’ With a view to further understanding (un)doing gender approaches at work Kelan (2010) explains as workers are ‘already categorised by sex when they do gender’ (ibid.: 179) and are seen to ‘act gender appropriately or inappropriately’ (ibid.: 183) for their sex. When there is a ‘mismatch between sex category and gender’ (ibid.: 190) they are ‘undoing’ gender.11 Moreover, Deutsch (2007: 122) stresses that in ordinary parlance ‘doing’ and ‘undoing’ gender evokes conformity and resistance respectively.

11 Kelan (2010: 190) gives the example of exploring ‘undoing gender’; paying attention to the work of men and women in non-traditional jobs or situations where the ‘relevance of gender is challenged and gender becomes gradually less relevant.’
Resistance

Although one sees control over workers through organisational policies and practices, it is important to acknowledge that at times workers also resist. For feminist scholars, studying resistance at work has been an area of concern above all for those that illuminate processes of change and transformation (see Cockburn, 1991; Thomas and Davis, 2005). For example, Thomas and Davies (2005: 711) focus on ‘three tensions within resistance studies, namely the subject of resistance, what “counts” as resistance, and when resistance counts ... [and] illustrates how feminist theory has worked through these tensions in maintaining a practical politics of change and transformation’. For them, ‘debates within organisational studies have drawn attention to the importance of appreciating resistance not only as collective, overt acts, but also as subtle, routine, low levels of struggle and challenge’ (ibid.: 720). Collinson (2005: 743) sees resistance as having a deleterious impact on employees – resulting in their being fired or suffering severe career damage, at the very least.¹² Workers are not only passive but rather form ‘communities of coping’ (Korczynski, 2003) as they resist and accommodate the organisational requirements at work, which are broadly guided towards customer satisfaction and maximisation of profit (capital accumulation).

Thus far, I have discussed research on gendered work that has focused on the structural and interactional levels in which men and women are ‘doing’ gender differently. I believe in order to explore gendered work a number of factors need to be analysed. This

¹² Feminist studies have also examined resistance when discussing about women’s empowerment (See Kabeer, 2001; Parpart, 2010). This is further discussed in the section on paid work and women’s empowerment later in this chapter.
includes an analysis at different structural levels, including gender divisions of labour, the workplace context (which sector) in which work is analysed, and the organisational norms and policies regarding gender and sexuality that have been built into their structure. In addition, the interactional level should be considered, including the gendered ideologies of workers and organisational processes that assume and ensure that men and women do certain types of work, and the way in which workers ‘do’ gender at work.

Studies on service (interactive) work have looked into concepts of emotional labour, aesthetic labour and sexualised labour and how men and women workers perform such labour as part of their work; concepts which I now move on to discuss in turn.

**Emotional Labour**

The concept of ‘emotional labour’ was first coined by Hochschild ([1983]2003: 7) in her widely quoted book *The Managed Heart*, to describe how workers are required to manage their hearts or ‘induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind’ in customers. Studying flight attendants and debt collectors, Hochschild claims that service sector workers interacting with customers have to manage their ‘feelings’ such that they perform a ‘publicly observable facial and bodily display’ and that ‘emotional labour is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value’ (ibid.: 7, emphasis in original). She distinguishes ‘emotion work’ and ‘emotional labour’, with ‘emotion work’ as the management of emotions
taking place in the private sphere and becoming ‘emotional labour’ once it gets to the public sphere and the worker is paid to manage their emotions. In her study, the flight attendants were explicitly told by the airline management to ‘relax and smile’ when dealing with irate passengers (ibid.: 105) and debt collectors were expected to be serious and not friendly. Flight attendants’ work includes ‘enhancing’ the customers’ status and making them feel important, under the approach of ‘the customer is never wrong’ even though in fact the customer may not always be right (ibid.: 139). In contrast, debt collector’s work involves ‘deflating’ the customer’s status. Hochschild ([1983]2003) also conceptualises the friendliness of workers towards customers as the performance or act which she categorises into ‘surface acting’ and ‘deep acting’.

**Surface and Deep Acting**

Hochschild explains surface acting as expressing an emotion without feeling that emotion. Surface acting requires the worker to suppress negative emotions such as anger, frustration, and sadness and instead to evoke positive emotions such as happiness and pleasure (as in the case of flight attendants), or to suppress positive emotions and display only negative emotions (as in the case of debt collectors). Surface acting involves verbal and nonverbal cues, for example facial expression, gestures and voice tone. It is most evident in customer interactions when (unhappy) customers express their anger at workers (service providers) who invariably act calmly and politely and may even respond with a smile as they mask their feelings. This is a typical example of worker’s self-control: evoking positive emotions (by smiling) whilst suppressing negative emotions (that of frustration and anger with the angry customer). The worker displays
fake emotions when surface acting, at odds with the emotions felt. Surface acting can lead to eventual alienation of self, as the act is cynical.

According to Hochschild, another way a service provider performs emotional labour is by deep acting whereby there is an attempt to actually feel or experience the emotions that one is expected or wishes to display. While surface acting focuses on outward behaviour, deep acting focuses on inner feelings. She further mentions two ways for deep acting – exhorting feeling (i.e., one actively attempts to evoke or suppress a feeling) and trained imagination (i.e., one actively invokes memories, and thoughts to induce the associated emotion such as feeling happy by thinking of a wedding). In the former case, their feelings are manipulated which could cause a feeling of guilt, whereas in the latter case, memories are used to legitimately feel those emotions. Deep acting can lead to a ‘transmutation’ of self as it involves sincere acting in the way that a method actor performs a role. Moreover, customer interaction involves working with ‘feeling rules’ (Hochschild 1979, [1983]2003) or ‘display rules’ (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993).

Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) describe ‘display rules’ by which workers identify what appropriate behaviour for them is from a script that could be provided as part of training or could be simply manners at work (and elsewhere). According to (Hochschild [1983]2003: 56), ‘[F]eeling rules are what guide emotion work by establishing the sense of entitlement or obligation that governs emotional exchanges’. Moreover, Hochschild (ibid.) distinguishes between emotion work and emotional labour in that the former is
about managing and presenting emotions in our daily lives (private sphere) and emotional labour involves commercialisation of a worker’s feelings in the labour market (public domain).

Recently studying commercial surrogates in India, Hochschild (2011: 23, emphasis in original) alerts us that ‘in addition to seeing what we feel (joyful, sad) there is the question of how much we should care at all’ as emotional labour increasingly gets commercialised and women become commodified whilst providing services in the competitive market. Brook (2009a: 27), on reasserting the human costs of emotional labour, concludes that Hochschild’s thesis of emotional labour ‘offers a trenchant critique of the harm caused by the production of customer service – and the commodification of emotions more generally – as a core feature of so-called “consumer capitalism”, ...[her work] can be said to be an early example of contemporary anticapitalist-style critique of consumerism’.

**Emotional Labour Criticised**

Hochschild’s definition of emotional labour differs from that of Ashforth and Humphrey (1993: 90), in that emotional labour refers to ‘the act of displaying the appropriate emotion (i.e., conforming with a display rule)’. According to them, display rules ‘refers to what emotions ought to be publicly expressed rather than to what emotions are actually felt’ (ibid.: 89-90, emphasis in original). They argue that it is relatively easy for customers, managers and peers to observe their level of compliance with display rules as it is reflected in behaviour, unlike the feeling rules that are reflected in internal states.
Furthermore, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993: 94) problematise Hochschild’s concept of emotional labour as it ‘implicitly presumes that surface or deep acting must be performed for compliance to occur ... [and] does not allow for the instances whereby one spontaneously and genuinely experiences and expresses the expected outcome’. They view genuine experience and expression of expected emotion as one of the means of accomplishing emotional labour apart from surface and deep acting. They provide the example of a nurse who feels sympathetic seeing an injured child and has no need to act, and point out that emotion may be also felt and displayed with relatively little effortful prompting.

Hochschild is also criticised for overestimating management control of workers (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Bolton, 2009) and for viewing workers as ‘crippled actors’ (Bolton and Boyd, 2003; Bolton, 2009). However, Steinberg and Figart (1999: 14) note that where emotional labour is a part of the job, ‘employers are able to exercise a degree of control’ over employees’ emotional labour which affects productivity and profit ‘through selection, training, and supervision’.

Criticising Hochschild for over-emphasising the costs of emotional labour for workers, Wouters (1989), also researching flight attendants, argues that customer service interactions are double-edged, in that they possess not only distressing emotions for the worker but can also lead to satisfaction for the worker. Similarly, Wharton (1993) examines the effects of emotional labour on workers in banks and hospitals and suggests that the performance of emotional labour does not uniformly result in negative
consequences, but is conditioned by the workers’ job autonomy. Furthermore, Wolkowitz (2006) highlights the ‘pleasures’ of performing emotional labour as workers work on the bodies of their customers in occupations that involve body work (such as nurses, beauticians and hairdressers). According to Sharma and Black (2001), beauticians in their research liked making customers feel good about themselves. Likewise, Bolton and Boyd (2003) suggest that workers can derive pleasure by giving their labour to customers as a ‘gift’, beyond being commercially motivated, which to them is what Hochschild fails to distinguish.

Bolton and Boyd (2003) argue that flight attendants are rather ‘skilled emotion managers’ as there are diverse and multiple ways to enact the organisational rules. Bolton (2009) criticises Hochschild, arguing instead for a theory of emotions so as to capture the complexity and contradictory nature of the emotional workplace. Bolton (2000) proposes a typology of emotion management with four types of emotion management in the workplace. Moreover, Wharton (2009: 161) points out that while the concept of emotional labour has ‘given sociologists a lens’ to examine work and motivated a wide spectrum of research, ‘it has been much less helpful in providing theoretical guidance for integration of the results generated by these bodies of work’.

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13 In the same volume of the journal, Brook (2009b) in refuting Bolton’s critique of Hochschild’s concept, comments that ‘Hochschild explicitly grounds emotional labour in Marx’s theories of wage-labour and alienation, thereby stressing its exploitative nature and human costs’ (ibid.: 546) but also gives credit to Bolton’s typology of emotion management as providing ‘a useful mapping of emotion sources in the workplace’ capturing the ‘complexity of organisational life’ (ibid.: 545).

14 These consist of ‘Pecuniary, Prescriptive, Presentational and Philanthropic’ (see Bolton and Boyd, 2003 for details).
Hence, the concept of emotional labour is evolving amidst criticism. I believe building on Hoschild’s ([1983]2003) conceptualisation of emotional labour – surface and deep acting – and further examining the process in which workers experience the ‘pleasures’ and ‘costs’ of performing their work helps to understand the concept of emotional labour in a holistic manner.

**Managing Emotional Labour: Is the Customer Always Right?**

The growing interest in the power relationship between workers, managers and customers necessitates an examination of customer behaviour in service interactions (see Lopez, 2010). The service industry at large is guided by the mantra ‘the customer is always right [and] the customer is king [sic]’ suggesting unequal power in worker-customer relationships (Brook, 2009a), with the likelihood of workers having to face customer aggression or abuse (see Hochschild, [1983]2003; Grandey *et al.*, 2004; Bishop and Hoel, 2008).

Researching call centre workers in the United States in 2001, Grandey *et al.* (2004) point to how managing emotional labour for a worker can take the form of either regulating his or her response by surface or deep acting or risk venting emotions at the customer when faced with a customer exhibiting verbal aggression, which may be stressful for the worker and problematic for the organisation.\(^{15}\) Engaged in voice-to-voice service interactions, workers who appraise aggressive callers as highly stressful

\(^{15}\) Verbal aggression refers to verbal communications of anger that violates social norms (see Grandey *et al.*, 2004).
are more likely to vent their anger than those workers who appraise callers as mildly stressful. These workers were also found to be taking a day off as one way of restoring lost energy. In the United Kingdom, exploring customer bullying in the British Employment Service, Bishop and Hoel (2008: 350-52) argue that the notion of customer sovereignty contributes to reinforcing the power imbalance in customer-worker relationship, as workers face customer behaviour that is ‘abusive’ ‘personally insulting’, ‘degrading’, ‘offensive’ and ‘aggressive’. They point out that the manager’s concern in finding out where the worker went wrong in providing a service to the customer (even when the customer is not right), ignores the worker’s feelings and prioritises customer satisfaction. They suggest ‘having a visible and influential union presence’ could help workers to address such ‘negative customer behaviour’ (ibid.: 363).

Crying at work is a ‘strong and intense emotional expression’ by workers and may be a result of failure to do emotional labour (Soars, 2003: 36). Researching workers from different service sectors in Montreal, Soars explains crying or tears as a way in which one expresses and communicates emotions beyond words and when it is not possible to manage one’s emotions completely (ibid.: 38). She goes on to discuss how crying is a gendered process as ‘tears are associated to [sic] weakness, femininity, and cowardice’ and while ‘men are socialised not to cry,’ it is acceptable for women to cry (ibid.: 38-39). Workers were found to cry most often due to sad events (although tears are not always sad ones) such as in situations of intense stress, excessive workload, the difficult reconciliation of work and family and being exposed to different forms of violence or
abuse. Crying also remains a private activity that often takes place behind closed doors in a private place, such as the bathroom (ibid.).

Hitherto, the studies mentioned have highlighted the aggressive or negative customer behaviour that service workers face; this illuminates the need to examine how workers manage their emotions at the same time as managing customer behaviour and to further explore the ‘pains’ and ‘pleasures’ of emotional labour (Wolkowitz, 2006).

**Gendered Emotional Labour**

Hochschild ([1983]2003) associates feeling rules with social norms that are culturally driven and which vary across societies, and explains that feeling rules are also differentially distributed by gender. In commercial service, women at large are required to perform emotional labour, for example working as nurses, waitresses and elementary school teachers, as context specific notions of masculinity and femininity guide social norms. As Steinberg and Figart (1999: 10) note, ‘research on emotional labour is stereotypically associated with femininity, emotional labour has typically been identified with historically female jobs although ... [it is] also performed by male and female police officers’. ¹⁶

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¹⁶ Steinberg and Figart, later in their article cite the work of Susan Martin on the various roles within police work that includes substantial emotional labour as men and women police officers engage in managing their emotions as well as those of citizens who are often upset, injured or angry (see Martin, 1999 for details).
Moreover, it is largely though not restricted to, women workers who are found to be performing emotional labour because of wider socio-cultural norms associated with masculinity and femininity. Women are seen as more suitable for certain kinds of jobs which are widely regarded as ‘feminine’ (e.g., school teachers and nurses, see Steinberg and Figart, 1999) and therefore are expected to be soft spoken and to show care for the customers as well as resilience in the face of customers’ anger. On the other hand, men are seen as suitable for jobs viewed as ‘masculine’ (e.g., debt-collectors, see Hochschild, [1983]2003), that often incorporate the role of guardian or protector (e.g., police officers, see Martin, 1999). This indicates that men do not always perform emotional labour, other than in certain occupations, and that this is associated with having more control due to socio-cultural norms of masculinity; this differs from what is expected of women when performing similar acts. For example, anger expressed by a man is considered ‘rational or understandable anger’, and as a ‘deeply held conviction’, whereas anger expressed by a woman ‘is more likely to be interpreted as a sign of personal instability’, reflecting women as ‘emotional’ (Hochschild, [1983]2003: 173).

Since *The Managed Heart*, Steinberg and Figart (1999: 15) identify two strands of research on emotional labour: a) case studies of employees at different workplaces in which sociologists have to a large extent focused on the gendered aspects of emotional labour, and organisational behaviour scholars on managing emotions to increase product

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17 In general, Hochschild points to the gendered expectations in society during childhood using demeanours like ‘sugar and spice and everything nice’ for a girl who is expected to be ‘friendly’ and ‘nice’ and for a boy to master fear and vulnerability as ‘boys are made out of snips and snails and puppy dog tails’ (Hochschild, [1983]2003: 163).
quality and raise profit; and b) studies on emotional labour\textsuperscript{18} at home and in different jobs with caring or nurturing work.

In the former case, examples of studies in different interactive service work include: the airline industry (Taylor and Tyler, 2000; Williams, 2003), beauty therapy (Sharma and Black, 2001) the hotel sector (Adkins, 1995) and casinos (Enarson, 1993). Examining different service sectors in Montreal, Soars (2003: 37) notes a ‘sexual division of emotional labour exists between jobs and between workers in the same occupation’ and that ‘emotional labour is gendered’. New areas of research on service work as ‘body work’, where workers such as beauticians and fitness trainers work on the bodies of customers, shows that work involves emotional labour and is performed along highly gendered lines (see Wolkowitz 2002, 2006), and that employment relations structure workers’ interaction with their clients as they are paid to conduct themselves with a friendly demeanour (see Cohen, 2010).

The service industry is about selling; be it selling the service itself, or a product, as in the case of models who sell products using their body and emotions. Studies of the fashion industry show modelling to be different from interactive service work, as models do not interact (verbally) with customers yet act in a manner that chimes with customers’ desires, potentially resulting in selling the product. Models perform emotional labour as they fake or manipulate their looks (apart from appearing as friendly) when

\textsuperscript{18} Steinberg and Figart (1999) use the term emotional labour and emotional work interchangeably.
displaying themselves before photographers, agents and clients of the fashion industry (see Mears and Finlay, 2005; Entwistle and Wissinger, 2006; Mears, 2011).

Research on modelling is a succinct example of how emotional labour and ‘having the right look’ is crucial for female models (workers) to survive and progress in the highly competitive fashion labour market, though they do not verbally interact with customers or clients. As part of their job, models have to take criticism from clients and producers, and accept the physical discomfort (such as having to stand for the entire day so as to avoid wrinkling the clothes or wear clothes unsuited to the weather e.g., swimsuit in the cold), all of which require masking their feelings as part of the job (ibid.). However, models are also said to not only enjoy and find doing emotional labour ‘pleasant’, it also ‘provides dignity as well, by reminding them that they are more than just paper dolls to be dressed up or objects to be weighed and measured’ (ibid.: 339). According to Wolkowitz (2006), this can be seen as the ‘pleasures’ of emotional labour for models.

The studies reviewed thus far have focused on the emotional labour of workers performing service work in different workplaces, and (in some studies) on the gendered aspect of emotional labour; there is emphasis on women workers doing emotional labour. Nickson et al. (2001) argue that studies on emotional labour have neglected the management of aesthetics at work, which is the focus of the following section.
Aesthetic Labour

The term ‘aesthetic labour’ was first conceived by Warhurst et al. (2000) and refers to the process of employees’ bodies being organisationally produced to embody the desired aesthetic of the organisation and work for organisational benefit. They (ibid.: 4) explain aesthetic labour as:

[A] supply of ‘embodied capacities and attributes’ possessed by workers at the point of entry into employment. Employers then mobilise, develop and commodify these capacities and attributes through processes of recruitment, selection and training, transforming them into ‘competencies’ or ‘skills’ which are then aesthetically geared towards producing a ‘style’ of service encounter.

They also clarify that aesthetic appearance means ‘deliberately intended to appeal to the senses of customers, most obviously in a visual or aural way’ (ibid.: 4). In their research, the ‘meanings and practices attached to aesthetic labour were analysed within a triangular configuration of employer-employee relations, employee-employee relations, [and] employee-customer relations’. They further stress that examining ‘pre-entry’, ‘internal’ and ‘external’ is useful to explore the three different ‘areas and relationships schematically’ (ibid.: 10). It is important to note that they use the term employer and management interchangeably.

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19 Warhurst et al. (2000: 9-10) explored ‘employers’ and employees’ understandings and experiences of the ways in which physical appearance or, more specifically, embodied capacities and attributes, competencies and skills are salient in the course of recruitment, selection, training and service encounter...’ in a range of service sector in Glasgow.
Three Areas: Pre-entry, Internal and External

In the area of pre-entry where recruitment and selection takes place; aesthetic labour is practiced within the employer-employee relationship. Warhurst et al. (2000) note that ‘... it was in the area of recruitment and selection that the notion of aesthetic labour had the most resonance, as this process allows for the filtering out of “inappropriate” people’ (ibid.: 11). They also highlight that some service sectors are indicative of a model in which ‘employers are utilising labour and seek labour markets that do not, in the first instance, require technical skills but, instead, rely to a large extent upon the physical appearance ...[and] only later is “on the job” training offered to those workers’ (ibid.: 2). This indicates that increasingly in some parts of the service sector, employers look for those employees with the ‘right’ kind of appearance, which at times may be more important than any technical skills.

In the internal area, through training, management practices and working practices, the meanings and practices of aesthetic labour take place in employer-employee and employee-employee relations. Warhurst et al. (2000: 12) discuss how employees are trained to fit their requirements, highlighting ‘the extent to which organisations continued to seek to mould people into the desired personas after they entered employment ... [and] training given to the staff by external consultant’. They further explain that such sessions encompass ‘haircuts/styling, “acceptable” makeup, individual make-overs, how men should shave and the standards expected in relation to appearance’ (ibid.: 12). However Hochschild ([1983]2003: 182), in the case of flight attendants, had also discussed that a company’s emphasis on grooming classes and
weight management reflected in the ‘sexy’ looks is an achievement of ‘corporate engineering’.

Warhurst et al. (2000) also highlight how management practices pay attention to employees’ appearance by training as well as monitoring them. They explain that employers assigned some employees the role of policing other employees on ‘regulation and adherence to’ grooming standards, ‘such as the employees’ skirts, shoes, stockings and jewellery to ensure they all conformed to the company ideal’. Moreover, they highlight that ‘peer pressure would also ensure conformity to company standards as individuals who did not comply were felt to be letting their colleagues down’ (ibid.: 13).

In the external area, through working practices and the service encounter, the meanings and practice of aesthetic labour take place in employee-customer relations. Warhurst et al. (2000: 14) highlight that employees are aesthetically geared to produce a ‘style’ of service encounter, and are trained to perform their work ‘managing their appearance and behaviour’. They also argue that ‘organisations are increasingly aware of the possible competitive advantage to be gained by utilising aesthetic labour’ (ibid.: 13) and that such awareness has implications for workers on who is represented as the public face of the organisation.

Research on aesthetic labour (also sometimes referred to as ‘embodied labour’) in interactive service work (see Taylor and Tyler, 2000; Warhurst et al., 2000; Nickson et al., 2001; Witz et al., 2003; Warhurst and Nickson, 2007) has shown how organisations
demand aesthetic labour and promote products and services by attaching workers’ bodies to an organisational brand or image. While Witz, Warhurst, Nickson and their colleagues prefer the term aesthetic labour over emotional labour, Entwistle and Wissinger (2006: 776, emphasis in original) argue that the term emotional labour is ‘useful for capturing something of the embodied work some workers have to do to maintain their bodies for particular forms of employment’. This demonstrates that the two terms emotional and aesthetic labour are conceptually distinct but that experientially they seem to be related.

While the framework of Warhurst et al. (2000) helps understand aesthetic labour, it is important to note that it draws from or can be examined alongside (and within) emotional labour. Nickson et al. (2001) claim that workers must produce the face and voice as per the company’s demand as employers consider workers to be a part of the service product. Likewise in the modeling industry, Mears and Finlay (2005) illustrate the extent to which women models are continuously conscious about and engaged in managing their appearance and emotions that match the producer’s and consumers’ imagination. This indicates that managing emotional labour is constitutive of managing a worker’s appearance and part of ‘the effort to keep up appearances, while physical has an emotional content to it’ (Entwistle and Wissinger, 2006: 774), buttressing the conceptual links between emotional and aesthetic labour (see Warhurst and Nickson, 2007 and Witz et al., 2003). Hence, while it is important to see how workers perform aesthetic labour, the work (emotional labour) that goes into performing it also needs to be analysed. Moreover, as Williams and Connell (2010: 371) note, ‘[A]esthetic labour
consists of the requirement that service workers “look good and sound right” for the job’.

**Gendered Aesthetic Labour**

Nickson *et al.* (2001: 175) argue that ‘while there are indeed important gendered dimensions to aesthetic labour, it is by no means only female embodiment that is being commodified as aesthetic labour’. A number of studies show that aesthetic labour is gendered (Entwistle and Wissinger, 2006; McDowell, 2009; Mears and Finlay, 2005 and Pettinger, 2005). Researching the retail sector, Pettinger (2005: 474) also concludes ‘[a]esthetic labour is gendered and men and women labour differently’, and that for women to ‘have the feminized skills of makeup, hair and self presentation’ was ‘both constraining and liberating’. Further, researching the work of female models in Atlanta city, Mears and Finlay (2005) find women not only watch what they eat but even go on diets, exercise rigorously and lift weights as they try to conceal their age and manage their weight. In the case of models (both male and female) in New York and London, age and weight were a ‘significant area of gender difference, with the pressure felt more acutely by female models (Entwistle and Wissinger, 2006: 778).20 Further, Wolkowitz (2006) emphasises that gender is integral to aesthetic labour that gets commodified and Wolkowitz and Warhurst (2010: 223) note that ‘embodied labour has not been foregrounded in labour process theory’ and stress the need to do so.

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20 Further, aesthetic labour among models has also been studied along racial lines where black models had to fit themselves to a narrow set of standards (unlike the whites) and models experience their race as both an asset and a liability (Wissinger, 2012).
The above studies illuminate that aesthetic labour is gendered; while women workers are in some cases expected to perform aesthetic labour, organisations seem to emphasise that women workers should manage their looks and weight. In many customer interactive jobs, interviewees perform aesthetic labour at the recruitment stage, seeking to impress management through non-verbal communication which helps them to get a job as well as to get on with their jobs once they are employed. Hence, I examine aesthetic labour by using Warhurst et al.’s (2000) framework (as considered earlier), which details the way in which workers are trained and expected to manage their looks and at interactional level and how organisational processes constitute producing gendered aesthetic labour at both structural and interactional levels.

Furthermore, Lisa Adkins (1995) in her study of hotel workers in the United Kingdom shows women are also expected to be ‘attractive’ despite both men and women workers being required to be of average height and weight. She extends the focus on workers appearance to show that work is both gendered and sexualised. I now turn to discuss the concept of sexualised labour.

**Sexualised Labour**

The term sexualised labour was used by Lisa Adkins (1995) in her study of two tourist organisations – a hotel and a leisure park – where her focus and understanding of sexuality and gendered work is in terms of labour. She discusses how in a leisure park and a large hotel instead of women being considered in terms of the work they do, their
bodies are emphasised and seen as objects of desire, and explores how women’s work is both gendered and sexualised. As Adkins (ibid.) notes, for some women, sexuality is key to getting and staying employed. She examines hotel manuals and highlights management’s expectation that women are ‘sexually pleasing’. She writes, ‘what the catering manager said she was looking for was “brightness in their [women’s] appearance” when recruiting’ (Adkins, 1995: 105). Moreover, Spiess and Waring (2005: 198) note that sexualised labour ‘complements aesthetic labour in explaining how the mobilisation of employees’ physical dispositions can move beyond mere aesthetic appeal to appealing to the sexual desires of some customers’. Furthermore, they highlight that ‘[A]esthetic and sexualised labour are therefore closely connected and complementary concepts’ but that in order to understand these concepts ‘it is also important to delineate the boundary between them’ (ibid.).

Some studies in service work have discussed and extended the focus on workers looks to how work is heterosexualised. Pringle (1988), for example, explains that employees’ flirting amongst themselves makes the workplace less boring, more exciting and more personal. Workers (women workers) self-sexualising themselves through aesthetic labour is perceived to benefit them personally (see Trautner, 2005; Deshotels and Forsyth, 2006; Williams et al., 1999). 21 Similarly, McDowell (2009: 57) notes that in the airline industry there is an emphasis ‘on looks, age, weight, appearance ... where

21 This relates to the profit motive behind the worker’s performing emotional labour and aesthetic labour with or without company’s direct supervision. If performing such labour means increase in tips or is related to promotion, workers are likely to be tempted to do so. Such activity leads to capital accumulation for the company but the benefits are also shared (in part) among workers.
sexualised bodily performance by both men but especially women flight attendants is notorious’ and has been subject to legal challenges too. However, Spiess and Waring (2005: 198) propose that the purpose of aesthetic labour is to have an appeal to the senses and that the appeal is not necessarily a sexualised one.

Employee Sexuality: Sanctioned, Subscribed to and Prescribed

Warhurst and Nickson (2009: 385) argue that to understand sexualised labour, ‘a conceptual double shift’ is needed: firstly, ‘from emotional to aesthetic to sexualised labour’; and secondly, from employee sexuality ‘that is sanctioned and subscribed to by management to that which management strategy prescribes’. They identify three differing forms of sexualised work where employee sexuality is: 1) Sanctioned by the management – Sexuality that is driven by the employee, but not prescribed by the management. In this case, management is aware but remains silent; 2) Subscribed to by management – Management permits and promotes the sexualised work by subscribing to it and also capitalises on this for the organisation’s commercial benefit; and 3) Prescribed by management (organisationally driven strategy), whereby the management has a strategy that is intended to create a distinctive, prescribed sexualised ‘look’ as a style of service. Their distinction between sexualised work and sexualised labour is important; it is only when sexualised work is prescribed by the management can doing such be counted as sexualised labour (ibid).

The need to have a certain ‘look’, which concerns whether women should (or should not) wear makeup at work, has been taken up by some studies - for example Dellinger and
Williams (1997: 153) argue that women wearing makeup ‘are seeking empowerment and pleasure’ even though it contributes to ‘the reproduction of inequality at work’. They also highlight that workplaces have institutionalised norms related to appearance that ‘reproduce assumptions about sexuality, health, heterosexuality and credibility’ (ibid.: 151) which women in rare instances attempt to subvert. As Acker (1990: 152) notes, in work organisations ‘women’s bodies are ruled out of order, or sexualised and objectified ... men’s bodies are not’. Moreover, service work that demands heterosexualised labour can encourage the sexual harassment of workers, as seen when male passengers’ interpretation of the service encounter as sexualised led to sexual harassment of women flight attendants in Australia (Williams, 2003). Studying the work of table servers, Hall (1993a, 1993b) also notes that the work of American waiters and waitresses is loaded with gendered meanings and those women waitresses are more likely to be sexually approached and harassed by customers than male waiters. Hall (1993a, 1993b) also highlights that workers ‘do’ gender as they work as waiters and waitresses. Hence, sexualised labour in the above reviewed studies takes into account the hetero-sexualised labour of women workers in the service sector.

*Sexuality and Power*

Studies of organisational control over workers’ sexuality, for example in stripping (Pasko, 2002) and exotic dancing (Deshotels and Forsyth, 2006), show that women strippers and dancers perceived that they had power over male customers. Deshotels and Forsyth (2006: 231) use the concept of ‘strategic flirting’ in their study of female dancers in American clubs to demonstrate how women use ‘flirting as a behavioural strategy designed to
induce customers to give them money’. They (ibid.: 231-33) find that dancers noted the power (over men) they had ‘to control the situation’, ‘manipulate customers’ and further found dancing to be ‘more empowering than other jobs’ as they felt they were in control of their sexuality at work. Despite ‘the perception of power to control the situation’ the dancers’ interaction with customers also shows the negative consequences of emotional labour. This was because the job constrained ‘their ability to create an authentic self’ in the process of creating ‘an impression of having fun in order to make money’, and that this left them ‘feeling bad about themselves’ (ibid.: 234-236). Hence ‘strategic flirting’ is viewed as having benefits and costs for dancers as they ‘are both empowered and exploited when engaging in strategic flirting’ (ibid.: 236).

Furthermore, women working as strippers (similar to erotic dancers) can also be seen as ‘challenging the conventional notions of women as sexually passive and demure’ and it has been claimed that stripping can ‘be potentially empowering for women’ (Johnson, 1999: 150). However, Williams et al. (1999) note that when women’s work is valued in terms of their sexuality ‘it is always short-lived’ and it may also discriminate between the ‘young and attractive’ women and the ‘old and less attractive’ women.

Thus far, I have discussed how different concepts have emerged as distinct modes of enquiry within the sociology of service work. I argue that a critical understanding of how service work is gendered raises the question: Is gendered work constructed by certain forms of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour?
The studies on the (interactive) service sector reviewed so far have focused on how work is constructed and performed at both structural and interactional levels – at structural levels, organisations shape and control gendered work and the different forms of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour; and at interactional levels, workers are experientially engaged in ‘doing’ gendered work and the different forms of labour.

There is a connection between emotional labour and aesthetic labour in that the performance of aesthetic labour requires employees to perform emotional labour (see Witz et al., 2003; Entwistle and Wissinger, 2006; Warhurst and Nickson, 2007, 2009). Warhurst and Nickson (2009) draw on various studies in the United Kingdom, United States and Australia that show management concerns with their employees’ emotions as well as their looks. Having the right attitude at work, good appearance or good looks were the two key skills many of the employers in the service industry looked for in their employees. Others (such as Warhurst et al., 2000; Witz et al., 2003; and Brook, 2009a) have also extended the concept of ‘aesthetic labour’ in the service industry by emphasising the commodification of a worker’s appearance and sexuality as display, hence pointing to a very thin line that separates aesthetic and sexualised labour.

Workers in the hospitality industry are constantly performing emotional labour, aesthetic labour and sexualised labour (Adkins, 1995). As mentioned earlier, Warhurst and Nickson (2009) illustrate the need to look at ‘emotional to aesthetic to sexualised labour’ when examining sexualised labour, emphasising the interrelatedness of these different forms of labour.
Women’s Empowerment

Women’s empowerment has various meanings and has been used by different actors in development associated with different strategies to ‘empower women’. The concept of empowerment emerged in the 1970s from the women’s movement particularly in developing (also then called third world) countries (see Rowlands, 1998; Bisnath, 2001). From the 1990s the concept was mainstreamed into many development agendas by diverse actors. Development assistance agencies and governments (of third world countries) later started to replace words like participation and women’s development with the word empowerment (see Hickey and Mohan, 2005; Batliwala, 2007).

According to Bisnath (2001: 11-12), the concept of empowerment when first raised, ‘was explicitly used to frame and facilitate the struggle for social justice and women’s equality through a transformation of economic, social and political structures ... [and] it recognised the importance of women’s agency and self-transformation’. This conceptualisation acknowledged that there was inequality between men and women as well as amongst women. It has also been noted that women challenge structures and processes simultaneously and at various levels when seeking for alternative visions of transformation (see Sen and Grown, 1987).

Many authors have written about the fluidity, unpredictability, untidy and ill-defined nature or understanding of the word empowerment (Parpart et al., 2002), and that it has been used and misused by various authors in different disciplines (e.g., Batliwala, 1994, 2007; Rowlands, 1998; Kabeer, 1999; Parpart et al., 2002). For example, Batliwala
(2007: 559, emphasis in original) explains that ‘all efforts to conceptualise the term more clearly stressed that empowerment was a *socio-political process*, that ... empowerment was *power*, and that empowerment was about shifts in political, social, and economic power between and across *both* individuals *and* social groups’. Rowlands (1998: 13) criticises the linkage of the word empowerment with ‘power over’. She explains that empowerment must include individual conscientisation and the ‘power within’ oneself, the ability to work with others collectively leading to ‘power with’ others. Moreover, empowerment must involve ‘power to’ to bring about change. She considers that empowerment involves a collective moving from insight to action.

The word empowerment has been loaded with various definitions of ‘power’ which itself is a debatable concept within the social sciences (see Rowlands, 1998). Batliwala (1994: 130) explains empowerment as, ‘[T]he process of challenging existing power relations and of gaining greater control over sources of power’. Moreover, Parpart (2010: 25) highlights that although ‘preoccupation with voice as a sign/symbol of women’s agency is understandable given the long struggles of feminists to ... speak out and to be taken seriously’; she concludes that ‘agency may take surprising forms, including the judicious use of secrecy and silence’.

Moghadam and Senftova (2005: 399) note that to understand women’s empowerment, a broader framework is required; women’s empowerment is defined as ‘a multidimensional process of achieving basic capabilities, legal rights, and participation in key social, economic, political and cultural domains’. Such a broad definition is also
taken up by the World Economic Forum, which has ranked countries in terms of women’s empowerment, selecting five criteria: economic participation, economic opportunity, political empowerment, educational attainment and health and well-being (see WEF, 2006). I next discuss Kabeer’s (2001) framework that I find useful to understand empowerment as it examines empowerment at both individual and structural levels.

According to Kabeer (2001: 19), empowerment ‘refers to the expansion in people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them’. A need and the possibility to be empowered underlines the notion of being disempowered. She suggests ‘[O]ne way of thinking about power is in terms of the ability to make choices: to be disempowered, therefore, implies to be denied choice’ and that ‘empowerment is a process of change’ (ibid.: 18-19). She highlights the ‘possible inequalities in people’s capacity to make choices rather than in differences in the choices they make’ (ibid.: 22, emphasis in original). Giving examples of women’s adherence to social norms and practices in a South Asian context, she highlights that choices also ‘stem from, and serve to reinforce, women’s subordinate status’ and in some cases women may choose not to choose, ‘an absence of choice on the part of women as a

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22 This ranking is done to not only assess women’s empowerment but also help countries’ reflection on their commitment to gender equality. Nepal ranks as the 126th country in 2010 among the 135 countries (WEF, 2011).

23 Criteria are based mainly on the findings of UNIFEM (2000), concerning global patterns of inequality between men and women.

24 Disempowerment does not mean that women do not have power at all, because even when they are disempowered, they still resist power in many cases.
subordinate group or as active discrimination by men as the dominant group’ (ibid.: 4). Kabeer (2001: 26-27) identifies three possible levels of empowerment: 1) immediate levels refer to individual resources, agency and achievements; 2) intermediate levels to institutional rules and resources; and 3) deeper levels to structural relations of class/caste/gender.

**Individual Level of Empowerment**

At the ‘immediate level’ Kabeer (2001: 19) suggests a framework to measure empowerment of individuals by measuring resources, agency and achievements:

Changes in the ability to exercise choice can be thought of in terms of changes in three inter-related dimensions which make up choice: resources, which form the conditions under which choices are made; agency which is at the heart of the process by which choices are made; and achievements, which are the outcomes of choices.

She further adds that these three dimensions are inter-dependent, as ‘the achievements of a particular moment are translated into enhanced resources or agency, and hence capacity for making choices, at a later moment in time’ (ibid.: 19).

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25 Some examples include: preference for a son, discrimination against daughters in the allocation of food and basic health and the oppressive exercise of authority by mother-in-laws over their daughter-in law.
According to Kabeer, a precondition of empowerment is to have access to and control over resources. Resources can be material, human and social; those that serve to enhance the ability to make choices. Resources are distributed by various institutions and processes; access to resources depending on the rules, norms and practices of the institutions such as family, labour market and state, where some actors exercise authority over others in terms of distribution of resources. Moreover the terms on which one has access to resources are as important as the resources themselves; empowerment necessitates change in such terms (ibid.: 20).

Another dimension of power relates to agency which Kabeer explains as ‘the ability to define one’s goals and act upon them’. Agency includes: ‘the meaning, motivation and purpose which individuals bring to their activity, their sense of agency, or the ‘power within’... [and] a wider range of purposive actions, including bargaining, negotiation, deception, manipulation, subversion, resistance and protest’ and also ‘cognitive processes of reflection and analysis’ (ibid.: 21). Agency can be exercised by individuals and collectives\(^{26}\) with positive and negative meanings of power; the positive sense of ‘power to’ refers to one’s capacity to define one’s own life-choices even when others oppose them and the negative sense of ‘power over’ refers to the capacity to over-ride the agency of others through violence, coercion and threat, for example (ibid.).\(^{27}\)

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\(^{26}\) See also Batliwala (1994).
\(^{27}\) Kabeer notes that the concepts of positive and negative agency echoes the distinction between positive and negative freedom made by Amartya Sen (Sen, 1985 cited in Kabeer, 2001).
Achievements are the outcomes of making use of one’s agency to make choices. Kabeer endorses Amartya Sen’s (Sen, 1985 cited in Kabeer, 2001) use of the term ‘capabilities’ as constituting both resources and agency, by referring to ‘the potential that people have for living the lives they want, of achieving valued ways of “being and doing” ... which are valued by people in a given context’ (ibid.: 21). She points to the particular ways of being and doing that are realised by different individuals, as constituting the third dimension of power – achievements. However, she highlights that the failure to achieve reflects imbalance in the distribution of resources and agency which can be considered as a manifestation of disempowerment.

**Structural Level of Empowerment**

According to Kabeer (2001), an ‘immediate’ level of empowerment could be a sense of selfhood and identity, in how individuals perceive their interests and their capacity to act. In addition, an ‘intermediate’ level of empowerment could be changes in the rules and relationships prevailing in personal, social, economic and political spheres of life. ‘Deeper’ levels of empowerment are shifts in the hidden structures which shape the distribution of resources and power in a society and reproduce it over time. She emphasises that for ‘change to translate into meaningful and sustainable processes of empowerment’, change must occur at both individual (immediate) and structural (immediate and deeper) levels; changes in just resources but leaving intact the existing structures ‘may help to improve economic welfare without necessarily empowering’ individuals (ibid.: 27).
Thus far, I have discussed various concepts that I intend to use while exploring work and women’s empowerment in the hotel industry of Nepal. I now focus my discussion on the three areas related to my thesis: paid work and women’s empowerment; the gendered labour market; and tourism work and gender.

**Paid Work and Women’s Empowerment**

During the 1970s, Ester Boserup was the first to document women’s importance to economic development, highlighting the unpaid work of women. However, the Women in Development approach focused on integrating women into economic development; subsequent feminists pointed out that it was only women’s paid work that gained recognition and was considered as a contribution to economic development. Waring (1989) criticised the statistical records of the United Nations System of National Accounts for ignoring the unpaid work of women in the economy and not counting their contribution. Today, feminist economists continue to argue that the unpaid reproductive work of women including ‘the care economy’ has not been duly recognised (see Beneria, 1995; Elson, 1999, 2004).

Discussion of women’s empowerment is often focused on enhancing women’s economic empowerment, underlined by the belief that increasing women’s access to finance, income or paid work will increase their autonomy and enhance their status – both economic and social (see Esplen and Brody, 2007). Increasing women’s access to material resources such as financial income through paid employment may empower
them to initiate change in the household and institutions that create and reinforce gender norms and stereotypes (Seguino, 2007). Researchers have noted that women’s independent income often makes possible some positive changes in gender relations in the family and community, accompanied by an increased involvement of women in local networks and politics28 (see Heyzner, 1986; Carr et al., 1996; Moghadam and Senftova, 2005).

However, other researchers alert us against taking for granted the automatic empowerment of women once they have access to income or paid work, as well as pointing out that having access to income or paid work can also bring about household conflicts (see Elson, 1999; Pearson, 2004; Esplen and Brody, 2007; Kabeer, 2005). Pearson (2004: 117) claims that it is the “‘Engelian myth’ ... the view that women’s empowerment, or emancipation as it used to be called, lies in their incorporation into the paid workforce’. She further explains that women are entering paid work generally to earn money and support their households, resulting in their work burden being intensified but with no changes in their role and status (ibid.: 118). Studies that have looked at women’s participation in paid work have noted that despite women’s increased share in the paid labour force, there is still resistance to men taking up the unpaid reproductive role at the household level (see Elson, 1995; Pearson 2000), except in some rare cases where men do not have jobs and are househusbands and in few dual earner households (see Vogler and Pahl, 1993; Charles and James, 2003).

28 Women’s active participation in local politics where their presence often makes a marked difference to political outcomes affecting the local constituency (Moghadam and Senftova, 2005) is an important aspect of women’s political empowerment.
Moreover, Kabeer (2007) notes that women’s experience of paid labour will be different for women in different countries and contexts, depending on many aspects, with socio-cultural practices, the nature and sector of employment and the motivation for women taking up work being a few. She also emphasises that for married women the challenge is tougher than for unmarried women and explains that married women are ‘reported to encounter much greater resistance to their attempts to enter paid work from their husbands than do unmarried women from the main authority figures within their families’ (ibid.: 17). There is also a class dimension to how married women have to manage their childcare and take up paid work (ibid.: 28). For example, while some women rely on family members and neighbours for help, others hire in domestic help. Such domestic paid service, while generating paid work for some women, relieves the other women (who hire the domestic help) of their unpaid work in the house. Here too the shift in domestic work is between women rather than from women to men or to the equal sharing of such work (ibid.). Kabeer et al. (2011) in their research in Bangladesh find that there are a range of related factors at play such as: the form of work women do that offers regular and relatively independent incomes; shifts in intra-household decision making processes; and women’s participation in public life that contributes to providing a pathway to women’s empowerment.

Furthermore, Kabeer (2000) notes that in Bangladesh the husbands of women who were in paid work were likely to take into account the views and preferences of their wife,
regardless of who controlled the wages. Kabeer (2007: 19) draws on various studies\textsuperscript{29} that show an ‘increase in women’s influence in strategic areas of household decision-making as a result of their access to paid work in the labour market or through access to micro-finance’ pointing out the ‘important shifts in the domestic balance of power’.

Women are the main targets of microcredit programmes that remain popular mainly in third world countries and are believed to empower women. The successes of these programmes have been applauded by government and development agencies, while they have been criticised heavily by several authors for overlooking the control and utilisation of such loans (Goetz and Gupta, 1996; Kabeer, 2005; Mayoux, 2005).\textsuperscript{30}

\textbf{Gendered Labour Market}

Women’s entry into the labour market is important not only in terms of wages but also because it challenges existing norms and stereotypes, especially those that constrain women’s mobility, restricting them to the household which is seen as the women’s domain. Acker (1990) argues that, like markets, organisations are not gender-neutral and gender stereotypes exist at the workplace, which at times are reinforced by organisational policies and management practices. The construction of jobs and hierarchies in an organisation has a gendered dimension where notions of masculinity and femininity are attached to defining the job and the hierarchy in an organisation.

\textsuperscript{29} Studies from contexts as widely divergent as Bangladesh, India, Mexico, Zimbabwe and Egypt (see Kabeer 2007: 19).

\textsuperscript{30} A frequent criticism is that loans obtained by women through microcredit are in many cases actually controlled and utilised by male members of the family to the extent that women are at times also pressured to obtain loans by the male family members for their own use.
Various researchers have tried to understand labour market segregation and segmentation,\(^{31}\) which often underpin gender inequality in wages (see Hartmann, 1976, 1981; Hakim, 1981; Blau and Ferber, 1986; Cockburn, 1988; Robinson, 1988). For example, Hartman (1976, 1981) explains gender segregation when analysing patriarchy and capitalism and the ways that men and capitalism both benefit from women’s labour. She highlights that in the family, the labour market, economy and society the problem is the division that places men in a superior and women in a subordinate position, beyond simply the division of labour between men and women. Cockburn (1988) views ending sex-segregation at work as a pre-requisite for ending the social division of labour by which masculinity is associated with economic production and femininity with reproduction and domestic life.

While it is true that men and women will enter the labour market depending on the jobs available, men and women may also enter the labour market with different preferences (e.g., some women prefer to work in services while some men prefer to work in manufacturing). Blau and Ferber (1986) explain that such gender discrimination is reflected in the preferences of employers and customers in the labour market for men or women workers. They observe a high degree of sex-segregation in relation to demand and supply of labour in the market. The skills women learnt during their childhood and through domestic life are attractive to employers, who exploit women with low wages. Thus, labour markets are gendered institutions where equality, efficiency and

\(^{31}\) I borrow from Walby (1988) this understanding that segregation refers to the concentration of people by ascriptive criteria like sex and race in particular sectors. Segmentation is the differentiation of the labour market into distinctive kinds of employment.
Empowerment are complex and intertwined as they operate at the intersection of productive and reproductive economies (Elson, 1999).

The above literature explains that men and women enter into the labour market on unequal terms mainly because of the gender roles and gender stereotypes that are prevalent in a society (see Seguino, 2000). Such gender stereotypes have been influential in the ‘crowding’ of women in some manufacturing jobs like the export processing zones (see Elson and Pearson, 1981) and in some service occupations (see Kerfoot and Korczynski, 2005). Acker (1990) mentions that these gender stereotypes continue to reinforce and reproduce gender divisions in the workplace which are reflected in various employment practices, such as job evaluation leading to changes in the workers’ position (e.g., through promotion/demotion, internal transfers within the organisation, increase/decrease in wages etc.).

Taking into account the theory of gendered organisations/institutions (Acker, 1990; Elson, 1999), many studies have documented the gender discrimination at the workplace that hinders women’s upward movement in the organisational hierarchy due to the ‘glass ceiling’ (Durbin, 2002). Even when women are pre-dominant in a workplace, there are men who take the ‘glass escalator’ (Hultin, 2003) and bypass women and move ahead in the organisational hierarchy. When women reach managerial level (or are recruited as managers), they face challenges like getting along with the male managers, being left out of informal managerial discussions, and having to ‘act like a man’ due to cultural stereotypes (see Charles and Davies, 2000).
Such challenges are analysed by Cockburn (1991) as a demonstration of men’s resistance to sex equality in organisations.

With a particular focus on the expansion of the service industry, it is important to understand the dynamics of women’s entry and employment in the context of the gendered labour market. Elson and Pearson (1981) caution that when there is job loss in a world market factory, a woman who has re-shaped her life on the basis of wage income, and then loses her job, may be left with no alternative but to sell her body in the growing tourism industry, especially in South East Asia. Sen (1999) draws attention to the concentration of Asian women in a narrow range of lower-status, low pay occupations, suffering the double work burden of household and paid work. Esplén and Brody (2007) suggest that the realities of women in the workplace can be examined by analysing the gender pay gap, un-regulated, un-contracted and subcontracted labour, discrimination and harassment and the fight for recognition of women’s work.

Conversely, women’s entry into the labour market has been seen by mainstream economists simply in terms of demand and supply. Export industries demand cheap labour so that the cost of production of goods and services can be lowered for sale in a competitive world market. On the supply side women workers need paid work mainly due to economic pressure. Many export industries predominantly employ women workers who are seen as best fitted to the requirement of the job due to a perception of their having nimble fingers at work, and because they are considered ‘docile’ and less likely to complain than men (Elson and Pearson, 1981). Economists ignore the
‘gendering of the labour market’ which categorises men’s work and women’s work differently (Elson, 1999). In reality this gendering is explained when there is a demand created by the industries/market for women workers mainly because the work is considered to be low skilled or unskilled, flexible and therefore lowly paid as well. Women are forced or lured into the labour market for a number of reasons, access to paid work and money being one of them (see Pearson, 2004).

It is important to understand the various meanings men and women give to the work they perform, be it in the productive and/or the reproductive sphere. For example, a study by Charles and James (2003) conducted to explore work orientation and job insecurity in manufacturing, public sector and retail industry in South Wales highlights that work orientations are also gendered. While most men consider themselves to be working to fulfil the status quo of the ‘male bread winner’, following their duty to bring in money and support the family, for women their work had a strong meaning in their identity which was different and conflicting at times with their identity of a mother or a wife (ibid.: 250). This analysis helps in understanding the jobs men and women choose following culturally specific gender stereotypes that exist in the society where men perform the jobs viewed as masculine (related to technology or physical strength or high mobility) and women take up those viewed as feminine (related to nurturing or caring or flexible, part time work). Such gender stereotypes also explain that men’s earnings are considered as the major household earnings in many cases, ‘he earns the bread and butter’, whereas the women’s earnings are seen as nominal, ‘earning the cream’ (Charles and James, 2005). However, this notion of the ‘male bread winner’ is being contested
pragmatically with many women entering into paid work and earning more than their male partners. It is also challenged in the case of job insecurity that also forces changes in work orientations (Charles and James, 2003, 2005).

With the expansion of the service industries in general and tourism sector in particular in many parts of Nepal, there could be an increasing number of women being hired primarily because of the various notions of femininity attached to some service industry jobs (for example, hotels and restaurants, banking). However, despite the increase in women entering the service industry and/or the predominance of women workers, their placement towards the lower end of the organisational hierarchy and the lack of recognition attached to their work is an area that needs to be further analysed. Williams (2002: 8) explains that ‘[E]ven where women are the main tourism workers, they tend to predominate in the majority of menial, semi-skilled, domestic and service type occupations’.

Tourism, Work and Gender

Many countries have identified tourism as one of the main sources of income for the country, and Nepal is no exception (see MoICS, 2004). The World Tourism Organisation views tourism as a ‘key driver for the world economy’ and as one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world (UNWTO, 2008). The boom in tourism worldwide is clear from statistics which reveal that global tourist arrivals in

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32 The second chapter of this thesis details literature related to labour force participation in Nepal.
2011 reached a record high of United States dollars 1.03 trillion (UNWTO, 2012: 3). This figure was noted to be around 25 million in 1950 (see UNWTO, 2008). Tourism also ranks fourth after fuel, chemicals and food in terms of global export earnings (UNWTO, 2012: 3). Tourism is also well known for having a high multiplier, spill over effect as it is widely claimed that when a job is created in the tourism sector, nine other people get employed in jobs that directly or indirectly contribute to this sector (see Williams, 2002).

Focusing on some of the constraints and challenges facing countries in their pursuit of developing their tourism sector, the UNCTAD (2001) report highlights factors including: geographical characteristics (such as ‘islandness and land-lockedness’); vulnerabilities to external shocks (such as natural disasters – floods and hurricanes in Haiti during 1977-1996 and wars – the first Gulf War in 1991 slowed down the flow of tourists in the Maldives and Yemen); structural handicaps (such as weakness in physical infrastructure, transport and accommodation; communications infrastructure; human resources (such as skill); and density and quality of inter-sectoral linkages and the issue of ‘leakages’) and weaknesses related to the policy environment. The issue of leakages is highly contentious since it ‘consists of import expenses incurred whenever the local economy is unable to supply relevant goods or services: remittances abroad of tourism income by expatriate labour and retention or repatriation of profit on the part of foreign-owned tourism enterprises’ (UNCTAD, 2001: 11). Thus, the report strongly suggests considering the strategy of reducing such leakages ‘by encouraging the involvement of local suppliers, local skills and domestic capital’ (ibid.).
However, the very nature of tourism is volatile because of its dependency on various externalities such as global political climate (e.g., post-9/11) as well as stability in the host country (e.g., Maoist insurgency in Nepal), spread of diseases (e.g., SARS). Besides, other factors affect business in general such as changes in purchasing power, as is currently happening due to financial/debt crisis in the relatively affluent parts of the world, and the taste and preferences of customers/tourists. However, criticism of increasing dependence on tourism, particularly from environmentalists\footnote{For example, a well known criticism is that swimming pools and golf courses use arable land and divert water from agriculture and local use.} and sociologists, bemoans the excessive emphasis given to its economic impact. The tourism sector is a complex one; it is not just linked to economic factors as mentioned above but also has an intense influence on social structures and people’s ways of living in host countries (Hochuli and Plüss, 2005).

Generally, key benefits highlighted from the expansion of tourism relate to economic benefits such as employment generation, which could be both direct employment such as jobs in hotels/resorts and indirect employment such as handicraft and floriculture jobs. For example, as a result of increased growth of tourism, employment opportunities for women in both formal and informal sectors were noted to have increased in countries like the Maldives, Nepal, Tanzania and Uganda (see Chaudhary, et al., 2006). At the macro level, the inflow of tourists and the money they spend is also given high importance since it results in foreign exchange earnings for the destination country (see Lea, 1993).
There are very few studies that analyse the impact of tourism industries on women per se. One notable study focusing on mainly the global south by Williams (2002) explains that one of the features of tourism is the capacity to absorb cheap labour, increasingly women’s labour. She argues that in the formal market, the sexual division of labour shunts women to the lowest paid jobs. Women’s employment in the informal sector takes many forms such as washing clothes, petty trading, floriculture and banking. She draws on some cases from Cambodia and Thailand where many women start working as housekeepers and later work in Karaoke bars or nightclubs. In terms of social and economic status, there could be positive aspects (e.g., increased women’s economic autonomy through employment) and negative aspects (e.g., tax breaks for hotels could divert resources from the social budget). Finally, she also acknowledges the struggle women are undergoing to have their voices reflected in tourism policy, which is generally male dominated (ibid.).

Work on gender and the labour market has highlighted the linkages between sexuality and gendered work. Studies on the tourism industry have also picked up these issues, from an analysis of holiday brochures to the nature of gendered work that operates in the tourism labour market, and show that gender relations in tourism work are constructed out of gendered societies (see Kinnard and Hall, 1994; Sinclair 1997.). Hence, sexuality is seen as an important factor for increasing the flow of customers and thereby increasing

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34 She explains the gender impact of tourism across four categories: 1) employment in the formal labour market; 2) women’s activities in the informal sector and sustainable livelihood; 3) women’s social and economic empowerment in terms of consumption and access to resources including government services and 4) women’s influence on decision making around tourism development policy (ibid.: 8).
the tourism business. Some authors have discussed issues of prostitution and sexual behaviour in the context of the tourism industry in general and the hotel industry in particular (see Heyzer, 1986; Crompton and Sanderson, 1990; Chant, 1997; Muroi and Sasaki, 1997). Moreover, as Enloe (2000: 36) notes, ‘sex tourism is not an anomaly; it is one strand of the gendered tourism’. Williams (2002) highlights the exploitation of women in the marketing of tourism, as they are ‘directly exploited as sexual play-things and earners of foreign exchange in prostitution (a traditional activity) and the new explosion of sex tourism’ (ibid.: 9). Moreover, women entering into prostitution not only incur health hazards, it is also dangerous, and once women join the sex tourism industry ‘it is made difficult for them to leave’ (Enloe, 2000: 36).

In addition, tourism is also known as the hospitality sector (see Crompton and Sanderson, 1990: 135), where the host and the guest interact in various ways resulting in diverse relationships that affect the growth and sustainability of the industry. Work in the service industry, particularly in hotels and restaurants where there is constant customer interaction, needs to be analysed beyond just occupational segregation or segmentation. Next, I discuss key literature on the hotel industry, followed by that concerning the casino industry.

**Hotel Industry**

Studies of work in the hotel industry illustrate that women and men experience different gendered occupational segregation (see Crompton and Sanderson, 1990; Levy and Lerch, 1991; Adkins, 1995; Sinclair, 1997). Women’s work is confined to traditional women’s
areas like housekeeping and reception duties, categorised as secondary labour and termed as ‘semi-skilled domestic work’. It is often viewed as an extension of their domestic and household activities. Women are also generally seasonal workers who face the risks of job insecurity. Men, predominantly, occupy skilled and managerial jobs.

The provision of ‘quality service’ in hotels is the epitome of customer satisfaction. Hicks (1990) mentions that the hotel industry gives the ‘personality’ of a person high weightage when recruiting. Further, the term ‘personality’ is often used to mean sexual attractiveness and/or certain specific feminine skills and attributes (Filby, 1992). Purcell (1996) adds that ‘sex-typed occupations’ in the hotel industry are often filled by hiring women workers. Hall (1993a: 456) explains that ‘[H]iring young attractive women and dressing them in uniforms to highlight their “sexy” looks is commonplace’. Adkins (1995: 126) states that women bar staff in the hotel she studied were required to wear their gingham dresses off their shoulders and sometimes bar managers would physically pull down their dresses to maintain the ‘appropriate’ appearance. Adkins (1995) notes female workers in particular being expected to cope with sexual advances from customers that are unwanted or demeaning, considering it to be part of the job.

Performing work in restaurants as waitresses is also said to be ‘doing gender’ by smiling and flirting (Hall, 1993a). Employees’ embodiment in service work creates affective interactive service with the customers with the intention of ‘satisfying the customer’. It also creates a perception that employees have to be ‘good looking’ or simply have the ‘right look’. It is this focus on ‘looks’ that can be analysed to identify the extension of
aesthetic labour to sexualised labour. In the words of Filby (1992) ‘selling the service’ also takes the form of ‘selling sexuality’.

There has also been an emphasis on the type of clientele in the hotel industry and its implications on the performance of workers. For example, Otis (2008: 32) in her study on hotels in China highlights that:

[E]xamining consumer markets rather than focusing on the roles of individual consumers, best explains the service strategies that firms use, as well as the specific tactics workers develop to maintain dignity. ... Hence, workers’ manners become subject to transformation, control, and surveillance to appeal to the patterned tastes, expectations and aspirations...among particular sets of consumers.

Eileen Otis in her book Markets and Bodies (Otis, 2012) has shown how different forms of femininity are performed; she relates performances of local and international femininity with the different clientele and ownership of the hotels studied. While such analysis is recent, I try to discuss such linkage in terms of the different kinds of femininities (and masculinities) that get performed as workers do their job in this research.

In Nepal, only a few studies (such as those by CBS, 2004; Khanal, 2005; and Upadhayay et al., 2011) on gendered employment in the hotels and resorts have
documented the masculinisation of the sector.\textsuperscript{35} One such study by Khanal (2005)\textsuperscript{36} notes that 16 percent of the workforce (159 out of 967 workers) in three five star hotels in Kathmandu were women. Male employees significantly outnumber females at both executive and non-executive levels; women consisted about 20 percent of the executive workforce and 16 percent of non-executive workforce. She also explored the reasons for gender differences and preferences in the selection of employees by using structured questionnaires to interview Heads of Personnel Departments and 20 employees (10 male and 10 female) from each hotel. She concludes that despite the huge potential for employment, female participation is very low and that men and women employees joined the hotel workforce for different reasons, with women joining to increase their self-esteem and men for economic reasons.

Moreover, Khanal limits her study by simply reporting the findings that managers preferred to employ women in some departments, such as the reservation, sales and marketing, guest relations, front desk and housekeeping departments, because women were considered to have more convincing and negotiating capacity than men as well as qualities such as patience, being soft spoken, politeness and dedication to work. Based on responses from 20 workers (male and female) about which kind of job suited them best; male workers mentioned jobs in the front office and women responded by mentioning housekeeping. This study suggests that perceptions of workers and managers are shaped

\textsuperscript{35} I discuss these studies in the section on labour force participation of women in Chapter Two.

\textsuperscript{36} Amidst the very little literature on women’s employment in hotels, Khanal (2005) is one study which attempts to analyse gendered employment in five star hotels. The data is gathered from three five star hotels - Hotel de l’ Annapurna, The Everest Hotel and Hyatt Regency Hotel. This is a thesis written for a post graduate diploma in Women’s Studies Programme in Nepal.
by gendered ideologies of masculinity and femininity, however, Khanal does not analyse her findings in this way, limiting herself to reporting them; a gendered analysis of the data could have enriched her analysis. This is the only study of women working in the hotel sector in Nepal.

_Casino Industry_

The few studies of the casino industry (concentrated in Las Vegas and Nevada) demonstrate that the industry employs a high number of young women workers who work under strict human and electronic surveillance (see Enarson, 1993; Jones and Chandler, 2001; Chandler and Jones, 2003; 2007; Sallez, 2005), are regulated on their appearance (Jones and Chandler, 2007) and work as emotion workers\(^\text{37}\) (Enarson, 1993). In general, all these studies indicate that monetary gains from casino work have brought material comfort in women’s lives (for example, being able to buy a house with the earnings, despite having low education levels and no technical skill) and ‘sometimes gave them the means to escape violent domestic relationships’ (Chandler and Jones, 2003: 190).

Gaming is ‘a rigorously controlled universe’ (Jones and Chandler, 2007) and card dealing roles are highly gendered, being mostly filled by women (Enarson, 1993). Card dealers also known as croupiers, are the front-line employees and represent the casino to customers (Sallez, 2005). They are also the ones on whom the casino relies for maximising their profit. In Nevada, Enarson (1993: 219) argues that casino management strategically place women as card dealers, ‘utilising socially constructed gender relations

\(^{37}\) Enarson (1993) uses the term emotion workers to denote workers who perform emotional labour.
(e.g., authority relations), dimensions of personality (e.g., interational skills), and economic status (e.g., self-supporting women and mothers) to maintain male-authority on the casino floor, retain customers in a competitive market, and increase control over the workforce. Moreover, every move of the card dealer is under high scrutiny with cameras fitted on the ceilings pointing to control over women’s bodies by casinos under an ‘eye-in-the sky’ (Jones and Chandler, 2007).

In casinos, the age, looks and body image of women appear to be crucial for women workers both to get employed and then to remain in the job. Enarson (1993) shows that the female workforce in casinos is stratified (by looks and age) and that dealers are sexualised and commodified. She further notes that ‘managers employ stereotypical notions of male vulnerability to female appearance ... [and] older women dealers ... worry about their future; they feel fortunate to be employed in an industry that thrives on the “young, sexy image”’ (ibid.: 222). Women workers’ bodies are also used and abused in casinos (Jones and Chandler, 2007). While both male and female card dealers face verbal abuse from customers, the sexualised workplace and the readily available alcohol ‘further disempower female dealers’ despite supervisors’ interventions on behalf of the card dealer when customers become too abusive (Enarson, 1993: 227). Moreover, apart from having ‘technical mastery’ and ‘physical stamina’ dealers are required to perform as emotion workers (doing emotional labour) whilst ‘cultivating charm’; and they also face verbal harassment (ibid.: 225-227).
Jones and Chandler (2007: 150) note that despite the bodies of women workers being regulated and controlled, women resist with ‘creative and subversive expressions’ and union activism helped. They highlight the ‘Kiss My Foot’ movement of casino waitresses that protest against casinos’ high-heel requirement (ibid.: 158-159). Chandler and Jones (2003) also stress the collective power of the trade union that reinforced pride in the jobs of women casino workers. Similarly, Sallez (2005: 51) notes that card dealers in a South African casino used three interpersonal defences when facing irate customers who have lost their money: submission (apologising for the customer’s misfortune by adopting a repentant pose); dissociation (deploying a thick skin by ignoring the customer); and counter-attack (striking back at customers with varying degrees of subtlety).

In Nepal, Upadhayay et al. (2011) carried out a field survey in 2008 showing that in 10 casinos of the country, women are employed in large numbers. They limit their analysis of women’s employment in casinos by presenting gendered workforce data in the casinos in the form of a graph. Drawing on their data, it shows that 35 percent of the casino workforce was women. Apart from Upadhayay et al. (2011) there is no other study or data that I know of which explores women’s work in the casinos of Nepal.

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38 Jones and Chandler (2007) highlight that casino management worked to use and control women’s bodies resulting in women facing health problems: housekeeping women have pain in their knees, card dealers hurt their back and waitresses’ feet are damaged. Casino waitresses called their movement – ‘Kiss My Foot’.

39 I have calculated this figure from the data provided in figure 5.2 (page 126) of Upadhayay et al., 2011.
Research Questions

The above reviewed literatures on the hotel and casino industry demonstrate that depending on the context, work is gendered; satisfying the customer requires workers to work with their emotions, looks are important and work is sexualised. It can also be said that workers are often ‘doing’ gender when they do gendered work and perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour in various (interactive) service sectors. Gendered work is also shaped by organisational structures and practices which have implications for who does what and how. Alongside this, workers also use various strategies to resist different aspects of their work.

Moreover, women’s paid work contributes to bringing material changes to their own and their families’ lives. It is, however, important to examine the processes through which such changes take place; as factors such as family structure and the type of paid work women do have different implications for their experiences as workers and for their empowerment.

I am interested in understanding and exploring how gendered work is constructed in hotels, resorts and casinos and also the extent to which such paid work empowers women. As mentioned earlier, there is a lack of research on women’s work in hotels and casinos and its linkage with women’s empowerment in the Nepalese context. I aim to contribute to filling this gap by addressing the following three research questions in this thesis:
How is gendered work constructed in hotels, resorts and casinos in Nepal?

To what extent do men and women perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour?

To what extent does paid work in hotels, resorts and casinos empower women?

Addressing these questions requires understanding women’s (and men’s) experiences of and the meanings they attach to their work, the kind of work they do, how they do such work and how doing such work relates to their empowerment. Perspectives of others – male workers, male family members, managers and policy experts – also need to be taken into account in order to understand gender as a relational concept. I now move on to describe the conceptual framework that I use in this research.

Conceptual Framework

Informed by my literature review, I develop a conceptual framework that provides insights into the realm of paid work in the hotels and casinos, contributes to understanding and valuing women’s work and examines the extent to which paid work empowers women. Context is paramount in order to understand (interactive) service work, but there is a need to look at not only who does what work but also how the work is being done. This necessitates the linkage of gendered work, emotional labour, aesthetic labour and sexualised labour, particularly in the case of the hospitality industry (within the broader interactive service industry).
The conceptual framework consists of five key concepts: gendered work, emotional labour, aesthetic labour, sexualised labour and empowerment. I use the first four concepts that are interrelated to explore the sociology of work in the hotels and casinos whilst using the concept of empowerment to examine the extent to which such paid work empowers women.

To explore the construction of gendered work I use Acker’s (1990) framework of gendered organisation, gendered jobs and hierarchies; further analysing the gender division of labour using the concept of occupational segregation (Hakim, 1981). I use the concepts of emotional labour, aesthetic labour and sexualised labour to examine how gendered work is ‘done’ and the extent to which it empowers women. Using Hochschild’s categorisation of ‘surface’ and ‘deep acting’ (Hochschild, [1983]2003), I also examine what happens when workers fail to engage in emotional labour. While analysing aesthetic labour, I use the framework of Warhurst et al. (2000) to look into the three areas of ‘pre-entry, internal and external’ to explore the meanings and practices attached to workers appearances or looks. While analysing (hetero)sexualised labour, I use the framework of Warhurst and Nickson (2009) to examine the three differing forms in which employee sexuality is: sanctioned; subscribed to and prescribed by management. I also examine how workers resist at work looking into individual and collective form of resistance; examining the ‘subtle, routine and low levels of struggle and challenges’ (see Thomas and Davies, 2005) that women face and the strategies they develop to resist.
I draw on Kabeer’s conceptualisation of empowerment\(^{40}\) whereby empowerment refers to one’s ability to make strategic life choices; choices that have been hitherto denied and which considers that ‘empowerment is a process of change’ (Kabeer, 2001: 18-19). I use the framework of Kabeer (2001) to assess empowerment at three possible levels: immediate levels that refer to individual’s resources, agency and achievements; intermediate levels that refer to institutional rules and relations; and deeper levels that refer to shifts in the hidden structures, which shape the distribution of resources and power in a society and reproduce it over time.

Overall, I argue that my conceptual framework is original as it brings together different concepts and approaches that contribute to an exploration of gendered work and women’s empowerment in the hotels, resorts and casinos of Nepal. Paying attention to the structural and interactional levels of how gendered work is constructed, to what extent men and women workers perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour as part of doing gendered work, and the extent to which such paid work empowers women will provide an insight into the nature of (interactive) service work in these sectors and its relation to women’s empowerment.

As mentioned earlier, since context is of paramount significance, in the next chapter I discuss the context in which this research has taken place. I explain the Nepalese context focusing on the tourism industry, hotels and casinos and the status of women.

\(^{40}\) As mentioned earlier, fuzziness and heated debates on the meaning of the term empowerment exist. It is therefore important for me to clarify how I conceptualise empowerment in this research.
Chapter 2: The Nepalese Context: Tourism, Hotels, Casinos and Women

Introduction

This chapter provides background information on the Nepalese context in which this research has been conducted; context is important as it has implications for the interpretation of the findings. I briefly explain the political situation and economy focusing on the tourism industry, and give an overview of the hotels and casinos. I then move on to elucidate the labour force participation in the economy, paying particular attention to women’s participation. Next I highlight various literatures in which women’s empowerment in Nepal is discussed, focusing on government plans and policies. This is followed by a discussion on the political instability of the country and its implications for the tourism industry and for women. Finally, I deal with the issues relating to labour disputes and the role of the trade union in the hotels and casinos.

Politics, Economy and Tourism

On the world map, Nepal is a landlocked, almost rectangular-shaped, country. The People’s Republic of China in the north and India in the east, west and south means that Nepal is sandwiched between two of the largest economies in the world. Geographically from east to west, the country is divided into three regions: Mountain (Himalaya); Hill; and Plains (also called Terai). Nepal has an ethnically diverse population of 26.62
million comprising 48.56 percent male and 51.44 percent female (CBS, 2011a). Nepal is an epitome of ‘socio-cultural pluralism’ where four racial groups, 60 languages, several religions and 12 traditional ethnic clusters co-exist (Bhattachan, 2001: 77).

Nepal was ruled by autocratic regimes either of Shah or Rana dynasty since the 18th century, with a brief interlude of democratic polity in 1958-1959. After the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990, several permutations and combinations of governments have been formed under the twin pillars of parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. However, none of them have been able to provide political stability. The armed insurgency waged by the Nepal Communist Party (Maoists) between 1996 and 2006 further fuelled the instability.

After the Maoist party that was formed in 1996 was brought into mainstream politics in 2006, an Interim Constitution was promulgated in 2007, which was said to have laid the foundation for charting a new political trajectory. According to this Constitution, which is still the supreme law of the land, the executive power of the country is vested in the Prime Minister, who is elected by the Parliament, and the President is Head of the State as well as the guardian of the Constitution. After the Constituent Assembly elections were held in 2008, Nepal was declared a secular democratic republic (Srivastava and Sharma, 2010). Although the main purpose of the Constituent Assembly was to write a new Constitution, it also acted as the Parliament of the Country. However, the major task

41 In 2001, Nepal had a population of 23.15 million; 49.95 percent were male and 50.05 percent were female (CBS, 2011a). Also see Bhattachan (2001) on ethnic diversity.
42 See generally Dixit (2011) and Srivastava and Sharma (2010).
of writing a new Constitution could not be completed even after its original two year term was extended till the end of the fourth year. On 27 May 2012, the term of the Constituent Assembly expired with the Government declaring fresh elections to the Constituent Assembly (Chapagain and Yardley, 2012). The present government led by the United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) was directed by the President to function as a caretaker, which, by implication, does not have the power to take decisions that could have long term political and economic repercussions (Dahal, 2012).

The Nepalese economy, once dependent on agriculture, is gradually moving towards a service-oriented economy. As shown in Figure 2.1 below, the service sector is emerging as a robust sector. In 2000/01, the service sector constituted 47 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)\textsuperscript{43} which increased to nearly 52 percent in 2010/11.\textsuperscript{44}

Further, between 2004/05 and 2010/11 trade in services accounted for nearly 70 percent of total convertible foreign exchange and the share of service trade income increased from 62.4 percent in 2004/05 to 72.6 percent in 2010/11 (MoF, 2011).\textsuperscript{45} Within service trade income, the average income from tourism is recorded as the second highest (12.4 percent) after remittances (83.7 percent) during the same period (ibid.).\textsuperscript{46} Hence, within the services sector, tourism is the second largest source of foreign exchange earnings of the country.

\textsuperscript{43} Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is ‘the total value of new goods and services produced in a given year within the borders of a country, regardless of by whom’ (Deardorff, 2010).

\textsuperscript{44} See Appendix 1(a): Sectoral share of GDP and growth rate, 2000/01-2010/11.

\textsuperscript{45} The Economic Survey 2011 notes that this figure for merchandise trade shared only 13.1 percent of total convertible foreign exchange earnings.

\textsuperscript{46} Remittances from migrant workers are the largest source of foreign exchange earnings of the country which has been contributing to stabilizing the economy.
The image of Nepal is built around the image of ‘Shangri-La’ to attract tourists (Bhattarai et al., 2005). The successful ascent of Mt. Everest in 1953 by a Nepali (Tenzing Sherpa) and a New Zealander (Sir Edmund Hillary) is a milestone in the history of tourism in Nepal. As mentioned in the Tourism Marketing Strategy for Nepal (2005-2020), the country ‘developed as one of the world's most fashionable long haul exotic destinations through the 1970s, '80s and '90s. During this period, visitor numbers grew from a meagre 45,000 to just under half a million and the country largely pioneered the concept of trekking tourism’ (Travers, 2004: 2).
Since the development of tourism in Nepal dates back to the 1950s, the tourism industry has been recognised as one of the economically planned development sectors and reflected in the country’s first five-year plan document (1956-61). However, it was the eighth five-year development plan (1992-97) that recognised the important role of women in tourism and focused on the development of their skills, providing education and vocational training for women. Grandon (2007) highlights that Sherpa women had been actively involved in cooking and providing porter services for mountaineers since the 1920s and 1930s, and mountain tourism can be said to be the first area where Nepali women started their association with institutionalised tourism activities (also see Upadhayaya et al., 2011).

At present, the economic development of the country is guided by a Three Year Plan (2010/11 – 2012/13) which prioritises employment creation and economic growth in the tourism industry, along with agriculture and export trade. The Plan (NPC 2010: 95) further aims ‘to generate greater employment opportunities, reduce poverty, and maintain regional balance and economic growth by developing and expanding tourism industry’ and ‘to develop Nepal as a major tourist destination in the world’.

The government of Nepal has been striving to promote tourism in various ways; notable amongst them are the launch of Visit Nepal Year programme in 1998 followed by Nepal

47 The plan document mentions: ‘Priority will be accorded to employment creation and economic growth by providing priority to agriculture sector, tourism, industry, and export trade (NPC, 2010: 18).’
Tourism Year in 2011. Similarly, the government has declared 2012 to be ‘Visit Lumbini Year’, demonstrating its continued commitment towards the promotion of tourism.\footnote{Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha, is one of ten world heritage sites of Nepal. Others include: Kathmandu valley with seven monumental zones, Sagarmatha National Park and Chitwan National Park. Available from: http://whc.unesco.org/en/list [accessed March 9, 2012]. Lord Buddha is known worldwide as a spiritual leader and Lumbini is being developed as a Buddhist pilgrimage centre.} Besides, the new Tourism Policy 2009 and Home Stay Tourism Operation Work Procedure 2010 are some of the major initiatives within the realm of national tourism policies and programmes. The Nepal Tourism Board also claims that the country has something to offer everyone, and for all age groups (NTB, 2008). Moreover, the government aims to increase the growth of tourism describing Nepal as ‘the country of extremes’ in the following manner:

Land of lofty Himalayas and deep valleys, fertile Terai and green hills, stumbling rivers and lakes, tropical heat and piercing chill dense forest and vast grass lands, dazzling sunshine and dark caves, torrential rain and prickly sun, colourful merry festivals and calm severe meditation, Nepal is the country of extremes (NTB, 2008: 133).

Recognising the importance of increasing tourist inflow into the country, the government planned to attract one million tourists in 2011, although it was able to achieve only around 80 percent of the target. Based on Tourism Statistics, the number of tourists visiting Nepal has increased in the past few years (MoTCA, 2010).\footnote{See Appendix 1(b): Tourist Arrival by Month, 1991-2011.} In 2010, the arrival of around six hundred thousand and in 2011 the arrival of around seven hundred and fifty
thousand tourists demonstrates the growth of tourism industry. Furthermore, at the start of 2012, four five star hotels planned to expand by adding 370 rooms as a result of the increase in tourist arrivals (New Business Age, 2012: 24).\textsuperscript{50} This shows that hotel sector is expected to grow with the increase in tourists’ inflow.

While there exists a wide range of documents and research on hotels as a sector from government and hotel related associations/organisations; it is not the case for casinos. Moreover, not being able to collect historical information on the growth of casinos (mainly from government statistics) raises various questions that have implications on how casinos as an economic sector have been operating. Thus, I next present an overview of hotels and casinos in different ways based on the information available.

\textit{An Overview of Hotels}

In the 1950s when mountain climbing became popular, camping accommodation was widely prevalent.\textsuperscript{51} The first hotel, Royal Hotel with 40 rooms was established in 1955 by Boris Lissanevitch, a Russian national (see Sedai, 2011). Along with the growth of the tourism industry came the growth of the hotel sector. The first plan document (1956-61) recognised training of human resources as important for translating plans into actions, the second plan (1962-65) emphasised modern hotel accommodation and the third plan (1965-70) emphasised the establishment of international standard hotels in three major cities: Kathmandu, Pokhara and Biratnagar. The Hotel Association of Nepal

\textsuperscript{50} The four hotels are Yak & Yeti, Shangri-La, de l’Annapurna and Everest.
\textsuperscript{51} In 1950 Maurice Herzog and his team scaled Mount Annapurna and in 1953 Tenzing Sherpa and Edmund Hillary first scaled Mount Everest (Sedai, 2011).
(HAN) that has a membership of formal registered hotels in the country was established in 1967. The fourth plan (1970-75) focused on expanding the hotel sector with the formation of the first Tourism Master Plan and the establishment of the Hotel Management and Tourism Training Centre (HMTTC). The first training centre in the tourism and hospitality sector, in 1972. The Tourism Act 1978 and Hotel, Lodge, Restaurant, Bar and Tour Guide Regulation 1981 are two pieces of legislation related to the establishment and operation of all forms of tourism related enterprises, including accommodation (see GoN, 1978; 1981). In 1998 the Government of Nepal published the criteria for the classification of resorts and star rated hotels in the Gazette (GoN, 1998).

The growth in hotels (including resorts) and restaurants as a category within the tourism industry has been fluctuating for the past decade like any other economic sector, primarily due to political instability in the country. As shown in Figure 2.2, while hotels and restaurants contributed to two percent share of GDP in 2000/01, this rate is estimated to be around 1.8 percent in 2010/11. From an almost negative growth rate in 2001/02, the sector improved with an impressive growth rate of 12.74 in 2003/04. Thereafter, the growth rate has been fluctuating, with some steady progress from 2009/10 onwards.

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52 HMTTC in 1998 was converted into Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM) incorporating academic courses in hotel and tourism management along with various training related to the hospitality industry.


54 I will discuss political instability later in this chapter.

55 The increase in tourists during 2003/04 is because of the peace agreement which was a formal end to the armed conflict in the country.
The hotel sector has been growing with a concentration in Kathmandu Valley where more than half of the hotels are situated. According to the Tourism Statistics 2010, among 789 hotels (an estimate), 464 are in Kathmandu Valley. Likewise, out of 10 five-star hotels, eight of them are in Kathmandu (MoTCA, 2010). Kathmandu valley comprises three urban areas: Bhaktapur, Lalitpur and Kathmandu, which are noted as the central tourist hubs. Moreover, according to Bhattarai et al. (2005), the ‘ruling elite and merchant-class’ predominantly are involved in the hotel business; among 706 hotels in 1997, 43 percent were owned by the two traditional ruling families from the Shah and Rana, followed by 23 percent by Indian Marwari merchants and 16 percent by local Newars.
The Economic Survey 2011 shows the growth of hotels from 68 (40 star and 28 non-star) in 1979 to an estimate of 789 hotels (103 star and 686 non-star) in 2010, which has surpassed many challenges such as the political instability (MoF, 2011). However, these only include formal recorded accommodation facilities, not tea houses along the major trekking trails, home stays\textsuperscript{56} or community-managed public accommodation enterprises such as monastery lodges, community lodges/guesthouses, cooperative lodges etc. (Sedai, 2011).

An Overview of Casinos

The history of casinos in Nepal dates back to the 1960s when Mr. Richard Doyle Tuttle, an American national, established the first casino – Casino Nepal – at Soaltee Oberoi, one of the five star hotels, partly owned by the (then) Royal family. At that time, it was Nepalese who were the customers of the casino, and \textit{Cowrie}\textsuperscript{57} was largely played. Later when many Nepalese started losing vast sums and became addicted to gambling, legal provisions under the Gambling Act (1963) prohibited Nepali citizens to gamble (see GoN, 1963). The preamble of the Act mentions: ‘Whereas, it is expedient to impose restrictions on gambling or causing gambling for economic interest and good conduct of Nepalese citizens’. Along with the liberalisation of the economy, post democracy (1990s), the casino business expanded when the Nepal Recreation Centre, a private limited company obtained an operating license from the Ministry of Tourism and Civil

\textsuperscript{56} Home-Stay programs were promoted during 2010 as part of developing rural tourism in Nepal. This can be operated on an individual as well as community basis.

\textsuperscript{57} A traditional gambling game that uses a conch shaped shell (played similar to throwing dice) that is still practiced in some parts of the country.
Aviation. This Ministry also grants permission to the five star hotels who then sign an agreement with casinos that hold the operating license. Thus, the Nepal Recreation Centre signed an agreement with several five-star hotels to operate the various casinos housed within them.

Later, Mr. Rakesh Wadhwa, an Indian national and a chartered accountant by profession who had been working with Mr. Tuttle in the casino business, slowly took over the casinos in Nepal. A tussle between these two businessmen and over control of the casinos led to increased interest of concerned government authorities, the media and the workers in investigating the operation of casinos. Further, the tussle was reflected in the Nepal Recreation Centre and its casinos failing to pay royalties and taxes to the government. On 28 December 2010, the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament directed the government to scrap the licenses of all casinos failing to clear their dues within 35 days, upon which time only two casinos paid the due taxes.\(^{58}\) On 14 February 2011, the Department of Revenue Investigation formally requested the Tourism Ministry to scrap the licenses of other casinos if they failed to pay taxes and royalties. Casinos are required to pay 20 million Nepalese Rupees (approximately 153,850 Sterling Pounds)\(^{59}\) as a royalty fee every year to the government. It is interesting to note that the hotels at this point were taken aback and although they argued that it was the responsibility of casinos to pay royalties to the government, legally it was the hotels that were provided with the licenses and not the casinos.

\(^{58}\) Casino Everest housed at Hotel Everest and Casino Tara housed at Hyatt Regency Hotel paid the taxes (Prashain, 2012).

\(^{59}\) Based on the exchange rate as of July 22, 2012 [http://www.nrb.org.np](http://www.nrb.org.np), when 1 pound Sterling = 138.18 Nepalese Rupees
As the casinos came under public scrutiny due to tax evasion, so also the trade unions in casinos started to question casino management about the high level of profits earned by them which then resulted in strikes and protests. In some casinos, such as Casino Nepal, it was reported that the staff had not received their salary for three months and the casino had failed to deposit their provident fund\(^60\) for the previous 29 months (ibid.). The closing and opening of casinos was ongoing as negotiations between management and trade unions continued (see Prashain, 2012). This indicates the fragile employment situation in casinos which has implications for workers’ income and job security.

Unlike with hotels, there is almost nothing published on casinos apart from articles in local media that has in the past few years started reporting cases of crime assumed to be committed by regular Nepali casino customers, and an enquiry by the government into tax revenue from the casinos. The casino operation has remained an area largely untouched by researchers, although a few journalists started investigating their operations once issues related to social crime and labour disputes increased. For example, Shrestha (2010) in an article published in a news magazine argued that the lives of some Nepalese have been destroyed as they regularly gamble in the casinos. It is also mentioned that the ‘Nepal Police has issued arrest warrants against the operators of five casinos, charging them with allowing Nepali citizens to gamble on their premises’ (ibid.).

\(^{60}\) The term provident fund, commonly used in South Asia, is similar to pension fund in the United Kingdom.
Eight five-star hotels in Kathmandu and two in Pokhara\textsuperscript{61} operate casinos under special government licenses that only allow them to admit foreign customers. While gambling as such is illegal for Nepalese citizens, the irony remains that it is mostly Nepali citizens who are the main customers of the casinos.\textsuperscript{62} With an overview of the hotels and casinos, I now present the labour force participation of the economy, paying particular attention to women’s labour force participation.

**Labour Force Participation and Women**

Based on the Nepal Labour Force Survey,\textsuperscript{63} Table 2.1 demonstrates the changes in the labour force participation of the economy for the population aged 15 years and above. It is important to note that since 1993, the definition of economic activity (based on System of National Accounts as per the United Nations Manual) includes extended economic activities such as water and fuel collection and processing of secondary products for domestic use (Acharya, 2007).

\footnote{Pokhara is a lake city around 200 km west of Kathmandu, which is the second major tourist destination in Nepal after Kathmandu.}

\footnote{This information is based on discussion with managers and workers of casinos in this research.}

\footnote{The Nepal Labour Force Survey (NLFS) provides the official statistics on labour. There have been two surveys conducted so far – the NLFS 1998/99 and NLFS 2008. Jobs are classified using the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC Rev. 3) based on United Nations, International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities, Third revision, New York, 1990 (CBS, 2009: 12).}
As mentioned earlier, the Nepalese economy that once depended on agriculture is slowly moving towards reliance on the services sector. In 2010/11, the services sector’s contribution to the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 52 percent whereas in 2000/01 it was only 47 percent. As can be seen from Table 2.1, women constituted 53 percent of the workforce in 2008. Other than agriculture, manufacturing, and wholesale, retail and trade, where most women work, the highest proportion of women is found in hotel and restaurant trade. In 2008, women’s participation was higher than that of men in three sectors: agriculture and forestry (61 percent), electricity and gas and water (64 percent); and private household\(^{64}\) (58 percent).

\(^{64}\) According to CBS (1999: 139), private household workers mean ‘persons employed to work in private households (e.g., domestic servants).’
### Table 2.1: Labour force participation for population of 15 years and above, 1998/99 and 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISIC code</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Figures in Thousands</th>
<th>1998/99 *</th>
<th>2008 **</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01-02</td>
<td>Agriculture and forestry</td>
<td>3164</td>
<td>4026</td>
<td>7190</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(44)</td>
<td>(56)</td>
<td>(39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(92)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mining and quarrying</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(75)</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>(70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-37</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(66)</td>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>(61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-41</td>
<td>Electricity, gas and water</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(92)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(36)</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>344</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(85)</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-52</td>
<td>Wholesale, retail &amp; trade</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>408</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(69)</td>
<td>(31)</td>
<td>(65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Hotels and restaurants</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>115</td>
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<td>(55)</td>
<td>(45)</td>
<td>(48)</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Transport, storage &amp; communication</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>136</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(96)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(96)</td>
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<tr>
<td>65-67</td>
<td>Financial intermediation</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(89)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(69)</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>Real estate, renting &amp; business</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(81)</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>(81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Public administration &amp; defense</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(91)</td>
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<td>(88)</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>Education</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(77)</td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td>(66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Health &amp; social work</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(79)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>Other community, social activities</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(89)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Private household workers</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(28)</td>
<td>(72)</td>
<td>(42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98</td>
<td>Extra territorial organizations</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(89)</td>
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<td>(80)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4737</td>
<td>4726</td>
<td>9463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(50)</td>
<td>(50)</td>
<td>(47)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note - Figures in parenthesis are percentage of the industry workforce.
ISIC stands for International Standard Industrial Classification.

Source: Author’s calculation based on CBS (1999) and CBS (2009)
Women in rural Nepal are engaged in day-to-day farming activities including the production of crops (including cash crops) and caring for livestock. There has been some research (see Fortier, 1993; Hassan and Shields, 2010; Pradhan, 1983) on the role of women in agriculture sector. Hassan and Shields (2010) highlights the high dependence of women on agriculture and that changes in gender roles have its impact on women’s productivity and earnings in agriculture. Fortier (1993) notes that in western Nepal (Jajarkot district), women performed many such tasks including artisanal work, food processing and caring for livestock.65

Another study, Pradhan (1983) studies the role of women in rice farming systems66 where women are engaged in producing yields of various crops and in the overall production systems including agricultural management. However, women’s contributions are ‘not perceived by themselves or the men as a particular feature of the household economy or of the national economy’, which could be because women’s engagement in agricultural production is embedded in their household roles in the family farm sector (Pradhan, 1983: 257). Women did 87 percent of the food processing work, which includes threshing, drying, seed selection, storage, grading, cleaning and winnowing (ibid: 256).

65 The study also mentions that socio-cultural practices, such as patron–client relations (tenancy relations) have been integral to agricultural production.
66 The study focuses on two villages – Bulu in Kathmandu Valley and Bakundol in Banepa (in close proximity to Kathmandu Valley) that are the most intensive rice growing villages in the study.
While agricultural activities remain dominant in the rural areas, women are also engaged in various other activities. The caste system in Nepal is found to have implications for the kind of work that men and women engage in the economy (see Blaikie et al., (2002); Cameron, [1998]2005; Rankin, 2010). For example, Blaikie et al., (2002: 1260) note that while off-farm income was important for the continued survival of rural households and crucial for all social classes, ‘off farm employment was socially selective by gender, class and/or ethnic group or caste.’

A study based on the Newar merchant community of Sankhu (a place near Kathmandu Valley and populated by people of the Newar ethnic group) shows that married women engage in business-related activities. They invested their private dowry property (cash and livestock) which helps them in building their capital without compromising ideologies of seclusion (Rankin, 2010). Rankin also notes that women from Newar community often take over family enterprises, such as butchering services of the meat cutter, when male family members migrate, but when male migrants return patriarchal principles are quickly reestablished (ibid: 123). Another study by Cameron ([1985]2005: 97) notes that male migration to India and from the middle hills to southern Nepal has increased women’s workload, more so that of low-caste women.

In Bhalara (a place in Bajhang district in the far western Nepal), Cameron ([1985]2005: 99) finds that in the past there were some kinds of work like ‘threshing cut rice and wheat, chopping wood with an axe…and carrying manure fertilizer to the fields in doko (baskets)’ that were considered ‘to be impure for high-caste women, too difficult for all women, or likely to take women away from the home and into “public” spaces of activity
considered inappropriate for them.’ Such work has over the years been taken up by women particularly low-caste women.\textsuperscript{67} While all women in the study were found to be working more hours productive and reproductive work, it was upper-caste women are the main farmers and work the most hours in both family farm production and reproductive and domestic work (ibid: 92-93). Cameron (1995:217) also mentions that in the context of changing landholding relations, lower-caste women’s labour in Nepal are a historical consequence of both their gender and their caste positions in the society. Thus, rural women’s work in rural Nepal, in particular, is shaped by gender, caste and landholding status (ibid: 237).

Therefore, the above literature provides an overview of women’s role in the economy particularly in the agricultural sector. It shows that along with the geographical location, caste makes a difference in the kind of work in which women are engaged in the economy and that a range of activities are involved often guided by socio-cultural norms, some of which have been changing over the years.

However, there is not much literature on women’s role in manufacturing or services sector compared to the agriculture sector. One notable study by Meena Acharya (IIDS, 1994) highlights women in urban areas employed in the informal sector; a significant proportion of manufacturing takes places within the household. Women are also becoming industrial workers in the formal sector, where they are engaged in

\textsuperscript{67} Other than ploughing which was a male dominated job (this has changed over the years, as women also plough fields), men have not substituted other forms of farm labour. Men are also noted to have increased leisure time than women (see Cameron, [1985]2005).
the textile and garment industries, carpet manufacturing units and plastics and electric goods supply sub-sectors (see Adhikari, 2007; Adhikari and Ghimire, 2003; IIDS: 67-68). While there is scarce literature on women’s role in services sector, from observation women are seen working in establishments like hotels and restaurants, casinos, hospitals, banks, schools and as sales personnel. I limit my account on women’s contribution in manufacturing and services sector based on the statistics in Table 2.1 above.

In addition, Figure 2.3 below shows the gender breakdown of employment in different sectors of the economy in 1998/99 and 2008. While the majority of workers were concentrated in the agriculture and forestry sector in both periods, their share was lower in 2008 than in 1998/99. According to the Nepal Living Standard Survey 2010/11, cereal crops such as paddy, maize, wheat, millet and legumes are the major agricultural production of the country.

Based on 2008 data, women are concentrated in agriculture and forestry (84.24 percent) followed by manufacturing (4.87 percent) and wholesale, retail and trade (3.91 percent). Some of the key manufacturing industries include handmade-knotted carpets, handicrafts, pashmina products, tea and other herbal products, pulses, etc. Within the services sector, 1.65 percent of all women in the labour force are concentrated in the hotel and restaurant sector. Figure 2.3 also shows that women working as private household workers consisted 4.42 percent of all women in the workforce in 1998/99 while by 2008, this figure had decreased to 0.3 percent, indicating an increase in women’s participation as paid workers.
in other sectors of the economy. There have also been some compensating changes as those women, who solely collect firewood, for example, have been classified in the agriculture and forestry group, and those collecting water have been classified in the electricity, gas and water industry. Earlier in the 1998/99 survey, these women were classified under the private household industry.

Figure 2.3: Sectoral share of male and female employment, 1998/99 and 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and forestry</td>
<td>66.79</td>
<td>85.19</td>
<td>62.09</td>
<td>84.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>7.73</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>8.50</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale, retail &amp; trade</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>8.10</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, storage &amp; comm</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (residual)</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private household workers</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration &amp; defense</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other community, social activities</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s calculation based on CBS (1999) and CBS (2009)

According to ISIC Rev. 3, on the basis of which the industries are coded, hotels and restaurants (code 55) show an increase in the proportion of the female workforce in hotels.
and restaurants from 45 percent in 1998/99 to 52 percent in 2008. Casinos (code 92) are included under code 90-93 (other community, social activities).\(^68\) Due to a lack of detailed data, it is not known to what extent there were any changes in the casino workforce.

Following this, some data on the gendered workforce in hotels and resorts have shown that the proportion of women in the total workforce is limited to 18 percent. For example, in 2003 a sample survey of 86 star-rated hotels and 161 resorts (see CBS, 2004)\(^69\) in different parts of the country, showed women to constitute 18 percent of the total workforce in hotels (1,162 women out of 6,572 hotel workers) and 9 percent in resorts (190 women out of 2,146 workers). A recent publication demonstrating field survey data in 2008 notes that 18 percent of the workforce in 10 five star hotels (655 women out of 3,639 workers) in the country were women (Upadhyay et al., 2011). Thus, gendered workforce data show that women workers are significantly outnumbered by male workers in hotels and resorts. Further, as also mentioned in Chapter One, data illustrated by Upadhyay et al. (2011) show in 2008, women constituted 35 percent of the total casino workforce (out of 5,874 casino workers, 2039 were women) in 10 casinos of Nepal.

According to CBS (2011b), the literacy rate of women is lower than that of men; 43.3 percent of the female population of 15 years and above is literate in comparison with 70.7


\(^69\) The data is based on sample survey and does not reflect the actual number of women working in all hotels. There is also no gendered workforce data in the non-star category of hotels.
percent of men in the same category. Women also lack access to formal education at all levels in comparison with men. Moreover, access to education is difficult for girls and the curriculum is stereotyped and gender insensitive. The low level of education and lack of adequate skills leads to women being employed in low status jobs within the public and private sectors and they often find themselves working in domestic work and in exploitative situations (see FWLD and CMC, 2011).

Besides the formal school system, vocational training is said to ‘play a useful role in developing the skills of the workforce’ (CBS, 2009: 48). The Labour force Survey in 2008 estimates that over a million people (1,030 thousand) have received formal training (ibid.); some of the main subjects of training are illustrated in Table 2.2 below.

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70 According to CBS (2011b: 80), ‘Literacy has been defined as the ability both to read and to write. A literate person is one who can both read and write a short, simple statement in any language on his or her everyday life.’

71 See Appendix 1(c): Literacy rate and level of education completed.
Table 2.2: Main subjects of vocational and professional training received by men and women, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High share of</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In Thousands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Teacher Training</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(61)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(39)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computer science</td>
<td>153.</td>
<td>96.5</td>
<td>249.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(61)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(39)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electrician</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(98)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(68)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(32)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agriculture, Animal husbandry</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(98)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Driving Skills and Motor Vehicle Operation</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(92)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooking and Food Preparation</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(94)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Police (security) Work</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(93)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Craft, Trade and Industrial</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(95)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Hairdressing, Beauty Work</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>185.1</td>
<td>206.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(90)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dressmaking, Tailoring</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(80)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Handicrafts, spinning, weaving</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>91.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(41)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(59)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health related programmes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Figures in parenthesis show the percentage of men and women in the subjects of training.

Source: Author’s calculation based on CBS (2009: 53)

According to the above table, women’s participation is higher than men’s in training for hairdressing and beauty work; dressmaking, tailoring; handicrafts, spinning, weaving; and health related programmes. Men’s share is higher than women’s in various other
training programmes such as cooking and food preparation, which are highly masculinised, although women are the ones who do these tasks at the household level. In addition, men appear to have acquired training that leads to them being employed in high paying jobs such as chefs and engineering work.

Hence, the above table illustrates that men and women acquire gendered skills; that is to say that the traditional gender roles of men and women are reflected in the highly gendered division of skills. According to Economic Survey 2011 (MoF, 2011), since 1972 the Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM)\textsuperscript{72} had provided training to 28,282 individuals, an overwhelming majority (85 percent) of whom were men. In addition, women have been concentrated on training related to housekeeping and hospitality (ibid.).\textsuperscript{73}

Furthermore, regarding the training provided on hotel sector courses, as reported in the report Tourism Statistics 2010 (see MoTCA, 2010), training on housekeeping has been dominated by women while men dominate the training programmes on food preparation (including food and beverage service), front office, bar tender and in-service training.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{72} NATHM (formerly HMTCC) is engaged in producing skilled human resources required by the hospitality and tourism industry. It provides a three year bachelor degree as formal education and several training courses related to the hotel and tourism industry. There are several other institutions in the private sector that also provide such training.

\textsuperscript{73} Out of all trained women, 62 percent obtained training related to housekeeping and 54 percent on hospitality related training (see MoF, 2011).

\textsuperscript{74} In 2008, while men largely obtained three years bachelor degrees in hotel management (43 men and 37 women), there were 53 women (26 men) who obtained the bachelor degree in travel and tourism. In 2010 nearly the same number of men and women (80 each) obtained either of these bachelor degrees, which demonstrates the growing interest in formal education in tourism (Appendix 1(d): Academic courses and training on tourism and hotel industry provided by NATHM).
Status of Women in Nepal

The Nepal Human Development Report 2004 refers to women as one of Nepal’s ‘weak, marginalized and alienated groups’. According to the report, ‘Nepalese culture is rooted in discriminations based on religion, which have perpetuated both practices of untouchability and the exploitation of women ... The low status of women, systems of patri-lineal descent, patri-local residence and rules of inheritance interact to isolate and subordinate women throughout the country’ (UNDP, 2004: 30). This is the third of the series of the Nepal Human Development Report which focuses on empowerment and poverty reduction.

Empowerment was the focus of the Nepal Human Development Report 2004 wherein conceptualisation of the term empowerment is noted as, ‘the process of transforming existing power relations and of gaining greater control over the sources of power. Empowerment builds people’s capacity to gain understanding and control over personal, social, economic and political forces to act individually as well as collectively to make choices about the way they want to be and do things in their best interest to improve their life situation’ (UNDP, 2004: 12).

Women’s empowerment in Nepal has been of concern in government plans and policies, with a particular attention on increasing women’s participation in economic, social and political spheres, although policy aspirations have not always been translated into practice and in cases where they have been, the progress is slow (see UNFPA, 2007;
Bhadra, 2009; Acharya, 2010). Various political parties also picked up the discourse on gender equality and women’s empowerment and included these issues in their political manifestos, and several non-government organisations have also been working on women’s empowerment. For example, according to Yami (2007) when the Maoists waged the ‘people’s war’, empowerment of women was high on their agenda that focused on the transformation of society. Moreover, as Dixit (2011) notes, there is no denying that feminists’ work in pushing back patriarchy has, in part, contributed to social progress. However, women still face discrimination in different ways depending on their position within the ‘socio-cultural pluralism’ (Bhattachan, 2001).

The first five year development plan (1956-61) prepared as part of the country’s development endeavour had a welfare approach towards women, focusing on women’s reproductive role as mothers and homemakers. In line with the practices adopted by the international community, the 1970s witnessed a shift in the focus on women as a Women in Development policy was included in the sixth plan document (1980-85) as a separate chapter. This sixth plan adopted an ‘efficiency approach’ and was the first to recognise women’s productive role. The following (seventh plan document, 1985-90) included the ‘participation approach’ in which Women and Development policy was reflected. During the 1990s there was a shift from Women in Development to a Gender and Development approach in the plan documents (see Bhadra, 2001).

Following this, the ninth plan document (1997/98-2001/02) that adopted an ‘equity approach’ in which ‘gender mainstreaming’ as a strategy was advocated and then
extended through the policy of ‘gender equality’ and ‘women’s empowerment’ in the tenth plan (2002/03-2007/08) and the interim plan (2008/09-2010/11). The ongoing three year development plan (2010/11-2012/13) notes the two objectives in the section on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women as follows: ‘to strengthen the role of women in sustainable peace and development process by socially, economically and politically empowering the women of all classes and regions; and to eliminate various forms of gender-based violence and discriminations against women’ (NPC, 2010: 167).

Earlier, the government’s tenth plan document (2002/03-2007/08) focused on increasing women’s participation in employment by providing incentives to employers and combating violence against women in the workplace, as well as facilitating the foreign employment of women (NPC, 2003). The Labour and Employment Policy (2006) also highlights women’s access to employment and self-employment as one of its goals, and emphasises the ratification and implementation of international standards to promote gender equality, including combating sexual harassment against women at the workplace, and the provision of maternity protection through leave and a women/family-friendly working environment (MoLTM, 2006). Thus government has been engaged in a gender discourse about women’s empowerment, although apart from the emphasis on for example, literacy, primary enrolment, health care services and micro-credit programs for poverty alleviation, empowerment and gender equality remain mere rhetoric (see Acharya, 2003, 2010; UNFPA, 2007).
The Forum for Women, Law and Development (2007) documents 103 provisions of different laws, including the constitution, that discriminate against women and which women’s rights organisations have been challenging for amendments. Many discriminatory laws have been reformed, and some positive government initiatives include the development of legislation and provisions of laws that have been passed and amended to improve the status of women, such as the 12th amendment of the Country Code which has recognised various rights of women including their right to reproductive health. Other breakthroughs include the recognition of women’s equal right to property (see FWLD and CMC, 2011); and the Domestic Violence Control Act 2009, that criminalises domestic violence and provides protection and justice to the victims.

Moreover, in 2001, the Central Bureau of Statistics developed gender sensitive development indicators, gender sensitive reporting and gender sensitive mapping. In 2002 ‘gender focal points’ in all government agencies were established, mandating gender mainstreaming in their programs and gender sensitivity in monitoring and evaluation along with the requirement of preparing gender disaggregated databases. Likewise, in 2005, the government introduced the Gender Responsive Budgeting framework which provided analytical insights from a gender perspective into the national budget of the country.

Another major initiative is ‘the special provision of 33 percent women participation in all state mechanisms’ by the House of Representatives in 2006 (MoWCSW, 2009:5). The concept of proportional representation was also incorporated in the interim constitution;
as a consequence of which out of 601 members of the recently dissolved Constitutional Assembly, 197 were women. Reservation polices in the administrative and security sector have resulted in women working in the army (3 percent) and police force (7 percent). In addition, some landmark judgments include providing citizenship through the mother without asking the identification of the father and the recognition of marital rape as a crime (see FWLD and CMC, 2011 for details).

The role of the women’s movement has been instrumental in the progressive status of women in Nepal although many challenges still remain (see Bhadra, 2009; Acharya, 2010; FWLD and CMC, 2011). Acharya (2010: 97) stresses that ‘it was only after concerted efforts by women activists, with the support of the UN-led gender equality movement, that certain discriminatory provisions in law were amended’. However, despite government initiatives, the UNFPA (2007) highlights that the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW), along with other ministries and the gender focal points, have inadequate capacity in gender mainstreaming and monitoring. Most gender focal point staff are too junior, have little power to influence the Ministry’s decisions effectively, do not have the zeal to work for gender equality and women’s empowerment and neither do they have adequate capacity to do so (ibid.).

Women in Nepal face discrimination from the patriarchal structures embedded in the laws of the country, society and at workplaces (see Bhattachan, 2001; Thapaliya, 2001; Bhadra, 2009; Acharya, 2010). For example, Acharya (2010: 85) highlights ‘gender discourse as one of the key accelerators in the process of fundamental socio-economic
and political transformation now underway ... strives to deconstruct patriarchal power relations to establish democracy where women, like men, have equal rights to power, identity, resources and opportunities’. In addition, Thapaliya (2001) notes that with the exception of certain ethnic communities of Tibeto-Burman and tribal groups. South Asian society is predominantly patriarchal, patri-lineal and patri-local.\textsuperscript{75} The following quote further helps illustrate the status of women:

Despite women’s formal equality in some spheres, the active restructuring of family relations seen from a broader angle reveals that women became more closely associated with their bodies as familial ideology constituted as “natural” the role of women as wives and others ... The legal gendering along more dichotomously defined spheres of the private-feminine and public-masculine brings to the fore ... [that] the citizen in Nepal is gendered (Tamang, 2000: 151-152).

Likewise, Bhattachan (2001: 82-83) highlights that along with women being discriminated against by state, ‘[R]eligion, tradition, cultural norms and values that govern communities and families are also gender discriminatory’. While differences among women (such as geographic location, caste, ethnicity and religion) prevail, women face double discrimination first by being a woman and then because of their

\textsuperscript{75} Thapaliya (2001: 16) writes, ‘[T]hree fundamental features characterising patriarchy are: patriarchal inheritance system; control over women’s sexuality and body; and restriction over women’s mobility.’
other differences, complicating the status of women (also see Tamang, 2009).\textsuperscript{76} Moreover, Bhadra (2009: 87) notes that there is a need for a ‘stronger and sustained women’s movement’ and stresses that ‘[W]omen’s voices need to articulate for a “women’s agenda”... [that] consists of women’s lived experiences ... [that needs to] come hand in hand with women’s actions to transform the discriminatory situation’.

Furthermore, as the UNFPA (2007: 33) notes:

\textit{[i]t is not sufficient just to increase women’s incomes by a marginal amount and help them gain a greater role in the household decision making process or voice in local community affairs. Much deeper social interventions are needed to overcome discriminatory patriarchal structures and ideology, to liberate women from them, and to expand the opportunity spectrum of women.}

To build upon this overview of women’s situation in Nepal, I now briefly explain the impact of political instability on tourism industry in general and how women’s lives were affected as a result of such instability.

\textbf{Political Instability, Tourism and Women}

\textit{Political Instability and Tourism}

The tourism industry has faced a number of challenges, both internally and externally.

\textsuperscript{76} Tamang (2009) emphasises the need for the women’s movement to look into the differences between women and move beyond seeing women as one ‘homogenized category’ that needs to be developed and also raises concern over the Maoists claims to have empowered women, as the Maoist party itself seems to be highly patriarchal.
Internal challenges include the internal conflict that began in 1996 and the abolition of the monarchy, two factors in the history of Nepal that can be said to have further spread news of the country worldwide (Upadhayaya et al., 2011). External challenges can be related to the rise in terrorism notably the 9/11 incident that affected tourism industry internationally and also had a negative impact on Nepalese tourism (Bhattarai et al., 2005).

As mentioned earlier, political instability in Nepal can be said to have begun with the beginning of democracy in 1990, which was installed after the people’s movement against the monarchy. The internal armed conflict which began in 1996 ended in 2006 with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the then Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and the government of Nepal. Political instability is reflected in the presence of nine prime ministers who led their respective governments in a span of ten years (1991-2000). The armed conflict did not affect the tourism industry during the initial years. The royal massacre in 2001 and the takeover of the state by Gyanendra (younger brother of the slain king) who became King aggravated the Maoist insurgency with the conflict reaching its apogee in the period between 2002 and 2005. Maoists were not only labelled by the then government as ‘terrorists’ but were also considered as an

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77 Observers of contemporary Nepal have also seen the proliferation of discourses relating to democracy; development and Maoism to name a few (see Shah, 2002).
78 The Maoist insurgency aimed from 1996 to establish a communist republic in place of the constitutional monarch in Nepal, which has been given various terms such as ‘internal armed conflict’ and ‘people’s war’ (Thapa, 2005).
79 The royal massacre took place on June 1, 2001 when King Birendra was put to death along with the rest of his family (wife, two sons and a daughter), and is said to have marked a cultural watershed for the people of Nepal (Dixit, 2005).
integral part of global terrorism by the United States administration\textsuperscript{80} (Upadhyaya et al., 2011), which supported the government of Nepal with a United States dollar 20 million military aid package (Bhattarai et al., 2005). The tourism industry was then affected as a consequence of all these factors that raised questions on Nepal being a ‘safe’ tourist destination.

What the Maoists consider as the ‘peoples’ war’ (1996-2006) affected the lives of the Nepalese in various ways, notably through the strikes and \textit{bandas}\textsuperscript{81} that disrupted normal life and affected the economy. According to police records, there were 125 \textit{bandas} in 2010 (Adhikari, 2010), which also affected the tourism industry, among others. Further, the growing strength of trade unions and labour disputes in the hotel sector led to the closure of several hotels as well as disrupted the tourism industry, despite the end of internal conflict. For example, during May 2011, Prashain (2011a) notes that five-star hotels faced room cancellations due to frequent strikes in the country. According to the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation, while there were 996 hotels (star and non-star) in 2005, the number plummeted to 607 in 2006 and then gradually picked up in 2008 with 669 hotels.\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{80} The United States Bush administration immediately after the World Trade Centre disaster of September 11, 2001 adopted a ‘war on terrorism policy’ which created a shift in the paradigm of global insecurity and the terrorism-tourism nexus in Nepal (Upadhyaya et al., 2011).

\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Bandas} in Nepali language is understood as the close down of transportation, shops, creating a standstill and disrupting normal life, although all government and most private offices do not close down.

It is clear that the tourism industry depends on the political stability of the country. Few tourists would like to visit Nepal risking their life knowing well that there is a political disturbance that obstructs their purpose of exploring the country, especially when movement is restricted due to strikes as mentioned earlier.

**Political Instability and Women**

The political instability, particularly armed conflict has had implications for the entire socio-economic situation of the country. It has had both positive and negative impacts for women; women’s lives were changed in ways that were often traumatic but sometimes liberating (see Gautam et al., 2001; Acharya 2010; Advocacy Forum and International Center for Transitional Justice (nd)).

The recruitment of women to the armed insurgency (or people’s war) apparently took place, as Maoists were said to have encouraged (or coerced) women (and other disadvantaged groups such as Dalits and Janajatis) to be combatants to fight against the government security forces. The myth that women are weak and need protection was shattered as women carried guns across their shoulders, dressed in trousers and fought the war along with men combatants (see Gautam et al., 2001; Acharya, 2010). This brought some changes in the gendered ideologies that saw women as unfit for the army. Moreover, the Nepal army and security forces also expanded their recruitment of women personnel.

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83 The exact participation rate of women is not known; estimates range from 19 to 40 percent (Acharya, 2010).
However, Bhadra et al. (2003) note that women’s participation in the armed insurgency reproduced traditional gender roles as women were given the tasks of food management, mending clothing, singing and dancing, soliciting donations and recruitment and carrying loads. Further, Yami (2007) documents a 2002-2003 survey conducted by the Maoist party in which large number of women reported feeling that there was discrimination in promotion.\footnote{The survey reported 61.32 percent women stated they felt there was discrimination in promotion (see Yami, 2007).} Within the Maoist party hierarchy, women are not taken seriously as ‘women cadres have the problem of asserting themselves [and] men cadres have the problem of relinquishing the privileged position bestowed on them by the patriarchal structure’ (Yami, 2007: 40). Further, criticising the Maoist party, Yami notes that women in senior military positions are ‘seen [by men] in the form of formal acceptance of women’s leadership, while in essence not accepting their leadership’ (ibid.).

The Maoists have boasted about their ability to reach the grassroots level (where even government and development agencies have not been able to access) and to mobilise women at community levels. Tamang (2009: 74) explains: ‘Initiatives have included preventing child marriages and polygamy, and banning the practice of making menstruating women sleep in cowsheds, as well as anti-domestic violence, drunkenness and liquor campaigns’.\footnote{See also: Advocacy Forum and International Center for Transitional Justice (nd).} Studies note that in rural areas, traditional gender roles were challenged with women taking the sole responsibility of household management and agricultural production due to the
migration, death or disappearance of male family members and men being recruited (both willingly and forcibly) as Maoist cadres (see Bhadra et al., 2007; Gautam et. al., 2001). Despite having some positive impacts, the costs of the political instability and armed conflict still remain huge. Women and young girls became victims of increased violence, with incidences of rape, forced pregnancy, sexual assault and murder from Maoist insurgents, security personnel and those who took advantage of the then prevailing security lapses (see Bhadra et.al., 2007; Advocacy Forum and International Center for Transitional Justice, nd). In an already discriminatory society where women’s identity and status is intimately linked to her husband, the conflict increased widows’ vulnerability to abuse from their in-laws and other family members, who often accused them of being ‘easy or loose’ women and being immoral (Advocacy Forum and International Center for Transitional Justice, nd: 28, emphasis in original).

**Labour Disputes and Trade Unions**

Along with democracy, the growth and activism of trade unions have been attracting the attention of government and private industries all over the country. Moreover, it has been noted that the growing unionism among workers in the ‘tourism sector has been provoked by extreme political ideology, enduring affiliations of trade unions with national political parties’ on the one hand and ‘the exploitative attitude of some monopolistic elite employers against the backdrop of the lack of appropriate labour law and industrial policy’ on the other (Upadhayaya, 2011: 24).
The history of trade unions dates back to 1945, prior to which the existence of trade unions in not documented. The first trade union – Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC) – was formed in 1946. The labour movement started in 1947 from Biratnagar (an industrial town) in a Jute factory, and since then NTUC was active in the struggle for workers’ welfare. With the dissolution of the multiparty democracy in 1960, trade unions were also banned along with political parties for almost 30 years (which also explains the close association of trade unions with political parties, i.e. labour movement was closely linked with political movement). Later, in 1989, the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT), affiliated to the Communist Party of Nepal Unified Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML) was formed. After the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990, labour movement revived with the establishment of trade unions in different industries and sectors, and got affiliated to various political parties. In the process, the All Nepal Trade Union Federation (ANTUF), the most recent trade union federation affiliated with the Unified Communist Party of Nepal- Maoist (UCPN-M), is said to have been established in 2007 once the Maoists were mainstreamed into politics. I present Table 2.3 below to help further understand the three major trade unions and their affiliation with political parties.

It is also important to note that the trade unions in the sample establishments, although are said to be open shops where employees need not necessarily belong to a trade union to get recruited, in practice, trade unions operate to a large extent as closed shops. Based on several information communications with workers and employers, within the trade union, women’s representation on the executive board and in terms of raising women’s
issues have progressed over the years. This shows that trade unions are perhaps increasingly accommodating women’s issues. However, according to several of my respondents, the politicization of trade unions was the major problem for operating in closed shops manner, and used as a recruitment centre through which political cadres can be recruited in the sample establishments. Trade unions are also said to be more focused on political party issues rather than concentrating on workers’ (and women’s) concerns and demands.

Table 2.3: Major trade unions and their affiliation with political parties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade Union in Hotels, Restaurants, Casinos</th>
<th>Trade Union (National level)</th>
<th>Political Party Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Nepal Hotel and restaurant Workers’ Union (ANHRWU)</td>
<td>All Nepal Trade Union Federation (ANTUF)</td>
<td>United Communist Party of Nepal - Maoist (UCPN-M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal Tourism and Hotel Workers Union (NTHWU)</td>
<td>Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC)</td>
<td>Nepali Congress (NC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s compilation from multiple sources.

Some cases of labour disputes have affected the hotel sub-sector. The Hotel Yak and Yeti, one of the five star hotels in Kathmandu was closed for almost eight months February – August 2006) as the trade unions (ANHRWU and NIHCRWU) demanded fair wages, facilities and permanent status for the workers. In addition, fifty-eight hotels
and resorts in Nagarkot\textsuperscript{86} were shut down for almost four days in November 2008 as the trade union (ANHRWA)\textsuperscript{87} demanded an increase in salary for all workers (Upadhayaya \textit{et al.}, 2011).\textsuperscript{88} It is important to note that during this period ANHRWA was powerful along with its affiliated political party the Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist (which has changed its name to CPN-UML) which was in power (August 2008 – May 2009).

In the case of casinos, labour disputes were on the rise alongside the growing investigation by government authorities into tax evasion by the casino employers, as mentioned earlier. For example, in February 2012, Casino Venus is said to have closed down for an indefinite period following labour disputes related to overtime allowances although the management cites the reason as ‘not being [a] labour union problem but \textit{due to} chaotic workers’\textsuperscript{89}. Similarly, in the case of Casino Shangri-La, rivalry between the two unions\textsuperscript{90} fighting for supremacy led to closure of the casino in December 2011 (Prashain, 2011b). However, as highlighted earlier, casinos have been facing problems regarding tax evasion and hence it may not only be the trade unions which are responsible for the closing and reopening phenomenon in some casinos.

\textsuperscript{86} Nagarkot is a tourist hub near Kathmandu valley.
\textsuperscript{87} ANHRWA- All Nepal Hotel and Restaurant Workers Association, is the trade union affiliated with the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) which changed its name to United Communist Party of Nepal- Maoist (UCPN-M) since January 2009.
\textsuperscript{88} In December 2008, the government reviewed the wage structure with an increment of Rs. 1,300 (from Rs. 3,300 to Rs. 4,600) for the lowest wage receiving workers. UCPN-M demanded for a flat increment of Rs. 1,300 for all level of workers (see Upadhayaya \textit{et al.}, 2011).
\textsuperscript{90} CPN-UML aligned Nepal Independent Hotel, Casino, and Restaurant Workers’ Union (NIHCRWU) and Maoist-affiliated All Nepal Hotel and restaurant Workers’ Union (ANHRWU).
It is necessary to understand the intricacies related to labour disputes and the increasing role of trade unions in the hotels and casinos as the once powerful management could be slowly confronting the ‘new power’ structure. Since the trade unions are politically connected, workers’ demands for increased salary and benefits cannot be easily brushed aside. Further, these disputes affect the tourism industry, have an impact on the operation of these establishments in particular, and affect employment practices.

**Sexual Harassment at the Workplace**

Another issue related to employment and gender is sexual harassment at the workplace which women’s rights organisations are concerned with. They welcomed the bill on sexual harassment at the workplace, which was prepared by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare prior to the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (May 27, 2012) and was under discussion at the parliamentary bills committee. I now briefly explain two legal cases of sexual harassment at the workplace that have been supported by women’s rights organisations that resulted in the formulation of procedural guidelines to address sexual harassment at certain workplaces, This is a positive measure, in a country context where there is no law on sexual harassment at the workplace (or elsewhere).

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91 It is my assumption that trade unions could be the ‘new power structure’. However, I leave this topic as providing scope for future research.

92 Both the cases, which were filed by women’s rights organisations, had received support from various other non-governmental organisations, some of which were part of the women’s movement in Nepal.
The International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2004) describes sexual harassment as a manifestation of power relations where a person’s privacy and dignity is attacked. A study on ‘Sexual Harassment at the Workplace in Nepal’ (ILO, 2004) documents that women working in hotels and restaurants are highly prone to sexual harassment and the degree of its prevalence is said to be higher in hotels and restaurants although it is persistent in almost all workplaces. Within hotels, those working in health clubs are more vulnerable as they have to work on the bodies of customers. Male colleagues and male guests harassed women working as waitresses and housemaids.

In 2003, Shoba Shah who worked at the Royal Casino, along with others, filed a writ petition at the Supreme Court demanding prevention and criminalization of sexual harassment at the workplace. The petitioners also made a plea to the court asking them to direct the Government to draft a relevant law since no legal provision addresses the issue of sexual harassment at the workplace. In the meantime, while the law was drafted, they also requested the Supreme Court to formulate necessary guidelines.

However, it was only in 2008 that procedural guidelines were issued for the ‘Prevention of Sexual Harassment against Working Women at Workplaces like Dance Restaurants, Dance Bars etc.’ (Pro Public, 2009: 35-43) when Prakash Mani Sharma and others filed another case. Their case was based on two studies that reported women working in

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cabin and dance restaurants facing economic and social exploitation. The study on the ‘Plight of Cabin Keepers’ (AAN, 2004)\textsuperscript{95} revealed that cabin restaurants in Kathmandu mostly employed young women who faced verbal, physical and sexual abuse by the customers and misbehaviour by the restaurant owners. Similarly, the study on ‘Women’s Exploitation in Dance and Cabin Restaurants: A Case Study of Kathmandu City’\textsuperscript{96} found women working in cabin and dance restaurants were forced to work in extremely hazardous situations and subject to economic and sexual exploitation (ibid.). However, what is still lacking at present is a law on sexual harassment which women’s rights organisations have long been demanding.

**Conclusion**

Nepal, which is currently passing through a phase of political transition, is witnessing a shift from a dependence on agriculture to a service-based economy. Within the service sector, the economy relies to a significant extent on remittances followed by the tourism industry which has been recognised as one of the economically planned development sectors since the 1950s. Alongside the expansion of the service sector, there has been an increasing participation of women in paid work in some sectors of the economy.

Hotels and casinos in particular employ many workers – women’s participation in hotels and restaurants has increased while in casinos women are employed in relatively large

\textsuperscript{95} I was involved in coordinating the research in 2004 when I worked with ActionAid Nepal as the Senior Theme Leader on Gender Equity.

numbers when compared to hotels and resorts (there are no data available on the trend of women’s employment in the casino sector). This shows the increasing significance of women’s employment in the hotel and casino sector in Nepal.

While there have been some positive initiatives to enhance the status of women through government policies and programmes, the women’s movement and Maoist movement (in certain cases) have also been instrumental in bringing changes. Furthermore, the political instability in the country has affected the tourism industry and women’s lives in various ways. In addition, labour disputes in hotels and casinos and the increasing role of the trade unions, along with the power politics at the country level and the differences among women (such as ethnicity, religion, geographic location) add to the uncertain and complicated country context. Political stability, an integrated women’s movement and political will in formulating and implementing gender sensitive policies by the government, along with women’s empowerment programs could contribute towards changing the status of women and challenging patriarchal social structures and ideologies. It is in this context that this research has been conducted and in the next chapter, I explain the process of how I carried out this research based on the context identified thus far.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the research methodology I used to explore my research questions and what is it that makes my research feminist. I begin with a discussion on feminist research and methods. I go on to discuss why I chose to use certain research methods and not others and consider these methods from a feminist viewpoint. I then move on to explain the research process and how I gained access to participants, constructed my sample and analysed the data. Next, I discuss research ethics and dilemmas and reflect on my experiences of ‘doing feminist research’ in the field and finally describe my research samples – establishments and research participants.

Feminist Research and Methods

Since the 1970s feminist research methods have been widely debated (see Roberts, 1981; Stanley and Wise, 1983). There has been considerable attention paid to what makes feminist research different from other critical perspectives such as those employed by Marxists and Critical Theorists, who have offered similar criticisms of social science such as the need for reflexivity within the research process and dialogue between the researcher and those researched (see Luff, 1999). In relation to this, Luff (1999: 688) writes: ‘[W]hat has made feminist perspectives distinctive is the way in which they have insisted upon gender and power, and the interplay of the two, as central to social science research’. Furthermore, Acker et al. (1983: 137) highlight some of the principles of feminist research: to contribute to women’s liberation through producing
knowledge that can be used by women themselves; that the methods of gaining this
knowledge should not be oppressive; and that researchers should continually develop a
feminist critical perspective that questions both the dominant intellectual traditions and
reflects on its own development.

There is wide recognition that feminist researchers have made an influential
contribution to the development of research methods that have led researchers to
become more reflexive in the research process, more conscious of power
relationships between the researcher and the researched, and more sensitive in their
considerations of how knowledge is created, endorsed or identified and by whom
(see Stanley and Wise, 1990; Maynard, 1994; Charles, 1996; Sampson et al., 2008).
Further, feminist researchers (see Stanley and Wise 1990; Ramazanoğlu and
Holland 2002) discuss knowledge as socially constructed. Stanley (1990: 15) uses
the term ‘feminist praxis’ to mean ‘an indication of a continuing shared feminist
commitment to a political position in which “knowledge” is not simply defined as
“knowledge what” but it is also “knowledge for”’ (emphasis in original). Moreover,
Stanley (1990) argues that feminism is more than a perspective (a way of seeing)
and epistemology (a way of knowing); feminism is also ontology, a way of being in
the world. She further stresses, ‘it is the experience of and acting against perceived
oppression that gives rise to a distinctive feminist ontology; and it is the analytical
exploration of the parameters of this in the research process that gives expression to
a distinctive feminist epistemology’ (ibid.: 14). Likewise, as Luff (1999: 690)
asserts, ‘[U]nderstanding the specific experiences of differing groups of women as women ... is essential to a feminist project’.

My research is feminist research; I aim to focus my research questions on issues of ‘gender and power’ at the workplace and in women’s lives and I want women’s voices to be heard; I take into account the varied experiences of women across different establishments (see Luff, 1999). I consider the gendered social realities within which women’s work in the hotels and casinos impacts on their lives (see Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002). I also believe that to understand women’s experiences broader social structures cannot be neglected; as Stanley and Wise (1983: 55) note, feminist understanding depends on ‘theoretical constructions about the nature of women’s oppression and the part that this oppression plays within social reality more generally’.

Moreover, women’s voices are central to my research. My research is grounded in the varied experiences of women who work in various establishments and who live in Nepal; these women are the main ‘subjects’ of my research. However, I also bring in the experiences of men to get an insight into gender relations: the different experiences of men and women and the perception of managers, male family members and policy experts.97 As Elson (1995: 1) writes, ‘Gender relations are the socially determined relations that differentiate male and female situations ...[and] refer to the gender dimension of the social relations structuring the lives of individual men and women, such

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97 I group them as policy experts because of their experience and expertise working on policy issues in different areas such as – development, tourism, labour, women and gender.
as the gender division of labour and the gender division of access to and control over resources’. Nonetheless, voices of women and the varied perceptions of other research participants have been mediated through my own analysis as a feminist researcher, as Letherby (2003) views that in feminist research, the researcher’s personal characteristics and experiences have an effect on the research.

Feminist research acknowledges that there is no single way of knowing which can be described as a feminist methodology but that there are several methodologies; all knowledge is context based. Hence diverse methods of understanding women’s experiences are considered as legitimate in feminist epistemology. Feminist research could use any cluster of methods required to answer the questions it sets (Reinharz, 1992). For example, Reinharz (1992: 213) notes, ‘[T]he particular combination of methods depends on the particular quest on which the researcher is embarked. ... One can be confident that a range of methods allows a range of individuals or circumstances to be understood in a responsive way. Important issues concerning women’s lives can be understood in complex and thorough fashion’. Further, Oakley (2000) argues that feminist research would benefit from eliminating the quantitative and qualitative divide.

Mixed methods (also sometimes called multi-methods) are considered as providing rich data as this approach creates the opportunity to put texts or people in contexts; some feminist researchers are also using mixed methods (see Reinharz, 1992; Sampson et al., 2008; Cohen et al., 2011;) although Sampson et al. (2008) suggest that using interviews to obtain qualitative data is still very common in feminist research. Furthermore,
studying methodological patterns from 19 journals in the interdisciplinary field of ‘women’s studies’, Cohen et al. (2011: 575) note that, ‘more than half (51%) used quantitative methods, either alone or in combination with qualitative methods, with 43 percent relying solely on qualitative methods’ and further highlighted ‘the importance of national contexts’; sociological research in the United Kingdom is strongly qualitative while research conducted in the United States is mostly based on quantitative data. Moreover, feminist researchers have shown an interest in combining both qualitative and quantitative methods to better represent the way women are situated in different contexts (see, Jayaratne and Steward, 1991; Maynard, 1994; Purcell, 1996; Oakley, 1998, 2000; Cohen et al., 2011).

**Research Methods**

In this research, I adopt mixed methods, combining quantitative and qualitative data to triangulate and enrich the quality of data analysis to answer my research questions. I believe that using mixed methods to gather both quantitative and qualitative data helped to provide insights into the complex and dynamic processes within the themes of gendered work and women’s empowerment and also enabled me to analyse the linkages. I used questionnaires to collect quantitative data, and interviews (semi-structured and in-depth), focus group discussions and observations to collect qualitative data. Moreover, as Morgan (1997: 30) notes, ‘[T]he argument for combining methods is fundamentally a plea

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98 Their analysis focuses on journals in gender, women’s studies, feminist and other women-oriented journals in 2007.
for the mutual relevancy of all research methods rather than an assertion of the superiority of any one technique’. I discuss the methods I used in turn below.

**Questionnaires**

Questionnaires are a collection of questions administered to respondents. When the respondent answers without the help of the researcher it is called a self-completion questionnaire (see Bryman, 2008, 2012). Further, using a questionnaire as a method to collect quantitative data is said to have gained interest among feminist researchers in research that uses both quantitative and qualitative data (see Reinharz, 1992).

I chose to use questionnaires to fulfil two aims: understanding the gendered labour market; and selecting research sample establishments. As mentioned in Chapter Three, there is no data available on the gendered workforce in five star hotels, deluxe resorts and casinos. To fill this gap, and in order to select my sample based on the gendered workforce in these establishments, I decided to administer questionnaires to the personnel/administrative personnel of all the 21 establishments registered with the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN) in Kathmandu valley. I phoned and confirmed email/postal addresses from all 21 establishments and sent them the short questionnaire, along with background information about my research. In this questionnaire I only asked for the number of male and female workers employed as of July 2008.

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99 I explain later in the section on sampling how I chose the sample establishments.
100 See Appendix 2 (b-i): Questionnaires for all establishments in Kathmandu.
101 As per the listing of the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN, 2001) under the two categories: five star hotels and deluxe resorts, there are 8 five star hotels and 5 deluxe resorts and 8 casinos in Kathmandu.
I selected my sample establishments based on the data obtained from the questionnaires, and then administered a second, more detailed, questionnaire\textsuperscript{102} to them when I started my field work.\textsuperscript{103} This time, the purpose was to obtain detailed gendered workforce data according to different departments within the establishments and to also find out more about employment practices, salary and benefits provided to workers. However, I did not get reliable data on differences in salaries within and across the establishments. Using questionnaires was the best way to gain an overview of the gender division of labour and pay attention to the structural levels within organisations; exploring – Where are the women workers in these organisations?

\textit{Interviews}

‘Interviewing is probably the most widely used method of investigating the social world’ (Davies, 2008: 105). Feminist research predominantly uses semi-structured (sometimes also called unstructured) interviews and in-depth interviews when gathering the life stories of women (see Reinharz 1992; Oakley 2000; Bryman, 2012;). Moreover, I am aware that feminist researchers are concerned with the way in which this method is used, considering factors such as seeing interviewees as ‘subjects’ rather than ‘objects’ of research; wanting women’s voices to be heard; seeking a non-hierarchical relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee; and building a rapport with the interviewees which could mean sharing their own experiences in the process (see, Oakley 1981, 2000; Luff, 1999; Letherby, 2003; Hesse-Biber, 2007; Bryman, 2008). In

\textsuperscript{102}See Appendix 2 (b-ii): Questionnaires distributed to sample establishments.

\textsuperscript{103}I explain later in this chapter about the two stage of field visit: preliminary visit and field visit.
this vein, Oakley (2000) argues for an interaction between the researcher and the researched.

Interviewing as a method allowed me to have face-to-face interaction with my research participants. In addition, because I used semi-structured interviews, I could alter the wording and order of the questions I had noted in my interview schedule, asking only those that seemed appropriate and also introduced supplementary questions when needed. Since semi-structured interviews allow respondents to introduce their own concerns, bring in information not necessarily directly related to the question, expand on their responses and allow clarification and discussion (see, Hesse-Biber, 2007; Davies, 2008; Bryman, 2012) I was able to hear women’s most pressing concerns.

In my research, using interviews (semi-structured and in-depth) with women was useful as I wanted to hear women’s experiences about work and how their lives had changed as a result of their paid work. Interviews also provided information about the meanings that people ascribe to work, money etc. This seemed appropriate as I wanted women’s voices to be heard through my research. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews helped me draw on the experiences of workers (both male and female) and the perceptions of male family members and policy experts, looking both at structural and interactional levels, when answering my research questions.
Semi-structured interviews: male and female workers

I decided to include both men and women workers as my research participants as my focus was gendered work.\textsuperscript{104} I also used semi-structured interviews with some male workers, as Stanley and Wise (1990: 44) correctly note, ‘[A] focus on ‘women’ and not on ‘gender’ will ghettoize academic feminism as a sub-discipline’ (emphasis in original). I also believe this provides space to make a comparison between the experiences of men and women and further illuminates the different experiences of workers (based on gender at one level and the differences within each group, male and female at the other).

In-depth interviews: selected women workers

Through further in-depth interviews\textsuperscript{105} with a third of the women workers, I was able to hear more about their life beyond work such as their family situation, and to understand the problems and constraints they faced at the household level, which provided more opportunities for detailed discussion and for seeking further clarification if necessary (see Hesse-Biber, 2007). This was particularly valuable in relation to my research question concerning women’s empowerment.

\textsuperscript{104} See Appendix 3(b): Semi-structured interview schedule for workers.
\textsuperscript{105} See Appendix 3(c): In-depth interview schedule for selected women workers.
Semi-structured interviews: male family members, managers and policy experts

Further, I used semi-structured interviews with some male family members of women workers to further understand gender relations at home and men’s perception towards women’s work and empowerment. Similarly, while managers’ perceptions about women’s (and men’s) work have implications on the policies and practices at the workplace, policy experts’ perceptions have implications on national policies. This is why I used semi-structured interviews with managers of sample establishments and policy experts to examine their perception of women’s work and empowerment at the establishment level and policy level respectively.

 Focus Group Discussions

A focus group (sometimes also called group interview) technique is a method of group interviewing, and ‘ since it allows participants’ perspectives ... it also offers considerable potential for feminist researchers’ (Bryman, 2012: 516). Further, Wilkinson (1998: 123, emphasis in original) also notes that in feminist research, ‘focus groups have the potential for future development into an approach par excellence’. Focus groups can yield high quality and interactive data, offer a route to studying people in the context of a social world and further address feminist considerations relating to ethical concerns about the ‘power’ of the researcher as the role of the researcher is to raise themes/topics and facilitate the discussion. Moreover, the participants of the focus group are often more interactive and open between themselves and with the researcher (see Morgan, 1997; Wilkinson, 1998; Bryman, 2012).

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106 See Appendix 3(d): Semi-structured interview schedule for male family members.
107 See Appendix 3(a): Semi-structured interview schedule for managers.
108 See Appendix 3(e): Semi-structured interview schedule for policy experts.
I decided to organise two focus group discussions\textsuperscript{109} with women workers (other than those interviewed on the gaming floor of the two casinos because I wanted to emphasise a specific theme/topic: sexualised labour) and also to see how women ‘respond to each other’s views and build up a view out of the interaction that takes place’ (see Bryman, 2012; Wilkinson, 1998). Further, as explained in my context chapter (Chapter Two), there has been no prior research on women’s work in the casinos in Nepal. With soaring concern about the sustainability of casinos and media attention focused on women’s sexual exploitation within them, I thought women might be more at ease taking part in the research as part of a group of female co-workers.

\textit{Observations}

In order to set my interview and focus group data in context I also conducted observations in sample establishments. Observation is a technique which aims ‘to record in as much detail as possible the behaviour of participants with the aim of developing narrative account of that behaviour’ (Bryman, 2008: 257). Using observation as one of the research methods allowed me to pay attention to how interactions took place, which provided insights into the kind of work men and women did, put in context workers’ experiences about customer interaction and helped to understand the working environment at the sample establishments.

Whenever I went to meet respondents, while I waited in the lobby or walked past various departments, I made notes in my field diary which I referred to later when analysing

\textsuperscript{109} See Appendix 4: Guiding notes on focus group discussion.
data. I made these notes on the basis of themes to be addressed when answering the research questions such as: gendered work, interaction amongst workers and worker aesthetics.\footnote{See Appendix 5: Guiding notes for observation.}

Hence, using mixed research methods of questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and observation allowed me to gather quantitative and qualitative data.

**Research Process**

In this section, I explain how I carried out my research while keeping in mind feminist considerations of being reflexive throughout the research process. I divide the research process into four aspects: 1) two stages of field visits; 2) designing and pre-testing; 3) sampling; and 4) translation, transcription and data analysis. I now explore each aspect of the research process in turn.

**Two Phases of Field Visits**

I made a two month preliminary visit to Kathmandu in July and August 2008 to explore the gendered labour market and further select my sample, followed by a nine month main field-work visit. During my first visit, I administered questionnaires to personnel managers in all 21 establishments (registered with Hotel Association of Nepal) about their workforce.\footnote{I present a snapshot of the data gathered in Chapter Four of this thesis.}
During the second visit, between April and December 2009, I started by pre-testing my interview schedules with those other than my research participants;\textsuperscript{112} administered a more detailed questionnaire to the sample establishments; conducted interviews with different groups of people (workers, managers, male family members and policy experts); organised two focus group discussions with women working on the gaming floor of casinos; and made observations. In both phases gaining access was a significant challenge.

**Gaining Access**

During fieldwork the changing socio-political situation in Kathmandu made access difficult. At the country level disagreement between political parties over forming a government led to political unrest and there were a number of strikes which took the form of road blocks and meant that bicycles were the only means of transportation. A sense of distrust of the political parties was felt as I overheard people talk in shopping complexes, local markets and in the streets. At the level of the sample establishments, hotel industry workers were in dispute with their management over pay and other issues, including the demand that the 10 percent service charge be distributed to workers.\textsuperscript{113} This situation possibly contributed to the managers’ reluctance to provide any data on their workforces.

\textsuperscript{112} I discuss designing and pretesting in another section later in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{113} In both the hotels and Moon resort, I noticed the area near the room of the trade union had banners (black background with white letters) demanding the service charge and rise in salary. Similarly protest was ongoing in Dazzle casino. Although I did not see any protest in Glitter casino and Sun resort, I was told by some of my research participants working in these establishments that protest posters were pasted on the walls outside their trade union office.
When I administered the initial questionnaires, I included several documents which I sent out with them. There was a letter from a reputed University in the United Kingdom, which explained the purpose of my visit to these establishments, and a short description of my research project. After a week or so, after not receiving a response from the establishments, I followed up my initial contact by phone but eventually I had to mobilise my social networks to get the questionnaires completed and returned. Because of my past work experience, I was aware that social networks are important and useful in Nepal and that they also help in facilitating the collection of information from government and private sector organisations. However, I had presumed that the letter from my University would in itself be sufficient to get the questionnaires completed. This proved not to be the case and I had to use my social networks (ex-work colleagues, neighbours, an ex-school friend and my cousin) to expedite the process – this proved vital to ensure a return from 18 (5 hotels 5 resorts and all 8 casinos) of the 21 establishments.

This experience led me to turn to mobilise my social networks (some ex-work colleagues, neighbours and one ex-school friend) in order to gain access to the managers of my sample establishments, after having followed up my initial approaches several times. I initially tried to gain access to the sample establishments through the human resource/administration manager as I believed they would be in the best position to provide the information I needed on employment practices; I also hoped to gain access to workers through them once I had selected my sample establishments. In the event, personal contacts were critical; my two neighbours introduced me to the hotel managers
and one casino manager, two ex-work colleagues put me in contact with the resort managers and my ex-school friend introduced me to the manager of the other casino. However, I also had to follow up these contacts several times in order to gain access to the human resource or administrative managers. In the initial stages I handed in a brief outline of my research, a copy of my curriculum vitae, interview schedules for workers and managers along with the University letter to all the managers before meeting them. According to the managers, they required these documents for their records. While this was a challenging task for me, it illuminates the importance of social networks in enabling me to gain access to the managers in the sample establishments.

In order to gain access to workers, I combined different methods: I approached human resource managers who put me in contact with an officer in their department (in the cases of Platinum hotel, Sun resort and Dazzle casino); and, in other establishments I used my social networks. For example, one of my neighbours (the person who introduced me to the manager) put me in touch with one of the workers in Gold hotel, my ex-work colleague (the person who put me in contact with the manager) introduced me to one of the workers at Moon resort and Glitter casino, and my female cousin working as a croupier there helped me gain access to some of her colleagues and I was then able to use a ‘snow-balling technique’ to extend my access to other workers.114

I illustrate this process with an example of how I gained access to workers, highlighting the case of Dazzle casino. I requested permission from the manager to interview six workers

114 I explain about the sampling techniques in the following section.
(two men and four women) from both the front and back office. The manager assigned me to Kopila (pseudonym), one of the women working in Human Resources, who provided me with a room in the Human Resource department for two days. I then interviewed two workers recommended by Kopila in response to my request that they be women working in the kitchen and gaming department and four other workers (2 male and 2 female workers) accessed via the snow-ball technique. These interviews were carried out in a room in the Human Resources department, a location which could have restricted workers’ openness when discussing/being interviewed, and thus having implications on what they said about work related issues in particular. I also requested my ‘gate keepers’ to facilitate my access to some men and women workers in the front and back offices. In Glitter casino my female cousin Sita (pseudonym), who worked there as a croupier, helped me gain access to other workers and also helped me organise a focus group discussion in one of her female colleagues’ (Madina) home.

The other focus group discussion was made possible through Kopila. Both Kopila and Sita arranged access to four and three women from Dazzle and Glitter casino respectively. I gained access to male family members through the women workers that I interviewed. Gaining access to most of the policy experts working on development and women’s/gender issues was not a problem as I knew them from my past work.

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115 On the first day I interviewed 2 women and 1 male worker. The following day, I managed to interview 2 more women and also conducted a focus group discussion which lasted for nearly an hour and a half.

116 This was intentional, as I had earlier interviewed male workers from these two departments at Glitter casino. Interviewing women working in these same departments would help me analyse how the work was gendered.
experience; they were part of my professional networks. For some policy experts (government officers in particular), I gained access through the other policy experts I interviewed (many of them I had known when working in various capacities in non-government organisations), who helped me to secure appointments and who also introduced me to them. Hence in my research, social networks emerged as a crucial element in gaining access to the sample establishments, to workers within them and to policy experts.

**Pre-testing Interview Schedules**

In March 2009 (before I began my field work) I visited a resort outside Kathmandu where I had access as a regular customer and pre-tested the questionnaire and interview schedule with the human resource manager.\(^{117}\) I also pre-tested the interview schedules with a female worker in the housekeeping department,\(^{118}\) a male worker in the food and beverage department, the husband of the female worker and a policy expert working on development issues. I made some minor changes by rephrasing some questions. I next explain how I chose my samples and highlight the different research methods used with the range of research participants.

**Sampling**

In order to choose the sample establishments and the research participants, I used a combination of purposive sampling and the snow-ball technique. Bryman (2012: 418) notes that the goal of purposive sampling ‘is to sample cases/participants in a strategic

\(^{117}\) This resort is not one of my sample establishments. Hence, the pretesting interviews are not included in my research sample participants.

\(^{118}\) I pre-tested both the semi-structured and in-depth interview schedule with her.
way, so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed’. I also wanted to ‘sample in order to ensure that there is a good deal of variety in the resulting sample, so that sample members differ from each other in terms of key characteristics relevant to the research question’ (ibid.). Furthermore, according to Bryman (2012: 424), ‘[S]nowball sampling is a sampling technique in which the researcher samples initially a small group of people relevant to the research questions, and these sampled participants propose other participants relevant to the research. These participants will then suggest others and so on’.

Sample Establishments

Based on the gendered workforce data from 21 establishments, gathered in the preliminary field visit in 2008, I used purposive sampling to select two establishments from each of the following three categories: five star hotels; deluxe resorts; and casinos which were situated in Kathmandu, selecting those that had the highest percentage of women workers.\(^\text{119}\) I believed that selecting on this basis would illuminate the significance of women’s participation in these establishments. Selecting the research sample was at first complicated, not least because gaining access to these organisations was not as easy as I had expected it to be. Therefore, where establishments had similar percentages of female workers, the kind of access I had in the establishments also had an impact on the sample selection. I chose to use pseudonyms: Platinum hotel; Gold hotel; Sun resort; Moon resort; Dazzle casino and

\(^{119}\) Bryman (2012: 422) highlights that ‘the findings of a survey might be used as the basis for the selection of a purposive sampling.’
Glitter casino, in line with ethical concerns around confidentiality.\textsuperscript{120} I describe my sample establishments in a separate section later in this chapter.

\textbf{Sample of Research Participants}

My research participants comprised 6 managers, 47 workers (15 male and 32 female), 5 male family members of selected women workers and 14 policy experts.

\textit{Managers}

I had six managers as my research participants, those working in human resource/administration who I interviewed in their respective offices for between 30 to 45 minutes. For reasons of anonymity, I do not mention gender of the managers.\textsuperscript{121}

\textit{Workers}

The selection of workers was a combination of both purposive sampling as well as the use of snow ball technique to some extent. I started off by choosing/suggesting some departments but human resource personnel in some establishments chose (the first few) workers. Further, selecting workers was a complicated process as I tried to balance the gender of the worker and the different departments in each establishment (purposive sampling) and asked my research participants if they could introduce me to their colleagues working in a certain department (snow-ball technique with purpose). In total, I selected 15 male workers and 32 female workers (25 women for interviews and 7

\textsuperscript{120} I do this firstly to maintain confidentiality, one of the codes of ethics in research. The pseudonyms are my personal choice which I hope will make reading this thesis interesting.

\textsuperscript{121} See Appendix 7(a): Demographic profile of managers.
women for focus group discussions) as my research participants. Further, I chose eight women for in-depth interviews (of the 25 women interviewed) using purposive sampling; I tried to ensure a balance among the sample establishments and at the same time approached women who were willing to talk to me for the second time. Likewise, I used purposive sampling to select women working in front office of casinos, particularly on the gaming floor, who took part in focus group discussions: four women from Dazzle casino; and three from Glitter casino.

**Male family members**

Although I made requests to interview male family members of all the 8 women I had conducted in-depth interviews with, only 4 women contacted me to say that their male family members (3 husbands and 1 brother) were willing to talk to me. A further opportunity came through Sabina (28, Platinum hotel) who suggested her husband would be happy to help me out if I had any questions for him as well. Her husband rang her on her mobile, whilst we were talking. I heard her explain to him about me and my research. When she put the phone down she said, ‘actually why don’t you interview my husband. He is willing to be interviewed if it will help you’. Therefore, although I set out to interview eight male family members, in the end I was only able to interview five.\(^{123}\)

\(^{122}\) See Appendix 7(c), 7(d) and 7(e) for Work and demographic profile of hotel workers, resort workers and casinos workers respectively. Also see Appendix 7(f): Demographic profile of women in focus group discussions.

\(^{123}\) See Appendix 7(b): Demographic profile of male family members.
**Policy experts**

I first used purposive sampling to select 14 policy experts; the purpose being to benefit from the perspective of experts working on different areas such as development, tourism, labour and women and gender. As mentioned earlier, while I knew many of them from my past work experience, some of these people also helped me gain access to other policy experts. I tried to balance the gender of the policy experts as well as the sectors they represented in order to have wide spectrum of opinions.\(^\text{124}\)

**Venue and Duration**

Many the workers were interviewed at their respective work-places in Platinum hotel, Sun resort and Dazzle casino. Although I was provided with a separate room near the human resource department to interview workers in Dazzle casino, there were some disturbances with the movement of human resource staff in and out of that room. Furthermore, in Gold hotel, all workers (except for one male worker Bikash) were interviewed in the lobby where the movement of customers and workers seemed to distract the respondents. Bikash (31), who I contacted through one of my ex-work colleagues, was interviewed in a quiet corner by the swimming pool. He also helped me to contact other workers in the hotel.

Furthermore, in the case of workers from Dazzle casino and Gold hotel, I could sense some discomfort when talking to me, particularly on topics related to work. Such discomfort could be as a result of the venue of the interviews, which could have induced

\(^{124}\) See Table 3.7 of this chapter on distribution of sample (policy experts) by sectors represented and area of expertise.
the fear of ‘being watched’. This is a limitation I had to work with given the labour disputes and the complexity in gaining access to workers.

In Moon resort, I interviewed all workers in the office of the trade union situated at one corner of the resort premises. Pritam (M, Dazzle casino) was interviewed in a room at my previous workplace as it was convenient for him to come there. When I asked if I could interview him at the casino premises like others, he suggested I meet him another day during his day off, somewhere outside work, because that way he felt comfortable.

Interviews with workers from Glitter casino took place at Anju’s home\(^{125}\) (one of my research participants). All semi-structured interviews with workers ranged between 30 minutes to an hour. Further the eight in-depth interviews\(^{126}\) ranged from 45 minutes to an hour; six of them\(^{127}\) were interviewed (for the second time) in the sample establishment premises and two women from Glitter casino were interviewed in Anju’s house.

The venue in Dazzle casino was the same room as in the case of interviews which must be kept in mind as participants during the focus group discussion were disturbed with the frequent movement of other workers. In the case of Glitter casino, the venue was Madina’s\(^{128}\) house where I felt focus group participants (three women) were much more open to share their experiences about work compared to those in Dazzle casino. Both

\(^{125}\) Anju was introduced to me by my cousin (Sita).
\(^{126}\) Two women each from Platinum hotel and Glitter casino and one woman each from other four establishments were chosen for in-depth interviews.
\(^{127}\) Six research participants are: Sujata and Ramita from Platinum hotel; Uttara from Gold hotel; Meena from Sun resort; Kalpana from Moon resort; and Pranita from Dazzle casino.
\(^{128}\) Madina, was introduced to me by Anju (one of my in-depth interviewees).
focus group discussions lasted for about one and a half hours. Interviews with male family members were conducted in restaurants and a café over tea/coffee and lasted for about 30 to 45 minutes. Interviews with policy experts took place mostly in their offices, and in some cases (consultants) in their homes.

**Recording, Translation, Transcription and Data Analysis**

Although I asked all research participants for their consent to tape-record conversations, I was only able to record interviews with workers and some policy experts (11) and the focus group discussions. I explained to my research participants that their opinion/experiences was important and tape-recording them would allow me to refer back later, as I may miss out if I did not and that memorising or taking notes would not be enough. However, male family members, managers and three policy experts (one male working in the area of development and two female consultants working in the area of women and gender) did not agree to have their interviews tape-recorded. I therefore, made notes while interviewing them which I expanded immediately once I got home.

Having conducted all interviews and two focus group discussions, my next challenge was to transcribe and translate before I set out to analyse the data. The process of translating the interviews from Nepali to English language was complex for a non-native English speaker like me; the transcribing was further a time consuming task. As Bryman (2008: 453) notes, ‘The problem with transcribing interviews is that it is very time-consuming’. As I listened to the recordings several times, I made translations of
the transcripts of only those sections that I felt were necessary to be quoted and/or those that were related to my research questions, doing the same for the tape-recorded focus group discussions. Similarly, my hand-written notes taken during observations at the sample establishments are used when contextualising the data analysis. I believe that this process familiarised me with data as I had to listen to the recordings of each transcript several times.

As mentioned earlier, in the case of interviews with some of the male family members, managers and some policy experts (mainly government officials), I hand-wrote down the responses/viewpoints in bullet form (in both Nepali and English language as used by my research participants) as they did not allow me to record the interviews for undisclosed reasons. As soon as I got back home, I immediately wrote up the responses/viewpoints, translating them in the process.

Thematic analysis was used as an approach to analyse the transcripts. Once I had all of the transcripts ready, I organised them into several themes – some of which were already identified by me (I made it a point to enquire about them for example regarding the different kinds of labour – emotional, aesthetic and sexualised). Bryman (2008: 554) writes: ‘the idea is to construct an index of central themes and subthemes ... [that] are the product of a thorough reading and rereading of the transcripts or field notes that make up the data’ when explaining thematic analysis. This allowed me to be open to themes that emerged during the fieldwork in the process of grouping sub-themes that related to the broad concepts (explained in Chapter One) and those that addressed my research
questions. When in search of themes and subthemes I was mindful of some of the techniques used for thematic analysis. Citing Ryan and Bernard (2003), Bryman (2012: 580) notes that useful techniques for identifying themes include: ‘repetitions; indigenous typologies or categories; metaphors and analogies; transitions; similarities and differences; linguistic connectors; missing data; and theory-related material’. In addition, I focused on looking for concepts that I had used in my conceptual framework as a facilitator, and remained alert to recurring topics, similarities and differences of opinion and experiences among my research participants.

**Research Ethics and Dilemmas**

Throughout the research I kept in mind the ethical considerations outlined by the British Sociological Association (BSA, 2004), particularly the issues relating to informed consent, anonymity, privacy, confidentiality and professional integrity. I provided consent forms both in English and Nepali.\(^{129}\) I explained in the consent form that I would maintain anonymity and that their names would not appear anywhere in my thesis as I would be using pseudonyms. I believe this process of signing the consent form and informing them about my interest in understanding experiences and perceptions was useful as I tried to build rapport with my research participants and at the same time gain trust.

\(^{129}\) I offered my research participants the choice of filling out either of the two forms (for example, English version of the Consent form is provided in Appendix 6).
When I interviewed workers, all of them were glad to know that their names would not appear and at the same time, almost all the women workers and a few men told me that it was the first time anyone had interviewed them. Interviewing male family members was also interesting as they kept asking at regular intervals if what they said was similar or not with what their woman family member had said to me. I had to keep reiterating that confidentiality of information was very important, and something I promised all my research participants.

Many women participants of my research expressed their gratitude towards me as ‘no one had ever shown interest in their life and work’. Some asked what would happen next; whether there be a rise in salary or better facilities and benefits provided. As mentioned in Chapter Two, since labour disputes were rife during my field work, perhaps, some of these workers saw me as a researcher whose recommendations might have implications on the economic benefits they receive. However, at the same time, some of them also phoned me to be reassured that I would not attribute their names or pseudonyms in my research. That said, I felt it is me who should be (as I am) grateful for them sharing their experiences with me, without which writing this thesis would not have been possible.

Listening to the experiences of some women workers in the casinos was emotionally disturbing. For example, interviewing Lalita (a widow) was a challenge and I found myself in tears, as she cried when talking about her husband, a former worker of the same casino who had recently died. Likewise, it was difficult emotionally to manage
myself when I had to hear some of the casino women’s harsh struggles in life. Another such situation was the case of Rohinee when she explained that on the one hand management used to ignore her complaints about sexual harassment by male customers and on the other hand forced her and other women workers to look sexy. I felt I was intruding into the lives of workers as I enquired about personal issues, and facing an ethical dilemma when using their story to write this thesis yet not doing anything for them - Lalita in particular.

Lalita is one example who had false expectations that I could talk to her manager and provide her some money to support her two children’s school fees. Despite not being able to directly guarantee this, this research does nonetheless contribute to making women’s work ‘visible’ which could have implications on policies in pursuit of creating space for positive changes in the lives of women working in the hotels, resorts and casinos.

I also encountered some dilemmas when I tried to maintain reciprocity whilst interviewing workers. When I did at some point of the interview inform the participants that I would be returning to the United Kingdom, I realised many workers (almost all men and some women) and some male family members diverted their interest to knowing more about options for them to travel to United Kingdom to work or study. In such cases, I had to refocus their attention on my interview topics/questions, which was difficult. At the same time, I was in a dilemma about whether it was the right thing to do as I tried to provide or direct them elsewhere to obtain such information.
Field work in reflection

I found the mixed methods approach useful to unravel complexities and draw the linkages between women’s work in casinos and their empowerment. In hindsight, I feel perhaps conducting focus group discussions with women in the hotels and resorts too could have enriched the analysis. However, I chose to conduct focus group discussions with women in the casinos as I presumed they would be comfortable to be interviewed in a group and discuss about their work because the casinos are unique in that customers are predominately male who are served with free alcohol. I would also like to flag that having access to some workers through their Human Resource manager/personnel and the venue of the interviews/focus group discussions being the premises of the establishments may have had implications on the responses of workers. Notwithstanding this, I have combined other research methods to gain insights into the kind of work women do in the hotels and resorts that have generated data for analysis.

The questions I asked and topics discussed made my research participants reflect, for example, on employment practices at work. When I asked workers about their contract letter and job description, many workers felt they should get it, read it and also understand it depending on their individual cases. Likewise, when I enquired about the benefits men and women receive, some workers would stop and think while others mentioned that they had not themselves felt the need for different benefits. Furthermore, during focus group discussions, for example, raising/provoking conversation concerning emotions and looks I believe made women mindful of and reflect on these issues.
Another example is when I interviewed the policy experts, many of them towards the end of the interview confessed knowing very little or nothing about women’s work in hotels and casinos but showed interest in knowing more. In the process, I felt research participants reflected on the employment practices and nature of work in hotels and casinos. Hence, broadly, it is my belief that this research may raise consciousness about various issues depending on research participants.

My identity as ‘a feminist’ doing research for the purpose of obtaining a degree in women and gender studies had interesting effects. I believe the responses I received from my research participants varied depending on their perception of me. I highlight some cases below which illuminate the complexity of the research process and how my personal biography, and my positionality as a women’s rights activists (and at times, an academic) had implications for the power differences between myself and my research participants.

**Personal Biography and Positionality**

In feminist research the role and positioning of the researcher is equally as important as that of the researched. As Maynard (1997: 16) notes, understanding the ‘intellectual autobiography’ and ‘personal history’ of the researcher has been seen as integral to the research process. My positionality as a middle class, Nepali woman, holding two masters

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130 I realise when conducting research earlier, I was addressed or perceived by participants of the research as ‘a researcher’. This time, doing a research from the department of women and gender studies, I was perceived as ‘a feminist’. When I worked on women’s rights issues in development organisations, I recall being perceived as a ‘development worker’.
degrees from ‘abroad’\textsuperscript{131} with nearly a decade of work experience on women’s issues in Nepal (as a women’s rights activist) had implications for the research process.

My positionality as a women’s rights activist could have led the managers to say what they assumed I would want to hear. I asked my neighbours, ex-work colleagues and an ex-school friend to position me as a women’s rights activist/researcher and/or feminist when introducing me to managers. Further, my personal biography shows that I have been involved in work and study on women’s issues/rights. Moreover, at a time when the media is presenting casinos negatively the managers may have deliberately sought to focus on how well their casinos were doing in terms of employing women workers.

As a feminist researcher, I tried my best to be attentive to the experiences of women and men. With most women workers I provided information about myself, my family and my desire to understand women workers’ situation in the hotel industry. I tried to show empathy as I listened to the workers talk about their work, family and themselves, because I was interested in ‘giving voice’ to them in my research. I tried my best to establish reciprocity as I responded to their queries, some of which were very personal (such as Ruku, who asked me how I managed my studies, home, husband and children). Further, many workers (men in particular) were interested in knowing how they could also go to United Kingdom to work as they discussed the political unrest in the country. To all such questions, I tried my best to respond.

\textsuperscript{131} Master of Business Administration from University of Pune, India and Master of Arts in Women’s Studies and Gender from Institute of Social Studies, Netherlands.
While some male workers were cooperative and seemed to understand the need to gather their perspectives, others expressed concern about how their interviews would be useful in my research as the research is feminist.\textsuperscript{132} For example, one manager said, ‘your research is about work and women’s empowerment and so I am not sure if I can help ... perhaps women politicians or women managers would help’. Such a remark at first made me feel as though they wanted to distance themselves from my ‘feminist research’. Further, I sensed some government officials were trying to respond to topics on women’s issues from a perspective they perhaps thought I would be willing to hear. For example, talking to the officer from the Ministry of Law, he said, ‘I hope I am correct. These days one needs to be gender sensitive, especially when talking to feminists like you’. I also faced misogynist comments from participants such as Pritam, who said, ‘women are to be blamed ... because they are not loyal to their husbands ... you may not agree because you work on women’s issues but...’ and a sense of distancing.

Therefore, from my experience, it was my personal biography and my positionality as a feminist researcher that had implications on the research process; depending on how I was positioned, power differences shifted between me and my research participants.

\textit{Power Dynamics and Challenges}

As mentioned earlier, one of the feminist critiques in social science has been on gender and power relations. According to Charles (1996: 13), ‘[I]mplicit in most feminist

\textsuperscript{132} Although I did not tell anyone that this research was feminist research per se, the ‘gatekeepers’ (people in my social networks) were aware of its nature and generally introduced it as such.
research is the assumption that gender relations are relations of power ... [and] that feminists are concerned with asymmetrical power relations’. Hierarchical power between the researcher and the researched is an area of concern in feminist research (see Oakley, 2000; Letherby, 2003; Hesse-Biber, 2007). I will elaborate on some issues of power and challenges faced in the process of gathering data as I interviewed different groups of individuals.

I tried my best to allow my research participants (mainly workers and male family members) to lead the discussions, encouraging them to share their experiences and perceptions as well as sharing my own thoughts when requested. I believe this was useful in maintaining some level of power balance. All managers decided when and where to meet, sometimes even cancelling the appointment at the last minute. I had less control in the process of interviewing them; while some of them were cooperative as they showed keen interest in my curriculum-vitae, research outline and offered to help, others questioned if I had any connection with the trade union movement or journalists. The casinos were already facing media attention with debates about whether casinos were responsible for the increased crime (e.g., kidnapping for ransom) in Kathmandu.

In one establishment, at first the manager showed distrust at me being a PhD student to the extent of suspecting me of being an undercover agent. In reflection, I see this as a crucial moment when I was tested on my patience and perseverance as I calmly tried to
convince the manager, showing the original documents I had obtained from the University.\textsuperscript{133}

When interviewing policy experts I felt the shifting of power between myself and them depending on their area of expertise. For example, policy experts working on areas other than women and gender issues would hesitate to respond or talk about women’s empowerment and women’s work. On the other hand, those policy experts working on women and gender issues had up-to-date knowledge on policy related documents.\textsuperscript{134}

Hence, as I reflect on the power between myself as a researcher and my research participants, I conclude that there were different experiences depending on who the research participants were. However, during the writing stage, I as a researcher held ‘a powerful role in the analysis and writing-up of the data’ (Wilkinson, 1998: 114). I decided which information would be used as I wrote my thesis, focusing on answering the three research questions that I set out at the beginning of the research process.

\textsuperscript{133} I showed my student identity card, recommendation letter from my supervisors and my university visiting card that proved my student status and also explained that I was conducting this research as part of my PhD degree.

\textsuperscript{134} For example, a male working on development issues said, ‘I think you are more knowledgeable on the topic women and gender…. Not sure if I have that level of knowledge.’ Likewise, a male working on women’s rights issues said, ‘I am not sure if you know about the sexual harassment bill… I will give you a copy before you leave. Just remind me to give it to you.’
Use of Nepali Language

Whilst mindful of the power relations between myself and my research participants, I made it a point to speak in Nepali (at least to start the conversation with managers and some policy experts) with all research participants to let them feel I was comfortable with Nepali, as I anticipated that most of my research participants, particularly workers, may feel more comfortable in Nepali than English. In retrospect, the use of Nepali language was interesting.

While some managers and policy experts responded to/discussed my queries in both Nepali and English, others (workers, male family members and other managers and policy experts) talked to me only in Nepali. However, there were some words like shashaktikaran in Nepali, meaning ‘empowerment’ which I realised were not easily understood by the workers. Instead, some of them were more comfortable using words in English such as ‘empowerment’, ‘violence’, ‘power’, ‘control’, ‘management’, ‘society’, ‘discrimination’ and ‘equal’, which is perhaps because such English words have been used more colloquially than their Nepalese synonyms. However, speaking in the Nepali language I believe allowed some of my research participants (workers and male family members) to feel comfortable sharing their experiences. With managers and some policy experts even though I started the interview in Nepali, during the discussions both English and Nepali were used.
Description of Sample

In this section, I describe each set of establishments in turn; highlighting similarities and differences, and I then describe my research participants.

Description of Six Establishments

As explained earlier, I selected six establishments for my research, two five star hotels, two deluxe resorts and two casinos in Kathmandu, based on the relatively high proportion of women in their workforce. I use pictures downloaded from various internet sources to illustrate how workers looked like in a hotel, resort and casino setting. However, none of the pictures represent the sample establishments in this research. I intentionally did not take pictures at sample establishments during field work to protect the identity of the establishments and their workers.

Hotels: Platinum and Gold

Both hotels are similar in many aspects of interior design and look like any other five star hotel in the world. They also offer similar facilities fulfilling the criteria of being a five star hotel as per the government guidelines (see GoN, 1998) and provide a range of services such as accommodation in a range of rooms, space for meetings, social events (marriage, birthdays etc.) and hosting food and music festivals as well as promoting leisure activities, all combined with lunch or dinner on weekends.

135 The next chapter (Chapter Four) begins with a more detailed description and further analysis of the gendered workforce in all six establishments.
While Platinum hotel is situated a little further from the heart of the city and more spread in terms of land occupied, in comparison Gold hotel is in the heart of the city and does not cover a large area of land. The workforces of both hotels were dominated by male workers; women comprise only 17 percent in Platinum and 19 percent in Gold of the total workforce.

Workers, both male and female, in the reception or lobby area were dressed in clean, tidy uniforms depending on the kind of work they do: women either wore western outfit, a shirt and trousers (some also wore a coat) or Nepali costume, a blouse and sari (see Picture 3.1a and 3.1b). Men were dressed in western outfit, a shirt and trousers and some also wore a bow-tie, or tie and a coat (see Picture 3.1a). All workers wore a nametag with the logo of the hotel. Both men and women serving food and beverages were wearing shirt, trousers with a bow-tie similar to Picture 3.1c below.
Picture 3.1: Workers wearing uniforms at the front office in a hotel/resort setting

Picture 3.1a: Front office workers in a hotel/resort setting


Picture 3.1b: A female worker at the front desk wearing Nepali costume in a hotel/resort setting

Source: http://farm5.staticflickr.com/4064/4287428335_c1f0421849_o.jpg [accessed July 17, 2012]
Resorts: Sun and Moon

The deluxe resorts are similar to five star hotels in many aspects. However, there are some distinctive features of resorts. One major difference is the location: resorts in general are situated in places famous for some specific reason for example, having views of the sunset, mountains, wildlife, rural landscape and cultural heritage. Most resorts are situated on the outskirts of the city; only a few are in the city where customers can enjoy the cultural heritage sites nearby. Traditional dances, music, art and food are what resorts focus on integrating while providing different types of services. Volume of business is another different feature; hotels operate on a large scale catering to more customers with wider range of facilities, compared to resorts.
Like in hotels, workers in resorts are dressed in uniform according to their work. While workers at the Sun resort have similar uniforms for both male and female workers as at the hotels (see Picture 3.1 above), Moon resort workers at the front office look different as most wear the national costume: men wear *daura-suruwal*, *topi* and a waistcoat (see Picture 3.2a below) and/or jacket. A few men (presumably managers) are seen wearing formal western suits – shirts, trousers, tie and a jacket (see Picture 3.1 above). Conversely, no women were seen in western clothes. Women in Moon resort were seen wearing Nepali costume, a blouse and a sari (see Picture 3.1b above) or wearing ethnic costume as shown in Picture 3.2b below. The use of national costumes signifies the cultural uniqueness. Women in both hotels and resorts appeared to have applied some make up, tied their hair neatly (commonly in a bun and a plait). Men had short (in most cases gelled) hair, with no moustache or beard. I describe some of the facilities provided in hotels and resorts as I divide the departments into front office and back office departments.

In Nepal the national costume for men includes *daura-suruwal*, *topi* and a western style of waist coat and a jacket. The *daura* is a closed neck shirt worn on the upper half of body like a shirt, with five pleats and eight strings that serves to tie around the body. The *sruwal* is fitted trouser made from the same material as the daura. The *topi* is a Nepali cap, with its peak offset from the center giving it a slightly lopsided look which completes the outfit. The national costume for women includes blouses and saris. Sari is cloth that is normally 5 or 5.5 metres in length, wrapped around the waist and over one shoulder. There has recently been debated about whether the present national costume represents the diverse ethnic costumes of different ethnic groups.

I explain more in Chapter Four about the front office and back office departments when explaining the gender division of labour within the establishments.
Picture 3.2: Workers in national costumes in a resort setting

Picture 3.2a: A man wearing Nepali costume


Picture 3.2b: Female worker in Nepali costume in a resort setting

Front office departments include reception, sales and marketing, food and beverage services, health/beauty and fitness, outdoor leisure activity (Sun resort) and security. Customers are provided with different facilities through various front office departments, where workers’ interaction with customers is relatively high compared with back office departments.

Reception is the place where customers interact with staff when checking in and out of the hotels/resorts and for any additional information they require. While both hotels and resorts have security personnel, hotels are considered to be under higher surveillance than the resorts because of the high flow of customers. In Gold hotel and Moon resort, Sales and Marketing is situated near Reception while in Platinum hotel and Sun resort it is further away from reception. This department focuses on increasing the volume of business and also retaining existing customers.

Workers in food and beverage services provide all services related to serving customers with food and drinks in restaurants, garden, room service etc. Health/beauty and fitness departments provide body massage, spa, haircuts, beauty care (facial, makeup etc.), a gym, and different types of sports (indoor). In Sun resort, they also provide outdoor leisure activities. Security personnel in both hotels and resorts are located at the entrance to facilitate security checks.

\[^{138}\text{To maintain confidentiality I do not mention what kind of outdoor leisure activities are provided.}\]
In all establishments back office departments are at the rear of the premises where entry is restricted (other than for workers). They include Human Resources, Administration, Finance, Engineering, Housekeeping, Laundry, Food and Beverage production and Stewarding. Workers in Human Resources take stock of all information about workers from recruitments to exit and are also responsible for keeping records of salary and benefits. The Administration department is often clubbed with human resources or accounts. The Accounts department looks into all financial records, providing details to management and other agencies such as the tax department. The Engineering department works to ensure the smooth operation of all equipment.

The Housekeeping department ensures that accommodation facilities are cleaned and hygienically maintained. Workers in this department work across all departments; they clean and decorate rooms, toilets and public places including the garden. The Laundry department involves collection and delivery and working with huge machines to clean and iron laundry. Food and beverage production involves preparing different types of food and drinks. Stewarding involves food and beverage production and service ensuring that customers receive the food and drinks they have requested.

**Casinos: Dazzle and Glitter**

The casinos are different from hotels and resorts as they do not provide accommodation and related facilities. Casinos focus on entertaining customers; customers gamble playing electronic and manual games. Food and alcohol (also soft drinks) are served free to all customers; regular customers are served with imported and high brand liquor. The
physical environment in both casinos is similar: high security at the gates with physically well built men (and a few women in Dazzle casino) dressed in black coats, trousers and shirts. There is hardly any daylight as one goes further inside the casino premises; artificial lights brighten up the floor. Moreover, the electronic games persistently flash with different coloured lights.

However, there are some departments such as Reception, Sales and Marketing, Food and Beverage (production and service) which are similar to the hotels and resorts. The Security department in casinos includes bouncers who are responsible for ensuring that customers do not cheat or start quarrelling/fighting with workers and amongst themselves. The front office in casinos includes gaming floor and guest relations. Gaming is the ‘heart’ of the casino; business takes place on the gaming floor. Adjacent to the reception is the exchange counter, where customers exchange their money (a currency exchange board is also fixed on the wall) for chips used to play the different kinds of game. This means there is no transaction of money other than chips beyond this point. The gaming floor is largely dominated by women workers and is an area of high surveillance: there are cameras fitted on the ceilings and at different corners of the room.139

Most women on the gaming floor wore fitted trousers and shirts (see Picture 3.3a and 3.3b below), applied distinctly visible makeup, and wore high heeled shoes, walked

139 It is also said that casinos everywhere have ‘eyes in the sky’ due to the high surveillance.
around their heads high and with some style swaying their body. In contrast a few women (those working as croupiers, serving food and drinks and clearing/cleaning the side tables) also wore loose trousers and shirts, flat shoes and had very little or no makeup on their face. Men in both casinos dress very similarly to those working in hotels depending on where they work.

**Picture 3. 3: The gaming floor in a casino setting**

Picture 3.3a: Croupiers on the gaming floor of a casino

It is necessary to understand the ownership of the hotels, resorts and casinos where I carried out my research as this may have implications for managerial control of workers’ performance of different types of labour, and of gender, and on the way femininities and masculinities are performed (see Otis, 2012). In this research, the ownership of both hotels and the Sun resort is a combination of local and international owners. While both hotels are partly owned by a large chain of American hotels (two separate chain hotels), the Sun resort is partly owned by an international chain of hotels. It is only the Moon resort that is wholly owned by Nepalese business people. In the case of casinos, both casinos are based in five star hotels and are largely owned by Indian nationals (with a few Nepali investors who are in minority).

\[140\] I was told that the international chain of hotels, was being replaced by Nepalese investors soon and in a few months after I finished my field work, I came to know that this resort was fully owned by Nepalese.
As highlighted in Chapter One, according to Otis (2012), when providing the service, the kind of service expected and produced depended largely on the aspirations of the different clientele in the globalised markets, and to some extent on the ownership of the hotels through management control. In this research, there are no differences in the clientele of both hotels and resorts. Clientele include local consumers and international tourists. Depending on particular months, in a tourist season (between September to April), major clientele comprise of tourists mainly from Europe, China, India, Japan and America. Packaged programmes are well known for attracting tourists in groups. Some hotels and resorts also target newly-wed couples for honeymoon packages, particularly targeting Indian tourists. In some cases, such packages are also combined with casinos that are situated in the five star hotel premises. During non-peak times (May to August), the local consumers who organize national and international workshops, social events and official meetings are the major customers.

In casinos, although they are set up for the entertainment of tourists, and Nepali citizens are legally prohibited to enter, the irony is that the clientele is largely Nepalese citizens. Other than the Nepalese clientele, a majority of the casino customers are tourists from India. It can be said that the ownership of the establishments seem to have some implications on the type of clientele in the respective establishments.

Therefore, while there are some differences between hotels, resorts and casinos relating to the ownership, the clientele of hotels and resorts are similar. Other than what is described above, across all establishments the back office departments were situated
further away from the main areas where customers are seen. All workers also wore their name tags when in uniform. I turn now to describing my research participants.

**Description of Research Participants**

As can be seen from Table 3.1 the research participants included six managers, 47 workers, five male family members and 14 policy experts; and I used a range of research methods with them to gather both quantitative and qualitative data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research participants</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Interview Semi-structured</th>
<th>Focus group discussion</th>
<th>Observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishments</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male family members</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Experts</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Visit, 2009

The six managers were from the Human Resources and/or Administration departments of the sample establishments. All managers were married post graduates (holding a Master’s degree) and were between the ages of 35 and 50.\(^{141}\) The five male family members included a brother (younger) working in a casino and four husbands: two

\(^{141}\) See Appendix 7 (a): Demographic profile of managers. As mentioned earlier, for anonymity reasons, I do not disclose the gender of the managers.
working as medical representatives and two in a casino. They were between the ages of 22 and 38. Their education levels ranged from having completed school (one of the husbands), to higher secondary school (one husband and one brother) and university undergraduate level (two of the husbands).142

As presented in Table 3.2 below, the sample of 47 workers (15 male and 32 female) and their distribution by the departments in which they worked at hotels, resorts and casinos.143 Although I tried to include men and women from the same department so as to be able to compare workers’ experiences and the meanings their work held for them, there were a few departments from which I was not able to include both male and female workers. For example, my research sample does not have a female worker from the engineering and laundry departments or a male worker from the guest relations department.

---

142 See Appendix 7 (b): Demographic profile of male family members.  
143 See Appendix 7 (c), 7(d) and 7 (e) for Work and demographic profile of hotel workers, resort workers and casinos workers respectively. Also Appendix 7 (f): Demographic profile of women in focus group discussions.
Table 3.2: Distribution of sample by gender and department of work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departments</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Resort</th>
<th>Casino</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Platinum M F</td>
<td>Gold M F</td>
<td>Sun M F</td>
<td>Moon M F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>0 M 1 F 3 1 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 1 1 0 0 0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health club/Spa related</td>
<td>1 M 1 F 1 1 1</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 1 1 0 0 0</td>
<td>2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>0 M 1 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td>1 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>1 M 1 F 0 1 0</td>
<td>1 0 1 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>0 M 1 F 0 0 1</td>
<td>0 0 1 0 1 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Production)</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Service)</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials/Store</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest Relations</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouncer</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot machine</td>
<td>0 M 0 F 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>3 M 5 F 3 4 2 4 2 4 2 8 3 7 15 32</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8 M 7 F 6 6 10 10 47</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M – Male and F – Female Source: Field Visit, 2009

As can be seen below Table 3.3 shows the distribution of the 47 workers (15 men and 32 women) by gender and age. Most workers were between 21 and 30 years of age. The youngest worker was 19 years old and the eldest 48 years, both male. Table 3.4 shows the distribution of workers by gender and marital status. Among 15 male workers, six were married and nine unmarried, and among 32 women workers, 19 were married and 12 were unmarried.
Table 3.3: Distribution of sample by gender and age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Resort</th>
<th>Casino</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Platinum</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>Sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M – Male and F – Female Source: Field Visit, 2009

Table 3.4: Distribution of sample by gender and marital status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Hotels Platinum</th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Resort Sun</th>
<th>Moon</th>
<th>Casino Dazzle</th>
<th>Glitter</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M – Male and F – Female Source: Field Visit, 2009

Workers were living in different kinds of family structure, which is demonstrated in Table 3.5 below. There were 16 unmarried workers living in their parental home (nine women and seven men); 11 women and 3 men were living in a nuclear family household; 4 married women and 3 married men were living in joint family households whereby married women move to live in their husband’s parental home (patri-local). In addition,
three married women did not live with their husbands for different reasons; two of them were living as single parents and one lived alone. There were seven unmarried workers (whose parental home was not in Kathmandu) living in different kinds of family situations such as living with relatives or siblings and some with a sibling’s nuclear family.

Table 3.5: Distribution of sample by gender and structure of family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure of Family</th>
<th>Hotels Platinum</th>
<th>Hotels Gold</th>
<th>Resort Sun</th>
<th>Resort Moon</th>
<th>Casino Dazzle</th>
<th>Casino Glitter</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint (Patri-local)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Parent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living alone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M – Male and F – Female; * Living with relative/sibling/sibling’s nuclear family
Source: Field Visit, 2009

Workers also had a wide range of work experience in the establishments. As can be seen from Table 3.6 below, most of the workers (20) had worked between four to six years in the same establishment. In Moon resort, one male worker had worked for 19 years and another woman had worked for there 17 years. In casinos, the longest length of work experience was 6 years.

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144 Pranita from Dazzle casino mentioned being married and said she was living with her children but not her husband. She did not want to say anything about her husband, nor did she say she was divorced. Likewise, Tarini from Moon resort said she was married but not divorced. She lived with her school-age son. Ruku from Moon resort was married and living on her own because her husband had migrated abroad for work.
Table 3.6: Distribution of sample by gender and years of work experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work experience (yrs)</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Resort</th>
<th>Casino</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Platinum</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>Moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 8 7 6 6 13 7 47

Note: M – Male and F – Female Source: Field Visit, 2009

I was unsuccessful in gathering information on the ethnicity and caste of the research participants, although I had intended to do so. I tried asking people their ethnicity and caste, but they did not want to tell me. Research participants refrained and some even questioned me on why their ethnicity and caste mattered as long as they responded to my queries related to their work and how their work was able (or not able) to bring any change in their lives. I presume this could be because talking about issues of ethnicity and caste has become political. In such a situation, I realized asking a person what ethnicity or caste they belonged to was not appropriate. I felt uncomfortable and later on stopped asking for such information. In addition, I did not try to gather information on the class of workers as I felt that caste and ethnicity were more important. Therefore, I am able to provide limited information regarding workers’ social background.
My sample also included 14 policy experts representing various sectors as shown in Table 4.6 below. I tried to include a balance in the gender of policy experts as well as the sectors they represented in order to gain a wide spectrum of opinions.

**Table 3. 7: Distribution of policy experts by sectors represented and area of expertise**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors represented</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Tourism</th>
<th>Law</th>
<th>Labour</th>
<th>Women and Gender</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1 (male)</td>
<td>1 (male)</td>
<td>1 (male)</td>
<td>1 (female)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
<td>1 (male)</td>
<td>1 (male)</td>
<td>1 (female)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union/Association</td>
<td>1 (male)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (male)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>1 (male)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 (female)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Visit, 2009

Hence, my sample of research participants includes 47 workers, 6 managers, 5 male family members of some women workers and 14 policy experts. Among the 47 workers, there are 15 male and 39 female workers from hotels (6 male and 9 female), resorts (4 male and 8 female) and casinos (5 male and 15 female). Most of the workers were young in age between 21 to 30 ages – most of them being casino workers. Most workers were unmarried, and lived in parental homes and nuclear family households and three women lived in single parent households. Most of the workers had work experience of up to 6 years in their respective establishments.
Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed why my research is feminist and explained the research methods I chose and the research process followed. I also discussed research ethics and the dilemmas I faced during fieldwork. Being reflexive about the research process, I have shown that my personal biography, positionality and social networks had implications for how I tried to reduce the power differences between the research participants and myself. I also discussed some of the challenges I faced during fieldwork and how my research can be seen as one that, in some ways, might have raised the awareness of research participants on the issues that we discussed.

I have also explained in this chapter my personal experience of gaining insights into ‘doing feminist research’, issues of access, power and challenges faced during field work and thereafter. I believe my social contacts, personal biography and having used Nepali language when talking to my research participants made it easier for me to conduct this research and I am aware that these have implications on the kind of data gathered. I emphasise that my social networks (ex-work colleagues, neighbours, ex-school friend and cousin) have proved to be very useful in gaining access with my research participants, which also indicates the importance of building and maintaining social networks in the Nepalese context.

The section on ethical considerations and dilemmas faced during the research process show that doing this research was a challenging experience but that hearing the voices of women and men workers and the gendered meanings of their work and empowerment etc. was very positive. I believe the different research methods used and the research
process I followed have been useful to address the research questions and document workers’ (women’s in particular) experiences that have not been documented in this way up to now.

Moreover, the time in which the field work was conducted was one when on the one hand, labour disputes were ongoing in the establishments and on the other political disturbances affected the entire country with strikes and bandas. This had implications for my research in terms of gaining access and the kind of information gathered. It sometimes prevented Managers from giving [accurate or detailed] information on salary structure, policy documents, and in some cases controlled which worker would be interviewed by me (based on my criteria). Further, in Platinum hotel, Sun resort and Dazzle casino, the venue of the interviews (and the focus group discussion in the case of Dazzle casino) were within the premises of the respective establishments which bear some implication on the kind of data gathered as workers could have had the feeling of ‘being watched’ by the management. As mentioned regarding the sampling of male family members, I could only interview five of them despite aiming to interview male family members of women who participated in in-depth interviews. Thus, such limitations have implications for the research findings that need to be kept in mind.

To conclude, ‘doing feminist research’ has been an interesting experience filled with challenges as I conducted the fieldwork, analysed my data and wrote this thesis. For me, this has been an ongoing journey from my earlier work experience as a women’s rights activist and development researcher, towards being a critical writer within feminist studies.
Hence, the research methodology that I used has significant implications for the findings of my three research questions: 1) how is gendered work constructed? 2) to what extent do men and women workers perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour and 3) to what extent does paid work empower women, in the context of five-star hotels, deluxe resorts and casinos in Kathmandu. The following three chapters address these research questions in turn.
Chapter 4: Construction of Gendered Work

Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on my first research question: How is gendered work constructed? I argue that gendered work is constructed by three distinct but related dimensions, namely: the gender division of labour; the gendered ideologies of managers and workers; and the gendering of skills through the training provided by establishments. I also argue that these dimensions shape the ways in which gendered work is constructed differently depending on the type of establishment.

I organise this chapter in four sections. First, I present a snapshot of the gendered workforce in the hotels and casinos of Kathmandu Valley. Second, I detail the gender division of labour in the six establishments I researched in terms of both vertical and horizontal segregation. Third, I unpack the gendered ideologies that managers and workers articulate concerning the qualities of male and female labour and which legitimise and naturalise the gender division of labour. I also highlight some cases of workers who challenge these gendered ideologies. Moreover, I point to the presence of a disjuncture between gendered ideologies and the gender division of labour. Fourth, I illustrate that the training provided to workers is constitutive of the gendering of skills, which influence and reproduce the gender division of labour. I begin by presenting the snapshot of the gendered workforce.
Gendered Workforce

This section provides a snapshot of the gendered workforce as of July 2008 in eight five-star hotels, five deluxe resorts and eight casinos in Kathmandu. As explained in Chapter Two and Three, there is very little data published on the gendered workforce in this sector. Moreover, when I started this research there was no gendered workforce data on this sector in Nepal\textsuperscript{145} which is why I used questionnaires to collect such information during my preliminary field visit, which I present in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4. 1: Distribution of total workforce in five-star hotels, deluxe resorts and casinos in Kathmandu by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establishments</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five-star Hotels</td>
<td>2,591</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>3,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deluxe Resorts</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casinos</td>
<td>3,948</td>
<td>1,882</td>
<td>5,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Workforce</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,102</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,468</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,570</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Preliminary Field Visit, July 2008

The figure below shows the distribution of workforce in 21 establishments: eight five-star hotels; five deluxe resorts; and eight casinos in Kathmandu. The majority of the workers are men, with women comprising 14 percent and 21 percent in hotels and resorts respectively. The casinos, a relatively new area of employment, have relatively fewer numbers of men and 32 percent of the workforce is female.

\textsuperscript{145} In 2011, one study Upadhyay et al. (2011) published the gendered data as of 2008 in hotels and casinos, which I came to know of only towards the end of my thesis writing process. I have not come across any gender disaggregated workforce data in deluxe resorts, other than a sample survey of resorts in 2003 (see CBS, 2004).
Figure 4.1 shows that overall; the sector is mainly comprised of male workers (74 percent), with women comprising 26 percent of the total workforce. Moreover, as noted by Upadhayay et al. (2011), 18 percent of the workforce in 10 five-star hotels and 35 percent of the workforce in 10 casinos in Nepal were women as of 2008; these figures are similar to those I have illustrated above.

This snapshot of the gendered workforce indicates that while all establishments are not feminised, it is hotels that are the most masculinised, followed closely by resorts and

---

146 See Appendix 8: Gendered workforce in five-star hotels, deluxe resorts and casinos in Kathmandu.
147 While data provided by Upadhyay et al. (2011) includes all 10 five-star hotels and 10 casinos in the country, my data is as of July 2008 and includes only 8 five-star hotels and 8 casinos in Kathmandu.
then casinos. I next unpack the gender division of labour and explore the work of men and women within and across my six sample establishments.

**Gender Division of Labour**

This section analyses the gender division of labour within the workforce of six sample establishments, providing insights into the different kinds of work done by men and women. As Acker (1990) notes, the gender division of labour is one example of ‘the construction of divisions along lines of gender’ that she highlights to be one of the interacting processes in which gendering occurs. I use the concept of occupational segregation (Hakim, 1981), both vertical and horizontal, to unpack the gender division of labour. I begin with vertical segregation, analysing the gendering of management.

**Vertical Segregation**

As Hakim (1981) notes, vertical segregation refers to who is employed where in the organisational hierarchy. Table 4.2 below shows the vertical gender segregation in the sample establishments, demonstrating the distribution of men and women as managers and non-managerial workers. However, I do not have such precise data from Dazzle casino; therefore, only the total workforce data in casinos has been calculated in the table below.\(^{148}\)

---

\(^{148}\) It was very difficult getting workforce data particularly from Dazzle casino, despite making use of various social networks. Eventually, I managed to get the entire gendered workforce data which did not include managerial level. I followed up to enquire on this but failed to receive any response even after repeated attempts.
Table 4.2: Proportion of total workforce in managerial and non-managerial positions in sample establishments by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Managerial workers</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-managerial workers</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total Workforce</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platinum hotel</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<td>(100)</td>
<td>(77)</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(83)</td>
<td>(17)</td>
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<td>(16)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hotels</td>
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</tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>79</td>
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<td>(11)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(80)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Figures in parenthesis are percentages; - denotes data not available.
Source: Field Visit, April 2009
Table 4.3: Proportion of total workforce in sample establishments by gender and level of employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establishment</th>
<th>Managerial Male</th>
<th>Non-Managerial</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Managerial Female</th>
<th>Non-Managerial</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Managerial</th>
<th>Non-Managerial</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<th>Non-Managerial</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Non-Managerial</td>
<td></td>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Non-Managerial</td>
<td></td>
<td>Managerial</td>
<td>Non-Managerial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>256</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<td>(10)</td>
<td>(90)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold hotel</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>(88)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun resort</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>41</td>
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<td>39</td>
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<td>(19)</td>
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<td>(86)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(90)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>(87)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dazzle casino</td>
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<td>388</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>557</td>
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<tr>
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<td>339</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>705</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(90)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(99)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(94)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1,262</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Figures in parenthesis are percentages; - denotes data not available.
Source: Field Visit, April 2009
Table 4.2 shows the distribution of the workforce by gender between the managerial and non-managerial level workforce. While managers are mainly male, proportion of managers who are female varies widely; 1 out of 33 managers (3 percent) in Platinum hotel and 8 out of 39 managers (21 percent) in Moon resort are female.

Table 4.3 shows the proportion of male and female workers at managerial and non-managerial levels in sample establishments. While managerial workforce varies between five (Sun resort) and 19 (Moon resort) percent of the total workforce; there are more male than female workers at managerial level. The highest proportion of female managers is in Moon resort (8 out of 49 or 16 percent) followed by Gold hotel (8 out of 56 or 14 percent). The highest proportion of male managers is in Moon resort (31 out of 157 or 20 percent) followed by Platinum hotel (32 out of 256 or 13 percent) and Gold hotel (36 out of 286 or 13 percent).

Moreover, there is stark gendered hierarchy in Glitter casino where only one percent of the female workforce are represented at managerial level whereas it has 47 percent of its workforce as women (see Table 4.2, column 9) the highest proportion of female workforce in all sample establishments. This is followed by Platinum hotel and Sun resort that have one and two percent of the female workforce at managerial level respectively. Table 4.2, column 9 shows women workers comprise 21 percent and 26 percent of the total workforce in Platinum hotel and Sun resort respectively.

Hence, the vertical segregation of the workforce shows that there are gendered hierarchies (Acker, 1990) within the establishments, with the managers being mostly men. Few women are managers and the percentage of women managers varies...
across the five establishments. Moreover, as highlighted in Chapter Three earlier, I do not have any reliable data to analyse the wage structure of workers across and within the establishments.\textsuperscript{149} It can only be assumed that women are paid less than men because of the former being concentrated at the lower echelons of the hierarchy.

I now analyse the horizontal segregation of the workforce.

\textit{Horizontal Segregation}

According to Hakim (1981), horizontal segregation refers to the distribution of women and men between different departments. I examine the offices which I have categorised as front office – those where customer interaction is high and back office – those that support the front office and have limited customer interaction.\textsuperscript{150} I examine the horizontal gender segregation in hotels, resorts and casinos consecutively.

\textbf{Hotels}

Table 4.4 below illustrates the distribution of the workforce by gender between the various departments of both the hotels. As can be seen in the table, the workforce in some departments is exclusively male. These include departments of Stewarding, Engineering and Laundry in Platinum hotel; and departments of Security and Food and Beverage Production in Gold hotel. The majority of the departmental workforce in Sales and Marketing in Gold hotel is consisted of women (67 percent). In other departments, the majority of workers are male.

\textsuperscript{149} I have explained in the chapter on Methodology that although I did try to collect data on salary structure, I was not able to do so.

\textsuperscript{150} In service work, particularly the hotel and casino sectors it is common to hear the terms front office or front-line workers referring to those who are regularly interacting with customers to provide services, distinguishable from those working in the back office and back of the house workers who support front office workers in providing face-to-face services to customers. In my research, workers and managers used similar terms of front office or front of house and back office or back of house to make this distinction.
Table 4.4: Proportion of total departmental workforce of sample hotels by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Platinum hotel Total Workforce</th>
<th>Gold hotel Total Workforce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Reception</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(79)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage Service</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(84)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Marketing</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>(44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness/Spa Centre</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(56)</td>
<td>(44)</td>
</tr>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SUB TOTAL</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>(26)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Back Office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and Human Resources</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(64)</td>
<td>(36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>SUB TOTAL</td>
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<td>(19)</td>
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<td>GRAND TOTAL</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(80)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages.
Source: Field Visit, April 2009
Table 4. 5: Proportion of total workforce in front and back office departments of sample hotels by gender

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Department/Office</th>
<th>Platinum hotel</th>
<th>Gold hotel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage Service</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14)</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness/Spa</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>(39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and Human Resources</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>(45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage Production</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewarding</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(70)</td>
<td>(61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Office</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Workforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages.
Source: Field Visit, April 2009
Table 4.5 above shows the distribution of the workforce by gender between the
different departments constituting the front and back offices. In both hotels, the
workforce distribution between front office and back office shows a concentration
of workers in the back office; in Platinum hotel 220 out of 325 (68 percent) and in
Gold hold 214 out of 342 (63 percent) workers are in the back office. This could be
the reason for the back office being seen as the ‘backbone’ of the hotels by
managers and workers. In the front office, the proportion of women is higher than
the proportion of men although the total number of women is much lower than the
number of men, particularly in Gold Hotel. Among the total women in their
respective workforces, Platinum hotel has 27 out of 69 (48 percent) and Gold hotel
has 27 out of 56 (39 percent) women in their respective front offices This suggests
that women might be seen as particularly suitable for front office jobs, which I
explore later in this chapter.

Table 4.5 also shows the concentration of men and women in different departments.
The highest concentration of men is found in Food and Beverage Production (30
percent in Gold hotel and 20 percent in Platinum hotel) followed by Food and
Beverage Service (18 percent in Gold hotel and 14 percent in Platinum hotel) and
Housekeeping (17 percent in Gold hotel and 14 percent in Platinum hotel). The
highest concentration of women is in the back office in both the hotels; 45 percent
and 41 percent of women’s workforce in Platinum hotel and Gold hotel respectively
of women are in the Housekeeping department. This is followed by women workers
in Fitness/Spa department of Platinum hotel (8 of 69 women or 12 percent of women)
and Food and Beverage Service department of Gold hotel (9 of 56 women or 16
percent of women).


**Resorts**

Table 4.6 below illustrates the distribution of the workforce by gender between the various departments of both the resorts. The table shows that the workforce in some departments such as: Security and Engineering departments in both resorts; and departments of Administration and Human Resources and Laundry in Moon resort is exclusively male. Women are majority of the departmental workforce in some departments such as: Housekeeping in Sun resort (68 percent); and Health Club/Spa (79 percent) in Sun resort. Other departments are comprised of a majority of males.
### Table 4.6: Proportion of total departmental workforce of sample resorts by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Sun resort Total Workforce</th>
<th>Moon resort Total Workforce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F&amp;B Service</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leisure</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Club/Spa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB TOTAL</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin/HR</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Keeping</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F&amp;B Production</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen Stewarding</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB TOTAL</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAND TOTAL</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages.
Source: Field Visit, April 2009
Table 4.7: Proportion of total workforce in front and back office departments of sample resorts by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department/Office</th>
<th>Sun resort</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Moon resort</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage Service</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>(18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leisure</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Club/Spa</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Front Office</td>
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<td>69</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(41)</td>
<td>(41)</td>
<td>(32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and Human Resources</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(15)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(5)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage Production</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen Stewarding</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Office</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(59)</td>
<td>(59)</td>
<td>(68)</td>
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<td>Total Workforce</td>
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<td>167</td>
<td>157</td>
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<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages.
Source: Field Visit, April 2009
Table 4.7 above shows the distribution of the workforce by gender between the different departments constituting the front and back offices. Similarly to the hotels, in both resorts, the workforce distribution between front office and back office shows a concentration of workers in the back office; in Sun resort 98 out of 167 (59 percent) and in Moon resort 140 out of 206 (68 percent) workers are in the back office. However, unlike the hotels, both resorts have similar proportion of men and women in the front and back offices. As can be seen in the above table, front office comprises 51 out of 123 (41 percent) males and 18 out of 44 (41 percent) females at the Sun resort, and 50 out of 157 (32 percent) males and 16 out of 49 (33 percent) females at the Moon resort. Similarly, back office comprises 72 out of 123 (59 percent) males and 26 out of 44 (59 percent) females at the Sun resort and 107 out of 157 (68 percent) males and 33 out of 49 (67 percent) females at the Moon resort. This indicates that unlike hotels, work in the front office and back office could be seen as suitable for both men and women in both resorts which I will explore later.

Moreover, Table 4.7 also shows the concentration of men and women in different departments. The highest concentration of men is found in Men are concentrated in Food and Beverage Service (21 percent) followed by Engineering and Human Resources (15 percent each) in Sun resort and in Food and Beverage Production (22 percent) followed by Food and Beverage Service (18 percent), Housekeeping (16 percent) and Engineering (15 percent) in Moon resort. The highest concentration of women is in the back office in both the resorts; 43 percent and 30 percent of women’s workforce respectively in Sun resort and Moon resort are in the Housekeeping department. This is followed by women workers in Health Club/Spa department of Sun resort (11 out of 44 women or 25 percent) and Food and Beverage Service department of Moon resort (10 out of 49 women or 20 percent).
Casinos

Table 4.8 below illustrates the distribution of the workforce by gender between the various departments of both the casinos. The workforce is exclusively male in some departments such as: Transport in both casinos; Production in Glitter casino; and Material, Kitchen, Video Surveillance and Telephone Operator in Dazzle casino. In some departments the majority of the departmental workforce is comprised of women, such as: the Sales and Marketing department (81 percent) and Housekeeping (53 percent) in Dazzle casino; and the Gaming department (87 percent) and Guest Relations (83 percent) in Glitter casino. In Glitter casino, ‘Others’ is a separate category in which 25 out of 329 women are employed. However, I could not get further information on this and therefore it can only be assumed that these are women workers who could be doing some work that management did not see as fitting in other departments. In other departments the majority of workers are male.

During my visit to both the casinos, I found women working as security personnel at the front doors. However, data collected from Glitter casino did not mention a ‘Security department’. I came to know later that the task of providing security at the gates was subcontracted to an external agency. The workforce data from Glitter casino are rounded up to the nearest figure. Although this may not be a major issue, I consider this to be worth flagging.
Table 4.8: Proportion of total departmental workforce of sample casinos by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Dazzle casino Total Workforce</th>
<th>Glitter casino Total Workforce</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>(49)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
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<td>Guest Relation</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>(81)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(81)</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage (service)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(72)</td>
<td>(28)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUB TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>180</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(57)</td>
<td>(43)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource, Administration and Finance</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(60)</td>
<td>(40)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(47)</td>
<td>(53)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>SUB TOTAL</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td>(13)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
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<td>(30)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages.
Source: Field Visit, April 2009
Table 4.9: Proportion of total workforce in front and back office departments of sample casinos by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department/Office</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage (service)</td>
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<td>380</td>
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Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages.
Source: Field Visit, April 2009
Table 4.9 above shows the distribution of the workforce by gender between the different departments constituting the front and back offices. Unlike hotels, and resorts, in both casinos, the workforce distribution between front office and back office shows a concentration of workers in the front office; in Dazzle casino 317 out of 557 (57 percent) and in Glitter casino 380 out of 705 (54 percent) of workers are in the front office. This could be the reason for the front office being seen as the ‘backbone’ of the casinos by managers and workers. The proportion of the total workforce of women who work in the front office of Dazzle casino is higher than the proportion of men (81 percent female and 46 percent male) although the total number of women found working in the front office is lower than that of men (137 female and 180 male). In Glitter casino, there are more women than men in the front office in terms of both numbers (270 female and 110 male) and the proportion of women is also higher than that of men (82 percent female and 29 percent male). This suggests that women might be seen as particularly suitable for front office jobs, which I explore later in this chapter.

Table 4.9 also shows the concentration of men and women in different departments. The highest concentration of men is to be found in Gaming department (81 out of 388 or 21 percent) followed by Kitchen (13 percent), Food and Beverage Service and Security (12 percent each) in Dazzle casino and Production and Transport (27 percent each) that are male exclusive departments followed by Food and Beverage Service (16 percent) and Housekeeping (13 percent) in Glitter casino.

The highest concentration of women is in the front office in both the casinos; 79 out of 169 (47 percent) and 200 out of 329 (61 percent) of women’s workforce in Dazzle
casino and Glitter casino respectively are in the Gaming department. This is followed by women workers in Sales and Marketing (17 percent) and Food and Beverage Service (11 percent) departments of Dazzle casino and in Guest Relations (15 percent) and Housekeeping (9 percent) of Glitter casino.151

To summarise, the structural level in which gendered work is constructed demonstrates the ‘gendered hierarchies’ and ‘gendered jobs’ across and within the six establishments (see Acker, 1990). All establishments are masculinised with casinos having relatively a relatively higher proportion of women in their workforce than hotels and resorts. While men are in the majority as managers, there are relatively more women as managers in Gold hotel and Moon resorts than others. In Glitter casino where 47 percent of the workforce is women, they are least represented at managerial level.

Most workers are concentrated in the back office which is well known to be the ‘backbone’ of the hotels and resorts. Conversely, the ‘backbone’ of casinos is the front of house where workers, especially women are concentrated in the gaming department. Women are also concentrated in departments that involve work such as housekeeping, serving food and beverage, body/beauty care and, in casinos, in entertaining customers and assisting them in gambling. Women are also the majority of the workforce in some departments such as: Sales and Marketing in Gold hotel and Dazzle casino; Housekeeping in Sun resort and Dazzle casino; Health Club/Spa

151 I noticed that the manager of Dazzle casino used the term ‘guest relations’ but data on the workforce did not reflect this category. I then approached one of my interviewees who informed me that the gaming department included those who worked as ‘guest relations assistants’. 
in Sun resort; and Gaming and Guest Relations in Glitter casino. The majority of workers in the other departments are male.

Having described the horizontal and vertical gender segregation characterising the workforce of the hotels, resorts and casinos, I now explain the overall patterns of gendered work in the six establishments by analysing the gendered ideologies of managers and workers that shape the ways in which gender division of labour is legitimised and naturalised.

**Gendered Ideologies of Managers and Workers**

In this section, I pay attention to the interactional level and discuss gendered ideologies of managers and workers that legitimate and/or contest the gender division of labour (see Charles, 1993). I asked the managers the following question: Could you explain why some departments have more men than women and some have more women compared to other departments? Although I asked the managers about male and female workers, I noticed that managers, particularly casino managers, focused their responses on the female workers.\(^{152}\) I asked workers to explain what kind of work they were doing in that particular department, if they had any preference to work in other departments given the opportunity and what the reasons for such preference were.

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\(^{152}\) As highlighted in my earlier chapter on methodology, it is possible that when I explained to participants about my research they assumed I would be mainly interested in women workers. They asked for my biography prior to giving me an appointment for interview. Managers’ responses could therefore perhaps be biased, saying what they assumed I would want to hear. Another possibility could be that at a time when media had created some hype around the casino industry, the managers’ responses mainly focused on how well their casinos were doing for women workers, from providing employment to various other benefits.
Some accounts of both managers and workers were guided by gendered ideologies that were underpinned by essentialist views, wherein work was considered as either ‘men’s work’ or ‘women’s work’. They assigned masculine and feminine attributes to men and women respectively and considered them suitable accordingly in the various departments within the establishments, which I will now explore in more detail.

‘Men’s Work’: Masculine Attributes

Since most managers focused on explaining why women were working in certain departments, few managers highlighted that women did not apply or were rare in departments such as Food and Beverage Production and Engineering. For example, regarding their Food and Beverage Production department, the manager of Sun resort mentioned, ‘we don’t find many women applying’. Moreover, the manager of Gold hotel said, ‘there are few women who show interest ... there are more men because it’s hard work’. Similarly, manager of Moon resort said, ‘Men are more into craftsmanship and engineering professions, women are rarely found in these professions’. It can only be assumed that a similar gender ideology of men being able to handle a strenuous workload resulted in employing nine male workers and only two women in the outdoor leisure department of Sun resort. For example, at the Sun resort, during an informal discussion one of the resort managers (other than the manager I interviewed) said, ‘these guys have to walk and carry such heavy equipment which is not something women would be able to do’.

Likewise, male workers in Engineering, Food and Beverage Service, Laundry and Security associated their work with physical strength. I illustrate the example of
Somraj (M, 48, Engineering, Moon resort) who noted that his work required physical strength, a characteristic of men:

This work is tough, as we have to carry heavy logs of wood, climb on roofs and lift heavy equipment. It is an occupation that men do ... all of us in our department are male. Women don’t do such work ... maybe some but ... it’s too much physical work.

Somraj also highlights the gender stereotypes that women rarely do woodwork because the work involves ‘carrying heavy logs of wood’. He seems to perceive women to be physically not as strong as men to do work related to woodwork.

Moreover, Pradeep (M, 25, Laundry, Platinum hotel) asserted, ‘doing laundry with big machines, standing long hours is no doubt a man’s job’. When I asked how he would feel if there were some women in his department, he replied: ‘this would bring distraction among us. I mean, among men folks, there could be fights over women’s matter ... you know what I mean?’ Pradeep perceived women to be more of a distraction and that women’s entry into the laundry work could create chaos and cause fragmentation in the unity of male workers. His response also indicates resistance to women’s entry thus maintaining the ‘male monopoly’ in the department as he tries to draw gendered boundaries at work. It can be said that these men do gender; resisting women’s entry into male dominated departments such that their male privilege remains intact.

In another example, Dipen (M, 29, Security, Glitter casino) is sceptical of women’s ability to handle the chaotic environment of the gaming floor, and seems to suggest
the job of a bouncer\textsuperscript{153} is fit for a man rather than a woman, as his quote below suggests:

Women are being taken in some casinos as bouncers these days ... it is difficult for women colleagues to handle the situation when there are cases of drunken men shouting or abusing customers, workers, yelling foul language and creating an environment for a row. Some of these men even leave threatening to take revenge outside the casinos.

Dipen considers women as not being able to handle what he sees as a chaotic environment. His quote shows that working as a bouncer involves working with risk, and potentially violent customers, while facing threats from some of the drunk and abusive customers. He suggests that being a man he could take it but for his women colleagues it would be too much to handle the risky work as a bouncer.

Likewise, Rabin (M, 24) working as a waiter in Glitter casino seems to suggest waiting at a table is a very masculine job because it involves lifting and moving heavy objects. He also considers it ‘understandable’ for women to request men to do such work as shown in the quote below:

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{153} Bouncers are workers who provide security mainly at the gaming floor in a casino and are included in the security department.
\end{flushright}
I serve food and drinks to customers....Carrying drinks and lifting plates can be really heavy. I think it is natural for men to get work where physical strength is needed. ... My female colleagues also request that I do the physically demanding work in the department, which is understandable ... As a male waiter, not only am I expected to be on my toes by my colleagues, but the customers too, I notice, are comfortable to beckon me to place their orders.

Calling on men colleagues to help to do housekeeping work was also mentioned by some women. For example, Runa (F, 40, Housekeeping, Moon resort) said, ‘I ask for help from men in my department to shift furniture and adjust the curtain hooks because they are stronger than me’. This indicates that some women in the housekeeping department also assume/expect men as being fit to do jobs that require attributes seen as masculine, such as physical strength.

Hence, according to the gendered ideologies of managers and workers, masculine attributes associated with (some aspects of) work such as doing work that demands physical strength and working with risk reinforces and legitimises the gender division of labour.

‘Women’s Work’: Feminine Attributes

Managers and most workers point towards certain ideologies concerning the suitability of women in some departments such as: Reception; Sales and Marketing; the Gaming floor; Fitness/Spa; and Housekeeping. Women are concentrated in these departments, as shown in the horizontal gender segregation earlier.
Managers and female workers explain a preference for women workers for two ‘natural’ reasons: first, women have acquired the skill to do certain tasks like cleaning and caring at home – skills acquired at home are assumed to be easily transferrable to work; and second, that women are presentable, with a charming personality, good interpersonal skills, are soft-spoken and have a liking for work related to beauty and body care. I move on to discuss the explanations provided by managers and workers regarding work in some departments of customer service (Reception, Sales and Marketing, Gaming, Health Club/Spa) in the front office and Housekeeping in the back office.

**Customer Service Departments**

Managers underscored the importance of satisfying customers. Having good interpersonal skills, being soft spoken and presentable with a charming personality and not being aggressive were attributes managers expected from women workers. In hotels and resorts managers saw women as suited to Reception and Sales and Marketing departments because they were ‘good at inter-personal skills’ (Manager, Platinum hotel) and are ‘more presentable ... [have] charming personality ... are softer spoken and do not get into arguments like men’ (Manager, Gold hotel). The manager of the Sun resort highlighted women as being at the forefront of the Nepali culture to entertain and greet guests and therefore saw women as particularly suitable as receptionists. Moreover, women were also seen as having ‘the motherly feeling with them’, being calm in nature and being able to ‘handle customer’s anger’ (Manager, Moon resort).
In addition to these ideologies, managers of casinos suggested that the casino business was perceived as a ‘glamorous’ one, signalling the requirement for young women to be perceived as the ‘attraction’. The quote below from Manager of Glitter casino illustrates this point:

It’s a glamorous industry and so girls are there ... we give more preference to girls in the customer relations department. But this does not mean that we portray girls in the front and exploit them. ... If a woman maintains herself physically, she can work till the age of forty or so.

Moreover, in Glitter casino since women were considered to be good at handling guests, the manager highlighted the casino policy of hiring exclusively women in the gaming section for the past few years. The manager of Glitter casino points to the youth of women being important as illustrated in the quote ‘... she can work till the age of forty’. This raises concern about whether older women workers (those above forty years old) are replaced by younger women and/or men workers. The manager’s emphasis on the importance of women maintaining their bodies and the age limit of forty years illustrates their focus on age and women’s sexuality along with physical appearance. Furthermore, the manager’s quote is ageist as it reflects the idea that older women no longer are (hetero)sexually attractive, which is one of the problems of sexualised labour for women.

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154 I raise this question as I do not know if men workers replace women who cross the age limit of forty years.
155 I discuss how women workers in the casinos perform (hetero)sexualised labour in the next chapter.
Along with managers, some women workers also attributed certain characteristics of women with their work. They associated women’s caring role in the family with what they do at work on Reception of hotels, resorts and casinos. Quotes from Swosti and Rohinee are two such examples.

I take care of our regular and important customers. We are all women in the special service and our job is to ensure that customers get taken care of like in the family. ... We keep up to date information on what newspaper they read, what drink they like, when they prefer breakfast and many such things. (Swosti, F, 27, Reception, Platinum hotel)

As a guest relation assistant, I must ensure that the guest is well taken care of ... lighting his cigarette, changing his money, asking him what game he would like to play or what he would like to drink and eat etc. (Rohinee, F, 31, Guest Relations, Glitter casino)

Most women working in the customer service-related departments believed they were good at listening, communicating, were soft-spoken and could control their anger and that these skills were what they used when interacting with customers. For example, Neeta (F, 27, Marketing, Glitter casino) mentions, ‘Communicating with customers is what women can do better than men ... because women are good at listening; do not lose their temper fast and are soft spoken too’. Some of these so-called feminine attributes expected from women workers by managers and workers’ explanation about their work implies working with emotions (managing anger) and aesthetics (looking and sounding attractive) which I discuss in my next chapter.
Beauty and Bodily Wellness

Some managers and women workers assumed women to have a ‘natural’ interest in ‘beauty’ and ‘bodily wellness’ which can be seen in the gender division of labour. As shown in table 4.5 and 4.7 above, 8 out of 69 women workers in Platinum hotel and 11 out of 44 women workers in Sun resort are in the Fitness/Spa or Health club/Spa departments. The Manager from the Platinum hotel said, ‘women by nature are more interested and conscious about their looks and body. So they are fit to work in these departments’. Similarly, the manager of Sun resort highlighted that women were working in the Spa department because it was women customers who came to get massaged and look good. The manager further said that women workers ‘also have that sense of beauty and have an interest in beauty products which is natural’.

Both Meena (F, 27, Sun resort) and Ramita (F, 26, Platinum hotel) working as a beautician and massage therapist, also highlighted that they had an interest in this work, but that it was physically demanding work and they had fear of doing harm to others’ bodies. Moreover, Meena mentioned she was doing her work as a result of having acquired training and through persistent practice, which contradicts the manager’s explanation of women having ‘natural affinities’; a natural sense of beauty and beauty products.

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156 I noticed that in the female section women had to queue for an appointment for a massage whilst the male section was nearly empty. Providing service to a largely female clientele that includes respecting privacy of the clients, where women workers work on the bodies of women customers, seems to be a more realistic intention behind hiring 11 women workers.

157 I explain this more in the section on disjuncture in ideologies. Women’s work was not recognised as physically tiring by managers but according to women workers it was.
Housekeeping

Housekeeping work was considered by managers and women workers to be more suitable for women. For example, the manager of Platinum hotel sees women as an unskilled labour force, using skills developed at home:

[not much of education and skill is required to do the housekeeping job. ... It is also mostly the work that women do at home ... [a] cleaning job for women is a normal thing ... [it] can be done by people with low level of education.

While the manager of the Moon resort mentioned, ‘women are better at decorating and are multi-skilled’, the manager of Sun resort said, ‘women can handle the housekeeping work better, they are used to doing it at home’. Some women workers working in housekeeping echoed these views. For example, Tarini (F, 39, Moon resort) mentioned:

I feel women can do the housekeeping work as it is quite similar to the work they do at home. At home, women do several things at a time like cooking, feeding the baby, cleaning the house etc. Similarly, at work also women can do several things.

Therefore, the gendered ideologies of managers and workers on housekeeping see it as ‘women’s work’ which involves multi-tasking including cleaning, caring and decorating, multi-tasking since it is similar to housework that women learn at home and are seen as ‘natural’ qualities of women. Moreover, the housekeeping department work includes several kinds of work from cleaning and decorating bedrooms to
public areas like swimming pool and lobby. Within the housekeeping department, while most women were found to be doing the former kind of work such as cleaning bedrooms, men were assigned to clean the public areas.

In summary, in hotels and resorts the gendered ideologies of managers and most workers assumed women were naturally good at customer service and inter-personal skills, housekeeping work, were loyal and multi-skilled and had an interest in looks (working on beautification of their bodies). Likewise, it was largely women workers who expressed being satisfied with their work as it was something they did at home, and/or was ‘natural’ being women. They considered themselves to have ‘natural’ qualities such as caring, multi-tasking (including having an eye for detail) and communicating associated with their work in the customer service, housekeeping, and marketing departments.

In casinos, both the managers highlighted the ‘glamorous’ trait of the casino industry as one reason for employing women, besides mentioning other qualities of women workers such as being gentle and/or soft spoken; being able to treat guests ‘better’; and not being aggressive, in comparison to men. In the case of men, it was taken for granted by managers and some workers (both male and female) that work demanding physical strength and risk was ‘men’s work’. It can be said that both managers and workers brought their gendered ideologies of masculinity and femininity into the workplace. Most workers expressed a preference for work deemed particularly suitable for them as males or females.\textsuperscript{158} This indicates the extent to which gendered

\textsuperscript{158} While most women preferred to work in housekeeping, as beauticians, in front office, as croupiers, sales and marketing in HR department and men preferred to work in laundry, as bouncers, and in food and beverage production.
ideologies are linked to assumptions about essential notions of masculinity and femininity. Furthermore, most workers both male and female are ‘doing gender’ (West and Zimmerman, 1987) at work.

Challenging Gendered Ideologies

A few women workers are challenging the gendered ideologies by resisting the gendered aspects of work. They could perhaps be considered to be ‘undoing gender’ (Deutsch, 2007). As illustrated by their quotes, they were doing work demanding physical strength it contradicts with managers’ and workers’ ideologies that women are not strong compared to men. The women working in departments assumed to require masculine attributes further highlighted having to prove themselves as they faced resistance from male workers. I present two such quotes as examples.

I had to prove myself to work in the kitchen with men. Though, some men would suggest that they lift the heavy utensils. I felt they were trying to tease me ... Once, one of my male colleagues said I was not strong enough as them ... That really annoyed me... (Karuna, F, 22, Food and Beverage Production, Moon resort)

I enjoy my work ... I don’t think the men liked it when I became the chef. Not many women are chefs. ... I did everything from lifting big pots and standing long hours in front of the oven just to prove myself that I could handle the tough work. (Dolma, F, 27, Kitchen, Platinum hotel)

159 Earlier in the section on masculinity and ‘men’s work’, I mentioned how men seemed to draw gendered boundaries at work by resisting women’s entry into certain departments.
These quotes show that women need to prove themselves in departments where the majority of the workers are male, and that it was difficult entering into nontraditional departments. Moreover, in the case of women who are challenging gendered work, most of them have a political background, being active in and/or getting support from the trade union (affiliated with the Maoist political party).

The above contradictions point to the possibility of workers challenging gendered ideologies that are associated with men’s work and women’s work. Furthermore, there are differences in casino managers’ ideas about having (or not having) women as bouncers. Manager of Dazzle casino preferred to recruit women as bouncers which challenge gender stereotypes, as shown in the quote below:

[W]e also have women working as bouncers ... so it’s not that women cannot be in the security team. ... We have fit, strong and capable women who can knock down a few men. ... Seeing women as bouncers might surprise people but here in this casino, having women bouncers actually challenges the stereotype that women are physically weak.

On the contrary, the Manager of Glitter casino explained women did not apply for the job:

[W]omen working as security guards are from our subcontractors ... we only have men as bouncers. Women don’t apply for this kind of work.

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160 I discuss how the support of a trade union is a resource to help women to collectively resist when I assess their empowerment in Chapter Six.
As explained by manager of Dazzle casino, having women bouncers (11 out of 57 bouncers were women) meant challenging gender stereotypes that women are not physically strong. Another reason for having women as bouncers could be due to the increase in women customers in casinos. As Basanti (F, 30, Dazzle casino) mentioned, ‘[E]arlier women rarely came to casinos to play, the trend is increasing as there are some women who are our regular customers too although the majority of them are male customers’. In Glitter casino, manager’s response that ‘women don’t apply’ does not stand up to scrutiny as some women in Dazzle casino are working as bouncers.

Moreover, there is disjuncture between ideologies and reality as there are several cases where managers’ and workers’ ideologies did not match with the existing gender division of labour and with what workers were doing. I discuss this next.

Disjuncture: Ideologies and Gender Division of Labour

Although managers in general had similar gendered ideologies which to a large extent reflected the gender division of labour, there is some disjuncture which I discuss in order to tease out the contrasts and contradictions. Managers and women workers considered women as fit for the housekeeping work in the hotels and resorts because it was similar to the work women carried out at home. However, the same ideology does not apply for women to work in the production of food and beverages. Since women are also largely responsible for food preparation at home, this begs the question as to why they are not preferred in the food and beverage department. The argument that women do not wish to work in the food and beverage department because of the hard work is tenuous because
some women are already employed in this department and some do the lifting of heavy pots.

The ideologies of managers and workers about which jobs require masculine attributes because they are heavy and risky contradict with some women’s own account of their work, which they consider to be ‘physically demanding’ in the Housekeeping department; and both physically demanding and ‘risky’ in the Health Club/Spa department. For example, Sabina and Uttara describe their work as follows:

... [w]ork is very hard. We need to clean and tidy up which requires skill and is physically tiring. ... We have to learn the art of making beds for example and placing things in the right manner ... also we work under a tight timeline especially during peak season when rooms have to be cleaned and ready for the next customer in a short time. It is tedious work ... but people don’t see the work of a room maid. (Sabina, F, 28, Housekeeping, Platinum hotel)

Our work includes everything from cleaning, decorating, literally everything. We need to have an eye for detail while working ... it is the most difficult work in the hotel ... not something you learn and can straight away be able to do it ... years of practice is needed. It is also physically tiring making beds, cleaning toilets ... we are constantly standing. Just because women do this work, sometimes I think even managers think it is easy work. (Uttara, F, 37, Housekeeping, Gold hotel)
These women’s quotes explain the housekeeping role as one that is tough and requiring considerable skill. The work is also physically demanding as it includes carrying out repetitive tasks and constantly standing up. Sabina and Uttara viewed women’s work in housekeeping as skilled work which has been acquired as a result of persistent practice but which is not given proper recognition when done by women.

Moreover, it appears that there is a further gender division of labour within the housekeeping department. Women are assigned the task of cleaning (rooms and bathrooms), making beds, dusting, arranging flower vases and other tasks while men are engaged in rearranging furniture and curtains, lifting beds, and doing the ‘difficult’ work such as carrying heavy laundry baskets. Even when men clean it is mostly windows, the top of wardrobes or shelves. For example, Runa (F, 40, Housekeeping, Moon resort) said:

I think it is good that men do work that requires a lot of strength such as cleaning the lobby with big, heavy brushes, wiping the top of cupboards and shifting heavy furniture. ... My job is also difficult. I have to clean the bathrooms, I need to stretch, bend, twist ... [it] requires a lot strength.

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161 This is based on interviews with Runa from Moon resort and mainly from an in-depth interview with Uttara from Gold hotel who explained the internal gender division of labour within the housekeeping department. My observations also reflect a similar division of labour.
However, despite the further gender division of labour within the housekeeping department, women workers’ in the housekeeping department were assertive as their accounts show that their work is ‘difficult’ and physically demanding. Hence, it can be said that both men and women are ‘doing gender’ (West and Zimmerman, 1987) differently within the housekeeping department. Meena (F, 27, Health Club/Spa, Sun resort) working as a beautician and massage therapist also described her work as being physically demanding:

I have to prepare many things required, in the right quantity being cautious ... if anything goes wrong, it will give another result; something the guest does not want ... also I have to sometimes do five massages per day which is physically very tiring. Men might say they have to lift heavy wet towels in bulk and scrub the floor, but if they were to do five massages like us, I don’t think they will be able to...

Moreover, Meena even suggested men might not be able to cope with the physically tiring work that she does and further highlights that she works with fear of harming, as she works on others’ bodies. Thus, the above quotes illustrate the disjunction between ideologies and the gender division of labour.

To summarise, this section shows that workers share many of the same gendered ideologies held and expressed by the managers. These gendered ideologies shape the gender division of labour to some extent. The majority of the workers expressed preferences that conformed to gendered ideologies. Moreover, as Forseth (2005: 443)
mentions, ‘[W]orkers are not only representatives of the organizations but also “gendered personas”’. However, these preferences raise the question as to whether reproducing gender stereotypes relates to maintaining the status quo or not.

That said, there were some workers who did not conform to the gendered ideologies. Some women were working in non-traditional departments, which was not easy for them as they faced resistance from male colleagues and felt that they had to prove themselves. These women are challenging the notion that women cannot do work that requires physical strength. Moreover, there are differences between the casino managers in their perception about who is suitable to be a bouncer. While the manager of Dazzle casino considered and recruited women to work as bouncers, challenging the cultural stereotypes, the manager of Glitter casino did not recruit women as bouncers on grounds of unsuitability. Furthermore, there is a disjuncture; the ideologies held by managers and workers around who is suitable to do the work sometimes contrast and contradict.

I move on now to explore how the training provided by the establishments also contributes to the construction of gendered work.

**Gendering of Skills: Training Provided by Establishments**

In this section, I illustrate the training provided by hotels, resorts and casinos wherein there is a gendering of skills, which contributes significantly to the construction of gendered work. Many workers bring with them some kind of gendered skills when they enter the work as explained in the quote from the
Manager of Platinum hotel:

Men and women join the hotel because they come with certain training and skills that make them suitable in certain departments, as men get trained as cooks, stewards, engineering and women get trained as receptionists and secretaries....

This quote points to ‘labour as a supply of embodied capacities and attributes possessed by workers when being recruited’ (Nickson et al., 2003: 185). However, besides the skills workers bring with them they are also imparted various training to further provide standardised and ‘quality’ service. I categorise the training provided into four sets of skills that are inter-related. These skills relate to: (1) doing, (2) managing, (3) looking, and (4) pleasing. The gendering of skills shapes and is shaped by the gender division of labour and the gendered ideologies held by managers and workers around ‘men’s work’ and ‘women’s work’. In the process, this leads to gendered work being made and remade. Moreover, it is important to note that establishments provide training to workers with the primary motive of ensuring that the service provided leads to customer-satisfaction as well as maximises workers’ productivity. I will elaborate on each set of skills in turn.

Skills Related to ‘Doing’

Most of the training was focused around ‘doing’ work, keeping in mind the quality of service that establishments provide to their customers. With increased competition and a need to maintain the standard of the hotels and resorts, workers’ accounts

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162 See also Warhurst et al. (2001).
explained that training related to ‘doing’ the specific work in the ‘right way’ according to the establishment’s own style. Some examples of training related to housekeeping, food and beverage and fitness work in hotels and resorts are illustrated below:

The training I have taken relates to housekeeping work such as decoration, cleaning and also on the use of different kinds of chemicals ... training make you do the work in the right way. (Uttara, F, 37, Housekeeping, Gold hotel)

I was trained in the food and beverage department on how to prepare different kinds of food. I also recently participated in a training related to presentation of food ... I am interested to get training on preparing European cuisine. (Dolma, F, 27, Kitchen, Platinum hotel)

When I joined I was on training in the department to learn about the different kinds of beauty products and in doing massage ... I think I am also going to be sent for another similar training soon. (Meena, F, 27, Health Club/Spa, Sun resort)

The above quotes suggest the importance of training to sharpen skills and update workers on agreed techniques of working in the establishments.

In the casinos, providing satisfaction to the customers was vital and training related to games seemed very important as the gaming floor was the heart of the casino. The croupiers at the forefront involved in games with the customers were trained and sometimes re-trained, as expressed by Sheela (F, 23, Gaming, Glitter casino) below:
My work involves a lot of calculations. We are given training time and again so that we do not forget ... also it is a time to learn new techniques in different games ... shuffle the cards well...

The extracts from focus group discussions with women workers from both casinos about training also corroborate the above quotes. The example below is from the focus group discussion with women from Glitter casino:

Madina (25): We had to keep working with the cards at home, at work until we acquired that talent.

Sonali (24): I know, I was continuously playing ... and it was not easy. I also had to revise my mathematics ... we had to be quick....

Madina (25): Yes, one mistake in calculation can cause a big loss to the casino. We cannot afford to make any mistakes ... we need to be always on the alert with calculations.

All the above quotes help explain that skills around calculating and cards were important as emphasised in the training given by both casinos. Workers also had to undergo persistent practice to ensure that they got it right. Madina’s quote further illustrates the costs of a mistake in calculation which demonstrates the salience of training workers to sharpen their skills related to ‘doing’.  

The quote of Pritam (M, 24, Gaming, Dazzle casino) below shows that men are also trained with skills related to working with calculation and cards:

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163 It is largely women workers in Glitter casino who are provided such training as they dominate the gaming floor. In the case of Dazzle casino, there are nearly equal number of men and women workers working as croupiers which means it is both men and women who are provided with such training.
Although I got the job, it was the training that scared me. So much maths ... I thought I would not be able to pass the initial training ... I managed but I did work hard with my maths ... I also regularly practised shuffling cards based on the training.

Moreover, in casinos other skills related to ‘doing’ specific work itself can be identified and seen to reinforce the gender division of labour, such as the training received by bouncers in security issues; and those working in the Food and Beverage department, who are trained on preparing and serving food. Similarly, in the case of hotels and resorts men workers are provided with skills related to ‘doing’ certain kinds of work such as engineering, laundry, production of food and beverage and wood carving to name a few, depending on the gender division of labour and the gendered ideologies of managers related to ‘men’s work’.

Managers also emphasised the provision of various kinds of training to enhance workers’ skills and provide better services to customers, as well as different training depending on which department they worked. For example, the manager of Platinum hotel said, ‘[Men] in laundry are trained in using new technologies with laundry machines. ... Women in housekeeping are trained on updated decoration styles’. The manager of Dazzle casino believed training women meant giving them skills and empowering them to earn and support themselves economically:

These women did not have such skills like they do now. ... We train them ... it empowers them. ... They are able to work in other casinos, abroad too ... earning money and not be dependent on others.
The manager’s quote illuminates the extent to which providing training not only meant acquiring skills but further opened up the possibility to find work in other casinos or abroad. This was also seen as empowering in the sense that women gained greater potential for economic independence.

**Skills Related to ‘Managing’**

Training provided to both male and female workers by hotels and resorts included imparting skills related to ‘managing’ people and departmental work.

I have to manage a lot of staff in the department. The workload also gets increased along with the high movement of guests. I was recently sent for training on how to manage people and the departmental work as well. I think that is very useful. (Dinesh, M, 33, Reception, Gold hotel)

Since I joined work, I have participated in two trainings related to managing housekeeping work in my department. ... With my new role as a supervisor, the training related to supervising workers and the department work has been helpful. (Kalpana, F, 36, Housekeeping, Moon resort)

While both quotes explain being trained with skills to manage departmental work, it was Dinesh, a male worker who explicitly said he received training on how to manage people and Kalpana, a female worker, who received training on supervising workers and the department work. This distinction was also expressed by other men and women who acquired skills related to ‘managing’ and ‘supervising’. This could be possibly because of different positions within the establishment hierarchy which meant that men were working at managerial level while women were working at the
supervisory level. It also reflects that although both men and women were trained on skills related to ‘managing’, the understanding of the term ‘managing’ had gendered meanings as men referred to it is ‘managing’ while women referred to it as ‘supervising’. This indicates that when men were referring to the same training in terms of ‘managing’ they could possibly be seeing it as high status thus inflating what they said, and by implication also inflating their position.

**Skills Related to ‘Looking’**

One common feature of training provided by all hotels, resorts and casinos was training on looking good, presentable and/or attractive as a result of the element of ‘glamour’ in the sector. This reinforces the significance of aesthetics at the workplace. For example, the manager of Moon resort said, ‘Women like to look good. We provide them with training on how to look good’. This quote indicates that the training builds on a preference women are already assumed to have. Furthermore, this kind of training was discussed mostly by workers who worked in close contact with customers.

I specifically asked workers to explain what they were taught in terms of grooming, and, for example, Bikash (M, 31, Reception, Gold hotel) said: ‘I was told the first day of my work in the grooming class that I had to shave my beard and I immediately did so’. In Dazzle casino, Pritam (M, 24) also recalls taking his ear-stud out and being told not to wear it at work. Similarly, Ramakant (M, 26, Fitness, 164)

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164 Workers who acquired such skills were - in the Platinum hotel: Uttara (F, 37), Rajesh (M, 27), Swosti (F, 27); in the Gold hotel: Dinesh (M, 33), Barun (M, 28), Ganga (F, 28); and at the Moon resort: Suresh (M, 26), Kalpana (F, 36). While men were at managerial level women were at the supervisory level.
Platinum hotel) and Dipen (M, 29, Security, Glitter casino) both pointed out that they were trained to ‘look smart’ with short hair and clean nails, and to maintain body hygiene, which seemed to be general requirements for all workers across establishments; most workers mentioned similar grooming requirements. Examples of other general codes of grooming related to workers’ outfits and accessories, e.g., ironed clothes, clean polished shoes, wearing a maximum of two rings, hair not hanging in the face, women tying their hair neatly and men having short hair. Moreover, women workers emphasised being trained to look good, including how to put on make-up and do their hair. I present two examples:

When we are told about grooming techniques, the emphasis is on the women although both men and women who work with guests are provided such training. I think we all need to look good. (Kalpana, F, 36, Housekeeping, Moon resort)

I did not understand why I had to take the training on grooming. I am a chef and my job is to prepare food to eat ... but I did get the training although it was of no use to me. (Dolma, F, 27, Kitchen, Platinum hotel)

Thus while both men and women are being trained on grooming, the emphasis is on women workers whether or not they are in front office, at least in Dolma’s case. However, not everyone seemed to see worth in the grooming training where they were trained to put on makeup, again Dolma being one such example. Some managers’ accounts also indicate that women are expected to look good and that looking good is more important for women. For example, the Manager of Moon resort said:

165 In Platinum hotel: Dolma (F, 27, chef); in Moon resort: Tarini (F, 39, housekeeping); and Babita (F, 37, cook) did not appreciate the grooming training.
We want everyone to look good because it is a glamorous industry. Women ...
need to pay attention to their hair, makeup and how they present
themselves. Also the men ...
but for women it is more important ...
they do well in this glamorous job.

The manager of Dazzle casino also emphasised the importance of the looks of women
workers and further saw them to be related to achievement:

Our women here in the casino have been trained to take care of their looks.
These days, how you look makes the first impression to others ...
I see that they have learnt to look smart which is an achievement for them...

Grooming standards are also mentioned in the staff handbook for casino workers. For
example, posture, voice, hygiene, manners and attitude of workers are considered
important for all workers and are more extensive for women. Men are expected to have
short, neat hair with no coloured streaks; no beard or moustache – clean shaved and only
one watch and one ring can be worn. For women, there are many more requirements than
those outlined for men. Some of these grooming standards include: shoes with a height of
minimum three inches to maximum five inches; studded earrings no bigger than 1.5
centimeters in diameter; hair gathered away from face and properly controlled; no
bangles or visible chains; and makeup must be applied as per the grooming lessons.\footnote{Although these are extracted from the handbook of sampled casinos, I refrain from quoting the resource due to confidentiality reason.}

This shows that ‘looking’ is gendered differently for men and women who are all
expected to ‘look good’ in all establishments. The emphasis is more on women in all
establishments as ‘looking’ is defined differently for men and women by managers. Moreover, it was women who were expected to look ‘glamorous’. Furthermore, in both casinos, training on skills related to ‘looking’ and grooming standards outlined in staff handbooks had more detailed and extended requirements for women compared to those for men.

**Skills Related to ‘Pleasing’**

While all workers are trained to smile when interacting with customers, workers’ understanding of smiling was different as can be seen from the quote below:

> We are trained to smile ... be soft spoken and friendly with our customers. Training on communication helps us ... not to argue ... because the customer is always right ... this is important as my work involves interacting with customers. (Suresh, M, 26, Reception, Moon resort)

> When I first joined I was given overall hotel training ... also that when we greet customers, we are always told to smile. We are also told in every training that we must be soft spoken and smile so that customer feels welcomed ... pleased ... also that customer is the king [sic]. (Sabina, F, 28, Housekeeping, Platinum hotel)

Although both of the above quotes highlight the imperative of being soft spoken it is interesting to note that Suresh, a man working in the front office, talked about being friendly while Sabina, a woman at the back office talked about having to smile. These
indicate the importance of gendered aesthetics at work that involve interacting with customers.¹⁶⁷

There were two men who also talked about getting training on ‘managing anger’¹⁶⁸ which shows that workers had to learn the skill of managing their own anger and customers’ anger. However, women workers did not mention this possibly because women were considered as being able to control/manage anger as can be seen from the gendered ideology of some managers. As explained earlier, the manager of Gold hotel said that women ‘do not get into arguments like men’ while the manager of Moon resort said that women were calm in nature and could control customer’s anger:

[We] cannot let the customer be annoyed. I learnt the skill of how not to get angry with the customers in one of the trainings ... Being a good listener and not arguing with customers who complain is one way. Of course, it is not easy to keep listening when someone is shouting at the top of their voice ... but we must remember that customer satisfaction is what is important.

(Rajesh (M, 27, Housekeeping, Platinum hotel)

In the training provided to some of us who work with customers, we are given some tips that help us to avoid getting in an argument with the customer. ... we should let the customer get angry ... how much could they complain or shout? It is only when they are a little calm that we should apologise or do something

¹⁶⁷ I discuss this further in the next chapter.
¹⁶⁸ This is a different type of management, related to emotional labour rather than managing other staff, which can be seen as ‘self-management’.
to please the customer ... like sending a bottle of wine or an extra platter of dish when the customer is dining or sometimes offering a free lunch or dinner ... but to keep quiet in front of an angry customer requires a lot of patience, a talent that I have mastered over the years. (Suresh, M, 26, Reception, Moon resort)

These quotes again explain that keeping customers happy or pleasing them is very important in the hotels and resorts. Letting the customer get angry was normal. Some training also provided tips aimed at discouraging workers from getting angry as in the case of Suresh above. However, both these men demonstrate that it is not easy to manage anger which signifies the importance and challenges of managing emotions at work despite being provided with such skills. In contrast, women workers were also managing their anger and that of customers, although they did not mention being provided with any such skills as the two male workers.169

Moreover, some women workers from casinos discussed being trained to ‘please’ the customers by caring for them; women were expected to ‘please’ (male) customers through their looks. For example, Rohinee (F, 30, Glitter casino) said:

‘Since I am a guest relations assistant, my work is to assist the customers ... [this] includes showing that I care about their comfort while they are in the casino ... need to please them ... I used to be told to wear sexy clothes, . I learnt how to speak in a caring tone through some communication related training.’

169 I elaborate this when discussing ‘emotional labour’ in the following chapter.
It was only the women workers who discussed training related to care or showing care for customers. Moreover, Rohinee’s quote indicates that she used to be expected to look ‘sexy’ in order to ‘please’ the customers. When asked if she had to still do the same, Rohinee further mentioned, ‘these days we are not told directly but I know it is still expected’. Moreover, it was only the women in Glitter casino who mentioned having to look ‘attractive and sexy’. This indicates the kind of ‘(hetero)sexualised’ labour women are expected to perform which I explain in my next chapter.

Thus, through the training provided by establishments, there is a gendering of skills as workers are trained to work in certain ways as part of doing gendered work. These skills of ‘doing’, ‘managing’, ‘looking’ and ‘pleasing’ are not mutually exclusive.

Who gets what kind of training depends on which department the worker is working in. Furthermore, the kinds of skills provided depend on the kind of work done within the department. The gendering of skills is also shaped by the gendered ideologies of managers who emphasise certain skills as particularly ‘male’ or ‘female’ or who expect different things from men and women workers in the same department.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I set out to explore how gendered work is constructed in the sample establishments. Building on Acker’s (1990) framework of understanding gendered work in relation to at least five interactional processes, I have shown that in my
sample establishments, the gender division of labour, the gendered ideologies of managers and workers and the gendering of skills through training provided by the establishments studied are dimensions that reflect the way gendered work is constructed. Moreover, I argue that gendered work is constructed by these three dimensions that are distinct but related to each other. I also argue that depending on the type of establishment, these three dimensions shape the ways in which gendered work is constructed.

I have provided a snapshot of the gendered workforce in eight five-star hotels, five deluxe resorts and eight casinos in Kathmandu. One distinct character of the hotels, resorts and casinos is that they are not feminised sectors. In comparison to hotels and resorts, the casinos employ a higher proportion of women. Women comprise 32 percent of the total workforce in casinos, followed by 21 percent in deluxe resorts and 14 percent in five-star hotels.

According to Acker (1990: 146), one of the dimensions in which gendering occurs is ‘the construction of divisions along lines of gender’ which refers to the gender division of labour at the structural level. In this research, I have used Hakim’s (1981) concept of occupational segregation (vertical and horizontal) to unpack the gender division of labour within the sample establishments which show that most workers are concentrated at the back office in hotels and resorts and at the front office in casinos. While all six establishments are masculinised, women are concentrated in the back offices in hotels and resorts and in the front office of casinos.
The vertical gender segregation of the workforce in all six establishments show that while men are predominately found at the managerial level, illuminating the presence of ‘gendered hierarchies’ (Acker, 1990). Horizontal gender segregation shows some similarities within and across the establishments. While there are no departments with exclusively female workers, the workforce in some departments such as Engineering and Laundry in hotels and resorts and Transport in casinos are exclusively male and this indicates that these are masculinised departments. While women are concentrated in departments that involve work such as housekeeping, servicing food and beverage, body/beauty care in hotels and resorts and further in entertaining and assisting customers on the gaming floor in casinos, men comprise the majority of the workforce in other departments.

Literatures on the (interactive) service sector (see Crompton and Sanderson, 1990; Levy and Lerch, 1991; Adkins, 1995; Sinclair, 1997) show that the workforce is feminised and that men and women experience gendered occupational segregation. Similarly, literature on the casino sector (see Enarson, 1993; Sallez, 2005) reveals that the workforce is feminised with card-dealers or croupiers mainly being female. In the case of Nepal, this research shows that hotels, resorts and casinos are not feminised sectors. However, there is some similarity with the literatures mentioned earlier, in that there is gendered occupational segregation. However, the pattern of this segregation could be different across sectors and furthermore, in line with previous studies on casinos, women are the majority of the card-dealers or croupiers in the casinos of Nepal.
Acker (1990: 146-147) points to the interactional process in which ‘gender is implicated in the fundamental, ongoing processes of creating and conceptualising social structures’ which can be referred to as the processes in which gendered ideologies relate to social structures or are used to explain gender divisions of labour or gendered hierarchies. There are similarities in the gendered ideologies of some managers and workers, and these ideologies serve to legitimate and/or contest the gender division of labour. Moreover, accounts of managers for explaining the gender division of labour and those of most workers for conforming to the gendered aspects of work and preferring to work in the existing gender division of labour indicate that workers do gender. All these raise a question whether these are tantamount to maintaining the status quo of workers or not.

The work in all establishments is constructed as essentially either masculine (men’s work) or feminine (women’s work). Some work done by women is seen as an extension of their innate attributes and as an extension of their domestic responsibilities, hence, not duly recognised and valued. However, further analysis on the nature of work performed by men and women in different departments shows there is disjunction in that the gendered ideologies held by managers are not necessarily reflected in the workforce data in various departments. Women in some departments explained the kind of work they did which indicated that they were ‘doing gender’ (West and Zimmerman, 1987). There was some mismatch in the gendered ideologies of managers and workers, regarding the reasons for men and women doing certain kind of work or the perceived suitability of some kinds of work, which did not necessarily fit exactly with what women workers said about their work.
Moreover, it can be said that workers are ‘doing’ gender at work (see West and Zimmerman, 1987). It can be said that most workers do gender wherein women are expected to exhibit feminine attributes and men are expected to exhibit masculine attributes. In some cases, few women workers can be said to be ‘undoing gender’ as they challenge the gendered attributes associated with their work in non-traditional departments such as women working as chefs, stewards (see Deutsch, 2007; Kelan, 2010). These women workers faced resistance from male colleagues and had to prove their work, which was not easy. Moreover, it can also be said the Manager of Dazzle casino is making a conscious effort to challenge gendered ideologies by recruiting women as bouncers.

I have also argued that one of the ways in which gendered work is constructed is through the gendering of skills that are imparted through the training provided by the establishments. The sets of skills related to ‘doing’, ‘managing’, ‘looking’, and ‘pleasing’ are not mutually exclusive. Establishments seem to be guided by a focused objective of providing ‘quality and standardised service’ to their customers, and training (and retraining) workers is part of the employment practices. In the next chapter, I focus on the interactional level of workers to analyse the extent to which workers perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour as part of doing the gendered work.
Chapter 5: Performance of Emotional, Aesthetic and (Hetero)sexualised Labour

Introduction

This chapter analyses workers’ performance\textsuperscript{170} of certain forms of labour that constitute gendered work in hotels, resorts and casinos and aims to address my second research question – To what extent do men and women workers perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour? I argue that men and women to a variable extent perform gendered emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour and such performances shape and are in turn shaped by gendered work. Moreover, the sector in which service workers who interact with customers are employed in also needs to be examined as this has implications for the extent to which performances take place.

Furthermore, emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour are gendered and, while both men and women perform emotional and aesthetic labour, there is more emphasis on women’s performance of aesthetic labour, particularly for those working on the gaming floor of casinos. Moreover, while women are doing sexualised work in all establishments, it is often women working on the gaming floor who are also performing (hetero)sexualised labour.

\textsuperscript{170}I limit the use of the term ‘performance’ to mean ‘doing’ and use the terms interchangeably throughout the thesis. I mention this to avoid confusion with the meaning of performance as performativity, which is not something I examine.
The chapter is divided into two sections: the first section explores the extent to which emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour\textsuperscript{171} is performed by men and women. I begin by explaining that gendered work in hotels, resorts and casinos includes closely intertwined forms of gendered emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour. While both men and women working in the front office are required to perform emotional and aesthetic labour, fewer men than women talk about smiling at customers and men are not always expected and/or required to perform aesthetic labour in the way that it is expected from women workers. Moreover, while women in all establishments are performing sexualised work, some women workers, particularly those on the gaming floor in casinos, are required to perform sexualised labour.

The second section discusses different forms of resistance at work as men and women workers adopt various strategies (sometimes to also accommodate themselves) in the process of doing gendered work. I elucidate that while both men and women resist overall organisational policies and practices, both collectively through the trade union\textsuperscript{172} and individually, it is mainly women (with the exception of a few men) who resist various aspects of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour; and sometimes women resist collectively as a group while relying on the support of the trade union.

\textsuperscript{171} Throughout the thesis, unless otherwise specified, I use the term sexualised labour to mean (hetero)sexualised labour in the case of hotels, resorts and casinos in Nepal. I came to understand that the context in which gendered work took place in these establishments was guided with notions of heterosexuality as the norm. Therefore, when I say there is sexualised labour I mean there is (hetero)sexualised labour in these establishments.

\textsuperscript{172} The role of the trade unions emerged during field work but was not an area of focus of this research from the beginning.
Performance of Emotional, Aesthetic and Sexualised Labour

Work in the service industry, with its many different roles and constant customer interaction, needs to be analysed beyond occupational segregation. Interactive service work is guided by the motive of ‘providing quality service’ and ‘satisfying the customer’; both of which can be construed as the mantra of the service industry. As explained in Chapter Four, managers and workers emphasise the importance of making the customer feel good and important, and the training provided by establishments reinforces the importance of customer satisfaction and quality of service. In this section, I discuss three forms of labour required as part of gendered work in the (interactive) service sectors like hotels, resorts and casinos: emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour.

Emotional Labour

According to Hochschild [1983]2003), when a worker is ‘surface acting’, he/she displays fake emotions that are different to the emotions felt, leading to alienation of self as the act is cynical. Attempts by a worker to actually feel or experience the emotions that are congruent to the emotions displayed are what Hochschild (ibid) calls ‘deep acting’. As explained in Chapter Four, the training provided by management on a set of skills related to ‘managing’ and ‘pleasing’ illuminates the importance given to managing emotions as workers interact with customers. At the same time, workers’ accounts of their work showed that they were performing emotional labour as part of their work: managing their smile and anger. Based on Hochschild’s conceptualisation of emotional labour, I illustrate how workers are ‘surface acting’ and ‘deep acting’ and highlight the ‘pains’ and ‘pleasures’ depending
on the kind of work they do. I also discuss the complexity in managing emotions; crying at work and learning to manage emotions. I start by discussing the management of smiles and anger.

Smile Management

Whenever I visited the hotels, resorts and casinos, I was always greeted with a smile whether I talked to workers or not. If I happened to have eye contact with a worker, he or she would smile; smiling seemed to be a part of their work. While it is largely those working in the front office who explained having to smile most of the time when meeting customers, workers in the back office also smiled as and when they came in direct interface with customers as part of their work.

Workers also emphasised that they were told time and again about the importance of smiling at customers. As explained in Chapter Four, the training includes providing a set of skills related to ‘pleasing’; all workers were told that smiling at customers is expected from them. All managers emphasised that the nature of service was focused on ‘customer satisfaction’. When I asked some of them to explain why workers were seen smiling at me when I visited the workplaces, the manager of Platinum hotel, for example, mentioned:

...here, a customer walks in you smile, a customer passes by you smile, a customer leaves you smile ... smiling at customers is a common thing we all do ... after all our job is to welcome customers and see them satisfied with our service when they leave.
Some managers also pointed to young workers as suitable to be trained. For example, the Manager of Moon resort said: ‘[T]his is glamorous industry, every customer must be greeted with a smile ... [the] young generation are easier to train as they are enthusiastic to learn different skills required for jobs’. Here, managers’ accounts of smiling seem to be gender-neutral, if age specific. However, as I show below, workers’ understanding of smiling at work was a gendered phenomenon.

Although both men and women workers smiled, it had different meanings. It was largely women across the hotels, resorts and casinos who discussed having to ‘smile’ at customers almost all the time, and being conceived as looking ‘pleasing’, ‘welcoming’ and attracting customers. I illustrate three examples; the latter two quotes also illustrate the surface acting involved.

Smiling at customers is what we all do. For women like us I think our smile attracts the male customers, sometimes it also keeps them playing. ... We are told to be always smiling when we see customers, which we do. (Sheela, F, 23, Gaming, Glitter casino)

[N]o matter how tired I am or unhappy, I must look pleasing, smile and greet the customers ... I am told by the manager that I have to always smile at customers because our smile helps please customers and gives them a feeling that they are welcomed. (Swosti, F, 27, Reception, Platinum hotel)

We are told by our department manager and supervisor to be smiling at customers every time we see them. ... I was once carrying some towels and walking past in the hallway when I tripped onto something and one of my toe
nails nearly came off. I was bleeding. Just then, two guests passed by. I still remember how I smiled and greeted them. ... If I was not in the hotel premises, I would have burst into tears. So you can imagine how much we play with our feelings here. (Tarini, F, 39, Housekeeping, Moon resort)

All three quotes illustrate how women are expected to smile whenever they meet customers, and that smiling is integral to their work. Sheela links her smile to looking attractive to the male customers; to keep them playing in the casino. This links to the kind of sexualised labour she also performs, which is discussed later. Moreover, there are a range of emotions involved when women ‘surface’ act; displaying their smile which is not only fake but also at times strategic at work, depending on the different establishments. Smiling is associated with looking pleasing and welcoming by Swosti, who explains that she has to smile no matter how much she doesn’t feel like it. Tarini’s quote goes further to explain the extent of ‘surface’ acting; hiding her tears behind her smile in front of passing by guests. She asserts that to display a smile she had to ‘play with ...[her] feelings’ and she is successful in managing her emotions. In both cases, Swosti and Tarini were engaged in ‘surface acting’, by putting up a front even when tired and unhappy (Swosti) and in great pain (Tarini).

Interestingly, fewer men than women talked about smiling and when some men in the front office explained having to ‘smile’ at customers, it was conceived as being ‘friendly’, as illustrated in the quotes below:
When greeting or interacting with customers, smiling is important. I smile at customers, be friendly with them so that they feel they are looked after ... provided good customer service. (Suresh, M, 26, Reception, Moon resort)

[S]miling at customers is being friendly. I was told by my supervisor when I first joined that we need to show the customers’ we are friendly with them,

(Pritam, M, 24, Gaming, Dazzle casino)

So these men also smile at customers but associate it with being friendly rather than looking attractive or pleasing. Moreover they do not talk about it being difficult.

**Anger Management**

In cases where customers are not satisfied with the service, smiling can simultaneously require managing anger, both that of the worker and the customer. Providing service in the entire hotel industry is centred on satisfying customers; workers are constantly reminded and made to believe that the ‘customer is always right’. In smiling whilst interacting with angry and abusive customers as part of the work, both men and women workers are ‘surface acting’ as they manage their own anger and try to manage the customer’s anger. I explain this from the following observation in the reception area in Gold hotel.\(^{173}\)

An angry male customer was complaining about being charged more from his credit card. This customer was interacting with Niraj (a male worker),\(^{174}\) who seemed to

\(^{173}\) I was waiting in the lobby and looking at magazines lying next to the reception desk, when I heard and observed this interaction between an angry male customer and two workers (a male and a female).

\(^{174}\) Niraj is a pseudonym given to this male worker who is not one of the research participants whom I interviewed.
be concerned and attentive to the customer’s complaint. I heard him speak politely and saw him smiling for quite some time after. I overheard the male worker mumble and tell his female colleague, ‘... please you need to handle this man, I am losing my temper ... will be back soon’. He then left the reception desk and requested his female colleague to handle the male customer’s grievances. The customer did not seem to be happy with the male worker’s responses as he was raising his voice and continued to do so throughout the interaction. The female worker Gita\textsuperscript{175} (F, 28) greeted the man with a smile and seemed to be more successful in handling the customer’s complaint, as I observed the following interaction just before the customer left with a smile:

\begin{quote}
Gita: ... [t]hank you sir. I hope you enjoyed your stay at our hotel. See you again and wish you a pleasant flight.

\end{quote}

The male worker, knowing he must not lose his temper in front of a customer but recognising that he was struggling to manage his anger, used an exit strategy in passing the situation to his colleague, Gita. She seemed to be more successful in doing emotional labour and in getting the customer to calm down and leave possibly satisfied as he reciprocated by smiling back at her. It seems that workers use different strategies to manage anger, including swapping work positions with colleagues, detaching themselves from organisational rules and sustained ‘surface’ acting. I discuss these different strategies in turn.

\textsuperscript{175} Gita is one of my research participants and I interviewed her soon after the customer left.
In the above example, Niraj’s strategy is to leave the interaction, before his ‘surface’ acting breaks down and he loses his temper in front of the already angry customer. Gita doesn’t get to this point, and when I later interviewed her, she explained that managing emotions was challenging for her but then she got used to handling angry customers, as shown below:

I have to hide my feelings ... they get angry without trying to understand.
... I try to be diplomatic, smile and even pretend that I can understand what the customer is trying to say but then explain what the hotel rules are and that we have to follow the rules. ... This is one of the most difficult things to do.

The above quote clearly shows that Gita sustains her ‘surface’ acting by smiling and hiding her feelings, and further uses the strategy of distancing herself from the hotel rules to show empathy towards the customers; she gives the impression that she understands, however, in reality she is complying with organisational rules that bind her as a worker.

Women croupiers from Glitter casino explained how they handled situations that involve interacting with customers’ anger and abusive behaviour in the following manner:

Madina (25): I just keep smiling at the customer even when he is angry and continues to yell at me. I cannot show my anger at him ... what I do is, I exchange my place with another colleague as I attend to her table and she
attends mine.

Sonali (24): Yes, I think this helps to control the situation because then the customer no longer talks to the same girl. Some customers in fact also demand that the dealer is changed ... they yell, shout. ... Once one such customer said I was not bringing any good luck in the game so I had to change my table in which I was dealing the cards. ... Well, you come across many such customers.

Here again constant smiling is the first strategy but if that fails then swapping places with another worker is used as a strategy to defuse the situation, although it is sometimes also demanded by the customer. The women’s quotes make clear the extent to which they have accepted the situation as given. Sustained ‘surface’ acting, along with the strategy of letting the customer get angry for some time, was also expressed by some men. For example, Suresh (M, 26, Reception, Moon resort) explains how he handled angry customers:

Even when you know it is the customers who are wrong, you must not say so. I keep smiling and try to help them, politely ... with my anger, it is meant not to be shown and I have got used to it ... I now think the best way is to let the customers talk, shout, get angry till they get tired ... all I do is keep nodding, pretending to listen. After some time, when the customer has cooled down, I try to explain or clarify. This has worked for me. ... Customers are very important for our business.

Suresh, even when he gets angry, controls his anger and performs sustained emotional labour; he ‘surface’ acts, as if listening and letting the customer empty
their grievances to the point when they exhaust all their anger. This strategy of managing customers’ and his anger simultaneously has worked well for Suresh. Such a strategy was also expressed by another male worker Rajesh (M, 27) from Platinum hotel, who mentioned that managers and supervisors were trained in handling angry customers; this is a training newly introduced at the hotel.

...[b]ecause managers and supervisors are responsible for the overall department work, we were recently trained on how to manage customers’ anger. ... We are told that we should let the customer get angry until they are tired, or they stop shouting....

Another strategy discussed by the manager of Sun resort was to provide complimentary food, drinks, spa facilities and even a discount on the final payment, all with the aim of satisfying the customers and making them happy. This was reflected when I asked Meena (F, 27, Health Club/Spa, Sun Resort) what she did when customers were not satisfied with the service. Meena said: ‘I can only show my smile and control my feelings ... I don’t want them to get angrier’ and further explained that she would try to calm the customer by offering her a complimentary head massage or a neck massage the next time she came.

Crying and Learning to Manage Emotions

Some women on the gaming floor of both casinos expressed that previously working with drunk and abusive male customers used to affect their emotions for a long time even when they were not at work, and some cried about it privately. However, they seem to have started getting used to such male customers’ abusive behaviour as they
learn how to manage their emotions. The following extract of the discussion with women working in Dazzle casino explains this point.

Sarika (23): Yes, I used to feel hurt when I had to face the scolding and yelling of drunken men. I even used to go to the rest room and cry.

Basanti (30): I think all of us who have to face drunken men, men who are losing their money in the game, do face difficulty holding back our feelings. Some women also go to the bathroom and cry when they are new. Later, everyone gets used to it and stop feeling bad.

Neetu (30): Now ...we all get used to it eventually.

The discussion above illuminates that women workers at first were not able to conceal their emotions. Sarika, who earlier felt hurt and cried because of the abusive behaviour of the male customers, was now performing ‘surface’ acting by smiling and feigning ignorance as if she had not heard the scolding and yelling of abusive customers. The women begin to get used to the work and perhaps become more adept at calling in colleagues to assist them before they get upset. This illustrates the process of learning to manage emotions and perform emotional labour. Another example is Amita (F, 21, Food and Beverage Service) from Glitter casino who said:

We regularly come across customers who lose their temper and so I have got used to looking as though I don’t get angry ... I just smile and listen. But then I know once, when I was very disturbed by one customer’s behaviour. ... He started shouting at me when I delivered the food he had ordered. I did
apologise for the slight delay from the kitchen but he would not calm down.

He started abusing me. I just asked my colleague to takeover and I went inside the Kitchen and cried ... I was very disturbed and hurt for a few days.

This quote from Amita shows that she fails to sustain her ‘surface’ acting; she calls her colleague to take over the customer interaction, goes to the kitchen to cry and feels disturbed or emotionally hurt. Moreover, the behaviour of drunken men that involves arguing and yelling for example highlights the kind of abuse that employees experience when dealing with customers’ anger and their abusive behaviour. This illustrates how hard it is to do ‘emotional labour’. Crying at work and further being disturbed or emotionally hurt are some of the ‘costs’ of emotional labour.

Deep Acting

According to Hochschild ([1983]2003), in ‘deep acting’ there is an attempt to actually feel or experience the emotions that one is expected to or wishes to display. While most workers seem to be doing ‘surface’ acting as their accounts focus on outward behaviour of smiling, and displaying fake emotions, some women workers seem to be doing ‘deep acting’ as they attempt to work with their inner feelings.

In hotels and resorts, there were two women who evidently expressed that they felt happy and satisfied interacting with customers and making them ‘feel good’ (see Sharma and Black, 2001). For example, I illustrate deep acting shown in two quotes from women doing body work in hotels and resorts:
I try and get to know the customer’s problems about their body and health as much as possible; what products they use, if they are allergic to any products and what kind of treatments they have had so far. I then suggest what they could do, explaining to them about different oils used in massage, treatment lotions, creams, relaxation methods ... [and] about overall about healthy body and mind. It is very satisfying to be able to help ease a customer who comes here with the hope of feeling good or better ... I think about myself and how I would feel when someone helps me when I am in pain, like the doctor. ... Sometimes, I feel I am like a doctor ... making them feel good. (Ramita, F, 26, Fitness/Spa, Platinum hotel)

My work involves working with hair, doing facial, manicure, and pedicure ... overall beautifying [of] women’s bodies. I need to know more about not only what they have done ... for their body and what they would like to me to do for them. ... When some of them explain their unhappy feelings about their pimples, hair loss, dark circles ... I let them know how sorry I am for their state and try to assure them that they would be fine. ... Most customers leave the spa centre feeling good, thanking me which is what I like best about my work. I too feel happy to be able to make the customer feel good with their body and health. (Meena, F, 27, Health Club/Spa, Sun Resort)

Both the quotes show that women are ‘deep acting’, working with their inner feelings of ‘trained imagination’ (see Hochschild, [1983]2003); feeling as if they themselves are in pain or facing problems about their body for which they seek help. Both quotes describe that Ramita and Meena show empathy for the customers; and
engage with the customer’s feelings, from feeling unhappy or bad to feeling happy and good. Ramita and Meena both attempt to feel the customers’ experience of emotions, which they seem to be successful at displaying before the customers. Ramita imagines herself as a doctor being able to ease the pain of a patient. Moreover, both Ramita and Meena express the ‘pleasures’ of performing emotional labour (see Wolkowitz, 2006) as they generally feel happy and satisfied with their work.\footnote{\textsuperscript{176}}

To conclude this section, it can be said that workers both male and female, engage in emotional labour in all establishments when interacting with customers. Most of these workers are engaged in ‘surface acting’, displaying their smiles and managing their own as well as customers’ anger with various strategies. While managers’ accounts of smiling seem to be gender-neutral, workers’ understandings of smiling at work can be seen as a gendered phenomenon. Moreover, while men seemed to get angry and sometimes also manage their own and others’ anger, women seemed to get upset; this led some of them to cry in private at first while they struggled to do emotional labour which they later learned how to do. Furthermore, some women also seemed to engage in ‘deep acting’ as they used memories of being healed or imagined being a doctor as they interacted with customers. In all establishments according to some women’s accounts, doing emotional labour mainly involves ‘costs’ such as crying, feeling hurt and disturbed; few women express ‘pleasures’ such as feeling satisfied and happy. It can be said that both men and women workers

\footnote{\textsuperscript{176} However, as also explained in earlier sections, they do come across a few women customers who leave making them feel bad and sometimes hurt. When customers raise their voice, scold workers and express dissatisfaction with the outcome of the service, they both perform ‘surface’ acting as they display behaviour different to the emotions of anger and frustration they feel.}
are doing emotional labour and further that emotional labour takes different forms when carried out by men and women. The next section explores how workers perform aesthetic labour.

**Aesthetic Labour**

Using the concept of ‘aesthetic labour’ as outlined in my conceptual framework, I draw on the schematic framework of Warhurst *et al.* (2000) to analyse the meanings and practices attached to aesthetic labour in three areas: recruitment and selection; training and monitoring; and working practices. I illustrate how workers responded to questions about how looks mattered at work in the different establishments.  

**Recruitment and Selection**

Warhurst *et al.* (2000) argue that at the time of recruitment and selection, employers look for employees with the ‘right’ kind of appearance in some parts of the service sector. In hotels and resorts, while both men and women believed looks are important for all workers, women emphasised their importance at the stage of recruitment, as shown in the quotes below:

> I think when recruiting, looks and smartness are what the management focuses on especially if they are hiring someone in the front office. This does not mean that the worker’s skill is not important but the appearance does play an important role. (Gita, F, 28, Reception, Gold hotel)

177 Discussion on having the ‘right’ looks at work is also linked with women’s sexualisation at work, which I illustrate in the section on sexualised labour.
I think it is natural for the resort to look for workers who have pleasant appearance. In the hospitality industry it matters even more. (Meena, F, 27, Health Club/Spa, Sun resort)

Furthermore, Karuna (F, 22, Food and Beverage Production) from Sun resort believed she was recruited because of her looks. She said:

Looks do matter. My friends said I was recruited because I am pretty. ... When we were trained on grooming, I was also told that I need not learn much as I already had good looks. So you see, having good looks does help.

Male workers also mentioned that no matter where one works, looks are important. For example, Bikash (M, 31, Reception) from Gold hotel said that ‘looks give an impression about you, we all need to dress smart and look good no matter where we work’.

The quotes above demonstrate that women think looks are important in getting recruited and that this is seen as ‘natural’ particularly in the hospitality industry. Gita considers that looks are important for workers in the front office, while Karuna explains that she believed she was recruited because of her good looks, which was an advantage as she was told she did not need to be trained much on grooming.

In casinos, although some women thought that having good looks helped them get recruited, during the focus group discussion Madina and Sonali pointed out that there were changes in the policy relating to recruitment of women.
Madina (25): If you come and see for yourself you will see that one does not need to be good looking these days to work in the casino. ... In my interview, I was asked to work on the gaming floor because I was tall. I think girls who are tall are chosen for gaming. But then there is no consistency. We also have new comers who are not necessarily good looking or tall or already married.

Sonali (24): The newly recruited girls are not all good looking ... we are all trained on grooming.

Madina (25): Our supervisor emphasises the grooming classes so much. It is to train these girls to look good ... though I don’t find the training useful for me because I know how to look good.

Sonali (24): You don’t even have to look good. You already have good looks. Look at your eyes. I have heard some customers mention you have eyes like a doll.

Madina (25): I know one customer told me right up to my face that he finds me very good looking and likes my eyes too.

According to the quotes above, women highlight that they need not necessarily be ‘good looking’. It was the training on ‘looking good’ which they highlighted as being important. They also thought that recruiting ‘good looking’ women is a decreasing trend in the casinos as women were trained on how to ‘look good’. Moreover, when women workers discussed looks, they distinguished between ‘good looking’ and ‘looking good’ which I consider worth flagging. While ‘good looking’ was construed as something that is ‘natural’ or ‘authentic’ which a person has with him/her, ‘looking good’ depicts the need to create a manufactured look, one that is not natural.
Training and Monitoring

Another area that Warhurst et al. (2000) highlight is management practices which pay attention to employees’ appearance by training as well as monitoring them. As already explained in Chapter Four, establishments train workers with skills related to looking. In all establishments, although both men and women explained how they were trained to manufacture a desired look, it was mostly women who emphasised the grooming codes. Women workers discussed being trained to look good, which involves how to put on make-up and do their hair. Moreover, as explained in Chapter Four, the staff handbook in casinos included grooming standards for both men and women that was gendered.

Furthermore, management also assigned some workers in hotels to police their colleagues on grooming styles as explained by Sujata (F, 30, Human Resources, Platinum hotel) below:

I am told by the management to keep an eye on the workers to maintain the grooming standards. I also tell some workers as and when I see them not following such standards ... I too follow the standards because I do not want to be seen as disobeying the rules myself.

While Sujata mentioned following the grooming standards, she was also policing other workers, both men and women. Similarly, Uttara, (F, 37) working as a supervisor in the housekeeping department of Gold hotel, mentioned how she reminds workers in her department about managing their looks.
Sometimes, when working we come across customers. We also have to work in public areas like the hotel lobby and meeting rooms. If the housekeeping staffs manage their looks in front of the customers, like greeting customers, smiling and wearing tidy uniform, it gives a good impression of the hotel. ... I am asked to ensure that my department staff look and behave with customers according to the training provided.

Moreover, in Glitter casino, women focused on and emphasised being trained and policed to look good. It is important to understand that with the emergence of the Maoist trade union, the uniform for women workers in casinos has changed from skirts to trousers. As a result, while women workers in casinos previously wore shirts and skirts with cardigans/jackets in winter, the skirts were later replaced by trousers. The discussion below indicates that aesthetic labour is beginning to be less controlled by the casino management.

Madina (25): Well, our seniors used to scare us talking about how strict our supervisor is in terms of checking on how we look before we went to deal. They used to say that she comes checking from the shoes, length of the skirt to the way girls have applied their makeup. ... Once the Maoist trade union came to power, they changed our uniform and we now have a very good uniform.

Sonali (24): I like the shirt and trousers we wear. There is no debate now on the length of the skirt and talks that short skirts make us look sexy. ... The situation now is different because of the Maoist trade union. Things are slowly changing.

Deepika (30): Earlier, the short skirts made us look sexy as our supervisors

\(^{178}\) While managers wore jackets, non-managerial workers wore cardigans in winter.
kept looking at the length of the skirt. It was also not comfortable, walking around with customers who looked at our legs. ... The trousers are comfortable and I do not feel awkward and shy to walk around in them.

Madina (25): I agree. But I think our supervisor is also not strict about our looks as before, because if women complain with the trade union against management then there could be problems between the union and the management. ...We do apply makeup and look our best ... but in our own way, not how we are taught in training.

From the above discussion, it appears that the change in the uniform of women workers was introduced by the casino management with the influence of the Maoist trade union, which suggests the power of the trade union could be instrumental in the lessening of emphasis and control over women’s looks. Furthermore, although it is not clear if the change was demanded by women workers, it seems that some women workers preferred this change. The women of Glitter casino talked about the importance of looking good at work and how they were policed by their supervisors. They were provided with training on grooming which they practised only partly. The techniques taught to apply makeup were not liked by them and they tend to follow their own techniques. This change, which they believed was because of the trade union, was liked by Sonali and Deepika who saw short skirts as ‘sexy’ compared to trousers and seemed not to want to perform sexualised labour through their clothing. However, wearing trousers does not mean one cannot look heterosexually attractive because based on my observation, while some women wore lose trousers, others were wearing fitted trousers. Although women highlighted that the length of

\[179\] In this study I did not look into the role of the trade union and the power dynamics in the casinos, which could be an interesting topic for further research.

\[180\] I discuss this further in the following chapter (Chapter Six).
the skirt, earlier was said to make women look ‘sexy’, it can be said that the extent to/way in which trousers fitted the bodies of these women can also make them look ‘sexy’.

The discussion also points to the change in the way management policed the women workers’ appearance from a strict policing approach, to an approach that can be called a different but less strict one. There seems to have been a shift in power from management to the Maoist trade union which is associated with changes that are liked by women workers. Also, the importance given to looking good seemed to be slowly changing with the new recruits through the influence (indirect) of the Maoist trade union as explained by managers of both casinos. For example, when I asked the manager of Dazzle casino what was it that they looked for in women and men workers, the manager replied, ‘...we now face labour militancy. The union gives us a list of say fifty names and we just select say twenty’. The role of trade unions in the recruitment of workers was also echoed by some casino workers. This means that management could no longer select predominantly on the basis of looks.

While the management of all of the establishments sought to control workers’ looks, the management of resorts seemed to control the least, with hotels and casinos controlling workers’ looks to a greater extent. Some women workers from Glitter casino also experienced reduced policing of their looks by the management with
perhaps) the evolving power of the Maoist trade union. Aesthetic labour still matters for women workers in casinos, even when they are wearing trousers, as they are still expected to ‘look good’ in front of the customers, as in the case of hotels and resort.

Working Practices and the Service Encounter

The third area Warhurst et al. (2000) point to highlights that the kind of working practices and the nature of the service encounter determines the manner and extent to which aesthetics is important in the service sector. For example, in the case of the hotel industry, some workers expressed that looks matter to those who work in the front office where they interact with customers routinely. Some of them also linked looking good more frequently to women workers than men workers. Samrat (M, 28) is one such male worker who worked in the materials department of Dazzle casino. When I asked how much did what he looked like matter for him at work, he replied:

I think it matters for women in the front. ... For men it may not matter that much. For us at the back, these things do not matter. We are not seen by the customers. ... It is also not that important for us ... women need to look good.

While there are trade unions in both casinos, the women from Dazzle casino did not share any information about management control on grooming. Many of them in fact highlighted learning the skills related to grooming as an achievement, which I explain in the following chapter on empowerment (Chapter Six). However, even if some of them had experienced control and/or felt pressurised and policed as in the case of Glitter casino, I believe since the interviews and focus group discussion took place in a room that was disturbed with frequent movement of other casino workers, it may have had implications on what they chose to share with me (see Chapter Three on research methodology).
When I asked him the same question to Ramesh (M, 35) working as a cook in Sun resort, he said: ‘[Y]es it does matter. As soon as you enter, everyone likes to see good looking people in the front’. He was referring to the front office workers for whom he believed looks mattered. However, Babita (F, 27) who worked as a cook in Moon resort felt it was skills that mattered to her at work.

For me, it is the skills to be a good cook that matter. I don’t need to look good because I don’t interact with customers ... but those in the reception, and customer services need to look good because that is where customers come and interact. (Babita, F, 27, Cook, Moon resort)

The above quotes show that apart from gender, where one works also makes a difference in whether looks matter or not. According to Samrat, it is women who work in the front office for whom looks matter the most. Similarly Babita also pointed to workers in the front office who interact with customers being required to look good. In the focus group discussion, Deepika (F, 30) working as a guest relations assistant in Glitter casino talked about managing her weight to look good before the customers. She said:

[M]y supervisor touched my belly and said that it is sticking out. She also said that I should lose some weight. ... I felt bad at first ... now when she sometimes does say I just smile at her ... but then I feel conscious of my looks and try not to gain weight.
Deepika’s quote indicates the discursive control over her body, which makes her conscious of her looks and further shows that she tries not to gain weight. She also feels bad but smiles which show that she is ‘surface acting’. This resonates with Hochschild’s ([1983]2003) study which showed that air-hostesses ‘surface act’, had to manage their weight to look attractive and were also monitored on these things. Likewise, the following extract from focus group discussion with women workers of Dazzle casino explains how looking good matters.

Basanti (30): Yes, definitely. We all try to look good in front of others, don’t we? Here also it’s the same. It gives the impression that we take care of our body, clothes and skin.

Neetu (30): Looking good is an art. Not everyone can make themselves look good. You need to have interest in taking care of what you wear and how you present yourself before others. ... Looks attract people and I think that is why we all try to look beautiful so that people get attracted to us. ... We being the senior most workers in the gaming department sometimes are told by our manager to help the new ones in grooming.

Here ‘looking good’ involves manufacturing a look that attracts other people as well as demonstrates the work that has been done to take care of the body, skin and clothes. Senior workers assisted the newcomers in the grooming techniques; ‘looking good’ was important for these women in the gaming floor but in different ways.

Thus far, following the framework of Warhurst et al. (2000), I have examined how looks matter at three stages: during recruitment and selection where having the ‘right
look’ mattered for men and women workers; during training and monitoring where, although all workers were trained in how to ‘look good’, there was a different emphasis for women in the front office and those working in casinos; and in the context of working practices during the service encounter where looks mattered to both men and women but also depended on how much they interacted with customers. It can be said that as with emotional labour, both men and women workers are performing aesthetic labour. In addition, more is required of women, particularly those who interact with customers, to perform aesthetic labour. Moreover, it is women who perform sexualised work and some women working on the gaming floor of Dazzle casino who perform sexualised labour, which I examine next.

**Sexualised Labour**

Tourists to Nepal generally need accommodation in hotels or resorts but they do not need casinos; they visit only if they wish to gamble. While female customers are becoming more common in the hotels and resorts they are still very much in the minority in the casinos. For example, Adarsh (M, 28, Marketing, Glitter casino) said:

> Earlier there were hardly any women who came to gamble. These days we do have a few women come and play but then it is mostly men who are our customers.

I use Warhurst and Nickson’s (2009) three-fold classification of sexualised work. They distinguish between sexualised work as that in which employee sexuality is sanctioned and subscribed to by management and sexualised labour as one in which
employee sexuality is prescribed by management; workers doing strategically sexualised work. Moreover, as Warhurst and Nickson (ibid.) also note, sexualized labour can also be analysed by extending the analysis of aesthetic labour. I analyse the ways in which sexualised work is performed by women, and highlight that with the increasing power of the trade union some aspects of women’s performance of sexualised labour on the gaming floor seems to be changing.

Sanctioned by Management

Warhurst and Nickson (2009) suggest that one of the ways in which sexualised labour is performed by employees is when employee sexuality is sanctioned by the management. They view employee sexuality as sanctioned when management recognises and passively accepts sexualised work which is employee driven.

Some women croupiers in Dazzle casino are said to be flirting with customers as part of their work. For example, Pritam, a male working as a croupier in Dazzle casino claimed that, ‘women colleagues are the ones who tease and flirt with not just the customers but also with us’. I illustrate part of a focus group discussion by women workers on the gaming floor of Dazzle casino below, where women also seemed to consider it normal to be involved in flirting with customers as part of their work.

Madina (25): I flirt with some customers. They flirt with me so I flirt back with them. Many of us look around and when we see some good looking new customer, we tell each other and talk about him. ... We chat about handsome young men amongst ourselves...

Deepika (30): It is ok to flirt with customers because it is also part of the
job as we all try to attract more and more customers to visit our casino and play. It is for the business.

Madina (25): Oh yes, I remember ... [Mr. X, a customer] saying he likes it when we tease him. I think he flirts with most of us.

Sonali (24): Yes, even I flirt with him sometimes.

The above discussion suggests that sexualised work is driven by workers as they flirt with some male customers in the gaming floor. As Deepika mentions, flirting is seen as part of their work, and they believe this behaviour benefits the business. In the hotels and resorts, a few women discussed the way that they and/or their colleagues flirt with each other. Some women also flirt with male customers. For example, Swosti (F, 27) at the front desk in Platinum hotel said, ‘some [male] customers tease us and also flirt with us ... well we do the same sometimes’. Likewise, Januka (F, 24) at the front desk in Sun resort explained that:

[passing comments on looks is common ... it is male customers and our male colleagues who pass comments on our looks ... it is not unusual and sometimes I also pass comments on their looks.

This shows that it seems to be largely women working in the front office who engage in sexual innuendo at work; these women’s work is sexualised.

Subscribed to by Management

Warhurst and Nickson (2009: 394) suggest another form of sexualised work takes place when ‘management actively promotes but does not appropriate employees’
sexuality’. As mentioned in the section on organisational training relating to ‘looking’ (Chapter Four), the high emphasis and policing of grooming, for women, particularly for women who interact with customers (front office) illuminates the extent to which women perform sexualised work.

As discussed earlier, management expects women to be ‘glamorous’; they rely on women looking attractive for their business. Thus, in all establishments women workers particularly those involved in customer interaction work can be said to be performing sexualised work. Moreover compared to hotels and resorts, in the case of casinos, some women workers’ accounts can be understood in terms of how management subscribes to women’s sexuality. For example, Madina (F, 24) from Glitter casino during the focus group discussion believed, ‘if I were to do [apply makeup] as they taught us in the grooming training, I would look like a prostitute’. The women in the focus group discussion at Dazzle casino also seemed to be doing aesthetic labour which can be used to analyse the way their work is sexualised:

Basanti (30): When going to work, it is important that we all take care of our looks and how we present ourselves no matter where we work.

Sarika (23): Yes, in the casinos, because we are mostly women interacting with male customers, it is important for us to look good. It is a fact that we all dress up to impress others.

Neetu (30): Also when working ... flirting with customers is common. It is only when they cross the line and start harassing us sexually, then it is a problem.
The above discussion points to the way workers themselves give importance to looking good; dressing up to impress others. Women workers in the front office in hotels and resorts similarly viewed aesthetics as ‘looking good’ for themselves and necessary in any work. The way in which flirting at work is considered ‘normal’ for any working environment also suggests that sexualised work is employee driven but subscribed to by the management through the emphasis on grooming – ‘dressing up to impress others’.

Women’s work in all establishments is sexualised through aesthetic labour, as had been found in other studies relating to women’s work (Filby 1992, Pringle 1988; Purcell 1996). Sexualised work is performed by women in hotels, resorts and casinos, and largely by those whose work involves interacting with customers, as management sanctions or subscribes to women’s sexuality. It is this emphasis on women workers to ‘look’ attractive, which is partially achieved through training, that management relies on to generate and sustain business.

**Prescribed by Management**

Warhurst and Nickson’s (2009) third strand of analysis of sexualised work deals with the way that employee sexuality is prescribed by the management and the way in which sexualised work is organisationally driven; managers develop an organisational strategy that commercially benefits the business. It is this form of strategically sexualised work that they argue takes the form of sexualised labour.
In casinos, the high importance given to the grooming of women workers coupled with the gender segregation of women on the gaming floor and the policing of their appearance illustrates that sexualised labour in the casinos is a result of management strategy. As highlighted in Chapter Four, the management’s strategy of hiring mainly young, heterosexual and attractive women for work on the gaming floor as croupiers and guest relation assistants in Glitter casino indicates the use of women’s sexuality to attract male customers.

Women’s work on the gaming floor is strategically sexualised work which means women perform sexualised labour. The quote from Rohinee (F, 30, Guest Relations, Glitter casino) reiterates the extent to which such a strategy operates to enhance business.

Why are guest relation assistants only women? You can see from this that the management wants to employ women to attract more men to come and play.

After all women do well in this glamorous job. Recruitment of women as guest relation assistants and croupiers means that our sexuality is good for the casino business.

Rohinee recalls one such occasion when the casino organised an evening of entertainment for its selected customers and some of the guest relation assistants were asked to dress up to look attractive before customers. She explained:

I was scolded for not looking attractive enough in my dress. Then, I was given a dress, the neckline of which was so low (pointing towards her chest). ...
the hall, the dim lights made it worse. No one would be able to notice what the
customer did to us, touch or hug us. I cannot imagine how I wore that dress
and stayed very scared and helpless.

Rohinee’s quote is a very good example that clearly shows the manner in which
sexualised labour is prescribed by the management as she was provided with a low
neckline dress to wear when interacting with (male) customers. It also shows that her
role as a guest relation assistant requires her to perform sexualised labour, to attract
male customers.

Furthermore, some women workers’ explanation of their work in the casinos shows
how women’s sexuality is indirectly prescribed by the management, through broadly
emphasising ‘customer satisfaction’ or the ‘pleasing’ of customer. This is illustrated
in the quote by Rohinee (F, 30, Guest Relations, Glitter casino) below which shows
the sexualised nature of her work:

It is like in the movies where they show call girls besides men, serving them
with drinks and lighting their cigars ... I just hate having to carry the lighter
wherever I go. ... Some men [customers] also request that I kiss the chip
first before they start playing ... these are the two things I hate to do ... I
have to please the customers ... my supervisor tells me I must always
please the customers.
The management at Glitter casino further indirectly prescribes sexualised work through the uniforms, which are tailor-made.\textsuperscript{182} For example, Erika (F, 30) said, ‘the tailor takes our measurements and we are provided with uniforms’. I observed that most women on the gaming floor wear fitted clothes, although some wore lose shirts and trousers. As also discussed earlier, women could be expected to look ‘attractive’ wearing ‘fitted’ trousers and shirts, which shows that women are expected to perform sexualised labour.

During the low season\textsuperscript{183} the guest relation assistants were always under pressure to phone customers to encourage them to come to the casino and play. Rohinee and Deepika of Casino Glitter are both guest relation assistants who have called customers old as well as new inviting them to visit the casino. I illustrate Rohinee’s quote below:

> When we call them, many customers tell us that they would buy gifts for us and that they would give us more money if we agreed to meet them elsewhere other than the casino and spend some time entertaining them. We can understand what such customers are hinting at ... sexual favours are what they want. When we express not being interested we even face abuses. ... This is when I feel humiliated.

\textsuperscript{182} Uniforms in all hotels, resorts and casinos are mostly tailor-made. During focus group discussions with women from Glitter casino, women talked about how some of them demanded that their clothes were not tightly fitted to their bodies.

\textsuperscript{183} The low season is normally between May and August when not many tourists visit Nepal due to weather conditions that are either too hot or rainy.
The above quote explains the kind of sexual harassment that guest relation assistants face, as customers try to lure them with money. It is also indicative of the kind of abusive behaviour women workers have to put up with as part of their work. That said, as explained earlier, the extent to which workers experience management control over their appearance has lessened. In the casinos, power seems to have shifted to women workers on the gaming floor and the trade union, something that has implications for the way management controls workers’ appearance and further prescribes sexualised labour. The quote from Rohinee (F, 30, Guest Relations, Glitter casino) is useful to illustrate and compare with what she said earlier.

Nowadays, we don’t have to wear those kind of low cut dresses or sit with customers in dim rooms although we still do light the cigarettes and sometimes kiss the chips. ... When I phone customers and they pass sexual remarks, earlier I used to just keep quiet and carry on talking, now I just hang up and start phoning the next customer.

Rohinee’s account illustrates the different forms of women’s sexualised labour and the strategies she uses to deal with unwanted behaviour; now she can hang up the telephone conversation with an abusive customer and move on. This suggests that women are resisting some elements of sexualised labour, with the backing of the trade union which I discuss in the following section.\(^\text{184}\)

\(^{184}\) I also discuss in detail in the next chapter on empowerment how some women do not put up with customers’ behaviour any longer. This relates to the shift in power between management and trade unions and is empowering for women.
In summary, using the framework of Warhurst and Nickson (2009), I have shown that women’s work in the hotels, resorts and casinos is sexualised through aesthetic labour and some women working on the gaming floor of casinos perform sexualised labour through aesthetic labour and also through their roles – kissing chips and lighting the cigarettes. Moreover, women’s sexuality is sanctioned or subscribed to by management in all sample establishments and women’s work is sexualised. In casinos, however, the sexuality of women working on the gaming floor is prescribed by management and here women perform strategically sexualised work, i.e. sexualised labour.

Hitherto, I have explored the way in which men and women perform emotional and aesthetic labour in all establishments, and in which some women in casinos perform, in addition to these, sexualised labour. All these types of labour are gendered: men and women perform emotional and aesthetic labour differently and (sometimes) it seems that more is required of women; it is women in casinos, particularly those working on the gaming floor, who perform sexualised labour. Moreover, the context in which one works is important when looking at how these types of labour are performed; both men and women working in the front office where customer interaction is high perform emotional and aesthetic labour in all establishments. Furthermore, while women’s work is sexualised through aesthetic labour, some women on the gaming floor perform sexualised labour.

Thus, men and women to a variable extent perform gendered emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour. In addition, while such performances by workers are shaped by the gendered work they do, it can also be said, in turn, that gendered work
is constructed by such performances to some extent. This means that workers, both men and women, do gender when performing emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour at work. However, while most workers conform to doing gendered work and overall organisational policies and practices, some workers also talked about being engaged in resistance at work, which I move on to discuss in the following section.

**Resistance at work**

In the second section of this chapter, I discuss men and women’s resistance at work in the various establishments. Although I did not set out to explore the extent to which workers resist at work, I discovered that when workers started explaining how they did their work, they also discussed how they resisted. I found that workers’ accounts related to the individual and collective forms of resistance that take place as men and women do gendered work. As noted by Adkins (2001: 672), ‘gendering is by no means fixed but rather it is continuously ... contested’. At the individual level, I explain the ‘subtle, routine and low levels of struggle and challenges’ that women face and the strategies developed to resist (see Thomas and Davies, 2005) and discuss how workers resist particular aspects of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour both individually and collectively.

**Individual Resistance**

According to some managers, more and more workers were showing resistance at work. For example, the quote from the manager of Moon resort below shows how workers are using the support of the trade union to disobey organisation rules:
These days they [workers] stay on leave without prior notice. If you scold them, they say sorry and that’s it. We give them a verbal warning and that’s all. We cannot fire them, they know it. ... Earlier workers would abide by the rules, only a few would disobey but now it’s the politics... the union is active.

Likewise, workers highlighted various acts of resistance as they explained their work during the interviews. I discuss the ways in which their acts show resistance in performing some aspects of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour.

Refusing to Tolerate Customers’ Abusive Behaviour

Mostly women workers complained about not being satisfied with the customers’ behaviour towards them. Although workers are expected to stay calm when interacting with customers who are angry, they are not always willing to do so. I illustrate a few examples:

Of course, I do my work and do not show my anger but ... sometimes it’s just too much. I tell the customer to go and complain to my supervisor or the management, whoever. ... I just cannot keep quiet and listen to them. If I am asked to provide an explanation by the manager, I will and I will also inform the trade union if things get worse. (Pritam, M, 24, Gaming, Dazzle casino)

Well, I told my supervisor that I will not tolerate it if that customer again shouts at me, I will fight with him. I did not care whether I would be fired or not. ... He [supervisor] did say he would give me a warning letter if I misbehaved and fought with customers as it is against the rules. ... The union
is strong and I know he will not give me the letter also even if I had fought.

(Sabina, F, 28, Housekeeping, Platinum hotel)

The above quotes show that Pritam and Sabina seem confident in refusing to tolerate the abusive behaviour of the customers; they did not care whether management asked for an explanation or fired them because they felt they could rely on the support of the trade union. In Glitter casino, although croupiers are not allowed to interact for long with customers (management suspect dealers may ally with customers to help them manoeuvre during games) the quote from Madina (F, 24, Gaming, Glitter casino) shows she not only interacted with customers but even told some of them off when they used abusive language with her.

I talk to the customers. I know we should not be talking for long but I just do. Nobody has said anything to me. ... Some customers are so bad, they lose and then they start using dirty language, abusing you. ... I used to tolerate it before but now, I know what to say. ... I tell them off too ... as if I had forced him, pulling his hand and dragging him to the casino to play.

These quotes show women’s resistance; they refuse to tolerate (male) customers’ abusive behaviour. Furthermore, they are able to do this with the support of the trade union. This shows that workers, largely women, resist certain aspects of emotional labour.
Defying Some Grooming Codes

While appearance did not seem to be so important in the back office, all workers are trained and expected to follow grooming standards. Some women working in the back office of hotels and resorts defy the codes of grooming. For example, Dolma (F, 27, Food and Beverage production, Platinum hotel) said, ‘I don’t understand why I should apply makeup on my face. I just don’t. ... If I am called to face the customer; I will ... they should like the food I serve, not my makeup’. Similarly, Sumnima (F, 33, Housekeeping, Sun resort) mentioned that although she applied makeup it was her own style. She said, ‘my style is not like what was taught to me in training on grooming, although I did learn some techniques’.

In Glitter casino, women in the focus group discussion mentioned that they were not allowed to show bangles or necklaces at work. They could wear small items but had to hide them under their uniform. However, when I observed the gaming floor, I saw some women with accessories (jewellery, necklaces, and rings) and found their appearance to be different to others, in the sense that they looked like married Hindu women. Later when I asked Anju (F, 31, Gaming, Glitter casino) to explain the situation, she said:

Did you not notice married women wearing potay, bangles and sindhur?\(^{185}\)

Actually although earlier, we were not allowed to wear them at all, it’s been a few years, we can wear them during festivals like Teej,\(^{186}\) only for that day.

But then it’s been so many days now that the festival is gone and still some of

\(^{185}\) Hindu married women wear the symbolic *potay* (necklace made of beads) and *sindhur* (vermillion in the hair parting) that signifies and portrays their married status.

\(^{186}\) Teej is a Hindu festival celebrated by women, wherein they dress in their finest attire and decorate themselves
our colleagues continue to wear them ... the supervisor I think pretends not to see or comment ... these [women workers] are the ones who got the job with the influence of the Maoist trade union.

This quote points to two crucial factors in the way women contest management prescribed appearance for women workers. Firstly, casinos were recently practicing the amendment of certain grooming requirements during festival times on a temporary basis. This is an indication that casinos are loosening their control over women’s appearance. Secondly, the fact that some women continued to portray the same appearance long after the Teej festival was over indicates a defiance of some grooming rules. As Anju explains, these women had support from the trade union (Maoist), which could be the reason why they could resist without too much risk to their employment.

During the focus group discussion with women from Glitter casino, the topic of training on grooming emerged and the women workers discussed the use of makeup in the following manner:

Deepika (30): If I do what I am taught in the grooming training I will look horrible ...

it’s just too much makeup ... and the hairstyle is even worse as if I am trying to look sexy...

Sonali (24): I think so too. The training is of no use.

Madina (25): Who will do what is being taught in the training. I think we are better off without this type of training. I like to put on makeup, who doesn’t?

Deepika (30): I too like to put on makeup but not too heavy.

Sonali (24): Yes, it should not be like going to a party. We go to work so makeup should be just what suits our uniform.
The above quotes suggest that women resist what they are told during the training on grooming as they say they already knew how to do their hair and put on makeup, and that the training is unnecessary. It also suggests resistance of their sexualisation and codes of ‘respectability’. That said, the women do have an interest in putting on makeup if it suits their uniform and in their own style. It is therefore only certain aspects of aesthetic labour that women resist.

Confronting Sexualisation by Male Workers and Customers

Some women workers confronted the sexualisation of their labour, mainly with customers, as it involved sexual harassment. I specifically asked the workers – Did you or any of your colleagues face sexual harassment at work? In the casinos, croupiers (largely women) face customers who abuse them or sexually harass by passing offensive remarks as shown below:

Basanti (30): We have the power to discipline the men in the casinos. We tell the customers to behave and sometimes when they do not, we signal the bouncers, who immediately come and handle the situation.

Neetu (30): These men [bouncers] are so strong that they will just lift the customer and take them to a corner, have a discussion and make them understand the rules of the casino.

Basanti (30): ... some customers try and harass us but we are the ones who control them in the casinos because we decide when to signal the bouncers.

Basanti and Neetu’s discussion shows that croupiers have power over the drunken and sometimes abusive men, as they can signal the bouncers who would immediately
attend and take charge by asking the guests to leave. This has two implications. First, it gives the women workers a sense of being protected against sexual harassment at work and helps them feel more secure working in the casino. Secondly, it also shows that croupiers have the power to call bouncers (male bouncers), which is an indication to the customers that they need to behave or face being disciplined. During the focus group discussion with women from Glitter casino, Madina and Sonali, both croupiers, also mentioned similar ways of handling male customers. In contrast, guest relation assistants in Glitter casino complain that bouncers and managers do not pay (prompt) attention to their signals and/or reporting of sexual harassment, as illustrated from the quotes of Rohinee and Deepika below:

When I signal the bouncer, if there is a customer who harasses me, the bouncers act as if they don’t see my signal and even when they do come, they come very late. ... These days I tell these customers that I do not like their behaviour. (Rohinee, F, 30, Guest Relations, Glitter casino)

Whenever I go to my manager and complain about the misbehaviour of any customer, he just ignores me as if I had not complained. If the complaint was from the croupiers, he would immediately take action by changing their worktable. But for us, we are left on our own ... I have got used to such misbehaviour and it does not affect me these days. I simply ignore the customer’s misbehaviour. (Deepika, F, 30, Guest Relations, Glitter casino)

The difference in treatment of croupiers and guest relation assistants could be because croupiers are the ones handling the games and on whose skill the casino business relies on, so they could be considered as more important than the guest relation
assistants whose role is to facilitate and ensure customers’ comfort whilst in the casinos. Thus, when the guest relation assistants face sexual harassment and misbehaviour from customers, they develop their own strategies of dealing with this such as speaking up against such harassment and ignoring customers’ misbehaviour. This shows that women are beginning to take charge of such situations but are not supported in the way that the croupiers are.

Dolma (F, 27) working as a chef in Platinum hotel, explained that women were sexually harassed by their male colleagues.

I do see some men who brush their shoulders, their hands as they walk past some of the women colleagues at work. I don’t think this is appropriate ... well some women may complain but not all. When one such incident happened to me, at a time when I had first joined the hotel ... I told the guy off ... [told him] to watch how he walked past women colleagues.

Dolma is one of those women who contested sexual harassment by speaking up, like Rohinee at Dazzle casino. In addition, some women working in the housekeeping department also explained that women faced sexual harassment from some male customers when providing room service at Platinum hotel and Moon resort:
I have heard some of my colleagues report to the manager about some male customers who try and harass them. They say, men ask them to spend some fun time with them in exchange for money. They have complained to the manager but then all he asked them to do was not to go to the rooms alone. (Sabina, F, 28, Housekeeping, Platinum hotel)

We are told by our supervisor to enter inside customers’ room in pairs. So we take our colleagues with us. This is because some of our colleagues were mistreated by some customers. (Sunita, F, 33, Housekeeping, Sun resort)

These women seem to be told by their supervisors/managers to develop a strategy of working/entering rooms of male customers in pairs. This illustrates that women get support from the management in terms of managing the possibility of facing sexual harassment, however such support can be questioned. While women workers seemed content using this strategy of going in pairs, it is notable for requiring the workers to change and not addressing the customers directly about their behaviour. The latter does not (and may never) happen with the management mantra of customer satisfaction being so important in running or increasing business. This also illuminates that women’s work is sexualised in all establishments.

**Collective Resistance**

While workers relied on the support of the trade union to resist certain aspects of work, the trade union seemed to be a common forum through which all workers can resist organisational policies and practices across the six establishments. In the case
of Glitter casino, women working in the gaming floor also resisted collectively as a group, relying on the support of the trade union. I discuss this first.

Women as a Group

As explained earlier, some women from Glitter casino contested codes of grooming. They also mentioned how they made use of mobile phones individually and collectively going against the rule that they cannot carry their mobiles during work.

Madina (25): We also carry mobile phones with us, hiding it in our stockings or our under garments, we roll them up ... we are not allowed to carry mobiles ... but we switch the sound off and check our phones when we go to the rest room.

Deepika (30): Oh yes, I used to do it thinking I was the only one. I noticed others were also doing the same thing. I think even our supervisor knows we hide the mobile inside our clothes but she does not say anything because now most of us are doing it.

In the casinos, where emphasis on grooming is high for women workers, particularly those on the gaming floor, there is resistance as women defy certain codes of grooming and are moving from individual to collective form of resistance. For example, in Glitter casino the three women during the focus group discussion explained that they made the choice not to concede to the reprimands of their supervisors/managers on grooming standards:
Deepika (30): When they tell us we have to apply makeup this way ... I don’t like it and don’t do it. Although I do apply makeup, I choose to do it my way. Actually, we all do it our way.

Sonali (24): Yes. I don’t follow those instructions ... I also apply makeup as per my choice. ... I agree with Deepika that we are united as group which is why I think our supervisor does not seem to be that strict like before.

Madina (25): I know many women who do not even know how to put on proper lipstick. The trade union is powerful and these women have links with them. So they can get away without having proper makeup too.

The above quotes help explain that the situation is very complex. While some women were being reprimanded and yet chose to resist (silently), others simply did not even have to resist because of the support of trade union.

Trade Union

All the six managers I interviewed raised concerns over the role of trade union in their business. Although they seemed to show that the management and trade union are cooperating with each other, some of them expressed having little if any control, as can be seen from the quote of the Manager at Glitter casino:

Making excuses is common. In fact it is increasing with more and more workers pointing to the trade union not only to threaten us or what but they just don’t work efficiently like before. With increasing political disturbance in the country, the trade union leaders come with requests saying they have to send so many workers to protest and we have no option but to agree or at the most contest the numbers ... how many would be allowed to go.
Men and women workers resist some organisational policies and practices that affect all workers through the trade union. They do so by joining/being active in the trade union, which is evolving as a new form of power in the hotel industry. So their resistance is rather focused on overall organisational practice. Campaigns by the trade union or negotiations that take place between the management and the trade union can be construed as collective and formal forms of resistance. During my field visit, I observed that the back office of Platinum hotel, Gold hotel, Moon resort and Dazzle casino had black banners listing the trade union’s demands (pay rises, service charge, benefits etc.), hung up at the entrance and in some common areas such as corridors leading to workers’ rest rooms.

The following two examples of workers’ active involvement in the trade union demonstrate that the collective power of the trade union is effective:

Our trade union has been very active in negotiating with the management on salary and benefit issues. I think raising concerns through the trade union is the best way to formally make demands with the management, rather than individually going to negotiate. (Suresh, M, 26, Reception, Moon resort)

I am actively involved in the trade union. ... If I have any complaints or issues regarding my work or organisational policies, I simply raise it with the trade union that takes up the issue with the concerned managers. It works. (Amita, F, 21, Food and Beverage Service, Glitter casino)
While both the workers highlight the contestation of organisation policies through the trade union, Suresh further opines a collective form of resistance to be the best way to formally make demands rather than an individual approach.

Hitherto, I have explained that it is mostly women who resist aspects of the gendered work they are expected to do, both individually and sometimes collectively. When women workers resist individually and sometimes as a group, they almost invariably rely on the trade union for support. Men and women both resist collectively through the trade union in terms of putting their demands related to organisational policies and practices. This illuminates how the collective power of the trade union affects women’s ability to resist as it shifts the balance of power from that of an individual woman to that of collective power of trade union as a group. It shows that changes at the structural level have implications for workers at interactional level; workers’ ability to resistance can be said to be partly because of the shift in power at the structural level with the emergence of the role of trade union (see Deutsch, 2007).

**Discussion**

In this section, I discuss the analysis of my findings in Chapters Four and Five in relation to two topics: first, how this research contributes to the debate about emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour; and second, the ways in which my findings relate to the cultural specificity of the context in terms of how different versions of masculinities and femininities are performed.
As discussed earlier in the literature review, the debate on emotional labour is on whether it is alienating or a gift. In this study, it can be said that emotional labour is neither alienating nor a gift. It has shown that workers, both male and female, who are doing emotional labour, have acquired the skills to do so and that they seem to be satisfied doing it. It is part of their work, to be involved in the emotions of the customers and thereby act accordingly, either doing surface acting or by deep acting. Women workers can be said to have gained confidence as a result of doing emotional labour, dealing with customers’ emotions and their own which can be said to have resulted in women feeling empowered (I will discuss this in detail in the next chapter).

On aesthetic labour, there has been an emphasis by various scholars that it is a form of labour that is being imposed on the employees by the employers. As discussed earlier in this chapter, right from the stage of recruitment and selection where the right or good looks matter in joining and continuing work, the workers are trained by the employers to maintain a particular look as demanded by the nature of work they perform. In this research, a similar pattern can be observed from the findings; management has control on how aesthetic labour is performed. In addition, some women workers also were found to have a natural interest in ‘looking good’ as a result of which they perceived to have built their confidence in themselves. Like emotional labour, doing aesthetic labour for some women can also be seen as empowering them, which is discussed in detail in the following chapter. In casinos, other than the management, the trade union was also found to have control on how aesthetic labour was performed.
Similar to other studies in casinos elsewhere, in this study, sexualised labour was performed by some women on the gaming floor of casinos. The work context in this study is different compared to casinos elsewhere where women workers on the gaming floor appear to be dressed ‘sexy’; in this study their behavior could be said as involving acts of being ‘sexy’. This shows that perhaps it could be the variation in socio-cultural setting and the emerging role of the trade union that could have implications on this different form of sexualised labour. Hence, sexualised labour need not necessarily require an overt form of management control but could take a covert form as shown in this study.

Therefore, this research goes beyond the existing debate and has shown that engaging in the different aspects of gendered work and doing emotional labour, aesthetic labour and sexualised labour can be empowering for women workers. It also raises the importance of analyzing the experiences of workers to understand these different types of labour; women workers’ experiences can be seen as empowering them.

As highlighted in Chapter One, according to Otis (2012:7-8), in her study of two hotels in China (one is an international five star hotel in Beijing and the other a luxury tourist hotel in Kunming), women workers were found to perform in ways that showed different forms of femininities as hotels are in transition to a service economy within the globalised market and that it was important to understand the cultural specificity of the context. McDowell (2009:200-202), in her study on a large hotel in Greater London, focuses on the recruitment and employment practices where ‘acceptable and appropriate versions of femininity and masculinity’ is both performed by workers and assumed or expected by the management as well as the customers.
In this study, it can be said that workers’ explanation of their work shows that along with the production of services, there were different forms of masculinity and femininity that were performed (see McDowell, 2009). Further, there is a combination of local and international aspects of femininities (and masculinities) in the hotels, resorts and casinos and that the cultural specificity of the context matters. Depending on the ownership of the establishments and the range of clientele who are provided services, the form of femininities would vary (see Otis 2012).

I highlight some examples. As I have discussed earlier, the gendered ideologies of managers and workers include men having masculine attributes and women having feminine attributes are expected at work. However, there were contrasts in these ideologies and the gender division of labour, which indicates that there is no one masculinity or femininity that is performed, but different kinds of masculinities and femininities. For example, in the hotels, while women are seen as suitable to work in the front office because of certain feminine skills such as being able to handle guests with a smile and tolerate customers’ anger, women are expected to be submissive. However, since men are also doing the same job, there is a different kind of masculinity that is performed. It is not the ‘aggressive’ masculinity that is expected; men are expected to acquire feminine skills when interacting with guests. In addition, while such feminine attributes could be considered as international, there is some expectation of workers and managers towards women workers in particular in that some women perform local aspects of femininity by wearing the national costume.
As discussed earlier, on aesthetic labour, the management has a role to play in what kind of femininity or masculinity is performed. In Chapter Three, when describing the sample establishments, I explained that while both hotels (Platinum hotel and Gold hotel) and Sun resort had international ownership to some extent, workers appeared largely portraying an international look: men wearing formal western outfits and women at large wearing western outfits, with some women wearing Nepali costume. There were no men in these establishments (Platinum hotel, Gold hotel and Sun resort) who wore the national costume.

In Moon resort, which is purely owned by locals (Nepalese citizens), majority of the male workers wore national costume and a few (presumably managers) wore formal western outfit. However, all women wore the national costume. In the case of both the casinos that are owned by an Indian company, all workers wore western outfits, but greeted customers by doing Namaste\(^\text{187}\) (the Nepali and Indian way of greeting). From observation, it can be said that although both the hotels and Sun resort had partly international ownership, while it was largely the international aspects of femininity that was performed, there was some elements of local aspects of femininity also being performed.

Furthermore, even where hotels and resorts are internationally owned, there are elements of local femininity and masculinity that seem to be preferred. For instance, the behaviour of workers and the way they greet customers both in English and

\(^{187}\) *Namaste* is a customary greeting that is common in Nepal and some parts of South Asia. It is typically done by folding the palms together before the chest and bowing the head down a little to show respect to the other person. It can also be only pronounced often beginning and ending a conversation.
Nepali (doing *Namaste*), possibly with the intention of providing a localized service can be said as being different to international hotels elsewhere.

Hence there is a combination of various elements of local and international, masculine and feminine look that is performed and this could be due to the cultural specificity of the context in Nepal. The ownership of the establishments along with the different clientele could have implications on the kind of femininity and masculinity that is performed. Although I have discussed the different forms of masculinity and femininity and the possible contrast between local and international aspects of femininities (masculinities), it is only a tip of the iceberg. More in-depth research is required to look into this area, which I leave as scope for further research.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has provided deeper insights into gendered work in the hotels, resorts and casinos showing the intimately intertwined manner in which both men and women, particularly those in the front office, perform emotional and aesthetic labour in all establishments. Women perform sexualised work and in addition some women on the gaming floor perform sexualised labour. Moreover, I have found that gendered work in the service sector where workers interact with customers is also partly constructed by certain forms of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour. Depending on the type of establishment or sector, the construction of gendered work takes different forms. Thus, I argue that men and women to a variable extent perform gendered emotional, aesthetic and (hetero) sexualised labour; such performances shape and are shaped by gendered work. I have also found that some workers resist
certain aspects of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour; in most cases resistance by workers is possible with the support of the trade union.

The chapter started with a discussion of the management of smiles and anger that emerged as part of work; workers are required to manage their emotions and those of the customers – to perform ‘emotional labour’ (Hochschild, [1983]2003). Workers, both men and women, perform ‘emotional labour’ in different ways depending on the gendered work they perform in hotels, resorts and casinos. While smiling is conceived to be gender-neutral by managers, all workers are expected to smile at customers - there were gendered meanings of smiling. The experience of some men and women workers showed how hard it is to do ‘emotional labour’, to the extent to which they might have to stop the customer interaction, leave the venue and calm down or shed tears in private.

Moreover, some women also seemed to be in the process of learning to manage their emotions. In addition women seem to be performing emotional labour differently from men; they are engaged in ‘surface acting’ and ‘deep acting’ while men do only ‘surface acting’. Women workers further highlight the various ‘costs’ and some ‘pleasures’ of performing emotional labour. These differences illuminate the point that although both men and women carry out emotional labour, the form taken by emotional labour differs for men and women. Both men and women experience difficulties in doing emotional labour. It can further be said that those who perform emotional labour and the extent to which they do so has implications for the way gendered work is constructed. Hence, emotional labour is gendered and this has implications for the construction and performance of gendered work.
In addition, workers accounts showed that they all performed aesthetic labour, as they are expected to do so. Workers were recruited, trained and monitored to display the right look mainly when representing the establishments (see Warhurst et al., 2000). While all workers are trained to look good in all establishments, women are expected by managers to look glamorous. This illuminates the wider socio-cultural norms in the society associated with femininity and the context in which work takes place. Workers also performed aesthetic labour depending on the working practices; those in the front office were expected and/or policed by management on their looks as these workers represented the establishments before the customers.

Like emotional labour, aesthetic labour is also gendered; men and women perform aesthetic labour differently. Moreover, women, mainly those who interact with customers and/or represent the establishment, seem to feel under more pressure to perform this labour. Furthermore, more is required of women to perform aesthetic labour through codes of grooming which are gendered; there is high scrutiny of women’s appearance by the management.

Moreover, if workers’ doing emotional labour means that workers’ feelings are commercialised and commodified (Hochschild, [1983]2003), it can also be said that workers’ looks are commercialised and commodified as the concept of aesthetic labour itself entails the ‘embodied capacities and attributes’ which are ‘commodified’ by organisations (Warhurst et al., 2001). While looking good is required for all workers, aesthetic labour is performed differently by women and men, depending on the gendered work they do. This also means that aesthetic labour is gendered and has implications for the construction and performance of gendered work.
Furthermore, women’s work is sexualised in all establishments through aesthetic labour and in casinos, some women working on the gaming floor are also performing sexualised labour. Women’s sexuality is ‘sanctioned or subscribed to’ by management in hotels, resorts and casinos and further ‘prescribed’ by management in casinos (see Warhurst and Nickson, 2009). Some women workers on the gaming floor in casinos perform (hetero)sexualised labour. That said, of late, women workers have experienced a lessening in management control and policing of their appearance and the way management prescribes women’s performance of sexualised labour; this is because of the emerging role of the trade union, though it seems that expectations from managers may not have changed. This means, some changes are taking place.

Furthermore, as shown in this chapter, the performances of gendered work in hotels, resorts and casinos take different forms. This means that the construction and performance of gendered work varies depending on the type of establishment or sector. The extent to which gendered emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour is performed by male and female workers depends on the sector and department in which they work. It can also be said that workers’ performance of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour depends on where workers are within the gender division of labour and the kind of work they do. I therefore, argue that the performance of gendered emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour shapes and is shaped by gendered work. It can therefore also be said that gendered work is constructed to some extent by certain forms of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour. In addition, workers can be said to be ‘doing’ gender (West and Zimmerman, 1987) when they perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour.
This chapter also discussed resistance at work; workers through the trade union collectively resist some organisational policies and practices that permeate and affect their work. Moreover, workers resisted some aspects of emotional labour by refusing to tolerate customer’s abusive behaviour. Despite the emphasis on women workers to perform aesthetic labour, they defied some codes of grooming. Furthermore, some women workers contested sexualisation by male workers and customers. In the process, women developed their own strategies of working in such situations, resisting both individually and collectively; workers in general resist management control through the trade union.

The role of the trade union emerged during field work and can be seen as an evolving power in the hotel industry; there seems to be a gradual shift in the balance of power from management to the trade union. Men and women rely on the trade union to resist some organisational policies and practices collectively; women almost invariably also rely on the trade union when resisting individually. This has implications for women’s empowerment. The support of the trade union was further conceived as a source of ‘power’ (see Deshotels and Forsyth, 2006) that women workers rely on as they resist. It can therefore be said that workers in the sample establishments seem to have an insight into the terms of their labour and that they are able to resist organisational policies and practices, particularly certain forms of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour. This illuminates that structural changes are taking place with the trade union trying to shift the power balance, which has implications for workers performance at the interactional level (see Deutsch, 2007).
I also discussed how this study is similar to and different from other studies on emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour; this is one of the research contributions to the debates on these themes. The findings go beyond the debate on these concepts in that engaging in such different types of labour can be empowering for women workers. In addition, I have highlighted how the establishments differ from each other in the way that they combine elements of local and international aspects of femininities and masculinities in relation to the cultural specificity of the context in Nepal. This could be due to the ownership structure of the establishments – local and international ownership and the various clienteles (customers being both local and international).

Furthermore, this raises the question of whether workers, mainly through women’s resistance to certain aspects of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour, can be considered as ‘undoing’ gender (see Deutsch, 2007) or ‘redoing’ gender (West and Zimmerman, 2009) and leads to a consideration of the implications of such resistance for their empowerment. In my next chapter, I therefore explore the extent to which paid work in the hotels, resorts and casinos empowers women.
Chapter 6: Paid Work and Women’s Empowerment

Introduction

In this chapter I focus on my third research question - To what extent does paid work empower women? I analyse the empowerment of women workers and its relation to their paid work in the hotel industry at the individual and structural level. I argue that women’s paid work empowers them to some extent at the individual level; however, structural constraints continue to impede their empowerment.

Studies of women’s paid work and empowerment note that when women have access to paid work due to an expansion of employment opportunities, it is important to understand the terms and conditions under which such paid work takes place and its impact on women’s lives (see Elson and Pearson, 1981; Elson, 1999; Kabeer, 2005; Kabeer et al., 2011). In this chapter, I explore the extent to which women’s paid work in the hotels, resorts and casinos empowers them. Moreover, I examine what performing gendered work means for women’s empowerment and the implications for women’s lives of earning money through participation in gendered work.

As explained in my conceptual framework (Chapter One), I analyse women’s empowerment using Kabeer’s (2001) framework; she identifies three possible levels of empowerment: immediate levels which refer to the resources, agency and achievements of an individual; intermediate levels which refer to institutional rules and resources; and deeper levels which refer to structural relations of class/caste/gender.
It can be said that the ‘immediate levels’ refer to the interactional/individual level in daily lives and the ‘intermediate levels’ and ‘deeper levels’ refer to structural levels. Moreover, Kabeer (2001) emphasises that for change to be translated into meaningful and sustainable practices of empowerment it must ultimately encompass ‘both individual and structural levels’. She stresses that changes at a structural level are necessary for a sustainable process of empowerment; a situation where resources change while existing structures are left intact ‘may help to improve economic welfare without necessarily empowering’ individuals (ibid.: 27).

This chapter is divided into two sections. First, I discuss how women experience change at the individual level, analysing this in relation to Kabeer’s (2001) framework of assessing resources, agency and achievements of individual workers at the ‘immediate’ level. Second, I discuss some women workers’ concerns over prevailing constraints at home, at workplaces and in the wider social context, analysing them in relation to Kabeer’s framework of ‘intermediate’ and ‘deeper’ levels of empowerment. I also discuss male family members’ and policy experts’ perceptions of women’s work and empowerment to explore the ways in which they are understood from different points of view.

**Individual Level**

Kabeer’s framework (2001) identifies three dimensions, ‘resources’, ‘agency’ and ‘achievements’ and emphasises that ‘[t]hese three dimensions are indivisible in determining the meaning of an indicator and hence its validity as a measure of
empowerment’ and that it is important to synthesise these diverse sets of indicators for triangulation (ibid.: 40-41). I move on to discuss women workers’ accounts of what has changed and how in their lives as a result of their paid work in the hotels, resorts and casinos and explore if such changes can be considered as empowering for them, and then analyse the findings in terms of Kabeer’s three dimensions.

Most of the research participants indicated income and financial independence as the core factor for bringing about various other changes in workers’ lives. It can be said that this was a major indicator for workers (both men and women) to imply their empowerment status (if empowerment is seen as something that has been achieved, and which was not existing earlier). I explain next the various indicators that research participants highlighted as they shared the changes in their lives as a result of paid work in the establishments.

**Income and Financial Independence**

One of the main reasons for which men and women took on paid work was to earn income; having money was one of the factors workers identified as a major economic resource in the lives of all workers. Money served as an instrument for achieving several things in life such as good health, status in society and education, which could then lead to a good job or setting up one’s own business etc. Money can also be considered as an ‘achievement’, more so when combined with financial independence. The degree to which income is seen as empowering depends on the worker’s marital status, type of family structure, the financial situation of their family and also their individual responsibilities, as the following analysis demonstrates.
Family Breadwinner Role

A few women acted as the main breadwinner of their family, and having regular income through paid work made it easier to fulfil this role. Further, where married workers – male or female – were the sole earners of the family they saw their income as essential, as demonstrated by the following quotes:

The money I get has been helpful to meet my own expenses and in running the house because it is only I who earn. (Samrat, M, 28, married, Dazzle casino)

Now that I am the only one who earns in the family, my earnings mean everything for me and my two children. (Lalita, F, 28, widow, Dazzle casino)

This salary of mine is what helps me and my son to survive in Kathmandu. Since only I earn, it is difficult. If the father was also earning and contributing to the house, it would be easier for me. ... But I have the confidence now to handle difficult situations. I feel I am empowered. (Tarini, F, 39, married, Moon resort)

Both Samrat and Lalita are the breadwinners of their families. Further, Samrat explained that he lived in a joint family and was the only son; he is expected to earn and support his family. Lalita, who was widowed recently and who as a result is the head of a single parent household has taken up the role of the breadwinner. Previously, it was her husband who earned and supported their family. Similarly, Tarini (39, Moon resort) is the breadwinner for her family and her husband left her to live with another woman, leaving her with their son. She suggests that a dual-earner household where both husband and wife earn and contribute to household expenses, is easier than a single earner household like
hers. That said, she feels empowered because of an increased self confidence that running the household has brought her.

Similarly Pranita (F, 32, Dazzle casino), another single parent taking care of two children, said: ‘I am empowered ... I am confident that I can support myself and my two children because I am the one who earns money’. These examples of Lalita, Tarini and Pranita can be considered as empowering as they challenge the male breadwinner norm; being the family breadwinner is an ‘achievement’. This also demonstrates the struggle experienced by women who are single parents and who take up the breadwinner role. Moreover, these women’s accounts could be also considered as indicative of an engagement with the structural levels of empowerment; structural changes can possibly take place when there are more women taking up the family breadwinner role.

**Contribution to Household Finance**

Most of the women workers emphasised being able to spend money on themselves and contributing to supporting their family as the major changes in their lives as a result of paid work. They were able to decide how they used their money and gained financial independence. In contrast, men were less likely to point to having money as something they did not have earlier and did not say anything about financial independence; this was possibly because of the male breadwinner norm and the expectation that men should earn money.

For most unmarried workers, their income contributed to meeting personal expenses including tuition fees for those studying and saving. Furthermore, depending on the
financial situation of their family, some unmarried workers (both men and women) contributed money to their family (some regularly on a monthly basis and others irregularly). For example, Suresh (M, 26, Moon resort) and Amita (F, 21, Glitter casino) who lived with their relatives in Kathmandu said that they sent part of their salary back home to their village, contributing to their parental households. Similarly Swosti (F, 27, Platinum hotel) stated: ‘Sometimes I give some money to my mother. I normally use it for my personal expenses and save’. Madina (F, 25) also explained during focus group discussion that she used most of her income for family expenses as it is her and her sister who earn and support their family (mother, brother and other younger sister):

Once my father died, me and my sister have been earning and supporting our family. We are the ones who bring money and give it to our mother to run the house... I am proud of being able to be independent. Had I not worked here [in the casino] I don’t think I would have been able to earn so much.

Hence, both unmarried male and female workers are financially independent as they are able to spend money on themselves. Some of them contributed to their parental homes; in the Nepalese context a son’s financial contribution to the family is expected, while a daughter is seldom expected to contribute financially because of the patri-local family structure. Madina’s quote above shows that she and her sister are the main breadwinners of her family which can be considered as empowering, as can similarly be said for the women whose accounts were highlighted earlier, as having taken up the role of single-parent family bread winners.
Most married workers explained that their income was important for their family. Financial contribution and/or rather running the house was a common usage of the income for most married women living in nuclear families; they regarded their income as important but supplementary to their husbands’ earnings. For example Sabina (28, Platinum hotel) said:

I have been able to buy things for myself, kids and contribute to household expenses. My husband does more spending for the house than me. My income helps in running the house.

Sabina’s husband Sirish also considered that her income contributed to their family as well as making her financially independent. He said: ‘[S]he can decide what to do because she is not dependent on anyone for money. ... When it comes to major expenses in the house, she makes contribution too’.

Similarly Uttara (37, Gold hotel) living in a nuclear family said, ‘my husband earns more and spends on most of the major things for the family’. Her husband Mahesh said that her income supported in ‘running the house on a day to day basis’ while he paid for larger expenses like children’s tuition fees and rent. Likewise, I illustrate the example of Anju (31, Glitter casino) who lived in a nuclear family household with her husband, and who contributed towards family expenses. She also gave some money to her mother who lived in her hometown:

I lead my life independently. I help my mother by buying things she needs time and again ... [I] spend on family expenses from rent to food and clothes ...
my husband also earns, it would be difficult to run the house only with his money.

While Anju regards her income as making a major contribution to family expenses, her husband Sandeep (28, Medical representative) said it was used to meet her own needs, help her mother and buy daily groceries; he asserts it is he who ‘runs the house’:

Anju is more confident. She has been able to meet her own expense. ... She also supports her mother sometimes. At our home, I run the house mainly. She uses her money to buy daily groceries. ... To me she is empowered ... she can look after herself.

Sandeep associates his wife Anju earning money and being financially independent with her being empowered. Furthermore, two married women from Moon resort – Babita (27) and Runa (40), whose husbands are migrant workers abroad, considered their income as ‘not very big’; perhaps because they assess it in relative terms and their husbands earned more. While Babita lived alone, Runa lived in a nuclear family household with her children. While they used their money to manage day to day expenses, their husbands’ income was used towards paying debts and saving.

These examples illustrate that the use and significance of income depended on women’s marital status, the financial condition of their household and the type of family they lived in. In nuclear family households, while women spent on daily household expenses, they considered their contribution as supplementary to their
husbands’ income which was used for larger expenditure such as paying debt and paying for children’s school fees. These examples are similar to the situations revealed in some studies that have taken place in the UK (see Vogler and Pahl, 1993; Charles and James, 2005). Among heterosexual couples ‘gendering of the responsibility of “breadwinning” continues [which has effects] on both financial arrangements and inequalities within household’ (Vogler and Pahl, 1993: 71). In South Wales, the gender culture is traditional, placing ‘high value on women’s caring and men’s providing roles’, although a few cases show the ‘emergence of a dual breadwinner/dual career family’ (Charles and James, 2005: 500). My study finds that at the household level, men are still considered to be the main family breadwinner even when women and men both earn. Women’s income is considered as contributing to household expenditure or helping/supporting the male family member’s role and responsibility of earning income; in this way at household level women and men can be said to be ‘redoing’ gender (West and Zimmerman, 2009).

Moreover, women’s accounts showed that earning money enabled them to be financially independent; women were able to spend money on themselves and decide what to do with their income, which can be said to be empowering. Some male family members also acknowledged women’s contribution to household expenses and saw women being confident and financially independent. Hence, being financially independent and being able to contribute to household expenses is empowering for women although the male breadwinner norm remains intact.

Furthermore, in casinos, all the women I interviewed at some point highlighted how important earning their ‘own income’ was in their life; this was also echoed in the
focus group discussions. Being financially independent or not relying on others for money boosted their confidence and led to several other achievements such as increased mobility and improved living standards. For example, married women living in nuclear family households and working at Dazzle casino during focus group discussion said:

Basanti (30): I think we get paid very well here. I can buy gifts for my family and friends and spend on my own personal needs.

Neetu (30): With the level of education, what I earn is a lot. I have been able to support my family. Not only that, I can buy for myself what I want. Kavita (30): Yes, I have been able to send my children to good schools...

The above quotes indicate that female casino workers see their income as a particularly good return considering their level of education. These married women bought gifts for family and friends, paid for the education of their children, and mentioned being able to spend money on themselves.

In summary, having an income was considered by all workers as crucial; money improved economic welfare in their families (see Kabeer, 2001). However, the usage of their income depended on their marital status, family structure and the financial status of their families. While it was mostly male workers (married and unmarried) who said they gave/sent money home to their parents, some unmarried women and one married woman (Anju, Glitter casino) also contributed money to their parental homes. While it is not known how workers’ contributions are negotiated in the family, in the case of married workers, the cultural expectation of men managing the large household expenses and women taking care of daily household expenses
illuminates the gendering of patterns of money management among married couples and the differences in earnings; men earn more than women. Some women mentioned having financial independence and considered themselves to be empowered because of their ability to financially support themselves and, in some cases, contribute to household expenses.

**Purchasing Jewellery, Motorbikes/Scooters and Saving**

Some women, mainly in the casinos and hotels, made investments; women asserted that they decided to purchase jewellery, motorbikes/scooters and some also saved money for the future. It was mostly married women living in nuclear family households who reported buying jewellery and a few shares. For example, Sabita (28, Platinum hotel) said, ‘I have been buying shares of some commercial banks and have purchased a scooter too’. Similarly Anju (31, Glitter casino), who lived in a nuclear family household, said that she bought jewellery whenever she had could save money. All four married women living in nuclear family households during focus group discussion at Dazzle casino said they bought jewellery and also saved money.

Sumnima (33, Sun resort), living in a nuclear family household is the only woman from either resort who talked about jewellery. Her quote is useful to understand the significance of buying jewellery:

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188 However, further research needs to be undertaken to explore women’s contribution to the family and the gendered patterns of money management. Moreover, to understand changes in gender relations at the household level further in-depth research is required to assess structural levels of women’s empowerment. I also discuss this in the second section of this chapter.

189 Two women – Sabina (28) and Sujata (30), working in Platinum hotel - mentioned having invested in shares. Further, Sujata explained she decided to invest in shares after seeing some of her friends (male) do so and further expressed being happy about it.
I buy some gold ornaments that I can sell later if the situation arises. It is easier to wear and later sell too. Buying land or other property requires big investment and a lot of complications like paperwork...

For women, jewellery signifies status in Nepalese society and is a gendered phenomenon; jewellery is a portable and displayable asset which has high liquidity meaning women can sell it whenever they need money. This is unlike property or even shares, the selling of which requires several formalities and the processing of paperwork and which hence are considered to be relatively less liquid compared to gold. Several women discussed making investments by buying motorbikes/scooters; they were using their income to pay for these in instalments as they had obtained loans to purchase them. I explain in the following section how this purchase has enabled them to have improved mobility and independence.

Saving money for future use was also mentioned by some women workers (mostly unmarried) from hotels and casinos. In resorts women did not say they saved, although all women expressed desire to earn more and save, and many mentioned that they were looking for jobs in hotels and casinos where they believed workers earned much more than them. Saving money was something similar to buying jewellery and shares as the savings were seen as their ‘own’, and for their ‘own purpose’. For example, Sujata (30, Platinum hotel) living in a joint family household said, ‘I also manage to keep some money aside as savings for the future. ... It comes in very handy when needed’.

190 Their belief could be correct, although I was not able to collect information on wages. Based on the interviews, particularly as workers talked about the usefulness of their earned income, casino workers seemed to be earning the most, followed by hotel workers and then the resort workers.
Increased Mobility and Independence

The women who owned motorbikes/scooters stressed their increased mobility. For example, Devika (23, unmarried living with her parents, Dazzle casino) said, ‘[my] motorbike has helped me go where I want and whenever I want. I no longer have to take lifts from my brother or my colleagues’. Kalpana (Moon resort) and Anju (Glitter casino), both living in nuclear family households, said their increased mobility meant that they no longer had to be dependent on their husband for transportation. Anju’s husband Sandeep (28, medical representative) explains how money, assets, confidence, mobility and freedom (independence) all combine:

Anju now has a scooter and she is able to have it because she earned money. It is her property. She can ride the scooter because she is confident. I don’t think she would be able to otherwise. ... That gives her the freedom to travel as per her wish.

Furthermore, the manager of Dazzle casino proudly showed me the motorbikes/scooters all lined up outside and also believed women to be independent as a result of increased mobility: ‘women can now go out on their own [and] that makes them independent’. It is usual for women in Nepal to depend on public transport or lifts from family members, colleagues and friends to travel. However, the number of women driving cars, motorbikes and scooters is increasing in urban areas. While owning these various means of transport increases women’s status and adds to the assets they possess, it also gives them higher mobility. Although many men also owned motorbikes, they did not seem to see it as an achievement, perhaps because driving a motorbike did not change their status, whereas it did for women.
Knowledge and Skills

As discussed in Chapter Five, the training given in the sample establishments could be interpreted as ‘job requirements’ and/or ‘a pre-condition’ for employment since providing good service and customer satisfaction are what matters most for these establishments.²⁹¹ Similarly to income, knowledge and skills, when viewed alone, can sometimes be understood as a form of ‘resource’ (human capital). They can also be considered as an ‘achievement’, more so when combined with work experience in the respective establishments. When asked what was it that they could or could not do because of their present work, some workers mentioned that they gained knowledge and skills. This boosted confidence as well as opened up ‘choices’ for them to work elsewhere (as they acquire transferable skills) within and outside the country, further enabling them to exercise agency in all spheres of their life.

Women saw training as very useful for their personal life. They were also more likely than men to recognise the importance of the knowledge and skills relating to their work which were resources they acquired from training. For example, Babita (Sun resort), Uttara (Gold hotel) and Meena (Sun resort) said that at home they cooked, made rooms/decorated and performed beauty treatments on themselves and others using the skills developed at work.

In casinos, knowledge and skills were considered as something women gained besides money, as discussed when I asked women in the focus group discussions if they thought that they had gained anything besides money from their work. For example, the following discussion at Dazzle casino illustrates this point.

²⁹¹ It is also one way of ‘disciplining’ workers and making sure in the case of international chain hotels/resorts that the quality of service is maintained in all countries.
Basanti (30): Yes, we have gained work experience, knowledge on different games and even learnt various skills with handling cards. We are all provided training which is a big challenge to go through.

Neetu (30): And this gives us better chances of going abroad to work in other casinos too if we get the chance.

Kavita (30): For us too, we have gained knowledge about our work in the food and beverage department.

Thus these quotes show that the skills related to ‘doing’ their job served as a ‘resource’; workers were confident to look for jobs elsewhere if needed. Having knowledge and skills was also seen by some workers as an achievement in itself. Some workers said they gained knowledge and skills about the work they did through training and work experience. Though this is very specific to their work it is valued as something they now have as a ‘resource’. Moreover, many of them saw the possibility of moving out of the organisation and even abroad with the confidence, because of knowledge and skills that they had which were related to their specific work. Furthermore, the manager of Dazzle casino pointed to the woman who brought a fruit platter in the room that, ‘providing training to women related to food and drinks means empowering’.

Language Skills

English language fluency was another area of focus by hotel and resort workers (mainly those who interacted with foreign customers) as both an achievement and a resource; they did not have this knowledge prior to their present job. Many customers are tourists and having knowledge of and skills in English helped workers in hotels
and resorts enhance their level of communication. For example, Barun (M, Gold hotel) and Meena (F, Sun resort) said that they were not previously able to speak English, but that they could after working in their respective establishments. Moreover, the manager of Gold hotel said women gained language skills and so were able to communicate in English and other languages such as Spanish and German too.

Furthermore, three male workers (Bikash, Gold hotel; Suresh, Moon resort; and Somraj, Moon resort) and one female worker (Sujata, Platinum hotel) explained they had enhanced their communication skills, both in public with customers and with ‘others’ (with women in the case of Somraj). While speaking with others increases the confidence of workers, it also helps enhance communication skills and expand social networks. Some workers also said that their friends and family recognised their enhanced communication skills. For example, Ramita (F, 26, Platinum hotel) said, ‘my father once told me that I was communicating very well and was no longer shy’.

In the casinos, only Ayush (M, 28, Glitter casino), mentioned being able to communicate better as an achievement.

**Improved Grooming and Appearance**

A significant number of women considered their improved looks – for example, the clothes they wear and make up they put on – as an achievement gained through work, particularly women working in casinos and hotels. As a result, they expressed being more confident. For example, Swosti (F, 27, Platinum hotel) said:
I have been receiving comments from some friends that I dress well and look good now compared to before. This is one of the changes I notice in myself and what others notice too ... I feel confident.

Similar to Swosti, all the women in both focus group discussions (in casinos) echoed that the one significant change observed by them and friends/family was in the way they dressed and looked. Further, dressing well was a change was observed by Yogesh and Sandeep when talking about changes in their sister/wife, Pranita (Dazzle casino) and Anju (Glitter casino), respectively. Further, managers of Dazzle casino, Glitter casino and Platinum hotel all said their women workers looked different as they had improved the way they dress and look. The manager of Glitter casino said, ‘these girls look like models or actresses when I see them outside work ... this is a very noticeable change’.

As discussed in Chapter Four, women (and men) were trained with skills related to ‘looking’ and although they did not explicitly mention having learned this skill through training, it is clear that they acquired the skill at work to some extent as ‘looking good’ was required at the workplace. Furthermore, their income also enabled them to buy clothes and accessories. For example, Pranita (Dazzle casino) said: ‘Because I have money, I can now spend on new designs of clothes and bags’. Similarly Anju (Glitter casino) said: ‘I use my money to buy clothes, makeup, bags, shoes that are in fashion’. Hence, women expressed being confident because of their improved grooming and appearance; some of them were also spending on new designs and the latest fashions in clothes and accessories.
Awareness of Labour and Women’s Rights

Along with knowledge and skills related to work, knowledge of labour rights and women’s rights were also considered important by many workers (both men and women) and policy experts. These workers and policy experts believed that most workers lack awareness of labour rights; being unaware of the benefits received at work and national laws and policies despite the existence of these policies. However, in all establishments very few workers were aware of their labour rights. For example, it became clear that most workers (male and female) were not fully aware of their leave entitlements at work. These workers said that they ‘don’t know exactly’ or when they did try to explain the details of benefits received, some of them could not do so at all and others fumbled trying to remember the number of days of entitlement for different kinds of leave. That said, when I asked them to explain the benefits they are provided, they seem to realise that it is important to have knowledge of these benefits.

Some male workers believed one aspect of women’s empowerment was to have knowledge about their rights and be able to translate this into action. For example, Rabin (M, Glitter casino) said, ‘women must have skills that can provide them employment ... [and they] must also have knowledge about what their rights are’. Likewise, Dipen (M, 29, Glitter casino) stressed that, ‘[T]o be empowered ... women should also be able to fight for their rights’. Such views were also expressed by many women workers who said they knew about some changes in laws and policies related to women’s rights. They further stressed that having knowledge or awareness about

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192 I discuss the importance of policies as considered by research participants in the section on discrimination and inequality, later in this chapter.
193 I attempted to compile data on benefits provided by establishments but failed to get information from human resources or administration departments.
these rights was useful, and gave them confidence. For example, Tarini (39, Moon resort), a single parent taking care of her son while her husband was living with another woman, said:

I know that if I file a case against my husband for marrying another woman, abandoning me and my little son without completing divorce procedure, I will be given justice. ... We need to have laws that ensure women’s rights because it makes us confident like in my case.

Hence, while having knowledge and skill related to work can be seen as both a ‘resource’ and an ‘achievement’, having knowledge on labour rights and women’s rights can also be considered as a ‘resource’; awareness of labour rights benefits all workers and awareness of women’s rights benefits women workers. Such a ‘resource’ can be used and translated into achievement when required. It can also be said that merely having skills and knowledge about one’s rights and entitlements is not sufficient. Rather, translating these into action is important, whereby work related knowledge and skills lead to employment and the knowledge of one’s rights is used when needed.

**Resistance**

As discussed in Chapter Five, women who resist (individually and as a group) mostly relied on the support of the trade union, which is therefore an important ‘resource’ for women. I have illustrated the examples of Dolma (Platinum hotel) and Rohinee (Glitter casino) who contested sexual harassment from male customers and colleagues by relying on the support of the trade union. As mentioned earlier, some
women workers also discussed being able to raise their voice and/or speak up; being able to show disagreement was considered by some workers as one of the changes perceived in them after joining paid work in the respective establishments. Hence, when the women are resisting, it can be said that they are exercising ‘agency’. Kabeer (2001) defines ‘agency’ as the ability to define one’s goals and act upon them. Further, as Parpart (2010) mentions, speaking out can be seen as a sign of women’s agency; studies on women’s agency and feminist struggles have long been concerned with women’s voices being heard.

Some married women were able to speak up or raise their voice, both at work and home. For example, Sabina (F, 28, Platinum hotel) sees confidence in herself behind being able to speak up with the management when in disagreement. She said, ‘I am confident because I have the skill’. Sabina’s husband Sirish also said, ‘.... she has changed. If she does not agree, she speaks up. Earlier she was not like this. ... She is now financially independent’. Similarly Meena’s (F, 27, Sun resort) quote below demonstrates that she raises her concerns at work and at home – her mother-in-law seems to have asked her to quit her job:

I no longer keep quiet if I don’t agree whether it is at home or work. ... I have been earning money, part of which I contribute in the house ... I also have the skill required to do my job. I can get another similar job. ... I convinced my mother-in-law that I would not quit my job because I was bringing home money.
While the above quotes show different understandings of women being able to speak up, they all refer to women being able to act upon ‘resources’. Sabina considers the skills acquired working as a housemaid as having made her confident to speak up with the management, her husband believed it is her financial independence that has given her this confidence. Likewise, Meena’s quote illustrates that she relies on both income and her new-found skills to raise her voice; at home having an income helped her further convince and possibly negotiate her mother-in-law’s approval to continue work; at work she was confident of finding another job if she lost the present job because she had acquired skills related to similar jobs. Meena was able to hire a domestic help (maid) because she could pay for her service to substitute for own labour at home. Furthermore, when explaining some of the changes observed in women workers, the manager of Dazzle casino related the income women earned to their confidence that led some ‘to break the chains of domination at home by raising their voice’:

I know that women continue to face domestic violence at home because they do not have the option of leading their own life. I think it is money that gives them the confidence to speak up ... it may even lead to divorce but should women be afraid of that?

The manager’s quote highlights the importance of having resources for women as a source of ‘power’ to enable them to make choices – they can speak up against domestic violence; knowing that if this leads to divorce they can manage alone. In a similar vein, it can be said that for some women having ‘resources’ such as income,
skills and the support of the trade union enabled them to exercise ‘agency’ in order to contest sexual harassment, to speak up and also to negotiate at home. This illuminates that women’s resistance in most cases can be understood as challenging the way they are expected to do gender as prescribed by management or at home.

As discussed earlier, in Chapter Five, not everybody chooses to exercise ‘open’ agency by raising their voice and/or speaking up. Some women when describing strategies used to meet challenges also talked about ‘hidden’ acts. For example, in Glitter casino, women as a group on the gaming floor resisted to the grooming codes by hiding their mobiles in their stockings. Sonali (24) during focus group discussion also mentioned, ‘married women cannot wear potay during work’ but that women did wear potay and some hide it under their shirt. This shows that while some women chose overtly not to follow the grooming and other rules, others do this covertly; they are thereby resisting management in its prescriptions of how gender should be done.

Another example of workers’ silent resistance was choosing not to take part when the trade union tells them to go out on the streets to protest on behalf of the political party it is associated with. Some women (and a few men) said they came up with some excuse or other not to turn up at the protests. Tarini (Moon resort) said, ‘I don’t like to go to protest on the streets so I make excuses like my leg is hurting and go home half way through the protest’. Similarly Rohinee (Glitter casino) explained she often said she was sick and avoided the street protests. These examples show that women exercised ‘agency’ to resist in silence, which resonates with Parpart’s analysis (2010:25): ‘silence and secrecy provide space for developing long term strategies for survival’ in situations
where ‘the choice to publicly challenge the powerful is extremely dangerous and even foolhardy’ (ibid: 17). Though this may appear as demonstrating a lack of empowerment, it is the very process of resisting (managerial) power at the individual level where women make choices (in this case to resist) that can be interpreted as women exercising ‘agency’, and forms part of the empowerment process.

**Shared Roles and Responsibilities at Home**

Some married women living in nuclear families reported shared roles, responsibilities and decision making at the household level.\(^{194}\) For example Sujata (Platinum hotel), Uttara (Gold resort) and Kalpana (Moon resort) said that their husbands helped them do the cooking and cleaning. There was also shared responsibility between the couples to take care of their children, for example, to help them do their homework and drop children off and pick them up from school. They all believed that it was because they were also earning and contributing to household expenses that their husbands helped. For example, Kalpana (Moon resort) stated: ‘[A]long with him [her husband] I am also working and earning money. ... We both share the household work’. This implies that there is a gender division of labour in which women’s responsibility is to do the household work while men’s role is considered as *helping* women; this gender division of labour is therefore not challenged by women’s employment. It can, therefore, be said that at home both men and women are ‘redoing’ gender (West and Zimmerman, 2009).

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\(^{194}\) Information on shared roles and responsibilities at household level was obtained from in-depth interviews with 8 women workers. As mentioned in Chapter Three, among 25 women workers who were interviewed, 8 of them were interviewed the second time using in-depth interview schedules that included topics on gender relations at home.
However, Anju’s (31, Glitter casino) quote below shows that despite such shared work at home with her husband, she feels pressured being a daughter-in-law as there are expectations from her husband’s family that she will go and help during extended family functions.\textsuperscript{195}

I cook in the mornings, he cooks in the evenings ... we take turns to clean the house ... but then during family functions, I have to go and help as I am the daughter-in-law.

Her husband Sandeep also echoed this expectation of Anju by his family. Meena (27, Moon resort), who lived in a joint family household, attributed having help from her husband and mother-in-law in child care responsibilities to her financial contribution. She said:

My husband and mother-in-law help in taking care of the kids when I am at work because I bring in money too. ... I spend on daily expenses like vegetables, grocery and sometimes also contribute expenses during festivals at home.

Some male family members\textsuperscript{196} and most policy experts explained that married women had a ‘double role’: work at home and in paid work. If women had children it was even more work. For example, Rabindra (husband of Kamala, Moon resort) said:

‘Women have a double role so they would be overburdened, taking care of children,

\textsuperscript{195} I further discuss structural constraints at home in the next section of this chapter.

\textsuperscript{196} Sirish (husband of Sabina, Platinum hotel), Mahesh (husband of Uttara, Gold hotel) and Rabindra (husband of Kalpana, Moon resort).
housework, going to office’. That said, all the four husbands (male family members) I spoke to mentioned helping their wives with household work and taking care of children. This suggests that women’s participation in full time paid work and their earning/contributing money to the household finances entails some kind of sharing of roles and responsibilities in some dual earner family households, and that the traditional role of husbands and the disinclination towards housework is perhaps shifting. However, to what extent such help facilitates change in gender relations within the household is not known. I raise the need to analyse men’s contribution in household work and the extent to which gender relations are changed as scope for future research. Nonetheless, the ways men and women do gender at home have implications for their empowerment.

Thus far, the accounts of women workers show that income earned through paid work was a resource that further enabled them to make investments, boosted their confidence and was also an achievement, as women were able to spend money on themselves and decide what they did with their income. Similarly, women also acquired knowledge and skill related to work (including language skills, improved grooming ability and appearance) that can be said to be both ‘resources’ and ‘achievements’; improved knowledge and skills made them feel confident on the basis of which they even resisted at the workplace. Moreover, having knowledge about labour rights and women’s rights was considered as a ‘resource’ that women could rely on when needed.

Furthermore, when women resisted at work or negotiated and spoke up at home they relied on their ‘resources’ of income, knowledge and skills. At the workplace, they
relied on the support of the trade union and at home they believed that having cooperation and understanding from family members (parents, husband, mother-in-law) was significant as they resisted and/or negotiated. Some married women reported greater sharing of roles and responsibilities at the household level with husbands in nuclear family households and with their husband and mother-in-law in the case of joint family households. These women believe that this has been made possible because they are earning income and contributing to the family’s household finances. I next discuss women’s empowerment at the structural level, highlighting women’s accounts of constraints at home, at their workplace and in the wider social context that impedes women’s empowerment.

**Structural Level**

According to Kabeer (2001), understanding women’s empowerment at a structural level includes possible changes which relate to the ‘intermediate’ and ‘deeper’ levels of empowerment. Empowerment ‘can occur at the intermediate level, in the rules and relationships which prevail in the personal, social, economic, and political spheres of life’ (ibid: 27). She further mentions that it can also occur at ‘deeper’ levels in the ‘hidden structures which shape the distribution of resources and power in a society and reproduce it over time’ (ibid: 27).

**Household Level**

Notwithstanding some reporting of sharing roles and responsibilities at the household level, there are still problems for married women in combining paid work and
household work; for those living in joint family households this was particularly difficult. I illustrate this with two quotes:

I realised that after getting married, my life became tough. ... It is the duties of a wife, daughter in law and mother that makes it challenging for me. I need to balance my work and family. (Sujata, 30, Platinum hotel)

When I am at home there is so much work. I cook for everyone in the morning and come to work. When I get home, I again do the cooking although ... I got a domestic help for cleaning and washing. Being a daughter-in-law and living in a joint family is difficult ... I have many roles such as that of a wife, mother ... and expectation from family members accordingly but before marriage, I had no such expectations. (Meena, 27, Sun resort)

Both Sujata and Meena, who live in joint family households, face the double-shift of paid work in their respective establishments and also doing the housework with little (if any) support from others. They experienced having to fulfil expectations from family members arising from social norms associated with being a wife, mother and a daughter-in-law.

Many women (mainly in casinos) said that having family members’ acceptance of their work was important; without such acceptance it was difficult to work. Depending on the type of family women had, they discussed the role of family members in facilitating them to work by providing support such as dropping them at

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Joint family households here mean those households where couples live together with the husband’s parents and sometimes also with his extended family.
and picking them up from work, encouraging them to continue to work, and contributing to household chores. Madina (Glitter casino, living in her parental home), explained that, ‘... sometimes my mother or my brother comes to pick me up at the drop-off point. My mother encourages me to continue my job’. Likewise, Ramita (Platinum hotel) also lives in her parental home and said her father and sisters contributed to household work and were understanding and cooperative. She said, ‘they know how tired I get at work and are very considerate towards me, if my sisters or my father see me working in the kitchen or washing clothes, they come to help me’. Thus, women attribute the role of their family in facilitating and/or serving as a ‘resource’ for their empowerment. It indicates the importance of the role that structural levels play in empowering women.

Focus group discussions with women casino workers highlighted the importance of trust and support from husbands and how difficult the work would be without that. For example, in Dazzle casino, women said:

Kavita (30): My husband has been very supportive and trusts me. Otherwise, I would not be working in the casino.

Sarika (30): Yes, my parents at first did not like the idea of me working here. But it was my husband who encouraged me to work.

Neetu (30): ...I think if family does not trust or support it becomes very difficult. In my case, my husband has been very supportive. ... He has trust in me.

Yasoda (30): ...my husband trusts me. ... I know some girls who have had problems with their husbands and boyfriends because of lack of trust and
support.

Neetu (30): Oh yes, there are so many women whose husbands are not supportive of their wives’ job ... there is so much of problem within the house, leading to fights and some even separate.

The discussion shows that husbands’ acceptance and encouragement of women working in casinos was crucial, which possibly gives women the confidence to work in casinos. Women valued husbands’ support and lack of such support could possibly lead to separation or having to leave work. During the focus group discussion with women from Glitter casino, Deepika (30) living in a nuclear family shared her experience of conflict in her house which occurred when her husband was at first not supportive of her working in the casino. It seems that he now tolerates it because of her income: ‘he does not mind, after a few months, he stopped picking on my work ... I think it’s because I have been financially supporting our family with my income’.

Some male family members also highlighted that families needed to be supportive towards women’s work. Speaking about Anju (Glitter casino), her husband Sandeep said it was his family and her maternal family who both supported her in doing the casino work. Sandeep was initially doubtful that his family would accept Anju when he had to tell his parents about marrying her, but his parents did not have any objection. He also said that his family is very supportive towards Anju’s work although they do not live with them. Similarly, Ragendra (M, 37) believed that

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198 Ragendra (37, casino worker), Sandeep (28, medical representative) and Yogesh (22, casino worker).
women’s empowerment was possible if there was ‘collective’ effort from family members. He emphasised that his parents understood when his wife Kalpana (Moon resort) could not be present and help during festivals and family gatherings, which made it easier for her to continue her job.

Furthermore, some policy experts believed that having support from family was instrumental in terms of women’s empowerment in general and for women doing paid work in particular. For example,

For women to go out of the house and work, family support is necessary. Getting consent from the husband and in some cases the mother-in-law allows women to take up work and earn money. When married women are unable to get family support, there are many cases where women are over-burdened with work at home and outside. (A female gender consultant working on gender/women’s rights)

Married women in general take up the dual responsibilities of doing the daily chores in the house and earning money by working outside. When they get support from their in-laws and husband, they are able to manage their responsibilities, otherwise there could be difficulties. They may not be able to do well in their work outside, have conflicts at home and could be stressed. (A male government official from the Ministry of Law and Justice)

In summary, for married women having family support was instrumental for their empowerment. The above quotes show how difficult being in employment can be for married women; women have to negotiate with their husband (and sometimes with
their mother-in-law) to join or continue paid work. Moreover, at the household level, having acceptance, encouragement from family members and further understanding and cooperation is a ‘pre-condition’ for women; they are ‘social resources’ (Kabeer, 2001) that enable women to join and continue work, earn money, gain confidence and can be empowering. However, it also means that the lack of such ‘resources’ could be disempowering for women. Hence, the family as an institution can be considered as both a facilitator as well as a constraint for women’s empowerment.

**Work Context**

As explained in Chapters Four and Five, women workers are engaged in gendered work and performing emotional labour, aesthetic labour, and in casinos, sexualised labour, and there are power relations between and among workers, management and customers. Furthermore, some women workers raised concerns about their work and the customer’s behaviour (at an interactional level). This had implications for women’s work being stigmatised and not recognised which I discuss next.

**Women’s Work: Stigmatisation and Non-recognition**

Most women workers raised concerns over their work being stigmatised and not valued. In both casinos, during focus group discussion women expressed that despite being paid well and able to do several things because of their income, they (specially unmarried and young women) face negative social perceptions. For example, women from Glitter casino said:

Madina (25): The house owners who lived in the flat above ours would often ask my mother what kind of job I do in the casino. ... If any male colleague
came to visit me at home or even dropped me off on his motor bike, I knew my mother would be questioned the following day.

Deepika (30): Oh yes, working in the casino is a challenge for most of us. People think because Nepalese are not allowed in the casinos, anything can happen inside – such as prostitution ... but this is totally wrong...

Sonali (24): I fully agree. It is because Madina is not married there is so much suspicion about what she does. ... These negative beliefs about our work in the casino will take a long time to change.

The discussion shows the social anxiety about women’s work in the casinos that is often related to the sexualisation of casino work. All the women who participated in the focus group discussions raised concerns about the negative images of casino work perpetuated by society. Sonali’s quote that social perceptions about women’s work in the casino would take a long time to change reflects the wider social norms about women’s sexuality and work; women’s work in the casinos has sexual connotations and is associated with shame. Moreover, casino work in general is stigmatised as the work involves gambling activities with often drunk (male) customers, as can be seen from the quote of Pritam (M, 24, Dazzle casino) below:

Our job is to help customers play games and get entertained. It involves working with gamblers. Almost everyone is drunk. I think that is why working in the casino is not seen as a respected job ... media people publish stories of increased crime because these people are regular visitors of casinos. That is another reason.
Furthermore, in hotels and resorts some women workers explained that there has been little (if any) change in the negative social perceptions of women’s work – particularly that which involved housekeeping and body massage. I illustrate some examples:

Hotel work was earlier not seen as good work. I think people associated sexual activities with hotel rooms and assumed women working inside rooms get involved in providing sexual services to customers ... but this kind of perception is slowly changing. ... I don’t think people recognise the work we do in housekeeping. (Sabina, 28, Housekeeping, Platinum hotel)

Here, the job I do involves massage and spa treatment. We work for women customers only. Those who do not know may think women workers like me have to work with the bodies of male customers too ... that is why some relatives raised questions when I first told them about my work. ... But later, I had the same relatives asking me to find a job for them here. (Meena, 27, Health club/Spa, Sun resort)

The first quote suggests that women’s work used to be stigmatised, and implies that this has changed and is no longer the case, and the second refers to a niche area of employment which is linked to several assumptions such as the work being associated with providing sexual services and women workers having to work on the bodies of male customers. However, both quotes also illustrate that perceptions about women’s work are changing.
Moreover, most women workers at some point during interviews and focus group discussions highlighted that their work was tough, tiring, skilled and demanding but was not valued as such. For example, Dolma (27, Kitchen, Platinum hotel) said, ‘I work as a chef and it is not easy but people think cooking is a job women do at home which is why I feel my work is not recognised’. Similarly, Kalpana (36, Housekeeping, Moon resort) said, ‘[housekeeping work] is very tiring, my back hurts ... but when I tell someone what I do in the resort, I don’t see any appreciation and recognition of my work’.

Likewise, during focus group discussions in the casinos women emphasised their work involved skills relating to mathematics and the dexterous use of their hands. For example, women from Dazzle casino said:

Basanti (30): It is not easy to constantly be calculating, one small mistake can be a big loss of money. ... People don’t see what goes on in our minds, the stress we face ... they think it’s easy standing there smiling and distributing cards.

Neetu (30): ... and it is not easy to distribute cards. We are trained and retrained. It is a skill we have learnt with years of practice. ... What to do? People barely know the details of our work. Negative images of us are what exist in society. ... We are not recognised for the challenges we face at work.

While women shared their accounts of having acquired skills with a lot of practice, they seem to be disheartened that details of what they do at work is seldom known to people. Furthermore, in casinos, most women workers raised concerns about not
being proud in saying where they work. For example, Rohinee (30, Glitter casino) said, ‘I still do not feel confident or I am not proud to say I work in the casino’. Neeta (27, Dazzle casino) said she hesitated to tell her friends and relatives that she worked in a casino.

One female policy expert asserted that women working in the casinos must have pride in their work to be empowered. Her quote below alerts that pride in work is crucial for women’s empowerment:

   Even though women have money and are able to make purchases and changes in their living conditions, have they been able to walk heads high and say that they are proud to be casino workers? I doubt [it]. ... For a woman to be empowered, she should be proud of what work she does. (A female consultant working on women’s rights)

The above discussion illustrates the impacts of working in a stigmatised sector and/or doing sexualised work; women working in casinos do not have pride in saying where they work. Women also shared dissatisfaction that their work was not given proper recognition.

**Interactional Level: Customer Behaviour**

Another challenge raised by some women (mostly in casinos) related to dealing with abusive customers during interaction. In hotels and resorts, some women working as housemaids explained they sometimes feared facing male customers who sought

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199 In Platinum hotel: Sabina; in Sun resort: Kavita; and in Moon resort: Kalpana and Runa shared some cases of sexual harassment from male customers that they or their friends faced.
sexual interaction. For example, Sabina (28, Platinum hotel), explained that women in the housekeeping department went with a colleague (preferably male) into customers’ rooms if they felt suspicious about customers’ intentions.

In casinos, women also highlighted facing abusive customers as a challenge. For example, some of them (e.g., Dipen a male bouncer at Glitter casino) talked about having to face drunken men who threatened them with harm when they were out of the workplace. They discussed ‘being hurt’ and ‘not feeling good’ about such incidents for quite some time, which signifies the impact of the threats on them. Moreover, facing threats and abusive customers seems to be expected in the casino as Anju’s (Glitter casino) husband Sandeep said: ‘drunken men could abuse women, try and touch them physically too … although that may not happen so easily because of the high security in the casino’.

That said, as highlighted in Chapter Five, croupiers (women) perceived that they had control over some male customers. They talked about confronting sexual harassment committed by male customers; they could signal to the bouncers who would immediately attend and take charge by asking the guests to leave.

Extracts from focus group discussion with women from Dazzle casino:

Neetu (30): … But then can you imagine, would we be able to take charge of those men playing? We even keep them disciplined … we can bring them to

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200 Anju and Rohinee from Dazzle casino, Devika from Glitter casino and all women in focus group discussions discussed this.
order.

Basanti (30): ... Now I see my work as more of taking control over men, let’s say who are in fact drunk most of the time. This is not easy. But I must say it feels great.

Extracts from focus group discussion with women from Glitter casino:

Madina (30): When some players abuse us or shout at us, we alert the bouncers who take them away. So you see we are powerful because we can bring them to order. Sonali (25): Yes, our work is to help them play and if they create problems then it is not good for the business.

The above extracts show that croupiers expressed satisfaction that they can take control over men, perhaps a novelty but one sanctioned by management and showing women’s power to control. Croupiers could also mobilise men as bouncers; croupiers seemed to be the ‘spine’ of the casino industry, whose signals matter to everyone. They emphasised taking ‘control over’ men; they handled male customers (often drunk), limiting their abusive behaviour akin to the findings of Deshotels and Forsyth (2006) in their study on women strippers and dancers. Nonetheless, the conception that women have ‘power’ can be questioned. As Williams et al. (1999) note, when women’s work is valued in terms of their sexuality ‘it is always short-lived’. In this case, croupiers’ ‘power’ is conditional; bouncers attend to croupiers’ call to attend to male customers (drunk and abusive) because it is approved by management.
In summary, most women workers in casinos and some in hotels and resorts highlighted stigmatisation of their work; women were disheartened that their work was neither valued nor recognised. It is facing and/or having to deal with some customers who are abusive and drunk in the casinos that remains a problem for women. Thus, analysing empowerment at the ‘intermediate’ level (Kabeer, 2001) shows that women face constraints at home and at work. However, as discussed earlier, the trade union seems to be instrumental in shifting power at the workplace which also has implications for women at home.

**Wider Social Norms: Discrimination and Inequality**

According to Kabeer (2001), empowerment can occur in the ‘deeper’ hidden structures in society. Wider social norms in Nepal were considered as impeding women’s empowerment by most research participants. They discussed discrimination and inequality in the society as deep rooted structures that constrained women. Although some women workers saw government policies as useful for women to enable them to achieve justice, they felt that the mindset of people needed to change. For example, Sumnima (F, 33, Housekeeping, Sun resort) said:

Women are no doubt discriminated by religion, culture and the overall society. ... But sometimes government policies can be helpful for women ... like the one related to domestic violence. If women face domestic violence they would know there is a law and they can seek help on the basis of this law for justice. ... But then it is attitudes of people that need to change positively to improve women’s lives.
Similarly, Gita (F, 28, Gold hotel) believed that, ‘women must know their rights to property, divorce ... also have knowledge on what to do if they face domestic violence’. These examples illustrate that some women seemed to consider government policies as a resource that they could rely on when needed. However, to improve women’s lives, many people expressed the need for change in attitudes towards women.

Some male workers and male family members also echoed the need for the elimination of discriminatory practices prevailing in the society. For example, Bikash (31, Gold hotel) said that, ‘society sees women daughter, sister, wife or mother as dependent of men be it father, brother, husband or son. ... Women should not be discriminated against by anyone’. Likewise, Uttara’s husband Mahesh (38) also said, ‘[W]e are part of the patriarchal society that discriminates women. ... As long as women are discriminated against there is no empowerment’.

Another example is provided by Lalita (28, Dazzle casino), a widowed woman taking care of two young children, whose case shows how socio-cultural norms constrain women. For Lalita, the casino work was a necessity rather than a choice – management offered her work out of sympathy since her late husband served for a long time in the casino; she may not otherwise have obtained the work. Lalita resumed paid work after a long gap (since she was earlier fully dependent on her husband’s income) and related her state of not being empowered:

I am not empowered. ... Earlier I could eat anything. Now because I am mourning I cannot eat here ... I have to eat pure food. ... I have become weak. I
know it is not because of my work here but then ... I lack confidence because of my husband’s death.

Lalita expressed the constraints of widowhood given Nepal’s social norms. Cultural/religious restrictions, such as on what, how, and where she eats food, make her feel physically and psychologically weak. As explained in Chapter Two, discrimination against women in Nepal is rooted in cultural and religious practices; Lalita’s state of disempowerment relates to such form of discrimination against widows.

Moreover, some workers who were actively involved with the trade unions in their respective workplaces mentioned that women’s empowerment denoted ‘not facing any discrimination’ and ‘being free from oppression’; they all highlighted the social structure that discriminates against women. Women workers, Babita (Moon resort) and Pranita (Dazzle casino) used the phrase ‘being free from oppression’ when explaining their understanding of empowerment. For example, Pranita’s quote below shows that empowerment meant not having to obey anyone (male) at home.

A widow according to the Hindu religion is expected to follow various restrictions on appearance, mobility, food and drinks, among others. Regarding food and drink, it is said that a widow must prepare her own food, bring water herself from the source (e.g., river, pond or tap) and have a pure vegetarian diet as eating meat is considered a sinful act. The emphasis on pure food also means doing things by herself and the food not being touched by any other person whilst being prepared and eaten.

There has been a movement called ‘the red movement’ led by widows across the country which calls for ending social, cultural, religious and legal discrimination against widows (see http://www.whr.org.np).

When talking to Babita and Pranita, they mentioned their brief experience of talking to women in villages about women’s empowerment as freedom from the discrimination and oppression of patriarchy in the Nepali society, prior to joining this job.
I am empowered. I do not face discrimination either at home or at work. No one tells me to obey them at home. I can do what I want and when I want.

Pranita’s brother Yogesh (22) also stressed that Pranita was empowered. He related her empowerment to ‘not facing any form of oppression’ at home because she was not living with her husband. It is worthwhile to note that Parnita, Babita and Yogesh were all involved with the Maoist party and its political activities in their respective hometowns. It can be said that the use of the word ‘empowerment’ increased in the public domain along with the rise of Maoist movement during the epoch of internal armed conflict. Therefore, the way in which Babita and Pranita related their empowerment with ‘oppression’ and ‘discrimination’ could be because of their understanding of the term from the Maoist lens.

Moreover, some male workers also highlighted discrimination against women when discussing women’s empowerment. For example, while Pritam (M, Dazzle casino) believed discrimination against women should not exist in the society, Bikash (M, Gold hotel) further added that ‘women must be treated the same as men ... non-discrimination would mean empowerment for women’. However, while it is a must for women not to be discriminated against, since they are not equal to men, they need different treatment, e.g., maternity provision. Such wider social norms relate to ‘deeper’ levels of empowerment (Kabeer, 2001) which are difficult and further challenging as they are deeply rooted in the social structure.

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204 I have explained in Chapter Two that the term women’s empowerment was used by the Maoists when calling for ‘people’s war’ (see Yami, 2007).
Some policy experts also talked about empowerment of women as meaning transformation in the social structure and changes in the status quo. Those policy experts who were actively involved with women’s rights saw empowerment as a process, and focussed on the need for identifying women’s agency so that women could claim empowerment and that it was not given to them. Others discussed women’s representation and the need for programmes that would help women be educated and get involved in economic activities. In other words, women could be empowered, which related more to improving the status of women through changes that bring economic welfare into women’s lives. Furthermore, as Kabeer (2001) asserts, it is questionable whether women can be considered as empowered when there are improvements in women’s status through economic welfare but there are no changes at the structural level.

Moreover, the need for ‘transformative changes’ in the lives of women in the long run was raised by almost all policy experts. They also felt that across women as a category, class, caste, geographic location (urban/rural) and religion complicated the understanding of women’s empowerment. Moreover, while the prevalence of the ‘patriarchal’ structure of the society was understood as a given condition in which women’s empowerment is discussed, most of them (all women and a few men) saw it as a major constraint, as shown in the quotes below:

For equality and non-discrimination among men and women, our social and cultural norms, deep rooted in discrimination must be changed which is not an easy task. ... Our society is no doubt a patriarchal society ... the main challenge is that women continue to live in this patriarchal setting and so
empowerment of women must be discussed and strategies and practices formulated, implemented and monitored keeping this in mind. (A female consultant working on women’s rights)

[The] women’s movement has contributed to the enactment of gender sensitive laws, policies and programmes for women’s empowerment. The problem is that many of these do not get implemented on the ground. ... This is a big challenge. (A female government officer from the Ministry of Women Children and Social Welfare)

Both quotes highlight the gap between policies and implementation and while the first quote shows that patriarchal society is a challenge to the women’s empowerment agenda, the second quote considers the ‘collective power’ of the women’s movement in contributing to bringing about gender sensitive laws, policies and programmes. Further, there was emphasis by almost all policy experts on the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies that would create an enabling environment where women are able to live better lives.

Therefore, structural factors seem to have long term implications for women’s empowerment. For women’s empowerment to occur, as Kabeer (2001) writes, changes must occur at structural levels as well as individual levels. Moreover, it is difficult and challenging to engage at structural levels for transformative change. Amongst my research participants, paid work had brought some changes in shared roles and responsibilities at the household level, however, problems remained at home, work and in wider social norms. Furthermore, the extent to which women are empowered has implications for the way they do gender both at home and at work.
While women are engaging with these problems and finding alternative strategies, most women workers and policy experts were also hopeful that the policies and programmes of the government would contribute to women’s empowerment.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, women’s empowerment has been discussed in a context where women work in hotels, resorts and casinos, with the primary objective of earning money. At the same time, women are also a part of a social structure that ascribes gendered roles which are produced and reproduced in daily life. At the individual level, women workers having money through paid work and the financial independence that this brought about – being able to spend on themselves, contribute to household expenditure and do what they want with their income – emerged as the central topic. Most of them raised this issue when discussing about the changes in them before and after they started working in their respective establishments and when referring to their empowerment. Women working in the casinos seem to earn more than women working in hotels and resorts. Income was the key element that made significant changes in terms of economic welfare possible in the lives of almost all workers; having income and gaining financial independence was valued immensely by women workers. In addition, the usage of income varied depending on marital status, financial condition of their families, type of family household structure and the responsibilities of workers.

Money or income was viewed as a ‘resource’ that women workers had or needed in the future, and at the same time was seen as an ‘achievement’ when they had
financial independence. Analogous to this, knowledge and skill were both a resource and an achievement. Some women used the knowledge they gained at work and at home; they cooked, made rooms/decorated and performed beauty treatments on themselves and others using the skills developed at work. Knowledge and skills were valued in their own right and also as resources they could use at home and that could open up opportunities for their employment, including overseas. In addition, while having knowledge on labour and women’s rights was also considered by some women to be important, being able to claim these rights was seen as an achievement.

Many women were able to exercise agency and this was visible as they resisted at work and at home; raising their voice/speaking up and in some cases resisting in silence. Women referred to the ‘resources’ of income, knowledge and skills and the support of the trade union as enabling them to exercise ‘agency’. Some silent resistance on the part of women was also visible as they resisted the demands of the trade union; women gained confidence developing strategies on their own. Women’s resistance at work and home illuminates the ways in which they resist doing gender in the ways prescribed by management and by social norms. Hence the range of possibilities mentioned above are what women were found to be engaged in, which they did not do prior to working in the respective establishments, and that is what women workers found empowering.

Moreover, it can be said that men and women both redo gender at home: although men are still the main family breadwinner, women are considered as supporting men in this role and women still take responsibility for housework, although some men are helping women in their roles and responsibilities at home. Some married women
reported men and other relatives taking a greater share of domestic work which is an ‘achievement’; they believe this is because they earned income and contributed to the household finance. In addition, there are a few women who take up the breadwinner role; these women are single parents. Furthermore, this can be considered as challenging the socio-cultural norms of the male breadwinner syndrome; it shows that there are some changes taking place at the structural level which have implications on women’s empowerment. So, the structural context is very important when looking at how paid work empowers women.

Furthermore, women are resisting and challenging power relations at work and at home and this is associated with empowerment. That said, problems and constraints still persist at structural levels at home and work. Almost all of the women workers discussed the wider social norms that are reflected in social perceptions of women’s work in this sector as stigmatised, not valued and not recognised. Moreover, all research participants raised concerns about discrimination and inequality based on gender that impeded women’s empowerment. Although some women workers and most policy experts believed government policies would create an enabling environment for women to bring positive changes in their lives, some also mentioned that the implementation gap, and the deep rooted discriminatory social norms and values ingrained in the attitudes of people seemed to be the major impediments to women’s empowerment.

At the structural level women’s empowerment necessitates the analysis of complex and varied socio-cultural factors. This is because macro-level power relations continue to privilege men over women. It is also macro-level power relations that are played out at the
meso-level (the workplace) and at the micro-level (the household) that constrain women and shape their agency. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, women’s empowerment has implications for the ways they do gender. While men and women are both ‘doing’ gender at work and at home, they seem to be ‘doing’ gender differently. It can be said that women are ‘redoing’ gender (see West and Zimmerman, 1987, 2009) by joining paid work and being empowered. Although it can be said that women’s paid work in the hotels, resorts and casinos provides pathways to women’s empowerment (see Kabeer, et al., 2011), the process is complex and varied depending on the kind of gendered work they perform and the social context in which they live.

Thus, using Kabeer’s (2001) framework to analyse women’s empowerment in relation to the kind of work they do in order to earn an income has been very useful. The framework has provided a holistic picture of what it is that can be considered to empower women. It has enabled me to look at the interactional/individual level and the structural levels together. I have found that in this research, women have experienced changes at the individual level but there are constraints at the structural levels which are challenging. Moreover, Kabeer (2001) notes, it is the structural levels of empowerment that are challenging and difficult to engage with; empowerment requires changes at the structural levels, changes only at the individual level may not necessarily empower women.

I conclude that paid work in the hotels, resorts and casinos has to some extent empowered women, more so at the individual level of resources, agency and achievements. At the structural level, although there seem to be some changes in shared roles and responsibilities at the household level, women resisting certain
aspects of gendered work and engaged in developing strategies to handle problems, constraints at home, workplace and in wider social norms still continue to impede their lives. Earning an income through paid work has brought several positive changes in women’s lives and has further enabled them to engage with structural problems and constraints, but it is not the end of the story. Women’s empowerment has implications for the ways in which they do gender at home and at work. I therefore suggest the need to revisit the concept of ‘doing’ gender (West and Zimmerman 1987) in the next chapter.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

Introduction

This thesis is an exploration of gendered work and women’s empowerment in two five star hotels, two deluxe resorts and two casinos in Nepal. It contributes to understanding of the construction and performance of gendered work and how such work relates to women’s empowerment. While the research is possibly the first of its kind in Nepal, it also contributes to existing theoretical and empirical knowledge about interactive service work and women’s empowerment – two areas of research that often remain separate.

The thesis set out to explore gendered work and women’s empowerment on the basis of three research questions. I have answered those questions using a conceptual framework which combines the key concepts of: gendered work, emotional labour, aesthetic labour, sexualised labour and women’s empowerment. Each one of them is a broad concept that is debated and widely used within contemporary sociology of (interactive service) work and women’s and gender studies. The first four concepts relate to (interactive service) work, and have been developed in a western context; here I use them in the socio-economic, cultural and political setting of Nepal. This shows their wide applicability. The fifth concept, relating to women’s empowerment (Kabeer, 2001) and developed in the context of developing countries, is pertinent as it takes into account changes at both the interactional/individual and structural levels when investigating women’s empowerment. I consider my conceptual framework to be original in the sense that it brings different concepts relating to (interactive) service work and empowerment together. The thesis shows the utility of the
application of these concepts on their own, as well as demonstrating the relevance of combining concepts to broaden knowledge on gendered work and women’s empowerment. When discussing the major findings I draw on this combination of different concepts, an approach which has rarely been used before.

The thesis has shown that understanding women’s empowerment through paid work necessitates recognising that what sector women are employed in, what they do at work and how they do such work all have implications for women’s empowerment. The question – ‘does paid work provide a pathway to women’s empowerment’ (see Kabeer et al., 2011) can perhaps be addressed by exploring gendered work and women’s empowerment concurrently, paying attention to the different ways in which gender is done, undone or redone at interactional and structural levels (see West and Zimmerman, 1987, 2009; Deutsch, 2007).

In this concluding chapter, I discuss the theoretical and empirical contributions of this research, followed by the research arguments and the major findings based on my three research questions. I consider revisiting the concept of ‘doing’ gender (see West and Zimmerman, 1987), extending it from gendered work to women’s empowerment. Before concluding, I highlight various areas that can be considered for future research.

**Research Contributions**

The research makes several contributions both at theoretical and empirical levels. Theoretically, the thesis makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the
relationship between gendered work and women’s empowerment. It shows the sector in which women are employed, the kind of work they do and how they do such work have implications in terms of women’s empowerment. In addition, it contributes to understanding interactive service work and sheds light on the extent to which men and women perform different forms of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour, in that they are all part of gendered work. It has also found that such performances partly contribute in the construction of gendered work.

The thesis takes forward Deutsch’s (2007) view that perhaps ‘doing’ gender is not a problem. She highlights that ‘difference per se is not the problem with the gender system; the problem is power’ (Collins, 2002; Connell, 1995 cited in Deutsch, 2007: 117). It has shown that even though most women are not ‘undoing’ gender (Deutsch, 2007), they are resisting/challenging power relations at work and at home which has implications for their empowerment.

Empirically, the thesis has made an original contribution to the analysis of interactive service work in Nepal. I have compiled and analysed the data and information relating to gendered workforce in eight five-star hotels, five deluxe resorts and eight casinos in Kathmandu, which is one of the contributions of this research in the context of Nepal as such data, to the best of my knowledge, had not been available in public domain.²⁰⁵ It has shown how work in the hotels, resorts and casinos is gendered. It has also shown that casinos are different to hotels and resorts in the way gendered work is constructed as well as in the worker’s performance because of the

²⁰⁵ The recent publication of a study (see Upadhyay et al., 2011) has provided a snapshot of gendered workforce data of only five star hotels and casinos beyond which there is no further information.
different nature of these establishments. In Nepal, these sectors are not feminised and are, in this sense, different from the ‘West’ where much research has taken place and where the sector is largely feminised.\textsuperscript{206} This is perhaps due to structural barriers concerning the stigmatisation of women’s work in hotels and casinos. It could also be due to dominant patriarchal structures that define women’s place as being in the home and that frown upon women’s paid work, particularly in this sector. However, although women are increasingly being employed in this sector, they are still in a minority and the trend, if it continues, perhaps will lead towards feminisation, for which longitudinal research needs to be taken up.

Moreover, the thesis has highlighted that there is a gradual change towards the social acceptability of women working in these sectors and government has designed and implemented various policies and launched different initiatives which increasingly facilitate women’s participation in paid employment in general and employment in tourism and hospitality sector in particular. These developments have created possibilities of change at the interactional level and to some extent are empowering for women in Nepal.

The research also contributed to the understanding of emotional, aesthetic and (hetero) sexualised labour as it has shown that the country context in which a work takes place has implications on the diverse forms of labour performed. The research

\textsuperscript{206} For example, this research finds that in Nepal, the hotels, resorts and casinos are not feminised sectors, in contrast to the earlier studies elsewhere on hotel work (see Crompton and Sanderson, 1990; Levy and Lerch, 1991; Adkins, 1995; Sinclair 2007) and casino work (Enarson, 1993; Sallez 2005; Jones and Chandler, 2007). This means, while gendered occupational segregation occurs, the patterns vary depending on the country context.
can therefore be said to have contributed in enhancing the understanding of these three concepts as highlighted in the relevant section in Chapter Five, thus taking forward the debates and discussions by explaining the points of similarity and demonstrating differences on the different forms of labour in the interactive service sector.

It has shown that emotional labour is neither alienating nor a gift. Emotional and aesthetic labour are both empowering for women and are not always the forms of labour that workers perform based on management control. There were also some workers who were performing such labour and work, because they internalised and/or considered such performance as a necessary part of their job. While women on the gaming floor of casinos were found to be performing sexualised labour, mainly because they were told to do so by the management, some women found it empowering even though their empowerment was one that was associated with power sanctioned by the casino management.

Hence, this research goes beyond the existing debate on the different aspects of gendered work and emotional labour, aesthetic labour and sexualised labour. It has contributed in understanding that engaging in gendered work and doing emotional labour, aesthetic labour and sexualised labour can be empowering for women workers, and this element has been hitherto neglected. This has implications for understanding women’s empowerment in that it is not only economic empowerment, but that there is a need to analyse the experiences of workers in doing different types of labour.
Research Arguments and Discussion of Major Findings

The main argument in this research is that doing gendered work can empower women at the individual level to some extent but that it is also important to take into account the structural context when considering women’s empowerment. The research has discovered that there is an experiential linkage between gendered work and women’s empowerment, which is premised on the three arguments made in relation to my research questions. I now discuss each these in turn.

How is Gendered Work Constructed?

In Chapter Four, I argued that gendered work is constructed by three distinct but related dimensions, namely: the gender division of labour; the gendered ideologies of managers and workers; and the gendering of skills provided through training. I have also found that gendered work in interactive service work is partly constructed by the performance of gendered emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour (discussed in Chapter Five). This illuminates the different forms of ‘gendering’ and the ways in which gendered work is constructed and performed. Hence, I underline the need to explore gendered work by examining how it is constructed and performed at the interactional level.

The research has found that the nature of gendered work varies depending on the type of sector/industry in which work is situated. The hotels and resorts are different to casinos; the backbone of hotels and resorts is the back office and in casinos it is the front office where most workers are concentrated. An analysis of the gendered workforce data from 21 establishments in Kathmandu has shown that while hotels,
resorts and casinos are not feminised sectors, there are relatively more women employed in casinos. In contrast, studies in other parts of the world showed the hotel and casino as feminised sectors (see Crompton and Sanderson, 1990; Levy and Lerch, 1991; Enarson, 1993; Adkins, 1995; Chandler and Jones, 2003; Sallez, 2005; Jones and Chandler, 2007; Sinclair 2007). In the case of casinos, the research has found that although the sector is not feminised, card dealers or croupiers are mainly young women, similar to the findings of Enarson (1993) and Jones and Chandler (2007). This indicates the similarities between casinos in that they hire young, heterosexually attractive women on the gaming floor to attract male customers. Thus, the research shows that the country context is important; the workforce in hotel and casino sector in Nepal is different – it is not feminised overall but certain occupations within it are becoming feminised.

The research has found that there is a ‘gendering’ of organisational or establishment structures (hierarchies and jobs), of the ideologies of managers and workers, of the skills provided in training and of the performance of certain aspects of interactive service work. Moreover, such ‘gendering’ has implications for how gendered work is constructed and the extent to which workers perform and resist gendered work. As Adkins (2001: 672) asserts, ‘gendering is by no means fixed but rather it is continuously made, remade and contested’.

Acker (1990) suggests that one of the ways in which the gendering of work can be analysed is by examining the gender division of labour. I have used the concept of occupational segregation (Hakim, 1981) to unpack the gender division of labour by analysing vertical and horizontal segregation and showing how gendering occurs at
the structural level of the establishments. Analysing vertical gender segregation in the sample establishments, I have shown that there is a ‘gendering of hierarchies’ (Acker, 1990); managers are mostly male in all establishments. Moreover, it is important to note that workforce in these establishments are masculinised overall. In addition, analysing horizontal gender segregation has shown that there is a ‘gendering of jobs’ (Acker, 1990); there is a gender division of labour within establishments. In hotels and resorts, women are concentrated in departments that involve so called ‘feminine’ work such as housekeeping, serving food and beverages, spa and beauty care, and in casinos, on the gaming floor in assisting and entertaining customers, largely men, who gamble. Men comprise the majority of the workforce in other departments. Moreover, the workforce in some departments such as Engineering and Laundry in hotels and resorts and Transport in casinos is exclusively male but there are no departments where the workforce is exclusively female.

Another dimension which contributes to the construction of gendered work, I argue, concerns the gendered ideologies held by managers and workers, which further legitimate and/or contest the gender division of labour (see Charles, 1993). These gendered ideologies are underpinned by essentialist views that attach attributes of masculinity and femininity to certain jobs which are considered as ‘men’s’ and ‘women’s’, and further expects and leads to workers doing gender at work. For example, working as an engineer or doing laundry work that involves using big machines and lifting heavy equipment are considered as ‘men’s’ jobs. Work reminiscent of that which women often do at home, such as cleaning or entertaining guests, are considered as ‘women’s’ jobs. Moreover, some work done by women was
considered as an extension of their innate attributes and their domestic responsibilities, which led to women’s work not being recognised and valued. That said, there is sometimes a disjuncture between these ideologies and the gender division of labour that exists – for example, there are a few women working in jobs that require physical strength. It is also important to take into account the structural context when considering women’s empowerment; women work as chefs and stewards in hotels and resorts and bouncers in Dazzle casino, contradicting some managers’ and workers’ ideologies that this work is masculine and is done by men rather than women. In addition, these few women were challenging such gendered ideologies which could perhaps be seen as ‘undoing gender’ as they work in non-traditional jobs (see Deutsch, 2007; Kelan, 2010). They faced male resistance and had to prove that they could do the same work as men, and consciously challenged the notion that women are not fit to work in certain departments (see Cockburn, 1991).

A third dimension I argue that influences or shapes the way gendered work is constructed, concerns the training provided to workers by the establishments. I found that workers are trained with various skills that are not mutually exclusive and that there is a gendering of skills. I have categorised them as sets of skills related to ‘doing’, ‘managing’, ‘looking’, and ‘pleasing’. Managers’ accounts indicate the emphasis on training workers in order to meet the customers’ expectations of ‘quality service’ as well as maintaining the ‘standardised service’ of the establishments. This means there is a gendering of skills as men and women workers acquire different sets of skills which also depends on where they work within and across the different establishments; this can be understood as workers doing gender at work.
Furthermore, I also discovered that gendered work in the interactive service sector is constructed partly through workers’ performance of gendered emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour, which I discussed in Chapter Five. In hotels, resorts and casinos, when analysing certain aspects of interactive service work, the variation of ways in which men and women perform emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour shows that there is a gendering of such labour. While both male and female workers are expected to perform emotional and aesthetic labour in all establishments, it is women on the gaming floor who perform (hetero)sexualised labour. Hence, exploring gendered work has shown that in interactive service work, the ways in which workers perform gendered emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour partly contributes to constructing gendered work in these establishments.

To What Extent do Men and Women Perform Emotional, Aesthetic and (hetero)Sexualised Labour?

In Chapter Five, I argue that men and women in different ways perform emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour and that such performances shape and are shaped by gendered work. As explained earlier, I have also argued that gendered work is constructed by different forms of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour that are interrelated and performed by men and women workers differently.

I have also discussed the gendered aspects of smiling and managing anger. Using Hochschild’s ([1983]2003) concept of emotional labour, I found that both men and women workers are engaged in ‘surface acting’; the management of smiles and anger are part of their job. I underline that emotional labour is gendered; men and women perform different forms of emotional labour. Workers attribute gendered meanings to
their smile, despite smiling being conceived as gender-neutral by managers, and while both men and women workers manage their own anger and that of the customers, women get upset and men get angry. For example, smiling was understood as being friendly by some men and as pleasing and welcoming by some women. With regards to managing anger, for example, Niraj, a male worker in Gold hotel got angry, he failed to do ‘surface’ acting while some women got upset and cried – Amita (F, 21, Glitter casino) went to the kitchen and cried. In the process of learning to manage their feelings, workers may even stop the customer interaction, leave the venue, swap with colleagues in order to calm down, and some women cry in private. This shows that it is both important and difficult for workers to manage their feelings and anger as they face abusive customers, and furthermore that there are ‘costs’ of doing emotional labour. These differences illuminate that emotional labour takes different forms when performed by men and women.

In hotels and resorts, some women working on the bodies of other female customers seem to be engaged in ‘deep acting’, as they work with their inner feelings of trained imagination. Two women workers reported feeling happy and satisfied, demonstrating that there are ‘pleasures’ too in emotional labour. Furthermore, while all workers are required to do emotional labour, more is required from workers in the front office where emotional labour is emphasised because of the high degree of customer interaction.

Using the schematic framework of Warhurst et al. (2000), I analyse the meanings and practices of aesthetic labour in three areas: recruitment and selection; training and monitoring; and working practices. I found that that there is a ‘right’ look that is
required in all establishments, with age and looks having a bearing on recruitment. However, managers’ accounts highlight the intervening role of the trade union in the recruitment process which has made it difficult for them to continue recruiting on the basis of ‘looks’. As explained in Chapter Four, all workers are trained with a set of skills related to ‘looking’ which means that both men and women workers were imparted grooming skills; workers are trained and monitored to perform aesthetic labour (Warhurst et al., 2000). That said, it is women workers who experienced being monitored most on their looks. While both men and women do aesthetic labour, they do it differently. Moreover, ‘looks’ are defined differently for male and female workers by managers. Women workers are expected to ‘look glamorous’ while male workers are expected to ‘look good’. I explain the difference in these looks, further on.

Moreover, depending on the working practices and the service encounter, workers perform aesthetic labour (Warhurst et al., 2000). For example, all front office workers to a large extent perform aesthetic labour as their work mostly involves interacting with customers. Workers in the back office do not interact with customers as often as those in the front office, which means that the degree to which workers are required to perform aesthetic labour varies. Notwithstanding this, all workers are required to perform aesthetic labour. There is a right look that is required of all workers but this look is gendered. Like emotional labour, I underline that aesthetic labour is also gendered. Women workers talked about management’s emphasis on and monitoring of their looks while men did not. Furthermore, while both men and women perform different forms of aesthetic labour, more is required from workers in the front office as they represent the establishments and have a high degree of customer interaction.
Women working as croupiers and guest relation assistants in casinos are required by management to perform aesthetic labour through adhering to specific grooming standards (delivered through training and a staff handbook) which are gendered. While required looks are different for men and women, there is scrutiny on women’s looks that perhaps demands more work from women in taking care of their looks. For example, women must put on make-up as taught in grooming lessons, maintain an appropriate body weight (a slim figure is preferred), wear high heeled shoes etc., the purpose of which seems to be to look heterosexually available. All of this makes women feel under pressure to conform to grooming standards. That said, some women workers’ accounts show that of late they have experienced a lessening in management control and policing of their appearance and they attribute this to the role of trade unions. This demonstrates that changes are taking place at the structural level, in part because of the trade union, which is bringing about a reduction in the ability of management to enforce the grooming standards as they used to. Such changes have an effect on women’s performance at the interactional level; they are able to resist organisational control or management’s prescribed manner of performing aesthetic labour. It also has significant implications for women’s empowerment.

I have used Warhurst and Nickson’s (2009) three-fold classification of sexualised work to examine how employee sexuality is ‘sanctioned’, ‘subscribed to’ and ‘prescribed’ by the management. Their distinction between sexualised work and sexualised labour is important; it is only when sexualised work is prescribed by the management as a requirement of the job that doing such work can be counted as sexualised labour. Following Warhurst and Nickson’s (2009) distinction between
sexualised work and sexualised labour, I argue that women’s work is sexualised in all establishments and some women on the gaming floor also perform sexualised labour.

In this research, I have found that women’s work in the hotels, resorts and casinos is sexualised through aesthetic labour (see Warhurst and Nickson, 2009) in that a particular look, one assumed to appeal to heterosexual men, is required of women workers. The management of the sample establishments ‘sanctions or subscribes to’ women’s sexuality. Women workers’ discussions about flirting with male customers and colleagues indicate the way establishments ‘sanction’ sexualised work. As discussed in Chapter Four, while management provides grooming training to both male and female workers, there is a gendering of looks. While workers’ appearance is important in interactive service work, insofar as they have to be well dressed, clean and smart, women workers having a certain appearance is considered to be additionally useful to attract (male) customers. Furthermore, more work is required from women to follow the skills related to ‘looking’, which are more detailed and extended. Women are also policed on their appearance to a greater extent. It can thus be said that women’s sexuality is ‘subscribed to’ by the management that permits and promotes women’s sexualised work and also capitalises on this in all establishments (see Warhurst and Nickson, 2009).

Moreover, sexualised work is ‘prescribed’ by the management; the hiring of young and (hetero)sexually attractive women workers on the gaming floor as croupiers and guest relation assistants to attract male customers is a management strategy (see Hall, 1993; Adkins, 1995; Purcell, 1996; Jones and Chandler, 2007). These women are also
prescribed to perform sexualised labour through the acts that their role requires them to perform, such as lighting cigars and kissing chips that demonstrate the nature of sexualised work that they are required to do. In addition, women workers’ (croupiers and guest relations assistants) accounts about their uniforms also demonstrates that casino management requires that uniforms are tailor made and fit in a certain way – most women on the gaming floor at Glitter casino were found to be wearing fitted clothes. It is important to note, though, that there were a few exceptions to this, which indicate the decreased power of management to control the looks of workers. Thus, women’s work in the casino sector is sexualised through aesthetic labour and also by their behaviour and roles.

The research has shown that the extent to which men and women workers perform gendered emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour relates to their empowerment. It also shows that the extent to which workers perform the different types of labour contributes to shaping perceptions about men’s work and women’s work in different sectors. Here, because of the nature of interactions in terms of how men and women perform gendered work and various aspects of it, perceptions are formed at the wider structural level. Some women workers’ explanations of their work showed that they faced sexualisation by male workers and male customers. In addition, it is women working on the gaming floor in casinos who are forced to cope with sexual approaches from customers.

It can, therefore, be said that doing sexualised labour is part of women’s job; their work requires them to play up to male desires, which necessitates a certain type of dress and make-up in order to be seen as heterosexually available (see Adkins, 1995).
It also means that doing sexualised work has implications for the way women’s work is perceived in wider society. In the case of casinos, the nature of the business is such that it thrives on male customers who gamble and are provided with free alcohol; casinos rely on young women workers on the gaming floor to attract these customers. This has the effect of women’s work being stigmatised because of the degree to which women perform sexualised labour.

Although many of my research participants note that there is gradual acceptance of women working in hotels, resorts and casinos, some women’s work in these sectors is still stigmatised and not considered as respectable for different reasons. In hotels and resorts women’s work in housekeeping is stigmatised because it is seen as doing low status work and thus considered not to be a respectable job. Moreover, women’s work that involves body massage in these establishments is often being associated with providing sexual services, and, hence, stigmatised. In casinos, as mentioned earlier, it is the very nature of work that croupiers and guest relation assistants do to attract male customers coupled with the working environment of the gaming floor that results in women’s work on the gaming floor being stigmatised. All of these have implications for women’s confidence, pride in their work and their empowerment (discussed in Chapter Six).

The thesis has provided insights not only into how workers are controlled by establishments with gendered expectations when doing (interactive) service work but also how workers contest these expectations; they resist certain aspects of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour. As the research has shown, the ‘agency’ of workers (particularly women) and the myriad strategies they use to resist at work demonstrate
a complex situation, and there exists some degree of tension between workers, the trade union (affiliated with the Maoist political party) and management.

While both men and women workers resist organisational policies and practices relating to salary and benefits, for example, it was largely women workers who resist certain aspects of gendered emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour. Moreover, I discussed in Chapter Five that resistance is both individual and collective. Individually, some men and women workers refused to tolerate customers’ abusive behaviour. While women liked to ‘look good’ they defied some codes of grooming and some women workers contested sexualisation by male workers and customers. In Glitter casino, croupiers and guest relation assistants also resisted collectively as a group relying on the support of the trade union. When workers resisted general organisational policies, it was often through the trade union; workers both men and women resisted collectively. The support of the trade union emerged as an important element, and was particularly perceived by women as a source of ‘power’ that was important for their resistance (see Deshotels and Forsyth, 2006; Sallez 2005). This shows that workers can and do engage in resistance and that they challenge power relations at work.

Furthermore, while establishments control workers’ performance, there seemed to be a ‘lessening of control’ as workers’ resistance seemed to be on the rise. Workers attribute this to the role of the trade union within the organisational power configuration. The trade union seems to be a part of evolving structure that is instrumental in (women) workers’ resistance; there are some changes in power relations at work, which is associated with empowerment.
**To What Extent does Paid Work Empower Women?**

I argue that women’s paid work empowers them to some extent at the individual level; however, structural constraints continue to impede women’s empowerment. In Chapter Six, I examined women’s empowerment by using the framework of Kabeer (2001) to analyse changes in women’s lives as a result of paid work at both individual and structural levels. Women’s accounts demonstrate some forms of ‘resources’ and ‘achievements’, and also that, to some extent, they exercise their ‘agency’.

At the individual level, I argue that women are empowered to some extent. There are certain factors that can be considered as empowering for women. Women having an income (money) such that they can control and spend as they want can be considered as both a ‘resource’ and an ‘achievement’. While very few women take up the breadwinner role, others make a contribution to household finances depending on the different types of family structure they live in. Women also purchase jewellery (which is a gendered phenomenon), invest in buying motorbikes/scooters and save for future, and achieve increased mobility and independence, which in turn boosts their self-confidence as a result of their income. Similarly, the acquisition of knowledge and skills related to work also served as ‘resources and achievement.’ They gained language skills and considered having improved their grooming and appearance. Moreover, having knowledge and/or awareness of labour and women’s rights were considered as ‘resources’ that could be used and translated into ‘achievement’ when required.
The thesis has also discussed how women resist at work and at home which indicates the empowering process of women. As mentioned earlier, the role of trade union also emerged as a form of ‘resource’ that facilitates women to resist. Such resistance relates to ‘agency’ that women exercise as they speak up against policies and practices at work and at home. In the case of casinos, some women resist in silence or give accounts of strategies used to meet challenges at work through ‘hidden acts’, which illuminate different manifestations of women exercising their agency. For example, it was found that women chose covertly not to follow codes of grooming as overt resistance could perhaps lead to the loss of their jobs (see Parpart, 2010). At home, earning an income has enabled women to challenge power relations at home; they are able to negotiate with their husband and mother-in-law and speak up against socio-cultural practices to which they conform due to compulsion rather than choice. These are something they did not do before joining paid work. Such changes in women were also observed by the male family members of women working in these establishments.

As also highlighted in Chapter Six, Kabeer (2001: 27) emphasises the need for changes at individual and structural levels for sustained meanings and practices of empowerment. There are some married women who expressed having men or other family members take a greater share of domestic responsibilities at home as one of the major changes as a result of their paid work. This illuminates the importance of women having ‘economic resources’ that could perhaps alter gendered roles and responsibilities at the household level. However, the notion of household work being a ‘women’s job’ seems to continue as male family members’ accounts show they only ‘helped’ women at home. In addition, the notion that men earn income and
women ‘contribute to’ household expenses also appeared to co-exist at home. This can be understood in terms of workers ‘doing gender’ differently or ‘redoing’ (West and Zimmerman, 1987, 2009) rather than ‘undoing gender’(Deutsch, 2007) at home.

At the structural level, there are several persisting constraints that obstruct women’s empowerment. Many married women workers made clear that their capacity to work was conditioned on consent from their husbands, mothers-in-laws, etc. Moreover, at the workplace, as mentioned earlier, many women seemed to be disheartened because in wider society their work was stigmatised and not recognised. Furthermore, the wider social norms and value as well as discrimination and inequality that are deep rooted at the structural level have long term implications for women’s empowerment; women are constrained by these structural barriers. While government policies could be considered useful to address such constraints and provide women an enabling environment for positive changes in their lives, most of my research participants stressed that changes in attitude of people was required. The trade union also seems to contribute towards alleviating such constraints at the institutional level.

Moreover, there are some changes at the structural level, with the emerging role of the trade union and several positive changes in the policies of the government (see Chapter Two). For example, in 2006, the House of Representatives passed a special provision to reserve 33 percent women’s representation in all state mechanisms (MoWCSW, 2009: 5). These structural changes have an effect on women’s empowerment. However, there are persisting constraints that impede women’s empowerment (see Kabeer, 2001). This has been found to apply more generally in the
context of Nepal (see, Tamang, 2000; UNFPA, 2007; Bhadra, 2009; Acharya, 2010), which underscores the need to overcome patriarchal ideologies and structures. This also highlights the importance of structural context and implies that structural changes can create opportunities which can be empowering for women.

Hence, using Kabeer’s (2001) framework to analyse women’s empowerment at both individual and structural levels has enhanced the understanding of what women could do as a result of paid work that can be considered as empowering. It has also enabled me to understand how workers continue to do gender in different ways at the household level and still be empowered at the individual level. It has found that changes at the structural level have contributed to women’s empowerment, however, changes are gradual and more is required. There are persisting constraints at the structural level that impedes women’s empowerment.

**Re-visiting ‘Doing’ Gender**

As discussed in Chapter One, the concept of ‘doing’ gender was first used by West and Zimmerman (1987), who later extended their analysis by introducing the concept of ‘redoing’ gender (West and Zimmerman, 2009). Their analysis is that we all do gender which is ‘an ongoing situated process, a “doing” rather than a “being”’ (ibid: 114). Deutsch (2007) acknowledges this understanding of gender, which she believes helps understand the unequal gender relations at the interactional level and further suggests that we ‘shift our enquiry about ongoing social interactions to focus on change’ (ibid.: 114).
Deutsch (2007: 122) uses the concept of “undoing” gender to refer to social interactions that reduce gender difference and proposes to ‘reserve the phrase “doing” gender to refer to social interactions that reproduce gender difference’. Moreover, she proposes a shift in research agendas and encourages an examination of the variability of gender inequality, which could contribute in turn to understanding the conditions under which change can occur (ibid.: 113). Furthermore, she suggests moving beyond a focus on the interactional level and simply documenting the persistence of inequality, to instead look at ‘how the structural (institutional) and interactional levels might work together to produce change’ (ibid: 113). Thus, I underline that the different ways in which gender is done, undone or redone needs to be analysed to examine the extent to which changes occur at interactional and structural levels.

I take forward Deutsch’s (2007) suggestion and emphasise that experientially there is a linkage between gendered work and women’s empowerment. This research has shown that while all workers do gender it is the different ways in which they do gender at work and at home that demonstrates the ‘variability of gender inequality’ at both interactional and structural levels. In this research, workers are found to do gender both at work and at home. Moreover, women do gender differently by going out and doing paid work and being empowered; they can be seen to be ‘redoing’ gender (West and Zimmerman, 2009). At work, a few women working in the hotels and resorts were chefs and stewards and are consciously challenging the notion of women not being able to do certain jobs (considered as ‘men’s’). In the case of Dazzle casino, the manager also seems to be consciously hiring women as bouncers. According to Deutsch (2007) these few women and the manager of Dazzle casino can
be said to be ‘undoing’ gender. This research also finds that ways in which women do gender at work and home has implications for their empowerment.

In addition, at work, the workers’ ability to resist certain aspects of such labour because they are aligned with and have confidence in the trade union reveals shifts in power relations at work which also have implications for how workers do gender at work. The tension between management on the one and workers and the trade union, on the other, demonstrates the complex situation at the structural level. Shifts in power balance at the organisational level have an effect on workers’ performance; they are able to resist at work. This is indicative of the changes that are taking place at the structural level and confirms that structure and interactions are interrelated. The structure shapes workers’ performance and in turn, interactions/performances shape the structure. Moreover, it is women’s collective resistance at the interactional level that has an effect on the structural level, which is why it is important that women resist collectively for changes to occur. This has the consequence that both men and women have the possibility to do gender differently at work; they can resist/challenge power relations at work.

At home, workers are also found to do gender as their accounts show that men are still seen as the breadwinners and women’s income is seen as ‘contributing to’ the household expenses. Moreover, women continue to take up the caring role at home and the shared roles and responsibilities at home take the form of men ‘helping’ women to do the household work. This shows that household work is still considered to be ‘women’s work’. Thus, it can be said that the ways in which workers do gender at home relate to women’s empowerment at the individual level. With men and
women both ‘redoing’ gender (West and Zimmerman, 2009) they are challenging power relations at home. In addition while women’s income as a result of paid work contributes to bringing some positive changes for women, it does not disrupt the gender order at the household level. Furthermore, the challenges woman face at work and at home as a result of paid work reflects the persistence of structural level constraints in women’s lives.

I underline that exploring gendered work and women’s empowerment at both the interactional/individual and structural levels calls for revisiting the concept of ‘doing’ gender. When focusing on change, analysing changes in women’s lives as a result of paid work in hotels, resorts and casinos has shown that workers continue ‘doing gender’ at work and at home. However, despite women ‘doing’ gender at work and at home, they are empowered and this indicates that perhaps ‘doing’ gender in and of itself does not matter – as Deutsch (2007: 115) notes, ‘perhaps differences that have no material foundation diminish over time’. She further questions, ‘can gendered differences exist without supporting ... power differences [between men and women]?’ (ibid: 117). This directs us to further consider the notion of difference – maybe gender difference is not the problem as long as it is not related to power relations and does not create or reproduce gender inequalities. That said, the problem is with power relations at work, at home and wider social relations that privilege men and discriminate against women, rendering them docile and subservient.

Furthermore, the study to some extent is reminiscent of the seminal work of Elson and Pearson (1981) in which it is revealed that employers of world market factories
rely on female labour, which is considered to be suitable as a result of women’s ‘innate capacities’; women’s ability to use their nimble fingers. In the case of interactive service work, as this research has shown, women are considered suitable for certain jobs by both employers and some (women) workers themselves because of their ‘natural’ qualities such as being good at listening and soft spoken. This illuminates the importance of how women are expected to do gender. If ‘gender as doing’ (West and Zimmerman, 1987, 2009) is so important and more so, is at the forefront of world markets, whether in manufacturing or services, more research is required on the ways in which men and women do gender at interactional level and how it relates to structural levels. This becomes particularly relevant if we are to focus on change as Deutsch (2007) suggests and consider what this could mean for women’s work and their empowerment.

**Scope for Future Research**

The study has raised some areas that can be taken up as future research. If workers are ‘doing’ gender differently, it also indicates the possibility of challenging gender inequality at the workplace for which detailed research is required on the wages and benefits received by male and female workers, which I could not analyse in this research. However, as I mentioned in Chapter Three, although I tried to, I was not able to gather information on wages and benefits from the sample establishments. If such information can be obtained and analysed, it could enrich the analysis on the gendered structures and in turn shed light on the possible gender inequalities within these establishments. This may, therefore, be taken up as an area of future research.
The role of the trade union emerged during the analysis and it seems to have significant implications for women’s empowerment. I highlighted that workers (particularly women) resisted organisational policies and practices because they relied on the support of the trade union. While affiliation with the trade union can in general be considered a resource for workers, it also appears to be an emerging structure that alters the structural dynamics. This necessitates looking at the evolving power configurations within the service industry which is beyond the scope of my thesis. Thus, the role of trade union in empowering men and women in the hotels, resorts and casinos may be taken up as a topic for future research.

The research has not examined the role of customers. There is a growing interest among sociologists to understand and examine (interactive) service work. On the one hand, recent studies (see Otis, 2008 on hotel work in particular) has pointed out the need to examine consumer markets and their implications on workers’ behaviour or their performance of service work. On the other hand, commercialisation and commodification of women’s feelings have been noted by some researchers (see Hochschild, [1983]2003; Brook, 2009a) who document women doing emotional labour in (interactive) service work. Likewise, the commodification of women’s appearances is an intrinsic part of the concept of aesthetic labour (see Warhurst et al., 2000). Moreover, in the context of Nepal, with government’s continued focus on the development of tourism sector – which to a significant extent relies on international consumer markets – there is a need to further explore a range of global (such as consumer markets and the role of customers) and local (role of trade union and country’s socio-economic, and political situation) factors that may have implications for women’s work and
their empowerment. Hence, more research will be required to unravel the complexities surrounding this inquiry.

**Concluding Thoughts**

This research has provided an insight into gendered work and women’s empowerment, drawing on the experiences of workers (micro-level) and perceptions of managers, male family members (meso-level) and policy experts (macro-level); it examines both interactional/individual and structural levels.

In summary, the thesis makes three arguments. The first is that gendered work is constructed by three distinct but related dimensions, namely: the gender division of labour; the gendered ideologies of managers and workers; and the gendering of skills through training. Second, men and women workers to a variable extent perform gendered emotional, aesthetic and (hetero)sexualised labour and such performances shape and are shaped by gendered work. Third, paid work in hotels, resorts and casinos empowers women to some extent at the individual level; however, structural constraints continue to impede their empowerment.

The research makes theoretical and empirical contributions to existing knowledge on gendered work and women’s empowerment. Theoretically, it contributes to understanding gendered work and women’s empowerment concurrently, which has rarely been done. It has shown that women’s work has implications for their empowerment. Empirically, the research makes a significant contribution in the context of Nepal by analysing interactive service work, which, to the best of my
knowledge, has not been done so far. Moreover, the thesis has shown that there is an experiential linkage between gendered work and women’s empowerment in that where women work, what they do and how they do their work all have implications for their empowerment.

The thesis revisits the concept of ‘doing’ gender and based on the empirical findings further suggests that perhaps ‘doing’ gender per se is not a problem (see Deutsch, 2007). It is the power relations at structural level that have an effect on women’s role, performance and status among others at the interactional level, all of which have implications for women’s empowerment. Hence, to reiterate, the main finding of this research is that doing gendered work can empower women at the individual level but that it is also important to take into account the structural context when considering women’s empowerment.
### Appendices

#### Appendix 1(a): Sectoral share of GDP and growth rate, 2000/01–2010/11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Hotels and Restaurants</th>
<th>Other Community, Social and Personal Service</th>
<th>Other Community, Social and Personal Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>37.64</td>
<td>17.79</td>
<td>47.47</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td></td>
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<td>46.56</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>-18.23</td>
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<td>2.01</td>
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<td>1.77</td>
<td>3.11</td>
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<td>2.91</td>
<td>-5.41</td>
</tr>
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<td>2005/06</td>
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<td>1.67</td>
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<td>6.33</td>
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<td>2006/07</td>
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<td>17.58</td>
<td>49.33</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
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<td>2009/10*</td>
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<td>1.72</td>
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<td>7.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11**</td>
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<td>52.22</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>7.37</td>
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</table>

Note: *Revised; ** Provisional

Source: Author's computation based on data sourced from Economic Survey 2011 (MoF, 2011)
Appendix 1(b): Tourist arrival by month, 1991-2011

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Jan</th>
<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Jun</th>
<th>Jul</th>
<th>Aug</th>
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<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>25,323</td>
<td>23,721</td>
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<td>19,362</td>
<td>24,429</td>
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<td>46,105</td>
<td>42,656</td>
<td>71,378</td>
<td>63,003</td>
<td>96,970</td>
<td>83,427</td>
<td>60,056</td>
<td>735,965</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Figures for 2011* are provisional data obtained from MoTCA by the author. Source: Tourism Statistics MoTCA (2010).

362
### Appendix 1(c): Literacy rate and level of education completed, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Literacy rate (in percentage)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 5 years and over</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 6 years and over</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 15 years and over</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Completed education level (in percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population 15 years and over</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never Attended</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than Primary</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Secondary</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree level</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 1(d): Academic courses and training on tourism and hotel sector - Provided by NATHM, 2008-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainings/Course</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor in Travel and Tourism (BTTM)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor in Hotel Management (BHM)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training in Hotel sector</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male dominated training</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Preparation and Control</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage Service Basic Food Preparation</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar Tender In-service Hotel Training</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Office</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women dominated training</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 2(a): Questionnaires distributed to 21 establishments

Organisational Details

Name of the Hotel/Resort/Casino:

Date of Establishment:

Employment Details

How many full time/part time employees do you have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Full Time (no.)</th>
<th>Part Time (no.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above data is as of ..................

Thank you.
Appendix 2(b): Questionnaires distributed to six sample establishments

**ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS:** Registered name of the Institution: Date of Establishment:

Who are the owners of the hotel/casino/resort? (Please tick)
- Nepali nationals
- Foreign nationals

If foreigners, which nationality (ies) are they:

**Management Details:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Staff</th>
<th>Nepali Nationals</th>
<th>Foreign Nationals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EMPLOYMENT DETAILS**

1. Terms of employment:

How many full time/part time employees do you have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Full Time (no.)</th>
<th>Part Time (no.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Work Timings:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Hours a day</th>
<th>Days a Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. **Data on Staff**: Number of men and women in each department according to the level of employment). *Please add the columns as per your requirement.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Level of staff</th>
<th>No. of Workers</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Benefits provided**

What are the benefits provided? Please explain. What are they? Who gets what?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Benefits Provided</th>
<th>Male Workers</th>
<th>Female Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Days off per week</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Overtime scheme</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Minimum wage structure</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Public holidays entitled (any facility for Overtime)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Uniform</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Transport</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Meals</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Leave accumulation per year</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sick Leave</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Maternity Leave</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Paternity Leave</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kriya Expenses (expenses for Mourning)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gratuity Scheme</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Allowances – education for children</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Medial allowances</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Festive allowances</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Any other benefits</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TRADE UNION

Name of Trade Union:
Name of the President/General Secretary of the trade union: Contact details:

Percentage of staff who are trade union members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Trade union members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

POLICIES /DOCUMENTS

(I would like to request for an interview with you during which I look forward to collecting the following documents related to my research.)

- What are the policies/ guidelines that govern the management of the workers in your institution? (HR policies/Recruitment/Development of staff/Anti-Sexual harassment policy/HIV – AIDS policy at the work place). Could you please share a copy of the documents?

- What about Gender Equality Policy? Does the organisation have one? Yes/No If yes, please could you share the document(s)? If no, we could discuss further during the interview.

- Could you share the salary structure of men and women workers?

- Could you please share your marketing brochures/documents/annual reports etc.? I would appreciate receiving past documents along with the present ones.

- If you have any booklets, information sheets issued to workers related to behaviour, dress, use of language etc, please could you also provide these documents?

Thank you.
I look forward to meeting you soon.
Appendix 3(a): Semi-structured interview schedule for managers

PERSONAL DETAILS:
Name: Age: Gender:
Marital Status: Educational Background:

OPERATIONAL ISSUES:

Employment trends:
• What is the perception of management towards men workers?
• What is the perception of management towards women workers?
• What helps the men workers to stay employed?
• What helps the women workers to stay employed?
• What are the reasons for some departments dominated by men workers and some women workers?
• What is the staff turnover? Generally, why do staff (men/women) leave?

Salary and benefits:
• How does the salary system work?
• Are there any special facilities for men/women workers?
  If yes, Please explain. How many staff (men/women) enjoy these facilities?
  If no, are there any demands from staff? Yes/No. If yes, please explain what they are. What does the management plan to do with those demands?

Perception towards workers:
• Why are men and women attracted to the hotel industry? (Which group of men/women, age, ethnicity) apply the most and in which level? Please explain.
• What does the management look for in women workers?
• What does the management look for in men workers?
• How do men and women workers get along, among and within themselves?
What are your personal observations about workers' behaviour, attitude and progress at work - any differences in men/women?

Empowerment:

Have you observed any changes in women who have been working in your hotel/resort/casino, in terms of: Lifestyle/Attitude/Behaviour

What do you understand by the term ‘empowerment’?

What are your views on the empowerment of workers in general?

How would you explain women’s empowerment in this industry? Can you explain some cases?

What are the changes if any required with respect to women working in this industry? How could this be done?

ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES:

Policies

Based on policies shared with me:

How successful has the management been in implementing the policies (shared with me)? Would you like to share some experiences on some of the policies? Could you discuss further the gender equality policy?

Recruitment Practices

Please explain the recruitment process.

What is the recruitment process for full time/part time or men/women staff?

What is the probation period? How is it allocated? How does it vary with the level of job and with men/women workers?

Development of staff

What does the management do for staff development? (Training/Job rotation) Please elaborate. (e.g., the different kinds of training for men/women staff in different grades)

How are staffs kept motivated?

How does the reward system work? (cash/monetary rewards or other systems)
**Management and labour relations**

- How would you describe the relationship between the management and the trade union?
- What are the problems you face in terms of labour relations? What has been the latest problem? When was it? Please explain the nature of the problem and what happened? (Was it solved and how? Why not?)

**Others**

- Please explain some of the key services provided by your hotel that attract customers. (Which service(s) do customers make use of more often?) Do women provide these?
- What are the challenges for your hotel/casino/resort? Please explain.
- How have you /do you plan to overcome such challenges?
- What are the factors that affect the operation of the hotel?

*Is there anything you want to ask me?*

Thank you.
Appendix 3(b): Semi-structured interview schedule for workers

_Name of Sample establishment:_

**PERSONAL DETAILS: Part - A**

Name (optional): Contact No:
Sex: Age:
Religion: Educational Background:
Marital Status:
If married/living with partner- details of spouse/partner:
Age: Occupation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Children:</th>
<th>Boys/Age:</th>
<th>Girls/Age:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Structure of family presently living in – Joint/Nuclear/living with friends-partner/other types
Who else is earning an income in your family?
Are you from the Kathmandu Valley? Yes /No If no, where did you grow up?
If migrated, why did you migrate? When did you migrate? What have you done since migration?

**WORK RELATED**

- What were you doing before joining this hotel/resort?
- Were you in paid work?
- When did you join this hotel/resort? (If married- Before/after marriage)
- How long have you worked in this hotel/resort?
- When you joined the hotel, in which department/level were you recruited?

**Department**-

- In which department/unit are you presently working?
- How long have you been working in this department?

**Level of work**-

- What is your designation/title /level at work?
- How long have you been working at this level?
- Please describe your journey to this level since you joined. (Promotional history)
**Working styles**

- Are you now working as a temporary or permanent employee?
  - Temporary/Permanent
- If permanent, which year/month did you become permanent?
- Your work schedule: *Full time* / *Part time*
- How many hours a day do you work?
- How many days a week do you work?

**Part - B**

*Employment Details:*

- Why did you join this hotel? (What motivated/inspired you to join?)
- How did you get this job? (through friends/advertisements) Please tell me the story. Was it easy or difficult?
- When you started paid work, did you face any challenges? Yes / No, If yes, what were they and how did you overcome them? Please explain. □ What was it like when you started the hotel/casino work in particular? □ Have you worked in other departments of this hotel/casino? Yes/No
- If yes, please describe your transfer(s) to various departments so far (transfer history).
- In which department did you like your work the best/the least? Why?
- Which department do you think you best fit in/can work in? Why?
- Did you receive any training before joining the hotel? Yes/No

  If yes, please could you explain the kind of training (List all).

  If yes, how was the training helpful? (Which one(s) was/were helpful and how?)

- Have you been provided any training by the hotel since you joined? Yes/No If yes, please describe the nature of the training(s).
- Have the training been useful? If yes, how? If no, why not? □ What training/skill do you think can help you in your work?
Terms of employment

- Do you have a contract letter? Yes/No. If no, do you know why?
- Do you have a job description? Yes/No. If no, how do you what you are to do? If yes, what does your job description say?
- Does your work and the job description match? If No, how does it differ?
- What does your work involve? Please describe the nature of your work. What do you think about your job in the hotel? Why do you think so?
- What do you think is the management expectation from you in terms of behaviour and attitude?
- How have you been able to meet (not meet) the management expectations? Yes/No
- If yes - how? If not - why not? Income
- What are your views on the salary/benefits you receive?
- How has your income helped you?
- How has it helped your family?
- What do you spend your income on? Is there anything specific in which you spend for yourself?)
- Do you control your own income? Yes/No If no, why not? Who controls your income then?
- Do you think you could earn more elsewhere? Yes/No. If yes, Where and why? If no, why not?

Benefits

- Are you aware of all the benefits provided? Yes/No If yes, what are the benefits you receive? If not, why not?
- Do you know of any special facilities for men/women workers? Yes/No If yes, Please explain.
- Do you enjoy these facilities? Yes/No. If yes, what do you think of such facilities? If not, what facilities do you think should be provided and to whom? Why?
- Regarding salary and benefits, do you think there should be any changes? Please explain.
**Job Satisfaction**
- Are you happy working in the hotel/casino? Yes/No
- Please explain with reasons.
- What is it that you like most/like least about your work?

**EMPOWERMENT AND PAID WORK**
- How would you describe the changes in your life, after you worked in this hotel?
- What was different earlier? Please give some examples.
- Have you heard the word ‘empowerment’? What does ‘empowerment’ mean to you?
- Do you think you are empowered? Yes/No, why do you think so?
- How would you describe your relationship (with male and female members) at home before and after you joined the hotel?
- How would you explain your relationship with colleagues at work? Has your relationship with your colleagues changed over time? Why do you think so? How?

**WORKING ENVIRONMENT**
- How would you explain your satisfaction with the physical environment at work?
- How would you explain your satisfaction with the psychological/emotional environment at work?
- Have you or any colleagues come across any forms of sexual harassment (verbal/physical) at the workplace? Yes No.
- If yes, can you explain? What was the consequence?
- How much does your appearance matter for working in the hotel? How does it matter?
- What are your views on your male colleagues? Please explain your relationship with them.
- What are your views on your female colleagues? Please explain your relationship with them.
TRADE UNION

- Do you have a trade union at your workplace? Yes/No If yes, are you a member?
- If yes, when did you join? Why?
- How active are you in the union activities?
- If not, why are you not involved?
- What is it that you
- Like best about the trade union ...
- Like least about the trade union ...
- Do you want the trade union to do anything specific? What is it?

Is there anything you want to ask me?

Snowballing

Could you provide me the name of one of your colleague (male/female) in............department who you could recommend to be one of my research participants like you? Someone you think is willing to share his/her experiences and talk to me. Do you have his/her contact number?

Thank you.
Appendix 3(c): In-depth interview schedule for women workers (selected)

Name (optional):

CHANGES IN LIFE

• How do you perceive yourself after earning an income/got paid work?
• If you were already in paid work earlier, what difference has working in the hotel/casino/resort made?
• After you got paid work in the hotel/casino/resort, please explain if you experienced any changes– at home, in the community? How do you think the other family members (and the society) perceive your work? Why do you think so?
• How have these changes affected you? (Economic/Social/Political/Cultural)

WORK AND HOME

• Before you got into paid work, who performed the housework?
• Did you hire someone? Please explain how your home was managed?
• At present, please explain how your home is managed? Who does what? Do you pay for some external help?
• How would you describe your life now compared to when you were not in paid work?
• Are you overburdened? If yes, Please explain. If no, what could be the reasons?
• Managing your home and working full time, how do you balance your life? In your opinion, how could this balance be met?
• Who controls your income?
• When it comes to spending, who decides on what? Please explain with some examples.

EMPOWERMENT

• What does ‘empowerment’ mean to you? How would you define your empowerment? (I will ask this again to see if they give the same answer as before)
• Are you empowered? Yes/No
• Why do you think so? Can you give me some examples that would help explain your empowerment?
• For you, what are the factors that would lead to women’s empowerment?
• How would you explain women’s empowerment in Nepal?
• What are the changes, if any, required empowering women? How could this be done?

**WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

• Why do you think men and women are placed in some specific jobs in the hotel industry? *(I will give some examples and provoke them to provide their own views)*
• Have you experienced any difficult times at work? Yes/No
• Would you like to describe these? (Date and nature of difficulty)
• Has the problem been solved? Yes/No - If yes, How?
• Are you involved in any other organisations/networks? Yes/No and Why?
• If yes, please describe how you are involved and how you have benefited.

**OTHER ISSUES**

• Does any member of your family work in the hotel industry? Yes/No, If yes – details.
• If you have any women family member working, could you explain if you have observed any changes in her life after she got the paid work in the hotel industry?
• Would you suggest to your family members to join this hotel/other hotels? Yes/No and Why?
• Would you like to share the best moment/opportunity you had while working in this job? Is there any incident that you think was unpleasant (not so positive) for you?

Is there anything you want to ask me?
Thank you.

*Request women if their male family members will be willing to speak to me.*
Appendix 3(d): Semi-structured interview schedule for male family members

PERSONAL DETAILS:
Name (optional): 
Age: 
Marital Status: 
Educational Background: 
Occupation: 

INFORMATION OF THE WOMEN RELATED:
• Name of the woman who is related to the interviewee: 
• Relationship with woman worker: 
• How long have you known the woman? 
• Where does she work? For how long has she been working in that hotel? 
• How did she get the job? Can you tell me the story? 
• What do you think about her work in the hotel industry? (like/dislike) Why do you think so? 
• Do you think she is happy working in the hotel? Why do you think so? 
• Have you motivated her to continue her job? Or have you tried to convince her to quit the job? Why? 

EMPOWERMENT:
• Have you heard the word ‘empowerment’? What does ‘empowerment’ mean to you? 
• Do you think she is empowered? Why? 
• In your opinion, what are the factors that would lead to women’s empowerment? How has her income helped her or the family? Who controls her income? 
• Do you think she would earn more elsewhere? Where and why? 
• Do you see any changes in her after she joined the hotel/casino/resort or recently? Please explain. 
• What is your opinion on women who work in the hotel industry? Do you have the same opinion on her too? Why? 
• Why do you think so? Has that changed now? If so, how? If no, what could be the reasons? 
• What do you think are the benefits or challenges for women in paid work?
• How do you think the other family members (and the society) perceive her work?
• Please explain how were the household activities managed before when she was not working? How is it managed now?
• If she has to leave her job in the hotel, what do you think she should do? Why? What do you think she would do? Why?

Is there anything you want to ask me?

Thank you.
Appendix 3(e): Semi-structured interview schedule for policy experts

PERSONAL DETAILS:

Name:
Designation: Representing Institution/area of expertise:
Age: Gender:

TOURISM IN NEPAL:

- How do you see the role of hotel industry and the casinos in the overall development of Nepal?
- What are your views on the Tourism policy/Act, guidelines for hotels/casinos?
- To what extent do you think the new (draft) tourism policy addresses gender issues?
- Nepali citizens are not allowed to enter the casinos. What do you think is the reason behind this? However, in reality the casinos have mainly Nepali customers. What is your opinion on this?

WOMEN IN NEPAL:

- What are your views on women's role and contribution to the economic development of Nepal?
- How would you explain the success/failure of mainstreaming gender into economic policies?
- How would you describe the role of women in tourism? In the hotel industry? In the casinos?
- What is your opinion on the gender equality bill?
- What are your views on the laws and policies that help or hinder women’s empowerment in general?
- What does women’s empowerment in Nepal mean to you? How do you think women in Nepal need to be empowered?
- What are the changes if any required in this context? How could this be done?
WOMEN WORKING IN THE HOTEL AND CASINO INDUSTRY

- What are your views on the expansion of the hotel industry?
- How do you see the role of FDI in the hotel industry, in the present context as well as in the future?
- What is your opinion on women working in the hotel industry? What about women working in the casinos?
- Do you think that the tourism policy and gender equality bill complement each other? How?
- What do you think are the main concerns for women working in the hotel industry/casinos?
- Do you have any recommendations for the hotel industry/casinos/trade unions in terms of employment issues, particularly in promoting women’s employment?

Is there anything you want to ask me?
Thank you.
Appendix 4: Guiding notes for focus group discussions

Estimated time: 45 – 60 minutes Some TIPS

Motivate participants to move on with the discussion.

Remind what the researcher is interested in.

Emphasise that different perspectives are important and to speak/elaborate. Emphasise hearing about stories – participants’ experiences.

A) Introduction:

- Introduction (Request all participants to introduce themselves and mention the level/department they work for in the casino and the number of years worked.)
- Explain the research objectives and offer to let them know about the outcome of the research if they are interested.
- Explain how confidentiality is protected and also the importance of having to record the discussion (not to miss out on their stories/information)
- Obtain consent - Consent form to be signed.

B) Issues to be discussed:

Entering the Casino Work:

- Were you working in the same kind of job? Can you explain briefly the sectors you have worked prior to working in this casino?
- Why did you join this casino?
- How did you get this job?
- How easy/difficult is it to get this job? What do you think got you this job?
- In your views, what are the employers looking for when hiring workers (men/women)?
- What were the benefits/challenges you had to face when getting into paid work in the casino? Is it easy/difficult, now? How? Do you think it is the same for your male/female colleagues? Why is it so?
Nature of work in the Casino –
- What do you have to remember to do when working? (What does the management tell you to do?)
- Could you describe the most important aspects of your job?
- How important is what you look like for the job you do? Could you explain with some examples?
- How do your male colleagues behave with you and how do you think they ought to behave?
- To what extent do you think sexuality is important in the casino? How?
- Job Security (How secure is your job? /Is there anything you can do to make your job secure? What is required for job security?)
- What is the salary structure? What about tips?
- What are the benefits you receive in this job?
- How happy/unhappy are you with your job? Could you explain the reasons?
- What do you like best/ least about your job?

C) Closing:
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me about yourself and the work you do which you feel you have left out?
- Do you have any questions to ask me?

Thank the participants and keep the option of returning to them if required for further information.
Appendix 5: Guiding notes for observations

Some points for making observations on:

- Dress code
- Language used
- Physical placement of - male workers/female workers
- Physical environment of the work place – posters, warnings for the workers?
- Nature of work performed - male workers/female workers
- Workers enjoyment in their work - male workers/female workers
- Workers behavior towards male/female customers
- Interaction among male and female workers
  - Banter? Sexual innuendo?
    - Light hearted sexualised statements/comments
- Interaction of workers with Seniors/supervisors (male/female)
- Off duty areas for staff to stay
Gendered Work and Women’s Empowerment:
A Study of the Tourism Industry in Nepal

I have been briefed about the research as mentioned above. I am willing to participate in the interview with the understanding that the information I provide will be in confidence.

Name of Participant:

Signature: ______________________

Date:
### Appendix 7(a): Demographic profile of managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manager of</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Platinum hotel</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Post graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold hotel</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Post graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun resort</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Post graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon resort</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Post graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dazzle casino</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Post graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glitter casino</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Post graduate</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note: For anonymity reasons, the gender of the managers is not presented.
Source: Field Visit, 2009
Appendix 7(b): Demographic profile of male family members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Name of women worker (establishment)</th>
<th>Relation with women worker</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sirish</td>
<td>Sabina (Platinum hotel)</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Medical Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahesh</td>
<td>Uttara (Gold hotel)</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Completed schooling</td>
<td>Casino worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabindra</td>
<td>Kalpana (Moon resort)</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>Casino worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogesh</td>
<td>Pranita (Dazzle casino)</td>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>Casino worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandeep</td>
<td>Anju (Glitter casino)</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>Medical Representative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Visit, 2009
Appendix 7(c): Work and demographic profile of hotel workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establishment/Department</th>
<th>Pseudonym (worker)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Number (age -yrs) of children</th>
<th>Source of income prior to the present job</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Platinum hotel</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness/Spa</td>
<td>Ramakant</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Completed schooling</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Keeping</td>
<td>Rajesh</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1 (0.5)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td>Pradeep</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Swosti</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Keeping</td>
<td>Sabina</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2 (8, 6)</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Sujata*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1 (4)</td>
<td>Construction company</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fitness/Spa</td>
<td>Ramita*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>Dolma*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gold hotel</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Reception</td>
<td>Bikash</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Dinesh</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Shop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Barun</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Gita</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Keeping</td>
<td>Uttara*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Completed schooling</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2 (14, 9)</td>
<td>Resort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Rashmi</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fitness/Spa</td>
<td>Sukanya</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Non government office</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Sex: M - Male and F – Female; Marital status: M - Married, U – Unmarried; *In-depth interviewees (Sujata, Ramita and Uttara)
Source: Field Visit, 2009
Appendix 7(d): Work and demographic profile of resort workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establishment/ Department</th>
<th>Pseudonym (worker)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Number (age yrs) of children</th>
<th>Source of income prior to the present job</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>Ramesh</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>Health Club/Spa</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>U</td>
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<td>House Keeping</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Not attended school</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1 (15)</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
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<td>Meena*</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Beautician</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage (Production)</td>
<td>Karuna*</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Moon resort</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Suresh</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Somraj</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2 (18, 13)</td>
<td>Wood carving</td>
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<tr>
<td>House Keeping</td>
<td>Kalpana*</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2 (15, 9)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Keeping</td>
<td>Tarini</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1 (18)</td>
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<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>Babita</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>House Keeping</td>
<td>Runa</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>Primary</td>
<td>M</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Sex: M – Male and F – Female; Marital status: M – Married and U – Unmarried; *In-depth interviewees (Meena and Kalpana) Source: Field Visit, 2009
Appendix 7(e): Work and demographic profile of casino workers interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establishment/ Department</th>
<th>Pseudonym (worker)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Number (age -yrs) of children</th>
<th>Source of income (job) prior to the present job</th>
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<td>Dazzle casino</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials/Store</td>
<td>Samrat</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1 (22 months)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming</td>
<td>Pritam</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouncer (Security)</td>
<td>Devika</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>Pranita*</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3 (14, 12, 6)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slot Machine</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>2 (5, 8)</td>
<td>Health project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Neeta</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Hospital work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glitter casino</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage Service</td>
<td>Rabin</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Adarsh</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouncer (Security)</td>
<td>Dipen</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Sheela</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaming</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Sales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guest Relations</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>U</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>Higher secondary</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes: M – Male and F – Female; Marital status: M – Married, U – Unmarried, W – Widow; *In-depth interviewees (Pranita, Anju and Amita) Source: Field Visit, 2009
### Appendix 7(f): Demographic profile of women in focus group discussions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Years of experience in casino</th>
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<td>Unmarried</td>
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<td>Unmarried</td>
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<td>Food and Beverage Service</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
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<td>Basanti</td>
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<td>Married</td>
<td>Higher secondary</td>
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<td>Neetu</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>Higher secondary</td>
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<td>Kavita</td>
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<td>Married</td>
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Source: Field Visit, 2009
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