

English at Work: Enhancing Women's Employability and Workplace Experiences

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Abstract

In the context of the prevalent gender disparity in Nepal, the empowerment of employed women remains crucial, as only a limited number of women hold senior roles. Despite the influential impact of English on global employability and career advancement, its role in shaping women's workplace experiences in Nepal has remained underexplored. This study explored how employed women describe their navigation of the workplace experience and how English proficiency influences their professional advancement. As narrative research, I conducted two rounds of informal interviews with four purposively sampled senior-level women from diverse fields. I then analyzed their responses, categorizing them into relevant themes and sub-themes, and examined them through Sen's Capability Approach. The findings indicate that while women appreciate their roles, they face certain Barriers to excelling/ excellence, such as workplace biases and societal expectations. Additionally, English proficiency as a capability of employed women serves as a catalyst for their professionalism, both enabling opportunities and presenting obstacles, with limited proficiency resulting in inequalities. The study recommends the need for equitable workplace practices, assessing workplace dynamics, and acknowledging the role of English language proficiency for women's well-being, thereby fostering inclusivity and gender equity in professional settings.

Keywords: English, employed women, workplace communication, women empowerment, professional advancement

Understanding Women's Workplace Experiences and Examining English for Empowerment

Women's empowerment and gender equality have become prominent global topics. Several scholarly studies and initiatives undertaken by UN agencies in Nepal have primarily emphasized the fundamental aspects of empowerment, including raising awareness about women's rights, providing access to education, and encouraging women's participation in the workforce. However, my professional experiences offer a different perspective. Having worked in higher education for

years and interacted with numerous employed women across various fields, I have been inspired to explore how women experience and perceive English as a tool for their empowerment in the workplace.

My observation reveals persistent gender inequality in Nepal's workplaces, with women holding limited positions of power, prestige, and equitable pay. Women are underrepresented compared to men at the highest scientific and organizational levels and systematically receive less funding for research (Bedi et al., 2012). Even though they work at the same job levels in different areas of science, they tend to receive a lower salary (Shen, 2013). This is also the case in Nepal, where the latest global gender gap report, 2023, ranks Nepal at 116th, down from 96th in 2022, indicating an increase in disparities in labor force participation, wages, and representation in senior roles. Women in Nepal are paid less for their work and are less likely to be hired as permanent contract staff (Coyle et al., 2014). This status is prone to degrade the country's overall economic, social, and sustainable development.

Research on women's empowerment in Nepal has addressed a range of factors, including age, education, wealth, and gender equality programs, which are identified as key determinants (Van Dongen et al., 2024). Additionally, research has explored the positive role of ICT in empowering women (Lal, 2011), as well as the challenges faced by Nepali women entrepreneurs, including domestic responsibilities, working conditions, and wage disparities (Bushell, 2018). However, there has been relatively little scholarly focus on women's experiences at work. I believe that unless we understand how employed women experience their workplaces and identify the factors that can help them grow and sustain their careers, true women's empowerment cannot be fully achieved.

Furthermore, English is becoming a crucial language for workplace communication in Nepal, significantly impacting employability and career advancement. It has become a 'must-have' for participation in the global knowledge economy (Brooker, 2018), and functions as a key to access learning opportunities, societal mobility, and self-esteem development (Esch, 2009). Studies indicate that English enhances employability skills, offering greater benefits in the workplace (MRTDI, M.M. (2012). *Employability skills for planners: A scoping report into the changing requirements of planning employers*. Retrieved from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/Employability_Skills_for_Planners.pdf

. Therefore, overcoming the barriers to learning English is essential for women's empowerment (Wonder Foundation, 2016). Prior studies also emphasize that women in senior roles require higher English proficiency to operate effectively, to advance in their careers, to earn better salaries, and to secure overseas opportunities (Solly et al., 2015).

Notably, a 25% salary gap exists between those who use English and those who do not (Brooker, 2018). Therefore, I believe that examining the relationship between the empowerment of employed women and their English language proficiency is both relevant and necessary.

Gendered Work Experience

It would not be an overstatement to say that workplace culture has been created by men and naturally favors men. At the same time, it cannot be denied that harmonious work relationships among men and women at work enhance superior performance in the organization, as it requires a greater number of hands and minds (Kaul, 2009). However, a conflicting practice is prevalent in organizations worldwide. For instance, Harvard Business Review (2005) and IT Magazines (2005) state that organizations with more women board directors have a higher return on equity (53%), sales (42%), and invested capital (66%) than those with a limited representation of women on the board (as cited in Catalyst, 2007). However, women are found to quit their roles after reaching the apex of their careers due to dissatisfaction with their workplace experiences Cormier, D. (2006). Why Top Professional Women Still Feel Like Outsiders. Employment Relations Today. Retrieved from http://www.cormierassociates.com/ERT_Outsiders_DCormier.pdf

In Nepal, employed women face multiple obstacles to their full participation in the work environment, and the struggle often extends to their homes, streets, and workplaces (Coyle et al., 2014). Therefore, it is essential to study gendered experiences, as it would help us create a work environment that is favourable for both men and women.

Gendered workplace experiences are unpleasant for employed women. Many women, after completing their education, join the workforce with the expectation of earning an identity and securing professional recognition. However, several young women are unaware of the substantial obstacles they would face to attain equality (Gregory & Connolly, 2007). For instance, women entrepreneurs in technology often face resistance from colleagues within and outside their organization, as well as societal pressure to maintain a suitable work-family balance. These factors hinder their empowerment and perpetuate persistent gender stereotypes (Ezzedeen & Zikic, 2012). Similarly, in Nepal, employed women encounter workplace challenges that contradict their expectations, significantly affecting their journey to empowerment.

Given the gender disparity in Nepal, the pressing need for women's empowerment, the obstacles of gendered workplace experiences, and English serving as a valuable tool in enhancing employability and enabling women to navigate workplace demand, this study attempts to explore women's workplace experiences and examine how English contributes to their professional empowerment. The study addresses the research question: How do employed women in Nepal describe their experiences at the workplace and the role of English in enhancing their employability and workplace experiences?

The Capability Approach (CA)

The Capability Approach was pioneered and developed by Amartya Sen. It is an evaluative framework for examining an individual's well-being. CA centralizes three elements in an individual's well-being: capabilities, functioning, and freedom of choice, and argues that

expanding the real freedoms people enjoy is development (Sen, 1999). Capabilities are anything that can improve a person's living, and their actions or values, while functioning refers to what a person does or is (Sen, 2005). Sen (1992) further argues that the evaluation of well-being should be measured within the space of capabilities rather than functioning. So, CA provides a foundation for exploring women's opportunities in the workplace.

CA emphasizes people's freedoms and capabilities to lead their lives, rather than just having better income or wealth. Justice, equality, and development cannot be achieved solely through income, material possessions, or the satisfaction of preferences (Oosterlaken, 2009). By emphasizing genuine freedom, this study seeks to understand women's empowerment beyond mere economic achievement. Additionally, the study is grounded in the fact that the capabilities of everyone vary; some people may consider economic production as a primary input, while others may consider political, social, and organizational practices equally important. Therefore, this study focuses on exploring the capabilities of employed women, including their proficiency in the English language, in relation to their overall well-being, rather than solely on economic growth.

Robeyns, in 2006, identified nine different types of applications of CA, one of which was assessing gender inequalities. CA applies to gender inequalities and posits that conversion of goods and services into functioning is influenced by personal, social, and environmental conversion factors (Oosterlaken, 2009). Therefore, this theory is reasonable for exploring the experiences of employed women at work, aiming to understand and encourage their development, as well as examine their English language proficiency as a capability.

Method

The paper adopts an interpretive research paradigm to explore and understand the women's experiences at work and the role of English. The interpretive paradigm emphasizes the differences in culture and life experience, suggesting that truths and knowledge are subjective (Ryan, 2018). Therefore, researchers must understand the existing diversity between people as social participants (Saunders et al., 2012). This study is grounded in the understanding that women's experiences are complex and dynamic, as they can interpret their experiences within the context of their social systems.

Furthermore, I purposively selected four women from various sectors, including civil service, IT-based companies, and NGOs, who met specific criteria, Such as being employed, holding senior roles, holding senior roles, and using English in their professional lives, because purposive sampling is commonly used in qualitative research (Bryman, 2008). Finally, to ensure the anonymity of participants and protect their privacy, pseudonyms were used for all participants.

As Cohen et al. (2018) suggest, researchers must examine situations through the eyes of participants rather than their own. I conducted two rounds of informal interviews with limited probing questions for data collection. The second round was necessary to gain detailed

experiences of women, which were not sufficient to make the first round’s response. The data collection process began with flexible, unstructured questions, with participants’ responses guiding further probing. I actively listened to experiences, audio-recorded the interview with verbal consent, and followed an iterative process that included data collection, transcription, coding, theme construction, and discussion.

The table below provides an overview of the research participants, identified by pseudonyms, along with their respective job titles and affiliated agencies.

Table 1: Participant details

| Participant (Pseudonyms) | Job Title | Agency |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Ms. Modest | Government Officer | National Human Rights Commission Nepal |
| Ms. Nice | Sales Executive | US-based IT company |
| Ms. Sweet | Business Development Officer | Logistic company |
| Ms. Tiger | Community Mobilization and Learning Continuity Specialist | USAID - Early Grade Learning |

With their consent, I audio-recorded their interviews and documented their unique facial expression and tone of communication in my diary. Then, I fully transcribed the audio and identified unique and common themes through coding. Although participants used a mixed language (Nepali and English), I translated only the Nepali responses relevant to the research questions into English, using them as direct quotations in the discussion. I thematically analyzed the participants’ experiences and organized the themes to address the research questions.

Findings and Discussion

The analysis of the collected data resulted in two overarching themes that provide valuable insights into the research question: Navigating workplace experiences and hurdles, and English for employability and professional empowerment. Each theme is discussed along with various sub-themes, incorporating participants’ voices and relevant literature, to offer a detailed understanding of the findings.

Navigating the Workplace: Experiences and Hurdles

The participants shared a rich array of experiences, highlighting both the victories and obstacles they have encountered in the workplace. It was impressive to observe their excitement and pride in holding senior roles at work. Their expressions communicated that they enjoyed the power,

influence, and responsibilities of their positions, believing that their hard work, exceptional prior experience, and academic qualifications had helped them avoid being directly dominated in the workplace. Freedom to enjoy such capabilities can be achieved only by overcoming organizational constraints (Nambir, 2019). However, observing hidden biases that affect other women employees and their similar past experiences while they fulfill their responsibilities continues to undermine their confidence. The attitudes of male colleagues, gendered favoritism, and societal realities leave them anxious about being prone to workplace discrimination in the future.

Embracing the Power and Influence of a Job Title and Its Responsibilities

The participants appear to enjoy the power and influence associated with their jobs. While sharing their job responsibilities, they were enthusiastic and detailed, reflecting a positive attitude towards their roles and a sense of competence. The five characteristics fostering employee empowerment included the sense of competence, a sense of self-organization, a sense of being effective, a sense of being meaningful or essential, and a sense of trust in others (Hieu, 2020). These qualities suggest that employed women who take on the power and influence of their responsibilities are a sign of their empowerment.

Miss Modest, who works at the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), expressed that her prior work experiences in an INGO related to human rights made her transition into her current role smoother, portraying her sense of competence. She proudly expressed her job responsibilities, which include developing proposals, managing contracts, and handling budgeting and project analysis, reflecting her confidence in her abilities. She said, *“Once at NHRC, it’s not just about reporting; it’s about recommending actions to the government based on the rights we’re advocating for”*, highlighting the sense of being vital as she perceives her work as influential in advocating human rights.

Similarly, Ms. Sweet expressed a greater sense of satisfaction holding a key role in client management. After pitching their services, presenting demos, and negotiating, she creates proposals. Her statement, *“Once the client is on board, I handle everything to ensure they are well taken care of”*, highlighted her sense of effectiveness in shaping client relationships and ensuring the success of her company’s services. Likewise, Ms. Nice’s ability to develop proposals, manage contracts, handle budgeting, and analyze project challenges suggests a high level of trust in her skills and decision-making within her organization.

So, the employed women expressed being technically competent for their roles and responsibilities, resulting in a positive attitude towards their jobs, which serves as a crucial element driving their empowerment.

Echoes of Society: Morals and Practices in the Workplace

The participants described the workplace environment as an echo of society, reflecting exact beliefs and practices. They emphasized how general experience in Nepali society, where men

are often considered right and powerful, hold the majority of influential positions, and family members create barriers for women, is vividly evident in the workplace culture. According to the World Development Report (2024), there are three main elements for limiting one's access to opportunities and creating barriers: a) parental and family characteristics, b) where the person grows up, lives, and works, and c) prejudice arising from societal norms, gender, and ethnicity. Unfortunately, employed women in Nepal experience all three of these barriers.

The description of the workplace by Ms. Modest explicitly indicates the second element (i.e., place) of barriers to empowerment. She compares it to a mirror of our patriarchal society, stating, *"The nature of workplaces reflects the character of the society we belong to"*. She further elaborated that just as the father in the family is often observed as an influential figure who makes key decisions for the family, similarly, almost every department in a government office is led by a male chairperson. The next participant, Ms. Nice, shared her experience of having only men as HODs (Head of Department) throughout her entire career, while women occupied only deputy positions. All the participants work under male bosses and can hardly recall working under a female leader.

Another societal barrier for women is the lack of freedom of choice and full participation in their profession. Women encounter multiple challenges to their full participation in the working environment (Coyle et al., 2014), while their own family, along with male colleagues, significantly contribute to those hurdles. For instance, Ms. Modest expressed her dissatisfaction with her husband's role in her career. Sharing about her husband's lack of support in her career, she said, "If my husband had supported me with the kid, I would not have missed a learning opportunity in a one-month field study in the far-western region that focused on the impact of the virus on prisoners." Similarly, Ms. Nice shared her experience of speaking to young ladies in the seminar about the reasons for avoiding a career in coding. She explained that the most common reason was the nature of the job, which requires staying late at the office to address software issues. Parents usually restrict their daughters from staying out late, and this case gets even more challenging after marriage.

While development needs the eradication of key sources of unfreedom, such as systematic social deprivation and repressive states (Sen, 1999), the prejudices of men have been detaining the advancing feet of women, oppressing their well-being. The vicarious experience of Ms. Modest sending a man instead of a woman employee for training, even though it was in a domestic setting. When inquired about the decision, the reasoning provided was irrelevant, stating that an additional resource would be required for childcare, which would be costly. Similarly, Ms. Nice also experienced an incident of such prejudice when she interviewed two women with comparable qualifications and experience for a job. However, the final call was made by someone senior to her who rejected one candidate primarily because she had a child at home, assuming she would not have time for work.

Hence, such prejudices against women, rooted in parental attitudes, societal norms, and workplace culture, as stated by the World Development Report (2024), have been significantly experienced by my participants, hindering their empowerment.

Gender Imbalance and Its Impact on Relational Skills in the Workplace

Enhancing three key areas — technical skills, relational skills, and influential skills — is a crucial factor in professional success (Hyter, 2020). Despite possessing technical competence, my participants faced challenges in developing relationships due to gender imbalances in the workplace. Relational skills refer to the ability to connect with others and have them relate to you, which is often easier with people we feel comfortable with. However, mainly having male colleagues and holding a patriarchal belief system hindered women from building their relational skills.

The participants were acutely aware of these dynamics. Ms. Tiger shared that male colleagues often have informal bonding opportunities, such as meeting after work, offering drinks, or attending overnight events, which are not feasible for women in our society. This experience corroborates the observations of Ms. Modest and Ms. Nice, who also noted a similar pattern. Ms. Nice, in particular, witnessed the salary and promotion disparities among the employees due to such informal bonding. She stated, “Those who become close friends with the CEO, meet outside of work, often tend to get promoted faster”.

Therefore, these workplace experiences and practices create hurdles to the enhancement of relational skills for employed women, ultimately affecting their professional attainment.

English: A Key to Employability and Workplace Empowerment

I believe workplace empowerment is a pertinent issue for employed women in Nepal. Workplace empowerment advances employees’ participation in decision-making, creative idea pitching, and execution (Hieu, 2020). Additionally, the English language has been associated with empowerment across multiple aspects of the personal, social, and professional lives of people in South Asia. It has been established as a basis for social class distinction in non-English-speaking countries (Piesker, 2002). Additionally, English language proficiency is demonstrated to be influential for marginalized women (Wonder Foundation, 2016; Erling, 2015). Therefore, the study explored the experiences of employed women regarding the role of the English language in their employability and advancement in the workplace.

English for Career Opportunities and Workplace Communication

My participants viewed English as a gateway to employment. The expanding influence of English as a global lingua Franca (Graddol, 2006) significantly influenced their career trajectories. For instance, Ms. Tiger, who started her career as a teacher, expressed her gratitude for her English, stating, “*English became a stepping stone for me to enter this career. At that time, without English, I would not have had any chance of joining UNMIN.*” Similarly, Ms. Sweet shared how her ability to answer interview questions in English assisted her in demonstrating professionalism and securing her current role.

This study examined the distinct impact of English proficiency, revealing unexpected pathways to employability. As Crystal (2003) emphasized the importance of English in global professional settings, Ms. Nice provided a compelling example, recalling:

I was observed by one of the employees during a presentation competition. She approached me afterward, saying she loved my English, and asked me to apply for a vacant position in her office. That is how I realized my English proficiency served as a gateway to employability. Otherwise, I had zero technical skills to fit into this job. However, my academic grades also reflected my capability and commitment as a learner.

These experiences highlight how English proficiency not only facilitated entry into the workforce but also played a crucial role in fostering perceptions of professionalism and competence, ultimately advancing the participants' careers.

English not only facilitates job opportunities but also influences career advancement, as it has become the language of workplace communication. Ms. Modest shared that despite not being an officially required language, English is essential for functioning effectively in the workplace, as international and regional documents are primarily in English. English language proficiency is one of the barriers to Nepali women's career progression in business and cooperative jobs (Adhikary, 2016). Ms. Modest shared how it created or hindered opportunities, such as attending or organizing training sessions and playing significant roles in conferences. Mastery of English, she emphasized, enables women in high-level roles and fosters cross-cultural collaboration.

Similarly, Ms. Nice highlighted the importance of fluent English in international companies, stating, "*Fluent English is necessary to interact with foreign clients and even CEOs, which builds confidence and ensures visibility*". Echoing this, Ms. Sweet observed, "*Using English during meetings gives the impression of being capable and confident, especially in client-facing roles.*" These experiences illustrate how English proficiency often determines access to high-value roles, shaping professional growth and visibility in the workplace.

Low English proficiency hinders access to and full utilization of professional opportunities. Ms. Modest shared her struggle, expressing, "*I have faced difficulties during international training where everything was in English. Understanding and responding felt overwhelming.*" She also recounted an instance during an international conference where participants with stronger English skills were given roles to interact with delegates, sidelining her contributions despite her prior involvement.

Interestingly, English is also used as a sign of respect among colleagues and senior roles in the workplace. The Director of the national SNGO (Southern Non-Governmental Organization) network believed that the difference in English language proficiency can create a sense of inequality in relationships and a lack of trust (Henderson, 2005). Reflecting this perspective, Ms. Nice noted the urge to use English in the workplace for communication. She further elaborated, "*Workplace communication is mostly in English. When clients are not around, we use Nepali, but in formal contexts, we stick to English because not doing so feels disrespectful.*" This highlights

how English serves as both an enabler and a barrier to women's participation in the workplace. While it opens doors to opportunities, it simultaneously creates challenges for those with limited proficiency, impacting their ability to fully engage in professional settings.

The Role of English Language Proficiency in Enhancing Confidence and Self-Assurance

Confidence flourishes with English language proficiency, while limited proficiency can reduce/weaken, particularly in international settings. Ms. Modest, recalling her previous experience in an international seminar, described how her limited English language proficiency obstructed her contribution. She regretted not being able to follow the discussion and even felt it could have been better if her male colleague had been given this opportunity. She stated, *"Now, thinking of going abroad alone scares me; I may miss my way and get lost."* Such experiences underscore how the language barrier can impede women's exploration of opportunities, leaving them hesitant to participate in future programs independently.

Conversely, improving English skills provides self-satisfaction and boosts women's confidence in their workplace. Ms. Nice, who was initially disheartened for not understanding the client's native accent, recalled an incident where she misheard the words while listening to the client's issue. She spent a whole week seeking a solution to that problem and presented her document, but her CEO pointed out that what she had heard was incorrect. This miscommunication not only wasted her hard work but also decreased her confidence. However, she also shared how she felt empowered by her enhanced English proficiency. She said, *"At first, I struggled to understand fast accents and technical terms. Later on, I started listening to recordings and seeking help, and I became more comfortable communicating with international clients."*

Hence, the experience of the participants shows that English language proficiency empowers employed women, fostering the confidence needed to seize and capitalize on international opportunities and navigate global interactions effectively. It indicated that English functions as one of the capabilities of women, enabling them to advocate for their rights and to have opportunities to confidently and fully engage in cross-cultural and international settings.

English: A Hidden Catalyst

The experiences of my participants indicated that, although English is not recognized as the underlying factor, its effect is self-imposed and indirect in their perception and work life. Although it is not explicitly given high preference, it functions as a hidden catalyst. Ms. Nice shared that, despite not having technical knowledge, she was given a highly regarded job due to her proficiency in English, which communicates a lot about what employers look for in employees for their companies. Similarly, Ms. Sweet's expression, *"During meetings, using English conveys confidence and professionalism, which creates a positive impression among clients and colleagues,"* also suggests that English is a hidden catalyst for the empowerment of employed women.

Ms. Modest's experience highlights how English affects her visibility at work, which is closely tied to women's empowerment. When she shared her perception of English, she admired, "*English makes it easier to communicate directly with international stakeholders and saves time otherwise spent on translations.*" However, she had a lived experience of keeping herself behind the scenes at an important international event, despite having organized almost every aspect of the event due to her limited proficiency in the English language.

Conclusion

Rooted in a context of existing gender disparities, where limited women hold senior roles and frequently face inequitable workplace practices, the study sought to understand the barriers and opportunities that shape women's professional lives. It was crucial to explore their opportunities, adopting Sen's CA—the exploration of opportunities led to increased capabilities for women. Additionally, employed women would need different amounts of resources and experiences to enable them to have the same opportunities in life as men. Therefore, the study addressed the issue two-fold: the experience of women in the workplace, what experiences improve their lives, and what existing practices affect their well-being; and the essential yet underexplored role of English proficiency in advancing the professionalism and confidence of employed women. Despite the increasing prominence of English as a global language of the workplace, there is a notable lack of focused scholarly studies on the intersection of gender, workplace culture, and English language proficiency in Nepal. Therefore, the study was necessary.

Exploring women's experience in the workplace and the role English plays in enhancing their employability and workplace experiences, the study revealed that gendered workplace experiences remain prevalent in Nepal's organizational culture. Although participants were satisfied with their job position and responsibilities, they described different experiences as barriers to their professionalism. The patriarchal attitudes of male colleagues, gendered biases in distributing resources and opportunities in the workplace, and societal expectations limit women's full participation and career advancement, which supports CA's crucial insight on the influence of a person's personal, social and environmental conversion factors on turning capabilities into functioning.

The study uncovered that having proficiency in the English language is one of the key capabilities, that enhances employability, career mobility, and self-confidence, while limited proficiency in the English language creates another form of discrimination, especially for women from marginalized communities. For employed women, freedom to participate at work, not being a victim of senior leaders' prejudices, being equally treated in society, and support from their family members are the capabilities that can make their lives better and advanced. The findings demonstrated that English functions as a gateway to opportunities, and also contributes to their professional success making them efficient in global communication. However, limited English proficiency increases inequalities and excludes women from high-value opportunities.

This research contributes new insights into the interplay between gender and English in a professional context. It underscores the need to address workplace inequalities and consider

the role of the English language for employed women. Recognizing the dual-edged nature of English at work, this study advocates for ensuring it becomes a tool of empowerment rather than exclusion. Additionally, understanding women's experiences and perceptions of navigating their work lives creates a discourse that requires immediate attention to practices that need to be avoided and areas that require emphasis for creating an inclusive work environment that supports women's empowerment and the organization's advancement.

Hence, the study enhances our understanding of women's workplace experiences in Nepal and highlights the need to foster gender equity and promote the use of the English language to build their confidence in workplace empowerment and overall well-being.

Limitations and Further Studies

The study provides valuable insights into women's workplace experiences and the role of English language proficiency in shaping their professional empowerment; however, it has certain limitations. The research involved only four participants occupying senior-level positions from selected sectors, whose rich and meaningful experiences may differ from those of women in mid-level or entry-level positions, or those working in rural and less formalized sectors. Therefore, future studies could include a larger and more diverse group of participants to capture broader perspectives across different professions and socio-economic backgrounds.

Furthermore, this study mainly examined English language proficiency as a factor affecting women's empowerment at work. Future research could expand on this by exploring how other factors—such as digital literacy, social capital, organizational culture, and family support—interact with language skills to influence women's professional well-being. Investigating these connections would help develop a more comprehensive understanding of empowerment in the Nepali workplace context.

Finally, as this study included women already working in senior roles, future studies could focus on early-career women. The experiences of women in rural settings would offer additional insights into how gender experiences and language evolve across different work environments.

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