

The Impact of Social Factors in Promoting Education to Dalit School Children

Gopal Lamsal

PhD Scholar, Mewar University, Rajasthan, India

Prof. Dr. Ram Krishna Maharjan

Professor, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal

Corresponding Author

Gopal Lamsal

Email: lamskgopal@gmail.com

Abstract

This study was conducted to identify the role of social factors in promoting Dalit Education. Education is seen as a major vector in society. Dalits are socially, educationally and economically backward. They are culturally and socially categorized as the untouchable caste in society. Legally, it is not allowed to do discrimination in spear of social activities on the basis of caste and ethnicity even though it is still in practice. The study was conducted among the 227 Dalit students, 18 guardians and 25 key informants in Nawalparasi district. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the respondents from the Dalit communities. Self-reported structured questionnaire was formed in 5 point Likert's scale to collect the perceptual data. The social impact like as: - No proper care of guardians for their education, no separate room for education and no encouraging discussion with family member, similarly, lack of awareness about the importance of education, the unavoidable fee/accommodation, lack of help from villagers; need to help in the traditional occupation of parents, are also equally responsible to affect the education of Dalit students.

Keywords

dalit, education, impact, , effect, promoting, school, social factors

1. Introduction

Empowerment means to give somebody power or authority is a power or quality that exists, and is capable of being developed. Empowering Dalit communities through education means to give dalit person a greater sense of confidence or self-esteem by the help of education. The Dalit communities can be empowered through education. Thus, empowerment is a skill that may develop capability, aptitude-inherent ability on the capability of being perfect.

Education can be used as a tool to empower the individual. Through child centered learning, students are able to see their own role in transformation. Changes in society come from the collective transformation of the individuals within that society. It is an independent institution now. Therefore, education can be considered as the instrument that can bring the social change and economic transformation in the country. It leads the country in the path of development. Similarly, it plays the decisive role in the overall process of development like social advancement and economic betterment. This article aims to explore the impact of social factors in promoting education to dalit school children.

2. Methodology

This study is based on qualitative and descriptive design. Therefore, primary and secondary data were collected from various sources. For the help of population and sampling the researcher chose Nawalparasi district, the western region of Nepal. Among the respondents, 227 school students from dalit communities were sampled for questionnaire survey, 35 guardians from dalit communities, and 25 “key informants” for in-depth interview. The data were collected from 14 community schools covering 8 Village Development Committees and only one municipality of Nawalparasi district. The study only focuses on how and in what ways Dalit communities can be empowered through current schooling system of Nepal. For reliability and validity, tools were developed in consultation with the resource persons and the tools were pre-tested.

3. Results

As rational animal, human beings are social animal who cannot live in isolation. They are conscious with social assimilation and participation. The current study had put inquiries on different social factors that are intervening to provide quality education for school children from dalit communities. The following tables show the reporting of respondents on intervening factors for promoting education to school children from dalit communities.

3.1 Problem to Manage the Study Time

The following table shows results on problem on time management of students. Respondents were asked if they had problem at home to manage study time because of engagement in household works to support their parents. The data show that 56.8% had never felt such problem, followed by 11.5% reported that hardly ever they faced problem of time management. Similarly, 19.4% said that they sometimes faced time management problem followed by 2.2% said quite often and 10.1% said very often.

Table 1: Problem to manage Study Time

Grade	Cannot manage study time					Total	
	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often	Number	%
Four	2	0	0	0	0	2	0.9
Five	6	1	0	0	0	7	3.0
Six	6	9	8	1	0	24	10.6
Seven	22	7	7	0	3	39	17.2
Eight	48	6	13	3	11	81	35.7
Nine	44	3	14	1	8	70	30.8
Ten	1	0	2	0	1	4	1.8
Total	129	26	44	5	23	227	100
%	56.8	11.5	19.4	2.2	10.1	100	
Chi-Square Tests							
			Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)		
Pearson Chi-Square			42.599 ^a	24	.011		
Power (1-β err prob) = 0.9609662 (96.09%)							

As the age grows, they have to share the family work so grade wise it is found that class 7-10 students had very often felt the problem of time management for their education. There is a highly significant association ($p = .011$) found on perception of different grade students on the problem of time management for school education. The result of test of power of hypothesis shows that there is a 96.09% chance of correctly rejecting the null hypothesis with 227 participants.

3.2 Prepare Food for the Family

In a rural community, we can observe that guardians are busy at outer work from morning to evening so schoolchildren have to prepare food for all family members. Most of the students of rural areas used to prepare food before coming into school and they have to prepare in the evening also after returning from school. Such activity also disturbs the study of school children. Regarding this problem, the researcher asked respondents about their responsibilities to prepare the food in the house. The data show that 41.9% said that they had never prepared food for the family, whereas 7.8% had very often prepared the food for the family. Thirty-five point seven percentages said that sometimes they had to prepare food followed by 4% said quite often and 10.6% said hardly, ever they prepared food.

Table 2: Have to prepare Food

Grade	Have to prepare food					Total	
	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often	Number	%
Four	1	0	1	0	0	2	0.9
Five	3	2	2	0	0	7	3.0
Six	5	3	15	1	0	24	10.6
Seven	17	2	15	2	3	39	17.2
Eight	41	10	22	2	6	81	35.7
Nine	27	7	23	4	9	70	30.8
Ten	1	0	3	0	0	4	1.8
Total	95	24	81	9	18	227	100
%	41.9	10.6	35.7	4.0	7.8	100	
Chi-Square Tests							
			Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)		
Pearson Chi-Square			24.183 ^a	24	.451		
Power (1- β err prob)			= 0.9901558 (99.01%)				

It is interesting that even grade 4 students also reported that sometimes they used to involve in preparation of food. There is no significant association ($p = .451$) found on perception of different grade students in preparing food for family members. The result of test of power of hypothesis shows that there is a 99.01% chance of correctly accepting the null hypothesis with 227 participants.

3.3 Electricity Problem

Electricity problem is not an individual problem; this is the national problem. In rural settings, people use the candle, firewood, lamp, or tuki for their study or other household level activities. Because of the problem of electricity, people usually go to bed very early. For rural children, at daytime they have to divide their time for school and household work so by compulsion, they have to manage their evening time for study, but because of the electricity problem, they cannot make their regular routine of study in every evening or night. The results from the following table explore the opinions of the respondents regarding electricity problem.

Table 3: Face Electricity Problem

Grade	Face electricity problem					Total	
	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often	Number	%

Four	2	0	0	0	0	2	0.9
Five	6	0	0	0	1	7	3.0
Six	5	9	3	6	1	24	10.6
Seven	14	4	13	4	4	39	17.2
Eight	32	6	18	12	13	81	35.7
Nine	26	9	17	8	10	70	30.8
Ten	0	0	2	0	2	4	1.8
Total	85	28	53	30	31	227	100
%	37.4	12.3	23.3	13.2	13.8	100	
Chi-Square Tests							
			Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)		
Pearson Chi-Square			43.007 ^a	24	.010		
Power (1-β err prob)				= 0.9605817 (96.05%)			

Students from Dalit communities of Nawalparasi district are also familiar with this electricity problem. Therefore, the researcher tried to identify the effect of electricity problem in the study of Dalit students. The table below shows that 13.8% reported that very often they had faced the problem of managing study due to unavailability of electricity in their house whereas 37.4% said that they had never felt electricity problem. As a reason of heavy load shedding in Nepalese context around 51% had access to electricity and remaining students said that they used candles to study regularly so they did not expect the electricity for their study in my study areas.

More in details, the data show that 12.3% had said whether they hardly ever felt the problem of electricity followed by 23.3% said sometimes and 13.2% said quite often. From the grade wise, from 5-10 students very often felt the problem. There is a significant association ($p = .010$) found on perception of different grade students on problem to manage study because of the lack of electricity. The result of test of power of hypothesis shows that there is a 96.05% chance of correctly rejecting the null hypothesis with 227 participants.

3.4. Problem to Manage Separate Study Rooms

Joint family has problem to manage the separate room for individual. The researcher asked Dalit students whether they could have problem to manage their study if they have no separate room for study. In such cases, how Dalit students were managing their time for study. The following table shows results opined by respondents on management of separate study room.

Table 4: No Separate Room

Grade	No separate room					Total	
	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often	Number	%
Four	1	0	0	0	1	2	0.9
Five	4	0	0	0	3	7	3.0
Six	10	2	7	1	4	24	10.6
Seven	21	2	5	3	8	39	17.2
Eight	29	11	22	7	12	81	35.7
Nine	23	7	15	5	20	70	30.8
Ten	1	0	2	0	1	4	1.8
Total	89	22	51	16	49	227	100
%	39.2	9.7	22.5	7.0	21.6	100	
Chi-Square Tests							
			Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)		
Pearson Chi-Square			21.021 ^a	24	.638		
Power (1-β err prob)			= 0.9937611 (99.37%)				

Data show that 39.2% said that they had never felt problem to manage their study due to lack of separate rooms for study, whereas 21.6% said that they had very often felt

the problem to manage study because of the lack of separate rooms for their study. Similarly, 9.7% said that hardly ever followed by 22.5% said sometimes and 7% said quite often Dalit students felt problem in managing their study because of lack of separate room.

Grade wise, from grade 4-10 students reported that they had very often felt problem to manage study because they had no separate room for study. From the analysis of this data, it can be understood that the student wants to study in a peaceful environment. Environment has a positive effect on the learning of students. The researcher also identified the association between the level of education and their perception of the study. There is no significant association ($p = .638$) found on perception of different grade students on problem to manage their study because of the lack of separate rooms for study. The result of test of power of hypothesis shows that there is a 99.37% chance of correctly accepting the H_0 with 227 participants.

3.5 They never had Problem in Fieldwork

Poor children have to go for fieldwork to support their parents. Mostly, children were asked to care the livestock, collect the firewood, grass for domestic animals, collect water from the pond, etc. Such involvement disturbs the study of children. Therefore, the researcher asked Dalit students about their involvement in fieldwork and its effect on their education. The response in table 41 shows that 41.9% said that they never had problem to manage their study because of the involvement in fieldwork, whereas 4.8% said that very often they had such problem. On individual rating scale, 5.7% said hardly ever they had problem followed by 41% had faced sometimes such problem and 6.6% had said quite often they had problem of time management for study because of involving in fieldwork.

Table 5: Go to field

Grade	Go to field					Total	
	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often	Number	%
Four	1	0	1	0	0	2	0.9
Five	5	0	2	0	0	7	3.0
Six	5	2	16	1	0	24	10.6
Seven	20	3	13	1	2	39	17.2
Eight	39	4	27	5	6	81	35.7
Nine	25	4	31	8	2	70	30.8
Ten	0	0	3	0	1	4	1.8
Total	95	13	93	15	11	227	100
%	41.9	5.7	41.0	6.6	4.8	100	
Chi-Square Tests							
			Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)		
Pearson Chi-Square			27.658 ^a	24	.275		
Power (1-β err prob)			= 0.9855468 (98.55%)				

Based on the grade of the student, from 4-10 students said that sometimes they felt the problem of managing their study because of the involvement in fieldwork. There is no significant association ($p = .275$) found on perception of different grade students on problem to manage their study because of the involvement in fieldwork. The result of test of power of hypothesis shows that there is a 98.55% chance of correctly accepting the H_0 with 227 participants.

3.6 Involvement in Wage-based Work

Poverty makes the people mobile from one place to another place in search of job.

Poor students have to earn some amount for their study. Mostly we find that in summer or winter vacation, students used to work in garment factories, brick factories, hotel, or other daily wage labour to manage the tuition fees and stationery.

We can observe the mobility of Dalit students to manage their daily expenditure. The data show that 63% had reported that they had never faced problem of time management for study because of the involvement in wage-based work, whereas 4.4% said that they felt very often problem of time management for their study. The researcher found the different perceptions among the dalit communities in the same work and status too. Same cultural students felt their phenomena differently. Somebody said that at the time of school vacation, they went for wage-based work and again joined the school regularly so they did not feel any stress, but some students shared that they felt stress because they had no free time to take a rest, which disturbed their study.

Table 6: Wage-based Work

Grade	Wage-based work					Total	
	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often	Number	%
Four	2	0	0	0	0	2	0.9
Five	6	1	0	0	0	7	3.0
Six	10	4	3	7	0	24	10.6
Seven	25	3	4	4	3	39	17.2
Eight	55	4	12	6	4	81	35.7
Nine	43	3	17	4	3	70	30.8
Ten	2	0	2	0	0	4	1.8
Total	143	15	38	21	10	227	100
%	63.0	6.6	16.7	9.3	4.4	100	
Chi-Square Tests							
			Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)		
Pearson Chi-Square			32.238a	24	.121		
Power (1-β err prob)				= 0.9785251(97.85%)			

Similarly, 6.6% hardly ever felt problem followed by 16.7% felt sometimes and 9.3% felt quite often problem to manage time for study. Based on the grades from 6-10 students said that sometimes they felt the problem of managing their study because of the involvement in wage-based work. There is no significant association ($p = .121$) found on perception of different grade students on problem to manage their study because of the involvement in wage-based work. The result of test of power of hypothesis shows that there is a 97.85% chance of correctly accepting the H_0 with 227 participants.

3.7 The Parents Pay Less Attention

Parents are the first teacher of children. They should be more aware about the importance of education, empowering their children, family and community. Because of the lack of parents' education, they do not pay attention to their children's education. On the other hand, it is the common experiences of general people in Nepalese context that there is no adequate job opportunity within the country. Daily 2-3 thousand youth go abroad for job. There is no any rule of minimum requirement of education to work as labour foreign lands. Therefore, parents take it as an experience-based learning of their life and they do not try to transfer the same learning to their children. Such types of learning make the problem in promoting the

education in disadvantaged communities. If the parents will not give more attention to their children's education, then children will be discouraged to continue their study.

Table 7: Parents Pay less Attention

Grade	Parent pay less attention					Total	
	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Quite Often	Very Often	Number	%
Four	2	0	0	0	0	2	0.9
Five	5	1	1	0	0	7	3.0
Six	5	5	14	0	0	24	10.6
Seven	17	2	10	1	9	39	17.2
Eight	52	7	13	4	5	81	35.7
Nine	32	9	15	4	10	70	30.8
Ten	0	0	3	0	1	4	1.8
Total	113	24	56	9	25	227	100
%	49.8	10.6	24.7	4.0	11.0	100	
Chi-Square Tests							
			Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)		
Pearson Chi-Square			49.439 ^a	24	.002		
Power (1-β err prob)			= 0.9850640 (98.50%)				

Regarding this problem among Dalit students, the researcher discovered that 49.8% never felt laziness for study because of the less attention of their parents, whereas 11% said very often. Grade wise, from 5-10 grade students felt sometimes discouraged in the study because of less attention of their parents.

There is a significant association ($p = .002$) found on perception of different grade students on the feeling of discouraging in the study because of less attention of parents in their education. The result of test of power of hypothesis shows that there is a 98.50% chance of correctly rejecting the null hypothesis with 227 participants.

Besides the structured survey, the researcher had also conducted key informant interview to explore the hidden factors affecting the education of dalit students. The respondents reported the following affecting factors:

Table 8: Affecting Factors

Affecting factors	No. Respondent	%
Economy	18	72
lack of inspired/educated person	6	24
lack of awareness	11	44
Unfavourable home environment/ cause	12	48
School distance	2	8
Unfavourable school environment	5	20
Uneducated family or discouraging family for study/lack of helping family member to complete homework	2	8
Unaffordable fee/accommodation, lack of help from villagers, need to help in traditional occupation of parents	10	40
Total informant = 25: affecting factors for Dalit education		

Key informants reported that the economic status of Dalit community was the main factor affecting their education followed by 48% reported unfavourable home environment like no proper care of guardians for their education, no separate room for education and no encouraging discussion with family members. Similarly, 44% reported that lack of awareness about the importance of education followed by 40% said because of the unavoidable fee/accommodation, lack of help from villagers, need

to help in the traditional occupation of parents also equally responsible to affect the education of Dalit students.

4. Conclusion

A lack of idle person in a Dalit community who has done better by getting higher education, distance of school, unfavourable school environment and uneducated family or non-encouraging family for study/lack of helping a family member to complete homework were also reported as the major causative factors in promoting the education of Dalit students. Education can only be regarded as a cooperative force in bringing about social changes decided by the forces possessing more pervasive power in society.

References

- Acherya, T. &. (2007). Gender Equity and Empowerment of Woman. *UNFPA*, 21-26.
- Ainscow, B. a. (2006). Improving School Developing Inclusion.
- Aliza, D. S. (2006). *Community Empowerment through Community Learning Centers in Mid and Far Western Regions of Nepal*. The UNESCO. Kathmandu Office: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Amarnath, K. V., & Das, A. R. (2012, Oct - Dec 4,). Inclusive Development of the Backward Classes through Higher Education. *Journal of Social Welfare and Management, Volume - 4*.
- Baniya, J. (2007, December). Empowering Dalit in Nepal Lesson from South Korean NGO's. 6.
- Barton, L. (1998). *Markets, Managerialism and Inclusive Education in Clough, P.(ED) Managing Inclusive Education: From Policy to Experiences*. Clough.
- Booth, T. (2003, March). *Inclusion and Exclusion in the City: Concepts and Contexts. Selection, Schooling and Community* London. London: Routled Falmer.
- Clark. (1995). Introduction in Clark Clyson A, Millward.
- Commission, T. R. (1964-66). *The Third Five year plan, the Planning Commission*. New Delhi: Ministry of Education.
- Dore, R. (1976). The Diploma Disease: Education, Qualifications and Its Implications.
- Goyal, B. R. (1981). *Educating Harijans*. Haryana, India:: The Academic Press, Haryana, India:.
- Gramsci, A. (1957). *The Modern Prince and Other Writing*. New Yark: International Publishers.
- Gurung, S. (2010). *Social Inclusion of Dalits through Micro-Enterprise A Case Study MEDEP in Nawalparasi district*. (Vol. Volume i). Kathmandu, Nepal: UNDP, Ministry of Industry (MOI).
- Jha, H. (2004). *Efforts to Raise Dalit's Share in Governance*.
- Kamat, A. (1982, Jul 20-26). Education and Social Change a Conceptual Framework. *Economics and Political weekly*, 17, 1237-1244.
- Koirala, B. (1996). *Schooling and Dalit of Nepal "A Case Study of Bungkot Dalit Community"*. Alberta University: Unpublished PhD Dissartation.
- Koirala, B. N. (1996). *Schooling and Dalit of Nepal - A Case Study of Bungkot Dalit Community*. Alberta University, Educational Policy Studies. Edmonton, Alberta: Unpublished PhD Thesis.
- Meijor. (1997). Inclusive Education Values into Practice. 1- 7.
- Mittler. (2000). Working toward Inclusive Education.
- Mohanty, R. (2003). *Dalits Development and Change: an Empirical Study*. New Delhi.
- Nambissan, G. B. (1996, April 20-27). Equity in Education? Schooling of Dalit Children in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 31, 1011-1024.

- Pai, S. (2004, Mar 13-19). Dalit Question and Political Response: Comparative Study of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya. (JSTOR, Ed.) *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39, pp. 1141-1150.
- Parajuli, B. K. (2009). *Continuity and Changes in Traditional Skills and Technologies among Hill Dalits of Nepal (a Study based on Kami, Damai & Sarki of Kaski District)*. Kaski,: Unpublished Thesis Report.
- Poudel, L. (2007). *Power Knowledge and Pedagogy; An Analysis of The Educational Exclusion of Dalit in Nepal* . Canterbury Christ Church University, Education. U.K: PhD Dissertation Unpublished .
- Ramachandran, V. (2001, Jun 23-29). Community Participation in Primary Education: Innovations in Rajasthan. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 36, 2244-2250.
- Schudder, T. a. (1980). *Secondary Education and the Formation of an Elite - the Impact of Education on Gwembe District*. Zambia: New York Academic Press.
- Simmons, R. a. (2005). Policy and Power in Inculsive Education Values into Practise. 1 - 9.
- UN. (1998). The Convention the Right of the Child.
- UNESCO. (1994). The The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Need Education.