

Tribhuvan University

Father Image and Family Happiness: A Relational Study of Buddhisagar's *Karnali Blues*

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Letter of Recommendation

Puspa Shahi has completed her thesis entitled “Father Image and Family Happiness: A Relational Study of Buddhisagar's *Karnali Blues*” under my supervision. She carried out this research from 1 March 2024 to 5 July 2024. I hereby recommended that this thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Father Image and Family Happiness: A Relational Study of Buddhisagar's *Karnali Blues*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Puspa Shahi has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

This research, based on Buddhisagar's Karnali Blues, is an attempt to explore how the writer has shown the importance of father image that leads to the family happiness. This research examines how the novel helps to demonstrate the mutual understanding and interconnectedness among the family members. It also explores how the father is a hero in the eyes of his son. This paper applies a new perspective on experiencing the love and connection between the father and son. By bringing the theoretical concept of Albert F. Osborn and Anthony C. Morris's Fathers and Child Care. Early Child Development and Care and Joseph H Pleck's "Why Could Father Involvement Benefit Children? Theoretical Perspectives", this research finds the relational study of father and son in the novel. This novel is written by Buddhisagar and translated to English by Michael Hutt and I have used English translated version of the novel.

Keywords: fatherhood, happiness, father-son relationship, parenting, family

This paper analyzes the father –son relationship in Buddhisagar's *Karnali Blues*. The novel is the narration through the son's eyes that how he sees his father throughout his entire life. The novel begins with the birth of BrishaBahadur, the narrator of the novel. BrishaBahadur narrates his father's struggles. The novel, divided into eleven sections, is an account of the happening of days. BrishaBahadur is taking care of his ill father who is sick in these eleven days and he remembers his days he had passed with his father. His father has been hospitalized after being paralyzed due to brain hemorrhage. The story starts with the narrator remembering his childhood as he is rushing towards hospital to see his father who is lying on a bed. The author describes that his father is no less than a super hero. And as the story progresses, he sees his father from the eyes of an adolescent boy who realizes how simple his father is, yet never fails to fulfill all his demands and his family's necessity. He gets full support from his father who always demands and desires.

The close relationship can be seen through the main character who valorizes his father all the time. The novel is all about sweet memory of the narrator's childhood days with his father. As the story moves forward, the readers with the narrator get to know many rivers, become the part of his childish and hilarious

things, and meet different personalities. The family faces many ups and downs as they move from Matera to Katase to Kalilot. The novel successfully takes the readers into the life and hardships of people living in the far western region of Nepal. The plot, character, and the language of the book are well crafts. Varieties of languages like local languages of Matera, Kalikot, Tharu and also the one spoken by porters and communities makes this novel lively. Readers can see the beautiful nature of the terai and the hills of Nepal. But, along with the beauty of nature, the author also shows the dark side of the village life. People are struggling day to day life and they have interest in business. It seems that due to the industrialization and modernization people are attract towards the business. Business sectors seems to be flourishing. The narrator introduces historical persons like late Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, who comes to inaugurate the Karnali Bridge. The narrator shares his happiness when he sees the bike and helicopter for the first time.

The narrator compares and contrasts his parents' physical appearance now and then. His memories, with the place Matera, where he has spent early stage of his childhood captivate the readers. He introduces villagers, neighbors, and his childhood friends as the novel moves forward. His father has a dispensary in Katase. In Katase the villagers and other people respects him with the title 'doctor saap'. He has been a helpful person for all the villagers. As a responsible and loving father, he has always been ready to fulfill his children needs, desires and demands. He makes sure that his children do not lack of anything. He sends both his children Harsha Bahadur and Parvati to school. He manages food, medicine, books, copies, clothes and other little things like grapes, oranges, etc for his family. He keeps his family happy as possible. The speaker let us to know that his father used to bring many other things that his friends never have. Later on, they shift to Katase and then to Kalikot. The speaker basically describes his childhood along with the insight of the places, people, languages, culture and history of the time. His childhood has been an amazing as he has many friends wherever he moves and enjoys lots of notorious with friends. In Matera he has only friend Mandire, with him he does a lot of funny things and shares his happiness as well as his sadness. Once they draw the picture of naga and stick in people houses to earn the money. They swim into the Amauri Khola and they love to tease Bhagiram Tharu. When the narrator shifts to Katase, he makes many friends like Ramesh, Ekraj and others. In Katase, the narrator eats the stolen duck's meat with his friends and the police arrest and put them in the jail. All these things are so natural that happens in most of the people's life. The writer

chooses the local places, local name, and local languages of the places he uses as settings. The writer portrays simple life style of these different people living in different places. In the novel there is the description of love, hatred, jealousy, childish activities, sadness, happiness, and many other experiences.

The narrator, because of his father's support and care, enjoys his childhood days happily. He also talks about his mother, who is a very simple and hard working woman. She, too, loves her children very much. Wherever they move and whatever they do, she dissolves herself into it. In Katase, she looks and takes care of their dispensary and shop in Kalikot. She is so adjustable and laborious working woman. As being a mother, she has a soft heart and she loves everyone. Once, her husband brings a tharu girl named Baatu in their house. Mother even loves her without any discrimination. She is also a devoted wife because she always supports her husband's decision and till the last breath of her husband she takes care of him. Throughout the novel, wherever they move, she always complaining about the house leaking in the rainy season. The husband and wife's healthy dissatisfaction, love and quarrel of brother and sister are present in the novel. This research paper is also about good and bad parenting. The author of the novel presents the memory with his parents, his friends, his migration, his childhood naturally.

This research examines the importance of fatherhood while rearing the children and also shows that the image of father in the eyes of children is equally important for the successful and healthy family. Although, in most of the families, we see son is close to his mother, but in this novel, father is the best buddy for his children. The bond between a father and his son is so adorable. The novel talks about the amazing relationship and the attachment between a father and a son. The father's character Harsha Bahadur, who is always ready to fulfill his children's (Brisha Bahadur and Parvati) needs and demands. The father is valorized mostly by his son. Brisha Bahadur is so much fond of his father that every time he wants to be with his father. This novel is all about the memory of the childhood of the narrator and how he is proud by his father. The beautiful memory of the narrator with his father takes every reader into the emotional love. As we read the novel, the narrator describes every detail of his father's appearance before and after he is paralyzed. Father is the source of happiness in the narrator's life. His father always notices the narrator's suffering and problems and always tries to make his son happy. He ignores all his troubles and mistakes.

Based on the description mention here, the problem to be discussed in the novel are concerns with the following questions:

- i. Does the novel really talk about only son and father relationship?
- ii. What is the novel actually about?
- iii. Does the novel show the importance of father image and fatherhood?
- iv. Is HarshaBahadur really a good father?
- v. Why do the BrishaBahadur think that his father is great in the whole world?
- vi. Does the novel also talk about good and bad father?

This research uses a qualitative research. On the basis of above questions this paper is going to work accordingly and for that I am using different internet access, scholars' articles, journals, books, etc. The related and relevant subjects will be used here as a reference.

Buddhi Ram Chapain, popularly known as Buddhisagar, is a Nepali writer and poet. He was born on 2 June 1981 in Kailali district of Nepal. Later his family moved to KataseBazzar of far western region and finally to Kalikot district of Nepal. He is best known for his novels, *Karnali Blues* and *Phirphire*. His *Karnali Blues* is sets in these locations. He is passionate about writing from an early age. From a very early age, his poems recites on radios. Buddhisagar published *Karnali Blues*, in the autumn of 2010 and since then it has been warmly received and praised by readers and critics. He has won many awards in Nepal. *Karnali Blues* is translated into English by Michael James Hutt with the same title and was published in 2021 by Penguin Books. Michael James Hutt (born 11 October 1957) is a Professor of Nepali and Himalayan Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. He received his BA in South Asian Studies and Ph.D. on the history of the Nepali language and literature in 1984, both at SOAS, and returned there as a British Academy postdoctoral research fellow in 1987, and has been engaged in teaching and research relating to Nepal here ever since. He has been teaching and researching Nepali language, literature and culture at SOAS. At SOAS, Hutt served as a faculty dean from 2004-2010 and from 2014 he is director of the SOAS (South Asia Institute). He engages in the study of modern and contemporary Nepali literature, and as a translator. He also publishes on Nepali politics, art and architecture, censorship in the

Nepali print media, and the Bhutanese refugee issue. In 2011, the Chancellor of the Nepal Academy presented Hutt with the NaiDerukha International Award ‘for his continuous dedication to promoting the study of Nepali literature in the international arena.

After the publication, this novel has received a great deal of praise and criticism from numerous forums for critical analysis. Diverse commentators have seen the work from various angles. The following is a list of a few of them. In the “Translator’s Afterword,” Hutt states that this book is different from literature published in Nepali over the past hundred years. While most Nepali writers have taken the capital Kathmandu as the setting and reference point, in *Karnali Blues*, “Kathmandu is on the margins of the story, and the central narrative continues to unfold elsewhere” (411). Another mark of departure, as mentioned by Hutt, lies in the use of different dialects of Nepali and local versions of Tharu in the original text, which serve “to reveal the class and caste identity of the characters” (Hutt “Singing the New Nepal” 306). The characters like Bhagiram Tharu, Bhagguand Baatu, who reflect their Tharu language and Shaddam who reflects Madhesi language, the porters and the Kalikot people have their own local language and culture. Every place in the novel has their specific qualities, weather and natural beauties, like Madera has river, hotness, and local trees and bushes whereas Kalikot has hills, snow, thick mountainous jungle, stream water, etc.

Similarly, another critic, Pankaj Giri reviews as “I saw that instead of romance/crime/politics, it primarily deals with a father-son relationship”. In the same way, Shambhavi Basnet, “The Man from Karnali” explains:

Father and son oscillate between having to give and receive care to one another. There is also the pacing of the past and the present in the chapters of the novel. The present moves in a numbingly slow pace as the human mind goes through moments rejecting death, and yet accepting the hopelessness enveloping it whereas the past rushes up to the narrator like a deadly current in a moody river that catches up to those who do not want to be caught. (Basnet)

BrishaBahadur's memory with his father puts everyone in emotion. He stays along with his mother in the hospital and takes care of his ill father. The narrator remembers his father's loving and caring nature. He has never treated badly by his parents. He always enjoys his father's company. The father and son, never says the word that they love to each other. But their actions clearly shows the love between them. Parents only by saying that they love their children is not enough rather, showing with the action is most worth. In the novel, there is not a single word mentioning love but all the action of the father and as well as the son, are clearly seen overflowing love between them. The attachment between father and son is incomparable. The novel also shows that, according to changing time, responsibility also changes.

Most of the critics and reviewers have positively commented on the novel. This is what Meena Sharma in her article mentions, "The Changing Dynamics of Nationalism: A Reading of Select Fiction from Nepal" mentions, "*Karnali Blues* has been hailed as a pioneering work in introducing 'new regionalism' in the context of Nepali literature. It narrates the story of mid- and far-western Nepal and aptly captures the lives of groups belonging to the margins." Another critic Arjun Dauliya, in his article "Review of the Book – *Karnali Blues*" states:

The uses of vernacular terms creates a new arena while reading between the lines of the story, too. The work is simple but the arrangement is incredible. *Karnali Blues* is therefore a humorous, light – hearted reading book that gave me immerse delight for anyone wishing to be nostalgic to their childhood memories, reading their dad's scarification. (Dauliya)

In addition, ParushaKhadka while interviewingBudhhisagar, in "Budhhisagaron how to become a good writer" elaborates:

Budhhisagar (Buddhi Ram Chapain) is a Nepali author known for his insightful and thought-provoking writing. He has written critically acclaimed novels like '*Karnali Blues*' and '*Phirphire*'. Vivid descriptions, rich character development, and poignant storytelling are his strengths and his books touch on themes of love, loss, and the human condition.(Khadka)

This novel is set in the mid and far western of Nepal. It demonstrates the love between family members, friends, neighbors, etc. BrishaBahadur, is both loving and playful brother to Parvati, respectful to his sister's friend Mamata, caring to Baatu and his other friends. Because of the place and business of his parents, their lifestyle also changes. In the early phase of their lives, they all live together and they are healthy and happy as well. As time passes Parvati elopes with someone then they change their business and place, BrishaBahadur moves to Kathmandu for his study and at the end his father passes away.

Diwakar Regmi, in his article, "Story of Displacement and the Quest for Completeness: The Case of *Karnali Blues*" states:

Buddi Sagar's novel reflects the society and its intricate social relations along with different power equations and cultural hegemony in an artistic way. Expressiveness is the soul of the novel, whereas idea is the body. It artistically serves the story of hardship and struggles of an ageing father for the future of his two children. The father's quest for completeness results in a series of displacement and, by the end of the novel, the family is left in complete ruins. Harsha sends his son to the capital for higher education, but, as the profits in business dry up, he finds it difficult to send him money in time. The father struggles in Kalikot and the son in the capital- the motive of the struggle, however, is the same, better adjustment. (Regmi)

The narrator and his family moves from one place to another place. First they come to Matara from Surkhet then they move to Katase and last in Kalikot. The journey of their move continues till the end of HarshaBahadur. First they may move for the betterment of life like for better education, business scope and for the good civilization. The writer may want to show that moving here and there is the instinct of human beings. The narrator's parents are working hard to keep their children happy and successful. HarshaBahadur never seen beating his son and that's why his son always feel protective and think that his father is the best father in the world. Yash Daiv in his article review the book, 'Karnali Blues'. This novel from Nepal tells a tender story of a father seen through his son's eyes" points:

Karnali Blues strikes a chord with how real it is. As an experiential tale of families in general and the father-son relationship in particular, it offers neither high drama nor deep analysis, but simply serves up a story close to the heart. Hutt's translation scrupulously protects the simplicity of the narrative without sacrificing the cultural and social nuances. (Daiv)

Most of the aforementioned reviews talk about various family, social, cultural and linguistic issues in the novel. This research, however, focuses on the father-son bond. It explores how they invest the whole life to understand each other. Their love is pure. They do not have to express their love and sacrifice, but one can easily feel this attachment. In our Nepali culture, we emotionally get attached with our family. Family is everything where we love and take care for each other. It is assumed that father is the head of the family and he is responsible for the sadness and happiness of the family and so is the novel. We know that every father loves his children. Here in the novel, Harsha Bahadur sets the example to rear the children in a correct way. Father is the symbol of hope and support.

The research has applied Albert F. Osborn and Anthony C. Morris's *Fathers and Child Care: Early Child Development and Care* as a theoretical tool. Their study, "Fathers and Child Care," published in *Early Child Development and Care*, investigates the various dimensions of paternal involvement and its effects on young children. They explain how father's involvement in child care impacts children's development and social adjustment. Their work highlights that father's active participation in parenting leads to better social and emotional outcomes for children as they move into school. Their study, which includes qualitative and quantitative research emphasizes the significance of both fathers and mother's parenting behaviors and beliefs in shaping their children's adjustment and social skills. This theoretical tool also demonstrates how the father image helps to keep the family happy. They further emphasize how the economy of the father helps his children maintain the status in the society. They also point out that how the father can help his children in physical and mental growth and their participation in the child development. Their work highlights that encouraging and supporting fathers to take an active role in early childcare not only benefits children but also strengthens family bonds and contributes to more unbiased sharing of parenting responsibilities.

To discuss the importance of father and his image and attachment with the children, Joseph Pleck's ideas from his article "Why Could Father Involvement Benefit Children?" have also been utilized. Pleck's research stresses the importance of fathers' active participation in their children's lives, highlighting how their presence and engagement contributes significantly to children's development across various areas. He also emphasizes that positive father-child relationships are linked to better mental health outcomes, higher self-esteem, and more satisfying adult relationships for children as they grow older. Similar to this, the researcher has also drawn on the ideas of other theorists who represent father's participation in the development of the children, study in order to make the argument more explicit, significant, and vivid. For instance, Robert Haveman, et al., *Childhood Events and Circumstances Influencing High School Completion* concept has been applied to demonstrate how the childhood events and circumstances influence high school completion. They examine factors like socioeconomic status, family structure, parental education and early childhood experiences. Their findings highlights the importance of early involvement and support in stable educational success.

In Pleck's article "Why Could Father Involvement Benefit Children?", he writes, "Father involvement may promote child development because father involvement promotes secure infant attachment (to the father), which in turn promotes good child outcomes through the processes hypothesized by attachment theorists" (189-94). Through this, Pleck hopes to highlight the father's involvement throughout the child development. The same type of scenario is also presents in the novel where the narrator narrates, "When he heard that I had been born, Father cycled home from Katase Bazaar. He lost himself gazing at my face and his eyes grew wet with happiness. Raising me to the sky, father said, 'May my son's fortune be extensive'"(2). This event gives us a glimpse of father's attachment to the child. The above scene comes when the narrator, BrishaBahadur is born. His father is so happy seeing his son. He carries his son into his arms in tears of joys. The situation is the happy moment that they have a new born baby. The father's expectation for the well-being of his child is find here. HarshaBahadur is a pure hearted person and he loves his son. Parent's positive involvement with the child may result positivity and happiness in the child's behavior.

Nepali society is sometimes seems to be bias. People here discriminates between rich and poor, high cast and low cast etc. Ordinary people love everything of the rich and renowned person. People make image according to their professions as HarshaBahadur known and respected as a doctor. If the person has lower status, people views them dominantly and if the person has high standard profession and is from well-known family then people show respect to them as well as their children. Children of renowned parents feel very proud because of their parent's status as like the narrator. The following conversation shows how the people treated to the renowned person and his child:

‘Doctor Saap, namaste.’ People pressed their hands together to greet Father as soon as they saw him.

Father smiled and returned their greetings.

‘Oho, is this your son?’ some of them asked. ‘He looks just like you.’

‘Yes. It is, Father said proudly.(21)

The above conversation is between HarshaBahadur and the villagers. It clearly shows that the villagers respect the narrators' father. They greet him and want to have conversation with him. The villagers behave well to the narrator and also shows their interest on him. Having well-known reputation of HarshaBahadur, villagers come to him to flatter and while doing so they even praise his son. They have the sweet and peaceful conversation. Being a doctor's son itself is a proud moment to the narrator.

The narrator further mentions that how he takes care by his father. Most of the time his father brings fruits and tonic for him from the market. The children of low status families are unable to have proper food. Being a doctor's child, he is facilitates with many things like having proper food, fruits and tonic. So, he becomes chubby even his legs and arms are good and plump. The gossips of the people shows how he is blessed to have the well-known father. As he mentions, “Some used to say, speaking loudly enough for me to hear them, ‘He's a doctor's son, see how handsomely he has grown. The look at our children, all dried up like *sinki*, fermented radishes”(25). The narrator is healthy and chubby by having proper food and care. So, the villagers compare the narrator with their children who are as thin as like *sinki*.

The narrator's childhood friend whose name is Chandra Kumar Lamichhane but all people of the village call him Chandre. He is limp and of the same age of narrator. His upbringing is shown very poorly. His father has low status and cannot afford Chandre's needs and expectation. Most of the time, his father beats him a lot. He has no time for him. They never have seen to communicate to each other. Chandre never has the support and gets advised from his father. Chandre tells the narrator from time to time, "Your father is a doctor. He gives you tonic drinks"(24). Chandre feels that due to the lack of nutrition and tonic he becomes limp. So, Chandre always has sense of missing of good father unlike the narrator's father who has a high image. "When Chandre saw my hat, he was delighted at first. But then he became hopeless. He sat down on the ridge of a field and I sat down beside him. If only my father was like yours.' Chandre was close to tears. There's nobody like your father in this Matera."(24).

The above discussion is between Chandre and the Brisha Bahadur. The happiness can be seen in two boys after getting the desire hat. As Brisha Bahadur demands, his father brings the hat for him, which is in fashion at that time. By seeing the friend's hat Chandre gets excited and dances. But later, he gets the sense of lack of material things which he never can afford whereas the narrator's father can easily get the things. Chandre is desperate for not only the loving, caring father but also the material things. Children love to show off and share their things with their friends. They are happy even in a small matter. Harsha Bahadur is very careful towards his children. So, he takes care of everything that need to his children. Chandre often thinks that his father does not love him. Brisha Bahadur, the narrator even easily gets many material things like wrist watch, money, leather jacket, shoes, hat and a bicycle, that nobody of his age or school friends has. He only the student who rides the bicycle to the school. Children often take wrong decision when the parents do not show any love, pamper and do not have any conversation to them as shown in this novel that Chandre runs away from the hometown and leaves his father behind.

'Ban Devi only scares people who have done something wrong, 'Father told me. 'Nothing will happen to a good boy like you.' And so, I stopped peeing in my bed. Chandre was peeing in his bed too, but his own father put a stop to it by thrashing him" (26). These lines come when Harsha Bahadur consoles his son, who is scared. His son pees on the bed. It also explains the way of two fathers teaching

methods. Harsha Bahadur is an educated person. So, he has the unique way of teaching. Harsha Bahadur is consoling and comforting his son, who is scared and pee on the bed. Instead of being angry, he tries to teach and comfort by saying that he is a good boy which spreads positivity on his son. He is encouraging his son to be a good boy. He is a careful father, who takes notices even on the small things that is happening to his son. On the other hand, Chandre's father is using violence to teach his son or to stop Chandre doing bad things. Though Brisha and Chandre stop peeing on the bed still Brisha is learning through positive way whereas, Chandre is learning and practicing in a negative way. In this sense, Pleck states, "Father involvement may promote child development because father involvement promotes secure infant attachment (to the father), which in turn promotes good child outcomes through the processes hypothesized by attachment theorists" (3).

Fathers being accessible, making his children most valuable, responding to their needs, and spending short or long time with them, assures the children that their father is a most reliable figure. Harsha Bahadur praises his son even if he has done his homework. Praising and consoling are the good and positive things that a parents should do with their children. The following conversation clarifies the father's rewarding purpose.

'Have you done your studying?'

'Yes'

'Here, then!'

"Father handed me a 2-rupee note. I grabbed it and ran away and, as I descended the steps, I saw Father smiling." (36)

The above conversation is between Harsha Bahadur and his son. He is asking whether his son has done his homework or not. He rewards his son frequently whether he does well or bad, still he loves his son. He acts according to the situation to praise or to scold his son. In the above conversation he has handed his son a two rupee note, just because he has finished studying. So, even the small things matter to the children. They get the encouragement when they are being rewarded and always try to do the good things for the praise.

This is the positive development in the children. They will learn pros and cons through the compliment and punishment. In the similar way, Pleck views, “Existing research is also increasingly aware that father involvement may influence child outcomes through multiple pathways. In addition to direct effects, it is becoming more widely understood that fathering may have indirect or mediated effects on children, especially by influencing mothering”(2). Father is always an inspiration and mirror to the children.

Robert Haveman et al. in their article notifies, “Among the studies that focus on educational outcomes, parental income generally has been found to have an important positive effect as has the mother's education. Father's education and occupation also are associated positively and significantly with the child's educational attainment; occupation appears to be the slightly stronger of the two” (136). As he explains father's occupation and income has a great role in the family. Same incident can be seen in the novel when the photographer comes to the village.

“Sandipe came to Matera two or three times a month. In Matera, everyone called him ‘Sandipe Cameraman’. His home was at Amaravati and many people praised him for having earned his own living ever since he was twenty. When they heard that he was coming to the village, many people took a bath and washed their clothes the day before he arrived. The next day, Sandipe would take photos in Keraghari, Bansghari, and Toribari. Then he would return four or five weeks later, bringing the photographs he had taken. His rate was Rs 15 per photo. Probably because of the cost, many people only had group photos taken.” (65)

In the village of Matera, people are happy to meet the cameraman who only comes two or three times in a month and costly to the poor people. Low income people cannot easily afford him. Photo taking is the precious thing and only memory collecting means of Matera people. Chandre also mentions it and says, “My father will never get any photos taken” (68). Those who can afford will have the memory of picture in their hands whereas poor people only have memory in their mind and heart. People are enjoying and happy when they hear about the cameraman's visit. The narrator's mother complaining to his father: ‘What is he like? After so many days, Sandipe is coming to take your photo today. We don't have a photo of the whole family. And you don't have a photo at all’ (65). This shows that every person is happy to see the cameraman

and wants to have photo. The narrator's mother is also happy and wants to have a photo taken. So, she is asking her husband not to go anywhere and rather have the photo together. It is difficult to the normal people to manage their day to day life. Only the renowned and well-being people can afford luxury and able to fulfill their desires. To relate this, Pleck explains in his article that social capital theory provides a second possible theoretical approach. The concept of social capital of Coleman, identified two kinds of "capital" provided by parents that facilitate optimal development. The first is financial capital, providing material resources to children such as food, shelter, goods, and services, including education. The second kind of capital is social capital(3).

'What will you do with so many ribbons, didi? I would ask her. One day, I will hang myself on them and die,' she would say"(44). This conversation is in between the narrator and the Mamata. Mamata is a friend of his sister and also his neighbor. Mamata's and Narrator's parents do not have the good bonding. Mamata is mostly finds in narrator's house with his sister. They both are very good friends. Mamata's parents are not educated and has low income status. As narrator mentions that her mother is not happy with her birth to Mamata. She often scolds with vulgar words and sometimes beats her badly. Mamata always wears similar or same kind of clothes. She has a sister who has already elope with someone. Whenever the narrator's father goes to the market, she asks him to abuy ribbon for her hair. She is a child of poor parents. The conversation also shows that she is so frustrates with her life of being poor and with her parents that she wants to die.

'Chi! How badly they treated her,' Mother said. 'Nobody despises their own children that much.'

Father did not reply.

'She was only her mother in name. After Mamata was born, she went around the village wailing about having a daughter. If she can be brought up by her sister that will be better, otherwise Mamata will suffer.' (47)

The above conversation is in between narrator's mother and father. The above statement is the reply of narrator's mother after his father asks for the Mamata who has not seen for many days. Mamata is also one

of the character who suffers due to poverty, unloving and uneducated parents. Being a girl, she may have many desires to wear new and trendy clothes, to have proper food and many more. She even plans that she will go to her sister's house after her study. All her plans and desires go in vain once she falls sick and dies. Her parents do not treat her with medicine rather they hide her in the room and follow shamans. Harsha Bahadur is a kind and loving father. So, he goes to the Mamata's house to see her by forgetting all the grudges but her mother does not allow him to meet Mamata. He loves Mamata as his own daughter, that's why, still he returns home at night with the medicine for her but Mamata does not get a chance to have that medicine because before getting the medicine, she already dies. One of the villagers says to Harsha Bahadur that she is still breathing while burying. By hearing that Harsha Bahadur gets furious and screams by saying that all the villagers are his enemy now and they are sinners too. The events take the whole scenario into the extreme emotional level. She dies not only because of her disease but also because of the negligence and arrogance of her uneducated parents. The poverty is also one of the causes that her parents cannot afford her treatment and let her die. To understand the situation, Pleck has some insight which is:

Different aspects of parents' socio-economic status are especially relevant to parental influence on child outcomes. For example, parents' income and education (indicating material and family social capital) may be more important early in development, while parents' employment status and occupation (indicating community social capital) may be more influential later in development. (3)

The other character Chandre who always lives in a fear of his father and at the end he is missing or runs away from his father and home. So, this novel shows how the father is important to grow and lead the children in the right direction and gives them the strength. Father has the central role to maintain the positivity and to bring happiness in the family. Fathers matter for children's development. Fathers' relations with children are mostly influential on their development.

The relation of the father and son is pure. If there is faithfulness, love and attachment in between them, they can share everything. If there is no attachment then there is a distance between the father and the children. In the same way, Chandre cannot interact with his father nor share his problem with him and often gets beaten by his father. Once in the school, some boys bully Chandre and the narrator. Chandre fights

with them. After knowing about their fight Chandre's father beats him and embarrasses him in front of others but the narrator's father asks narrator calmly as shown in following conversation.

'Did you run out of school today? Father asked me. Sister had already told him.

I stayed silent.

'If you run away again, I won't bring you a watch, understand?

I nodded my head.(71)

The above conversation is between narrator and his father. The narrator's father is trying to teach and asking him not to repeat the same mistake like bunking the class and having fight. The same scenario but the teaching methods of two different father is vary from each other. The narrator's father is a kind and thoughtful whereas Chandre's father is short tempered person. HarshaBahadur is also teaching his son that if he becomes good then he will bring watch for him.

The villagers respects the narrator's father and his profession as well. Seeing such respect towards his father, the narrator is very proud. Robert Haveman et al. in their article states, "The role model theory discussed by sociologists provides a third, and complementary, perspective. This theory stresses that parents set examples for their children. Hence a parent with more education and greater earnings acts as a model to encourage similar behavior by his or her offspring" (149). In the novel, villagers often visit him with the health issues and greet him very respectfully. It shows that society always respects to the person's income and profession. The villagers used to say, "You've come to live in such an out of the way village, Doctor,' they would say. ' You are an angel of the Lord...hey, shopkeeper, give him some tea from me!"(74). Villagers take the HarshaBahadur as a God's helper who comes there Matera to help villagers. So, they are very grateful towards the narrator's father and always talks good about him.

"Tell your Ba to buy a bhatbhate, na?

I stopped right there. Chandre was looking at me, grinning.

All right. Ba will buy me one,' I said proudly. I'll give you a ride on it too.

You won't let me drive it?" (78)

The above conversation of two friends, BrishaBahadur and Chandre reflect their desire of having motorcycle. The narrator, being a doctor's son has so much confident. He believes that his father will certainly fulfill his demands. Whether the thing is useful to him or not, he is very much sure that his father will surely fulfill it. Chandre also believes in the same way that the narrator's father will buy anything for him, unlike his father. Chandre never expect anything from his father because he knows that bhatbhate is out of his father's limit. He also knows that by demanding anything like this means only getting beaten from his father. So, to him, it is waste even to think it. The two different fathers has two different nature. It is because of their education and image in the society. HarshaBahadur is making his son's confidence high whereas Chandre's father is making his son's confidence low.

"My eyes filled with tears.

'You have saddened my heart, son.'

I sobbed.

All right, off you go. You'll pass next time. 'Father pushed me gently away. I'll bring you a watch next time...I cried all night. From time to time, I thought of Chandre. His father must have beaten him badly. If only he had a father like mine – he didn't beat me, but he slapped my heart.'" (94)

The above conversation comes after the narrator fails in exam and his father knows about it. The narrator and his friend Chandreboth fail in exam. They are very disappoint and sad. Chandre is fear to go home and asks to the narrator, "your father won't beat you, right?Chandre is so sure that his father is going to beats him to death. Whereas BrishaBahadur was also fear a little but not like as Chandre. He has some kind of certainty that his father won't bit him which the narrator mentions above.HarshaBahadur does not beat his son even after failing the exam rather he is teaching him that failing is the part of success and suggests him to keep practicing and get success in the next exam. To encourage his son he even shows the

greed of wrist watch that he will bring if he passes his exam next time. According to Kathleen Mullan Harris et al.:

The level of fathers' involvement influences their children's economic and educational achievement, whereas both the level of involvement and the course of affective relations throughout adolescence are more important for children's social behavior and psychological well-being. Highly involved fathers promote their children's attainment, whereas high involvement and increasing closeness between fathers and adolescents protect adolescents from engaging in delinquent behavior and experiencing emotional distress. (214)

As above Kathleen M. Harris mentions that parents' involvement brings the positive change on children development. Parents should have to show calm and friendly behavior towards their children. They should listen, understand and support them even in their failure as HarshaBahadur does. The communication gap always creates distant. Parents should not create the situation where their child has to take wrong decision as Chandre does. He runs away from his house and leaves the village. He does so because of the fear of his father's beating. Having the strong connections of parent's with the children is beneficial and the poor connections have negative effects as well. Understanding children, is really matters for the healthy relationship as revealed in the following dialogue:

“He didn't encourage to you to go with him?”

I sat in silence. Father's face darkened.

‘Someone who runs away from home just for failing once is a coward,’ said

Father, tossing a 2-rupee note towards me. A son should not run away from home.”(95)

The above conversation is between HarshaBahadur and his son. He is confirming whether his son's too has planned for running away as Chandre does. Chandre missing fears HarshaBahadur a lot. He is a very careful father. He is so scares that he thinkshis son will also leave him behind by running away. His son is his life and hope. Being a considerate and an intelligent father, he doesnot scold his son even he fails, rather

he consoles and encourages him to study hard again. He gives money to his son and also brings the wrist watch for him and asks to study properly. This is only possible because of the father's economy, love and consideration towards his children. Harsha Bahadur is coaxing his son by providing money and material things to keep him happy. At this point, Albert F. Osborn et al. states, "It is possible that fathers at different social levels have different ways of interacting with their children." (289)

The economy of the father's keeps everybody in the family happy even in the worse situation. The father's income and the profession always keeps his family respected and less worries. The narrator's house is burnt due to the childish carelessness of narrator's and nobody knows about it. The house, money and many more things all burnt. Though they lost many things in that burnt house but it does not affect them much. Harsha Bahadur is so caring father that though the house and money is burning in a blaze of fire, he still cares for his worries and crying son and says, "Don't be afraid" (109). Being a doctor in the village, he doesn't have much problem to rebuild the house. As a result, they have a beautiful house again. This is all possible because of the image of Harsha Bahadur. As the narrator mentions, after seeing the narrator's house, how the villagers response, "The roof of the doctor's house shines like silver," the people would say at Paal Bazaar. I felt proud. Of course, there was no house like ours in the whole of Matera" (112). People valorize the material things and the income of the person. The narrator always proud of his father and his profession that he frequently repeats and ends with the statement like "Here in Matera, there is no one as loving as my father" (97). To relate this, Albert F. Osborn et al. states, "In particular, by making use of several housing and social indices the Index focuses on the social and material environment of the child and any inadequacies of individual indices are glossed over by the presence in the Index of the other items." (285)

"We will educate them. Education is the shelter of a big tree. Whether it rains or the sun shines, it gives shelter. What would we do with fields? I can't even plough anymore." Father looked at me. "If we keep the land, this one simply won't study. He'll plough the fields, he'll be a farmhand. When he grows up, he'll say his parent's didn't keep anything for him; he'll just look after himself. We have to teach him how to walk. He'll fall over, he'll get up, he'll walk on." (139)

The above conversation is between the narrator's father and mother when they are planning to move in Katase. Mother is so worried to move in Bazaar by selling their house and lands of Matera. His father wants to move from village (Matera) to Katase Bazaar for the better lifestyle, proper education and for the good civilization. He has a thoughtful points to move. He always gives more priority to his children's education. Even at the end of his life, when he is in hospital's bed, though he eagerly wants to meet his son but at the same time he worries for the loss of his son's education. The following conversation shows that how he values education. "Why should he come? Father asked breathily, 'Doesn't he have to study?'"(103)

HarshaBahadur being an educated and laborious person, he knows the real value and power of education. He wants his children should be educated and be renowned person. Without any discrimination he sent his daughter to the school as well. He wishes his children will study hard and be a successful person. To relate this, Nora Reich states, "The educational level has a strong effect in most countries, supporting the assumption that highly educated fathers are the forerunners of modern gender roles." (14)

"How is it BrishaBahadur, class five?"

I did not look up or say anything in reply. I did not understand. What was Sir talking about?

'Next time, you must pass by studying well. You shouldn't always pass just because your father makes you pass.'(158)

The above conversation is between the BrishaBahadur and his teacher. The narrator fails in his exam again but his father's image help him to upgrade his class. HarshaBahadur goes to the school and talks with the teacher and makes his son pass. The above statement of the narrator's teacher also indicates that the narrator need to pass his exam by studying hard and not by his father all the time. To relate this Albert F. Osborn et al. views, "The Social Index has been found to be more discriminating and to have other advantages in child studies compared with father's occupational status as an index of social class." (285)

"I was promoted to class five because of Father. Everybody believed Sir when he announced that BrishaBahadur had not failed, it was just that his name had been left off the list. When I remembered this, I felt like crying. I pictured Father's face as I turned the pages of the Red Rhododendron

exercise book, working forward from the back. I stroked a blank page for a moment, and then I wrote with a red sign pen: There is no one in this world like my father.”(158)

The above statement is the narrator’s soliloquy. He is so thankful to his father and teacher, who says that BrishaBahadur is not fails but it is only that they forget to upgrade his name in the list. This shows that Father image always plays a vital role in children’s life. If the father is understanding and educated like HarshaBahadur, there is no way of sadness in children’s life. Though his son fails twice he still treats him calmly and even gives money to coax him. HarshaBahadur loves his son so much and always tries to leads him, support him and stood as a back supporter. Not only the HarshaBahadur but also the BrishaBahadur loves his father as well. BrishaBahadur is so fascinates by his father and he is so proud to be his son as he mentions in the above soliloquy.

In this regard, Albert F. Osborn et.al. Views, “Certain social and family circumstances tended to increase the probability that a father would be more involved with his child. Family size, maternal employment and socio-economic circumstances were all factors influencing the father's involvement” (300). It means that certain social and family circumstances can influence father involvement with his children and also the socioeconomic status play a role in child’s development. The following statement also reflects how the socioeconomic effects in children’s life:

“The next morning, at 9 o’clock, I set off for school on the bicycle. When I came across children walking the road to school, I came up close behind them and rang my bell. Startled, they jumped out of the way like frogs. Some of them shouted abuse at me when they had got out of my way, but others shouted after me, ‘Hey, let me ride on it too! When I heard this, I felt very proud, because I was the only student in class five with a bicycle.(164)

The above statement of the narrator’s explains what he has done after getting the bicycle. As he mentions above, how he is excites having a bicycle and how he scares other walking students by ringing the bell of his bicycle. He is only the student of class five having bicycle. It makes him so proud and confident. To build the confident on the narrator his father has a great role. HarshaBahadur does not scold his son being

fail besides he buys the bicycle to give the moral support to his son. As mentions by the narrator, his father always tries to fulfill his son's desire as much as possible. Whatever he promises, he make sure to fulfill it. Money brings happiness in the family. He brings the bicycle for his son as he promisesthat once he reaches in class Five, he is going to buy him a bicycle. Having the bicycle is a proud and exciting moment to the child and that's what narrator describes his excitements after getting a bicycle.

HarshaBahadur is the father and the husband who never backs off to entertain his family members. He ishappy and calm person. Whenever he goes to the market or Surkhet, he makes sure hebringssomething to each of the family members. He always tries to entertain himself and his family as well. Once he buys the sewing machine though he does not know how to sue the clothes, still he tries. 'La! The shirt was tossed in my direction.

Mother went to the kitchen laughing" (352).

Family togetherness and support is always important to live happily. HarshaBahaduralways supports by his wife and son. They never stop him from doing anything, rather they enjoys his activities. Whether he plays harmonium, sings the hymnsor his talks, they enjoy everything. They support him and love him as well. He is the person who brings the happiness in the family. He never hesitates to support his son. When his son passes the SLC exam, the whole family members celebrate. He is so proud of his son passing the exam and said, 'Well done! You've made me happy' (374). After passing the SLC exam, the narrator wantsto study in Kathmandu. His father and motherinitially deny to send him far from themto Kathmandu as it is hard to meet him. So, they prefer him to study in Surkhet. When his father sees him being unhappy, theylet himto go in Kathmandu for his further study. Kathmandu is the capital and dream city for the youngsters though it is very costly to afford. The poor and low class people hardly afford it. So, studying in Kathmandu is almost impossible to the people like the narrator's friend Mandirebut it is possible to the narrator. Mandire lost his father at his early age and his single widow mother raises him. At the end of the SLC. Exam, Mandire asks to the narrator where he will go for his study and the narrator replies:

"To Kathmandu."

“Mandire was quiet for a while.

“And you’re going to study here, right?”

“Where else can I go? Said Mandire, stirring the dust with a sandal whose laces were about to snap. I’ll study here. After I’ve passed class twelve, I’ll become a clerk at the District Development Committee.” (372)

The above conversation between the Mandire and the narrator shows the confidence in narrator’s voice whereas sadness in Mandire’s voice. The father image and his income is always the source of happiness and confident to the child. The narrator is so happy and confident that once he passes the slc exam his father definitely sends him to Kathmandu as he desires and his father does so. Mandire has no father and has no solid income source so, he does not has much option to choose except living and studying only in Kalikot. When the results comes, Mandire fails the slc whereas the narrator passes. Everyone who passes the slc is celebrating and the Mandire runs away may be because of the shame of failing or because of having no father who can suggests and supports him and do not let him to run away. This also reflects that father involvement is important for the children growth.

“Quietly, I called him, ‘Ba?’ Grimacing, he opened his closed eyes just a little. His hand searched for something, like a waterbird gliding across the surface of the water. I took hold of his hand. You’ve come? Father’s voice was faint. Tell me now, why did you take so long?”(5). These conversation of father and son shows the deep love between them. Father lies in the hospital’s bed as fainted but still hearing the voice of his son’s conscious him, as if he is only waiting for his son in his last breathe. When the narrator is helpless, his father stands strongly and supports him. Now it’s time for the narrator to stand strong and supports his ill father. He loves his father too much that he notices every physical details of his father, “How had his body shrivelled up like this?”(4). He notices his father’s body becomes thin and shivering. He breaks down into emotion by seeing it. He has enough love towards his father. He remembers his father when they are at Matera and Katase, “I kept on looking at him and, as I did, I began to remember his face as it was when we were at Matera: bright and strong” (18). The narrator enjoys the time with his father in their dispensary at

Katase. He describes his experiences of riding bicycle with his father while going to the medical as well as returning back. Being a father HarshaBahadur does not forget about the needs of his children. He is the source of his family's happiness. Every father loves his children most and to every child's father is the teacher who teaches wrong and right. Father is the inspiration, happiness, strength and support of the child. As the narrator mentions how he is happy when his father is healthy and wealthy. He enjoys all his childhood and adolescence under his father's love. Unfortunately, his happiness fades when his father is hospitalized and nears his death. His mother also puts all her effort to look after her husband and forgets to look for herself. The narrator notices it: "I looked closely at Mother. Where was the sunflower of her smiling lips? Where were those plump cheeks? Where was that long hair?"(7). It shows that their happiness along with the father is fading away. His father is the source of his family happiness.

At the end of the novel, the doctor says that his father will not survive anymore and he is in his last stage. So, the doctor advises the narrator to do the things that his father wishes to do. By hearing such unacceptable truth the narrator is about to cry uttering how he can survive without his beloved father: "With every stair I ascended, a picture of Father span in front of my eyes. What would Mother and I do without him? If he was not there, to whom would I show my happiness? Before whom would I cry when I felt sad? Who would build Mother a house with a watertight roof?"(369). He is imaging his loneliness after his father. It will be very difficult for him to say good bye to his father. His whole world will be shattered along with his father's death. The love and attachment between the father and the son is amazingly portrayed and along with that the father figure is most important for the well-being and happiness of the family is also shown in the novel.

In conclusion, in the novel, Buddhisingar effectively conveys the importance of father image to the family's happiness. HarshaBahadur's children, BrishaBahadur and Parvati, and his wife are happier than others in the village because they get almost everything like, respect, money, nice clothes, proper food and other material things. They are happy and live a peaceful life. However, on the other hand, characters like Mamata, Chandre and Mandire, they are sad and they all have to compromise with their necessities due to lack of a good father image. They always feel a sense of lack in terms of good fathering,

money and other necessities. BrishaBahadur, the narrator enjoys his life by having all the things that he wants whereas others cannot afford them like wrist watch, nice clothes, leather jacket, bicycle and shoes but narrator can easily getsthrough his father. His family can easily afford the cameraman and have the photos, whereas, Chandre and Mamata can only see others' developed photos.Mamatadies due to the poverty and the negligence of her parents.BrishaBahadur, on the other hand, getswhenever and whatever he demandseasily whether that is money or any other things.BrishaBahadur is being respected as a doctor's child and also gets benefits from this image. The narrator's father makes the narrator pass even when he fails the exam whereas Chandre and Mandire run away and lose after failing the exam.So, all these scenarios focus and reflect that the father image is more important for the happiness of the family and for the child development.

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