

**SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF NONWORKERS IN  
NEPAL**

**A Thesis Submitted to  
Master's Program in Labour Studies (MLS)  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the  
Degree of Master of Arts in Labour Studies**

**By**

**Ananta Aryal**

**Campus Roll Number: 13-2020**

**Exam Roll Number: 2839001**

**TU Reg. No. 5-2-37-1863-2012**

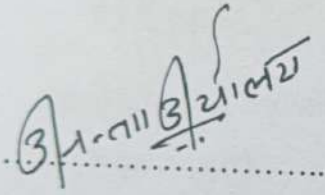
**Tribhuvan University**

**Kathmandu, Nepal**

**December 2024**

## Declaration

I, Ananta Aryal, hereby declare that this thesis titled "**Social Stratification of Nonworkers in Nepal**" is my own original work. It does not contain any material previously published in any form, nor have I used its content for the award of any other degree or qualification. All sources of information from other authors have been properly acknowledged and referenced. The copyright of this research belongs to me, the author.

  
.....

Ananta Aryal

1 December 2024



त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय  
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY  
मानविकी तथा सामाजिक शास्त्र सङ्काय  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
श्रम अध्ययन स्नातकोत्तर कार्यक्रम  
MASTER'S PROGRAMME IN LABOUR STUDIES (MLS)  
कीर्तिपुर, काठमाडौं (KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU)

च.नं./Ref. No

**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

This thesis entitled "SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF NONWORKERS IN NEPAL" has been prepared by Mr. **Ananta Aryal** (Admission Batch 2020-2022) under my supervision for the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Labour Studies. Hence, I recommend the thesis to the Evaluation Committee for final evaluation and approval.

Dr. Bhim Raj Suwal  
(Supervisor)

01 December 2024



त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय  
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY  
मानविकी तथा सामाजिक शास्त्र सङ्काय  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
श्रम अध्ययन स्नातकोत्तर कार्यक्रम  
MASTER'S PROGRAMME IN LABOUR STUDIES (MLS)  
कीर्तिपुर, काठमाडौं (KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU)

च. नं./Ref. No

**LETTER OF APPROVAL**

The thesis entitled "SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF NONWORKERS IN NEPAL" prepared and presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Labour Studies by Mr. **Ananta Aryal** (Admission Batch 2020-2022) has been evaluated and approved.

**Evaluation Committee**

Dr. Bhim Raj Suwal .....  
Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Shree Krishna Shrestha .....  
External Examiner

Dr. Kamala Devi Lamichhane .....  
Coordinator

Dr. Chiranjivi Acharya .....  
Assistant Dean, FOHSS, TU

10 December 2024

## Acknowledgements

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the collective effort and support of many individuals and institutions. First and foremost, I am incredibly grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Bhim Raj Suwal, for his unwavering encouragement and guidance throughout this journey. His constructive-expertise and support were instrumental in shaping this dissertation into its final form. I also extend my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Keshav Adhikari, whose constant encouragement and facilitation were invaluable. My thanks also go to Prof. Umesh Upadhyay, Prof. Dr. Khadga KC, Prof. Dr Sanjaya Acharya and Dr. Kamala Lamichhane for the encouragement, insightful guidance and gentle reminders that kept me focused on completing this Thesis.

Financial support is crucial for any research project, and I am grateful to the **Madan Bhandari Foundation (MBF) Nepal, for the financial Support.** Special thanks to Mr. Mahendra Pandey, Mrs. Mina Bhandari, Dr. Kundan Aryal, Dr Prem Sagar Chapagain, and the entire MBF team for their guidance, support and facilitation. On a personal note, I am deeply thankful to my friends, Mr. Sajan Bartaula for his unwavering motivational and technical support throughout this process. I am thankful to Ms. Rashmi Rai (employment coordinator of Kathmandu Metro), Mr. Damodar Nepal, Brothers Sahadev Gautam, Vishal Adhikari, Pramesh Nepal and Kaushal Ghimire, Sisters Kripa Bhattarai and Rachana Adhikari for facilitating the literatures and data collection process. Finally, I express my gratitude to all my friends who kept me accountable and reminded me of my work when needed.

Ananta Aryal

10 December 2024

## Abstract

This study shifts the focus on nonworkers from the conventional market dynamics framework to a class-based perspective, examining the Nepali nonworkers' perceptions of their social, political, economic, and psychological status. It categorizes them based on similarities and differences within these areas, identifying distinct class characteristics within Nepal's current socioeconomic structure. Using thematic analysis of 26 in-depth interviews and textual analysis of the manifestos and constitutions of 10 major political parties, the research reveals unique class traits of nonworkers, such as subjective saliency, historical variation, antagonistic conflicts, similar material status of living, experiences of oppression, class consciousness, and aspirations for emancipation. The findings indicate that nonworkers in Nepal have been historically marginalized from essential opportunities like employment, education, healthcare, and other basic needs, which has entrenched generational inequality. They experience severe social exclusion, stigma, favouritism, and nepotism in accessing job opportunities, alongside oppression in the form of violence, discrimination, feelings of inferiority, and exhaustion from subjugation by the working class. This is compounded by their exclusion from decision-making processes and heightened mental health challenges, such as stress, being isolated and depression. Economically, nonworkers are dependent on family and friends, often resorting to borrowings and loans for basic survival. Key barriers to employment include societal perceptions, cultural constraints, policy failures, corruption, and a complex, inequitable recruitment system. The study also identifies an emerging, albeit nascent, sense of class consciousness and collective action among nonworkers, suggesting the potential for the formation of a distinct social class. While most respondents support a complete governmental overhaul for their emancipation, some

advocate for structural reforms. These findings contribute to the understanding of a growing 'nonworker class' within Nepal's socioeconomic structure, shedding light on the persistent inequalities they face and pointing to areas for future research.

***Key Words:*** Stratification, Class, Emancipation, Nonworkers, Oppression, Perspective.

## Table of Contents

Declaration .....	i
Letter of Recommendation .....	ii
Letter of Approval .....	iii
Acknowledgement.....	iv
Abstract.....	i
Table of Contents .....	iii
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures .....	ix
List of Acronyms and Abbreviation.....	x
Chapter 1: Introductions	
Background.....	2
History .....	5
Context of Nepal.....	9
Statement of the Problem .....	11
Objectives of the Study .....	12
Significance of the Study .....	13
Limitations/Delimitation of the Study .....	14
Chapter 2: Literature Review	
Source and Method .....	16

Concept and Definitions.....	17
Worker.....	17
Nonworker.....	18
Nonworking Class.....	18
Working class.....	19
Class Consciousness.....	19
Class Formation.....	20
Class Struggle.....	20
Theoretical Review.....	20
Subjectively Salient Group.....	20
Historical Variation.....	23
Distributional Location.....	28
Inequalities in Life Chances.....	31
Antagonistic Conflict.....	34
Class Consciousness.....	38
Emancipation.....	40
Empirical review.....	43
Global scenario.....	43
National Scenario.....	53
Research Gap.....	56
Conceptual Framework.....	57

## Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Qualitative Research Methodology.....	59
Research Methods.....	59
Thematic Analysis.....	59
Narrative Analysis.....	60
Textual Analysis.....	61
Universe of the study .....	61
Research Sites and Population .....	62
Sampling and Sample Size .....	63
Inclusion and exclusion criteria.....	63
Inclusion Criteria.....	63
Exclusion criteria.....	64
Data collection tools.....	64
Textual Analysis.....	64
In-Depth Interviews (IDI).....	64
Data Collection Procedure.....	65
In-Depth Interviews (IDI).....	65
Data Management and Analysis Technique .....	65
Coding.....	66
Theming.....	66
Analysis .....	66

Research Standards .....	67
Credibility and Objectivity .....	67
Transferability .....	67
Content and Construct Validity.....	68
Dependability, Confirmability, and Reliability.....	68
Ethical Considerations .....	69
Chapter 4: Results and Analysis	
Demographic profile of respondents.....	70
Theming and Coding strategy.....	73
Perspectives of National Political Ideologies.....	77
Analysis of Constitutions.....	77
Analysis of Manifestos .....	80
Perceptions of Nepali Nonworkers about Their Current Position.....	89
Understanding on Nonworking Status.....	89
Difference between Nonworker and Worker.....	91
Perception Towards Nonworkers.....	98
Perception of Family .....	98
Perception of Society.....	101
Perception of Working-Class People.....	102
Stratification of Nepali Nonworkers .....	104
Subjectively Salient Group .....	104

Historical Variation .....	107
Current material standard of Living .....	112
Inequalities in Life Chances.....	115
Experience of Oppression .....	125
Antagonistic Conflict.....	146
Class Consciousness .....	149
Emancipation .....	155
Other findings .....	162
Impact of Discrimination and Violence.....	163
Challenges and Barriers to Get Employment.....	166
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusionss	
Perspectives of Nepali Political Ideologies Towards Nonworkers.....	172
The Stratification of Nonworkers .....	176
Implication of the Study .....	187
Conclusion .....	188
References	
Appendicess	

## List of Tables

Table 4. 1 Illustration of coding and theming strategy .....	73
--	----

## List of Figures

Figure 2. 1 The Research Process .....	58
Figure 3. 1 The Cycle of Thematic Analysis .....	60
Figure 4. 1 Estimated Daily Expenses of Respondents.....	70
Figure 4. 2 Source of Expenses .....	71
Figure 4. 3 Reason to Terminate Previous Job .....	72
Figure 4. 4 Duration of Unemployment .....	72
Figure 4. 5 Relationship Between Themes (Code Theory Model.....	76
Figure 4. 6 Histogram representing Nepali political parties' perspectives towards nonworkers.....	80
Figure 4. 7 Bar diagram showing the specific themes addressed by each party on their manifestos. ....	87
Figure 4. 8 Definition of Nonworker.....	89
Figure 4. 9 Difference Between Worker and Nonworker.....	92
Figure 4. 10 Representation of Word cloud for the Theme .....	106
Figure 4. 11 Representation of Word Cloud Regarding to Historical Variation .....	108
Figure 4. 12 Representation of Word Cloud Regarding Current Living Status.....	113
Figure 4. 13 Behavior of Governmental and Political Organizations Towards Nonworkers .....	119
Figure 4. 14 Cause of Existing Discrimination Towards Nonworkers.....	142
Figure 4. 15 Barriers to Collective Action Among Nonworkers .....	153
Figure 4. 16 Measures for the Meaningful Emancipation .....	156
Figure 4. 17 Perception Towards Existing Political and Governmental Structure ...	161
Figure 4. 18 Psychological Impact on Nonworkers .....	163
Figure 4. 19 Challenges and Barriers to Employment.....	166

### **List of Acronyms and Abbreviation**

CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
IDI	In-Depth Interview
ILO	International Labour Organization
NLFS	Nepal Labour Force Survey
RRF	Rural Respondent Female
RRM	Rural Respondent Male
UNSDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
URF	Urban Respondent Female
URM	Urban Respondent Male
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal
UML	Unified Marxist Leninist
RSP	Rastriya Swotantha Party
PSP	Peoples Socialist Party
NWPP	Nepal Workers Peasants Party

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Social stratification refers to the hierarchical arrangement of individuals or groups within a society, based on various social, economic, and political factors (Bourdieu, 1987). This stratification significantly influences access to resources and opportunities, particularly within the labour market. Historically, studies of nonworkers (defined as individuals without work who are actively seeking employment, available for work, but unable to find opportunities; see Concept and Definition, p. 29) have predominantly adopted a market-centric approach, viewing unemployment as a consequence of broader economic factors such as inflation, demand and supply fluctuations, and economic cycles (Friedman, 1968; Keynes, 1936; Pissarides, 2000; Standing, 2011). Historically, class analysis primarily centered on the relationships between Proletariat and Bourgeoisie, Lords and Serfs, Slaves and Slave Owners and etc. (Marx, 1867; Weber, 1922). These early studies examined the economic and power dynamics between labor and capital within the context of societal structures.

However, this study departs from the conventional market-centric approach to examine the experiences and perspectives of Nepali nonworkers through a class-based lens. By emphasizing the role of socio-political structures in shaping labour market outcomes, the research seeks to understand how these factors contribute to the exclusion of nonworkers from employment opportunities and perpetuate systemic inequalities, potentially leading to the formation of a new class identity. Building on the work of scholars who have investigated the relationship between class and labour market dynamics, this research aims to understand the challenges faced by nonworkers, including material deprivation, social exclusion, and oppression.

Through a qualitative thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with nonworkers, and a

textual analysis of the manifestos and constitutions of major political parties in Nepal, this study identifies key systemic barriers, such as corruption, nepotism, and socio-cultural perceptions, that limit access to life chances. By integrating personal narratives with textual analysis, the research seeks to uncover the root causes of labour inequality, focusing on the class characteristics of nonworkers, and aims to provide a foundation for policy reforms and academic discussions that address these pressing issues.

## **Background**

The stark global disparity in wealth distribution, with the top 1% of the population holding 38% of wealth created since the mid-1990s, while the bottom 50% possesses only 2% (Chancel et al., 2022). This inequality is evident in wealth growth, as the poorest half of the global population has seen minimal gains since 1995, while the top 10% continues to capture over half of total income. Alongside this, global unemployment has surged, with the International Labour Organization (ILO) estimating that unemployment reached 402 million in 2023 (ILO, 2023). Labour force participation is predicted to remain 1.2 percentage points below 2019 levels, reflecting a potential disengagement from the workforce. This global crisis has further magnified pre-existing inequalities. ILOSTAT (2024) points to widening disparities across worker groups and nations, threatening economic, financial, and social stability worldwide. In developing countries, informal economies exacerbate these challenges, as small enterprises, lacking access to credit and government support, leave vulnerable populations without adequate relief. Smaller businesses, compared to larger firms, have experienced greater reductions in employment and working hours, leading to income loss and worsening health and nutrition outcomes.

The pandemic's economic fallout has pushed millions into poverty, with an estimated additional 30 million adults falling into extreme poverty in 2020. The rising prices of essential goods, combined with a slow labour market recovery, have strained disposable incomes, particularly for low-income households. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on global employment, exacerbating pre-existing inequalities. This crisis has underscored the need for not just economic recovery but also the strengthening of social safety nets to address widening disparities. Unemployment transcends geographical boundaries, diminishing social identity as work often defines social roles. Unemployed individuals experience social isolation, exclusion from networks, and stigma, further deepening feelings of shame and devaluation (Sen, 1999).

From an economic and psychological perspective, unemployment significantly increases the risk of mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. The loss of a job removes structure and purpose from individuals' lives, leading to feelings of helplessness and long-term psychological challenges. Additionally, the social stigma attached to unemployment exacerbates psychological distress, contributing to feelings of shame and antagonistic conflict. Economically, unemployment disrupts financial stability, leading to hardships such as debt and difficulty in meeting basic needs like housing, food, and healthcare. The financial strain caused by unemployment reduces the living standards not only of individuals but also of their families. Over time, long-term unemployment erodes skills and diminishes future job prospects, contributing to deeper economic instability.

These social, psychological, and economic challenges are shared experiences for nonworkers across the globe and are intertwined with cultural background, socioeconomic status and political economy. From a Marxist perspective,

nonworkers, lacking both the means of production and the opportunity to sell their labour, are inactive in the production process, making them subject to systemic exploitation through market dynamics (Marx, 1867). While individual exploitation may be absent, the broader socioeconomic system plays an exploitative role by limiting access to opportunities.

This notion aligns with Weber's theory of social stratification, which asserts that economic life chances determine the material status of individuals (Weber, 1922). The lack of economic opportunities, psycho-social oppression experienced by nonworkers shapes their Social, economic and psychosocial status, contributing to the formation of a distinct social class. Shared experiences of economic deprivation and social exclusion unify nonworkers into a cohesive group, characterized by their limited access to resources and opportunities, as well as the resulting psychological and social consequences.

### *Class and Status*

Karl Marx defined class based on one's relationship to the means of production, identifying the bourgeoisie (owners) and the proletariat (workers) as the two primary classes. For Marx, class struggle drives social change, with status derived from economic position (Marx & Engels, 1848). Max Weber expanded this view by introducing the concept of "life chances" which are opportunities to acquire goods and status, emphasizing that status, often linked to honour and lifestyle, can transcend class lines and be shaped by factors like education or prestige (Weber, 1946). Durkheim, however, saw class differences as stemming from the division of labour, which creates interdependence rather than conflict (Durkheim, 1893). Pierre Bourdieu contributed the idea of cultural capital, focusing on how knowledge, skills, and education reinforce class boundaries through social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1984).

In this study, "class" will be used primarily as an adjective, reflecting relationships like class structure and class conflict, though it will also occasionally be used as a shorthand noun to represent one's position in the socioeconomic hierarchy (Wright, 2005). Class relations involve unequal access to and ownership of productive resources, with some individuals possessing greater control and the ability to appropriate income generated from these resources (Grant, 2001; Wright, 2005). Class analysis operates on both macro and micro levels, examining the impact of class structures on entire societies as well as individuals. Macro-level analysis explores how class structures shape societal outcomes, while micro-level analysis looks at how class influences personal opportunities and behaviours, reflecting a core focus in sociology.

While unemployment has traditionally been viewed as a status in spite of sharing certain class characteristics. The unemployed face economic disadvantage, limiting their life chances, aligning with Weber's concept of class (Weber, 1946). Unemployment can also foster a collective identity through shared experiences of hardship, stigma, and restricted opportunities, potentially contributing to class consciousness (Wright, 1997; Furlong et al., 2004). This collective identity can lead to advocacy for social policies, and the cyclical, intergenerational nature of unemployment mirrors class structures, suggesting that the unemployed may represent a distinct social class (Standing, 2014).

## **History**

The concept of class and its role in shaping societies has undergone significant transformations throughout history, adapting to changes in economic and social structures. Social classification, in various forms, can be traced back to the earliest human societies, including hunting and gathering communities, where social roles and

hierarchies were already present (Lenski, 1966; Flannery & Marcus, 2012). As societies transitioned from simple to more complex forms of organization, class distinctions became more pronounced, particularly with the advent of agriculture and settled communities.

Early philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, and Xenophon categorized societies into hierarchical structures based on social roles, wealth, and virtue (Plato, 1937; 2003; Aristotle, 1985; Xenophon, 2007). Medieval thinkers, such as Thomas Aquinas, Dante Alighieri, and Peter Lombard, incorporated these classifications within theological and philosophical frameworks, reflecting the hierarchical structures and religious foundations of medieval society.

The transition from feudalism to capitalism brought new perspectives on class. Winstanley challenged social class hierarchies and private property ownership, advocating for a decentralized political order and economic justice (Winstanley, 1652). John Locke shifted the philosophical perspective from feudal hierarchies, emphasizing individual rights and merit-based stratification (Locke, 1988). Jean-Jacques Rousseau critically examined societal disparities, questioning the origins of social inequality and the role of wealth and authority (Qvortrup, 2004).

Adam Smith's "The Wealth of Nations" provided foundational concepts for understanding social stratification as a consequence of the concept of "division of labour" (Smith, 1776). Joseph de Maistre advocated for hierarchy, while Henri de Saint-Simon envisioned a collaborative relationship between industrialists, scientists, and the working class (Lebrun, 2001; Saint-Simon, 1964). Hegel's master-slave dialectic illustrates the development of self-consciousness and the interdependence of social roles (Hegel, 1979; 1989).

David Ricardo identified three classes in a capitalist economy: landlords, capitalists, and workers; emphasizing the interconnectedness and conflicts inherent in income distribution (Ricardo, 1817). Pierre-Joseph Proudhon critiqued property ownership, advocating for mutualism as a cooperative alternative to capitalism (Proudhon, 1840). Herbert Spencer applied evolutionary theory to classify societies and individuals based on adaptability and success (Francis, 2014; Spencer, 1898).

Max Weber's class concept is fundamentally economic, focusing on individuals' market positions and access to resources. He identified three classes: Property Classes, Commercial Classes, and Social Classes. Weber's multidimensional framework encompasses class, status, and party, providing a nuanced understanding of social stratification influenced by economic, social, and political factors (Delatour et al., 1948; Weber, 1947).

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels introduced class struggle as a historical force, categorizing individuals based on their relationship to the means of production (Marx & Engels, 1848). Marx recognized the bourgeoisie (owners of production) and the proletariat (working class) as the core determinants of social class and historical change, with class conflict arising from the exploitation of labour for profit (Marx, 1867; Marx & Engels, 1964).

The mid-20th century brought further insights into class dynamics. Joseph Schumpeter discussed innovation's impact on class structures (Schumpeter, 1942), while Mills (1959) examined the power elite's influence on social forces. John Kenneth Galbraith argued that economic abundance transformed class expressions without eradicating differences (Galbraith, 1962). Pierre Bourdieu introduced cultural and social capital as factors perpetuating class distinctions (Bourdieu, 1984), while Erik Olin Wright provided a comprehensive class analysis framework (Wright, 2000).

Thomas Piketty's "Capital in the Twenty-First Century" highlighted wealth inequality and capital accumulation's role in reinforcing class divisions (Piketty, 2013).

The BBC's 2013 Great British Class Survey identified seven distinct classes, expanding on the traditional three-class model by integrating economic, cultural, and social factors (Savage et al., 2013). Globally, class analysis varies, focusing either on socio-cultural factors or socio-economic aspects. Environmental and social changes have continually reshaped social structures, resulting in new class characteristics. In the 21st century, technological advancements, climate change, and population growth have altered markets, concentrated wealth, and increased unemployment, contributing to rising informality in the workforce (Blankfeld, 2009). These factors have shaped the experiences and characteristics of the contemporary nonworker class.

Fukuyama (2011) discussed about the class and hierarchy within early India and China. The development of early Indian society was significantly shaped by the establishment of distinct social categories, particularly the “varnas” and “jatis” systems which led to a highly stratified society, where religious and secular authority were separated. The Brahmins, as a priestly class, monopolized ritual power, legitimizing their dominance over society, while Kshatriyas held political power. This division of labor and social hierarchy created a decentralized political system, in contrast to China’s more unified state authority, where the state centralized power over society. The jati system further subdivided Indian society into occupationally bound, endogamous groups, reinforcing class divisions and limiting social mobility. This rigidity made it difficult for centralized political authority to emerge, as power was distributed across various social and kinship groups. The Brahmanic religion played a critical role in legitimizing these social hierarchies, ensuring the dominance of a small elite class.

From a materialist perspective, the Indian class system persisted because it suited the interests of the ruling classes: both those who held coercive power and those who controlled ritual authority. The durability of India's class system was not solely based on economic interests, but also on the ability of elites to wield ritual power, maintaining their position atop the social hierarchy. The similar system of stratification was existed in the contest of Nepal. In contrast, China's political evolution was marked by the primacy of state power over kinship and religious groups, allowing for the development of a strong centralized state.

### **Context of Nepal**

Nepal's class structure is shaped by a complex blend of historical, economic, and sociocultural factors like early India, with persistent inequalities. Historically, Nepal's feudal past and caste system heavily influenced social class, with land ownership and caste affiliation determining social status. The Rana regime (1846-1951) further entrenched these inequalities, consolidating power and resources among a small elite class (Hoftun et al., 1999). Although political changes post-1951 brought reforms, deep-rooted disparities remain.

Caste and ethnicity are integral to class analysis in Nepal. Historically, high-caste Brahmins and Chhetris have held privileged positions, while marginalized groups like Dalits and indigenous Janajatis continue to face discrimination and socioeconomic disadvantages (Dahal, 2003; Gellner et al., 1997). Nepal's class system consists of three main classes: the Upper Class, Middle Class, and Rural Poor/Peasantry. The Upper Class includes political elites, business leaders, and bureaucrats with significant influence. The Middle Class, consisting of professionals, small business owners, and civil servants, has grown due to better access to education and employment. The Working Class, comprising urban Labourers and factory

workers, faces challenges such as low wages and job insecurity. Meanwhile, the Rural Poor and Peasantry continue to struggle with poverty and limited access to services, despite land reforms (Khadka, 1993; Thieme, 2005; Seddon et al., 1998; Gurung, 2005).

Historically, Nepal has been a patriarchal society where women have been traditionally subordinated to men. This cultural legacy has contributed to deeply ingrained gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices that persist today. This gendered division of labour has significant implications for women's access to life chances. The women's experiences of deprivation in Nepal are shaped by the intersection of gender with other social factors, such as religion, caste, ethnicity, and kinship.

The back-warded people including women from marginalized groups, such as Dalits and indigenous communities, often face multiple forms of discrimination and deprivation that can exacerbate their vulnerability. The consequence of such deprivation has created a cluster of people with similar social, psychological and economic features.

According to Nepal's 2021 census, the population stands at 29,164,578 (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2021). The 2018 Labour Force Survey reported that 71.5% of the population was of working age (20.7 million), with an unemployment rate of 11.4%. Female unemployment was higher at 13.1%, and youth (15–34 years) made up 69.1% of job seekers. Approximately 20% of Nepal's employed population works in agriculture, the largest employment sector, followed by trade (17.5%) and construction (13.8%). The informal sector comprises 62.2% of all employment. Service and sales occupations employ nearly a quarter of workers (23.8%), with elementary occupations accounting for just over 20% (NLFS, 2018). In

response, the government launched the Prime Minister Employment Program in 2019, offering 100 days of work per year to justified unemployed individuals through a selection process.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Nonworkers in Nepal face a myriad of challenges that significantly impact their well-being and overall quality of life. Unemployment leads to a range of negative consequences, including financial hardship, social isolation, depression, and a decline in self-esteem. The prolonged experience of unemployment can also have long-term implications for individuals' mental health and future employment prospects. Additionally, the stigma associated with unemployment can further marginalize nonworkers, making it difficult for them to reintegrate into the labour market (Paul & Moser, 2009; Clark et al., 2001).

Traditional class analysis has largely focused on material wealth, roles within the production process, and kinship ties, from early philosophers like Plato (1938) and Aristotle (2003) to economic theorists such as Adam Smith (1776; 1998). Marxist theory (Marx & Engels, 1848) further emphasized the relationship to the means of production as central to class divisions, while Max Weber (1947) expanded this view by incorporating cultural standing, kinship, and individual capabilities. Mid-20th century scholars like Schumpeter (1942) and Mills (1959) introduced the influence of innovation, technology, and elite power in class dynamics. Bourdieu (1984) emphasized the role of cultural, social, and symbolic capital in perpetuating class divisions, and Piketty (2013) highlighted the impact of wealth inequality, capital accumulation, and inheritance.

However, these frameworks often overlook individuals outside the traditional production process, particularly nonworkers, those without ownership of or engagement in the means of production. Recent researches on human development (ILO, 2019, 2020; OECD, 2021; World Bank, 2020; UNDP, 2022) has predominantly focused on the working class and "decent work" often overlooking the unique challenges faced by nonworkers, particularly in terms of their psycho-socio-economic status. These studies tend to concentrate on promoting decent work for all, rights at work, social protection, social dialogue and opportunities for employed individuals, while neglecting those who are unemployed. In spite of providing attention on programmes like UNSDG's are not proper to uncover the all issues and dimension stated above. This research seeks to fill this gap by critically examining the social, economic and psychological characteristics of nonworkers through a broader class perspective in the context of contemporary societal changes. In doing so this study will answer following questions:

- i. How nonworkers have been addressed by the political ideologies in Nepal?
- ii. How nonworkers understand about their position in relation to the address of current political ideologies?
- iii. How the nonworker people can be classified in terms of their current social, political, economic, and psychological positions (standpoints)?

### **Objectives of the Study**

To address above mentioned research questions, the study has following research objectives:

- i. To review the perspectives of national political ideologies towards nonworker people.
- ii. To explore the perception of the Nepali nonworkers about their current position.

- iii. To categorize Nepali nonworkers in terms of similarities and differences of their current social, political, economic, and psychological positions.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study aims to fill a significant gap in the current understanding of social class by focusing on the often-overlooked population of nonworkers. In this study, "nonworkers" is synonymous with the term "unemployed" (see Concept and Definition, p.29). With the global population surpassing 8 billion, approximately 5% (210.94 million people) are unemployed globally (Statista Research Department, 2024). In Nepal, the unemployment rate stands at 11% (NLFS 2019), a figure that excludes economically inactive individuals such as the long-term unemployed, children, and retirees. Unemployment remains a critical challenge for policymakers and economists (Blinder, 1988). Despite this, existing literature and political ideologies primarily concentrate on the working class, neglecting the experiences of nonworkers.

Most research on social stratification emphasizes working individuals and the owners of the means of production, leaving the experiences and challenges of nonworkers inadequately explored. In this context, the findings of this study are expected to shed light on the problems, challenges, and discrimination faced by nonworkers in Nepal, particularly from a class perspective. Recognizing nonworkers as a distinct social class can empower them to collectively assert their socio-economic rights. This perspective could enhance their organizational capacity, amplify their voices, and contribute to more sustainable solutions to unemployment.

Moreover, no political ideology can be considered comprehensive without addressing the needs of all societal segments. Sustainable peace and prosperity are

unattainable without the inclusion of marginalized groups (Russett, 1983). The study's findings are expected to contribute on enriching academic debates and help shape policies in favour of nonworkers, advocating for their rights and employment opportunities. It also aims to spark further discussion on classifying nonworkers and developing ideologies and policies that address their socio-economic rights.

Ultimately, this study aspires to promote a more inclusive understanding of the nature and challenges faced by nonworkers, encouraging further research and policy development in this area.

### **Limitations and Delimitation of the Study**

This study has several limitations and delimitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. Firstly, the research design captured a single-time snapshot of perceptions, which limits the ability to analyze changes or trends over time. Secondly, the geographic scope is restricted to two districts, incorporating both rural and urban settings, but potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to the entire country. Thirdly, the study focuses exclusively on individuals who have been unemployed for at least one year, excluding those with shorter unemployment durations.

Methodologically, the research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing in-depth interviews (IDIs), textual analysis, and narrative methods. This limits the ability to generalize the findings to a larger population, as the qualitative approach aims for depth rather than breadth. The sample size per group was determined using information saturation, with a minimum of six respondents per group, which may not capture the full range of experiences among nonworkers.

Moreover, the study's focus is limited to nonworking (unemployed) individuals, excluding other vulnerable groups such as the underemployed, the

working poor, and those who do not participate in the formal workforce. The analysis also primarily adopts a class perspective to examine the experiences of nonworkers, potentially overlooking other important factors, such as ethnicity, culture, and broader societal issues beyond class dynamics.

Finally, the content analysis of political party documents was restricted to the constitutions and manifestos of parties represented in the federal parliament, excluding other party publications or those from parties not represented in the legislative body. These limitations may constrain the scope and generalizability of the study's conclusions.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter aims to examine, analyze, and synthesize theories relevant to the research topic. It evaluates existing theoretical frameworks, models, and concepts, identifying gaps and areas of agreement or disagreement in current knowledge. The chapter includes both theoretical and empirical reviews, with the former establishing the theoretical base and relationships between phenomena, while the latter aligns theory with real-world data. The subheadings under this chapter covered are 'Sources and Method of Literature,' 'Concept and Definition,' 'Theoretical Review,' 'Empirical Review,' 'Research Gap,' and 'Conceptual Framework.' The chapter aims to bridge theoretical knowledge with current realities, highlighting both known insights and future research directions.

### **Source and Method**

The relevant literatures were searched online as well as in offline library sources. Particularly, Tribhuvan University Central Library (TUCL) is the main offline source. The online sources included digital repository TUCL, Google Scholar, Jstor, Science Direct, Semantic Scholar, Springer, Taylor & Francis, ProQuest database and etc. Some search terms were identified while searching the literatures. The search terms used in are: "Class" OR "Class Analysis" OR "Nonworker" OR "Unemployment" OR "Social Stratification" OR "Nonworking Status" OR "Approaches of Social Stratification" OR "Impact of Unemployment " OR "Theories of Stratification".

A comprehensive literature review was conducted, with each source analyzed based on its emphasis on these identified themes. This analysis was documented in a thematic matrix, which further supported the research question and highlighted

existing gaps in the understanding of the phenomena. Political party documents were also reviewed to assess their alignment with the identified themes, providing insights into how these parties conceptualize social stratification of non-workers (unemployed people).

### **Concept and Definitions**

#### ***Worker***

The World Bank and (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2018) defined an employed person as those at working ages who were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit, during the reference period or temporary absence from a job, or working-time arrangement. Marx and Engels in ‘the communist manifesto’ have defined ‘proletarians’ with a specified and narrowed aspect that proletarians are only the wage Labourers who does not have their own means of production (Marx & Engels; 1848, p.57). But, analyzing the changed context and historical definition; This study defines a worker as “a person of working age who is engaged to production process or to sell physical as well as mental power in order to live within specific reference period”. It comprises all blue-collar worker, white collar worker, owner of means of production, employer, and all who has got opportunity to exchange their physical, mental and all other ability with salaried remuneration or with kind or with allowance or any other things that is needed to live. A ‘perfect workers’ are those whose earnings are enough to fulfill psycho-socio-economic needs or enough to declare a decent work as per described by United Nations Sustainable Development Goal’s (UNSDG’s 2015).

### ***Nonworker***

Here, an opposite word of worker i.e., ‘Nonworker’ is used instead of unemployed to denote a person who is not in employment. Historically, Marx, Engels, Weber and other theorists had used the term ‘worker’ instead of employee (Marx & Engels; 1848, p.116). By standing on that logic, this study uses the term ‘Nonworker’ and adopted the existing definition of unemployed. World Bank (2018) and ILO (2018) defines unemployed as a working-age person who is not in employment, carried out activities to seek employment during a specified recent period and was currently available to take up employment given a job opportunity. Similar definition was used by Winkelmann (2014) and Clark & Summers (1982). For the purpose of this research the term ‘nonworker’ is used instead of unemployed and is defined as “a person of working age who is involuntarily out of the production process”. More clearly; A person who is willing to sell physical as well as mental power in order to live, actively searching for opportunities and available to work, but not getting the opportunity. Voluntarily unemployed person is not considered a nonworker since the World Bank and ILO consider them as an ‘economically inactive’. Person with physical and mental disabilities who is unable to perform work and is not a nonworker.

### ***Nonworking Class***

Marx and Engels in ‘the communist manifesto’ define the proletariat class (working class) as “the people in the class of modern wage Labourers not having own means of production and are reduced to sell their Labour power in order to live” (Marx & Engels; 1848, p.57). By standing with the same logic, this study uses the word ‘Nonworking Class’ to denote the opposite to the ‘working class’ and defines nonworker class as “a group or strata of people who are involuntarily out of the

production process”. That means the group of people who wish to work, actively searching work and available to sell their mental as well as physical power in order to live but not getting opportunity to do that. There exist no vast differences on their psychological, social and economic characteristics. Ethnic, cultural and voluntarily unemployed people are not the nonworker class. The term has its history of use from 1844. It was used by various scholars with the theme of not doing work and also as antonym of working class.

### ***Working class***

Marx and Engels in The Communist manifesto defined ‘Proletarians’ as “the people in the class of modern wage Labourers not having own means of production and are reduced to sell their Labour power in order to live” (Marx & Engels, 1848, p.57). The present world of work comprises many other methods as well as peoples who sell their physical as well as mental power in order to live. Being based on this historical definition and analyzing the changed context on current understanding of the word ‘work’; this study defines worker class as “all blue collar as well as white collar worker, own account worker as per defined by ILO (2018), and any other kind of work which pay worker as a salary in cash or in kind or in profit from the investment”. More clearly; The investors, owners of the means of production, blue collar workers, white collar workers and all who have got opportunity to sell their physical as well as mental power in order to live are worker class people.

### ***Class Consciousness***

This refers to the level of awareness people have regarding their class interests and the factors influencing their advancement. Put simply, it's how much

people understand their position in the social hierarchy and the conditions that affect their ability to improve it (Marx, 1867; Stephens, 1979).

### ***Class Formation***

These are the groups that people form to more effectively pursue their class interests. These groups can be highly structured and focused, such as Labour unions or political parties, or looser social networks and communities that share similar class positions (Stephens, 1979).

### ***Class Struggle***

This refers to the conflicts that arise when individuals and groups pursuing opposing class interests clash. These conflicts can range from individual worker strategies within a workplace to reduce workload to large-scale conflicts between organized worker groups and capitalist entities over power and control within production processes (Marx & Engels, 1848; Wright, 2000).

### **Theoretical Review**

The theoretical review is organized into categories based on their emphasis and alignment with broader themes. It primarily draws from the Marxist School of thought, while also addressing key criticisms and alternative perspectives.

### ***Subjectively Salient Group***

This refers to a subset of individuals who share certain characteristics or experiences that are personally significant or meaningful to them, influencing their identity and behaviour. These characteristics may not be objectively measured or universally recognized but are important to the individuals within the group. When stratifying nonworkers, identifying subjectively salient groups involves categorizing them based on characteristics or experiences that are personally meaningful to them,

even if these characteristics are not immediately obvious or measurable by conventional metrics. This stratification recognizes the personal and psychological factors that define their group identity.

Marx and Engels' renowned pamphlet, "The Communist Manifesto," focuses on the class dynamics between the proletariat (working class) and the bourgeoisie (capitalist class). They argue that societies throughout time have been characterized by struggle between oppressing and oppressed classes. The opening section lays the groundwork by introducing the proletariat, the working-class lacking ownership of the means of production, and the bourgeoisie, the capitalist class who control these means. The authors depict the bourgeoisie as the oppressors who exploit the proletariat, forced to sell their Labour for survival (Marx & Engels, 1848). This approach had defined the proletariat class within the existing social structure at that time. In spite of giving proper concern towards the class properties of proletariats, Marxian approach fails to provide clear identity to the non-proletarians or nonworkers who were neither on work, nor owned means of production. It had segregated nonworkers in a segment of 'Lumpenproletariat'; a group of marginalized individuals who lack a stable economic position (unemployed, underemployed, or engaged in criminal activities) (Mills, 2022). Marx argued that this group of nonworkers lacks a clear class consciousness and can be easily manipulated by reactionary forces. However, the characteristics of nonworkers were not thoroughly examined. Changes in socioeconomic contexts have the potential to alter the characteristics of nonworkers.

Max Weber on the other hand proposed a concept of class, status and power. His analysis goes beyond purely economic explanations (like Karl Marx's focus on class) and includes cultural and status-based factors that individuals themselves perceive as

important in their social positioning. Class is related to economic resources, but status refers to social honor and prestige. This prestige can come from education, family background, occupation, or even lifestyle. He argued that these factors (class, status, power) shaped an individual's "life chances," meaning their opportunities for success, education, and social mobility (Weber, 2013a, Pp 402-407). High social status, even without great wealth, could open doors. Weber identified "status groups" as communities with shared lifestyles, values, and honor. These groups weren't solely economic, but offered social recognition and influence (Weber, 2023).

Coser & Giddens (1974) criticised the Weberian approach for being complex and ambiguous. Critics argue that Weber's multidimensional approach, which includes class, status, and party, can be overly complex and ambiguous. This complexity makes it challenging to operationalize and apply consistently in empirical research. Wright (1980) criticised for placing too much emphasis on subjective factors like status and prestige, which are difficult to measure and may not have as significant an impact on social stratification as economic factors.

Émile Durkheim's "The Division of Labour in Society" (1893), examined the inter-relation between the division of labour and social cohesion. His work revolves around the transformation of societies from traditional to modern forms and the resulting impact on social structures. He introduced concept of mechanical and organic solidarity to explain this transformation. Mechanical solidarity characterizes pre-industrial societies where individuals share similar values, beliefs, and tasks. This homogeneity fosters a strong collective conscience, a set of shared beliefs that bind individuals together. Repressive laws, focused on punishing deviations from the norm, maintain social order in these societies. In contrast, organic solidarity emerges in modern, industrialized societies with a complex division of labour. Individuals

specialize in distinct roles, creating a network of interdependence. This fosters social cohesion through mutual need for each other's specialized skills. Restitutive laws, designed to restore social balance and relationships, become more prominent as societies become more diverse (Durkheim, 1997).

In contrast to Durkheim's focus on social structures, Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social stratification (Bourdieu, 1987; 1984; 1986) emphasized the role of individual capital in shaping social positions. He argued that people occupy distinct locations within a social space based on their possession and use of various forms of capital, not just economic resources. This approach highlighted the multidimensionality of social class. Economic capital (income, wealth) is one factor, but cultural capital (education, knowledge, taste) and social capital (networks, social connections) also significantly influence an individual's social standing. Bourdieu identified broad categories within this social space: the upper class concentrated with high levels of all forms of capital, the middle class possessing moderate levels across different capitals, the working class with limited capital resources, and the underclass with minimal capital across all forms. This approach provides a different framework of social stratification, acknowledging the interplay of economic power, cultural background, and social networks in shaping an individual's place within society.

### ***Historical Variation***

This theme involves a macro-level analysis of how different time periods have influenced the composition and attributes of nonworkers due to various socio-economic, political, and cultural factors. Stratifying nonworkers by historical variation means examining and categorizing them based on structural changes over time to better understand the intensity and format of these variations within the group. This approach requires a concept that accommodates macro-level variations across

different times and places, rather than merely focusing on the micro-level processes affecting individual lives. This macro-level perspective provides a comprehensive explanation of historical variations in the social organization of inequalities.

From a Marxist perspective, the key factor driving historical variations in inequality lies in how different economic systems extract and distribute wealth. Capitalism and feudalism, for instance, represent distinct forms of exploitation. While both systems create class structures with an exploiting class, the mechanisms of appropriation – market forces versus direct control – mark a significant qualitative difference in how historical inequalities manifest (Wright, 2005, Pp.189-190). In a feudal system, the extraction of surplus from the Labouring class, or serfs, is achieved through the direct exercise of coercive power by the feudal lords. This form of exploitation is characterized by coercive power, where feudal lords exert direct control over serfs, compelling them to produce surplus through legal and military means. Economic relations in feudalism are not mediated by markets but by customary obligations and direct coercion, resulting in a rigid social hierarchy with little mobility between the classes of lords and serfs.

In contrast, capitalism organizes surplus appropriation through market mechanisms, particularly the Labour market. Key aspects of this system include Labour markets, where propertyless workers sell their Labour power to capitalists in exchange for wages, and capitalist control over the Labour process, enabling the appropriation of surplus value generated by workers' Labour efforts. Although exploitative, capitalist class structures are more fluid than feudal ones, with potential for class mobility and complex market relations (Marx & Engels, 1848; Engels; 2003).

Marxism highlights the qualitative differences in the mechanisms of exploitation between feudalism and capitalism. In feudalism, exploitation is overt and

direct, with lords extracting surplus through coercion. In capitalism, exploitation is more indirect, occurring through economic relations in the Labour market, where workers are compensated less than the value of their Labour. Both systems establish distinct class structures, but the processes shaping these structures differ fundamentally. Feudal class structures are defined by birth and tradition, creating a relatively stable but rigid hierarchy, while capitalist class structures are defined by economic relationships and property ownership, creating a dynamic but exploitative hierarchy.

Marxist theory justifies historical variation in inequality by emphasizing the specificity of economic systems. Each system's unique methods of surplus appropriation and class dynamics produce distinct forms of inequality. Feudal inequality is rooted in direct coercion and rigid social stratification, while capitalist inequality is rooted in wage Labour exploitation and market dynamics, often masked by the apparent fairness of market exchanges. Marxism posits that as economic systems evolve, so do the mechanisms of exploitation and the nature of inequality, marked by the shift from overt coercion to subtler forms of economic exploitation, reflecting changes in productive forces and social relations.

While Marxist theory provides a robust framework for understanding historical variations in inequality, several criticisms and considerations merit attention. Critics argue that Marx's focus on economic structures may underplay the roles of culture, politics, and individual agency in shaping historical inequalities, potentially oversimplifying the complex interplay of factors influencing social stratification. Marxist analysis has also been critiqued for insufficiently addressing how race, gender, and other social categories intersect with class to produce compounded forms of inequality. Expanding the analysis to include these dimensions

offers a more comprehensive understanding of historical and contemporary inequalities. Additionally, Marx's theory assumes a linear progression of economic systems, which may not account for the nuanced and non-linear paths of historical development. Diverse historical contexts and local variations can lead to different forms of inequality and social organization.

Max Weber's discussion regarding historical variations among social classes highlights how different historical contexts and societal developments shape the composition, characteristics, and roles of these groups. He argues that social classes are not static entities but evolve dynamically over time due to historical processes, economic transformations, and cultural shifts. Weber debated that; class emerge and evolve in response to changes in economic structures, technological advancements, and shifts in political power. He contrasts the class compositions and relations in agrarian societies with those in industrialized societies, illustrating how these contexts shape class identities and interactions. The values associated with Protestantism, such as hard work, thrift, and worldly asceticism, played a role in the rise of capitalism (Weber, 2023, Pp. 3-13). This suggests historical variation in social class mobility and economic development based on cultural factors. Moreover, Weber discusses how historical events such as industrialization, urbanization, and colonization contribute to the formation of new classes and the restructuring of existing ones. He considers factors like occupational mobility, changes in property ownership patterns, and shifts in economic opportunities as pivotal in shaping class dynamics across different historical epochs. Cultural and political dimensions also play crucial roles in Weber's analysis, influencing class relations, inequalities, and social stratification patterns over time. He discussed the role of ideologies, religious beliefs, and legal frameworks to impact the historical variation of social classes. Weber's analysis also explores the

changes in class structures interact with shifts in status (social honor and prestige) and power (political influence), highlighting how alterations in economic power dynamics can influence social status and vice versa (Weber 2013b; 2023).

Emile Durkheim (1997) provides a framework for understanding inequalities as a natural outcome of social evolution. He explains how social classification systems differ based on dominant forms of social solidarity. Traditional societies have simpler classifications, while modern societies, driven by the division of Labour and population growth, require more complex systems reflecting diverse roles and skills. Durkheim also highlights the role of the division of Labour as a key driver, and how legal systems adapt to manage interactions within the more intricate classifications of modern life. However, Durkheim acknowledges the challenges of rapid social change, such as anomie, where traditional norms can break down, and how existing classifications may struggle to keep pace with evolving social reality (Bierstedt & Giddens, 1972).

Unlike Durkheim who explained inequalities as a natural outcome of social evolution, Bourdieu suggests that capital, especially cultural capital, is often inherited. Children from privileged backgrounds have access to better education, cultural experiences, and social networks, allowing them to accumulate more capital and maintain their advantageous social position. This creates a cycle that can be difficult to break, potentially solidifying class structures across generations. Similarly; Habitus, a system of dispositions and practices shaped by one's social background, can influence how individuals navigate the social world. Those born into higher classes may develop a habitus that aligns with the expectations and practices of their class, further solidifying their position. Conversely, those from lower classes may lack the cultural capital or social networks to develop a habitus that facilitates upward

mobility. Bourdieu also argued that dominant classes can wield symbolic violence, using cultural norms and institutions to legitimize their position and potentially disadvantage those with less capital. For example, educational systems might favor certain cultural knowledge or skills, making it harder for those from different backgrounds to succeed (Bourdieu, 1987; 1984; 1986).

### *Distributional Location*

Distributional location refers to the concept of class as a central factor in determining how individuals are objectively situated within the distributions of material inequality. Class, in this context, is defined by material standards of living, typically measured by income or wealth. This theme treats class as a gradational concept, often visualized as rungs on a ladder, where individuals are categorized into various classes. This gradational approach helps in understanding the relative positions of individuals or groups within the socio-economic hierarchy based on their material resources.

Marx's analysis of the proletariat and bourgeois class was based on their social and economic position within the capitalist mode of production. The proletariat class does not own the means of production (land, factories, tools, etc.) and is forced to sell its labour power to the bourgeoisie in exchange for wages. They work for the bourgeoisie and are employed in various industries, such as manufacturing, services, and agriculture. The proletariat's socio-economic location is characterised by their lack of ownership and control over the means of production, which makes them dependent on selling their labour to earn a living. In opposition, the bourgeoisie class consists of individuals who own and control the means of production. They accumulate wealth and profit by exploiting the labour of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie's socio-economic location is marked by their ownership of factories,

businesses, land, and other productive assets. They accumulate capital and hold significant economic power, enabling them to extract surplus value from the labour of the proletariat (Marx & Engels, 1848; Marx, 2021). This relational understanding of class highlights the dynamics of power and exploitation inherent in capitalist societies.

In contrast, the gradational concept of class, as often used in popular discourse and in countries without a strong working-class political tradition like the United States, views class in terms of material standards of living. This perspective defines class by income or wealth, visualizing it as rungs on a ladder with categories such as upper class, upper middle class, middle class, lower middle class, lower class, and underclass. This view is reflected in political rhetoric, such as calls for "middle-class tax cuts," which target those in the middle of the income distribution (Wright, 2005). The distributional location of nonworkers was not clearly discussed within the Marxism. It argues that material standard of living is the outcome of deeper structural relations. The distribution of income and wealth is a consequence of the capitalist mode of production, where the bourgeoisie extract surplus value from the proletariat. Understanding class solely through material standards can obscure the mechanisms of exploitation and the resulting inequalities.

In contrast with Marxism, Weber's theory of social stratification does not define classes solely based on their distributional location within society. Instead, it argued for a multidimensional approach, where class, status, and party all play a role. According to Weber, class is defined by market situation, which refers to a person's relationship to the means of production and the labour market. This includes factors such as ownership of property, skills, and qualifications, with classes sharing similar life chances due to their market position. Examples of class types in Weber's

framework include Property Class (Those who own significant resources like land or capital), Petty Bourgeoisie (Small business owners or independent professionals) and Manual Labour Class (Those who sell their labour for wages). In addition to class, Weber also emphasized the importance of status, which refers to social honour and prestige associated with a certain position in society. Status is not directly tied to wealth and can be influenced by factors such as education, family background, and occupation. Weber argued that while class, status, and party can overlap to some extent, they are not identical. For example, a wealthy individual might belong to the upper class in terms of economic resources but lack social prestige if their wealth is newly acquired, thus lacking status. Conversely, a doctor might have high status due to their profession but belong to the middle class economically (Calhoun et al., 2007; Weber, 2013a).

Thus, according to Weber, class is just one dimension of social stratification and are not solely defined by income or wealth but by their relationship to the means of production. Additionally, class, status, and party (power) all interact to influence an individual's position (location) in society (Hurst, 2007).

While Bourdieu's theory outlines four social classes—upper class, middle class, working class, and underclass—based on the possession of capital. It does not provide a rigid, quantitative method for pinpointing an individual's exact location within the social space. This is due to the multidimensionality of his framework, which emphasizes the interplay of economic, cultural, and social capital. Determining someone's class involves more than just assessing their income level; their education, cultural background, and social networks all play crucial roles. Bourdieu highlighted the concept of habitus, which refers to the internalized dispositions and practices shaped by one's social background. For instance, an individual from a working-class

background who achieves a high income might still exhibit a working-class habitus, affecting their social positioning.

However, Bourdieu's classification provide insights into how these classes might be distributionally located within the social space. The upper class likely possesses high economic capital, such as significant wealth or inheritance, along with high cultural capital, including prestigious educational qualifications and cultural knowledge aligned with the dominant culture, and extensive social capital, which includes powerful social networks and influence (Bourdieu, 1984). The middle class, on the other hand, tends to have moderate levels of all forms of capital, including some economic security, educational qualifications, and social connections that offer opportunities for advancement. The working class is characterized by limited capital resources, relying primarily on manual labour for income, with fewer educational qualifications and social networks largely within their class. Finally, the underclass experiences minimal capital across all forms, facing significant barriers to social mobility and often being excluded from dominant social networks (Bourdieu, 1984; 1986; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

### ***Inequalities in Life Chances***

Life chances refer to the inequalities on opportunities that individuals faced while achieving various life goals, shaped significantly by their class. This theme investigates which structure of factor is reasonable for the existing inequalities in life chances and material standards of living.

In the Marxist approach, the inequalities in life chances of the proletariat class are elaborated through discussion on the capitalist mode of production, labour theory of value, the extraction of surplus value, and the alienation phenomenon. The value of a commodity is determined by the socially necessary labour time required for its

production. The capitalist system uses this value to generate profit by paying workers less than the value they produce. Thus, capitalists earn profit from the exploitation of labour. Capitalist economies tend to go through cycles of boom and bust. To maintain profit, capitalists intentionally maintain a pool of unemployed workers, referred to as the "reserve army of labour." This surplus of unemployed workers puts downward pressure on wages and makes it easier for employers to hire and fire workers, thus ensuring a constant supply of cheap labour. The exploitative nature of capitalism leads to alienation, where workers are estranged from the products of their labour, the labour process, and even from their own human essence. Capitalist production reduces workers to a mere means of generating profit. Also, the pursuit of profit drives capitalists to reinvest and expand their capital. This process exacerbates exploitation as competition intensifies and workers are pushed to produce more for the same wages. The bourgeoisie's economic power allows them greater access to education, influence on law and policies, and health facilities that maintain their hegemony over the proletariat class.

Weber argued that class is based on one's relationship to the means of production. Those who own property or have valuable skills have better life chances due to their market advantage. This creates a system where some have more opportunities for education, healthcare, and social mobility. Also, social honor associated with a profession or background can also influence life chances. For example, a doctor might have limited wealth but high status, granting them access to exclusive networks and opportunities. This phenomenon is equally applicable for the privileged cultural-religious status/identity (Weber, 2023).

Parkin (1982) argue that Weber's framework downplays the importance of structural economic inequalities and the conflicts arising from them. They believe that

Weber's focus on status and party detracts from the fundamental economic divisions between capital and labour. Schlegel (2020) criticized for its Eurocentric bias, as it is based largely on European social structures and may not be universally applicable to non-Western societies.

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social stratification emphasized the role of various forms of capital (economic, cultural, and social) in shaping life chances and social mobility. These forms of capital are unequally distributed, leading to the reproduction of social inequalities across generations. Economic capital, encompassing financial resources and material wealth, grants access to better education, healthcare, and other resources that enhance mobility. Cultural capital, including knowledge, skills, and educational qualifications, exists in three forms: embodied (dispositions and skills), objectified (cultural objects), and institutionalized (educational credentials). Cultural capital is crucial for educational and professional success, and its transmission from families with high cultural capital perpetuates class inequalities. Social capital, referring to networks of relationships, provides access to social support and opportunities. Extensive social networks can be leveraged for career advancement and resource access. Finally, symbolic capital represents the recognition and prestige an individual holds, convertible into other forms of capital and reflecting accumulated economic, cultural, and social capital. Also, according to Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1990, Pp. 52-65), the internalized dispositions shaped by social background, influences individuals' aspirations and practices. Those from privileged backgrounds develop a habitus aligned with dominant cultural norms, granting them an advantage in social interactions and institutions. Fields, social arenas where competition occurs for resources and status, value different forms of capital. The

educational field, for instance, values cultural capital, favoring those with substantial cultural capital for academic and professional success (Bourdieu, 1986).

The educational system, Bourdieu argues, plays a crucial role in reproducing social inequalities. Schools often reward students possessing cultural capital aligned with the dominant culture, disadvantaging those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Curriculums, pedagogical methods, and assessment criteria may be biased towards the habitus of the upper and middle classes, perpetuating existing hierarchies. Furthermore, families with substantial capital invest these resources in their children, providing advantages that enhance their life chances. This transmission of capital ensures that social inequalities persist across generations (Bourdieu 1984; 1986; 1990).

### *Antagonistic Conflict*

Antagonistic conflict focuses on the societal cleavages that systematically generate overt antagonisms and conflicts. This theme explores the concept of class as it relates to the causes of inequalities in economic opportunities, identifying the specific aspects of economic inequality that lead to conflicts of interest and, consequently, overt conflicts. Classes are not merely defined by common conditions that generate economic opportunities but by those clusters of conditions that inherently pit people against each other in the pursuit of these opportunities. This conflict might be in observable form or be in psychological, emotional format. This theme attempts to analyze both.

Marx's analysis of society revolves around the concept of class struggle and dialectical materialism, identifying the antagonistic relationship between the ruling class (the bourgeoisie/capitalist) and the working class (the proletariat). A clear statement “The History of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles”

(Marx & Engels, 1848, p.57) represent the weight of the concept of class struggle within Marxism. He argues that throughout history, societies have been marked by the exploitation of one class by another. This exploitation leads to the development of class consciousness as the working class becomes aware of their common interests and shared experiences of oppression. As this consciousness grows, the working class becomes organized and empowered to challenge the bourgeoisie's control, seeking to transform the conditions that perpetuate inequality. The antagonistic conflict emerges from the proletariat's struggle to gain control over the means of production and end the exploitative relationship. Simultaneously, the ruling class attempts to maintain its dominance and protect its profits by extracting surplus value from the Labour of the working class, leading to socioeconomic inequality and conflict (Kautsky, 1903; 1910).

This idea of antagonistic conflict is particularly prominent in the Marxist tradition, although class also plays a role in explaining social conflict in non-Marxist theoretical traditions. Weber, for instance, sees class as a potential basis for conflicts but explicitly rejects the notion that class relations inherently generate overt conflicts. In contrast, Marx viewed conflict as an intrinsic consequence of class relations. While Marx did not see explosive class conflict as a constant feature of capitalist society, he believed that capitalist societies would experience recurrent episodes of intense struggles driven by antagonistic class interests, with a systematic tendency for these episodes to intensify over time. The aphorism “class struggle is the motor of history,” although an oversimplification, underscores the importance of conflict in Marx's concept of class (Rothstien, 1962; Przeworski, 1977).

Max Weber's theory of social stratification (Aydin, 2018) does not solely focus on antagonistic conflict arising from economic struggle. Instead, it offers a

multidimensional framework that acknowledges the potential for conflict based on class, status, and party. This framework highlights the complexity of social division, where various groups with differing interests and power dynamics can engage in conflict. Within Weber's system, class conflict exists but is just one facet of a multifaceted picture. Similar to Marxist theory, Weber recognizes that individuals and groups within different classes have divergent economic interests. Property owners seek to maximize profits, while workers fight for better wages and working conditions. This competition for resources and life chances can lead to conflict, particularly evident in Labour disputes and struggles over income distribution (Weber, 2013a; 1946).

Beyond economic factors, Weber emphasizes the role of status groups in social conflict. Unlike class, which is based on economic position, status groups are defined by social honor and prestige. Competition for social recognition and prestige between these groups can lead to antagonistic relationships. Traditional elites might feel threatened by the rising prestige of new professional groups, for instance. Additionally, status groups often engage in "social closure," restricting access to resources and opportunities to maintain their social position. This exclusionary behavior has the potential to breed conflict with other groups seeking similar privileges. Also, political parties and interest groups form another dimension of conflict. These organized groups compete for political power and the ability to influence policy and decision-making. Power struggles between parties representing different interests and ideologies can be highly antagonistic. Furthermore, parties often have conflicting policy agendas and goals, leading to legislative battles and political maneuvering (Roth & Collins, 1987).

This approach highlights that conflict can occur within and across these three categories. Traditional class conflicts typically occur between different economic classes, but there can also be conflicts within the same class, such as between skilled and unskilled workers. Additionally, conflicts can arise at the intersection of class and status. For instance, economically successful individuals lacking social prestige might seek to change their status, leading to conflict. Political parties can become battlegrounds for class and status conflicts, as they aggregate and represent the interests of various social groups.

In *The Division of Labour in Society* (1997), Durkheim discusses how the division of Labour can become abnormal or pathological. This occurs when specialization leads to excessive individualism or when there is a lack of moral regulation, resulting in conflict and disintegration rather than cohesion. He terms these situations as "anomic" or "forced" divisions of Labour, where the smooth functioning of society is disrupted.

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social stratification offers a distinct perspective on class conflict compared to Marxist approaches. He steers away from a model of overt antagonism between classes, instead focusing on the subtle mechanisms that reproduce social inequalities. Bourdieu emphasizes the role of cultural capital and educational institutions. He argued that dominant classes maintain power through the transmission of cultural capital and the way educational systems perpetuate class distinctions (Bourdieu, 1984; 1986). This operates through a concept he terms symbolic violence, where the dominated classes internalize the social structures and classifications imposed by those in power. Domination, in this view, is achieved through cultural and symbolic means rather than open conflict. Social fields, another key concept, represent arenas where individuals and groups compete for resources and

positions, using different forms of capital (economic, cultural, social, symbolic) (Bourdieu, 1986). However, this competition is structured in ways that favor the reproduction of existing power relations. Furthermore, the habitus, the ingrained dispositions shaped by social class, influences how individuals perceive and respond to their social world. Class conflict, from this perspective, may not always be overtly antagonistic; it can be embedded within everyday practices and dispositions that align with one's class position. Ultimately, Bourdieu underscores the role of social structures and processes, like education (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) and family upbringing, in perpetuating social inequalities across generations, indicating a more nuanced structure of class dynamics where competition and struggle are often mediated by these structures.

### *Class Consciousness*

Class consciousness involves the awareness and perception of nonworkers regarding their position within the socio-economic hierarchy. This theme explores how nonworkers understand and interpret their class status, the shared conditions and experiences that define their group, and their collective interests and potential for collective action. Class consciousness among nonworkers encompasses their recognition of common economic and social challenges, their identification with others in similar situations, and their understanding of the broader class dynamics and power structures that influence their lives. This theme also examines how nonworkers' awareness of class impacts their attitudes, behaviours, and potential for mobilization in pursuit of improved conditions and greater social and economic equity

In Marxist discussions, false consciousness is a key concept that refers to individuals holding beliefs that do not align with their objective class interests, serving the interests of the ruling class. This leads to individuals identifying with a

class other than their own, perpetuating class-based inequalities. Class consciousness is crucial for the proletariat to recognize their exploitation and mobilize for collective action against the bourgeoisie. Marx argued that the development of class consciousness among workers is essential for initiating revolutionary change and overthrowing the capitalist system. He outlined several stages in the development of class consciousness: Class-in-Itself (Class Structure Awareness), Class-for-Itself (Class Consciousness), and Political Mobilization and Action. Initially, workers may be aware of their shared economic conditions and experiences but do not recognize them as a basis for collective action. As they become more aware of their common exploitation and shared interests, they develop class consciousness, recognizing the antagonistic relationship between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and the systemic nature of their exploitation (Bourdieu, 1986; 1987; Burris, 1983; Dahrendorf, 1959).

Marx and Engels emphasized the role of ideology and the superstructure in shaping and maintaining false consciousness. The ruling class uses these institutions to disseminate ideas and values that justify and perpetuate the existing social order, preventing the proletariat from developing true class consciousness.

Max Weber's perspective on class consciousness differs from Karl Marx's, emphasizing the interplay of factors influencing social action and group formation. While shared economic interests exist within classes, they don't automatically translate into a unified class consciousness or collective action. Weber also highlighted the complexity of social stratification, including class, status, and party, which interact and overlap, making a unified class consciousness more difficult. Status groups based on social honor and prestige, and political parties can cross-cut class lines, leading to varied and sometimes conflicting identities and interests among individuals within the same economic class. Status groups can create divisions within

a class, as individuals might identify more with their status than their class. Weber acknowledged that class consciousness could emerge under specific conditions, such as Labour strikes and workers' movements, but these conditions are not always present, and various social and cultural factors can inhibit the development of class consciousness (Bierstedt & Giddens, 1972).

Bourdieu's work addresses the subtle and pervasive ways in which social structures and inequalities are reproduced, but it does not explicitly address class consciousness in the Marxist and Weber's sense. His concepts of habitus, symbolic violence, and various forms of capital suggest that individuals often unconsciously align with their social positions, which may limit the development of a collective awareness and action against social hierarchies.

### *Emancipation*

Emancipation, within the context of nonworkers, refers to the pursuit and achievement of liberation from socio-economic constraints and inequalities. This theme explores the aspirations, strategies, and movements aimed at achieving greater autonomy, rights, and opportunities for nonworkers. Within this theme, the focus is on understanding how nonworkers seek to empower themselves individually and collectively. It examines efforts to challenge and transform the systems and ideologies that perpetuate inequality and exclusion. Emancipation also encompasses broader social justice movements that advocate for the rights and dignity of nonworkers, aiming to create a more equitable and inclusive society where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive. This theme emerges from a critical perspective that views economic inequalities not only as outcomes of specific mechanisms but also as forms of systemic oppression and exploitation. It involves a normative stance that advocates for the liberation of individuals and groups from these oppressive structures,

envisioning a society where all individuals have equitable access to resources, opportunities, and rights.

The primary objective of the Marxist approach is the attainment of emancipation and equality for the working class through the dismantling of the capitalist structure and the establishment of a society devoid of class distinctions, often referred to as communism. This approach underscores the imperative of addressing the systemic issues of exploitation, disparity, and estrangement inherent to capitalism, primarily through revolutionary transformation. Marxism emphasizes the need to abolish class exploitation by enabling workers to seize control of the means of production, fundamentally changing how society produces goods and services. This can only be achieved through a revolutionary overthrow of the existing system, not through gradual reforms. A crucial element for revolution is the development of class consciousness, where workers recognize their shared plight and the exploitative nature of their relationship with capitalists. This awareness empowers them to challenge the status quo and fuels their collective action. Following the revolution, a "dictatorship of the proletariat" would be established as a temporary state where the working class dismantles the remnants of the capitalist system, paving the way to a communist society. The ultimate aspiration is to create a social framework characterized by collective ownership of production resources and equitable allocation based on need. This culminating stage, termed communism, is anticipated to be attained through successive transitional phases, progressing from capitalism to socialism, and ultimately realizing a classless society. Marx envisioned a world free from exploitation and oppression, a state of liberation for the working class, involving a complete societal transformation to dismantle class structures entirely and eliminate the capitalist system and its inherent exploitation (Marx & Engels, 1848).

In different way than Marx, Max Weber's theory of social stratification, provides a framework for understanding how individuals and groups can improve their social and economic positions. Weber emphasizes a multidimensional approach, considering class, status, and party. Class mobility involves improving one's market situation through education, skills, or property ownership, leading to economic emancipation. Status attainment, based on social honor and prestige, can help individuals overcome social stigmas and gain recognition, contributing to social emancipation. Political participation and collective action through parties can provide a platform for marginalized groups to advocate for their interests, enabling political emancipation. However, Weber's theory highlights the complexity and intersectionality of these dimensions, noting that barriers in one area can impede progress in another, and that the potential for emancipation is conditional and context-dependent.

Durkheim posits that the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity is a natural consequence of population growth and technological advancements. However, this transition can lead to anomie, a state of normlessness, causing social instability and individual disorientation due to the breakdown of traditional norms. Despite specialization fostering differences, Durkheim argues that the division of Labour ultimately strengthens social cohesion by increasing interdependence. He emphasizes the need for new forms of moral regulation to ensure cooperation and coexistence in a diverse society (Durkheim, 1997). While acknowledging the value of individual autonomy, Durkheim critiques extreme individualism, highlighting the importance of maintaining a balance for a healthy society.

Piacentini (2017) commenting on 'Social Class in the 21st Century' argued that Bourdieu's theory overemphasizes the reproduction of social inequalities. They

suggest his framework underestimated the possibility of social mobility and individual agency in navigating social structures. Chan & Goldthorpe (2007) in 'Cultural Capital: Some Critical observations' criticized this approach for being multidimensional nature of capital (economic, cultural, social) makes it difficult to quantify and compare. This has potential to lead to challenges in empirically testing Bourdieu's ideas. Compared to Marxist theories, Crompton (2006) in 'Class and Gender in Modern Britain' criticized for not fully addressing the role of overt power structures and class conflict in maintaining social inequalities.

### **Empirical review**

Empirical review has been further divided into global and national scenario.

#### ***Global scenario***

In 2013, the BBC's Great British Class Survey Experiment unfolded. This significant undertaking marked the most extensive investigation into social class ever conducted within the United Kingdom. This comprehensive study engaged a staggering number of participants, exceeding 160,000 individuals, and employed a multifaceted approach (Nuffield Class Schema), encompassing surveys, interviews, and focus groups. The outcomes of this research have effectively challenged established assumptions concerning class distinctions and, in doing so, have offered profound insights into the intricate and ever-evolving fabric of social class in contemporary society. The survey's conclusion unveiled the existence of seven distinct social classes within modern British society, each distinguished by its own unique characteristics. These classes were identified as follows:

The 'Elite Class' was comprised of the most affluent and privileged members of society; this class encompassed top-tier professionals, business leaders, and high-

income earners. Typically, they possessed substantial educational and economic resources. The 'Established Middle Class' featured professionals and managers with secure employment and comfortable incomes. Frequently, they were homeowners and enjoyed access to cultural and social amenities. The 'Technical Middle Class' was comprised of individuals engaged in technical or scientific vocations. Their incomes were moderate, and their distinctiveness lay in their cultural interests. The 'New Affluent Workers' consisted of young professionals and managers holding well-remunerated positions, often engaging in cultural and social pursuits. The 'Traditional Working Class' consisted of occupying manual or routine job roles with modest incomes; this class generally had limited access to cultural and social capital. The 'Emergent Service Workers' class was populated by younger, lower-paid individuals working in the service industry, such as bartenders and call centre employees. Their economic and cultural resources were often limited. The 'Precariat' class consisted of people representing those grappling with precarious, low-paying employment and minimal access to social and cultural assets. The precariat faced enduring economic instability and insecurity (Savage, et al., 2013).

The Nuffield Class Schema was developed during the 1970s and onward by a group of sociologists including John H. Goldthorpe, Robert Erikson, Tak Wing Chan, Catherine Mills, and many more at Nuffield College, University of Oxford. It presents a significant contribution with seven types of classes to understand social stratification, particularly within the British context. It departs from subjective self-perceptions of class and instead emphasizes a multidimensional approach grounded in objective criteria.

The schema categorizes individuals based on measurable attributes related to their economic positions, including occupation, employment status (full-time, part-

time, self-employed), and the nature of their work (manual, supervisory, etc.) (Goldthorpe, 1987). Central to the schema is the distinction between employers, the self-employed, and various types of employees, recognizing the influence of employment relationships on class positioning (Evans et al., 1993). It was built upon extensive empirical research, utilizing large-scale surveys to classify and analyze social classes (Goldthorpe & Mills, 2008). This data-driven approach ensures its relevance and adaptability. The schema is particularly valuable in studying social mobility. By tracking changes in individuals' class positions over time (based on the aforementioned factors), researchers can analyze patterns of social movement within the class structure (Goldthorpe & Mills, 2008).

This updated social class model effectively challenged the conventional three-class framework, consisting of upper, middle, and working classes and traditional working class and bourgeoisie class, shedding light on the intricate and varied social class structures within contemporary Britain. It took into account mainly economic factors like their chances to engage with work and the material status they possess. Although the cultural and sociopolitical dimensions are also equally important in class analysis. It is also crucial to analyze one's access to work opportunities in doing so. This survey forgets to take nonworkers as a potential class on the analytical part.

In 2015, A study on class structure in Australia was conducted by Sheppard, J. and Biddle. Data for this study was collected through the Australian National University Poll (ANU poll), conducted by the Social Research Centre (SRC), an affiliate of the Australian National University (ANU). The ANU poll utilizes a nationally representative random sample of the adult Australian population. Telephone interviews were conducted with 1,200 participants between July 13th and 27th, 2015. This research concluded that: Almost all Australians view themselves as

belonging to a social class, with more than half identifying as middle class, two in five as working class, and only two percent as upper class. This long-standing tendency to identify as middle class has likely strengthened with the expansion of 'white-collar' industries. Study have divided the Australian society into five classes: 'established affluent', 'emergent affluent', 'mobile middle', 'established middle', and 'established working', based on respondents' economic, social, and cultural capital.

Most Australians' self-described class closely matches their objective class membership. The established working class has the lowest incomes, occupational prestige, and educational attainment, and is the oldest class on average, with a mean age of 66. The established middle-class averages near the mean in income, property value, social and cultural capital, education, and occupational prestige, outperforming their parents in occupational prestige but not in household income. The mobile middle class, with higher educational attainment, is transitioning towards the affluent class, earning high incomes and possessing significant property wealth. Members of the emergent affluent class, typically younger and benefiting from intergenerational advantage, earn much but save little and are on track to join the established affluent class. The established affluent class benefits the most from intergenerational advantage but does not have the highest incomes or greatest wealth. Social classes in Australia also differ in political opinions and attitudes, with affluent classes most satisfied with the country's direction and least supportive of government intervention to reduce inequality, whereas the mobile and emerging classes favor increased government services (Sheppard & Biddle, 2015).

A study on class division was conducted in Chile. This study examined the division of social capital across different classes in Chile, one of the most unequal countries globally. The study investigated the extent to which individuals from upper,

middle, and lower classes form social networks with others of similar social standing, following Bourdieu's theory that higher social strata networks are particularly segregated in terms of social capital. Using large-scale, representative survey data from the Chilean urban population aged 18–75 years ( $n = 2,517$ ), we constructed an integrated indicator of social class combining education, occupational class, and household income measures. Their regression analyses reveal that upper-class individuals have larger networks and access to more varied and prestigious social resources compared to their middle- and lower-class counterparts. Notably, there is a U-shaped relationship between social class and class homogeneity, indicating high network segregation at both the top and bottom of the class structure, while middle classes exhibit more heterogeneous class networks, potentially bridging the class structure's extremes. These findings highlighted that while social and economic capital accumulates in higher classes, the lower classes face social deprivation in addition to economic disadvantage. Data for this study was sourced from the first wave of the Estudio Longitudinal Social de Chile (Longitudinal Social Study of Chile) (ELSOC 2018), managed by the Centre for Social Conflict and Cohesion Studies (COES). The data were collected in 2016 by the Microdata Centre at the Universidad de Chile, involving a random selection of 1,067 street blocks, with 2,984 men and women aged 18–75 years from 94 municipalities across the country participating in face-to-face interviews. (Otero et al., 2021).

Warner's (1949) presents a comprehensive framework for analyzing and measuring social status in American society. Warner's methodology was grounded in community-based research, using case studies of specific American communities to illustrate broader trends in social stratification. Two methods were used i.e., Evaluated participation (EP) and Index of status characteristics (ISC) to investigate the social

status in USA (Warner, 1949, Pp. 33-35). This approach allows for a detailed, context-specific analysis of social class dynamics. Warner identifies a distinct stratification system within American society, characterized by a hierarchical structure of social classes. He divides society into six classes: upper-upper, lower-upper, upper-middle, lower-middle, upper-lower, and lower-lower. Warner emphasizes the importance of both quantitative and qualitative methods in capturing the complexity of social stratification. His manual provides detailed procedures for measuring social status based on a combination of objective criteria (such as income, occupation, and education) and subjective perceptions (such as prestige and lifestyle). Warner argues that the type of work individuals perform significantly influences their position within the social hierarchy. Occupations are ranked based on their perceived prestige, contributing to the overall assessment of social class. He also highlights the role of cultural and social factors in shaping class distinctions. He explores how values, behaviors, and social networks are linked to different social classes, reinforcing class boundaries and perpetuating social inequalities. This study also examines patterns of social mobility, noting that while there is some movement between classes, the overall structure remains relatively stable. Warner finds that upward mobility is limited and often constrained by structural barriers and cultural norms (Swanson et al., 1949; Warner, 1949). However, the six-class model oversimplifies the complexities of social stratification in the US and the reliance on reputation can be subjective and may not capture the full picture of economic resources and power dynamics.

Lenski (1966) through his valuable theoretical work 'Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification' identified and discussed the features of various classes within different types of societies (Hunting and gathering societies, horticultural

societies, Agrarian societies and, Industrial societies). His approach on sociocultural evolution posits that societies advance through stages based on their technological and informational capabilities, with more advanced societies exhibiting greater complexity and stratification. Central to his theory is the role of surplus production in fostering social inequality; societies capable of producing surplus beyond subsistence needs tend to develop social classes that control resources and technology. Lenski also highlights the exploitation inherent in social stratification, where dominant classes extract surplus from subordinate ones, perpetuating power imbalances. He emphasizes that inequality is multidimensional, involving not just economic class but also power, prestige, and privilege, with these dimensions being interrelated. Additionally, Lenski underscores the significance of the distribution system in determining how resources and rewards are allocated among different classes. Although he does not heavily focus on class consciousness, he acknowledges that awareness of shared interests within a class can spur social movements and challenge existing inequalities (Mayer, 1966).

Erik Olin Wright in his work on social stratification is centered on a nuanced and comprehensive analysis of class structure, emphasizing the complexity of class relations in capitalist societies. Wright extends and refines Marxist theory by incorporating elements of Weberian sociology to develop a detailed class schema that accounts for the diverse and contradictory positions people occupy within modern economies. He introduces the concept of "contradictory class locations" to explain how individuals can simultaneously hold positions that align with different class interests, such as managers who may share characteristics with both capitalists and workers. Through his theoretical/ideological discussions and criticisms, Wright also explores the dynamics of class exploitation, power, and the potential for class

consciousness and collective action to bring about social change (Wright, 1978; 1980; 1985; 2000).

A Comprehensive collection of writings 'Approaches to class analysis' edited by Wright (2005) elaborated the features, pros and cons of different historical approaches of social stratification including Marxian approach, Weberian approach, Durkheimian approach, Bourdieu's approach, and rent based classification system. E.O. Wright summarize that: In addressing broad historical variations in the social organization of inequality, the concept of class must be defined differently than when used to answer narrower questions about individuals' subjective identities in contemporary society. These questions are embedded within broad theoretical frameworks that shape how they are posed. To sort out the various perspectives on class, it is useful to map them onto key questions posed within class analysis. He introduces six important questions where the concept of class is central. Distributional Location: How are people objectively located in distributions of material inequality? Subjectively Salient Groups: What explains how people, individually and collectively, subjectively locate themselves and others within a structure of inequality? Life Chances: What explains inequalities in life chances and material standards of living? Antagonistic Conflicts: What social cleavages systematically shape overt conflicts? Historical Variation: How should we characterize and explain the variations across history in the social organization of inequalities? Emancipation: What sorts of transformations are needed to eliminate oppression and exploitation within capitalist societies? (Wright, 2005, Pp. 180-192).

Mills (1951; 1956), critically delves into the structure and dynamics of American society. In "The Power Elite," Mills challenges the idea of a dispersed power structure, positing instead that a small, interconnected group of leaders from

the political, economic, and military spheres wields immense influence over national decision-making. He introduces the concept of interlocking directorates, where individuals sit on multiple corporate boards, creating a web of shared interests that consolidates their power and restricts public participation, thereby undermining democracy. In "White Collar," Mills examines the rise of the white-collar middle class, highlighting a shift where this seemingly prosperous group actually experiences a loss of autonomy and control over their work due to the growing dominance of large bureaucracies. He argues that this bureaucratization leads to worker alienation and a sense of powerlessness, with many white-collar workers suffering from a "false consciousness," mistakenly attributing their success to individual effort while ignoring structural limitations (Mills, 1951; 1999). Together, these works underscore the complexities of social stratification and the nuanced ways in which power and control are exercised in contemporary society.

Namboodiripad & Habib (1994) studied *Classes and Class Struggle in Indian History*. As a part of the anthology "Essays in Indian History: Towards a Marxist Perception," addresses two prevalent myths about India's cultural ethos: the perceived incompatibility of materialist ideologies with India's spiritualist traditions and the notion that class struggles are foreign to Indian society. Pioneers of Indian Marxist theory, such as Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya and D.D. Kosambi, refuted these myths by highlighting the historical presence of materialism and class struggles in India. Habib's essays build on these foundational works, illustrating how class conflicts were central to India's socio-economic and political evolution from ancient to Mughal times. He argues that India's history, contrary to claims of stasis, has been marked by dynamic class struggles comparable to those in Europe and China. The paper discusses various aspects of these struggles, including the socio-economic conditions

under Mughal rule and the ideological battles between different religious and philosophical schools. Habib also critiques the limited geographical focus of existing Marxist historiography and calls for a more comprehensive study encompassing all regions of India. He concludes by underscoring the importance of understanding the historical context of class struggles to inform contemporary political and academic discourse. (Namboodiripad & Habib, 1994)

Parkin (1974) edited a collection titled "The Social Analysis of Class Structure" within the "Explorations in Sociology" series (Vol. 5). Published by Tavistock Publications, this book served as a valuable resource for understanding central themes in British sociology during the 1970s. The volume incorporated both theoretical and empirical contributions, exploring contemporary issues like the intersection of race and class, gender inequality, and the historical development of the working class alongside concepts like the Victorian Labour aristocracy. A chapter by Sheila Allen and Christopher Smith explored the relationship between class and race in Britain, focusing on Asian and West Indian workers. The authors argued that class and race should be seen as dynamic relationships rather than static categories, emphasizing the interconnectedness of class and race experiences. They discussed the theoretical challenges of integrating race relations with class analysis, critiquing the simplistic notions of 'underclass' and highlighting the complex roles of migrant Labour. The paper examined how black and Asian workers are often relegated to low-status, low-paying jobs, and how institutional racism affects their class position and life chances. While acknowledging differences between the experiences of Asian and West Indian migrants, the authors also pointed out that both groups face significant barriers due to racism and economic exploitation. They stressed the need for a model

that fully integrates class and race to better understand the socio-economic dynamics at play (Allen & Smith, 2020, pp. 39-54).

### *National Scenario*

Savada (1993) for Federal Research Division Library of Congress USA constructed the country profile of Nepal and Bhutan. According to this research, Nepalese society is characterized by distinct differences in wealth and access to political power, dividing it into three main classes: a small ruling elite, a growing intermediate group of government officials, large landholders, and merchants, and the vast majority comprising the peasant base. These divisions represent functional class categories rather than Marxian social class entities, forming a continuum within the social structure. Most members of the ruling elite and government officials originate from the rural landed class, reflecting this continuum. The agricultural sector, though facing similar economic and technological conditions, is diverse, with varying strata in landholding, economic dependence, and independence. The intermediate stratum of farmers, while slightly more diverse than the rest of the rural population in ethnic and geographical backgrounds, is relatively homogeneous in shared interests due to its economic and educational advantages and occupational activities. This group generally aspires to middle- or elite-class status. The ruling elite, the smallest and least diverse category, is primarily composed of high-caste, educated Pahadis, including various strata of Brahmans and Chhetris. At its apex is the monarch, whose authority is derived from the orthodox Hindu belief in the king as a reincarnation of Vishnu, not from electoral support. The expansion of the bureaucracy was driven by the increasing educated population. Due to limited development, many educated individuals struggled to find employment upon graduation and, concentrated in urban centers, posed a potential revolutionary threat. To neutralize this threat, the ruling

class absorbed them into an already bloated bureaucracy. In the 1980s, many educated individuals in Kathmandu Valley found employment with development consultant firms, which emerged to meet the demand from foreign donors for local consultants. These firms tapped into foreign aid, creating numerous jobs and enabling many educated Nepalese to achieve middle-class status (Savada, 1993, pp.87-88).

In case of Nepal, the social stratification/class division has been rooted with the caste system and various authors (Andras 1979; Gellner, 2007; Levine, 1987) emphasized the caste-based inequalities and discrimination in their analysis. The caste system of Nepal is rooted with the division of labour/work. And also, it is linked with the socio-economic inequality.

Hofer (1979) offers a detailed examination of the Muluki Ain, Nepal's legal code of 1854, and its impact on the country's social and caste structure. The book presents a multi-faceted analysis from legal, historical, and anthropological perspectives, providing deep insights into the codification of caste relations and the functioning of the state. Hofer focuses on the parts of the Muluki Ain that specifically address caste hierarchy, interpreting the code not merely as a legal document but as an ethno-theory reflecting the self-perception of Nepali society. The book covers various themes, including purity and impurity, commensality, sexual relations, social status, division of Labour, slavery, asceticism, and the roles of ethnic groups within the caste system. Hofer also discussed the implications of the law on ethnic groups and caste mobility, emphasizing the dynamic nature of legal interpretations and their influence on social reality. One of Hofer's critical arguments is against the attributional interpretation of caste status, suggesting instead that caste relationships are codified outcomes of inter-caste interactions. He also challenges the notion that Nepali caste is fundamentally different from Indian caste systems, while simultaneously recognizing

the flexibility and tolerance of the Nepali caste system as described in the Muluki Ain. Hofer's analysis extends to the historical context and the role of state authorities in enforcing and adapting caste laws, though he acknowledges gaps in his study, particularly regarding the influence of Brahmans on the legal code. Despite these limitations, Hofer's work is praised for its scholarly rigor and its contribution to the understanding of Nepalese caste and legal systems.

Messerschmidt (1981) critiqued the Andras Hofer's "The Caste Hierarchy and the State in Nepal: A Study of the Muluki Ain of 1854". He writes that, it provided a comprehensive examination of Nepal's legal codification of caste and its implications for social stratification. Hofer's ethnohistorical approach had combined the legal, historical, and anthropological perspectives to offer powerful insights into the nature of social interaction in Nepal. His analysis revealed how the 'Muluki Ain' not only codified caste relations but also reinforced ethnic identities and social hierarchies. However, Hofer's work leaves certain critical questions unanswered, particularly regarding the role of Brahmans in the development of the legal code and the long-term impact of the law on ethnic solidarity and internal structures. Despite these gaps, Hofer's treatise remained an essential reference for understanding the complexities of caste and legal systems in Nepal and served as a foundational text for future research in this area.

Pariyar (2018) illustrates that dominant Nepali caste groups in Britain and are actively challenging certain aspects of caste hierarchy, specifically the status differences between themselves and higher castes, while preserving the status differences between themselves and lower castes. Factors such as their population size, relative economic success, and the impact of ethnic movements in Nepal contribute to this dynamic. If current trends continue, untouchability is likely to

persist in Britain as a hallmark of Nepalese caste. The Nepali diaspora in the UK exhibited both continuity and change regarding caste practices. Cultural traits of honor and shame continue to influence behavior across South Asian communities, contributed to the persistence of caste-based discrimination. The desire to maintain honor and prestige across national borders, facilitated by advancements in communication and transport, motivates individuals to adhere to traditional caste norms. This migration, intertwined with a caste-sensitive recruitment process, has led to the formation of strong caste associations. Consequently, caste organizations are likely to flourish in the UK, maintaining boundaries between high and low castes due to a lack of awareness and sensitivity about caste issues in British society. Middle-ranking castes, such as the Gurungs, Magars, Rais, and Limbus, seek to undermine the traditional dominance of high castes while marginalizing lower castes.

### **Research Gap**

Existing research on class and status in Nepal has primarily focused on individuals within the traditional production process, often overlooking the unique experiences and challenges faced by nonworkers. The significance of class perspectives among nonworkers has not been adequately recognized in the literature. Additionally, the gap between the contexts of previous research and contemporary realities has not been sufficiently considered. Major existing schools of class analysis have defined class through the material status of people (Andrew, 2001; Wright, 1985; Marx & Engels, 1848; Breen, 2005; Grusky & Galescu, 2005; Weininger, 2005; Pakulski, 2005). However, the contemporary context has changed significantly. Millions of people are unable to access life chances, sharing common features such as economic hardship, opportunity deprivation, and social stigma. The population of this stratum is increasing alongside technological advancements and rapid globalization.

Technology has played a crucial role in transforming the psycho-socioeconomic context.

The features of classical society's classes and modern society's classes have evolved with the changing context. Throughout history, major political ideologies have primarily stratified workers who earn or have as a social class. Existing research has largely neglected to study nonworkers through a class perspective. Neither political ideologies have provided a framework to classify nonworkers as a socio-economic class nor have they debated on this line. Thus, this stratum remains largely unexplored by existing ideologies. This research aims to fill this gap by critically examining the social stratification of nonworkers through class perspective.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The term "nonworker" was conceptualized and defined for operational use based on existing knowledge and previous practices. Following this, an ideological discussion was conducted to identify the core themes that are essential for defining a social strata or group as a "Social Class." Various studies (Pakulski, 2005; Marx & Engels, 1848; Wright, 2005) have utilized these key themes to justify the existence of other social classes, such as the working class, upper class, and middle class.

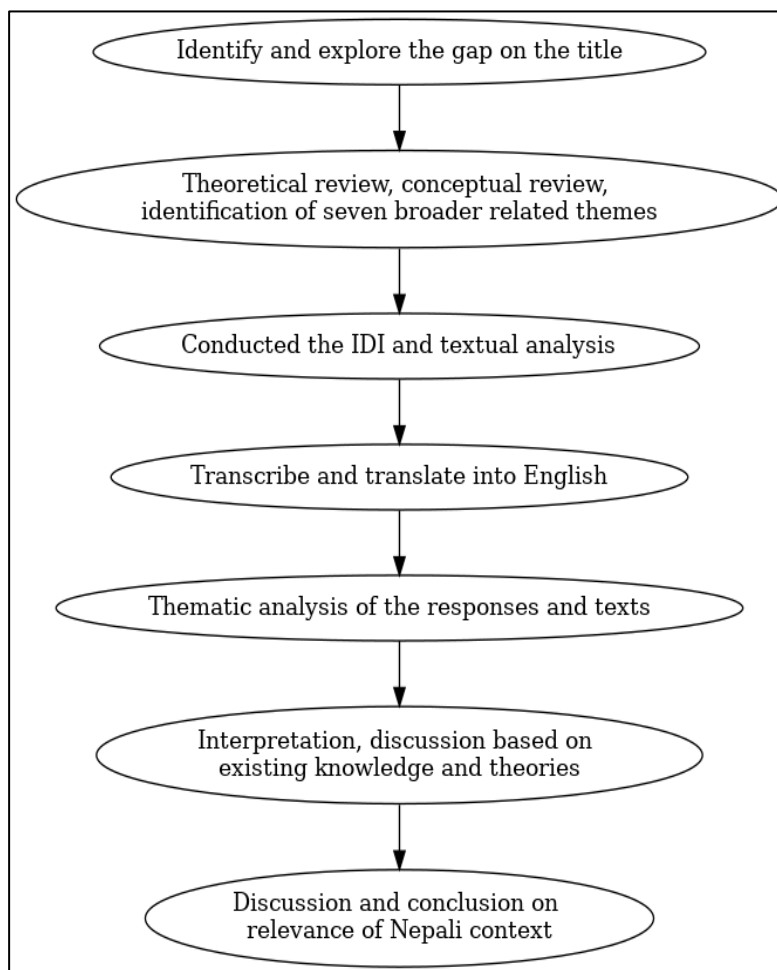
Through a theoretical and empirical review, seven core themes were identified: "Subjectively Salient Group," "Historical Variation," "Inequalities in Life Chances," "Material Standard of Living," "Antagonistic Conflict," "Class Consciousness," and "Emancipation." These broader themes served as a framework for the textual analysis of the in-depth interviews.

The presence of these themes in the responses of nonworkers was examined through semi-structured interviews, guided by a set of 31 interview guidelines. The

information collected was transcribed, translated into English, and analyzed thematically. From the thematic analysis, 13 major themes were uncovered, including the seven broader themes from the theoretical base and six new themes. These themes were analyzed and discussed in relation to existing knowledge and theories, and their relevance and generalizability were considered within the context of Nepal.

**Figure 2. 1**

*The Research Process*



### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

This chapter details the research methodology employed in the study. It encompasses the following aspects: The qualitative research methodology, the research site and population, sources of data, research design, research instruments, data collection procedures, data management and analysis techniques, reliability and validity of the study and ethical considerations.

#### **Qualitative Research Methodology**

Qualitative research approach is a non-statistical inquiry where data and information are presented in the form of words, symbols, pictures, or other non-numerical records, materials, or artefacts that are collected by a researcher (Moses et al., 2007). This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design, utilizing thematic analysis as the primary method. The analysis extends into narrative interpretation to provide a comprehensive understanding (Creswell & Creswell, 2022; Fay, 1987).

#### **Research Methods**

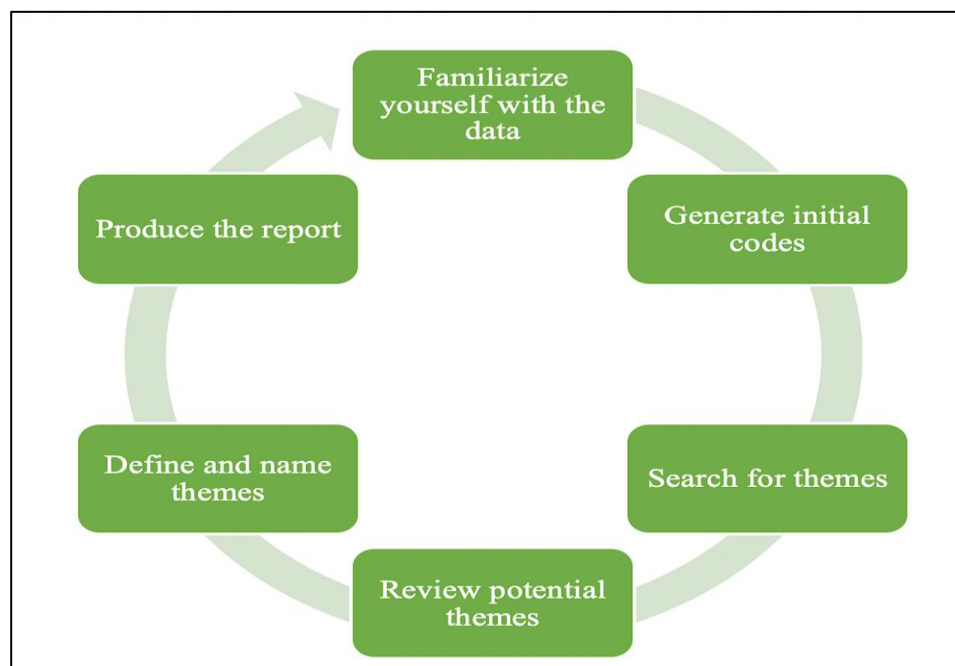
##### ***Thematic Analysis***

This research employed inductive thematic analysis (TA), a widely used qualitative method for identifying and analyzing recurring patterns (themes) within data. TA offers a flexible and systematic approach, adaptable to various research questions and theoretical frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This strength allows for a rich understanding of complex phenomena by enabling researchers to not only organize and describe data in detail, but also to develop an interpretative framework that reveals deeper insights (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Through a systematic coding process, TA ensures rigor and transparency in the research (Braun & Clarke,

2006). A set of Thirteen themes were identified from the IDI and most of them were also in center of discussion on various approaches (Davis & Moore, 1945; Ossowski, 2018; Wright, 1980;2005). Some of them were already defined by various theories/approaches (Marx & Engels, 1848; Wright, 2005; Bourdieu, 1987).

**Figure 3. 1**

*The Cycle of Thematic Analysis*



Source: Braun & Clarke (2006; 2012).

### *Narrative Analysis*

Narrative Analysis is a qualitative research method focused on examining the stories or personal accounts individuals use to make sense of their experiences. It views narratives as a fundamental way through which people structure their identities, relationships, and social realities. This approach is used in various fields such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology to explore how individuals and groups construct meaning within specific cultural and historical contexts (Riessman, 2008).

Narrative analysis emphasizes the structure, content, and context of stories, considering not only what is said but also how it is said and to whom. Researchers analyse the sequence of events, the role of characters, and the overarching themes to uncover deeper social or psychological patterns (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). This method can reveal how individuals shape their social identities through storytelling and how power relations and social norms are reflected in these narratives. This study combines the narrative analysis with thematic analysis.

### ***Textual Analysis***

In addition, A conceptual content analysis was conducted by reviewing the manifestos and constitutions of 10 Nepali political parties. Implicit terms were coded based on their implications, and themes were constructed accordingly. Explicit terms were coded under themes according to their respective leanings. Implicit terms were identified with the aid of a dictionary, if necessary, and contextual translation rules were followed. This content analysis was closely connected to and conducted in alignment with the research question 'I' and objectives 'I'. Through a meticulous review process, statements within the political party documents were analyzed and categorized based on their alignment/leaning with one or more of these core themes. This categorization allowed for a systematic understanding of the prevalent ideas, perceptions, and priorities within the political landscape of Nepal as articulated by its major parties.

### **Universe of the study**

The universe of this study encompasses the nonworking male and female population, including individuals from different socio-economic backgrounds. This research delves into the social stratification of nonworkers, aiming to categorize

according to their socio-economic characteristics. By focusing on nonworkers this study seeks to uncover the ways in which social stratification manifests and perpetuates within this segment of the population. Through a descriptive qualitative research methodology and a critical theory approach, this investigation aims to illuminate the socio-economic dynamics, cultural perceptions, and systemic challenges faced by nonworkers in Nepal, providing valuable insights into their lived experiences and contributing to broader discussions on social inequality and inclusion. First of all, for the content analysis, manifesto and constitution of 10 political parties were collected, coded, categorized and created themes as per their leaning. This was conducted for analyzing the political perspectives towards nonworkers. For the theoretical review and literature review, various online databases and libraries were visited.

### ***Research Sites and Population***

This study was conducted in three locations within Nepal: Kathmandu Metropolitan City (Wards no. 5 and Ward no. 29), Panchakanya Rural Municipality, and Shivapuri Rural Municipality (Nuwakot District). These sites encompass both urban and rural environments, allowing for a more inclusive sample that reflects the diverse socioeconomic contexts of unemployed individuals in Nepal.

Target Population of this study is the unemployed individuals registered with the Prime Minister Employment Program (PMEP) during the economic year 2079-2080. Data from the PMEP website (<https://www.pmep.gov.np/>) indicates a total of 815 registered unemployed individuals in Kathmandu Metropolitan City, with the highest concentrations residing in wards 5 and 29. Additionally, 350 unemployed individuals were registered in Panchakanya Rural Municipality and 369 in Shivapuri Rural Municipality.

## **Sampling and Sample Size**

This study used the information saturation method Charmaz (2006) of sample selection for IDI of the nonworkers. The root of information saturation method of sampling is in grounded theory in which saturation of information categories is examined with inclusion (interview) of each research participants. In general, it is widely cited around 90% of the information categories are likely to be achieved (saturated) with interview of around 10-12 research participants from one group.

A purposive sampling method was used with quota sampling to represent 4 main domains of the study; rural male, rural female, urban male and urban female. In order to adequate representation of information categories, a total of 6-7 research participants (nonworkers) has been interviewed from each domain totaling of 26 research participants (RRM=7, URM=7, RRF=6, URF=6).

## **Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

### ***Inclusion Criteria***

**Target Population.** Perfect Unemployed Individuals are the target study population. To ensure study capture the experiences of those truly seeking employment, it only selected participants who meet the International Labour Organization (ILO 1982) definition of unemployment. This definition requires individuals to fulfill all three of the following criteria:

**Without Work.** They did not have any paid employment or self-employment during a specific reference period (usually one week).

**Currently Available for Work.** They are available to begin working within a short period, typically two weeks.

**Seeking Work.** They have actively looked for work in the past four weeks or have already secured a job that starts within the next three months. Active job search includes browsing job ads, attending career fairs, or contacting employment agencies. By adhering to this definition, this study guarantees its interview participants represent the intended population of unemployed individuals.

#### *Exclusion criteria*

- Respondents experiencing unemployment less than 6 month were excluded.
- Respondents below age 18 and above 59 was excluded.
- Respondents having history of residency in the study site less than 5 years were excluded.

#### **Data collection tools**

##### *Textual Analysis*

**Data Sources.** Party manifestos (including election manifestos) and constitutions were collected by visiting the offices of political parties and websites. Additional relevant texts were identified and retrieved through internet searches and website browsing.

##### *In-Depth Interviews (IDI)*

**Interview Guideline/questionnaire.** A qualitative, open-ended questionnaire with 31 questions was developed to guide the interviews. This guideline included probes for deeper exploration where needed.

**Development Process.** The questionnaire was reviewed by experts and thesis supervisor for feedback and refinement. A pilot interview was conducted with two unemployed individuals (non-workers) to test the clarity and effectiveness of the

questions. Based on the pilot interview, unnecessary or duplicate questions were removed, and existing questions were modified for improved clarity. The finalized interview guideline is included in Appendix C for reference.

**Interview Logistics.** Interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the respondents.

**Recording and Transcription.** Interviews were audio-recorded using an Android phone. Recordings were then transcribed and translated in English for analysis.

## **Data Collection Procedure**

### ***In-Depth Interviews (IDI)***

To recruit participants/respondents, The letter provided by the Master's program in Labour Studies was presented to the relevant municipalities in Kathmandu Metro and Nuwakot (Panchakanya and Shivapuri Rural Municipalities). After obtaining verbal consent, Rapport with the municipality offices and locals was built. This facilitated access to data on unemployed individuals within those areas. Potential participants were then contacted, referencing the established rapport. Before each interview, a brief explanation of the research project was provided and obtained written informed consent. A total of 26 in-depth interviews were conducted, ensuring proper representation of gender in each location.

## **Data Management and Analysis Technique**

The data obtained from the IDI was transcribed without any manipulation as it was recorded. After transcription, these data were translated in English. Researcher himself translated the transcribed data and verification was done by the research supervisor. After completing the translation, following process was followed.

### ***Coding***

Data was coded line-by-line in accordance with Glaser (1992). Following the completion of initial coding, focused coding was implemented as described by Glaser (1992) by importing the transcribed data files into MAXQDA software. Categories were then constructed based on the coded data, drawing upon the methods outlined by Tesch (1990) and Creswell & Creswell (2022). Sentences with similar meanings were grouped under broader category labels. The coding strategy is elaborated in Table 3.1.

### ***Theming***

As per recommendation of Creswell & Creswell (2022), analysis of the categorized lived experiences of unemployed individuals (non-workers) revealed a set of seven key themes. These themes are considered to represent the fundamental characteristics or qualities that define a social class. Each theme possesses distinct aspects and holds specific meaning within the context of social stratification. Notably, the identified themes resonated with those found in the existing theoretical literature, suggesting the continued relevance of these established concepts within the current study.

### ***Analysis***

Thematic analysis was facilitated by MAXQDA software. This software allowed for the exploration of interrelationships between the identified themes. The analysis compared existing theories and knowledge about how unemployed individuals (referred to as "non-workers" here) can be categorized based on social, economic, and psychological characteristics. Furthermore, the analysis investigated the potential emergence of new concepts based on the study's findings. Finally, the

themes were discussed by drawing connections between the theoretical framework and the empirical evidence gathered from the research.

### **Research Rigor/ Standards**

The term ‘Research Standards’ is used as an umbrella terminology and refer to the research rigor like credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and etc. This approach aligns with contemporary shifts in research paradigms where traditional notions of validity and reliability, which are more common in quantitative research, may not fully capture the complexity or the goals of qualitative or mixed-methods research. Various frameworks (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004) Discussed on it.

### ***Credibility and Objectivity***

The credibility of the research was ensured by reviewing the interview guidelines and questionnaires through expert feedback. Subject matter experts, including the thesis supervisor and researchers in the field, provided input to enhance the relevance, clarity, and representativeness of the instruments. Efforts were made to capture participants' perspectives authentically, minimizing researcher bias. The data were analyzed within the participants' own contexts to ensure objectivity in the interpretation.

### ***Transferability***

Although this study focuses on the social stratification of nonworkers in Nepal, the findings may be applicable to other contexts with similar socio-economic dynamics. By providing detailed descriptions of the research setting and participants, the study enhances the transferability of its findings to other similar contexts, aligning with relevant literature.

### ***Content and Construct Validity***

Appendix G presents the similarity analysis of responses, which shows high document similarity scores (Jaccard index). This demonstrates that the identified codes effectively capture the core themes across respondents' experiences, ensuring content validity. Additionally, the consistency in coding and thematic similarity across transcripts indicates that the codes accurately represent the constructs under investigation, particularly concerning the social stratification of nonworkers in Nepal.

### ***Dependability, Confirmability, and Reliability***

To ensure dependability and confirmability, member checking was conducted with two respondents from each group after transcription and translation, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected their views. Cross-verification of emerging categories from in-depth interviews was conducted against existing knowledge and theories, further ensuring reliability. Content analysis of political party documents also contributed to a structured and replicable approach to data collection.

Auditability was addressed by maintaining comprehensive records of interviews, field notes, and analysis, providing a clear audit trail. Intercoder reliability was strengthened through multiple rounds of review by both the researcher and supervisor, ensuring consistency in coding and interpretation. Appendix G shows high intra-coder reliability, confirming that coding was applied consistently across different transcripts. This combination of strategies enhances the overall reliability of the research, ensuring that the findings are stable, replicable, and grounded in the data, free from researcher bias.

## **Ethical Considerations**

The data acquisition letter issued by the Master's Degree Programme in Labour Studies was used to inform the respondent during data collection and letter is presented in Appendix A. The written consent of the respondent was taken before the data collection. The written informed consent form is attached to the questionnaire and is represented in Appendix B. The permission from related municipality was taken before data collection. The thesis work followed the American Psychological Association 2020 style of citation, referencing, and formatting. and is bound by the Statistical Act of Nepal, 2079, The basic human right is considered and the neutrality of the researcher is carefully maintained. The thesis has undergone the plagiarism test as mentioned in the Anti-Plagiarism Software Management and Operation Procedure, 2078, arranged by the Tribhuvan University Central Library. Thus, the produced certification test report was incorporated into the thesis submission.

## Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

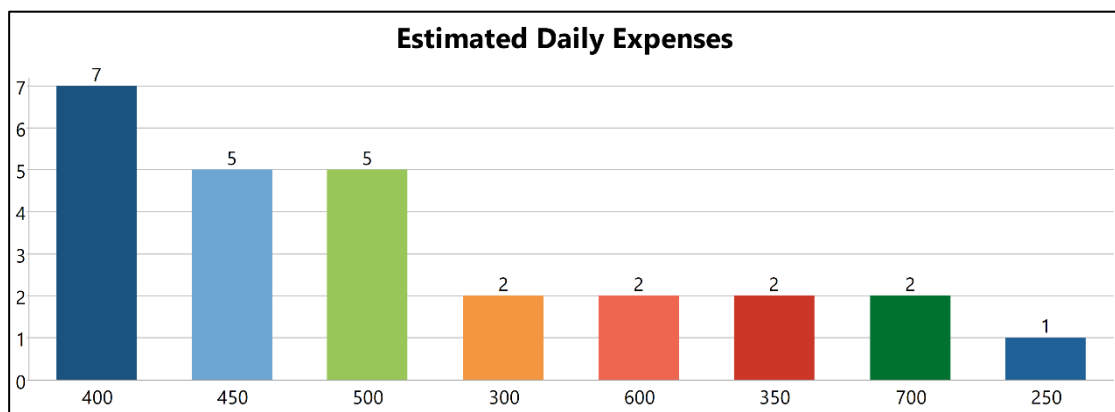
This chapter presents the results and analysis of the study, organized into the following sections: Perspectives of National Political Ideologies, Perception of Nonworkers Regarding Their Current Position, and Stratification of Nonworkers. The findings are interpreted through thematic analysis, accompanied by narrative interpretation. Prior to presenting the findings, the coding strategy employed in the analysis is thoroughly explained.

### Demographic profile of respondents

Out of 26 total respondents, 14 (53.8%) were male and 12 (46.2 %) were female. The age of respondents was ranged between 20-34. Married respondents were 9 (34.6%) and unmarried were 17 (65.4%). Among them 15 (57.7 %) were from Brahmin/Kshatriya ethnicity. All respondents have the literacy level at least of high school. 14 (53.8%) respondents have bachelor's degree, 9 (34.6%) holds Master's degree and 3 (11.5%) has high school certificate.

**Figure 4. 1**

*Estimated Daily Expenses of Respondents*

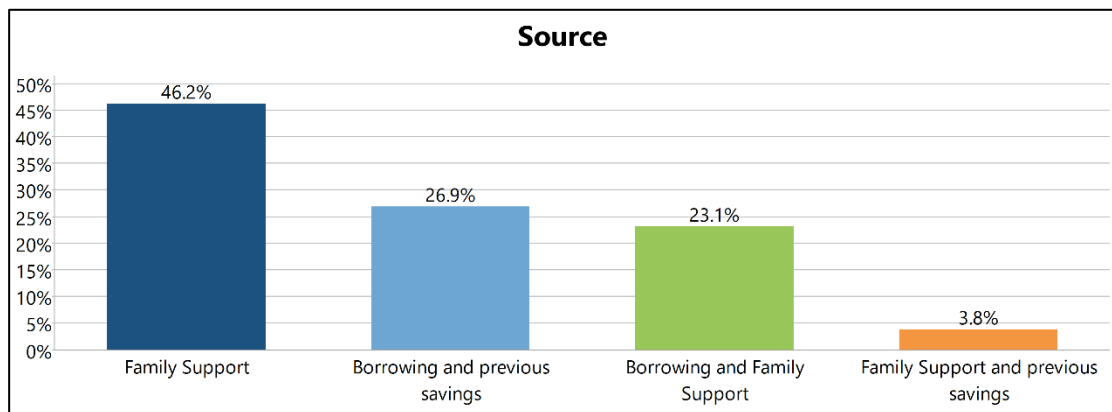


Numbers of family members was ranged from 2-11. Only one respondent has two members and 11 membered family. Majority 7(26.9%) and 6(23.1%) respondents

have five and six membered family. Four respondents have three and another four respondents has four members in family. Majority of respondents 18 (69.2%) has no dependents while 5 (19.2%) has one and 3 (11.50%) has two dependents in family. Figure 4.1 represents the estimated daily expenses of respondents and was ranged 250-700 NRs. Seven respondents reported that they need 400 per day for the expenses and one respondent marked for the lowest expenses. While talking about the sources for the expenses, 46.2% (12) respondents reported that their major source of expenses was family support only. 26.9% (7) respondents reported that they operate their livelihood by borrowing and previous savings. 23.1 % (6) respondent have both sources i.e., family support and borrowings. And only one respondent uses family support and previous savings for expenses. Which implies that most of the respondent does not savings from their previous work; see figure 4.2 for further visualization.

**Figure 4. 2**

*Source of Expenses*



Among 26 respondents, 15 have previous work history. 11(42.3%) respondents did not have previous work history. 5(19.2%) respondents had worked for one year, 4(15.4) had worked for three years, 3(11.5%) had worked for two years, 2(7.7%) had worked for four year and one respondent had worked for five years.

Figure 4.3 represents the reason to terminate the previous job. Among them 4 (26.7%)

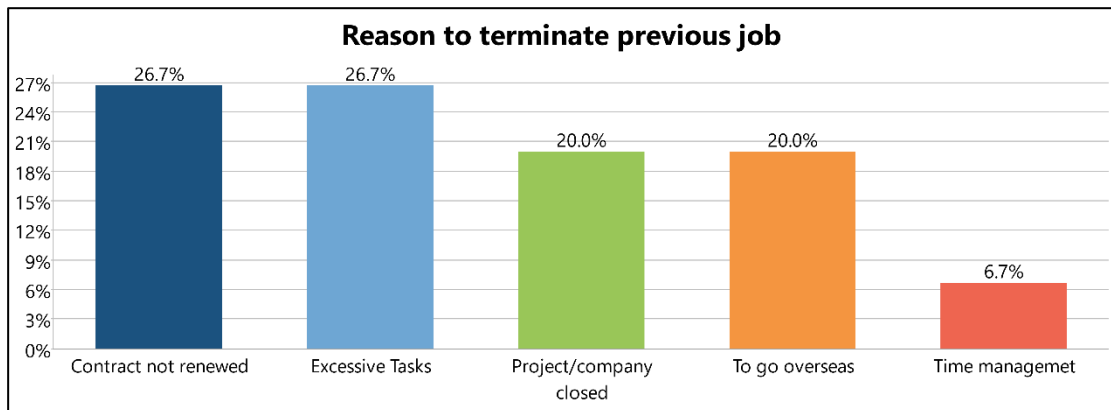
respondents became unemployed due to contract close and Excessive tasks. 3 (20%)

respondents became unemployed due to project closed and to go overseas. One

respondent has left job because of time management issue.

**Figure 4. 3**

*Reason to Terminate Previous Job*



Majority of respondents were seeming to be unemployed for the last two year.

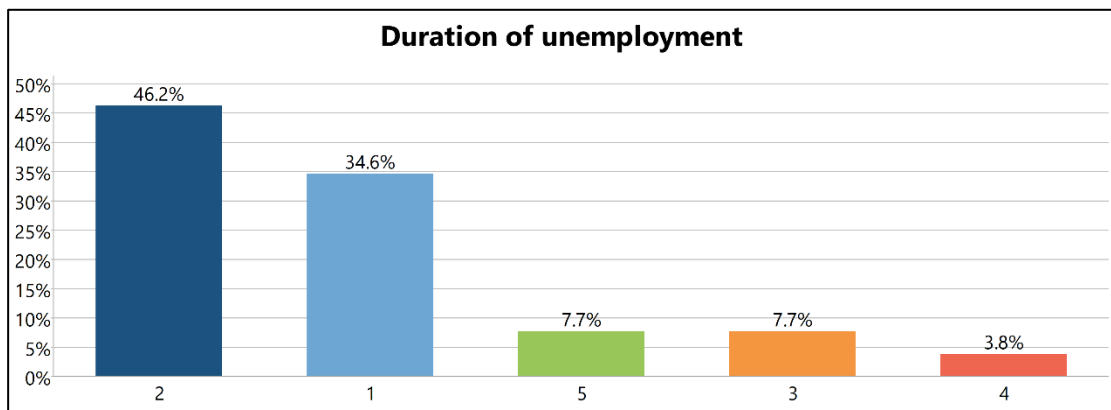
Among 26 respondents, 12(46.2%) respondents were unemployed for two years,

9(34.6%) were for one years, 2(7.7%) were for 5 years, another 2(7.7%) were for 3

years and 1 (3.8%) respondent was unemployed for 4 years; see figure 4.4.

**Figure 4. 4**

*Duration of Unemployment*



## Theming and Coding strategy

A set of 13 major themes were identified from the inductive theming process through categorizing codes. The responses were coded according to their leaning towards the meaning of themes and defined as follows. Figure 4.5 represents the relationship between the central theme of the research and the major themes with their respective sub themes. Table 4.1 illustrates the coding and categorizing process in details.

**Table 4. 1**

*Illustration of coding and theming strategy*

S.N.	Themes	Codes
1	Definition of Nonworker	<p>“Nonworker means...”</p> <p>“..... known as nonworker”</p> <p>“I think ..... are nonworkers”</p>
2	Subjectively Salient Group	<p>“..... are different”</p> <p>“I have listened...”</p> <p>“I understand ....”</p> <p>“Economically...”, “psychologically...”, “Socially....”</p>
3	Historical Variation	<p>“My grandfather used to share ....”</p> <p>“My father shares....”</p> <p>“As per my knowledge/information...”</p> <p>“Since long.....”,</p> <p>“I experience .....</p>
4	Current Living Status	<p>“I have...”</p> <p>“..... gave me”</p> <p>“I must be dependent with ... ..”</p>

---

		“Burrowing.....”
5	Inequalities in Life Chances	“I think.....” “Not everyone has .....” “..... who hold power”? “Who has person to recommend....”
6	Antagonistic Conflict	“.... Has .....behaviour” “.... physically .....Psychologically” “Psychologically....” “Shows.... Behaviour”
7	Perceptions Towards Nonworkers	“My family and relatives show.... ..” “Society .....” “People who work.....” “The way they behave.....” “Unknowingly teasing, taunting.....”
8	Psychological Impact	“I feel tired....” “I go to....” “I don’t do anything...” “It Hurts.....” “I blame myself...”
9	Class Consciousness	“I usually gather with.....” “I think to be unified.....” “I have discussed with other nonworkers...” “I have heard .....”
10	Emancipation	“First of all, .....” “Government should....” “Society/Family should .....” “Existing structure.....”

---

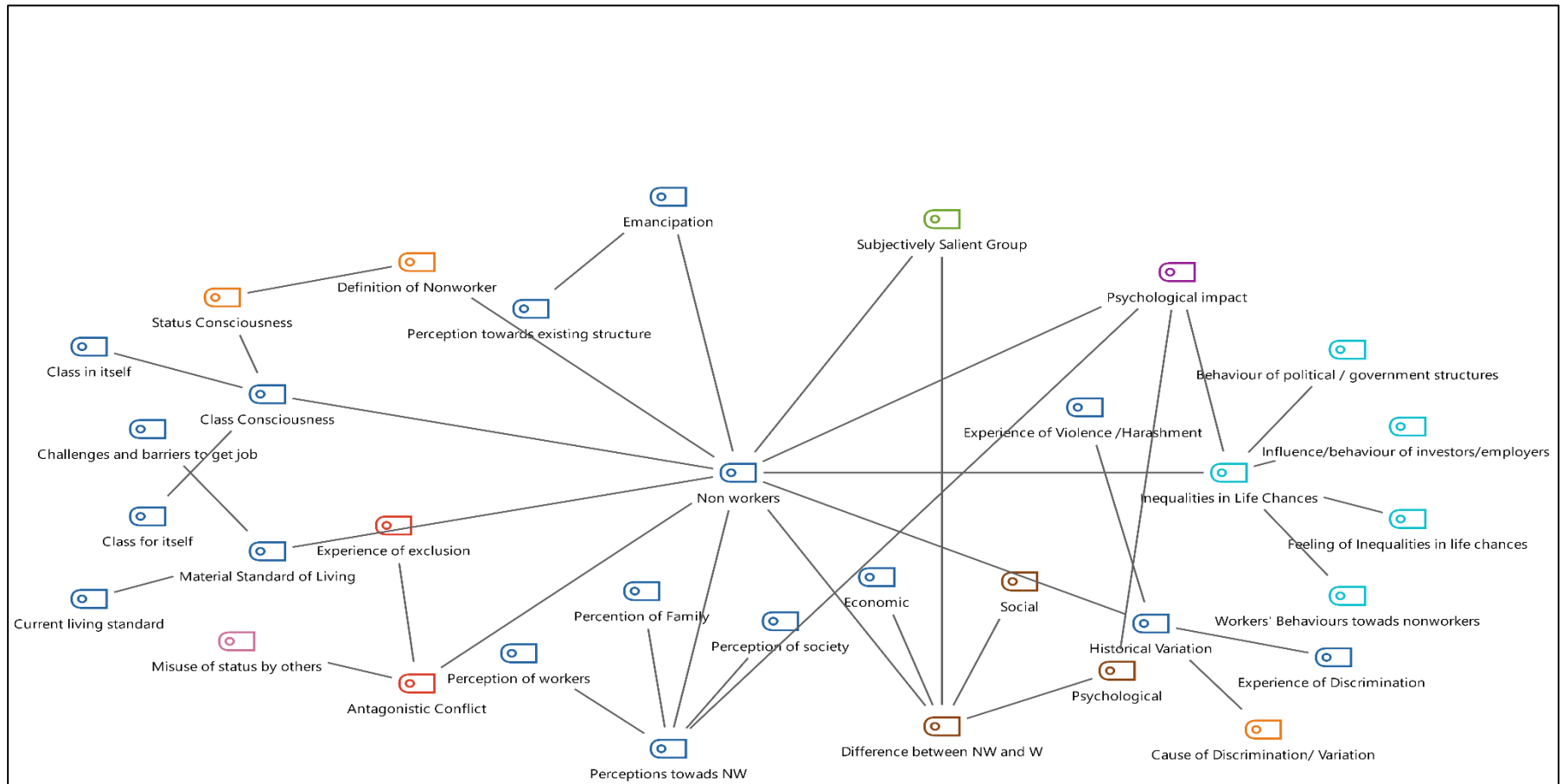
---

		“The policies should .....
11	Difference Between Nonworkers and Workers	“Economically nonworkers are different.....” “Socially.....” “Psychologically .....
12	Experience of Oppression	“People who works.....” “Workers use to .....
		“State provides .....
		“In family .....
13	Challenges and Barriers to Get Job	“The main obstacle is....” “The society.....” “The family .....
		“In my experience.....”

---

**Figure 4.5**

*Relationship Between Themes (Code Theory Model)*



## **Perspectives of National Political Ideologies**

An analysis was conducted on the foundational documents (Manifesto and constitution) of 10 Major Nepali political parties. This review aimed to discern the central themes encapsulated within these documents, with a focus on identifying and categorizing statements according to their alignment with seven core themes:

Distributional Location, Subjectively Salient Group, Inequalities in Life Chances, Antagonistic Conflict, Historical Variation, Emancipation and Class Consciousness.

The analysis of constitution and manifestos is represented in separate sub-section to explore the political perspectives towards the Nonworkers. Figure 4.6 illustrates the perspectives through specific themes.

### ***Analysis of Constitutions***

This section analyzes the perceptions of 10 major Nepali political parties through their main text (constitution) towards nonworkers/unemployed individuals, categorized under seven core themes as follows:

**Distributional Location (Material status of living).** Statements indicating the current status and identity or position of nonworkers in relation to material inequality or status are categorized within this theme.

The constitution of most parties, including the Nepali Congress, CPN UML, Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre), Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), Janamat Party, Nagarik Unmukti Party, People's Socialist Party (PSP), Rastriya Prajatantra Party, and Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Socialist), largely did not acknowledge and address to the nonworkers living standard. However, there is an acceptance regarding the economic marginalization of nonworkers in some parties: Nepali Congress Constitution of NC (2078, p.96, article 10) and CPN (Unified socialist) and Nagarik Unmukti Party. The Nepal Workers & Peasants Party (NWPP)

recognizes the workers, farmers, and other social strata within this theme but excluded the nonworkers.

**Subjectively Salient Group.** Statements defining/comparing/identifying nonworkers within others existing social structure or illustrating how nonworkers are perceived or differentiated in terms of inequality are categorized under this theme.

None of the parties implicitly or explicitly recognizes the subjective saliency of nonworkers. However, the economic hardship and entrepreneurship as a measure to overcome the poverty was seems to be acknowledged. The CPN-UML, Maoist Centre, and NWPP emphasize working-class unity and their overall wellbeing, reflecting a lack of recognition for nonworkers as a stratum having specific features.

**Inequalities in Life Chances.** Statements/provisions/plans and policies favoring or intended to favor or positively leaned towards the favor to other social classes rather than nonworkers are categorized under ‘Inequalities in Life Chances’.

Nepali Congress acknowledges the existing inequalities in job opportunities and implicitly offers foreign employment as a solution, potentially exacerbating domestic market issues (Constitution of Nepali Congress, 2078, article 10, p.104). Other parties, including CPN-UML, Maoist Centre, and NWPP, focus more on working-class welfare/wellbeing rather than proper emphasizing nonworkers. The PSP discusses about creation of employment but does not directly address nonworkers and existing inequalities. RSP and Janamat Party shows no indications regarding this theme.

**Antagonistic Conflict.** Texts or statements reflecting, explicitly or implicitly fueling conflicting relationships with other existing social structure are categorized under ‘Antagonistic Conflict’.

Several parties, including the Nepali Congress, CPN-UML, Maoist Centre, and NWPP, exhibit potential for development of class antagonism by favoring more to the working class, potentially leading to conflicting relationship (psychologically or physically) with nonworkers. The PSP, RSP, Janamat Party, and Nagarik Unmukti Party also slightly addresses and favor the working-class peoples but do not address or imply such conflicts explicitly.

**Historical Variation.** Statements detailing with chronological variations, discriminations, and historical perspectives on opportunities relating with the nonworkers/unemployed are categorized under this theme.

Many parties, including the Nepali Congress, CPN-UML, Maoist Centre, and NWPP, seems continuing historical biases by focusing on the working class or similar social stratum and neglecting nonworkers. The PSP and Janamat Party also indicate a continuation of historical variation in their constitution.

**Emancipation.** Texts or statements addressing emancipation, sustainable solutions, or empowerment for nonworkers are grouped/categorized under the theme 'Emancipation/Liberation'. No party provides a sustainable solution for unemployment or nonworker's emancipation. The PSP shows some intent towards self-employment and independence, but other parties, including NWPP, Nepali Congress, CPN-UML Maoist Centre, and RSP, fail to address this adequately, limiting some short-term offerings.

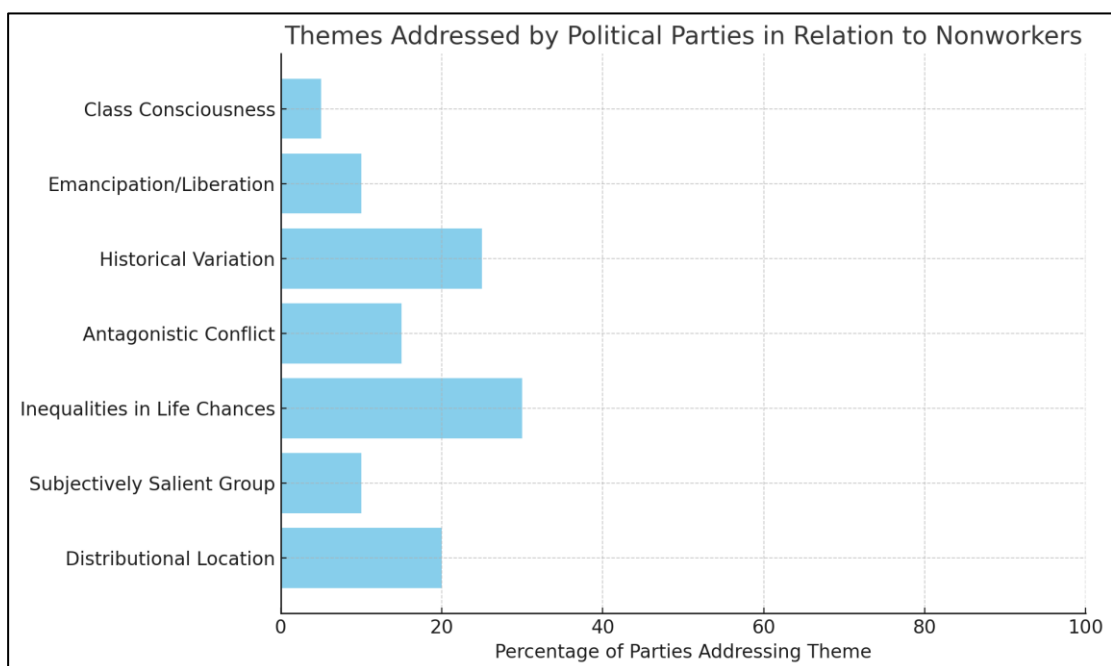
**Class Consciousness.** Contents or statements relating to or promoting the class consciousness, self-awareness as a class, organizational efforts, collective actions, and similar topics are categorized within this theme.

Most parties do not recognize/address nonworkers as a separate social stratum. None of the party's constitution provided the framework to form committee or

organization under the party to organize the nonworking members/people for their emancipation. Nepali Congress, CPN-UML, Maoist Centre, and NWPP particularly lack understanding for the emergence of new social classes, demonstrating a limited understanding on societal context which has potential to develop new class. The PSP, RSP, and all other parties also does not show such belief/understanding.

**Figure 4. 6**

*Histogram representing Nepali political parties' perspectives towards nonworkers.*



### *Analysis of Manifestos*

This section analyzes the perspectives of various Nepali political parties through their Manifestos towards nonworkers/unemployed individuals, categorized under seven core themes.

**Distributional Location.** The Manifesto of Nepali Congress implicitly acknowledges the ‘working-class’ and as well as other cultural strata but does not mention nonworkers. Similarly, the Manifesto of CPN UML implicitly locate the ‘working class’ but overlooks nonworkers. In contrast, the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist Centre) explicitly located the unemployed within existing socio-economic

structure, highlighting their subjective saliency in society (Pratibaddataa patra, 2079, p.11, 5, 12). The Janata Samajwadi Party explicitly discusses a welfare state with social security, including provisions/offerings for unemployed and vulnerable groups. However, parties like the Rastriya Swotatra Party and Janamat Party focus more on existing inequalities between other social classes without specific mention of nonworkers. The Nagarik Unmukti Party, RSP and Loktantrik Samajwadi Party did not locate the nonworkers within the existing socio-economic structure.

The manifestos across various political parties reveal a consistent gap in defining/identifying the distributional location of nonworkers within Nepal's socio-economic framework. While the working class and other cultural strata receive attention, nonworkers are often overlooked. Initiatives like skill enhancement and employment schemes typically focus on the employed or those with part time work, failing to recognize nonworkers as a distinct stratum requiring targeted policies. This oversight contributes to their marginalization, limiting access to resources and opportunities necessary for economic participation.

**Subjectively Salient Group.** Nonworkers rarely appear as a subjectively salient group within the manifestos, which primarily focus on existing social classes like farmers, Labourers, cultural strata and backward communities. The absence of explicit acknowledgment of nonworkers as a significant demographic reflects a broader issue of invisibility in political discourse. This lack of recognition prevents the development of tailored strategies that could address their unique challenges and integrate them into the socio- economic landscape effectively.

**Inequalities in Life Chances.** The manifesto of Nepali Congress proposes health facilities, insurance, kidney transplants, and dialysis specially for destitute and disabled individuals, but does not explicitly promise these benefits for nonworkers.

The manifesto also includes skill enhancement for youth and a Contributory Social Security Fund for workers, which was also promised by the manifesto of other parties like CPN UML, Maoist Center. These manifestos offer a minimum work of 100 days. However, the question remains whether 100 days of employment can sustain nonworkers for 365 days. The manifesto of Nepali Congress also addresses agriculture and farming, leaving those who does not have an opportunity to farm. The "Integrated Social Security: From womb to bereavement" proposal promises respectful employment, youth skills, or full-time education for all youth within five years (Manifesto of Nepali Congress, 2079). The CPN UML manifesto offers 20 guarantees and among them the "enlarge the horizon of social security". However, it does not mention any provisions for nonworkers, such as allowances and insurance. The Manifesto of CPN Maoist Center states that agriculture and farmers will be at the center of the economic revolution of Nepal without mention to nonworkers. Manifestos frequently emphasize reducing inequalities for existing social classes but seldom extend these promises to nonworkers. While there are commitments to improving healthcare, education, and economic opportunities, these often exclude nonworkers, who face significant barriers to accessing such services. The absence of specific measures to support nonworkers exacerbates existing inequalities, hindering their life chances and perpetuating a cycle of disadvantage.

**Antagonistic Conflict.** None of the party's manifesto explicitly represent the Antagonistic statement. However, class antagonism or conflict arises as they overemphasize or support only for established social classes neglecting/undermining nonworkers. This overemphasis can breed resentment and deepen divisions, as nonworkers perceive themselves as excluded from the benefits afforded to others. The manifesto of major political parties did not reflect such statements, but there are a

lot of statements that implies the potentials for development of class antagonisms. Their statements/offerings are currently discussed in the theme, Historical variation and inequality in life chances.

**Historical Variation.** The manifestos of major Nepali political parties demonstrate a consistent oversight of nonworkers, perpetuating historical exclusions. The Nepali Congress focuses on landless and squatter communities, discussed about the differentials and variations among workers, SSF, management of foreign labour employment and etc. But, did not discussed for nonworkers which implies continuation of past biases.

The CPN-UML and Maoist Centre both prioritize the working class, with slogans like "Workers of the world unite" ignoring the nonworking population and maintaining traditional class divisions. The manifesto of CPN UML offer "Respectful Labour: Secure Employment" outlines programs to improve worker well-being through training and skill development. However, it fails to address the non-workers (Manifesto, 2079, p. 52). The manifesto boasts achievements like establishing employment information centers and a 100-day employment program. It also claims an increase in minimum wage, which benefits mostly employed rather than unemployed. Critics point out the limitations of the 100-day program, questioning its ability to sustain people for a full year. This reflects a historical pattern of neglecting the non-working population.

The manifesto of CPN Maoist center claims credit for empowering various social groups, but a key passage (page 8) implies a disregard for the rights of non-workers. This suggests the party prioritizes other demographics while neglecting a significant portion of the population struggling with unemployment. Further evidence comes from the "Strategy" section (page 16), which outlines plans for Labourers,

farmers, and those below the poverty line. Once again, there's a complete absence of any mention for non-workers, perpetuating a historical pattern of overlooking their needs. Also, the manifesto mentions social safety nets and insurance schemes for other groups, including farmers (page 27). However, there's no mention of similar protections for the unemployed. This reinforces the concern that the party lacks a concrete plan to address the issue of unemployment. Similarly, the Nagarik Unmukti Party restricts membership and advisory roles to active professionals, excluding nonworkers. The Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Socialist) adheres to Marxist-Leninist principles, emphasizing worker-centric policies without addressing nonworkers. Similarly, Rastriya Prajatantra Party, Janta Samajwadi Party and Loktantrik Samajwadi party also offers plans and policies that explicitly benefits the existing social class, implicitly undermine the nonworkers.

The economic policies offered by manifesto of Rastriya Swotanttra Party (RSP) further solidify the trend of neglecting non-working citizens. Promises to fulfill the basic needs of government workers, from healthcare to entertainment, create a clear distinction between employed citizens and those who are not working (page 11). Similarly, proposed laws aimed at improving the working conditions of healthcare professionals (page 17) and plans to boost farmers' income (page 19) fail to mention any initiatives for non-workers. Notably, the ambitious plan to revitalize agriculture lacks a strategy to integrate non-working individuals into the sector, and the promised social security measures only benefit farmers. These targeted economic benefits reinforce a historical pattern of differentiation. The manifesto prioritizes specific working groups while neglecting the needs and potential contributions of nonworkers. This selective approach raises serious concerns about the party's commitment to building a truly inclusive and equitable society.

The manifesto of Janta Samajwadi Party (PSP) claims that "the working people are the main basis of building socialism," and emphasizes the importance of collaboration between the working class and oppressed nationalities, it ultimately undermines the role of non-working people. This reinforces a historical trend of differentiation and exclusion. Several points within the document highlight this issue. First, the statement itself prioritizes "working people" as the foundation of socialism, implicitly sidelining non-workers. Second, the call for a "united initiative" focuses solely on Labourers, farmers, intellectuals, and oppressed nationalities, again neglecting the contributions of non-working citizens. Finally, the manifesto does acknowledge various social groups like indigenous communities and marginalized castes (point no. 5.6), yet conspicuously omits any mention of non-workers. This lack of definition and complete absence of any strategy to address their needs suggests a continuation of past practices that overlook this crucial segment of Nepali society. The manifesto's rhetoric around building socialism seems contradictory. By focusing solely on working groups and neglecting the role of non-working citizens, the document undermines its own stated goal of a unified approach to social progress.

By perpetuating historical inequalities facing by nonworkers, parties risk continuing systemic biases that hinder progress toward a more equitable society. These manifestos reveal a pervasive gap in addressing the needs of all societal segments, underscoring the necessity for inclusive policies to achieve equitable progress in Nepal.

**Emancipation.** Efforts to emancipate nonworkers are often implicit and lack the clarity needed for effective implementation. Several parties stand out for their commitment to social welfare and inclusion. The Janta Samajwadi Party prioritizes employment for all, offering an unemployment allowance until a job is secured. Their

manifesto emphasizes education, health, and employment, suggesting a strong focus on social welfare for non-working citizens. Similarly, the Nagarik Unmukti Party proposes self employment programs, particularly in agriculture, while also discussing an education system geared towards entrepreneurship. The Janmat Party takes a multi-pronged approach, focusing on job creation through investment and industry, utilizing remittances productively, and promoting community farming. Their commitment to equal employment opportunities for women adds another layer of inclusivity.

The Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Socialist) recognizes the need for "scientific socialism," which requires employment for all. They propose data collection on unemployed youth, job creation initiatives in various sectors, and linking education to local employment needs. However, their "One House, One Skill, One Employment" policy might not guarantee sufficient income for an entire family.

The Maoist Center, while neglecting to explicitly mention non-workers in resource distribution discussions, acknowledges the need to increase their engagement in agriculture. They also promote self-employment, skills training, and a skilled education system, which could indirectly benefit non-working citizens.

Other parties present fewer clear approaches. The Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) proposes mobilizing volunteers with fixed-term employment, but lacks details. Their manifesto also discusses job creation and income generation, but the target population remains unclear. A proposed technical and vocational education fund might not be enough to ensure long-term well-being for non-workers.

The Nepali Congress (NC) focuses on skills development and promises job creation, but the sustainability of their plans remains a question. While skill enhancement could empower some non-workers, a broader strategy is necessary. The CPN-UML delegates responsibility for employment creation to the private sector,

raising concerns about government accountability. Their focus on human capital development primarily benefits the working class, with a lack of a clear path for sustainable solutions for non-workers.

In conclusion, Nepali political parties need to develop more concrete and inclusive plans to address the challenge of unemployment. The emancipatory plans and offerings are contradictory to other statements that were discussed in previous themes. While some manifestos propose self-employment and skill development initiatives, these are typically framed within broader employment strategies that do not specifically target nonworkers. A sustainable vision for emancipation requires explicit policies that empower nonworkers through education, training, and access to economic resources, enabling them to achieve long-term independence and stability.

**Class Consciousness.** Political manifestos were not found to take into consideration class consciousness of non-workers and were found to mainly focus on existing working-class stories. Any assumption that the possibility of the development of new social stratum from already existing socio-economic disparities does not appear to have even occurred to the parties with left ideology. By overlooking nonworkers as a separate social stratum, political parties foreclose an opportunity for understanding better the complex nature of class relations and for developing a more comprehensive concept of socio-economic stratification.

**Figure 4. 7**

*Bar diagram showing the specific themes addressed by each party on their manifestos.*



## Perceptions of Nepali Nonworkers about Their Current Position

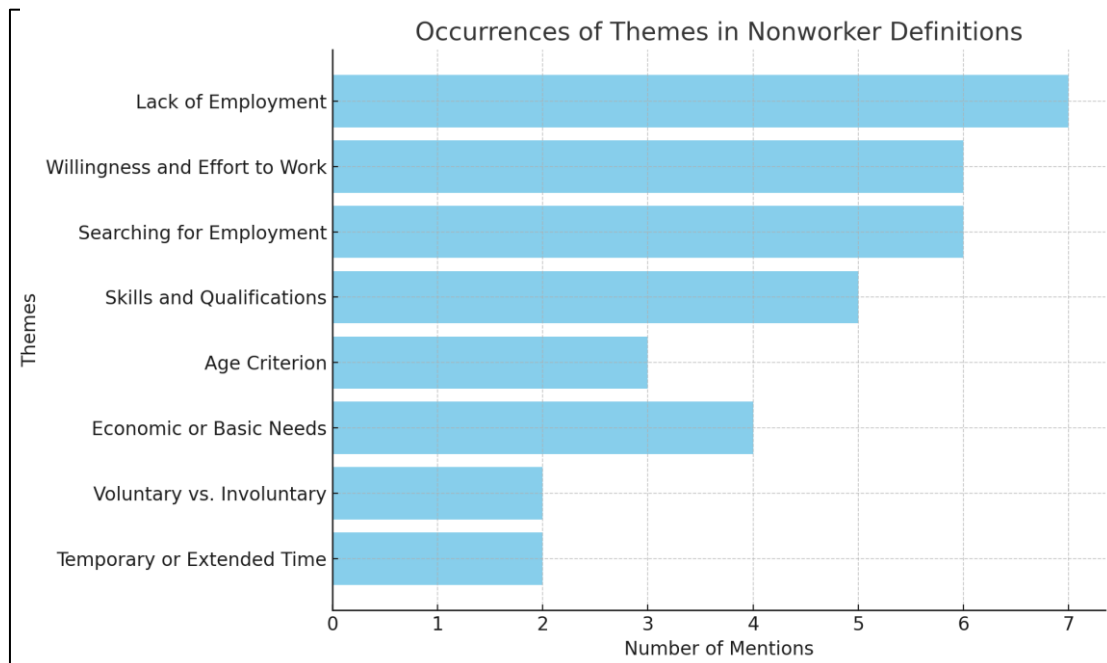
### *Understanding on Nonworking Status*

The answers/responses relating to define and identify the nonworkers within the existing socio-economic structures are categorized under this theme. Aim to conduct this is an attempt to define the term 'Nonworker'. The respondents have focuses on following key elements or requisites to be a nonworker which is further visualized on figure 4.8.

- **Lack of Employment:** A person without a job is consistently described as a nonworker. (Codes from the response of URM07, RRF03, RRF01, URM06, RRF06).
- **Willingness and Effort to Work:** The person must demonstrate a willingness to work and actively seek employment, but despite their efforts, they are unable to find
- work (Codes from the response of URM07, RRF03, RRF01, RRF04, RRM01,

### **Figure 4. 8**

#### *Definition of Nonworker*



RRF05).

- **Searching for Employment:** Many respondents mention that the nonworker actively searches for work but cannot find it, whether due to lack of opportunity or other barriers (Codes from the response of RRF02, RRM04, URM03, URM05, RRF06).
- **Skills and Qualifications:** The nonworker may have skills or qualifications, yet they are still unable to secure employment, either because the job does not match their skill set or because opportunities are lacking (Codes from the response of RRM04, RRM05, URM01, URM04, URM06).
- **Age Criterion:** Several respondents mention the age of 18 (After Childhood) as a threshold for someone to be considered a nonworker (Codes from the responses of RRF05, URF05, URM05).
- **Economic or Basic Needs:** Some respondents broaden the definition to include people who are unable to earn enough to meet their basic needs, even if they are working, or those who voluntarily do not work but are dependent on others (Codes from the responses of RRM05, URM04, URF01, URF02).
- **Voluntary vs. Involuntary:** A distinction is made between those who do not work by choice (voluntary nonworkers) and those who cannot find work despite trying (involuntary nonworkers) (Codes from the responses URF01, URM03).
- **Temporary or Extended Time:** There are references to the duration of unemployment whether it is temporary (a few months) or extended) (Codes from the responses of RRM01, URM02, URM07).

**A synthesized understanding.** A ‘nonworker’ refers to an individual who is at least 18 years old, has the ability (physical and mental) and willingness to work, and is actively seeking employment but is unable to find work despite their efforts. This includes those who possess relevant skills and qualifications but are unable to secure jobs that match their abilities. In addition to those who are unemployed in the

traditional sense, the definition may also encompass individuals who, although working, do not earn enough to meet their basic physical and psychological needs, and those who are voluntarily unemployed but remain financially dependent on others because of skill mismatch. The term also reflects both short-term job seekers and those in a prolonged state of unemployment.

### ***Difference between Nonworker and Worker***

The responses regarding to the distinction between nonworkers and working-class people are categorized under this theme. These differences are further categorized under three separate sub themes: 'economic differences', 'social differences', and 'psychological differences.

The differences between other classes in society (like working-class people) and nonworkers are analysed and presented under three main subcategories: Economic differences, Social differences and psychological differences. Figure (4.9) represent the frequencies of words used by the respondents while describing the differences. The psychological, social and economic differences were prominent among them and illustrated in different sub-headings as follows:

**Economic Differences.** The difference between other classes and nonworkers is central to understand the stratification. The responses provide insight that highlight various aspects of disparity, which impacts individuals' lifestyles, spending habits, and social status. Nonworkers struggle to meet basic needs, while workers and elites enjoy a more comfortable lifestyle. For example, one participant shared: "I have to wait to buy even the most necessary things... I don't even think about eating unnecessary food" (URM07). This illustrates how nonworkers must make sacrifices, cutting back on basic commodities like food and clothing. In contrast, workers don't



restrict their spending to the bare essentials (URM01; URM02). This difference leads to social exclusion for nonworkers, who often cannot afford to participate in social gatherings or outings, which reinforces their feelings of inferiority and isolation.

Economic status heavily influences how individuals are perceived in society. Workers often receive more respect, while nonworkers are judged negatively based on their financial situation: "A person's value is often judged by how much money they have" (RRM04). This societal judgment extends beyond mere economic status and affects nonworkers' confidence, self-esteem, and social interactions.

The economic divide between workers and nonworkers often leads to psychological stress, as nonworkers constantly face challenges in meeting their basic needs (RRM01; URF01). The economic differences between workers and nonworkers impact various facets of life, from basic necessities to social status and psychological well-being. Workers, with their steady income, financial security, and social advantages, lead lives marked by stability and confidence. Nonworkers, by contrast, face daily economic struggles, limited social participation, and constant feelings of inferiority. These economic disparities are not just financial but social and psychological, further entrenching the gap between these particular two groups in Nepali society.

**Psychological Difference.** The sub-theme "Psychological Difference Between Nonworker and other classes" explores several key psychological contrasts between individuals who are employed and those who are not. These differences are multifaceted, regarding self-perception, social interactions, and mental health.

Across multiple responses, a recurring category(theme) is that workers tend to exhibit higher levels of confidence and self-esteem compared to nonworkers. For

example, RRF05 and URM07 note that workers are more self-assured and better equipped to handle problems, while nonworkers often feel discouraged by smaller issues. Additionally, workers are said to develop a sense of superiority, often subconsciously, due to their financial independence and societal recognition (URM07, RRF01). "Working people have a lot of self-confidence, they have the ability to deal with any problem, while unemployed people are discouraged by small things" (RRF05).

Nonworkers frequently shared feelings of social isolation, depression, and low self-worth. They often compare themselves to their working counterparts, leading to demotivation and mental health issues. Nonworkers often avoid social interactions, feeling judged or inferior, as seen in RRF02 and URF01's accounts. This isolation is often exacerbated by societal pressures and family expectations, which further diminish their self-esteem (URM05, URF01). "When I don't work, I feel depressed, I start to question myself by comparing with my friends" (RRF02).

Several responses noted that workers often exhibit a sense of superiority over nonworkers, consciously or unconsciously. This "ruling behavior" is not only a reflection of their financial stability but also societal validation (URF01, URM03). Nonworkers, in contrast, feel humiliated and develop an inferiority complex, which perpetuates a psychological divide between the two groups. This dynamic is highlighted by RRM02, who describes how workers tend to treat nonworkers with condescension rather than genuine support. "Working people tend to show kindness but also slander nonworkers mentally rather than really helping them" (RRM02).

Nonworkers shared the experience of significant psychological pressure, both from themselves and society. They face a constant struggle to find employment and meet societal expectations, leading to stress, anxiety, and in some cases, depression.

This contrasts with workers who, despite having job-related pressures, feel more secure and mentally "pressure-free" (RRM05, RRF04). "Workers are a bit mentally pressure-free" (RRM05).

Many nonworkers enter a cycle of demotivation, where the lack of job opportunities leads to feelings of hopelessness, which in turn reduces their motivation to seek new opportunities. This is often worsened by their perceived inability to improve their situation, creating a vicious cycle of low self-esteem and inactivity (URF01, RRM05). Nonworkers reported that they feel that they are not capable of contributing to society or achieving personal goals, a sentiment echoed by multiple respondents.

There is a suggestion that the 'psychological difference between workers and nonworkers' indicates the class separation. Workers, due to their financial and social stability, may see themselves as part of a different "class" than nonworkers, further entrenching this divide (RRM06, URF03). Nonworkers feel this separation acutely, often internalizing societal judgments and feeling "different" or "inferior" to their working counterparts. "Workers also create a psychological illusion that nonworkers are nothing, they are unemployed, what can they do in the society, in the country" (URM06). The psychological differences between nonworkers and workers are stark and multifaceted, ranging from confidence and self-esteem issues to social isolation and mental health struggles. Workers tend to experience higher self-confidence and societal validation, while nonworkers face demotivation, pressure, and feelings of inferiority. This dynamic creates a psychological divide that both groups feel deeply, influencing their behavior, self-perception, and social interactions.

**Social Difference.** The theme Social Differences Between Nonworker and Worker explores several societal dynamics that shape the experiences and perceptions

of nonworkers and other classes of society. Across multiple responses, it is evident that workers are given more social respect and are listened to more attentively in social matters/platforms. Nonworkers, on the other hand, are often ignored or excluded from social gatherings and decision-making processes. For example, one participant noted that employed people are heard and prioritized in social issues, while nonworkers are overlooked (RRF01). Employment is associated with social status, prestige, and respect. Workers are considered to have higher social value, while nonworkers are seen as lacking skills, knowledge, and social worth (URM05; URF03). Participants pointed out that nonworkers receive bad treatment, associating unemployment with poverty and disrespect (RRM04). "Employment means not only income, but also status and prestige. Yes, the society also respect those who earn" (URM05). Nonworkers experienced exclusion from community and organizational settings. Workers are more active in social organizations, while nonworkers often lack the economic means or organizational capability to form their own unions or groups (URM06). This exclusion extends to opportunities like loans, where nonworkers are deemed unfit for support because they are perceived as financially unreliable (URF01). "Working class people form organization, which work for their welfare in difficulties. But nonworkers can't due to the economic reason" (URM07).

Lack of income lead nonworkers to exclusion from economic activities that are crucial for social inclusion. This exclusion intensifies the cycle of poverty and marginalization, preventing them from participating in essential social functions like donations, activities in 'Guthi' and other communal events (RRM06). The social exclusion and lack of respect for nonworkers have psychological consequences, contributing to feelings of worthlessness and low self-esteem. The perception that nonworkers have nothing to do and less value in society deeply affects their mental

well-being (RRM02; URM03). Which are further illustrate in separate theme; Impact of oppression.

Society prioritizes workers in resource allocation, as noted in examples where working people receive loans and opportunities, while nonworkers are excluded (URF01). This is a clear indicator of how social structures favor those with employment. Workers are viewed as contributors to society through their employment, making them more valuable in the eyes of the community. Nonworkers, in contrast, are seen as unable to contribute, which further diminishes their social standing (RRM07). Workers are given preference in leadership roles within both formal organizations and informal community groups. Nonworkers are rarely considered for these roles due to their perceived lack of contribution and organizational capabilities (RRF01).

Nonworkers lack the organizational structure and economic resources to form unions or support groups, leaving them without a collective voice to advocate for their rights or needs (URF06; RRM05). Employment status has become a significant social criterion, even influencing personal decisions like marriage. Society tends to favor those who are employed for marriage prospects, adding pressure on nonworkers. "Progress has been measured being based upon the job he/she has got ... One gives daughter (marriage) only to the one who is employed..." (RRM07). Earnings, rather than other forms of work or contribution, are increasingly viewed as the primary measure of success and progress in society. This creates a narrow view of value, centered on financial achievement (RRM07).

This indicated a clear social difference between other classes and nonworkers, where earners enjoy greater respect, opportunities, and social inclusion. Nonworkers, conversely, face exclusion, marginalization, and psychological consequences as a

result of their lack of employment. The findings reflect a broader societal trend in which employment is not only a means of financial survival but also a key determinant of social status and identity in society.

### **Perception Towards Nonworkers**

The responses regarding to the saying/ perceptions of family members, relatives, society and other working-class people towards the nonworkers were coded and categorized under this theme. Doing so, the perception of family and relatives, society and working-class people was coded in different sub themes.

#### ***Perception of Family***

The perception of family members towards nonworkers reflects a spectrum of emotions, including frustration, misunderstanding, and subtle discrimination. The data reveals that nonworkers often face criticism, family pressure, and diminished status within their families, contributing to feelings of isolation and demotivation. Many nonworkers feel an immense pressure from their families to find employment, with family members often failing to understand the challenges in job opportunities. This pressure frequently leads to tension, arguments, and feelings of inadequacy. Respondents mention that family members believe they are "lazy" or "avoiding work" despite their efforts to find jobs. For example, RRF05 describes how family members put pressure without understanding the struggle of job searching, which causes conflict. URM01 similarly shares that family pressure revolves around their financial dependency and lack of income, creating a sense of failure and inadequacy.

Nonworkers are frequently compared to siblings or relatives who are employed, which exacerbates feelings of worthlessness and failure. RRF02 notes how their sibling's opinions are valued more due to their employment status, while their

own advice is ignored. Likewise, URF02 discusses how family members who earn money are praised, while nonworkers are viewed as burdens.

The data shows a pattern of discrimination and differential treatment based on employment status. Many nonworkers feel overlooked or disrespected in family decision-making. For example, URM02 mentions that their suggestions are dismissed in family events or financial decisions simply because they are not earning. This sense of exclusion contributes to feelings of social marginalization within the family unit. The emotional toll of being a nonworker within the family is evident. Several respondents' express feelings of being 'looked down upon' or treated as though they "can't do anything" (RRF04, RRM03). Nonworkers also describe how they are ridiculed or teased by family members, which leads to further social isolation (URM02). The persistent negative attitudes create an environment of emotional distress and resentment. "When there's a family event like a wedding or a religious ceremony, and financial decisions need to be made, they don't consider or apply my suggestions even if they are true/fact just because I'm not earning" (URM02).

Some families initially try to encourage nonworkers to find employment, but when no progress is made, this encouragement often shifts to discouragement or even hostility. For instance, URM01 describes how their family initially motivated them to search for work but later accused them of laziness. Similarly, URM03 points out that family members frame their criticisms as being "for their own good," which feels demotivating and undermining.

There is a perception that while family members express concern or pressure, they often fail to provide tangible support. RRM05 notes how sympathy is offered without real help, and a respondent shares an experience of a relative promising to help with a business venture only to withdraw support later, leaving them feeling

trapped and abandoned. Even after finishing studies and being unable to find a job, family members often put a lot of pressure. “Without understanding the situation of searching for a job and not finding one, they assume that I don't want to work, which creates conflicts in the family” (RRF05).

Numerous respondents noted that unemployment often lead to conflicts within the family. Conversations about nonworkers' future or financial decisions frequently escalate into arguments. RRM04 and RRF02 note how these discussions can turn chaotic, reflecting deep-rooted frustrations on both sides. Some of the perceptions of family are influenced by societal norms and external pressures. Nonworkers are often seen as failures not just by their families but by society at large, which then influences family attitudes. For example, RRM03 reflects on how society and family both belittle those who fail in business or employment, reinforcing negative perceptions.

The overall findings suggest that nonworkers face significant emotional and social challenges within their families. They are subjected to pressure, comparison, and often exclusion based on their employment status. This dynamic creates a cycle of emotional distress, where nonworkers feel undervalued and unsupported, while family members feel frustrated by their perceived lack of contribution. The relationship between nonworkers and their families is often characterized by conflict, social alienation, and a deep sense of inadequacy. Despite occasional expressions of sympathy, nonworkers are largely left unsupported, creating a challenging environment for them to navigate. These results highlight how important family factors are in determining the experiences and mental wellbeing of Nepali nonworkers.

### *Perception of Society*

The perception of society towards nonworkers in Nepal is generally characterized by negative stereotyping, lack of respect, and social exclusion. Nonworkers are frequently perceived as a burden to society. As one respondent stated, "Society tends to perceive them as a burden" (RRF05). This view leads to a social dynamic where nonworkers are excluded from recognition or respect in community settings. Several respondents emphasized that society values those who are working, with nonworkers being ignored or belittled. For instance, URF04 observed, "In society, people who work often act like they own the place...and society gives these people a lot of respect." This demonstrates a clear social distinction between workers and nonworkers.

The findings suggest that respect in society is closely tied to one's financial contributions. As one participant noted, "Respect is based on money" (RRM04). This financial-centric respect system reinforces the social pressure on nonworkers, who feel marginalized not only because they are jobless but also because their lack of income diminishes their social standing. Another respondent noted, "People who are working are not only respected but also heard and valued; their opinions matter" (URF06). This highlights the broader issue of economic productivity being directly linked to personal worth in the eyes of society.

Society tends to uphold certain job types, especially government employment, as more respectable. One respondent shared how nonworkers are often shown government workers as examples to follow, with private-sector jobs being viewed as less respectable (RRM02). This reflects a societal hierarchy that not only differentiates between workers and nonworkers but also between types of employment, further alienating those who do not conform to these ideals.

Social gossip is a recurrent theme among respondents, who express frustration at being the subject of neighborhood and community gossip. URF02 mentioned, "Neighbors are just there to gossip...they ask why I'm not doing anything even after finishing my studies." Such gossip not only perpetuates negative stereotypes but also adds to the emotional and psychological pressure on nonworkers. Respondent URM02 emphasized how unemployed individuals are used as negative examples in conversations, further undermining their social standing. Discrimination against nonworkers also extends to social gatherings, where nonworkers are often treated differently. One respondent pointed out, "Society also discriminates, you see. Society puts employed people first, gives them more respect at parties" (URF03).

The perception of nonworkers by society in Nepal is found negative, driven by social norms that place high value on economic productivity. Nonworkers face exclusion, gossip, and discrimination, with their worth often tied to their employment status. Society respects those who work, particularly in government roles, while those who are unemployed are marginalized and belittled, often being used as negative examples. This creates significant social and psychological pressure on nonworkers, deepening their sense of alienation.

### ***Perception of Working-Class People***

The perception of working-class people reflects a complex mixture of insecurity, resentment, and a sense of superiority. Workers often express fear of job competition and are wary of nonworkers, creating a social dynamic where nonworkers are marginalized or looked down upon.

A recurring response is the working-class fear that nonworkers could take their jobs. This sense of insecurity leads to a defensive attitude, where current

employees may seek to undermine or block nonworkers from entering the workforce. For instance, one respondent noted, “People who are currently employed often worry that unemployed individuals might take their jobs” (RRF04). This sentiment leads to a protective stance toward their own employment, often at the expense of supporting nonworkers. Due to fear of losing job, workers stand in favor of investors, which further harm workers because the investors tend to cut off the facilities or reducing wages or benefits. URM07 underscores the duality of the working-class perspective: while there is personal empathy for the unemployed, the economic realities of job insecurity and power imbalances push workers to adopt a more detached and neutral attitude. This reflects a broader societal acceptance of the inequities within the labour market, where workers, despite understanding the struggles of nonworkers, do little to challenge or disrupt the system that perpetuates those struggles.

When it comes to the case of workers, I feel like working-class tend to be more sympathetic on a personal level. However, in an economy like ours where investors have a lot of bargaining power, I think people tend to be more ignorant and accepting of the status quo. They seem neutral towards the plight of nonworkers (URM07).

The findings suggest that some workers harbor resentment towards nonworkers or newcomers, possibly due to competition or a desire to maintain their status. In some cases, this resentment manifests in active sabotage. As one respondent shared, “Whenever I started a new job and did well, my colleagues would secretly resent me and try to sabotage my work” (RRF02). This example highlights the competitive and, at times, hostile environment that can exist within the working class, particularly toward those seen as potential rivals.

Another significant segment is the superiority complex exhibited by some workers. They often view nonworkers as inferior or less knowledgeable, contributing to a dismissive attitude. As noted by one participant, “Those who work often have a tendency to somewhat look down on those who don't” (URM03). This reflects a broader societal belief that employment equates to worth, further alienating nonworkers from social and professional networks.

### **Stratification of Nepali Nonworkers**

The stratification of nonworkers was presented based on or linking with the pre identified broader themes as per suggested by existing theories and approaches as well as as per extra themes that were explored from IDI through ground data.

#### ***Subjectively Salient Group***

The responses referring/representing to the location within the existing socio-economic structure, responses or answers indicating certain characteristics or experiences that are personally significant or meaningful to them regarding to their position, their uniqueness within the existing structure that influence their identity and behavior. When categorizing and theming, identifying subjectively salient groups involves coding of characteristics or experiences that are personally meaningful to them, even if these characteristics are not immediately obvious or measurable by conventional metrics. This theme recognizes the personal and psychological factors that define their group identity (Wright, 2005, pp.183-185; Ossowski, 2018).

The coded segments regarding the theme "Subjectively Salient Group" suggest a consistent perception that nonworkers form a distinct social group within the broader socioeconomic structure. Figure 4.10 is the visual illustration of the wordcloud that the respondent frequently used.

Many respondents indicate that nonworkers are treated as a separate category from workers, both by society and the government. The Prime Minister Employment Program (PMEP) and other governmental schemes often target nonworkers, highlighting their distinct status within the social hierarchy. However, respondents frequently expressed skepticism regarding the actual implementation and effectiveness of these programs. Nonworkers are described as having different psychological conditions, lifestyles, and living standards, which sets them apart from workers. For example, RRF03 and RRM01 noted differences in thinking patterns and spending habits.

The responses show that nonworkers feel economically vulnerable and psychologically isolated. They describe themselves as lacking self-confidence compared to workers, which exacerbates their sense of marginalization (RRF02, RRF05).

The dependence on others is a recurring theme, where nonworkers must carefully manage their resources due to a lack of income. As stated by RRM05, nonworkers often find themselves reliant on others, pushing them inferior on social hierarchy. Several respondents emphasized that governmental or NGO efforts to support nonworkers often fail to reach those in need. RRF05 mentions that nonworkers are not aware of, or do not have access to, programs designed to help them. This lack of access to training, jobs, or financial assistance deepens their exclusion from the workforce and economic opportunities (URF06, RRM04). Some respondents also mentioned that nonworkers are left out of social networks that could provide access to these opportunities (RRF02, RRF05). They feel disconnected from the support systems that are available to workers, further illustrating the division.



Yes, I think they(nonworker and others) are different, because when they become nonworker, they have to face many things (difficulties), might it be from the society or from the family, whether it is mentally or because of something else, one feels that one is different and isolated. I think all nonworker has the similar characteristics, similarly, the working people are different and the nonworker also feel themselves inferior and also they think, their morale is low (URM04).

The analysis of responses clearly supports the idea that nonworkers are a salient group within the existing socioeconomic structure of Nepal. Respondents repeatedly emphasize the distinct separation between workers and nonworkers in terms of access to resources, economic status, psychological well-being, and social recognition. This distinction is reinforced by government programs, social networks, and individual experiences, which collectively perpetuate the marginalized status of nonworkers.

### ***Historical Variation***

This theme involves categories relating to how different time periods have influenced the composition and attributes of nonworkers due to various socio-economic, political, and cultural factors. This means the responses relating to the history of inequality/discriminations that the respondent or their close relation had experienced. Stratifying nonworkers by historical variation helps in examining and categorizing them based on their experience of discrimination/ inequality during structural changes over time. This is a macro-level perspective provides an explanation of historical variations in the social organization of inequalities (Wright, 2005, pp.189-191).



with meaning like 'not working', 'not getting opportunity' and etc. The words 'Variation', 'discrimination', 'dominate' are repeated more.

Historically, Nepal's economy was agrarian, with wealth and social status tied to land ownership and agricultural productivity. Several respondents mentioned that even hard work in agriculture did not yield significant cash income, and this led to poverty. Nonworkers, or those unable to generate substantial agricultural output, were marginalized. The discrimination was not just about employment status but also about socioeconomic class and access to resources.

Several respondents indicate that, historically, families prioritized agriculture over formal employment due to a lack of job opportunities. This preference for agricultural Labour persisted even when employment opportunities were scarce, as mentioned by one respondent: "My grandfather had read a lot. But did not send my father and uncles to study, saying agriculture is better than a job, and they engaged in such work" (URM07). This suggests that nonworkers were historically viewed through a lens that prioritized self-sustenance through farming over employment.

The necessity of seeking work abroad, particularly in India, was a recurring theme. Several respondents shared stories of family members who migrated for employment due to a lack of opportunities in Nepal. This indicates that unemployment and underemployment have been long-standing issues, leading to Labour migration as a coping strategy.

Multiple respondents note that access to power, wealth, and jobs has always been unequal, and discrimination often stemmed from this disparity. For instance: "This is running since long, because all the opportunities are given to those who have

access to power, and those who do not have access do not get work opportunities" (RRF03).

This highlights that nonworkers, historically, faced systemic discrimination because of their inability to secure jobs, often due to lack of connections or resources. The societal perception of nonworkers has consistently been negative, with those who did not work or were unemployed being looked down upon. One respondent shared: "The attitude of other colleagues and friends is also different. Their perception is as if I have nothing!" (RRF02). This attitude extended into the family structure, where nonworkers were seen as less valuable, reinforcing the idea that discrimination against nonworkers has been ingrained in the social fabric. Earlier, caste and family wealth played a more significant role than employment status in societal hierarchy. However, over time, access to employment, especially in government jobs or positions of influence, became a marker of respect. Many respondents recall their grandfathers or fathers struggling due to limited job opportunities, reflecting how economic and social gaps between the "haves" and "have-nots" have persisted historically. Those who worked and earned were respected, while nonworkers or those who lacked financial means were often discriminated against.

In my grandfather's time, it was called 'Pradhan Panch'. Even then, those who had work, money, and wealth were respected, while those who had no work and were poor had to live like 'plowing men' and obey the orders of the rich (RRF04).

This shows that nonworkers have long been subordinated in social hierarchies based on their lack of income or land ownership. Access to jobs has been heavily influenced by social connections and power structures. Respondents noted that historically, those with ties to influential people were more likely to secure

employment, while others, particularly nonworkers or those from lower social classes, faced exclusion. The idea that those who have access to power get opportunities is prevalent in several accounts. The job opportunities both historically and in the present, have been distributed unevenly, often influenced by favoritism and nepotism. "There is discrimination, if there is someone you know, you get an opportunity to work, whether you have the capacity to do this job or not" (URF02). This highlights that nonworkers have historically been excluded from employment due to systemic inequalities, which were perpetuated by connections and social networks rather than merit. The financial struggles of nonworkers were a source of family-level discrimination, where those who earned were favoured over those who did not. For instance,

In situations where the earnings were not enough to feed the family even after hard work, the son who earned became beloved, cared for by the family. But another son who did not work and earn was less beloved, insulted, and discriminated against (URM04).

This illustrates how unemployment or lack of income often led to internal family discrimination, perpetuating a cycle of inequality.

As Nepal's economy shifted from a purely agrarian base to one where cash income and formal employment became more important, the status of nonworkers worsened. Cash has become a critical factor in societal respect and family dynamics. While agricultural work once provided self-sufficiency, today, nonworkers who lack formal employment are increasingly marginalized due to their inability to participate in the cash economy. Some respondents pointed out that discrimination shifted with the changing economic landscape. Initially, caste and family wealth were more critical determinants of discrimination, but with the rise of cash-based economies,

employment became a key factor. "Respect was given on the basis of caste and family wealth rather than one's employment status" (RRF05). As cash and formal employment became more important, those who lacked jobs faced increased marginalization.

Over time, as education and awareness increased, overt discrimination against nonworkers may have diminished, but subtle forms of exclusion still exist. One respondent highlighted this shift. "Discrimination used to be much more than it is now, because people are now educated and it seems such discrimination is less. There might exist backbiting, but face-to-face discrimination is comparatively less than before" (URF03). This suggests that while social attitudes may have softened, the economic and structural disadvantages faced by nonworkers remain significant.

The evidence from these respondents' points to a long history of discrimination against nonworkers in Nepal, rooted in economic and social disparities. While overt forms of discrimination may have lessened over time, nonworkers continue to face significant marginalization due to socioeconomic factors, nepotism, and shifting societal values around employment. The persistence of these issues highlights the deeply entrenched nature of discrimination, and the ways in which it continues to shape the lives of nonworkers across generations.

### ***Current material standard of Living***

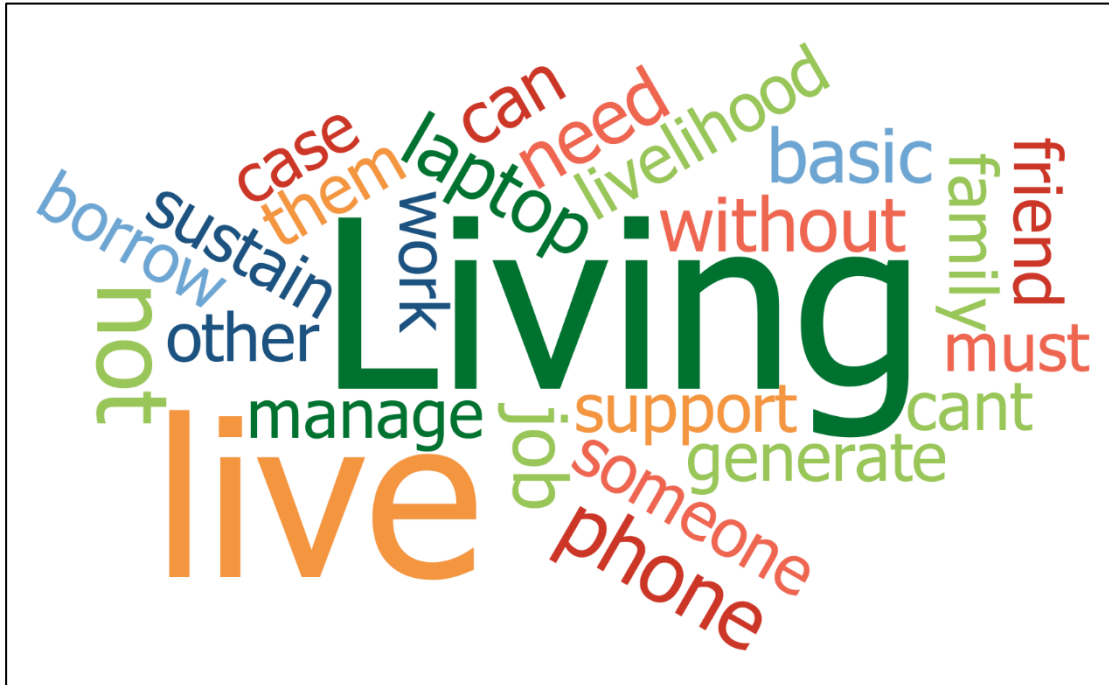
It is constructed by categorizing the responses regarding to the 'Material Standard of Living' of respondents. Distributional location refers how individuals are objectively situated within the distributions of material inequality. Class, in this context, is defined by material standards of living, typically measured by income or wealth. This helps in categorizing the relative positions of individuals or groups

within the socio-economic hierarchy based on their material resources (Wright, 2005, p.183).

The analysis of the respondents' current material status reveals that nonworkers face significant challenges in sustaining their livelihoods. Reliance on borrowing and family support is widespread, reflecting a broader issue of economic dependence. While many possess basic assets, such as cell phones and laptops, these tools have not been converted into means of livelihood, exacerbating their financial insecurity. Furthermore, the limited ability The analysis of the respondents' current material status reveals that nonworkers in Nepal face significant challenges in sustaining their livelihoods.

**Figure 4. 12**

*Representation of Word Cloud Regarding Current Living Status*



Reliance on borrowing and family support is widespread, reflecting a broader issue of economic dependence. While many possess basic assets, such as cell phones and laptops, these tools have not been converted into means of livelihood,

exacerbating their financial insecurity. Furthermore, the limited ability to meet basic needs without external help emphasizes the importance of securing employment to achieve independence and a stable material standard of living. Ultimately, the findings highlight the necessity for structural changes, such as improved access to employment opportunities, to uplift nonworkers from their precarious financial positions. Figure 4.12 highlights the most frequent words used by the respondents by defining their current status. to meet basic needs without external help emphasizes the importance of securing employment to achieve independence and a stable material standard of living.

The overwhelming majority of respondents indicate that they rely heavily on borrowing from friends or family to meet their material needs, particularly during periods of uncertainty. For instance, URM07, RRF03, and RRF04 explicitly mention borrowing to handle daily expenses. This pattern reveals a consistent theme of dependency on others due to the absence of stable employment, highlighting the inability to sustain oneself without external support. Nonworkers, such as RRM06 and URF04, even report borrowing from local saving groups or selling personal items like gold to cover urgent costs.

Most respondents possess basic technology such as cell phones, laptops, and sometimes motorbikes. However, they almost uniformly state that these assets have not contributed to generating any income. For instance, RRF02, RRM03, URF05, and URM04 mention having phones and laptops that were provided by family members but do not offer any financial benefit. This suggests that while some have access to essential tools, they lack the skills, opportunities, or means to leverage them for income generation, reinforcing their economic dependence.

Several respondents highlight that their access to resources, such as ancestral land or family wealth, does not provide them with long-term material stability. RRF01, for example, notes that the land they own only sustains them for half the year. Similarly, RRM05 underscores that they have a small piece of land, but its production capacity is too low to meet basic needs. The reliance on ancestral property without having operational control over it, as RRM04 points out, further exacerbates their financial insecurity.

A significant number of respondents mention that they cannot meet their basic needs, such as food and clothing, without a job. URF03 and URM06 explicitly state that without work, it is *"impossible to manage basic needs,"* echoing the sentiments of many others. Postponing the purchase of essentials, especially non-food items like clothing, is common among respondents (RRM04, URM03), further illustrating the precarious financial situation they face. The necessity of postponing even basic consumption decisions underlines their vulnerability.

Across multiple responses, there is a clear recognition that securing employment is essential for achieving independence. RRF02, RRF06, and RRM01 argue that without a job, sustaining themselves without reliance on family or friends is impossible. This view is reiterated by URM05, who expresses frustration with being unable to fulfill personal or familial expectations due to a lack of work. The general consensus is that employment not only allows individuals to manage their material needs but also frees them from perpetual dependence on others.

### ***Inequalities in Life Chances***

This theme was constructed by categorizing the responses referring or relating to the inequalities on opportunities that respondents faced while achieving various life

goals. This theme investigates which structure or factor is reasonable for the existing inequalities in opportunities to basic needs and material standards of living (Weber, 1946; Wright, 2005, pp.185-186). The experience of inequalities in opportunities are presented and analysed in five different sub-sections as follows:

**Experience of Inequality in Life Chances.** The coded segments on the theme "feelings of inequalities in life chances" reveal a pervasive sense of unfairness among respondents. These narratives, drawn from multiple individuals, highlight the systemic obstacles that non-workers and marginalized groups face in accessing opportunities for employment, self-employment, and social advancement.

Respondent, URM07, refers to historical inequalities rooted in systems like the 'Adhiyan', where farmers were heavily dependent on landowners, paying a portion of their produce as rent. This reflects the deep-rooted economic disparities passed down through generations. Similarly, RRF02 mentions how their brother's weak economic background led to a refusal of loans, illustrating how past poverty perpetuates present disadvantages, limiting upward mobility. Several respondents, such as RRF03 and RRF01, express frustration over the preferential treatment given to individuals with powerful connections. They highlight that job opportunities are often monopolized by those who are linked to people in authority, while others, even those with qualifications, struggle to gain employment. RRF01 laments the power dynamics, stating that those close to political leaders often secure jobs, while others face significant challenges.

This sense of exclusion from opportunities due to lack of connections is echoed by URM02, who mentions how access to employment or livelihood resources, like loans or natural resources, is often reserved for those who are connected to or favored by authorities. URF06 and URF04 reiterate that even highly qualified

individuals are often overlooked in favor of those with connections, further fueling the perception of inequality.

Many respondents highlight the difficulties faced in pursuing self-employment due to economic and social barriers. For instance, RRM06 details how their loan application for a self-employment venture was partially denied, reflecting how financial institutions often discriminate against individuals from weaker economic backgrounds. Similarly, RRF05 shares an experience of being unable to start a business due to a lack of capital and refusal from the bank. Respondents like RRM02 also observe that marginalized individuals face more difficulties in securing resources for self-employment compared to those with better economic standing. These individuals are often judged by their economic background rather than their potential, leading to a vicious cycle of poverty.

Beyond economic barriers, social exclusion is another theme. RRF04 notes that those in higher social and economic positions are given priority in village decision-making processes and public recognition, while non-workers and those with lower status are neglected. This marginalization lowers their confidence and further entrenches their exclusion. URF01 and RRM03 highlight that even in community organizations like cooperatives, the wealthy and powerful are more likely to hold leadership positions, while those from weaker economic backgrounds remain as ordinary members. This perpetuates a system where the underprivileged are excluded from both economic opportunities and decision-making.

RRM01's statement adds another layer to the issue, highlighting gender and age-based discrimination. They observe that skill training programs are often targeted at women and older people, leaving young men like them without access to such

opportunities. This selective targeting exacerbates feelings of inequality and restricts opportunities for certain groups, further hindering social mobility.

Many respondents' express skepticism toward the role of government in addressing inequalities. For instance, RRF01 and URF03 mention how government policies that claim to promote equal opportunities often remain unimplemented or benefit only those with access to power. "The private resources like vacancies from projects are captured by the people who are working there since before" (URM07). RRF04 notes that while the state provides certain benefits like health and education, these efforts do not address the fundamental need for sustainable livelihoods among non-workers. Respondents suggest that the rhetoric of equality is often not matched by action, leading to widespread disillusionment.

Several respondents, such as URM01 and RRF01, express frustration and demotivation resulting from repeated failures to secure employment or recognition despite their efforts. The constant rejection and delayed responses from potential employers, combined with the requirement for numerous recommendations, create a disheartening experience that reinforces their sense of exclusion.

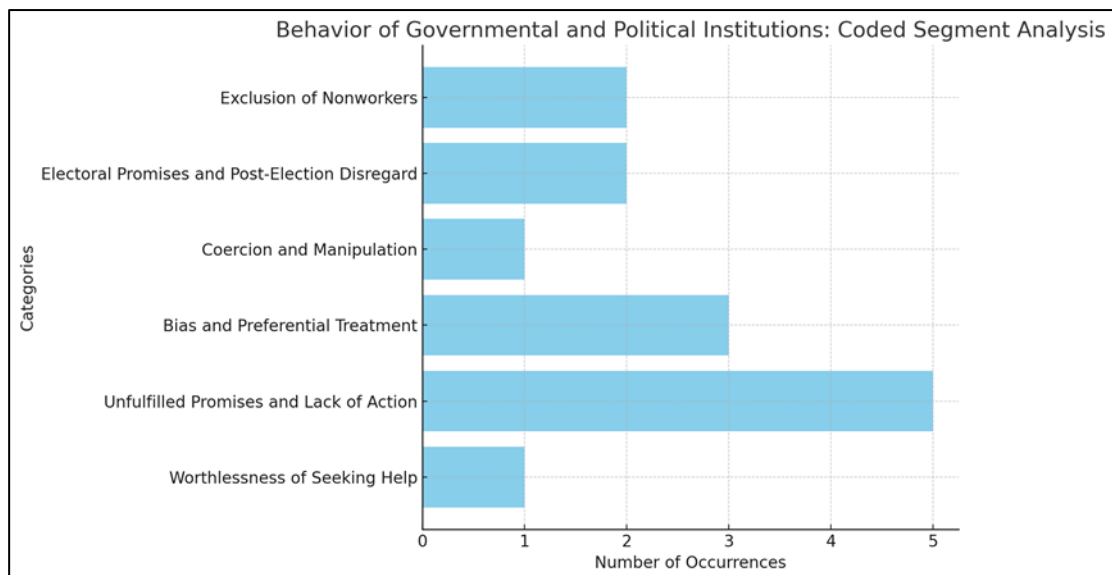
It reveals widespread perceptions of systemic barriers, where connections to power, economic background, and social status significantly influence access to opportunities. Respondents frequently cite their exclusion from employment, self-employment, and decision-making processes, which perpetuates the cycle of inequality. The role of the state and institutions is viewed critically, as policies claiming to promote equality are often seen as favoring those with influence. These experiences collectively paint a picture of disenfranchisement, demotivation, and a lack of trust in the system, where social mobility is restricted by entrenched inequalities.

## Behaviour of Governmental and Political Organizations Towards

**Nonworkers.** The coded segments under this theme reveal a pervasive sense of dissatisfaction and mistrust among respondents regarding their interactions with these entities. Figure 4.13 represent the recurring categories. These categories reflect key patterns such as unfulfilled promises, bias, and exclusion, with "Unfulfilled Promises and Lack of Action" being the most frequently cited issue.

**Figure 4. 13**

*Behaviour of Governmental and Political Organizations Towards Nonworkers*



This visualizes how respondents perceive and interact with these institutions when seeking employment.

Many respondents expressed that approaching government or political figures was futile. They felt that visiting these institutions or officials would not result in any meaningful assistance. For instance, one participant stated outright, "I have not visited such organizations because it is worthless" (URM07). This sentiment was echoed by others who felt that their efforts to seek support were met with empty promises or no action, leading to a general feeling of disillusionment.

A consistent theme was the lack of follow-through on the part of government or political leaders. Numerous respondents shared experiences where they were given verbal assurances but ultimately received no concrete support. One respondent reported, "They usually say okay, but don't do anything. What should I do when nothing happens even after following up 5-6 times?" (RRF01). Others recounted similar instances where political figures promised to help but failed to act, contributing to a growing sense of distrust in these institutions. For example, one respondent mentioned, "I talked to a political figure... they said if I find a suitable job for you, I'll let you know, but they never got back to me" (RRF04).

Many respondents reported experiencing or witnessing biased behavior from government and political institutions, where opportunities were reserved for individuals with connections or affiliations to influential people. One participant observed, "When I asked for help, some people got jobs, and some didn't. If someone had helped him before he became the ward chairman, then they got a job; otherwise, they didn't" (URF02). Another added, "Those with power get opportunities" (URM06). This perception of preferential treatment created feelings of exclusion among respondents, especially those without political connections.

Some respondents described instances where political figures demanded loyalty or participation in party activities in exchange for opportunities. One respondent recounted a situation where they were asked to join party committee (be member of party) in exchange for job security, leading them to resign from the job instead.

When I got my name on the list for a job at the municipality, some party members came and said I had to put up their party's flag and become a

member of their party committee if I wanted to keep the job. I apologized and next day i resigned and didn't take the job (RRM03, Pos. 46).

This reflects how political involvement is often coerced and used as a bargaining chip for access to opportunities.

Several respondents shared how political figures made promises before elections but failed to deliver once they were elected. This was captured in statements such as, "Before the elections, everyone makes promises... but in the end, they didn't do anything and ran away" (RRM03), and "Once I went to meet a member of parliament, but they didn't really pay any attention to me. Now that they've won the election, their needs are met, so they don't care at all" (RRF06). This cycle of unmet electoral promises led to disillusionment with the political process.

A number of respondents highlighted how nonworkers are often sidelined by both government and political institutions. One participant noted, "The state claimed that they provide facilities for nonworkers, but these facilities were enjoyed by working-class people and their nearer ones" (URF03). This narrative reflects a broader feeling of marginalization among nonworkers, who believe they are systematically excluded from opportunities and resources intended for their benefit.

This paints a picture of widespread frustration and disillusionment. Respondents perceive government and political institutions as ineffective, biased, and primarily serving the interests of the powerful or politically connected. Many feel that their efforts to seek help from these institutions are futile, as promises are rarely kept and follow-up action is almost non-existent. Additionally, political favoritism and coercion exacerbate feelings of inequality, with nonworkers and those without political connections finding themselves particularly disadvantaged. If these issues are

not addressed, the growing sense of mistrust and exclusion may further erode the public's faith in these institutions.

**Influence and Behaviour of Investors/ Employers.** The data highlights a significant imbalance in power dynamics between employers/investors and potential employees, with a focus on how these dynamics impact social stratification and inequality. The overarching narrative depicts a Labour market where employers and investors wield considerable influence, often to the detriment of workers, particularly nonworkers seeking employment.

Employers and investors are repeatedly described as prioritizing profit maximization over the welfare of employees. Many respondents expressed that investor seek to reduce wages as much as possible, frequently through bargaining tactics or by hiring less experienced workers at lower rates. This behavior is evident in narratives such as one participant's experience:

Owners try to get as much work done for as little money as possible. They want you to work long hours and do a lot of work for a small amount of pay, which is something I've experienced firsthand (RRF02).

Additionally, some participants note that this behavior is exacerbated by high unemployment rates, which allow employers to leverage the desperation of job seekers to offer lower wages: "When there is high unemployment in a country, do investors benefit or lose? Well, it's definitely beneficial for them because they can hire cheap Labour and fire expensive ones" (RRM03).

The findings suggest that employers often establish barriers to employment, particularly for inexperienced workers. Many respondents noted that job postings prioritize candidates with prior experience, making it difficult for nonworkers to gain

initial employment: "I just don't understand why they always ask for work experience when hiring someone. How can you gain work experience if you're not given the opportunity to work?" (RRF06).

Moreover, participants shared that hiring decisions often favor individuals with personal recommendations or connections, further marginalizing those without social capital. This form of gatekeeping perpetuates inequality, as it limits opportunities for nonworkers who may not have access to influential networks. Several participants described recruitment processes as opaque and biased, with employers seemingly filtering candidates unfairly. Some respondents reported instances of favoritism, particularly in cases where employers already had preferred candidates but continued to conduct interviews as a formality: "When going for interviews, the interviewers often do things to undermine your confidence, as they already have someone in mind for the position" (URF05).

This contributes to a perception of powerlessness among job seekers, who feel that their fate is largely determined by the whims of employers. One respondent recounted feeling filtered out during the recruitment process: "I feel like they were trying to filter me out when I went for those institutions. It felt like they were looking for any reason to reject me, saying negative or discouraging things" (URM07).

Respondents consistently described employers and investors as profit-driven, with little regard for the social or economic well-being of employees. This mindset is particularly harmful to nonworkers, as it perpetuates a cycle of exploitation and economic marginalization. One respondent expressed this dynamic succinctly: "Here, the situation is that investors always seek to maximize profits. They focus on hiring Labour at the lowest cost to extract higher profits" (RRM07).

In addition to wage suppression, participants also noted that employers often overwork employees, furthering the perception of exploitation: "They overwork us, don't pay on time, and stuff like that" (URM03). The influence employers and investors hold over the Labour market extends beyond individual employment opportunities. Their actions, such as wage suppression, selective hiring, and favoritism, contribute to broader societal inequality, limiting the upward mobility of nonworkers. As one respondent noted: "Investors and capitalists have a lot of influence. They ultimately decide who gets a job, who doesn't, who gets assigned to which position, and who gets fired" (RRF05).

This influence underscores the systemic nature of inequality in Nepal, where employers' and investors' decisions directly impact individuals' life chances. A notable pattern of exclusionary practices emerged, where participants observed employers favoring candidates from certain castes or religious groups. This highlights how social stratification is perpetuated not just through economic means but also through cultural and social discrimination: "They tend to look at caste and religion and prefer hiring people from their own caste or religion" (RRM02).

This intersection of economic and social marginalization further disadvantages nonworkers, particularly those from minority or underrepresented groups. It reflects a Labour market that is heavily skewed in favor of those with economic and social capital. Employers and investors prioritize profit maximization, often at the expense of fair wages and equitable hiring practices. This dynamic exacerbates the challenges faced by nonworkers, who encounter barriers to entry, discriminatory practices, and exploitative conditions. The cumulative effect of these behaviors deepens social stratification, perpetuating inequality in Nepal.

### ***Experience of Oppression***

The answers related to experience or feelings of discrimination are categorized under this theme. It is further sub-divided into various sub-themes like: 'discrimination by working class people', 'by society', 'by state', 'by family'. And the answers related with the reason of discrimination was categorized under a different sub-theme 'causes of discrimination'.

Since the respondent answered about various sources and actors from where they feel/experienced oppression, this is analyzed by separating on various subheadings: Experience of discrimination by (state, by society, by family and by working class people), experience of Exclusion, Experience of violence and Misuse of status. The findings are further expanded up to the cause of discriminations.

#### **Experience of Discrimination**

***By State.*** The experiences of discrimination by the state, as captured in the data segments, illuminate the systematic marginalization of nonworkers. The state's policies, as perceived by nonworkers, are disproportionately designed to benefit working-class while leaving nonworkers deprived of essential benefits like pensions, healthcare, and social security. A key theme that emerges from the data is the state's prioritization of workers over nonworkers, evident in the provision of social services, pensions, allowances, and healthcare benefits. Multiple respondents highlighted how state policies tend to favor employed individuals, with one participant mentioning, "The government provides a bulk of facilities to the employed individuals... Their children go to good schools and colleges and they have access to better health facilities" (RRM01). This highlights a structural gap in how the state allocates resources, reserving key benefits for those who are already employed.

Several participants also pointed out that state programs and incentives are often only accessible to the powerful, further alienating nonworkers (RRF01). The inaccessibility of benefits to the marginalized jobless population reflects a deeper issue of unequal power dynamics within economy. The economic disparity perpetuated by the state leads to the exclusion of nonworkers from programs intended to uplift disadvantaged groups.

Another prominent issue is the state's failure to implement effective policies aimed at addressing the needs of the unemployed, particularly through entrepreneurship support. While entrepreneurship has been acknowledged as a potential long-term solution, several respondents criticized the lack of immediate, tangible assistance for nonworkers. As one interviewee noted, "The state is dedicated towards improving the conditions of jobholders... but this can't effectively address the ongoing crisis" (RRF01). One participant remarked, "If the state were to provide insurance facilities among others, and ... it would be a lot easier for the nonworkers" (RRF02). This reflects a broader inequality in safety net for unemployed individuals.

Respondents frequently pointed out that the state actively contributes to discrimination through its policies and programs, which often exclude nonworkers. The provision of pensions, allowances, and subsidies for education and healthcare is consistently mentioned as being exclusive to jobholders. A recurring sentiment in the data is that nonworkers and their families are deprived of basic necessities, such as healthcare and education, which are crucial for their survival and long-term welfare (URF04).

This exclusionary approach is seen as a form of structural discrimination, perpetuated by government institutions and policies. The unequal distribution of state resources directly impacts nonworkers' ability to access education for their children,

secure healthcare, or even maintain a basic standard of living. As one participant starkly noted, "Jobless people have difficulty providing for their children's education, health, and overall family necessities. They are always discriminated against by the state and society" (RRM05).

This highlights the multi-layered nature of discrimination, where both the state and societal structures conspire to further marginalize nonworkers. Several respondents pointed to the role of local government in perpetuating discrimination. Local officials are perceived as corrupt and self-serving, often diverting resources intended for development and nonworkers to those with political power or influence. One participant shared an anecdote about agricultural tools being wrongfully distributed to influential individuals who were not in need (RRM04). This illustrates how local governance failures deepen the economic divide, with nonworkers often being deprived of basic resources due to corruption and favoritism.

Additionally, local-level authorities are seen as key players in determining who benefits from state policies, further exacerbating inequality. For example, a respondent explained, "The heads and deputies of the local levels unfairly divert the funds allocated for various development programs" (RRM03). This reflects the localized nature of discrimination, where the effectiveness of state programs is dependent on the integrity and priorities of local leaders.

Nonworkers also face barriers in accessing financial services and social security, as state policies often require proof of employment or income, which nonworkers lack. One respondent described their experience of being denied a loan due to their unemployment status: "I went to apply for a bank loan, but I was denied that for not having a source of income" (URM04). This scenario illustrates how the financial system, governed by state regulations, reinforces the exclusion of

nonworkers from economic opportunities. The inability to access credit or other financial services further limits their capacity to engage in self-employment or entrepreneurship.

A major theme in the data is the lack of welfare programs tailored to the needs of nonworkers. Several respondents emphasized the absence of unemployment allowances, healthcare subsidies, and educational support for the children of nonworkers. One respondent commented, "There is barely anything for the jobless fellows whether it be in education, health or anything else for that matter" (URF02). The absence of these programs is perceived as a failure on the part of the state to provide a comprehensive welfare safety net for its citizens, especially those who are unemployed.

***By Society.*** The experiences shared by nonworkers reveal a multi-layered form of exclusion that nonworkers face in their communities. This discrimination manifests in both subtle and overt ways, significantly impacting their social standing, mental well-being, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

One of the most prominent aspects of societal discrimination is the exclusion of unemployed individuals from decision-making processes and community activities. Participants frequently mentioned that their voices are not heard, and they are often sidelined during important discussions and decisions within their communities. The lack of acknowledgment from society not only undermines their morale but also fosters a sense of inferiority, as highlighted by one respondent who noted, "They are not included in decision-makings. Their voices aren't heard. Their presence isn't acknowledged" (RRF01).

Furthermore, this exclusion extends to local committees and projects, where unemployed individuals are systematically overlooked. Those with jobs or financial resources are given preference, leaving the unemployed with limited opportunities to participate in community-driven initiatives. For instance, one participant recounted a road construction project that was diverted away from their house due to their inability to invest/influence in the project (URM04).

A recurring theme is the differential treatment by society based on employment status, with a distinct divide between those who are employed and those who are not. The workers are seen as more competent, respected, and deserving of social resources and opportunities. This is reflected in statements like "In every society, those who work are acknowledged, and those who don't aren't" (URF04). Nonworkers are seen as "useless" and are denied basic opportunities, such as being part of cooperative organizations or accessing loans from community groups (URM03). The working class and the elite are often the source of this discrimination, as they look down on the unemployed, perceiving them as dependent and incapable. One respondent described how the elites believe that the less fortunate live on their favors, perpetuating a dynamic of dominance and subordination (URM06).

The economic aspect of discrimination is another crucial element highlighted by the participants. Society tends to favor those with financial stability, offering them better access to resources, loans, and opportunities. In contrast, unemployed individuals are often denied these same privileges. This was vividly described by a participant who pointed out that even shopkeepers began to treat their family differently after their father fell ill and they could no longer afford to make payments upfront (RRM06).

*By Family.* The family, which is often perceived as a place of support and unconditional acceptance, can also become a source of stress, criticism, and discrimination, particularly when one member is unemployed or perceived as unproductive. The coded segments reveal an ingrained pattern of familial discrimination, where the nonworking members are treated differently from their employed counterparts, leading to feelings of inferiority, resentment, and emotional distress.

From the coded segments, it is clear that familial discrimination is pervasive, and it manifests in both direct and subtle ways. Nonworkers often experience differential treatment, ranging from verbal taunts and insults to exclusion from financial and emotional support. “Discrimination happens in our own family” (RRF03). This simple but powerful statement captures the essence of the theme; discrimination is not just a societal issue but one that exists within the closest social unit: the family. Another participant elaborates on the specific ways this discrimination plays out: “For instance, in a family, one son earns and another doesn’t, parents themselves treats the two differently, they look down on the nonworker, taunt on occasions” (RRF03). This illustrates that the family views the working son as more valuable, providing him with more respect and support, while the nonworker is seen as lesser and is subjected to humiliation. This is echoed by multiple participants who describe similar dynamics, where employed family members are favored, and nonworkers are criticized or sidelined.

One of the key forms of discrimination identified in the data is the unequal distribution of family support and resources. Families tend to prioritize the needs of those who contribute financially, often neglecting or even withholding support from nonworkers.

At home, my brother works, but I don't. My parents always say that my brother works hard, but I don't do anything. Those who work get more support compared to those who don't. For example, if my brother needs money for his business, they'll easily give it to him. But if I ask for money for a really necessary expense, they hesitate (RRF03).

This statement highlights the stark contrast in how families allocate resources, favoring the working members over nonworkers. The nonworking family members are not only discriminated against socially but also in terms of financial support, which exacerbates their feelings of inadequacy and dependence. "Families differentiate between those who work and those who don't in every aspect, even with their own children" (URF04). This suggests that the discrimination is not just isolated to financial support but extends to emotional care and respect. Nonworkers are often treated as second-class family members, leading to a sense of alienation within their own homes.

"When you're unemployed, you can feel inferior even among your own friends. This happens within families and society as well" (RRM07). This highlights how the experience of discrimination extends beyond the family, affecting nonworkers' interactions in broader social contexts. The discrimination at home contributes to a pervasive sense of worthlessness, which impacts their ability to engage confidently with the outside world.

In many cases, the discrimination experienced by nonworkers from their families can be seen as a form of social pressure. Families often discriminate out of concern for the future or societal expectations, as highlighted by this participant:

Within families, there's usually a tolerance limit. If someone remains unemployed beyond that point, questions like 'What do you do? What will be your basis for running the household tomorrow?' start to arise. This creates significant psychological pressure (URM06).

Here, the discrimination is not just about disapproval but also about the pressure to conform to societal norms of productivity and financial independence. Nonworkers are constantly reminded of their 'failure' to meet these expectations, leading to a build-up of psychological stress. The lack of a job is seen as a personal failure, not just by society, but by their own family, which intensifies the feeling of inadequacy. Interestingly, the findings reveals that discrimination is not limited to low-income or struggling families; it also exists in wealthier families where economic pressures might not be as severe.

I've seen that even some people from wealthy families don't have pocket money. This is because they don't have jobs or work, so their families don't trust them. I've observed that families tend to show this difference in treatment" (RRM06).

This observation is significant because it suggests that the discrimination faced by nonworkers is not merely a matter of financial necessity but is deeply rooted in cultural and societal values that equate employment with worthiness. Even in families where resources are abundant, nonworkers are treated with suspicion and withheld financial autonomy, reinforcing their status as "lesser" family members.

Familial discrimination is often expressed through favoritism, where the working members of the family receive more respect, attention, and support. This is noted by a participant who observed:

They discriminate between their own children. The way they treat their child who earns money is different from the one who doesn't. They show more respect to the one who works and say things like, 'This one just lazes around all day and wastes money' about the one who doesn't have a job (URF06).

This favoritism creates a hierarchical structure within the family, where the worth of each member is evaluated based on their ability to contribute financially. The nonworking members are not only deprived of respect but are also subjected to negative judgments and assumptions about their character.

Another interesting aspect revealed in the data is how families react to business failures. This implies that the discrimination is not just towards those who are chronically unemployed but extends even to those who take risks and fail. The family, instead of offering support, engages in a form of punitive judgment, exacerbating the individual's sense of failure and isolation.

These findings highlight the harsh reality faced by nonworkers, where they are treated differently by their own families. The discrimination is pervasive and takes multiple forms, including verbal insults, exclusion from financial support, emotional neglect, and social pressure. The psychological toll of this discrimination is profound, leading to feelings of inferiority, resentment, and alienation. Families, driven by societal norms that equate worth with employment, often fail to provide the unconditional support that nonworkers need. Addressing this issue requires a cultural shift in how families value and support their members, regardless of their employment status.

***By Working Class People.*** The coded segments provide valuable insights into the nature and dynamics of discrimination faced by nonworkers, particularly from the

working class within the same society. Multiple respondents indicated that discrimination arises due to entrenched social hierarchies where those who work, or are employed, view nonworkers as inferior. This results in feelings of superiority and a tendency to dominate. Examples include: “A friend who previously played together began treating the nonworker differently after securing employment” (RRM02).

The intersection of political and economic power with discrimination is evident in some cases. Nonworkers often miss out on job opportunities due to their inability to pay political bribes or secure favors, leading to systemic exclusion (RRM03). Additionally, government employees are specifically highlighted as sources of discrimination (RRM03). Respondents noted that the discrimination between workers and nonworkers is not a new phenomenon but has been present in society for a long time. Inequality, particularly driven by economic disparities, has historically fueled this discrimination, with wealthy or employed individuals consistently oppressing those who are weaker or unemployed (RRM07; URF05).

Discrimination within peer groups and workplaces reflects a broader organizational culture. When working peers engage in discriminatory behavior, organizations themselves tend to adopt the same practices. This shows how discrimination can be systemic within institutional structures (URF01). Some respondent shares narratives about experience of discrimination with taunting and teasing by the working people of their own house.

Even my own brother sometimes says things like, 'What do you care about life anyway? You're living the easy life, eating and sleeping. You have got such a joyful life! It's annoying when he treats me like that. It makes me feel bad (RRF03).

A recurring theme is the tendency of those with power whether economic, political, or social to dominate those without it. This dynamic is especially evident in the way employed individuals exert influence over nonworkers, whether in social interactions or through institutional mechanisms (URM04). Some respondents highlighted how generational or educational differences also contribute to discrimination. Those with better education or family status due to employment were perceived to have a better social standing, as one respondent reflected on the changes in their own family's status (URM03).

The findings reveal that discrimination against nonworkers by the working class is multifaceted, involving social, economic, and psychological dimensions. This discrimination manifests through marginalization in social settings, exclusion from job opportunities, and domination in both personal and institutional interactions. The deeply entrenched societal inequalities, combined with the power dynamics between workers and nonworkers, perpetuate this cycle of discrimination, which is exacerbated by peer groups and organizational cultures.

**Experience of Exclusion.** The analysis of coded segments sheds light on how nonworkers often face social, economic, and psychological exclusion. This exclusion is perpetuated by friends, families, communities, and broader systems, leaving nonworkers marginalized and often invisible. The coded segments reflect a sense of isolation, rejection, and the deprivation of opportunities and support.

A recurring pattern in the data is the exclusion of nonworkers from opportunities and vital information. This exclusion can take subtle forms, where nonworkers are systematically kept out of the loop in community, job, or social networks.

Nowadays, there's a trend of hiring specialists for everything. Those without experience hardly get opportunities... Even if I do get one, it's usually a low-paying job that everyone else has rejected... For example, if there's any beneficial scheme or information, they don't share it (URM07).

This statement highlights how nonworkers are deprived of valuable opportunities, which exacerbates their unemployment status. It underscores how exclusion is not always overt but can manifest through the withholding of information and resources that could help nonworkers improve their situation. This also emphasizes a broader structural issue where access to opportunities and resources is restricted to those already within the working or privileged class, leaving nonworkers trapped in a cycle of exclusion and disadvantage.

A significant dimension of the exclusion faced by nonworkers is the distancing and neglect they experience from their social circles, particularly friends and peers. The data reveals that unemployment and financial hardship often lead to a breakdown in social relationships (RRF03). This suggests that social ties are often contingent upon financial status, where those with money or jobs are prioritized, while those without are left behind. The loss of social connections due to unemployment can lead to feelings of isolation, as echoed by another respondent: "I've faced a situation where if I don't work, I'm excluded from my working friends' group. If there's any community work, they ignore me. Even at home, they don't seek much advice or consultation from me" (RRF02). This exclusion from social activities and decision-making processes further marginalizes nonworkers, making them feel invisible and devalued within their own social networks. The data also highlights how nonworkers are often excluded from important social events, such as weddings or gatherings (RRF04). These exclusions are not just symbolic but carry emotional and

psychological weight, as they reinforce the nonworker's sense of alienation. "During events, some friends intentionally do not invite" (URM01). These exclusions, whether intentional or unintentional, reflect the way nonworkers are sidelined in social life, reinforcing their marginalization.

Financial instability is a central factor in the exclusion experienced by nonworkers. Not only are they excluded from social events, but they also face exclusion in more critical areas, such as accessing healthcare or starting businesses.

Hospitals are even worse. If you don't have money, you can't get treatment... Just six or seven months ago, I had a very high fever and went to the hospital... I was unable to pay all those bills, so I asked for a quick discharge (URM05).

This highlights the harsh reality of economic exclusion, where nonworkers are denied essential services such as healthcare due to their inability to pay. Economic exclusion further entrenches their marginalized position, affecting their physical well-being in addition to their social status.

Additionally, a respondent mentioned the difficulties they faced in getting financial support for starting a business: "When I ask for money to start a business or for help, no one believes me... If you can't contribute money for social activities, you might be excluded, even if it's not said directly" (URM01). This reflects the broader societal mistrust of nonworkers, where their lack of financial contribution results in exclusion from social activities and support systems. The lack of belief in their potential further exacerbates their economic and social marginalization.

These responses reveal the deep social, economic, and psychological marginalization that nonworkers face. Their exclusion is multi-faceted, ranging from

being left out of social events and networks to being denied opportunities for employment, healthcare, and community participation.

**Experience of Violence.** The most severe form of violence and harassment mentioned relates to sexual harassment in the workplace, particularly by individuals in positions of power. One respondent shared a harrowing experience where a government employee demanded sexual favors in exchange for a job recommendation. This type of coercion, where power is abused for personal gain, creates a hostile environment for job seekers, especially women, and violates their self-respect. The respondent also highlighted that such incidents are not isolated to government offices but occur in private sectors as well. This reflects the pervasiveness of sexual harassment across different professional settings:

“He told me he will provide recommendation for the job to which I had applied in exchange for sexual favors, saying things that would hurt my self-respect, trying to touch me, and even suggesting I spend the night with him to secure the job” (URF01).

Another example illustrated the fear-driven endurance of harassment in the workplace. A respondent recounted the experience of a friend who endured inappropriate behavior from her boss due to the fear of losing her job and being unable to find another. This reflects how harassment is compounded by economic vulnerability and lack of job security, where victims feel they have no choice but to tolerate abuse to maintain employment (RRF02). Another frequent response were related with the harassment in family settings, respondents reported discrimination and verbal harassment based on their unemployment status. This form of social violence manifests as relatives and siblings looking down on those without jobs, reinforcing feelings of inadequacy and exclusion. For instance, during a family

gathering, one respondent was gossiped about for not being employed at his age, which further stigmatized his status as a nonworker (URM04).

Harassment in the workplace also extends to verbal mistreatment by superiors, where job holders in positions of authority misuse their power to intimidate employees. A friend of one respondent endured this kind of harassment from her boss, underscoring the emotional and psychological toll that constant fear of losing a job can take on individuals, particularly when the boss's behavior becomes oppressive.

These examples of violence and harassment, whether in the form of sexual coercion, verbal abuse, or discriminatory treatment based on unemployment status, highlight a systemic issue within both professional and personal spaces. They reveal how nonworkers and vulnerable individuals are subjected to multiple forms of violence and exploitation, impacting their mental health, dignity, and sense of belonging.

**Misuse of Status.** The theme highlights various ways in which individuals without employment are exploited by those who have jobs or hold power. Many participants report being asked to perform personal tasks for those with jobs. Examples include looking after a shop, assisting in form-filling, or even visiting hospitals for others. These tasks are often assigned under the assumption that nonworkers have nothing else to do, reflecting a misuse of the jobholders' status to shift their responsibilities to the unemployed. URM07 reports helping jobholder friends renew licenses, fill forms, and even write reports, without any compensation or benefit. RRF03's experience of being asked to watch over a shop is another instance of exploitation without regard for their own time and effort.

Nonworkers are often recruited to assist in political campaigns, under the guise of helping with tasks such as crowd gathering, standing in lines, or performing menial jobs. The promises made by political candidates such as jobs or benefits are rarely fulfilled after the campaigns, leaving the nonworkers feeling used and manipulated. RRM01 mentions being part of election campaigns where candidates made shallow promises, but nothing materialized after the elections. URM01 reflects on the frustration of being exploited for election work, only to be ignored afterward, despite the hard work they put in.

Parties promised us jobs, we fell into that trap and worked relentlessly, tread in the sun, just by eating a cup of tea and a boiled egg. Now when they see us they act like they didn't saw" (URM01).

Some respondents have shared the experience of getting offers for illegal work like transporting narcotics and illegal drugs and even ask for clean septic tanks: "...they go as far as to asking to clean their septic tanks. Some even ask to do illegal works like transporting illigal drugs/narcotics and etc" (URM01). This reflects the vulnerability of nonworker and potential of being used in illigal and criminal activities being proxy.

A common pattern in the data is nonworkers being asked to perform tasks either for no payment or for an amount far less than the work's actual value. Nonworkers are often assigned physically demanding jobs, such as picking fruits or helping in agricultural tasks, but are either given only symbolic compensation (e.g., a few fruits to eat) or a very small amount of money. RRM05 describes being asked to pick litchis and load them for market sale, only to be given some fruits to eat instead of being paid. URF06 shares frustration at being given meager payments (e.g., 100-200 rupees) for work worth far more.

That's how it is. Let me give you an example, a friend of mine has an orchard with around 50 litchi trees. During the litchi season, he would call all of us jobless friends and have us pick litchis, bring them to load onto the vehicle, or nearer market. He would keep the money and give us some litchis to eat.

That's it. It's the same way during rice-harvesting season. There are numerous such instances where we are made to work for free (RRM05).

There is a recurring perception among jobholders that nonworkers have ample free time, leading them to offload tasks onto them. This dynamic often leads to resentment among nonworkers, who feel taken advantage of and undervalued. URF01 mentions how jobholders would return from work and assign tasks, commenting on how nonworkers had "nothing better to do." URM06 describes being frequently asked to help with tasks simply because of not having a routine or formal employment.

The nonworkers are often manipulated with promises of networking opportunities, future jobs, or career development, particularly during election periods or in the context of political parties. However, once the purpose is served, those making the promises tend to disappear, leaving the nonworkers feeling betrayed and exploited. URM05 shares how political parties used the promise of career advancement or certificates to manipulate nonworkers into helping with their campaigns, only to disregard them afterward.

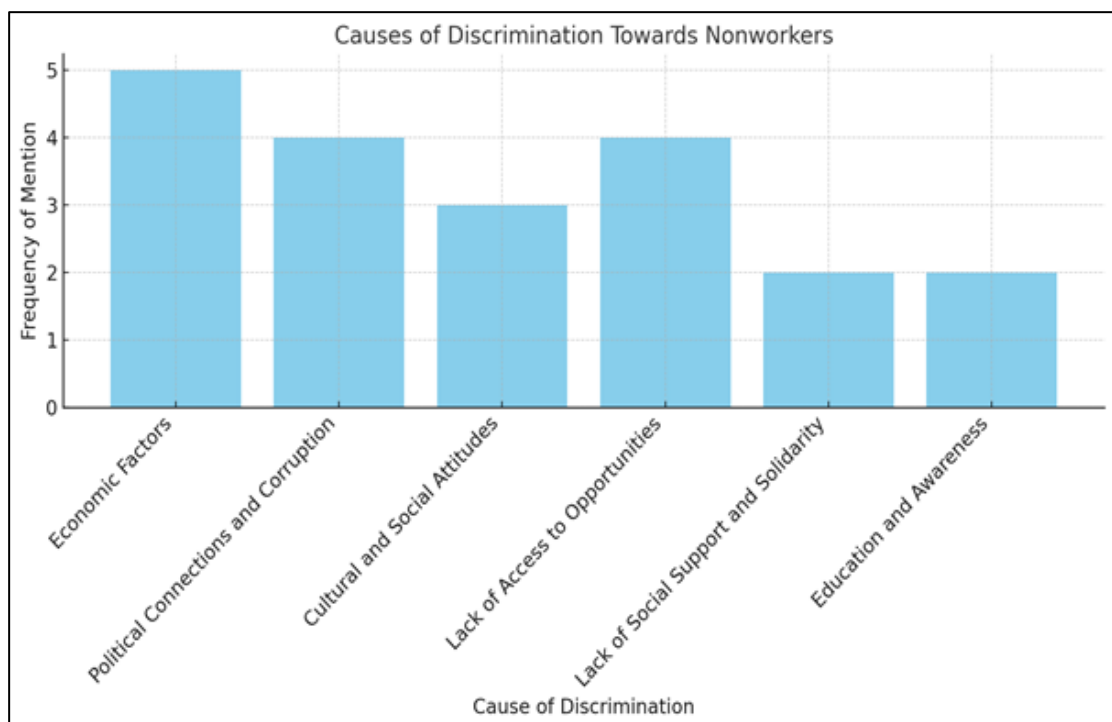
A recurring emotional response across the segments is anger, frustration, and regret. Many nonworkers reflect on these experiences with a sense of resentment, as they realize that they were being used for someone else's benefit without any personal gain or recognition.

This theme highlights the structural inequalities faced by nonworkers, with power dynamics playing a central role in their exploitation by those with jobs or status. The nonworkers' time and Labour are often undervalued, and their free time is manipulated to serve the needs of others, reflecting a broader societal disregard for their well-being.

**Cause of Oppression.** The coded segments reveal several complex factors contributing to the marginalization and unequal treatment of individuals who are nonworkers. Figure 4.14 is a histogram visualizing the causes of discrimination towards nonworkers based on the coded segments. The x-axis represents different categories of causes, while the y-axis shows the frequency of mentions for each category in the data.

**Figure 4. 14**

*Cause of Existing Discrimination Towards Nonworkers*



Several responses highlight that discrimination against nonworkers is rooted in economic disparities. Nonworkers are perceived as contributing less to society, primarily due to their lack of income or financial independence. As a result, society tends to prioritize and respect individuals with wealth and employment, creating a power imbalance. For instance, one respondent notes that during community decisions, only the wealthy are heard, and their needs are prioritized (RRF01). This reflects how society values economic capital and marginalizes those without it.

Additionally, the belief/behavior that employed individuals are "useful" while unemployed individuals are "useless" further perpetuates the stigma and discrimination (URM02). Economic success is tied to societal worth, leading to the exclusion of nonworkers from decision-making processes and opportunities for advancement.

The political system is another significant cause of discrimination. Many respondents argue that access to employment and opportunities is often contingent on political connections or affiliations. For instance, the lack of transparency in government programs, such as the Prime Minister's employment program, means that those connected to the ruling party or from privileged backgrounds tend to secure work more easily (URM03).

First of all, it seems to stem from a lack of transparency and inclusiveness. I recall the Prime Minister's employment Program for the unemployed, where individuals connected to the ruling party or from the upper class tend to secure work, while those who are not affiliated with the parties'' (URM03).

This reflects a broader issue of politicization in every sector, where nepotism and favoritism overshadow merit-based opportunities. Government policies, while

present, are often poorly implemented, further exacerbating discrimination against nonworkers. A lack of political will to address these issues leaves nonworkers at a disadvantage, and the dominance of certain groups in power maintains the status quo (RRM04; URM03).

Cultural attitudes also play a role in perpetuating discrimination. Several responses highlight those societal norms often associate respect and dignity with employment and wealth. For instance, one respondent points out that society tends to make positive examples of workers while viewing unemployed individuals negatively (RRM06). This ingrained societal mindset leads to nonworkers being seen as inferior or unworthy of support.

Family attitudes also contribute to discrimination. For example, families may place undue pressure on nonworkers by expecting them to become independent without providing the necessary emotional or financial support (URM07). This lack of support and belief in nonworkers creates further challenges for them to seek opportunities or pursue independent ventures.

The lack of access to job opportunities, particularly for women and marginalized groups, is another recurring theme. One respondent describes how being a woman, or not having political connections, can prevent access to employment (RRF05). This highlights the intersection of gender and politics in discrimination, where nonworkers, especially women, face additional hurdles in finding employment.

Another respondent emphasizes that even when state policies exist to support employment, such as agricultural grants, the information often does not reach the intended recipients due to geographic or administrative barriers (RRM04). The lack of effective communication and policy implementation leaves nonworkers disconnected

from potential opportunities, further marginalizing them: “... as a result, the policies made by the state will not reach the right people. For example, regarding agricultural grants, where did we, and our fathers receive such support?” (RRM04).

Discrimination is also fueled by a lack of social support and solidarity among different groups. One respondent noted that everyone in society seems to have their own interests; workers want to secure their jobs, investors want to maximize profits, and unemployed individuals want jobs (URF01). This lack of mutual support and cooperation perpetuates a system where nonworkers are left behind. Moreover, the dominant mindset in both society and the state reflect a belief in self-sufficiency, where individuals are expected to fend for themselves without collective support. This individualistic attitude leads to further isolation of nonworkers, who may feel unsupported and demotivated in pursuing their goals (URF04).

Illiteracy and lack of education also contribute to discrimination. One respondent argues that while many people are educated, their behavior does not reflect that education, suggesting that ignorance or lack of awareness about the struggles of nonworkers fuels discriminatory attitudes (RRM03). The failure of society to provide effective guidance, training, or vocational education to nonworkers compounds the problem (URM01).

This reveals causes of discrimination against nonworkers are multifaceted, involving economic, political, social, and cultural factors. Economic disparities, political connections, cultural biases, and lack of access to opportunities all contribute to the marginalization of nonworkers. Additionally, societal attitudes that prioritize wealth and employment, combined with a lack of effective policies and support systems, further entrench this discrimination.

### *Antagonistic Conflict*

This theme was constructed by categorizing the responses representing the conflicting, anti or opposite kind of behavior, thinking and actions. Antagonistic conflict focuses on the societal as well as interpersonal cleavages that systematically generate overt antagonisms and conflicts. Classes are not merely defined by common conditions that generate economic opportunities but by those clusters of conditions that inherently pit people against each other in the pursuit of these opportunities. This conflict might be in observable form or be in psychological, emotional format. This theme categorized the both (Wright, 2005; Marx & Engels, 1848/1964, p.57; Marx, 1867; Weber, 1905/2013a; 1922/2013b; Bourdieu, 1972; 1979; 1980).

The theme of "Antagonistic Conflict" between nonworkers and workers captures a significant element of social stratification, emphasizing the tensions that arise from different statuses related to employment and productivity. As observed from the coded data, there exists a layered conflict between these two groups. It becomes evident that the conflict is predominantly psychological, with occasional instances of open confrontation or disputes. Many participants mentioned internal struggles and unspoken tensions, pointing towards deep-rooted emotional and psychological turmoil. "There is a conflicting relationship between those who work and those who do not" (RRM01). This direct statement reflects how the antagonistic relationship is well-acknowledged by the participants. However, it is important to note that the nature of this conflict is not always visible on the surface. Rather, it lingers beneath everyday interactions, influenced by the attitudes of both workers and nonworkers towards one another.

"Even if there's no open argument, there's always this inner anger. I'll show you one day when I earn as much as you" (RRF06). This sentiment captures the

essence of the psychological struggle that nonworkers experience. It shows how being unemployed or economically inactive can lead to feelings of inadequacy and resentment, which manifest as antagonism towards workers who are perceived as more successful.

The antagonistic relationship between nonworkers and workers is primarily driven by societal structures that value employment and productivity as measures of worth. Participants frequently noted how nonworkers are often belittled, judged, or seen as lazy by the working class, leading to feelings of resentment and hostility from nonworkers. One respondent pointed out: "Working-class people think of themselves as very good, and they see nonworkers as lazy, often trying to dominate them. This leads towards the conflicting relation between them" (URF04). This perception reflects the socio-cultural attitude that being employed is not just a means of survival but also a status symbol that grants superiority. Nonworkers, being deprived of this status, experience psychological marginalization, which contributes to their antagonism toward workers. Such experiences of exclusion and shame deepen the divide between the two groups. Nonworkers often feel alienated and targeted by their working counterparts, fueling psychological conflicts that sometimes lead to overt disputes.

The conflict between nonworkers and workers can manifest in various ways, ranging from passive psychological tension to direct confrontation. The majority of respondents spoke of psychological conflict, where nonworkers harbor feelings of resentment and frustration toward workers, but these emotions do not always translate into open aggression. One respondent described this internal tension: "It happens. Even if it doesn't show outwardly or involve fights, it can be seen in behavior. Psychologically, it was bound to happen" (RRM06). This underscores the subtle

nature of the conflict, where outward behavior might remain civil, but the underlying emotions are charged with antagonism. The invisible divide creates an unspoken tension, where nonworkers feel pressured by societal expectations and the judgment of workers.

However, there are instances where the conflict escalates into open disputes, especially in familial settings. A participant recounted a conflict between siblings: There is a dispute; my parents had a conflict and I've heard a lot about it. I have a brother who works, and he says, 'You've grown up, yet you're not working. I have to handle the family.' This kind of talk leads to disputes (URF01).

This example highlights how the conflict can spill over into family dynamics, particularly when financial and social pressures intersect. The working sibling's resentment towards the nonworker, based on their perceived lack of contribution, creates friction, resulting in familial discord.

"Even if it doesn't manifest physically, it affects us psychologically" (RRM04). This comment reflects the cumulative emotional toll that the antagonistic relationship with workers takes on nonworkers. Although the conflict may not always result in physical altercations, it is still deeply felt, creating a pervasive sense of tension and frustration.

The antagonistic conflict between nonworkers and workers has broader social implications, particularly in terms of social cohesion and stability. The data suggests that the divide between these two groups can contribute to social fragmentation, as nonworkers feel marginalized and alienated by the working class, while workers may look down on nonworkers with disdain or condescension.

One participant highlighted the potential for social instability: "The unemployed face pressure from all sides. Workers tend to band together, exhibiting a ruling behavior that seeks to dominate. Even if no one speaks about it, there is an internal conflict and psychological conflict" (RRM05). This observation indicates that the antagonism between workers and nonworkers can have ripple effects on society at large. When one group feels dominated or oppressed by another, it can lead to social unrest, a breakdown in interpersonal relationships, and a general sense of disunity. The conflict has significant implications for social cohesion and personal well-being. To address this issue, society needs to adopt a more empathetic and supportive approach towards nonworkers, recognizing their value and contributions beyond mere employment status.

### *Class Consciousness*

This theme was constructed by the categorization of the responses related to the awareness and perception of nonworkers regarding their position within the socio-economic hierarchy. This theme coded the responses related or regarding their class related behaviors and understanding. The shared conditions and experiences that define their group, and their collective interests and potential for collective action were coded within this theme. This theme also includes the responses related to nonworker's awareness of class and its impacts on their attitudes, behaviors, and potential for mobilization in pursuit of improved conditions and greater social and economic equity. (Wright, 2005; Marx & Engels, 1964; Marx, 1867). This theme is analyzed and interpreted under three different sub-themes: Status consciousness, Class in itself and Class for itself.

**Status Consciousness.** This is an intention to understand that what nonworkers perceive exactly about their status. The coded segments under the theme

of "Status Consciousness" consistently point to the pervasive self-identification with unemployment among respondents. Almost every participant explicitly defines their current status as "unemployment," suggesting a shared and entrenched perception of their socioeconomic position. Virtually every respondent describes their status as "unemployment." This reflects a strong, unified consciousness of their economic condition, with little variation in how they define their situation. The frequent repetition of this label emphasizes its significance in their self-perception.

The segments suggest that respondents are acutely aware of the societal stigma surrounding unemployment. Terms like "Jhole" and "Bhatuwa" highlight not only the condition but also a sense of being marginalized or labeled negatively in society. This reflects an awareness of the social consequences of their status beyond mere economic hardship: "That is like Bhatuwa" (RRM04).

There is minimal differentiation in how respondents articulate their status. The overwhelming consensus is that they are all "unemployed," with little elaboration or alternative descriptors. This homogeneity indicates that unemployment defines their status consciousness more than any other factor.

Their "status consciousness" is deeply rooted in an economic reality that feels inescapable, leading to a shared class identity based on unemployment. The consistent labeling of themselves as "unemployed" further indicates the prevalence of external societal pressures that reinforce this identity.

**Class in Itself.** The coded segments under the theme "Class in Itself" reveal insights into the collective consciousness and experiences of nonworkers in the context of social organization and class identity. Analyzing these segments provides a nuanced understanding of whether nonworkers exhibit behavior akin to what Marx

described as "class-in-itself," where individuals share common conditions but lack a unified class identity or organized collective action. There is evidence of class awareness among nonworkers, where they recognize their shared plight and the societal structures that contribute to their exclusion. However, this awareness has not fully matured into class consciousness or an organized movement. Several participants express a desire to raise their voices collectively or believe that collective action could lead to better outcomes. Some mention that if they could unite, they might be able to apply pressure to the government or other stakeholders (RRF03; RRF04). However, this remains a thought rather than a reality.

To form an organization and raise our voices, the first thing that comes to mind is money... It's unlikely that someone would sponsor us" (URM07).

We come up with many concepts... But when it comes to forming an organization, the financial aspect always takes priority and creates an obstacle (RRM07).

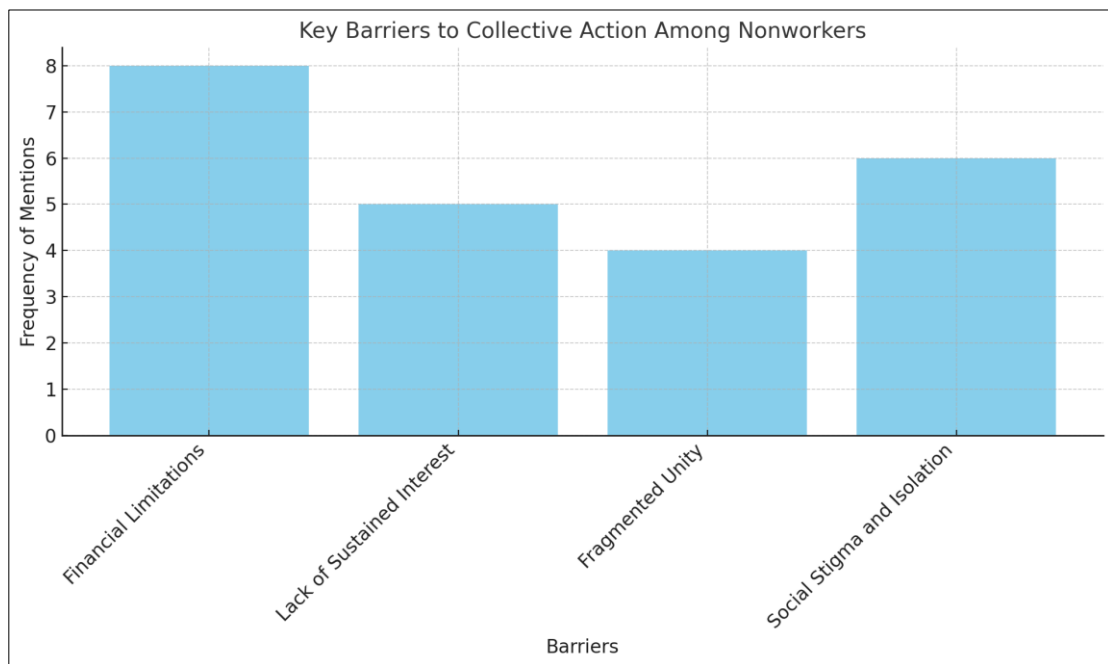
One of the main challenges preventing nonworkers from transitioning from "class-in-itself" to "class-for-itself" is the financial burden associated with organizing. Expenses related to travel, food, and resources discourage individuals from forming sustained organizations, leading to fragmented efforts: "People only seem to unite when they're unemployed. Once they find work, they disappear. That's why I don't think it's feasible" (URM07). The absence of sustained collective action is evident in the temporary nature of group formation. Once individuals find employment, they tend to disengage from collective activities.

While nonworkers do engage in social gatherings, these are largely informal and lack a strategic focus. The discussions center around immediate concerns like politics and job prospects but rarely lead to concrete plans for collective action. This

mirrors the characteristics of a "class-in-itself" where shared experiences are present, but they do not coalesce into organized efforts. Emotional and psychological barriers further prevent collective action. Gatherings often become spaces for venting frustrations rather than organizing for action, reflecting a sense of helplessness and isolation. Additionally, societal stigma against the unemployed creates a psychological hurdle, where nonworkers feel scorned and excluded, reinforcing their marginalization.

While ideas for collective action and organization occasionally emerge, they often lack follow-through. Individuals express desires to unite and raise their voices against injustices but are unable to translate these thoughts into sustained action due to various obstacles, such as financial constraints, social stigma, or lack of coordination: "Sometimes, I think that if we can't find jobs individually, maybe we could form a group and put some pressure on them" (RRF04). "I've also thought that, seeing how the government and the state ignore and neglect us unemployed people, I wish we could organize and raise our voices" (URM04). Despite these barriers, there are glimpses of potential collective consciousness. Some respondents express a desire to organize and believe that collective action could make a difference.

The data reveals that nonworkers in this context exhibit characteristics of what Marx described as "class-in-itself" since they share common conditions, frustrations, and occasional desires to organize.

**Figure 4. 15***Barriers to Collective Action Among Nonworkers*

**Class for Itself.** The coded segments under the theme "Class for itself" shed light on the understanding of the collective identity and actions of nonworkers. This theme delves into how nonworkers perceive their shared class identity and the ways they organize or attempt to mobilize for change. Respondents indicate a strong sense of solidarity with other nonworkers. They often gather in informal groups to discuss their struggles, share information, and seek solutions to their unemployment. This gathering creates a sense of unity and mutual understanding, as seen in comments like: "We generally gather other nonworkers in our circle" and "we meet up and talk about where to look for jobs and how to find them" (URM07). This reflects a growing awareness of their collective position in society as a distinct class.

Despite this solidarity, formal collective action appears limited. While some respondents mention protests or demonstrations, such as those at Maitighar, many are either unaware of the details or hesitant to participate. This hesitation is often

attributed to societal stigma, personal betrayal, or fear of negative consequences. For instance, one respondent notes, "It's difficult to go out (being united) like this because society has such a negative perception" (RRM01). Indicating that social pressures and potential shame act as barriers to formal organization. A significant barrier to sustained collective action is the lack of resources. Respondents repeatedly mention that organizing protests or movements requires financial resources for transportation, food, and lodging resources that are scarce among nonworkers. Additionally, there is a perceived lack of institutional or governmental support, further discouraging formalized protests.

"To organize protests and meetings, we need funds... Without these resources, it's not possible" (URM06). This highlights the practical difficulties faced by nonworkers in organizing effectively. Figure 4.15 is further visualization of barriers.

There is awareness of past protests, such as the EPS protests or movements in Maitighar, indicating that nonworkers are attuned to collective efforts by their peers. However, many respondents express a sense of disillusionment or distance from these events, with some stating they heard about protests but did not participate. This suggests that while there is a growing recognition of shared struggles, the leap from awareness to active participation remains a challenge for many.

Much of the class consciousness among nonworkers manifests in informal networking rather than organized movements. Respondents often describe meeting casually to exchange job leads or discuss their frustrations. These gatherings are more about survival and mutual aid than political or social mobilization, this indicates that while nonworkers have a budding class identity, their focus is still largely on immediate economic concerns rather than larger political action.

However, their attempts at forming a cohesive "class for itself" are hindered by practical barriers such as a lack of resources, societal stigma, and internal disillusionment. While informal gatherings foster a sense of unity, formal collective action remains sporadic and underdeveloped. This indicates that the class consciousness of nonworkers is in a formative stage, where they recognize their shared status but struggle to transform this awareness into sustained collective action. The recurring mentions of protests and gatherings suggest potential for mobilization, but the lack of financial and institutional support, coupled with societal pressures, currently limits their ability to act as a cohesive political force.

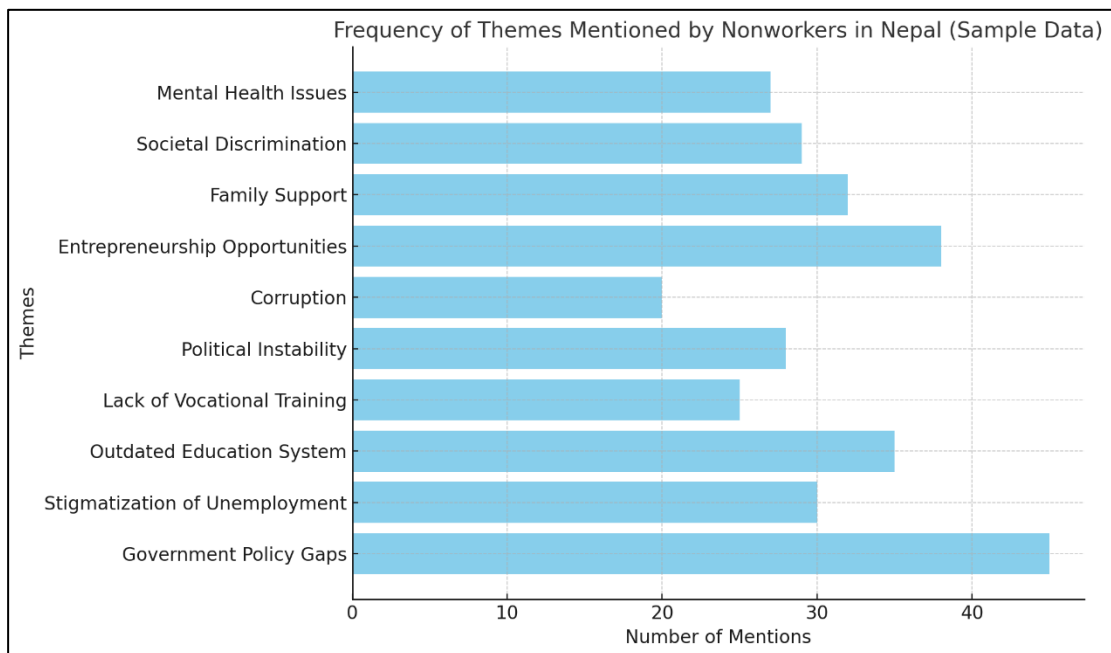
### *Emancipation*

This theme categorized the responses of nonworkers related to the pursuit and achievement of liberation from socio-economic constraints and inequalities. This theme coded the aspirations, strategies, and movements aimed at achieving greater autonomy, rights, and opportunities for nonworkers. Within this theme, the focus is on understanding how nonworkers seek to empower themselves individually and collectively. This theme was defined by various approaches and perspective that views economic inequalities not only as outcomes of specific mechanisms but also as forms of systemic oppression and exploitation (Marx & Engels, 1848/1964, p.116; Wright, 2005, pp.191-192; Goldthorpe, 1987). The analysis of responses reveals a deeply intricate relationship between governmental policy, societal attitudes, education, and personal experiences. These findings offer valuable insights into how nonworkers view their situation and what they believe needs to change for meaningful emancipation from unemployment. Figure 4.16 represent the perceptions of respondents regarding the actions that should take for emancipation. Below is a comprehensive elaboration of these findings.

A dominant narrative across the interviews is the widely perceived inadequacy of the Nepalese government in addressing unemployment. While the government has launched several initiatives aimed at job creation, respondents frequently criticized these efforts as insufficient or poorly implemented.

**Figure 4. 16**

*Measures for the Meaningful Emancipation*



The “Prime Minister's Employment Program (PMEP),” which guarantees 100 days of employment for unemployed individuals, was frequently mentioned. While some interviewees recognized it as a step in the right direction, they felt that it does not go far enough in addressing the long-term needs of nonworkers. RRM07 commented, “The government needs to create not just temporary job solutions, but sustainable employment opportunities that people can rely on for their livelihoods.” The limited duration of such schemes leaves many nonworkers without a stable income after the program ends, and the jobs created are often low-paying and not aligned with the skills or aspirations of the workforce.

URM01 expressed frustration over the government's failure to deliver on promises made during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as providing economic support for those who lost their jobs. Many respondents echoed this sentiment, suggesting that while there are policies on paper, the lack of proper implementation and transparency continues to prevent any real progress in solving unemployment.

Several respondents emphasized the need for the government to focus not just on job creation but also on enhancing the employability of nonworkers through vocational training and skill development. RRM04 proposed, "The government should initiate free skill-development programs that equip people with the necessary abilities to contribute to the nation." Vocational training, they argue, can help nonworkers transition into industries such as agriculture, tourism, or technology, where there is potential for growth but a lack of skilled Labour. The notion of linking training with national service also highlights the respondents' belief in a mutual relationship between individual empowerment and national development.

Corruption and political instability were also frequently cited as obstacles to addressing unemployment. "Nepal needs leaders who will prioritize the needs of the people and not engage in power play" (RRF01). The perception that nepotism and favoritism control access to public sector jobs has left many nonworkers feeling disillusioned with the system. Respondents called for fair competition and transparency in job allocation, particularly in government sectors, where they feel opportunities should be based on merit and not connections.

The issue of political dysfunction is tied to broader societal failures in supporting nonworkers, with several respondents arguing that political stability is a prerequisite for any real progress. RRM02 highlighted the need to eliminate policy

loopholes that perpetuate inequality and called for a revision of the criteria for development, ensuring that nonworkers are a key focus of government initiatives.

Another strong theme that emerged from the interviews was the discrimination and stigma attached to nonworkers in society. Unemployed individuals are often seen as lazy, unmotivated, or less worthy, which adds a significant emotional burden to their economic struggles.

Several respondents emphasized the need for society to shift its perceptions of Labour, suggesting that all forms of work should be valued equally. RRM03 called for families and communities to be more supportive of those pursuing entrepreneurship or informal work, as these opportunities, though less conventional, can offer sustainable livelihoods. They argued that society needs to “stop discriminating against people who are out of work and instead start encouraging them to find their path.” This cultural shift would also involve reframing how success is defined. URF05 (Pos. 73) noted that societal expectations often push people toward high-status jobs that they may not be qualified for or interested in, thereby contributing to unemployment. By broadening the definition of success to include alternative employment paths, such as self-employment or work in the gig economy, respondents believe nonworkers would feel more empowered to explore non-traditional opportunities.

Education was another frequently cited theme, with respondents criticizing the Nepalese education system for failing to adequately prepare people for the job market. Many interviewees suggested that the focus on theoretical knowledge, particularly in urban centers, leaves graduates without the practical skills they need to find employment. RRM04 commented,

I feel that the nonworkers need to be provided with proper skill-development trainings according to their interests and aspirations. It would be really great if they were trained free of charge on a condition of contributing to the nation. I believe that would help uplift their attitude towards the nation.

Respondents highlighted the gap between education and employability, with URM06 pointing out that students graduate with degrees that don't match the market's needs. This misalignment, they argue, results in a large pool of educated yet unemployed individuals. RRF04 raised a related concern, noting that opportunities for skill development are disproportionately available in urban areas, leaving those in rural regions at a disadvantage. The geographic disparity in educational resources exacerbates the inequality faced by nonworkers in different parts of the country.

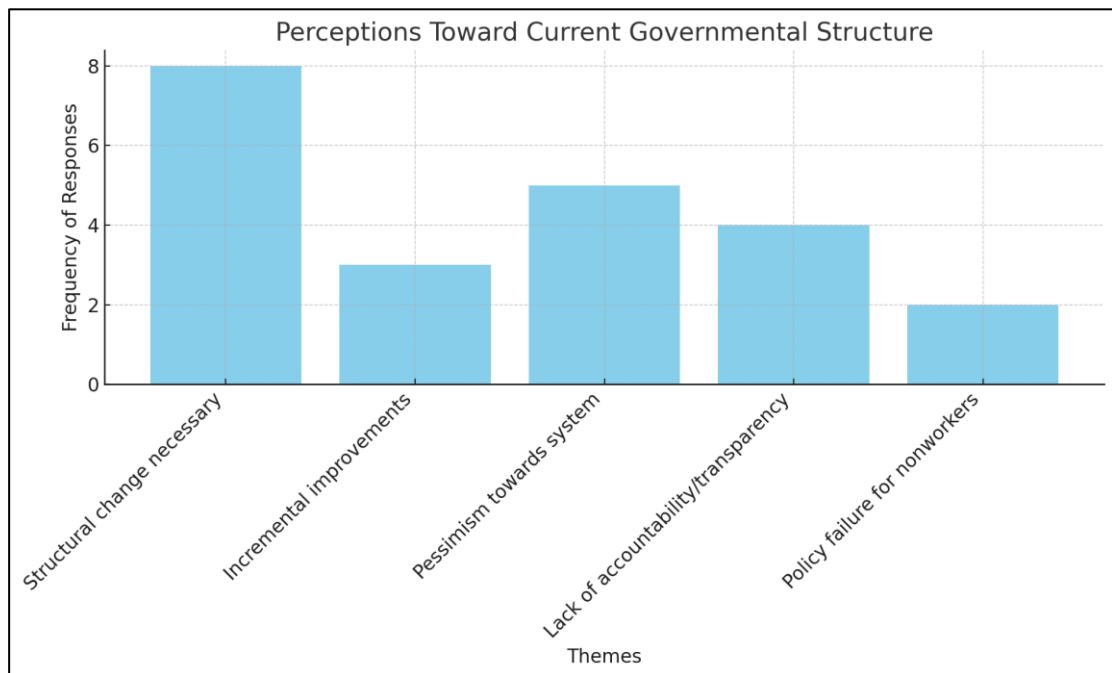
There was widespread agreement among respondents that the government and private sector should focus on offering vocational training and skill-development programs. Several respondents called for the introduction of technical education at earlier stages in the curriculum, believing that students should be given the option to pursue practical skills that align with their interests and market demands. RRF02 suggested, "If we started teaching practical skills from a young age, we wouldn't have so many people struggling to find work after they graduate."

The stigma of unemployment often leads to feelings of inadequacy and depression (URF05). The psychological toll of unemployment can make it even harder for nonworkers to remain motivated and actively seek out job opportunities. For some, the pressure to find work, combined with societal judgment, results in a withdrawal from social activities, further isolating them from potential networks that could offer job leads or emotional support.

Several respondents emphasized that family support is crucial in helping nonworkers regain their confidence and explore alternative employment options (RRM03) They called for a cultural shift where families are more understanding and supportive of nonworkers, particularly those who are actively trying to better themselves through education or entrepreneurship. Additionally, some respondents suggested that families should play a more active role in facilitating job opportunities by leveraging their networks (URM02)

Entrepreneurship emerged as a central theme in the narratives surrounding the emancipation of nonworkers. Respondents saw self-employment as a viable alternative to traditional employment, particularly in a country like Nepal, where formal jobs are scarce. RRM03 and others argued that nonworkers should be encouraged to start their own businesses, as entrepreneurship offers the potential for both economic independence and job creation. However, they also pointed out that starting a business requires initial capital, training, and mentorship, which are often lacking for nonworkers. Several respondents proposed that the government should offer low-interest loans, grants, and free training programs for aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly those from marginalized communities.

**Perception of Nonworkers Towards Existing Structure.** The coded segments under the theme "Perception towards current governmental structure" primarily highlight participants' discontent with the existing system of governance. The responses reveal a broad critique centered on inefficiency, lack of accountability, and an inability to bring meaningful change. The analysis identifies two prevailing perspectives: one advocating for the complete overhaul of the current structure and the other supporting structural reforms rather than a full replacement.

**Figure 4. 17***Perception Towards Existing Political and Governmental Structure*

Several participants explicitly call for a transformation of the governmental structure, as they believe that the current system is inherently flawed. One respondent points out that despite the existing structure being in place for the last two decades, there has been no significant improvement (URM07). This sentiment reflects frustration with the government's inability to deliver tangible results. A recurring criticism is the government's failure to introduce and implement effective policies. The inefficiency in governance is emphasized, particularly in relation to job creation and social policies (RRM01, RRF06). Another respondent discusses how the current system prevents leaders from addressing the needs of people at lower levels of society. There is a desire for a system where leaders have the time and mandate to address grassroots issues, but this remains a "dream" under the current structure.

“...in my opinion, this system is not good/right. There needs to be a system that allows leaders to pay attention to the lower levels. If they are given 8 to 10 years to work, results could emerge. But that is just a dream” (RRM05).

A specific critique revolves around the lack of transparency and accountability within the system. Respondents suggest that addressing these gaps is essential for any meaningful progress (URM02). While many participants advocate for structural change, a notable number favor improving the current system rather than completely replacing it. Some participants argue that changing the mindset and character of those operating within the system is more important than changing the structure itself. They believe that the existing structure can work if approached with the right attitude and effort (URM07). Rather than advocating for an overhaul, several respondents support making improvements to the current structure. They suggest that if reforms are implemented, the system can be made functional and effective (URF05, URF02, URM05). One participant criticizes the gap between policies and their implementation, noting that while quality policies exist on paper, they are not applied in practice. This discrepancy highlights the need for reform in governance, focusing on better execution (RRM02). Though the system is viewed as deeply flawed, some respondents express cautious optimism that incremental improvements can be made. They acknowledge that while achieving these changes may be difficult, improvements are necessary and possible with effort (URF05, URM01).

There is a strong sense of urgency for change, with many respondents feeling that the current government cannot bring about necessary improvements without significant alterations, whether structural or reform-based.

### **Other findings**

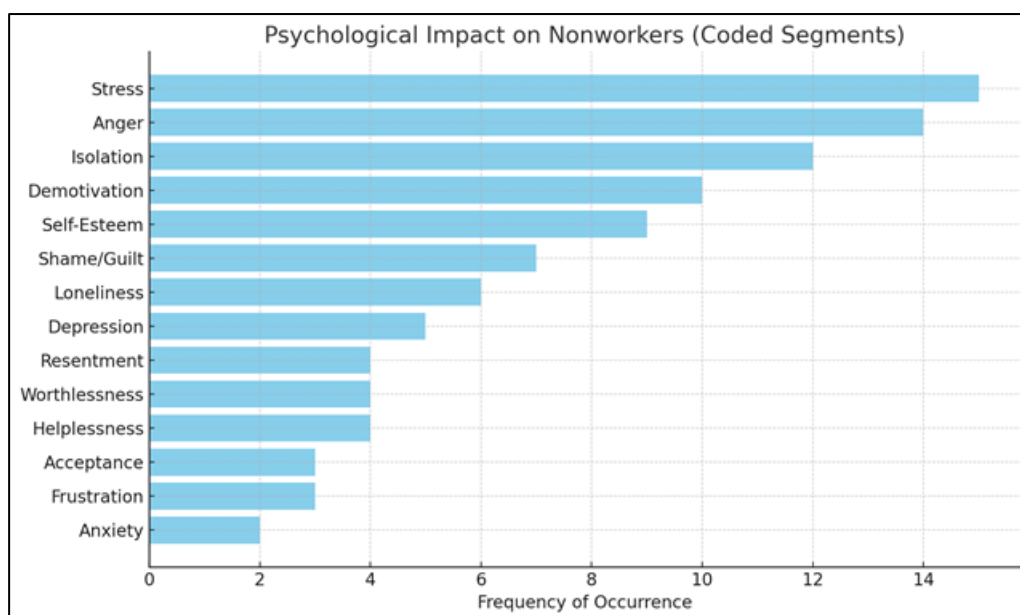
Some other themes were categorized and explained as follows;

### *Impact of Discrimination and Violence*

The feelings of nonworkers towards the perception of family, society and workers are categorized under this theme. Their mental and emotional status were coded. The perception, behavior and saying of other people is reasonable for the emotional and mental status. The psychological impact is also interrelated with the inequalities in life chances, behavior of investors and owners of companies, misuse of status. Figure 4.5 illustrates the inter-relation between the psychological impact and other themes. The coded segments reveal a range of emotional and psychological experiences faced by nonworkers due to societal, familial, and peer behavior. Figure 4.18 is a horizontal bar chart visualizing the psychological impact of nonworkers based on the coded segments. The chart shows the frequency of key emotions and experiences, such as stress, anger, isolation, and demotivation. Stress and anger appear most frequently, highlighting the significant emotional toll experienced by nonworkers.

**Figure 4. 18**

#### *Psychological Impact on Nonworkers*



Many nonworkers express feelings of isolation, both self-imposed and socially induced. The individuals often feel compelled to retreat from social gatherings, choosing to stay at home or away from interactions where their nonworking status might be highlighted or mocked: "I mostly stay at home" (URM07), "I feel like staying at home rather than wandering with friends" (RRM04).

There is also an overarching response of social avoidance and withdrawal from those who are employed. This withdrawal is often linked to the fear of humiliation or judgment from others. The behavior of society, family, and peers leads to feelings of stress, depression, and, in some cases, suicidal thoughts: "Sometimes I get depressed and sometimes I isolate myself" (RRF02), "It causes frustration, depression, and even suicidal thoughts" (URF01).

There is also a recurring theme of anger, both towards the self and others, triggered by societal expectations and negative interactions: "I feel torture when everyone says I am not doing anything" (RRF03), "It raises anger" (RRM03).

Some participants report a lack of emotional outlets to express their anger, compounding feelings of frustration (RRM04). The societal and familial pressure to be productive and employed leads to feelings of worthlessness and diminished self-esteem among many nonworkers. These individuals express a belief that their lack of work diminishes their value in the eyes of others and themselves: "It feels like I am really worthless" (RRF01) and "I feel like I can't do anything, self-esteem decreases" (RRF05). These feelings of inadequacy are often exacerbated by societal comparisons, especially when others are perceived to be more successful: "It makes me angry when I see that someone less qualified than myself is getting a job" (URM03).

A sense of demotivation pervades the experiences of nonworkers. They express a lack of drive to seek employment, overwhelmed by the negative perceptions and judgments they face:(RRF03; URF05). Helplessness is a common category, with individuals feeling powerless to change their situation or combat the negativity they encounter (URF01; URM01). Interactions with society, family, and peers are often demoralizing and critical, further contributing to the negative psychological impact. Nonworkers experience judgment, ridicule, and humiliation, which affects their mental health: "Some people tease, some make jokes" (RRF01) and "There is a lot of irritating gossip" (URF04).

Despite the overwhelming negativity, some participants describe coping mechanisms to deal with these psychological impacts. These include seeking solace in solitude, managing anger, and attempting to retain self-confidence. Religious practices or interactions with friends are mentioned as coping strategies, even if they offer temporary relief: "I go to the temple, I meet other friends" (URM01).

While demotivation is a prominent theme, a few participants acknowledge that societal pressure can serve as a motivator, albeit in a stressful manner. These individuals recognize the potential for personal growth, despite the emotional toll: "It motivates, but it creates pressure in the short term" (URM06).

The theme "Psychological Impact" highlights a complex interplay between isolation, demotivation, emotional distress, and societal pressure among nonworkers. The weight of societal expectations, family dynamics, and peer interactions profoundly affects mental health, leading to feelings of worthlessness, depression, and anger. Despite these challenges, some nonworkers exhibit resilience through self-reflection, religious practices, and a sense of future hope. The negative affects like lower self-esteem, hopelessness and worthlessness tend to increase the risk of suicide

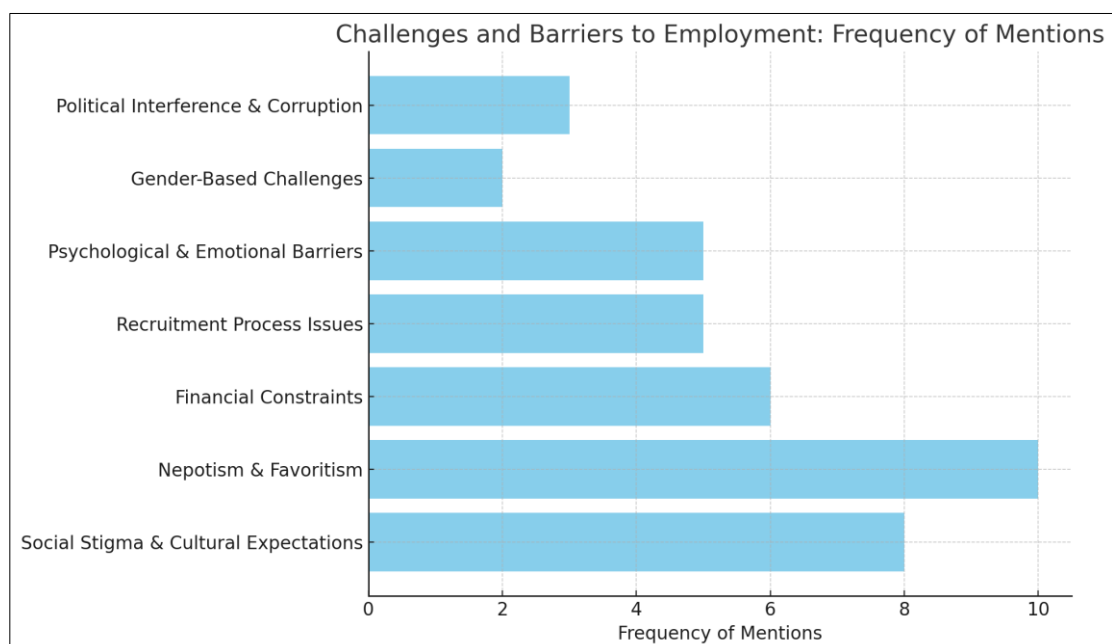
among young adults (Czyz et al., 2014). The discriminations like emotional toll, Abuse and loneliness, are strong risk factors for suicide in youths (Gibb et al., 2001). The risk of suicide is often associated with the economic hardship and socio-cultural factors in Nepal (Jordans et al., 2014). These studies further elaborate the vulnerability of nonworkers from mental health aspect.

### ***Challenges and Barriers to Get Employment***

The responses related with the challenges and barriers that are faced by nonworkers in searching employment were coded and categorized under theme. The coded segments presented here reveal several interconnected challenges that nonworkers face in obtaining employment. These challenges encompass societal, cultural, economic, and systemic factors that collectively create barriers to accessing and sustaining meaningful employment.

**Figure 4. 19**

### ***Challenges and Barriers to Employment***



One of the most significant challenges for nonworkers is the strong influence of societal norms and cultural expectations. Several respondents express how societal values discourage them from pursuing certain types of jobs, particularly manual Labour or service-oriented positions like waiters. For instance, URM07 discusses how their education becomes an obstacle, stating that “society doesn’t allow it” when they try to do manual Labour despite having a Master’s degree. Similarly, RRF03 mentions the stigma around jobs like being a waiter, where people would rather advise them to stay home and help with household chores.

There is also a noticeable influence of caste and family status on the kinds of jobs people are "allowed" to pursue. RRM02 touches upon caste-based discrimination, where certain castes are expected to avoid particular types of work, reflecting broader societal biases that hinder job access. Caste-based job allocations have long been a structural problem in Nepalese society, where certain jobs are deemed inappropriate for certain castes. For example, Brahmins and Chhetris are discouraged from engaging in physical labour such as plowing the fields, pig farm and etc. as described by RRM04.

These societal and cultural expectations are compounded by family pressures, as respondents frequently mention how families prevent them from taking up jobs they find undesirable. RRF05 emphasizes how family reputation becomes a consideration in job decisions, while RRM05 reveals how their family discouraged them from pursuing a self-employment venture (a pig farm), causing them to sell it at a loss. These deeply ingrained values prioritize status and reputation over securing employment, resulting in restricted job opportunities.

A prominent barrier to employment is the prevalence of nepotism and favoritism in the job market. Multiple respondents highlight the critical role of

connections in securing employment. For instance, RRF01 notes that “everything comes down to having the right connections and power.” This theme is reiterated by other respondents like RRF02 and URM01, who express frustration at how recommendations from relatives or acquaintances are often required to get hired. These reflections reveal that in Nepal, connections are valued more than qualifications, creating a hierarchical structure where those without social or political networks are left behind.

Nepotism and favoritism are seen as entrenched in the political and recruitment systems. RRM03 recounts their experience with political interference when they cleared an exam but were replaced by someone who could bribe political party members. The influence of politics is pervasive, with respondents recognizing that the job market is not a meritocratic space. This results in highly qualified individuals being passed over for jobs in favor of those with the right connections or ability to offer financial incentives. Furthermore, URM02 mentions how civil service positions are dominated by personal connections, where freshers face exploitation by seniors.

Another recurring category is the financial barrier to obtaining employment. Respondents express how even the process of applying for jobs becomes costly, particularly for nonworkers from lower-income backgrounds. URM07 mentions the financial strain of repeatedly asking for money from home to fill out forms, which is often an expensive process. This is particularly significant in a context where unemployment is widespread, and families may not have the financial resources to support the ongoing job search efforts of their members.

Financial barriers also extend to self-employment, as respondents discuss the challenges of securing capital or investment to start their own ventures. URM05 and

RRM05 both emphasize the lack of access to seed money as a significant hurdle to becoming self-employed. Without financial backing from either the family or formal institutions like banks, nonworkers are often stuck in a cycle of unemployment.

URM06 adds that "those who want to be self-employed also need investment at the beginning," but such support is rarely forthcoming.

In addition, banks and financial institutions in Nepal are perceived as uncooperative toward nonworkers. Respondents like URM05 highlight how banks refuse loans to the unemployed or those without a steady income, which further compounds the financial difficulties. This lack of financial access prevents nonworkers from creating their own employment opportunities or pursuing entrepreneurship, leaving them dependent on a flawed and inaccessible job market.

Several respondents criticize the job recruitment process in Nepal, describing it as unnecessarily complicated and discouraging. RRF04 points out how the application process is designed to be difficult, which discourages potential job seekers from even trying. The recruitment process is also seen as biased toward those with prior experience, which further disadvantages nonworkers who are new to the job market. URM03 refers to the recruitment policy as a means to "find cheap Labour," and this lack of transparency and fairness in recruitment prevents qualified candidates from securing jobs.

Moreover, fresh graduates face unique challenges as companies prefer experienced workers. URF04 expresses how companies "don't really want to hire fresh graduates" which creates a paradox for young job seekers. They need experience to get a job, but they can't get experience without a job.

The psychological and emotional challenges faced by nonworkers are another important factor affecting their ability to secure employment. Many respondents speak to the emotional toll of being unemployed, including feelings of low self-esteem and social pressure. RRF06 mentions how unemployment undermines self-esteem, making it more difficult to remain motivated and pursue job opportunities. Similarly, URF05 discusses self-doubt, which is exacerbated by societal expectations and the fear of judgment if they succeed or fail.

Additionally, the fear of societal judgment prevents some individuals from taking jobs that are considered socially undesirable. Respondents mention how cultural and ethical barriers shape their decisions. URF03, for instance, explains how their ethics prevent them from taking lower-level jobs that don't match their education, while RRF05 highlights how the fear of societal judgment discourages them from pursuing opportunities.

Gender also plays a significant role in shaping employment opportunities for nonworkers. The coded segments suggest that women face additional hurdles in the job market. URF06 points out that “girls have to go home early” and face comments if they work late at the office, implying that gender norms restrict women’s ability to work in certain environments or for extended hours. This restricts the types of jobs available to women and reinforces traditional gender roles that prioritize domestic responsibilities over professional aspirations.

The issue of political interference and corruption is another systemic barrier to employment. Several respondents, such as RRM03 and URM03, discuss how politics infiltrates the recruitment process. Political connections often take precedence over qualifications and merit, which severely limits the chances for ordinary job seekers who are not politically connected. This not only undermines the credibility of the

recruitment system but also deepens societal inequality by favoring a select few with political power.

Thus, the challenges are deeply rooted in structural, cultural, and societal factors. These include nepotism and favoritism in the job market, financial barriers, social stigma, caste-based discrimination, and political interference. Cultural expectations and societal pressures further limit the kinds of jobs that individuals can pursue, while the recruitment process is designed to favor those with connections and experience.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions**

This study aimed to investigate how the nonworkers have been addressed and perceived by the current political parties (ideologies) and how nonworkers can be stratified in terms of their social, economic and psychological standpoints. The perception of current political ideologies is mapped by the textual analysis and the possibility of social stratification of the nonworkers was examined by the thematic analysis with narrative interpretation. This chapter aims to discuss on the findings. The chapter comprises the discussion on Perception of Nepali Political Ideologies Towards Nonworkers, Stratification of Nonworkers, Recommendations for Future Research, and a Conclusion.

### **Perspectives of Nepali Political Ideologies Towards Nonworkers**

The analysis of both Nepali political party constitutions and manifestos reveals a significant oversight in addressing the needs and concerns of nonworkers. Despite the recognition of unemployment as a key issue, nonworkers remain marginalized in the political discourse, with most parties failing to explicitly identify them or offer targeted solutions. Instead, political ideologies tend to focus on the working class, perpetuating historical biases that limit the social and economic prospects of nonworkers. The findings from IDI with nonworkers also justifies this gap that the offerings and policies formed by the government and political institutions are mostly improper and not accessible to those who are in actual need. This gap in political recognition and address has far-reaching implications, both in terms of perpetuating inequalities and fostering potential class antagonism as theorized by (Marx, 1867; Weber, 2013; Wright, 1980).

In reviewing party constitutions, it becomes evident that nonworkers are largely absent from formal political frameworks. Although parties such as the Nepali Congress, CPN-UML, and Maoist Centre acknowledge unemployment, their emphasis remains on the working class, thereby ignoring the unique challenges faced by nonworkers. Even parties like the Nepal Workers & Peasants Party (NWPP), PSP and CPN (Unified Socialist), which recognize various social strata, fail to include nonworkers, reinforcing their exclusion from the political system. This historical bias results in a lack of structural frameworks for organizing nonworkers, further marginalizing their role in political processes. Such historical discrimination propels the division as discussed and conceptualized by (Wright, 2005; Weber 2023).

Political manifestos reflect a similar trend. While many parties propose initiatives such as self-employment, foreign employment, and skill development to address unemployment, these measures are often generic and fail to account for the specific needs of nonworkers as well as sustainable class mobility. The absence of nonworkers in the socio-economic structure of political discourse means that their unique challenges, such as inequalities in life chances, social stigma, and class antagonism are not adequately addressed. This exclusion diminishes the saliency of nonworkers as an influential social group, limiting their ability to influence policy and advocate for their rights. These are also a prominent symptom of an emerging new social class as theorized by (Wright, 2005).

The lack of recognition for nonworkers within Nepali political ideologies has several important implications. First, the failure to explicitly address nonworkers as a distinct group contributes to their continued vulnerability and exclusion from the mainstream political agenda. Without political acknowledgment or organization, nonworkers are left without a platform to voice their concerns or challenge the socio-

political structures that contribute to their marginalization. This not only perpetuates existing inequalities but also hinders social cohesion by creating potential antagonism between other social classes and nonworkers.

Second, the absence of comprehensive solutions to unemployment further exacerbates the plight of nonworkers. While political parties have proposed measures like skill development and self-employment, these initiatives often lack the sustainability and depth needed to address the root causes of unemployment. Foreign employment, often proposed as a solution, risks exacerbating domestic market issues and fails to provide long-term economic stability. The findings from IDI reveals that the Corruption, Favouritism, Nepotism and failure of transparent implication of policies often created the frustration, anger and negativism towards the existing governmental structure. To minimize this more holistic approach, addressing both structural factors and individual needs, is essential to achieving meaningful progress in the emancipation of nonworking status.

The lack of attention to nonworkers in the context of class consciousness underscores the limitations of current political frameworks in understanding evolving social stratification in Nepal. The findings from the IDI reveals that Nonworker's class-in itself characteristics and class-for itself characteristics are similar as theorized by (Marx & Engels, 1848; Marx, 1867). The class consciousness level and antagonistic conflict is often limited to the individual level due to some barriers like lack of economic sponsorship. By focusing solely on the traditional working class, political parties are fulling the emergence of new social class: Nonworking Class.

The findings from this study indicate a notable reluctance among Nepali political parties to embrace or acknowledge the emergence of a new social class: Nonworking Class. This resistance can be attributed to Nepal's prevailing mode of

production, which is predominantly market-oriented and leaning towards capitalism. This economic system, influenced by investors and capitalists, has shaped government policies and the superstructures of the country. As Marx (1867) theorized, capitalism tends to create a reserve army of unemployment to maintain a power balance in the market, favouring owners and capitalists. Consequently, government policies, influenced by capitalist interests, may not prioritize the complete elimination of unemployment.

Keynes's (2021) concept of sticky wages originally published in 1936 in his influential book (*The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*) provides valuable insights into the nature of wage on economic ups and downs. While wages may rise during periods of high demand and low labour supply, they often remain sticky (nominal rigidity), resisting downward adjustments when demand decreases and supply increases. However, Keynes's analysis falls short of adequately addressing the phenomenon of employee layoffs during economic downturns, when investors seek to reduce costs and maximize profits. This practice contributes to the pool of unemployment, ultimately benefiting capitalists. The government intervention suggested by Keynes would be meaningless since it was already influenced by the capitalists/investors. This theoretical phenomenon is relatable in the current context of the Nepali labour market and economy. The study's findings from IDI also revealed the investors' and capitalists' influence on government policies and the labour market system has a detrimental impact on nonworkers. This influence perpetuates a system that prioritizes the interests of capitalists or investors rather than the marginalised nonworkers.

## **The Stratification of Nonworkers**

The study identifies several themes which define the term 'Nonworker'.

Primary requisites include the absence of current employment, active willingness and effort to work, active job-seeking, and meeting age-specific criteria, where individuals must be at least 18 years old. These criteria align closely with established definitions by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2018). In addition to these primary conditions, secondary factors contribute to the definition. These include the individual's skill level and qualifications, the temporary or extended nature of their nonworking status, whether their nonworking status is voluntary or involuntary, and their economic or basic needs status. Unlike the primary criteria, these secondary conditions were not universally considered in previous definitions but are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of nonworker categorization.

Nonworkers describe themselves as experiencing distinct psychological conditions, lifestyles, and living standards that set them apart from working class and other peoples of society. For instance, participants like RRF03 and RRM01 noted differences in thinking patterns and spending habits. Many respondents emphasized being treated as a separate category by both society and the government.

Governmental initiatives such as the Prime Minister Employment Program (PMEP) frequently target nonworkers, underscoring their unique status within the social hierarchy. Nonworkers exhibit salient features due to inequalities in access to opportunities, economic dependency, psychological and economic marginalization, perceived inferiority, and social stigma. Wright (2005, pp. 189-190) discusses similar subjective saliency features that define class membership. Marx & Engels (1964) also examined distinctive features of the working class within the socio-economic

structure of the 18th century. Similar class attributes have been identified among nonworkers in this study.

This study reveals that discrimination against nonworkers in Nepal has deep historical roots, with origins in wealth, caste, and employment status. Though the forms of this discrimination have evolved over time, it continues to manifest in various ways. Evidence from respondents highlights a long-standing history of marginalization, deeply embedded in economic and social disparities. While overt discrimination may have decreased, nonworkers remain significantly marginalized due to a combination of socioeconomic factors, psychosocial factors, nepotism, favouritism and changing societal values around employment. This persistence underscores the entrenched nature of discrimination, shaping the lives of nonworkers across time. Similarly, Wright (2005, pp. 189-190) discussed how historical variations brought about by feudal and capitalist systems have been critical in shaping distinct social classes. Marx and Engels (1848), and later Engels theorized the rise of a new working class through the exploitation inherent in the capitalist mode of production, particularly through the extraction of surplus value. In the current socioeconomic structure of Nepal, which is capitalist in nature, the exploitation of labour is not limited to workers alone; it has also resulted in the creation of a cluster of nonworkers. This cluster serves as a reserve labour force, ensuring a cheap supply of workers to maximize profits for capitalists, a phenomenon Marx (1867) theorized. The historical trends of exploitation and oppression within the socioeconomic system is contributing to the formation of a distinct class of nonworkers in Nepalese society.

A significant number of respondents reported that they are unable to meet their basic needs, such as food and clothing, without employment. Respondents URF03 and URM06 specifically stated that without work, it is "impossible to manage basic

needs," a sentiment reported by many others. All respondents indicated a dependence on family, friends, and borrowing to sustain their lives, particularly for basic necessities. They also reported having limited access to resources. The shared material status and lifestyle of nonworkers is a crucial determinant of their classification as a distinct socioeconomic class, as also discussed by Wright (2005). Weber (2013) and Bourdieu (1984) theorized class structures based on material conditions, defining 'Upper,' 'Middle,' and 'Lower' classes. The similar material living standards of Nepalese nonworkers support their identification as a different (lowest class) class within the existing socioeconomic structure.

The findings from the study suggested that nonworkers experience persistent inequalities in opportunities (Life Chances), rooted in structural barriers that limit their access to employment, self-employment, and social mobility. Many respondents reported feelings of frustration and disillusionment, believing that their opportunities for wellbeing are unfairly restricted by systemic or structural factors such as political favouritism, Nepotism, economic privilege, and social connections. This sense of exclusion is similar to Wright (2005) analysis of how systemic inequalities in life chances contribute to the formation of distinct social classes. The respondents' narratives reflect broader concerns about the role of state institutions and government policies, which, while ostensibly designed to promote equality, are often viewed as serving the interests of the powerful ones. Nonworkers, lacking political connections, feel particularly disadvantaged and disenfranchised, supporting a sense of exclusion from decision-making processes and opportunities for upward mobility. These dynamics are connected with the class structures theorized by Weber (2013) and Bourdieu (1984), where material conditions and social capital determine one's position within the socioeconomic hierarchy.

It's essential to remember that the labour market itself contributes significantly to perpetuating inequalities, in addition to institutional failures. Respondents often mentioned facing discriminatory, complex, and unfair hiring practices, exploitative working conditions, and barriers to entry. Employers and investors, focused on maximizing profits, frequently overlook fair hiring and wage practices, further marginalizing nonworkers and deepening inequality. These findings are consistent with Marx's (1867) analysis of the capitalist system's tendency to extract surplus value from labour and maintain a reserve labour force, such as nonworkers (unemployed), to sustain class hierarchy and profitability. The cumulative effect of these systemic and institutional behaviors has created a deeply stratified society, relegating nonworkers to the margins. The persistence of these issues not only impedes social mobility but also erodes trust in political and social institutions.

The findings from IDI also indicated that nonworkers face significant emotional and social challenges within their families. They often encounter criticism, pressure, and a diminished status, which fosters feelings of isolation, demotivation, and inadequacy. The family members often frustrated by the perceived lack of economic contribution from a nonworker, tend to compare nonworker unfavourably to employed relatives. While there may be occasional sympathy, nonworkers are generally left unsupported, which creates a cycle of emotional distress and conflict in their relationships with family members. This phenomenon reflects the critical role of family that plays in shaping the emotional well-being of nonworkers. Societal perceptions further exacerbate the difficulties faced by nonworkers, with strong traditional perception linking personal worth to employment, particularly in government jobs. Nonworkers are often marginalized, gossiped about, and discriminated against, deepening their sense of alienation. In addition, the working-

class views nonworkers through a lens of insecurity and resentment, fearing job competition and reinforcing a social divide marked by superiority. Together, these factors contribute to the social and psychological marginalization of nonworkers, intensifying their struggles to find opportunity.

The data clearly illustrates the systemic and structural discrimination faced by nonworkers, revealing deep-rooted societal, familial, and governmental biases that consistently favour the other societal classes while differentiating the nonworkers. State policies play a central role in perpetuating this disparity, as nonworkers are systematically excluded from social safety nets like allowances, healthcare, and social security benefits that are typically reserved for employed and other individuals like widows, retirees, and etc. This exclusionary policy framework reflects broader structural inequalities that neglect even the basic needs of the nonworker. The lack of supportive government programs, and fair implementation especially in areas like job creation and entrepreneurship, leaves nonworkers in a disadvantaged position with little opportunity to improve their situation. At the local level, corruption and favouritism only exacerbate this problem, diverting resources and opportunities away from nonworkers and toward those with political or financial influence, further intensifying economic divides.

Such discriminating patterns do not stop with state policy and extend to all sections of society, as evidenced by nonworkers' exclusion from community decision-making processes and local projects. Social structures reinforce the notion that worth and competence are tied to employment status and designation. Nonworkers are marginalized in community activities, and even social networks, where their voices are often disregarded. This exclusion fosters a pervasive sense of inferiority among nonworkers, promoting the belief that their lack of employment renders them less

valuable members of society. The economic divide between employed and unemployed individuals plays a critical role here, with those who have jobs often seen as more deserving of respect, resources, and opportunities, while nonworkers are treated as "useless" and dependent.

Familial discrimination adds a deeply personal layer to this issue. The research highlights that families, which are traditionally viewed as sources of unconditional support, can become environments of exclusion and criticism for nonworkers. Within families, nonworkers often face verbal taunts, unequal distribution of resources, and diminished respect and care. This dynamic reflects broader societal norms that equate productivity with value, creating a hierarchical structure within the family based on employment status. The psychological toll of such discrimination is profound, as nonworkers experience feelings of inadequacy, alienation, and emotional distress. This issue is not limited to economically struggling families; even in wealthier households, nonworkers are denied financial autonomy and support, illustrating that this form of discrimination transcends financial necessity and is rooted in cultural values.

Discrimination from the working class further reinforces the marginalization of nonworkers. The research reveals entrenched social hierarchies where the employed view nonworkers as inferior, leading to exclusion from social, economic, and political opportunities. Working-class individuals, along with elites, perpetuate this hierarchy through both overt actions, such as taunting and social isolation, and more subtle forms of exclusion, such as withholding information or opportunities. The lack of access to financial resources, healthcare, and social participation traps nonworkers in a cycle of poverty and exclusion, compounding the challenges they face.

The responses reveal the violence and harassment experienced by nonworkers, particularly during searching the job. Harassment by individuals in positions of power, coupled with verbal abuse and discriminatory treatment, creates a hostile environment for job seekers and reinforces feelings of inadequacy and exclusion. The vulnerability of individuals without jobs makes them susceptible to a range of abuses, from sexual coercion to verbal harassment. The fear of losing employment often prevents victims from reporting or resisting such behaviour.

A profound psychological and emotional toll on nonworkers, driven by societal, familial, and peer discrimination was highlighted. The responses illustrate a range of emotional responses, with stress, anger, and isolation being prominent themes. These negative emotions are exacerbated by the pervasive social stigma associated with unemployment, leading to feelings of worthlessness, diminished self-esteem, and mental health challenges. While some nonworkers find temporary relief through coping strategies, the long-term psychological impact of discrimination remains significant. The constant pressure to conform to societal expectations of productivity and the constant judgment and criticism from others create a vicious cycle of demotivation and emotional distress. These psychological behaviours are associated with the development of antagonistic thoughts.

The theme of "Antagonistic Conflict" reveals a divide between nonworkers and workers. It is driven by psychological and societal structures that equate employment with personal worth. This conflict manifests primarily as a psychological struggle, with nonworkers experiencing deep-seated emotional turmoil and frustration in response to the dominance and judgment of the working class and society. Societal perceptions and internalized beliefs about the value of employment and designation fuel the conflict. Nonworkers often feel marginalized and alienated by the working

class, leading to feelings of resentment, inadequacy, and a sense of inferiority. The attitudes of workers, who frequently view nonworkers as lazy or unproductive, further exacerbate this emotional divide. Mainly, this conflict often remains psychological. However, it can occasionally manifest in direct confrontations, especially within familial settings. The societal value placed on employment and designation can disrupt family dynamics, leading to tension and disputes between workers and nonworkers. The impact of emotional toll is significant which affects the psychological well-being of nonworkers. The constant sense of frustration, anger, and alienation can have long-lasting consequences for their mental health. Moreover, the broader social implications of this antagonistic conflict cannot be ignored. The divide between workers and nonworkers threatens social cohesion and can contribute to social fragmentation. Similar class antagonism has been debated and elaborated by (Marx & Engels, 1848, p.57) arguing that societies have been marked by the exploitation of one class by another. Max Weber recognized that property owners seek to maximize profits, while workers fight for better wages and working conditions, and this competition for resources and life chances can lead to conflict (Weber, 1946; 2013). The antagonistic relationship is discussed as a key requisite to define or recognize any group as a class by Wright (2005). The findings of this study indicated a very primitive stage of antagonism between the nonworkers and other classes of society that is limited in psychological antagonism till now. This psychologically conflicting relationship can be changed into class struggle when class consciousness arises among the oppressed parties (Aydin, 2018; Weber, 1946).

The theme of 'status consciousness' reflects the acute awareness nonworkers have regarding their social identity as "unemployed". This self-labelling indicates a deep internalization of societal pressures and the stigma attached to unemployment.

The frequent use of terms like "Jhole" and "Bhatuwa" reflects not only their status but also the negative labels imposed by society, illustrating a broader understanding of the marginalization they face. This shows that nonworkers are conscious of the social consequences of their status beyond mere economic deprivation, recognizing the social and psychological impacts of being unemployed.

The analysis also aligns with Marx's concept of a "class-in-itself," where individuals share similar conditions but lack a unified collective identity or action. Nonworkers in this study exhibit characteristics of the state, as they share common frustrations and challenges but have yet to fully organize as a cohesive group. The data reveals a growing awareness of their shared plight, with many participants recognizing that societal structures perpetuate their exclusion. This awareness, however, remains in its early stages, as nonworkers have not yet formed a unified movement or class consciousness. There are signs of potential mobilization, with some participants expressing a desire for collective action and acknowledging that organizing could help apply pressure on the government or other stakeholders. This recognition reflects an emerging "class-for-itself" identity, where nonworkers begin to see themselves as a collective entity capable of advocating for change. As they became more aware of their common exploitation and shared interest, they develop a class consciousness recognizing the antagonistic relationship between the oppressor and oppressed (Bourdieu, 1986; 1987; Burris, 1983; Dahrendorf, 1959). However, practical barriers such as a lack of resources, societal stigma, and internal disillusionment hinder their ability to fully transition into an organized class. While informal gatherings provide a platform for nonworkers to share experiences and foster a sense of solidarity, these efforts remain sporadic and underdeveloped. The findings suggests that while nonworkers are aware of their shared status and the potential for

collective action, their attempts to form a cohesive movement are constrained by external pressures and internal limitations. Recurring mentions of protests and informal gatherings indicate the potential for future mobilization, but the lack of financial and institutional support, along with societal stigma, continues to limit their capacity to act as a unified political force.

The challenges faced by nonworkers are deeply embedded in structural, cultural, and societal factors, creating multiple layers of exclusion. Nepotism and favouritism in the job market emerge as significant barriers, where employment opportunities are often reserved for those with connections or familial ties. This undermines meritocracy and leaves nonworkers, particularly those without influential networks, at a clear disadvantage. The recruitment process, by favouring individuals with prior experience or connections, perpetuates a cycle where the most vulnerable remain excluded from economic participation and access to life chances.

Financial barriers further compound these challenges, particularly for those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. For them, Access to education, skill development, and job training is often limited, exacerbating the difficulties nonworkers from such backgrounds face in securing employment. Without the financial means to improve their qualifications or engage in entrepreneurial ventures, many are trapped in a cycle of poverty and unemployment, unable to compete in an increasingly competitive job market. Social stigma also played a significant role in perpetuating the marginalization of nonworkers. The responses indicated that being unemployed is not just an economic hardship, but also a socially devalued status. Caste-based discrimination further exacerbates these inequalities, where individuals from marginalized castes face additional obstacles in the labour market as discussed by (Andras 1979; Gellner, 2007; Levine, 1987). These cultural and societal prejudices

shape the opportunities available to nonworkers, limiting their upward mobility and reinforcing their marginalized status. Political interference adds another layer of complexity, where the allocation of jobs or development resources is often influenced by political patronage. Nonworkers without political connections are frequently excluded from opportunities, leaving them disillusioned with the system and further deepening their sense of alienation. Cultural expectations and societal pressures also play a restrictive role, particularly in determining the types of jobs that individuals are expected to pursue. Gender roles, family expectations, and societal norms often dictate the kinds of employment deemed acceptable, further narrowing the opportunities for many nonworkers. This pressure not only limits their career options but also reinforces societal biases about what constitutes "respectable" work.

A complex interplay of governmental policy, societal attitudes, education, and personal experiences that are responsible for the hardships faced by nonworkers was revealed. These findings provide insights into their perceptions of their situation and the necessary changes for meaningful emancipation from nonworking status. The possibility of liberation/emancipation from the current status was discussed as a meaningful factor comprised under the class identity of any group (Durkheim, 1997; Marx & Engels, 1848; Wright, 2005). The government's inadequacy in addressing unemployment, the need for enhanced employability through vocational training, corruption, political instability, societal stigma, educational shortcomings, and the psychological impact of unemployment are all significant factors contributing to the hardships. Entrepreneurship is seen as a viable alternative but requires greater government support and willingness. Addressing these multifaceted challenges necessitates a comprehensive approach that involves government reforms, societal shifts, and individual empowerment.

The analysis of the theme "Perception towards Current Governmental Structure" reveals widespread dissatisfaction among participants with the existing system of governance. A dominant critique centres on inefficiency, lack of accountability, and the government's inability to effect meaningful change. Two primary perspectives emerge from the data: one advocating for a complete overhaul of the governmental structure and another calling for structural reforms without a full replacement. Many respondents express a belief that the current system is inherently flawed, with several explicitly calling for transformative changes. Respondents argue that the government, as it stands, is incapable of delivering the necessary improvements without significant restructuring or reform. This reflects a strong sense of urgency among participants for more effective governance, emphasizing that meaningful progress is unlikely under the existing framework without substantial changes.

### **Implication of the Study**

This study has following implications for future research as follows:

1. Qualitative research on "Classification of Nonworkers" could be designed with grounded theory approach and as well as critical theory approach by adding KII.
2. Quantitative research on "Differences between Nonworking class and working class" with a survey design could be applied to identify the differences between the working-class people and non-working-class people.
3. A mix method approach is also applicable for further in-depth investigation on this domain.

## **Conclusion**

This qualitative study, employing thematic analysis of 26 in-depth interviews with a narrative interpretation, delves into the perspectives of Nepali political ideologies towards nonworkers and the self-perception of nonworkers regarding their position within the existing socio-economic structure. The study aims to understand how nonworkers are classified in terms of their social, psychological, and economic characteristics.

The textual analysis of perspectives of major political parties in Nepal reveals a substantial gap in recognizing and addressing the issues faced by nonworkers. Most parties seem to be demonstrating and continuing a historical bias toward nonworkers, which perpetuates inequalities in life chances and potentially exacerbates class antagonism. The offerings and policies of parties seemed to be influenced by the current mode of production of the country (leaned towards capitalism) by investors/employers who sustained the cycle of inequality, maintaining their position at the top of the hierarchy and ultimately benefitted the investors. The study highlights the urgent need for political parties to re-evaluate their policies, constitutions, and manifestos, ensuring they are inclusive of nonworkers' challenges rather than promoting the interests of investors/capitalists. The narratives emphasize the necessity for comprehensive policy reforms that prioritize sustainable employment solutions rather than temporary measures and limited offerings. Enhancing vocational training and skill development programs is crucial to improving the employability of nonworkers and ensuring they have access to meaningful job opportunities. Ensuring political stability and reducing corruption within job allocation processes is imperative for fostering a fair and transparent employment landscape.

Findings from the analysis reveal that nonworkers in Nepal have established themselves as a distinct social group with unique psychological, social, and economic characteristics. Their self-perception aligns with the socio-political perspectives and socio-cultural phenomena shaped by the country's political economy throughout history. A clear consensus emerged among nonworkers regarding their status, defining a "nonworker" as an individual of at least 18 years old who possesses the physical, mental, and emotional capacity as well as willingness and availability to work, actively seeks employment, but remains unable to find work despite persistent efforts.

The findings of this study illuminate the pervasive inequalities and systemic oppression faced by nonworkers in their pursuit of opportunities, economic stability, psychological well-being, and social recognition. Notably, the research identifies significant distinctions between workers and nonworkers regarding access to essential resources, societal perceptions, familial relationships, views of the working class, psychological status, living conditions, and political perspectives. These distinctions profoundly influence the economic status and social standing of nonworkers, who often experience exclusion from familial support, societal engagement, governmental programs, financial assistance, and employment opportunities. Such exclusion contributes to a cycle of dependency and marginalization, as respondents consistently highlight their reliance on borrowing from friends and accruing loans to meet basic needs.

The historical context surrounding nonworkers reveals deep-rooted discrimination that has evolved yet persisted in different forms over time. This marginalization is historically anchored in traditional caste hierarchies, wealth disparities, and employment status, all of which have shaped societal perceptions and

treatment towards nonworkers. Individuals without land or financial resources have long been subjected to exploitation and exclusion from decision-making processes. Furthermore, the transition from an agrarian economy to a cash-based one has exacerbated the marginalization of nonworkers in Nepal, as employment increasingly symbolizes social status. While overt forms of discrimination may have diminished with advancements in education and societal progress, this study uncovers other subtle forms of exclusion that continue to perpetuate inequalities. The economic struggles faced by nonworkers are starkly contrasted with the stability enjoyed by their employed counterparts. Respondents indicate that many nonworkers cut back on essentials such as food and clothing, illustrating the profound economic divide that exists within Nepali society. This disparity is further accentuated by the fact that workers have access to benefits like pensions, allowances and insurance, which significantly contribute to their overall financial security.

The psychological ramifications of economic marginalization are profound. Nonworkers frequently experience lower self-esteem, social isolation, and mental health struggles, while their employed counterparts exhibit somehow higher confidence and self-assurance. The pervasive sense of judgment that nonworkers feel from society and family contributes to demotivation and depression, as they compare themselves unfavourably to their employed peers. The narratives of respondents reflect a cycle of inferiority, where societal judgments about employment status and designation led to internalized feelings of worthlessness. The social dynamics surrounding nonworkers reveal a stark contrast in respect and recognition compared to their employed peers. Employment serves as a key indicator of social value and respect, where nonworkers often face exclusion from community activities and leadership roles. This exclusion reinforces the social and psychological challenges

they encounter, as nonworkers are frequently perceived as less capable of contributing to societal development. The influence of nepotism and political favouritism in the job market emerged as a recurring theme while discussing about challenges and barriers to get employment. Respondents expressed frustration over the monopolization of job opportunities by individuals with powerful connections, further entrenching the systemic inequalities faced by nonworkers.

The stigmatization of unemployment as a measure of personal worth in society leads to an environment where nonworkers are treated as burdens rather than individuals deserving respect and dignity. This societal bias further exacerbates the challenges faced by nonworkers, as they encounter discrimination and exclusion in both public and private spheres. Nonworkers face systemic exclusion in their communities, where their voices are often silenced and their contributions overlooked. This marginalization reinforces feelings of worthlessness and undermines their ability to participate fully in societal development. The experiences of violence and exploitation faced by nonworkers underscore the pervasive biases against and misuse of those without jobs. The dynamics of oppression from both societal attitudes and familial perceptions highlight the complex social hierarchies that perpetuate feelings of superiority and ruling behaviour among employed individuals. The interplay between societal attitudes, familial dynamics, and economic disparities creates a clear division between workers and nonworkers within the existing socioeconomic structure.

The responses regarding class consciousness among nonworkers reveals a growing awareness of their shared struggles and a desire for solidarity, but this awareness is often hindered by financial constraints and societal stigma, limiting their ability to mobilize for change. The respondents' narratives illustrate a collective

identity marked by unemployment, which fosters a sense of unity among nonworkers but also highlights the challenges they face in organizing for collective action. The analysis of the themes: historical variation, inequalities in life chances, subjectively salient group, antagonistic conflict, current living status, experience of oppression, class consciousness and emancipation reveals that the nonworkers of Nepal possess clear class characteristics which are also theoretically justifiable to define an emerging class within the existing socioeconomic structure.

The findings regarding perception towards current governmental structure underscore participants' widespread dissatisfaction with the existing system, marked by inefficiency, lack of accountability, and failure to bring meaningful change. While some advocate for a complete overhaul of the government, others call for targeted reforms within the current framework to address these deficiencies. Both perspectives agree on the urgent need for transformation, particularly in relation to policy implementation, job creation, and social policies. Although there is some cautious optimism about the potential for incremental improvements, participants overwhelmingly emphasize that without significant structural or reform-based changes, the government is unlikely to deliver the necessary progress

## References

- Allen, S., & Smith, C. (2020). Race and ethnicity in class formation: A comparison of Asian and West Indian workers. In F. Parkin (Ed.), *The social analysis of class structure* (pp. 39–54). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/0422744700>
- Andras, H. (1979). *The caste hierarchy and the state of Nepal: A study of the Muluki Ain of 1854*. Universitätsverlag Wagner.
- Anheier, H. K., Gerhards, J., & Romo, F. P. (1995). Forms of capital and social structure in cultural fields: Examining Bourdieu's social topography. *American Journal of Sociology*, 100(4), 859–903. <https://doi.org/10.1086/230603>
- Aristotle (1985). *Politics* (trans. C. Lord). University of Chicago Press.
- Atkinson, A.B. (2014). *Inequality: What Can Be Done?* Harvard University Press: Cambridge, USA.
- Aydin, K. (2018). Max Weber's theory of inequality and social stratification. *Journal of Economy Culture and Society*, 57, 245–267. <https://doi.org/10.26650/JECS414077>
- Bierstedt, R., & Giddens, A. (1972). Capitalism and modern social theory: An analysis of the writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber. *Contemporary Sociology*, 1(6), 507. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2062498>
- Blankfeld, K. (30 September 2009) Countries billionaires could buy. *Forbes*.
- Blinder, A.S. (1988) The challenge of high unemployment. *American Economic Review*, 78, 1–15. [www.jstor.org/stable/1818089](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1818089).

- Bourdieu, P. & Passeron, J.C. (1990). *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. SAGE Publications.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, USA.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1987) What makes a social class? On the theoretical and practical existence of groups. *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 32, 1–17.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The Logic of Practice* (trans. R. Nice). Stanford University Press: Palo Alto, USA.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.  
<https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In H. Cooper, P. M. Camic, D. L. Long, A. T. Panter, D. Rindskopf, & K. J. Sher (Eds.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol. 2. Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological* (pp. 57–71). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/13620-004>
- Breen, R. (2005). Foundations of a neo-Weberian class analysis. In E. O. Wright (Ed.), *Approaches to class analysis* (pp. 31–51). Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511115639>
- Burris, V. (1983). Book review: *Marxism and class theory*. *Insurgent Sociologist*, 11(4), 117–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089692058301100414>

- Calhoun, C., Gerteis, J., Moody, J., Pfaff, S., Schmidt, K. & Virk, I., editors (2007). *Classical Sociological Theory*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Chan, T. W., & Goldthorpe, J. H. (2007). Class and status: The conceptual distinction and its empirical relevance. *American Sociological Review*, 72(4), 512–532.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240707200402>
- Chancel, L., Piketty, T., Saez, E., Zucman, G., (2022). *World inequality report 2022*. World Inequality Lab.
- Chancel, L., Piketty, T., Zucman, G., et al. (2023). World inequality report 2022. *Population and Development Review*, 49, 209–210.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12547>
- Charmaz, K.C. (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. SAGE Publications.
- Cicero, M. T. (1913). *De officiis* (On duties) (W. Miller, Trans.). Harvard University Press.
- Clark, A. E., Georgellis, Y., & Sanfey, P. (2001). Scarring: The psychological impact of past unemployment. *Economica*, 68(270), 221-241.
- Clark, K. B., & Summers, L. H. (1978). *The dynamics of youth unemployment* (NBER Working Paper No. 274). National Bureau of Economic Research.  
[https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w0274/w0274.pdf](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w0274/w0274.pdf)
- Clark, K. B., & Summers, L. H. (1982). The dynamics of youth unemployment. In R. B. Freeman & D. A. Wise (Eds.), *The youth labor market problem: Its nature, causes, and consequences* (pp. 199–234). University of Chicago Press.  
<http://www.nber.org/books/free82-1> <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c7875>

- Coser, L. A., & Giddens, A. (1974). The class structure of the advanced societies. *Contemporary Sociology*, 3, 496. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2063553>
- CPN (Maoist Centre) (2021). The constitution of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre)
- CPN (Maoist Centre) (2022). प्रतिबद्धता पत्र, प्रती निधी सभा तथा प्रदेश सभा निर्वाचन-२०७९
- CPN (UML) (2022). The Manifesto of Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist Leninist). *सुशासन, विकास, समृद्धी र समानता । पाँच बर्ष: एमालेले गर्छ ।*
- CPN(UML) (2021). Constitution of Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist Leninist).
- Creswell, J.W. & Creswell, J.D. (2022). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 6th edn. SAGE Publications.
- Crompton, R. (2006). Class and family. *Sociological Review*, 54, 658–677. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2006.00665.x>
- Czyz, E. K., Berona, J., & King, C. A. (2015). A prospective examination of the interpersonal-psychological theory of suicidal behavior among psychiatric adolescent inpatients. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 45, 243–259. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12125>
- Dahal, D. (2003) (Chapter III Social composition of the population: Caste/ethnicity and religion in Nepal. In: *Population Monograph of Nepal 2003*.
- Dahrendorf, R. (1959). Class and class conflict in industrial society. In *Stanford University Press* (Vol. 1). Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

- Davis, K. & Moore, W.E. (1945) Some principles of stratification. *American Sociological Review*, 10(2), 242-249. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2085643>
- Delatour, G. S., Weber, M., Henderson, A. M., & Parsons, T. (1948). The theory of social and economic organization. *American Sociological Review*, 13(3), 349-351. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2086579>
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (5th ed.). Sage.
- Durkheim, É. (1893). *The Division of Labour in Society*. Free Press.
- Engels, F. (2003). The condition of the working class in England. 1845. *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(8), 1246–1249. <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.93.8.1246>
- Erikson, R.S. & Tedin, K.L. (2015). *American Public Opinion: Its Origins, Content and Impact*. Routledge.
- Evans, G., Erikson, R., & Goldthorpe, J. H. (1993). The constant flux: A study of class mobility in industrial societies. *British Journal of Sociology*, 44(1), 173-175. <https://doi.org/10.2307/591712>
- Fay, B. (1987). *Critical Social Science: Liberation and Its Limits*. Cornell University Press.
- Flannery, K., & Marcus, J. (2012). *The creation of inequality: How our prehistoric ancestors set the stage for monarchy, slavery, and empire*. Harvard University Press.
- Francis, M. (2014). *Herbert Spencer and the Invention of Modern Life*. Cornell University Press.

- Freeden, M. (2001). Ideology: Political aspects. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (pp. 7174–7177). <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-0430767/01154-2>
- Friedman, M. (1968). The role of monetary policy. *American Economic Review*, 58(1), 1–17.
- Fukuyama, F. (2011). *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Furlong, A., Raffe, D. & Savage, J. (2004). *Work and Welfare in Britain: Entering and Exiting Low-Paid Work*. Routledge.
- Galbraith, J.K. (1962). *The Affluent Society*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Gammarano, R. (2019, October). Work and employment are not synonyms. *ILOSTAT*. <https://ilostat.ilo.org/work-and-employment-are-not-synonyms/>
- Gellner, D. N., Pfaff-Czarnecka, J., & Whelpton, J. (Eds.). (2016). *Nationalism and ethnicity in a Hindu kingdom: The politics of culture in contemporary Nepal*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781138895690>
- Gellner, D.N. (2007) Caste, ethnicity and inequality in Nepal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42(20), 1823–1828.
- Gibb, B. E., Alloy, L. B., Abramson, L. Y., Rose, D. T., Whitehouse, W. G., & Hogan, M. E. (2001). Childhood maltreatment and college students' current suicidal ideation: A test of the hopelessness theory. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 31(4), 405–415. <https://doi.org/10.1521/suli.31.4.405.22042>

- Glaser, B. (1992). *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis*. Sociology Press: Mill Valley, CA, USA.
- Goldthorpe, J. H. (2007). "Cultural capital": Some critical observations. *Sociologica*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.2383/24755>
- Goldthorpe, J. H., & Mills, C. (2008). Trends in intergenerational class mobility in modern Britain: Evidence from national surveys, 1972–2005. *National Institute Economic Review*, 205, 83–100.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0027950108096591>
- Goldthorpe, J.H. (1987). *Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Clarendon Press
- Grant, J. A. (2001). Class, definition of. In R. J. B. Jones (Ed.), *Routledge encyclopedia of international political economy: Entries A–F* (p. 161). Taylor & Francis.
- Gurung, H. (2005). *Nepal Social Demography and Expressions*. Himal Books.
- Hegel, G. W. F. (1989). *Phenomenology of spirit*. Choice Reviews Online/Choice Reviews, 26. <https://doi.org/10.5860/CHOICE.26-4428>
- Hegel, G.W.F. (1979a). *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Galaxy Books. Oxford University Press
- Hegel, G.W.F. (1979b). *Phenomenology of Spirit* (trans. A. V. Miller). Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Hoftun, M., Raeper, W. & Whelpton, J. (1999). *People, Politics, and Ideology: Democracy and Social Change in Nepal*. Mandala Book Point.

- Hurst, C.E. (2007). *Social Inequality: Forms, Causes, and Consequences*, 6th ed. Allyn & Bacon: Boston, USA.
- ICLS/20 (2018). *Resolution* International Conference of Labour Statisticians Geneva, 10-19 October 2018, p. I20th.
- ILOSTAT. (2024). *World employment and social outlook: May 2024 update*. <https://doi.org/10.54394/HZFD7984>
- International Labour Organization. (2019). *Decent work and the sustainable development goals: A four-pillar approach*. International Labour Organization. <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/langen/index.htm>
- International Labour Organization. (2020). *Global wage report 2020-21: Wages and minimum wages in the time of COVID-19*. International Labour Organization. <https://shorturl.at/HmzPp>
- Janamat Party (2077 BS). Constitution of Janmat Party, Amendment of 2075.
- Jordans, M. J. D., Kaufman, A., Brenman, N. F., Adhikari, R. P., Luitel, N. P., Tol, W. A., & Komproe, I. (2014). Suicide in South Asia: A scoping review. *BMC Psychiatry*, 14, 358. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-014-0358-9>
- Kautsky, K. (1903). *The Social Revolution* (edited by A. Simons & M. W. Simons). Charles Kerr, & Co.
- Kautsky, K. (1910). *The Class Struggle* (W. Askew E.B. (Trans.)). Charles H. Kerr, & Co.
- Keynes, J. M. (2021). *The general theory of employment, interest, and money*. Hassell Street Press.

- Khadka, N. (1993). Democracy and development in Nepal: Prospects and challenges. *Pacific Affairs*, 66(1), 44-71. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2760015>
- Lebrun, R. (2001). *Joseph de Maistre's Life, Thought, and Influence: Selected Studies*. McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Lenski, G. (1966). *Power and Privilege: Theory of Social Stratification*. McGraw Hill: New York, USA.
- Levine, N.E. (1987) Caste, state, and ethnic boundaries in Nepal. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 46(1), 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2056667>
- Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R. & Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative Research: Reading, Analysis, and Interpretation*. SAGE.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage.
- Locke, J. (1988). *John Locke: Two treatises of government*. In *Cambridge University Press eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511810268>
- Maguire, M. & Delahunt, B. (2017). *Doing a Thematic Analysis*. Sage Publications Limited.
- Marx, K. (1867). Critique of Political Economy: Capital, Vol. I. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/>.
- Marx, K. (2021). *Capital* (Reprint 20). Fingerprint Classics. (Original work published 1867)
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1848). *The Communist Manifesto*. Pocket Books.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1964). *The Communist Manifesto* (J. Katz, S. Moore, & F. Randall B., Eds.). Simon & Schuster, Inc. Pocket Books. (Original work published 1848)

Mayer, K. B. (1966). Power and privilege: A theory of social stratification by Gerhard E. Lenski. *Social Forces*, 45(2), 283–284. McGraw-Hill Book Company.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/2574401>

Messerschmidt, D. A. (1981). *The caste hierarchy and the state in Nepal: A study of the muluki Ain in 1854* by András Höfer. Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner (Khumbu Himal: Ergebnisse des Forschungsunternehmens Nepal Himalaya, Band 13/2), 1979. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 40(4), 824–825.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/2055725>

Mills, C.W. (1959). *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Moses, J. W., & Knutsen, T. L. (2007). *Ways of knowing: Competing methodologies in social and political research*. Palgrave Macmillan: New York, USA. *Journal of Peace Research*, 46(2), 288–289.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433090460020810>

Nagarik Unmukti Party (2078 BS). Constitution of Nagarik Unmukti Party, Amendment of 2079.

Namboodiripad, E. M. S., & Habib, I. (1994). Classes and class struggle in Indian history. *Social Scientist*, 22(9/12), 152-159. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3517922>

Nepali Congress (2021). Constitution of Nepali Congress.

NIP (2022). Constitution of National Independent Party.

NWPP (2046BS). Constitution of Nepal Workers & Peasants Party (NWPP), with Amendment Of 2047.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2021). *OECD employment outlook 2021: Navigating the COVID-19 crisis and recovery*.

OECD Publishing. <https://www.oecd.org/employment-outlook/>

- Ossowski, S. (2018). *Class Structure in the Social Consciousness*. Routledge.
- Otero, G., Volker, B., & Rozer, J. (2021). Open but segregated? Class divisions and the network structure of social capital in Chile. *Social Forces*, 100(2), 649-679. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soab005>
- Outhwaite, W. (2009). *Habermas: Key Contemporary Thinkers* (2nd ed.). Polity Press.
- Pakulski, J. (2005). Foundations of a post-class analysis. In A. Wright & E. Olin (Eds.), *Approaches to class analysis* (pp. 152–179). Cambridge University Press. <https://www.academica.org/erik.olin.wright/47>
- Pariyar, M. (2018). Caste discrimination overseas: Nepali Dalits in England. In D. N. Gellner & S. L. Hausner (Eds.), *Global Nepalis: Religion, culture, and community in a new and old diaspora* (pp. 404–434). Oxford University Press.
- Parkin, F. (1982). Marxism and class theory: A bourgeois critique. *Reis*, 20, 185. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40182929>
- Paul, K. I., & Moser, K. (2009). Unemployment impairs mental health: Meta analyses. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74(3), 264–282. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2009.01.001>
- People's Socialist Party (2023). Constitution of People's Socialist Party.
- Piacentini, L. (2017). Book review: Social class in the 21st century. *Social and Legal Studies*, 26(5), 652–654. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0964663917710975a>
- Piketty, T. (2013). *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Harvard University Press.
- Pissarides, C. A. (2000). *Equilibrium Unemployment Theory* (2nd ed.). MIT Press.

- Plato (1937). *The Republic* (C. M. Francis (ed.)). Pirates enhanced classics.  
India.
- Plato (2003). *The Last Days of Socrates* (edited by H. Tredennick). Penguin Classics.
- Popper, K. (1934) *The logic of scientific discovery*. Routledge. (Original work in German 1934. *Logik der Forschung*).
- Proudhon, P. J. (1840). *What is property? An inquiry into the principle of right and of government* (B. R. Tucker, Trans.; G. Woodcock, Intro.). Dover Publications.
- Przeworski, A. (1977). Proletariat into a class: The process of class formation from Karl Kautsky's *The class struggle* to recent controversies. *Politics and Society*, 7(4), 343–401. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003232927700700401>
- Qvortrup, M. (2004). *The Political Philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. Manchester University Press.
- Ricardo, D. (1817). *On the Principles of Political Economy, and Taxation*. Electric Book Company.
- Riessman, C.K. (2008). *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. SAGE.
- Roth, G., & Collins, R. (1987). Weberian sociological theory. *American Historical Review*, 92(2), 379-380. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1866627>
- Rothstein, A. (1962). The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. *Marx Memorial Library Quarterly Bulletin*, 22(1), 3–5.  
<https://doi.org/10.3828/mmlqb.1962.22.2>
- Russett, B. (1983). Prosperity and peace: Presidential address. *International Studies Quarterly*, 27(4), 381–387. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2600553>

- Saint-Simon. (1964). *Social organization: The science of man and other writings* (F. Markham, Ed. & Trans.). Harper.
- Savada, A. M. (Ed.). (1993). *Nepal and Bhutan: Country studies* (3rd ed., 1<sup>st</sup> printing). Federal Research Division, Library of Congress.
- Savage, M., Devine, F., Cunningham, N., Taylor, M., Li, Y., Hjellbrekke, J., Le Roux, B., Friedman, S., & Miles, A. (2013). A new model of social class? Findings from the BBC's Great British Class Survey Experiment. *Sociology*, 47(2), 219–250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038513481128>
- Schlegel, J. (2020). Edward W. Said (1935–2003), Orientalism (1978). *KulturPoetik*, 20, 261–269. <https://doi.org/10.13109/kult.2020.20.2.261>
- Seddon, D., Gurung, G., & Adhikari, J. (1998). Foreign labour migration and the remittance economy of Nepal. *Himalaya*, 18, 22–33.
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63-75.
- Sheppard, J. & Biddle, N. (2015) ANU Poll 19 social class. In: *Canberra: Australian Data Archive*, Vol. 2015.
- Smith, A. (1776). *The Wealth of Nations*. Electric Book Company.
- Smith, A. (1998). *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Elecbook Classics.
- Spencer, H. (1898) *The principles of sociology*. D. Appleton and Co. <https://library.lol/main/8725EEDF802DBBA075F746BEB3D8DC1B>.
- Standing, G. (2014). The precariat. *Contexts*, 13(4), 10–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1536504214558209>

- Statista Research Department. (2024, September 4). *Unemployment worldwide*. Statista. <https://shorturl.at/Gla1R>
- Stephens, J. D. (1979). Class formation and class consciousness: A theoretical and empirical analysis with reference to Britain and Sweden. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 30(4), 389–414. <https://doi.org/10.2307/589631>
- Swanson, G. E., Warner, W. L., Meeker, M., & Eells, K. (1949). Social class in America: A manual of procedure for the measurement of social status. *American Sociological Review*, 14(6), 823. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2086696>
- Tesch, R. (1990). *Qualitative research: Analysis types and software* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315067339>
- Thieme, S. (2005). *Social networks and migration: Far West Nepalese labour migrants in Delhi*. LIT Verlag Münster. <https://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-4034>
- United Nations Development Programme. (2022). *Human development report 2022: Uncertain times, unsettled lives*. UNDP. <https://hdr.undp.org/en/2022-report>
- Warner, W.L. (1949). *Social Class in America: A Manual of Procedure for the Measurement of Social Status*. Harper & Brothers.
- Weber, M. (1946). Class, status, party. In H. H. Gerth & C. W. Mills (Eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (pp. 180–195). Oxford University Press.
- Weber, M. (1947). *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. Oxford University Press: UK.
- Weber, M. (2013a). *Economy and Society* (edited by G. Roth & C. Wittich). University of California Press (original work published 1905).

- Weber, M. (2013b). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (T. Parsons, Trans.). Routledge. (Original work published 1921).  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315063645>
- Weber, M. (2023). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (trans. T. Parsons). Routledge.
- Weininger, E.B. (2005) Foundations of Pierre Bourdieu's class analysis. In: *Foundations of a Neo-Durkheimian Class Analysis* (edited by A. Wright, D. Grusky & G. Galescu).
- Winkelmann, R. (2014). Unemployment. In A. C. Michalos (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of quality of life and well-being research* (pp. 6765-6770). Springer.  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5\\_3078](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_3078)
- Winstanley, G. (1652). *The law of freedom in a platform*.
- World Bank. (2020). *The human capital index 2020 update: Human capital in the time of COVID-19*. World Bank.  
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34432>
- Wright Mills, C. (1951). *White Collar: The American Middle Classes*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Wright Mills, C. (1999). *The Power Elite*. Oxford University Press.  
<https://www.marxists.org/>
- Wright, E. O. (2005). Approaches to class analysis. In E. O. Wright (Ed.), *Approaches to class analysis* (pp. 189-190). Cambridge University Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511488900>
- Wright, E.O. (1980). *Class Structure and Income Determination*. Academic Press.

Wright, E.O. (1985) *Classes*. London. The Thetford Press Ltd. p-10

<https://www.aacademica.org/erik.olin.wright/54>.

Wright, E.O. (1997). *Class Counts: Comparative Studies in Class Analysis*.

Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Xenophon (2007). *Xenophon on Government* (edited by V. J. Gray). Cambridge

University Press: Cambridge.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Data Acquisition Letter.



प. नं./Ref. No

त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय  
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY  
मानविकी तथा सामाजिक शास्त्र सङ्काय  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
श्रम अध्ययन स्नातकोत्तर कार्यक्रम  
MASTER'S PROGRAMME IN LABOUR STUDIES (MLS)  
कीर्तिपुर, काठमाडौं (KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU)




Date: 15 August 2023


To Whom it May Concern

This is to certify that, Mr. Ananta Aryal, student of 2020 batch, Masters Programme in Labour Studies, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu is writing Master's Level thesis entitled '*Social stratification of nonworkers in Nepal*'. To accomplish the study, he is approaching you/your institution to collect necessary information. In this regard you are cordially requested to support/assist him by providing the necessary information. The collected information will be kept confidential as per the statistical acts/rules of the country and analysed maintaining anonymity of the personal/institutional identity.

Thanking you for your best support.

  
Dr. Kamala Devi Lamichhane,  
Coordinator

## Appendix B: Informed Consent form.

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tribhuvan University</b> <b>Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences</b> <b>Master's Programme in Labour Studies</b> <b>Kirtipur, Kathmandu</b></p>
---	--

**Research Title:** "Social stratification of nonworkers in Nepal"

**Date:** .....

Dear Participant,

Namaste

My name is **Ananta Aryal**, final semester student of master's programme in labour studies (MLS) at Tribhuvan University. I am conducting a study entitled "**Social stratification of nonworkers in Nepal**" as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Masters in Labour Studies (MLS) at Tribhuvan University.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the study is to study the perspectives of Nepali political ideologies towards non-workers. We will be discussing about the socio-economic class, non-workers and their characteristics in relation with the other classes in Nepal. The discussion is expected to complete within 30-40 minutes. I will record our discussion on voice recorder and as well as will take note. I highly appreciated your participation in the discussion.

**Statement of confidentiality:** I would like to state that; The information you provide will be kept confidential as per the statistical act/rules of Nepal and will solely be used only for academic purposes as part of my thesis.

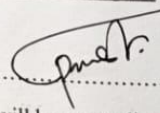
**Voluntary participation:** Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and suggested to with your own conscience to the best of your knowledge and experience. During the discussion time if you feel uneasy you may terminate your participation. But I hope that you will be able to participate throughout the discussion.

Your queries, criticism and suggestions are highly inspiring.

**Approval of Participation:** If you are agreeing to be participant, please provide your consent by written with signature at box below or verbally. If you are not agreed, your reason will motivate me for further improvement.

Reason to Refuse (For refusal only): .....

**Signature of Participant**

.....  


Now, I will be proceeding the research.

Code URM02

## Appendix C: In-Depth Interview Guidelines/Questionnaire.

### Guidelines/ Questionnaire for In-Depth Interview with the Nonworkers

Demographic information:

Gender:

Age:

Marital status:

Caste/ethnicity:

Religion:

Education:

Address:

Numbers of Family member:

No.of dependants:

Duration of continues unemployment:

Estimated daily expenses:

Source of daily expenses:

Previous work experiences:

Date of First entry into job	Types of job	Duration of work	Reason to terminate the Job

1. How would you define your current status? तपाईं आफ्नो अवस्था लाई कसरी परिभाषित गर्नुहुन्छ?

**Probe:** definition of the 'nonworkers'?

तपाईं अश्रमिक लाई कसरी परिभाषित गर्नुहुन्छ?

2. Do you remember any incident with the government, any political institution, or organizations addressing nonworkers separately? if yes, please explain. सरकार, कुनै राजनीतिक संस्था वा संगठनले अश्रमिकहरूलाई छुट्टै रूपमा सम्बोधन गरेको कुनै घटना के तपाईंलाई याद छ? यदि छ भने, कृपया व्याख्या गर्नुहोस्।

Probe: .....

3. Do you perceive yourself and other non-workers as a distinct social group within society? Why or why not? के तपाईं आफु र अन्य श्रमिकहरूलाई समाज भित्र एक फरक सामाजिक समूहको रूपमा बुझ्नुहुन्छ?

Probe: socially, economically and psychologically distinct or not?

4. What differences do you observe between You/ or non-workers and other social classes? तपाईं आफू, अन्य अश्रमिकहरू र सामाजिक अन्य वर्गका व्यक्तिहरू बीच के कस्ता भिन्नताहरू देख्नुहुन्छ?

Probe: socially, economically and psychologically distinct or not?

5. Have you heard about the unemployment experienced by the elders of your house, family and society during their time?

तपाईंको घर, परिवार र समाज का अग्रजहरूले बेरोजगारी सम्बन्धी वहाँहरूको समयमा भोग्नुभएको बेरोजगारको बारेमा सुन्नुभएको छ ?

Probe:

6. Are members of your home, family and community discriminated against due to unemployment? Do you think, nonworkers have been historically discriminated against? Family history? तपाईंको घर, परिवार र समाज का अग्रजहरू लाई बेरोजगारीको कारणले भेदभाव गरिएको छ? तपाईं लाई के लाग्छ, अश्रमिकहरू/बेरोजगार हर्लुलाई ऐतिहासिक रूपमा भेदभाव गरिएको छ?

Probe: By whom and what kind of discrimination?

7. Do you think non-workers have been systematically disadvantaged throughout history in terms of accessing life opportunities? तपाईंलाई के लाग्छ, के अश्रमिकहरू/ बेरोजगारहरू लाई आजिविका उत्पन्न गर्ने अवसरहरू को पहुँच मा एतिहास देखी नै भेदभाव हुँदै आएको छ ?

Probe: By whom or what forces or actor might be behind this variation.

8. Have you ever felt insult, guilt, oppressed and etc. due to your status? If yes, please explain. तपाईंले कहिल्यै आफ्नो अवस्था वा हैसियतको कारणले अपमान, दोष, उत्पीडित आदि महसुस गर्नुभएको छ? यदि हो भने, कृपया व्याख्या गर्नुहोस ।

9. Are you able to meet your basic financial needs without employment?

तपाईं रोजगार विना आफ्नो आधारभूत आर्थिक आवश्यकताहरू पूरा गर्न सक्षम हुनुहुन्छ?

Probe... How do you manage your daily expenses? And at the time of sick or emergency?

10. What do you own or have in your own name? The product created from it fulfils yours basic need? If yes, how do you got this? तपाईंसँग आफ्नो स्वामित्व वा हक भोग मा वा आफ्नो नाम मा के के छ ? त्यसबाट सिर्जना हुने उत्पादन ले आधारभूत आवश्यकता पुरा हुन्छ ? यदि छ भने, तपाईंले यो कसरी पाउनुभयो?

Probe: Is there any conflict over utilization of this property?

11. Do you feel you have equal access in economic opportunities in your community/state? तपाईं आफ्नो समुदाय वा राज्यमा आर्थिक वा श्रमको अवसरहरूमा पहुँच भएको महसुस गर्नुहुन्छ?

12. Are there specific barriers or challenges preventing you from seeking or obtaining employment? रोजगार खोज्न वा प्राप्त गर्नबाट तपाईंलाई रोक्ने बाधा वा चुनौतीहरू के के छन्?

Probe...?

13. In your experience, what kind of inequalities or discrimination do you observe within your community? तपाईंको अनुभवमा, तपाईं आफ्नो समुदायमा अश्रमिकहरू र श्रमिकहरू बीच असमानता वा भेदभाव देख्नुहुन्छ?

Probe: If Yes, What kind? (कस्तो (SSF, health insurance, and like others)

14. What might be the reason behind the existing inequality between workers and nonworkers? अश्रमिकहरू र श्रमिकहरू बीच विद्यमान असमानताको कारण के हुन सक्छ?

15. Have you ever been denied opportunities or resources due to not being employed (e.g., loans, social events, decision-making)? के तपाईंलाई रोजगारी नभएको कारणले अवसर वा स्रोतहरूबाट वञ्चित गरिएको छ (जस्तै, ऋण, सामाजिक घटनाहरू, निर्णय लिने)?

16. How do you feel about the way you are treated by the investors of institutions, companies, etc., in searching or joining to employment? रोजगारी को सिलसिलामा तपाईंलाई कुनै संस्था, प्रतिष्ठान, कम्पनी इत्यादी का लगानिकर्ता, इत्यादी ले कस्तो व्यवहार गरेको महसुस गर्नुहुन्छ ?

Probe: low salary bargain, complex recruitment process, recommendations and etc

17. In your opinion, does there exist an influence of investors, capitalists and working-class people on the job market? तपाईंको विचारमा श्रम बजारमा लगानीकर्ता, पुँजीपति र मजदुर वर्गको कस्तो प्रभाव छ ?

Probe: if yes, what kind of influence you noticed?

18. Historically, there has been lots of effort to eliminate the unemployment problem, but what might be the causes behind this problem that has never been resolved? ऐतिहासिक रूपमा, बेरोजगारी समस्या उन्मूलन गर्न धेरै प्रयासहरू भएका छन्, तर यो समस्या कहिल्यै समाधान नहुनुको पछाडि कारणहरू के के हुन सक्छन्?

19. What is the perception of your family members as well as relatives to you, who does have job? तपाईंप्रती तपाईंको परिवारजन र आफन्तहरू (जो रोजगार छन्) ले कस्तो धारणा बनाएको महशुस गर्नु हुन्छ ?

Probe...?

20. Have there been discussions or conflicts within the family regarding your non-work status? के तपाईंको काम नगर्ने स्थितिको बारेमा परिवार भित्र छलफल वा विवाद भएको छ? Probe: ...?

21. Did you face any stigmatization or social exclusion or discrimination during this period? How did it effect your, daily life ? तपाईंले यस अवधिमा कुनै कलंक वा सामाजिक बहिष्कार वा भेदभावको सामना गर्नुभयो? यसले तपाईंको दैनिक जीवनमा कस्तो प्रभाव पारेको छ ?

22. How do you feel towards the perspective and attitude of society towards you/individuals who are not currently working? हल काम नगर्ने तपाईं /अन्य व्यक्तिहरूप्रति समाजको दृष्टिकोण र व्यवहार प्रति तपाईं कस्तो महसुस गर्नुहुन्छ?

Probe: feelings of aggression and etc...

23. Do you agree that nonworkers experience internal psychological conflicts with workers of family and society? तपाईं अश्रमिकहरूले परिवार र समाजका श्रमिकहरूसँग आन्तरिक रूपमा मनोवैज्ञानिक द्वन्द्व अनुभव गर्छन् भन्ने कुरामा सहमत हुनुहुन्छ?

24. Did you feel that some working people utilized your status for their interest? केही श्रमिकहरूले तपाईंको हैसियतलाई आफ्नो स्वार्थका लागि मात्र प्रयोग गरेको महसुस गर्नुभएको छ ? Probe: How you feel while remembering this?

25. Have you ever been gathered with other nonworkers friend? तपाईं कहिल्यै अन्य अश्रमिक साथीहरूसँग एकै ठाउँमा भेला हुनुभएको छ?

Probe: If yes, explain about moto.

26. Have you ever thought about to work collectively or to deal collectively or to be organized regarding to your status? तपाईंले कहिल्यै आफ्नो अवस्था लाई लिएर संगठित भएर काम गर्ने वा बहस गर्ने बारेमा सोच्नुभएको छ ?

Probe...?

27. Have you visited any political representatives, offices of political parties, Government offices like municipalities, ministries, departments and etc regarding to your status collectively or even individually? If yes, please explain. तपाईंले आफ्नो स्थितिका सम्बन्धमा सामूहिक वा व्यक्तिगत रूपमा कुनै राजनीतिक दलका प्रतिनिधि, राजनीतिक दलका कार्यालयहरू, सरकारी कार्यालयहरू जस्तै नगरपालिका, मन्त्रालय, विभाग आदि भ्रमण गर्नुभएको छ? यदि छ भने, कृपया व्याख्या गर्नुहोस ।

28. Have you ever been invited or requested to join or attended any collective program or function organized by nonworkers or related organizations or any other nonworkers? तपाईंलाई कहिले पनि अश्रमिकहरूले वा सम्बन्धित संस्थाहरूले आयोजना गरेको कुनै सामूहिक कार्यक्रम वा समारोहमा सामेल हुन वा सहभागी हुन अनुरोध गरिएको छ?

29. Have you observed any efforts among nonworkers to organize or advocate for their rights? के तपाईंले अश्रमिकहरूले आफ्नो अधिकारको लागि संगठित वा वकालत गर्ने कुनै प्रयासहरू देख्नुभएको वा सुन्नु भएको छ?

30. In your opinion, what should be done to bring change in your current situation? के गन्यो भने अथवा के भयो भने तपाईंको अहिले को अवस्था बदलिन्छ वा सुधार हुन्छ ?

Probe: social, political action or attempt.

31. Do you have any suggestion that I must add something on my study?

मैले मेरो अध्ययनमा केही थप्नुपर्छ भन्ने तपाईंसँग कुनै सुझाव छ?

**Thank You for your time and participation**

Appendix D: Permission Letter for Data Collection



काठमाडौं महानगरपालिका  
काठमाडौं महानगरपालिका  
Kathmandu Metropolitan City  
५ वडा कार्यालय, हाँडीगाउँ  
बागमती प्रदेश, नेपाल

प.सं. ०८१/८२  
च.नं. ०५/२५८



मिति: २०८१/०५/२५  
ने.सं. ११४४ ज्ञलाथ्व, सप्तमि

श्री अनन्त अर्याल  
श्रम अध्ययन कार्यक्रम  
त्रीभुवन विश्वविद्यालय, किर्तिपुर, काठमाण्डौ ।

विषय: स्विकृती दिएको सम्बन्धमा ।


उपरोक्त विषयका सम्बन्धमा तपाईंले यस कार्यालयमा मिति २०८१/३/२२ मा दिएको निवेदन अनुसार तपाईंलाई काठमाण्डौ महानगर वडा नं.५ भित्र “Social Stratification of Nonworkers in Nepal” विषयमा अनुसन्धान गर्नको लागि मिति २०८१/०५/२६ देखी २०८१/०६/०५ सम्म तथ्यांक संकलन गर्न को लागि अनुमती दिएको ब्यहोरा अनुरोध गरिन्छ ।

उक्त शोध कार्य विशुद्ध अध्ययन प्रायोजन का लागि गर्नु हुन का साथै प्रचलित तथ्यांक ऐन २०७९ अनुसार सम्पन्न गर्नुहुन सुसुचित गराईन्छ ।

बिरेन्द्र प्रजापती  
वडा अध्यक्ष  
५ वडा कार्यालय

बिरेन्द्र प्रजापति  
वडा अध्यक्ष


## Appendix E: Permission Letter for Data Collection

**काठमाडौं महानगरपालिका**  
या मद्दानगबन्धालिका  
२९ नं वडा कार्यालय  
डिल्लीबजार, काठमाडौं

पत्र संख्या : ०८१/०८२  
चलानी नं. : २१२

मिति : २०८१-०५-२५  
नेपाल सम्वत् १९४४ बैशाख, सप्तमी


श्री अनन्त अर्याल  
श्रम अध्ययन कार्यक्रम  
त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय, कीर्तिपुर, काठमाडौं ।



विषय : स्वीकृत दिइएको सम्बन्धमा ।

उपरोक्त सम्बन्धमा तपाईंले यस कार्यालयमा मिति २०८१/०५/२५ मा दिनुभएको निवेदन अनुसार तपाईंलाई काठमाडौं महानगरपालिका वडा नं. २९ भित्र "Social Stratification of Non Workers in Nepal" विषयमा अनुसन्धान गर्नको लागि मिति २०८१/०५/२६ देखि मिति २०८१/०६/०५ सम्म कानूनको परिधिभित्र रही तथ्याङ्क संकलन गर्नको लागि अनुमति दिइएको व्यहोरा अनुरोध गरिन्छ ।

उक्त शोध कार्य विशुद्ध अध्ययन प्रयोजनका लागि गर्नु हुनका साथै प्रचलित तथ्याङ्क ऐन २०७९ अनुसार सम्पन्न गर्नु हुन सुसूचित गरिन्छ ।

  
कुशा डकाल  
वडा अध्यक्ष  
२९ नं. वडा कार्यालय

बाग दरवार, काठमाडौं, नेपाल । फोन नं.: ०१ ४५१९९७९ फ्याक्स: ४२६८५०९  
पो.व.नं.: ८४१६, ईमेल: ward29@kathmandu.gov.np, वेबसाईट: www.kathmandu.gov.np

**Appendix F: List of Political Parties Currently Representing Parliament of Nepal.**

<i>S.N.</i>	<i>Political Party</i>	<i>FPTP</i>	<i>Proportional</i>	<i>Total Members</i>
1	Nepali Congress	56	32	88
2	Nepal Communist Party (UML)	45	34	79
3	Nepal Communist Party (Maoist Center)	18	14	32
4	Rastriya Swotantra Party	8	13	21
5	Rastriya Prajantantra Party	7	7	14
6	Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Socialist)	10	0	10
7	People's Socialist Party	4	3	7
8	Janamat Party	1	5	6
9	Janata Samajwadi Party, Nepal	3	2	5
10	Loktantrik Samajwadi Party Nepal	4	0	4
11	Nagarik Unmukti Party	4	0	4
12	Nepal Workers Peasants Party	1	0	1
13	Rastriya Janamorcha	1	0	1
14	Aam Janata Party	1	0	1
15	Independent	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>165</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>275</b>

House of Representative, Nepal (<https://hr.parliament.gov.np/en/parliamentary-parties>) Update Date: 8 May, 2024

\* FPTP - First Past the Post Voting





U R M 02	0 . 8 0	0 . 7 0	0 . 7 0	0 . 7 5	0 . 8 2	0 . 7 3	0 . 7 3	0 . 7 3	0 . 7 7	0 . 8 4	0 . 9 1	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 0	0 . 7 7	0 . 7 3	0 . 8 0	0 . 8 4	0 . 6 6	0 . 8 2	0 . 7 3	0 . 8 2	1 0	0 . 8 0	0 . 8 6	0 . 7 7	0 . 8 6	
U R M 03	0 . 7 3	0 . 7 3	0 . 6 4	0 . 6 8	0 . 7 5	0 . 7 0	0 . 8 5	0 . 7 5	0 . 7 7	0 . 8 7	0 . 8 0	0 . 8 0	0 . 7 7	0 . 7 5	0 . 7 5	0 . 6 8	0 . 6 8	0 . 6 8	0 . 7 5	0 . 6 6	0 . 7 5	0 . 8 0	1 0	0 . 7 5	0 . 7 0	0 . 8 0	
U R M 04	0 . 8 4	0 . 7 5	0 . 8 0	0 . 8 0	0 . 8 6	0 . 7 3	0 . 7 7	0 . 7 7	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 4	0 . 8 6	0 . 8 6	0 . 8 9	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 4	0 . 8 4	0 . 6 1	0 . 8 2	0 . 7 7	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 6	0 . 7 5	0 . 8 0	1 0	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 6
U R M 05	0 . 8 9	0 . 7 5	0 . 7 5	0 . 7 0	0 . 8 2	0 . 7 3	0 . 8 6	0 . 7 3	0 . 7 7	0 . 7 5	0 . 7 7	0 . 7 3	0 . 8 4	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 8	0 . 6 5	0 . 7 0	0 . 8 6	0 . 7 3	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 6	0 . 7 0	0 . 8 2	0 . 7 0	1 0	0 . 8 2	0 . 7 7
U R M 06	0 . 7 5	0 . 8 0	0 . 7 0	0 . 8 4	0 . 8 6	0 . 7 3	0 . 7 7	0 . 7 7	0 . 8 6	0 . 8 4	0 . 8 6	0 . 8 6	0 . 8 4	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 2	0 . 8 4	0 . 8 9	0 . 6 6	0 . 9 1	0 . 8 2	0 . 7 7	0 . 8 6	0 . 8 0	0 . 8 6	0 . 8 7	0 . 8 6	1 0

# Tribhuvan University Central Library

Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal



f. No. ....

Date:.....12/12/2024.



## Plagiarism Test Report

The **Master Thesis** titled “**SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF NONWORKERS IN NEPAL**” submitted by **ANANTA ARYAL** for a plagiarism test on **Dec 12, 2024**, has been checked by the iThenticate plagiarism checker software. The software found an overall similarity index of **1%** based on the following criteria.

### Criteria:

- |                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| ▪ Quotes                  | - Excluded |
| ▪ Bibliography            | - Excluded |
| ▪ Exclude Sources Matches | - 1%       |
| ▪ Exclude Words Matches   | 10 Words   |
| ▪ Abstract                | - Included |
| ▪ Methods and Materials   | - Included |

Note: Kindly be advised that the similarity index produced by software may not comprehensively reflect the caliber and criteria of the document. Consequently, it is highly advisable for the appropriate authority to manually assess the examined file to ascertain its adherence to the essential benchmarks of being articulate, well-investigated, and upholding academic integrity.

Lal Bahadur Chouhan  
(Deputy Librarian)

# SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF NONWORKERS IN NEPAL

By: ANANTA ARYAL

As of: Dec 12, 2024 3:18:02 PM  
47,045 words - 9 matches - 1 source

Similarity Index

1%

Summary Report



*Handwritten signature and date:*  
2024-10-08/27

245 words / 1% - from 10-Jan-2024 12:00AM  
[elibrary.tucl.edu.np](http://elibrary.tucl.edu.np)

text:

## SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF NONWORKERS

IN NEPAL A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE MASTER'S PROGRAM IN LABOUR STUDIES (MLS)  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

By ANANTA ARYAL Campus Roll Number:13 Exam Roll Number:2839001 TU Reg. No. 5-2-37-1863-2012  
Tribhuvan University Kathmandu, Nepal October 2024 Abstract This study shifts the focus on nonworkers from the conventional market dynamics framework to a class-based perspective, examining the Nepali nonworkers' perceptions of their social, political, economic, and psychological status. It categorizes them based on similarities and differences within these areas, identifying distinct class characteristics within Nepal's current socioeconomic structure. Using thematic analysis of 26 in-depth interviews and textual analysis of the manifestos and constitutions of 10 major political parties, the research reveals unique class traits of nonworkers, such as subjective saliency, historical variation, antagonistic conflicts, similar material status of living, experiences of oppression, class consciousness, and aspirations for emancipation. The findings indicate that nonworkers in Nepal have been historically marginalized from essential opportunities like employment, education, healthcare, and other basic needs, which has entrenched generational inequality. They experience severe social exclusion, stigma, favouritism, and nepotism in accessing job opportunities, alongside oppression in the form of violence, discrimination, feelings of inferiority, and exhaustion from subjugation by the working class. This is compounded by their exclusion from decision-making processes and heightened mental health challenges, such as stress, being isolated and depression. Economically, nonworkers are dependent on family and friends, often resorting to borrowings and loans for basic survival. Key barriers to employment include societal perceptions, cultural constraints, policy failures, corruption, and a complex, inequitable recruitment system. The study also identifies an emerging, albeit nascent, sense of class consciousness and collective action among nonworkers, suggesting the potential for the formation of a distinct social class. While most respondents support a complete governmental overhaul for their emancipation, some advocate for structural reforms.