

Access to Education for Muslim Women in Nepal
Constraints and Opportunities
(A Case Study in Pipra Village of Kapilvastu)

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By

Usha Sharma

Campus Roll No. :182/2061

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY
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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

The thesis work entitled “**Access to Education for Muslim Women in Nepal: Constraints and Opportunities (A Case Study in Pipra Village of Kapilvastu)**” by **Usha Sharma** is prepared under my supervision for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Masters’ degree of Arts in Anthropology.

I forward it for final evaluation to the Thesis Committee.

Dr. Ram Bahadur Chhetri
Reader
Central Department of
Sociology/Anthropology
Tribhuvan University
Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

November, 2008

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY
KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU
NEPAL

CERTIFICATE OF ACCEPTANCE

This thesis entitled “**Access to Education for Muslim Women in Nepal: Constraints and Opportunities (A Case Study in Pipra Village of Kapilvastu)**” submitted by **Usha Sharma** has been accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters’ Degree of Arts in Anthropology.

THESIS COMMITTEE

Supervisor

Dr. Ram Bahadur Chhetri

Head of Department

Dr. Om Gurung

External Examiner

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Usha Sharma

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ABBREVIATIONS

DDC	-	District Development Committee
VDC	-	Village Development Committee
UN	-	United Nations
RIDA	-	Research Inputs Development Associates
HMG	-	His Majesty the Government (<i>at that Period</i>)
UNFPA	-	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	-	United Nation Children's Fund
NPC	-	National Planning Commission
CBS	-	Central Bureau of Statistics
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme.
CERID	-	Centre for education Research Innovation and Development
NRB	-	Nepal Rastra Bank
MOH	-	Ministry of Health
SEARO	-	South East Asia Region
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization

CHAPTER – ONE

INTRODUCTION

Nepal has entered at the 21st century but its position in global context still remains as one of the least developed countries. Till 1950 it remained isolated from other parts of the world. This is one of the major factors, which is responsible for the current developmental status of Nepal. Although various efforts have been made for the development of Nepal from 1950 onwards, yet the country is still far behind economically, educationally and socially as compared with many other developing countries of the South and East Asian Region.

Basically Nepal is a rural country where more than 85.6 percent population (CBS 2001) live in the rural area. So rural development is synonymous with national development in the context of Nepal. The general problems of Nepal are similar to those faced by many other underdeveloped and developing nations throughout the world connected with ignorance, disease and poverty. The problems created by rising population, unfavorable balance of payment, lack of investment potentials, low level of technological innovation, lack of skilled manpower are some of the problems faced by Nepal (Adhikari, 1982). Rural development is concerned with programs that aim to raise the living standard of rural people and communities. Potter has explained that if the project is to embrace the total aspect of rural development and not just the agricultural sector, there arise parallel requirements like education, health service, animal health, co-operatives, marketing, youth program, home economics, family guidance etc. He has further mentioned that the number of required cadres would depend on local conditions and stages of development (Potter, 1975).

Most of the ethnic groups are on the level of illiteracy. My case study also focuses on educational status of one ethnic group "Muslim". "Muslim is not

only separated from high caste but also from other groups including the ethnic groups. They are an exception and can not be fitted into the linear hierarchy. They are "Water-Unacceptable" to all "Water-Unacceptable" castes. Even the untouchables refuse to accept water from them. Muslim are mostly classified as an impure caste and equated to the Mleccha, the main reason for this being their religion which is Vidharma from the Hindu point of view" (Höfer, 1979. p.p. 162).

The Muslims in Nepal possess a rich cultural heritage but they are lagging far behind in educational development in reference to many communities. There is the existence of wide disparity between male and female within the Muslim population.

In Nepal, 40 percent of school-going children have never been to school, 70 percent of the school children drop-out before completing the primary school cycle(I-V), sixty to seventy percent of class (grade) ten graduates cannot pass the School Leaving Certificate Examination (a nation-wide test at the end of grade ten which was the final year of secondary school until 1994), and about sixty six percent of students who pass the School Leaving Certificate Examination (SLC) cannot go on for higher education (Koirala, 1996).

In Nepal, 4.1 percent of total population has covered by Muslim population. The 2001 Census data shows that the literacy percentage of Muslim is below 18 percent and the Muslim women's literacy percentage is below 13%. The enrolment of Muslim children in government school is very negligible. In Tarai, it is rare to find a girl who has passed SLC or obtained higher education. But in Kathmandu, we can see Muslims are in University level.

Up to 1930s, Muslim children were not allowed to attend any schools. Madrasas were also not allowed to run. Muslim were considered as impure people and rules were made to prevent low caste people from being polluted by them. By 1940s, Muslim were allowed to attend secondary school and college and the Rana government eventually opened a Muslim primary school with the

declaration of free primary education up to class 5 for all Nepali citizens. The numbers of Muslims attending the school steadily increased. Nowadays, most of the villages in Tarai have got Madrasas (Muslim School), where young children are only taught a basic knowledge of Urdu and other religious books. But these Madrasas are running very poorly and they are unable to supply books and other materials to the growing number of students. Furthermore, teachers are not in adequate number in these schools and they are very poorly paid. The work burdens for these teachers are so high that most of them fly away for hunting another attractive jobs (Ansari, 1981).

In Tarai educated Muslims can be counted on the fingers. The drop-out rate among the children is very high due to their forced engagement in various economic activities. According to Samira Luintel “the situation for women of all groups did not change much due to the religion orthodoxy, so both the women and the Dalits have been left behind from the educational opportunities. The Dalit women hold the lowest status in education being doubly exploited as Dalit and women. As per the study of educational opportunities from Muslim women they also not far from the condition of Dalit women as well” (Luintel, 2003 pp 82-83).

Literacy and education qualification are the vital indicators of women’s social status. These are not only crucial factors for availing of employment opportunities created in the process of modernization but also for communication with the outside world as with increasingly educated males within the household. (Acharya, 1995)

Due to poor economic condition of Muslims, they are unable to finance the existing Madrasas. So it is essential for the government to support the Madrasas with trained teachers, books and other educational supports.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The universal declaration of human rights by United Nations (1948) has not yet succeeded to overcome the gender differentiation in various aspects of life. Women of developing countries are still unprivileged group in the light of human right. To uplift the condition of women, UN declared 1975 as women's year. The United Nations, in its declaration for plan of action states that women are not minority group numerically. Women constitute half of the total population of the world. By limiting women's participation in public spheres, developing societies deprive themselves of the full talents of half their number (UN 1997, VOL-III).

In Nepal more than half (50.1% CBS 2001) of the population are female. The literacy rate of female is 65.2 percent, which is very low in comparisons with 81.9 percent of male. Literacy is a skill developing and accelerating factors, it is a potential added to existing human population (Shrestha, 1985). Women's contribution to economic and social progress is still constrained by their limited access to education, which hinders the full development and utilization of their intellectual and productive capacities. Various studies have proved that the problems like infant mortality, maternal mortality and high growth of population, unhygienic practices and environmental degradation can be tackled by education. To educate a man is to educate an individual but to educate women is to educate whole family and then society. Aristotle, the Greek philosopher said, "The prosperity of a nation is determined by the level of prosperity of its women citizen"(Pokhrel, 1999). To mobilize natural resources a nation needs its highly developed human resources which include not only male but also female population. But in Nepal more than half of their populations are underdeveloped and their status is very low in comparison to man as far as women's access to property and modern avenues of education, skill development and knowledge are concerned. Nepali women in general lag far behind men (Acharya 1997).

Except in some Tibeto-Burman communities, Nepali society is basically patriarchal and majority of its population are influenced by the ideology of Hinduism. Nepal is a country with a very high incidence of son preference (RIDA 1991). Only a son can perform death rites of their parents, they carry on the family name and legacy and also are the economic security of parents in their old age. On the other hand after marriage, girls are sent off to their husband's house. They are kept in their parent's house as a property of others' so, there is rejoicing in the birth of a son and unhappiness at the arrival of a daughter. Among Maithili community there is a saying that "if girl is born the earth sinks by one foot, if a boy is born it rises up by one foot to meet him" (Acharya, 1981). It is found that the number of adults preferred their first child to be born a son, and there were no significant differences based on either education or literacy (Acharya and Bennett 1981). The common sayings like- "To be born a daughter is a misfortune" and "Let it be later but let it be a son" reflect the status of girl child in Nepali society. The unfortunate combination of poverty and extreme gender disparity in Nepal has a significant impact on the child's preparation for life. A recent assessment of major changes in women's life in Nepal over the past decade has shown that despite higher attainments of literacy, social mobility and awareness, women still remain confined to the roles prescribed by Nepali traditionally patriarchal social, economic, political and legal frame-work (TRI SHAKTI, 1995). The role of women in Nepali society is generally confined to attend the household chores in which necessary knowledge and methods are transferred from mother to her daughter. To fetch water, prepare meal for the family, work in the field, look after children and other household work is daily routine of rural women in Nepal. Whereas the education of male children are given high priority by most of the parents because they recognize their education not only as an instrument to stay afloat in the competition but also a source of support that their sons are expected to provide in old age.

Several studies have concluded that resource constraint on household is one of the major factors, which limits the school enrolment of girl children in rural Nepal (Pokhrel, 1999). Girls work more than boys in all average groups, the girl's work burden increases with age, girls at some ages work an average of twice as much as boys (Nepal Rastra Bank, 1988). A study in 1990 revealed that workload out-of-school girl aged 6 to 9 years are in average 7 hours per day, and workload of out-of-school girls aged 10 to 14 years are in average 9.5 hours per day (RIDA 1991, CBS 2001).

The recent trend in enrolment ratio indicates that female education is undergoing a greater positive change. But there still exist the problem of low enrolment of girl in formal education. The net enrolment of girls in primary school is 61 percent in comparison to 80 percent of boys and their dropout rate is much higher. Only one fourth of female over six years of age are literate as compared to 55 percent literacy among male over six years (HMG/NPC/UNICEF 2000). Several factors might be responsible for the low enrolment of a girl child in school. So, this study is proposed to find out the factor that affects the enrolment of Muslim girl child in rural Tarai in Nepal.

The main reason for Muslim women not accessing education is that the concept of women work should be limited only in household works and the earnings of girl child(daughter) is not acceptable by Muslim parents. They think that, if girl won't engage in earning activities, then why they should need education. Before marriage girl should be engaged in household chores, they are not allowed to go in outdoor works, job and earnings activities.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to find out the actual cause of inequalities in education among Muslim women in Tarai. It may be the cause of socio/cultural/religious aspects. Therefore the main objective of my study is to analyze the educational inequalities in Muslim women of Pipra VDC,

Kapilvastu. Specific objectives of this study are as follows:

-) To understand the meaning of education for Muslim men and women and their perception towards access to education by sex.
-) To understand the perception towards education in Muslim women.
-) To analyze both the male and female perception and access to education among Muslims in Pipra.
-) To analyze the socio/cultural factors in inequalities in education on both sexes.

1.3 Significance of the Study

A girl is a person first and foremost and has the potential for growing into capable and productive adults. The social status of girl in a community is linked with the social status of women. They should be educated, which help them to recognize their importance in the society. There can be no development without the full participation of women. The problems like high infant mortality, maternal mortality, high growth rate of population, environmental degradation, etc, are the hindrance in the development. These problems are directly or indirectly related to women and can be solved by educating them. A girl of today will be a mother of tomorrow. An empowered mother is suited to recognize and promote the best interest of the child in every sphere-survival, development, protection and participation. A traditional notion holds that girls should not be educated because they do not belong to family and are given in marriage to some other family. Therefore, education for girls is essential to change this conservative perspective and through this they can develop their skills and join into the main stream of development of nation.

In general poverty, lack of resources, household chores, and traditional notions are the main hindrances in the enrolment of a girl child. But no study has been

conducted yet to investigate the changes brought by community development program in the school enrolment of Muslim girl child. This study has tried to find out the changes brought by a community development program in the school enrolment of Muslim girl child in a Muslim community.

1.4 Chapter Organization

This thesis consists of six chapters including sub topics in each, Chapter one has provided a brief overview of the Nepali as well as Muslim education. Besides Socio/cultural context, introduction to Muslim, research problem, objective of the study and significance of the study are also drawn in this chapter.

The second chapter deals with the literature review. It consists of discussion on the anthropological theories on education, concept of literacy, general background of education, history of education development in Nepal and educational status of Muslim. A conceptual framework is also included in this chapter.

In the third chapter various research methods used in the study are elucidated, including research design, research site selection, nature of sample and sources of data, data collection techniques, household survey, observation, focus group discussion, key informants interview, reliability of the research, data analysis, and limitation of the study.

The fourth chapter deals with the general introduction of the study area with map as well as the socio/economic characteristics of the sample population.

Chapter five analyzes socio/cultural/economic characteristics and schooling a girl child in various aspects. This chapter also contains data analysis and interpretation of the sample households. Discussion of the study is also taken.

Chapter six provides a summary, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

CHAPTER – TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Socio/cultural inequality has been a central problematic in anthropological theorizing. So there is a large body of writing on the topic of socio/cultural inequalities in access of every thing such as education. However for this study my operational definition of schooling refers to the formal schooling system from primary through secondary or upper secondary. Caste is also one of the cause of socio/cultural inequality. Anthropological research on schooling, which relates to inequality, dates back to the early 1900s. Ogbu (1994) over viewing of schooling research states that some anthropologist such as Hewett (1976 originally 1905), Boas (1928), and Malinowski (1976 originally 1936) all conducted research on schooling. Hewett highlighted the educational problems of immigrants, American Indians and native of the Philippines, and concluded that schooling forced them to learn the "higher" Anglo-American culture. Boas fore-shadowing Bourdieu's work of the 1970s, developed a theoretical perspective that emphasized cultural relativism and argued that differences in culture brings differences in school performance while Malinowski rejected such a claim contending performance differences were a result of in his example, Africans receiving intellectually inferior schooling compared to Europeans (Koirala, 1996).

In Nepal, the issue of women's role in development was formally addressed for the first time in sixth five years plan (1980-1985). The operational strategies for the investigation of women in development program were not incorporated in this plan but Women's Social Coordination Committee (WSC) of social service National Co-ordination Committee (SSNCC) was mobilized to prepare national plan of action for women's development in 1981. This plan of action proposed strategies for the implementation in the field of education, health,

employment, agriculture, forestry and co-operative development by government, non-governmental agencies and institutions. It is also called for increased recruitment of women at all levels in extension and administrative field to have significance impact on subsequent government plans and policies (UNICEF, 1987)

The Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child are landmark treaties which together constitute a formidable code of rights for women and children. The committee on Rights of the child and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women has a mutually reinforcing nature. They should form the essential framework for a forward-looking strategy to promote and protect the rights of girls and women and decisively eradicate inequality and discrimination. CEDAW was adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1979 and came into force in September 1981. Nepal fully ratified CEDAW in 1991. CEDAW calls for equal rights for women in political and public life, equal access to education and equal choice of curricula, non-discrimination in employment, salary and guarantees of job security.

In 1994 National Council for Women and Child Development was constituted under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. The purpose of the council was to formulate national policies according to the world summit. Ministry of Women and Social Welfare was established in Sept 1995 to co-ordinate and monitor all activities related to child rights and welfare and to enhance the status of women (UNICEF, 1996).

The issue of formal education in Nepal is embedded within a powerful, global discourse on planned development, which emphasizes positive links between poverty, education, development and literacy. Formal education is positively correlated with agricultural productivity, health, population control, social cohesion and political consciousness and, therefore, considered one of the most

important ways to achieve economic and social development (Dreze & Sen, 1999; Gurung, 1988; NESAC, 1998; UNDP, 2002; UNICEF & HMG/NPC, 1996), from this perspective, illiteracy and lack of formal education is hence given high priority in development planning, with very specific consequences, such as financial and technical support to the educational sector, and planning and implementation of so-called non-formal, yet highly standardized, literacy programs particularly directed towards adult women and out school children (Valentin, 2005).

2.1 Concept of Literacy

Literacy is the knowledge of reading and writing. Those who can read and write are called literate. The ability to read and write has been regarded as the minimal standard of literacy. Nowadays literacy is interpreted in a wide and comprehensive sense. UNESCO came up with the concept of functional literacy in 1965. It defined "A person to be effective in normal activities of life. It is difficult to measure the extent of knowledge and skill required to carry on daily responsibilities relating to work" (UNESCO, 1965).

2.2 General Background of Education

In this context, Aryal views "Education is the greatest force for building up a country economically, socially and culturally. The challenges have to be accepted by the education, which are the real builders of the nation. Unless education is properly planned and organized it is not possible for the social welfare of all" (Aryal, 1970).

Literacy is ability of reading and writing whereas education is the systematic instruction to gain knowledge. Quality education produces knowledgeable person who is the shining sign of civilization, and development of country.

Today world has been progressing in every field due to the promotion and expansion of education. By education human being acquired knowledge of its past civilization and related it to present for the visualization for future. Education helps to shape the individual, culture and society. The crucial necessity in the development of the society is to improve education and skills. Education and development are continual process. Educated people utilize scientific technology on the local resources (Salam, 2003).

According to Harson, "Education is not a luxury which can be afforded after development has occurred. It is an integrated part an inescapable and essential part of the development process. Hence education plays vital role for the modification of human behavior and socio/cultural change" (Harson, 1966).

Learning Gender Justice through Women's Discourses has stated "The important reason for women's lack of access to resources and formal employment is not lack of education but rather than the patriarchal establishment discriminates against women in having access to resources. Therefore education will not make much difference. In addition the main effect of formal schooling is to educate women to accept a subordinate position in society and accept these discriminatory practices instead of fighting them. Schooling is therefore a main cause of women's lack of access to resource and education" (UNESCO, 2005).

Lynn Bennett has stated "No children should be excluded on the ground of location cast ethnicity gender or abilities to acquire relevant knowledge, learning skills and complete their education. For example, in Nepal the enrolment rate (age 6-10) of girls among Tarai middle caste and Muslim are well behind that of boys; for Muslims, both boys and girls enrolment rate is lower than other castes and Muslims girls participation in formal secondary school has remained low at 23 percentages. In India great strides have been made though the need for fuller addressing of scheduled caste issues is recognized" (Bennett, 2006).

2.3 History of Education Development in Nepal

Education is the pillar of overall development of a country so education is essential for every human being or a nation. In ancient period, the concept of schooling originates among high caste Hindu people, the Brahmins. And there are not any such records on educational development on that period. Middle of the fifth century under the rule of Lichhavi dynasty paid little attention to people's education and education of the common people was seen as an extra burden for them (Sharma, 1986) though they were popular for their cultural and architectural development. The succeeding regime, the Malla dynasty (879-1768) showed an interest in educating people but through their education system they were able to reach only high class people who were the ruling class family and families of the traditional priests or pundits (Joshi, 1982). The development of education in Nepal also could not progress before Rana period because the rulers were busy at war for expanding their states. During the period of Rana regime (1846-1950), they gave attention to the development of education in the country in order to run the administration of the country and to train the Brahmin boys for performing religious rites.

Similarly, Bir Shamsheer opened the first "western type" of school which was named Durbar School (government school). Tri-Chandra college which is the first college of Nepal was established in 1918. It was administered first by Calcutta University and later by Patna University. In 1934, the first school leaving certificate (S.L.C) board was established in Nepal. Only one female named Sabina Kumari applied for school leaving certificate and not a single woman applied for college education before 1947 (Sharma, 2043 B.S. 1986). The state's first national education act, the Education Code of 1940, authorized the opening of community-managed schools throughout the country and was therefore an important step in the development of formalized education policy in Nepal (c.f. Parajuli, 2002,p. 82). The successive Rana prime minister after Chandra Shamsheer started opening schools in the Katmandu valley and other parts of the country. But the participation of the students was only higher class

or caste people. It is not surprising then that Daniel Wright, writing about the number of school in Nepal before 1951 would state, " The subjects of school and colleges in Nepal may be treated as snakes in Ireland, there are none" (Wright, 1879).

But the record shows that there were in fact a handful of schools and students. Although about 98 percent of the 8.2 million people of Nepal were illiterate in 1951 (Nepal Ministry of Education, 1970) and Muslim were then excluded from the formal schooling for centuries and not given an opportunity to make education their cultural capital or use education to transform their knowledge into cultural capital. Before 1940 Muslim were not allowed to attend any schools. And after 1940s Muslims were allowed to attend secondary schools and colleges and the Rana government eventually opened a Muslim primary school. With the declaration of free primary education up to class 5 for all Nepali citizens the number of Muslim attending the school has steadily increased (Ansari, 1981).

Hence, real progress of education development in the country began only after the dawn of democracy in 1951. The gradual development of education in Nepal appeared after establishment of democracy in 1951. People got chance to interact with the world only after democracy, people got right for their own interest. So democracy played the vital role for development of education. Government also emphasized on education giving priority to educational institutions. Five decades has passed since the installation of democracy but Nepal is still far behind in the educational development.

According to population census 2001 out of total population of Nepal, only 73.5 percent people were literate. The literacy rate is concentrated in the urban areas. Similarly, in the case of female education out of total 65.2 percent of female population is literate.

2.4 Women's Educational Status

Female literacy rate remain low and there is considerable disparity with male rates. The literacy rate for females rose from 12 to 42.5 percent between 1981 and 2001, while that for males rose from 34 to 65.1 percent. Almost half of the literate females are girls between 6 and 14 years of age, indicating the important role education has played in recent years. However considerable regional variation is seen in female literacy trends. An encouraging sign has been the greater participation of women in adult literacy programs and in 1985/86 women comprised 60 percent of those enrolled (Shivakoti, 1997).

“A number of steps are being taken to promote female literacy. A successful strategy is being undertaken by National project in the training of rural girls from backward, remote communities as primary school teachers.

Other innovation to encourage female literacy rate for the celibate classes between six to twelve year old girl which combine basic literacy and practical skills training through pragmatic daily life based curricular. Scholarship, free primary education and free text books as primary level have made some impact particularly in urban areas. Since 1986, although the percentage of female in most trade school is still low, in health science training, it was nearly 43 percent in 1987-88” (Regional Health Paper, SEARO, No-22).

Neupane shows that female education plays an important role to reduce population growth. The fertility rate decreases as the education level of women increases and vice-versa. So, to reduce the fertility rate, it is necessary to provide facilities for all women especially in village area in the field of education, if they are engaged in field of education, they are engage in other outsider works so there is less probability of (Shivakoti, 1997).

Acharya, giving emphasis on women's education and educational qualification are vital indicators of women's social status. These are crucial factors for not only to avail of employment opportunities created in the process of

modernization, but also for communication with the outside world as with increasingly educated males within the household. An educated wife and mother naturally have better communication with her educated male counterparts in the family and commands greater respect than one without education. Hence, in addition to marriage options, educational attainment has become a most-valuable indicator of women's social life (Thapa, 2003).

Ghimire has further emphasized on the importance of female education by arguing that to educate a boy is to educate an individual but to educate a girl is to educate the whole family and society. Education is therefore essential for women and girls to become self dependent, more productive, skillful, creative and to recognize their right place in the society and to enter the mainstream of the development of the nation (Ghimire, 1997).

Women are generally less educated than men, with a median of less than one year of schooling, compared with 1.4 years among males. This gap in gender has into narrowed in recent years. The net attendance ratio which indicates participation in primary schooling among those age 6-10 years and secondary schooling among those ages 11-15 years shows as 13 percent point different at primary school level and an 8 percent difference at the secondary school level (MOH, 2002).

2.5 Education status of Muslims

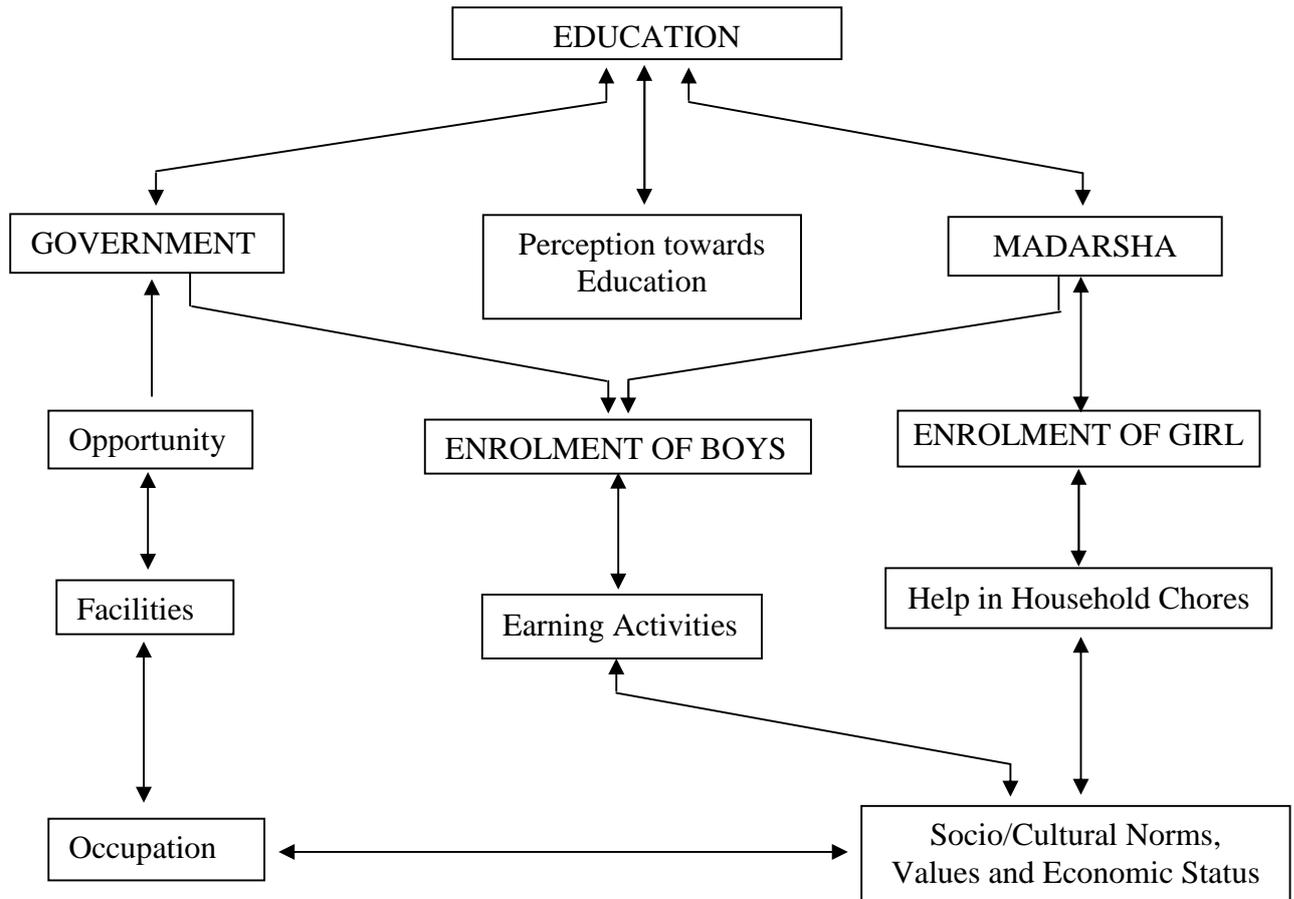
Nepal has multi-ethnic caste society representing mountain, hill and Tarai. Muslim population is found in Tarai belt. Muslim covers 4.4 Percent of the total population of Nepal. This rank is as third position among religious group in Nepal (CBS, 2001). Kapilvastu is the third largest district where Muslim population is highly dominated. But in the field of education, the majority of Muslim is attending only in-formal (religious/Madrassa) education. Out of the total literate population male literate population is 81.08 percent and female

literate population is 65.2 percent. But the literate condition of third largest group is very low, only 40 percent are literate and within them female literacy rate is only 13 percent. In Kapilvastu district total 41.5 percent population is literate out of them male literacy rate is 52.9 percent and female literacy rate is 29.3 percent. In Pipara VDC only 28 percent population is literate. There is also a great difference in educational status between male and female (DDC report, 2007).

According to Quran, “Every Muslim boy or girls should pursue his or her education as far as possible.” But in Muslim society it is only saying and doesn't exist in practice (Abdulaa, 1999).

Before 1940's Muslim people were not allowed to attend any Nepali schools and after that they were allowed but conservative Muslim didn't allow their children especially girls to have education. Only a few were given chance to continue their education. Today, the condition of education is not much more satisfactory. At first Muslims emphasize reading religious books like Quran. Most of the females are limited with this type of knowledge and some receive primary and secondary education in Madrasa. During Rana period Muslim primary school was opened and it is still running as "Madrasa Islamic". Nowadays large number of Madrasas are located in Tarai belt. Some Muslims continue to study Urdu and Persian in India and gulf countries (Salam, 2005). A large number of the Muslim of Nepal live in the Tarai belt. Every Muslim children start their reading and writing process in Madrasa. And most of the girls are only limited on Madrasas education. Madrasas are established in 28 district in Nepal. Out of the 28 districts 18 are in Tarai and 10 are in the hills. There are nearly about 3000 small and big Madrasas and Islamic schools in Nepal. Rautahat district has the largest number of students in Madrasa and Lalitpur has the lowest number. Moreover, parents forbid the female children with the education but they educate their boys in the government and private schools (Souvenir, 2007).

2.6 Conceptual Framework



Conceptual framework has been developed to investigate the factor, which is responsible in the enrolment of girl in school. In this regard school enrolment of girl taken as a ‘dependent variable’ where as socio/cultural norms and values, economic status, occupation helping household chores, earning activities, facilities, opportunities perception toward education, all was taken as “independent variables”. As well as government school and Madrasa school were not also far from this independent variables which also categories as “independent variables”. Independent variables, which I drew, were directly affected dependent variable. So, dependent variables and independent variable both were co-related to each other.

CHAPTER – THREE

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the technical aspect of the research. Only one method is not sufficient to gather all kinds of information related to the study. To make study more reliable, different data collection techniques are used. Further it also gives information regarding location of study area, types of research design, data collection techniques, sample nature, sources of data and data analysis techniques.

3.1 Research Design

This present study is specially designed to describe the status of Muslim women's education in Pipra. It is based on the descriptive research design, in order to fulfill the specific objective of the study. The analysis is mainly based on primary data.

A descriptive research design used to describe and helped to fact-finding inquiries on the selected topic, inequality access on education in Muslim community. As per nature of the research data related to socio/cultural phenomenon perception towards education, equal opportunity, enrolment of female children in school, etc, were collected based on existing situation.

3.2 The Research Site

I focused my research on those ethnic/caste group which are different from Hindu religion called Muslim “untouchable one” ethnic/caste group in the

western development region of Nepal and I did my field research in Pipra VDC, one of the 78 village development committees (VDC) of the Kapilvastu district of western Nepal. Why I choose Pipra in Kapilvastu and why not some other village or some other district? Regarding the ideal study site Marshall and Rossman (1989:su) argue that it is where entry is possible, where there is a high probability of a rich mix of many of the processes people, programs, interactions, or structures of interest and where the researcher can define an appropriate role and be assured of good sampling. And I found Pipra VDC is fit all of these criteria. Many disadvantaged community people such as Muslim, Pasi, Chamar, Yadav, Kahar Call Pipra VDC is their home. The combination of Muslim and Hindu are in the VDC.

Pipra is situated on the southern part of Kapilvastu district. The VDC covered by 585 households; with them 59 percentage of resident are Muslim. Muslim residents are highly dominated. The total literacy rate of the VDC is 28 percent. The main reason to select this area for study is no research has been conducted in this VDC yet. And my study is concern with Muslim girl's education. This VDC is highly dominated by Muslim population and of course literacy rate is very far behind the people. Like wise the VDC is very close to India and the research also compares the Indian cultural effects. So all these reasons made me to choose Pipra VDC for my research site.

Prior to the selection of Pipra VDC, I consulted statistical officer of the DDC and some other development organization like LCA, DACAW. All suggested me to go to Pipra VDC because Pipra is highly Muslim dominant VDC to fulfill my objective. Pipra is the best site for my study.

3.3 Sample Design

To determine the sample size by means of probability techniques the total numbers of households existing in the study area is the important parameters

required. The sample size was determined on the basis of households population of the area was obtained from the office of the Village Development Committee (VDC). The standard sample procedure was followed for the proper representation of the area. One household or a single family is considered as a sample unit.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

First of all when I used the method of sampling I already known about the total households located in the concern wards where I was going to do my research work. For deep investigation I only choose 3 wards out of 9 wards. Within them, I separate 105 Muslim household from 165 household in VDC. After that process, I had applied systematic random sampling procedure. And I applied the formula of systematic random sampling which is known as $K=N/n$,

Where, $K = \text{Interval}$

$N = \text{Total Households}$

$n = \text{Sample}$

I had done only 40 percentages, which means 42 households. This formula applied like that, $K=N/n$.

Where, $K = 42$, $N = 105$ hence $n = 2.5$ (either 2 or 3 was the interval) than I draw 1, 2, 3 number and those number are local leader take out which was no. 2 and my first household interview was start on the household there was not the chance for biasness so that I applied this method on my research.

To meet the objective of the study I use this method. The method which I have applied helped me to generalize universe reasons throughout the specific data.

3.5 Natures and Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected during the fieldwork. The qualitative data basically consisted of ethnographic details, their perception on education and their reaction on the female education on higher level or government level. I directly consulted the women who were not able to continue or had not received education. The qualitative data were collected generally the first hand information on population census and socio/economic condition. Secondary data have also been collected from government office such as DDC and VDC and other sources such as from Madarsa, Library and DACAW.

3.6 Data Collection Technique

Both primary and secondary data were collected according to the objectives of the study. To make study more reliable ever-sampled household was undergone to collect primary data.

Interview schedule and semi- structured questionnaire were used to gather information from the respondents. Using this method, I achieved the scattered concept towards women access on education, affecting reasons thought the individual opinion.

Similarly participants' observation, group discussion, key informants interview, household survey was also used during the course of the survey.

Secondary information was collected from relevant literature, library study, research report, VDC report and annual report of plan which are collected from DDC. This data helps me to know about the Muslim people's culture, religion, norms, values likewise literacy percentages and population. School teacher, local leaders, development workers were interviewed to gather information

about the situation of the VDC and the people. Information collected from this technique was used to make the semi- structured data more clear.

3.7 Household Survey

In order to collect primary data regarding the socio/cultural perception of the people, the household survey was conducted and this can not be gained from observation, the questionnaire method is a major research instrument for the study an inter related questionnaire was developed to gain more details for the study. Therefore simple semi-structured questionnaire was developed and tested for the interview with the respondents and with the help of sampling.

3.8 Observation

Relevant information regarding the educational status of Muslim women in the rural villages were also collected by direct observation in the study area. During the study period, observation and interview were conducted. Only those data have collected which can only be observed. For this research, observations were done on school and teaching, community visit to know the living standard of the people, gender behavior, schooling patterns etc.

3.9 Group Discussion

Group discussion is also one important method to find out the actual socio/cultural boundaries towards the female schooling. During group discussion, a group discussion represents some qualitative data on different points of view towards the education & schooling. By this method, I collected the information regarding people's perception on female education and male education. I raised question related to education and affecting factor for

education like religion, culture, economy, perception towards education, need of household chores, earning activities and so on. They all gave me their own view and these helped me to identify the actual social cultural cause in terms of inequality.

Using this method I know about the perception of female education in Pipra VDC which was known from group discussion. What was the opinion of various people about the women education is known as well as learnt about the Muslim religion, custom and tradition through this study.

3.10 Key Informant Interview

This technique was conducted to collect primary data. Key informants are mostly reliable in giving information on particular topic.

To meet my topic I prefer for those people who know about the inequality of education on this Muslim community. Local people having good knowledge about local area and resources such as school teachers, leaders, farmers, development workers, VDC Chairmen, as well as house wives, women group leaders were consulted through interviews, conversations and peer discussions for broader information collection.

3.11 Methods of Data Processing and Analysis

In terms of data processing it is nothing harder, it was the primary data translating into the needed format of the table. Compared to the Muslim educational inequality in male and female and what is the root cause of inequality through the use of information from respondents and informants. Therefore diagrams, tables, have been used as a tool and techniques of data analysis.

3.12 Limitation of the Study

My research is concerned with the educational inequality in male and female of Pipra VDC, Kaplivastu. It is concerned on the basis of socio-cultural reason to find out the educational inequality. Questions like, what are the reasons behind the Muslim females not receiving education properly? Why they are partially distributed on education, is the major base line of my research? So, this research of mine does not represent the total Muslim community of Nepali Muslims because it has been done on the basis of certain group of community in Kapilvastu.

My research find out the reason of unequal distribution of education to Muslim female. People of excluded group like Muslim man, woman are the limited source of my study. So that, it might not give the total representation of total Muslim community of Nepal because of the lack of manpower, budget and other supporting factors. But without doubt, this will help any individual organizations or even any student to get into the root causes of educational inequalities in Muslim communities and help them to get rid of such problems.

3.13 Expected Outcome of the Research

This research allows me to produce a scientific thesis. Similarly education has become an indispensable factor in the development of various spheres of society and culture and this research helps to get knowledge about the cause of inequality in access to higher education in Muslim women in Tarai. Therefore it directly provides the feedback knowledge for the individual researcher/developmental planners in NGO/INGO to get information and the root cause of inequality in education.

Education is fully focused on the current issue of excluded groups as well as the national problems. It also encouraged to involve the excluded group or, marginalized person on the development to the access of educational equality.

So far as the research brings out the current socio/cultural inequalities to access on higher educational conditions as well as their facing problems and its resolution.

Now, socio/cultural inequality in access of higher education in rural Muslim women in Tarai is the main issue raised on national level. They are socially /culturally /religiously exploited. They are exploited on grounds of their own religious identity. There is very vast inequality in access to higher education in Tarai. It is very difficult to define literacy but the simple knowledge in reading and writing skill is categorized as the literacy. But the Muslim women in Tarai has been taught the religious knowledge and they have only the knowledge of Quran and religious books. Therefore, this research concern with the socio/cultural issues on the inequalities in access of higher education of Muslim women in Tarai. This research brings current situation and problems for the discussion in national level which helps to raise them on equal distribution of the education in Tarai Muslim women.

CHAPTER - FOUR

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to provide a brief introduction of the study area followed by the demographic description and socio-economic characteristics of the study area.

4.1 Physical Setting of the Study Area

Kapilvastu district is situated in the western part of Nepal. It is one of the district of Western developmental region. It is bounded by the districts Arghakhanchi, Ruphandehi and India from north, east, south and west respectively. The district headquarter of Kapilvastu is Taulihawa and there is one municipality called Kapilvastu Municipality. The total number of VDCs in Kapilvastu is 78, and Pipra is one of among them. It is located in southern part of Kapilvastu. It is bounded in the east Bijuwa; west Rangapur, north Titirkhi, Baluhawa and India is on southern part. So this VDC is called Nepal-India border. This VDC is very close to India and because of this closeness; all people go to India for the purpose of market, hospital and daily needs. Nepali people are depended on Indian market therefore Nepali economy directly gone to Indian market.

Pipra lies 9 km on the south part from Pakadi chowk, which is situated in Lumbini road between Lumbini to Taulihawa along Nepal-India border road. Even though the place is belted in Tarai region but the facilities on road is not very well. There is one main gravel road and lots of other muddy road for village entrance. Due to the condition of road people have to face difficulties in

their daily lives especially on rainy season. This village extended over an area of 8.74 sq/km. The land use pattern of VDC is dominated by agriculture land. There is not Major River in the VDC. There are lacks of irrigation, within the VDC, and due to the absence of canal system all farmers are depending upon the nature for irrigation. In the whole VDC there is only one health post in ward 3, for simple disease all people came on this health post. So lack of health care center mortality rate on this VDC is very high.

4.2 People, Family and Habitats

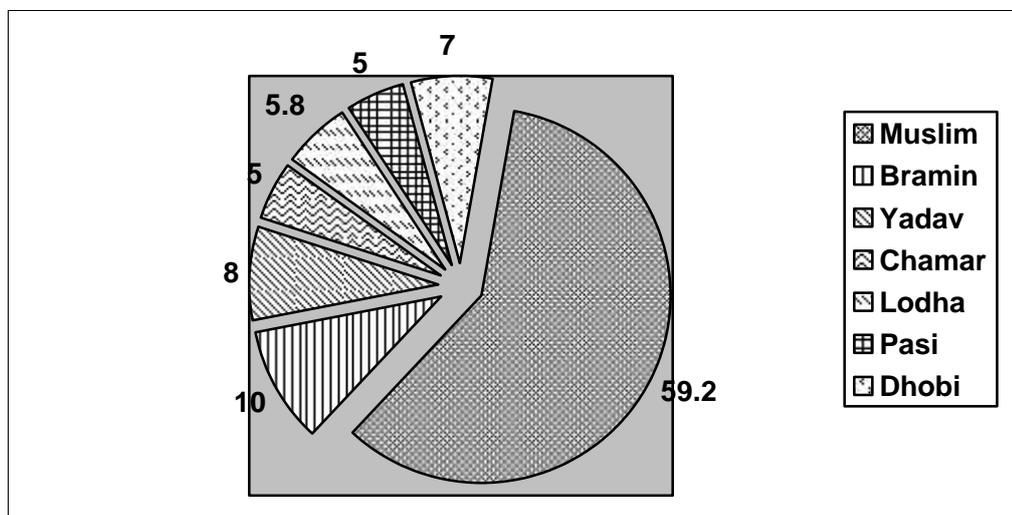
There are 585 households in the VDC and the total population of the VDC is 4,231 among which male population is 2,087 and female population is 2,144 (source, VDC records). Majority of Muslim families are joint type whereas Hindu families seem to be nuclear with an average family size of 8.8 (source forwarded to DDC 2007). All the families belong to patriarchal, son preference is highly dominant in this community.

The VDC is heterogeneous in terms of caste/ethnic distribution. Muslim is the major ethnic group followed by Yadav, Kalwar, Brahman, Chamar, Kahar, Lodha, Pasi. Muslim occupies the top most position with 59.2 percentage of population. This VDC is highly dominated by Muslim population. However the distribution of caste/ethnic groups in Pipra VDC is somewhat different than the overall distribution in Kapilvastu district. In percent, there are very less Brahmans, Pasi, Kahar, Loadh and so on.

Figure 1 shows the caste, ethnic/caste composition of Pipra VDC.

Figure 1

Population Distribution of the Pipra VDC



The settlement pattern of the VDC is scattered. Majority of the houses are made up of bricks and cements but not well finished. The animal sheds are built just close the house and goats are kept in the corner of the kitchen. There is no toilet in the VDC, people used forest and open areas for defecation. It is a common practice in the rural Tarai area handed down from generation to generation. And somehow development project had been launch common people for toilet to against the common place defecation but this project was totally failed, no one can interested on this development.

4.2.1 Distribution of the Mother Tongue: The mother tongue speaker in VDC is categorized in the *Table 1* and *Figure 2*

Table 1

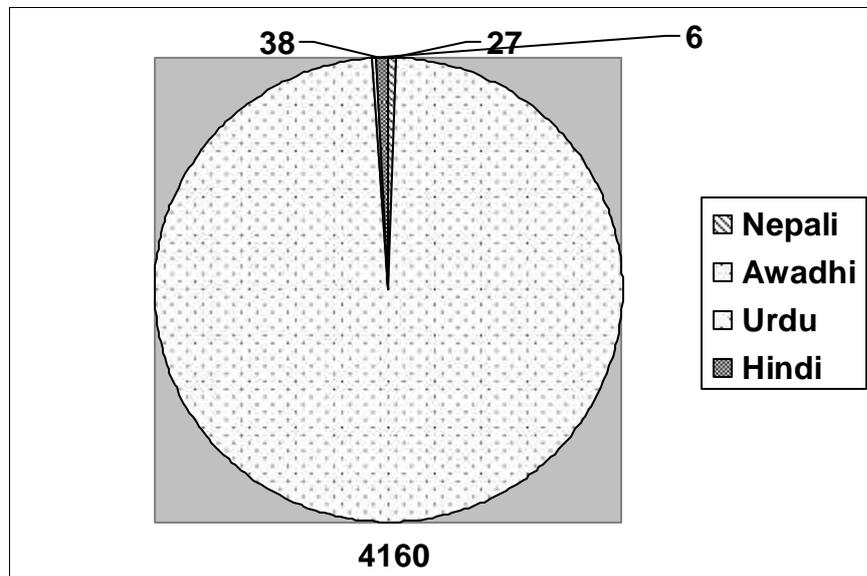
Distribution of Mother Tongue

Mother Tongue	Total	Percent
Nepali	27	0.64
Awadhi	4160	98.32
Urdhu	6	0.14
Hindi	38	0.90
Total	4231	100.00

(Source : DDC Report 2007)

Figure 2

Distribution of Mother Tongue



Hence, Nepali mother tongue speaker are only 0.64 percentages

Awadhi mother tongue speaker are 98.32 percentages

Urdu mother tongue speaker are 0.14 percentages

Hindi mother tongue speaker are 0.90 percentages

Especially, Awadhi is main mother tongue of the total population. A very interesting aspect of my research is that all my respondents did not understand Nepali language when I talked Nepali they laughed at seeing me.

4.2.2 Population by Religion : Pipra VDC is religiously diversity such as Muslim, Hindu and those religious people live together, no conflict between each other so the society smoothly function on its religious system and religion is one agent which derived the society as positive way as negative but in the VDC we saw religion derived as positive way. In Pipra VDC 41.0 percent population is Hindu and other side 59.0 percentage population is Muslim. Again religiously, Muslim population is in high position of the VDC.

4.2.3 Household Head by Sex: Main responsibility of the household head taken by male members of a house, so male is dominant factor and they are the decision makers on the whole family. Similarly female has very less access on household decision making.

Table 2 shows the percentage of male and female access on household head.

Table 2

Distribution of Household Head by Sex

Sex	Household	Percentage
Male	530	90.60
Female	55	9.40
Total	585	100.00

(Source : DDC Report 2007)

Comparatively male access on household head is highly than female access.

4.2.4 Employment Status of Pipra VDC

Most of the male members go to foreign countries like Qatar, Dubai, Saudi, and India for the purpose of employment therefore in village young male members was very less to see. Main source of income is agriculture and foreign remittance. People of the village are very poor. Similarly Muslim female never go to the outside of field because of their veil culture. So female worker is only limited inside the house and the all outside working responsibilities are only for male member. But this type of condition is not observed in Hindu religion both male female are working out side the house.

In Pipra VDC employment status is like this:

Table No. 3

Distribution of population by Employment Status, Pipra VDC

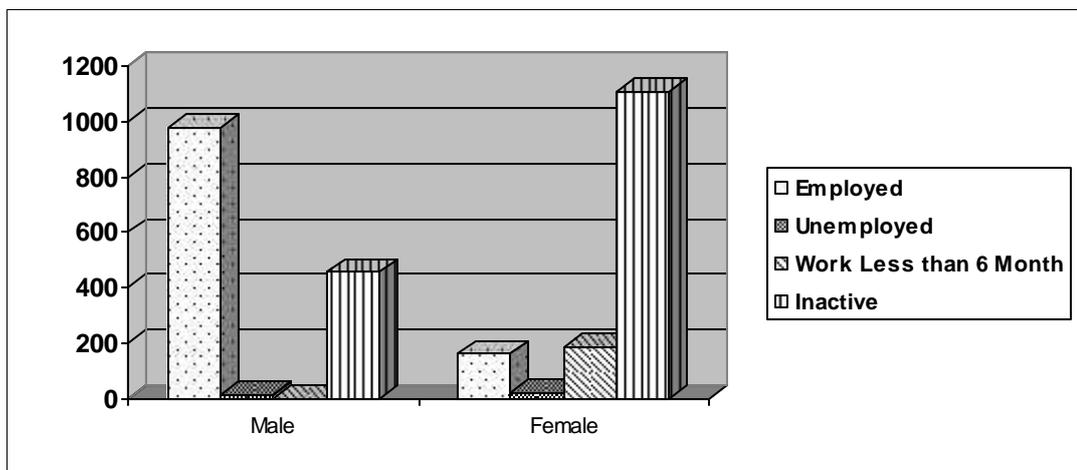
Employment status	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Employed	974	33.39	163	5.59	1137	38.98
Unemployed	13	0.45	22	0.75	35	1.20
Work less than 6 months	0	0.00	185	6.34	185	6.34
Inactive	456	15.63	1104	37.85	1560	53.48
Total	1443		1474		2917	100.00

(Source : DDC Report 2007)

* Note 5.59 % of female employment is not the employment of Muslim women but the employment of Hindu women who were the member of same cluster.

Figure No. 3

Employment Status of Population of Pipra VDC



(Source : DDC Report 2007)

4.2.5 Educational Status of Sample Parents

Education develops the horizon of our thinking. It helps in socialization, guides us to have clear idea and develops our mind, body and soul. An educated father can provide proper guidance to his children. Education of a father not only improves his social status but also improves the social status of his family. Educational status of father was measured as illiterate and literate. Those who cannot read and write were grouped as illiterate and those who can read and write and also had attended schools for education were grouped in literate category. Distribution of fathers on the basis of their educational status is given in *Table 4*.

Table No. 4

Educational Status of Sample Parents

Educational Status	Fathers	%	Mothers	%	Total	%
Literate	12	14.12	27	31.76	39	45.88
Illiterate	17	20.00	29	34.12	46	54.12
Total	29		56		85	100.00

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

Among 42 households I found only 29 fathers present in the house. Absences were not included in these characteristics because the fathers were not in the house due to their job. The percentage of literate father was 14.12 percent, in which 5 were just literate, 7 were of primary level. There was no any father who should taken secondary level or more. 20 percent of fathers were found illiterate.

As mother is considered a first teacher of the child, education of mother has an important role in development of child's personality through socialization. Education of mother is measured as that of father's education. Distribution of mothers on the basis of their educational status is given in the *Table 4*.

Out of 56 mothers 27 of mothers were literate and 29 mothers are illiterate. And I want to mention that all these mother should take only religious education and also they have little knowledge of subtract and addition.

4.2.6 Occupation of the Respondent

The word occupation literally denotes the primary work of an individual. Occupation not only gives a social and economic identification of the individual but also gives a hierarchy to the people especially in rural society. Occupations of head of the household influence the other members of the family also. Family occupation like agriculture, cottage industry requires all the member of the family to work together. So occupation of respondent was categories in 4 groups, consisting agriculture, labour, wage labour, business. Distribution of respondents according to their occupation is given in *Table 5*.

Table No. 5

Occupation of the Respondent

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Agriculture	35	83.33
Labour	4	9.52
Self Business	1	2.38
Skilled labour	2	4.76
Total	42	100.00

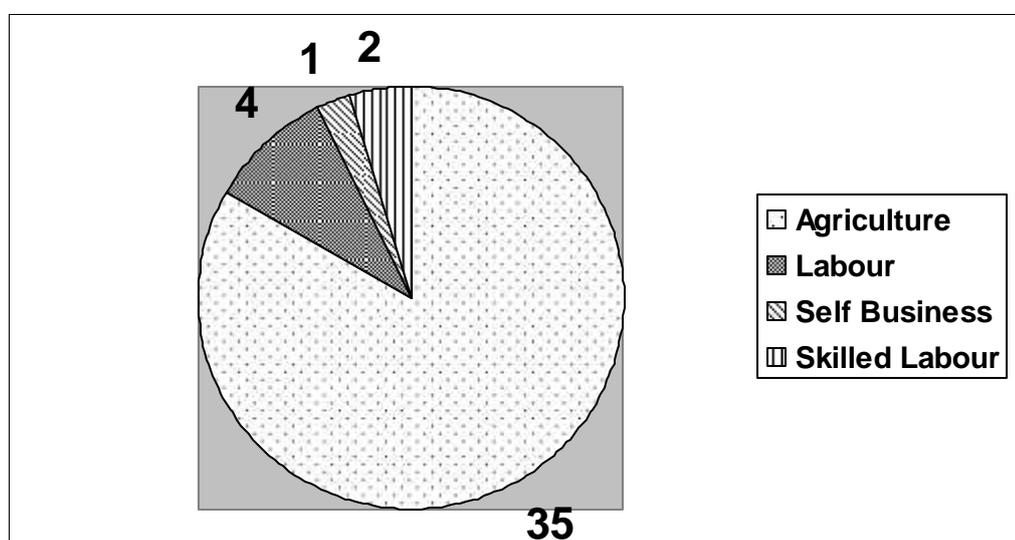
(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

The means of subsistence of majority of people was agriculture. Out of 42 household 83.33 percent were found dependent in agriculture as their main occupation. There were 9.52 percent of households who were fully dependent on wage labour, 4.76 percent were skilled labour and 2.38 percent of households were dependent on their own business.

Among them only a few had food sufficiency for a year from agriculture. Most of the households were food deficit; to solve this problem people went to India or gulf country for wage labour.

Figure 4

Occupation Distribution of the Pipra VDC



4.2.7 Economic Status of the Sample Household

Family property owned by a household reflects its socio-economic status in the community. In this view, a relative economic status of the household conceived by the community was taken as important characteristic.

All the properties of a household including land, livestock, agricultural production, business and service are taken into consideration of find out the relative economic status of the households. To identify the relative economic status of the households, on the basis of their relative economic status is given in *Table 6*.

Table No. 6

Economic Status of the Sample Household

Economic Status	Number	Percentage
High	4	9.52
Medium	18	42.86
Low	20	47.62
Total	42	100.00

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

Among them 9.52 % of households were of high economic status, which had food sufficiency for nine months to twelve months. The households belonged to medium economic status were 42.86% with food sufficiency for sixth to eights months only, and 47.62% of households were of low economic status with food sufficiency for three to five months only.

4.2.8 Helping in Earning Activities

In a country like Nepal, majority of people are poor and the burden of supporting the family become difficult for the parents only. Parents need a helping hand of their children in wage earning activities to support the family. The main focus of this study was on the enrolment of child in school that the need of children in earning activities was considered as important

characteristics. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses to the question “Does your child engaged in earning activities”?

4.2.9 Need of Children in Earning Activities

The *Table 7* shows that 14.29% of respondents have need of their children of school going age to help in earning activities, whereas 85.71% of respondents were not in favor of engaging their children of school going age in earning activities. In other side, respondent of girl child never allow them in earning activities.

Table No. 7

Need of Children in Earning Activities

Engaged in Earning Activities	Total no of Household				Boys Enrolled		Girls Enrolled	
	Boys	%	Girls	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	6	14.29	0	0	15	14.56	0	0
No	36	85.71	42	100	88	85.44	110	100

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

4.2.10 Helping in Household Chores

It is recognized but that women's working hour is longer than that of man. In a country like Nepal, the fertility rate of average Nepali women is 5.6 (Nepal family planning report, 2007), where mother frequently needs the help of her children especially of girl children in household chores. In this view, need of children in household chores were taken as an important characteristic of the household. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses to the question "Do you need your child to help in household chores? The total percent of respondents needs their children in household chores.

4.2.11 Facilities

It is widely recognized that the status of women in Nepal, particularly in rural areas is lower than that of men due to socio-cultural milieus. Women are socially, culturally, and economically far behind than men. In this view, the parental attitude and practice was taken as characteristics of the respondents. In this regard, two questions were asked to parents. "Do you think that both boys and girls children should get equal opportunity in education?" and "Do you provide school facilities to both your son and daughter equally?" Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses is given in *Table 8*.

Table No. 8

Attitude of Parents in Providing Equal Facilities in Education

Equal Facilities in Education	Number	Percentage
Yes	2	4.76
No	40	95.24
Total	42	100.00

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

Out of 42 household 4.76 percent of respondents were in favor to provide equal facilities to both son and daughter, and 95.24 percent were in favor of boys' education only. According to them girls do not have the use of education because she is confined to do household chores, where education is not necessary to be literate only will be enough for them, its means, she had able to read religious book.

Table No. 9

Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of Equal Opportunity

Equal Providing By opportunity	H/N	Percentage
Yes	5	11.90
No	37	88.10
Total	42	100.00

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

It is a real fact that in the context of Nepal girls have provided less opportunity than the compare between male, similarly in Muslim community 88.10% of household did not provide equal facilities and only 11.90% provide equal facilities.

4.2.12 Distance

There is not sufficient number of school in the VDC. Due to this the distance from secondary school to home have became very far, and primary school and Madarsa is also one lack of school and the distance parents of Muslim people do not allow their child, especially girl child to walk long distance alone. In this view, distance of house to school was taken into consideration.

All total respondents have the same sound that the distance to the school was far from the house, so its difficult to girl child to go to school they would not send their girl child in high school.

CHAPTER – FIVE

MAIN HINDRANCE OF FEMEALE’S ACCESS TO EDUCATION

5.1 Socio/Cultural/Economic Characteristics and School Enrolment of Girl Child

In developing countries like Nepal the status of women is lower than that of men. The socialization patterns in Nepali society are such that young boys are prepared for the world of productive work and decision making of every field, while girls are trained to be housewife, mother and service providers. The root cause of gender bias against the girl child in Nepal seems to lie in a complex set of social, cultural, economic and historical factors. Education of girls is also influenced by the socio-cultural norms and values, which are prevailing in the community and has been handed down generation to generation. Their socio/economic factors influence the participation of girl child in formal education. An objective understanding, rather than subjective speculation, of these social cultural or economic factors would greatly enhance ones ability to make rational decision towards providing a wider and more sustaining participation in education. In this view some socio/economic characteristics such as religion/caste/ethnicity, culture, income occupation of respondent, economic status of households, need of children in household chores, need of children to help in earning activities, distance to school, equal opportunity, facility and perception towards education were taken to find out the variation in school enrolment of girl child in relation to these factors.

In order to find out the relation between school enrolment of children and different socio/cultural and economic characteristics have been compared.

5.2 School Enrolment of Muslim Girl Child in Madarsa

Muslim people never allow their girl child to join co-education when they go young. Due to this concept enrolment of girl child was found to be high only in primary level, after that they never join co-education because of their various religious aspect. But in another side most all boys children have joined Indian boarding School and very few have joined Madrasas because the concept of "Aarka Ko Naso" (Girls are considered as other's property) and "Budheskal Ko Sahara" (Boys are considered as stick of old age) found main hindrance for the less enrolment of Muslim girl child in Madrasa and rare enrolment of boarding school.

Table No. 10

Distribution of School Enrolment of Muslim Children in Madarsa

Class	Male	Female	Total
1	40	38	78
2	19	21	40
3	17	22	39
4	14	13	27
s5	13	16	29
Total	103	110	213

(Source : Madarsa of Pipra VDC Report, 2007 }

Figure No. 5

Distribution of School Enrolment of Muslim Children in Madarsa

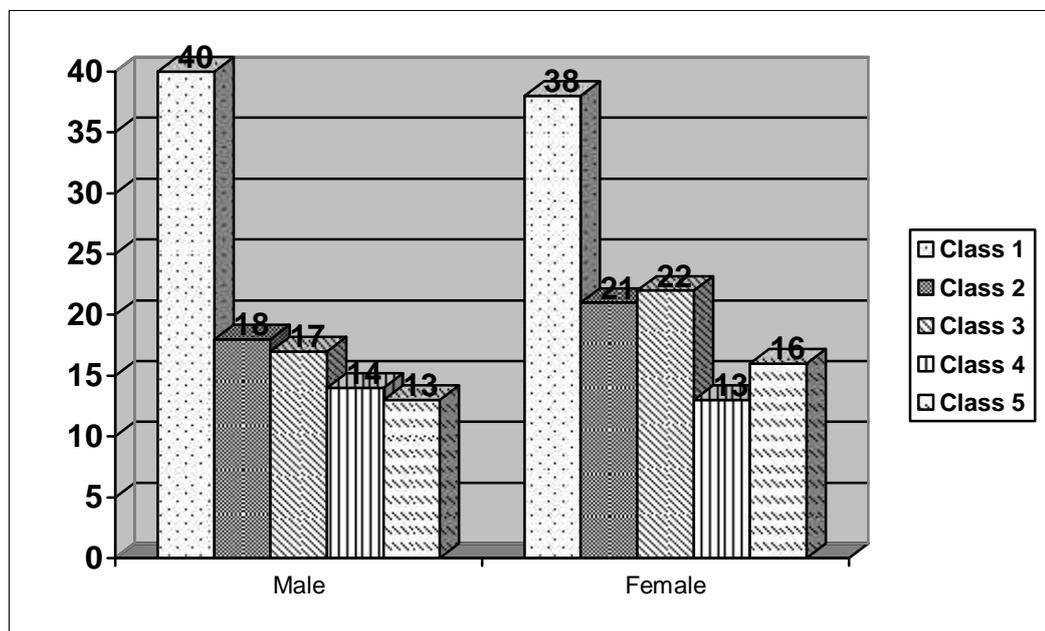


Figure 5 and Table 10 shows that in grade 1 the total enrolment was quite good for both sexes, grade II, female enrolment is high than male enrolment like wise grade 3 again female enrolment is high than male but the number of student decreases in grade 4 male are high than female, and 5th grade female enrolment is slightly up. The Madarsa do not have their own buildings all students sit on strew-mats in a common room. They do not have separate classroom. Therefore the government should first prepare the physical facilities then teacher should be provided. Five teachers are required at a time to cover five different classes, but if only two teachers are provided, who should take the three classes? (Interview with the teacher of a Madarsa in Pipra VDC, 2007).

5.3 School Enrolment of Girl Child and Religion

It is obvious that cultural values and social norms are very much influenced by religious beliefs of the community. In traditional society religious codes are

reflected in social codes and even in legal codes. In this view, it is important to compare the school enrolment of girl child between different religious backgrounds. Distribution of school enrolment of children on the basis of their religion is shown in *Table 11* and *Figure 6*.

Table No. 11

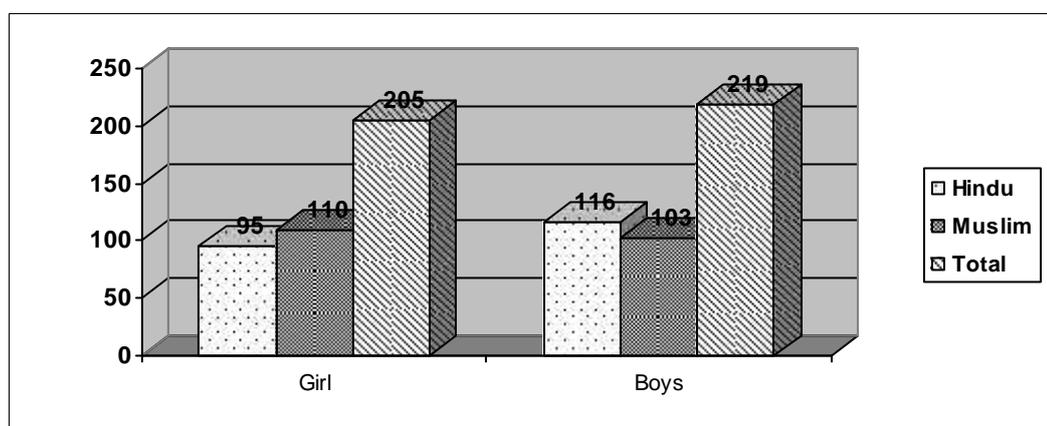
Enrolment of Girl with Respect to Religion

Religion	Total No. Of School Going Child (6-15yrs)					No. Of Children Enrolled				Total Enrolled	
	Girl	%	Boys	%	Total	Girl	%	Boys	%	No.	%
Hindu	242	17.65	267	19.47	509	95	6.93	116	8.46	211	15.39
Muslim	453	33.04	409	29.83	862	110	8.02	103	7.51	213	15.54
Total	695		676		1371	205		219		424	

(Source : DDC Report, 2007)

Figure No. 6

Enrolment of Girl with respect to Religion



Out of 242 Hindu girls only 95 girls were found enrolled in school where as in Muslim total girl population was 453 with them 110 girls were found enrolled

Madarsa which mean 8.62 percent. Similarly boys enrolled was high in school it was 8.46 percent whereas boys in Muslim Madarsa was less than girl enrolled. It was 7.51 percent. As seen on the figure 6 There was a difference of 0.15 percent between the two religion.

5.4 Level wise Educational Status of the Pipra VDC

Education is the prime pillar of any country and society. Education is one indicators for all kind of development. Educated people can change the society means developed the society so that education of the VDC is compared to the development of the VDC. The distribution of educational level of the VDC is shown in *Table 12* and *Figure 7*.

Table No. 12

Population (6 years and above) by Education Level

Education level	Total	Percent	Male	Percent	Female	Percent
Illiterate	1897	54.72	767	22.12	1130	32.59
Class 1-3	384	11.08	243	7.01	141	4.07
Class 4-6	498	14.36	273	7.87	225	6.49
Class 7-10	334	9.63	240	6.92	94	2.71
Class 11-12	72	2.08	72	2.08	0	0
Bachelor	14	0.40	14	0.40	0	0
Others	260	7.50	103	2.97	157	4.52
Not stated	8	0.23	0	0	8	0.23
Total	3467	100.0	1712		1755	

(Source : DDC Report, 2007)

In Pipra VDC, total literate population is only 28 percent. Level wise educational status shows population with various classes enrolment. In class 1-3 there are 384 students with them 243 males and 141 female. Likewise 4-6

levels are 498 students with them 273 male and 225 female, 7-10 level are 334 students with them 240 male and 94 female.

In Pipra VDC there was no secondary level school. So these people were sent for study out side the VDC, those people mostly prefer to study in India, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. In higher secondary level there were only 72 males who completed higher secondary studies, there was not a single women who was enrolled in higher secondary studies. There were 14 males in bachelor level but no one in master degree.

Similarly 7.5 percent of students were involving other education level. Which are called Madrasa School, with them 103 male enrolments and 157 female enrolments, female Muslim are highly visible in Madrasa.

5.5 School Enrolment of Girl Child and Educational Status of Father

It is recognized that in a male dominated society a father has an important role in decision-making process at household and social level. In this regard his educational status influence not only his but also the whole family and then society. So the difference in school enrolment of girl child was compared with the educational status of the father. Distribution of school enrolment of girl child on the basic of their father's educational status is given in the *Table 13* and *Figure 7*.

Table No. 13

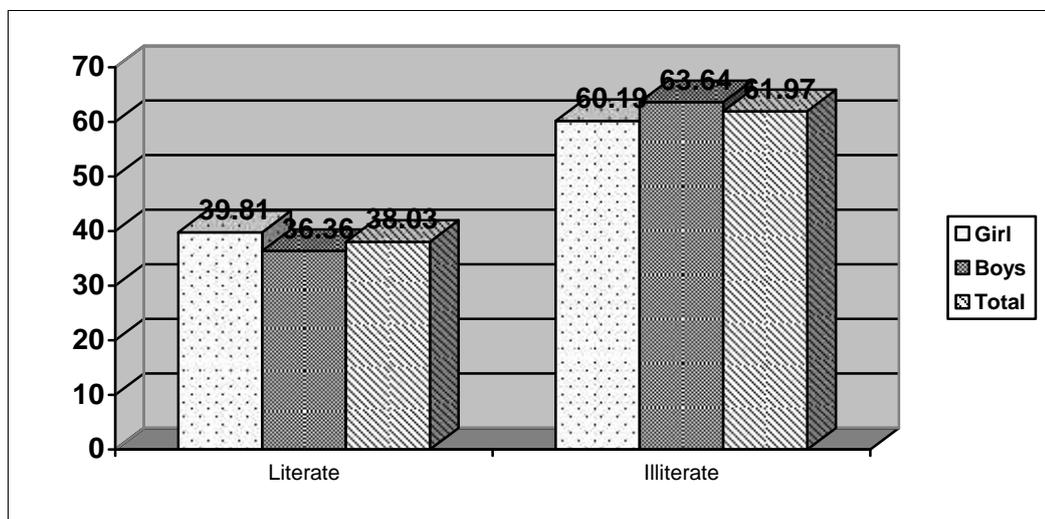
School Enrolment of Girl Child and Educational Status of Father

Father	Total Enrolled				Total	
	Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent	No.	Percent
Literate	41	19.25	40	18.78	81	38.03
Illiterate	62	29.11	70	32.86	132	61.97
Total	103		110		213	100.00

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

Figure No. 7

School Enrolment of Girl Child and Educational Status of Father



The school enrolment of girl child was 18.78 % among the literate father, where as it was 32.86 % among the illiterate father. Literacy rate among the father was less to see in the table. It was found that literacy of father was also effect the low enrolment of girl child in school.

5.6 School Enrolment of Girl Child and Educational Status of Mother

An educated mother gets a higher social status in comparison to uneducated mother. She is considered as a good advisor of the family. Education of mother helps to develop the entire personality of her children. In this view the difference in school enrolment of girl child was compared between different educational statuses of mother. Distribution of school enrolment of girl child on the basic of their mother's educational status is given the *Table 14* and *Figure 8*.

Table No. 14

School Enrolment of Girl Child and Educational Status of Mother

Educational status of Mother	No of Child Enrolled				Total	
	Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent	No.	Percent
Literate	75	35.21	80	37.56	155	72.76
Illiterate	28	13.15	30	14.08	58	27.23
Total	103		110		213	100.00

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

Figure No. 8

School Enrolment of Girl Child and Educational Status of Mother

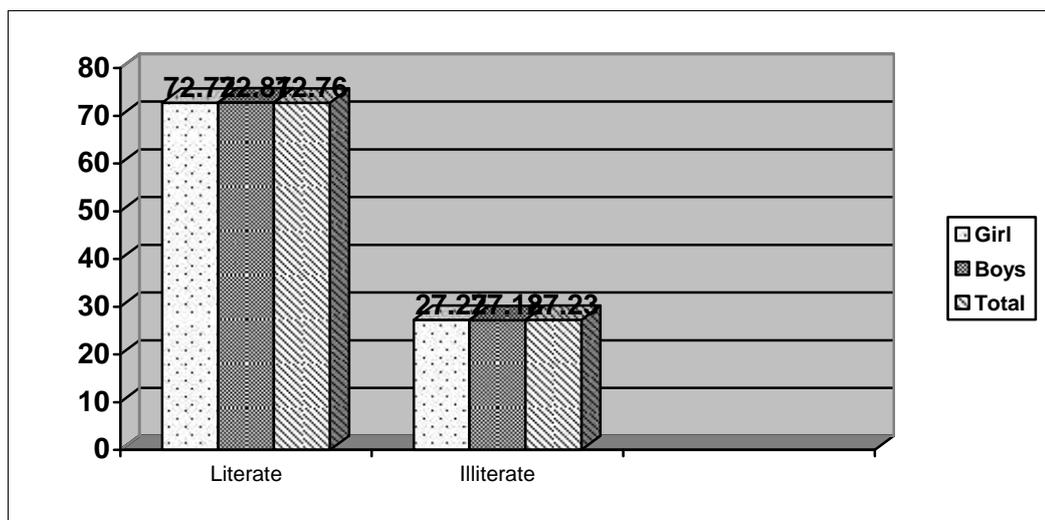


Table 14 shows that the school enrolment of girl child among the illiterate mother was 14.08 percent where as it were 37.56 percent among the literate mother. There was a different of 23.48 percent in the school enrolment of girl child among the literate and illiterate mothers. It is seen from the data in table 13 that educational status of mother has an important role to increase of school enrolment of girl child. But those mothers had been taken religious education.

5.7 School Enrolment of Girl Child and Occupation of Respondent

Occupation of the respondent not only influences the income of the family but also involvement of all family members. It gives identification to their work and its relative status in the community. In this view school enrolment of girl child was compared between different occupation distribution of school enrolment of girl child on the basis of respondents occupation is given in *Table 15* and *Figure 9*.

Table No. 15

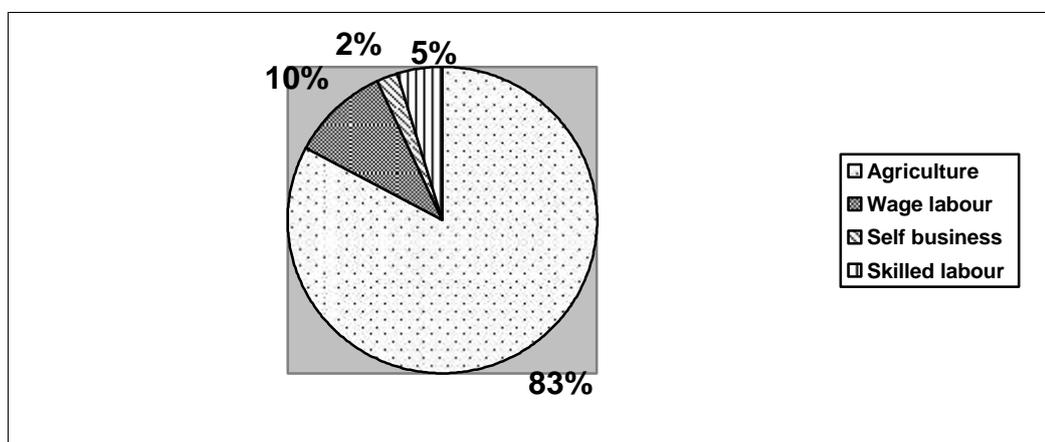
School Enrolment of Girl Child and Occupation of the Respondent

Occupation	No. of Enrolled Children				Total	
	Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent	No.	Percent
Agriculture	90	42.25	86	40.38	176	82.62
Wage labour	10	4.69	12	5.63	22	10.32
Self business	1	0.47	4	1.88	5	2.34
Skilled labour	2	0.94	8	3.76	10	4.69
Total	103		110		213	100.00

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

Figure No. 9

School Enrolment of Girl Child and Occupation of the Respondent



The lowest school enrolment of girl child was found 1.88 percent among self business group; in skilled labour it was found 3.76 percent; in wage labour group it was found 5.63 percent and in agriculture group it was found 40.38 percent which is the highest rate among these groups. There was a marginal difference in the school enrolment of girl child among labor group and agriculture group. Beside this there might be other factors like educational status of parents, need of girl child in household cores, income that may also influence in school enrolment. The regular source of income among the skilled labor and self-business group could be the reason for the highest enrolment state among all groups.

5.8 School Enrolment of Girl Child and Economic status of Household

Family property owned by a household gives a financial security to its member. It also gives social as well as economics status to the members of the household. School enrolment of girl child was compared by economics status of the household. Economic status is also one prime factor for the household subsistence. Distribution of school enrolment of girl child on the basis of economic status of their household is given in *Table 16* and *Figure 10*.

Table No. 16

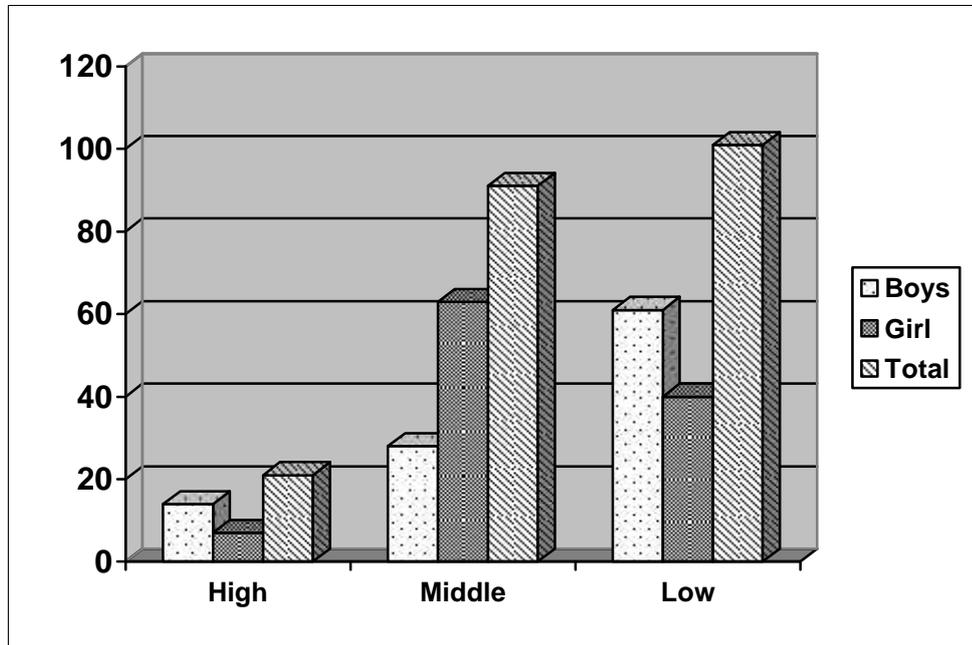
School Enrolment of Girl Child and Economic Status of Household

Economic Status of Household	No of Children Enrolled				Total	
	Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent	No	Percent
High	14	6.57	7	3.29	21	9.86
Middle	28	13.15	63	29.58	91	42.72
Low	61	28.64	40	18.78	101	47.42
Total	103		110		213	100.00

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

Figure No. 10

School Enrolment of Girl Child and Economic Status of Household



As shown in Table 16 and figure 10 the lowest enrolment of 3.29 % was found in high class those households whose economic status was high. Because high status of Muslim people restrict their girl child due to the name of prestige. If they allow their girl child to go to school she may be eloped. May be the villagers' saw their girl child, the veil system they never send their girl child out of the village? Prestige also cause for not sending their girl child to the school. The highest enrolment with 29.58 percent was found in household of middle class economic status, and 18.78 percent was found in household of lowest class economic status, which is highest than high-class economic status.

5.9 School Enrolment of Girl Child and Engaged in Earning Activities

In many parts of Nepal children above 10 years are found engaged in income earning activities. Parents only cannot support the family so they need a helping hand of their children to earn more. In this view the school enrolment

of girl child and boy child was compared between the household who needs and does not need the help of their children of girl child on the basic of their engagement of earning activities is given *Table 17* and *Figure 11*.

Table No. 17

School Enrolment of Children and Engaged in Earning Activities

Engaged in Earning Activities	Total no of Household				Boys Enrolled		Girls Enrolled	
	Boys	%	Girls	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	6	14.29	0	0	15	14.56	0	0
No	36	85.71	42	100	88	85.44	110	100

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

Figure No. 11

School Enrolment of Boys Child and Engaged in Earning Activities

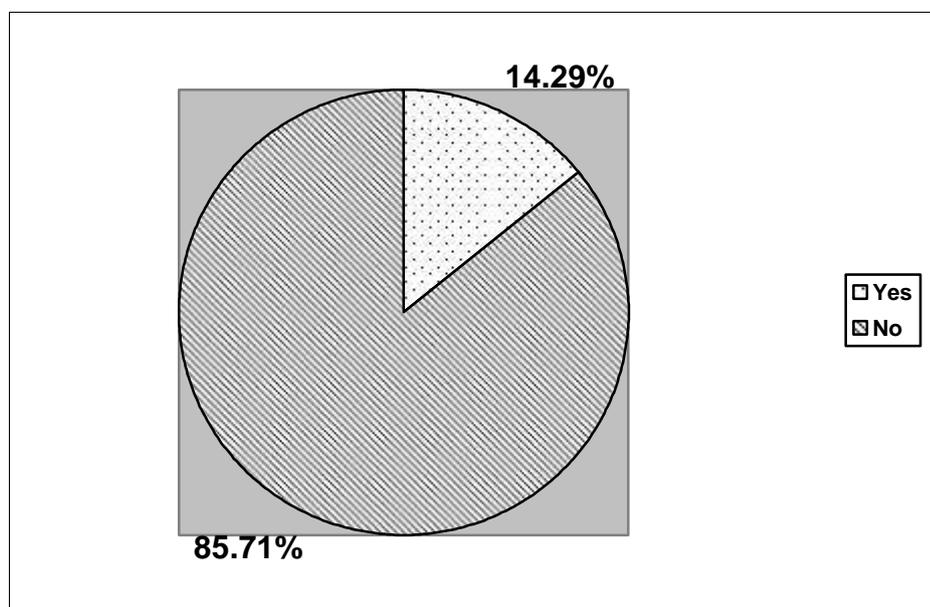


Table 17 shows that in the context of Muslim people, they did not engage their girl child in earning activities because of their veil thinking they were not allow their girl child in earning activities and they don't need it also because in Muslim religion the earning of daughter is not accepted in the household. So that they were not engaged their girl child in earning activities.

Again the same *Table* and *Figure 11* shows that 14.56 percent of household were needed their school going boys child an earning activities but highest number of household were not engaged their school going boys child an earning activities, they forced them to go to school but they won't go seriously in school. They spent their time on playing cards and doing fun, but neither they help to their parents for earning activities or not going to school for education.

5.10 School Enrolment of Girl Child and Need of Children in household Chores

In traditional society women are confined to do household chores. The workload of women is comparatively higher than that of men. In this regard a mother needs help especially from her daughter. She also wants her daughter to be trained in household chores so that she could be able to do it later in her life. In Muslim community birth rate was seen in maximum level so the school going girl child was engaged to look for their younger siblings. In this view, school enrolment of girl child was compared between the households where children are and are not needed to help in household chores.

Every household needed their school going children to help them in household chores.

5.11 School Enrolment of Girl Child and Distance to School

In traditional society, the importance of education has not yet been realized; parents do not want to send their children especially a girl to a distant school. Distance also effects the girl enrolment in school. In this view school enrolment of girl child was compared between the households who had considered distance to school as far and not far.

The distance of primary level was near but the lower secondary and secondary school was very far from the villages, and it takes (the distance of those school was) $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour walk to reach those schools. Therefore no one can send their girl child to those schools.

5.12 School Enrolment of Girl Child and Equal Facilities

The disparity between male and female is observed all over the country. In traditional society parents do not give priority to the education of girl. Similarly, in Muslim society, this situation is not far from the level. The attitude and practice of parents towards education of the girl child in school education. In this view, difference in school enrolment of girl child was compared between the households who provide equal or unequal facilities to both son and daughter. Distribution of school enrolment of girl child on the basis of facilities providing by parents is given in *Table 18*.

Table No. 18

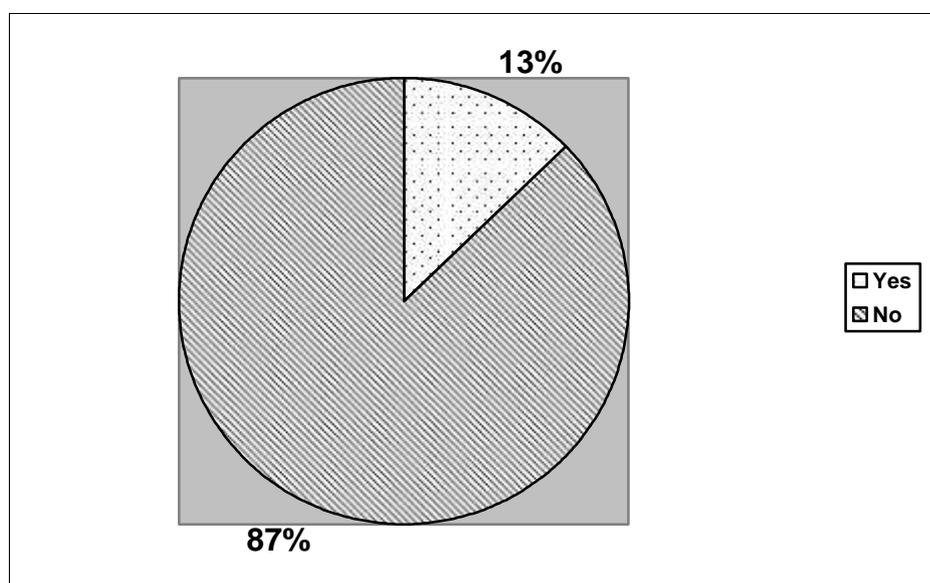
School Enrolment of Girl Child and Equal Facilities

Equal Facilities Provided to Daughter	Total no of		Girl Enrolled	
	Household	Percent	No.	Percent
Yes	7	16.66	14	12.78
No	35	83.33	96	87.28

(Source: Field Survey, 2007)

Figure No. 12

School Enrolment of Girl Child and Equal Facilities



As shown in *Table 18* and *Figure 12*, 12.72 percent of household was in favor of providing equal facilities, such as pen, pencil, copy, dress and other things to their children. Whereas high number 87.28 percent of household were not providing equally. The school enrolment of girl child among the household who provided equal facilities was 16.66 percent and the enrolment of girl child was 12.72 percent. 83.33 percent of households who were not providing equal facilities to their girl child.

5.13 Perception towards Education for Both Girl and Boy

In my study, I mostly focused on this topic because the traditional concept has been still running in people's mind whereas Muslim people have also been suffering the same concept. Their perception towards education is also very different for boys and girl. They want to educate their male child to the extent they can. On the other hand, for girls they only provide primary level education. I asked the reason for this type of discrimination (bias). They easily said that when we go older son take care usually but daughters are others

property, we have no right for them after marriage, so education for girl was not needed. Therefore primary level was enough to girl because primary level means she might be able to read religious books, so only for reading religious book they educated their daughter otherwise they never gave permission to their girls for job. So, all these causes were effected girl enrolment in school.

Table No. 19

Perception towards Education for Both Girl and Boy

Education needed for girl	Total no.	Percent
Needed	2	2.33
Only read (Quran) religious book	84	97.67
Not needed	0	0.0

(Source : Field Survey, 2007)

Figure No. 13

Perception towards Education for Both Girl and Boy

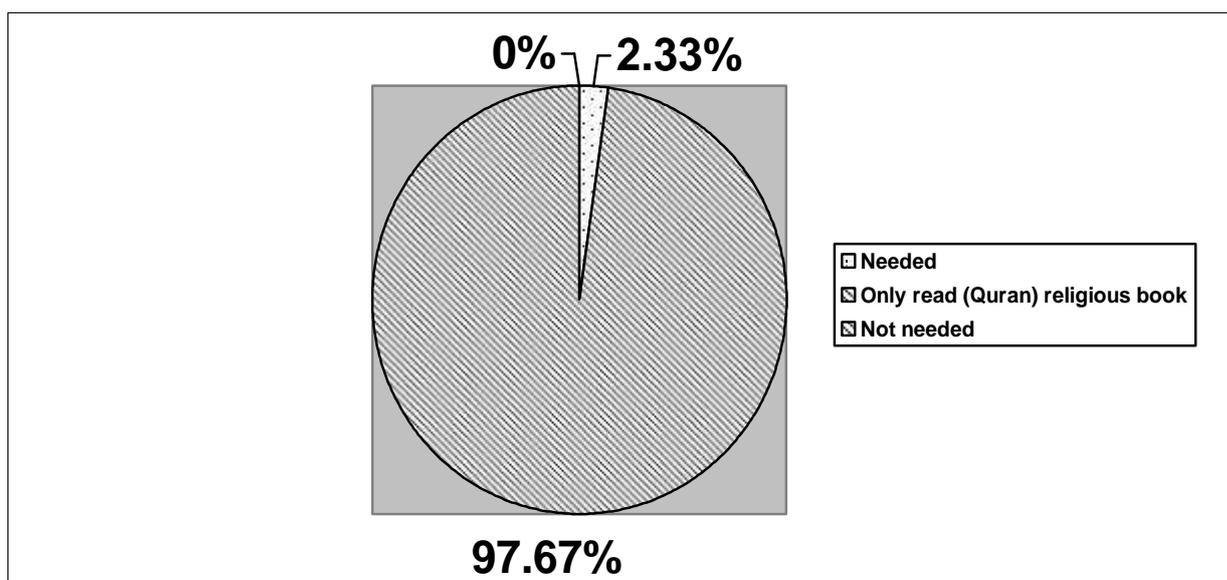


Figure 13 shows that, the perception towards education for girl was seen unsatisfied level. There was very less to develop the thinking of equal access on education, 97.67 percent people were in favor of religious education. Only 2.33 percent people were favor on equal access to education. But every people should want to give religious education for girls, I simply find out the cause that the continuity to their religion.

5.14 Discussion

School is not sufficiently found in Pipra VDC in Kapilvastu districts of Nepal. Sometimes plan international concerned on the child schooling but the people of VDC were not giving interests. Main purpose of the plan International was to develop socio-Economic conditions of VDC such as agriculture, education, water and sanitation, child health but all programs were in vain because of the lack of public awareness.

Various studies in Nepal have shown gender discrimination in the school enrolment of girl children (Pokhrel, 1999). This study found that Muslims girls only enrolled in Madrasas but compared to boys, boys were enrolled in Madrasas as well as in boarding school. The percentages of a girl enrollment on Madrasas are higher than boys because most of the boys children are enrolled in boarding school in stead of Madrasas. There was no girl who attended higher education (Class 11-12 or above). My study shows that middle class economic group has large number of girl enrolment rate in Madrasas than other groups. In these groups, the gender discrimination is still over there because boys child have been sending in boarding school. Lowest enrolment of girl child was found in high economic groups because higher economic group restrict their girl child due to the name of prestige. Literacy of parents played an important role to increase enrolment of a girl child.

Children education has been determined by parent's educational status. Poor family provided opportunities to their male child rather than their female child because they need their female child to support their house holds chores. Likewise, high level of girl enrolment was seen on middle class families but the need of children in house hold chores specially girl children seems to be an obstacles in their school enrolment. The result also shows that the far distance of school is also an obstacle in enrolment of female child especially in Muslim community.

It is found from the research that awareness program like wise empowerment of female, role of female in house hold decision making process, importance of female education, is necessary to increase the enrolment of girl child. But in general socio-cultural prejudice, prevalent in Muslim community is against to girl's education. In Muslim community, boys child have been given more priority in every aspects than girl child. Like wise opportunities and facilities are also provided more to boys child. So, all findings directly show that, in Muslim community gender discrimination is higher than in any other community. The strong attitudinal factors of certain community need a broader study to investigate the effects of these multifactor issues.

CHAPTER – SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Summary

Education plays role for all kinds of progress whether of an individuals or a society. Educated person are the agents who change the conservative, traditional cultural norms and values in a society. Therefore, education must be provided to all people of a country for the development of the personality of the individuals and of course of the society. The overall development of the nation is impossible without equal participation of all its people irrespective of gender, class and creed. Therefore, equality in the access to education must be made without any discrimination to entire population of the country. Education provides the deprived and discriminated section of the communities, tribes, nationalities, ethnic groups, etc, to make them aware of their rights and duties to participate in the main stream of the political social and economic development of their own communities and the countries. Such participation ensures harmonies relation between among the diverse communities within the country such participation is most important in Nepal which is characterized by wide diversity.

The government of Nepal had committed to universalize primary education by the year 2000 with an emphasis on reducing current disparity between boys and girls. Although primary school enrolment continues to grow with gross enrolment over 100% in general but the net enrolment ratio of girls are only 65 % (CBS 2007). The convention of the Rights of Child, which Nepal has ratified, guarantees the equal rights of children regardless of gender,

caste/ethnicity, religion, language or social status to health, education, water sanitation and protection.

Majority of people is engaged in agriculture, which is of subsistence level only. Parents only cannot support the family and they need a helping hand of their children to push the cartwheel of their life. The simple necessity of having food, shelter and factors such as unemployment or underemployment of the adult members of the family, compel children to be engaged in earning activities irrespective of their age.

Education has low priority in rural Nepal where survival and growing enough food is every one's main aim. Boys go to school when there is no work on the land but girls are always needed at home for domestic activities such as collecting fodder for animals, fetching water looking after their younger siblings.

Various studies have proved that gender discrimination highly prevails in Nepali society and poor socio/economic condition has been observed as the major cause for the low enrolment of girls in schools. In this view, this study has tried to identify those factors that affect the school enrolment of a girl child in rural Nepal.

The objective of the study was to find the educational perception towards male and female. And socio/cultural, economic and religious factor that affect the school enrolment of girl child. Discrimination among children in education opportunity and impact of rural development program in the school enrolment of a girl child.

This study is conducted in Muslim community. Muslim community is considered as one of the comparatively less advantage among the communities of Nepal in the sphere of education. Therefore this study tried to focus on the educational condition at Pipra VDC in Kapilvastu.

Muslim of the VDC constitute on first position in the total population, living since long time ago. Muslim communities in general have a large and extended family; the dependency ratio is quite high in Pipra VDC. Average family size of Muslim community has 10 people. The literacy status is still very low. Most of them so far as government education and has take religious education (Madrasa). In whole VDC there are three primary schools within them two are Madrasa and one is government schools and I didnot not found any lower secondary and secondary school in whole VDC. And 28 percent of population is literate in the VDC. The main aim of this school (Madrasa) is to provide formal education for those who were not getting education due to the distant of school. Although there was one sub health post but people would prefer to go to India for treatment.

Both primary and secondary data were collected as required by the objectives of the study. A door to door visit was conducted to collect primary data and secondary were collected from relevant literatures, library study, research reports, annual reports of Plan International, VDC report, and base data were collected from DDC, and district education office. A semi-structured interview schedule was prepared to collect primary data and discussed with key informants like VDC leaders, school teachers and development workers to know the general situation of the village.

Literacy and educational qualification are vital indicators of women's social, cultural status. They are the crucial factors not only for availing them employment opportunities creed in the process of modernization but also for communication with the outside world. Although Muslim holds the first position among the major ethnic/caste group in the VDC, however female education is very poor. In the religious school the proportion of students were 103 males and 110 students were female so female enrolment were higher than male, that saw only in primary level but in higher education there were very less 1,2 girls are involving ward no. 3,4,5 I saw male population and involving both kind religious and higher education but female Muslim population are

only involving religious school Muslim women were literate not with formal education but only religious education similarly more ratio of literate males were engaged in the service not in Nepal but in gulf countries and India hence they were economically well-off.

6.2 Conclusion

School enrolment of girl child lags behind the boys in most part of Nepal. This study shows that the change in socio/cultural characteristics has a substantial influence in the school enrolment of girl child. Furthermore the parental attitude towards education and poverty seems to be the main hindrances in the education of girl child. Though a girl in rural society desires to be educated but the socio/cultural prejudice and extreme poverty are not allowing her to go ahead and the socio-economic characteristics and cultural prejudices are responsible for girl's participation on formal education, which was needed for in-depth investigation.

Muslim people are very devoted to their religious norms and values. Likewise Nepali Muslims enjoy their religious and other rights. Muslim people are very conscious of their religious norms and values so they are allowed to perform acts considered as duty in their own religion and the tradition of their family. Muslims have been living in different parts of Nepal among various communities of different religious faith for the past five centuries with harmony and peace.

Illiteracy, poverty and lower standard of living are major problems which we found in the Nepali Muslim community. Most of the Muslims have very narrow idea which is the main cause of illiteracy and they said that the main cause is 'Cultural boundaries' their thinking that Muslim culture does not allow for girls on job if female does not involve in job than what is the benefit so they narrow down their thought. This type of feeling mostly prevails in rural

area. Considering the Muslim community as backward some effort of the governments of Nepal is needed to improve their lots.

Nepal is a country where we see cultural diversity but every caste/ethnic people enjoy their religion and culture. Similarly Muslim are also free to follow their religion. So Muslim in Nepal take pleasure in belonging to Islam and they are proud of it. But Muslim are very much concentrated their thoughts on religious aspects. They should be changed day by day and traditional attitude of the Muslim education has slightly undergone.

Some Muslim have now seriously realized the socio/cultural values of education and they have begun to think positively about educating their children. But the lack of proper education and particular school is also standing one main cause for less participation on higher education for Muslim girls. But Muslims are concentrated their mind on education, now large number of the Muslim girls and boys are found in secondary and higher levels but in Pipra VDC this type of enrolment was not seen.

Most of the Muslim households have their own land and their main occupation was agriculture. But low living standard, high birth rate indicates high fertility and mortality rate in this community. Moreover traditional and intensive subsistence farming has added to the root cause of their poverty and low annual income.

In Pipra VDC, I saw two types of education systems and I categories, one for formal education, which indicates government school and the other one is non-formal education and it is called religious education (Madrassa). The number of student enrolment in formal education in Pipra VDC was 206 where as non-formal education are 213 within them male enrolment is 103 and female is 110. Educational attainment of Muslim female in level wise shows high disparity whereas educated female is found more in primary level than other level. More literate female were found in families with medium income and service background. Due to poor economy and for prestige people were not sending

girl child to the school. In this study I found only male members were attending formal education; females were not participating as well. This is basically related with the attitude and narrow thinking of Muslim peoples that there female child not to mix with other community.

6.3 Recommendation

It has been found that lower literacy status among the Muslim community is the result of economic, social and cultural reasons. Involvement of their children in the agricultural works, social prejudice against females, lack of awareness and ignorance of parents are the major cause behind lower literacy rate and access low education levels.

On the basis of this study the following recommendations have been put forward:

-) In my study I only took 42 households, which is not sufficient to find out the actual cause so that depth field research is recommended.
-) The socio-economic characteristics and cultural prejudices are responsible for girl's participation on formal education which was needed for depth investigation.
-) In order to make parents aware of benefit of educating a girl, they should have realized the need and the importance of education.
-) As per the group discussion, it was realized that the provision of female teacher with free schooling and inadequate number of classes in a school could increased girl's enrolment in Muslim Madrasa.
-) I recommend the people who will go to research Pipra VDC that they should know the local language (Awadi) because villagers could not speak or understand Nepali or other languages.

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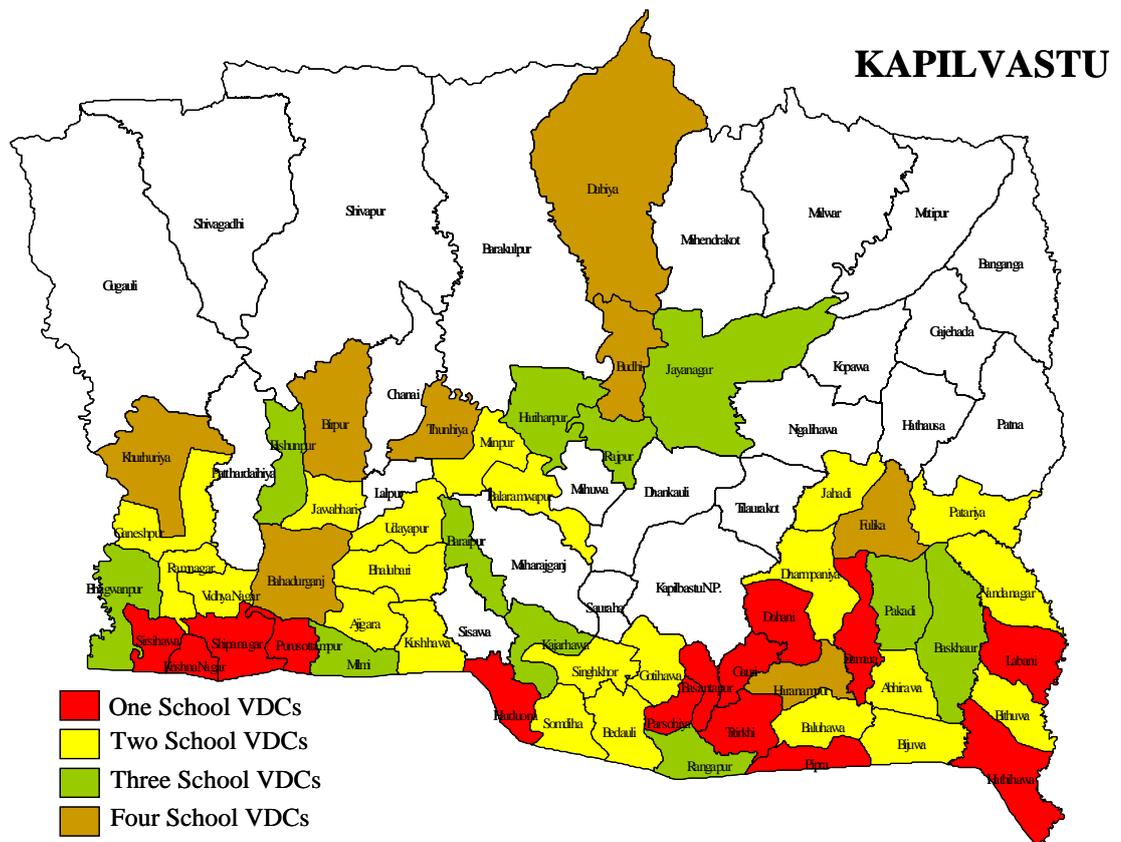
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(ANNEX A)

Map of Pipra VDC, Kapilvastu District



Map of Pipra VDC, Kapilvastu

