

**SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITION OF KAMI THROUGH THE
PERSPECTIVE OF TRADITIONAL OCCUPATION
(A Case Study of Chinnedanda-18, Pokhara Municipality, Kaski)**

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**By:
Pradip Gurung
Prithivi Narayan Campus
Academic Year Roll No. 012/064
TU Registration Number: 5-1-48-192-97**

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

It is certified that Mr. Pradip Gurung has completed the dissertation entitled “Socio Economic Condition of Kami through the Perspective of Traditional Occupation: A Case Study of Chinnedanda-18, Pokhara Municipality, Kaski” under my guidance and supervision. I therefore recommended this dissertation for final approval and acceptance.

.....

(Supervisor)

Mr. Surya Bhakta Sigdel

Department of Sociology/Anthropology

Prithivi Narayan Campus

Pokhara, Nepal

Date: 28 February 2014

APPROVAL LETTER

This thesis entitled “Socio Economic Condition of Kami through the Perspective of Traditional Occupation: A Case Study of Chinnedanda-18, Pokhara Municipality, Kaski” has been accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirement of Master’s Degree in Sociology.

Expert Committee

.....

Mrs Shanti Bhusal

Department Head

Department of Sociology/Anthropology

Prithivi Narayan Campus

.....

Mr. Surya Bhakta Sigdel

Supervisor

.....

Prof. Dr. Bishwo Shrestha

External

Date: 28 February 2014

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This study “Socio Economic Condition of Kami through the Perspective of Traditional Occupation: A Case Study of Chinnedanda-18, Pokhara Municipality, Kaski” is carried out for the partial fulfillment of Master Degree in Sociology from the Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Prithivi Narayan Campus, Tribhuvan University.

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Pardip Gurung
Researcher

Date: 28 February 2014

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to access the interrelation of caste based occupation of Kami and their social exclusion. Similarly, its specific objective was to identify the problems in the Kami by studying the status of socio economic profile of the Kami in Chinnedanda-18, Kaski through the perspective of their traditional occupation and exclusion. There were interconnections between social exclusion and traditional occupation. It was evident that traditional occupation had direct and indirect impact on social exclusion, resulting caste based discrimination, poor sanitation practices, poverty, illiteracy and gender discrimination which ultimately led to the situation where dalits are discriminated, dominated, excluded and exploited. However, even in the Dalit community, many layers of castes and similar practices prevailed.

Majority of respondents have considered low wage, social discrimination, old technologies, perception towards caste based traditional occupation as main contributor towards their exclusion indirectly considering for age-old traditional occupation as one of the major reason. So modernization, standardization in wages could help to uplift the occupation and minimize social exclusion practices. The majority of reason of dissatisfaction in occupation was low wage and social discrimination related to the traditional occupation practiced by them. 83% respondents confessed job dissatisfaction, 50% respondents indicated that low and unreasonable form of wage as main reason for their dissatisfaction. Likewise 42% expressed social discrimination was main reason for their dissatisfaction in their traditional means of earning. However, 56% believed that the traditional occupation has self-employment opportunity if modernized with scientific rise in payment, as being a technical sector; it can attract lot of skilled man power into the occupation raising the economic and social aspect of the

occupation. Youths consider the traditional occupation as a means of outdated earning hindering their socio-economic growth. However, they consider it as good source of employment and income if modernized. Kami who were in politics and working in NGOs were in good social position than Kami who were in traditional occupation.

Earning was another factor which also determines social interaction and respect. People who had better earning had earned comparatively better position in the society. The traditional occupation holders of Chinnadana had less income in comparison to that of other occupation holders. Kami who are in non-traditional occupation and earn their living outside the district do not feel caste based discrimination in the same level as the ones living in the district. Likewise, youths and children had lesser experiences in caste based discrimination and exclusion. Youths and children from the non-traditional occupation family had comfortably adjusted with other community youths and children than those of traditional occupation holders. Kami who were literate and were in non-traditional occupation had felt change. They confessed of enjoying non-discriminatory behaviour and equal treatment in workshops, seminars, meetings and social gatherings.

Female were more dominated and discriminated within their own community. They had less participation in social function and gatherings and had strong experiences of ill traditional practices be it gender or caste based social discrimination. Within the Kami caste there is also several ranks. Gold smith has higher status than Kami who made iron items. Castes like Sarki, Wadi, Gandharva, Damai are considered lower in hierarchical caste based status. Thus, a light degree of untouchability with minimal marital relation is practiced within the Dalit community. Kamis

have more or less same rituals in marriage and other religious and cultural functions as Brahman, Chhetri, and some other castes have. Priest from their own community supports them in organizing any types of functions and rituals as Brahmin priest considers it sin to perform in their houses. Kami including Kami mostly do not invite to non-dalits in marriage or other ceremonies but youths were seen inviting their friends. Ironically, educated people were also following the ill practices despite they voiced against it. Touchability and untouchability among dalits and non-dalits and within the Dalit community is socially ill practiced tradition in Nepali society, which is found still strongly prevailing in Chinnedanda.

Kami openly visit tea shops and hotels in Pokhara and do not hesitate to mix up with other people there. It is a positive social change which was not considered acceptable in past. Still, some restrictions are imposed and followed compulsorily in the religious processions and cultural festivals. Temples and drinking water mainly have restricted access to Kami though their products are used in such places and they are used as labours to build such restricted areas. The findings of this study show that Kami in traditional occupation have poor socio-economic condition. They are far behind from the reach social services. They are exploited through wages. The occupation is caste based occupation which is perceived lower grade work so they are excluded and there is no proper social respect to their profession although they have equal contribution in the development of the community and society. Kami who are in other occupation or are outside the district have different experiences. There is no special political agenda to uplift them and encourage for their occupational development. They should be encouraged and such unhealthy and ill practices should be discouraged. They have all the rights to enjoy the available facilities and prejudices against them should be removed.

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