

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. 1 Background of the Study

Despite having about six decades of planned development period (1956-2009), Nepal is now at the lower ebb of the development indices. The country is transitionally facing core problems of widespread poverty, exclusion, inequality and the vibrant conflicts with the developmental victimization of Dalits with serious forms of economic, political and social discrimination in terms of access to and distribution of the resources. In recent years, especially after the April Movement in 2006, the issues of people's empowerment and inclusive development have arisen to the alarming levels that these Dalits would be ensured for development of development from micro, textual, visual, etic and cross-cultural perspectives of development (Samata, 2012). The traditional approach of study for Dalits seemed to be more technical, so that the critical research gap here will be to investigate them from all dimensions: political, social and economic.

Empowerment of Dalit is one of the most crucial issues in the field of development since Dalit has the greater role to make a society more inclusive. Though Dalits are doing hard labor very sincerely, they are not able to come to the frontline of development discourse because of various socially constructed systems and practices for the discrimination and prejudices against Dalits in our society. The research of Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization (NNSWOW) shows that present status of Dalit is vulnerable has no access to education, no social justice and mostly found as peasant and wage labor so on. Nepalese people especially Dalits are excluded due to Hindu culture and the system which was rigidly enforced during the Rana period (1846-1951) promulgated by Junga Bahadur Rana, the founder of Rana Regime (Aahuti, 2010). The Muluki Ain (Country Code) in 1854 AD formalized the Vedic prescription for social order in hierarchical caste societies and classified people in four broad categories in descending order: (a) *Tagadhari* at the top (b) *Matwali* in the middle, & (c) *Sudra* (impure but touchable castes) and (d) *Acchut* (impure but untouchable castes) at the lower position (Hachhethu et al. 2010). The Country Code thus the reconstructed Nepalese social structure into four- fold of caste hierarchy and placed Dalits- the groups belonging to the fourth category, at the bottom.

The party-less Panchayat¹ upheld the old symbols & practices, even though the new Civil Code (1963) recognized that all people were equal. It abolished caste-based discrimination but it was never enforced ([www.assets.helvetas.org/downloads 'Empowering Dalits / learning _pdf](http://www.assets.helvetas.org/downloads/Empowering_Dalits_learning.pdf)). The Panchayat Constitution (1962) promulgated by King Mahendra declared Nepal, a Hindu state. Thereafter the king, Hindu religion, Nepali language and the unitary state were retained as core components of Nepali nationalism. This also contributed in the perpetuation of disempowerment of Dalits in Nepal (Bhattachan, 2011).

Democracy reinstated in April 1990- provided Dalits a little space to voice their demands and concerns. People's movement in 2006 also paid attention to the social inclusion and empowerment of Dalits (Galanter, 2011). Subsequent movements in Nepal have been the plethora of identity-based movements, though the issues of inclusion and empowerment of Dalits have been less focused by the Nepalese academia.

Now, the country is facing transitional period and going to put down new constitution of nation. The reasonable question about the reconstruction of nation and representation from each and every caste, socially excluded groups, minorities and so on in constitution making process is rising to the alarming level but Dalit has no political consciousness and their involvement in politics is found rarely in the national level. Similarly, the literacy rate of Dalit is still less than the upper castes where as the life expectancy of Dalits are also lower compared to non dalits in the national average (CBS 2012). Furthermore, Infant mortality rate of dalits are much higher compared to non dalits in the national level where under-five mortality is also found much higher than others in the national level. Out of the total population, about 13 percent are the Dalits in the country. However, Dalit civil society claims it to be about 20 percent; a demographic survey conducted by NNDSWO provides evidence to the claim. The poverty incidence is also at the apex for them (CBS, 2012). The structure of Nepalese society is multi-polar and multi-dimensional. They are socially, economically and politically poor coupled with social exclusion, inequality and class division from the history.

¹ A regime promulgated by King Mahendra by 1960 that was abolished in 1990 AD through people movement I

Dalit is also known as Achhut (Pani Nachalne) which is categorized into mainly Hilly Dalit, Terai Dalit and Newar Dalit that includes different sub castes. There is still a huge research gap regarding an empowerment and their cumulative dynamics coupled with Dalits. To contribute such gap this study is based on the case of Devdaha Village Development Committee (VDC) of Rupandehi district. In this research, only Hilly Dalits have been studied for increasing depth and decreasing the width.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

For justifiable development, each and every caste of people should be empowered, is a fundamental task. Disadvantaged groups especially Dalits in Nepal live in backward environment which is caused by unequal power relation, socio- religious, cultural norms and traditions. The present status of Dalit has limited access to natural resources and economic opportunities. They are often landless or marginal farmers operating on the most unproductive land (Stokke, 2010). The Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS) 2004, estimated that half of Hill Dalits fall below the poverty line and incidence of poverty among the Terai Dalits which is higher than the national average. Dalits are unappreciated, devalued, or derided matters of longstanding and institutionalized tradition by the larger society. If a group is seen as not being able to offer much, little is offered to it. Dalits may be harassed or persecuted without protection by established authorities (Manandhar, 2011). The labor or other forms of contribution of Dalits may be undervalued in the market place. If a group's labor is undervalued, the group receives too little capital and retains its disadvantage. With undervaluation, there is great opportunity for exploitation, harassment, and other forms of inequitable treatment (Panday, 2009) which leads to vicious circle of poverty causes disempowerment of such group.

The reality of Dalits in the study area Devdaha VDC is same as national level. The literacy rate of Dalits in the study area are still less than national average level, particularly less than the upper castes where as life expectancy of Dalits are lower compared to non dalits in the national average level. They have limited access to natural resources and economic opportunities and have not their own Land holding certificate. Beside it, they are demoralized or demoted on the name of caste or class by larger society and behaved as untouchable group from whom water is not accepted and whose touch

require purification by sprinkling water. So, it is found that most of the Dalit has been living here as socially excluded people below poverty line (VDC profile, 2011). Therefore, empowerment of Dalit is necessary for equitable development.

The main purpose of this research is to find out empowerment of Dalits in local institution. This research is guided by the following research questions:-

1. What is the status of Dalits?
2. How is the level of Dalits participation in social, economic and political institutions?
3. Why are Dalits not receiving opportunity?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this research is to find out the empowerment of Dalits in local institutions in terms of opportunity and participation at Devdaha VDC of Rupandehi district. The specific objectives associated with this will be the following:

- i. To analyze the socio- economic status of Dalits;
- ii. To examine the status of Dalits participation in social, economic and political institution;
- iii. To identify the hindering factors for Dalits empowerment.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

With the assessment of empowerment of Dalit more than a technical way, this research will be contributory to build theoretical issues and empirical strategies to follow and adapt. The analysis of various indicators and variables (social, economic and political) of empowerment of Dalits will clearly indicate the contemporary debates. Very few studies have been conducted on the issues of empowerment of Dalits by governmental and non-governmental organization in the study area. Thus, the relevancy of this study will lie at the creation of 'knowledge discourse' to contribute in the discourse of empowerment in Nepal from rural development point of view. It is hoped that this study will be a useful and reliable tool for the concerned planners, policy makers, GOs/NGOs/INGOs, students, academician, scholars who are working in the same field.

So, the socio- economic status and dynamics of empowerment especially social, economic and political participation at local institutions and hindering factors of empowerment of Dalit was studied in the study area.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

This study aims to find out the general status of Dalits as well the Dalits participation in social, economic and political institution and hindering factor of empowerment of Dalits in the study area. It was also micro study, which attempted to explore an empowerment of Dalits in the local institutions in the study area but it may not show the macro view of political, social and economic status. Moreover, this study aims to find out why Dalits are not getting opportunity. This thesis was limited only on political empowerment of Dalits which was studied about the participation.

This present study based on and limited to the Hilly Dalits of Devdaha VDC of Rupandehi district. Considering the limited time and resources, only 44 households from only two wards that is 3 and 5 was selected for the detailed household survey. So, it will not be possible to make a meaningful analysis of empowerment of Dalits. To some extent, it might be generalized to those areas, which have similar socio- economic settings. But, at the same time I also agree with the limited generality of the qualitative studies like this.

1.6. Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction of the study. The second chapter deals with the literature review in which all the theoretical nexus for this thesis have been presented.

The third chapter deals with research methodology adopted for this study. The fourth chapter is about the data presentation and analysis of the study report. And finally the fifth chapter represents the overall summary of the study, conclusions and suggestion of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents literature on empowerment of Dalits based in available reports, articles and some web-based information prepared for particular purposes of the study.

It is mainly based on reports and research works on the related issues by national and international agencies, research institutes, research scholars and human rights organizations.

2.1 Concept of Empowerment

The term empowerment was used at first in United States of America in 1960s as women empowerment then popularized in social polity discourse in Europe to crisis of the welfare state. The term later was used in other regions especially in development paradigms based in poverty reduction and inclusion. However, the form of empowerment was emerged at first in 1960s but many studies have shown that empowerment exists from the very beginning of civilization (Sapkota, 2011).

At the core of the concept of empowerment is the idea of power. The possibility of empowerment depends on two things. First, empowerment requires that power can change. If power cannot change, if it is inherent in position or people, then empowerment is not possible, nor is empowerment conceivable in any meaningful way. In other words, if power can change, then empowerment is possible. Second, the concept of empowerment depends upon the idea that power can expand. This second point reflects our common experiences of power rather than how we think about power. Power is often related to our ability to make others do what we want, regardless of their own wishes or interests. Traditional social science emphasizes power as influence and control, often treating power as a commodity or structure divorced from human action. Conceived in this way, power can be viewed as unchanging or unchangeable. Weber (1946) gives us a key word beyond this limitation by recognizing that power exists within the context of a relationship between people or things. Power does not exist in isolation nor is it inherent in individuals. By implication, since power is created in relationships, power and power relationships can change. Empowerment as a process of change, then, becomes a meaningful concept. The concept of empowerment also depends upon power than can expand, our second stated requirements. Understanding power as zero-sum, as something

that you get at my expense, cuts most of us off from power. A zero-sum conception of power means that power will remain in the hands of powerful unless they give it up. Although this is certainly one way that power can be experienced, it neglects the way power will remain in the hands of the powerful unless they give it up (www.joe.org).

2.2 Verbal Definition

Empowerment is related to the word power. In English, the concept leans on its original meaning of investment with legal power—permission to act for some specific goal or purpose. The new meaning of the concept includes mainly references to power that develops and is acquired. People are managing to gain more control over their lives, either by themselves or with the help of others. The form to be empowered relates to what is both a process and an outcome—to the effort to obtain a relative degree of ability to influence the world.

2.3 Initial Meanings of Empowerment

Three of the first writers to relate systematically to the concept have had a most fundamental influence on the development of its use. Barbara Solomon (1976, 1985) emphasized empowerment as a method of social work with oppressed Afro-Americans. P. Berger and Richard Neuhaus (1977) proposed empowerment as a way of improving the welfare services by means of mediating social institutions. Julian Rappaport (1981) developed the concept theoretically and presented it as a world-view that includes a social policy and an approach to the solution of social problems stemming from powerlessness. The root of the evil, they claimed, is that local knowledge and resources are ignored in the course of corrective intervention, and that the missing resources are provided insensitively, without consideration for what is already there. Since the eighties, four ideological approaches have provided the framework of ideas for the discussion of empowerment. The first is an ethnocentric approach, which seeks a solution for difficult social problems of ethnic and other minorities (Solomon, 1976; Gutierrez & Ortega, 1991). The second is a conservative liberal approach that seeks to revive the community as a social unit which among other things has to care for its weak citizens as well. The third is a socialist approach which demands of equity and social responsibility in the

treatment of social problems (Boyte, 1984). The fourth approach wants to see empowerment as a profound and professional implementation of democracy—one that will contain every legitimate social ideological current in the democratic society. This is a progressive democratic world-view which resolves to live in harmony with the other approaches and attempts to create an integration of them. Where there is a multiplicity of shades it is not always easy to distinguish a new color, and not everyone who is interested in empowerment is interested in interpreting the ideologies behind it. Since empowerment is declaredly also a world-view, it is worth acknowledging that different and even contradictory value-systems have participated in its creation.

2.4 Empowerment: Definitions and Meanings

Empowerment is a process of transforming, existing power relations in favor of those (women, disadvantaged groups and, more generally, the poor) who severe limitations in exercising power and making voluntary choices (UNDP, 2004). In another word, it is said to be as the process of challenging existing power relation and of gaining greater control over the sources of power (Bhattachan, 2011). Empowerment is a transition from this passive situation to a more active situation of control. The need for it is part of the realization of one's very humanity, so much so that one could say that a person who is powerless with regard to his life and his environment is not realizing his innate human potential. Since the sources of powerlessness are rooted in social processes that disempower entire populations, the empowerment process aims to influence the oppressed human agency and the social structure within the limitations and possibilities in which this human agency exists and reacts. In recent development discourse, there is not only a definition of empowerment can find several explanations from various perspectives so it has become a buzzword.

Empowerment is divided mainly into three categories, or levels, which in the literature on empowerment sometimes appear on their own and sometimes together, though not always in a differentiated way: individual empowerment—which focuses on what happens on the personal level in the individual's life; community empowerment—which emphasizes the collective processes and the social change; and empowerment as a professional practice—which sees empowerment as a means of professional intervention for the solution of social problems (http://www.mpow.org/elisheva_sadan_empowerment.pdf) and

organizational empowerment that focuses to collective capacities and community empowerment on 'the social contexts where empowerment takes place' (Wallenstein and Bernstein, 1994).

2.5 Individual Empowerment

The personality structure, as we know, is significantly influenced by environmental conditions. A person is not formed only by heredity and conditions of growth and care, but also by opportunities and experiences in the world around him. Among these, especially important to us is the ability to make decisions and to act in order to attain goals. This ability (or its absence) shapes the person's character and influences the degree to which she will be the effective actor in her life (Pinderhughes, 1983). Empowerment is an interactive process which occurs between the individual and his environment, in the course of which the sense of the self as worthless changes into an acceptance of the self as an assertive citizen with socio-political ability. The outcome of the process is skills, based on insights and abilities, the essential features of which are a critical political consciousness, an ability to participate with others, a capacity to cope with frustrations and to struggle for influence over the environment (Kieffer, 1984). The process of empowerment is an active process. Its form is determined by the circumstances and the events, but its essence is human activity in the direction of change from a passive state to an active one. The process brings about an integration of self-acceptance and self-confidence, social and political understanding, and a personal ability to take a significant part in decision-making and in control over resources in the environment. The sense of personal ability connects with civic commitment. Individual empowerment is an expression on the individual level of a multi-leveled process which may be applied to organizations, communities, and social policy (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Empowerment is a process of internal and external change. The internal process is the person's sense or belief in her ability to make decisions and to solve her own problems. The external change finds expression in the ability to act and to implement the practical knowledge, the information, the skills, the capabilities and the other new resources acquired in the course of the process (Parsons, 1988). Some writers call the internal change psychological empowerment and the external change political empowerment. According to this distinction, psychological empowerment occurs on the level of a

person's consciousness and sensations, while political empowerment is a real change which enables a person to take part in the making of decisions that affect his life. To achieve psychological empowerment a person requires only internal strengths, while to realize his political personal empowerment a person requires environmental conditions, mainly organizational ones, which will enable him to exercise new abilities (Gruber and Trickett, 1987). While the traditional approach sees political power as the possession of sufficient influence or authority to bring about a change, or even to impose it, the idea of empowerment adopts a different approach to power, one that does not attribute possession of power to anyone. When power is not conceived as a resource or a concrete position in any particular site, then it is in any case both political and psychological. Indeed, people have testified that in their empowerment process they did not necessarily acquire more social influence or political control, but they did become more able participants in the political process and in local decision making. They estimated that they did not possess more absolute power to dictate the character of their environment, but they believed that they were beginning to be more effective in the dynamics of social and political negotiations (Kieffer, 1984).

Empowerment, then, is a pro-active concept that encourages an active and initiative-taking approach to life, on the individual level as well. The individual process entails the will to influence the environment on all levels: it begins with a sense of faith in one's own strength, advances to activity in inter-personal domains, and continues from there to activity for social change. An elderly woman may feel empowered from the very fact that she is still independent and controls her own private affairs, but she can feel much greater control over her life when she is involved in neighborhood activity for herself and for other citizens in her situation. Action and consciousness are bound up with one another and vary from one person to another. They, together with the other constituents of the process, contribute to the vast variety of forms and contents of the empowerment process. Individual empowerment is a process of personal development. The process involves both a development of skills and abilities, and a more positive self-definition. People testify to a better feeling about themselves, a sense of more self-respect and self-esteem. A new self-confidence and a feeling of self-efficacy are connected with a redefinition of the self, and the latter is closely linked with a real improvement in personal knowledge, abilities, skills, resources and life opportunities. A higher level of personal activity makes possible more effective inter-personal relations. Since self-perception is based on achievements in

the real world, there is a clear positive interaction between development of self-confidence and reinforcement of personal ability. The ability to redefine yourself and to act efficiently for yourself is the essence of individual empowerment. But individual empowerment cannot be an exclusive or principal component of the concept of empowerment because powerlessness is not only an individual problem, but also a social and structural condition. People, generally, are not powerless because of lacks in their private lives or their personalities, but because they belong to a powerless group. Of course, in each such group there will always be those who, thanks to exceptional talent or luck, will attain to personal success and power (the converse situation also exists: in a group that possesses power there will always be some powerless individuals). Nonetheless, although these are known and accepted truths, psychological and individual explanations of success and failure are still prevalent, and the conservative social policy that reinforces them is still in vogue. These explanations remain in force because they cast the responsibility for the situation and the onus of change on the individual victims of inequality and oppression, instead of on the social structure which is the root of these problems. Empowerment is the opposite approach, and that is why its social dimensions are so important. Individual empowerment is only one constituent of the process which as a whole connects the personal and the individual with the collective and the social in people's lives. (http://www.mpow.org/elisheva_sadan_empowerment.pdf)

2.6 Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is the increased control of people as a collective over outcomes important to their lives. Community empowerment is manifested in the increasing actual power of neighborhood groups, especially when the participation produces a change in decision making in the neighborhood and leads to residents' organizations having more control over their affairs (Biegel, 1984). Only when residents' participation in their neighborhood's agenda becomes an accepted procedure (where poor neighborhoods are concerned, this is in most cases an achievement that entails considerable efforts) can community empowerment be defined as collective knowledge of problems and alternative solutions and skills in the presentation of issues, in groups leadership, and in implementation of tactics (Fawcett et al., 1984).

The Community and the Common Critical Characteristic

Community has a meaning of a life that is more egalitarian, participatory and intimate than life in society at large, which demands the objectification of man and anonymous obedience to authority and law. The community as an image is a kind of antithesis of the bureaucratic, hierarchical, formal and judiciary society. The concept is to a certain extent abstract, but at the same time concrete, because it operates in the geographical, the ethnic, and the functional sense. The need for a community is a need to live together, to trust, to communicate. In the Middle Ages the concept *commune* was used to describe a settlement with an independent identity and government. In English, community and communication are derived from the same root (Handler, 1990). There are several approaches to community: 1. A utopian approach oriented to a vision of a future community whose members will be able to fulfill their human and social potential. This approach draws its inspiration from the utopians of the 19th century. Although it is far from the idyllic scene of adults and children who are cultured, educated, strong, healthy, and possess high moral qualities, who group together in a rural setting to grow vegetables and weave clothes, it too preaches egalitarianism and autarchy. The separation from society at large is necessary in order to realize important social goals of the members (Friedmann, 1987). 2. A rehabilitation approach which focuses on the situation of ethnic minorities, and more recently also of other minorities, such as the disabled (Dolnick, 1993). On this view, the community struggles with life beside a different and sometimes hostile society, and grapples with the dilemma of integration into this society. Here too a utopian vision exists: to revitalize the intimate and supportive community in which, more by necessity than because they want to, people whom the society isolates and discriminates against live today (O'Sullivan, 1984; Friedmann, 1989; Rivera & Erlich, 1984, Cendeluci, 1995). 3. A social approach which redefines community and departs, perhaps too sharply (because quite a few people still live in traditional communities in our time too) from the traditional community as it used to be (Warren, 1975). The new community is a social collective entity, and the image appropriate to it is one of people with common problems and generally a common dependence on service providers. This is a community which does not include all the aspects of existence, but responds to those needs in people's lives for the sake of which it was created (Reinharz, 1984). Parents of children with Down's Syndrome can create a community for themselves to deal with all

aspects of their lives as parents of these children: the care, the raising and the development of the child. However, they may also have life interests which they do not share with this community (http://www.mpow.org/elisheva_sadan_empowerment.pdf).

2.7 Organizational Empowerment

Organizational empowerment refers to organizational efforts that generate psychological empowerment among members and organizational effectiveness needed for goal achievement (Peterson and Zimmermann, 2004). In simple terms, an organizational empowerment is its potential to perform - its ability to successfully apply its skills and resources to accomplish its goals and satisfy its stakeholders' expectations. The aim of organizational empowerment is to improve the potential performance of the organization as reflected in its resources and its management. Performance is the ability of an organization to meet its goals and achieve its overall mission. Organizational empowerment is defined as the potential ability of an organization to develop an empowering and democratic partnership with a community, through which the community's capacity to identify and address its priority health concerns is enhanced. It is the organizational domains that present a straightforward way to define and measure empowerment construct as a process (Laverack, 1999; Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001). Based on review of literature, with focus group research, and broader consultations with experts, several authors have constructed different but somewhat overlapping domains of empowerment. None of the literature makes a strongly compelling case for one schema above any other (Smith et al., 2001).

2.8 Meaning of Dalits

Here, the word “ Dalit ” was used by Doctor Ambedkar at first in India in 1927 AD and then in Nepal in 1967 AD. Nowadays, it has become a group identity of untouchable caste. The literal meaning of Dalit in the Nepali dictionary is “the person who is suppressed”. The proposed Bill on Dalits in Nepal forwarded by National Dalit Commission to the lower house of Parliament for approval has defined the term “Dalit” as those communities who by virtue of atrocities of caste- based discrimination and untouchability, are most backward in social, economic, educational, political and religious fields, and are deprived of human dignity and social justice. It is also known as

“Achhut”, or “Pani Nachalne” from who water is not accepted and whose touch requires purification by sprinkling water (*Aahuti, 2010*).

It is usually said that there are 22 Dalit castes, but it has not always been the same 22 that have been identified. The Uppechhit, Utpidit ra Dalitbarga Utthan Bikas Samiti (National Committee for the Upliftment of the Depressed, the Oppressed and Dalits Community), established by the government, identified 22 Dalit castes. After nationwide consultation, the National Dalit Commission (NDC) defined Dalit community and caste based untouchability in its Bill for an Act in 2003. According to this, ‘Dalit community’ refers to communities, who have been left behind in social, economic, educational, political and religious spheres and deprived of human dignity and social justice due to caste based discrimination and untouchability. “‘Caste-based Untouchability’ refers to those communities, who have been discriminated against as water polluting, or touching whom requires purification, untouchables or any community that was identified as untouchable before the promulgation of the New Civil Code, 1963.” Based on these definitions, NDC also tentatively identified 22 Dalit castes, including five from the Hills and 17 from the Terai. A few Dalit castes such as Viswakarma, Pariyar and Sarki of the Hills and Chamar of the Terai have multiple names and some Dalit castes such as Musahar and Bantar of the Terai have single names. For example, Viswakarma has now become a common caste name that refers to those Dalits who identify themselves as Kami or Lohar or Sunar or Wod or Chunara or Parki or Tamata. Many family names of Dalits are identical with that of Bahun-Chhetris and some are identical with Vaisya and some indigenous peoples (UNDP,2008).

2.9 Historical Background of Dalits

Caste based discrimination, including untouchability, originated in the Indian sub-continent more than two thousand five hundred years ago. Hindu religious scriptures, specially the Manusmriti, divided human beings in four Varnas, namely, Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra and their ascribed traditional roles were respectively intellectual, warrior, economic and manual work. Each varna was further divided in numerous castes and sub-castes. Varnas, caste and sub-castes are based on ascription, hierarchy, purity and pollution of water, food and body. Brahmins are at the top and

Sudra at the bottom of the hierarchy. Castes and sub-castes within each Varna are further hierarchically sub-divided.

Academics have provided many explanations for the emergence of varna and castes. Sacred religious scriptures such as the Purush Sukta of the Rig Veda invented, and later the Manusmriti reinforced, caste hierarchy and a caste-based division of labor. Yam Bahadur Kisan, a leading Dalit scholar, has noted six reasons for the emergence of Sudras: (i) non-Aryan slaves and those vanquished in battle, (ii) Aryan non conformists, Aryan enemies, (iii) inter-marriage, (iv) progeny, (v) occupation, and (vi) powerlessness. In the case of Nepal, according to Dilli Ram Dahal, "...the present Dalit population of Nepal could be the mixture of two distinct groups of people; (i) "a group of people who originally came to Nepal from India along with other Hindu caste members," and (ii) "the "made" Dalit group resulting from illegitimate sexual relations."

The restructuring of Newar society of the Kathmandu Valley in the fourteenth century was the foundation for the expansion of caste based discrimination, including untouchability, in different parts of Nepal. King Jayasthiti Malla invited five Brahman priests from India as advisors to restructure Newar society. Based on their suggestions, the Newars were divided into 64 castes based on occupation. Although initially these 64 castes were horizontal, the process of Hinduization and Sanskritization transformed these castes into a hierarchy, giving birth to Newar Dalits such as Poda, Chyame and Kusle at the bottom and Rajopadhyas at the top.

Another important historical stage in restructuring of the state on a basis of caste discrimination, including untouchability, was the promulgation of the Muluki Ain (the National or Civil Code) of 1854 by the Rana Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana. Caste was fundamental to the structure which it incorporated, formalized and reinforced. It also had differential punishments for the same crimes: least for Brahmans and greatest for Dalits. The caste hierarchy set out in the Code is well-known in Nepal. It provided for four broad groups:

1. Tagaddhari ("Sacred thread wearing" or "Twiceborn") (including Brahmans, Rajputs, Jaisis and Chetris (Kshatriyas))
2. Matawali (Liquor drinking) who were divided into the Namasine ("Unslavable") (Magars, Gurungs, Sunuwars and some Newar castes) and the Masine ("Enslavable") (Bhote, Chepang, Kumal, Hayu, Tharu and Gharti)

3. Pani nachalne choi chhito halnu napanne (Castes from whom water is not acceptable and contact with whom does not require purification by sprinkling of water), including Muslims, Dhobi, Madheska Teli, Kulu, Kasai, Mleccha, Kusle and Cudara)

4. Pani nachlne choi chito halnu parne (Castes from whom water is not acceptable and contact with whom requires purification by sprinkling of water) (including the Sarki, Damai, Kami, Gaine, Sunar, Badibhad, Cunara, Pode, Hurke and Cyamakhalak

Such system kept Dalits as the bottom of the caste hierarchy that emphasized to discriminate of Dalit on the basic of caste, class, religion and so on from higher caste of people.

The Muluki Ain mentions the Madhesi Teli as caste from whom water is not acceptable and contact with whom does not require purification by sprinkling of water but fails to mention other Madhesi Dalit castes. Of the 18 castes identified as “untouchable”, the 10 at the bottom are Dalits. The main consequences of those distinctions included that the state patronized caste based untouchability and discrimination against Dalits, that it was mandatory for “high caste” people to practice caste-based untouchability and discrimination against Dalits in everyday life, and that the life chances of Dalits were low. King Mahendra is often credited with eliminating caste based untouchability by amending the National Code in 1963 but, according to Yam Bahadur Viswakarma and Chakraman Viswakarma, he did not abolish it as he used “neutral terms” that helped to continue untouchability unabated. The problem seems to have been that while the Code purported to abolish untouchability it also prohibited interference with social customs – in other words those who excluded Dalits on such grounds could continue to do so.

The People’s Movement of 1990 contributed to establishing a multi-party political system within a constitutional monarchy that helped to bring out issues of marginalized communities, including the Dalits, but, on the whole, the process of marginalization continued as usual, despite the provision against untouchability in the 1990 Constitution. Although the Dalit movement intensified after the People’s Movement of 1990, it was overshadowed by the indigenous peoples’ movement. More recently, the Maoist insurgency from 1996 to 2006 has helped to reduce caste based untouchability in their areas of influence.

And after the end of the absolute rule of King Gyanendra, and the commitment of the parties to moving to a Constituent Assembly and a new Constitution, the Interim Constitution was enacted on January 15, 2007. And again the Dalit cause has been overshadowed by the 2007 Madhesi movement. After the Peoples' Movement of 2006, the reinstated House of Representatives declared Nepal as a caste based untouchability free country but the declaration is more rhetoric than reality due to weakness in its implementation. Moreover, Dalit issues did not get due attention from the CPN (Maoist) and other parties in the governing alliance, the Interim Parliament, the Interim Government and the Government's Dialogue Team. Dalit issues were not addressed right from the 12 Point Agreement to the Interim Constitution, which incorporated positive, but inadequate, provisions, which are analysed in the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at New York University's "Briefing Paper" in this publication.

And even when the Constitution Assembly (CA) Election Act made some provision for ethnic/caste quotas, this guaranteed only something less than 13% in the 335 proportional representation seats.¹⁹ Parties were only exhorted but not required to be inclusive in choosing candidates for the constituency seats. In the event, of 3,131 party candidates for the FPTP elections, 177 were Dalits of whom 27 were women. Fifty-four political parties fielded a total of 6,000 candidates to contest the election for 335 seats allotted under the PR system. Of these, 685 (or 11.41 %) were Dalits, (376 women and 309 men). Looking only at the 19 parties with the largest numbers of candidates: they put forward 2,644 candidates for the FPTP elections, of whom 108, or 4.08%, were Dalits. Of these parties' 4,090 PR candidates, Dalits were 489, or 12.16%. Turning to the results: taking all the elected members together there are 49 Dalits - 8.52% of the elected members, or 8.15% of the total membership. Seven of these were elected from geographical constituencies, and the rest from the party lists. Fourteen of them are from Madhes, and the rest from the Hills. None of the 26 nominated by the Council of Ministers (actually the major parties in the CA) was a Dalit (UNDP, 2008).

However, Dalits are not seen in the front line of the development, there is lack of social, economic and political opportunities. Besides it, Dalits are being forced to bear from the different level of discrimination for example individual, institutional, community. At individual level, they have been bearing the problems of untouchability for a long time

and most of the Dalits are landless and economically ultra poor. They have no access to education and suffer from different traditions for example “Balighare²”. At institutional and community level, they have no access to policy and decision making level. So, the empowerment of Dalit should be done to the development of such group at different levels. People may experience a more vital psychological empowerment such as increase in self- respect, esteem, or confidence at individual level, which often develop from collective action. At the community level, empowerment allows individuals and group to systematize and mobilize them to achieve community defined goals. Community empowerment occurs only when both individuals and institutions are empowered to achieve commonly defined outcomes or goals. As an outcome, it involves people coming together to bring structural transformation of the political, economic, social and cultural conditions to address the cause of their poverty (UNDP, 2004) which advocates enlarging the human choices and freedom. There is some degree of anxiety about whether disadvantaged people’s especially Dalit empowerment leads to the disempowerment of elite group (non- dalit). People see themselves as disadvantaged to the extent they are denied access to and use of the same tools found useful by majority of society. These include autonomy, incentive, responsibility, self-respect, community support, health, education, information, employment, capital, and responsive support systems. Manandhar (2011) viewed that the empowerment of rural disadvantaged group of people especially, women, poor, landless and low caste (Dalit) is also realized by new method. Dahal (2004) viewed that in involving woman poor, low caste people in development activities is problems so they are taken as disadvantaged group to development activities.

2.10 Socio- economic Status of Dalits

The Dalits lag far behind in their income (the lowest PCI), education (the lowest rate of literacy and enrollment) and other human development indicators (the lowest HDI). Dalits overall have the lowest household incomes – roughly half the average incomes of Brahman- Chhetri households and less than a third that of Newar households; the Madhesi Dalits have the lowest per capita incomes of all.

Dalits comprise the poorest community in Nepal, in terms of all poverty measures (income, consumption and human development). Their land holdings are small and landlessness is extreme among Dalits (15% Hill and 44% Madhesi Dalits). The Nepal

² An old system of Nepalese society in which services are exchanged with things

Living Standards Survey (NLSS), 2004, estimated that almost half of Hill Dalits (48%) fall below the poverty line and incidence of poverty among the Terai Dalits (46%), which is 15 percent higher than the national average (31%).

The literacy rate among Dalits has grown in absolute terms but the gap between their literacy (33.8%) and the national average (54%) is still wide. The NLSS, 2004, reveals that only 12 percent of Brahmins, Chhetris and Newars have not been to school, compared to 52 percent of the Hill Dalits and 47 percent of the Terai Dalits. The life expectancy of Dalits is lower (50.8 years) compared to the national average (59 years). On average Brahmins and Newars live 11 to 12 years longer than the Dalits. Infant mortality is much higher (116.5 per 1000 live births) compared to the national average of 75.2. Under five mortality is also much higher (171.2 per 1000) than the national average (104.8 per 1000). The nutritional status of Dalits is low. Because of illiteracy, ignorance and other socio-economic factors, their living conditions are unhygienic, contributing to their poor health. The Dalits do not have easy access to clean drinking water and they suffer from water-borne diseases (www.nndsw.org.np).

The share of the Dalits in the total cultivable land is 1 per cent only. Data of Dalits' land owners show that 23 percent Dalits are landless, 48.7 percent own less than 5 ropanies, 15.6 percent own 6 to 10 ropanies, and 9.6 percent own 10 to 20 ropanies and 3.1 own more than 21 ropanies of land. Most of the Dalits in the Terai are landless and their share in agricultural land is only 1 per cent (Jha, 1998). Only the lucky ones among the Dalits in the Terai have land, though the situation is comparatively better in the hills. According to a research report, about 88 percent Dalit families are unable to make a living from their land. Thus they are forced to find labour based employment in agriculture or non-agriculture sectors but employment in these sectors are simply not available. Unequal distribution of resources and exploitative relations of production have compelled most of the Dalits to live as paupers, landless and homeless. Off-farm, Dalits are known for occupations such as sewing, iron works, leatherworks and cleaning, which are traditionally considered to be lowly works with no economic power in the society. They thus remained economically excluded for centuries; hence they are living in a dire economic condition. They cannot produce and sell foodstuffs like milk and vegetables, they don't find customers to pursue trading or service businesses such as restaurants, and

they are not educated to take up public service jobs. In sum, there is no room for their economic prosperity in traditional Nepalese society (www.fedo.org.np).

2.11 Political Participation of Dalits

Dalits participation in political process and representation in government at the village, district and the national level is insignificant compared to the size of their population. After the people's movement 2006, the country experienced a great change in the political sphere, however, that change has not been able to benefit the Dalit community significantly. The CA election 2008 could elect Dalits to only 8 percent, for instance; furthermore, there is no Dalit representation in the first Government (cabinet) of Republican Nepal (www.nndsw.org.np).

There is no doubt that political opportunities should be defined as natural human rights. But according to the NHDR (2009), participation of caste and ethnic groups in leadership positions of judiciary, constitutional, executive and legislative bodies shows that only 1.7% of the leaders are Dalits. It's far below the other caste, even far below the rate 13% of Dalits population of whole Nepalese.

Majority system or direct electoral system was adopted for the elections held on 2015 BS, 2048 BS, 2051 BS and 2056 BS for the selection of members of parliament in Nepal. But in the Constituent Assembly election on 2064 BS for the first time mixed electoral system was adopted. Except the election of Constituent Assembly, Dalit community could not have representation in the House of Representatives through the First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral system adopted in the previous elections. Due to adoption of mixed electoral system, in particular, for the election of Constituent Assembly, the presence of 51 Dalit representatives became attainable in 601- member of the Constituent Assembly³. Among them, 7 candidates or 3 percent were elected through direct electoral system whereas all others were nominated through proportional representation system. This also indicates that one of the important reasons of less representation of Dalit is non adoption

³ 50 Dalit members of Constituent Assembly were elected through the election of Constituent Assembly. Matrika Prasad Yadav and Jagat Prasad Yadav elected from then Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) quit the party after the party unification of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) with Communist Party of Nepal (Unity Centre Mashal). On the request of Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists), Election Commission dismissed their Membership of Constituent Assembly and elected Ram Kumar Paswan and Farnud Ahmed through proportionality. There were altogether 51 Constituent Assembly members in the Constituent Assembly including Ram Kumar Paswan.

of electoral system that ensures Dalit representation. Similarly, it is the political and constitutional denial of provision of mandatory representation of Dalit (Samata, 2012).

Dalits' participation in political process remains low despite promises of inclusion in terms of caste and ethnicity by the political parties and the successive governments. The main problems of lower participation of Dalits in politics include predominant control of political parties by "upper" caste people, lack of substantial initiatives by political parties to eliminate untouchability and caste based discrimination and to increase participation and representation of the Dalits and predominance of Brahmanism in all political institutions. The socio- economic background and structural barriers are further hindering to the Dalit leaders to be effective and influential within their parties (www.nndsw.org.np).

The status of Dalits is vulnerable now. It is not changed currently like magically because exploitation, discrimination and untouchability upon dalits becoming human culture so it takes more times to improve the status of current situation. When work of Dalits is respected, equal behave and progressive laws are prepared that can change the status of Dalits. Moreover, if there is a system of Dalits participation in policy level that can play prominent role to change the status of dalits (Shrestha, 2012).

Dalits are discriminated on the name of caste. The form of discrimination is higher in female than male. Being Dalits, twenty percent dalits are not allowed to use and participate in the resource and service consumption where as 29% Dalits are tortured or physical punishments and same numbers of Dalits are discriminated due to intra caste marriage. On the other hand, 19% Dalits are devoted and discrimination in their self esteems (www.nndsw.org.np).

Dalits have been and still are being discriminated just because they are Dalits: a structure of caste based discrimination. The discrimination in terms of untouchability is very severe as none of the Dalits are allowed to enter the house of the non dalit. Even if some do allow them, have to sit outside the house and if offered something to eat and drink they will have to eat it outside the house and wash the utensils on their own and leave it to dry

in the sun. This practice has been running from several years back but still it is being practiced ([WWW.Academia.edu/1611360/ Socio_Economic_Status_of_Dalits_in_Kaski](http://WWW.Academia.edu/1611360/Socio_Economic_Status_of_Dalits_in_Kaski)).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter represents overall research methodology, which had been applied for this study in order to meet the research objectives.

3.1 Research Design

The present study incorporated descriptive as well as exploratory research design, because it describes the situation of dalits and explores hindering factors of empowerment process. To some extent, it is a historical research design because it has traced out different historical issues and dimensions for the empowerment in the society.

3.2 Rationale for the Selection of the Study Area

Devdaha is the famous ancient capital of Koliya Kingdom, a mawali place of Lord Buddha, a semi urban area of Rupandehi district. The site is well connected by Purwa-Pachhim Rajmarg. There are 6 primary schools, 8 secondary schools, 4 higher secondary schools, including 2 campuses. It is an open defecation free area which has great prospect of religious tourism. Different caste for instance Brahmin, Chhetri, Dalit, Janjati, Madhesi⁴ in some extend have been living here. Development activities are increasing day by day in Devdaha VDC, however, equal participation from Dalit is not seen with respect to other non- dalit in development activities so there is necessary to study about the status of dalits and their empowerment process. The main reason for selecting this VDC of Rupandehi district is that in the past there is no study in the issue of dalit in the outset topic. We can get general picture of the empowering dynamics of dalits of semi urban area.

3.3 Nature and Sources of Data

It followed a more qualitative research design though there may be some quantitative information or data as well. A rigid set of design and techniques have not been developed because of the qualitative nature of the study and subject matter.

⁴ One of the marginalized community of the Terai region who speak "Aawadi or Hindi"

The study was based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from the household survey, semi-structured interview and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Similarly, the secondary data was used for the study which was collected from published or unpublished written documents, for example: - CBS statistics, VDC / DDC profiles, reports of NGOs and CBOs and so on.

3.4 Universe / Sample Size / Sampling Procedure

The study universe included the Dalits of the ward number 3 and 5 of Devdaha VDC in Rupandehi district where altogether 158 households are living in both wards.

This study has been focused on the empowerment of dalits in the local institutions. For this research study, the total sample size was 44 households or 27.85 percentage of universe of 2 selected wards of a VDC. The selected two wards were wards 3 and 5 of Devdaha VDC. Among 44 households, each ward covered 22 Households. All the households of the sampled wards had been included for administering the household interview schedule.

Due to the nature of the study, both probability and non probability method of sampling procedure were adopted. In first stage, Devdaha VDC of Rupandehi district was chosen through purposive sampling method to be the area of this research considering time and resources. Inside this, two wards of VDC was selected for studies again using purposive sampling that was based on the criteria of the majority of the Dalits as compared to the other wards and convenience for researcher. After entering into the selected wards, 22 household from each ward was taken using the random sampling method because of homogenous socio- economic status of Dalits.

3.5 Techniques and Tools of Data Collection

To accumulate primary data, Household survey, Institutional Survey, Key Informant Interview and Focus Group Discussion were done. Similarly, questionnaire, checklist, interview guidelines and FGD guidelines were applied as the tools of data collection. The detail method of data collection was followed.

3.5.1 Household survey

Household survey was done by developing structured and unstructured questionnaire as a tool to produce the accurate and realistic data from Dalits. The questionnaire has been

prepared or divided in two parts. One part was related to general information of households and another was related to obtain general information, socio- economic conditions and their participation in social activities, participation in decision- making which mainly discovered their empowerment conditions. The question was asked to the respondents and answer was filled up to accumulate the required data. The main contents of the questionnaire were about education, income and expenditure, poverty status and participation in the local social, economic and political institutions of household populations.

3.5.2 Institutional Survey

It was done by developing institutional survey guidelines as a tool to accumulate the holistic data. During the research study, the data were collected related to dalits participation from different social, economic and political institutions.

3.5.3 Key Informant Interview (KII)

The primary data was also assembled from key informant interview using interview guidelines tool. Its nature is qualitative so qualitative data was assembled on the factor of empowerment of dalits in development process and so on. The key informant interview was taken with a person as depth study of selected group.

3.5.4 Focus Group Discussion

In order to access the qualitative information on the process of empowerment of Dalits, the FGD was organized by developing FGD guidelines as a tool. It was organized at a place with 12 people. All the participants were local Dalits people. This discussion was focused more on Dalit's participation in decision making, policy level, empowerment process and the problems that they are facing and on more issues. It has explored the level of empowerment of Dalits.

3.6 Data Processing and Analysis

The data or desired information collected through different tools were checked, verified manually to reduce possible error and categorized in different relevant headings and subheadings. Since the nature of the study is qualitative and quantitative in some manner, the method of analysis also is qualitative and quantitative. The collected data finally

endorsed into the conceptual framework, and then discourse analysis and statistical analysis was followed. And the statistical measures like percentage magnified the data analysis process. The relevancy of the discourse analysis can be justified here because of the power dimension of the empowerment of the dalits. On the other hand, four cases were prepared about hindering factors of empowerment of Dalits.

3.7 Reliability and Validity of the Tools

To achieve pragmatic information of study tools must be reliable and valid. Before finalization of household's questionnaire, institutional survey checklist, KII guideline and FGD guideline, these tools were consulted and discussed with respective research guide/teacher (supervisor and experts) of the CDRD Tribhuwan University for better outputs. The relevant research tools were modified and finalized.

3.8. Ethical Issues of the Research

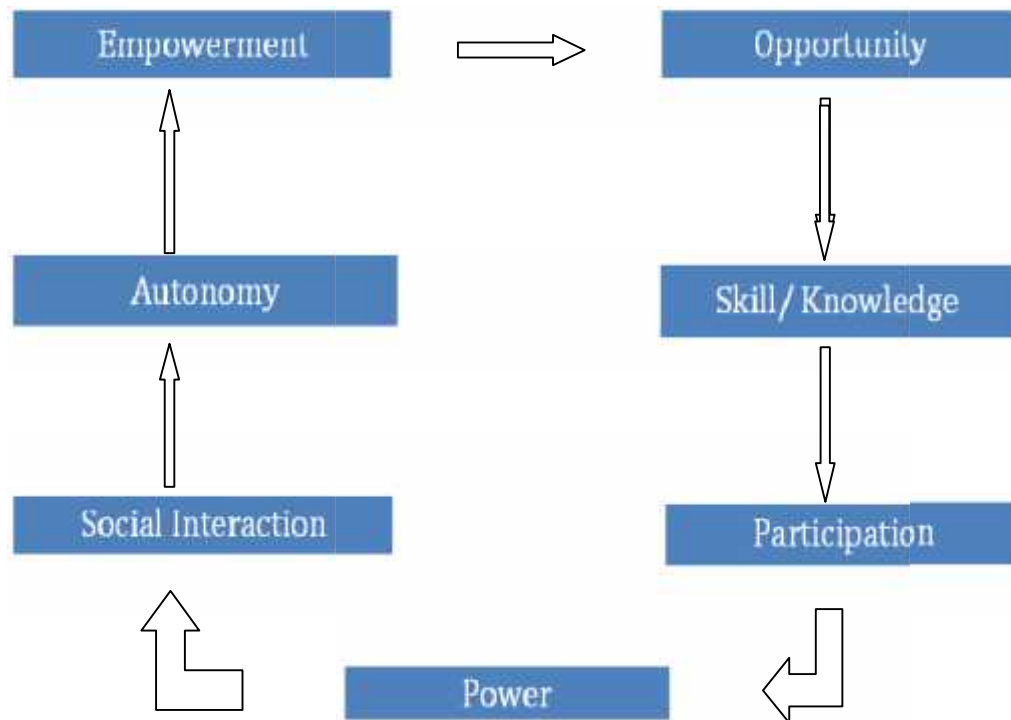
Ethical Issues are critical aspects for conducting of research, which are moral principles or beliefs about what is right or wrong. They are also associated with the power relationship between the researcher and those who grant access to information. During the research period, it was believed that respondents were noticeably informed about the purpose of the study where the researcher had considered the social and cultural ideals of the study area. Similarly, the respondents had been participated as their willingness and confidently; not any kind of forces used and respondent's identity and privacy have not been disclosed in any way.

3.9 Conceptual Framework

The framework developed by researcher presents the interrelations between two concepts: empowerment and opportunity. Conceptually, it has been hypothesized that empowerment and opportunity are mutually correlated concepts. Opportunity emphasizes skill or knowledge which enhances skill / knowledge. Further, it increases participation in each and every activity that build up power. Along with, it increase social interaction level and people will be self autonomy or independent that prepares empowerment of the person or community. This creates again opportunity. Such type of cycle repeats again. The different indicators have been categorized under the variables of empowerment of

Dalits. Along with this power structure, the overall case empowerment vs. opportunity will be studied and incorporated for in-depth analysis. Thus, the framework and description of the indicators can be synthesized as what the following figure indicates:

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Empowerment.



Empowerment means here meaningful participation. When people is invited in the program, provides chance to speak their own concept and apply their views if applicable.

Opportunity: It means getting chance to participate in any activities whether, it may be general or important activities. Here, opportunity means if respondents or household members get chance to participate in any activities.

Skill / Knowledge: Skill / Knowledge means a technique that helps to people to work easily. Here, skill/ Knowledge means traditional skill that dalits have. Especially, tailoring, blacksmith, goldsmith and so on which is traditional and has a long history of transferring from people to people.

Participation: Here, participation means stage of participation. If a respondent is invited in any activity for his/ her participation that is termed as participation.

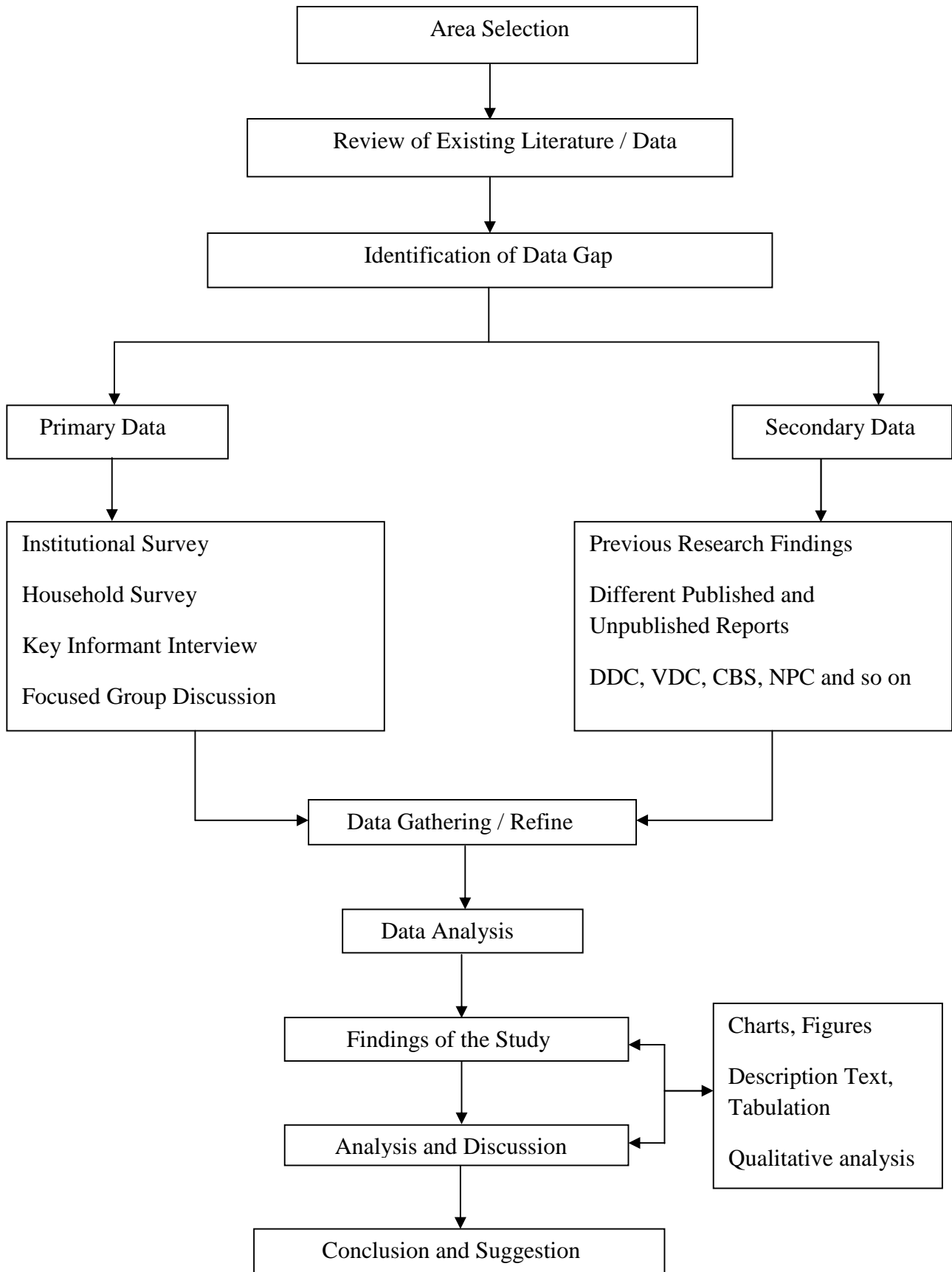
Power: Inner capacity of people that can able to people themselves do decision on necessary time.

Social Interaction: A social program where people meet at a place, at a time by collective opinion.

Autonomy: A stage where respondents or households can do own decision without any torture.

Figure: 2

Research Flow (Methodological Chart)



CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter is totally dedicated for data presentation and analysis of the respondents and household population of the study area. After the collection of necessary information, all the data have been classified, tabulated, analyzed and outcomes are mentioned in detail in this chapter.

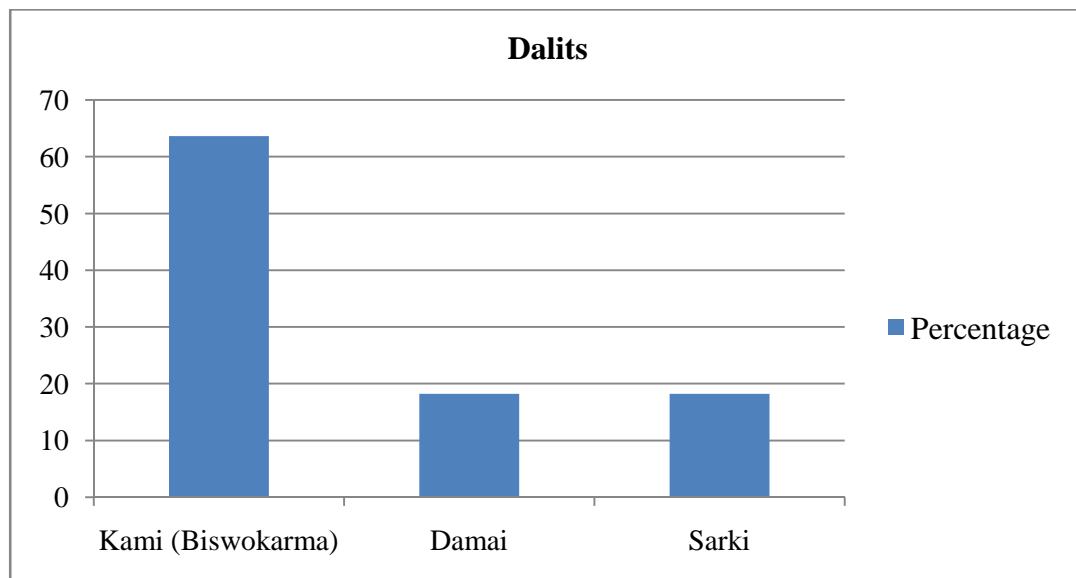
4.1 Background of the Respondents

I took 44 respondents who were above 14 years. All the data relating to respondents are herewith.

4.1.1 Caste of the Respondents

There were only Hilly Dalits in which three castes out of five hilly Dalits was found in the study areas.

Figure 3 Caste of the Respondent



Source: *Field Survey, 2013*

Among Hilly dalits, the majority of the respondents were Kami (Biswokarma) with 63.6% whereas other two sub castes Damai and Sarki were found 18.2% equal (Figure 4.3).

4.1.2 Age Composition of the Respondents

The age structure plays a major role in demography whether it influences the values, roles, social mores, responsibilities, social relation and fundamental social hierarchy. It was found that different age of people is living in the research area which was categorized

into mainly five age groups. The classification of respondents by broad age group was shown below.

Table 4.1: Distribution of respondents by broad age group

Age group	No.	%
15-30	4	9.1
30-45	20	45.5
45-60	7	15.9
60-75	13	29.5
Total	44	100
Mean age of the respondents = 47.4		

Source: Field Survey, 2013

In the sampled population, 45.5 percent respondents were found in age group 30-45 years, where 29.5 percent respondents were in age group 60-75 years, followed by age group 45-60 years (15.9%). Only 9.1% respondents were in age group 15-30 in the study (Table: 4.1). The mean age of the respondents was 47.4 year.

4.1.3 Educational Status of the Respondents

Table 4.2 Distribution of the respondents by educational status

Literacy rate	No	%
Literate	27	61.4
Illiterate	17	38.6
Total	44	100
Educational attainment		
Informal Education	5	18.5
Primary level	15	55.6
Lower secondary level	6	22.2
Secondary level and above	1	3.7
Total	27	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The table above shows that only 61.4% of total respondents were found as literate respondents where as rest of the total respondents (38.6%) were illiterate which is more than national average (CBS, 2012). Among the literate respondents, 55.6% had primary level education, 22.2% had lower secondary education, 18.5% had informal education and 3.7% had secondary level education and above.

This data shows that huge mass of respondent (74.1%) hadn't attained basic education and negligible percentage had secondary education and no one had higher education and above among the literate respondents (Table 4.2).

4.2 Social and Economic Status of the Dalits Households

In this topic, different data regarding to demographic, social and economic characteristics was incorporated.

4.2.1. Demographic status of the Dalits Households

Such data that is related to demography especially age, sex of the Dalits households was taken.

4.2.1.1 Age- Sex Composition of the Dalits Household Population

To find out the demographic status of the Dalits households, age – sex composition of the household population was taken in which only two sexes that is male and female were found and different age group of people was classified into mainly five groups.

Table 4.3 Distribution of Dalits population by age and sex

Age Group (years)	Male		Female		Sex ratio	Total	
	No	%	No	%		No	%
0-15	24	24	48	39.3	50	72	32.4
15-30	23	23	28	22.9	82.1	51	23
30-45	31	31	23	18.9	134.8	54	24.3
45-60	9	9	10	8.2	90	19	8.6
60+	13	13	13	10.7	100	26	11.7
Total	100	100	122	100	91.2	222	100
Household size: 5.04							

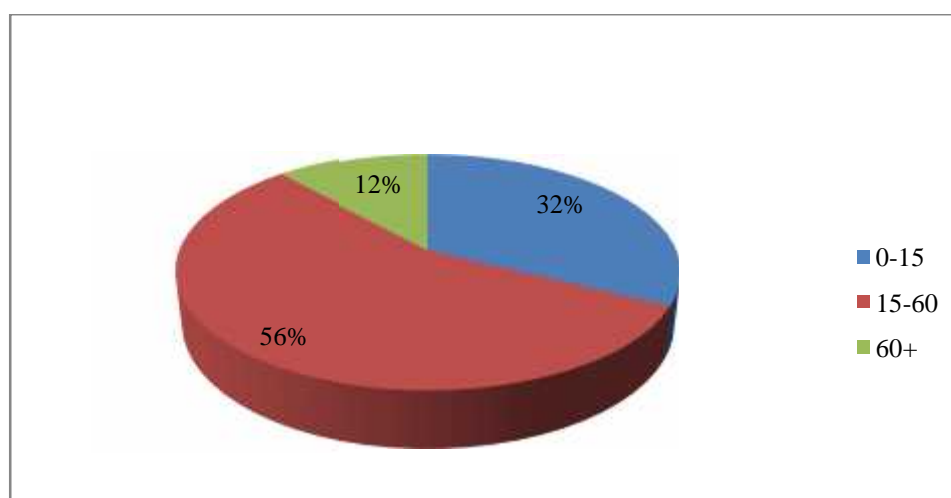
Source: Field Survey, 2013

Above table shows that the largest number of male population was found in the age group 30-45 and the least number of male population was found in the age group 45-60 whereas the largest number of female population was found in the age group 0-15 and the least number of female population was found in the age group 45-60. On the other hand, the second largest number of male population was found in the age group 0-15, followed by age group 30-45 whereas the second largest number of female population was found in the age group 15-30, followed by age group 30-45. The male population 60+ was found 13% whereas it was found only 10.7% of female population.

In total, the largest number of population was found in the age group 0-15, followed by age group 30-45 whereas the least number of populations was found 45-60 age groups. The sex ratio in the study population was found to be low. This indicates that the number of females is higher than males. However, it was found irregular in a group. It is high in the age group 30-45 and is equal in the age group 60+. The average household size of the research area is 5.04 which are bigger than VDC average 4.38 and national average 4.88 (Source: CBS, 2012). Similarly, sex ratio is found 91.2 which are low than national average (Source: CBS, 2012).

If we examine the age composition in economic term, people below 15 years and 60 years above are supposed to be economically inactive that means “Dependent population” and age 15-59 years is economically active that means “Independent population”.

Figure 4 Age distribution of the household population by broad age



Source: Field Survey, 2013

The above figure shows that 56% households are 15 to 60 age group and 44% households are less than 15 years and 60 and above among the households.

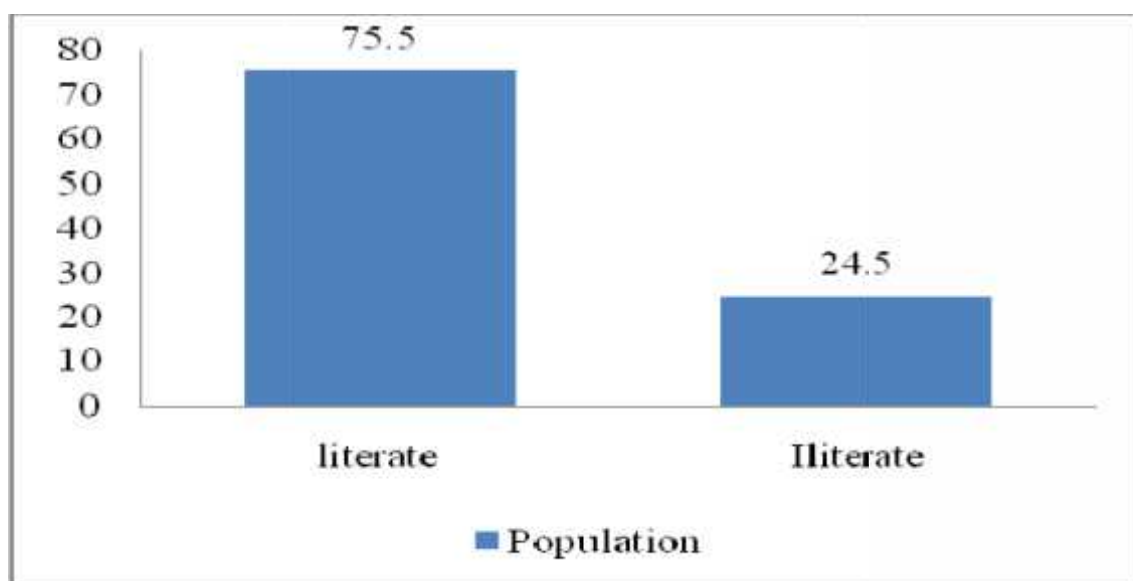
The figure shows that majority of the household population are independent on which 44% of the households depends upon for survival. Percentage of independent population is quiet less than national average (57%). This indicates both social as well as economic dependencies over the potential working population.

4.2.2. Social status of household population

To find out the social status of Dalits households, different social indicators especially education, religion, occupation, status of married, family type was calculated.

4.2.2.1 Educational status of the household population

Figure 5 Population distribution by literacy status



Source: Field Survey, 2013

The figure above shows that out of the total population, more than third quarter of the population (75.5 %) are literate where rest of the population (24.5%) is illiterate (Fig.5) which is categorized below in detail.

Table 4.4 Distribution of Dalits population (6 years and above) by their literacy status

Literacy rate	Sex				Total	
	Male		Female		No	%
	No	%	No	%		
Literate	81	82.6	70	68.6	151	75.5
Illiterate	17	17.4	32	31.4	49	24.5
Total	98	100	102	100	200	100
Educational attainment						
Informal Education	39	48.2	26	37.1	65	43.1
Primary level (class 1-5)	16	19.7	26	37.1	42	27.8
Lower secondary level (class 6-8)	17	21	11	15.7	28	18.5
Secondary level (class 8-10)	5	6.2	4	5.7	9	5.9
SLC	4	4.9	2	2.9	6	4
Higher Level and above	-	-	1	1.5	1	0.7
Total	81	100	70	100	151	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The table above shows that literacy status of household population in according to their educational attainment. Among the literate household population, 43.1% had got informal education and more than a quarter (27.8%) of literate population had only primary level education. Similarly, 18.5% had completed lower secondary level and 5.9% had concluded secondary level education mean while 4% had fulfilled at least SLC. In addition to, less than 1% (0.7%) had passed intermediate level and above. Nobody had achieved graduate level in the study population.

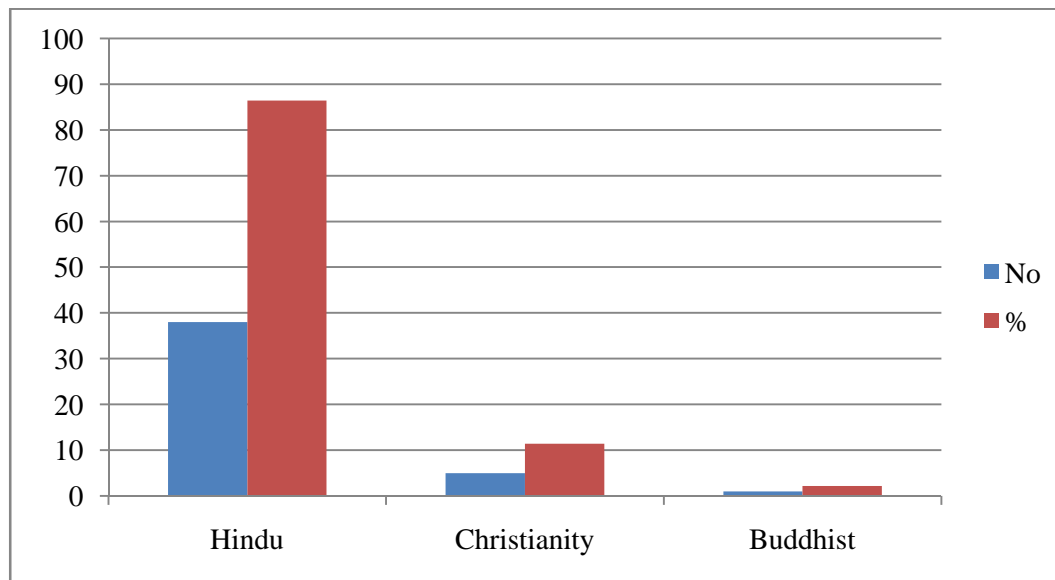
This table 4.4 shows that almost study household population were lack behind to complete basic education among the literate population that suggested most of the literate household population could only read and write normally. And very few people had

access to higher level education & above. Similarly, educational status by sex was found unequal among the study household population. Literacy rate of female in the study household population was very less than male as a whole though female literacy rate was higher in the primary level education which was declining in the further education. The difference between male and female literacy rate was 14% that shows more female had illiterate with comparison to male (Table 4.4).

4.2.2.2 Religion of the households

It was found only 3 religion followed by households' population which is shown below:-

Figure 6: Religion of the households



Source: Field Survey, 2013

Among them, the majority of the households were followers of Hindu religion (86.4%), followed by Christianity (11.4%). A little mass of the households (2.2%) were found as followers of Buddhism (Figure: 6).

4.2.2.3 Major occupation of the Dalits households' population

Out of 222, 189 people with 100 female and 89 male was found above 5 years so it was taken as total occupational status of the household.

Table 4.5 Major Occupation of Household Population

Occupation	Sex				Total	
	Male		Female		No	%
	No	%	No	%		
Agriculture	9	10.1	11	11	20	10.6
Service	3	3.4	-	-	3	1.6
Business	1	1.1	-	-	1	0.5
Daily wage labor	20	22.4	17	17	37	19.6
Physically not able to work	1	1.1	3	3	4	2.1
Student	30	33.7	27	27	57	30.2
Currently not working	2	2.3	3	3	5	2.6
Household work	-	-	37	37	37	19.6
Foreign employment	18	20.2	-	-	18	9.5
Social worker	2	2.3	-	-	2	1.1
Skill	3	3.4	2	2	5	2.6
Total	89	100	100	100	189	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The above table shows the occupational status of sampled household population.

Above table shows that huge mass of people was daily wage labor which was the major occupation for male whereas 17% of females were found to involve in Daily wage labor. None of the females were found to involve in any foreign employment whereas 20.2% of male were found as foreign employers. On the other hand, none of the males were found to involve in any household work whereas 37% of females were found to involve in household work. The percentage of male household population involved in skill was significantly higher than the female. None of the females were found to involve in any Service, Business and Social work whereas 3.4%, 1.1%, 2.3% of males were found to involve in Service, Business and Social work respectively.

Out of total occupational status of households, 30.2% people were students, followed by Daily wage labor and Household work with 19.6%. Only 10.6 % were taking agriculture as a major occupation for livelihood where most of the students were also engaged in this occupation (Table 4.5). Other identified occupations in the study area were foreign employment (9.5%), skill (2.6%), and service (1.6%) and so on. Less people were engaging in high social value activities for instances Business (0.5%), service (1.6%) and social worker (1.1%).

Above table shows that involvement of female was less in income generating activities than male. Most of the female was engaged in non economic activity whereas majority of the households depends upon the income of daily wage labor and foreign employment.

4.2.2.4 Age of Dalits at the Marriage time

While asking the age of marriage to the respondents and her / his family, it was said different age by the respondents and her / his family which is tabulated below:-

Table 4.6 Distribution of Population by Their Age of Marriage

Age (Year)	Female	%	Male	%
8-10	3	6.8	-	-
10-12	3	6.8	1	2.3
12-14	7	15.9	2	4.5
14-16	11	25	5	11.4
16-18	11	25	10	22.7
18-20	6	13.6	12	27.3
20-22	3	6.8	9	20.5
22-24	-	-	3	6.8
24-26	-	-	2	4.5
Total	44	100	44	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The table above shows the age of first time marriage of household population. None of the female was married after 22 years of age for first time and 6.8% of females were found married before 10 years of age whereas none of the males were found into married life before 10 years of age. Majority of the females (25%) were found married in the age group 14-18, followed by 12-14 age groups (15.9%) whereas majority of the males (27.3%) were found married in the age group 18-20, followed by 16-18 age groups. 13.6% of females were married in the age group 18-20 whereas 20.5% of males were married in the age group 20-22, followed by 14-16 age group.

The above result shows that early child marriage is found in both females and males whereas the incidence of early child marriage is higher in females than males though early child marriage is restricted by government.

4.2.2.5 Family type of the Dalits households

While doing households survey in the research area, it was found only three types of family structure which is shown below:-

Table 4.7: Family type of the Dalits Households

SN	Family type	(Percentage) %
1	Nuclear	52.3
2	Joint	43.2
3	Extended	4.5
Total		100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

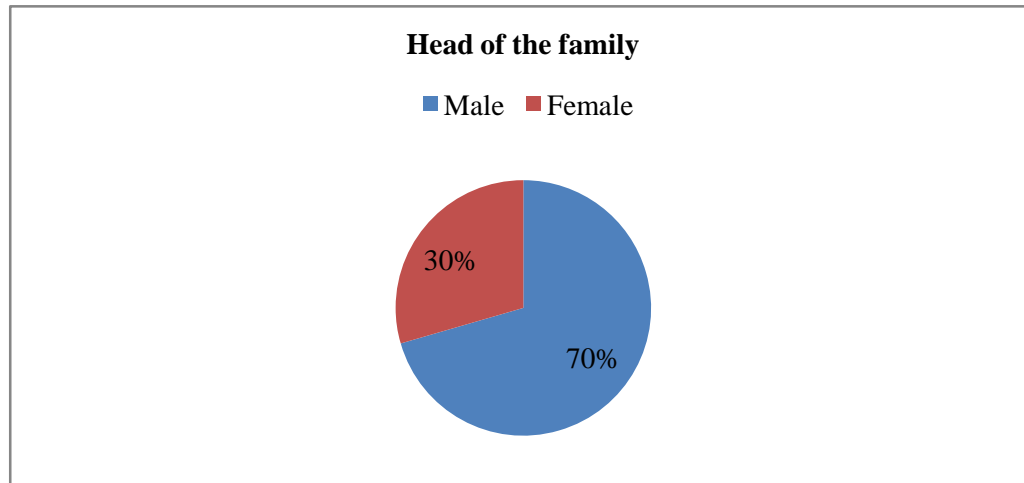
The above figure shows the distribution of the household by family types. Majority of the households were living with Nuclear family whereas 43.2% of total family types were living with Joint family and 4.5% were living in Extended family.

This data shows that people of the study area were living in both types of the family structure. On the other hand, the total number of Nuclear family was significantly higher

than Joint family and others structure of family types because of changing social dimensions (Table 4.7).

4.2.2.6 Head of the family

Figure 7: Head of the Family



Source: Field Survey, 2013

The table above shows that more than two third (70.5%) of the households had male headed family and remaining (29.5%) were female headed family in the study households.

This data shows that highly male dominated family was found in the study area (Figure 7).

4.2.3 Economic Status of the Households' Population

To find out the economic status of the Dalits households, different questions was asked or filled related to economic indicators especially source of income, monthly income level and land to the respondents.

4.2.3.1 Source of Income

During the field survey, a questionnaire was asked or filled about the source of income of family, different types of source of income was informed by respondents that is presented by following table.

Table 4.8 Distribution of the Dalits Households by Source of Income

Source of Income	No	%
Agriculture / Livestock	8	18.2
Labor	12	27.3
Job / Service	3	6.8
Foreign Employment	15	34.1
Skill	5	11.3
Business	1	2.3
Total	44	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The above table shows that foreign employment is the major source of income for more than one third households (34.1%), followed by labor on which 27.3% of the households depend. Only 1 household considers business as their income source which is evident as only 2.3% of the total households. On the other hand 18.2% of total households consider agriculture / livestock as their income source whereas skill and job / services are believed as the major source of income by 11.3% and 6.8% of total households respectively.

4.2.3.2 Monthly Income Level of the Households

About the monthly income level of the households, the question was asked to the respondents. All the respondents told about the monthly income level which was categorized below.

Table 4.9 Distribution of Households by Monthly Income Level

Income categories (NRs)	No	%
Less than 3,500	2	4.5
3,500- 7,000	6	13.6
7,000-10,000	9	20.5
10,000-20,000	13	29.5
20,000-30,000	9	20.5
30,000+	5	11.4
Total	44	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

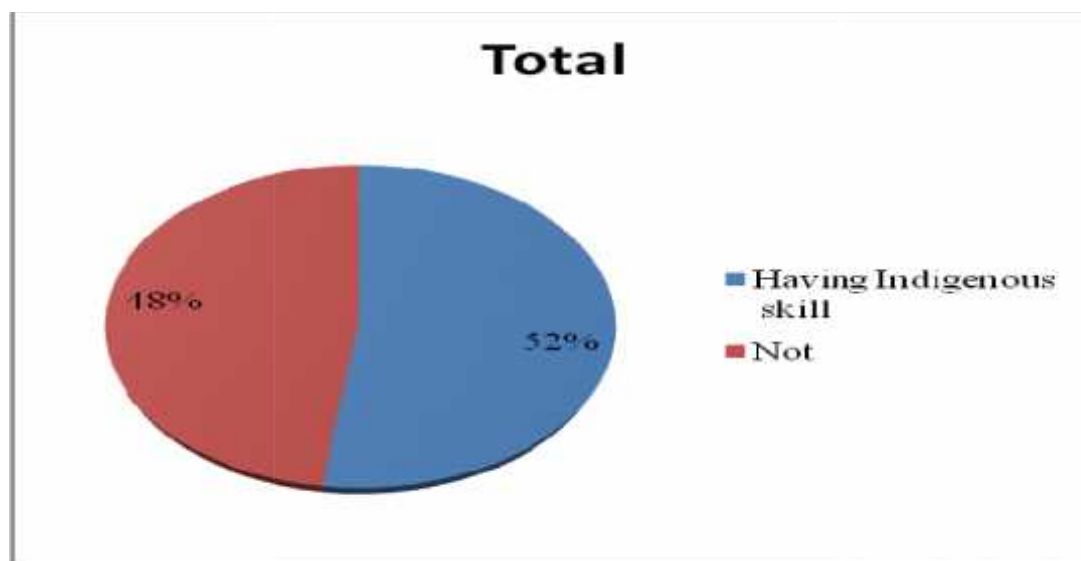
Above table 4.9 shows that 11.4% of total respondents fall in the category of more than Rs. 30,000 / month and least of the total households (4.5%) in the category of less than Rs. 3000/ month whereas 29.5% of total households fall in the category of Rs. 10,000-20,000, followed by 20.5% of total households fall in the category of Rs.7,000-10,000 and another 20.5% of total households fall in the category of 20,000-30,000 monthly income. On the other hand 13.6% of total households have Rs. 3500-7000 as their monthly income.

This table shows that households of the study area have less income that signifies majority of the households have been living with low status.

4.2.3.3. Level of Skilled Dalits Households

Dalits are rich in traditional skill. On the basic of skill, Dalits are classified by following figure.

Figure 8: Levels of Skilled Dalits Households



Source: Field Survey, 2013

Among 44 households, majority of the households (52%) have indigenous skill and rest of the households (48%) having no indigenous skill.

The above figure shows having indigenous skill family is higher than not having indigenous skill (Figure 8). Further, they have following indigenous skills which are classified below:-

Table 4.10 Distribution of the Households by Indigenous Skill

Indigenous Skill	No	%
Tailoring	7	30.4
Black Smithy	12	52.2
Gold Smithy	1	4.4
Shoemaking	3	13
Total	23	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Among Indigenous skilled households, majority of the households (52.2%) have indigenous skill on Black Smithy and the least (4.4%) of the households have skill on Gold Smithy. On the other hand 30.4% and 13% have indigenous skill on tailoring and Shoemaking respectively (Table 4.10).

Skill can be used as a main source of income. During the field survey, following households have been using their Indigenous / traditional skill as main source of income for livelihood that are tabulated below:-

Table 4.11: Distribution of the households using Indigenous skill as a main source of income

Indigenous Skill	Using skill as main source of income (No)	%
Indigenous skillful family	23	100
Number of households using indigenous skill as main source of income	5	21.7
Tailoring	2	28.6
Black Smithy	1	8.3
Gold Smithy	1	100
Shoemaking	1	33.3
Total	5	21.7

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Among the total indigenous skillful households, only 21.7% are using their indigenous skill as the main source of income whereas majority of the households were doing tailoring, followed by households of Black Smithy, Gold Smithy and Shoemaking.

Above result shows that majority of the households are not applying indigenous skill what they have as the main tool of livelihood. Majority of the FGD participants said Indigenous skill is not modernized timely and discrimination is done on the basic of skill so they are not applying indigenous skill as the main source of living.

4.2.3.4 Land Ownership

All the households were asked about the land ownership. All the households said that they have no land ownership certificate that means they are *Sukumbasi* but they have been using their land as their livelihood purpose whereas they have following pieces of land which are tabulated below.

Table 4.12 Distribution of the households by piece of land

Pieces of Land (Kattha)	No	%
<1	12	27.3
1-5	26	59.1
5-10	2	4.5
10-20	4	9.1
More than 20	-	-
Total	44	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Among the total households, majority of the households (59.1%) had only 1 to 5 Kattha of land and none had more than 20 Katta of land. On the other hand, more than a quarter of total households had less than a Katta of land, only 9.1% of total households had 10 to 20 Katta of land and 4.5% of total households had 5-10 Katta of land (Table 4.12).

4.2.3.5 Food Sufficiency

All the households were asked about the duration that their production supports them which are tabulated below.

Table 4.13 Distribution of the households by food security

Duration of support by the production (Month)	No	%
<3	32	72.7
3-6	8	18.2
6-9	3	6.8
9-12	1	2.3
Surplus	-	-
Total	44	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Out of total households, the majority percentage (72.7%) of households said that their production can support them for less than 3 months. 18.2% of total households said their production can support them for 3-6 months, followed by 6.8%. Only 2.3% of the total households said that their production only supports them for 9-12 months.

The above table shows that there is no food sufficiency among dalits of Devdaha VDC that tell all the Dalits should seek other opportunities to sustain themselves.

4.3 Participation of Dalits in Social, Economic and Political Institutions

There were many social, economic and political institutions. Dalits participation was studied in social, economic and political institutions of the local areas using institutional survey guidelines.

4.3.1 Participation of Dalits in Social Institutions

As social institutions, School Management Committee (SMC), Mothers Group and Tole Reform Committee (TRC) were studied by using Institutional Survey guidelines.

4.3.1.1 Participation in SMC

There are 7 schools and 2 colleges in the study area in which 2 Higher Secondary Schools (HSS), 2 Secondary Schools (SS) and 3 Primary Schools (PS) are found. Here, a Higher Secondary School, a Secondary School and a Primary School were selected for this study through Institutional Survey.

Table 4.14 Distribution of Participation of Population in SMC of Schools

Name of Institution	Participation in SMC							
	Aadibasi / Janjati		Dalits		Others		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Shree Devdaha HSS	2	22.2	1	11.1	6	66.7	9	100
Shree Ugjyoti SS	1	11.1	1	11.1	7	77.8	9	100
Shree Udaya PS	3	42.9	1	14.2	3	42.9	7	100
Total	6	24	3	12	16	64	25	100

Source: Institutional Survey, 2013

The table above shows the status of Dalits participation in SMC of Schools. Participation on SMC of Shree Devdaha HSS from Others is higher (66.7%) than Aadibasi / Janjati and Dalits where as Janjati participation is found 22.2% and dalits participation is found only 11.1%. On the other hand, Others participation on SMC is found higher (77.8%), followed by Aadibasi / Janjati and Dalits participation at Shree Ugjyoti SS where as Aadibasi / Janjati and Others have equal participation and Dalit has relatively low participation with respect to Aadibasi / Janjati and Others on SMC of Shree Udaya PS.

This table 4.14 shows that Dalits participation as SMC member of schools are found comparatively low with respect to Aadibasi / Janjati and Others at all schools. It means that they have not got much opportunity in the vital post of the school management committee.

Hence, Dalits participation in the SMC of Udaya PS is good where as Dalits participation in the SMC of Ugjyoti SS and Devdaha HSS is not satisfactory comparison with the Dalits population of Devdaha VDC (VDC profile, 2068).

4.3.1.2 Participation in Mothers Group

There were 6 Mothers group in the study area in which Executive Committee (EC) of 3 Mothers group were selected for this study through Institutional Survey.

Table 4.15 Distribution of Participation in EC of Mother Groups

Name of Institution	Participation in Mothers group							
	Aadibasi /Janjati		Dalits		Others		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Bhagwati Mothers group	2	18.2	5	45.4	4	36.4	11	100
Mahamaya Mothers group	4	44.5	2	22.2	3	33.3	9	100
Durga Devi Mothers group	8	61.5	4	30.8	1	7.7	13	100
Total	14	42.5	11	33.3	8	24.2	33	100

Source: Institutional Survey, 2013

Above table 4.15 shows that Dalit participation is higher (45.4%) as compared to Others (36.4%) and Aadibasi / Janjati (18.2%) in EC of Bhagwati Mothers group. On the other hand Aadibashi / Janjati is higher (44.5%) than Others (33.3%) and Dalits (22.2%) in EC of Mahamaya Mothers group. In addition to, Aadibashi / Janjati participation is found higher (61.5%) as compared to Others and Dalits in EC of Durga Devi Mothers group where as 7.7% from Others and 30.8% from Dalits participation are found.

The above table shows that Dalits participation is found relatively significant in Bhagwati Mothers Group than others two Mothers Groups. In total, one third of EC is found as Dalits in Mothers Groups.

Hence, the above table 4.15 represents that Dalits participation in the Mothers Group is better comparison with the Dalits population of the VDC (VDC profile, 2068).

4.3.1.3 Participation in Tole Reform Committee

There were 2 Tole Reform Committee in the study area in which EC of all the Tole Reform Committee was selected for this study through Institutional Survey.

Table 4.16 Participation of Population in Tole Reform Committee

Name of Institution	Participation in TRC							
	Aadibasi /Janjati		Dalits		Others		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Udaya Tole Reform Committee	2	18.2	5	45.4	4	36.4	11	100
Siwalaya Tole Reform Committee	4	44.5	2	22.2	3	33.3	9	100
Total	6	30	7	35	7	35	20	100

Source: Institutional Survey, 2013

The table above shows the participation of population in Tole Reform Committee. Dalits participation is higher (45.4%) as compared to Others and Aadibasi / Janjati in EC of Udaya Tole Reform Committee where as 36.4% from Others and 18.2% from Aadibasi / Janjati are found. On the other hand, the percentage of Aadibasi / Janjati (44.5%) is higher in EC of Siwalaya Tole Reform Committee than Others and Dalits where as the percentage of Others (33.3%) & Dalits (22.2%) are found.

Participation of Dalits is found relatively significant in EC of Udaya Tole Reform Committee than EC of Siwalaya Tole Reform. In total, the participation of dalits is comparatively better and is seen equal with respect to Others.

Hence, the above table 4.16 shows that participation of Dalits is the best based on the total number of Dalits population of the VDC (VDC profile, 2068).

4.3.2 Dalits Participation in Economic Institutions

Here, cooperative was taken as economic institution. There were 9 cooperatives in the study area in which EC and general member of 5 cooperatives were selected for this study through Institutional Survey by using Institutional Survey guidelines.

Table 4.17 Participation of Population in Economic Institutions

Name of Economic Institution	Participation in Cooperative							
	Aadibasi / Janjati		Dalits		Others		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Devdaha Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (EC)	1	9.1	-	-	10	90.9	11	100
Palwabi Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (EC)	2	22.2	-	-	7	77.8	9	100
Nawa Prabhat Woman Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (EC)	1	14.3	-	-	6	85.7	7	100
Sangini Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (EC)	5	45.4	3	27.3	3	27.3	11	100
Total	9	23.7	3	7.9	26	68.4	38	100
Devdaha Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (General Member)	121	21.8	16	2.9	418	75.3	555	100
Palwabi Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (General Member)	49	12.8	8	2.1	325	85.1	382	100
Nawa Prabhat Woman Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (General Member)	70	27.5	20	7.8	165	64.7	255	100
Sangini Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (General Member)	42	26.4	41	25.8	76	47.8	159	100
Total	282	20.9	85	6.3	984	72.8	1351	100
Mulyawan Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited	-	-	11	100	-	-	11	100

(EC)								
Mulyawan Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (General Member)			127				127	100

Source: Institutional Survey, 2013

Devdaha Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited had 2.9% dalits participation in the general member but had no participation in the EC. Palwabi Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited had 2.1% dalits participation in the general member but had no participation in the EC. Similarly, Nawa Prabhat Woman Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited had 7.8% dalits participation in the general member but had no participation in the EC. But, it was found that Sangini Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited had 25.8% dalits participation in the general member where as 1.5% more than general member that is 27.3% dalits participation was in the EC. Moreover, Dalits have started a cooperative only for dalits communities named Mulyawan Saving and Cooperative Limited where all the general members and executive committee members are dalits.

Hence, the above table 4.17 shows that an unsatisfactory result about the Dalits participation in the vital post and general member based on Dalits population of the VDC except Mulyawan and Sangini Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited (VDC profile, 2068).

4.3.3 Dalits Participation in Political Institutions

Dalits participation was studied in Political Institutions especially political parties and VDC council through Institutional Survey.

4.3.3.1 Dalits Participation in Political Party

More than half dozen of political parties and their representation can be seen here in which Dalits participation was overviewed only in namely three major parties that is given below:-

Table 4.18 Participation of Population in Political Institutions

Name of the Political Parties	Participation of different caste in EC of political parties at ward level							
	Aadibasi /Janjati		Dalits		Others		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)	5	19.3	3	11.5	18	69.2	26	100
Nepali Congress (NC)	9	37.5	1	4.2	14	58.3	24	100
CPN (UML)	4	18.2	2	9.1	16	72.7	22	100
Total	12	17.1	6	8.6	52	74.3	70	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Above table shows that 69.2 percentage from Others and 19.3 percentage from Aadibasi / Janjati that was followed by 11.5 percentages of Dalits in EC of UCPN (Maoist) in the ward level which is better in the comparison with Dalits population of the VDC (VDC profile, 2068). 58.3 percentages from Others and 37.5 percentages of Aadibasi / Janjati that was followed by 4.2 percentages of dalits in EC of NC in the ward level. On the other hand, 72.7 percentages from Others and 18.2 percentages from Aadibasi / Janjati that was followed by 9.1 percentages of Dalits in EC of CPN (UML) in the ward level.

This table shows that UCPN (Maoist) had provided more opportunity to Dalits to participate as EC member of local level than others parties.

The above table 4.18 represents that Dalits participation in the EC of political parties is unsatisfactory based on Dalits population of the VDC (VDC profile, 2068).

To be member of political parties is a kind of political participation. In the sampled respondents following figures was found as membership of political parties.

Table 4.19 Distribution of Respondents by Having the Membership of Political Parties

Description	No	%
Having membership in Political Parties	11	25
Having not membership in Political Parties	33	75
Total	44	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

In the study area only a quarter (25%) of total respondents has membership of political parties where rest of the respondents is politically in active. This table 4.19 shows that huge mass of households are politically inactive who have no politically consciousness only they are voters.

4.4 Hindering Factors of Empowerment of Dalits

This topic concentrated to find out hindering factor for not being empowerment of Dalits. Questionnaires were developed and asked using FGD and KII to find out the hindering factor for not being empowerment of Dalits. Majority of the respondents said following factors were responsible for the disempowerment of Dalits.

4.4.1 Illiteracy

In FGD, a question was asked about the main causes of disempowerment of Dalits. All participants (12 of 12) said that illiteracy is the most dominant cause for disempowerment of Dalits. Further, they said that illiteracy have different dimension that is directly interlink to the opportunity which effects to empowerment. Similarly, KII respondent also listed illiteracy is the pertinent factor for not empowering of Dalits.

Table 4.20 Distribution of the respondents by educational attainments

Literacy Status	No	%
Literate	27	61.4
Illiterate	17	38.6
Total	44	100
Educational attainment		
Informal Education	5	18.5
Primary level	15	55.6
Lower secondary level	6	22.2
Secondary level and above	1	3.7
Total	27	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The table above shows that majority of the respondents (61.4%) were found as literate respondents where as rest of the total respondents (38.6%) were illiterate which is more than literacy status of nation. This data shows that huge mass of respondent (74.1%) hadn't attained basic education and negligible percentage had secondary education and no one had higher education and above among the literate respondents (Table 4.20).

There is necessary having at least lower secondary level of education to get job in government office where as majority of the Dalits had deprived due to lack of necessary qualification though they are skillful so that they have been powerless.

All the participants of FGD reported that "*poverty*" is the key factor for being illiteracy. Due to poverty, Dalits is involved in the labor so they are busy only for income generation and have no time for paying attention towards education of their son and daughters. Similarly, KII respondent also mentioned that "*poverty*" is the main reasons for being illiteracy of Dalits so that they have no time to think about the quality education.

All the participants of FGD reported that "*Lack of sensitization towards education*" is the second dominant causes for not getting education. Due to lack of sensitization among

parents, majority of the households are not paying attention towards education of their son and daughters even if they have time.

All the participants of FGD reported that “*Not getting opportunity*” and “*caste discrimination*” are the third and fourth prime factor for not getting education. Few participants of FGD said that Dalits themselves also responsible for being backward and Non-dalits are also responsible in some extent for disempowerment of Dalits.

Case Study-I

Harka Biswokarma lives in Devdaha-5, Shitalnagar. He has a small family living with a son, two daughters and his wife. He has been living in a small house made by mud and roof. When he was child, his father couldn't send him to school due to poverty so he could not get chances to study. Besides it, there were no schools near the house. Now, he is getting trouble due to illiteracy. He says “I request to others to study and writing any letters.” Further, he tells “I have been working as a wage labor if I have literate I could do many works.”

4.4.2 Caste- Based Discrimination

Dalits are considered as a low caste and are at the bottom according to the caste hierarchy in Nepal. They are grouped under the ‘*choi chitto halnu parne*’ category meaning if a dalit touches a non dalit then the non- dalit becomes impure and to purify him/her back requires the sprinkling of water. That is why the dalits face discrimination in many aspects of public services use like fetching water from the common tap or other water source, entering a temple, entering the house of non- dalits, having food together and so on.

Majority of the participants of FGD (75%) reported that caste discrimination between dalits and non dalits was another prime hindering factors for disempowerment of dalits. Similarly, KII respondents also noticed about the caste based discrimination therefore, on the name of caste; they have been demoted and demoralized and have found low participation in socio, economic and political activities.

Among total respondents, it is found that more than one third of the total respondents (40.9%) have been feeling discrimination until now while participating in the religious program on the name of caste though majority of the respondents couldn't raise voices.

Case Study- II

Bimal Bisworkarma lives in Devdaha-5, Udaynagar. He is from medium class family who has two little child and a wife. He has completed SLC and he has a skill of painting. He said that before few years ago, “I wasn’t entered into the temple because of my caste, on the name of caste, I was devalued or demoralized. After that, we fight against the discrimination, now people are agreeing to enter in the temple for Dalits. Still it is in practices but going to decrease the rate of incidence.” Further, he tells that now he can enter into the temple but many Dalits are getting tension and have no opportunity in the socio- economic and political activities because of his caste; therefore, they are behaved as untouchable caste or choi chitto halnu parne.

The main reasons for not Dalits raising voice against caste based discrimination are tabulated below:-

Table 4.21 Distribution of respondents by not raising voice against caste discrimination

Causes not raising voice	No	%
Alone	8	44.4
Lack of literacy	4	22.2
Not benefit	3	16.7
No knowledge about rights & constitutional provisions	2	11.1
Other	1	5.6
Total	18	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Above table shows that 44.4% of total respondents were not raising voices due to alone feeling, followed by 22.2% due to lack of literacy. On the other hand, 16.7% were not raising voices due to no benefit and 11.1% due to no knowledge about rights and constitutional provisions whereas only 5.6% were not raising voices due to other reasons (Table 4.21).

4.4.3 Poverty

Poverty was taken as the third important hindering factor for disempowerment of dalits by participants of FGD. They said that land ownership, food security and debt are the main causes of the poverty. The above table 4.12 shows that all the households had their own land but they had not land ownership certificate called “Sukumbasi” so they are deprived from taking loan due to “Dhito” of which table no 13 shows that none had surplus food by the production. It informs that all the households should seek another opportunities to be alive.

On the other hand more than half (59.1%) of the total households had loan. This results show that majority of the households had low income with comparison to expenditure whereas they have been living with debt.

Case Study-III

Dambar Bahadur Nepali, 42, son of Maan Bahadur Nepali, lives in Devdaha -5, Hele tole with his family. He has a wife including two little children. On the name of land, he has only a kattha of land though he has no land ownership certificate called Sukumbasi and is living in a small house made by mud and “Khar”. He is illiterate and has no skill so he has been doing wage labor for his income. He is not able to grow food from his land for a year; therefore, he has no food security. He says “I am not able to get any opportunities because of poverty that is restricting from achieving quality of life.”

4.4.4 Level of Awareness relating to Rights

Case Study-IV

Maya Pariyar, 32, lives in Devdaha -5, Shitalnagar. She is living with 3 sons and her husband in a small hut which are made by mud and “Khar”. She is from poor class family. Though they have pieces of land, it is not enough for survival.

Maya is unknown about the rights. She tells “I have no knowledge about the women rights and dalits rights and so on.” Further, she confused about the cure if she gets violation.

More than third quarters of respondents were unknown about the constitution. Beside it, a questionnaire was asked to the respondents about the level of awareness relating to Dalit rights that are tabulated below:-

Table 4.22 Knowledge about Dalits Related Provision Provided by Constitution

Total number of Households	Knowledge on the dalits rights			
	Yes	Yes %	No	No %
44	6	13.6	38	86.4

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The table above shows that majority of the respondents (86.4%) had no knowledge about Dalits right provided by constitution where as less percentages of respondents (13.6%) had only knowledge about Dalits related provision provided by constitution. Here, it is found that Dalits have poor knowledge about own right provided by constitution.

While asking about voting rights in the study area, third quarters of total respondents said that they voted in the latest election in which a quarter of total respondents were not able to vote in the latest election due to various reasons. The various reasons are listed below:-

Table 4.23 Distribution of the Respondents by Reasons for Not Voting

Reasons for not voting	No	%
No citizen certificate	3	27.3
Foreign employment	7	63.6
Other	1	9.1
Total	11	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The above table shows that why dalits are not voting in the latest election. In the study area, 63.6% of people didn't vote due to foreign employment, followed by 27.3% who didn't vote due to no citizen certificate and 9.1% didn't vote due to other reasons.

This table 4.23 shows that foreign employment and not having citizen certificate is the dominant causes for not voting.

4.4.5: Lack of Opportunity

Opportunity creates participation that builds up empowerment of the people. To find out the level of participation, it was asked to the respondents about the invitation or opportunity in the program which is tabulated below:-

Table 4.24: Participation in interaction program

Total Households	Invited for participation in VDC level interaction meeting?	
	Yes %	No %
44	15.9	84.1

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The table above shows the participation level of the respondents in VDC level interaction meeting. Only 15.9% are invited to participate in VDC level interaction meeting whereas more than third quarters of the Dalit community is apart from this opportunity.

This shows that there is no meaningful participation of Dalits in the VDC level program. Some participants of FGD reported that dalits themselves responsible for their backwardness because they were not active and had no courage to fight against discrimination and some participants also said that poor mechanism and system of government is responsible to disempowerment of dalits. Now, government has prepared laws and policies against discrimination and empowerment of dalits but it is not properly implemented due to lack of strong mechanism and systems of government.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter represents the summary of the findings of the study and it also includes the conclusion and recommendation of the study.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This study was concentrated on Empowerment of Dalits of Devdaha VDC. The general objectives of the research was to find out the empowerment of Dalits in terms of opportunity and participation where as specific objectives are to stumble on the socio economic status of Dalits, their participation in social, economic and political institutions and the hindering factor for not being empowerment of Dalits.

This study incorporated descriptive as well as exploratory research design. To some extent, it is a historical research design because it has traced out different historical issues and dimensions for the empowerment in the society. It followed a more qualitative research design though there may be some quantitative information or data as well that was based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from the Household Survey, Focus Group Discussion and Key Informant Interview where as secondary data was assembled from published and unpublished written documents. Only 44 households of 158 households (27.85 percentage of universe) of two selected wards of Devdaha VDC were taken that was chosen on the basic of probability sampling in which altogether 222 households population (male 99, female 123) were found.

Majority of the population were found in age group 0-15 years (32.4%) and lowest population was found in age group 45-60 years (8.6%) where the sex ratio in the study households is low (91.1%) than sex ratio of whole country. The average number of family members in households is 5.04. More than third quarter of the population (75.5%) were literate where rest of the population was illiterate. Among the literate household population, 43.1% had informal education and more than a quarter (27.8%) of literate population had only primary level education. In the study population, nobody had achieved graduate level where as only 18.5% had completed basic level and around 6% had concluded secondary level education. Mainly 3 religions were found to the

households where as most of the population (86.4%) was Hindus. Besides it, 19.6% population was daily wage labor and 20.2% male of total male population was in the foreign employment. None of the males were found to involve in any household work whereas none of the female was involved in the foreign employment. 79.6% of total females were married before 18 years whereas 41.9% of total males were married before 18 years. Majority of the households were living with Nuclear family where as 43.2% of total family types were living with Joint family and 4.5% were living in Extended family. Among the total households, more than two third (70.5%) of the households had male headed family and remaining (29.5%) were female headed family.

Remittance is the major source of income of the households in which 34.1% households depends. Daily wage labor is the second and agriculture / livestock is the third income source of the households in which 27.3% and 18.2% respectively depends where as skill and job / services are believed as the major source of income by 11.3% and 6.8% of total households respectively. 11.4% of total respondents fall in the category of more than Rs. 30000 per month and least of the total households (4.5%) in the category of less than Rs. 3000 per month where as 29.5% of total households fall in the category of Rs. 10000 to 20000, followed by 20.5% of total households fall in the category of Rs. 7,000 to 10000 and another 20.5% of total households fall in the category of Rs. 20000 to 30000 monthly income. All the dalit households had no land ownership called *sukumbasi*, no food security by their own land though they had traditional skill that was not modernized so most of the households were not using it as the main source of income.

Dalits participation in the SMC of Udaya PS is good (14.2%) where as Dalits participation in the SMC of Ugjyoti SS and Devdaha HSS is not satisfactory comparison with the Dalits population of Devdaha VDC. Similarly, the percentage of Dalits participation in the *Mothers Groups* is 33.3 that is better, comparison with the Dalits population of the VDC. Moreover, participation of Dalits is the best (35%) in the TRC comparison with the total number of Dalits population of the VDC.

None had participated as EC members of cooperatives and only 3.5% dalits participation was found in the cooperative as general members except Mulyawan and Sangini Saving and Credit Cooperative Limited based on Dalits population.

Dalits participation in political institutions is unsatisfactory because the percentage of Dalits participation as EC members at ward level is seen only 8.6% which is less than the total number of Dalits population of VDC. Similarly, only 25% of total respondents have membership of any political parties where rest of huge mass is politically inactive or no politically aware.

It is found that dalits are born with debt and die with debt, no food security with lack of ownership on land called *sukumbasi*, no access to and control over resources, information and low participation in socio-economic and political process and no knowledge about rights, are the dominant causes of disempowerment of Dalits. It is a system here dalits are taken at the bottom of the social stratification of caste, which is also a pertinent factor for disempowerment so that they are demoralized and demoted. Until now, they have been facing caste discrimination especially *untouchability* problem inter and intra Dalits. They have skill but it is not modernized therefore Dalits are not self autonomy. On the other hand, Dalits have low income, low land, socio- cultural prejudices, lack of education, lack of participation in the socio- cultural and political activities and low awareness about dalits related provisions that has provided low opportunity in the socio – economic activities or social interaction.

5.2 Conclusion

We see that the socio –economic status of Dalits is vulnerable. Dalits have been and still are being discriminated just because they are Dalits: a form of caste based discrimination. Therefore this caste group is disadvantaged and backwards in many social and economic opportunities for example education, occupation, income, food sufficiency and so on which emphasis low participation.

Being back in socio economic opportunities and caste based discrimination; Dalits participation is found at a bottom with comparison to other castes in socio, economic and political interaction as a representative of different institutions. Therefore, education, poverty, caste based discrimination, no opportunity in the programs and lack of awareness about rights are taken as the main hindering factor of empowerment of Dalits that created no power within Dalits. So, they are not taking part in the social interaction which emphasized no self autonomy in the decision making process though they have traditional

skill and knowledge. Hence, Dalits are not empowering due to lack of no opportunity to participate in the program that is hampering to create power and social interaction as well as self autonomy. This means opportunity directly effects to the empowerment.

5.3 Suggestion

On the basis of findings of the study the following recommendations are made to improve the Dalit's status and to increase their participation in socio-economic, political activities. Recommendations are divided into two parts. One is for policy implications and other is for research.

5.3.1 For Policy Implications

-) Local government should conduct programs to increase the income of local Dalits.
-) Local government should conduct programs in creating awareness about rights.
-) The local government should help to dalits for modernizing their traditional skill and knowledge and should be facilitated for dalits to enable for them equal access to participation in social, economic and political aspects.

5.3.2 For Further Research Area

Empowerment is the very vague terms. This study has been taken some selected variables of participation in terms of empowerment. So, this study couldn't cover all forms of empowerment. This study is mainly based on quantitative tools (used open ended and close ended questionnaires both) however also used Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) method but it is not enough for qualitative research. It has only covered 44 sampled households of Devdaha VDC of Rupandehi district.

So, upcoming researchers are requested to study on this area to find out more information about social and economic empowerment. If time, money and manpower are favorable, it is requested to conduct various tools of qualitative methods, include more variables of empowerment and increase the sample population to get real situation of Dalits. Similarly, researchers are requested to study Dalits participation on youth club, Forest Users Group, Drinking Water Users Group and economic institutions such as Bank, Development Bank and so on.

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Annex-I

Institutional Survey

Institutional survey guideline

Date:

Name of the Institution:

Venue:

Established date:

S.N.	Name of the Executive Committee	Caste	Position

Total number of executive committee =

Total number of Dalit in the executive committee =

Percentage of Dalit in the executive committee =

Annex-II

Key Informant Interview

Key Informant Interview guideline

Date:-

Name:-

Address:-

1. What do you mean by empowerment?

.....
.....
.....

2. What do you mean by participation?

.....
.....
.....

3. What is the present status of Dalits?

.....
.....
.....

4. If poor, why Dalits are far in the development process?

.....
.....
.....

5. What should be done to empower the dalits?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Annex-III

Questionnaire for Household Survey

Topic : “An Assessment of Empowerment of Dalits ”

Household Survey:

General information

01. District 02. VDC/Municipality..... 03. Ward No. 04.
Name of locality (Tole).....
06. Name of household head.....07.Name of
respondent.....
08. Caste/Ethnicity 09. Sex (1: Male; 2: Female)..... 10. Religion of the
household head...(1: Hindu; 2: Buddhist; 3: Kirant 4: Islam; 5: Christian) 6. Other (specify)
..... 11. Type of the family: (1. Nuclear; 2. Joint; 3 Extended)

Household Information

S. N.	Name	Relationship to the household head	Sex	Age	Education	Main Occupation

Child Dependency Ratio:

No of Children(below 15 year): Male: Female.....

Do they involve in any economic activities? Yes..... No.....

If yes, what do they do?
.....

How many rupees do they earn per day?
.....

Old aged Dependency Ratio:

No of Old aged people (above 59 year):- Male: Female:

Do they involve in any economic activities? Yes..... No.....

If yes, what do they do?

How many rupees do they earn per day?
.....

Do they have any pension? Yes..... No.....

If yes, how do they earn?
.....

Do you have any disabled people from 15-59 age groups?

Yes..... No.....

If yes, how many people are there? Who are they?
.....

Poverty Status:

Total land (Kattha)below than a Kattha.....1-5 Katta

5-10 Kattha..... 10- 20 Kattha more than a Bigha.....

Is it enough for subsistence? Yes No

If no, how many months do you get food from land?

Below 3 months..... 3-6 months.....6-9 months..... 9-12 months.....food surplus.....

Main occupation of the family:

Income: (monthly).

Expenditure:

Agriculture:..... Food:.....

Education:..... Health:.....

Cloth:..... Others:.....

If income is less than expenditure, how do you maintain this deficiency?

.....

Question related to social, economic and political participation

01	Do you have participated in the activities of following social, economic and political institutions?		
	S. N.	Name of the social, economic and political organization	Yes No
	01	School Management Committee	
	02	Mothers' group	
	03	Tole Reform Committee	
	4	Cooperative	
	5	VDC Council	
	6	Political Organization	
02	Are you a member of any of the above mentioned institutions?	Yes No	
04	If no, do you have willingness to participate?	Yes No	
05	Have you ever voted to the political parties in any elections?	Yes No	
06	If no, why?	1..... 2..... 3.....	

		4.....
07 .	Have you ever been a member of any political parties?	Yes..... No.....
08 .	By whom are you encouraged to be a member of the political party?	Dalits leaders..... Non Dalits leaders..... Self.....
09 .	Have you any willingness to be a local representative?	Yes..... No.....
10 .	If yes, why do you want to be a local representative?	1..... 2..... 3..... 4.....
10	Do they invite you in any programs?	Yes..... No.....
12 .	Have you known about Dalits rights?	1..... 2.....
13 .	Have you any idea about the rights of Untouchability and discrimination?	Yes..... No.....
14	Have you saved capital in the formal or informal institutions?	Yes..... No.....
15	If yes, whose name is selected for saving money?	Father..... Mother..... Others.....
16	If no, why are you not saving money?

	
17	Have you realized any discrimination from non-dalit in local institutions?	Yes..... No.....
18	If yes, which type of discrimination are you feeling?	Normal..... Medium..... Hard
19	Have you raised voice against this discrimination?	Yes..... No.....
20	If yes, what sort of activities are you doing? If no, why are you not raising voice against discrimination and participation of Dalits?

Annex-IV

Checklist for the FGD

Q No.1	What may be the causes of less education among Dalits.
Q.No.2	Why Dalits participation in social, economic and political sector is less?
Q. No.3	Despite several policy reformation, why dalits still behind? What are the hindrances?
Q.No.4	What should be the policy of the state to empower the status of the Dalits?

Annex- V

Mean age of Respondents

Table 4.1: Distribution of respondents by broad age group

Age group	No.	%
15-30	4	9.1
30-45	20	45.5
45-60	7	15.9
60-75	13	29.5
Total	44	100

Source: Field Survey, 2013

SN	Age group	X	No (F)	XF
1	15-30	22.5	4	90
2	30-45	37.5	20	750
3	45-60	52.5	7	367.5
4	60-75	67.5	13	877.5
		180	N= 44	2085

Here,

$$X = 180, \quad N=44, \quad XF= 2085$$

Mean =?

We know,

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{XF}{N}$$

$$= \frac{2085}{44}$$

$$47.4$$

Hence, Mean age of Respondents = 47.4 years

Annex VI

Household Size

Total Population = 222

Total Numbers of Household= 44

Household Size=?

Here,

Household Size= Total Population / Total Numbers of Household

$$= 222 / 44$$

$$= 5.04$$

Hence, Household size is 5.04.

Annex VII

Significant Photos related to Thesis



Photo of taking FGD with stakeholders



Participants of FGD program