

# **Female English Teachers' Identity Construction: A Case of Dalits**

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education  
In Partial Fulfillment for the Master of Education in English

**Submitted by**

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Faculty of Education

Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur,

Kathmandu, Nepal

2023

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge this thesis is original; no part of it was earlier submitted for the candidature of research degree to any University.

Date: 05/03/2023

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## Recommendation for Acceptance

This is to certify that **Mrs. Akriti Sunar** has this thesis entitled **Female English Teachers' Identity Construction: A Case of Dalits** under my guidance and supervision.

I recommend the thesis for acceptance.

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## **Dedication**

Dedicated to

My husband whose inspiration and love brought me to this stage and my parents who devoted their entire life to make me what I am today.

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**Akriti Sunar**

## Abstract

This research entitled **Female English Teachers' Identity Construction: A Case of Dalits**. Identity is one of the most basic reference points that we organize and evaluate our relationships with the world, past, present and future. Identity is the most subjective experience of human. The study aimed at exploring the ways female teachers construct their identities and examine their professional development in relation to support and obstacles. I adopted the narrative inquiry as a research design. I used purposive sampling procedure for my research study. The participants of the study were four Dalit female teachers from Melamchi Municipality, Sindhupalchok, Nepal. The interview was used as the tool for data collection. I analyzed the data analytically and interpretatively. The study showed that Dalit female teachers faced several challenges, dilemmas and tension related to social and gender issues. Thus, gender and social inequality and discrimination at home and institution made them feel depressed and marginalized. Consequently, Dalit female teachers did not have significant spaces for sharing their stories with other teachers. It was found from the story that the participants were encouraged or supported by the family/institution and societal environment. And they were hindered by gender issues. Similarly, it was found that teacher community of practice was essential for their sound personal and

professional growth and self-confidence and struggle is very important to construct identity.

The present study consists of five chapters. Chapter one is an introductory chapter. It includes background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study and operational definitions of the key terms. Secondly, chapter two deals with review of the related theoretical literature, review of the related empirical review, implication of the review and conceptual framework. Similarly, chapter three includes design of the study, population, sample and sampling strategy, research tools, sources of data, data collection procedures, ethical consideration. Likewise, chapter four presents the analysis and interpreted of the results. Finally, chapter five includes the findings, conclusions and implications of the study. The last section of this research includes the references and appendices.

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### Acronyms and Abbreviations

COP	-	Chief of Police
EHRD	-	Education and Human Resource Development
ELT	-	English Language Teaching
NDC	-	National Dalit Commission
PD	-	Professional Development
SLC	-	School Level Certificate
TESOL	-	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TSC	-	Teachers' Service Commission

## Chapter I

### Introduction

This is the study entitled "Female Teachers' Identity Construction: A Case of Dalits". This chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definitions of the key terms.

### Background of the Study

Identity is the most subjective experience of human. It is the shaping of a person's values, beliefs, practices, discourses and knowledge; influenced both by cultural system and by individual actions. The process of forming an identity based on personal and other people's perception of self. Recent studies have shown that identity construction of female English Language teachers have received an increased interest in English language teacher education (Van Veen&Sleegers, 2005). In this way, the visible and invisible factors which influenced their personal and professional lives. Similarly, this is the study focuses on the diverse ethnic group of Dalit female English Teacher. The Dalit have endured social segregation, discrimination and operation, including untouchability, at the hands of non-Dalit parts particularly the higher caste. As a Dalit female English

language teacher in Nepal they do not understand 'who am I?' and 'what kind of teacher I want to be?' (Thomas & Beauchamp, 200, p.229). However, majority of the Dalit female teachers in Nepal are not aware of their personal and professional life. They are in teaching profession but do not have the significant space for sharing their story. They do not have their own identity in their professional life. Specially, Dalit women are dominant in every society so they are necessary to understand the concept of teacher identity and its impact on educational change.

When I went through the previous studies, I found that female teachers are not able to construct their identity in teaching due to the lack of professional activities which includes the number of different workshop, study groups, fireside chats, a district wise colloquium for middle school teachers, action research project as suggested by Grossman (1994, p.58). In this regard, teacher development includes the core aspects as collaboration, experience, knowledge, skill, engagement in different work shop, seminar, action plan, collegiality, communication, culture and roles within the institutions and within the larger social world as mediated through these components. Therefore, teacher identity provides the insights into the construction of own identities in multiples laces they are situated. By examining the participant teacher stories, I hope this research study would provide

the voice to Nepalese female English language teacher as well as to explore the ongoing issues that they faced in creating and recreating their identity.

Though the reviewed studies discussed the importance of teacher identity in the context of educational change, what I found in most of the research studies which are concerned with female English teachers in TESOL context and specifically Nepal do not talk about teacher identity. When I reviewed some research works carried out in Nepal as Poudyal (2012) I found that, female are always tied with traditional values and norms which are not letting us to be free as male in home and school. Thus, female teacher are not able to grow personally and professionally. But I hope this research study provide the voice to Nepalese Dalit female English language teachers as well as to explore the ongoing issues that they faced in creating and recreating their identity with reference to socio-cultural factors as gender includes, norms, roles, social status, ideology, values, practice that play the important role to shape and reshape teacher identity.

Therefore, I realized the necessity of carrying out the comprehensive research on exploring the images that of Dalit female English teachers have for their own identity. This study also aims on exploring the Dalit female English language teachers' construction of their teacher identity with reference to socio-cultural factors as gender.

Socio-cultural perspectives on gender include norms, roles, social status, ethnic condition, ideology, values, practice that play the important role to shape and reshape teacher identity.

More specially, I chose this particular topic for my study for examining the core aspects that support and hinder Dalit female teachers' identity construction and how they cope with these complexities. Similarly, in the process of becoming teacher, do they be able to build the personal and professional connection throughout their career or not?

### **Statement of the Problem**

This is a subject very interesting as well as challenging for research language teachers. According to Vandrik(1999) remembers her experience of her missionary upbringing idea through her experience as an ESL teacher state, "the unconscious racism that infects almost everyone with privilege, including colonial, privilege." According to her, teacher identity does not exist alone rather their identity has been influenced by numbers of internal and external factors. In this sense, Dalit female teacher back from social, cultural, ethnic and racial norms. Thus, teacher identity has been interesting but critical component it is the broader social, culture, and political landscape (Tsui, 2007). This authors highlight the need for understanding who the teachers are; individual, professional, cultural, social, identities

which they claimed or which they assigned to them. Scholars like Norton (2006) states that identity as dynamic and constantly changing across time and place, however literature works missing the issues of struggles, challenges, domination that female teachers have encountered in their personal and professional lives. Another significant aspect missing in most of the literature is the gender sensitivity and community of practice. The narratives lives stories of Dalit female English language teachers clearly demand the need for exploring these core components of teacher identity.

In the ELT scenario of Nepal, there paid little attention to the issues of Dalit female teacher identity construction. Furthermore, she plays the multiple roles as child bearing and managing household chores as well as suppression from society so teaching can be the highly stressful profession especially for the women need to deal with both work and family (Alam, 2014). In fact, women in Nepal specially, Dalit women face the multiple forms of domination because due to the stereotype society.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- a) To explore the identity construction of Dalit female English language teachers.

- b) To examine the Dalit female English language teachers' professional development in relation to the support and obstacles.

## **Research Questions**

This study had following research questions:

- a) How do they construct their identity as Dalit female English language teacher?
- b) What factors do support and hinder in Dalit female English language teachers' professional development?

## **Significance of the Study**

This research also has its own significance in the field of Nepalese English language teaching where the issues of teacher identity have not been discussed yet. Similarly, research works carried out in Nepal related to women teacher professional growth have given little attention to the impact of teacher personal histories, everyday experiences and social and cultural boundaries. To investigate more about the responsible factors that constitute female teacher identity, my study focused on potential issues of their personal and professional lives. Thus, this research would become helpful for exploring the hidden reality of female teacher lives. I hope the result of this study would be beneficial for female teachers, policy makers, researchers and all the ELT practitioners.

There has been increasing number of Dalit female in teaching profession by the reason behind governmental support. The result of



my study suggested those Dalit females who are in teaching truly love teaching and they want to construct their own identity in teaching. They could do further if they are provided opportunities to involve in different professional activities such as interaction, training and peer observation. However, due the multiple workloads at home and school, roles and responsibilities in family, personal factors such as tensions, dilemmas, frustration made them little depressed and unable to grow. I believe that the study would become helpful for those female teachers who are struggling to construct their identity in teaching particularly.

Similarly, this study is significant to the policy maker to develop the plan and policy for the Nepalese government to make social and gender friendly approach in education. I hope this study would be beneficial to bring strong policy and provision for empowering the Dalit female teachers.

Most importantly, as being an ELT practitioner particularly as a researcher, this study helps me to explore the hidden reality of Dalit female teachers' life and my evolving identity within this socio-cultural surrounding .Moreover, it can be useful to the prospective researcher who want to undertake resources in the area of teacher identity particularly in Dalit female teacher identity formation.

Therefore, this study would be helpful to these important bodies to bridge existing gap and bring the fundamental changes in policy and practice level.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

The study had the following limitations:

- I. This study was limited to the four Dalit female English language teachers who are teaching as English language teachers Basic level in community schools.
- II. Similarly, the data were carried out through in-depth interview, formal and informal conversation, narrative reflections.

### **Definition of the Key Terms**

*Dalit.* Dalit refers to group of people who are religiously, culturally, socially, economically and historically oppressed, excluded and treated as untouchables and they belong to different geographical region, language, culture and castes.

*Teacher identity.* Teacher identity is a unique characteristic of an individual teacher. It deals with who am I and what kinds of teacher I want to be. In this sense Lemke (2008) views that individual and their social lives are responsible to determine teacher

identity. Thus, both personal and social factors are important in constructing female teachers' identity.

*Teacher professional development.* Teacher professional development is any type of continuing education effort for educators. It is defined as activities that develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher.

*Narrative inquiry.* Teachers narratives are the stories of female teachers own experiences that they encounter during their personal and social lives. The stories which they told help them to understand their past and present experiences, contexts and complexities in constructing their teacher.

*Teacher community of practice.* It is the place where the female teachers get ample opportunities to construct their teacher identity through shared stories.

## Chapter II

### **Review of Related Literature and Conceptual Framework**

Literature review throws insights on theoretical knowledge and enables researcher to widen their knowledge related to their research topic. This chapter includes several sub-chapters like review of related theoretical literature, review of related empirical literature, implication of the review for the study and conceptual framework.

### **Review of Related Theoretical Literature**

Theoretical knowledge is necessary for researcher to have enough knowledge about the selected topic of the research. The researcher cannot go further in research process without theoretical knowledge and concept of the research topic. In earlier part, I discussed about the concept of identity in general. Here, I am presenting more specifically the female teachers' construction and reconstruction of their identity.

**Concept of identity and teacher identity.** Identity is the core issues which is prevailing in every profession. It is therefore the unique characteristics of a person. Identity has become a powerful issue, despite its complex and varied meaning and interpretation including those relating to the people's internal system (Schwartz, 2001), group membership (Brown, 2000; Tejfel and Turner, 1986),

nationalism (Schildkraut, 2007), positions taken in conversations (Bamberg, 2006; Benwell&Stokoe, 2006). So, identity is a burning issues and has greatly impacted and influenced individual's lives. It especially deals with who am I? Or who are you? In the particular context in your social surrounding. Who am I is the identity solely deals with one's mind associated with the concept of self. Another parameter to define self is determined by external factor i.e. with the connection of individual to the external world/ society. Therefore, personal and social dimension play crucial role in constructing own identities. These two are inseparable to each other. In this regard, Lemke (2008) and Hall (2004) point the individual and their activities in social life are responsible to determine their identity. So, the identity (who am I) does not exist in isolation but rather exist in a social relation to others.

Thus, the term identity more broadly includes the individual thought (psychological, affective, cognitive domain) and social aspects. Wenger (1999, p.149 as cited in Castaneda, 2011) provides the more social perspectives of identity. He says, "There is a profound connection between identity and practice". He further mentions that we define identity that who we are in terms of how we relate to other member of a group and how we negotiate us within the community. The communities where we belong are more responsible to construct

our identity. Tsui (2003) thus, believes that teacher identity is associated with more social dimension .She closely examined how negotiation, interaction and classroom participation help teacher to construct their teacher identity. More than this is the IT era, technology creates a debatable environment regarding identity. It makes identity as a complex phenomenon in all aspect of people lives. Discourse analyst, on the other hand part of society have attracted by the term. Discourse played the vital role to categorized identity as accomplished, disputed, ascribed, resisted, managed and negotiated.

This overview of the identity provides a general understanding of what is identity, what are the two important component that are crucial for constructing own identity .

I am concerned to discuss more specifically the female teachers' construction and reconstruction of their identity. They should participate in dialogue, be aware of the many approaches and the ways of doing things, be engaged with range of resource and share ideas so they can locate themselves. If teachers are able to engage these types of activities they really feel comfortable and able to grow them professionally. However, in our context, Dalit female teachers do not able to know the real essence of professionalism. The visible and invisible part of work and life constitute their identity. They are not

aware of who they are and what kind of teachers they want to be due to the pressure of family life and school life. Thus, their identities are attached undoubtedly with their husband', family, father, or societal identities. In the theories; a narrative inquiry about the teacher identity construction: Pre-service teachers' share their stories, Sara Jane Dickinson (2012) shares her experience gained through her participants. She further states that a teacher identity covers multiple identities as a teacher who is mother, daughter and wife respectively. She here means woman teacher identities are determined by the circumstances they meet. If we internalizing the same context in Nepal, undoubtedly Nepalese female teachers identity are in crisis. Due to the patriarchal values, norms, ethics, profession like teaching become more stressful for them.

Leaders in the field of teacher education recently have paid their attention in teacher identities. They provide the different perspectives on teacher identity construction. According to Thomas and Beauchamp (2007,p.229), "Teacher identity construction means building a personal sense of the world along with developing a clear understanding of how teachers see themselves interacts with other". They further argue that teacher identity as a part of professional identity guidelines teachers of their own ideas of "how to be" and "how to act" as a teacher. Similarly, Palmer (2007) emphasizes the role of experience in

school reveal who we are. Thus, teacher identity is greatly impacted by who am I and who are you. These two questions determined our identities. Along with their personal attempts, institutions also played significant role to bring them in teachers' community. In the community, they may share and exchange their lived experience to each other. It is the good platform for them to construct their identities. Thus, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) view, "identities are the stories teachers tell; teachers' stories are their identities".

Most of the articles which I reviewed have not discussed much about female teachers' problems/ struggles which hinder in construction of teacher identities rather, they give more emphasis on learners than the identity formations of teachers (Kanno, 2003; Miller, 1999; 2003; Varghese, 2005; Block, 2005). However, some research works carried out in this area are the positive steps for the female teachers' professional growth. As I understand, female teachers in Nepal do not have the significant opportunity to be a professional. We can find significant domination to them in home and school environment. Though some female teachers attempt to shape and reshape their identity face many challenges in their personal and professional life. Female are facing such problems due to their gender most. So, identity can be the great issue not only for female teachers but also for the educators. As a female English language practitioner,



my attention here is on exploring the visible and invisible factors that directly and indirectly crucial in construction of female teachers' identity in Nepalese scenario.

**Teacher professional development.** Professional development is a process of improving and increasing capabilities. It refers to the variety of activities, both formal and informal, designed for the personal and professional growth. To become a better teacher by learning and understanding about their field, teachers encountered number of challenges. The tension and challenges that teachers experience in the course of teaching definitely evokes the need of professional development. Thus, Professional development is very important for a teacher who wants to expand her horizon of knowledge in the teaching field. In this sense, teacher development is 'the professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically', Glatthorn (1995, p. 41). However, teacher's growth cannot be seen through single lens. We can see it both from technical and practical/ contextual perspectives. Technical dimensions such as lesson planning, classroom management, material design and the more complex types of teacher professional growth: leadership, contributions to the colleagues or the communities, or decision making, Glatthorn (1995, p. 41).

Therefore, teacher development is a complex construct that involves above mentioned dimensions. For professional growth, a teacher should involve in training, workshop, peer coaching, action research, seminars and so on. Therefore, teacher education programs help them to shape and reshape their professional identities. Another significant role played by the institution they engage in. The institution plays the significant role to grow their teacher professionally. School's encouraging environment has significant impact on teacher professional growth. Supporting the ideas, Farrell (2001, p.49) states that to be a teacher and become the part of teaching, what student teachers experience during their practicum in the teaching institution has great impact on their sense of professional expectation for the future.

Teacher identity on the other hand plays the very important role in teacher professional development. Teachers identity fundamentally linked with who am I? And who are you? Thus, Teacher identities are both concerned with internal and external factors. As a practitioners, for example professional expectations, motivations, emotions, beliefs about teaching, experience gained in classroom, notion about teaching, notion about teachers are the internal factor of choosing the profession of teaching. They will build the strong or weak kind of knowledge for their professional identity. Opining similar view, Johnson (2009) emphasizes the role experiential knowledge and theoretical knowledge

for professional development as they enroll in teacher education program. These kinds of notion play the important role to construct their professional identity.

The external/ social factor also plays the crucial role in constructing the teacher identity. It deals with the role of teachers. Tsui(2003 as cited in Castaneda, 2011) states that experienced of being a practitioners in teacher community help to construct the identity. Thus, the community of practice plays the vital role to construct the professional identity of a female teacher. Participating in the group of community helps teachers to understand the real value of “learning to teach”. This sense later has the impact on understanding the role of teachers as well.

Another hindering factors of teacher professional development is teachers’ knowledge and beliefs. A set of beliefs are found to influence many of the areas as learning, teaching, decision making and practices. Grossman (1995, P. 20) introduced; a typology for understanding teachers’ knowledge, which includes knowledge of content, general pedagogy, curriculum, integration, of knowledge domains and the creation of new knowledge, as well as knowledge of self. This theoretical implicitly introduce the ideas of the complex and varied nature of teachers’ system of knowledge. This suggests that

teachers' knowledge is not static and that they develop new understanding of teaching and themselves in a very dynamic way.

Similarly, Kumaravedivelu (2012) states that teacher's knowledge that is associated with belief is also significant for understanding the teacher identity formation. That is why such types of beliefs systems in the above area are now termed as what teacher 'know', 'believe' and 'think' them. However, there is a lacking of such knowledge in teacher professional identity.

Another hindering issue of female teachers do not grow professionally is due to the gender. In the patriarchal society, we can see the clear demarcation line between male and female. In the patriarchal society, women are supposed to be the second class citizen. Their role and responsibilities are mainly bounded into the four wall of house. Though they are in teaching profession, their condition which we believe is not good. In the work place, the institution as a sub system of male dominated society, they do not offer the equal opportunity to the female teachers. In this regard, Regmi (1999 as cited in Adhikari, 2013) claims that gender is the burning issue in Nepalese society which hinders them and female always think lower social status than male.

Due to these burning issues, female teachers do not grow professionally. These contradictions, dilemmas, overloads, dominations,

struggles create the great tension within these female teachers who attempt to shape and reshape their identity. So, we need to glance our eyes toward what factor support them and what factor hinder their teaching learning process. I think, this thesis incorporate the necessary detail for female teachers' professional development.

### **Gender issues in the construction of female teachers' identity.**

Gender issue started along with the human civilization and it is the most prevailing issue of 21<sup>st</sup> century in the entire field including education. Growing research literatures on teacher identity typically ignore gender. However, recently in the field of TESOL, there are the panel discussions, paper presentation on the gender. These discussions try to explore the concept of gender in wider perspectives. Opining similar view, Bowie (2006, p. 81-101) distinguishes gender from sex. For Bowie, 'gender' refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors and the attributes considered appropriate for men and women in given society. 'Sex' refers to the biological category. Thus, gender is the social and cultural division whereas sex is the biological one.

Teacher stories of my research on the other hand were in line with Butler (1990) ideas. Butler believes that gender is taught, one learns in their young and through the interaction with society they have grown up, Butler (1990:p. 6-13 as cited in Mustedanagic, 2010,

p.8). In fact, there is an intrinsic link between gender and other social identities. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the lives of female that are shaped largely by the social and cultural world they belong.

Bhusal (2015) shares the stories that female teachers experience multiple forms of challenges, obstacles, struggles in the complex socio-cultural context in the process of creating and recreating their identity within these multiple boundaries'. She further discusses the need of essential factors in female teacher lives and argues that the dominant patriarchal discourse can be a tool for maintaining and legitimating the gender ideology. In the Nepalese context, school, a sub system of society is the key place of gender disparity however their motto is 'to learn and together without any discrimination', Adhikari (2013). That is why female teachers are not able to develop them professionally.

Recently the country turns towards the secularism. However, our religion is another core element that hinders women teacher professional development. Research work on the status of female shows that in the orthodox Hindu religion including the earlier textual tradition "Manusmriti" is responsible to categorize the respective role for men and women as 'breadwinner' and 'caregiver'. In such context, men have the dominant role in decision making inside and outside the home whereas primarily the role of women are to look after children

and manage the household chores properly. In this sense, they are taken as the ornament of the house. The society imposed certain rules and regulations for both men and women. There is a deep rooted concept of gender ideology which categorized appropriate roles, rights, responsibilities of women and men (Kroska, 2007, p. 1867). Opining the similar view, Philips (2014) states, “the society’s specific but within one society one can be exposed to a number of differences” .That is why, in patriarchal society, we experience the ideology that women are the goddess of house. However, it is beyond the spirit of one being a goddess. It is rather the sign of domination. Thus, culture, value, role, social status, stereotype ideology is the core elements that influence women teachers construction of their identity.

#### **Socio-cultural aspect in female teachers’ identity construction.**

Socio- cultural factor is one that plays vital role to construct and reconstruct the female teachers’ identity. The sociological theory emphasizes that we do not live in isolation rather we are the major part of the existing society. In the process of uniting, our mind is mediated and socialized (Burr, 1995). Gradually we became the member of the complex community where we encounter with difficulties. This leads us to create our identity. In this regard, Vygotsky, a leading sociologist (1978) views that human higher order thinking is not only biologically shaped, but is derived from social life that is

culturally and historically influenced ,Wretch, (1991).Thus, the specific social context where teacher performs their roles is key to shape their identities. On the other hand, teaching is highly prestigious job cannot be far away from this inequality.

Varghese, Morgan, (2005) discussed the significance of applied linguistic and its relation with teacher identity. Though the work on applied linguistic play significant role to bring the concept of identity in language teaching, they gave high priority on technical role of teacher inside the classroom. However, it was worth mentioning that Classroom, a sub site of society, is a complex place where students from diverse background have. So, the teacher- student negotiation of identity is another crucial component of socio- cultural aspect. Students are influential factor of teacher identity. Teachers' beliefs and real practice in classroom affect their identity. Thus, teachers are viewed as an influential player in the classroom in relation to their students and to the wider context to which they belong (Varghese ,Morgan, 2005).Teachers are not a neutral players in the classroom, her positionality in relation to her student and the broader context in which teachers situated was vital. In this regard, these authors also mention the idea put forward by Vandrick (1999) who mentions her experience as ESL teacher in India. She further writes, "The unconscious social racism that infects almost everyone with privilege,



including colonial privilege” (70). And poses “the possibility of a colonial shadow over our profession.” This shows that teacher identity is a critical component in broader socio cultural context (Tsui, 2007). In a larger and complex society, we should first understand whether the teacher is individual entity or social being. Who they are in: professional, cultural, political and mere individual identity which they are claimed or assigned.

Based on the review “Identity as a Socio-cultural Construct in Second Language Research”, Bonny Norton (2006) outlines five main characteristics of research that addresses the issue of socio-cultural identity which are very important for my research work. These issues are:

- i. Identity is dynamic and constantly changing over time and place
- ii. Identity is complex and contradictory
- iii. Language is the main influence on constructing identity
- iv. Identity must be examined in relation to larger social processes
- v. Research attempt to link identity to classroom practice.

Similarly in the work of Varghese, Morgan and Johnson (2005) state the Tejfel (1982) theory of social identity. Tejfel define social identity as “the individual knowledge that he belong to certain social group together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership” (as cited in Hogg and Abhram, 1988).Tejfel

highlights the three core principles of social/group identity: membership, value connotation and emotional investment. Therefore, this theory view identity is complex and the role of member in group may differ to another.

Recently some other studies on the field of TESOL highlight the need of negotiated and shared identity which are crucial for understanding the teacher identity. Nesma Hassam Eldin Hassan Abdel Fattah in her Master thesis entitled “Negotiated Identity of Teacher of English as a Foreign Language” (EFL) highlights the importance of English language in Nepal (Shrestha, 2008, Bhattarai, 2000).

The students belong to different countries where the English language, they learn the English language as a second language. Nowadays learning the English language is very important for the students. They join for learning the English language. Where the English teachers teach the English language to them. Teaching the English language to non-English speakers is not an easy job for the teachers. The quality of a good teacher is to recognize the problems and facilitate the best ever environments for the students and encourage them to learn. The teacher face by the many challenges due to teaching English language.

*Distribute environment of the class.* Environment matter most in learning and teaching the English language. Mostly the English teachers faced environmental problems in teaching the English language. The distributing environment of the classroom distracts the teacher and affects the teaching of the English language. A suitable and comfortable environment is the basic need of teaching the English language. If environment is suitable and comfortable for the teachers then it ruins all the teaching and learning process of the English language. Mostly, the teachers faced such kind of disturbing environment in teaching the English language.

*Limited teaching resources.* Not only has the English language, teaching anything mostly depended on the resources. Mostly the teacher faced this kind of problem, the resources which are essential for delivering the lectures of the English language to the students for effective learning are not provided them. It became very difficult for the teachers to teach without the resources essential for the lectures. The resources include speakers, mike, projectors, computer systems, and other kinds of digital devices. It makes the overall lecture and environment interesting and effective for the students and helps them in learning the English language.

*A large number of students in the classroom.* A large number of students in the classroom produce a lot of disturbance and stress for

the teachers because teaching a large number of students the teachers have to do more effort and hardworking.

*Wrong syllabus has been taught.* The syllabus helps the teachers to prepare the important factors of the course to teach to the students step by step. Mostly the teachers faced this problem in teaching the English language. The wrong syllabus is given to them to teach the students the English language. The teachers teach the wrong syllabus will make negative impressions on the students, and by this, the students cannot learn and speak the English language.

*Limited time to lecture to teach.* The time of class is very little for the teachers to teach the English language. This one of the most difficult tasks for teachers to teach in less time.

*Students hijack lessons.* Mostly the students are not interest in learning the English language. They hijack the lessons and do other kinds of activities and the English learning process is defeated. The English language is always count the students because they cannot go further in course if the students are missing.

*Students disturbed the class.* Sometimes, students get bored and try to do other activities during the lectures which disturbed the teachers during teaching the English language. They try to speak to

the other students during the lectures which disturbed the teachers a lot.

*Using other languages in the classroom.* For the students, it's very easy to speak in their native language or other languages which they can speak easily instead of the English language. It's very frustrating for the students trying to speak the language and think the words and sentences to speak which they didn't know. It's very easy for them to communicate in their native language or the language they already have experience with.

*Students depends on a teacher.* The students completely depends on the teachers. They didn't try to learn and speak themselves. Those students ever time look to the teachers for helping them in learning and giving them the correct answers. They didn't try to make words and correct sentences in speaking the English language. By this problem, the students didn't learn the technical terms and conditions of how to use different kinds of tenses and words of the English language in speaking.

*Students bored and not interested in learning the English language.* Students getting bored and not interested in learning the English language is also a problem faced by the teachers.

All above the most common and big problem faced by the English teachers in teaching the English language to the students in which the English language is not their native language.

**Female English teachers in Nepal.** Female teachers have vital role to improve girls' situation. Female teachers are the inspiration for female to be involved in profession. In Nepal recruitment of female teachers is a common agenda. To talk about the female teachers in Nepal, there is increasing number of female in teaching profession. The Flash Report (I) 2015/16 show explicit number of enrollment of female teachers in teaching profession. The share of female percentage is 39.2%, 21.3% and 35.6% primary, lower secondary and secondary level respectively. From this data we can generalize the slightly improved status of female teachers in teaching field. Most of the female teachers have difficulties who are involved in this profession. They face challenges in their personal and professional life. Female teachers in Nepal are facing several problems because of the superstitious dominated society. Female teachers are stressed in their work place as a result of unclear role demanded by their job. The more they spend their time for household works, more they are stressed. Female teachers in Nepal have their responsibility towards their family. Their working time on household work increases their stress. In Nepalese context gender roles have been rooted in the

society so, it is difficult for female teachers to manage their time. They have to do their household works as well as they have to fulfill their responsibilities of their profession which is very challenging. The biological, stereotype gender roles, and patriarchy culture heavily influenced the professional life of women teachers. It is difficult for female teachers to determine their full time on their profession because of the gender roles and patriarchy culture. Gender role determine female to do the household chores so, female teachers have to fulfill their roles. The traditional gender roles of the society place women within the domestic domain as caregivers. Therefore, female teachers like to give priority for their family and the lack of commitment towards the profession hinders them to achieve their personal career goals.

Female teachers in Nepal are still ignored, harassed, and overloaded not only with teaching but also with household chores. They have difficulties on their professional as well as personal life. They are overburden with extras classes at schools and they have to do all of the household works. Female teachers have difficulties to manage their time because they do not get proper support and do not get cooperation from children and family members. They face number of difficulties between family and job responsibility especially when they need to work more than the normal working time. Therefore,

most of the female teachers suffer from psychological stress when they are unable to complete the task at the fixed time. Bista (2006) states that in Nepal, sometimes socially and culturally it is not acceptable for married and unmarried women to go to a village and work as a school teacher. For female teachers there are lots of problems to involve in teaching profession. The beliefs and cultural values hinder them to involve in profession. The cultural beliefs not allow females to go for jobs and many female teachers face the gender disparity problems so that they are not equally treated in the teaching centers as male teachers.

Female teachers are found to have temporary status despite several years of service and most of the female teachers were either trained or partially untrained (Bista, 2006). Most of the female teachers cannot involve in teacher training because of their gender roles and they think trainings are only for male teachers, not for them. Gender roles, lack of family support and traditional view about female hinders female teachers from teacher training. Female who are engaged in teaching profession are basically concentrated in lower qualified primary level job and the lower number of female teachers in secondary level. In Nepalese context female teachers are limited at primary level and basic level.



Bista (2006) further mentions that the average number of hours spent by female teachers on a day-to-day basis on household chores were 6 hours as opposed to 4 hours for male teachers. Female teachers spend more time on their household chores like cooking. Women still perform majority of the care giving role in the family. Maintaining a balance between the professional and personal lives of female teachers, they still have the major responsibility for housework and childcare which is challenging for them.

**Challenges of female Englishlanguage teachers.** The stories of female English language teachers revealed that in recent days, teaching becomes a highly demanding employment especially for the Nepalese women. There are the increasing number of women in this profession. The Flash report (I) 2020/21 show explicit number of enrollment of female teachers in teaching profession. The share of female percentage is 5% (primary, lower secondary and basic level) in all type of community schools. (Annex: XXIV). From the data what we can generalize depict the slightly improved status of female teachers in teaching profession. On the other hand, research works on female teachers in teaching show that teaching profession for women in Nepal can be one of the most stressful profession especially for those who need to deal with both work and family. That's the reason, women teacher face challenges during their career due to the number

of factors (Rokka, 2016. p.20). Due to the patriarchal societal norms and values, there is a significant difference between male and female teacher. Opining similar view, Weber (as cited in Harrington, 2005, p.235) states, "The traditional modes of power are characterized by patriarchal domination and those women are subject to the authority of the patriarchy". Thus, in the name of patriarchy, women from their birth face challenges. Later on these values and beliefs can be the important part of their daily lives.

When I reviewed research work on female teachers' status in Nepal, the condition of female teachers are in crisis(Rokka, 2016). In the research work of Estvad (1988, Reed, 1990 as cited in Andersson&Lindkvist, 2000) I learnt the miserable condition of Nepalese women. They mentioned that the orthodox Hindus, Buddhist and other religion which reveal female subjugation. Women and girl were treated badly during their menstruation and delivery. Even they are considered as the father and husband's property. Equally social superstitions, cultural belief, social evils like dhama, jhakri, boksi, chaupai, deuki, jaar are some of the prevailing domestic violence.

Due to these facts, women in Nepal are not only victimized in home but also in school. In school, seniors, upper caste and male teachers behave accordingly. They did not provide equal chance to them. Thus, Female students and female teachers should be the

preserver of societal belief i.e. they should be shy and obedient (respondents also expressed same reflection during our conversation).

Marriage is another core issue that hinders female teachers' life. When I studied previous research works carried out in Nepal related to the status of females I found similar conditions in Malaysian working women who regretted after marriage they start the conflict between work and family (Alam, 2014). It is because of the gender ideology. Thus, they have no right to decide their own rather it is their family and society decides their marriage. Gradually, family and society asks her about her fertility. As a result due to their heavy workloads (bearing child, managing all family matters) in both places and lack of socialization they are not aware of their personal affairs. Those who are engaging in teaching due to the insufficient time unable to grow personally and professionally.

Though women face challenge in managing both work and family. I am interested to investigate how these women cope with stress which they encountered in regular basis.

**Condition of Dalit female in Nepal.** In the context of Nepal Dalit are socially discriminated in rural area. According to national Dalit Commission (NDC), Dalit are defined as “those communities who, by virtue of atrocities of caste based discrimination an untouchability, are

most backward in social, economic, educational, political and religious fields, and are deprived of human dignity and social justice.

According to Census 2011, there are 1.8 million Dalit women in Nepal, which consists of 13% of the total female population of the country. Unique features of Dalit women's lives are characterized by exclusion through customary provisions of caste institutions based on the notion of purity and pollution, and patriarchy and gender discrimination. As a result of such exclusion and discrimination, they endure extreme forms of poverty, humiliation, and denial of social and economic rights and recognition as human beings. Dalit women like other women from minority communities or indigenous peoples, Madhesi and Muslims: they tend to remain invisible even in the alternative reports by the civil society organizations. Given the extreme and multiple level of discrimination and vulnerability of the women belonging to the Dalit community.

Dalit women include a section of women who belong to the so-called lower castes within the Nepali Hindu caste hierarchy and are being treated as untouchables. Dalit women are at the bottom of caste, gender, and class hierarchy in Nepal. Dalit women are Dalits of Dalit. They are "doubly Dalit" because they bear the burden of both caste and gender discrimination. As members of impoverished underclass, they suffer most severe forms of deprivation compounded

by violence, sexual assault, and humiliation. Madhesi Dalit women endure additional forms of exclusion-based lingual, identity, and regional disparities. Dalit and women put together condense and portray multiple forms of discrimination, violation of human rights, and inequality in Nepal. Within the larger women population, the segment of Dalit women continues to experience severe and multiple forms of discrimination.

So, Dalit can be the great issue not only for female but also for all the educators. As a Dalit female English language practitioner, my attention here is on exploring the visible and invisible factors that directly and indirectly crucial in construction of Dalit female teachers' identity in Nepalese scenario.

**Dalit female English teachers in Nepal.** Dalit have had lowest social status in the traditional Hindu social structure but James Lochtefelt, a professor of religion and Asian studies said in 2002 that the adoption and popularization of (the term Dalit) reflects their growing awareness of the situation and their greater assertiveness in demanding their legal and constitutional rights.

Table 1

**Percentage of lower and Upper Basic Level Dalit Teachers in Total Number of Teachers by Type of School, Appointment, Province and Gender (2020-21)**

Province		Dalit teachers					
		Community		Institutional		Total	
		F	T	F	T	F	T
Koshi	SS	8.2	6.2	5.8	2.2	7.0	4.2
	HS	2.0	4.1	1.3	3.4	1.6	3.7
Madhes	SS	17.0	12.4	2.1	2.2	9.6	7.3
	HS	1.9	8.0	0.0	2.7	0.9	5.4
Bagmati	SS	3.6	3.1	1.0	0.9	2.3	2.0
	HS	1.1	2.5	7.3	2.2	4.2	2.3
Gandaki	SS	15.4	12.5	6.7	3.8	11.0	8.2
	HS	3.9	5.7	11.0	3.5	7.5	4.6
Lumbini	SS	12.6	10.2	6.2	3.7	9.4	6.9
	HS	3.5	4.5	5.3	4.5	4.4	4.5
Karnali	SS	17.4	16.3	8.0	5.4	12.7	10.8
	HS	2.8	7.8	3.6	22.8	3.2	15.3
Far	SS	9.8	11.1	3.4	4.6	6.6	7.9
Western	HS	1.1	4.6	0.7	10.2	0.9	7.4

<b>Total</b>	SS	13.4	11.5	5.4	3.6	9.4	7.6
	HS	2.5	5.8	3.6	7.8	3.1	6.8
	<b>T</b>	8.0	8.6	4.5	5.7	6.2	7.2

Source: Center for Education and Human Resource Development

(Retrieved on 2077)

Above mentioned, table 3.47 presents that the Dalits are very under-represented in the teacher workforce as they make up between 13% of the population but account for only 6.5% of the total teacher workforce including 7.8% of teachers in community schools and 5.1% of teachers in institutional schools at secondary education level (Grades 9-12). Among the 7 province, Karnali, Gandaki, and Far-western provinces have the highest share of Dalit teachers than in the other provinces. To make more and equitable participation of teachers from Dalit communities, all tires of government need to pay ample attention to formulate the policy and programme in this regards (EHRD). Dalit female English teacher are not separated in EHRD list.

**Challenges of Dalit female teachers.** Teaching process of identity construction is a complex phenomena. Teacher identity construction is same phenomena for the Dalit female English teacher in teaching profession. It may effected by family background, viz.

parent's occupation, education, family structure, locality, ethnicity, economic condition, attitudes of other teacher towards and management community involvement to develop teacher's identity construction. The Dalit female English teacher face by the multiple challenges due to their identity construction.

I tried to find out the challenges of the Dalit Teachers for their professional development. I found that respondents felt some problems in the Teaching English because of the medium of domination. It means that they do not work well who dominated in school as well as household also. They expect far from caste system but the situation is quite different. In another way, they are not given more attention in outside the home due to stereotype society. Similarly, they felt problems due to caste based discrimination, household works, poverty and uneducated family. It shows that respondents felt problems due to Dalit as well as women also. It inferred that Dalit Teachers felt problems in their teaching career due to caste system, gender discrimination, religious, social rules. It creates the challenges for Dalit female English teacher for shape and reshape their Identity construction.

*Failure of policies.* The policies are the inadequate to minimize the handicaps and disabilities of the past and in reducing the gap between them and rest of the Nepalese society (social Justice). Dalit



women continue to suffer from a high degree of poverty, gender discrimination, caste discrimination and socioeconomic discrimination.

*Violence.* Women face violence at a younger age and at higher rate than women of other castes in school, public place and society as well. According to National Family Health survey by the age of 15, 33.2% scheduled caste women experience physical violence. The figure is 19.7% for “other” category women. The violence continues, largely due to sense of impunity among dominant castes (Social justice). Dalit female teacher domination not only gender violence they domination by caste.

*Political power does not help.* Even when the Dalit women acquire political power, as when they are elected as sarpanches, there is often no protection against the social power that sanctions violence and discrimination against them. In village a Dalit sarpanch, a Dalit women was burned, but no action was taken.

*Attitudes of dominant castes.* There is a mind-set among the dominant castes that make them feel that they can do anything they want with Dalit girls and that they will get away with it. The discrimination faced by Dalit women at the cost of the Bramanical obsession with “purity and pollution”.

## **Review of the Related Empirical Literature**

To collect some ideas on thesis writing, I have reviewed different empirical literature. They are as follows:

Tsui (2007) in her research work entitled “Complexities of Identity Formation: A Narrative Inquiry of an EFL Teacher” explored the difficulties that Chinese ELT practitioner (Minfang) encountered throughout his teaching experiences. She talked about the complex nature of identity that is the part of wider socio-cultural and political context. Tusi examined the Chinese EFL teachers’ lived experiences that helped him to struggle with multiple identities. For this research study, she adopted narrative inquiry as the methodology which is based on the premise that ‘stories’ are powerful to construct personal and professional identity of a teacher. She collected data through in-depth face to face conversation and diary reflections. By the help of Wenger (1998) social theory of identity formation, she tried to explore the lived experience of teacher identity formation. Data were analyzed according to the framework of the dual process of identity formation, proposed by Wenger, identification and negotiation of meanings. The findings suggest that identity is reficative (inclusion and exclusion from membership in various communities) and participative (social practice of engaging oneself in the discourse). It also suggests that teacher education program should provide new teacher, the opportunity for

involving them in the process of identity formation. As a result they encounter with difficulties. This conflicting environment helps to construct their personal and professional identity.

Khoddami (2011) conducted a research entitled “Being a Female English Language Teacher: Narratives of Identities in the Iranian Academy”. She explored the feelings and perceptions of female teachers in the Iranian context and their sense of identity. She focused on the day to day experiences these women encountered. These experiences which includes; tension, frustrations, struggles, dilemmas play vital role to shape and reshape their identity in the patriarchal County like Iran. She took eight Iranian female English teachers as the respondents. The data were collected using in-depth interview and email correspondence by the two years collaboration with the participants. The findings suggest that that gender identity is the responsible factor. In her interview, one of the participant regretted that they are not able to grow professionally because of their multiple roles and responsibilities assigned on the other hand, lack of awareness; there exist gender inequality and multiple forms of violation and domination. The society considers women as the ‘creature of emotion’. Thus, the most suitable roles for them are being mother and wife. The findings show the conflicting interplay between gender and

professional discourse that these Arabian women face during their profession like English teacher in Iran.

Likewise, Paudyal (2012) explored the issues of inclusion and exclusion due to the gender in the teaching profession. In her research work, she used survey design. The primary objective of her research was to describe and analyze the existing status of female teachers in public school of Nepal. There were 21 woman teachers from six community school situated in Kavre, Kathmandu and Lalitpur district. In addition, she included the head teachers, members of school management committee, students and family member of the participants. The findings of her study show that the culture of 'aafnomanche' and 'aafnojaat' plays the crucial role whether one should be included or excluded from job despite their qualification and ability. She further mentioned the socio-cultural factors as religion, caste, gender, values that hinder women teacher identity construction.

Rokka (2018) in her study entitled "Identity Construction of Female English Language Teachers" explored the feelings and perception of English teachers in the Nepalese Context and how they make their own identity. She focuses on who are the female teacher in our society? What is the role in the society? And she collect four teachers experience for this study. These experiences which includes; tension, frustration, struggles, dilemmas play vital role to shape and

reshape their identity in the patriarchal country like Nepal. She was collected data by using in-depth interview. She inspired by female teachers' story from Iran. So, she conducted this research by the narrative method. In her study, there is active participation of female in professional sector but they have no sufficient time for construct and reconstruct their own identity because they are household women (caring bearing their family), they dominated by the patriarchal society. She further mentioned the socio-cultural factors as religion, gender, values that hinder women teacher identity construction.

Bhusal (2015) conducted research entitled "Female English teachers' professional development". The main objectives of her research were to explore the perceptions of female English teachers 'professional development in relation to the supporting and hindering factors. She raised the issues regarding gender. Due to the gender, they encounter number of challenges in work and family lives. She adopted qualitative and interpretative approach especially narrative and interview in data collection process. The participants were from secondary level English teacher taught in Lalitpur district. Her finding shows those women are very positive towards teaching profession. However, they want more supporting environment from their family and school for their identity construction. If the family, society and educational institutions support them, they contribute equally to male.

There are the challenges as time management, competency, training, salary that they face until now.

Fattah (2016) conducted a research on “Negotiated Identity of Teacher of English as a Foreign Language: A Socio-Cultural Perspective. The study has been designed to explore relation between teachers experience and their negotiated identity from a socio-cultural angle in the Arab world and typically in the Egyptian context. She used six experienced and novice teacher from two different education system namely; public and private. She examined the internal and external factors that they encountered during their professional lives. Similarly; she explored their prior experiences as being an ELT practitioners influence later in their professional lives. However, she was unable to clarify whether the teaching and non-teaching experience are vital to form professional identity in ELT context. So, straightforward framework does not work properly in all contexts. For that, we first have the knowledge of dynamic nature of identity. Similarly, one should aware of how teacher negotiate their institutional identity in a wider education scenario. In her examination, there may be the difference and raised conflict between private and public teachers negotiate their identity.

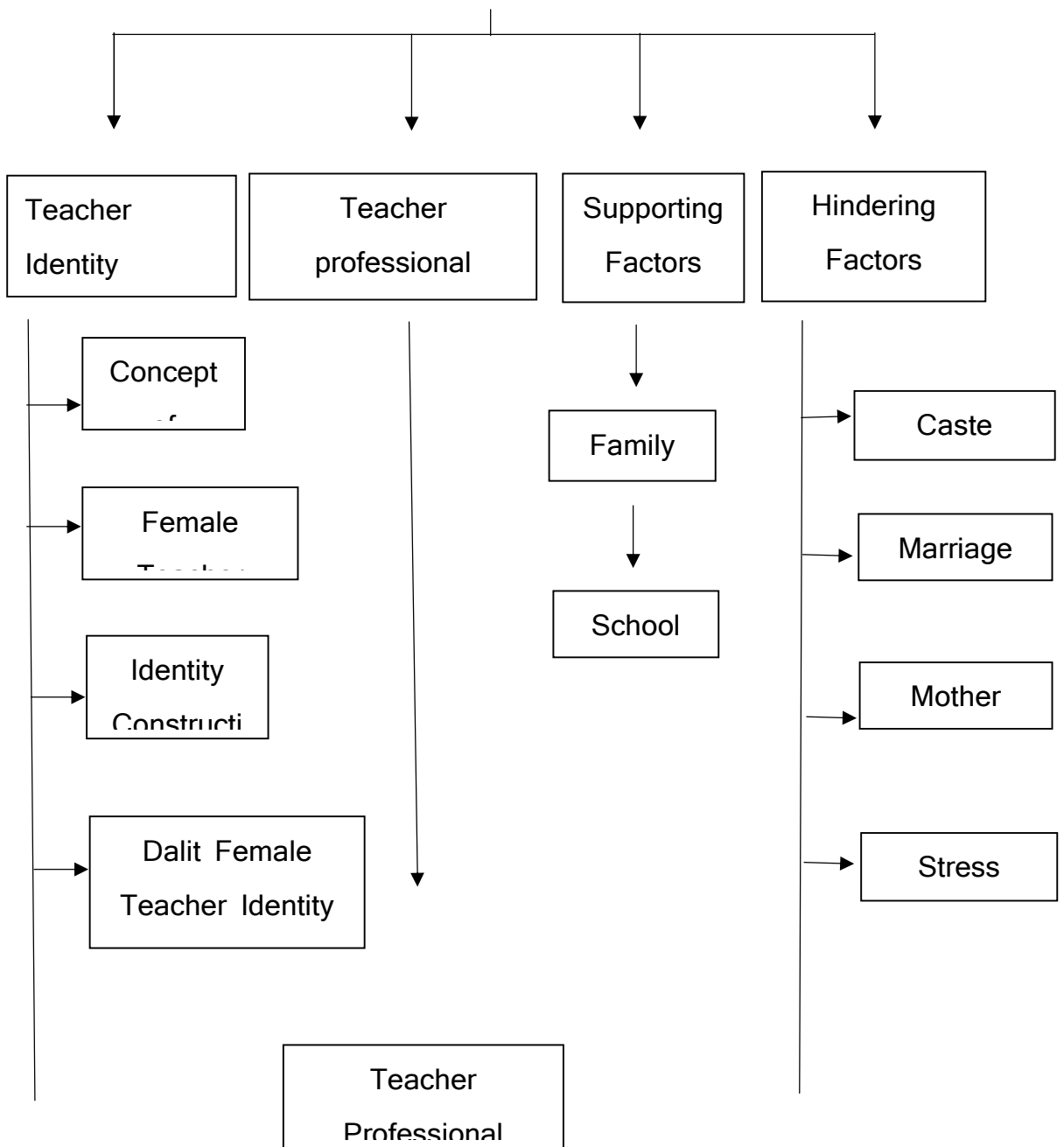
When I reviewed the research works done within and outside the country, I noticed that almost similar condition of all female

teachers. It is more difficult for Dalit Female teacher they are culturally biased in our Nepalese society. In the patriarchal society, due to their multiple roles and responsibilities, work load in work place and home, religious, cultural values, non-supporting environment their lives become more stressful than the male. However, some researchers tried to carry out the researches on female teachers' identity construction. Inspired by those studies and own experience as Dalit female ELT practitioner, my interest here is on exploring the Dalit female teachers' attempts of construct their identity using narrative approach.

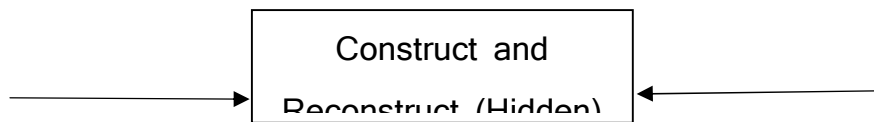
### Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework refers to the mental picture of the things in consideration. When we think of something an image is created in our mind, that mental structure is referred as conceptual framework.

The case study is titled: **Female Teacher Identity Construction: A Case of Dalit**







### **Implications of the Review for the Study**

One of the important parts of any research study is reviewing the related literature. It provide me necessary theoretical back up related to his\her study and lends his\her to go ahead in right path. Kumar (2009) says literature review is an integral part of research process. It serves as a supportive tool from the beginning of the study to its end. All above reviewed literature (theoretical and empirical) is similar and helpful for the study. I have taken ideas and information about my researches which have been more useful and helpful for my study based on procedure, methodology, sources of data, tools and so on. This review of the study obtained information from the varieties of book, theses, and journal articles and so on. These entire sources helped me to build the ideas related to research problems, challenges, and new methodology and contextualize the finding and provide an opportunity for critical analysis.

Wenger (1999), Rokka (2018), Tejfel (1978), Norton (2006), Vgytosky, Morgan (1997), Connelly and Clandian (1999) provide me an insight for building theoretical knowledge. Similarly, Bista (2006),

Adhikari (2013), Bhusal (2015) were helpful to get ideas about gender inequality in Nepalese context. There are other valuable materials which became the part of my research were included in the references section.

### **Chapter III**

#### **Methods and Procedures of the Study**

This chapter is about methods or procedures that I used to conduct my research study. The chapter mainly includes research design, selection of research site and participants, tools and techniques of data collection, data collection procedure, data analysis and interpretation and finally, ethical considerations.

To achieve the objectives of the study, following methodologies were selected in the research process.

## Research Design and Method of the Study

There are many research designs. Among of them, I have used narrative inquiry research design in order to complete this thesis. In narrative research designs, researchers describe the lives of the individuals, collected and tell stories about people's lives and individual experiences (Connely&Clandinin,1990) as cited Cresswell (2012,p,502).

Thus, research is the systematic investigation that follows a stepwise procedure. A systematic and scientific process has been adopted in order to conduct a research study. I adopt the following steps for my study given by Creswell (2012).

- ) Identify a research problem
- ) Review the literature
- ) Develop a purpose, statement and research questions
- ) Collet qualitative data, analyze and interpret the qualitative data and
- ) Write and evaluate a study.

Narrative inquiry is a kind of investigation of people's experience or the story. It is the best research design to find out in depth data of the study. Using the narrative inquiry,I explored the factors that affect in identity construction of Dalit Female ELT. I selected four participants who were from Dalit community of Sindhupalchok district.



1	Sujita	27	M.Ed	Married	Seven	-	A	5 years plus
2	Mira	28	B.Ed	Single	Seven		B	9 years plus
3	Sabnam	22	B.Ed	Married	Six	-	C	8 years plus
4	Sristi	23	IA	Single	Four	One	D	5 years plus

The data obtained from the table showed that all the participant teachers teach at Public schools which are situated at Melamchi Municipality. Among them, only Sujita teaches at the school named 'A' as a permanent teacher others are temporary. The data showed that the ages of participant teachers ranged from 22 to 28. They were grown up in rural context of different district. They were the product of Nepali and medium school. They obtained bachelor from the Indrawati Multiple Campus Melamchi. However, they were not the same batch student. Among the four participant teachers, two was single. In the following section, I will briefly discuss about the each participant's briefly under the title participants' profile.

### **Sources of Data**

Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized for this study to achieve the above mentioned objectives. The researcher used both sources of data in order to carry out this researcher.

**Primary sources of data.** The primary sources of data were the life experiences told by the four Dalit Female English teachers' of who are teaching in Melamchi Municipality. I was done through the in-depth interview as the main techniques in my study.

**Secondary sources of data.** Apart from the primary sources of data, I studied and consulted different books, thesis, journal articles, previous researches, websites, dictionaries and other published and unpublished materials.

### **Study Area/Field**

The major emphasis of my Study was on the female English teachers identity construction: a case of Dalits. The eastern part of Sindhupalchok district Melamchi Municipality was the field/area of research study.

### **Data Collection Tools and techniques**

The selection of research tool is very important for the researcher to collect the required data for his/her study. Without appropriate selection and use of the research tools, a researcher

cannot collect the required data for his/her study and make the study effective, reliable and valid. Thus, to collect the required data, I used in-depth interview as the main techniques in my study.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

At first, I went to concerned Municipality of Sindhuplachok district and ask about Dalit female English teachers'. Then I selected four teachers'. After that, I went schools and ask the concerned authority to carry out my research. Additionally, I rapport with them. Then I explained the purpose and the process of research and request them to get permission to carry out the research. After getting permission from the principal, I consulted who were purposefully selected the teachers for interview. I took the formal and informal interview with participants' after we fixed our time and exchanged our phone number. After one week of our first meeting, they informed me about their free time. At first, I was little close with her. Then, I started the interview by asking the general background of their personal lives. Gradually, I entered into their own personal and professional lives in follow up interviews. Sometime, I jumped and asked more about the challenges, women roles and regulation, support that they got and dilemmas encountered in their private and professional lives. Specifically, I have focused on the supporting and obstacles of professional development and the role the socio-cultural

factor as gender and ethnic that affect shaping and reshaping their teaching identity. Finally, Interviews with participants were taped recorded in Nepali language and transcribed literally in Nepali then translated into English language. Later, analyzed thematically.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedure**

At first, I made individual files which included both interview and narrative reflection under pseudonym. Later, I listened interviews more than three times and later transcribed interviews and typed up narratives. I transcribed the audio recording interview literally in Nepali language before translated it into English language. However, I felt very difficult in transcribing the most remarkable excerpt of the interview. Because it was challenging, attentive and time consuming work. After all, I went through all the data to find the general sense. Later, I went through each participant file separately and outlined the major points. I typed up in separate page under their pseudo names. In the next step, I put all the printed data together and coded data to explore the unique lived experiences of the participants' female teacher. Then, I developed the different areas as personal history, family influence, role of school, gender discourse for my own comfort. The respondents were explained in their perspective. The researcher linked with different theories. And the data were analyzed and



interpreted by using the frameworks developed by me and the literature review all together.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical consideration is one of the main parts of the research. Every researcher should be aware about the ethical considerations while conducting any research studies. First of all I made the participants sure about their privacy. I assured them that the personal details and the information they gave to me would be strictly confidential. I articulated the purpose of my study and informed participants about how the data would be used. I made them sure that the data they provided to me would not be used for any other purpose. I provided their interview to make improvements if needed and assure them that their ideas and views has not been violated, and modified. To accomplish my research work, I considered the ethical values and norms of the research study.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

This chapter contains the analysis of lived experiences of my participant Dalit female ELT teachers who are trying to shape and reshape their identity in teaching. Their stories reflected the memories and the experiences pertaining to their personal and professional identity development. The information found in this section was obtained from teacher interview, participants' journal, activities observation and the informal talk.

### **Analysis of Data and Interpretation of the Results**

I have used thematic approach to determine what stories were told and what stories revealed about each individual teacher and what kind of challenges they encountered during their professional life. On the other words, the narratives were first viewed holistically and then

analyzed thematically. Thus, this section includes the following theoretical reviews:

**Becoming Dalitfemale English language teachers'**. Becoming a teacher is a process that continues throughout the one's professional career. In this regard, (Rokka, 2018) said that, this process of becoming teacher is concerned with both internal and external images such as professional expectations, motivation emotion, notion about teachers and teaching and the whole social surrounding they are situated. Opining the similar view, Gur (2014) mentions that teacher as persons besides their professional identities have other sub -identities including personal, parental, collegial and ideological, among others. Thus, female teachers have multiple identities within herself. Throughout the discussion with my research participants, I came to know that Nepalese female English language teachers have multiple identities as being obedient daughter, honest and loving wife and caring mother. However, Teacher identity therefore is very depending on the context and circumstances at any given context as claimed by Dickinson (2012) in her research works on "Pre-service Teacher Identity Construction".

In this part, I have presented the experiences of the research participants to give the voice and meaning to their lives. No matters when and how a teacher decided that female participants wanted to

become an English language teachers, the lived experiences of these female ELT teacher influenced in their teaching identity. To become a female English teacher, they were not talking about the support but highly emphasized the challenging aspect of their private and social life. Their stories revealed that their prior learning experiences, motivation, passion, workloads, frustration, training, family are the important aspect that female participant teachers were always wanted to be a teacher.

Following major sub themes were emerged from the participant stories:

**Formation of social and gender identity in female English language teachers’.** Throughout the discussion with my participant female teachers, we came to know that the traditional gender, social and ethnic discourse plays the crucial role in the construction of their female teacher identity. Due to Patriarchal rules, regulations, values and norms women teachers encountered numbers of problems in their personal and professional lives. The gender and social discourse can be the powerful means to categorize specific rule for male and female. That is the reason, women always feel them junior and obedient than male in home and office and society also. In this regard, it can be worth mentioning the ideas put forward by Schmenk (2004) who describes the gender and social stereotype tendency

throughout diverse culture and context where gender looks for specific traits inside person, neglecting the socio-culturally constructed dimension in society (p.517). Thus, their lived stories revealed that the underlying gender as well as social discourse in our society bring the significant difference between two sexes. Thus, genderis social and cultural division (Bowie, 2006) which creates the discrimination between male and female. Due to the fact that female teacher also faced challenges in their personal and professional lives.

Under the following description, she has to work as a housewife and as a professional English teacher. They are always busy in their household chores. It is really difficult to become Dalit female English language teacher.In this regard

One the participant Sujita said,

*Along with me some of my friends were married. We talked more about family matters than our own study, personal and professional affairs during our college days. (Pauses sometimes) we talked about study, personal life, and teaching. Similarly, one of my classmate shared that her father in -law always warned her every activities. One day Jasita (pseudo name) became late for returning. When she reached home she found her father in-*

*law was in anger. Following day, he did not allow her to go to college and even go to school. Now, she become housewife and spends days in doing household works and caring family members.*

Sabnamcommented,

*If I were a male teacher, I am sure that I could get the chance to teach in higher classes like other male teachers who have same degree with mine. But as being an inferior sex, I did not get the chance to involve myself in important academic and non-academic activities. In the same way, Male teachers have dominant power in our school.*

On the other hand, Mira and Sristi shared the bitter experiences that she encountered not because of qualification, it was because of gender in her personal and professional life. She shared that being a Dalit and inferior gender, she lost some of the important opportunities to involve in training and other professional activities at school surrounding. Above as Sujita shared her classmate problems, it was not only the problem of her and her classmate encountered rather the problem of average Nepalese female teachers. Form her story, it can be said that male have the dominant power than women in our society. Similarly, the story signaled that female identities are attached with either her father or husband before and after marriage

respectively. Thus, her view was largely supported by the ideas mentioned in Manusmriti (a Hindu textual tradition) which is responsible to categorize the respective roles for man and woman as 'breadwinner' and 'caregiver'. Thus, they have no right to decide for their own personal and social lives. Opining the similar view, Kroska (2007) mentioned that the gender ideology that rooted in our society responsible to categorize appropriate roles, rights, responsibilities of women and men.

By observing the condition of my research participants, we can say that due to the gender, female teachers' faced multiple dominations, obstacles, dilemmas and frustration in their personal and professional life. Consequently, they felt always them junior than male counter parts. From female teacher narratives, it can be said that the difference between male and female shape largely their understanding of being obedient and shy than rational. Thus, Lorber (2008) suggested that social, historical and cultural phenomena not only construct gender, they help to create a gendered social order that is hierarchical and discriminatory.

**The symbolic value of English language in female teachers' identity construction.** The participants' own description of their knowledge of English revealed the symbolic value of English language in their identity construction. They articulated that they chose English

language teaching because of its 'wide spreading demand' (Sristi). Moreover, it was not only the case, now the government aided school of Nepal highly emphasized the English medium as instructional activities. In the following section, I have examined the participants' decision to become an English language teacher.

In Nepal, English is regarded as a foreign language where it is difficult to become a competent English speaker through public schooling. It is the medium of instruction. The lived stories of my participant teachers here revealed that they were the product of Nepali medium school where they did not have the good exposure and other resources materials such as audio visual materials, private tuitions except English text book at school. Similarly, they argued that learning English was not our mother tongue. Meanwhile, they believed that they first started learning English letter at class four. They also influenced by English teachers, textbook etc. In this respect, their stories were supported by the idea mentioned by Farrell (2010, p.149) who states that early experiences as being particularly student and teacher at private institution had impacted their teacher identity.

*Mira Shared,*

*When I studied in grade 9/10, I did not have much interest in English. I loved mathematics. But, when I started teaching at English medium school, I observed (experienced) necessity of*



*learning English everywhere. More, the English translated textbook, English speaking environment played the significant role. Later, I was fascinated by it.*

*Sabnamcommented,*

*When I passed SLC, I had no particular aim of my life. To be honest, I had a dream to become a businessman. Because people saw business as new profession for female.*

*Ummm.....it was difficult for me socially and economically to go to Kathmandu and study commerce. Later, I joined in Education Faculty with majoring English. More, I had got the opportunity to see my aunt speech in English at private school, I saw many of senior brothers choose English subject. They are the direct and indirect factors.*

The quotation above indicated that Mira's early interest was not in English language. However, the private school where the medium of instruction (English) enabled her to become an English language teacher. Similarly, in the follow up interview, Mira shared that TPD training for English language teacher helped her to understand broader scope of English language. More, she appreciated the support that she got from NELTA, 'I got the chance to attend few NELTA programs'. As a result, she has positive impact in her English language profession and she felt teaching is valued career. Similarly,

during my second visit with Sristi at her own home, I found the same interpretation like Mira. When I inquired her about learning English language informally, she shared that her early involvement and experience as being English student later supported her to become English language teacher. Another respondent female teacher, Sujita reflected that she was not sure to be an English language teacher before SLC. In our story sharing, she shared that knowledge of English, social boundaries, poverty and her mother were direct and indirect responsible factors in engaging and remaining in English language teaching and learning. We got the same kind of responses of Sabnam like other participants. More, she discussed the role of dominant patriarchal discourse which can be the tool for maintaining and legislating the gender ideology (Bhusal, 2015). That's the reason, she did not get the chance to be a businessman. From her and others' lived stories, it is believed that men and woman are supposed to perform their own roles and responsibilities. However, she mentioned that due to the increasing interest in English language, her aunt speech and being ELT teacher motivated her to become English teacher.

By analyzing their stories, it can be said that all the participants agreed that there should be good exposure, certain resources materials such as private school, private tutoring, language institution,

available to families with sufficient means to afford the expenses (Khoddami, 2011). These female teachers therefore wanted to become an English language teacher and had desire to become the fluent English language (speaker) teacher.

**Role of passion for female teachers' identity construction.** A significant theme that emerges from the data is that their stories reflected the strong sense of becoming a teacher. When I inquired them, I found that these female teachers developed a strong passion in teaching profession. For them, passion refers to the true love of teaching, 'I don't know why but I love teaching very much. We got the pure love of young children' (Mira, interview). Her ideas are supported by one of the participants named Mary Griggs in the research worked carried out by Aimar (2006). In Griggs word, 'passion is being excited about coming to school even on those mornings when you do not feel great'. She even articulated that 'passion is a desire to teach English'. Mira, one of my participant female teachers also had the same desire. Her passion was also evidence in this line, 'even on Saturday, I wish to come and stay with kids at school'. From her illustration, it is explicit that passionate teachers as 'someone in love with a field of knowledge' (Fried, 2001, p.44). Mira further articulated that interaction with young kids and the different classroom activities made her feel good and positive in teaching. Here, Mira

raised the most important issue as teacher-student negotiation, which is essential component of teacher identity and most influencing socio-cultural aspect (Fattah, 2016). From the lived story of Sujita, we assumed that different contexts were responsible to be a passionate teacher. In order to be a successful female English teacher one should be positive towards her profession and can able to bridge the gap as well as should build the strong rapport with family, society and with teacher community disregarding the dilemmas, tensions, obstacles they encountered in her personal and social life.

In the following excerpt, Sujita shared,

*I used to think that I should do for myself. As being woman we have to do many works inside and outside family. I work in kitchen, field and school. Even, I have provided the time for my family members. Sometimes, it makes me little unhappy. But I don't feel bad. You know, bearing child and being mother is our natural duty..... Ummmm (feeling positive). So, I think, we should love our profession by heart than blaming others.*

From her illustration we concluded that though she faced difficulty in maintaining family and school, her strong passion can be the significant contributor to become an English language teacher. Her

articulation was strongly supported by the ideas suggested by Aimar (2006) who mentions that it is the passion that drives people in many different directions towards personal and professional goals. We can see the clear evidence of it in Mira's follow-up interview where she mentioned that she felt better, 'staying in the middle of the student circle' and she showed the great sense of satisfaction with teaching.

**Supporting factors.** Teaching is a journey that one can shape and reshape her teaching identity by involving in different interactive activities. Teacher professional learning activities and desire of becoming teacher were affected by several factors as personal as well as contextual ones. The participant were positively influenced by the teaching. The personal, social and contextual factors greatly impacted their teaching identity. In my study the process of becoming teachers, provided nearly the similar opinion about the support that they got from their family and the whole social surrounding for their identity construction in teaching field. However, they articulated it differently.

In the following section, I have presented the teaching profession with focusing on the supporting aspects. Their narratives mainly reflected following sub theme under this broad topic:

***Family influence.*** Family support is the most important theme which I developed throughout the discussion with them. When I inquired their view, all the participants provided the positive family

influence to become a teacher. Family members who were teachers, family encouragement were the most important aspect for remaining and leaving teaching profession to them. During the interview, all participants articulated that family support is the key for her teacher identity construction. Her parents were not educated supported her in household chores.

*Sujitashared,*

*After getting marriage, I faced many challenges during my initial years. I came Melamchi from Shikharpur for teaching. I woke up early in the morning and did regular works then prepared for school. At that time, I did not get more support from my in-laws. (Feeling little depressed) My husband who was in project also discouraged me. Sometimes, I became somewhat frustrating when I did not find them positive towards teaching. However, I remember my parents, who were always in my side and suggested me not to leave teaching. When my husband leave from job and started working here in Melamchi, he understood my complexities and helped me in doing household chores as well as in parenting. (Sujita)*

*Sristi shared,*

*Of course, my father always supported to me to study. He joined to me boarding school nursery to till primary level. I learnt general English in there. I faced the more problems in English. So, I had a due respect to my father, he never said, stop your study. (deep breathing, I thought that time), when I was in seven class my grandfather want to marriage because he had doubt for inter-caste marriage but my father was suggest him and stop this.*

Sujita mentioned that her parents were the significant motivator of her teacher identity construction. During our interview, she shared that her mother is the key motivator of her to become a teacher; 'my mother who could not continue her study' inspired me to be a teacher. Due to early marriage and the distance between home and school her mother was unable to continue her study. In the data she illustrated that though her parents encouraged her to go further, it was a financial factors that seen as problematic to her. She further provided the additional explanation for staying in teaching. After getting marriage, in her initial teaching years she did not get more support but later got support by her family members and husband particularly. Another participant teacher Sristi who is more than 5 years teaching experiences articulated that her family especially her father support always for teaching. Now, she loves teaching by heart. She gets

respect from others. In schools' days she got a chance to study in boarding school till primary level. She is exposure in English. In our story sharing, she regretted that she was not a higher caste gents because of she spend the many problems due to the Dalit female. But now a days, she made a powerful weapon for the teaching profession. She commented that as being a Dalit female, she faced many challenges and trouble in her personal and professional life. Like other working women, family management is the key challenge in her teacher identity.

In another participant Mira, who belongs to poor family background provided the positive family support. She strongly mentioned that she choose teaching because of family financial reason, 'my parents could not afford for my further study'. Though her family encouraged her to involve in teaching, family low income played an important role in her decision to be a teacher. The data obtained from her stories revealed that apart from her kind family support it is a family income source, she engaged in teaching from college days as well. Similarly, Sabnam further provided the additional explanation of choosing and staying her in teaching because of her supportive husband, 'I feel lucky myself because I got support from my husband in doing other household chores.' Because of her husband, she has got the opportunity to prepare for lesson and get rid of the burden of



work in family. However, she sometimes felt bad as she did not have time for family.

From her illustration, we came to know that family is the foremost supporting factor of female teacher identity construction. All the participants mentioned that they had got moral and emotional support to grow professionally and personally. They further pointed out that for their better personal and professional development, they always want supportive family environment throughout their teaching career.

Overall all, family is the powerful weapon for construct and reconstruct their identity.

***School's influence.*** The stories reported by these four female English teachers revealed the support which they got from the institution. When I inquired their view, they responded that school is the key factor for their professional development. Sabnam provided the role her school played for her professional development. She argued that there is no gender bias in her school because her school is one of the recognized public school in Melamchi village, 'our principle sir treats us equally. There is no bias between male and female in our school'. She often argued the need of gender friendly approach in school as suggested by Adhikari (2013) for female teacher identity construction. She further provided the additional explanation of being

there for teacher. In this respect, she mentioned that she can get the explicit encouraging environment in her school during her sickness as well. But another participants argued that, school is one of the place where is play the politician in everywhere who are the teacher not interested in politics they always dominated them. So, politics is power of the human it's hide to creative knowledge. Sujita shared, her story she is always domination due to female as well as Dalit one. So, overall teachers have no same reaction in to the school. They spend different types of domination and support also.

*Sristi shared,*

*'No official training has been supported but the administration has always supported emotionally, they praised my work and motivate me' (Sristi).*

*Sujitaarticulated,*

*When I take a leave for exam the teacher in my school always angry with me because one of the Dalit female teacher grown up from us. That is the reason behind the teacher always dominant to me.*

According to Sristi, an optimistic female teacher also had the positive thought about the support that she got for her identity construction. It was her teaching experiences in different schools that

enable her to stay in teaching profession. She believed that it is the school that encourages and discourages them either to stay or leave from teaching. In her own experiences, it is clear that it is the school which makes female teachers aware for the bad practices, equal participation in decision making, able to practice the good practices in her family and society. The data clearly show here that Sristi's decision in staying teaching was closely associated with her school's motivation for female teachers. Sujita mentioned that, it is the challenging way to her for teaching as well as grown up identity. Dalit female teacher are one of the most vulnerable groups facing discrimination in different forms, as untouchability, caste-based and gender-based as well. Mira during our conversation shared that though school played the significant role for female teacher success it was her school that supported to preserve the deep rooted gender ideology. This type of gender ideology obviously help female teachers to think always junior than male counter teacher as suggested in the traditional Hindu tradition, "Manusmriti" which is responsible to categorize the respective role for men and women as 'breadwinner and 'caregiver'. Similarly, in the excerpt Sabina's illustration, it was worth mentioning here the ideas of Komba and Nkumbi (2008) who said that a school management with a motivating culture encourages teachers to engage in professional development programs who learn from other which drive the teacher towards self -improvement. The

data above mentioned clearly shows that institution plays the important role to create gender friendly environment.

Other supporting factors for these female teacher identity constructions were related to their own factor such as strong determination to become a teacher. During the conversation with four female participant teachers I found the most important factor 'strong desire' to stay in teaching. The participant teacher shared, 'I have faced more difficulty but I did not escape. I try to win those and accept the reality of being female' (Mira). Like her, other participant teachers also provided similar response which helps them to become a teacher. For these female teachers, struggle and life are synonymous. They articulated the struggle and problems arisen in their life supported them to understand who they are in personal and professional surrounding. The difficulties they encountered as being member of complex community where they do not live in isolation made them different and equally their mind is mediated and socialized.

Finally, the difficulty leads them to construct their identity (Burr, 1995). Similarly, training, motivation teaching experiences, prior learning are some other important factors for sustaining in teaching profession. Their stories revealed that family is the ideal for them. In the above discussion, Sujita shared that her mother was the ideal for her

professional and personal identity. Likewise, for Mira her Father was her role model to become a teacher.

**Hindering factors for female teacher identity construction.** The stories of my participant narratives not only talked about the support that they got in their personal and professional lives. More, this study concerned with some other obstacles of their teacher identity construction. Narrative inquiry in this study draws on the challenges that they encountered while constructing their teacher identity. Therefore, this study draws the attention of people to understand the participants' effort to understand how they are constructing their teacher identities and what factor appeared as the obstacles for them. When our conversation was going on at different places, participants mostly shared socio- cultural perspective on gender factor as marriage and mother figure are more responsible.

***Caste.*** Nepal retains its centuries-old caste system. Dalits, the discriminated people under this system, suffer from restriction on the use public amenities, deprivation of economic opportunities, and general neglect by state and society (Shrestha, 2002). In this regard, Dalits are oppressed by upper-caste for construction their identities. Teacher identity is determined by whether a female is married or single ones. It greatly affected to Dalit female teachers personal and professional lives. In this regard my participants shared their view we

are Dalit women we face the number of challenges while teaching as well as construct our identity. Society always dominant us because we are Dalit female teachers we couldn't handle the class perfectly.

*Sristi shared,*

*The most hindering factors for female Dalit English teacher is thinking of administration. They underestimate the capability of female teacher. They think Dalit female couldn't control students though they have not better qualifications. So, the responsibility for upper level in school is not often handed to Dalit female.*

*Sabnam shared,*

*I have faced the many challenges being a Dalit female English teacher. There is less payment for Dalit female teacher than non-Dalit male teacher though the workload is similar for both.*

Above all teachers mentioned that, Dalits are junior in our society. Male teachers thought, Dalit female teachers has not any idea than us. They are under-talented. It means that the practice of untouchability have negative impact in the construct and reconstruct teacher identity. It decreases the professional development ability because of the psychological effect. On the basis of the Dalit female

teachers view, it was found that Dalit teachers are stop their further study due to their economic background, caste based discrimination, uneducated family background and early marriage.

**Marriage.** Teacher identity is determine by whether a female is married or single ones. It greatly affected to female teachers personal and professional lives. In the patriarchy country like Nepal, marriage was seen as the core indicator of differences between two sexes'. In her study entitled Gender Based Motivation to Learn English at University Level, Dhakal (2017) argued that our societies have given different sets of rule and obligation for husband and wife. These were the key indicators for differences. Like many other studies related to female status carried out in the context of Nepal, in this study also female teachers illustrated that it was marriage that hinder their teacher identity construction. When Sujita invited me at her own home, I found that due to her early marriage, she could not able to complete her study in time. Due to these facts, she did not get the chance to teach in upper classes. She further mentioned that due to her early marriage, she could not have the time for self-study and attending the TPD training.

*Sujita shared,*

*I think, marriage is compulsory for female in our context.*

*Parents become worried when we grow up and mostly think*

*about our marriage. They have the deep belief on 'to have a good marriage at their early age' is much better than being single. On the contrary, they think about their son higher study. I had the same experience. I was married at quite young age and handling all these matters. After marriage, I got involved in different matters which are really none for my own personal life. Because of these matters, I lost some chances to involve in different personal and professional activities and unable to boost up my career.*

*Sabnam shared.*

*Yes of course. After getting marriage we are bounded with some rules and regulations, when I was a single, there were no more boundaries for me. I could do what I liked to do. Yes, but the situation was different after marriage. Now, I have to provide time for family. After marriage, even in family, we have more economic responsibilities. So, it is challenging to continue both (study and teaching) together.*

Sujita's view was similar here with the research finding of Tremayne (2006). Tremayne, in the study *Early Marriage in Iran* mentions, 'Marriage itself remains fundamental to the social identity of all women, regardless of their achievements in other spheres of lives'. From the data it is clear that in Nepalese society marriage is the



foremost thing for women whether they are job holder or not. After marriage they should obey rule of husband and family honestly. She further mentioned that her family did not get the permission to go outside for days, 'my family suggests me not to go outside except working school.' In another interview, Sabina (married figure) articulated that marriage is the key factor that brings the change in female personal and professional lives. Like other Nepalese female working women, Sabina articulated that marital status hampered their career. By analyzing her experience, it is clear that in the patriarchal country, marriage is the important determinant factor for their personal and professional lives. In the same way, their stories revealed that married women have more pressure of domestic responsibilities. As Mirashared, her sisters story 'I woke up early in the morning (around 3.30 am) and involved in doing works in kitchen, field and repeated same duties (after 4. P. M to 10/11 P.M) till late night'. In this respect, her view seems in line with the research findings of Bhusal (2015) who mentioned the pressure of domestic works for married female then unmarried ones.

When analyzing their stories, I found that these female teachers were educated, independent and educating other have not strongly argued over traditional gender discourse. Most of them realized that marriage hinder their lives but agreed that marriage and having more

responsibilities were not noble duties for them. That is why, Sujita articulated, 'marriage and child bearing are not new for us. If we want to grow and become a successful teacher, we have to struggle ourselves'.

**Mother.** I assumed from the stories of my participant teachers who were married and single that they all accepted the reality of becoming the mother in the world. They loved the role of being mother as they experienced the kind and loving mother at their home. From the participant illustration, it is clear that they all have the positive perspectives as their multiple roles of women as being daughter, wife, daughter-in-law and mother respectively.

*Having two children of her own, Sujitashared,*

*Absolutely, being wife, mother and any other are the social boundaries for female. Yes, but we cannot go far away from this reality and could not be happy enough (I see, my mother, grandmother and other female around are positive). So, we have to reconstruct ourselves as with social construction. Look! When I was a school girl, I used to think how difficult to handle all those for female but now I realized better than I thought earlier.*

*In another, after having a child, it becomes the main problem for me. We have four members here in Melamchi along with*

*two sons. My husband works in office. I have to do all the household chores myself than go to school. That's why I do not have more time for attending seminar, important meeting held inside and outside school. I will try to attend those activities as far as possible. However sometimes, because of family factors (two sons), I missed some important training and other professional activities.*

*Mira Shared,*

*Mira, a single female teacher shared that to become the mother, it is not necessary to have their own children. Mira, who teaches at Basic level articulated, 'Teaching begins with children. If we do not want to be a mother, we have to be the parents of our young kids in school.'* (Interview)

In the narrative of the participant teachers, no matter how challenging and difficult the teaching profession for women, the notion of being loving, kind and caring mother is essential. Similarly, the institution assumed the same role as caring and loving teacher to the young disregarding their qualification. Such gender discourse creates the confusion and stress in the process of becoming an ELT teacher.

**Stress.** Studies related to the status of women in Nepal have raised the issues of female teachers' professional development

(Poudyal, 2012; Adhikari, 2013; Bhusal, 2015). However, they have not much discussed about the role of stress in their teacher identity construction. In such scenario, the stories of female teacher mostly revealed the frustration they encountered in their regular basis. These female teachers of Melamchi valley mostly talked about the gender issues that lead them in stress. Being an inferior sex, they have to face many challenges in their personal and professional lives.

*In the Sujita shared,*

*People around always see me happy. They often share their problems with me such as husband-wife quarrelling, child care and other family matters. But they do not think how difficult the job teachings for women. I have to do all the house work, washing clothes of my school children, husband (who works in project), looking after garden and chickens, cleaning house and so on. I have no more time even in Saturday.*

*In this respect, Mira Shared,*

*I belong to poor family. My father never works due to his own physical disabilities but sometimes, my mother works in neighbor fields. We are living with poverty. So they could not afford for my study. So, I joined in teaching from after SLC. Even, I could*

*not get the chance to study for 2 years after SLC and immediately engaged in teaching just for family.*

During our long conversation, it was clearly showed that poverty is the main hindrance for female teacher identity construction. In her teacher story, Mira shared that reason for choosing teaching was strongly determined by the financial reason. Therefore, she always had been searching for high salary paying school. Thus, she paid less attention to her teacher identity and more concerned on high salary paying school. In the similar way Sabina and Sristi also shared the same opinion regarding her teacher identity. For them teaching is related to how much they earn for family. They also believed that economically they were more important for their family. Opining the similar view, Sujita shared that it is her high income, 'salary equal with her husband', she got more support from her husband in parenting children and other activities. Similarly, she got the time for preparing lesson, sometimes for attending TPD training as well. However, she regretted that she will not get time for attending seminar far from her residence due to children.

From her illustration, it is clear that females are still dominated by men and the traditional cultural values. It was not only the case of Nepalese female teachers who are trying to construct their teacher identity rather it is the major issue of most of the female teacher in

developing countries. The data here showed the female teachers' dissatisfaction as being a teacher. The dual responsibilities lead them in stress. She further provided the additional explanation of the difficulty in maintaining her teacher identity. So, these female teachers faced emotional and psychological challenges when they could not have time for engaging professional activities like their counter male teachers in school. More than above common challenges that these women teachers shared poverty also played the significant role in their private and professional lives. In the developing country like Nepal female English language teachers are not constructed their teacher identity due to financial reason. What I found in this study is that no one of the participant teachers belonged to high family status. Therefore, it is poverty that compelled them to engage in teaching and other profession from their young days. Therefore, socio-economic factor was also seen as hindrance for them. Another stress they faced due to their students poor achievement. Students of various backgrounds were in school. Due to the lack of knowledge of how to deal with diverse background children at public school, they were failed to create the children friendly environment in their class.

It can be concluded that female teachers' identity was largely influenced by internal and external factors. Their stories revealed that

the need of kind support, co-operation of family, society, institution for their professional growth.

## **Chapter V**

### **Findings, Conclusion and Implications**

This chapter concludes my study which I have drawn from chapter I to chapter IV. It is all about the brief description of my research study. More especially, the final chapter discusses the main findings of the study presented in chapter four. It deals with major findings of the study, conclusion and recommendation to the policy maker, teacher educator, female researchers and ELT practitioners. Similarly, I have concluded with my reflections which include the challenges, conflict, dilemmas encounter while preparing the overall thesis.

#### **Findings**

Trying to exploring the female teachers' construction and reconstruction of teacher identity. Similarly, findings of this present research have been based on the factors that affect identity construction of female English language teachers supporting and obstacles in professional development factor affecting in their



professional growth like stress, caste, marriage and mother of Dalit females to identity construction. In this part, I have presented the findings on the basis of the narrative reflection and in-depth face to face interview. Moreover, I have tried to present the main themes of research findings separately that stemmed from the data analysis, research objectives and research questions.

**Becoming the female English language teacher.** The stories of participant female teachers articulated that to become a teacher, family, school and society were play very important role. Their stories revealed the encouraging and discouraging family and institution atmosphere played the apparent role in constructing and reconstructing their identity. Moreover, they mentioned the role of gender and discriminatory system of male dominated society. Based on the research result, I have mentioned the following major points:

- i. The narrative of female English teachers revealed that the female teachers found teaching is challenging profession because female had multiple identities besides their professional identity (daughter, wife and mother) which were largely shaped by different internal and external factors.
- ii. It was found that gender and social discourse must bring the clear demarcation line between male and female as well as upper caste and lower caste in family, society and office, we

found the same reflection in their (especially Mira's school) educational institution.

- iii. The narrative and lived stories of Dalit female teachers reflected that they had a strong sense of passion in English language teaching. Moreover, it was found that they chose to become an English teacher because its wide scope throughout world.

### **Supporting factors for Dalit female teacher identity construction**

- i. It was found that all the participant Dalit female teachers' illustrated that encouraging family environment support their professional growth. For them, family and society was the heart for their teacher identity construction.
- ii. It was found that some personalities like parents, early teachers', resource person acted as the figurative role model to follow this profession. In the teacher narrative, Mira shared that her decision to choose teaching was rooted in the impact of her early teachers and resource person had on her, 'I was a fan of early teacher and resource person who sometimes visited in our school'. Thus, it was the strength point for female teacher professional growth.
- iii. It was found that most of the participant female teacher reflected that encouraging school environment always motivated

them to learn more about teaching profession and able to know their position in particular institution and society. Moreover, the professional relationships among teaching and non-teaching staff were fundamental for developing the sense of inclusion and exclusion. Thus, institution was another significant factor for teacher identity construction.

- iv. Their stories revealed that positive attitudes towards English language teaching particularly strong determination and teaching with young children supported them to be in teaching.

#### **Obstacles for Dalitfemale teacher professional development**

- i. All the participant Dalit female teachers considered that gender issue was the main obstacle for their teacher identity construction. They have not only faced the obstacles at home but also at institution and society. Thus, gender inequality and discrimination at home, society and institution made them feeling depressed and marginalized.
- ii. Their stories revealed that lower cast, early marriage, becoming mother and bearing children were the four major factors that obstacles to grow-up professionally.
- iii. It was found that heavy secluded work both at home and school leads these working women towards stress, dilemmas and

frustration. Thus, it was found that identity is complex and contradictory, Norton (2006)

- iv. It was found that social and family management is also the most important issue for their teacher identity. They do not have the sufficient time for sharing their stories with others and gaining insights on it due to the lack of involving themselves in teacher community of practice as COP believes that Dalit female teachers' have more interesting stories for sharing. Similarly, from their lived experiences, it was found that they were interested in sharing stories with teacher community.

## **Conclusion**

This research study was based on qualitative approach. It has analyzed and interpreted the issues concerned the factors that affect the identity construction of the Dalit female English teachers. This research explored the answer of the question like how do they construct their identity and what factors do support and hinder in Dalit female English teachers' professional development. For this study, narrative inquiry and interview was taken from four Dalit female English teacher of Sidhupalchok District. Narratives of these four participants have been analyzed and interpreted once again in order to arrive in finding and in construction based on the objective of the study.

Teaching is a challenging profession. Because female teachers have multiple identities besides their professional identity (daughter, wife and mother) which were largely shaped by different internal and external factors. As well as gender and social discourse must bring the clear demarcation line between male and female (upper caste and lower caste) family and office. We found that same reflection in their education institution. The participation reflected that they had a strong sense of passion in ELT. They chose to become an English teacher due to its wide scope throughout world. All the participants illustrate that, encouraging family environment support their professional growth. For them, family and society was the heart for their teacher identity construction. Likewise, female teacher reflected that encouraging school environment always motivated them to learn more about teaching profession and able to know their position in particular institution and society. Moreover, the professional relationship among teaching and non-teaching staff were fundamental for developing the sense of inclusion and exclusion. Thus, institution was another significant factor for teacher identity construction. Their stories revealed that positive attitudes towards English language teaching particularly strong determination and teaching with young children supported them to be in teaching. They considered that gender issue was the main obstacle for their teacher identity construction. They have not only faced the obstacles at home but also at institution and society. Thus, gender

inequality and discrimination at home, society and institution made them feeling depressed and marginalized. Their stories revealed that lower cast, economic condition, early marriage, becoming mother and bearing children were the five major factors that obstacles to grow-up professionally. Social and family management is also the most important issue for their teacher identity.

It can be concluded that the shared stories of the participants were vital to construct female identity in teaching. Thus, story enabled them to know who they are, how family, society and school support and obstacle their professional growth. Similarly, they know better how personal factors such as marriage and child bearing leads them to the psychological stress. The four participants shared that female has positive impact in construction of their identity. In the same way, their family support, school support, society, economic condition, motivation to professional development. It also played a vital role in identity construction. Finally, self-confidence and struggle is also very important to construct identity.

### **Implications**

On the basis of finding and conclusion, some recommendations have been made to be applicable in:

**Policy related.** There are certain issues which I believe are of great importance in understanding the identity construction of Nepalese Dalit female English language teacher. As being a Dalit female ELT practitioners and member of male dominated society, I believe that Dalit female teacher identities are largely constituted by the socio-cultural aspect as gender ideology. The gender discourse related to women roles as being daughter, wife and mother create conflict within them and other. When I reviewed the list of literature on identity formation, few studies have been concerned with female teacher identity construction in the field of teacher education. However, most of the researches carried out in English language teaching in Nepal have focused on issues related to language learning and methodological aspect rather than the women teacher identity construction. In the same vein, my attempt was to explore the female teacher identity construction in relation with supporting and hindering factors shed light some prevailing issues with what they do, think and feel themselves in the complex social web where they situated. My study encompasses following points to be applicable to the policy maker:

- i. Findings of my study showed that some of the participant (Mira) strongly commented on unequal power relation. Similarly, there were very limited programs and policies to address gender

concern in teacher education. So, for the improvement of the quality education and female friendly teaching environment, the government should bring the new perspective and new approach to address the gender related issue.

- ii. Similarly, the policies and provisions should oriented towards equity in teacher education program rather on bringing gender equality.
- iii. Similarly, in order to fill the existing gender gap within the Nepalese ELT scenario, there should be the program for (Dalit) female teachers particularly and should involve them in administration and leadership and implemented strictly.

**Practice related.** It is common across the literature of teacher education that practice plays an important role in the process of constructing their teacher identity. I hope, this study is equally advantageous to those who are at the practice level. Therefore, I can confidently assert that my research is very much significant for the teacher educator, ELT teachers and more especially for Dalit female ELT practitioners who engage in teaching profession and try to construct their teacher identity. The major implications of the study in this level are:

- i. By analyzing their lived experiences, it was found that Dalit female teacher who needs to deal with work and family face



challenges due to the heavy workload. So, they were suffered from the psychological stress. To minimize their problems, dilemmas and frustration, Dalit female teachers need more supportive and encouraging school environment.

- ii. Likewise expert in teacher education also suggested delivering the different female friendly program inside and outside the school and encouraging them to participate.
- iii. I hope, female teachers who were the participant of this study also draw the insights and become more aware of themselves and their relationship with larger social world.
- iv. Though it was my small attempt to bring out the stories, it motivates other female ELT practitioners who are facing multiple challenges.
- v. Moreover, this study also provides female teacher to seek alternative ways in teaching and negotiate with the gender discourse.
- vi. Further, it will be beneficial for the Dalit female teacher researcher from multiple angles to explore the hidden reality through narrative inquiry approach.

**Further research.** No work is final and no research is complete in itself. This study also could not cover all the areas of research. There might have some limitation as well. While doing this thesis, I

encountered with several topics and ideas. However, I have pointed out some related areas for the further study:

- i. This study was limited to four female English language teachers who are teaching at public school in Melamchi (rural). It would be more interesting to see how other Dalit female teachers from remote areas see themselves as ELT practitioners.
- ii. Similarly, another possible direction to further research is related to male English teachers' identity construction. It can be more interesting if we investigate their stories/ experiences by applying the similar method.
- iii. The next areas for conducting research is related to the methodological aspects to get better insight of the phenomena, the narrative journals, activities observation and face to face in-depth interview are not enough. In order to get the better insight on teacher identity construction, it would be better to use the others sources like teachers daily diaries, class observation report, activities observation report teachers' reflective writing (article) etc. as complementary ones. It helps to examine and explore the personal and social life.



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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A**

#### **Consent Form**

Dear informant,

I would like to invite you to take part as a one of the respondents in my research entitled **Female English Language Teachers Identity Construction: A Case of Dalits** under the supervision of Dr. GopalPrasad Pandey, Head and Lecturer, Department of English Education, T.U. Kirtipur, Kathmandu. The purpose of my research is to explore the factors that might affect Dalit female teacher's identity construction in their personal & professional development in the context of Nepal. The expected duration of your participation will be two hours. The research tool mainly will be the interview and your reflection writing as secondary ones. Please let me know if you agree to participate in it. Your participation will not only help me in my work but it would definitely enrich my data and result. Please inform me of your decision and hopefully your consent by responding.

See you soon,

Researcher

**AkritiSunar**

M.Ed. 4<sup>th</sup> Semester

University Campus, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Note:

- ) There will not be certain risk & discomfort associated with this research.
- ) The information you provide for the purpose of this research is confidential for both interview & your reflection writing.
- ) Interview will be recorded.
- ) I hope you will not leave yourself from process at any stage.

Signature.....

Name.....

Date.....

## Appendix B

### General Interview Guiding Questions

The interview questionnaire has been prepared to collect information for the research work entitled, **Female English Language Teachers' Identity Construction: A Case of Dalits**, under the supervision of Dr. Gopal Prasad Pandey, Head and Reader, Department of English Education, T.U, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal. I do hope the informants will co-operate by providing invaluable information to accomplish my research.

#### Questions

- i. How are you?
- ii. What is your name?
- iii. Family history: members, family link to teaching.
- iv. Personal background: activities in the past, motivation
- v. What do you do before joining teaching?
- vi. What motivated you to enter into the teaching profession?
- vii. How long have you been teaching?
- viii. Why did you continue this profession till now?
- ix. What kind of change are you noticing in your 9 years teaching?
- x. How do your family/ society perceive you as Dalit female English teacher?

- xi. As being a Dalit female English teacher, what kinds of problems are you facing in your daily basis and how can you cope with them in our patriarchal society?
- xii. What do you think are the obstacles for your identity construction in teaching?
- xiii. Do you believe gender and social is the most hindering factor in your professional path?



## Appendix C

The interview has been conducted to collect the viable insight for the research work entitled **Female English Language Teachers ' Identity Construction: A Case of Dalits**, under the guidance and supervision of Dr. Gopal Prasad Pandey, Head and Reader, Department of English Education, T.U, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal. I do hope the informants will cooperate by providing invaluable information to accomplish my research.

### Sample Interview Transcript

**Researcher:** Namaste, your good name, please?

**Respondent:** Namaste. It's me Sujita.

**Researcher:** How are you?

**Respondent:** Fine.

**Researcher:** How are you feeling now?

**Respondent:** Good.

**Researcher:** Myself is Akriti from T.U, Kirtipur. Today, I am here to take your interview for my research purpose. I see, you are a Dalit female English language teacher and married ones, how is your life going on?

**Respondent:** Yes, Being a woman, I have family rule and regulations. It is rather difficult to handle both workloads equally. But yes, I have got kind family support.

**Researcher: Your permanent address?**

**Respondent:** I belong to..... Melamchi. But stay temporarily here.

**Researcher: Where?**

**Respondent:** At Shikharpur.

**Family**

**Researcher: Family members?**

**Respondent:** There are seven in husband's home. But here, me and my one son.

**Researcher: Will you please provide me your family educational background?**

**Respondent:** Fine. Family is the heart of my success. If you want to know my family, they (my own parents) were not educated. They are farmer. But my husband is educated. He advised his parents. So, they encouraged and helped me to do a job disregarding the difficulties they encountered in their daily basis. Because of support I am still enjoying in teaching.

**Researcher: How long have you been there (stayed with family)?**

**Respondent:** I have not stayed long there.

**Researcher: What kind of support did you get from in-laws?**

**Respondent :**( Being little nervous) they supported me. I did not have intellectual support by them but they helped me when I needed their help like to look after my children when I have an important meeting outside valley. I call them to stay here for some days.

**Researcher: Because of family, female teacher leave teaching profession? Do you have such experience?**

**Respondent:** Why not? I experienced such condition during my initial days of teaching and after becoming a mother of my first child. I know, it is really difficult for female than male. We have to manage home and office. Because of these challenges, we did not able to develop ourselves as equal to male. We did not have time for self-study. In my own experience, it is really challenging for us to deal with both work equally and we become somewhat frustrate.As a result, it hampers our intellectual development.

**Marriage and Child Bearing and Others.**

**Researcher: When did you get marry?**

**Respondent:** At the age of 18.

**Researcher: Love/ arrange?**

**Respondent:**(Pause) arrange.

**Researcher: What does your husband do?**

**Respondent:** He works in project (pseudo name) school, Melamchi.

**Researcher: Do you have children?**

**Respondent:** Yes, I have two son.

**Researcher: Your son?**

**Respondent:** Elder one he studies in grade one and younger is in nursery.

**Researcher: Husband's support in parenting?**

**Respondent:** I am lucky in this matter. Because of his support, you see, I am continuing teaching quite happily than other female teachers.

**Researcher:** Fine, let's talk about ..... I mean, what kind of disturbances you face in your professional life because of family matters?

**Respondent:** After getting marriage we are bounded with some rule and regulations. When I was a single, there were no boundaries for me. I could do what I Preferred to do. Yes, but the situation was different after marriage like other females, now, I have to provide time for family. After getting marriage, in family we have more economic responsibilities. So, it is challenging to continue the job and study together.

**Researcher:** So, it is said that bearing child and being wife (marriage) are the two significant factors that bring change in female PD? Do you agree?

**Respondent:** Yes of course. These are the natural duty for female. I think you know better than me (laughs). For example, for breed also, women are necessary. There are some conditions where male could not do anything though they wish.

**Researcher:** It's all right (paused sometimes). Then how do you perceive your role as being daughter, wife and mother?

**Respondent:** Absolutely, being wife, mother and any other are the social boundaries for female. Yes! but we cannot go far away from this reality and could not be happy enough. We have to reconstruct ourselves as with social construction. We have no option escaping from this reality. When I was a school girl, I used to think how difficult to handle all those for female but now I realized better than I thought earlier. I have accepted the reality that every girl later has to become a daughter in- law, wife and mother like us.

### **English and ELT context**

**Researcher: Would you mind telling us about your childhood and school education?**

**Respondent:** Of course. My childhood was very normal and happy. My parents were farmers. So, they were very hard working. They sent us to school.

**Researcher: How was your school life before SLC?**

**Respondent:** Teachers were somewhat strict and helpful too. We never felt bored in school because some of my teachers always motivated students to do work hard. But sometimes, lack of required teaching material, insufficient reference books, trained English teachers, we faced problems. Because of that including myself, most of us (students from public school) were always poor in English subject.

**Researcher: So, what was your dream after SLC?**

**Respondent:** When I passed SLC, I had a dream to join in commerce because people saw commerce as good profession. But it was difficult for me to go Kathmandu and study commerce socially, culturally and economically. Therefore, I decided to join in Education Faculty with majoring English

**Researcher:** Well, you had a dream to become a nurse. Share your experience with us, why did not you study nursing? (Pauses), Lack of support or any other reasons.

**Respondent:** You know, I grown up in village where the situation for girl was different (10 /12 years ago) than present. And my family told me if I read well, English Education is not bad.

**Researcher:** Yes, when you have decided to study Education English as your major subject, how do you feel?

**Respondent:** (pauses) when I chose Education field then I might think that teaching is my future profession.

**Researcher:** Yes. Then English?

**Respondent:** I was little bit talented in English subject than other subject like mathematics, science. During that period, many of my seniors' brothers chosen English as their major subject. They even suggested us to choose English subject in higher education Even I had got the chance to see my aunt speech (who is an English teacher at boarding school). However, I had no particular aim until my SLC. But I was little fascinated by English subject.

**Researcher: Please tell us how you came to be involved in teaching?**

Respondent: As I already told, I had no particular aim until my SLC level. When I joined in education faculty in class XII, my interest in teaching gradually began to increase.

**Researcher: Well...When did you start your journey in teaching?**

**Respondent:** I started teaching since 2069 when I was a college student. I started from very beginning level at AamaYangri Boarding Boarding School (pseudo name) which is situated in Kaski district. I worked in other boarding schools of valley and finally got a chance to teach here by the passed from TSC exam, teaching as basic level English language teacher.

**Researcher: Starting level?**

**Respondent:** Primary.

**Researcher:As English language teacher how do you feel yourself in teaching profession?**

**Respondent:** After engaging in teaching field, we have to be more serious. As an English language teacher, I want to say you all that there should be a good English exposure at school and home.If we got the enough exposure, there is no difference between male and female. If we have the time like male for reading, watching English related materials, we can also make our student more interactive in English like Nepali subject.

**Some selected interviews (part) of follow up interview**

**Researcher: How do you define teaching? (In your own words)**

**Respondent:** Yes, for me teaching is not a particular job for earning. It is challenging and an ongoing process where every teacher examines herself and himself how to be a successful person in their personal and professional life. So, we feel honored in our society.

**Researcher: Um..., you mean, teaching itself is a prestige job?**

**Respondent:** Definitely, I agree with you. I know teaching is more prestige job in comparison to other profession like, singing, dancing banking etc. They are more time consuming profession and not secure profession for female. But in teaching, we have got the chance to become parents and felt secure.

**Researcher: Well...You mean teaching is really safe for female teachers?**

**Respondent:** Please, let's not to over generalize my ideas. You see, in every profession, there are good and bad people. I mean teaching is more suitable job for female in relation to time, family and child caring factors.

**Researcher: How the societies perceive you as an English**

**teacher? Respondent:** In a society, teaching profession is considered as low paying job than other profession. But societies have the positive perception towards me. It is good to maintain the position in society along with family.



**Researcher:** What kind of disturbances that societal norms bring?

**Respondent:** Societal norms, values are the significant factor for us and it hampers in our profession. Sometimes, due to teaching, being a daughter in law, I had no time for doing regular works like: cleaning dishes, kitchen etc. during that time, I face a problem and sometimes, it becomes the great family issue. And more...

**Researcher:** Please, continue.

**Respondent:** Like me other female always feel them weak because of societies rule and regulation. We have more works inside and outside home. For e.g. if I tried to speak or do not provide time for family, they are my against and started backbiting. At that time, I become frustrated and feel very bad.

**Researcher:** Let me tell your school environment?

**Respondent:** The name of my school is 'D' (Pseudo name) Secondary school, is one of the public school situated in Melamchi Municipality.

**Researcher:** Female teachers?

**Respondent:** More than male teachers.

**Researcher:** School support in your professional development?

**Respondent:** Our principal sir treats us equally. There is no bias between male and female. We involve in the curricular and extracurricular activities held in our school. If we observe the context

of other Nepalese public school, they do not have positive feeling towards female teachers. Certainly, you may find the difference here.

(Paused) In our school, you see, female teachers are in vital post like in- charge in different level.

**Researcher: I see you are the mother of small child, in this case, what kind of challenges you face and the support from school?**

**Respondent:** It's really challenging case for female teachers to continue their profession in the context of Nepal. I think, the government should bring the strong policy for female teacher. If you talk about my school, I have got the support but some time parents are tease me (case: breast feeding, child caring etc). But, I have a due respect to my school management committee because I got a kind support from them. I have to take my regular periods but the school does not force me to take after 4 duties like other female teachers.

**Researcher: As you mentioned that you were started your teaching career from elementary level. Why the school does not provide them (have equal qualification like male) the classes for teaching in upper level?**

**Respondent:** Yes I did. When I came Melamchi, I worked in different school as an English teacher. I know, the private schools have no belief in female teachers. They might think that female teachers do not dare to control class like male teachers and..... many more

reasons. Equally, they have the deep rooted concept that female could not manage time for extra classes. Boarding school therefore is more time consuming for female. It was not only the cases of boarding school, even we find the same reflection of female teachers who are teaching in community school ( She further adds that one of her neighbour female teacher who is teaching at community school do not get the chance to teach in upper level where she was appointed) because of existing male dominated culture.

**Researcher: What may be the reason?**

**Respondent:** Umm, firstly, it becomes our culture. None of the qualified female dares to teach in upper level. I see, they prefer to stay with kids. So, most of the female teachers are in lower grades. Secondly, people have belief that woman can treat the child properly and they know how to treat them well and many more.

**Researcher: How often do you participate in TPD training and other academic programs?**

**Respondent:** We have got the chance. Our school sends us and involves in different training program. I attended some of them as far as possible.

**Researcher: What did you get there?**

**Respondent:** We learn many things like, ideas related to sharing problems among the teachers. Our own weakness and the way of improving language teaching and learning, methodology and more

importantly, it helps me to know my capacity, weakness, value of English language teaching, ideas on how to be a professional teachers, how to cope with daily challenges and so on.

**Researcher: What do you think the hindering factor for (your) female English teachers' development?**

**Respondent:** Of course! There are. You see, how difficult teaching for women due to many rules, norms, values and responsibilities inside and outside home. There are more hidden factors that hamper our development. They directly and indirectly impacted our personal and teaching life. I do hope, you will get the same response as me if you ask same question to other female teacher. Because of my family (marriage, family, being wife, mother) I encountered several challenges in my personal and teaching life. I could not get the time for skill development, self-study like my husband (who is also a teacher) due to family and time factor. I have no time for my own personality development, attending training like him. (She further continues) many of the male teachers I know are always in educational circle but we are not. At family also due to the educational background, I did not get the time for sharing knowledge with family except my husband. Another important considerable point that matters is our marital status. Due to early marriage, we could not develop us as speed like with single. However, I am trying to manage all these.

## **Final part**

**Researcher: Well, how do you manage your personal and professional life?**

**Respondent:** I know, it is so difficult for female who are working as both housewife and teacher. Though it is difficult, I have got the support from my family. My in-laws also help us to look after our child especially during vacation. My husband especially helps me in working household chores and in parenting a child. He understands its complexities (he is also a job holder) and does not interfere with my job. He even calls his parents if we have an important work. So, I am still working with dignity. I am really grateful to them and their invaluable support.

**Researcher: If you had not been a teacher, what would you have done?**

**Respondent:** (laughs).... I might be housewife. To be honest, I might have joined in business.

**Researcher: Well, what is your future plan?**

**Respondent:** I want to be the professional teacher and have desire to horizon the knowledge of this field. As we know our students are weak in English. So it is my responsibilities to make them better in

language teaching and seek the platform for enlighten myself in teaching.

**Researcher: All right, lastly, what do you want to tell the working female like you and other females who want to become a successful teacher?**

**Respondent:** Be positive towards your profession and take every challenge as learning opportunities, believe yourself first than others, love your profession by heart. More, for all who want to come to this field, I request you all, choose a field where you are happy to work hard. Also work to benefit to your personal and professional image in a positive way.

**Researcher: Thank you for providing interview.**

**Respondent:** You are welcome.

(Note: I have presented only some parts of interviews)

## Appendix D

### Participants' Profile

#### Sujita

Sujitawas born in Baguwa, Melamchi 10. After marriage, she has settled in Talarang, Melamchi. Her husband used to work in project. She has two children, 7 years and 4 years sons. She has grown up at Baguwa. She has six sisters and one brother. Due to big family, they face to join the hand to mouth problem in early days. Her two elder sisters are housewife and three younger sister is a student. Her father is a farmer. She remembers that her mother is the key motivator for her teacher identity. She is uneducated but she forced for all daughter to study. She inspired her to be a teacher. Her teacher identity is shaped by her mother who always motivates her to become English language teacher. She mentioned that her mother regretted that due to early marriage, family rules, number of daughter born waiting for son's once, social norms, she was unable to continue her study. After marriage, she faced the same problem like her mother. But the situation was little different than her mother (25 years ago). Because of bearing son and family management, she left teaching for some years. Later, she convinced her husband and other family members and joined in teaching. Now, she feels happy and teaching became a passion to her. Now, she loves teaching, gets respect and thinks it as prestigious profession for female. She wishes

to bring the changes in society. She wants gender friendly perspectives and policies in teacher education.

### **Mira**

Mira is also from Dhading. She is 28 years old, unmarried female English teacher. She was born in poor family. Because of family economic crisis, her family decided to migrate to DhadingBesi for a searching job. There were seven family members. She has three sisters and one brother. Her sisters were married. But she is still unmarried due to economic condition. Now, she works in MelamchiSchool from the project "Teach For Nepal".

She has been teaching English for more than 9 years. She engaged in teaching at the age of 17. She encountered many difficulties to become a teacher. Her father motivation were the key factors for her identity construction. She remembers that like other female English teacher her contact with English was in class four. As she remembers, she was not very much interested in English in her school days. At that time, she loved mathematics. However, working with young kids enabled her to become an English language teacher. She mentioned that because of single, she missed some of the opportunities to teach at high paying private school in her initial teaching years. Moreover, she mentioned that discouraging school environment and gender bias sometimes leads her towards frustration. However, her strong determination, experiences made her strong to



become English language teacher. She believes that teaching experiences strengthened her knowledge, skills and teaching vocation. She would prefer to work ideally with co-operative teachers' circle in public school.

### **Sabnam**

Saban is 24 years married female English language teacher. She stayed in Melamchi for last few years. She worked as a lower secondary level English language teacher at 'C' secondary school. Her husband is carpenter. Sabina received B.Ed degree from Indrawati Multiple Campus, Melamchi.

She is inspired in teaching by the Montessori training. She has good teaching experiences. She was joined in teaching when she was a college student. She mentioned that she was not very good at English. After SLC, she wanted to join in commerce. But because of financial, social and cultural factors she could not able to study business and later enrolled in education faculty with majoring English. The teaching experiences, her English language teacher, teacher were some of the influencing factor for choosing teaching profession. She regretted that the specific rules and responsibilities as family caring, Social factor hinder her teacher identity. Due to the imbalance of family, she cannot work like male teacher and to grow professionally as she wishes. She shared that teaching and non-teaching environment largely support her identity construction. Like other working female, she also has desire

to work with college students, if she gets the support by her husband and family.

### **Sristi**

Sristi is 23 years female English language teacher. She is unmarried. She was born in Kathmandu but stayed in Melamchi for last few years. She has two sisters and no brother. She belongs to middle class family. Her father is a sick always and her mother is in foreign country. Her sisters were student and doing part time job. After SEE, she wanted to join in nursing profession. But because of financial, social and cultural factors she could not able to study nursing and later enrolled in education faculty with majoring English. She participated in English speech competition, spelling contest, essay writing during school days. So, it's support for teaching English at school.

She made a decision to become an English language teacher because of her family and she thinks that it is a great profession for female .Now, she loves teaching by heart. She gets respect from others. In schools' days she got a chance to study in boarding school. She is exposure in English. In our story sharing, she regretted that she was not a higher caste gents because of she spend the many problem due to the Dalit female. But now a days, she made a powerful weapon for the teaching profession. After involving in English language teaching, she became more aware about teaching English and the

environment made her to become English language teacher. She now realized the value of English in her teacher identity construction.

She commented that as being a female, she faced many challenges and trouble in her personal and professional life. Like other working women, family management is the key challenge in her teacher identity.