

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Ignorance is the night of mind and a night without moon and stars and there is no cure for it other than the education. So there could be no clue against the immense magnitude of education. It has been extensively accepted that education is the backbone of people, society and foundation for the development of whole country. So no compromise is accepted in this sector. Moreover it can be considered as the basic right of all human beings regardless of origin, sex, ethnicity, caste, race, culture, religion and language. Investment in the education sector is arguably the most precious investment a society can ever make (Pradhan, 2003). Education is the key factor for sustainable development; it is at the same time a component of well being and a factor in the development of well being through its links with demographic as well as economical and social factors. Education furthermore is the indicator of the development of a country. It is the principal factor to bring about revolution in every field of a society and guiding it towards prosperity.

Nepal is well known around the world for the religious and caste harmony as a diversity of castes constitutes the country without any violence and dirty games in this respect, though there are still lots of unsolved questions regarding caste discrimination. The waft of caste system is still in influence which is believed to have started from time immemorial. The caste system has been divided into four groups, namely Brahmin, Chhetri, Baishya and Sudhra where Sudra is considered as lowest caste (untouchable) popularly known as *Dalits* (Bista, 1980). As cited by Prithvi Narayan Shah Nepal as a garden of four castes and thirty six sub castes blooming together, the quotation somehow sounds contradictory as the *Dalits* are still searching for the space to bloom within this garden. Because of different circumstances the *Dalits* are still heavily deprived of blooming opportunities as they are being deprived from the lights of education.

Education is simply the floodgate of development and its deprivation means the exclusion from the main stream of development which has been the current fate of Nepalese *Dalits*.

Even though there is a clear declaration for no discrimination to *Dalits* in the constitution of Nepal, the present story of *Dalits* is quite different and the prohibition upon untouchability and on the cast based discrimination is still to make any headway in resolving the problems at local level. The provision for *Dalits* reservation in every institution is still a far cry in Nepal except a few cases.

The term *Dalits* itself is a politically coined word. If it is set to carry the meaning of “poor and oppressed persons” this meaning is less sensitive than the meaning of ‘Harijan’ or ‘Achhoot’ or so called untouchables (CARE, 2002). The Nepali Legal Code of 1854 defined some caste/ethnic groups as “Pani nacahlne choit chito halnu parne jat” (caste from whom water is not accepted and whose touch requires sprinkling of holy water to get purified). However, the modernization has contributed to relax the magnitude of fundamental taboos especially in urban-based environment, but a large majority of people follow somehow the conditions of old Legal Code by maintaining a significant proportion as untouchable. A number of groups are included within *Dalits*. The tradition of hierarchy and untouchability exists severely and equally among and within them.

The story of *Dalits* of the study area is also no different from the whole scenario of *Dalits* of the country, as they are absolutely isolated from other communities. Being very much near from the district headquarter also, they are still far from the taste of the educational as well as other advancement sited by surrounding communities. They have merely been as a watchdog, just gazing the progress of so called upper castes and waiting to get something to be thrown from their side. Still the *Dalits* of the study area are forced to follow the traditional occupation of sewing, cobbler work and ploughing the farm of upper castes.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Education is undoubtedly an envoy or the pathfinder of the development. The development of the country is more often related with the literacy percentage of that country which clearly suggests that education is the primary basis to pave the way of development. On the other hand educating certain group of people or glowing the lights of education in the limited area does not help to increase the literacy percentage of the country. This means that it is a must to educate all the people of the country in order to make a prosperous country overall.

But it has not been the case in our country as a huge part of people seems to be left out from the main stream of the development and those missing out are no other than the *Dalits* and the reason for being left out is of course deprivation from the sparkling lights of education. This no dwelling ignorant people's number is resulting in the creation of big gap between the rich and poor which is hampering the development of the country very massively. Their ignorance in addition is creating more space for so called upper castes to exploit and dominate the lower caste which is pushing these *Dalits* in the deep ditch of poverty. Lack of education has forced them to live under many social constraints and they are very much unable to raise their problems as an issue. So this sort of trouble is creating a kind of social gap which could lead towards the process of social disintegration and thus be the hindering factor for the development of country.

In Nepal, as in most other developing countries, there is large disparity between the literacy rate of *Dalits* and other castes. *Dalits* are underrepresented at all levels of education. The main cause of disparity between non *Dalits* and *Dalits* literacy is the social attitude which regards upper castes as superior human beings and perpetuates their superior status in society. Education gives them claim to extra superiority.

Social attitudes are not negative: it is only negative towards *Dalits*. Since attitudes are developed over years, it takes time to change these views. Despite the traditional mentality and behavior it is evident that this social attitude is not rigid.

However, Nepali society is marked by diverse ethnicity, religions, castes creeds and languages. The topography of hills, mountains, plains and terrains which is contained of rivers and streams divides the country into remote isolated pockets and compartment. Such diversity presents challenges per economic developments. The way people think is influenced by all these and thus social attitudes are developed. (Subba,1989). So these very sluggishly changing social attitudes are the great problems to be worked out.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study entitled “Educational Status of *Dalits*” has been carried out with an objective to analyze the educational status of Dalits. The specific objectives however are as follows.

1. To study present educational status of *Dalits*.
2. To examine the regularity of the children at schools/colleges.
3. To analyze the prominent constraints of the *Dalits* hindering their participation in education.

1.4 Significance of the Study

It is obvious truth that assurance of a better education means the expectation of betterment of socio economic status of the local people with probably the least amount of adverse effects, arguably anything can have in this whole world. Education being one of the key to appraise the development of the country, it should never be limited in only certain area, certain groups or certain castes or communities.

In Nepalese context, *Dalits* are economically backward, politically voiceless, socially marginalized and individually untouchable people who are left way back in the process of development and no other than ignorance being the major reason for the case. With an identity of covering about one fifth of the total population of the country, there can be no way out for leaving this massive group apart from any aspect of the country.

The bitter truth of the country is that the majority of this massive part of population has been deprived of education which is really a huge setback for the sustainable and equitable development of the country.

The discrimination and exclusion is the major obstacle for the socio-economic development of *Dalits* in Nepal. Though the action plan for *Dalit* development is not an easy task, the government, political parties, NGO/INGOs and civil society all are expected to perform effective roles in these various *Dalits'* development programmes. Moreover, coordination is highly important to have best returns without duplications with the limited resources and to reach to the target communities. Finally, the stable and politically committed government is prerequisite for the effective launching of these various development and empowerment programmes for the welfare of *Dalits* (CARE, 2002).

So the study has tried to unfold the issues relating to the educational and social problems of the *Dalits* with the hope that the findings of the study can be helpful for the implementing agencies in the formulation of plans and policy makers to formulate appropriate plans for further development to gain the desired result in the field of *Dalits* education. It also opens up the further problems to be researched.

1.5 Limitation of the study

The study is based only on the data of a single VDC. So generalization made in this study may be or may not be equally applicable to other areas of Nepal. The study is very specific like that of the case studies. Although the study does not cover much area, the conclusion drawn from this study is mere indicative rather than conclusive. However, the outcome might represent the area with similar geographical, social, economic and ecological condition.

The study is conducted under time and financial constraints, and is based on data collected from the field survey. Sample-based data collection could have its own limitation in drawing a fully reliable conclusion.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The first chapter is the introductory chapter, which discusses about the background information, statement of the problem objectives etc. Literatures related to education, Dalits, Dalits issues has been reviewed on the second chapter under the heading of ' literature review'. Third chapter is all about the research methodology applied for this research. Chapter 4, 5 & 6 are the analysis of data. Chapter four is about the introduction of the study area; chapter five discusses about the status of the *Dalits* and chapter six is the summary, conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter Two

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Education

The intrinsic human value of education – its ability to add meaning and value to everyone’s lives without discrimination is at the core of its status as a human right. But education is also an indispensable means to unlock and protect other human rights. It provides some of the scaffoldings necessary for the achievement of the rights to good health, liberty, security, economic well-being and participation in social and political activity where the right to education is guaranteed, people’s access to and enjoyment of other rights is enhanced and the imbalances in life chances are lessened (UNESCO, 2002). Right based approach in implementation of education related programmes can certainly decrease the imbalances among different strata of the same society. And undoubtedly, education gives meaning to the individual’s life.

Literacy is ability of reading and writing whereas education is the systematic instruction to gain knowledge. However literacy and education are similar and both are complementary to each other. Quality education produces knowledgeable persons who are the shining sign of civilization and development of the country (Salaam, 2003).

Literacy is a fundamental tool for every form of learning. Literacy is also a prerequisite for participation in social, cultural, political and economic activities and for learning throughout life. Literacy is about more than reading and writing, it is about how we communicate in society (UNESCO, 2003). In Nepal, literacy and education are generally perceived as similar terms while discussing on the literacy analysis. This is absolutely true that education and literacy are interrelated.

UNESCO furthermore emphasizes that literacy is the central focus of Education for all Plans, programmes and actions. The gender equality perspective and the needs of those without access to quality learning opportunities – out – of school children, adolescents, youths and non-literate adults – must urgently be addressed.

Education is not a luxury which can be afforded after development has occurred (Harson, 1966). This statement of Harson reveals that education is the foundation for the development and it is an integrated part, an inescapable and essential part of the development process itself.

The development denominator for the area is the educational access- "without education everything fails". People consider education as a catalyst for social progress. In areas where education is assured, changes start to become visible. People become more dynamic and forward looking, get confidence to change things.

Education has become an indispensable factor in the development of various spheres of the society (Aryal, 1970). It is the means by which a society can contribute in the task of conservation as well as transformation and advancement of its culture. No society can progress without knowledge and skill which are gained through the means of education. Aryal argues that education is also an important factor in bringing attitudinal changes, new ideas, values, morals and customs. Thus education is a key factor determining the overall progress of a society.

The concept of integrated rural development and education for rural development were becoming very popular during the 1970's. In 1977 the Ministry of Education, the Center for Educational Research Innovation and Development (CERID) and World Education(WE), an international non governmental organization, teamed up to explore more effective ways to provide non formal education to rural areas of Nepal. Over the next three to five years, the team developed, piloted and continuously revised a set of materials. The result of these efforts was the creation of the Nepal National Literacy Programme(NNLP), a six month curriculum using a text called *Naya Goreto* (New Trail), designed to teach reading, writing and math skills which also providing a number of relevant social messages. Many INGOs and local non-governmental organizations involved in rural development subsequently adopted the materials and the approach used, and literacy became an entry point for development work in the villages (USAID, 1999). While organizing the literacy classes the outcomes become more effective to increase the

literate population, if the literacy class focuses also on the awareness generating together with its objective of literating persons.

Prior to 1951 in Nepal, education was treated as an active threat rather than as a potential asset. During more than a century of authoritarian Rana rule, education was restricted as part of the general policy of isolationism. Traditional forms of education (generally religious) were virtually extinguished, and new institutions were discouraged, except for a limited number of schools to educate the children of Katmandu's elite. It should be noted that some of the modern schools were opened during the Rana regime. (Hridaya, 2004). So history is also a witness of the fact that in every situation or circumstances the selected group generally take more chances, leaving the back warded communities in bay.

2.2 Ethnicity and *Dalits*

The word '*Dalit*' comes from the Sanskrit root '*dal*', which means to shatter, to break into pieces and to step on. The term is a product of a 19th century Indian reform movement. The literal meaning of the word '*Dalit*' are : shattered; over burdened; suppressed; squeezed; stepped upon; kneaded; ground down; shamed by being required to bow to someone else's feet, or silenced through suppression (Nepali Brihat Shabdakosh, 1993). The term *Dalit* in itself is discriminatory to the *Dalit* people. Use of this term has to be abolished in all forms of social debate and formal writings. And the use of *Dalit* word even in informal debate should be discouraged.

Devkota (2002) admits that there is the extreme sense of castism in the Nepalese society. *Dalits* are regarded as the lowest and untouchable castes. The upper class people from the centuries have developed the orientation like: "Aaphu marya doom nai Raja" [After my death who cares, even if there is the *dom* king (lower caste king)]. Raja or King is regarded as the living God in the Hindu Society and his place is embarrassingly replaced by the *dom* (*Damai/Dalit*). This shows the clear indication that there is the very negative connotation of the Dom or *Dalit*. It further reveals that upper class people are never in favor of the *Dalits* neither they wish any positive image of the Dom/*Dalits*.

Sujakhu, 2002 has studied the pattern of ethnic and religious composition of Kathmandu valley and have insisted that ethnic and religious composition is parameter which helps to determine the social cohesion and the organizational basis in the society. She is of the conclusion that the low caste ethnic people are very backward in every aspects like education, health, social as well as economic conditions. Majority of the low caste are still far from the inclusion in the mainstream of development and these people are still forced to follow their traditional occupation and compelled to remain in the same stage as they were since long before.

A vast number of people among the Hindus both in Nepal and India are comprised of the lowest castes category of 'Shudra'. Castes are divided into 'touchable' and 'untouchable' groups. The people of untouchable castes, despite their belongings to Hindu fold, are relegated to a position outside the pale of Hinduism. They are socially segregated, economically and politically deprived and were also denied access to education for long. The people of 'untouchable' castes these days are termed as *Dalits* (i. e. oppressed) in general. They are considered as backward because the process of social stratification and job distribution in the past particularly in a Hindu society was such that the present sociopolitical and economic is held responsible for the status of these caste groups. They are backward caste and community as a whole due to the hierarchical order and differential socio-ritual status of kinship (Khanal, 1996). This socially ascribed caste system is hindering the so called backward group's upliftment despite much economical effort.

Murphree (1994) based on ethnicity and development has offered three dimensions of impingement and process of ethnic factors on state. The first one relates to the colonial history of these states, their location in an exploitative system of international capitalism and the way in which racial and ethnic identities have been manipulated to serve the interests of the exploitative process. A second dimension relates to the genesis and durability of ethnically determined group consciousness and structure and the contexts of its salience and operationalisation. A third dimension is prescriptive and relates to the

political engineering required to contain, control and possibly utilize the dynamics present in the ethnic factor.

2.3 Inequality and *Dalit*

(World Bank, 2006) portrays the numerical description of the poverty scenario. Inequality existed every where- among the countries and within the country. Report of the World Bank states that the extreme poverty in developing countries fell from 28percent in 1990 to 19percent in 2001. But Nepal has its 31 percent of the total population below the poverty line and the poverty in rural areas is much higher (34.6%) than its urban counterpart (9.6%) in the year 2003-04. The report further reveals the fact regarding share of income and consumption that lowest 10 percent population enjoyed only 2.6 percent of the total consumption where as the highest 10 percent population enjoyed 40.6 percent of the total consumption in the year 2003-04.

The term inequality refers to unequal distribution of income among the inhabitants of a country. This results from unequal earnings of the people in a society. Unequal earnings are, in turn, due to unequal opportunities, unequal abilities, unequal ownership of assets and a lot of other institutional factors. Income inequality is a universal phenomenon existing in almost all the countries of the world but in different degree (Deo, 1997). He further states that there is close relationship between poverty and inequality. Generally, a high degree of inequality is associated with high extent of poverty. But these two are distinct concepts and neither subsumes the other. Unequal opportunity for education definitely contributes for the widening gap between different strata of the society.

Tumin (1967) states about the social stratification that the arrangement of any social group or society into a hierarchy of positions that are unequal with regard to power, property, social evaluation and/or psychic gratification. Power refers to the ability to secure one's ends in life, even against opposition. Property may be defined as rights over goods and services. Evaluation refers to a societal judgment that a status or position is more prestigious and honorable than others, or more popular, or preferable for one or another reasons. Psychic gratification includes all sources of pleasure and contentment

that are not otherwise classifiable as property, power, or evaluation. Education has a lot to do with all the above component of social stratification. If education for all campaign is materialized in the practice, the gap can be narrowed down

A society consists of various strata arranged in a hierarchical order based on the amount of power, property, evaluation, and psychic gratification that the strata characteristically receive. This is the general picture of a stratified society, and all societies are stratified in this way to some degree (Tumin, 1967). This accepts the fact that every society is stratified in one or other way. The indicator of stratification is not only the income and assets known as pure economical indicator but it consists variety of other components such as education.

The theory of personal distribution of income, as described in Deo (1997) states that for a long time, the maximum emphasis was given to the growth rate of the country leaving the distribution of income untouched. To use Lewis metaphor, it is like riding the horse of economic development and leaving the horse of economic inequality to feed itself. He further states about the solution of inequality that public expenditure programme are also effective instruments for removal of income inequality and poverty. Government can reduce these problems to a great extent through designing schemes of public expenditure in favor of the poor or the weaker section of the society (such *Dalit*). The Nepalese government has been devoting a huge amount on development work since a long time but the fruits of development do not reach the weaker section of the society.

Narayan D. (2000) states on the subject of the approaches to poverty assessment that a variety of different data collection instruments are necessary to understand the cultural, social, economic, political and institutional realities that determine the opportunities and barriers poor people face in their efforts to move out of poverty. The report suggests that a multitopic household survey aims to gather information on a wide array of topics intimately linked with household welfare. The most well known of these surveys, the Living Standard Measurement Surveys (LSMS), were piloted in the Côte d' Ivoire and Peru in 1985 and have since been implemented in dozens of countries. Such surveys

provided crucial information on living conditions: measures of income, expenditure, health, education, employment, agriculture, access to services, and ownership of assets such as land and so on. This further mention about the Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) which is described as an interactive, participatory research process that seeks to understand poverty from the perspective of a range of stakeholder, end to involve them directly in planning follow-up action, most importantly involving poor man and women. This emphasizes on the fact that poverty can not be understood only from economic perspective; poor's access to politics and public institutions such as school is one of the important factors.

Equity consideration in provision of educational services to the community has to be emphasized for achieving sustainable level of development.

2.4 Dalits and Education

Koirala (2002) focusing on *Dalits* literacy, conclude that we do not have to wait four or six months to be literate. Even six days are enough to be literate, may be we can run full day literacy centre for a week. This alternative approach helps us to be literate and make others literate. Non -formal Education Centre of the Basic and Primary Education Programme has piloted this concept already. We can do the best use of this idea to make the *Dalit* settlement literate. Conceptually, there is open learning programme in the country. This idea can be capitalized to ensure post literacy and continuing education support for the neo literate people. CERID in collaboration with Save the Children US has tested the correspondence post literacy and continuing education programmes. Apart from this Plan International has been thinking to run open school programme in association with the local high schools. Let us use the learning. Finally Koirala appeals for all of us to use the learning of these innovative programmes for the benefit of *Dalit* community.

Though Nepalese law clarifies that there is no any discriminations regarding education sector, there still remains the caste discrimination even in primary schools For example there is still a practice of a different arrangement of water drinking pots, one for the upper

cast students and other for lower caste students in the schools of rural areas. Even the line they stand in their assembly is different for *Dalits* and there is great partiality in this case as well. The upper caste students ill treat the lower caste students and they do not want to be familiar with the lower caste students (Kisan, 2003). This kind of discrimination ultimately stands as a barrier of the *Dalit*'s access to education.

Jha (2003) persists that education is the light of knowledge. Education is the principle factor of human mental as well as wisdom development. Upon the unavailability of knowledge human being becomes as an animal, no more than that but the educational status of *Dalits* is quite miserable(Jha, 2003). The literacy percentage of *Dalits* is assumed to be just only 4.65 percent. It looks like that the concerned organizations are not paying proper attention towards the upliftment of education level of *Dalits*. He further articulates that because of untouchability, *Dalit* children refuse to go to schools. So, he even focuses on the need of establishment of separate Boarding School for *Dalits*.

Nepali society has a deep-rooted Hindu caste system with group hierarchy. The bottom stratum is of *Dalits* or untouchables whose social, economic, health status and political conditions are lowest compared to other groups (CARE, 2002). In the history of Nepal, the kings, and the governments have proclaimed the hierarchy of castes/ethnic groups; and even in recent years government has identified a number of caste/ethnic groups as *Dalits*. This indicates there are the clear differential attitudes in the authorities and high levels regarding the looking sense to certain group or to the *Dalits*.

2.5 Dalit Related Issue

Yadav (2004) spotlighting on requirement of upliftment of *Dalit* women admits that low ethnic groups' women and low status women have low role in decision making, less responsibility and less opportunities in every sectors but high constraint from family and cultural factors. Increasing the capability of the women will ultimately increase their reach to the different institutions. These groups' women have to be more necessarily provided education, employment and political involvement to achieve equal role,

decision making, responsibility and opportunities in these sectors and reduce those constraints.

Concerning on the boost up of *Dalits* insist that if any question arises about the upliftment of a certain community, then it verifies that the community is discarded or betrayed by the state and the community is deprived from national means, resources and facilities. The labour and skills of these people is being exploited and over 45 lakhs of *Dalit* people of Nepal fall under this category (Sagar, 2000).

He further emphasizes that until and unless *Dalits* are brought into the mainstream of development, the overall development can not be possible which has been proved through the passed previous projects. According to him as the previous planners, development workers, political leaders and the government didn't focused the *Dalits'* issues and gave very less concerns regarding *Dalits'* problems and left them out from the mainstream of development which became the main reason for Nepal to fall among the most poor countries in the world.

From the study of world economic system it can be generalized that *Dalits*, downtrodden, exploited do not exactly benefit from high economic growth rate (Jha, 2002). In some sense the formula of trickle down has been benefit less, which has been stated even by Human Development Report, as it has mentioned that in some countries though the economic growth is low, the condition of poor and *Dalits* is still good whereas in some countries despite having a high growth rate the condition of poor and *Dalits* is stable. Jha argues that the reason behind it is that while investing more in social sectors like education and health, the Human Development Index will be high though the economic growth rate seems low. Taking this fact into consideration, the government and related organizations should focus on the *Dalits'* education, health and beneficial works.

So, there is an immense necessity of *Dalits'* literacy and their education opportunities in order to alleviate their poverty as well. A reservation in the education sector for *Dalits* for certain period sounds to be sensible work to be done.

A study carried out by (CARE Nepal, 2002) upon *Dalits* have mentioned that educational enhancement among *Dalits* is essential to change the attitudes and behavior within *Dalits* themselves and to bring change in the inter-community culture. The prevailing caste-based discrimination is to be mitigated by governmental and non-governmental means. The enforcement of law is to be made effective. The *Dalits* lack solidarity among them. The solidarity for common interests among the *Dalits* of Hill, Kathmandu Valley and Tarai is inevitable to boost up their equitable share in social behavior and economic and political. Thus it has heavily focused on the fact that *Dalits* themselves have really to be concerned about their problems and backwardness first and the lacking consciousness among them should be generated within themselves so that it would be easier to other concerning agencies to act as catalyst in their upliftment.

In the above context, present study is an attempt to deal with the educational status of Dalits. The above literatures suggest that education is an indispensable element to ensure the people's right to good health, liberty, security, economic well-being, enjoyment of other rights etc. Quality education produces knowledgeable persons who are the shining sign of civilization and development of the country. Though Nepalese law clarifies that there is no any discriminations, there still remains the caste discrimination and Dalits are among the most disadvantaged groups who have been deprived of these elements and dispossession of education being the crucial factor to hinder their access to the basic elements of life. The caste based discrimination has forced them to surrender to the so called higher caste, which has resulted to the poor economic condition, which further has resulted to the deprivation from education, irregularity of education and drop out of children. Unless Dalits are brought into the mainstream of development, the overall development can not be possible and educational enhancement among Dalits is essential to change the attitudes and behavior within Dalits themselves and to bring change in the inter-community culture, which is very essential for the sustainable and equitable development of the country.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study was carried out on the basis of explanation and descriptive research designs because the study mainly focuses on to investigate the educational status of the *Dalits*. Moreover the study has tried to find out the educational status along with the regularity of the children to school and the major constraints of the *Dalits* to hinder their education, which is the basic objective of the study. In order to fulfill these objectives information were collected from the related field survey. The data which were quantifiable was explained literally. Analysis of data has been made by generating the tables of averages and percentages.

3.2 Study Site

The study area lies on the way to Beshihar (district headquarter) from Dumre, the transit point to Lamjung. The study area is some 180 kilometers from Katmandu city and is bordered with the Lamjung district headquarter. Though only some parts of ward nos. 2, 3, 6 and 8 only had the road access, taking into the consideration of the responsibility to conduct the research without prejudice, every ward according to the holding number of *Dalits* households were given the equal preference. So the research was conducted in every ward of the VDC on the weight basis of the respective ward.

3.3 Sampling Design

The sampling, due to its advantages like saving time, money and human resources, has been adopted in this proposed research. The population of the *Dalits* was found dispersed in every ward of the village. Household from each ward has been included in the sample on the weight basis of the respective ward. The researcher had made a preliminary visit to the study site in order to identify the representative *Dalit* settlement for study. The household is the sampling unit of the study. A total of 40 households is the sample size. In the preliminary visit to study site, the each settlement have the following number of total household that has been identified.

Table 3.1: Description of Sampled Households

Ward	Total Households	Sample Households	Percentage
1	14	3	7.5
2	34	7	17.5
3	0	0	0.0
4	98	20	50.0
5	6	1	2.5
6	13	3	7.5
7	10	2	5.0
8	0	0	0.0
9	20	4	10.0
Total	195	40	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2006

So, on the weight basis 3 households from ward no. one, 7 households from ward no. two, 20 households from ward no four, 1 house hold from ward no. five, 3 households from ward no. six, 2 households from ward no. seven and 4 households from ward no. nine has been selected for study based on probability sampling. First household was selected randomly and the next household for the study was selected leaving four households, which mean every fifth household.

3.4 Nature and Sources of Data

Both primary and secondary measures of data and information collection were used. As understandable primary data being the most reliable sources of data, it was gathered through household survey.

As extensive library consultation has been made for the collection of secondary data regarding. The library consultation contributed a lot in depth understanding the depth of the issues under the study. Eventually the understanding helped tremendously in designing of tools and field data collection method as well. The library research involved a wide range of materials such as book study report, information bulletins, booklets etc published by various institutions and personnel working in the field.

3.5 Techniques of Data Collection

The data has been collected from both primary and secondary level. The household survey is applied to generate primary level of information. Focused Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted to solicit the information in depth. Information gathered from field observation has been intensively used as a primary data in order to back up the information collected from questionnaire survey and FGD. Informal discussion at the paddy cropping field during the lunch break has also been taken in to consideration to elucidate the information collected through different instrument.

Different published and unpublished literatures were studied to obtain the secondary level of information. Access of internet also provided with lots of secondary information related to the proposed assignment.

3.6 Analysis and presentation

The gathered data has been categorized, tabulated and analyzed using different methods. The quantitative data is analyzed using a standard computer programme, like Excel. Statistical tools such as frequency, average, percentage etc have been used for the analysis of data. Qualitative data has been analyzed so that the real situations can be mirrored. Photographs also have been attached in the report to visualize the situation.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY AREA

4.1 Location

Gaunshahar VDC is one of the 61 VDCs of Lamjung district. The village is located in the central part of the district, on the right bank of the Marshyangdi River aside the district headquarter, Besishahar. It is bounded by Banjhakhet VDC in the east, Purankot VDC in the west, Besishahar VDC in the north, Udipur VDC in the south, Nalma VDC in the north east and Tarku VDC in the south west.

4.2 Features

The study area lies in the mid hilly region of the western Nepal. The elevation range is 667 to 1770 meters above the mean sea level. Marshyangdi river which flows alongside the northern boundary of the area is one of the most important and recognized river of the VDC. Physically the study area can be basically divided into two regions one being the hilly region, which lies in the western side of the study area and other flat region, which lies in the right bank parts alongside of the Marshyandi River. Hilly region's altitude gradually increases towards both west-northern side and west-southern side. Hilly regions cover nearly 70 percent of the total area. The slopes of the flat region gradually decrease towards southeast. Due to the flat nature of land, the soil in the basin area is very fertile and is very suitable for cultivation. However, being close to the district's headquarter and inclusion of the VDC in the Besishahar Town Development, the agricultural land is gradually shifting to the built-up area.

4.3 Historical Importance

The study area carries an immense significance with regards to the origin of Shah Dynasty Kings (though the monarchy is in vulnerable stage at the moment) and their diffusion and unification of the great Nepal. Yeshobrahma Shah, the Lamjungae King used to reside in the study area from where he used to rule his state. He had two sons, the elder Narahari Shah and the younger Drabya Shah. As the elder son (Narahari Shah) had the right to succeed the throne, the younger Drabya Shah (who was lot ambitious), was left alone bare handed who did not want to settle as it is. So with an ambition to be a

King, Drabya Shah went to Gorkha and won the contest of Ligligkot race and was able to capture the throne of Gorkha. Great Prthvi Narayan Shah who later conquered the splitted states and unified the whole Nepal kingdom was the grandson of Drabya Shah. So what can be generalized is that the seeds of Great Nepal were primarily sowed from the study area. As evidence there still remains the great palace popularly known as Lamjung Durbar, in the study area.

The study area as well carries a great religious value as the temple of Lamjung Kalika, one of the four Kalikas (the others being Gorkha Kalika, at Gorkha) is situated there.

4.4 Climate

Gaunshahar VDC lies on sub-tropical and temperate regions. The southwest monsoon is the affecting factor which causes rainfall. Average annual rainfall of this study area is 3500 mm. July is the month when it witnesses the maximum volume of rainfall and December is the driest month. Summer conditions are hot and moist and winter is dry and mild. Average maximum temperature in summer is 30.9 degree Celsius in June and average minimum temperature in winter is 7.4 degree Celsius in January. Generally there is the prevalence of three types of seasons in the study area. Hot season prevails from March to June, rainy season from July to October and cold season from November to February. Table 3.1 shows the temperature and rainfall situation in the study area. This metrological station is on the east flat land area of the study area.

Table-4.1: Monthly Temperature and Rainfall

Month	Monthly average temperature		Rainfall (cm)
	Maximum	Minimum	
January	18.8	7.4	5.86
February	19.5	7.6	0.65
March	23.1	11.5	-
April	27.6	14.3	4.7
May	29.1	16.2	9.18
June	30.9	19.3	50.85
July	30.3	23.0	89.70
August	29.9	24.2	60.90
September	29.7	22.3	43.45
October	28.1	19.0	35.04
November	25.5	12.1	2.10
December	21.0	8.6	0.13
Average	26.1	15.4	302.56

Source: Narayani Basin Office Ratnapul Pokhara, Station Gaunshahar, Mulpani Lamjung 2004. Altitude (775 m)

4.5 Flora and Fauna

Climatic condition of Gaunshahar supports sub-tropical and warm temperate deciduous monsoon forest. Due to the altitudinal variation, natural vegetation also differs from one place to another of the study area. Sisau, Katus, Pipal, Kavro, Pakhuri and Bamboo are the main dominant plants in the lower region, whereas in the upper slope Chilaune, Laliguras, Uttis, Nigalo, pakhuri and Katus are the dominant plants. Endangered plants like ashuro, harro, barro are also found here. Forest covers over one third of total area of this VDC .Most of the higher slope of northwestern and southwestern parts of the study area are under forest.

The study area is endowed with a majestic habitat for mammalian fauna. Monkey, Jackal, Leopard, Bear, Deer, wildcat etc are the common species of the study area, with even the presence of leopards and tigers. Likewise, it is also a habitat for wide species of birds. The main species of birds are Titro, Kalize, Sparrow, Crow, Duck, Vulture, Dove, Swallow, Dangrae etc. Reptiles like lizard, snake, squirrel etc are abundantly found in this area.

4.6 Population Composition

The VDC comprises the total population of 6868 with the domination of female as of the national figure. The male population numbers to 3117 i.e. 45.38 percentage and female population tallying 3751 or 54.62 percentage. The total number of households of the VDC stands at 1511. The population distribution according to the age groups is illustrated on the following table.

Table 4.2: Age Composition of the Population of the VDC

S. N	Age Group	Population	Percentage
1	0-14	2415	35.16
2	15-34	2180	31.74
3	35-59	1568	22.83
4	Over 60	705	10.26
5	Total	6868	100.00

Source: CBS, 2001

4.6.1 Population Composition by Caste and Ethnic Groups

Discrimination on the basis of caste has been formally outlawed by the Muluki Ain (National Code) of 1963. Although illegal as a basis of discrimination, the caste system still exerts or significant influence over Nepalese society and to some extent affects people's access to positions of privilege powers.

The caste structure in Nepal is based on Hindu Varna System. Manu is regarded as the founder of four castes; Brahmin (priest), chettri (warrior), Vaishya (trader) and Shudra (Untouchable).

Brahmins and Chhetris, who together constitute 28 percent of the total population, have maintained a separate identity and performed distinctive functions as priests and warriors respectively. Even today, a significant proportion of these two groups are very wealthy and influential members of the society.

Though being only a VDC, the study area comprises of a wide variety of ethnic groups reconciling in a great bit of harmony. The complete population of all ethnic groups residing in the study area is demonstrated in the following table

Table 4.3: Ethnic/Caste Composition of the VDC

S N	Caste/Ethnic Groups	Population	Percentage
1	Gurung	832	12.11
2	<i>Dalit</i>	1326	19.31
3	Chhetri	3003	43.72
4	Brahman	808	11.76
5	Tamang	11	0.16
6	Newar	304	4.43
7	Gharti/Bhujel	47	0.68
8	Magar	442	6.44
9	Rai	8	0.12
10	Thakuri	24	0.35
11	Others	63	0.92
12	Total	6868	100.00

Source: CBS, 2001

As most of the country's scenario, the population of the study area is also mostly dominated by Brahmins and Chhetris covering more than half of the total population. The

Dalits as well have a strong presence in the VDC with almost one fifth of the total VDC population and among *Dalits* also the population of ‘Sarkis’ is dominant followed by ‘Damai’ and ‘Kami’. Gurungs are also very nicely placed in the study area in respect of the population holding. The other ethnic groups who have existence in the VDC are Magar, Newar, Gharti, Thakuri, Tamang and Rai.

4.7 Drainage

Marshyangdi is the major river of the study area which originates in the northern slope of Annapurna mountain and flows north-south direction through Gaunshahar. The dendrite pattern of river consist many tributaries. Majuwa khola, Dhuan khola, and Jafati khola are the major streams of the study area, which flow through the VDC and collapse into the mainstream of Marshyangdi river. Majuwa Khola also works as border of the study area from west and south-west. The volume of water of these streams fluctuates according to the season. Though these streams look very small in dry season the volume increases to such a large extent in the rainy season that it becomes difficult to cross these streams. As the land pattern is sloppy in the study area there is no danger of sinking and the water in the rainy season pass through the above mentioned streams to the Marshyangdi River.

4.8 Transportation

The Dumre-Besishahar black topped road (42 km.) is the foremost access to connect this study area with other parts of the country. Major cities of the country are linked with daily bus, mini-bus and microbus services from Beshishahar and these all pass through the study area. Within district major market centers like Sundarbazar, Bhotewodar, Khudi and Bhorletar are also linked with this study area by bus/minibus/microbus services. Meanwhile road to Manang is under construction from Besishahar and Green Road to Bhujung from Besishahar is also under construction. Similarly a road from the study area to Nalma is also under construction.

4.9 Settlement Pattern

The low land area of the VDC which is connected with the Dumre- Besishahr highway and the development of the settlement in the road by area are increasing heavily and the

linear type of settlement is found in this area. Places like Bhakundae, Gairi, Ranikuwa, Mulpani fall in this sector. Whereas the other parts of the VDC are yet to be connected with motorable road so we can observe the scattered type of settlement in these rest of the parts of the study area.

4.10 Communication, Electricity, Water Supply and Health Service:

Since the rebels destroyed the tele communication tower in 2058, the whole district had almost been almost communication less and only 4 or 5 VHF telephone services were operating in the whole district. But after the recent maintenance the telephone service has been on track and the study area is also among the beneficiaries of the service. Though there is no single telephone cabinet inside the VDC, headquarter being very near, the telephone lines are connected within the study area through long extension cables and altogether 11 telephone lines are in operation in the entire VDC.

Since the district electrification was launched in 2054 BS, the entire VDC has been electrified and remarkably every ward of the VDC has been provided with the electricity facility. According to DEO over 95 percent of the total population of the VDC is provided with the electricity facility. But the service is very miserable throughout the whole district as the electricity is not reliable. There is always uncertainty of regular power supply and people have to witness power cut off frequently, might be the management and maintenance factor being poor.

District Drinking Water Office is only concentrated in the district headquarter only so there is no any government organizational initiation in the supply of water. But the people of different wards in their local level with assist of some funding NGOs have constructed water supply projects and are being benefited. In Ward no 3, 6 and 7 there are water taps in almost all houses whereas other parts have been managed through public water taps. So though there is still some cost in collection of water in many parts of the VDC, still the water crisis situation has not been witnessed.

Specific to the VDC, there is one Health Post in ward no. 8 which provides services to all in the VDC. However, the district hospital being very near from the VDC, almost all people visit the district hospital in case of medical treatment. Never the less, there are still two medical clinics one in Ward no. 3 and next in Ward no 7, runned by junior medical personnels in each case.

4.11 Institutions

Several local as well as non local organizations are in effective in the study area. There are altogether three secondary schools, one lower secondary school, four primary schools and one primary boarding school, running. An INGO named World Vision is also very effectively working in the VDC and is running a kindergarten for small children. Whereas a secondary boarding school closed due to the Maoist threat has still been unable to open. Likewise, considerable numbers of the local people are active and associated with different local co-operatives. Co-operatives like ‘Annapurna Bachat Kosh’, ‘Himal Mahila Bachat Kosh’ are actively working. Social clubs like ‘Moonlight Youth Club’ different women’s groups popularly known as ‘Aama Samuha’ are also effectively launching programmes for social awareness and development. Similarly villagers have formed a committee for the preservation of the local forests.

4.12 Agricultural Development

The low flat land in the eastern part of the VDC being very fertile and the mid hill part also being good for cultivation; the study area bears a great potentiality of agriculture farming. The climatic condition of the VDC is also favorable for various kinds of agricultural production. Agricultural is basically the principal occupation of the people. The major food crops grown in this area are cereal crops like rice, wheat, maize and millet. Likewise, in case of cash crops, they grow potato, tomato, radish, cauliflower, ladyfinger, cabbage, spinach, Pumpkin, etc. Similarly, they also grow different types of fruits like orange, banana, guava, pear, lemon, lime, pomegranate, jackfruit, papaya, lychee etc. More significantly a lot of vegetables are produced commercially in different parts of the VDC and up to some extent they have been able to fulfill the vegetable demands of the district headquarter Besishahar.

Chapter Five

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1.1 Age and Sex Composition of Households

Out of total 195 *Dalit* households of the study area, only 40 households were surveyed, the total data of every member of those selected households were gathered. So the listed information comprises of the description of each member of the selected household rather than only the respondent and the population listed under is the cumulative population of each member of the selected households.

The economically active part of population of selected households of *Dalits* of Gaunshahar VDC comprises about 60 percent taking the age group of 16-59 years. Similarly 49.6% of the total Population represents the male and remaining 51.4 percent female. Sex composition of selected households is very near to the national sex composition of Nepal. Miraculously no one of the age of 60 or above was recorded from the selected households.

Table 5.1: Sex and Age Composition of the Population of Households

Category	0-15	16-59	60 & Above	Total	Percentage
Male	51	74	0	125	48.64
Female	52	80	0	132	51.36
Total	103	154	0	257	100
Percentage	40.08	59.92	0	100.00	

Source: Field Survey, 2006

5.1.2 Land Holding

Land holding size portrays the economic and social status of the people living in the rural areas. Majority (80%) of the HHs have less than 5 ropani of land. Still there are 15 percent Households without land and households having less than 1 ropani of land comprise to 15 percent. Similarly households having 2-4 ropani of land accumulate to 36

percent, whereas only 20 percent households own land equal to or above 5 ropani. The individual highest record area of land holding among the selected households was found only of 7 ropani.

Table 5.2: Land Holding of Households

S. N	Area	No of Households	Percentage
1	No Land	6	15
2	1 Ropani or Less	6	15
3	2-4 Ropanis	20	50
4	5 Ropani & Above	8	20
	Total	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006

In the hilly region, the highest land value in agricultural perspective is for the paddy field, generally known as 'khet' and of the above mentioned land about two third of the land comprises of productive land or paddy field. Rest one third of land is bushy, shrubby and forest type where no cultivation can be done.

With very less mass of land holding it is obvious that it becomes very hard to fulfill their food requirement. None of the households was found to produce ample amount of food grains required for the family throughout the year. Two fifth of the households have to rely totally on other income sources to fulfill their food requirement as 40 percent of HHs are unable to manage the production sufficient for even a single month. 52.5 percent of households are able to produce food enough for one to three months and only 7.5 percent HHs are having production adequate for four to six months. The following table shows the details.

Table 5.3: Food Sufficiency

S. N	Food Sufficient For	No of Households	Percentage
1	No or Less than 1 Month	16	40
2	1 Month	9	22.5
3	2 Months	9	22.5
4	3 Months	3	7.5
5	4-6 Months	3	7.5
6	More than 6 months	0	0
	Total	40	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

5.1.3 Livestock Rearing

Table 5.4: Status of Livestock Rearing

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Buffalo	29	14.80
2	Cow	5	2.55
3	Ox	6	3.06
4	Goat	96	48.98
5	Hen/Cock	57	29.08
6	Pig	3	1.53
	Total	196	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

Due to lack of abundant space, land and private vegetation cattle rearing is not that much up to the level of anticipation but also significant numbers of cattle are raised in the study area. Cattle rearing were dominated with the number of goat which comprises just under 50 percent of all cattle holding. Though commercial poultry farm was not witnessed, lots of households were found to be interested in hen/cock rearing which covered about 29 percent of livestock population. Ox and cows were raised in nominal numbers whereas

the custom of rearing pigs in *Dalit* community almost looks to be swabbing out as only about 1.5 percent of livestock population was covered by it.

5.1.4 Residential Status

Most of the members of the family are residing in the village (about 86%). Just only about 5 percent of the total population is living in the other cities of the country but remarkably in the circumstances about 9 percent of the total population is staying in other countries. Most of those have gone to countries like India, Malaysia and the Arabian countries to work.

Table5.5: Residential Status

Status	No. of Population	Percentage
Home	221	86.00
Other Cities	13	5.05
Other Countries	23	8.95
Total	257	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

5.1.5 Occupational Status

Occupation has been evaluated taking an account of the economically active part of population (i.e. between the ages 16-59); students are not incorporated in this analysis of occupation distribution. A large number of populations (about 49%) have adopted labouring as their occupation. The labour work mainly constitutes the ploughing, digging and planting in the land of other landlords' as well as burden physical works like breaking stones, carry works, chopping woods etc. Since the land owning of the *Dalit* people is very low, the people engaged in their own farming is very stumpy in respect to the country's scenario as only about 13 percent people are engaged in farming. Outstandingly about 15 percent of the people have gone abroad for earning purpose. There are still a significant number of populations (about 10%) who are following their traditional occupations like sewing, cobbler works and iron works done by Damai, Sarki and Kami respectively. A miserable (about 3%) of the population above 16 years is found to be continuing their studies and only a single person among the members of the

respondent was found to be joining the government job, which is in the Armed Police. But significantly about 10 percent were involved in business works which mainly constituted of cloth shop, vegetable and fruit business etc.

Table 5.6: Occupational Distribution

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Farming	20	12.99
2	Labour	75	48.70
3	Student	5	3.25
4	Traditional Occupation	15	9.74
5	Business	15	9.74
6	Abroad Work	23	14.94
7	Army/Police	1	0.65
	Total	154	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

5.1.6 Household Luxuries

Though radio, television and computers have been the fundamental stuffs in the urban areas and for so called upper caste people, these above mentioned materials are still as luxurious goods for the *Dalits* of the study area.

Table 5.7: Household Luxuries

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Radio	6	15.00
2	B/W TV	11	27.50
3	Color TV	6	15.00
4	Both TV & Radio	3	7.50
5	Nothing	14	35.00
	Total	40	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

In this age of world globalization where media have dominated the whole world, still over one third (35%) of the households of the study area are lacking from any sort of media assets. About 15 percent of households own radio in their house but television was found the most popular in the area as about 27 percent of households own B/W Television and 15 percent of households owning the color Television. There were only about 7.5 percent households owning both Television and the Radio.

5.1.7 Type of House

Of the forty sampled houses only 2 houses (5%) of houses are cemented houses. The most widely found type of house was the Brick and Mud house with either stone roof or Tin roof or sometimes hay roof which comprised of about two third (67.5%) of the sampled houses. About 27.5 percent of households are residing in a hay and mud hut made up of bamboo cuttings' wall and roof of hay or grasses.

Table 5.8: Type of House

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Cemented	2	5.00
2	Brick & Mud	27	67.50
3	Hay & Mud Hut	11	27.50
	Total	40	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

5.1.8 Family Size

From the study of the sampled households it was recorded that the average members in the family fall somewhere in between 6 to 7 members. And obviously the family having 6 to 7 members dominated the family composition by holding 42.5% of the family size. Similarly small family constituting up to 5 members was found to be 27.5 percent and comparatively large type of family constituting over 8 members in the family occupied about 30%.

Table 5.9: Distribution of Family Size

S. N	Family Size	Number of HHs	Percentage
1	Up to 5 members	11	27.50
2	6-7 Members	17	42.50
3	8 or Above Members	12	30.00
	Total	40	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

5.1.9 Toilet Management

There is a well known saying that, if character is lost everything is lost, if health is lost something is lost and if money is lost nothing is lost. This statement well suggests that health has a pretty good importance in one's life as health is the basic factor required for a prosperous life. The elucidation of human excreta in proper manner is always related with the health and hygienic aspect. So toilet is a must in anybody's house in every corner of this world but still about 30 percent of the HHs in the study area lack any sort of toilet is which really a very humiliating factor. About 57.5 percent of the households have a temporary type of toilet whereas just only 12.5 percent have constructed a permanent toilet. Among the ones without having toilet the majority said that they go to nearby jungle early in the morning for toilet purpose whereas they use the back side of their house for short toilet (urinating). The evidences of human fasces seen nearby on the road side to the study area also suggested the researcher that they use the sides of streets as well for toilet purpose.

Table 5.10: Toilet Management

S. N	Toilet	Number	Percentage
1	Permanent	5	12.50
2	Temporary	23	57.50
3	No Toilet	12	30.00
	Total	40	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

5.2 Educational Status

5.2.1 Literacy Level

Coming across the literacy level of the whole country which is 54.1 percent (CBS 2001) the district holds much greater literacy level, which is 65percent. Furthermore taking in account of the district's literacy rate, the VDC holds a pride of getting way forward in this aspect with the VDC literacy rate being 74.2 percent. While studying the literacy rate of *Dalits*, about 32 percent among the total households were found to be totally illiterate. Among the sampled households, 14percent were just literate, who are just able to read and write. The majority of the number (about 36%) comprised of the literates who have achieved only the primary level of education i.e. from class 1 to 5. About 24 percent of the household members have achieved the secondary level of education (class 6 to 10), whereas only about 1.2 percent of the household members share the pride of having SLC degree or above. The members of the households of the age of six or above are taken in the account in this segment.

Table 5.11: Literacy level

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Literate	14	5.98
2	Primary Level	85	36.32
3	Secondary level	57	24.36
4	SLC or Above	3	1.28
5	Illiterate	75	32.05
	Total	234	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

Note: 23 members below 6 years

Though the literacy level sounds very good, the actual level is not really as the statistics illustrates as the degree of awareness was found poor. The majority of the literate personals acquire only just primary level of education and furthermore majority of this part also consists among having studied class 1, 2 or 3. On the other hand the highest level of education amongst the literates is also not that high.

5.2.2 Objective of Educating Children

Based on the fact that education is the only means that can assure the better future of today's human being in every corner of the world, the questions were asked relating to that factor. Similarly the stories of people from low level being cheated are very common in our rural areas, as well as unsocial behaviors due to lack of education in our backward society is also a burning issue, so these factors were given the emphasis while querying the households. Though the household sampled only consists of 40, the answers regarding to this topic were more than that and the universe in this topic has increased to 50 and the data is analyzed likewise.

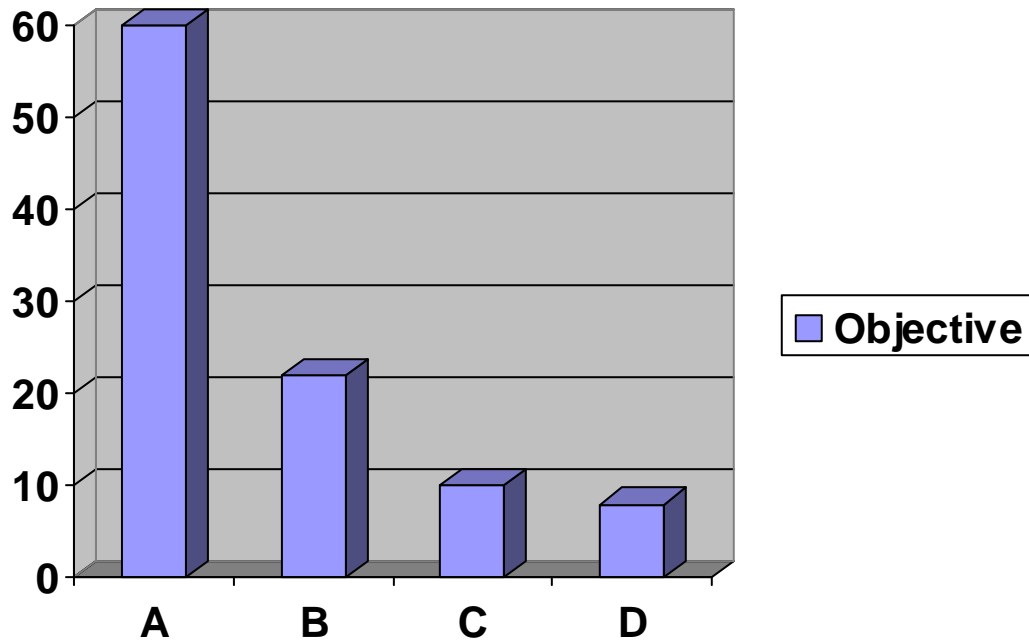
Of the total answers acknowledged the majority (about 60%) supposed that the main objective of education could be to secure the future of the children. They believed that if children are educated they will have ample opportunities to earn their living. Whereas about 22 % supposed that educated person cannot be cheated and the cheating they had to face won't continue in their children's life. Ten percent of sampled answers signified that educated people are more social. While about eight percent of the households gave some other reasons for educating their children.

Table 5.12: Objectives of Educating Children

S. N	Reason	Number	Percentage
1	To Secure their Future	30	60.00
2	Least chance of getting cheated	11	22.00
3	Educated people are Social	5	10.00
4	Others	4	8.00
	Total	50	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

Figure 5.1: Objectives of Educating Children



A = To secure Future

B = Least chance of getting cheated

C = Educated people are social

D = Others

5.2.3 Girls Education:

There is a famous African proverb with respect to women's education which states that

If you educate a man, you educate a person,

But if you educate a woman, you educate a family

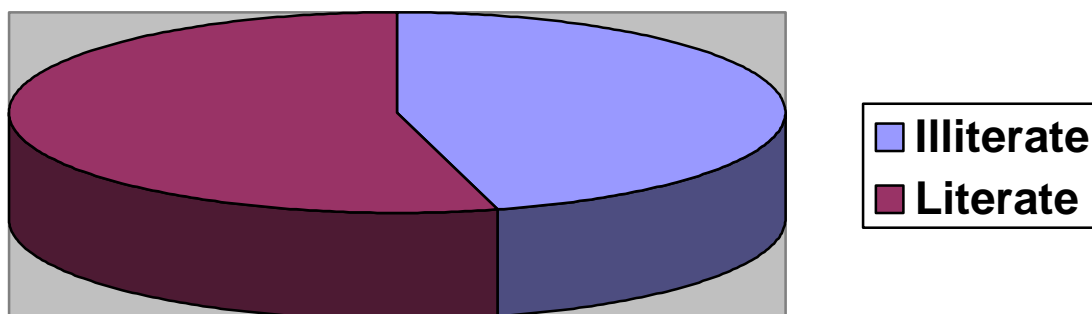
This ancient wisdom of importance of educating girls has been increasingly acknowledged in recent times. Experiences of many countries around the world have demonstrated that investment in education, especially of girls and women, is the most precious investment a society can ever make, and that no society has ever liberated itself economically, politically, or socially without a sound base of educated women.

Table 5.13: Girls literacy level

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Illiterates	45	45.92
2	Literate	53	54.08
	Total	98	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

Figure 5.2: Girls literacy level



The literacy percentage of the women's of the study was found outstandingly higher than the national female literacy rate as it was about 54 percent in comparison to national rate of 42.8 percent. Though the women's literacy rate seems good, the actual level of knowledge found on the field is quite different and the statistics does not actually resemble the real educational status of the women of study area. The highest level achieved by women was only up to class 8 and most part of the women stated in above data are the ones whose study hovers around class 1,2 or 3. Only the accounts of women 6 or above years are taken in the above statistics.

5.2.4 Opinion towards Girls' Education

It was great to witness the best of awareness about the girl's education in the study area. About the questions on the importance of educating girls, most of the respondents (about 65%) deliberated that girls should get equal study opportunities as boys. Twenty percent of households were in favor of educating their girls just up to the reading and writing level. A slim two percent of the households were against the girl's education as they said that girls are the gift for others so it is useless to educate girls under the poor economic situation. About 4 percent gave other opinions about the girl's education.

Table 5.14: Vision towards Girls' Education

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Should get equal opportunities as Boys	26	65.00
2	Get education just up to reading & writing level	8	20.00
3	Useless to educate them	2	5.00
4	Others	4	10.00
	Total	40	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

5.2.5 Regularity to Schools/Colleges

Education is not only admitting children to Institutions and appearing the examination but it is moreover attending the classes regularly so that children will not miss any important lessons.

Table 5.15: Regularity to Schools/Colleges

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Regular	23	65.71
2	Irregular	12	34.29
	Total	35	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

Among the 40 sampled households only the children from 35 households are attending School currently. Out of those 35 households about 66% (23 HHs) of the households are sending their children regularly to the school whereas the rest of about 34 percent (12

HHs) households are unable to send their children regularly to the school because of some different reasons.

5.2.5.1 Reasons for Regularity

The reason to send the pupils regularly to the schools were asked to regular school senders and possible reasons that may force to send children regularly to schools were asked with irregular senders as well. The answers were more than the households, so here the Universe has been taken as the number of reasons noted which summed to 60.

Table 5.16: Reasons for Regularity

S. N	Reason	Number	Percentage
1	Social pressure	21	35.00
2	Children's Willingness	11	18.33
3	Study is Basic Element of Self Development	22	36.67
4	Others	6	10.00
	Total	60	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

Among the 60 answers 35 percent supposed the social pressure being the most important factor to send children regularly whereas a bit more than that (about 36%) believed that; as study is the basic element of self as well as social development, the children should be sent to schools regularly. Amazingly 11percent answers said that they are sending their children regularly due to their children's own willingness, which really a noteworthy point. 10 percent of the respondents gave some other answers.

5.2.5.2 Reasons for Irregularity

As in the previous case all households were queried about or about likely causes for not sending the children regularly to schools. The answers here also were more than the number of households.

Table 5.17: Reasons for Irregularity

S. N	Reason	Number	Percentage
1	Work pressure	7	12.07
2	Lack of awareness in Parents	15	25.86
3	Weak economic condition	25	43.10
4	Child's unwillingness	6	10.34
5	No hindrance	5	8.62
	Total	58	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006

The main factor to hindrance the regularity of children education was no other than the poor economic condition which comprised about 43 percent of the total answers. It also showed that about 26 percent of the reason is due to lack of awareness about children's education among the parents. 12 percent believed that the main factor is the excessive work load at home and 6 percent supposed that Child's unwillingness is another prime constraint for children's education regularity. Nevertheless there is some reason to cheer for as just about 9 percent said that there is no any obstacle or hindrance for their children's education.

5.2.6 Highest Level of Education of Households

It is an undoubted fact that an educated man can inspire more than any body to educate any other persons, so there is great essence of a motivator in the household to act as a catalyst towards education. So it would be a great plus point if any member of the family has higher degree of education. But the scenario of the study area is quite different. Though the literacy level looks very sound the highest level of education achieved is not that much illustrative. Majority of the households have their highest level of education up to the primary level only which comprises of the 52.5 percent of total households. About 27.5 percent of the households have lower secondary level of education as their highest level of education. There are only 7.5 percent households with at least a secondary level educated person whereas only about 5 percent of the households share the pride of having

up to SLC or above SLC qualification. Furthermore 7.5 percent of households are totally illiterate, which really is a very disappointing aspect.

Table 5.18: Highest Level of Education of Household

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Primary	21	52.50
2	Lower Secondary	11	27.50
3	Secondary	3	7.50
4	SLC or Above	2	5.00
5	Totally Illiterate	3	7.50
	Total	40	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006

5.2.7 Availability of Stationery Goods

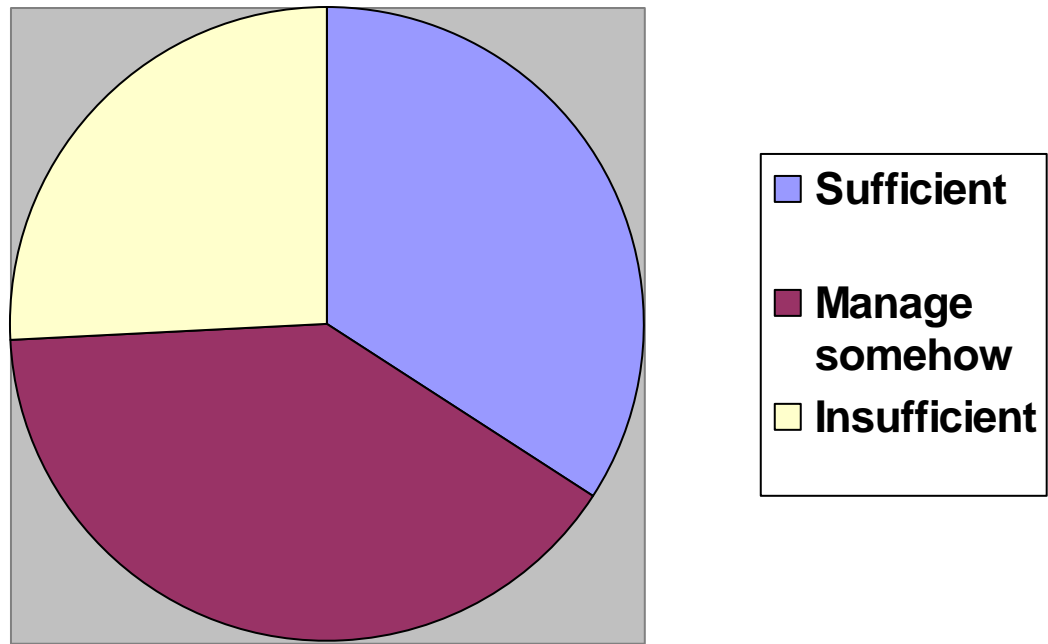
Just only admitting or sending children to the school do not exactly ensure better education. Students are also needed to be equipped with ample accessories required to read and write. So providing enough stationery goods is also another primary factor to assure the targeted education to the pupils. As there were only 35 households whose children are currently studying amongst 40 sampled households, the account of those 35 houses is taken. Among them children from about 34 percent of the houses are acquiring sufficient stationary goods. About 40 percent households are managing their children's stationary goods somehow though they are unable to manage completely. Disappointingly about 26 percent of the households are unable to provide enough stationary to their children.

Table 5.19: Availability of Stationary Goods

S. N	Stationary Goods	Number	Percentage
1	Sufficient	12	34.29
2	Somehow Managed	14	40.00
3	Insufficient	9	25.71
	Total	35	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006

Figure 5.3: Availability of Stationary Goods



5.2.8 Drop Out

One of the major constraints of the better education is the drop out of the children from the school in the very basic level. The same scenario exists in the study area as well.

Table 5.20: Drop Out Level

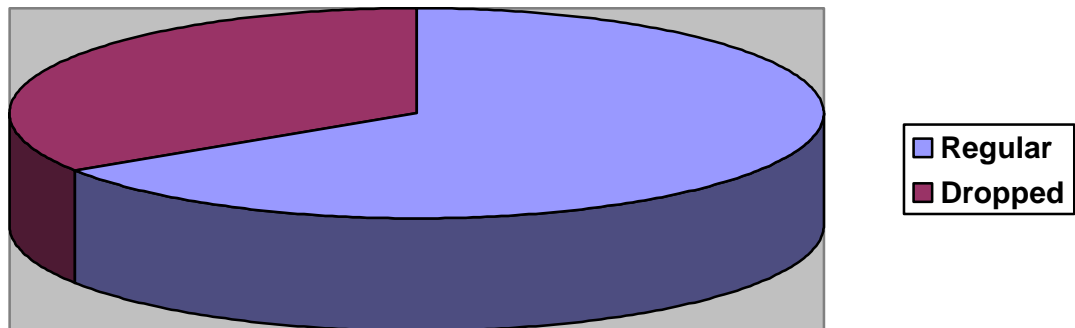
S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Regular	62	65.96
2	Dropped	32	34.04
	Total	94	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006

The age group under 20 years is taken in account for the study of drop out students. The drop out percentage of the study area was found to be about 34 percent, which really is very high number and only about 66 percent of the children under 20 years of age are regular. The more bitter fact was that the majority of the regular children are studying in

primary level only. So what was witnessed is that though the children were admitted to school initially, the continuation of their study used to be bunged very shortly.

Figure 5.4: Drop Out Level



5.2.8.1 Reason for Drop Out

On searching out the reason behind the drop out of the children from the schools, 32 answers were accumulated. The major reason behind the drop out was found to be the children’s self unwillingness, which comprised 36.6 percent of answers. About 30 percent of the parents have to drop their children because of poor economic condition as they couldn’t manage the expenses for the studies. Excessive work pressure on the other hand is forcing 26.67 percent of students to be dropped out, whereas about 6 percent gave the other answers. The data is illustrated in the following table.

Table 5.21: Reason for Drop Out

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	No more expenses for studies	9	30.00
2	Work pressure at home	8	26.67
3	Children's unwillingness	11	36.67
4	Others	2	6.67
	Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006

5.2.9 Study Assistance to Children

There is a popular saying that home is the first school, and the school is the second home for children, so guidance to the children at home is always a great boost towards better education. Among the 35 households who are sending children to schools, only about 8.75 percent used to encourage their children towards the studies. Similarly about 22.86 percent parents guide the children whereas only about 2.86 percent parents help their children's studies by creating free time for the studies. But a humiliating 65.71 percent of the parents do not assist or encourage their children by any means at home. The major reason behind it was, the parents being illiterate themselves. The other reasons were the negligence towards the children's studies and another factor being lack of time to care the children.

Table 5.22: Study Assistance to Children

S. N	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Encourage children	3	8.57
2	Guide children	8	22.86
3	Create free time for children to study	1	2.86
4	No help	23	65.71
5	Others	0	0
	Total	35	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006

5.2.10 Type of School

Realizing the poor economic condition of the *Dalits* of the study area it would be unlikely to expect them to admit their children to expensive private boarding schools but for the information the study was conducted and it was found that a great majority (about 94.2%) of the households send their children to government schools and rest 5.71 percent households are sending their children to private boarding schools.

Table 5.23: Type of School

S. N	School	Number	Percentage
1	Government	33	94.29
2	Private	2	5.71
	Total	35	100

Source: Field Survey, 2006

5.2.11 Adult Literacy

Adult literacy programme is really a great boon for those who are unable to read and write, which at least helps those to read letters/newspapers and write. Adult literacy programme was run in different sectors of the study area as well in the past years, though it is off now. Many people were benefited from those classes and the *Dalits* of the study area are also among the beneficiaries. About 35 percent households had taken adult literacy class whereas rest of the 65% didn't attend it.

Table 5.24: Participation in Adult Literacy Class

S. N	Adult Education	Number	Percentage
1	Taken	14	35.00
2	Not Taken	26	65.00
	Total	40	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2006

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Summary

Though Nepal is a small country, it is an encompassment of colorful ethnic groups and communities; simply Nepal is a diverse and heterogeneous. Despite the fact that Nepal is gifted with phenomenal natural beauty and a diversity of ethnic groups believed to be residing in a great transaction of harmony, it 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 the state and society. *Dalits* as a whole holds the identity of representing the poorest and back ward community in the Nepalese society.

Education has always been the indispensable means to uplift the any disadvantaged groups but the real educational story of the *Dalits* has always been very wretched. So the assurance of a better education opportunity will definitely help to uplift the *Dalits*.

There are 195 *Dalit* households in Gaunshahar VDC where 40 households were sampled. Majority of the respondents are found to be staying in a nuclear family with an average family size of 6.4 persons. Among the total sampled *Dalits*, young population comprises of 48.64 percent and the rest of 51.36 percent population is of economically active and no one above 60 years of age was found.

The size of landholding of *Dalits* is small. Landlessness is acute among the various *Dalit* groups and this is more so among the study area *Dalits*, as the average landholding is just about 2 ropanies per household. Only 20 percent houses hold land up to 5 ropanies or more. Similarly 50 percent households own land ranging from 2 to 4 ropanies whereas 15 percent are landless and the remaining 15 percent hold just about 1 ropani or less land.

Study has found that almost half of *Dalits* populations have food deficiency and a significant portion of these groups of people produced food grains sufficient only for less

than three months in a year. None of the sampled households are able to produce sufficient food for the whole year. 40 percent of households produce food sufficient for one or less than one month, inclusive of no food producing HHs. 45 percent households satisfy their food needs only for 1 to 2 months. Similarly 7.5 percent of the total households have food sufficient (produced from their own land) for up to 3 months and the same 7.5 percent satisfy their food need up to 6 months.

They live in substandard and far below the marginal conditioned houses and only about 5 percent of *Dalits* families had owned the cemented house whereas 67.5 percent live in brick and mud house and rest of 27.5 percent live in hay and mud house. The mean annual income of *Dalits* is lowest, their expenditure on clothing, education and medicine are found to be lowest. Just only two households among the sampled houses were found to be saving some amount of money from their expenditure.

A large majority of *Dalits* depend upon agriculture. Non-agricultural activity is limited. Moreover the agriculture is in form of labour in landlords' field as they lack their own land. So the main economic activity of majority of *Dalits* is wage labour which comprises the 48.7 percent of the occupational categories. The caste-based traditional and occupational works (such as black-smithy, leatherwork and tailoring etc.) have been simultaneously substituted by the availability of modern ready-made materials as just only about 9.7 percent of the people were found to be enduring their traditional occupations. There are no efforts to explore market to support their traditional skills. They are bound to depend upon the so-called high caste and Janjati families for survival by making annual contract of their services in the form of traditional bali or khan system with low bargaining power. Still the tradition of acquiring family tailor, family blacksmith is prevailing in the study area and reserving the tail part of goat for tailor, neck part of goat for blacksmith in Dashain is a mere representation of the fact.

The life expectancy of *Dalits* is much lower (53.8 years) than the national average (62.2 years), as a fact nobody above 60 years of age was found in whole the sampled households. Infant mortality is much higher compared to the national average. Nutritional

status of both the male and female is poor and many *Dalit* women are suffering from a number of diseases, including the sexually transmitted diseases. Still about 30 percent of the *Dalits* of study area are without toilet and majorities (57.5 percent) have temporary toilets. The Human Development Index of *Dalits* populations as a whole is lowest compared to the national average.

The political participation of *Dalits* population as a whole is low. Their representation at the Village, District and the National level government is rather insignificant compared to their population size. Only a single member among the sampled house was noted to have represented as a political position holder once in history.

Coming to the education the literacy rate looks quite sound as the study area comprised of about 68 percent of literate people where about 36.2 percent have acquired only the primary education, about 24.3 percent secondary education and only about 1.2 percent above SLC level. Among the 40 households, there are 35 households who have children and have admitted them to the Schools. Among them 65.7 percent HHs send their children regularly to schools whereas rest of 34.3 percent are irregular. 35 percent of HHs send their children to school because of social while 36.6 percent send realizing that education is the basic element of self development. And among the irregular senders 43.1 percent of reason is because of poor economic condition and 25.8 percent due to the lack of awareness in the parents. Regarding the objective of education 60 percent of households argued that education can secure the future of their children so that they are sending their children to School.

The drop out of students is the major problem of education in the study area as about 32 percent of the likely students are dropped and the most been dropped in lower grades. About 36.6 percent reason was the child's self unwillingness, whereas 30 percent had no more expenses for the continuation of their children's education and 26.6 percent don't have time because of excessive work pressure at home.

Providing enough stationary goods is a primary factor to assure the targeted education to the pupils. Among the regular students only 34.3 percent were able to receive sufficient stationary goods. 40 percent were managing anyhow their stationeries whereas rest of 25.7 percent is deprived from sufficient stationary goods. On the subject, to assist children 65.71 percent use not to assist for their children in studies by any means, whereas only 22.8 percent use to guide their children. Of the total only 5.7 percent are studying in private boarding school and rest of 94.3 percent are studying in government or community run schools.

Concerning the girls' education 65 percent believed that girls should get equal study opportunities as the boys. Among the women, about 54 percent of the women population was found to be literate. Similarly members from 35 percent households were noted to be taken the adult literacy classes.

6.2 Conclusion

The study was carried out in the Gaunshahar VDC of Lamjung district with the major objective of studying the educational status of the *Dalit* community and secondarily the study was also carried out to portray the other social and economical status of that community. The conclusions drawn from the study are recapitulated below.

- The literacy level of the *Dalits* of study area was found quite gleaming statistically but the actual level of knowledge and consciousness was very poor in terms.
- The educational level of the above stated literates of the study area was dominantly hovering around class 1, 2 and 3 and the highest level of education attained by the *Dalit* community was not that high as well.
- The prospect towards the education among the *Dalit* households was found quite encouraging and their attitude towards education very positive.
- The main objective to send the children to the school was with the view that the future of those children will be very much secure through education.
- Though most of the members had been admitted to school at times, they had to leave the studies because of economic problem and other constraints and the

regularity was also the main concern where poor economic condition played a major role.

- It is observed that the schooling facilities are not being fully used by parents as, though the children are enrolled; they are dropped very shortly in many cases due to economical and social reasons.
- Among the community, child labour is used extensively in agricultural and household activities which are hindering the *Dalits* education.
- The female literacy rate is also found to be quite adorable but the level of education in this case also being much poorer.
- The attitude towards girls' education was found on high but the application didn't justify that great attitude and the girls were found to be dropped very quickly from the schools.
- The study environment around the community was found horribly vulnerable. Parents were found very less concerned in home guidance of children and were found preferring to be helped in household works.
- The language used by children and parents as well was so dishonorable and hard to digest for normal people in most of the conditions. Politeness among themselves was very rare.
- The concern over health and hygiene was very underprivileged due to lack of education. Spots of human faeces were all round the way of the community, which reflects the figure of barbarism.
- *Dalits* have been relegated to do caste-based work as black/goldsmith, tailors, shoemakers and street cleaners, all are considered of low social status. Poverty and lack of other means of livelihood force the *Dalits* to continue their traditional occupations *Dalits* who are able to get a wage-earning job suffer from unfair wage system. They get much less than their non-*Dalit* counterparts.

Last but not least the *Dalit* problem cannot be resolved overnight. Its solution requires a combination of action on the part of the *Dalit* communities, the government, and the political parties. The *Dalit* issues should now be treated as political issues that deserve the attention of government bureaucrats and politicians. Laws against the discrimination

of the *Dalits* should be properly enforced, and government programmes for uplifting the economic and social status of the *Dalits* should be fully implemented with the assurance of a better education to all *Dalits*.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, following recommendations are made:

- Educational enhancement among *Dalits* is essential to change the attitudes and behavior within *Dalits* themselves and to bring change in the inter-community culture. The prevailing caste-based discrimination is to be mitigated by governmental and non-governmental means. The enforcement of law is to be made effective.
- Most of *Dalits* do not exactly know the importance of education. So there should be special kind of incentive to the children of this community for education. And a regular class for 'adult education' is required to conduct which will be prove to be a one step push forward for the adult of this community. That will give the incentive to their young children as well.
- The stationary goods as well as dresses for poor and *Dalit* students should be provided in order to encourage them towards education.
- The major strategy should be focused to improve the level of education of *Dalits* through various measures as enrolment, scholarships, fellowships, focus on vocational education and training, recruitment of *Dalits* teacher in every school, removal of discriminatory languages against *Dalits* in textbooks, and emphasis of *Dalits* women in health related education
- They spend their major source of earning on the feasts and drinking alcohol. Therefore, the awareness about the demerits of such bad habits should be thrown to them through education.
- They were not trained with any vocational guidance. So proper training for mobilization of internal resources as well as training about the improvement and implication of their indigenous knowledge is required.
- They are less conscious on development and politics. Thus, it is necessary to motivate *Dalits* to take part in local politics.

- The existing caste- based discrimination must be gradually eliminated by enforcing and implementing legal provisions and encouraging ‘live-together model” between *Dalits* and non- *Dalit* groups. Many taboos in practice must not be continued.
- Acceptance of food and drinks, protection of couple in case of inter-caste marriage, participation of *Dalits* and non-*Dalits* in national functions and treatment of inferiority syndrome among *Dalits* are required.

6.3.1 Recommendation for Further Studies

- The hygiene condition was found to be very poor, so it is felt necessary to study the hygienic status of Dalits, including sanitation and sewage management.
- The language used by Dalits was found very horrible and the way of behaving very disrespectful, so a study of their behavioral activities is felt essential.