

ELITES TO PAUPERS: TURNING POINTS IN EDUCATION

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This thesis is submitted to the Tribhuvan University  
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## Acceptance and Recommendation

The undersigned certify that we have read, approved, and recommended to the Faculty of Education, Tribhuvan University for acceptance, a thesis entitled ELITES TO PAUPERS: TURNING POINTS IN EDUCATION submitted by Ishwari Prasad Regmi in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION WITH SPECIALIZATION IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES.

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## Abstract

In the name of *Durbar School* (DS), the first modern school was established by Jung Bahadur Rana in 1854 A.D. in Kathmandu. In the beginning, only elites were allowed to study in DS, but in the course of time, it has witnessed turning points, and now the same school with the name- *Bhanu Madhyamik Bidhayalaya* is still running at the west side of *Rani Pokhari*. Unlike in the past, now children of people living in very marginalized situation i.e. paupers are studying in DS with a hope of success in the future. While observing these contexts - 'Turning Points in Education' as they are reflected in the case study of DS. I started this study, in order to understand how these turning points in education and the people who are living in very marginalized situation interplay with each other and again the situation is turning to miss the points of social justice and equal opportunities. Hence, this study shed light on diverse experiences of and responses to schooling as seen from the view of actors in students, teachers, parents and footpath *pasale* in and around DS.

Following the brief discussion of local cosmology of schooling, the study turns to the elite formation in Modern Nepal and making elites linkages with DS, which was the primary research unit. Information was then gathered, mainly based on the qualitative design of research, by using questionnaire based survey form, FGD, individual interview, life stories, NGD, participant observation, and I took this study as a mosaic of learning, a pattern produced by text posing events in the history of Nepal and making their linkages with the present context of DS in Kathmandu. While making such an exploration superunknowns and empirical heuristics in educational research are also considered.



It is apparent that turning points have occurred in education in Nepal and these turning points also sneaked up on the paupers life and taking schooling as a means for their prosperous future life. But in the school context, there are many turning points including missed turning points which could be witnessed and must be retraced back. Beyond these, the power of education and knowledge of English is primarily underpinning in Nepali school. In this respect, this study throws light on the 'Turning Points in Education' as a new discourse in Nepal.

Further, this study explores on the multiple aspects of turning points around the issue of paupers schooling. The dynamic interplay between *Durbar School*, inner-city context and pauper's subjective experiences have been in the foreground, empirically and analytically, and has motivated me to look at the 'Turning Points in Education' as a new discourse. In order to establish an understanding of the turning points in education, I have used an analytical framework that builds on three major theoretical constructs. The first is the work of Bourdieu on the role of schooling in social and cultural reproduction and second, agency and structure of Anthony Giddens and cultural production of Skinner and Holland to unfold the social realities in and around DS in Kathmandu. Finally the notion of power/knowledge by Michael Foucault to understand the social facts and people's practices. Besides these I have used the notion of rebirth and *Dharma* from *Gita* to understand the serving nature of DS in the past and in the present.

This study shows that children living in other's houses as domestic workers are not only poor from economic points of view but they face multiple difficulties at home and school. This infers that paupers have to bear double and greater burden of marginalization and stigmatization. This sort of double victimization of the paupers in

Nepali society is contributing to witness missed turning points in education. First school seems to promise anticipated turning points in pauper's life but at the same time it becomes missed turning points for the paupers and school contributes to the reproduction of social inequalities. Second the discourse of education in Nepal is found ever changing in nature, slowly the trends are shifting, paupers voices are being heard in school setting. Within in these context, the agentic nature of DS and knowledgeability and capability of the students are analysed and interpreted based on the theoretical constructs; agency-structure developed by Anthony Giddens, cultural production propounded by Skinner and Holland, and 'rebirth' from *Bhagwat Gita*. Third, schooling itself being a complex process, I intend to go beyond the agency and structure, to understand turning point in education as a new discourse. So, I have applied the terms power/ knowledge developed by Foucault, as an abstract force which determines what will be known, rather than assuming that elites develop ideas and knowledge to dominate the paupers in the society. This study also reveals that children studying in DS had given more value to education specially English education. This conjuncture of power and knowledge on English education has created great difficulties. The power of education and knowledge of English is underpinning in Nepali school. Nevertheless, there are many unresolved issues and challenges in the field of education which could be understood from other theoretical and empirical understanding, with that respect this study could be challenged. However this study also turned to the current school system which requires certain readjustment and transformations in order to make useful for the paupers in Nepal.

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## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

AD	:	Anno Domini
ASI	:	Assistant Sub Inspector
B.Ed.	:	Bachelor of Education
B.Sc.	:	Bachelor of Science
CERID	:	Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development
D.H.S.	:	Durbar High School
DOE	:	Department of Education
DS	:	Durbar School (Palace school)
EFA	:	Education For All
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
FOE	:	Faculty of Education
FT	:	Female Teacher
HMG/N	:	His Majesty's Government of Nepal (Now, Government of Nepal)
I.A.	:	Intermediate of Arts
I.Sc.	:	Intermediate of Science
IGES	:	Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
INGO	:	International Non-Governmental Organization
INGOs	:	International Non-Governmental Organizations
KU	:	Kathmandu University
M.Ed.	:	Master's Degree in Education
M.Phil	:	Master of Philosophy

M.T.	:	Male Teacher
MOES	:	Ministry of Education and Sports
NBT	:	National Book Trust
NC	:	Nepali Congress
NCERT	:	National Council for Education Research and Training (India)
NESP	:	National Education System Plan
NGD	:	Natural Group Discussions
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organization
Ph.D.	:	Doctor of Philosophy
RNA	:	Royal Nepal Academy (Now Nepal Academy)
RQ	:	Research Question
SLC	:	School Leaving Certificate
SMC	:	School Management Committee
TP	:	Turning Point
TU	:	Tribhuvan University
UGC	:	University Grants Commission
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA	:	United States of America
V.S./B.S.	:	Vikram Sambat/ Bikram Sambat (Nepali Calendar)
VCDP	:	Vulnerable Community Development Plan
VDC	:	Village Development Committee

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