

DALIT GIRL'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS DISCRIMINATION

BY
LALITA AWASTHI

This thesis is submitted to the Tribhuvan University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
The Master of Philosophy in Education.

January, 2008

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted for the candidature for any other degree.

I understand that my thesis will become a part of permanent collection of Tribhuvan University Library. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any readers upon request.

Lalita Awasthi

14th January, 2008

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 DALIT GIRL'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS DISCRIMINATION submitted by Lalita Awasthi in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION WITH SPECIALIZATION IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES.

Prof. Bidya Nath Koirala, Ph. D.
Thesis Supervisor

Dr. Anjana Bhattarai
External Examiner

Dr. Madan Prasad Pariyar
External Examiner

Prof. Jai Raj Awasthi Ph. D.
Member of the Research Committee

Dr. Chandreshwor Mishra
Member of the Research Committee

Date: 14th January, 2008

Acknowledgement

Bearing in mind the Chinese saying “a journey of a thousand miles starts with the first step”, I undertook this step. Though this step has not let the destination but it has tried to unfold out the issues of Dalit girls to some extent.

It has been a great pleasure and a new experience in my life to complete this thesis with the help of several people- teachers, friends, family, and faculty members. It has added a new chapter in my life.

I am indebted to my respected advisor Prof. Bidya N. Koirala for his ideas, constructive suggestions and assistance for improving the text. He has indefatigably and cheerfully helped me at various stages, and, this work would definitely remain unaccomplished without his kind and wholehearted co-operation coupled with genuine understanding and round the clock support. Therefore, I owe him a debt of gratitude for his contribution with valuable time, comments and information.

I would fail in my duty if I do not express my gratitude to Dr Anjana Bhattari and Dr. Madan Prasad Pariyar, who read the draft dissertation thoroughly and provided me feedback and valuable suggestions with constructive comments, which helped me clarify some of the subject matter.

I would like to express my thanks to the members of the Research Committee Prof. Basu Dev Kafle and Prof. Jaya Raj Awasthi who have enriched my experience and knowledge in the subject through their cooperation, feedback, participation, curious queries, and attention.

I would also like to thank my all research participants, teachers and principal of Ratna Rajya Higher Secondary School for their co-operation.

I also wish to extend my thanks to all my friends especially Mr. Sharad Chandra Simkhada and Anju Khadka who has helped and encouraged me a lot to complete this work with in a limited time.

Last but not the least, I wish to express my thanks to my family for providing supportive environment and encouraging me to complete my thesis.

An Abstract of the Thesis

The study deals with Dalit women's perception regarding discrimination, especially, in Hindu society. The broad objective of the study was to find out the perception of Dalit girls that affect their participation in education. The overarching research question of this study was, "How has discriminatory practices influenced Dalit girls' access to education?"

I, as a researcher, reviewed the literature related to Women under Hinduism, Cultural perspective and Educational perspective. I used hermeneutics for the theoretical construct of this research.

I used case study as a research strategy for generating information and analyzed it using the philosophy of Husserl, Heidegger, and Gadamer. I used questionnaires, in-depth open-ended interviews and direct observation under this method. In order to guide myself I also developed schematic chart to dig out information for this study.

I found the forces that contributed to make up Dalit women's perception like culture, religion, social values and gender construct. I also interpreted the forces by using hermeneutic theory of Husserl, Heidegger and Gadamer.

I also explained about the relationship between perception and education of Dalit girl's with hermeneutics interpretation. I found the history and structure of society as the cause of their hindrance to education.

I presented the findings under different categories like findings generated from the literature, field, personal reflection, and Hermeneutical inquiry. In doing so, I tried to capture the forces that shaped and reshaped Dalit girls' perception towards discrimination in school.

Hermeneutics taught me that all meaning is context- dependent and therefore unstable. It also stated that culture could be created and recreated; implying that the culture, which is against Dalit women, could also be changed.

I realized that Dalit girls' perception towards education could be changed by introducing inclusive approach to teaching, and reorienting culturally socialized mindset. Lastly, I have concluded my thesis by saying that the discrimination started from the mind of people and spread to home school and community so the treatment should be started from the peoples' mind.

Library Release Form

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Name of the author | Lalita Awasthi |
| Degree | Master of Philosophy in Education |
| Year of this degree granted | 2008 |

Permission is hereby granted to Tribhuvan University to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves other publication and other rights in association with the copy right in the thesis, and except as herein before provided neither the thesis nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatever without the author's permission.

.....

Baneshwor, Ward No. 34
Kathmandu, Bagmati Zone, Nepal
Date 14th January, 2008

Table of Contents

| | Page |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| An Abstract of the Thesis..... | ii |
| Library Release Form..... | iv |
| Declaration..... | v |
| Acceptance and Recommendation..... | vi |
| Acknowledgement..... | vii |
| Content | ix |
| List of Appendices..... | xii |
| I. INTRODUCTION..... | 1-17 |
| Background of the study..... | 1 |
| Rationale of the study..... | 11 |
| Objectives of the study..... | 16 |
| Research Questions..... | 16 |
| Limitation | 17 |
| II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE..... | 18-37 |
| Women under Hinduism..... | 18 |
| Cultural Perspectives..... | 24 |
| Educational Perspectives..... | 27 |
| Theoretical Construct..... | 34 |
| III. METHODOLOGY..... | 38-48 |
| Data Source..... | 40 |

| | |
|---|-------|
| Tools and process of information generation..... | 40 |
| Case Study..... | 40 |
| In -depth interview..... | 42 |
| Observation..... | 43 |
| Research Design..... | 45 |
| Process, analysis and interpretation of Data and Information..... | 45 |
| Report writing..... | 46 |
| Ethical issues..... | 47 |
| IV. FORCES THAT MAKE UP DALIT WOMEN'S PERCEPTION..... | 49-67 |
| Culture as a force for the construction of Dalit women's perspective on discrimination..... | 54 |
| Religion as a force for the construction of Dalit women's perspective on discrimination..... | 57 |
| Economy as a force for the construction of Dalit women's perspective on discrimination..... | 60 |
| Social values as a force for the construction of Dalit women's perspective on Discrimination..... | 60 |
| Gender construct as a force for the construction of Dalit women's perspective on discrimination..... | 65 |
| V. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEPTION AND EDUCATION..... | 68-76 |
| VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION..... | 77-81 |
| Findings generated from the literature..... | 77 |
| Findings generated from the field..... | 77 |
| Findings generated from my reflection..... | 78 |

| | |
|---|-------|
| Findings generated from the literatures on Hermeneutical inquiry..... | 79 |
| Discussion..... | 79 |
| VII. CONCLUSION AND MEASURES TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION.... | 82-89 |
| Measures to inclusive education..... | 83 |
| Targeted program for inclusive education..... | 86 |
| Reorientation of the culturally socialized mindset..... | 87 |
| Change in the traditional occupation..... | 88 |
| REFERENCES..... | 90-96 |
| APPENDIX..... | 97 |

List of Appendices

| Appendix | Page |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| Appendix- I | Schematic chart..... 97 |