REASONS FOR GIRL'S DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL IN INARUWA MUNICIPALITY, SUNSARI

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Mrs. Priyanka Pritam has completed her dissertation entitled" **Reasons for Girl's Dropping Out of School in Inaruwa Municipality, Sunsari**" as a partial fulfillment of the requirements of Master Degree of Arts in Sociology under my guidance and supervision. I therefore, recommend this dissertation for final evaluation.

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LETTER OF APPROVAL

This dissertation entitled "**Reasons for Girl's Dropping Out of School in Inaruwa Municipality, Sunsari"** prepared and submitted by Mrs. Priyanka Pritam has been evaluated and accepted by the following evaluation committee as a requirement for the partial fulfillment of the requirements Master Degree of Arts in Sociology.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled "**Reasons for Girl's Dropping Out of School in Inaruwa Municipality, Sunsari"** submitted by me to the Central Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University, Nepal is an entirely original piece of research work prepared under the supervision and guidance of Prof Dr. Surendra Mishra. I have made due acknowledgments to all ideas and information borrowed from different sources in the course of writing this research paper. No part of the content of this dissertation has ever been published in any form anywhere. I am solely responsible if any evidence is found against my declaration.

………………..

Priyanka Pritam

April, 2021

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ABSTRACT

Dropping out of Girl's from school is one of the common problems in Nepal. Some attention has been directed at understanding how patriarchal socio-cultural practices influence the girls' attendance and why they don't complete their education in secondary education. This study attempts to explore the girls' experience and perception of factors influencing dropout of girls, including parents', teachers' views on it. This study identifies and discusses the factors leading the girls to discontinue their study and also focus on how patriarchal socio-cultural practices influence the girls' participation and drop out of the secondary education system. Qualitative approach research method has been used and collected data from both primary and secondary sources. Theoretically, the study encompasses four lenses of theories namely self- identity, social stigma, intersectionality and anti-oppressive practice basically focusing to empowerment approach.

The main findings of this study showed that the reasons for girls' school dropout is a complex phenomenon and is a result of interaction of structural, cultural, religious, social and economic factors.

In conclusion, almost all girls reported being interested in continuing school, but many factors combined to spell an end to their education and no girl returned after dropping out.

Key words: girls' secondary school attendance, affecting factors, gender inequality, intervention strategies

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in this project.

BAEP : Basic and Primary Education Project

BLE : Basic Level Examination

CERID : Centre for Educational Research, Innovation and Development

CIRID : Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

DEO : District Education Office

DoE : Department of Education

EFA : Education for All

GBD : Gender Based Discrimination

GNP : Gross National Product

GoN : Government of Nepal

GPI : Gender Parity Index

HIV : Human Immuno Deficiency Virus

HSEB : Higher Secondary Education Board

IRIN : Integrated Regional Information Networks

MDG : Millennium Development Goal

MOE : Ministry of Education

MoES : Ministry of Education and Sports

NEB : National Examination Board

NFE : Non-formal Education

NGO : Non-governmental Organization

NLSS : Nepal Living Standard Survey

NPC : National Planning Commission

OHCHR : Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

RD : Regional Directorates

SEE : Secondary Education Examination

SEN	:	Special Education Needs
UN	:	United Nations
UNAIDS	:	United Nations Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
UNDP	:	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	:	World Health Organization
WOREC	:	Women's Rehabilitation Centre

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Education is regarded as a prime mover for the socio-economic development of a country and accounts for as much as 20% of the annual Gross National Product (GNP) of developing nations (Alvares, Gillies, & Biadsher, 2008). This is considered so because education has been found to improve the productive value of human beings by imparting knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior traits referred to as human, social and cultural capital which are required in producing goods and services (Lazear, 2006). In addition to the productive value, education promotes harmonious co-existence, population control, healthy living, effective citizenship, nutritional adequacy and child upbringing. Education is a fundamental human right and also a catalyst for economic growth as well as human development. Globally, education has brought about high social rates of return which estimated to be 27% for completed primary education and 15-17% for secondary education. Correspondingly, private returns of education have been found to be significantly higher than social returns estimated at 49% for primary and 26% for secondary education. A report by UNESCO (2005), has shown that education is one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty, give people opportunity to improve their lives and raise their voice, improve their health, productivity and foster participation in civil society. Female education has been identified as more crucial for the advancement of a nation than just education in general (McMichael, 2004). It is now widely recognized that the social returns to female education greatly exceeds those of male education. This is because development cannot happen without the participation of women in society. Reports from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, the first three countries are the most populous in South Asia and home to the majority of out-of-school children in the region. The South Asia study and the country studies aim to understand the scale of the problem of exclusion of children in the four countries as well as in the region. Gender equality in education is directly proportional to gender equality in the labor force, in the household and in decision making. Educating female's lower mother and baby mortality rates generate higher educational attainment and achievement for next generations and improves economic conditions of nations (Schultz, 1993). In spite of

this realization female education is a crisis in Africa and world in general. A World Education Report research (1995) has shown a long standing imbalance in participation of formal education by women. The report stipulated that the literacy rate of the world's women (71.2 per cent) is significantly lower than that of men (83.6 per cent). Nearly two third of the world's illiterate adults are women (565 million), most of whom live in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

1.2 System of Education in Nepal

Education in Nepal has only recently started to develop. The Rana regime (1847-1950) has suppressed education so much that it was never encouraged in the country. Thus the modern school in Nepal began after the establishment of the first school in 1853 which was open only for the ruling families and their courtiers. This did not change until 1970s (CERID 1997; Bista 2001). After the popular revolution against the autocratic Rana regime in 1951, it was attempted to establish a national education system.

The majority of schools were built only in urban areas. So, if families wanted to educate their children they had to send them away to city area which was very expensive. Today most programs seem to integrate a literacy component which represents that the gender gap in school enrolment has declined and literacy programs are widespread in the country (Tuladhar, 2005).

The formal school system in Nepal officially spans a period of 12 years which is structured as: primary, secondary and higher secondary. Primary education in Nepal called Basic Education consists of grades one through eight. Secondary levels are grades nine and ten, and Higher Secondary Levels cover grades eleven and twelve. Pre-primary education is available in some areas, and students usually begin grade one at age five. A district level examination Basic Level Examination (BLE) is given on grade eight while a national Secondary Education Exam (SEE) examination is conducted at the end of grade 10, while completing the Grade 12 examination leads to the School Leaver's Certificate. The National Examinations Board (NEB) supervises all BLE, SEE. HSEB supervises 11th and 12th grade exams.

University education leads successfully to the degrees of bachelor, master and doctor (Ph.D). Depending upon the educational stream and degree subject, a bachelor's degree may require as much as three to five years of study, but two years is the typical duration. Some universities offer M.Phil. and post-graduate diplomas. Some universities offer M Phil and post-graduate diplomas. The higher education in the country like elsewhere is the sole responsibility of and administered by universities and institutions of higher learning. Currently, it has ten universities.

Nepal has legally a dualistic school system with both public and private schools. Education in private schools is expensive and typically affordable only by the higher class family. Most private schools have English as the language of instruction and many also use computers in the curriculum. The third type of school is a community school run (managed and supported) by the local people, which does not get the regular financial support from the government and also has no other sustainable financial sources.

Over all, the government controls the system of education and overview in all perspectives focusing on the quality. Thus, private schools, colleges, universities all have to be approved by the government.

Women's education in the country is disappointing. However, the following table on literacy shows a positive development from 1991 to 2011.

Table 1: Literacy Rate in Nepal in Different Census Years

Sex	1952/54	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Male	9.5	16.3	24.7	34.9	54.5	63.85	71.6
Female	0.7	1.8	3.7	11.5	25.0	38.7	44.5
Total	5.3	8.9	14.3	23.5	39.6	51.27	56.6

(Census Reports, Bureau of Statistics 2011)

According to UNESCO Institute for statistics (2002), literacy in the population from 15 years and above is 63% in 2005 and 67% in 2007. Similarly, Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS-III, 2010-11, shows that most recently Nepal has an adult literacy rate of 56.6% with a disparity between males and females, where the male literacy is 71.6% and female is only 44.5% with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) at 0.62

women lagging behind men by whopping 27%. In a sense, this is an impressive achievement. However, in Nepal, women's low participation in educational activities whether in the formal sector or in the non- formal sector is still striking. Also, the participation of girls in vocational, higher and technical education is very low where most of the dropouts occur during middle and high school level. Education is a key in the continued economic and social development of the country; Nepal has been making efforts to provide access to primary as well as secondary school to children through various programs in order to achieve the goal of

Education for All (EFA). Despite efforts such as literacy campaigns and free education for children, education is not accessible to all due to its indirect cost. Therefore, even basic education is still a privilege enjoyed only by a segment of population regardless of cost.

Almost 14% of children of primary school age are still not enrolled (GON, 2006).Thus the country is still facing the challenge to achieve EFA.

1.3 Factors responsible for school drop out

Dropping out of children from school has become a serious problem in many places around the world (Young & Chavez, 2002), especially in low income countries like Nepal. According to Lewin & Sabates (2012), although large number of children has started primary school than ever before, the rate at which children drop out from school had remained high in poorer countries. More than half of the children who start primary school do not complete the full cycle of education. Maton and Moore (2010) has shown the problem of dropping out should be the concern of every member of society since it has negative consequences at both the individual and social level. Thus dropout is not a mere problem that affects or impacts an individual but it is a problem that affects the entire community as it has been noticed that certain dropouts get involved in crime (Jamil, et al., 2010). Nepal is a primary example where large number of children dropout from schools due to poverty and social backwardness.

There are various factors responsible for the dropout of children from school. Sarkar (2004:12) classifies these factors into four categories which can be associated to the current dropout scenario of Nepal.

- Accessibility: the physical and social distance to school, social discrimination, the burden of household chores, and the burden faced by children combining work and schooling.

- Affordability: direct, indirect, and opportunity costs of schooling.

- Quality: lack of school infrastructure, facilities, materials, and support systems for children, inadequate conditions of work for teachers, low status, lack of adequate training leading to child friendly teaching methods, aids and teaching materials for teachers and his lack of sensitivity of education authorities and teachers to the needs of children at risk.

- Relevance: curriculum detached from local needs, values and the aspirations of children at risk, inadequate curriculum to prepare students for useful and gainful skilled employment.

Particularly, girls from rural areas in Nepal keep themselves engaging themselves in cooking food, cleaning utensils, collecting firewood, taking care of the younger ones besides farming seasons. During farming season, girls are engaged in agricultural activities inside or outside homes. Boys are largely involved in agricultural works like plugging fields and planting crops during farming seasons. Apart from this, they work as unskilled worker in hazardous condition as daily wage laborer. According to Groot (2007), severe poverty and the requirement of additional labor, is thus an important factor that keeps children out of school and pushes them into work. Therefore, most of the children who dropout from schools cannot enjoy their everyday life as opposed to the western notion of childhood which relates children everyday life experiences with play along with schooling.

A woman's life is greatly improved when she has an education by increasing her status in society and at home and also by increasing the opportunity of financial self-sufficiency. She also suggests that to improve women's lives, it is essential to understand why this gender discrimination prevails and why it substantiates the urgent need for policy makers to take education and literacy initiatives, especially for women. An essential part of human rights is gender equality. Nations values and it is every country's responsibility to protect the equal rights of men and women and to promote women's human rights (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High

Commissioner [OHCHR]). Since the Millennium Development Goals were agreed upon in 2000, true progress has been made towards women's empowerment and decreasing the gender inequality in the world but millions of girls and women continue to face the consequences of gender discrimination in every part of the world (United Nations [UN], Goal 5). They face policies and laws that prevent them from having the same rights as men gender-based violence, social and economic circumstances that diminishes the power that they have over their life and denied access to sexual and reproductive healthcare.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

The increasing attention has been given worldwide to decrease the gender inequality in education mainly in developing countries; however it does not seen to be improved in Nepal very much. The central aim of my study is to explore the girl's experiences and perceptions including parents, teachers and key person's opinions on their school discontinuation and gender difference in education influenced by the social context and cultural value by identifying and discussing the factors influencing gender differences in education. Also, it aims to provide some social implications on its intervention. For this purpose, the study offers an understanding of gender discrimination and a discussion of factors that causes gender differences in secondary school attendance. Some other empirically grounded question is formed below aiming to initiate the meaningful interview with informants and collect valid and reliable data as far as possible.

Research question:-
1. What are the factors influencing female dropout of school?
2. How do the girls experience of their school discontinuation?

1.5 Objective of the study

The general objective of this study is to find out the causes of dropout among girls in Bal Mandir secondary school.

The specific objectives are:-
- To explore the factors influencing female dropout of school.
- To analyze the girls experience of their school discontinuation.

1.6 Rationale of the study

Children school dropout has several negative impacts on society. Especially considering female school dropout has more impact on family as if a female is educated than she can help in uplifting education level of future generation as well.

To best of my knowledge, there was no similar study conducted in this region. This study was conducted to determine the average of female dropout, reasons of dropout and its consequences. It will help to explore children, parents and teachers perspectives. It will also help to explore what children are doing after dropout from school which will help to determine the indirect aspects of causes of dropout and how it affects children future and well-being. I have focused on the measures to be adapted to reduce the problem of dropout of female children from children's, parents and teachers perspective. Female children's , parents and teachers experiences and suggestion will help the government and policy maker to formulate and guide new policies and programs as well as proper implementation of currently running programs. My study will be helpful to see what is actually happening and what measures should be taken on the areas of female children and their schooling, especially in remote areas of Nepal.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This Thesis is organized in five chapters. The first chapter includes introduction, backgrounds, statement of the research problem, objective of the study, rationale of the study. The second chapter deals with literature review. It consists of the concept and definitions of sociology of education, gender differentials of dropout, gender related approach, concept of social exclusion and review of previous study.

The third chapter describes the research methodology used for the study. Under this chapter, research design, rational of the study area, nature and sources of data, universe and sample, Primary data collection are discussed. The fourth chapter describes analysis of the causes of dropout. Finally, the fifth chapter comprises the summary and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I have incorporated the review of the related research works and the explanation of differences among them and the proposed study including some of the background of the study.

2.1 Empirical review

2.1.1 Dropout Issue in General

Different research shows that education is a key contributor to economic growth in developing countries. According to IIASAs Policy Brief *Economic Growth in Developing Countries: Education Proves Key* (2008), better and higher education leads, not only to better health advantages and higher individual income, but also increases the long-term effects of human capital necessary to bring people out of extreme poverty. Education empowers people and benefits a country's economy and it should therefore have a significant role in international policymaking when planning towards a sustainable development. The world's poorest children's, especially girls', lack of education is one of the obstacles to development in their countries.

Investment in education, particularly in secondary education, is considered to be very important (IIASA, 2008). Ethiopian women who have some secondary education are 260 percent more likely to have access to antenatal care than those with no education, and an additional year of female education decreases the infant mortality by five percent. Mothers with at least five years of primary education are 40 percent more likely to have children who live five years or more, compared to those with no education (Sperling, 2005). Drèze and Murthi (2001) state in their article based on data from India that female literacy is highly significant and that it decreases the number of births per woman. This study also brings up the fact that son preferences keep up the level of fertility rates and that satisfaction with the surviving children regardless of their gender would reduce the incentives to have more children. As a consequence, educating more women should also researchers have found a gender bias, which occurs due to the different amount of money that parents are willing to spend on their sons and daughters education. This bias appears already at young ages

but gets stronger when the children transition to secondary school. Boys have a better chance of completing primary education than girls in many parts of the world, and more especially in developing countries (Azam and Kingdon, 2013).

2.1.2 Dropout Issue in South Asia

Education in India has been characterized by inequalities for a long time and even though the state policy was meant to ensure free and compulsory education for everyone, both enrolment and participation rates show that this has not been lived up to. The gender gap is an important part of the inequalities that have persisted since India became independent and the school statistics of girls still shows signs that this gender gap is present and that it gets larger the older the children get. It is obvious that religious, demographic, socio-cultural and economic factors play an important role in the educational opportunities of children and that the importance that parents attach to their children's education is gender specific in disfavor of the girls (Azim Premji Foundation, 2004). This gender gap has also been discussed by Sperling (2005), who claims that parents who decide whether the girls should go to school or not, do not understand the scope of the benefits of schooling for both the girls themselves and their country. Similarly study done by Kajisa and Palanichamy, based on farming households in Tamil Nadu, India, has found that until the late 1990s, the level of education of the adults in the household has a positive effect on children's education, but this relation has since then become weaker. However, a study of three Asian countries showed that the mother's education has a greater impact on the daughters than what the father's education has (Hill and King, 1995).

Gender is considered to be a significant predictor for enrolment. A study done in remote village of India, showed that 91 percent of boys and 86 percent of girls, between ages 10 and 13, have reported attending school while in the age group 14 to 17, the attending percentages are only 75 percent for boys and 38 percent for girls. As we can see, the educational improvements have mostly been at primary level and when girls make the transition to secondary school, the numbers drop. This can be explained by girls' domestic burden doing household chores and taking care of younger siblings, and also early marriages as a result of social norms and parents deciding about their life. This often does not allow girls to complete education higher

than primary or allowing them to think about making a career (Kelly and Bhabha, 2014).

Bose (2012) states that parents often do not educate their children unless it provides some financial return in the future. She demonstrates in her article that preference for sons over daughters leads to deep-rooted consequences. The article analyses why the crucial progress towards better education does not include daughters of the households. She has also shown that mothers are less likely to prevent daughters from attending school or to promote son preferences if they are educated themselves. Thus, mothers having son preferences is a significant factor affecting girls' education negatively compared to families where all children have equal rights and the same opportunities regardless of their gender.

Since education expenditures such as school fees, uniforms and textbooks are common even for publicly provided schooling, parents are put in a tough position when deciding which of the children to send to school. Parents in poor countries often decide to invest more in the sons' education to maximize the returns of the children's education. As result of cultural practices, such as the expectation of sons being financially supporting when the parents get old and the small advantages they would get from sending girls to school since they often get married and create their own family, the daughters education is valued less. The number of girls enrolled in school is less than boys at all levels of education and there are therefore much fewer literate adult women than men.

Sons have a superior position because they are seen as more valuable economic assets while the daughters' time have a higher opportunity cost since they work more at home. Another crucial factor contributing to the low education of girls is the early marriages that often take place in India. Prior to marriage, the family wants to protect the girl's purity and often impose restrictions on her movements. When she is married, the possible returns of her education would go into the husband's family and therefore mean no financial contribution to her family (Azim Premji Foundation, 2004).

In Pakistan where schools are generally segregated by gender, Ghuman and Lloyd (2007) describe a shortage of female teachers to teach girls, which would particularly

affect schools in rural areas. Research frequently cites the gendered curriculum and learning resources for example textbooks, which promote specific notions of 'femaleness' and 'maleness', which can shape how children identify themselves, their life chances and as such their educational prospects. Gendered practices within the classroom might include teachers encouraging/discouraging students according to gender, encouraging students to take on gendered tasks and roles within the classroom (Kane, 2004).

Furthermore, several researchers identify the relationship between poverty and dropouts (Birdsall, Levine & Ibrahim, 2005; Boyle, Brock, Mace & Sibbons, 2002; Brown & Park, 2002; Bruneforth, 2006; Cardoso & Verner, 2007; Dachi & Garrett, 2003; Hunter & May, 2003; Ranasinghe & Hartog, 2002; Vavrus, 2002). Dachi and Garrett's conducted a study in Tanzania, where they found that even though school was considered important, the main reason for not sending the children to school was because parents and guardians were unable to pay the fees.

According to Mukudi (2004), being unable to finance school fees does not only mean permanent dropouts, but also temporary dropouts and under-enrolment.

To finance education, girls, more often than boys, have to work instead of attending school (Kane, 2004), with the heavier workload usually in domestic and household settings (Hunt, 2008). In countries where people depend on agriculture, parents often value having many children for the sake of labour and for emotional and physical support (UNICEF, 2011). The opportunity cost for sending a child to school increases with age, and leads to greater pressure on the child to find a job (Cain, 1977; UNESCO, 2005). Agreeing with Cain, Hunt also adds that children from poorer backgrounds are more likely to be affected by this occurrence. Poor households are exceptionally vulnerable to fluctuation of income, so called income-shocks, which might lead to withdrawal of children from school in order to save schooling costs and at sometimes work to earn money. However common, some households try other methods before withdrawal, such as using household assets, taking a loan or asking relatives and friends for financial support (de Janvry, Finan, Sadoulet & Vakis, 2006). The poorest families most commonly value education and have rational reasons for not sending the child to school, such as decisions made on education quality, financial value and future investments (Boyle et al., 2002).

Illness and death in the family may affect children's attendance in school, especially females', as they are more often expected to act as caregivers (Case & Ardington, 2004; Chesterfield & Enge, 2000; UNAIDS, 2000 cited in Kane, 2004). Bereavement, for both family members and the females in question, often causes vulnerability to dropout, none or late enrolment and slow progress (Case & Ardington, 2004; Bicego et al., 2002 cited in Hunter & May, 2003). Even if they recover from the disease, the family members emerge from that period poorer in many cases: this will most likely make them vulnerable to future dropout (Hunter & May, 2003).

Studies, such as Nekatibeb (2002) and Rose & Al Samarrai (2001), recognize a connection between females' menstruation patterns and dropouts. The report How to integrate water, sanitation and hygiene into HIV programmes (WHO, 2010) similarly illuminate the issue and estimates that 10 % of African school-age girls do not attend school during menstruation or drop out when the first period occur. The report concludes that several days of absence each month has a negative impact on girls' education and learning ability. Furthermore, those girls that have limited access to soap might not attend school because of the possibility of the period showing on the clothes; also, there is an urge for cleaner and more private toilet facilities. ZEDP reports that water and sanitation facilities are often insufficient in many of Zanzibar's schools (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2007).

Children suffering from malnutrition such as lack of protein and micronutrients in their diet are more likely to repeat grades, do not have equal opportunities to pay attention in class, often suffer from low motivation, drop out early and have poor cognitive function in comparison to well-nourished and healthy children (Pridmore, 2007).

2.1.3 Dropout Issue in Neapl

Acharya, M., Ghimire, P., Mathema, P. Acharya, B., Koirala, C. Shrestha, N. and Sapkota, B. (2007) carried out a research on gender equality and women's empowerment in Nepal. Her study demonstrates that gender plays a major role to produce unequal access in education. The primary reason behind this is the social obligation for parents to marry their daughters preferably late in teens or early 20s.The gross enrolment parity rate was 0.91 and the net enrolment parity was 0.97 in

2004. Progress is much slower at higher levels of schooling, mainly in secondary level. The nation's overall gross enrolment in 2004 was 74% and 86% for girls and boys respectively (MOES/DOE, 2004) .Also the study exhibits that gender difference is higher in rural areas, where gender disparity in literacy in urban was 19%, but it was 23% in rural area.

According to Sharma, R., Sharma, S. and Nagar, S. (2007) concludes that even with a large number of developmental programs focusing on achieving hundred percent literacy in the coming years, there will still exist instances where girls do not complete their secondary education due to the patriarchal culture. The body of literature has demonstrated that the long historical neglect of education of girls has left very high illiteracy rates, especially among women in rural areas (CERID/WEL project, 1984 in Bhusal, 2011).

Likewise, Oxaal (1997) explains the persistence of gender gaps and indicates how the combined effects of poverty and gendered culture reduce the educational opportunities for girls. In his study, he argues that early marriage and teenage pregnancy lead the girls and women to be illiterate, dependent and unsafe. He has also suggested that a gender perspective on poverty and education highlights several possible strategies to tackle the disadvantages that women meet in education.

Similarly, Hunt's (2008) comprehensive review of the international evidence on why children drop out of school discusses a combination of factors such as house hold income and limitations placed by household finances both for direct and indirect costs of schooling concluding the impact of poverty on children school dropout. Moreover, Kamal in IRIN report (2 may, 2010), an education specialist with the UN Children Fund (UNICEF) noted that many girls drop out at secondary level and only 30 percent of the cohorts reach the 10 grade. In the same way, Nepal Ministry of Education noted that the literacy rate or female stands at just 44.2% as opposed to 67.7 % for males. Further, Acharya noted (IRIN, 2010) that most public schools in Nepal still practice gender based discrimination and thus the girls are often harassed by their male counterparts. To avoid humiliation especially teasing by school boys- the girls would rather go home. This is one of the reasons why they lose interest in going to school. Similarly, in rural Nepal, girls cannot afford sanitary pads or tampons and sanitary facilities are generally not available at schools as well. In most schools it was reported

that girls took leave from school if they menstruated. According to the available literature no dropped out girls had return back to school ((ibid).

An ethnographic research in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal identify factors that determined school attendance among Nepali female which was conducted by Levine (2007) showed that gender, cultural prejudice, cast, poverty and rural residence prevented a majority from going to school. Of those who went, most regardless of academic talent were pulled out in order to work at home as wage labors and domestic servants or to enter arranged marriages. The majority of parents of the girls viewed a daughter's education as a poor investment relative to a son's, since in a patriarchal society, a son stayed with his parents and contributed to the household economy where as marriage of a daughter transferred the benefits accumulated from her education to her husband's family.

Another study conducted by Groot (2007) explains that the question of enrolment and attendance in Nepal should be looked at in the context of the country. This study highlights that the gender gap in school enrolment in Nepal has declined, it still exists, and increases as the children get older. Besides this, literacy rates varied among regions and districts across Nepal, where the low enrolment rates in the Terai are caused by the low enrolment of girls in these areas. Further, the study discusses that there is not a sole reason for a child to be out of school but there is a combination of many factors leading them out of school. In addition, Sharma (1974, in Pandey, 2006) did a field study on parental reasons for not sending their children for primary school in Pokhara town. The finding of this study reveals that parents do not see value in education for their daughters. In contrast, they viewed it more valuable to get education for boys, where the study demonstrates that not only male but more female parents as well were not in favor of female education. Further, Acharya (1994 in Pandey, 2011) analyzed the condition of the female education. According to her findings, the female literacy appears to be closely related to the overall status of women in various geographical regions of the country as also to the availability of educational facility. Access to secondary education is still greatly limited for girls. In her analysis she has described the female education as an emerging issue in Nepal.

Lastly, CERID (1984) reported that both girls and boys are dropping out of secondary school throughout the country in which girls' dropout rate is higher. In the report,

household work, lack of awareness in parents and illiteracy, their traditional attitude to see a girl have been shown as the main causes of girls' school dropout in rural Nepal. The present study contributes to analyze the girl's own experience and perception presenting a general female situation in Nepal. In doing so, the study includes the girls' condition after dropping out from school, understanding and exploring the factors affecting their school attainment in different context and cultural settings thorough the study. This might contribute to making appropriate strategies in order to reduce this problem.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Rationale of the Site Selection

This study specially focuses on the causes and problem with girl's school dropout in Inaruwa municipality of sunsari district. It is located to the eastern part of our country in province one. I had choosed this area as I belong to this place. For detail study I had chosen Shree Bal Mandir Secondary School which is located in Inaruwa municipality ward no. 2. It is about 500m south to the main market of Inaruwa. It is a government school and was established in 2039 B.S. I had chosen Bal Mandir secondary School as my study site as it is the school having highest number of students in this ward. Most of the students attending this school come from low socioeconomic group. As we know chances of having female school dropout is more in family having low socioeconomic group. Thus study targeting this group will help to find out the factors and circumstances faced by female school dropout.

3.2. Research design

This study is exploratory. It explores the cause of dropout rate of girl's student. For doing so, I chose an empirical approach with in-depth interview method, the most commonly used approach in the field of social science.

Generally, the research method is scientifically selected on the nature of problem to be investigated. Therefore, I have taken the qualitative design to assess the girl's experience and describe the factors that lead them to stay out of school. The reason was that in this method the objectives of the study are seen and understood in their own context. It is truly a strong method to produce vivid and rich accounts of human experience, that emphasizes depth of understanding, attempt to subjectively tap the deeper meaning of human experience and intend to generate theoretically rich observations.

Mainly, I want to investigate the participants' own points of view on their experience which is only possible by qualitative method because in quantitative method, there are more rigid close ended questions, which cannot permit me to grasp the deep feelings of my informants.

Qualitative method is powerful because of its ability to explore the people's real world directly in their own context. It studies the human behavior, attitudes and experiences in particular times and describes how people organize their world and produce meaning to their life. Through an interview, the interviewer can get closer to the interviewee and collect the empirical data in detail. Thus, I used only a single method; it is appropriate and sufficient to explore the students experience according to my study purpose.

It is believed that a researcher with ready-made questions either open-ended or close-ended cannot expose people's perception, understanding and experience and enter into their emotional expression. Thus, it is the in-depth interview which leads the researcher to reach in-depth of people's world and produce a wealth of valuable data. Likewise, I have used the key questions to guide while interviewing. It has contained several points and I was led by those points in order to lead the interviewees during the conversation. So that, I could modify the questions when needed because it was flexible, thus I was free to change or formulate the questions required to situation that arose. Furthermore, I have applied the grounded theory as the methodological approach to analyze and interpret the data in my study, because this approach was seen suitable to find meaning in the interview data of the study.

3.3. Universe and sampling procedure

The term sampling simply talks about the selection of informants or the population of the study. It is the process of selecting a small group as the representative of the whole population in which a relatively small number of study population or measures of units is selected and analyzed in order to find out something about the entire population from which it was selected. Briefly, it is a procedure of collecting information of whole population by investigating only a part of it, where as stated by Robson (1993:135), we make judgments about people, places and things on the basis of fragmentary evidence. Hence, it is a key in research which helps to save time and labor, reduce expenditure and lead the measurement of greater scope to produce greater precision and accuracy, yet there might exist the possibility of an error in the outcome of sample to the entire population. Total no. of dropout in this school from academic year 2071 to 2075 samples was 90. Among that the available sample size I took was 20 from the age group between8 to 16. 4 parents and 4 teachers were also

interviewed during my study. Likewise, the criteria for selecting the teachers were that they should be the secondary teachers in social study from the public schools in Inaruwa. It is because the social teachers are expected to have more knowledge on social issues or social problems than the teachers in other subjects. Therefore, in this study, they are expected to express their opinion on girls' social status and their situation at home and at school influencing their school attainment in secondary level. In this way, the study has different actors for the sources of data. The rational in doing so was that a purposively selected diverse sample offers the high possibility of identifying the full range of factors connected with secondary school discontinuation. It also creates many possible experiences of an event. So, it was important to interview different actors representing their views and situations to build up a broad understanding of the topic in my paper (Strauss and Corbin,

1990:109).

Prior to the start of the study, I made contact with the school administrations to find out the girls school dropped out and their address including their parents.

Selecting this appropriate sample size the paper has involved a trade –off between breadth and depth of my thesis (Patton, 1990)

Here, I would like to clarify that it was not so difficult to visit the dropped out young girl students in the study context because most of them stay at home engaging in domestic works or get marriage. Thus, I observed and interviewed them and their parents at their homes, workplace and other places where they carried out their daily activities in order to get a real picture of their school discontinuation and their parents attitude to it in a natural way, because as suggested by Hull (2005), the great strength of qualitative design is its naturalism, its intimacy with real people in real situation to understand the people how they act in their daily life.

While interviewing, it was observed the informants (girls) appearance, facial expression, gesture and posture with the purpose of understanding their feelings and perception about their school discontinuation and their view on themselves, which more or less has a contribution in the study. All the respondents of this study were interviewed applying the prepared interview guide with qualitative open ended questions (See Appendix).

3.4. Nature and sources of data

This study is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Both the primary data and information is extensively utilized as the main source of this research work. The primary data is both quantitative as well as qualitative. Quantitative data was collected mainly from interview schedules and qualitative data from group discussion. Some dropout students were interviewed for the verification and triangulation of data as case study. Some school teachers and parents of dropout students also interviewed. Secondary data and information were different published and unpublished sources such as web site, journals, books, census records, reports of

DEO, Village profile, reports of Unicef, Word Bank and others.

3.5 Process of Data Collection

First of all, I have had an intensive detailed study and collected a lot of knowledge and information about the study topic and study area including the study design, methodology and field. Then, I prepared the In-depth interview guide with qualitative unstructured (open ended) questions. After that, I traveled to the field i.e. Inaruwa, Nepal. Firstly I sent the written approvals to the selected schools taken in the study. Then, I contacted to school administration and got the drop out records for last five years. After this, I set the plan to visit them and interview by collecting their consent agreement. Then, the purposively selected dropped out students and their parents were interviewed considering the research ethics by providing the written approval and reading it out.

In addition, I would here like to clarify that the sample questions in interview guide were repeated (see Annex), because repeating the same question in different versions is used to test the reliability of the answers (Kvale, 1996). In this sense, I was able to grasp the consistency of the answers to my questions asking them from a variety of angles.

For example: some actors provided much information with explanation within a single open-ended question, so I should not ask another question listed in the guide in order to get information. Similarly, in some interviews I didn't get as complete answers as the study was seeking for. So, I had to ask some cross questions in order to

fill up the information gap or get the required data, which in addition has increased the possibility of validity and reliability determining the generalizing capacity of the study. During the field work, I followed up the concerned participants, where it was optionally their own choice to response in each step of data collection procedures. While talking about the interview time, it took around one to two hours. The entire interview was recorded and noted by collecting consent from them. Further, it was also informed and taken consent to translate and transcribe the data into English.

3.6 In-depth Interview: The Method

It is more convenient and reasonable to apply in-depth interview in subjective studies like experience in order to dig the emotional, expressive and sensitive data with detail information. In other words, applying in-depth interview approach I got an opportunity to tap into the richness of girls' thoughts and feelings about their schooling. I had used this method as it explore and understand about a person's thoughts, ideas and behaviors. Along with interview I had also observed and group discussion was done with the respondent closely thus the triangulation method was applied.

3.7 Ethical Issues

In research, whether it is qualitative or quantitative, an ethical guideline must be considered.

In all countries, research studies mostly include human or animals. While researching on these subjects, the researcher has to consider the high ethical standards set by various ethics committees to protect the privacy and dignity of the respondents. As a social researcher, I was responsible to follow each ethical code which has also been presented in the recruiting procedures. I carefully followed the ethical standards designed to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of participants along with the researcher's obligation to the study area. I tried to play a positive role and had no bias to them as far as possible from my side. Likewise, I informed them well about the study purpose, process and analysis.

In the beginning of the interview, I collected the informed consent from the respondents with their signature before starting the interview. Similarly, it was

informed that it was voluntary to participate and that they could withdraws any time during interview. For this, I had gone through the voluntary informed consent to the participants by door keeper with written approval, respecting the privacy rights of the informants maintaining confidentiality and ensuring them anonymity.

3.8 Validity and Reliability of the Study

There are some aspects of measurement to evaluate our works, objects and situation from qualitative and quantitative perspectives. Among them validity and reliability are the major ones. If the tool of measurement can assess what it is supposed to measure, it is considered valid. Similarly, if the measurements have consistency from one observation to the next, it is considered to be reliable (Frankfort, 2000). At the same time, the subject of validity and reliability are complex and controversial. Since the integrity of qualitative research depends on attending the issue of validity and reliability, it is important to discuss how valid and reliable an investigation is. In this regard, I have designed a qualitative study to explore the girls' experience and perception and identify the factors that cause gender differences in education, where it concerns to the accuracy and truthfulness of its findings.

As suggested by Kvale and Mason (1996; 2002), the researcher is the primary instrument while collecting and analyzing the data. The reliability and the validity of the study therefore depend upon the researcher's quality. Hence, an important aspect in qualitative method is that the data is produced in the relationship between researcher and the informants. Therefore, it is impossible to reproduce the interview with another researcher. That is why; different researchers will get different stories from the same informant. But that does not mean that one story is truer than the other. It is because there are different ways to present the same event and experiences. Hence, the significant thing about reliability is that the informant can agree about the presentation of the story but not necessarily agree about the interpretation. As stated by Patton (1990), I was very careful in constructing instruments, i.e. interview guide, to be sure that the instrument measures what was supposed to measure applying the qualitative standardized open-ended in-depth interviews to analyze the problem.

3.9 Limitation of the Study

In this part, I have mentioned the boundaries of the study with reference to its scope by specifying the areas to which the conclusion have been confined and the procedural treatment including the sampling procedure, the techniques of data, the development of measuring and their use in the study. The scope of the study has been limited to the exploration of the girls experience and perception of their school dropout and the factors pulling them out of education including the parents', teachers' and key persons' views on it. Thus, this study has focused on these two perspectives where in addition it sheds light on the possible intervention strategies to the problem. Hence, this study has reflected the socio-cultural and family perspectives, where among the secondary schools in the district it has purposively been selected and analyzed only one public schools. So that, it does not correspond to the situation of whole Nepal, as its people live in diverse culture and socioeconomic conditions. In this sense, the conclusion drawn through this study might not represent the entire geo-political areas of the country. But it shows some processes and mechanisms which probably will have validity in other places.

3.10 Data Analysis Process

Data analysis, as the core of a research gives an overview of the study analysis and interpretation of the findings. Thus**,** it is a process of bringing order, structure and interpretation to the mass of collected date (Marshall and Rossman, 1999), where it finds the meaning in data that gives an answer to the particular research questions in qualitative design

(Merriam, 2009). In other words, data analysis involves the process of organizing what have been seen, heard and read. So that researcher can make sense of what had been learned. On the ground of data, researcher describes, creates explanations, poses hypotheses, develop theories and link one's story to other stories (Glesne, 2006:147). As mentioned, data analysis in qualitative research is a search for patterns and relationship in data through constant comparing between individual, stories, experiences or meanings attached to their experiences.

In the present study, the noted data generated from in-depth interview have been translated, and transcribed into English from the respondents' language. Then, the

empirical data have been analyzed and presented by using the grounded theory as the methodological approach. The approach is suitable for finding meaning in the interview data.

While analyzing the qualitative data, there is not only one best way, though this study has applied some elements of Grounded theory. This includes the reading and re-reading the transcribed interviews and examining the interviews in order to lead to emerging the themes, coding, building analytic categories and constant comparisons, because the basic idea of this approach is to read and re- read (Borgatti, 2005). This makes it possible to reduce and systematically work with the data. Hence, data analysis followed some ideas from the theory, as the whole of this study is based on constructivist grounded theory approach that studies people in their natural setting. Similarly, critical analysis and discussion of these categorized themes have leaded to make comparisons and to identify contrast among the respondents.

Further, while analyzing the raw data, the study has applied a set of theoretical ideas.

As gender inequality and school dropout both are understood as complex phenomena, data were therefore examined through interrelated processes. In brief, the procedures emerging from the interview guide were categorized as: Understanding gender differences in education in Nepal, girls' experience and perception on their school dropout and their understanding on self out of education in patriarchal society, which has helped to reduce the lengthy amount of data summarizing them under the specific categories. The information collected from the respondents on their experience over gender inequality and school dropout phenomena were read, re-read and compared to create familiarity and contradictory information.

CHAPTER IV

FACTORS INFLUENCING FEMALE DROPOUT OF SCHOOL

4.1 Introduction of study area and respondent

This study specially focuses on the causes and problem with girl's school dropout in Inaruwa municipality of sunsari district. It is located to the eastern part of our country in province one. Study area was chosen as I belong to this place. For detail study Shree Bal Mandir Secondary School was selected which is located in Inaruwa municipality ward no. 2. It is about 500m south to the main market of Inaruwa. It is a government school and was established in 2039 B.S. Shree Bal Mandir secondary school is having highest number of students in this ward. Most of the students attending this school come from low socioeconomic group. As we know chances of having female school dropout is more in family having low socioeconomic group. Thus study targeting this group will help to find out the factors and circumstances faced by girl's school dropout.

The 20 respondent which were chosen for study mainly belongs to low socioeconomic group. Their parents are mainly involved in agriculture, carpentry. The respondent mainly belongs to koiri caste between the age group of 8 to 16. The age of respondent are given below:

Table 4.1 Age of Respondents

Age Group	No. of Students	% of the Total
8 to 14	18	90
15 to 16	2	10
Total	20	100

Source: Bal Mandir Secondary School

4.2. Dropout Rate of Students in Bal Mandir Secondary School by year.

Year	Number of students			Number of drop out student			Percentage
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	of dropout
2071	197	138	335	10	6	16	4.7
2072	212	159	374	34	25	59	15.77
2073	195	154	349	19	14	33	9.45
2074	229	190	419	2 1	11	32	7.63
2075	246	221	467	6	2	8	1.28

Source: Shree Bal Mandir Secondary School

The data was collected from the academic year 2071 to 2075. The total number of students in 2071 was 335 out of which 197 were female and 138 were male. The total no. of female dropout in that year was 10 whereas male was 6. The total number of students in 2072 was 374 out of which 212 were female and 159 were male. The total no. of female dropout in that year was 34 whereas male was 25. The total number of students in 2073 was 349 out of which 195 were female and 154 were male. The total no. of female dropout in that year was 19 whereas male was 14. The total number of students in 2074 was 419 out of which 229 were female and 190 were male. The total no. of female dropout in that year was 21 whereas male was 11. The total number of students in 2075 was 467 out of which 246 were female and 221 were male. The total no. of female dropout in that year was 6 whereas male was 2.

4.3 Factors Influencing Dropout

It explains the major causes of girl's school dropout in Inaruwa municipality. Various factors influence in girl's education. Major causes of school dropout in the school are poverty, early marriage, illiteracy, property transference, distance to school, and failure in school exams. These   factors are major causes of dropout in Inaruwa municipality.

4.3.1 Factors Related to Family

Family factor was seen as one of the major aspects for dropping out of girls from school. Some of them are poverty, early marriage, illiteracy of parents.

4.3.1.1 Poverty

Most of the people in Nepal have low economy, a poor socioeconomic infrastructure and there is large gap between rich and poor and majority of the people lives in severe poverty mainly depending on agriculture. Thus parents cannot afford school costs. Most of the parents aspects fast return from their children after sending their children to school by getting job and start earning money. But this is less possible in case of girls as girls are more likely to carry out household work rather than doing job. During interview poverty was identified as the major factor for girls dropping out of school. One of the respondent explained poverty factor for dropping out from school.

"Her father said that he cannot afford school fees too longer as it is costly to go school."

Most of the girls come from low socioeconomic background where parents are mostly involved in agriculture. Along with poverty, concept of parents towards girls schooling was different. They wanted to invest money on boys education as they can give output that is that money can be return back but on the other hand schooling for girls were poor investment as it does not give back the financial support as girls get married and sent to other houses. One of the key informants said that

"My parents didn't want my schooling , they showed their objection for going to school and force me to leave school and work at home because they were unable to pay her fees."

Hunt's (2008) study indicates a strong link among parents' income, gender and dropping out, whereas relating to Hunt (ibid) to some extent, the present study reflects a core reason that conce rn on the gender matter, because to pay for girls' education is an uncertain investment in which parents were not interested. Also, they should go to another's house, so they cannot be a part of economic support for parents in future which decreases the girls' social and family value as well in the context. Similarly another key informant illustrated that:

"Some students were sent home sometimes due to lack of school fees. Girls also stated that they cannot go to school most of the times so that they could carry out

household work and can help in agriculture field. During this period they missed school lessons"

The lack of work opportunity especially for girls is seen as a structural as well as a gender problem discouraging parents to invest on their daughter's education. Most of the parents agreed that it was better for the whole family if the girls worked at home and learned household work rather than attending further school. In rural areas people have no source of cash income compared to urban people. One of the key informants provides an example on this:

"Most of we are farmers and our occupation is agriculture. We mainly produce rice and weight and from this we can only manage cost for son but not for daughters."

This section indicates that family poverty is linked with girl's dropout but it is not just an apparent reason of it. Based on data, many girls from poor family have experienced the gender constraint to their education. Hence, the role of family with its acceptance and financial support is valuable for girls to keep their school continue.

4.3.1.2 Son Preference

Most of the parent's concept is that they must have son to have successful life before and after death. So more preference is given to son and in doing so they may have large family while waiting for son. Large family size can create difficulties to provide good care and equal opportunities to their children than parents choose their son to go to school and daughters to stay and work at home.

According to the family system, as women work at home and men out of home, men get money for their work but women are not paid even working hard fulltime. That is why; a boy gets higher value in a family than a girl. One of the key informants argues on this:

"In our culture a son has to perform all the religious rituals but this priority is not given to daughters. So parents thinks they need a son both and after death but daughter are regarded only as a part of family. Thus less value is given to daughter and value to sons education"

Supporting this, another key informant provides a justification on this demonstrating the impact of family value up on girl's education through socio-cultural and religious lenses:

"Parents have the conservative concept that sons are the preserver of their ancestors and the existence of their life even after their death. Because of this, they think that sons should eat well, be better cared for, have to be strong and healthy and should get education because of having all the cultural and religious responsibilities over their parents, where as a daughter is considered as a member of other's family. That is why; girls get little value in their own family which create the challenges for them to continue their study"

Throughout the interviews, it was noted that more preference is given to son and most of the facilities is given to son which makes the girl out of school. The statement of respondent provides an example on this:

"According to my father and mother concept the role of girls is to help mother and learn household work instead of going to school."

Concluding this, son holds deeper socio-cultural, religious and economic importance for families, whereas daughter gets less value from all these perspectives. According to traditional belief it is only a son who can give deliverance to the ancestors and perform rituals. This belief has led many families to abandon their girl children in many cases. Because of this, they are not getting the same opportunities, i.e. in education and also other basic rights where the society expects female to inhabit with her husband's family and son with his parents throughout the life having full authority on his parental property both before and after the death of parents. This practice therefore result a situation where parents do not think it is positive to get much education for girls. It is not an investment, but a waste of money for them. Hence, in Nepal, its cultural values, for instances: the value of education for women, gender roles, family values, religious beliefs and , the economic context, all these practices inter-relate and produce gender differences in education.

4.3.1.3 Conservative concept of Parents

Parent's role is very important for their children. The impact of parental illiteracy on girls on girls school discontinuation linking it with low parental income causing girls dropping out of their study. While exploring the value of education among informants, the parents revealed that a daughters education was poor investment compared to the son. It is because sons stays with his parents and contributes to the household economy whereas after daughters marriage it transfer advantages from her education to her husband family. From girls education only her husband family will be benefited not her parents. According to parents girls do not need education as their roles are only as wives and mothers. Therefore for a girls it is more important to learn household work and get ready for marriage.

One of the key informant provide an example on this:

"My parents do not want to spend money for my education because they think that education is not necessary for girls."

During the interview, the girls were asked about what caused them to leave school and how. In their replies, they said their parents' conservative thoughts to their schooling as one of the reasons of their school dropout. Key informant narration provides an example on this:

"There are many factors that force me to leave school. My parents' conservative attitude to my schooling is the main. I have faced a lot of difficulties due to their conservative thoughts when I was in school. It is because they do not understand the importance of exams. Thus, they want me to be engaged in household work even during my exam week. Therefore, I could not prepare better for exam and I failed in my exam."

Most of the girls during the interview said the different treatment of boys and girls, as a factor causing dropping out from school. Key informant further adds on this:

"I think that the main reason of girls' low school attainment is the lack of awareness among their parents to the importance of education for girls."

Concerning the parents' conservative thoughts, one of the respondents mother has a negative attitude to girls' education. She expressed in the interview:

"My daughter can read and write now. That's enough for her. She must feel grateful to us because we sent her up to grade 8. Our parents never sent me school, yet I am living happily. It is wise for daughter to learn household work rather going to school. Even if they get education, they have to bear babies and care for them and the family and run the household. That is why, education is not necessary for them."

In conclusion, parents cannot afford to send all their children to school, and the boys are given more priority. They expressed a positive view to the basic education for girls but they seem negative to the continuation of schooling longer after this level. It might be because of their conservative thoughts for daughter education. Also it might be the influence of the socio-cultural structure.

4.3.1.4 Early Marriage

According to Nepali culture marriage is a social connection between family rather than personal choice where the females are expected to perform domestic work which includes child bearing and caring for children. Similarly, the females are more disadvantaged than men in education, economic resources and non-agricultural employment in every caste groups. Key informant commented on this issue in the following way:

"Most of the parents, concept is that a girl has to be taught household work and discipline in the parents' house. Then, she has to be sent to their husband's house without delay. Therefore, the basic education is enough for them because their main duties in future are to bear babies and manage the household, and also work in agriculture if necessary. If they get higher education, it becomes difficult to find a husband for them. On the other hand, they have less opportunity to find job even if they have education. Moreover, they are not free to choose any job as a boy does, which create limitation to utilize their education. Hence, education is viewed not so valuable for girls."

This concerns the kind of future parents see for their daughters. Marriage is the only future career they see, and in this context more education than the basic is not

necessary. If there are no alternative careers as single with education in the labor market and as an acceptable position for a woman, it is also an explainable strategy for parents. Concerning marriage arrangements, only the arranged marriage is commonly accepted. Parents themselves are considered culturally and religiously responsible and lucky to arrange and perform their daughters' marriage ceremony. They prefer to do it early, if possible before the first menstruation. It specially happens in Hindu Brahmin families because it is a matter of honor for them to have their daughter married (Acharya et al, 2007). It is more positive if they can do this before a girl menstruated because a girl is considered impure after her first menstruation. Also parents must give dowry in a daughter's marriage (ibid).This practice result a situation where parents do not think it wise to invest in their daughters' schooling, where sons are perceived as the parents' future, and daughters as a part of other's family to whom parents have a single responsibility that is to give them Kanyadan. Similarly one of the key informants illustrated that

"When we are old we will need support from our sons. Also they have a lot of responsibilities even after our death. Thus, we should care for them better. Daughters go to their husband's house, and then we can get no more help from them. My parents also did the same to me. I married in the age of 13. Now I have my own family and I am happy. Hence, it is better to send daughters to their husband's house early. It is our culture and we have to follow it."

Taking her view into account, she considers this way of doing things as positive; it is a good thing for her daughter to be married early. Also, she refers to tradition and culture as something to be followed. Key informant argues in this concern as:

"The same conservative and male dominated culture is still being followed, mostly in rural areas, which reinforces the parents to educate their sons and arrange the early marriage of their daughter."

The early marriage system has an important role in dropping the girls out of school before completing their secondary education cycle. Supporting this, Oxaal (1997), states that early marriage and early pregnancy are among the main factors reducing female education. Providing an illustration to the patriarchal society respondent (student) retrieves:

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"When I had just begun in class 9, my parents forced me to leave school in order to take care of my younger sisters and brothers. At the same time I am forced to learn household work and get ready for marriage. Unfortunately, I was married at very early age. Now, all the possibilities to restart my school are finished."

The environment for girls both in and out of home as well as school is unsafe and they are often in risk of being raped, trafficked or abused in many forms of gender discrimination and stigmatization. That is why parents are in a hurry to arrange marriage for their daughters. They think that girls are safer with a husband than being single. No matter whether the marriage is arranged or she has chosen her husband herself, when a bride leaves her own house and goes to the house of her husband's family she finds herself in a highly ambiguous position. She is valued for her domestic labor an++d as the future mother of sons on the other side. But she is also on the lowest rung of the domestic ladder. (Levine, 2006)

 The study concludes that early marriage resulting in teenage pregnancy covering the age of 10-19 seems as a common social problem that directly affect the girls to be out of school. It is considered as one of the key reasons of girls' secondary school dropout. Parents pull out their daughters from school and arrange their marriage at an early age with the wish and blessing on their daughter to have children as soon as possible.

Many factors discussed above are interrelated to one another in the process of a girl's school dropout. Thus, they always come combined. Following the combination, it is here highlighted on early marriage, as one of these factors causing dropping out of girls out in education where most people follow the patriarchal culture in which man is perceived superior and woman is inferior. Similarly, a daughter is considered for marriage and parents traditionally follow the early marriage system mainly in remote Nepal. Therefore, there are no more possibilities for girls to make their career. Also, there are some alternatives to marriage or to delay marriage such as, keeping study continue or having a job and helping the family economy. But they are not attractive but rather challenging in practice. It is because when a girl postpones to marriage, both she and her family will be stigmatized for being unable to marry in time with some blames, doubts and rumors like having boyfriend, involving in prostitution or having some social (characterless), physical and mental (having diseases) defects, that

might be true in some cases but false in many cases (Bhusal, 2011). This would make it difficult for her family to arrange her marriage later. As a result, the young girls and their family are lead into the dilemma whether making career or arranging marriage.

4.3.1.5 Handover of Asset

Although constitution of Nepal has declared the equal rights to give the parental property for both girls and boys, the boys often take over the property because of the sociocultural norms and values. Also the girls are entitled to claim the property belonging to their husband after marriage, but if the marriage is terminated in any case, they are deprived from this right too (Sangroula, 2001).The asset which belongs to parents is socio-culturally transferred to their son when the parents are too old or they pass away. In case of more than one son, the property is equally transferred to all of them. This type of practice makes the women economically dependent on family, especially father and husband due to which girls and woman get lower value than men, and thus they have no power in many things, for example: making decision about continuing and discontinuing their school, plan making for future etc. which creates uncertainty about their future. The asset transference is therefore an important factor affecting the girls' education. In the interview, some informants viewed that equal right to asset would reduce the gender differences in education. However that would not be before parents had died and the girls would be grown up, it influences their schooling. It is because the girls are treated at present on the basis of future. Thus they would be equally powerful through the economical perspective, if they are also considered to have the equal right to parental property from the birth as it is practiced with a boy. Then they would have high probability to decide their selves about keeping their education continue or not. Respondent argues on this providing an illustration as:

"In my opinion property is power. Our culture allows the parental property only to sons, not to girls because sons are powerful and girls are powerless having no right on it."

The similar statement is expressed by other respondent also. She explains on this as:

"If we have money we can do many things. Boys can do many things they like because all the parental wealth culturally belongs to them. On the other way, girls get

nothing. The attitude of parents is also different for son and daughter. They behave in such a way that daughters are temporary member of family and give less value to daughters. If parental property was equally distributed to both son and daughter, there would be no gender discrimination and girls should not quit their school even being interested to their study"

Asset transference practice contributes to the gender differences in education, since it occurs late in their lives, not when they are young and going to school. It is because differences and discrimination took place from the birth. When a boy is born he is perceived as the owner of his parental property. But if it is a girl, she is perceived as a member to be given to other's family later. This tradition therefore determines more opportunities, i.e. education to a boy allowing more power due to his economical backup and this goes opposite to a girl. It is thus this practice as many other factors mentioned in the study influences girls' education and many other aspects of their life due to their economic dependency on parents or brothers. The study shows that the practice of parental asset transformation is mostly done by parents themselves and their family relatives in the name of tradition.

4.3.1.6 Household Chores

Out of many factors interacting in the process of girls' school dropout which emerge from their household situation such as child labor, caring for siblings and poverty. One of the respondents expressed it in this way:

"I have four younger siblings and I am eldest among them . My parents are farmers and both are illiterate so they said me to stay at home when they needed my help. Therefore, caring for my sisters and brothers including the household chores always constrained me from going to school."

Her argument is also supported by key informants noted that:

"Household chores and siblings' care are the major family issues which constrain the girls to get access to education."

The position in the sibling order could also be crucial because it has a direct influence to pull a girl out of school, but it does not influence for boys, because only the girls

are forced to take up the responsibilities of house tasks at an early age and that affect their education in term of dropping out (Sharma, 2007).While talking about the factors leading the girls out of school, a key informant strongly agreed that the family was an influencing factor to pull the girls out of school. She said:

"The girls miss on class frequently. They mostly do so during the period of planting and harvesting crops."

According to him, girls miss class often for helping parents in agricultural work, which is seasonal during planting and harvesting the crops. Respondent said:

"I don't like to do household chores. I prefer to study. I feel very tired because of workload at home. My parents always want me to work at home and help them with work in farm and field. They become happy when I work a lot, but they became angry when I insist to go school.

They do not think seriously about my education."

Hearing her experience and knowing about her situation, it is manifested that the parents do not pay attention to girls' education. They expect their daughters to help them with house work and farming rather than schooling. The daughters want to go school but cannot perform better at study as they are tired due to workload.

This study demonstrates that organization of household is a cause contributing girl's low educational achievement. When they are culturally assigned all household responsibilities, on one side they have no time to spend with their study and on the other hand, they are tired and cannot concentrate in study. Both of these reasons de-motivate them to continue their studies. Key informant comments further demonstrate how the duties concerning household affects the girls to stay out of secondary education.

"More of the girls are pulled out of school because they are needed at home to help family members in the situation such as: if a new baby has been born, and the older sister, who had been taking care of younger siblings, has got married , or someone in the household had become chronically sick."

Indeed, the girls' experience reflects how the girls are assigned to household duties and how the boys are kept far from it. Moreover, her narration also provides evidence that the causes of girls' school dropout are not restricted only to the family economy but also to the prevailing socio-cultural structures. In addition, household and child care by girls as young as 7 years of age is referred to by Hodfar (1986) and Khafagy (1990). While both sons and daughters have household task the demand for girls' labor is higher, and this unequal demand for household labor translates into educational disadvantage of girls (Guhl, 1990). The other common cause for girls' secondary school discontinuation is the arrival of a marriage proposal connecting with the household. For this purpose, they think it most important to learn household chores before marriage. Therefore, in most cases, parents pull out their daughter from school and engage them in household.

4.3.2 School Related Factors

In this section, how different aspects of the schools as an institution affect girls' education are discussed. Many studies show, school related factors contribute to girls' incomplete education (Sharma 2007, Pandey 2011, Bhusal2011, Sabates 2010; Groot, 2007).

4.3.2.1 Lack of Physical Safety

Girls' physical safety while travelling from home to school, is often given as a reason for keeping the girls out of school . In this section, it is demonstrated that how school location and insecurity in getting to and returning from school influence the girls' school attendance. Rape of girls occurred on the way to school and even at school plays important role in dropping of girls out of school. Girls are raped on their way while going to school, on the way to market and they are also punished at school and they died. Some are raped and killed by their own teacher after rape. (These cases can be seen on Bhandafor news, 29 mar. 2012) *at:* http://canadanepal.net/*).*

Most of the cases concern secondary school girls indicate the young girls' unsafe situation in and out of school by representing risk to be raped, i.e. on the way to school. Supporting this, Panos (2003) argues that for many young girls the most common place where sexual harassment are experienced is in school. Due to lack of physical safety, old and incomplete school building with poor foundation, e.g. having no door, water leaking roof etc. lacking sanitary facilities (toilets and sanitary pads) also affect the girls school attainment.

During the interviews, the parents said that they do not want to send their daughters to school because their daughter cannot be safe. Key informant provides one example:

"It is not sure that a girl who goes to school, comes back to home safely or not."

It is because in some cases they are abused by their own teachers and teased by their boy's classmates. On this basis, it is possible to claim that girls' unsecured situation is an important reason of girls' school discontinuation.

The geographical condition of Nepal has also influenced the education sector. In some cases, there are no enough schools available in rural areas. So children have to go long which is more risky particularly for girls to be sexually abused on the way.

Further, according to the key informant, in inaruwa, it is not so long distance to go to school, however many incidents are seen to be occurred on the way to school with girls.

4.3.2.2 Unsuccessful to Pass School Exams

In this section, it is showed that how the girls are dropped out due failure in school exams. Unsuccessful educational achievement and failure in school exams has also been considered as a factor for drop out of girls to be an obstacle for the girls in Inaruwa. The experience of key informant is an illustration of this:

"Both to work at home and help parents in agriculture, girls had no time to read and do homework at home. Therefore, they are unsuccessful to pass out exams. Thus, they feel shame to be teased by friends and scolded by parents. Therefore they lost their interest in repeating the same class and leave the school."

The pressure from parents to perform household work result the lack of timework for their study and exam preparation which results failure at school exams, and that leads to the girls' dropout from school, while performing household work they have no time to go to school and had no time to do homework which becomes one of the factor for dropout of girls from school. Further, next key informant has also expressed nearly the similar experience. She narrates:

" I tried my best to pass in the exam but I have failed in class nine. As I have to do all household chores, I cannot manage time for my study. Hence, I could not prepare better and I failed the exam this year as well. Then, I hesitated to go in the same class, and left school."

It does not mean that girls are poorer in learning than boys. Some studies (see Chaudhari, 2011; Pandey, 2010) show that girls are not weaker. But in some cases, they are more talented than boys.

To sum up, the study says that problem with girls' education is further compounded if the school is in unsafe long distance and it lacks basic physical facility, i.e. toilets and sanitary pads, available at school. According to Brock and Cammish (1997:47), distance to school and the lack of female toilet facilities can be factors contributing to such a decision at this age. Every time, it is not always the parents who pull a girl out of school. In many cases when teachers and friends behave her in a discomforting way or the girl experiences discomfort within school, she herself decides to come out of school. Some of the girls as well as their parents reveal that the one of the factors in girls' secondary school dropouts is lack of safety. Also lack of female teachers is highlighted as a reason influencing girls' school attendance in the combination of other factors. Based on the interview data, failure in school exams is another factor which pushes the girls out of school. The factors behind the failure are complex but the result that they fail and cannot continue their education because of that reason.

4.3.2.3 Lack of Sanitary Facilities

Lack of sanitary facilities becomes one of the crucial factors for the dropout of girls from school. Among these issues, menstruation is an important issue which contributes to push the girls out from school. For example, girls cannot share their problems concerning menstruation to a male teacher but it lacks female teachers, then they do not come to school during their menstruation because there is a lack of sanitary facilities (toilets and sanitary pads) at school and aslo the hesitate to talks about these problems . Because of that they miss class and important lessons, with the result that they fail in exams. They also avoid school because of harassment. Key informant narration below provides an illustration of this.

"When I had periods for the first time, it was not easy for me. It was bleeding too much, sanitary pads was not available in the school. Then, blood leaked out, wet my skirt and it was a shame for me. My friends teased at me. All teachers and other students also knew about it. Then it became more shame for me to go school again. Because of this, I was not willing to go to school every month and I used to miss classes every month."

Therefore, menstruation has been considered in as a gendered factor pushing the young girls out of school. Also, her narration reveals the lack of sanitary pads at school. She further continues her experience in this concern as:

"I do not feel well during menstruation. Thus, I used to drop out school for some days during this week due to severe stomach ache. Unfortunately, this problem continued repeating. Due to this, I felt boring to keep my school continue."

Due to the conservative cultural and religious practices related to menstruation along with the lack of sanitary pads, girls have to face a lot of challenges like sleeping in the shed, which creates a lot of physical and psychological problems leading them to dropout their school. Similarly, female body is considered dirty and impure during menstruating period. The girls are gossiped and humiliated by their own classmates, mostly by the boys concerning their menstruation in class and also among other friends at school. By this, the girls experience shame, anxiety and harassment. In general, this humiliation is connected to sexuality considering a girl being sexually matured. Lack of basic physical facility at school, highly affects the young girl to leave school before reaching or completing secondary education (IRIN, 2009). Girls who are menstruating in Nepal are less likely to attend classes due to the lack of toilets at school premises undermining their prospects for completing their education (IRIN, 2010). The report (ibid) shows that 59 percent of public and community schools across the country do not have any toilet which is contributing to the increase rate of girl to discontinue their secondary school per year. In addition, girls in rural areas cannot afford sanitary pads or tampons and instead use rags, which if not properly cleaned can result infections. In this way, they cannot hide that they are menstruating.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

The data from interview shows that students in Inaruwa municipality come from low socio-economic background and their parents are mostly engage with low earning activities such as agriculture, carpentry, sweing etc. Due to less income, parents are unable to pay school fees, transportation costs and other indirect costs such as school uniforms and studying materials. Low level of income affect opportunity, reservation and performance of students deeply affected since girls are forced to leave their studies and look after household chores or help their parents in productive activities so as to generate family income.

Torto, (2009) study also shows that when the family income becomes poor, girls are pulled out of school and boys are left in school. Also he shows that when girls become matured enough for marriage, girls are taken out of school to support family income by selling small agricultural items, farming or performing other money earning activities. Family financial situation have a significant association with school enrolment rate. Kirda, (2009) holds that children from farming societies are less likely to access education due to their low levels of income.

According to data from interview, socio-cultural practices were other reason for dropping out in education in Inaruwa municipality. During interview there were various social and cultural reasons said to prevent girls from getting to school or causing them to drop out from school. Early and forced marriage, dowry, funeral ceremonies are factors that tend to impact negatively on girls education in Bal Mandir secondary school. Generally early and forced marriages were presented by all respondents as major barrier to girl's education and development in Bal Mandir secondary school.

In similar findings, Bamora study (2010) in Ghana identified traditional practices such as early and forced marriages, dowry and religion, as bad socio-cultural issues that affect negatively on girls access, retention and performance and hence contributed to large extent on gender inequality in access to education in Ghana. Furthermore, the

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study by Indonesia government found gender gap at the senior high school level and higher educational levels (college and Universities) various reasons for limited women and girls at these levels, early and forced marriages being among of them (Indonesia government 2002).

The finding showed that long journey from home to school was a reason for inequality in access to education in Bal Mandir secondary school. They don't feel safe due to more distance to school. Due to long journey to school most of the parents and girls has fear that they cannot come home safer as there is probability of rape, harassment etc. due to which girls are being dropped out from the school. As a result the situation become intolerable to students especially girls and hence drop out.

Triangulation of methods of interviews, focus group discussion and observation reviews showed that uneducated parents were source of drop out for girls in access to education in Bal Mandir secondary school. Most of uneducated parents are not aware of importance of girls education and also they are fixed with negative views against girls education for example educating girl child is worthless as girls has to get married and sent to other houses. The investment done in girls education cannot come back as she is married and goes to her husband house. Therefore they find no necessity of educating their daughters and hence they pay more attention to educate their sons with expectation that their sons will financially help them in future.

By applying the concept of intersectionality, it is concluded that the main structure of domination is gender intersecting with caste, class and religion with unequal gender relations and power imbalances limiting girls' school attainment (Crenshaw, 1989). This is the instrument of patriarchy (Connell, 2002). The study exhibits that perceptions of gender, gendered society and gender institute restricts girls' education discussing the persistence of gender gaps and indicates how the combined effects of culture and poverty reduce education opportunity for girls. Moreover, due to illiteracy and conservative thoughts from rural area, secondary education is more preferably given to sons as they can provide financial support and care their parents in their old age. Most of the girls reported that their brothers are going school and parents have planned to give them higher education as far as possible. Most of the girls reported that they are interested to complete the secondary school but are given less opportunity than the boys. Regardless of academic talent, many were kept out of

school to carry out house work and in agriculture. In some cases, girls work for their brothers' expenses and wellbeing (Pandey, 2011). Many parents still viewed that the more schooling a girl continued, -the more complex problems are created, like difficult to find her husband and problem herself to adjust in his house, chances to make boyfriend and have self/love marriage, raise voice at them. Their conclusion was that it does not suit at girl to be cleverer, because that may result badly or against their socio-cultural and religious beliefs, which stigmatizes the girls themselves and their family disempowering them in all aspects of their everyday life (Goffman, 1963).

The section as a whole discusses that different factors is overlapping which are linked to different levels of society. An important point in the context is that the factors are interrelated and it is difficult to find solution. During the study some of the girls during interviews seemed optimistic and they positively expressed if girls get sociocultural, religious and economical value including all other opportunities equal to a boy, they can also do the work that a boy can do. Similarly, though the majority of parents reported that girls' schooling is less important than boys'. It reflects that even Nepali mothers who had sons recounted that investing in the education of a daughter whom typically would remain emotionally close to her parents after marriage might be better long-term strategy (Levine, 2006).

5.2 Conclusion

Nepal is a very gender unequal society where the situation of girls and women is critical. In the context, gender inequality is produced and manifested in everyday life with the result of a high dropout rate of young girls. Another the perceptions of gender; the values connected to women such as ritual impurity, moral and religious issues act in combination with gendered social structures like the family, including marriage heritance and property relations and the education system to create practices in family life, in school and in the labor market which result in girls' secondary school dropout. Hence, there are many challenges for education of girls and women. Education is important for them and thus their school dropout should be avoided. However almost all the girls reported interested to continue school; they have been primarily lead out of school because of the impact of gender. Yet there is not a single reason, but different mechanisms for production of gender inequality intersect to lead

them out of education. The study shows that this is a complex social problem and to solve the problem a team approach from all the stakeholders responsible to this issue is required. That is why, the interventions for keeping the girls in school and improve their situation crucially deserve the continued support from family, school and the organizations like NGOs, INGOs including the government focusing on prevention by addressing the gendered cultural practice at home and school including gendered stigma and discrimination in order to provide a favorable environment for girls to complete their secondary education.

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ANNEX I
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Describe your family background.
2. Whom do you stay with?
3. What is your parents'/guardian's occupation?
4. What is your parents/ guardian's level of education?
5. How many siblings do you have?
6. Has anyone in your family reached secondary school?
7. Describe your educational background.
8. When did you start schooling?
9. How was your performance at school?
10. What are the things you liked most at school?
11. What things did you not like while at school?
12. At what level did you drop school?
13. Explain your school dropping process.
14. What factors made you drop out of school?
15. Whose decision was it for you to leave school? Why?
16. What role did your parents/ guardians play in the process?
17. What did your parents do, or say about you dropping out of school?
18. Did your teachers do anything about your drop out?
19. What were the challenges you experienced when you were going to school?
20. What is your life like after dropping out from school?
21. How do you spend your time now that you are out of school?
22. What type of work do you do at home, or outside the home?
23. Are you happy with the type of life you are living now?
24. What were your ambitions/ how else would you have liked to spend your life?
25. Where do you see yourself in one year from now?
26. What else do you plan to do in the future?
27. Do you think something could have been done to ensure that you did not drop out of school?
28. Do you have any additional comments?