

STRUCTURES OF DENIAL: STUDENT REPRESENTATION IN NEPAL'S HIGHER EDUCATION

Pramod Bhatta, Lila Adhikari, Manu Thada and Ramesh Rai

Introduction

In this paper, we focus on the nature, extent and dimensions of unequal representation in Nepal's higher education. Unequal access to, and control over, income opportunities, productive resources and services such as education and health, has been a lived reality of people across both space and time. Very often, such inequalities are a result of systematic exclusionary practices adopted by the state. Social exclusion on the basis of the supposed superiority of one race/caste/gender/religion/group over the others has been rampant in all societies, ancient and modern. The exclusionary initiatives and horrendous effects of racism in the USA, European colonialism, apartheid in South Africa, Nazism in Germany and casteism in the Indian subcontinent are some of the few glaring examples of social exclusion. Social exclusion is a multi-dimensional concept that refers not only to a state or situation (e.g., deprivation in the economic, social and political spheres) but also to the processes and mechanisms embedded in the societal relationships by which the people are excluded (de Haan 1998: 12–13). According to the Department for International Development (DFID), social exclusion refers to a process by which "certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live" (DFID 2005: 3). DFID estimates that about 891 million in the world experience discrimination on the basis of ethnic, linguistic and religious identities alone (DFID 2005: 5).

Nepal is a multiethnic and multilingual country and the extent of such diversity is only becoming more recognized. Various studies have shown that the Nepali state has historically pursued a policy of homogenizing its population. The *Muluki Ain* of 1854, promulgated by Janga Bahadur Rana, is seen as the first attempt by the state to bring all people residing within the territory of Nepal into the 'Hill-Hindu' ambit. Subsequent attempts to create a pan-Nepali nationalism based on 'one nation, one

language, one culture'¹ and its effects on the country's ethnic and linguistic diversity have been well documented.² It has been widely alleged that in this process of nation-state formation, some groups have immensely benefited while others have been systematically marginalized and excluded. Various studies have shown that three groups—Brahmins, Chhetris and Newars—have an overwhelming presence in all sectors of the state and polity, media and even the non-government while others are underrepresented (see, for example, Chaudhary 2005 v.s.; Gurung 2006; Onta, Maharjan, Humagain and Parajuli 2008).³ It is, therefore, not surprising that issues related to the overrepresentation of some groups such as Brahmin-Chhetris and Newars and underrepresentation of others such as Dalits, Janajatis, Madhesis and religious minorities in the state and polity have surfaced vehemently after the overthrow of the Panchayat regime by a popular democratic movement of 1990. The post-1990 period has witnessed a rapid reassertion of one's ethnic and language identity.⁴

It is now widely believed that without inclusion in education, it is impossible to accomplish inclusion in other sectors. This is because the credentials provided by education are supposed to level the playing field and make it fair, just and universally acceptable. Once equality of opportunity in access and outcome is achieved and institutionalized in education, it may not be necessary to have separate provisions for inclusion in the other sectors in societies that believe in and practice meritocracy. However, although there are widespread assumptions about the general nature of social exclusion in Nepal's higher education, little is known about the specific nature and extent of inequalities prevalent in the system, both at school and higher education levels. We can find data, for instance about the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) participation and pass rates for boys and girls but no such data exist for Dalits, Janajatis and other marginalized communities. It is only very recently that Nepal's policy-makers are making concerted efforts to understand and encourage the representation of Dalits, Janajatis and women in general in school

-
- 1 This was evident especially during the Panchayat regime (1960–1990).
 - 2 For instance, the 1952/54 census listed 44 languages, which gradually decreased to 36, 17 and 18 in the 1961, 1971 and 1981 census, respectively.
 - 3 Moreover, it is usually the males from these groups who have been highly overrepresented.
 - 4 From 1991, the number of language and caste and ethnic groups listed in the census has increased significantly. The 1991 census listed 36 language groups and the 2001 census has listed 92 languages and about 100 caste and ethnic groups.

education.⁵ But much remains to be done to understand and address underrepresentation in higher education. We have, in this research, precisely focused on this lack. The overall objective of this research is to explore the nature and magnitude of representation of Dalits, Janajatis, Madhesis, religious minorities and women in general in Nepal's higher education and the causes for such representation.

Given the present discussions regarding state restructuring and the creation of a socially inclusive new polity in Nepal through a representative constituent assembly, we have felt that it is an opportune moment to research access to higher education for communities that have thus far been marginalized and underrepresented. The importance of this research is further justified because while there are loud calls for the new Nepal to be socially inclusive, there is very little discussion regarding the educational pipeline that will have to produce the variously competent women, Dalits, Janajatis and Madhesis who will face the challenges of a more inclusive new Nepal. We believe that this research will provide an important foundation on which more informed public discussions and debates on these issues can be advanced in the years to come.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows. We begin with a description of the research methodology used in the study. This is followed by a presentation of the key findings based on an analysis of student enrolment data. We then discuss some of the important factors that have been responsible for unequal representation in higher education. Finally, we provide some recommendations for enhancing student diversity in Nepal's higher education.

Research Methodology

This study centers on the Tribhuvan University (TU) system of Nepal. TU was formally established in 1959 AD and the TU system now covers the entire country with its 60 constituent and 416 affiliated campuses. Until 1991, it was the only university in the country offering courses in multiple disciplines.⁶ It is still Nepal's biggest university with a student population

5 This is evidenced by the publication of annual Flash Reports by the Ministry of Education (MoE) since 2004 which contain disaggregated data on student enrolment, completion and achievement in primary and secondary levels by region, gender, caste and ethnicity. Moreover, the MoE has implemented scholarships and other incentive programs targeted at the traditionally marginalized communities in school education.

6 Another university in existence was the Mahendra Sanskrit University (now Nepal Sanskrit University) established in 1986 for the purpose of uplifting

of 290,833 in 2008 (TU 2008). This enormous student size and geographical spread of the university, coupled with relatively low tuition fees, makes TU a very suitable institution for a study of student diversity because vulnerable groups are more likely to be in TU than in any other university in Nepal.

We have focused on the 60 constituent campuses of TU which together account for about 60 percent of the university's total student body. From these 60 campuses, we have selected 26 campuses for in-depth study of student enrolment patterns. The process of campus selection has been purposive: campuses have been selected in accordance with the geographical spread, significance (size), disciplinary diversity and the availability of student enrolment data. The campuses selected are listed in Appendix 1. From the 26 campuses, we have obtained enrolment data of all the students studying at bachelors and masters levels.⁷ We have then classified these student enrolment data by caste, ethnicity, gender and region, and also religion in the case of Muslims on the basis of the students' family names. We have done this in accordance with the popular classification schemes promoted by various organizations and scholars. For instance, we have used the classifications promoted by National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN), National Dalit Commission, the Census of Nepal 2001, and by noted scholars such as Harka Gurung (2001, 2004) and Pitamber Sharma (2008). Many formal and informal interactions with various activists and scholars have been helpful in this classification process. The major categories we have used in the classification and analysis are: Hill Brahmin-Chhetri, Janajati, Newar, Madhesi, Dalit, and Muslim. Each of these categories has been further disaggregated by gender and sub-groups. In order to create multiple scenarios, we have treated Newars as a separate group and also as a Janajati. We have also disaggregated Janajatis and Dalits into Hill and Tarai (this includes the Bhitri Madhes or Inner Tarai). It should be noted that there are ongoing political debates

Sanskrit education in the country. After the economic and political liberalization ushered in by the 1990 People's Movement, a number of smaller universities have been established under the multi-university concept.

7 We have focused only on these two levels because the Intermediate (or Proficiency Certificate Level) and its equivalent Ten-Plus-Two are not internationally recognized as university education. Efforts are ongoing to phase out the Intermediate Level from the university and replace it by Ten-Plus-Two to be treated as the apex level of secondary education (See MoE 2009).

regarding the working definition of these categories and 'scientific bases' for these classifications.⁸

These student enrolment data have helped us to ascertain the nature and magnitude of student representation by caste, ethnicity, gender, region and religion in Nepal's higher education. Most of the data were obtained from the TU Planning Division but we also visited several campuses in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepalgunj, Butwal, Chitwan, Pokhara and Baglung to gain additional insights. At the same time, we carried out group discussions with students from various communities within and outside Kathmandu Valley in order to understand the perceived causes of exclusion in higher education. In total, 11 such group discussions were conducted with women, Madhesi, Janajati, Muslim and mixed community students studying in TU's various constituent campuses. Similarly, we interacted with university teachers, educationists, NGO representatives, activists and representatives of the concerned caste/ethnic/regional organizations.

We believe that the results of this research are representative of Nepal's higher education. First, the constituent campuses selected are cheaper than other community-run TU affiliated colleges as well as the private affiliated colleges and universities and are thus more affordable to the poor. Secondly, majority of them have hostel facilities and give priority to remote area and marginalized community students in granting these facilities. Thirdly, the constituent campuses have greater disciplinary diversity and they provide all the benefits such as tuition subventions and other incentives determined by TU. Thus, we believe they are more representative in terms of student diversity than other types of campuses.

We have noted several limitations in this study mostly with respect to the methods we have used to identify and classify students into various social categories. The student identities are not self reported. Thus, it is possible that many students were wrongly classified. This we assume is partly responsible for overrepresentation of Hill Brahmin-Chhetris and underrepresentation of others. For instance, it is common among Dalits and even Janajatis to assume Brahmin-Chhetri-like caste names. In such instances, students have been classified as Hill Brahmin-Chhetris.

8 These debates have focused on who is/is not a Janajati, and more recently a Madhesi. There are also ongoing debates regarding whether there are Dalits within the Newars, and whether the Newars are a Janajati. Pratyoush Onta (2006) provides important insights into the Janajati sphere.

Similarly, many caste names are common to the hills and Tarai. In such cases, we have also taken into consideration the geographical location of the campus. These limitations may have altered the absolute representation of various groups by a few percentage points but we believe that they have not altered the relative placement of the group in the overrepresented-underrepresented ranking because the inter-group differences are quite substantial. However, in the absence of 'better' alternative methods of student classification in place at the moment, there is little we can do to overcome this limitation.

Student Representation: An Exploratory Analysis

In this section, we have carried out an exploratory analysis of student composition in the constituent campuses of Tribhuvan University by caste, ethnicity, region, and gender.

Overview of Student Representation

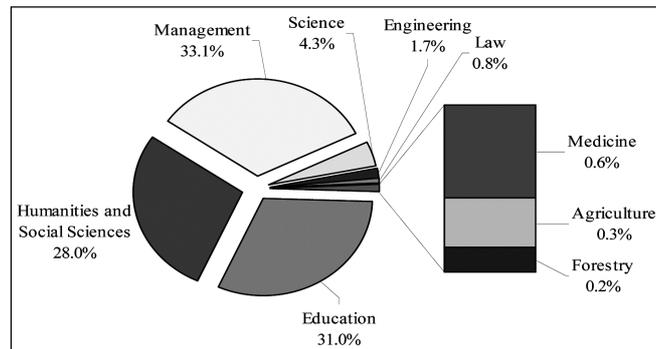
There are significant gender gaps in the TU student body. Of the total 183,968 students who were studying at bachelors and masters levels in TU in the academic year 2006/07 (UGC 2007), 62.3 percent were male and 37.7 percent were female students. When we looked at student distribution across faculties, the majority of the students were concentrated in the Management stream (33.1%) followed by Education (31%), Humanities and Social Sciences (28%), and Science and Technology (4.3%) (see Figure 1 for details). Thus, in all, 92.9 percent of the students were enrolled in general higher education and only 7.1 percent were enrolled in technical higher education.⁹ Within the technical higher education, more than 60 percent of the students were enrolled in the basic sciences (i.e., Basic Sciences and Science and Technology).

We have found significant gender differences in the distribution of students across subjects. When we looked at gender composition by general and technical higher education, women made up about 39 percent of the total student body in general education while they accounted for only 21.3 percent of the total student body in technical education. Female representation was comparatively better in Education, and Humanities and Social Sciences, in which they accounted for 43 and 41.4 percent of

⁹ Technical higher education includes the subjects Science and Technology, Engineering, Medicine, Agriculture, Veterinary and Forestry. General higher education includes Humanities and Social Sciences, Education, Management and Law.

the total student body respectively. In all other disciplines, their representation was lower than their overall representation of 37.7 percent. This representation was particularly low in technical subjects.

Figure 1: Student Distribution in Various Disciplines



Student Representation by Caste, Ethnicity and Region

Our analysis shows that the Hill Brahmin-Chhetris and Newars are, in general, overrepresented in the total student body in comparison to their total population size as reported by the 2001 Census. Hill Brahmin-Chhetris and Newars account for 68.4 and 12.3 percent of the total student body, respectively. Their proportional representation in the total population as reported in the 2001 Census is 30.89 and 5.48 percent, respectively.¹⁰ Likewise, Janajatis (excluding Newars), Madhesis (excluding Tarai Dalits and Tarai Janajatis), Dalits (Hill and Tarai combined) and Muslims are underrepresented in comparison to their total population as reported by 2001 Census. They constitute 12.7, 4.0, 1.4 and 0.2 percent of the total student body respectively (see Table 1).

When Newars are treated as a Janajati, the share of Janajatis increases to 25 percent. Similarly, when Tarai Dalits and Tarai Janajatis are included in the Madhesi category, the representation of Madhesi increases to 5.8 percent. This, however, does not alter the status of their representation.

¹⁰ The population of Hill Brahmin and Chhetris is slightly greater than reported in the 2001 Census because we have also included the *Sanyasi* group in this category.

Table 1: Over- and Underrepresented Groups in Higher Education

Social Group	% in Total Population*	% in Total Student Body	Status of Representation
Hill Brahmin-Chhetri	30.89	68.4	OR
Newar	5.48	12.3	OR
Male	49.94	62.3	OR
Janajati	31.72	12.7	UR
Madhesi	13.77	4.0	UR
Dalit	12.77	1.4	UR
Muslim	4.27	0.2	UR
Female	50.06	37.7	UR

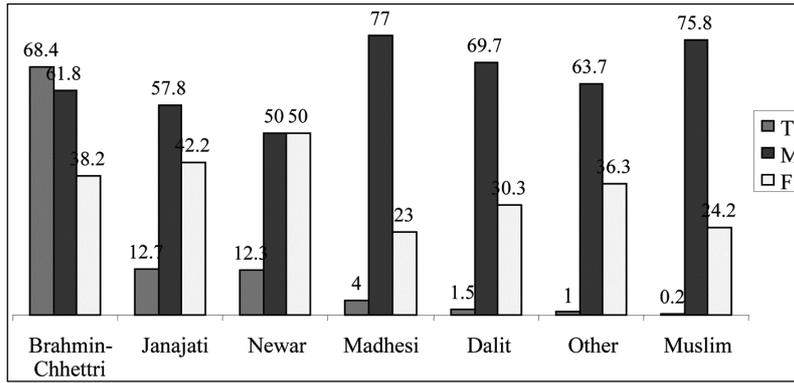
OR=overrepresented; UR=underrepresented.

* Source: 2001 Census.

Within each group, the representation of male students outweighs the representation of female students. This is graphically shown in Figure 2. For instance, within the Brahmin-Chhetri students, females account for only 38 percent of the total Brahmin-Chhetri student body. Similarly, within the Janajatis, female students account for 42 percent, within the Dalits 30 percent, within the Muslims 24 percent, and within the Madhesis, only 23 percent. The only exception is Newar in which the representation of male and female students is surprisingly equal. It should be noted that the representation of females is comparatively better in the Janajati category. This scenario further improves if Newar is treated as a Janajati: the proportion of females rises to about 46 percent. Our analysis shows that gender disparities in student representation are more pronounced among the Dalits, Madhesis and Muslims. It should be noted that all of these groups also have low representation in the overall student body.

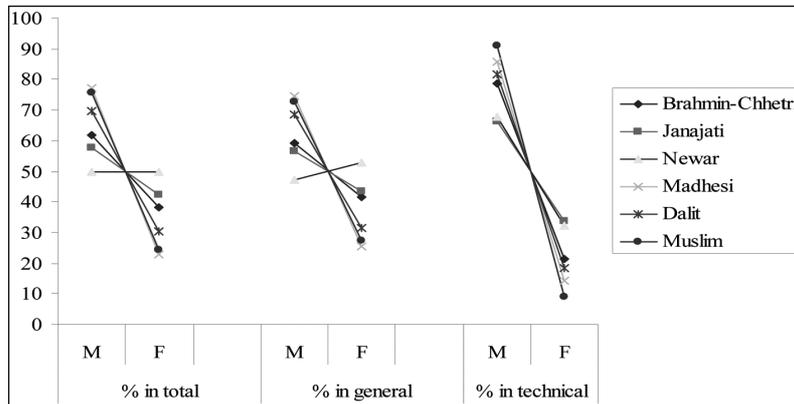
This unequal representation by gender becomes more pronounced as we move from general to technical higher education (see Figure 3). For instance, among the Hill Brahmin-Chhetris, females account for 41.7 percent of the total Brahmin-Chhetri students in general education but only 21 percent in technical education. These percentages are 43.3 and 33.8 respectively in the case of Janajatis, 31.4 and 18.4 percent in Dalits, 25.3 and 14.4 percent in Madhesis, and 27.4 and 9 percent in Muslims. Even among the Newars, where there is equal representation by gender in the total student body, females account for only 32 percent in technical higher education as compared to 52.8 percent in general higher education.

Figure 2: Student Representation by Social Identity



Gender disparities are also marked in terms of relative representation within a social group. In other words, groups that are relatively well represented in the overall student body have comparatively better female representation than those that are not well represented. This is further discussed in the following section.

Figure 3: Student Representation in General and Technical Education by Gender across Social Groups



Intra-group Disparities in Student Representation

We have also found significant intra-group inequalities in representation in higher education. For example, within the Dalits, Tarai Dalits account

for only 6 percent of the total Dalit student population while Hill Dalits account for 94 percent. Their proportional representation in the 2001 Census is 38.4 and 55.7 percent respectively. Within the Hill Dalits, four caste groups, namely Damai, Kami, Sarki and Sunar, account for 91.5 percent of the total Dalit student body but only 55 percent of the total Dalit population.¹¹ Moreover, Kami alone account for 50.7 percent of the total Dalit student representation in higher education.

In the case of all Madhesi population (including Tarai Janajatis, Tarai high and middle castes, Tarai Dalits and Muslims), we have found that Tarai high and middle castes are overrepresented: while these castes account for 42 percent of the total Madhesi population as reported by the 2001 Census, they account for 67 percent of the total Madhesi student body in our research. Tarai Janajatis are evenly represented: they account for 29.8 percent of the total Madhesi population and 28.5 percent of the total Madhesi student body in our research. However, Tarai Dalits and Muslims are underrepresented. Tarai Dalits account for 15 percent of the total Madhesi population but only 1.5 percent of the total Madhesi student body in our study. Similarly, Muslims account for 13.3 percent of the total Madhesi population but only 3.1 percent of the total Madhesi student body.

In the case of Janajatis, five major hill Janajatis (Magar, Gurung, Tamang, Rai and Limbu) account for 80.4 percent of the total student population while their representation in 2001 census is 61.6 percent only. When we use the classification of Janajatis promoted by NFDIN¹² (which includes Newars in the Janajati category), the Advanced group (consisting of Newar and Thakali) accounts for 12.4 percent of the total Janajati representation of 25 percent, followed by Disadvantaged group at 8.4 percent and Marginalized group at 4 percent. The representation of Highly Marginalized group is 0.1 percent and that of Endangered group is almost nil (only 9 students). In relative terms, students from the Advanced group constitute 49.6 percent of the total Janajati student population, followed by Disadvantaged at 33.7 percent and Marginalized group at 16.1 percent. The Highly Marginalized and Endangered group students

11 This statement needs some further qualification as all Dalit students using the generic caste name Nepali have been included in one of these four groups.

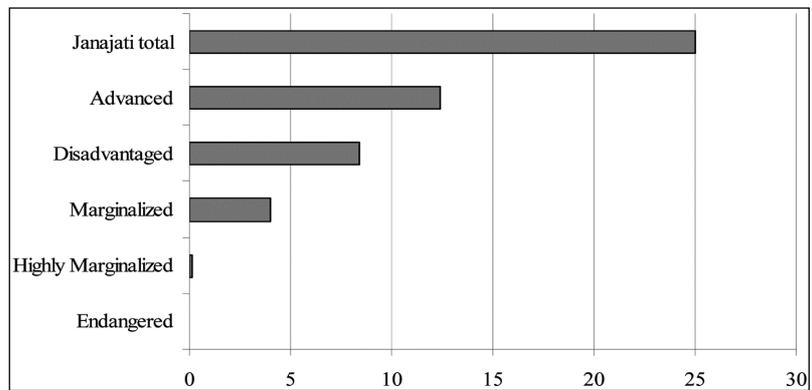
12 Refer to Appendix 2 for the details of the classification schema of NFDIN. According to NFDIN, this classification is based on Human Development Index (HDI) parameters. However, Onta (2006: 316) has noted a lack of documents specifying the methodology used in this classification.

account for less than 1 percent of the total Janajati student body. This data is graphically represented in Figure 4.

The representation of female students also gradually declines as we move from Advanced to Endangered group. The representation of females is 50.1 percent in the Advanced group, 45.5 percent in the Disadvantaged group, 35.5 in the Marginalized group and only 19.1 percent in the Highly Marginalized and Endangered groups combined.

There are also regional disparities within the Janajati category. For instance, in the total Janajati population of 72,10,210 (excluding Newars) as reported by the Census 2001, Tarai Janajatis account for 30.8 percent. In our research, students from Tarai Janajatis account for 13.3 percent of the total Janajati student body. Within the Tarai Janajatis, Tharus account for 69.1 percent of the total population of these groups while in our research they account for 82 percent of the total student body from these groups.

Figure 4: Representation of Janajati Students According to NFDIN Classification



Changes in Student Representation across Levels

We have also found marked variations in student representation at the bachelors and masters levels. For instance, while female students make up 43.7 percent of the total student body at bachelors level, their representation decreases by 13 percentage points to only 30 percent at the masters level. Such variations are also found across the various social groups used in this study. For instance, Janajatis account for 13.8 percent of the total student body at bachelors level but only 10.3 percent of the

total student body at masters level. These figures are 12.8 and 11.4 percent for Newars, 1.7 and 0.9 percent for Dalits, and 0.2 and 0.1 percent for Muslims, respectively. On the other hand, the proportional representation of Hill Brahmin-Chhetris and Madhesis increases from 66.8 percent to 71.7 percent and 3.6 percent to 4.7 percent respectively.

Discussion: The Causes of Unequal Representation

Our evidence shows that there are marked inter- and intra-group inequalities in terms of proportional representation in Nepal's higher education institutions. Some groups are highly overrepresented while others are underrepresented, and the magnitude of such inequalities increases as we move from general to technical education. Within each group, there are further disparities in terms of proportional representation. Moreover, there are significant gender disparities within all groups and the degree of gender inequality increases as we move from general to technical education. These findings largely confirm popularly held assumptions about the general nature of disparities in Nepal's higher education. In a country where, in higher education, the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) is less than 6 percent and Gender Parity Index (GPI) is 0.4 (UNESCO 2007), it is not surprising to note massive inequalities with respect to access and representation. And this scenario, where universities do not adequately reflect existing social diversities, is not unique to Nepal but is common in many other countries with similar enrolment ratios.¹³

In this section, we discuss some of the factors responsible for such unequal representation. We would like to remind our readers that while many of the causes of underrepresentation in higher education are generalizable or common to all social groups, many other causes are group-specific. We focus on both the commonalities as well as the specificities. The discussion that follows is based on a review of secondary sources, and individual and groups interactions with university students, university teachers, activists and scholars.

13 See, for instance, Morley, Leach and Lugg (2008) for a discussion of the African scenario. They have shown that higher education opportunity structures in Ghana and Tanzania (with GER of 5 and 1 respectively in 2005) appear to reflect existing social inequalities despite various efforts to widen participation. See also World Bank (2002: 52–58) for a more general treatment of the persisting inequalities in tertiary education in various parts of the world.

Overarching Issues

First, it is important to ascertain if higher education institutions practice discriminatory policies in entrance, or whether such discriminations emanate at the lower levels of the education system, in secondary and primary school levels. For this, it is important to find out what percentage of the candidates from different social groups eligible to enter the colleges are actually in colleges. Unfortunately, such data is not available in Nepal at the moment. Studies using similar procedures in India have shown that social exclusion does not occur at the university level and whatever unequal representation is seen in the colleges is merely a reflection of the inequalities originating and continuing at lower levels of the education system (see, for instance, Rana and Mehta 2008).

Evidence from enrolment trends in Nepal's primary and secondary levels shows that many causes of underrepresentation in higher education do in fact emanate at the bottom of the education ladder starting right from grade 1. When we look at the primary education enrolment 15 years back, i.e., in 1993 when the current university students were supposed to be in primary education, we find significant gender disparities in access to education. In 1993, the GER for girls was only 85 against a GER of 129 for boys, and girls constituted only 39 percent of all primary students (MoE 1993). Similarly, when we look at the enrolment data of secondary education 5 years back, i.e., in 2003 (when the current university students were supposed to be in secondary education), the GER for girls was 41.3 against a GER of 51.5 percent for the boys. The Net Enrollment Rates (NER) were 26.3 and 32.7 percent for the girls and boys respectively, and the share of girls in the total secondary student population was only 38.8 percent (MoE 2003). Even when we look at the SLC examination results, there are fewer girl candidates appearing in these exams compared to boys, and girls have lower overall pass rates and lower overall performance than boys (Bhatta 2004).¹⁴ Various studies have shown widespread differences in the literacy, dropout and cycle completion rates for different social groups and it can be seen that groups underrepresented in higher education also have lower literacy levels, higher dropout and

14 Unfortunately, no systematic data exist for the SLC performance of other social groups. However, in a survey of 22,500 students from 2002, 2003 and 2004 batches of SLC, lower pass rates were noted for Dalits and Janajatis compared to Newars, Brahmins and Chhetris (Bhatta 2005: 75). Low SLC completion among Tarai Dalits, Hill Dalits, Hill Janajatis and Muslims is also noted by DFID and World Bank (2005: 4-37, Fig. 4.3).

lower school completion rates.¹⁵ Recent data suggests that gender gaps in enrollments have narrowed down: in 2008, the NERs for boys and girls were 93.2 and 90.4 in primary, 58.0 and 56.6 in lower secondary and 37.8 and 35.0 in secondary level, respectively. Janajati representation has also improved at all levels of school education. Nonetheless, Dalits continue to be underrepresented in secondary level, accounting for only 7.8 percent of the total student enrollments (DoE 2008).

Other causes of underrepresentation surface much higher in the education ladder. There is strong evidence to suggest that geographical accessibility is one such cross-cutting issue that affects many social groups both over and underrepresented. According to the Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS) data, the Mid Western region had the lowest tertiary level GER followed by the Far Western and Eastern regions. In the urban areas, Kathmandu Valley had much higher GER than other urban areas. And, all rural areas had significantly lower GERs than the national average, and within them, the western mountains and hills had the lowest GER (near about 0) (CBS 2004: 76, Table 5.16). Similarly, the geographical distribution of campuses (urban centered) and availability of disciplinary diversity shows marked inequalities. Of the total 476 constituent and affiliated campuses of TU in 2007, only 30 were located in the Far West and 28 in Mid West while the Central region had 248 such campuses (TU 2008; see also Parajuli et al. 2007: 50–51). All big constituent campuses of Tribhuvan University providing courses across multiple disciplines—Mahendra Morang Campus, Thakur Ram Multiple Campus, Prithivi Narayan Campus or the University Campus—are located in the major cities. Campuses located in more remote areas provide fewer course or level choices. For instance, Jumla campus, located in Jumla of Karnali only offers certificate level in Management and certificate and bachelors levels in Education. In the entire Far Western region comprising Seti and Mahakali zones, no courses are offered at all in Management (a relatively popular subject) and no masters level is offered

15 See, for instance, DFID and World Bank (2005) for educational attainment by caste/ethnicity. According to this study, the proportion of people who have never been to school is highest among Hill Dalits, Tarai Dalits, Muslims and Hill Janajatis (DFID and World Bank 2005: 12-6, Table 12.1), and completion of primary education is lowest among Hill Dalits, Tarai Dalits and Muslims (p. 4–37, Fig. 4.37). The proportion of the population with grades 5–10 education is also the lowest among Hill Dalits, Tarai Dalits and Muslims (DFID and World Bank 2005: 12-6, Table 12.1). See also Gurung (2001, 2004), TPAMF (2004: 46–49) and UNDP (2004: 179).

in humanities and education in the three constituent campuses located in Mahendranagar, Dadeldhura and Doti. Similarly, Gorkha Campus in Gorkha district offers certificate and bachelors in education only. This scenario is comparatively better in the Eastern region where available campuses provide multiple courses across disciplines. Thus, even where there are colleges, they may not be providing subjects of one's choice or the next level of education.

We were also interested to know if caste/ethnicity was a major determinant of access to higher education. Research carried out in India has shown that "Caste is significant not in itself but because of the congruence between caste, rank and economic position. By and large, the lower castes are poor, and it is their poverty, rather than caste status, which tends to bar them from enjoying the fruits of new educational opportunities" (Chanana 2001: 265). In our interactions with college students, many participants alleged that teachers (most of whom come from higher caste backgrounds) practiced caste-based discrimination in the classrooms, giving more attention to their community students while neglecting those from other communities. These students have also alleged that they get lower marks just because they belong to certain communities. Such discriminatory practices have been reported particularly by Madhesi students. They have stated that they have felt it difficult to make friends with students from other communities and even in the hostels, they are often not treated well. One Madhesi student who wanted to write a thesis on the Madhesi movement was not allowed to do so by the supervisor because the supervisor thought that the topic was not worthy of research. Gender-based violence (such as writing obscene graffiti on the walls of girls' toilet, and sexually-directed harassment by peers and teachers) was also reported in a number of interactions. However, what also emerged during such discussions was that teachers exhibited biases based on academic abilities of the students. In one discussion we had with 20 Dalit students studying in technical education, the majority of the students had stated that their school teachers had played a major role in facilitating their access to higher education because they were deemed as intelligent students with potential. Evidence regarding these allegations is inconclusive in our study and we feel that these issues are worthy of further research.

Another cross-cutting issue is income poverty. As shown by the Nepal Living Standards Survey (NLSS) data, the GER in tertiary level of the richest quintile was 10 percent while the poorest and second poorest quintiles had GERs of nearly 0 (CBS 2004: 77, Table 5.17). Although

studying in TU constituent campuses is not expensive in terms of tuition fees, the costs of living in an urban area are quite expensive and, with inadequate support mechanisms of the campus (even those with the best hostel facilities cannot accommodate more than 4 percent of the total enrolled students), are unaffordable to many prospective students. Evidence shows that poverty is more prevalent among marginalized groups (See NESAC 1998; DFID and World Bank 2007). On top of it all, if a family has to make choice between education of son and daughter due to poverty, the son will unquestioningly get the priority; the girl will have to wait until the economic condition of the family improves, which often may not be the case.

An important insight provided by this research is the huge enrolment gap in general and technical higher education. If higher education is to fulfill its developmental promise or function, research elsewhere has shown that the enrolments in the two streams need to be pretty even or even biased towards technical higher education. In the OECD countries, on average, 37.7 percent of the university students graduate in technical education.¹⁶ However, in Nepal, higher education is overwhelmingly biased towards general education, and within it, towards the humanities and social sciences. This scenario had been noted in the early 1960s by a UNESCO Commission led by Hugh Wood and Bruno Knall (Wood and Knall 1962) who had recommended restricting entry into general higher education, especially in the humanities. Assuming that students from remote rural areas and public schools flock into humanities and social sciences because of the poor quality of math and science education in those areas and schools,¹⁷ it is very likely that technical higher education is filled by students from select elite schools who further undergo

16 The subjects included in the technical category are Health and Welfare, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences and Agriculture, Mathematics and Computer Science, and Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction (OECD 2007: 69)

17 This assumption is not hypothetical because a study by Shyam KC (forthcoming) shows that the more remote the school, the more likely that its overall environment will be less conducive to teaching-learning, more likely that teachers will be unqualified and more likely that school will remain open for fewer days. Similarly, Bhatta (2004) has noted that the SLC performance in mathematics and science is much lower than other subjects and overall average performance, and there is greater variation in school performance in these subjects. These two subjects also have the largest gender gap in pass rate, and the difference in pass rate among private and public schools was also high (2004: 302–303).

intensive training in private institutions providing bridge courses and entrance preparation classes to gain entry into these institutions. At the same time, the increase in the proportion of Madhesi students in technical higher education as compared to general higher education needs further qualification. During group discussions, it was repeatedly stated that Madhesi students prefer to enroll in technical education as compared to general education because the prospects of getting employment or self-employment are higher in technical education.

Lack of employment opportunities after graduation (due to the perceived low quality and relevance of education) and fear of failure in the examinations (it should be noted that failure rates are quite high in TU) coupled with increase in the opportunities for foreign employment have also been reported as playing a major part in whether prospective students actually come to universities or colleges. Evidence indicates that traditional patterns of foreign migration are gradually changing. In the past, hill ethnic groups dominated such migration but now even Tarai is witnessing massive out-migration of its people to foreign countries for employment. Partly, this is because of increase in the population of Tarai due to out-migration from the hills. But it is also the case that more Madhesis are out-migrating to Gulf countries and to India for work. When we look at the age structure of these migrants, the majority of them come from the 20–30 age brackets with the peak at 22 years indicating that many of them are prospective university students (Adhikari and Gurung 2003). An issue which was raised in many group discussions was that nowadays people engaged in overseas employment have a higher social status and are better role models in the community than Nepali university graduates because of their higher earning capability.

Moreover, lack of adequate information about admissions and support mechanisms has also been cited as one of the causes of unequal access. The constituent campuses of TU do not generally make admission-related advertisements in the media. Similarly, there is also a lack of adequate information dissemination regarding the various support mechanisms that are in place for needy students from poor and marginalized communities. Prospective students have to get this information from their fellow students or only once they have formally enrolled in the campuses. This lack of adequate information does not directly discourage students from entering higher education but rather it does not encourage them to come to colleges.

Group-specific Causes

Many of the causes of underrepresentation in higher education institutions are group specific. For instance, in the case of women, and more specifically in the case of Madhesi women, the practice of dowry is seen as a major cause of female discontinuity in higher education because the higher the level of the bride's education, higher the level of groom's education too and this means the bride's parents have to offer higher dowry. This scenario discourages many parents from sending their daughters to colleges and universities for higher studies.

Similarly, menstruation has also been cited as playing some part in women's higher education. In many parts of Nepal, particularly among the high caste Hindus, menstruation is associated with physical and mental pollution. During their monthly cycle, women are prohibited from eating certain foods (such as milk), joining religious activities, using public water sources and even barred from touching others (*chuna nahune*). Thus, many girls are absent from schools and colleges during this period, thus affecting the regularity of their studies. In addition, menstruation is a symbol of womanhood and denotes that the girl has entered adulthood and is ready for marriage.

Many female participants in group discussions also reported that family socialization into submissive roles affects how they participate in higher education. According to them, girls are socialized to play submissive roles in the family and society right from their birth. Certain norms and values – such as women should not pursue technical education, *arkāko ghar jāne jāt, chorāko lakṣyañle hīḍnuparne*, be self conscious of oneself, not talk too much in the public, not travel alone, and take care of siblings and help mother with household chores – all interfere with girls' mobility and time for study, thus also affecting their access to and performance in higher education, including their desire to study in more cosmopolitan colleges and their ability to write a dissertation that is based on extensive field work that requires spending substantial amount of time away from the family ambit. Evidence indicates that restrictions imposed upon women's mobility may be stronger among the Madhesi and Muslims, as shown by the very low participation in higher education of females from these communities.

Early marriage has also been reported as a major cause of discontinuity in higher education and there is evidence to suggest that early marriage affects girls more than boys. The 2001 Census data shows that the average age at marriage is 19.5 for females and 22.9 for boys. Although data shows that the average age of marriage is increasing, by 24

years of age 78.5 percent of the females are married compared to only 48 percent of the males (CBS 2003: 222–223). Generally, married girls become mothers soon after their marriage. The additional responsibilities associated with marriage (such as assuming prime responsibility for household chores and becoming a good daughter-in-law) and motherhood (such as looking after children) seriously interfere with women's desire and capacity to pursue further studies. Early marriage also affects boys in the sense that they have to bear the additional economic burdens associated with marriage as they have to look after their wives and kids too by finding a good job. The pressure for earning extra economic resources increases if the economic condition of the family is poor. Family pressure is generally greatest on the eldest son. However, generally, the pressures on females (both social and household) outweigh those on males.

In the case of Janajati men, recruitment in the British and Indian Armies (*bhartī jāne*) has also been reported as a major cause of their underrepresentation in higher education. Traditionally, young men from the Gurung, Rai, Limbu and Magar jatis have been highly represented in the foreign armies as the famed Gurkha fighters (known locally as the *Lāhures*). Recruitment, especially in the British Army is associated with high status, high income and more linkages. It has been reported by many group discussion participants that *bhartī jāne* is the first priority among the boys from these jatis even during school education. *Lahures* become the first choice for marriage and have a high status in their society. Unofficial estimates suggest that there are about 100,000 beginning applicants for the approximately 200–300 number of annual openings in the British Army and the majority of applicants take a break from or leave the school and college for good to engage in intensive physical trainings to get past the selection process. Similarly, for recruitment in the Indian Army, about 10–12 thousand applicants compete for about 700 annual openings. It has also been reported that those men who are not selected in the army tend to seek employment in other foreign countries rather than continuing their education in Nepal.

In the case of Muslims, it should be noted that Muslim children spend many years of their life studying religious education in Urdu in their Madrasah schools. The incompatibility between Madrasah education and that imparted in secular state schools is seen as an obstacle in their access to and continuity in higher education. Moreover, in the case of Muslim females, the culture of Burka (which prevents Muslim girls from

appearing in, and interacting with the public) further restricts their entry into non-secular higher education institutions.

In spite of all these hindrances, in the campuses we visited, teachers have noticed an increase in student diversity over the years. Such evidence is there in the case of gender representation (as shown by University Grant Commission [UGC] annual reports) but there is no hard evidence in the case of other marginalized groups. An overall increase in the awareness level of people regarding the intrinsic and instrumental values of education, greater institutionalization of schooling and corresponding increase in the participation of people in schooling, aided by channeling of remittance money into education may be some of the causes for this increase in participation. Even campuses that earlier practiced strict enrolment policies across all disciplines have stated that nowadays they are more lenient in general higher education and try to accommodate all applicants as far as possible. However, they have also noted that, with the expansion in both the coverage and disciplinary diversity of private colleges, the richer or elite sections of society that traditionally used to attend public campuses have now started moving into private campuses that hold classes more regularly and are supposedly providing better quality education. Thus, like in the school education, public-private disparities may be emerging in higher education too.

Implications: Enhancing Student Diversity in Nepal's Higher Education Institutions

The data above has shown that certain caste, gender, ethnic, religious and regional groups are overrepresented while others are underrepresented in higher education institutions in Nepal. This demands questions such as: to what extent should universities or higher education institutions mirror the existing social diversity of a society? Or, even before that, is it necessary for universities to be socially inclusive? For the champions of marketization in education, higher education is a commodity, available to those who can purchase it and governments should not subsidize higher education. However, many countries, both developed and developing, provide substantial portion of the university budget. For instance, in the case of TU in Nepal, more than 91 percent of its recurrent and 100 percent of its capital expenditure is provided by the government (TU 2065 v.s.: 22), and the students have to pay only a very nominal percent of the actual total cost incurred during the study. Other community and private universities also receive substantial funding from the government. In such instance, is it fair that universities receiving government subsidies be

highly over representative of some social groups and highly under representative of others?

Before indicating how universities can promote equitable participation of all social groups, it is useful to review what has been done until now to enhance the representation of hitherto underrepresented groups in Nepal's higher education. There are various scholarship schemes for the Dalits, Janajatis and women in general supported by the government and non-governmental organizations. For instance, MoE has been allocating scholarship quotas for Dalits, women, disabled and remote area students to pursue technical higher education in Nepal and abroad. The Ministry of Local Development (MoLD) also supports higher education of Dalits and Janajatis by providing funds through NFDIN and the Neglected, Suffered and Dalit Class Upliftment Development Board. Likewise, the Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB) has provision that all higher secondary schools affiliated to the board must provide free education to at least 3 percent of the total students—on a merit-basis to the poor, women, Janajati, Dalit, and disabled students (HSEB 2008). More recently, the Second Higher Education Project, 2007–2014 (financed by the World Bank and implemented by the UGC) has implemented the Student Financial Assistance Program since 2007/08 with the primary objective of providing financial assistance towards higher education of poor women, Dalit, Janajatis and geographically and socially backward groups. There are also various provisions for research related grants, training and fellowships specifically targeted at the marginalized community students (see Box 1 below for a description of some important initiatives).

It is as yet unclear the effectiveness of these targeted scholarships in enhancing access to and learning outcomes of students from various underrepresented groups. Scholarships undoubtedly form a necessary element of enhancing access of underrepresented groups and should be continued, although it is debatable if they are sufficient. We feel that the state, rather than merely facilitating the provisions of scholarships, should focus more on removing institutional barriers and instituting structural reforms in place, such as those outlined below.

Perhaps the first thing Nepal needs to do is establish more institutions of higher education and learning in various parts of the country to improve geographical access. For instance, our own research has shown that more localized campuses such as Mahendra Campus in Baglung and Bhojpur Campus in Bhojpur have better representation of the existing

Box 1: Various Scholarship Schemes for Marginalized Community Students

Scholarships Provided by NFDIN

In the year 2064/65 v.s., NFDIN provided 215 scholarships to various Janajati students based on its classification of Janajatis into 5 groups. Under this scheme, 2 seats are reserved for the Advanced group, 30 for the Disadvantaged, 80 for the Marginalized, 48 for the Highly Marginalized and 50 for the Endangered groups. In addition, it has been providing masters' scholarship to 26 students from these five groups and masters' thesis grant and also scholarships to engage in tertiary trainings such as journalism, social mobilization, JTA, CMA, lab assistants and micro-hydro technicians. In reality, it has been noted that the quotas for the Endangered group have been unfulfilled (only 32 out of 50 were provided with scholarship) while those of the Marginalized, Disadvantaged, and Advanced groups have been overfulfilled.

Scholarships Provided by Neglected, Suffered and Dalit Class Upliftment Development Board

This Board, established in 2054 v.s. in the MoLD, has been providing scholarships to Dalit students in higher education since 2055/56 v.s. on a regular basis. Starting from approximately 30 scholarships in the first year, the Board now provides 350 scholarships annually to Dalits studying at various levels from higher secondary to PhD, in both technical and non-technical subjects. The annual budget allocated for such scholarships has also gradually increased from NRs 450,000 in the first year to 5,500,000 in the year 2064/65 v.s.

Student Financial Assistance Program

The Second Higher Education Project, 2007–2014 (financed by the World Bank and implemented by the University Grants Commission) has implemented the Student Financial Assistance Program since 2007/08 with the primary objective of selecting and financing higher education of women, Dalit, Janajatis and geographically and socially backward groups. It is expected that in the project period, a total of 7,800 students (4,300 in higher secondary and 3,500 in bachelors) throughout the country will be provided with financial assistance (SFAFDB 2007).

PDRC's Efforts to Enhance Dalit Participation in Higher Education

Through its Youth Empowerment in Science and Technology program, Professional Development and Resources Centre (PDRC), an NGO, has been promoting the participation of Dalit students in technical higher education. Academically bright students from various parts of the country are selected through PDRC's network and provided with intensive preparation classes and study materials to excel in entrance examinations of medicine, engineering and other technical subjects. Students who cannot afford to study after SLC are also supported to find colleges and individual donors that provide scholarships. Through its Family Focus Program, PDRC has been identifying needy Dalit students and providing them with books, uniforms, counseling and hostel facilities so they can continue their study in Kathmandu. And through its Empowering Dalit Daughters initiative, PDRC has been supporting 24 female Dalit students in various faculties to continue their higher education. PDRC has reported that about 1000 Dalit students have benefited in various ways from these initiatives since 2003.

local population dynamics than more cosmopolitan campuses.¹⁸ Likewise, TU affiliated colleges that are run by the communities have a better representation of female students.¹⁹ At the same time, courses at such localized colleges need to be further diversified so that students do not have to travel far to study the desired subject(s). However, educational expansion in itself may not be followed by greater democratization in terms of increasing access to underrepresented communities: while more students from marginalized communities may be in the system, it is most likely that even these marginalized students are from the relatively well off families in their communities (see Chanana 2001: 269 for a discussion of the Indian scenario).

Thus, to overcome the limitation noted above, Nepal certainly needs to practice some form of affirmative action or positive discrimination over a period of years targeted specifically at the hitherto underrepresented groups because this is probably the best way to develop the situation for the underrepresented groups. On an absolute scale, all groups except Brahmin-Chhetris and Newars need to be included in this policy. However, the policy should not stop here and also simultaneously address relative disparities within these groups that arise from a complex interplay of geographical distance and economic condition. For instance, while all Janajati groups need to be targeted, within them, more priority needs to be given to the Marginalized, Highly marginalized and Endangered groups. Similarly, in the case of Dalits, Tarai Dalits need to be given more priority than Hill Dalits. Within the Hill Dalits, groups other than Kami, Damai and Sarki need to be given preferential treatment. In general, there is also a need to target Madhesi groups. On top of it all, women from all of these marginalized categories need to be prioritized.

The universities can be encouraged to take the lead in devising innovative affirmative action policies. Currently, TU and other universities receiving state subsidies are not being proactive enough with regard to enhancing social diversity in their classrooms. The constituent colleges of TU are required to provide merit-based scholarships to about 20 percent of the total students and tuition subventions to all disabled students and those injured in the People's Movement. Apart from this,

18 For instance, Mahendra Campus has a very good representation of Magar and Dalit communities and Bhojpur Campus has a good representation of Rai community, all of which are underrepresented in higher education.

19 According to UGC (2007), about 45% of the total students studying in TU affiliated colleges were females.

there are no explicit obligations to ensure that TU and other universities enhance student diversity. We feel that such obligations are necessary not only to make student life more attractive for the minorities but also to provide a better set of graduates to a multicultural Nepal. Thus, as an important first step, we feel that the subsidies being received by the universities need to be explicitly linked to enhancing student diversity. This requires, among others, the development and use of formula-based funding in the case of government support to higher education institutions, whereby universities that show targeted improvements in the representation of underrepresented groups receive more subsidies from the state. This will provide an incentive for universities to meet government set targets, but will not force them to do so and will allow them to do so in their own ways.²⁰ In fact, this is not a new concept in Nepal and been widely used by the MoE in school education to provide extra incentives to schools that show improvements in the enrolment and retention of Dalits and female students. There is no reason why it cannot, and should not, be extended in higher education.

Acknowledgements

The research for this paper was undertaken through a grant provided by the Ford Foundation to Martin Chautari. We would like to thank both the Ford Foundation and Martin Chautari for providing us with this opportunity. We would like to thank all Martin Chautari staff for their help, suggestions and comments on our research process and outcomes. We would like to thank the Tribhuvan University Planning Division for providing us with student enrolment data. We would also like to thank the campus body of Nepalgunj, Butwal, Rampur, Prithivi Narayan and Baglung campuses for their help during our visits to these campuses. Similarly, we would like to thank all the students, social activists and the academics who participated in our group discussions and interactions and provided the information with which we could accomplish this task. Finally, we would like to thank Dr. Seira Tamang and Dr. Pratyoush Onta from Martin Chautari, Dr. Andreas Follesdal from the University of Oslo, and Dr. Fred Shepardson for going through the previous drafts of this paper and providing important insights and suggestions for improvement. However, any remaining errors and weaknesses are solely ours.

²⁰ We are grateful to Dr. Fred Shepardson for helping us develop and elaborate this concept.

References

- Adhikari, Jagannath and Ganesh Gurung. 2003. Migration and Human Rights. A Report Submitted to ILO Regional Office, New Delhi.
- Bhatta, Saurav Dev. 2004. Disparities in School Performance in the SLC Exams: an Exploratory Analysis. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 9(2): 293–343.
- Bhatta, Saurav Dev. 2005. Determinants of Student Performance in SLC Examinations. SLC Study Report #13. Prepared for the Ministry of Education and Sports/ESAT by the SLC Study Team.
- CBS. 2002. *Population Census 2001: National Report*. Kathmandu: Central Bureau of Statistics.
- CBS. 2003. *Population Monograph of Nepal* (vol. I and II). Kathmandu: Central Bureau of Statistics.
- CBS. 2004. *Nepal Living Standards Survey*. Kathmandu: Central Bureau of Statistics.
- Chanana, Karuna. 2001. *Interrogating Women's Education: Bounded Visions, Expanding Horizons*. New Delhi: Rawat Publications.
- Chaudhary, Dipak. 2065 v.s. *Nepālko Madheśī Samāj*. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar.
- de Haan, Arjan. 1998. Social Exclusion: An Alternative Concept for the Study of Deprivation. *IDS Bulletin* 29(1): 10–19.
- Deshpande, Satish. 2008. Exclusive Inequalities: Merit, Caste and Discrimination in Higher Education. In *In Search of Inclusive Policy: Addressing Graded Inequality*. Sukhadeo Thorat and Narender Kumar, eds., pp. 321–337. New Delhi: Rawat Publications in association with Indian Institute of Dalit Studies.
- DFID. 2005. *Reducing Poverty by Tackling Social Exclusion: A Policy Paper*. UK: Department for International Development.
- DFID and World Bank. 2005. *Citizens with(out) Rights: Nepal Gender and Social Exclusion Assessment*. Kathmandu: DFID and World Bank.
- DFID and World Bank. 2007. *Unequal Citizens: Gender, Caste and Ethnic Exclusion in Nepal* (Summary). Kathmandu: DFID and World Bank.
- DoE. 2008. *Flash I Report 2008–09*. Bhaktapur: Department of Education, Ministry of Education.
- Gurung, Harka. 2001. *Nepal Social Demography and Expressions*. Kathmandu: New Era.
- Gurung, Harka. 2004. *Social Demography of Nepal*. Kathmandu: Himal Books.
- Gurung, Harka. 2006. *From Exclusion to Inclusion: Socio-Political Agenda for Nepal*. Kathmandu: Social Inclusion Research Fund.
- Hasan, Rana and Aashish Mehta. 2008. Underrepresentation in Colleges: What do the Data Tell us? In *In Search of Inclusive Policy: Addressing Graded Inequality*. Sukhadeo Thorat and Narender Kumar, eds., pp. 166–181.

- New Delhi: Rawat Publications in association with Indian Institute of Dalit Studies.
- HSEB (Higher Secondary Education Board). 2008. *Uccha Madhyamik Vidhyalayako Sambandhan Linaka Lagi Garnuparne Purbadhar ra Sartaharu*. *Sampreṣaṇ* 12(21): 50–51.
- KC, Shyam. Forthcoming. Socio-economic Distribution of Geographical Accessibility in Nepal. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 14(1).
- MoE. 1993. *Educational Statistics of Nepal at a Glance 1993*. Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.
- MoE. 2003. *School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal at a Glance 2003*. Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.
- MoE. 2009. *School Sector Reform Plan 2009–2015* (vol. I). Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.
- Morley, Louise, Fiona Leach and Rosemary Lugg. 2008. Democratising higher Education in Ghana and Tanzania: Opportunity Structures and Social Inequalities. *International Journal of Educational Development* 29(1): 56–64.
- NESAC. 1998. *Nepal Human Development Report 1998*. Kathmandu: Nepal South Asia Centre.
- OECD. 2007. *Education at a Glance 2007*. Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- Onta, Pratyoush. 2006. The Growth of the Adivasi Janajati Movement in Nepal after 1990: The Non-political Institutional Agents. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 11(2): 303–354.
- Onta, Pratyoush, Harshaman Maharjan, Dev Raj Humagain and Shekhar Parajuli, eds. 2008. *Samābeṣi Miḍiyā*. Kathmandu: Martin Chautari.
- Parajuli, Tirtha Raj, Bidhya Nath Koirala, Prithu Charan Baidya, Ram Krishna Maharjan, Pramila Rai and Umesh Kumar Mandal. 2007. *Advancing Policy Options for Higher Education: Improving Transition and Access to Higher Education in Nepal*. Kathmandu: University Grants Commission and UNESCO.
- SFAFDB. 2007. *Student Financial Assistance Program (Second Higher Education Project 2007–2014)*. Lalitpur: Student Financial Assistance Fund Development Board.
- Sharma, Pitamber. 2008. *Unravelling the Mosaic: Spatial Aspects of Ethnicity in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Himal Books for Social Science Baha.
- Sundaram, K. 2008. On Backwardness and Fair Access to Higher Education. In *In Search of Inclusive Policy: Addressing Graded Inequality*. Sukhadeo Thorat and Narender Kumar, eds., pp. 119–147. New Delhi: Rawat Publications in association with Indian Institute of Dalit Studies.
- TPAMF. 2004. Analysis of Caste, Ethnicity and Gender Data from 2001 Population Census in Preparation for Poverty Mapping and Wider PRSP

- Monitoring. Submitted to DFID by Tanka Prasad Acharya Memorial Foundation, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- TU. 2008. *TU Special Bulletin 2008*. Kathmandu: Tribhuvan University.
- TU. 2065 v.s. *Tribhuvan University Bulletin Falgun 2065 v.s.* Kathmandu: Tribhuvan University.
- UGC. 2007. *University Grants Commission Annual Report - 2006/2007*. Sanothimi, Bhaktapur: University Grants Commission.
- UNDP. 2004. *Nepal Human Development Report 2004: Empowerment and Poverty Reduction*. Kathmandu: United Nations Development Program.
- UNESCO. 2007. *Global Education Digest: Comparing Education Statistics across the World*. Montreal: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.
- Wood, Hugh B. and Bruno Knall. 1962. Educational Planning and its Economic Implications. A Draft Report of the UNESCO Mission to Nepal.
- World Bank. 2002. *Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

Appendix 1: List of Campuses Selected

Kathmandu Valley

1. University Campus, Kirtipur
2. Amrit Science Campus, Lainchour
3. Padmakanya Multiple College, Bagbazar
4. Mahendra Ratna Campus, Tahachal
5. Nepal Commerce Campus, Minbhavan
6. Bhaktapur Multiple Campus, Bhaktapur
7. Patan Multiple Campus, Patan
8. Ratna Rajya Campus, Pradarshanimarg
9. Nepal Law Campus, Pradarshanimarg
10. Institute of Engineering, Patan
11. Institute of Medicine, Maharajgunj

Eastern Region

12. Bhojpur Campus, Bhojpur
13. Mahendra Bideswori Campus, Rajbiraj
14. Mahendra Morang Multiple Campus, Biratnagar
15. Snatakottar Campus, Biratnagar
16. Central Campus of Technology, Dharan

Central Tarai

17. Institute of Forestry Science, Hetauda
18. Institute of Agriculture and Animal Sciences, Chitwan

Western Region

19. Prithivi Narayan Multiple Campus, Pokhara
20. Institute of Forestry Science, Pokhara
21. Mahendra Multiple Campus, Baglung
22. Butwal Multiple Campus, Butwal

Mid and Far West

23. Mahendra Multiple Campus, Nepalganj
24. Jumla Campus, Jumla
25. Siddhanath Multiple Campus, Mahendranagar
26. Doti Multiple Campus, Doti

Appendix 2: Classification of Ethnic Groups According to NFDIN

Advanced Group	Disadvantaged Group	Marginalized Group	Highly Marginalized Group	Endangered Group
Newar Thakali	Barhagaunle-Thakali Byansi Chhairotan Chhantyal Gurung Hyolmo Jirel Limbu Magar Marphali Thakali Rai Sherpa Tangwe Tingaunle-Thakali Yakkha	Bhote Bhujel Darai Dhimal Dolpo Dura Gangain Kumal Larke Lhopa Mugal Phree Pahari Rajbanshi Sunuwar Tamang Tajpuria Tharu Topkegola Walung	Baramu Bote Chepang Danuwar Dhanuk Jhagad Lhomi Majhi Satar Siyar Thudam Thami	Bankariya Hayu Kushbadiya Kishan Kusunda Lepcha Meche Raji Raute Surel