

8. EQUITY: TUITION WAIVERS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Introduction

Although most educational planners and policy-makers in Nepal tend to believe that higher education is an instrument for achieving the goals of greater social justice and equity in Nepal, at least two major findings belie such rosy hopes. In 1979 a study was sponsored by the Research Division of Tribhuvan University at the initiative of the then Rector Professor Kamal P. Malla to study the social structure of Tribhuvan University enrolment. Because the findings of the study were not too palatable to the then Government the study was not made public. With the restoration of parliamentary democracy there is greater urgency to address these neglected issues relating to equity and social justice in higher education. As Tribhuvan University is almost entirely financed by public resources and tax-payers' money greater accountability and transparency in the use of its resources is called for now than ever before.

Relatively lower enrolments among the poor, women, minorities, disadvantaged social, cultural and linguistic groups are most pronounced in higher education in developing countries largely as a consequence of inequities at the primary and secondary levels of education. No qualified student should ordinarily be unable to enroll because of inability to pay. But do the poor and the disadvantaged social groups have any access to higher education in Nepal?

Who benefits from the State investment in higher education? These questions have not so far been asked, let alone answered. Here are some disturbing data:

Table 8.1: Distribution of University Students by Caste and Ethnic Groups, 1979

Caste and Ethnic Groups	Students in %
Brahmins	45.49
Chhetriyas	19.95
Newars	18.78
Rai and Limbu	2.40
Gurung	2.82
Tamang	0.34
Sherpa	0.27
Thakali	0.29
Tharu and Rajbanshi	2.48
Marwari	0.65
Muslims	0.63
Schedule	1.81
Others	2.03
Special	1.84
Total	99.78

Source: Upendra Man Malla et al., 1982, p.67

Table 8.2 : Change in the Access to Higher Education by Caste and Ethnic Groups, (1974 to 1979)

(In percent)

Caste and Ethnic Groups	Students		Change
	1974	1979	
Brahmins	47.10	45.49	-1.61
Chhetriyas	20.76	19.95	-0.81
Newars	19.25	18.78	-0.47
Rai and Limbu	1.79	2.40	+0.61
Gurung	1.78	2.82	+1.04
Tamang	0.39	0.34	-0.05
Sherpa	0.21	0.27	+0.06
Thakali	0.36	0.29	-0.07
Tharu and Rajbanshi	1.47	2.48	+1.01
Marwari	0.71	0.65	-0.06
Muslims	0.65	0.63	-0.02
Schedule	1.13	1.81	+0.68
Others	1.78	2.03	+1.65
Special	2.26	1.84	-0.82
Total	99.64	99.78	

Source: Upendra Man Malla et al., 1982, p.75

Table 8.3 : Population 6-Year of Age and Over by Caste, Ethnic Group, Educational Attainment, 1991

Caste/Ethnic Group	Graduate Equivalent and Above	Total Population 6 year and above	Percent of Graduates	Graduate population ratio
Total	96977	15145071	0.64%	1:156
Yadav, Ahir	2354	624670	0.38%	1:265
Kayastha	1899	44190	4.30%	1:23
Kumhar	192	58283	0.33%	1:304
Bania	704	83107	0.85%	1:118
Dhobi	162	62034	0.26%	1:383
Sudhi, Kalwar	1048	133250	0.79%	1:127
Kurmi	303	135927	0.22%	1:449
Brahmin (Terai)	4032	137438	2.93%	1:34
Rajput	1173	46362	2.53%	1:40
Tharu	901	964641	0.09%	1:1071
Teli	1006	205106	0.49%	1:204
Kushwaha	381	166629	0.23%	1:437
Muslim	1468	517504	0.28%	1:353
Haluwai	113	36169	0.31%	1:320
Mallah	35	88323	0.04%	1:2524
Rajbanshi	63	68162	0.09%	1:1082
Dhimal	5	14095	0.04%	1:2819
Gangain	40	18602	0.22%	1:465
Marwadi	2018	25265	7.99%	1:13
Bengali	164	6646	2.47%	1:41

contd....

Table 8.3 : Population 6-Year of Age and Over by Caste, Ethnic Group, Educational Attainment, 1991 (contd..)

Caste/Ethnic Group	Graduate Equivalent and Above	Total Population 6 year and above	Percent of Graduates	Graduate population ratio
Dhanuk	176	110855	0.16%	1:630
Shikh	87	7653	1.14%	1:88
Dhusadh	24	75031	0.03%	1:3126
Chamar	31	164636	0.02%	1:5311
Khatway	13	53659	0.02%	1:4128
Musahar	7	112886	0.01%	1:16127
Kewat	127	82254	0.15%	1:648
Rajbhar	66	27090	0.24%	1:410
Kanu	159	56977	0.28%	1:358
Others (Terai)	1402	510499	0.27%	1:364
Brahman (Hill)	33040	1995774	1.66%	1:60
Chhetri	11984	2437349	0.49%	1:203
Thakuri	1784	245607	0.73%	1:138
Sanyasi	616	149190	0.41%	1:242
Newar	23000	890189	2.58%	1:39
Limbu	528	244172	0.22%	1:462
Rai	1031	431851	0.24%	1:419
Gurung	1203	376057	0.32%	1:313
Thakali	189	11983	1.58%	1:63
Tamang	703	828368	0.08%	1:1178
Magar	885	1087402	0.08%	1:1229
Danuwar	38	41143	0.09%	1:1083
Jirel	3	3983	0.08%	1:1328
Majhi	4	44375	0.01%	1:11094
Sunuwar	36	33641	0.11%	1:934
Gaine	1	3639	0.03%	1:3639
Chepang	1	29033	0.00%	1:29033
Kumal	20	61278	0.03%	1:3064
Churaote	8	1462	0.55%	1:183
Bote	2	5327	0.04%	1:2664
Lepcha	33	3978	0.83%	1:121
Raute	16	2295	0.70%	1:143
Darai	9	8685	0.10%	1:965
Raji	2	2704	0.07%	1:1352
Thami	18	15609	0.12%	1:867
Damai	72	295628	0.02%	1:4106
Kami	266	768382	0.03%	1:2889
Sarki	48	221920	0.02%	1:4623
Nadi	3	5659	0.05%	1:1886
Others (Hill)	302	150321	0.20%	1:498
Sherpa	306	91588	0.33%	1:299
Bhote	21	10223	0.21%	1:487
Others (Mountain)	9	1462	0.62%	1:162
No Caste (Foreigners)	520	2631	19.76%	1:5
Not Stated	123	4119	2.99%	1:33

Source: The National Population Census, 1991, Table 26.

Tuition-fee Waivers in T.U. Campuses

Tribhuvan University provides tuition-fee waivers to 20 percent of its students. The objective of the tuition-fee waiver is to enable poor students of the University to pursue higher education. Financially, the waiver of the tuition-fee refers to exempting students from paying the tuition-fee only. Therefore, it is a financial award ranging from Rs.500 to Rs.740 generally for one academic year depending on the level of study.

Some Campuses split the tuition-fee waiver among different students into half or quarter. Some Campuses provide tuition waiver even for 2 years (i.e., the whole period required for a level of study).

If we compare average number of students and average number of students receiving tuition-fee waivers it shows less than 20 percent. However, in reality the number of students receiving tuition-fee waivers may exceed 20 percent. Because of overlap of the academic sessions and under reporting by Campuses almost 80 percent of the students receive some form of tuition-fee waiver in the RR Campus, Janakpur. Similarly, no tuition-fee was waived in Jumla Campus for which no reasons were specified. As regards to the kind of fees waived there is uniformity in all Campuses. Only tuition-fee is waived, not any other fees along with it.

The Use and Misuse of Tuition-fee Waivers by Students

Till 1990-91 only twelve percent of the students admitted in the University Campuses were entitled for tuition-fee waivers. Now it is twenty percent. As stated earlier, tuition-fee waiver is a financial grant offered to the poor students by the University. The objective of tuition-fee waiver is to provide assistance to financially weak students to procure academic goods and services. If the tuition-fee waivers are received by the poor students and the funds received are used to buy books, stationary, etc., we can claim that the awards are properly utilized. If the tuition-fee waivers are awarded to rich students and the funds received by them are used for other than learning materials the awards are misused.

Students and the Campus Chiefs are the main persons who can judge to the use and misuse of the tuition-fee waivers. Students themselves are not going to accept that they have misutilized the tuition-fee waivers. Similarly, student union leaders all the time demand more scholarships and tuition-fee waivers so they are also not going to concede that the students are misusing the awards. In this situation, the Campus Chiefs are the only persons who could have provided pertinent answers. To find out the present situation several questions were asked to Campus Chiefs about the use and misuse of the tuition-fee waiver. The responses indicate that more than 60 percent of the Campus Chiefs don't feel that the tuition fee waiver is misused. About 30 percent of the sampled Campus Chiefs feel that it is misused. Others did not like to respond to this question. Those who confirmed the misuse of the tuition-fee waivers reported that students receive tuition-fee award either in the middle or end of the academic session. Tuition-fee waiver means waiving the payment of subsequent instalment of tuition-fees and refund of already paid fees to students in cash. Generally, the amount refunded is small and the students do not bring it to the notice of their parents and spend it at restaurants or on movies as windfall profit. The misuses are being encountered

because 1) tuition-fee is waived not on the basis of the actual students who study regularly but on the basis of the reported enrolment figure. So the number of students receiving tuition-fee waiver is significantly higher than 20% of the regular students. 2) It is not tied up with the academic performance of the student. 3) It is awarded on the basis of merit but there are a lot of students who have obtained questionable degrees from Bihar and UP and the marks they have secured are exceptionally inflated. 4) There is a procedure of returning previously paid fees to the students in cash which is treated by the students as windfall gains. 5) The amount of award is so small that it goes unnoticed. Moreover, all the students who were interviewed reported that the tuition-fee waivers were so meagre that it did not help them financially with their studies.

The analysis of the recipients is another angle from which use and misuse of tuition-fee waivers can be judged. It can also be analyzed from the perspective of adequacy of number of awards in each Campus. In this regard it was reported by the majority of Campus authorities that among the applicants academic merit was the main criterion used to select the actual awardees. Thus a poor student who has just pass marks cannot receive tuition-fee waiver. Similarly a rich student can receive tuition-fee waiver easily if he applies and had good academic standing. Thus there is a problem of defining the needy students for awarding tuition-fee waivers. Regarding the adequacy of the tuition-fee waivers about three-fourths of the Campus Chiefs interviewed said that not all needy students get tuition-fee waivers. But only about one fourth of the Campus Chiefs interviewed recommended increase in the number of awards. Those who recommended to increase suggested an increment by 5 percent or more. This indicates that there are enough number of tuition-fee waivers available in the Campus, and to serve the needy only the mechanism by which the awards are made needs to be changed.

Criteria Used to Award Tuition-fee Waivers at T.U. Campuses

Generally, the Campus publishes notice inviting applications from those needy students requiring tuition-fee waivers 4-6 weeks after the commencement of classes. Selection of the students is done from the applicants using different criteria as the guidelines. But there is confusion right from the publication of the notice. Very poor students do not want to apply because of prestige. In this context even rich students apply and receive tuition-fee waivers.

Though only one Campus Chief has responded to the questionnaire that poor students do not apply because of prestige this type of behaviour was reported by several Campus Chiefs in their personal discussions with the research team. They reported that generally poor students also have poor marks. They come mostly from general schools. They believe that if the tuition-fee waiver will be awarded on the basis of academic merits then it will not be possible for them to receive it. So they do not apply. Female students do not like to have their names on the notice board of the Campus as a recipient of tuition-fee waiver because of similar reasons. In recent years, the majority of the Campuses were found awarding tuition-fee waivers on the basis of merit. When it was awarded on merit basis, the recipients felt that it was a matter of prestige to receive tuition-fee waiver so did their family members feel so. Over the time, economically well-to-do as well as shy students were reported to be coming

forward to apply for tuition-fee waivers. Tuition-fee waiver is intended for the poor students. But there is no clearcut definition of the poor. So different Campuses were found to follow different criteria for defining the poor. Quite often, more than one parameter was found to be used to define the poor. The criteria used to define the poor and award tuition-fee by different Campuses are given in Table 8.4.

Table 8.4: Frequency Distribution of the Criteria used by the Sample Campuses in Awarding Tuition-fee Waivers

Criteria	Frequencies
Academic performance only	11
Committee's Own Observation	10
Recommended poors	6
Coming from remote area	6
Backward Class	3
Previous School's recommendation	3
Regular in study	2
Students passing exam in one attempt	1
Students without parents/guardians	1
Disabled students	1
Women student	1

Source: Field Survey

Note: Many Campuses were using more than one Criteria.

This study indicates that there is no fixed criteria to measure the level of poverty for the identification of such students. Various measures are found to be used by different Campuses. During the discussion with the Campus Chiefs and students it was also brought to the notice of the research team that in Nepal only a few are rich. In this context, tuition-fee waiver needed to be awarded to all. So, several Campuses used academic merit as the only criteria to award tuition-fee waivers. It was also reported in the discussion that recommendation by the Village Development Committee Chairman, District Development Committee, Chairman or the Member of Parliament is not an effective criteria because it was not difficult to receive such recommendations. Since the people providing such recommendations were political people, it was but natural that everyone who approached them received such recommendations. However, the students interviewed reported that merit and poor economic status used were the only two criteria for granting tuition-fee waivers. Out of the two criteria, poor economic status was the criterion identified by 69 percent of the respondents. Various criteria used by various Campuses to select poor students include academic performance, judgement of the committee, recommendations, geographic locations, caste, past history in school regularity in attending classes, academic intelligence, status of the guardian, disability as well as sex. This list itself indicates that several parameters are being used to find the most needy person. But the frequencies awarded to these criteria indicate that in majority of the cases academic performance and the judgement of the committee are the most frequently accepted criteria. This indicates that the Campus administration is looking for least

controversial criterion for award rather than the most appropriate mechanism to identify the needy student.

Problems Encountered While Distributing Tuition-fee Waivers in T.U. Campuses

Institutions of higher learning in Nepal are generally located in urban areas. The number of students studying in each Campus is very big. The students come from different geographical regions and ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Selection of poor students from this heterogeneous group is a challenging job. In this situation several problems are faced by Campus authorities while selecting awardees. These problems as reported by Campus Chiefs are summarized in Table 8.5.

Table 8.5: Frequency distribution of the problems faced by the Campuses while Awarding tuition-fee waivers

Problems	Frequencies
Ignorance of financial status of student	13
General recommendations of the applicants	8
Student pressure	4
No application on time	3
Deceiving students	3
Questionable Certificates	2
Very poor do not apply because of prestige	1
No response	1
No Problem	4

Most Campuses had a majority of the students enrolled coming from outside the district. As there is virtually no student guidance or counselling in TU Campuses there seems to be no effective mechanism by which the Campus authorities and parents of the student could interact with each other. This has resulted in ignorance on the part of Campus authorities about financial, social, physical and psychological needs of the students. The interaction with the local elected officials in the form of recommendation also does not provide sufficient information about financial condition because every student was found to receive and furnish to the authorities almost similar recommendations. Similarly, Campus Chiefs also reported that various student organizations as well as student unions exert pressure on the Campus authorities to provide tuition-fee waivers to as many students as possible.

Scholarships in T.U.

The objective of providing scholarships in T.U. is 1) to motivate students for higher academic achievement and 2) to provide financial assistance to poor students. To meet these objectives T.U. has managed different sources of funds. Roughly 2 percent of the annual University budget is allocated for the scholarships besides private endowment and project-funded scholarships. In the past, Student Loan Programme was initiated and continued for a few years. It was discontinued because the loan was

awarded by the Campus and did not have any mechanism to enforce repayment and the money available for this programme was very small.

Available scholarships in T.U. at present can be divided into 1) T.U.-instituted merit scholarships such as Mahendra, Birendra and Aiswarya scholarships 2) Scholarships available to students of four technical institutes, Faculty of Education and I.Sc. students in Mahendra Campus, Nepalgunj and Siddhartha Campus, Mahendranagar 3) Special scholarships such as the Tharu and Women scholarships and 4) Endowed scholarships.

Distribution of Scholarships in Different Faculties

The distribution of scholarships in different faculties and Campuses in T.U. is uneven and not uniform. Generally scholarships are concentrated more for the students of technical institutes. This is explained by Table 8.6.

Table 8.6: Number of Students and budgeted amount of Scholarships in different fiscal years and faculties in T.U.

Fiscal Year		Technical Institutes	Faculty of Education	General Education	Total
2049/50	Number of students	4816(4.6)	9204 (8.9)	89820 (86.5)	103846 (100)
	Budget	7513(53.5)	1409(10.0)	5129(36.5)	14051 (100)
2048/49	Number of students	5220(4.7)	9114(8.3)	95905(87.0)	110239 (100)
	Budget	7177(63.9)	1431(12.7)	2622(23.4)	11230 (100)
2047/48	Number of students	5169(5.5)	8555(9.1)	80029(85.4)	93753 (100)
	Budget	5827(62.8)	1075(11.6)	2370(25.6)	9272 (100)
2046/47	Number of students	4838(6.1)	6272(7.9)	67922(86.0)	79032 (100)
	Budget	4653(58.9)	1057(13.4)	2195(27.7)	7905 (100)
2045/46	Number of students	5449(7.3)	6032(8.1)	62907(84.6)	74388 (100)
	Budget	4957(62.1)	1018(12.7)	2013(25.2)	7988 (100) ³

Source: Student number from the Planning Division, T.U. and Budget from the T.U., Budget Speeches of respective fiscal year.

Note: 1. Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentages.

2. The scholarship budget to technical institute consists of T.U. as well as foreign aid component. The Scholarship budget to general education also consists the budget allocated to central office besides Campuses.

Table 8.6 indicates that the technical institutes have less than 8 percent of the total number of students but receive more than 53 percent of budgeted scholarship amount. In the Faculty of Education the percentage of budget allocated is one and a half times more than the percentage of students. In general education budgeted amount is roughly 25 percent whereas the number of students is about 80 percent or more. This clearly indicates that students studying technical education are receiving a major share from scholarships funds. The Faculty of Education is in between technical subjects and general education subjects. Higher amount of scholarships awarded to the Faculty of Education than general education indicates that the policies of the New

Education System Plan is still being continued in case of teacher training. Table 8.7 further shows the distribution of the student enrolments and scholarships available in the sampled Campuses.

Table 8.7: Distribution of Students Enrolments and Scholarships available to them in Sampled Campuses, 2050

Faculties	Intermediate		Bachelors		Masters		Grand Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Humanities	6092(55)	6576(25)	2529(38)	225(21)	555(14)	248(8)	9176(107)	9075(54)
Management	3528(38)	1161(16)	2043(54)	283(13)	1110(5)	118(1)	6681(97)	1562(30)
Education	1558(132)	428(18)	1351(12)	136(1)	-	-	2909(144)	564(19)
Science	3719(34)	486(19)	3331(23)	470(13)	86	1	7136(57)	957(32)
Law	2444(25)	281(5)	2312(11)	146(2)	-	-	4756(36)	427(7)
Technical	1511(562)	214(63)	1203(275)	107(17)	-(20)	-(3)	2714(857)	321(83)
Total	18852 (846)	9146 (146)	12769 (413)	3393 (67)	1751 (39)	367 (12)	33372 (1298)	12906 (225)

Source: Field Survey

Figures in parentheses indicate number of scholarships available.

Table 8.7 also reconfirms the fact that the number of scholarships i.e., 940 out of a total of 1,523 in technical education is higher than in the campuses of general education. This may raise one pertinent question. Do the students in technical education deserve to receive disproportionate share of the scholarships? To answer this question present practices of the technical institutes need to be understood clearly.

The admissions in the technical institutes are taken primarily from two streams 1) Fresh students and 2) Inservice students. The number of students admitted as inservice candidates is found to range from 25 to 50 percent of the total admission quota. These students have some sponsorship from their employer. They receive scholarships plus monthly salary. Others are sent on study leave and receive only monthly salary. Monthly salary could be usually Rs 1800 and above. The scholarship received by them ranges from Rs. 1000 to as large as Rs. 5,000 or even more. These inservice students do not get any scholarships from T.U. They are only counted in the total number of students admitted which increases the number of scholarships to be provided. Among the freshly admitted students some students receive scholarships from development projects, NGOs or INGOs.

Often the scholarships available from these sources are quite substantial when compared to T.U. scholarships. Generally, students are found not to disclose the fact that they are receiving such scholarships. Sometimes, they receive the money from more than one agency. Only the remaining students are awarded scholarships from T.U. Those students who do not receive scholarships receive tuition-fee waivers. Information available from the Campuses show that *less than 20 percent of all*

students in technical institutes are found not to receive some or other financial assistance.

The technical institutes conduct Entrance Examination for admission. Minimum criteria set for application is also very high. The students who come from good schools have better chances of getting admission. Good schools generally refer to private boarding schools. Though the economic status of the parents has not been analyzed it is widely believed that students from high income families go to these boarding schools. In this context, rich students are studying in technical institutes and they are also receiving more scholarships. In reality, such candidates are not the real needy ones for scholarships. Considering the unit costs of technical education, the need of present technical education in Nepal is not to increase its student number but its quality and diversity. The researchers strongly feel that in no case scholarships should be used as a motivating force to get students into technical education in T.U. It is also unnecessary to attract students to technical education by providing them financial incentives because most of the technical manpower produced in the country is unemployed. So it seems logical to withdraw the large number of scholarships from technical institutes from the point of view of social justice as well as national need. At least, Institute of Medicine has taken a positive step in this direction by withdrawing the tuition-fee waivers and scholarships since Academic Year 2054.

Criteria Used to Award T.U.Scholarships

Scholarships in T.U. are reportedly awarded on the basis of merit. But several problems are encountered with the definition of merit because 1) students from several faculties are admitted to one programme. The Institute of Science and Technology, Faculty of Education or Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences may have different criteria to judge academic performance and the percentages shown in the transcripts of the students may not be comparable. Side by side there is a big problem of certificates obtained from the Universities of Bihar and UP in India. The marks obtained from such Indian Universities are found to be inflated. This fact was expressed by students as well as Campus authorities in their discussion. Some students even said that they study in Nepal and appear in examinations from India. Thus some better assessment is needed to judge merit of the students. In this context, different Campuses have been found using different measures to judge academic merit which are provided in Table 8.8.

Table 8.8: Frequency Distribution of Different Measures Used by Sampled Campuses to Judge Academic Merit

SN	Measures	Frequencies
1	Only highest mark in the past examination	14
2	Highest mark obtained in examination conducted for the purpose of scholarship	6
3	Highest score obtained in Entrance Examination	1
4	Highest mark in previous examination plus interview	1

Source: Field Survey

Table 8.8 indicates that the majority of the T.U. Campuses are using merit list based on marks obtained in the previous examination as a single most important criteria to judge academic merit of the student. Eight Campuses out of 22 are found to be conducting scholarship examinations, entrance examination or interview to select meritorious students other than using marks obtained in previous examination as the only criteria. Those who award scholarships based on marks obtained on previous examination believe that they are not awarding scholarships to "real meritorious students". But because of previous practice and problems encountered in conducting scholarship examinations those Campuses were found not to have changed the criteria. Because of a large number of students receiving degrees from outside the country and getting admission into higher levels, several Campuses have adopted alternative measures to provide basis for merit scholarships on several modified criteria which include awarding scholarships only to those students 1) who passed the previous examination from T.U. Campuses. 2) who passed the previous examination from the same Campus 3) who topped in the scholarship examination conducted by the Campus 4) who topped in the Entrance Examination. These criteria are used in different Campuses. Scholarship examination and Entrance Examination are held only in technical institutes.

General education Campuses have a large student population. Campus authorities do not feel that such examinations are practically possible. Awarding scholarships only to those students who passed from T.U. Campuses was also reported to be a matter of controversy in some Campuses in the Tarai. Awarding merit scholarship only to those students who passed lower level examination from the same Campus was observed to be most suitable criteria but it was not equally applicable to all Campuses. To award scholarships in the subsequent years the merit list of the annual examination of Tribhuvan University is used as basis.

Out of 41 students interviewed in different Campuses 25 reported of obtaining scholarships. Table 8.9 gives the reasons identified by the students for receiving scholarships.

Table 8.9: Reasons Identified by the Students for receiving Scholarships 1993

Criteria	Frequency Responses
Merit	23
Poor Economic Status	7
Remote Area	5
Preferences for Women Candidates	1
Total*	36

Source: Field Survey

Issues Related to Scholarships in T.U.

Issues related to scholarships include purpose, number, and amount of scholarships, criteria for awarding scholarships, timing of scholarships payment and special groups who should receive special attention. They are as follows:

1. *Purpose of Scholarships.* Stated objectives of the scholarships programmes are a) to motivate students to achieve academic excellence and b) to provide financial assistance to poor students. Whether these purposes of the scholarship are fulfilled or not can be judged by the responses received from the students as well as from the Campus Chiefs.

Among the 41 students interviewed 25 students were receiving scholarships out of which 19 students said that they received scholarships because they were meritorious. Remaining 6 students reported that they received scholarships for not only being meritorious but also poor or from remote area or being a women student. The Campus Chiefs have given different criteria for awarding scholarships which include (a) marks obtained in the past examination, (b) marks obtained in previous examination plus interview, (c) marks obtained in the entrance examination. Some Campus Chiefs also said that only the marks obtained in the past examination does not fully evaluate the strengths of the student. Due to various administrative problems in introducing other reliable evaluation mechanism marks obtained in the previous examination are used to measure merit. Certificates coming from outside T.U. and students coming from different backgrounds and opting to take different subject combinations create another problem for a fair competition. In this context, it can be concluded that the scholarships primarily encourage meritorious students but not always. Thus it fulfils the objective only partially.

Another objective of providing scholarships is to support financially poor students. Among 25 scholarship holders only 7 said that they received scholarship because they were poor besides being meritorious. This indicates that stated purpose of helping the poor is secondary. All the scholarship recipients also reported that they would have continued their studies even if scholarships were not given to them. It indicates that either the amount given to students is very insignificant or the scholarships are not given to financially poor students. Thus it can be concluded that present scholarship programme does not serve the poor.

2. *Number of Scholarships.* Except in the four technical institutes and education faculty the number of scholarships available to students was 4 in each programme and in each faculty. As reported from sampled Campuses it was divided between one male and one female student in each year except in only female Campus. The numbers allocated were not proportionate to the number of shifts, the number of sections or the number of students in a programme. Similarly privately endowed scholarships are limited to the Campuses of the Kathmandu Valley. The number of privately endowed scholarships can be increased. Thus the number of scholarships available to students in general education is not balanced.

The number of scholarships available to four technical institutes and the Faculty of Education is significantly more. Awarding scholarships to 25 percent of enrolled students is considered too high by the Campus authorities and policy-makers in T.U. The Institute of Medicine has, therefore, started to withdraw scholarships to a large number of students. It is justifiable in the context of present technical manpower supply situation as well as the socio-economic condition of the students.

3. *Amount of Scholarships.* As stated earlier the scholarships provided by T.U. is Rs. 200 per month for 10 months in a year. Private endowments or the scholarship provided is generally higher than this amount. Out of Rs. 2000 received by the students Rs. 500 to Rs. 740 is spent on paying the tuition-fee annually. In this situation scholarship amount comes around Rs. 100 per month.

When the scholarships were instituted along with the implementation of the New Education Plan in 2029 B.S. the amount of scholarship was Rs. 150 per month. This amount was increased to Rs. 200 in the year 2037. Since then this amount has not been increased. Because of inflation, real value of this scholarship has decreased. When asked about the adequacy of scholarship amount all the students unanimously recommended for increment.

4 *Criteria for Scholarship Distribution.* In all of the T.U. Campuses the basic criteria used for distribution of scholarship was academic merit. To define merit most of the Campuses used the marks obtained in the previous examination. Few others conducted scholarship examination or awarded scholarships on the basis of marks obtained in entrance examination or internal assessment. It was observed that awarding scholarships only on the basis of marks obtained in the previous examination does not provide good measurement for assessing merit of the students.

Most of the Campus Chiefs were skeptical about the meritoriousness of students who passed from Universities in neighbouring states in India. One student receiving scholarship even reported that it was easy to bring certificate from India to receive scholarship because marks was the only criteria for awarding scholarship. Thus it seems necessary to develop a standard test to ascertain meritoriousness of the students.

5. *Time of Scholarship Distribution.* When the scholarship is received by the student is as important as it is received at all or not. It is important from the perspective of its use. If a student spends the money on books and stationery it is better utilized if received just after admission. If it is used for food and cloth it is better utilized by providing scholarship at regular intervals. If the money received is utilized for further study then it is better utilized by providing money at the end of the academic year. Among the students interviewed almost all said that they spent the scholarship money to buy books and stationery. Even if their scholarship money was doubled majority of the students preferred to spend scholarship money on books and stationery. Among 25 student only one student responded that he will utilize his scholarship money for the purpose of further study. In this condition for the best utilization of the scholarship money it is necessary that scholarship is awarded at the beginning of the academic year and on regular instalments.

Only 15 percent of the Campuses surveyed award scholarship at the beginning of the academic session. Majority of the Campuses (40 percent) award scholarship at the end. Twenty-five percent of the Campuses who did not give the dates may also fall in the same category or they may actually distribute scholarships even after passing the level. Similar responses were also obtained from students. When asked to respond to number of instalment of scholarships received, 73 percent of the students responded that they received scholarship in a single instalment. Eight percent each received

scholarship on monthly basis, two instalments and three instalments. The students who received monthly instalment were those who were receiving sizable amount of scholarships from Winrock International in the technical institutes. This clearly indicates that majority of scholarships are not distributed in time so that they could be best utilized.

6. *Special Groups to receive attention for Scholarships.* Women students, students from the disadvantaged groups and students coming from remote areas are the special groups of students getting attention at present. Among these groups women and the Tharus are clearly defined groups. T.U. provides one scholarship for women on the basis of highest marks received by girl students in each year of a programme in each Campus. For the last two years several general education Campuses receive HMG women student scholarships through District Education Office. The Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science, the Institute of Forestry as well as Jumla Campus were reported to have women scholarships provided by international non-governmental organizations in the past. Similarly, a few privately endowed scholarships which are awarded only to girl students were also reported. Two Tharu students also receive scholarships in some Campus. But there are no other fixed and defined scholarships for backward or suppressed classes. Few Campuses have reported that they give importance to students coming from remote areas or from suppressed classes only if there were equal marks between two students.

To help women, disadvantaged classes or remote-area students suggestions are solicited from the Campus Chiefs. Fixing scholarships quota and providing hostel facilities were most favoured programmes suggested by the Campus Chiefs. To find out how the scholarships should be distributed to different groups the Campus Chiefs were also asked to suggest the distribution of the available scholarships to different group of students on percentage basis. A few Campus Chiefs also opined that women students as well as students from remote areas should not get any scholarships. They argued that only rich people send their daughters to college or only rich persons from remote areas send their children to college !

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the outcomes of the study:

1. The objective of providing tuition-fee waivers and scholarships to students at different levels under the TU campuses is to provide financial support to poor and motivate talented students. These objectives have only been partially met. One of the main problems associated with the management of the tuition-fee waivers and scholarship award is the selection of the candidates for these awards. In both awards, the TU campuses select candidates on the basis of merit. Since the objectives of tuition-fee waivers and scholarships are different, the selection criteria should also be different.
2. The tuition-fee waivers should be awarded to financially poor students. There is problem in defining poor. At present there are two types of poor. (1) real poor and (2) proven poor. Proven poor are reaping the benefit of tuition-fee waivers and real poor seems to be left out. To improve the situation and direct

university resources to real needy students the university should change the present rule of awarding tuition-fee waivers to 20 percent of the students enrolled and should adopt following practices:

- a. Tribhuvan University should provide tuition-fee waivers to *all* the poor students.
- b. The university should define the poor student. For practical purpose, a poor student should be defined as one who has received tuition-fee waivers and/or any other financial assistance in his high school. To receive tuition-fee waiver in a campus a student should be required to provide certified testimony from his high school and his Village/Town Development Committee.
- c. The university should provide structured forms to receive recommendations which should also caution the person making recommendations that if the information furnished by him is found to be false he will be blacklisted in the campus and the tuition-fee waivers awarded will be immediately withdrawn. The objective of making such provision is to discourage the undeserving demanding tuition-fee waivers and making the referee responsible.
- d. The university should adopt the above policies for the students who will be admitted in the new session. The students who are receiving tuition-fee waivers at present should be allowed to complete the present level of study.

3. Present practice of awarding scholarships is not uniform in all institutes, faculties and levels of study. Regarding scholarships the university should adopt following policies:

- a. The scholarships provided to the students of T.U. should be classified into three groups. 1) TU merit scholarships 2) TU poor student scholarships and 3) scholarships sponsored by private endowments and the Government and non-Governmental Organizations.
- b. TU merit scholarships should be awarded to students who secure highest marks in the class. Present practice of awarding scholarships to one male and one female student in each class should be continued. If the funds permit it can be increased to 2 each or 3 each. Regarding TU merit scholarship following policies should be adopted.
 - i. For those students who enter campus for the first time, scholarships should be awarded on the basis of merit obtained in the scholarships examination to be conducted by each campus one month after the commencement of the classes.
 - ii. For subsequent years the scholarships should be provided on the basis of merit list of annual examinations. But TU should develop a

mechanism to publish annual examination results within 2 months of the examination held.

iii. In the subsequent higher level academic programmes the merit scholarship should be provided only to those students who have passed lower level examinations from the same campus.

iv. The students receiving merit scholarship should be provided with merit certificate.

v. The amount of money to be provided for merit scholarship should be handsome as compared to TU poor student scholarships or other private endowments. It can be awarded in kind. If TU merit scholarships are provided to more than one male and one female student the amount of award to first and second student should vary.

c. TU poor student scholarship should be provided to financially weak but academically sound students. These scholarships should be comparatively large in number and distributed in different campuses. They should be awarded to the poor, remote, backward and disadvantaged groups. Basically, these scholarships should be made available to the students willing to study outside the Kathmandu Valley, in small and remote-area campuses. These awards should be made only to those students who would otherwise not be able to receive higher education. The selection procedure to be adopted is suggested as follows:

i. TU central office should publish the notice inviting applications for scholarship at least six months ahead of the commencement of the academic session.

ii. The application has to be made on prescribed forms available from different campuses.

iii. The applicants should be required to furnish testified documents from Village/Town Development Committee, the school from where they passed SLC and 3 academic referees who also know the candidate's financial status.

iv. A central level Scholarships Award Committee should make scholarship awards on the basis of academic and financial condition of the candidate. The candidates should seek admission himself. Awards should be made only when he gets admission.

v. Each campus should have a provision of assigning an academic advisor to the scholarship recipients. He will monitor their financial and academic condition.

vi. The scholarship should be awarded for the duration of one academic programme. But there must be strict provisions of scholarships

withdrawal if the student is not making any progress in academic matters.

- vii. These scholarships should be distributed each month only after receiving testimony from the academic advisor. Academic advisors should testify that the awardee is regular in the class, making good academic progress and well-behaved.
- d. Scholarships arranged through private endowments, the Government and non-governmental organisations should be awarded on the basis of the contract made with the person or organisation making endowment. However, the university should have a fixed policy to receive endowments such as
- i. Since T.U. already provides merit scholarship, no endowment should be accepted for making award to student scoring highest mark.
 - ii. Each campus should develop a plan to receive private or organizational endowments. The different criteria to receive scholarships can be formulated as a) poorest student b) orphan c) disabled d) coming from disadvantaged communities e) coming from different places f) students scoring highest marks in a particular subject g) champion in sports/particular sport, music, literary skills and or I.Q. h) campus, level and programme specific etc. Besides these general endowments, open to all kinds of students can also be made.
 - iii. It should be possible to receive private endowments at local level. The provision of TU rule which states that the prior permission of the Executive Council to receive endowments should be amended. However, guidelines to make endowment and receive endowments should be developed and included in TU rules. The new TU rule is not clear.
 - iv. Each campus should mobilize local resources by means of charity and donation for the purpose of scholarships. The amount thus collected should be invested in high yielding risk free investments. Earnings made from these investments should be utilized to provide partial financial support to needy students. These funds should be awarded only for academic purposes such as buying books, paying tuition fee, paying examination fee, support for thesis writing and financial relief at the time of natural calamities and disasters.
 - v. To encourage private endowments the university should establish good linkages with general public and public and private institutions. University/campus authorities should encourage the public by asking them to participate in public functions organised in university premises. Similarly, the persons who make endowments should be commended by the university. Even making Education Day Awards to the persons who make endowments for scholarships will motivate a large number of

people to make endowments. University/campuses can make roster of possible endowment-makers and solicit endowments. Similarly, university alumni can also help the university in this endeavour.

vi. To attract private endowments, transparency of the system is a prerequisite. Each campus which has private endowment should publish the accounts of the earnings and expenses as well as help to establish a lively linkage between the endowment-maker and recipient of the benefit.

4. Other policies which should be adopted by the university system for the better management of scholarships and tuition-fee waivers are as follows:

- a. Two scholarships and/or tuition-fee waivers should not be awarded to any one student. This will help to provide financial support to a large number of students.
- b. The amount of scholarship should be raised to meet the cost of living and studying by an average student. The amount of scholarships needs to be revised often. Stagnation in the amount for many years makes the scholarships meaningless.
- c. It is recommended that the large number of TU scholarships provided to the students of technical institutes should be curtailed down and the amount saved should be utilized to increase the amount of scholarships.
- d. At present, campus chiefs do not feel that they should mobilize local resources to make endowments for scholarships. TU should give responsibility of mobilizing resources for scholarships to campus chiefs and evaluate their activities.
- e. Scholarships for girl students are desirable but this was not demanded by any campus chief or the students interviewed. Even in this situation TU should create girls' scholarship fund and award them to needy students because of international and national demand.
- f. TU should provide scholarships to the very poor needy students who are not applying for admission from TU poor student scholarship scheme.

5. Accounting and record keeping regarding tuition-fee waivers and scholarships are lacking. So it is recommended to develop and install an accounting system which will give adequate and precise financial information at the campus level and also at the central level.

During the course of this study we found it very difficult to obtain pertinent data about scholarships and tuition-fee waivers. Similarly, accurate statistics is also essential for proper management. Thus it is recommended that TU Central Office as well as each campus should maintain accurate up-to-date data about scholarships and tuition-fee waivers.

7. To provide financial assistance to needy students T.U. should adopt a policy of encouraging students to work in libraries, dormitories, cafeteria as well as research projects beyond their study hours.

Table 8.10: T.U. Regular Budget, Total Income and Budgeted Scholarships in Different Years

(In thousand NRs.)

Fiscal Year	Total TU regular Budget	Total Income	Budget for Scholarship	Scholarships as Percentage of Total Budget	Scholarships as the Percentage of total income
2049/50	611395	95000	11028	1.80	11.61
2048/49	485632	49000	8609	1.77	17.57
2047/48	357000	42500	7094	1.99	16.69
2046/47	308500	42500	6150	1.99	14.47
2045/46	250400	32500	6062	2.42	18.65

Source: T.U. Budget Speeches of relevant years.

Table 8.11: Total Income, Income from Tuition Fee and Estimated Loss of Income from Tuition-fee Waiving in Different years

(In thousand NRs.)

Fiscal year	Total Income	Income from Tuition Fee		Estimated Loss due to Tuition-Fee Waiver	Loss as Percentage of total income
		Amount	%		
2049/50*	95000*	48420	51.0	12105	12.74
2048/49	86469	36763	42.5	9191	10.63
2047/48	46348	12636	27.3	1723	3.71
2046/47	42518	13043	30.7	1779	4.18
2045/46	37750	9683	25.7	1320	3.50

Source : T.U. Budget Speeches of relevant years.

Note : * Actual income of the fiscal year 2049/50 will be published in 2051/52 budget only. So only the estimated income for this year is given.