



The Effectiveness of the Policy to Bring Parity in Education between Dalit and non-Dalit in Nepal

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Abstract

This article by comparing achievement scores claims that Dalit is equal to non-Dalit despite millennium-long discriminations and suppression. The study was initiated with the common assumption of “the status of learning and learning supporting environment of Dalit students are lower than of the non-Dalit” because of their deprivation of social dignity and culture of silence, and economic poverty. Trends analysis of score across 2004, 2009, and 2015 of the students (N=440) in six different public schools in Gorkha district, and measuring the status of the learning environment- motivation, awareness, investment to education, and indiscrimination in school, for Dalit students (N=42) of three public schools at district headquarters of Gorkha who attempted SLC exam of 2016, through their self-rating on provided opinionnaire form suggest that learning environment for Dalit students is moderately supportive and they have made significant progress in education. Increasing in achievement score and enrollment of Dalit students despite no increase in the educational quality of public schools over 11 years indicates the effectiveness of policies formulated by the state to uplift Dalit in Nepal.

Keywords: Dalit and non-Dalit, Policy Effectiveness, Parity in Education, Learning Environment, Nepal

Introduction

Approximately 14% (CBS, 2012), some claim even 20 % (Sob, 2012, p. 57), the population of Nepal have been categorized as ‘Dalit’ whose HDI is 88 % of the national average (UNDP, 2009), and treated with the policy of positive discrimination for bringing parity with non-Dalit (e.g. NPC, The Eleventh Plan, 2007, p. 263). Nepali word ‘Dalit’, (henceforth ‘D’) connotes a ‘depressed one’ which denotes ‘a group of people’ associated with social, cultural and economic construction. ‘Non-Dalit’ (henceforth ‘ND’) is an opposite word that denotes ‘a group of people’ who are more or less responsible for making D. ‘D’ and ‘ND’ as two social strata were constructed over a 3000 years long course.

The root of the ‘D’ goes to the *sudra* that is the lowest stratum in the *chaturvarna* system that idea was constructed in the Vedic age in the Indian subcontinent with the creation of *Purusha Shukta* in Rigveda 10.90. 11&12 (Griffith, 1896), and elaborated in ‘*Manu Smriti*’ (Hunter, 1886; Ambedkar, 1946, preface). With the reference of

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these religious texts, this discriminatory practice was further fostered through the civil codes in Nepalese society by the Jayasthiti Malla (1360-1395 AD) that proclaims “...their specialty, livelihood, and caste is based on their occupation” and classified the works as pure and impure (Nepal Law Commission, 2018, p. 27). This practice of the ‘occupation-based caste and caste-based hierarchical social structure’ became further institutionalized until the dawn of democracy in 1950 (Upreti, 2010). Despite many changes in the elimination of parity over the ‘D’, still, there are- “illiteracy, poverty, backwardness and menial job orientation rampant among them” (p. 9). It is assumed that these disparities are reflected in the education sector too. Therefore, a study was conducted to expose the status of ‘D’. The aspects to be highlighted are discrimination in school; learning environment at home; and learning achievement in comparison to ‘ND’ counterparts.

Nepal as a member of the UNO accepted to eliminate race and caste-based discrimination, the granted right to equality constitution, and issued the civil code in 1965 declaring any kind of discrimination against D as a crime. However, due to the millennium-long suppression discriminations were so deeply embedded that the state realized to policy interventions through legal, socio-cultural, educational and economic aspects. Education in Nepal has been used as a vehicle for national development and inclusive democracy (first periodic plan, 1957-1961) and made the provision of universal and compulsory school education. Interims constitution of Nepal (2008), encourages D through free of cost education in all levels, provision of scholarship, and special quotas for job placement among, etc. At the same time, the Government of Nepal has allowed hundreds of I/NGO provisions of priority to D in job vacancies- e.g. “candidates from the marginalized community are highly encouraged”. On the other, millennia-long deprivation of D is itself a curtailing for their access to education by enmeshing into the vicious circle of poverty, and low level of awareness, motivation, and confidence to education even after removing the restrictions. Amidst these tensions between accelerating and retarding forces, gauging “how the D community is progressing in education” is the interest of this study.

This paper has triple aims. First, it describes the status of D in education level in comparison to their ND counterpart with their scores obtained in school leaving certificate board exam. Second, it attempts to mitigate the contradictory finding of socioeconomic status (henceforth SES) and learning by comparing D and ND. Diverse empirical studies infer that parents with higher SES choose a better school that results in more learning in comparison to the parents with lower SES (Sirin, 2005), but a recent study suggests that scientific evidence establishing directional links and mechanisms between SES, school climate, and academic performance is inconclusive (Berkowitz et al. 2017). The SES of the people who send their children to the public school is not significantly different whether life in urban (here, urban refers to the place at and around the district headquarters where parents may send their children to private secondary schools) and rural, D or ND. SES and school quality have been controlled by selecting

the only public school. Third, it discusses the effectiveness of the one-decade long active intervention of government with the evidence of positive changes in upgrading educational level, motivation, awareness and willingness and capability to invest in education and a non-discriminatory environment in schools for D.

Policy Intervention and Parity in Education in Nepal

Governments have moral and legal obligations to intervene in society to direct, regulate, facilitate and act as a catalyst for economic prosperity, social justice, and ecological sustainability (Waldt, 2015, p. 35). The nature and scale of such interventions are guided by the ideological reasoning of policymakers. Nepal practiced “Partyless Parliamentary Democracy” with a mixed-economy since 1965, “Multi-party Democracy” with liberalization since 1990, and “Republic Democracy” since 2008, and “Socialism-oriented Republic Democracy” since 2015. Since the state principally formulating policies for reducing inequality to prevent political polarization, disrupt social cohesion, and undermine trust in and support for democracy (Cox, 2017, p. 1). Social inequality is a composite of inequalities in different factors- property ownership, education level, health condition, political participation, etc. Still, there is another more subtle factor in social discrimination which is associated with ignominy and stigma. The term ‘inequality’ interchanged with ‘disparity’ to connote unjust or unfair differences and implies the need for the address of these differences. Dimensions of disparities resulting in educational outcomes are: (a) differential or biased treatment of ethnic and racial minority students within the educational system, (b) differences in socioeconomic status and low motivation, aspiration and investment in education, and (c) different responses to educational systems or different sets of educational needs (APA, 2012, p. 11).

The disparity in achievement score as an output of the educational system is the consequence of discriminatory inputs and throughputs whether intentional or not. Analysis of their historical background and findings of different studies suggest that D students get a less conducive learning environment at home in comparison to the ND students. At the same time, D students at schools got caste-based discrimination from their ND mates and teachers. The millennia-long deprivation consequences to D parents are less aware of the importance of education, have no aspiration to uplift through education, and at the same time, the inability to invest in education. Hence, they are less motivated to schooling. At the same time, caste-based discrimination if they feel in school that causes deprives of learning opportunities and psychological harassment which may lead to drop out (HMG, 2018). Since the discussion made in this section aims to conceptualize these aspects in this study.

Legal Provision to Remove Discrimination

The state which used to oppress D before began to uplift since 1950- they were allowed to get an education and treated as human-like other ND. Caste-based

untouchability and discrimination were banned by making a civil code in 1964, ‘the provisions were imprisonment and pay a fine’ (Nepali, 2019, p. 5). With the restoration of multiparty democracy afterward in 1990, from 1991 to 2001 the literacy rate of D doubled from 17 to 33.8% (OHCHR, 2011, p. 1). In 2006, an amendment to the Civil Code widened criminal definitions to include “untouchability” practices and boycotts or restrictions against any person based on caste, religion or class, and the Interim Constitution of 2007 contains an article on fundamental rights with a right to protection from caste-based discrimination and untouchability. The adoption of the Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act in May 2011 unshackled all bonds to D. Discrimination is defined as involvement in harmful actions toward others because of their ethnicity, nationality, language ability, accent, etc. and discrimination may occur in an institutional level or personal level (Brown, 2015, p. 1). He suggests that students who feel discriminated against by their peers more likely to exhibit racial/caste mistrust, problem behaviors, and ultimately depressive symptoms. And those students, who feel from a teacher, are more likely to have a negative attitude about their school, lower academic motivation and performance, and an increased risk of dropping out of high school (Fan & Williams, 2018). The legal effort to eliminate any kinds of caste-based discrimination against D students in school expects that D students feel no discrimination, and discrimination has no longer causes poor learning.

Financial Willingness and Support for Education

Lamsal (2012, p. 78) reports that 42% of D (the national average is 25%) is below the poverty line, the life expectancy for D is 50.8 years (the national average is 59 years), the literacy rate of the D community is 33.8% (the national average is 54), their representation at the gazette level in the civil service is less than one percent (0.9%), 23% of Hill D and 44% of Terai D are landless. D is still subjected to exploitative labor practices such as the Haliya/Haruwa, Charuwa, and Balighare systems. Regarding such disparity, the fifth strategy of the 13th plan of Nepal states that all the programs of national development have been targeted to the economic and social empowerment of the backward group. Different reports indicate that poverty is the prime cause of curtailing their access to education because the poor are unable to bearing opportunity cost and even a little investment in education, hence, poverty brings a gap between D and ND in both absolute and relative form.

D scholarship in school and higher education has contributed to increasing their access to education. Nepali (2013, p. i &vi) claims many ambivalences- the amount is supportive but not sufficient; the provision has increases enrollment but not encourages to retain; the family environment has not been changed and still suffer discriminations in education. This context forces us to expect a substantial gap between D and ND in educational achievement as suggested by Reardon (2011).

Family Awareness about Education

Contemporary research has revealed the need for parent involvement to promote children’s success in school (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991). The first stage of parent’s

involvement is associated with their awareness about the importance of education. Those parents are aware of the education involved in student's education. Awareness concern about and well-informed interest in a particular situation or development. The right information about education is that it is the fuel of driving individual potentiality to achieve reality. Moreover, the contemporary ideology of late capitalism says that "an individual is the ultimate master of his or her life, free to determine every detail" (Salecl, 2010, p. 1). Thus, according to this ideology of choice, everyone is "the architect of his/her happiness", "a master of him/herself" or, in other words, everybody has open opportunities to do whatever they want with themselves if only they try hard enough. Parents should know that education inculcates values in their children. The values include developing spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education awareness to their children so that their future life will be better than without these (Slater, 2001).

Students' Motivation for Education

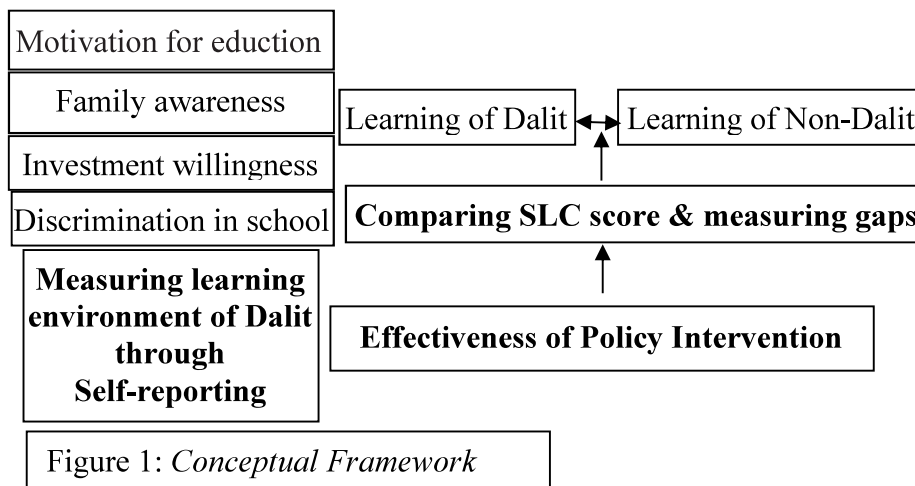
D used to be, sometimes, excluded from jobs where the de facto cause is their caste. But the scenario of the past is changing. If not explicitly, implicitly, D is being encouraged to work in GOs and I/NGOs, since ultimately motivated to education. In all kinds of government jobs 45% of total vacant quotas are reserved for inclusive recruitment and 9% of the reserved are for D. This provision encourages D children not only in participation but also for better education. Political parties have constituted D fronts. Similarly, D Commission has been established as a constitutional body from where they get moral support not only prevents them from harassment but also to struggle for more opportunity and rights. International communities such as the UN, EU, and I/NGOs have a vital role in empowering D through economic opportunities of jobs, etc. and moral support, awareness, economic support in the right, exposure, media, awareness contents, etc. This open society in a new political context convinces the importance of education, encourages getting an education, and teaches to play a better role in parenting. Both parents and children through interaction with educated D and hearing the opportunities, desire, and motivation to education as what the 'social theory of motivation' says (Forges, William & Laham, 2005, p. 3).

Parenting comprises motivating children to study, collaborating with schools, and all kinds of supports- homework and buying material. Parental participation that exists between schools, families, and communities improves student learning and plays a positive role in children's academic success (Davis, 2000). "Students from families with low education, negative attitudes towards schooling, inability to support their children or poverty-stricken single parents have a higher likelihood of dropping out" (OECD, 2012, p. 20).

Conceptual Framework

This study describes the status of D in the aspect of quality of education and a supportive environment for learning at home and school to compare with ND. At the same time, it assesses the effectiveness of the policy applied in the last 20 years to remove discrimination against them and bringing them parity to the ND. Figure 1 presents

many diverse concepts employed in this study by arranging them in a diagrammatic form as a method (suggested by Jabareen, 2009) of designing a conceptual framework.



As this study employs a comparative approach to conceptualize the phenomenon, it begins with comparing the D and ND dichotomy by measuring the education level of both D and ND, and learning environment of D, assuming D is equal to ND, if not higher. Status of the D in educational level and the supportive the learning environment are the benchmarks to assess the effectiveness of the policies of empowering D.

Methodology

This study employs descriptive design as suggested by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006) - "a good description is fundamental to the research enterprise and it has added immeasurably to our knowledge of the shape and nature of our society" (p.1). It describes the gap in educational level between the D and ND students by comparing the achievement scores they obtained in the SLC (school leaving certificate exam conducted externally by central ministry level board) exam, the ministry of education solely depends on the SLC score to rate curriculum, schools, teachers, students, and other management aspects. The score of D and ND students were collected from the record of the district education office, of Gorkha district and compared with the trends analysis method (Sigmund et al, 2017) using the score of D and ND students of urban and rural living in 2004, 2010 and 2015 using excel 2007 and online t-test calculator. In column of D, scores of Sarkee, Kami, Damai, Chureto, and Gaine (Nepal Dalit Commission, 2018) students are included and in the column of ND students: Brahmin, Chhetri, and all the ethnic castes have been included. Gorkha Municipality, a small town represents urban living where old structure shaped by social, cultural and economic relationships is destroying and modern structure has been negotiating relatively faster than rural living represented by the places- Muchhok, Jaubari, Chhoprak, and Phinam of Gorkha district. The average educational quality of the district falls on the top deciles in the SLC result.

I was highly influenced by Hirsch's (2007) idea " a) low income is a strong predictor of low educational performance; b) just 14 % of the variation in individuals' performance is accounted for by school quality, i.e. most variation is explained by other factors; c) deprived children are more likely to feel anxious and unconfident about the school, d) less advantaged children are more likely to feel a lack of control over their learning, and to become reluctant recipients of the taught curriculum; e) equality of educational opportunity must address multiple aspects of disadvantaged children's lives" while developing self-rating opinionnaire. Despite lacking full objective reliability, I ventured this tool (Crandall, 1976), to assess four factors- motivation, investment, awareness, and discrimination. 'How favorable are' these four factors to D students have been assessed by capturing the responses of 42 D students four days before they sit for the SLC exam 2015, who lives in and reads in three schools of district headquarters.

Analysis and Findings

The information has been analyzed in three aspects as per the objects of the study. Each section of the analysis has been wrapped with its findings in the end paragraphs. First, it presents the educational quality of D students in comparison to the ND. Second, it assesses the status of the learning environment of D students. Last, it discusses the effectiveness of bringing D up to the NDs.

Status of D in Learning Quality in Comparison to ND

Table 1 presents the status of the educational quality of D and ND students across the places and time in the comparative form. There are 12 variables: D and ND, rural and urban, and of three years. In similar comparisons, except for the rural and urban NDs in 2066, all null hypotheses are accepted.

Table 1

<i>Comparing Castes and Places in Different Times by Scores</i>								
2004								
Caste→	Urban		Rural		Non-Dalits		Dalits	
	non-Dal-its	Dalits	non-Dalits	Dalits	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
average %	51.91	52.92	49.16	43.59	51.91	49.16	52.92	43.59
SD	8.09	6.75	7.46	6.92	8.09	7.46	6.75	6.92
N	200	15	130	14	200	130	15	14
Cal. t-value	0.59		0.01		0.002		0.001	
H ₀	accepted		accepted		Accepted		accepted	
2010								
Caste→	Urban		Rural		Non-Dalits		Dalits	
	non-Dal-its	Dalits	non-Dalits	Dalits	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural

average %	62.66	56.42	54.92	52.11	62.66	54.92	56.42	52.11
SD	9.76	11.39	7.81	6.97	9.76	7.81	11.39	6.97
N	225	26	154	35	225	154	26	35
Cal. t-value	1.18		0.040		3.21		0.096	
H0	accepted		accepted		Rejected		accepted	

2017

	Urban		Rural		Non-Dalits		Dalits	
Caste→	non-Dal-its	Dalits	non-Dalits	Dalits	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
average %	65.24	56.75	54.44	50	65.24	54.44	56.75	50
SD	11.16	8.82	10.00	11.89	11.16	10.00	8.82	11.89
N	180	42	121	53	180	121	42	53
Cal. t-value	.0043		.01		1.09		.001	
H ₀	accepted		accepted		Accepted		accepted	

Inference: there is no significant difference in educational quality regarding caste and places

Education quality in public schools whether urban and rural and students' learning whether D or NDs are equal. D is said underprivileged community in comparison to the ND, however, its effect on their children's learning is not observed. It also suggests that over the 11 years, D students were neither below in the past nor now, rather a difference between the rural and urban D has been observed. OECD (2012, pp. 16-17) based on the PISA reports suggests that a 15-year-old student from a relatively disadvantaged home is 2.37 times more likely to score below Level 2 in the PISA reading proficiency scale than a student from an affluent family. It indicates for further research that students in public schools are segregated with their level of socioeconomic status.

Learning Environment of D Students

The learning environment has been compartmentalized into four factors to make it simple to measure. D student's perceptions in each factor have been presented in the tables below in both forms: as the tool used to measured perception and analysis.

Motivation to Education

Table 2 presents the format of the opinion survey form and the opinion of the D students in their motivation to education.

Give priority score to each statement below (1 to most like and 7 to least like and accordingly to other)							
I am studying at school because:	how many students						
<i>Priority Ranking</i>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
a...my guardians have a pressure to me get pass SLC	13	7	2	4	3	5	8
b...I cannot get prestige unless I get pass SLC	3	6	8	5	4	4	12
c...I cannot get even the lowest job unless I get pass SLC	4	10	9	8	5	5	1
d...It becomes easier to go foreign country if I get pass SLC	1	1	4	7	8	7	14
e... getting SLC pass is minimum for living in contemporary society	3	7	5	8	10	5	4
f...I cannot get access to higher education unless I get pass SLC	19	5	4	3	4	5	2
g...I can get the government job in reservation quota only if I get pass SLC	2	4	6	7	8	3	2

In Table 2, students ranked their motivating factor to pursue school education. Pursuing higher education is the most (45%) motivating, and fulfilling parents' will is the second most (30%) factor to SLC pass for the students. It shows that parents are aware of the importance of education and expect their children educated (to get SLC pass).

Willingness and Capacity to Invest in Education

Dizon-Ross (2016, p. 34) suggests that less-educated parents have less accurate beliefs, and update their beliefs and some investments more in response to information. School education is not so costly in Nepal that rich parents can afford, a little positive attitude developed by the policy intervention to education is sufficient. Table 3 presents the format of the opinion survey form and D students' opinions on their family willingness and capacity to invest in education.

Give a score of 3 if you completely agree, 2 for agree, and 1 for disagree to the following sentences			
I am studying at school because:	how many students		
<i>Priority Ranking</i>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
a...my parents can give me money as much I need	25	7	10

b...my parents collect money for my education bearing any trouble	34	8	0
<i>Total positive response</i>	59	15	10
c... my parents provide little money for my study which is not enough	6	20	24
d...my parents do not give me money, I collect myself	0	2	40
<i>Total negative response</i>	6	22	64
e... the money of Dalits scholarship support for my education	10	32	0
f... the money of Dalits scholarship is sufficient to my education	2	15	25
<i>The need for Dalits scholarship</i>	23	42	19
g...I do not need the money of Dalits scholarship: my family can bear	12	8	22

Measurement has been made on an interval scale, though they are understood as ordinal and analyzed as nominal by making frequency counts. Table 3 indicates 70% of students perceive that their parents are supportive and 76% perceive their parents are willing to invest. However, their teachers reported that NRs. 500 is not a significant amount. Nearly, half of the D children work as a laborer in holiday and vacation for pocket money, and very few of them for stationery and tuition fee, otherwise, if they have responsible parents, whether rich or poor, they are supported even with daily wages.

Family Awareness to Education

Table 4 presents the format of the opinion survey form and D students' opinions towards their financial support from their family to education.

Table 4
Family Support for Learning

Opinionnaire to assess family awareness to education			
Give a score of 3 if you completely agree, 2 for agree, and 1 for disagree to the following sentences			
I am studying at school because:	how many students		
<i>Priority Ranking</i>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
a... my parents are careful to my education	20	7	5
b... I have a good environment for education at home	9	22	11
c...my kinsmen are educated and encourage me for higher study	19	12	11
d... my parents are ready to bear any trouble to see my education	24	12	10
e... my parents help me in extra class and tuition	28	13	3
<i>Total positive responses</i>	100	66	40

f... my parents want I begin earning business leaving education	5	10	27
g...I have to help parents in work than study at home	3	12	27
<i>Total negative</i>	8	22	56

Table 4 indicates that the family attitude of D children to education is positive. As the background of students and family exert an important influence on their performance, their parents are found aware, however, almost all parents of public schools are unable to support their children in homework, counseling, and motivating. Few of them may have senior siblings and kinsmen in higher grades.

Caste-Based Discrimination in School

Table 5 presents the format of the opinion survey form and D students' opinions on their financial support from their family to education.

Table 5
Caste-Based Discrimination in School

Opinionnaire to assess caste-based discrimination to education			
Give a score of 3 if you completely agree, 2 for agree, and 1 for disagree to the following sentences			
I am studying at school because:	no. of students		
<i>Priority Ranking</i>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
a... non-Dalits students do not prefer Dalits as their friends	3	8	31
b... non-Dalits students do bully and ridicule Dalits at school	1	11	22
c... non-Dalits do not prefer Dalits as their friends	6	12	24
d...teachers have soft-corners to non-Dalits against Dalits	10	12	20
e...teachers teach better to non-Dalits than Dalits in the classroom	12	13	17
f...teachers also satire and ridicule to Dalits in school	4	10	18
g...Dalits are treated as second grade since they do not feel enjoy in school	3	13	26
<i>Total discriminative responses</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>158</i>
h...friendship generally depends on our behaviors not in caste in our school	32	10	0
i...teachers love Dalits students as much as non-Dalits	25	8	9
j...we feel no smell of Dalits and non-Dalits discrimination in school	23	17	2
k...we feel the school is the best place of regardless of caste	31	8	3
<i>Total non-discriminative responses</i>	<i>111</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>14</i>

The aggregate of frequency counts presented in Table 5 indicates that D students feel almost nothing of caste-based discrimination in school. They may get more care and love from teacher if they are better at learning. Finding of this study resembles OECD (2012) that reports - “students direct their attention away from learning when they experience negative emotions such as discrimination, additional behaviors such as drug or alcohol abuse and juvenile delinquency are also associated with lower performance” (p. 19). But this study suggests that there is no caste-based discrimination to D students in school, and they need not be upset and annoy. It is tremendous progress against the “caste-based discrimination was severely practiced at schools in the past...that causes a high rate of irregularity and dropout... even still there” is reported by Bishwakarma, (2017, p. 61).

Effectiveness of the Policy

The judgment of any policy for its effectiveness in bringing social change is not straightforward but very complex (Shas, 2011, p. 21). Findings of this study based on small-scale data suggest that there is no disparity between D and not-D students in their achievement scores in public school. The learning environment of D is supportive, but there is no benchmark to gauge this status as progressive or static, or regressive either with its longitudinal point or as excellent, moderate, or low with other cross-sectional points. Triangulation with teachers indicates that students’ self-reporting is a bit ‘fake-good’ for what van de Mortel (2008) says- ‘socially desirable responding’. Nevertheless, the learning environment not bad, more than half the responses are positive, if a little is reduced for the ‘fake-good’, they have a moderate level of support.

Table 6
Comparing Development between 2004 and 2017 by Score
2004 BS

Year	Urban ND		Rural ND		Urban Dalit		Rural Dalits		Overall	
	2004	2017	2004	2017	2004	2017	2004	2017	2004	2017
average %	51.91	65.24	49.16	54.44	52.92	56.75	43.59	50	56.13	62.77
SD	8.09	11.16	7.46	10.00	6.75	8.82	6.92	11.89	10.5	9.74
N	200	180	130	121	15	42	14	53	363	433
Cal. t-value	1.10		4.42		0.042		0.014		0.33	
H ₀	accepted		accepted		Accepted		accepted		accepted	

Table 6 compares the education level of public schools across the 11 years and found there is no increase in education quality- i.e. achievement scores of students, except the rural ND. It suggests that the educational quality of public schools over 11 years is not significantly advanced and interventions made by the government to enhance the educational quality are almost ineffective.

Table 7
Increased Educational Quality of Dalit Over 11 Years

Group	D 2004	D 2017
Mean	48.59	53.38
SD	6.8	10.36
SEM	1.27	1.06
N	29	95
Intermediate values used in calculations: $t = 2.3345$, $df = 122$, $SED = 2.050$ Confidence interval: The mean of D 2004 minus D 2017 equals to -4.7850095% the confidence interval of this difference: From -8.84250 to -0.72750 P-value and statistical significance: The two-tailed P-value equals 0.0212 By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be statistically significant.		

Table 7 reports that the achievement score of the D students across 11 years is significantly increased. Quality of the public school is the same but the quality of D students is increased, it deduces that the quality of D has increased over 11 years. Another achievement is- enrollment of D students increased by triple. D people are now more motivated and aware of education, at the same time willing and capable to educate children and the school environment is not harassing and annoying. These two facts suggest that policy interventions are effective to lift the D up.

Conclusion

A comparison of the achievement score of D and ND students of six different public schools suggests parity between them. Trend analysis over 11 years suggests that D has made significant progress in achievement and enrollment in school education. D students' self-rating opinionnaire suggests the status of their learning environment- e.g. motivation to education, willingness, and capacity of investment, awareness to the importance of education, and the non-discriminatory perception at schools are positive for better learning achievement. Thus, the study concludes that the D had made significant progress over 11 years and the national policy of bringing D up is effective. The status of the learning environment was measured with self-reporting which is supposed to be authentic through participant observation. This conclusion may not generalize to comparing the students in private and public schools and other urbanized districts. Two other findings of this study are: (a) the low achievement score is associated with rural-urban factor; (b) educational quality of public schools over 11 years is not increased. D is assumed lower in SES than the ND, it is observed that there is no significant difference in their achievement scores. It may force us to infer that there is no association between SES and students' learning. But, SES at first affects school choice and segregation, and then consequences to better education and higher achievement score.

Several research in school choice, and private and public schools are suggested to understand the association between SES and achievement score. This findings suggests a similar study comparing access in learning of D and ND students in the

diverse fields (a) in private schools, and (b) in high-ranked public schools in different district of Nepal to make a more generalizable knowledge about the status of D, and effectiveness of D upliftment program.

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