

Madheshi Women's Struggle for Higher Education in Nepal

Hota Raj Khanal¹

Abstract

This article adopted a qualitative approach to explore the practices and problems faced by Madheshi women in higher education. Though the traditional world has changed, and women in Madhesh are still struggling for equality and empowerment. For achieving higher education, they are accepting all the challenges that rise in front of them; but the established traditional norms and values in their socio-cultural life have become the main barriers playing role in keeping them away from higher education. In this study, the primary data were collected via in-depth interview with the participant with prolonged engagement in the field. The interpretation and analysis of the data helped to reach the conclusion from the perspective of the participant. The finding revealed that tit-bits of Madheshi women are receiving higher education but lots of them are away from education; engaged in household works, rearing children, feeding the family members; and socio-cultural beliefs have suppressed them a lot.

Keywords: patriarchy system, feminism, Madheshi women, higher education

Introduction

The term *Madheshi people* refers to the people residing in the southern part of Nepal that incorporates various ethnic groups residing in the region. It is often said that the women in Madhesh are bound in strong cultural practices; and the voice of the women is suppressed, so it is not taken as equal to that of males in practical life (p. 125). The United Nations (1991) defines the status of women considering their access to knowledge, economic resources and political powers as well as their personal autonomy in decision making process. The status of women can also be determined by comparing their situation against men, and the autonomy of decision making at the household level. In general, a woman does not feel independent, and feels lacking the authority of decision making; looking upon others for her own identity, having the character of

¹ Kapilvastu Multiple Campus; Taulihawa, Kapilvastu; [Email: hotaraj9841436918@gmail.com](mailto:hotaraj9841436918@gmail.com)

Madheshi Women's Struggle for Higher Education in Nepal

powerlessness, inferior to men and remembering household work as her own duty.

In the context of Nepal, women in society are still taken as weak and are not behaved equally either in education, wages or in several other opportunities. When a male twin after the Secondary Education Exam asks the parents to be away or to stay in other country for higher education, parents easily permit him without any objection and become happy as the son is able to stay away from home and has been ready for struggle in the future. On the other hand, if a female twin of the same family asks for the same permission, she does not get that opportunity though they have secured similar grades in the exam. She is requested to show the manner of the society in terms of culture and conventions. Parents do not forget to name her as a culture and prestige of the family; and they make her morally to stay at home. She is admitted to a college near home and not allowed to leave residence.

Discrimination against women and girls is more severe in the lowland plains of the country known as Tarai, and in the Midwestern and far-western regions, creating a fertile ground for trafficking and child labor (Asian Development Bank, 2016). The culture of Madheshi society has been under pressure over the Madheshi women. When a girl from Madheshi society completes higher education and becomes capable of a job, there is the possibility that she will earn a good reputation in her society; and for her marriage parents have to search for a boy from reputed family which demands handsome amount of dowry. In her marriage, the family has to spend a high amount of money. On the other hand, a family does not need to spend much on a marriage if the daughter of the family does not have better education and reputation; the bridegroom demands fewer dowries so the burden of the parents of the bride will decrease. It means, the higher the education, the greater the burden for the parents of a daughter.

On this backdrop, it would be worthwhile to study the situation of women in higher education; and accordingly, the objective of this study was to explore the practices and problems faced by Madheshi women in higher education.

Decision making

Despite the contributions women make to family livelihood, they usually have little say in household decision making; this lack of voice is replicated outside the home (Asian Development Bank, 2016). A woman in a family is regarded as a good person having the skill of cooking food or curry but she cannot decide which curry will be cooked today evening at home, and asks her

husband or son (if the son is adult) for the decision, so we can easily assume her position in the family. It is a very common and everyday matter. Besides, she needs permission to go to a neighbor's house; without order she cannot buy a glass ring to wear on her hand and the color of her glass ring will be selected by her husband; she cannot buy a litre of milk for her family or herself. A woman cannot keep a single pace out of her house; then, how can she think and decide about her higher education, especially after marriage (Gupta, 2019). She always waits for the decision of her husband; but that decision does not let her go to college.

A woman in a family is taken as a housewife, so she needs to complete all the tasks of a house; the tasks of the house remain waiting if she goes somewhere for a time (Pokharel, 2008). Every task has to be completed before going somewhere and she should get permission. She worries about her duties and responsibilities. Early in the morning she prepares everything; gets her children ready for going to school, makes everything ready for her husband to go to office, cleans everything and makes the remaining members of the family for the whole day being mother, wife, and housewife (Gupta, 2019).

Social structure and social status of women

In the context of Nepal either we get nuclear family or joint family. Nuclear family system is prevalent in urban and city areas whereas joint family system is found in rural and Terai areas of the country. Woman is regarded as a housewife whether she is in a nuclear or joint family system. She has to make all the family members happy and do all the tasks and perform all the duties playing the roles of wife, mother, daughter-in-law, aunty, etc. following all traditions and cultures (Gupta, 2019). She has to prove herself as an ideal person in the family and the community. In Madheshi socio-cultural system, a woman is not allowed to go and talk to the outsiders because of the rigidity of traditional culture observed in most cases. As far as possible she cannot show her face to an outsider who visits her house; she answers him hiding herself inside room and does not come out. Moreover, the culture binds women inside the house rather than going to a college for higher education.

A family has to decide over several matters of the house but she does not get opportunity to participate in making decisions; in case of property she is not regarded as a co-partner; or she is not taken as a family member. She is known as a second class member in the family. A woman is known in her community as a wife of someone or a mom of someone but she is not known by her own name; she enjoys nominal rights and in most cases she does not know that she

has been suppressed by her husband and patriarchal society (Gupta, 2019). It is generally assumed that a woman as a daughter always remains under the control of her father, as a wife under her husband in the family and as a mother under her son. The women who are living in strict traditional societies are not in position to totally change all those traditional rules and bring change in their rigid social customs which are not entirely favorable for establishing the equal status of men and women in society (Bista, 1991). The culture does not prioritize higher education for women beyond the household works. It pressurizes them to stay at home with the family members, mostly with children to care them; and university education for women is not a prestigious side of a family (Tiwari, 2013). Our society has been running under the rigid system of culture; as a result women cannot break the cultural system which has been followed by the society developed in the course of a long history.

Sexual and domestic violence

Sexual and domestic violence seems to be commonly prevailing in India and Nepal and especially in the Madheshi society. Violence against women cuts across social and economic situations of women and is deeply embedded in cultures around the world especially in third world, (Cate, 1997). Gender based violence against women in various forms including domestic violence, girl trafficking, rape, racking, dowry, etc. are more common in developing countries like Nepal. Study has shown that millions of women in the world require medical attention as well as psychological treatment due to such a violence. The women who are beaten are subjected to repeated violence and most of the violence occurs due to rejection of sex. It was also found that such a violence generally occurs by someone she knows (Ellsberg and Manzurola, 1999).

Some causes of violence against women can be identified in society. In Nepal, particularly, violence is generally known as a common phenomenon; and this has not stopped due to the lack of legal literacy among women. The declaration on the elimination of all forms of violence against women has also recognized by the constitution of Nepal; but still it appears in practice mostly in Madheshi society (Rana, & Koirala, 2021). Marital rape, dowry, sexual harassment, family torture, violence, are the instances of gender based violence (Shahen, 2021).

In Madhesh, it is often pointed out that women suffer from violence mentally and physically. After marriage, they keep a huge load of household work on their head which does not let them think about higher education. Even if they have the interest for study, their husbands do not permit them to go to college;

community backbites if they are sent for education. In patriarchal societies, the greatest violence is directed towards girls and women and rarely towards male which occur due to the lack of education (Gupta and others, 2021). Most innocent women who have been always treated in this way digest any torture, do not even realize that they are exploited, and thus must change (Forum for Women, Law and Development (2009). Domestic violence is more than an isolated instance of mental and/or physical abuse within an intimate relationship. It hampers women's right to dignity and life.

Patriarchy system

Patriarchy is, by definition, sexist, which means it promotes the belief that women are innately inferior to men (AlMostafa, 2016). This belief in the inborn inferiority of women is a form of what is called biological essentialism because it is based on biological differences between the sexes that are considered part of our unchanging essence as men and women (Tyson, 2006). This is a belief that by birth women are supposed to be weaker than men and they are dependent members of a society or a family; as a result they always need a strong support for their survival. In the present context, a well educated woman does not become ready to get married to a man whose level of education is lower than her which is the perspective of patriarchy existed in woman's heart in twenty first century's society; but a man always becomes ready to marry a woman who has lower educational status than his; women themselves seem to be uplifting traditional culture even if they advocate against patriarchy structure.

Males are supposed to be physically and emotionally stoic and possess the dictatorship more than females which is socially, culturally and religiously accepted; as a result, the division of work seems to be developed accordingly. Crying and showing fear or pain are considered a sign of weakness; these are the signs which never fit for men and are considered unmanly if they are seen in men (AlMostafa, 2016). If someone cries or fears due to some reasons, then people give him a tag of female in Nepalese culture due to which a man cannot cry though he is suffering from a great problem or pain. A man does not know showing his fear or pain to others. It is considered as a taboo expressing their sympathy for other men; moreover, males are not permitted to fail at anything whatever they try in their day to day life because failure in any domain implies failure in one's manhood.

Feminism

Females are biologically different from males by birth and males are not made the same as the females (Byrne, 2020). The birth is programmed biologically

but not socially. But it is the society where rules are invented by men and made men favored but not women favored. The world is a playground where all the systems and rules are made in favor of males; and females are considered as the aliens from another planet. In Nepalese cultural context, women are taken as a machine for giving birth to children. She gives birth to children but she cannot decide the number of children to be given birth. Rearing and caring the children is her main responsibility. She needs to make everyone happy: children, husband, parents, and guests but not herself. Men can act upon the world, change it, give it meaning, while women have meaning only in relation to men. Thus, women are defined not just in terms of their difference from men, but in terms of their inadequacy in comparison to men (Tyson, 2006).

Actually, women are not so as males think and behave towards them. Though they are biologically different, they are similar to men and they can do as equal to men. Women are lagging behind due to the lack of education and male-generated culture but not due to the lack of knowledge. Traditional man-made gender roles have been privileged in societies. The gender roles are used to justify everything; and women are proved everywhere as weaker, blunt, dependent, and subaltern.

Methodology

In my master's class I found a student different from others. She was not regular in her class and did not pay much attention in classroom activities. Sometimes she used to go out before the time; and sometimes she used to be late. She used to be serious in her classroom. I thought this could be not only the case of Kapilvastu district but a representative case of the struggle of women from the entire Madheshi community. A student was facing problem in higher studies and struggling a lot to achieve higher education avoiding the obstacles.

As a researcher, I purposively selected the participant to collect qualitative data which was helpful to achieve the designed objective. In this study, I intended to study the struggle of Madheshi women for higher education. I brought reality into existence through my interview incorporating various perspectives and interpretations of the participant's view and opinions. I went purposively and chose only one participant who was a student of M.Ed. Third Semester (2021) in a public campus of Kapilvastu for interview to collect data. The research study adopted qualitative case study research design through which I could reach into the reality to see the situation of women in higher education in general and the practices and problems faced by Madheshi women for higher education in particular. The reason I chose the qualitative method is that I could

study the case very minutely after developing a good rapport and could find out the reality of existence which helped to understand the struggle of students; and it can help the policy makers to develop a policy. (Qian, 2020).

High school education

Nepal's Madhesi common proverb "Padle likhle kaun kam, har jotle dhane dhan" is commonly uttered through the vocal cords of common Madhesi people – which reflects the belief that education is not as important as agricultural activities. For them education does not keep more meaning; rather it is the waste of time. As a result, many girls in Madhesh still do not complete high school education; rather, they give priority to the household works with the belief that girls have to do household works more willingly than education. My participant said, "Females have to learn internal management of the house which is the primary skill of women thinking that they are taken differently than the boys". Though the girls are sent to school, in the name of age, sex, household and prestige, most of the girls cannot complete their high school education. Even if they are willing to complete education, the barrier of traditional belief comes in front of their life which kills the desire of completing education (Tiwari, 2013).

The consolidated literacy rate of Madhesi female population of 15 years and above is 56.6% whereas male literacy is 67% (Nepal Living Standard Survey, 2011 cited in Gupta & Hajariya, 2012). Love marriage is considered the evil in Madhesi society; and they think that girls may fall in love and elope with the boys in their adolescence if they are sent to college or high school for education (Tiwari, 2013). This is a great fear in Madhesi society; so girls are compelled to drop their education early. The participant said, "Eloping with a boy being a daughter from a house is taken as destroying all the prestige of a family, and the community offers a tag of having bad culture of the concerned family". But such fear is not assumed in the case of boys; and they do not face any challenge, instead, they are supported from the cultural belief too.

Household work

After marriage, a woman needs to take all the responsibilities of the house. The participant exclaimed, "*From the early crack of cock I start my duty. Being a mother of a family, maintaining neatness of house is a part of daily routine; fetching water and preparing varieties of food for all and feeding them in the same way.*" From their childhood, they are taught that their real home is the husband's home. Moreover, she said, "*I look after all children; make them ready for school; satisfy all adult family members; if there remains*

something to eat then only I eat". For household work education is not important for women. Therefore, daughters are naturally considered themselves as the temporary residents of their parental home and are excluded from full membership and identities of the parental families after marriage.

In patriarchal society, women derive social status primarily from fertility as the carriers of 'clan seeds' and mothers, but they have little control over their own fertility (Tiwari, 2013). The mother gives the number of births as required by her husband or family but it is not determined by herself; she is taken as if she is a birth machine. Before giving birth to a child she does not have identity; but after a birth to a child she is recognized by a mom of her child and it becomes her strong identity in her family (Gupta, 2019).

Madheshi people have their own culture and lifestyle which they strongly follow in their life or community. From their perspective, women after marriage should stay inside the house and not perform the works concerned with the places out of the house. If a guest comes to their house, they do not answer the guest as far as possible; and they answer the guest inside their house without showing their face. It means their culture does not permit them to work out of the house. Therefore, they do not prioritize educating their daughters. The participant said, *"If married women go to college for higher education, the culture back-bites them and even wearing kurta-surwal is not easily digestible matter when the women wears it to go to college"*. Going to college for higher education is a challenging job for a woman.

No or low support of family

The participant said, *"Married women do not get support from their house for higher education. There were many female classmates when I was in high school as a student but I am the only one who has been continuing study after high school education"*. Some of them left their study before marriage and some others left after the marriage though they wanted to continue their education. Even an unmarried girl is supposed to perform all household works rather than going to college for education which is the bitter reality of the Madheshi community. She revealed that her husband had promised for her higher education before marriage; but after the marriage everyone forgets their promises as her husband had committed before the marriage. She exclaimed:

Before marriage, I told my fiancé that I teach at a school and study at campus. It may take two to three years to complete my study which should not be discontinued. Before marriage, they accepted all but after the marriage they forgot all. ...Now, they tell to me not

to go to campus and school, and leave the job. Every day, all the tasks need to be completed as if a servant and nobody helps.

Sometimes during the class they call her and order her to leave the class and to prepare food due to the arrival of the guest. They cannot wait one or two hours up to the end of the class; and they never think about the future of the family through the empowerment of women after the completion of higher education. The food is not prepared at home in her absence though there are mother-in-law, brothers-in-law and sisters in the house; thus she feels herself as a non paying servant of the family.

Higher the education richer the dowry

Dowry has been one of the deeply-rooted practice in Nepal that is associated with social status and prestige, which both families (those receiving as well as providing large amount of dowries) believe as a means of boosting the social status (Karki, 2014). Dowry price was based on several factors and attributes of the groom and bride and their families, such as the education level of the groom and parents, economic and social status of the groom and parents, hyper-gamy, and imbalance in the marriage market (Himalaya News Service, 2008). In the present society, education is seen as an intellectual activity equated with higher prestige and it is the matter of the entire world.

A girl gains higher prestige and better reputation when she receives a better education or better job. Her parents have to search for a suitable boy for her marriage who is highly educated and has a better reputation or job; a boy having lower level of education than a girl and lower status of job than a girl cannot get married with her. The patriarchal society has a strong belief that a boy must have higher level of education, better job, better family status, and older in age than a girl to get married to her. The participant said, *"The amount of dowry goes on increasing along with the level of education, level of job, and family status of the boy. If a girl is educated, she needs a boy which fits her level of education and status"*. It means, the consequence of higher education for a girl indicates higher amount of dowry for marriage which is an additional burden to the parents. Because of this scenario, parents do not show their interest in educating daughters. Moreover, they keep their daughters at home with training in household works. If a bride's family is not in a position to provide dowry, they take loans or sell property, perpetuating a cycle of debt and dependency (Karki, 2014).

Practices and problems

Mostly the daughter-in-laws are kept within the four walls or even in a room, not allowed to talk with any other male members of the family except for her husband. Daughter-in-law in a family is totally dominated and restricted to bearing children and feeding the family. She has to follow all the rules and regulations and has to suffer several instances of violence and torture. Daughter-in-law is taught to carry out household jobs, with the characters of gentleness, sacrifice and unassertiveness. Decision making, self-expression, opinion formulation and assertion of their needs and interests are mostly discouraged (Chaudhary, 2008). The participant said, "*Daughter-in-laws are for cooking food, giving birth, rearing children, but not for going to college and working out in office or business. They must be honest and disciplined. They do not have to show their face to others.*" It is a culture of the Madheshi community. If a woman goes to work outside, the incident becomes the issue of family prestige. Only the families having low prestige send their women to work out of the house.

A woman becomes 'woman' in society only when she performs her role as a mother; her status is validated only after bearing children, especially a son, who is must light parents' funeral pyres, can perform the *Shraddha* ceremony for the deceased parents (Lynan & Dahal, 2008). Still the son and daughter in the society are not seen equally due to various reasons. While son is regarded as a continuity of the family, daughter is seen just as a guest of a family who goes to her husband house; that is why a woman has to give birth to a son even if there are several daughters in the family; and she is regarded like a machine for giving birth (Shrestha, 2021). This belief is strongly seen and followed in Madheshi society which is the problem faced by the women. The family does not let a woman go to college for education or for a service to an office or an institution. The participant said:

Women are not supported by their families in learning material as well as time for reading and going to college. Women have to perform all the tasks of the house, and in the tasks they are not supported by the other family members though there are other members in the house out of work. I remain busy morning to evening. If I try to read, the family members hide my books, note copies and other reading materials so that I cannot find them for reading.

It is very difficult for women to continue education after marriage. Neither they get support from their own house nor are they protected from their culture.

Madhesi Women's Struggle for Higher Education in Nepal

Madhesi women are suffering from the sadistic problem of their recognition and identification of their existence with their own distinct culture, customs, language and region since the history of human civilization; and the constitution has not touched upon their livelihood for uplifting them from problems.

The participant claimed, "*Slowly, in Madhesh, women are struggling after the influence of women from other societies and showing interest in study, so they request their parents to go to school and college and for late marriage.*" Going to college becomes easier before marriage rather than after the marriage, which helps in continuing higher education. They want promise from their fiancé for their education in the agreement before marriage. Some of them appeal their husbands and other family members to support them for higher education, as seen rarely sometimes. They themselves do hard labor and manage time for education. Higher education makes vital contribution to sustainable development through generation and dissemination of knowledge (Ghara, 2016).

Social perspective towards women

Women, in general, do not have direct access to monetary income due to their reproductive role which is the center of nurture and socialization, maintaining households and productive role. The women in Madhesh are deprived from access to the symbolic, economic and cultural except for the social capital related to the network of family and kinship (Gupta, 2019). Gender discrimination is perhaps the most universal form of social exclusion against women in the community and society (Sah, 2021). The hierarchy of women in the social structure of Madhesh region seems to be very low. A woman does not have the right to decide over (even) a few trivial matters, and she always sees the face of either her husband or other male members of the family in making decisions. All the property is kept under the possession of male but not under the control of females.

Male is seen as a power in society, so it is a compulsion for a woman to give birth to a son – in absence of whom her status is not taken as equal to other women of the same society. So, she continues giving birth even after bearing several daughters. She cannot decide herself over the number of children needed in her family. Even the well educated people seem to have a conservative mentality. They are against female education, and they do not want to send their daughter, wife or female members to school or college for education and for work outside the village. The participant claimed, "*Gender discrimination is seen with high intensity in Madhesh because sons are sent to the advanced cities or even in foreign countries for education but daughters are not sent in such*

places." Parents do not think about the importance of education for their daughters; and they are not sent to the school or college located nearby – with the belief that they have to do nothing with their education.

Conclusion

The study reaches the conclusion that typical Madhesi women are struggling far ahead for higher education, keeping a strong interest in it. Women do not get good support for study from their own house or family members including their own husbands. Madhesi women face many problems that are created either by culture or their own family members. They do not get time for study at their home, as they have to complete all the household works by themselves. They cannot continue their higher education after marriage even if they have a desire for higher education. Very few Madhesi women are able to achieve university education; but the majority of them are still away from university education which is a bitter scenario in the context of Nepal. Continuous labor, overload of work, strong desire, hard struggle are the practices of women, and their polite appeal with their family especially with their husbands for education have been suppressed by the social-cultural frame and established traditional orthodoxies.

References

- AlMostafa, Mohammad Salem. (2016). The Representation of women in Youssef Ziedan's *Azazeel*: A feminist study. *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 5(3), 38-49.
- Asian Development Bank. (2016). *Gender equality results case study: Nepal gender equality and empowerment of women project*. Asian Development Bank.
- Bista, Dor Bahadur. (1991). *Fatalism and development: Nepal's struggle for modernization*. Calcutta, Orient Longman.
- Byrne, Alex. (2020). Are women adult human females? *Philosophical Studies*, 177(12), 3783-3803.
- Cate, Jamie, (1997). *Violence against women: An issue of human rights, gender action 1 (4)*. Washington D.C., Office of the Women in Development, United States Agency for International Development. Pp. 1-4.
- Chaudhary, Dipak. (2008). *Nepalko madhesi samaj*. Ratna Pustak Bhandar, Kathmandu. In Tiwari, S. (2013). *Status of Madhesi women in Nepal: A case study of Parsa district*. A Ph. D. thesis.
- Ellsberg, Mary; & Manzurola, Gharry. (1999). Men and women in a time of Change. In UNFPA, (2000). *The state of world population: Lives*

Madhesi Women's Struggle for Higher Education in Nepal

- together, worlds apart: men and women in a time of change.* United Nations Population Fund.
- Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD). (2009). *Domestic Violence, Offence and Punishment Act, 2008 and Conceptual Framework*. Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD), Kathmandu, Nepal. Pp.1-7.
- Ghara, Tushar Kanti. (2016). Status of Indian women in higher education. *Journal of Education and Practice*. Vol. 7 (34).
- Gupta, Anil Kumar. (2019). Significance of girl education: Parents' perception from rural madhesh of Nepal. *Journal of Management and Development Studies*, 29(28), 61-68.
- Gupta, Anil Kumar; Kanu, Poonam Kumari; & Lamsal, Bishnu Prasad. (2021). Gender discrimination in Nepal: Does it vary across socio-demographics? *Journal of Contemporary Sociological Issues*, 1(2), 145-165.
- Gupta, Sumit; & Hajariya, Ambar. (2012). The youths of Madhes: An overall national assessment. In Gupta, A. K. (2019). Significance of girl education: Parents' perception from rural Madhesh of Nepal. *Journal of Management and Development Studies*, Vol 29.
- Karki, Subekshya. (2014). *A study on dowry related violence in Nepal*. INSEC online.
- Lynan, Bennett; and Dahal, Dilli Ram. (2008). Caste, ethnic and regional identity in Nepal: Further analysis of the 2006. Nepal Demographic and Health Survey. In Tiwari, S. (2013). *Status of Madhesi women in Nepal: A case study of Parsa district*. A Ph. D. thesis.
- Pokharel, Samidha. (2008). Gender discrimination: Women perspectives. *Nepalese Journal of Development and Rural Studies*, 5(2), 80-87.
- Qian, Hong. (2020). *The development of critical thinking in the academic writing of Chinese students: Case study in a UK university*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Leicester.
- Rana, Bandana, & Koirala, Samiksha. (2021). Nepal's gender policies: Achievements and challenges. *Nepal Public Policy Review*, 1, 191-200.
- Sah, Shailendra Kumar. (2021). *Dowry violence among women: A sociological study of Lahan-11 & 24, Siraha district* (Doctoral dissertation, Department of Sociology).
- Sen, Purna. (1999). Enhancing women's choices in responding to domestic violence in Calcutta: A comparison of employment and education. *European Journal of Development Research* 11(2).

Madheshi Women's Struggle for Higher Education in Nepal

- Himalaya News Service. (2008). Woman killed for dowry. *Himalayan Times*.
- Shahen, Md. Abu. (2021). Gender-based violence in Bangladesh: A critical analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Research*, 1(2), 127-139.
- Shrestha, Bhawana. (2021). Overcoming barriers as a Nepali woman through emotional intelligence: My emotional literacy journey into my Ph.D. in educational leadership. *Inquiry in Education*, 13(2), 17.
- Tiwari, Sushma. (2013). *Status of Madheshi women in Nepal: A case study of Parsa district*. A Ph. D. thesis.
- Tyson, Lois. (2006). *Critical theory today: A user-friendly guide*. New York: Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group.
- United Nations (UN). (1991). *The Worlds Women: Trends and Statistics, 1970-1990*. New York, United Nations. Pp. 85-94.