

# Reasons for the Prevalence of Caste Discrimination and Practice of Untouchability in *Itihāsko Ek Piakā* and *Likhe*

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<https://doi.org/10.3126/haimaprabha.v1i22.56546>

## Abstract

*This paper examines reasons for the prevalence of caste discrimination and practice of untouchability in Itihāsko Ek Piakā and Likhe. To fulfill the objective, the researcher has implied Stuart Hall's theory of representation under cultural studies as main and other theorists' insights are cited as supporting tools to analyze and interpret the primary texts. This study is primarily a library based qualitative research. The area of this research is confined to novels by both Dalit and non-Dalit Nepali writers. The data were collected from text information, description and record keeping. The researcher found that all the Dalit characters have been facing socio-economic, educational, political and cultural domination, discrimination, humiliation and biasness from the upper caste people in the words and actions. The representation of Dalit characters displays that due to the policy of the nation results the caste discrimination and practice of untouchability. These evil socio-cultural practices result: illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, lack of political access, lack of unity among Dalits and lack of self-esteem. Beside this, characters in both novels: Bhuwansingh and Likhe suffer by same childhood experiences in terms of discrimination and untouchability. These evil socio-cultural practices also affect the learning environment. Thus, Dalits have been suffering lifelong and searching their self-respect and humanly treatment to emancipate them. This study adds new avenue for academic discussion in the field of academia so as to address the age-long discriminatory system in order to create a just and healthy society without any forms of discrimination in the name of race, class caste, color and gender. Therefore, it is significant to the academia because it is a great asset.*

**Key Words:** Caste discrimination, emancipation, hierarchy, untouchable, Varna system

## Introduction

This research centers on Dalit issues that how Dalits have been living in miserable condition due to the caste discrimination and practice of untouchability practiced on the basis of Hindu Varna system. In the context of Nepal, some people are privileged while others are underprivileged in the name of caste. There are four Varna: Brahman, Chhetri, Baishye and Shudras. Shudras (now Dalits) categories are at the bottom of Hindu social

organization system and these have been designed as 'untouchable' or 'Dalit'. When Prime-minister Junga Bahadur Rana put a royal seal on *Muluki Ain* (MA) in 1910 B.S. thereafter caste discrimination and the practice of untouchability became officially strong. Although *The Constitution of Nepal* 2072 B.S. declares that the caste discrimination is a crime in the eyes of law, caste discrimination still exists in practice. However, principles of social equality, justice and equity have not been practically achieved in Nepal. Leaders, policy makers, administrators and political parties have almost failed to implement rules and regulations. In this community, most people only talk about equity and equality but hardly implement into practice. Therefore, the researcher selects two novels: *Itihāsko Ek Paikā* (2066) by Ranendra Barāli, the Dalit writer and *Likhe* (2073) by Sarad Paudel, the non-Dalit writer for the research topic as represented in the texts under scrutiny.

The area of this research is confined to novels by both Dalit and non-Dalit Nepali writers. The research was based on the question that 'what are the reasons for the prevalence of caste discrimination and practice of untouchability in Dalits?' To answer the question, the objective 'Prevalence of caste discrimination and practice of untouchability in *Itihāsko Ek Paikā and Likhe*', the researcher has implied Stuart Hall's theory of representation under cultural studies as main and other theorists' insights are cited as supporting tools to analyze and interpret the primary texts. This study primarily a library based qualitative research adds new avenue for academic discussion in the field of academia so as to address the age-long discriminatory system in order to create a just and healthy society without any forms of discrimination in the name of race, class caste, color and gender. Each and every member of human society, regardless of race, class caste, color and gender have equal right to live and work with identity, dignity, and sense of individuality.

### **Research Methodology**

The researcher in this research section has included research design, sampling, data collection, data collection tools, and data analysis process.

### **Research Design**

Obviously, a cultural study is the area of this study and it is a library based qualitative research. The researcher mainly focuses on the Dalits' issues in the Nepali society due to cultural domination. The researcher in this study has applied the constructivist approach to carry out this research.

## Sampling

The researcher has used the primary as well as secondary data. The required data have been collected from the books, thesis, dissertations and different reports. The researcher collected the available novels written both by Dalit and non- Dalit novelists. Then he studied all of them and the texts which contain caste discrimination and untouchability were purposively selected for the study.

## Data Collection

Primary as well as secondary data were collected from the library for the study.

## Data Collection Tools

The data were collected from text information, description and record keeping. The researcher has collected the required data by studying selected novels: *Itihasko Ek Paika* and *Likhe* as primary data and other documents like; reports, articles, books and dissertation for secondary data.

## Data Analysis Process

After the collection of data, the researcher reviewed all of them, made sense of them and organized them into categories or themes and analyzed on the basis of insights of related theorists. Before interpretation and critical analysis, the researcher began the subject matter. For the support of argument, quotes from the texts were included and related theoretical insights were imbedded and critically analyzed and interpreted. The researcher has maintained the research ethics seriously and analyzed the texts and contents remaining in the contact zone without being biased with any caste, religion, profession and culture. Talking about any caste and religious group does not mean to scold, humiliate and abuse. The researcher's main aim was to display the reality of the society which is mentioned in the literary texts about Dalits and the upper caste people.

## Review of the Literature

The researcher in this section reviewed theoretical and empirical literature. In the first part, the researcher collected insights on caste discrimination and untouchability. Focusing on the caste, Rajshekhar links the power structure to the formation of different castes which are hierarchical in a social system. It shows that the 'untouchables' and 'touchable' are two broad classes existing in the Hindu society. His argument sounds stronger and logical if looked at the verse of *Manu Smirti*, a Hindu scripture that formerly begins casteism. *Manu Smirti* asserts, "The people who are imprisoned in the war, servant, and son of the servant and bought man are the people from Shudra caste" (Shastri as cited. in Paudel, 2010, p. 32). This predicament of casteism parallels the Marxist

analogy of religion as a drug: "religion with opium" (p. 47). The caste division and practice of untouchability is compared with drug. Similarly, G.S. Ghurey (2016) asserts that discrimination of caste was in food and drinks. "It is because the Brahmins put restrictions on the acceptance of food and drink from the Shudras during the second stage of the development of their culture (p. 92)." Food and drink provided by Shudras was not accepted by the upper castes. Moreover, Ambedkar (2018), in *Annihilation of Caste*, reinforces that "It is not possible to break caste without annihilating the religious notion on which the caste system, is founded" (pp. 5-6). For breaking up the caste system, he proposes to socialization process, "inter-caste dinners and inter-caste marriages are not enough but destruction of the religious notions on which caste was founded" (p. 15). In the same vein, Ambedkar further states that "caste is the monster that crosses your path. You cannot have political and economic reform, unless you kill this monster" (p. 42). Touchability and untouchability has been practiced on the basis of caste division and religious notion so Ambedkar reinforces the destruction of that notion. As Rajshekhar's focus on *Manu Smirti*, in the context of Nepal, is the main reason of caste discrimination and practice of untouchability. And it is clear that as Ambedkar has claimed, caste and untouchability have been founded on the religious notion so that it needs to be destructed first to emancipate Dalits.

Similarly, the researcher has gathered the significant views of the Nepali writers and literary figures about two selected novels for the research. In the view of Ninu Cāpāgāin (2070), Ranendra Barāli for his novel *Itihāsko Ek Paikā* (2066) has selected very important and crucial issues. If it was in the hand of a good novelist, it would be a high class novel (p. 5). Ruplal Bishowkarma, a Dalit writer was devoted to the Dalit movement and the emancipation of whole working class people. Barāli in this novel is successful to address some reasons of Ruplal's rise and fall. It has addressed the policy, strategy, leadership, and role of leaders to lead the movement. So, this has become a historical collection. Barāli has tried his best to display the facts and secrets which have never been published before. But his novel still lacks the key features and language of a good novel (pp. 5-7). In the same way, Bishowbhakta Dulal (2066) comments on *Itihāsko Ek Paikā* that the story is centered on the rise and fall of Ruplāl Bishowkarmā, a historical figure. Despite this, he failed at last in political leadership. Ruplāl rising from low social status was able to lead communist movement. His leadership in the decade of the thirties, Jugedi-Jutpāni struggle and in forty's decade 'Money Action Plan' (MAP) in Purtiḡhāt was not simple movements. Once his name was inspiring for hundreds of youth but dismissed in his early fifties. Barāli's novel tries to capture Ruplāl's biography. This novel helps young generations to get sufficient message and it also suggests that how much important is the cultural revolution of working class or proletariat group in the communist movement (pp. 8-9). In the same line of Dulal, Sharad Paudel (2070) analyses *Itihāsko Ek Paikā* that it presents the destiny of the political leaders while leading the

party. The novel also shades light on self-realization that how much a person is influenced when his/her belief and faith are destroyed. Barāli has successfully presented this novel by reaching the bottom of the Dalit community to explore discrimination, domination, exploitation and all kinds of the evil practices incurred on Dalits. Similarly, he has encouraged Dalits to come out from the darkness and lead their life in light to create liberated society (p. 10).

About Paudel's *Likhe* (2073) Ramesh Prasad Bhattarai (2070) writes that, Dalits suffer even in abroad after they are exiled from their nation because of exploitation and discrimination. In this novel, the Dalit character is at the center. The struggle is confined between Brahminism and Dalits against untouchability. The struggle is between the upper caste and the lower caste people or the exploiter and the exploited. Moreover, it presents the picture of patriarchal domination. Lastly, it focuses that for caste liberation and emancipation, Marxist and class based consciousness is essential. It is the presentation of reality of Nepali society. The exploiters are Brahman, Bista, Bāje and Bāhuni Bajai whereas exploited are Cāure, Cāuri and Likhe. Dalits both in Nepal and India are suppressed, oppressed and dominated. In this sense, the novel is successful to raise the voice of Dalit and their unity for their emancipation (p. 215). Moreover, Bhattarai emphasizes Dalit problems. He suggests solving the problems only speech and reformation are not enough rather radical change. Paudel has appealed that, communist leaders have to make especial policies to address Dalits and their issues. Dalit issues are not only Dalits' rather they are equally related to the nation in general. So, to overcome these issues, the nation and Dalits themselves should be aware about class and class consciousness (pp. 215-216). Further, Bhattarai mentions the weaknesses of the novel: Cauri's rape, domination on Caure's family and silence of Sannani because they could do nothing against torture. To develop consciousness against exploitation, domination and segregation, Dalits should prepare themselves. But the novel is silent about Likhe's attitude, his strategy, and action (p. 217). Furthermore, Cāpāgāin (2070) shades light on *Likhe* (2073) that it is written focusing the issues of Dalit around Parbat and Baglung areas. Dalits were very poor and facing economic, social and cultural domination of the upper castes. It mainly focuses on miserable life, every day problem and need of the emancipation from domination and torture. It is not only highlighting the torture, scarcity, poverty and humiliation of Dalits in Nepal but also in India (pp. 71-72).

Furthermore, Shyam Lal Magarati (2021) in 'Cultural Representation of Dalits in Nepali Literary Writings' focuses that Dalits have been victimized due to socio-cultural aspects in general. He has summarized even these texts that all the Dalits characters suffered both physically and mentally in the homeland and abroad as well due to economic, religious, educational, political and caste and practice of untouchability. Consequently, Surinder Jodhka and Ghanshyam Shah's article 'Comparative Contexts of Discrimination: Caste and Untouchability in South Asia (2010) based on empirical studies carried out in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka during 2007-08, offers a

brief introduction to the prevailing Dalit situation in the four countries and identifies specific problems of social inequality, discrimination and deprivation of the groups in these countries. The four studies clearly bring out the fact that even when the meaning of untouchability and its sources (religion or tradition) varies across south Asia, as also its forms (from physical touch and residential segregation to taboos and restrictions on inter-dining), physical movement and pursuing occupations of one's choice, its effects on those placed at the bottom are quite similar, i e, economic deprivation, social exclusion and a life of humiliation (p. 99).

The foregoing discussion clearly indicates that the novelists have been addressing economic, cultural, social, educational and political problems of the Dalit community. Both of them suggest that Dalits should be educated, aware, conscious and unite together to overcome the discrimination and domination on them. However, the novelists do not answer the question: who is responsible for their poverty, illiteracy, lack of self-esteem, lack of unity, lack of decision making and lack of political access? Moreover, both of them have emphasized the need of class struggle for the emancipation of Dalits but no issue is raised about the reasons for the prevalence of the caste discrimination and practice of untouchability. The constitutions have been promulgated and policies against caste discrimination have been made, though human mistreatment on Dalits exists. Therefore, this study was essential.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is primarily a library based qualitative research. The area of this research is confined to novels by both Dalit and non-Dalit Nepali writers. Texts are selected purposively as per the demand of theme of the research. Similarly, the researcher applies Hall's insights on representation under cultural studies. The insights of Hall related to discursive approach are employed as main theoretical parameters to analyze the socio-cultural aspects: caste discrimination and untouchability. Discursive Approach is more concerned with the effects and consequences of representation- its politics. It examines not only how language and representation produce meaning but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates, conducts, makes up or constructs identities and subjectivities and defines the way certain things are represented, thought about, practiced and studied (Hall, p. 6). Besides this, other theorists' insights like Rajshekhar for caste division, Ambedkar for annihilation from caste discrimination, Ghurye for division of Verna and Marx's insights for comparison of caste and opium are cited as supporting tools to analyze and interpret the primary texts. Therefore, the lens of representation under cultural studies based on the insight of Stuart Hall is used as the theoretical parameter to analyze and interpret the primary texts which were purposively selected written by both Dalit and non-Dalit writers.

## Result and Discussion

### Reasons for the Prevalence of Caste Discrimination and Untouchability

The researcher in this section examinations reasons for the prevalence of caste discrimination and untouchability in our society. The following consequences are described in these examples. *Itihāsko Ek Paikā*, the historical novel revolves around the life story of Dalit activist and leader Ruplāl Bishowkarma. The main character and other characters suffer due to their poverty. Bhuwansing narrates his sister who possesses a small hut and its interior that was seven hands long and five hands wide which could contain a pitcher and a small bed. After the kitchen work, pots were kept under the bed. The roof was made of dried grass and door was made of maize stem. At any time, the dog could take the rice pot opening the door. That was the residence for the first night in Chitwan' (p. 22 as cited in Magarati, p. 25). These images are the "signifying system" (Hall, p. 61) which display the real picture of Dalits' economic condition. It shows how Dalits have been living their life in poverty, misery and scarcity. Barali depicts the real picture of the Dalit community. Here the economic, social, and cultural condition of Dalit characters is presented convincingly. It is due to the caste discrimination and practice of untouchability that they do not get proper job, cannot begin other professions and not allowed for household work. There is not any exaggeration. Dalits in the society perform their duty innocently and responsibly but they do not get credit in this sense Mansingh argues:

In the village, the Dalits perform their duty very hard and live a life, the upper castes blame them they are trying to be equal with them and start hypocrisy, lawsuit and physically punish them and chase them away from the village. For fighting against such dominations, we need persons who could raise voice and poke their fingers against them. (p. 25)

Dalit people have been dominated from both sides; if they are poor and if they get progress. If they are poor, they have to go to rich people's houses for work. They are dominated and hated culturally and exploited economically. If they progress, they get physical punishment, mental torture and should leave the village for competing with the upper caste people. On the contrary, the society depends on their labor. This seems very natural and live experience of the Dalit community. Mansingh tells that upper caste people dominate and discriminate the poor and Dalits on the one hand and there is caste-based discrimination and practice of untouchability among Dalits themselves on the other. It is not a good practice for Dalits which divides them. They are divided themselves in the name of caste and political rulers have played a role to divide Dalits as we see

Hiralal who played a negative role after his appointment as deputy state health minister (p. 113 as cited in Magarati, p. 26). Although Hiralal was very proud of his post, he did not support to the Dalit community. He was manipulated by the state rulers from that time Dalit movement was weakened. Similarly, Bhuwansingh narrates Mansingh and his economic condition. Mansingh (real character Ruplal) was the political leader and full time cadre of the party (p. 114). Mansingh's wife managed his house and children but at last he got divorced. After some years, Mansingh spent money and ornaments which his second wife possessed. The economic support which he has been getting from the party stopped and he was not active in party for serving his wife (p. 206 as cited in Magarati, p. 26). He started living in capital city but his income decreased because the Central Alliance Committee did not support which he has been given Rs 5000 regularly (pp. 209-10 as cited in Magarati, p. 26). All these directly affected him and at last he faced economic problem. For downtrodden status of Dalits, it is contextual to cite Storey that "it is lived experiences of ordinary men and women especially Dalits" (p. 48). The person loses confidence in his endeavor. This also happens in the life of Mansingh. Poor economic condition and social stigma have promoted such narratives that undermine the Dalit characters. It is because they lack power/knowledge to have access to the mechanisms and power structures of the state since "'power' and knowledge are joined together (Foucault, p. 100)." Neither in sufferings of the common people nor the causes of these miserable conditions have even been represented in the mainstream literary discourse. This condition of Dalits is "discourse as a system of representation" (Hall, p. 44) that represents entire Dalits under the state power. He was ambitious in the political field and he left his family and started a care-free life in the capital city. He as well as other supporters were equally responsible for his downfall. For lifelong political devotion, Mansingh was confined to politburo only. In the political career, Mansingh was elected in the post of central committee politburo member but he was not satisfied because for his lifelong devotion, he could not get the leadership (p. 209 as cited in Magarati, p. 26). Slowly he became passive in the political activities. He started raising negative voice against the party and its leaders. In this context too, he was deprived for getting political leadership.

In *Itihāsko Ek Paikā* practice of caste discrimination and untouchability is clearly seen. While Bhuwan was studying at school, he drank water from the pitcher but one of the teachers named Tikaram Thapa slapped him. Sometimes he was bitten by friends for sitting on the same bench and sometimes for touching their fried grains which they used to keep inside their bags. Sometimes he got punishment from the upper caste friends' guardians (pp. 19-20 as cited in Magarati, p. 34). This shows that not only other places, but also in schools, Dalits face caste discrimination and untouchability which Bhuwansingh faced while he was drinking water. Such socio-cultural practices are



constructed by the rulers and practiced by the society. Therefore, these are not natural but socially constructed.

In the same way, Paudel's *Likhe* is about the dominated, discriminated, crushed, and subordinated Dalits from socio-economic, caste and culture imposed by unitary power hegemony of Nepal in general and Parbat, Bāglung and Myāgdī (Gandaki region) in particular. The novelist presents the Dalit characters as helpless, miserable, frail and inferior, whereas non-Dalits as powerful, confident and strong in every aspect of life. It is the story of Dalits and their children who suffer a lot in society by means of economic exploitation, social and cultural domination and more by practice of untouchability. There is the picture of political domination of Dalits by state power and political leaders. Social harmony between Dalits and non-Dalits and among Dalits themselves is lacking due to the practice of untouchability. In this context, the researcher quotes from Sarad Paudel's novel *Likhe* that, Likhe's father saluted Rijal Bista sitting one corner of the courtyard. At the same time Sānnāni and Sānbābu (Rijal's children) at the same age of Likhe approached nearby and started staring at him. Bista shouted at them! Why are you gathering there? You will touch to Damai, you rowdy children (p. 8 as cited in Magarati p. 31). Laughing, Bista's children started asking Likhe, but he was distressed. Joining his two hands, Likhe's father requested them to go away you will touch him if you approach nearby. Wife of village chief said to Cāure and Likhe, you sit on the corner of the courtyard. In Brahmin's house too, how do you stay at midst part of courtyard (p. 9 as cited in Magarati, p. 31)? In this context, it is clear that the upper caste people practice untouchability and they teach same thing to their children. In the context of Nepal, not only inter-caste but intra-caste discrimination prevails. In *Likhe*, Range Kami convinced Sānbābu to play with him and let not play with Likhe because he is the son of Damāi. We as Bishwokarma do not touch him and you are the son of Brāhmin how could you do this. Do not you know Mukhiyā? Kami/ Bishwokarma are considered upper caste than Damāi/tailors. His effort was to prove him the upper caste (p. 15 as cited in Magarati, p. 32).

Selfishness is presented more among Dalits than non-Dalits. Dalit characters are presented as selfish, unsocial, dirty, drunkard, irresponsible, inferior and unfriendly. The narrator presents the discussion of Lāhure and Nepali boy about Likhe's problem:

The Delhi Lāhure was speaking. Likhe began to cry holding Lāhure's hands, "brother do not go away leaving me here alone. Lāhure threw Likhe's hand and spoke, 'what a coward child is this. Who will provide him food without work?' The Nepali boy was not satisfied with Lāhure and his direct statement so he complained his misbehavior. Everyone fears and becomes sad for the first time in such a new place. (p. 154 as cited in Magarati, p. 27)

The narrator presented Likhe as innocent, weak and coward whereas Lāhure is presented as a very rude, selfish and unsocial man. He does not have sympathy for the innocent boy Likhe and other people. The Nepali boy gets angry observing misbehavior of Lāhure towards Likhe. How selfish is Lāhure? We can see and realize this after the discussion with the Nepali boy. The representation of Dalit is a "site where knowledge is formed" (Miller, p. 117). Innocence, poverty, illiteracy and lack of confidence characterize Dalits. The Nepali boy was co-operative, helpful, social and innocent but he was reported loafer, drunkard, lazy and selfish. That was the strategy of Lāhure to dismiss him and get that job. Such activities are seen in the foreign land among Nepali workers. The Nepali boy went to the boss and quarreled and gate-keeper beat him badly and he was thrown under the truck and killed (p. 163 as cited in Magarati, p. 28). In his problem Lāhure is indifferent but Prashurām is aware of the reality and asserts that Lāhure is selfish which Prashuram experiences when he denies going and reporting it to the organization. He said Nepali boy is dead so it is useless to search for him. Otherwise police will create a problem for them. Such events occur frequently and Nepali workers get tortured because they do not have unity (p. 172 as cited in Magarati, p. 29). Prashurām was well known about this but Lāhure was indifferent.

The researcher in this section compares the characters and their representation from both novels. Dalit literature is the voice of all oppressed communities who challenge the rigidity of caste system and demand equality. Both Dalit and non-Dalit writers have written about Dalit lives. There is not an example of Dalit movement and punishment given by *Likhe* to the dominant group of people and exploiters in *Likhe*. On the contrary, in *Itihāsko Ek Paikā*, Bhuwansing and Mansingh fight against feudal lords and hegemonic power structure in many places in farmers and Dalit struggle. They punish Premnath Koirala (pp. 37-40), in Dhikur Bari they punish four persons (pp. 48-54), the gang of six (pp. 55-65) and in the Soshi bazar they punish Laxman Shrestha for the rape attempt of Manmaya (pp. 71-79). Both of them participate in the Jugedi struggle (pp. 143-151) and the Jutpani struggle (pp. 152). Major and minor characters in both novels are tortured, discriminated and dominated both in words and actions. They are avoided in the taps, wells, and temples and at the school. Likhe is addressed 'dumko chauro', dirty lad, dum, gothalo and cor in words and he is physically beaten badly at Bista's house. Bhuwansing is also avoided in the class and he is slapped by his teacher while he was drinking water at school. In this context it is relevant to cite Ambedkar's statement that "caste is the monster that crosses your path, you cannot have political and economic reform, unless you kill this monster" (p. 42). In this sense, Dalits have been the victims of caste discrimination and untouchability in the society for ages.

In *Likhe*, the narration begins with and ends in Likhe's struggle. It presents the story of Likhe's childhood, his suffering, pain, struggle and moaning at home and abroad and revolutionary consciousness and his return with this consciousness. It describes the exploitation due to the caste discrimination and the class. The main cause of class exploitation and discrimination is Brahmanism and the rule of exploiters. To break these two types of exploitation and establish classless society, it is necessary to begin the class struggle. This message is presented artfully. Here the struggle between the Brahmans and Dalits, rich and poor reflects the struggle between the rulers and the ruled. It also presents the story of rule of patriarchy and its exploitation. Marxist and class-based consciousness is essential for the emancipation of Dalits and women. The novelist is successful in the presentation of the Dalit problem at home and abroad. It emphasizes that organization and unity is essential to solve such problem (pp. 214-15 as cited in Magarati, p. 30). Cāuri is raped but Bista goes unpunished. She cannot tell the truth to her husband. Cāure does not struggle against Brahmin's exploitation and domination. The story is set the context after 2046 B.S. However, villagers especially Dalits are not against feudal lords. This is the weakness on the one hand and on the other it does not talk about caste and class struggle well. The message of the novel is that all the dominated, poor, and marginalized and Dalit should go together for class struggle and try to establish classless society. Likhe is the Dalit protagonist but dependent on others' guidance rather than acting as independent Dalit protagonist.

The researcher concludes that both Dalit and non-Dalit writers have presented Dalit characters, their issues, class and culture. Barali has created Dalit character Mansingh as protagonist and other who devote to the Dalit and marginalized group but are victim of socio-cultural practice, discrimination in school, taps and temples. On the other hand, Paudel in *Likhe* creates Likhe as passive, coward, illiterate, dependent and innocent who fails to take revenge against cruelty, domination, discrimination of the upper castes at home land and India. Both writers have presented their characters the victim of economic condition, exploitation, poverty, political discrimination and victim of evil cultural practices. All these consequences are the result of caste discrimination and untouchability. However, both Dalit and non-Dalit writers have not given much priority to the cultural issues of Dalits. Dalits have been dominated, discriminated and segregated due to cultural domination than class.

### Conclusion

The researcher from the analysis and discussion of Dalit characters concludes that all the Dalit characters have been facing socio-economic, educational, political and cultural domination, discrimination, humiliation and biasness from the upper caste people in the words and actions. The representation of Dalit characters displays that due to the

policy of the nation has resulted the caste discrimination and practice of untouchability. These evil socio-cultural practices result: illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, lack of political access, division among Dalits and inferiority. The researcher found that characters in both novels are culturally traumatized due to same factors. Likhe and Bhuwansing suffer even after they are grown up. Likhe faced poverty, physical and mental torture, inter-caste and intra-caste discrimination. He was illiterate and unaware about political access. Similarly, Bhuwansingh suffers economically, caste and practice of untouchability in school premises. Mansingh suffers due to poverty, lack of political leadership and cultural practices. Likhe could not go against Bāje, Bajai and other dominant because of his poverty and caste. He could not support Sānnāni when she was asking help. These are the reasons which cause the prevalence of caste and practice of untouchability. Thus, the unsocial practices have affected Dalit characters in the selected novels. Dalits have been suffering lifelong and searching their self-respect and humanly treatment to emancipate them. Unless and until, policies are implemented strictly against such practices, socio-cultural domination will remain forever. This research paper is not final due to the broad area of Dalit issues. For the further researchers, it paves the way still people carry out researches imbedding textual evidences as well as in-depth interview regarding the reasons for the prevalence of caste discrimination and practice of untouchability.

### Acknowledgement

First of all, I would like to thank the Research Division, Rector's office, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur for providing me golden opportunity to carry out mini-research entitled Interrelationship between untouchability and trauma of Dalit characters in Barali's *Itihāsko ek Paikā* and Paudel's *Likhe* in 2022. Similarly, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota, the Head of Central Department of English, and the final expert of this research for his valuable feedback, suggestions and creative comments.

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