

Problems and Opportunities of Girls' Education (A Case Study Namobudda Kavre)

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Abstract

Namobuddha is a significant Buddhist pilgrimage site located in Kavre District, Nepal. The main objective of this research was to understand the perception of people regarding problems and opportunities for girl's education in this location. Interview, method schedule questionnaire, and observation method were applied to collect data from respondents. Data analysis was done through MS Excel. The development of the country is being presented with both opportunities and problems as a result of the recent major advancements in girls' education in Nepal. The government's dedication to advancing gender equality and international aid programs have made it easier for girls to access education. Positive results of these efforts include rising enrolment rates and shrinking the gender gap in primary and secondary education. Giving girls access to high-quality education gives them the knowledge and skills they need to make a significant contribution to society and end the cycle of poverty. Despite the advancements, obstacles still stand in the way of girls' education in Nepal being fully realized. Boys' schooling is frequently given priority over girls' by sociocultural norms that are firmly anchored in traditional practices. Girls' access to school is still being hampered by early marriage, gender-based violence, and a lack of knowledge about the advantages of education. Girls' educational possibilities are disproportionately impacted by the poor infrastructure, scarce resources, and lack of trained teachers in remote rural locations. To overcome these obstacles and provide equal educational opportunities for everyone, the government, communities, and NGOs must work together.

Keywords: problem, opportunities, challenge, girl, education society

Introduction

Education is a fundamental right for all individuals, irrespective of gender. Unfortunately, in Nepal, Numerous obstacles prevent girls from accessing high-quality education for them. Traditional customs, early marriage, gender-based violence, and constrained gender roles limit girls' educational possibilities, and sociocultural norms and gender inequalities offer substantial obstacles. Economic hardships worsen the issue since families sometimes prioritize the education of their sons above that of their daughters, maintaining gender inequities. Girls find it challenging to consistently attend school due to poor infrastructure and difficult access, especially in rural regions, depriving them of their constitutional right to an education. Girls are discouraged from pursuing education as a result of gender-based violence and discrimination, including sexual harassment and bullying. Girls' self-esteem and drive are further hampered by the dearth of female role

models and mentors in educational institutions. These challenges call for concerted efforts to address socio-cultural norms, promote gender equality, improve infrastructure, and provide a safe and supportive educational environment. By investing in girls' education and dismantling barriers, Nepal can empower girls, promote gender equality, and foster a brighter future for all. This proposal aims to address the problem of limited girl education in Nepal and seize the opportunity to enhance their access to quality education. The proposal will provide an overview of the problem, highlight the associated opportunities, and present strategic interventions to promote and empower girls' education. One of the major obstacles to girls' education in Nepal is the prevailing socio-cultural norms and gender biases. Traditional beliefs often prioritize boys' education over girls', leading to a disparity in educational opportunities. Furthermore, early marriage and child labour are prevalent, especially in rural areas, which results in girls dropping out of school at a young age. To address this, Nepal has focused on raising awareness and challenging gender stereotypes through community engagement programs and campaigns. These efforts aim to change mindsets and promote the importance of girls' education, enabling more girls to access and complete their schooling. Another significant challenge is poverty, which affects a large percentage of Nepalese families. Poverty compels families to prioritize immediate economic needs over education. Girls are often seen as economic burdens and may be forced into domestic work or early marriages. To combat this issue, Nepal has implemented various scholarship programs and financial incentives to alleviate the economic burden on families and encourage girls' enrollment and retention in schools. (Rana, 2012) By providing financial support, Nepal aims to empower girls and break the cycle of poverty, enabling them to pursue their educational aspirations. Geographical barriers also pose a challenge to girls' education in Nepal. (Maharjan, n.d.) Many remote areas lack proper infrastructure, making it difficult for girls to access schools. Moreover, long distances and lack of transportation options often lead to high dropout rates among girls. To address this issue, Nepal has focused on improving school infrastructure and providing transportation facilities in remote areas. These efforts aim to create a conducive learning environment and reduce the barriers that prevent girls from attending and completing their education.

Young Nepali girls are not given equal opportunities in many sectors including basic needs like education. They are discouraged and prevented by their own family and community from education. Despite having high level of participation in lower-level education, girls' participation in high school level and above is concerning and giving more opportunities to girls in higher-level education will many doors of opportunities (Adhikari, 2020), the role of community engagement in promoting girls' education in Nepal. The study explores the impact of community involvement in improving girls' enrollment, retention, and educational outcomes. It highlights successful community-driven initiatives and suggests strategies for strengthening community participation to enhance girls' education in the country (Shrestha, 2017). Girls' education has been ignored in Nepalese communities for several reasons such as cultural, traditions, an unsuitable schooling environment and financial problems. Especially in remote villages

among poor and Dalit families, it is particularly rare for girls to get an education up to the High School level (Murimirwa, 2021) International organizations routinely make bold claims about the benefits of girls' education. We examine the evidence underlying each of these claims and find that some claims have consistent, strong evidence behind them, like the positive impact of girls' education on vaccination rates and on their children's nutrition and survival. Others have weaker evidence, such as the impact on climate change or agricultural productivity (Shelby Carvalho, 2022)

It is very essential to highlight the opportunities women's education provides from all sectors of the society. The country can flourish economically, politically, culturally and socially. (Kumari, 2020) Also, it is believed that the whole family gets educated if it has an educated woman. Females can educate their children and show good paths to them and can share the joys and sorrows of her family members as well as make better decisions. Like, men, women can work in all walks of life and contribute. (Qaiser Suleman, 2015) Nepal aims to empower all people ensuring their equal space in state affairs. It is the prime duty of the government to develop access of all women to education. Since women also have a substantial contribution to the household economy, education to all girls can benefit their own families and country in many ways More than half of the population of Nepal is covered by women and young girls are the main pillars of nations future but many young girls are not provided with basic rights of education due to social and economic reasons. Because of that, women's participation in the decision making is much less in comparison to male participation. Proper education to the young girls ensures the social and economic development of the country in future. So, men and women are the pillars of development but women's role as the managers of the subsistence sector is avoided off as unproductive.(Sapkota, 2019) Their opinion is important but patriarchy considers it as meaning less and their freedom is restricted within the household Sphere and overall conferred the status of a weak lot. The lack of girls' education now can result in spring of strong gender bias in the economic, social, and political fields in future and this bias can continue and make males the centre of power. (Nepal-UNICEF) The research problems are the low participation of young females in education and the opportunities education can provide for the country economically and socially. How does the economic condition of the family affect providing quality education to girls and women? What is the status of girls' education as compared to past years? To find out the factors that impact girls' access to education, identify barriers and challenges, to girls' education.

Methods and Materials

This study was generally based on primary and secondary data. Many research and journal articles were taken as secondary information where fieldwork data collection methods schedule questionnaires, interview methods, and case study methods also was applied for data collection and data analysis Altogether, 40 scheduled questionnaires were filled to generate a conclusion about the problems and opportunities of girl education. Face-to-face interviews and informal focused group discussions to collect data from respondents. Data analysis was done through MS Excel

Result and Discussion.

General information

Table 1 Education of respondents

Level of Education	frequency	Percentage
Non Formal	8	28.57
Primary	5	17.85
Secondary	9	32.14
Intermediate	4	14.28
Bachelor / Above	2	7.14
Total	28	100

Source: Field survey, 2023

Table 1 shows the education status of the respondent females. Among them, 70 percentage were literate and 30 percentage were illiterate. Researching more among the literate participants revealed that 28.57 percentage have only completed non-formal education, 17.85 percentage have completed Primary level, 32.14 percentage completed Secondary, and 14.28 percentage with Intermediate level education and rest 7.14 percent have completed Bachelor level or further study after that.

Table 2 Occupation of respondents

Sector	Number	Percentage
Agriculture	14	35
Business	10	25
Service	4	10
Others	12	30
Total	40	100

Source: Field survey, 2023

Table 2 shows the type of occupations participants are involved in. The majority of them were involved in agriculture sector with 25 percentage, business sector have 25 percentage of participants involved with, service sector had 10 percentage and most of the female that participated were involved in other works such as household works. This data proves that most of the respondents were involved in agriculture sector and other works, which involves mostly of household works.

Table 3 family status

Types of family	Number	Percentage
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Nuclear	28	70
Joint	12	30
Total	40	100

Source: Field survey, 2023

The above table shows that the majority of families were nuclear families 70 percentage and the other 30 percentage of participants lived in a joint family.

Table 4 Challenges of girl education

Challenges	Number	Percentage
Yes	21	52.5
No	19	47.5
Total	40	100

Source: field survey, 2023

The above table 4. represents that 52.5% girls have faced specific challenges while 47.5% girls does not have.

Table no 4 Need of girls educational facilities

Educational facilities	Number	Percentage
Yes	35	87.5
No	5	12.5
Total	40	100

Source: field survey, 2023

The above table 4 represents that 87.5% girls need schools/ educational facilities while 12.5% girls do not have.

Table 5 Gender based challenges on girl education

Gender challenges	Number	Percentage
Yes	26	65
No	14	35
Total	40	100

Source: field survey, 2023

The above table 5 shows that 65% of girls were facing gender challenges while 35% did not.

Table 6 Personal challenges on girl education

Personal challenges	Number	Percentage
Yes	25	62.5
No	15	37.5
Total	40	100

Source: field survey, 2023

The above table 6 represents that 62.5% faced personal challenges or obstacles in pursuing their education while 37.5% did not.

The economic aspect of respondents

Table 7 Monthly income of respondents

Represent	10-30	30-60	60 to above
Number	25	45	10
percentage	31.25	56.25	12.5

Source: field survey, 2023

From the above table 31.25% income in 10-30, 56.25% income in 30-60 and 12.5 % income above 60 which were monthly income.

Table 8 Education status helped in income generation

Represent	Number	percentage
Yes	37	92.5
No	3	7.5
	40	100

Source: field survey, 2023

From the above table, 92.5% of education status helps in income generation and 7.5% does not

Table no 9 School fee

School fee(monthly)	Numbers	percentage
Below 5 thousand	13	32.5
5-10 thousand	22	55
more than 10 thousand	5	12.5
Total	40	100%

Source: field survey, 2023

Table 9 represents the monthly school fees of children of 40 households. As shown in the figure 32.5% of the fee is below 5 thousand, 55% of the fee is from 5 thousand to 10 thousand and 12.5 % of the fee is more than 10 thousand.

Table 10 Type of school

Type of school	Number	percentage
Government	5	12.5
Private	18	45
community	17	42.5
Total	40	100

Source: field survey, 2023

Table 10 represents the type of school where children of 40 households attend.

As shown in figure 5 of the households send their children to government school, 18 households to private schools and 17 households to community schools.

Table 11 Expression of opinion regarding need of girl education

Expression of opinion	Number	percentage
Strong	5	12.5
Neutral	23	57.5
never	12	30
Total	40	100

Source: field survey, 2023

Around 12.5 % express strong opinion on children education for knowledge and skill enhancement of children .While 57. 5% remain neutral and 30% never express any things.

Table 12 Role of politics of girl education

Politic play important rile on education	Frequency	percentage
Yes	38	95
No	2	5
Total	40	100

Source: field survey, 2023

95% of respondents agreed role of policies in girls' education 5 percent respondents disagreed involved in any kind of political party and 5% were not involved in any such party.

Conclusion

Based on the research analysis done by our team in 40 households of Namobuddha, we can provide a general conclusion based on research regarding problems and opportunities in girls' education. Despite vocal answers given adapting equality among the genders, there seems persistent gender gap in education and some discrimination in households and in access to resources. Also, societal expectations prioritize their domestic roles over education.

Due to factors like poverty, distance to schools and the availability of courses near home, the girls still face barriers to education.

Early marriage and adolescent pregnancy have led to girls dropping out of school, as they are forced or self wants to assume adult responsibilities at a young age.

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