

Effect of Poverty on Students' Participation in the class at Community Schools in Nepal

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Abstract

To analyze the effect of poverty on households towards class participation at community schools is the main objective of this study. A cross-sectional survey is conducted within two districts among five hundred thirty students adopting random sampling. Data on class participation are collected from semi-structured survey questionnaires and analysed by using bivariate and multivariate analysis with help of Stata 14. It is found that poverty hinders involvement in academic activities and managing learning facilities. Parents with poverty have been involved in nonacademic activities and are unable to manage the academic home environment. As a result, their children were irregular and absent, and they were involved in nonacademic activities, which are more favourable for the poverty zone except for extracurricular activities. By addressing students' diversity and local context, students living in poverty may have done better class participation.

Keywords: Academic activities, class participation, parents' involvement, physical punishment, poverty

Introduction

Education is a key to economic and human resource development. For this, every person, society, and nation invests in education to obtain a higher level of human resources development. In this context, the Government of Nepal focuses on access to education for all children in the remote area, marginalized and poor families through various activities such as scholarships, free textbooks, gender equity, and many more activities in poverty-stricken area (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2013). However, it is not sufficient to increase access to and awareness of education. As a result, equity programs and equality of education are being political agendas. Although the government of Nepal is trying to address their needs by managing open and alternative education and instructional materials (National Planning Commission [NPC], 2019). This effort is not successful due to extreme poverty and inappropriate income distribution (Thapa,

2013a) and gender inequality. As a result, in a backward society, poor and highly marginalized families continue to be excluded (Oxfam International and HAMI, 2019) in the national and career development process.

The socioeconomic status of parents particularly directly influenced class participation (Miller et al., 2013) due to personal, economic, and academic problems. As a result, students living in poverty are comparatively more absent and feel difficulties adjusting to an academic environment and are also responsible for low achievers (Burger, 2017; Thapa, 2013b) and low levels of class participation. Similarly, low levels of motivation and system errors such as punishment and political movements are also responsible for poor performance (Rijal et al, 2015). As a result, in students living in poverty, in-class participation is not satisfactory and more opportunities are missing due to a lack of self-consciousness and an unappropriated learning environment.

According to MPI (2021), 28% of rural Nepalese are living in poverty. Among them, a higher proportion of Dalit and Marginalized people are living in poverty. In the Jhapa district, 66.7% of Santhal families people based on daily wages and have no own landless (Rai & Hasda, 2018). This scenario is similar in other cultural groups. Students living in poverty and not living in poverty in school have not been identified in Nepal. Therefore, Nepalese students living in poverty are mysterious problems and difficulty to address their needs.

Furthermore, lack of positive attitudes, awareness, and resource violence in the family (Silva-Laya et al., 2020) economic crisis (Thapa, 2013b), backward (Miller et al., 2013), and non-relevant knowledge about jobs are cultural factors of poverty to reduce the effectiveness of class participation (academic performance). These are responsible for the fragile performance, and adjustment, and cause more dropouts. In this milieu, poverty has significant and diverse relationships (Burger, 2017) with assignment completion, absence, punishment for nonsense work and so on. To explore these this study will take a small step to open the problems on the surface

In this study, poverty was measured by applying the 'Nepal multidimensional poverty index (MPI)-2021'. Two indicators of MPI are modified based on the pre-test. The structure of basic education is modified and remains 1-8 grade. Similarly, a family has two assets that are enough to

be non-poor. But every house has a phone and a little more old cycle in Terai belt. To make relevant indicators, two were replaced by three and other indicators and analysis procedures are similar.

Method

A cross-sectional survey had been conducted in Jhapa and Morang districts under the positivist philosophy. Five hundred thirty students and their parents (530) were selected to measure poverty and class participation respectively through stratified sampling. Five strata (Brahmin-Chhetri, Highly Marginalized, Marginalized, Disadvantaged, and Dalit) were applied based on a categorization of religious groups by Development of Indigenous Nationalities (2012). Brahmin- Chhetri 149, Disadvantaged 91, Highly Marginalized 115, Marginalized 128, and Dalit 46 participants were represented from every stratum. An equal proportion of samples from every stratum was not possible due to the pandemic situation and the low level of participants' involvement in schools.

Eleven schools from Jhapa and nine schools from Morang were selected from stratified sampling. An equal proportion of samples (265) were selected from Jhapa and Morang districts. Nine schools were sufficient to select the target sample within five strata from Morang. On the other hand, 11 schools were necessary to select 265 participants due to the few students involved in the school in Jhapa.

The questionnaire, observation, and interview remain as main tools of the study. Similarly, descriptive and binary logistic analysis procedures were applied through Stata 14 programme. With the help of logistic regression, the odds ratio and p-value are the baselines for calculating the effect of poverty. Similarly, if dependent variables are highly correlated, the maximum likelihood estimators will not do an effective function due to the large standard error of the estimator value (Sami et al., 2022). Multicollinearity in the regression model, 0.7 is provided as a threshold by Halkos and Tsilika (2018) to indicate a problem of near collinearity (Salmeron-Gomez et al., 2021) which is adapted as a cutoff point. So, multicollinearity was identified among independent variables.

Results

Relationship of Poverty with Family Status

Table 1 shows that most of the parents living in poverty have no good resources (9.5%) to invest. This condition is a better position, one-fourth in the non-poverty zone. It indicates that the limited income of students' parents living in poverty was not sufficient to arrange necessary instructional materials on time. As a gist, students of community schools had not a lot of opportunities to acquire more facilities for better performance due to lacking resources. Similarly, Students living in poverty have a critical condition in parenting academic guidance conditions. The least proportion (5%) of parents living in poverty had good academic qualifications. A better position (12%) was observed in the parents not living in poverty. The majority of parents living in poverty and without poverty have no good education to support their children in academic activities. So they were unable to participate in academic activities in school and motivate their children.

Parent involvement is a significant indicator of prediction. More than half of parents living in poverty were not involved in school activities. Only the least percent (8.94%) of parents living in poverty were involved regularly. Similarly, two-thirds (37.99%) of parents living in poverty participated in school activities partially. This scenario is significantly different in a non-poverty zone. Approximately, thirty percent of parents not living in poverty have visited the school regularly. Due to a lack of good education, daily physically oriented work, and lack of free time, poor parents participated in school activities limitedly.

Marginalized and highly marginalized students have more experiences of facing poverty. Furthermore, Brahmin-Chhetri and Disadvantaged groups of students (33% and 20.5% respectively) were non-poor. Similarly, girls have more experiences of poverty at community schools. About two percent higher proportion of girls living in poverty than those not living in poverty (61.82) participated in the study.

Table 1. Relationship Poverty with Socio-Demographic Variables

	Status of poverty poverty	Living in poverty		Living without poverty	
		%	Frequency	%	Frequency
Parent education	Illiterate	25.7	46	30.48	107
	School education	69.27	124	57.55	202
	Higher education	5.03	9	11.97	42
	Total	100	179	100	351
Parent occupation	Daily wages	32.4	58	52.42	184
	Agriculture	58.1	104	27.07	199
	Others	9.5	17	20.51	89
	Total	100	179	100	351
Home environment	Non-academic	29.61	53	31.05	109
	Academic	70.39	126	68.95	242
	Total	100	179	100	351
Caste	Highly marginalized	26.26	47	19.37	68
	Marginalized	29.05	52	21.65	76
	Dalit	15.64	28	5.14	19
	Disadvantaged groups	10.61	19	20.51	72
	Brahamin- kshetri	18.44	33	33.05	116
	Total	100	179	100	351
	Parents' involvement	No involve	53.07	95	30.2
Voluntary work	Partially	37.99	68	40.74	143
	Regular	8.94	16	29.06	102
	Total	100	179	100	351
	Non-participated	74.86	134	63.75	222
Gender	Participated	25.14	45	36.75	129
	Total	100	179	100	351
	Female	63.13	113	61.82	217
Gender	Male	36.87	66	38.18	134
	Total	100	179	100	351

Relationship of Poverty with Class Participation

Table 2 represents that more than half of students living in poverty were supported by colleagues and not living in poverty were supported by parents. Only one-third of parents living in poverty have access to support their children. Comparatively, more proportion of students not living in poverty had supported by parents and teachers and the students living in

poverty had limited opportunities and they have no appropriate guidance from parents due to a lack of parents' good education and self-consciousness. Furthermore, the home environment between students living in poverty and not living in poverty had no significant gap.

Table 2 *Relationship Poverty with Class Participation*

Status of poverty		Living in poverty		Living without poverty	
		%	Frequency	%	Frequency
Seating position	Front	39.11	70	58.4	205
	Back	60.89	109	41.6	146
	Total	100	179	100	351
Support to work	Friends	55.31	99	37.04	130
	Parents	36.87	66	53.28	187
	Teachers	7.82	14	9.69	34
	Total	100	179	100	351
Study hours	0-1	54.75	98	55.27	194
	More than one	45.25	81	44.73	157
	Total	100	179	100	351
No homework	Physical punishment	87.15	156	76.35	286
	No Punished	12.85	23	23.65	83
	Total	100	179	100	351
Relationships with teachers	Negative	33.52	60	19.66	69
	Neutral	40.22	72	45.58	160
	Positive	26.26	47	34.76	122
	Total	100	179	100	351
Extracurricular activities	Nonacademic	58.1	104	43.02	151
	Academic	41.9	75	56.98	200
	Total	100	179	100	351

Significantly a higher proportion of students living in poverty (60.89%) are more interested in seating on the back side in the classroom while three-fifths of students not living in poverty were seated on the front side to facilitate comfortable learning. Lack of intrinsic motivation and self-conscious, poverty-holder students want to stay far from teachers' vision. However, study hours at home have no observed significant gap.

The majority of the students living in poverty (87%) have faced physical punishment by teachers for their carelessness or unable to completion of assignments. This situation is more favourable for nonpoverty-holder

students. Nepalese class instruction and teachers' mindsets are not far from the traditional way. Similarly, only one-fourth of students living in poverty and one-third of students not living in poverty have a positive attitude towards teachers due to the traditional way of instruction and lack of democratic behaviour of teachers.

Lack of self-consciousness and a vast interest in academic activities, only two-thirds of students living in poverty have participated in academic activities of extracurricular while three-fifths of students not living in poverty were involved in academic activities to fulfil their thirst for knowledge. Similarly, significantly a higher proportion of students not living in poverty (36.75%) have participated in voluntary work in society due to their family responsibility and their interest to participate in group work. Only one-fourth of students living in poverty have participated due to a lack of appropriate guidance from parents and are more engaged in nonacademic work at home.

Table 2 shows that significantly three times more agriculture holders' parents remain poor in comparison to daily wage workers. Similarly, fifteen percent of poor parents are less likely to remain, good professional holders. Most of the parents living in poverty are struggling against hunger or to fulfil basic needs and do not have enough resources to invest.

The home environment has a significant relationship with poverty. Most of the parents living in poverty have non-academic home environments in the comparison of partially academic and academic (Odd ratio= .58 and 0.38 respectively) due to their children being far from proper academic guidance and inspiration to do work better. As a result, students living in poverty are being poorer in academic performance and frustrated.

In the comparison of no involved parents in academic activities of schools, a minimal proportion of parents living in poverty (Odd ratio= .46 and .41 for partial and regular respectively) have visited school partially and regularly. Parents' involvement supported to build of good relations with teachers and developing consciousness among teachers, administrators and students and developing better class or academic performances. Poverty is a hindering factor (Thapa, 2013) to enhance academic advancement. Significantly parents living in poverty missed involvement in academic activities at the schools. Most students living in poverty were unable to support their children's learning process.

Poverty has a significant association with students' access to smartphones to facilitate better learning. About eighty percent of (adjusted odd ratio=23) students living in poverty have no smartphone that supports appropriate learning apps to search for learning material due to a lack of investment resources for learning. As a result, students not living in poverty are better performance due to smart technology and the proper guidance of parents and students living in poverty are poorer.

In the comparison of Brahmin-chhettri, Marginalized and Disadvantaged groups (Odd ratio=.42, .70 respectively) of students have less experience with poverty while 4 times more likely to experience poverty Dalit students. It is observed a significant association.

Poverty has a significant relationship with homework completion. Approximately three-third of students living in poverty (odd ratio=.41) are less likely to complete the assignment regularly. The majority of students living in poverty are not successful to complete work on time. Similarly, the majority of students living in poverty are physically punished and less than seventy percent (odd ratio=.31) are less likely to treat orally for their nonsense work or carelessness. Teachers' punishment had not succeeded to increase the motivation level of students but was useful to realize their mistakes.

Significantly, a higher proportion of students living in poverty (odd ratio=2.37) are regularly more absence from school to study. They have felt more discomfort school environment and teachers' behaviours. The traditional way of teaching is not appropriate for their innate power development and inspiration. However, students living in poverty are studying for more than one hour at home. Significantly, 3.4 times of students living in poverty are more likely to study more than one hour in comparison to the one-hour studier.

Table 3. Effect of Poverty on Family Status and Class Participation

	Status of poverty	Odd ratio	P value	95% CI
Parents' profession	Daily wages	1		
	Agriculture	2.89	0	1.65-5.06
	Others	0.86	0.702	.39-1.86
Parents' education	Basic	1		
	Good	0.86	0.608	.48-1.52
Home environment	Nonacademic	1		
	Partially academic	0.51	0.026	0.78-.92
	Academic	0.38	0.002	0.20-.70
Parents' involvement	No	1		
	Partial	0.46	0.004	0.27-.79
	Regular	0.41	0.021	.19-.87
Participation of voluntare	Partial	1		
	Regular	0.76	0.319	.44-1.29
Phone	No phone	1		
	Normal	0.95	0.895	.42-2.10
	Touch	0.23	0	0.09-.49
Caste	Brahmin-Kshatri	1		
	Disadvantages groups	.70	0.384	.32-1.56
	Marginalized	.42	0.058	.17-1.03
	Highly marginalized Dalits	.98	0.961	.48-2.03
Support to assignment	Dalits	4.04	0.006	1.48-11.04
	Students	1		
Homework completion	Parents	0.74	0.262	.45 - 1.24
	Partial	1		
Action for no work	Always	0.41	0.001	0.24-.68
	Physical punishment	1		
School absence	Oral punishment	0.31	0.001	.61-0.62
	No	1		
Study hours	Yes	2.37	0.002	1.38-4.05
	0-1	1		
Participation on extracurricular	More than one	3.79	0	2.19-6.56
	Nonacademic	1		
Seating on the classes	Academic	0.99	0.989	.59-1.66
	Back side	1		
	Front side	0.66	0.102	.39-1.08
	Cons	2.2503	0.164	0.71-7.05
	Pseudo R2	0.3032		

Discussion

A minimal proportion of parents living in poverty have good professionals. So, most of the parents living in poverty are struggling against hunger or to fulfil basic needs. Only ten percent of parents have good investment resources. They have no access to invest. Their children are residing without appropriate learning facilities and a nonacademic mental set. As a result, students living in poverty have poor class participation. As the study of Julius and Bawane, (2011) asserted that poverty hampers learning activities because of lacking resources and learning materials. Lack of resources had a direct association with poverty (Engle & Black, 2008) and is not favourable for intrinsic motivation for class performance.

Most of the parents living in poverty (more than 60% less likely) have non-academic home environments. Their children have many difficulties managing academic activities at home such as physical work over drinking or quarrelling with each other. Students living in poverty are far from proper academic guidance and inspiration to do work better. As explored by Cooper et al., 2010, academic learning activities at home had a significant and positive relation to participants' class performance (Cooper et al., 2010). This situation is poor in poverty-holder families due to a lack of consciousness. As a result, students living in poverty are being poorer in academic performance and frustrated.

A minimal proportion of parents living in poverty (less than 10%) have participated in academic activities at the school regularly. Parents' involvement supported to build of good relations with teachers and developing consciousness among teachers, administrators and students and developing better class or academic performances. Poverty is a hindering factor (Thapa, 2013) to enhance academic advancement. Significantly parents living in poverty missed involvement in academic activities at the schools. Most students living in poverty were unable to support their children's learning process. A study by Zedan (2021) asserted that parents' involvement increased students' satisfaction levels and positive relationships with the teacher. The class environment will be more positive, supportive, and encouraging. Unfortunately, a prominently higher proportion of poor participants, whose parents were not involved in school activities.

Poverty has a strong relationship with smart technology for better learning. The Majority of the students living in poverty has no access to smart technology or smartphone that supports learning apps to search for learning material due to a lack of investment resources and self-consciousness about learning. As a result, students living in poverty are poor academic participation or performance. Consistency result was found in the USA. In the USA, students with low economic status have no access to appropriate technology and internet access at home (Stelitano et al., 2020, pp. 134–3) for searching for different types of information or learning materials.

Students from Marginalized, highly marginalized, and Dalit have more struggle against poverty in comparison to Brahmin-Chhetri and Disadvantaged groups. As Rai and Hasta were arrested the marginalized (Santhal) and the highly marginalized (Rajbashi) have more experienced poverty due to a lack of political and economical consciousness. Similarly, girls have slightly more experiences of poverty at community schools. Likewise study in the US (2014) explored that females were more experienced poverty (Rosa Cho, 2014) in this study.

Significantly, the majority of students living in poverty are not succeeded to complete work on time regularly. Similarly, the majority of students living in poverty are physically punished and only limited is far from punishment. Teachers' punishment had not succeeded to increase the motivation level of students but was useful to realize their mistakes. It creates negative feelings or relations against teachers (Khan et al., 2014). Nepalese classes have an autocratic environment that was not favourable for students living students. As a result, they are responsible for physical punishment in Nepalese instructional classes and they have not built positive attitudes and good relations with teachers. Instructional classes are not being democratic and children's friendly.

Significantly, a higher proportion of students living in poverty (2.4 times more likely) have more experience of absenteeism. Discomfort school environment and autocratic teachers' behaviours encourage them to leave the school. The traditional way of teaching is not favourable for their innate power development and inspiration. However, students living in poverty are studying for more than one hour at home. Significantly, a higher proportion

of students living in poverty are more likely to study more than one hour in comparison to the one-hour studier.

Conclusion

Parents' involvement and profession, home environment, and the availability of smart technology have a significant association with poverty. Students living in poverty have a non-academic home environment, lack investment resources and their parents have no access to academic activities at the school. Unexpectedly, parents' education and involvement in voluntary work have no significant relationship with poverty. However, a higher proportion of students living in poverty are belonging to not have good parental education. Students from Marginalized, highly marginalized, Dalit, and girls have more experiences of poverty. Similarly, homework completion regularly, the action of no work, and school absenteeism have significant effects on poverty. Students living in poverty have observed poor participation or academic performance except for study extracurricular activities. More absenteeism, physical punishment, seating in the backside, and work irregularity are heavier weightage in the poverty zone.

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