

Research Article

A Qualitative Exploration of Barriers to School Education among Adolescent Girls in Nepal

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A B S T R A C T

Educated girls have better sense of responsibility that can be instrumental to establish harmony and justice in the society. The access to education of girls in school education is still indiscriminatory in some countries. This research explored barriers to school education among adolescent girls in Nepal using qualitative research methods. This exploration includes 12 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), 6 in-depth interviews with out-of-school girls and 6 personal interviews with school teachers/management committee members of six schools in three districts representing mountain, hill and terai. Barriers in three levels: macro level (socio-economic and Institutional), micro level (Inter-personal and Personal) and governance and management level were identified. The study can be helpful devise intervention mechanism to overcome the barriers to school education of adolescent girls in the countries with identical settings like Nepal.

Keywords: Adolescent Girls, Barriers, Qualitative Exploration, School Education

Introduction

Role of educated girls in family and society is widely accepted for balanced living. Undisputedly it is also an issue of humanity and justice. The access of girls to school education does not remain same in some countries. After the priority shifted to achieve sustainable development goals, equal opportunity to education for all children including girls got priority. This has contributed to have indiscriminatory provisions in legal and institutional settings in many countries.

Researches have been conducted, mainly in developing countries, to identify the factors supporting and hindering participation of girls and other disadvantaged children in education. However, the findings vary with the socio-cultural settings. This research explored the barriers to school education among adolescent girls in Nepal. So as to ensure justice and equality in the society, it becomes necessary to identify and combat the hindering factors to education among girls for their indiscriminatory participation in

education. This research can help stakeholders to develop suitable mechanisms to devise intervention to overcome the barriers to school education of girls in Nepal and in the countries with identical settings.

Background

World has acknowledged the significance of girls' participation in education through the Dakar Framework in April 2000 at the World Education Forum by adopting the Education for All (EFA) global movement in the leadership of UNESCO. The millennium summit of the United Nations declared eight international development goals as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the year 2015 where 'To achieve universal primary education' was set on second priority. The goal has a specific target to achieve 'By 2015, all children (boys and girls) can enrol and complete a full course of primary education'. The United Nations General Assembly in 2015 replaced MDGs by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by the year 2030. There are 17 SDGs measured

through 169 targets. Among 17 SDGs, the goal 'Quality Education' has been set on fourth priority that envisions to 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.'

Statistics estimated that if the trend from the 1990s had continued only 25 countries would have gained gender parity but as of 2015 additional 62 countries achieved equal participation of boys and girls in basic schooling (UNICEF, 2015). The enrolment of girls in school education is the outcome of initiatives of MDGs followed by SDGs which is substantiated by the data published by Global Partnership for Education (GPE), 2017. As per the publication two thirds of countries reached Gender Parity Index (GPI) between 0.97 and 1.03 in the years 2011-2016. During the period Nepal has GPI of 0.99 meaning 99 girls are enrolled in primary school for every 100 boys. However, the access to the quality education and completion of education by the girls is still dearer.

As per the Human Development Indicator report published by UNDP (United Nations Development Project) as of 2018 (UNDP, 2018); Nepal's HDI (Human Development Index) is 0.574 ranked as 149 where contribution of education index is 0.502. As mentioned in the report the mean years of schooling (female) is 3.6 years compared to male 6.4 years. Also, the population with at-least secondary education, female (% ages 25 years and older) is 27.3% compared male 43.1% in same segment. The figures are indicative to the historical discrimination to girls in education. Recent reports have shown the awareness in the society to provide equal opportunity to girls in education however the discrimination found to have changed its paradigm. It is evident through several researches that the education can contribute in better health and economic benefits through increased sense of responsibility. Above all education helps to increase bargaining power of the girls from within (Fancy, 2012; Brown 2012).

Temin and Levine (2009) found clear evidence that the more education (especially secondary schooling) a girl receives, the more likely she is to marry later, become a mother when she is older and have a lower lifetime fertility. In return problems associated with pregnancy and childbirth which are leading causes of death for girls ages 15-19 worldwide (WHO, 2014) get reduced. Education has a strong influence on a women's use of health systems during pregnancy and childbirth, as well as their knowledge on sexual health, contraception, STIs and HIV (UNICEF, 2011). These facts establish the importance of education especially with adolescent girls in the context like Nepal where practices of child marriages are high.

A team of researchers L. Bhagavatheeswaran et al. (2016) conducted a comprehensive qualitative research study of SC/ ST (Scheduled caste and scheduled Tribe) adolescent

girls in northern Karnataka, South India and identified several barrier and enabler factors and categorised them as individual, interpersonal, education system and macro/ societal. Based on the findings, researchers developed a conceptual framework that resemble with the concentric circles of the framework of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) eco-systemic model. In light of the findings of the study, this research has been conducted to reveal the experiences of girls and identify additional factors prevailing in the research context acting as impediments to education among girls. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE), 2017 analysed 42 Education Sector Plans (ESPs) in 42 countries including Nepal among which 26 ESPs reported barriers to girls' education. The analysis reported 15 barriers divided into four categories. These four categories of barriers include demand related barriers (7), supply related barriers (2), school environment related barriers (4) and teacher related barriers (2).

Research Methodology

At first hand, published reports and figures were studied for situational analysis. Based on the outcome of the analysis, qualitative research method using focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted with girls aged between 12 to 18 years of age. In addition, views of various stakeholders working in different level of school operation and management were taken. Purposive sampling was used to select the sample public schools and participants where geographical, socio-economic and cultural variations were considered and adopted. Standard ethical procedures were followed while conducting interview with the children. Thematic analysis of qualitative data including indexing, charting, mapping and interpretation was conducted.

Situational Analysis with Secondary Data

Global Initiative on Out of School Children-Nepal Country Study, 2016 by UNICEF summarized nine key barriers to cause children out of schools in the context of Nepal. The barriers include poverty, social exclusion linked to caste/ ethnicity, disability, migration, child labour and trafficking, social norms and gender biases (including child marriage), Supply constraints as school infrastructure and staffing, language, Emergencies and civil strife, Governance and financing bottlenecks. According to the report, social norms and gender biases caused to 18.7% of girls aged 5-9 years out of school vs 17.1% of boys and 10.4% of girls aged 10-12 years out of school vs 7.7% of boys.

National Planning Commission (NPC) 2017, Nepal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Baseline report has called to improve quality of education as envisaged under SDGs that 'it is necessary to improve the teaching and learning environment, school infrastructure and facilities and supervision by designated resource persons. It is also necessary to strengthen the capacity of the local

governments to manage schools and control quality of basic and secondary level education’.

National indicators show less enrollment of girls compared to boys in Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) level in schools. Nation wise enrolment in ECED grade in the education year 2074¹ show that out of a total of 958,127 children enrolled in ECED 452,259 (47.2%) are girls and 505,868 (52.8%) are boys whereas out of a total of 938,863 children enrolled in the first grade 470,582 (50.1%) are girls and 468,281 (49.9%) are boys. Also, the statistics of students who sat their Secondary Education Examination (SEE) in the year 2074 BS (2017/2018 AD) show that out of total 451,532 students 227,931 (50.48%) were girls under regular category² but under exempted category³ out of total 25,138 students 14,477 (57.6%) are girls. The figures of more girls appeared in exempted category hint towards poor completion of secondary education by girls.

Field Work

A total of six schools two each from three sample districts Jumla, Bardiya and Gulmi were selected for data collection. Purposive sampling was used to identify the districts and schools considering accessibility, research scope, geographical variations, socio-cultural settings and convenience. This research examined the views of various stakeholders (girls, their guardians, school teachers and management members) to get enriched data and compare information for validity. A total of twelve focus group discussions (FGDs) with school reading girls, 12 in-depth interviews with out-of-school (drop-outs) girls (N=6) aged below 20 years and six personal interviews with school teachers/management committee members were conducted. A total of 10 participants aged between 12 to 18 years studying in class 6 to 10 (two from each class) participated in each focus group discussion. Researcher got the support from experienced local social working female volunteer to facilitate the interviews. Themes of these interview schedules were school enrollment, regularity, dropouts, teaching methodology, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) situation in school, child rights, management and governance issues at individual and institutional level.

Findings

The findings of the analysis of the data in the study showed number of impediment factors barring adolescent girls from continuous participation in education. Girls dropped out from school cited macro-level factors like socio-economic, cultural, relational, managerial (school) and microlevel factors like personal, interpersonal, family, interest,

persona educational achievements. The governance and management problems found to prevail in all level of entities however the intensity of management problem in institutional level was found high. In contrast to the findings of the L. Bhagavatheeswaran et al. (2016) and GPE (2017) this research found some additional factors that barred adolescent girls from education. Based on the findings of this study impediment factors found to prevail in four major levels as personal, inter-personal, institutional and socio-economic as shown in the conceptual framework in Figure 1.

Macro-level Barriers

Macro-level problems include socio-economic and institutional problems spread over globally.

A1: Socio-economic barriers

- **Social traditions and beliefs:**

This study found wider belief across the people of sample areas that girls should be enrolled in school. The enrolment figures of girls in sample schools as well as national figures also demonstrate this belief system. However, the belief system has been found limited to enrolment only but not in completion of education. Highlighting the awareness about educational enrollment FGD participants from Gulmi district mentioned: *“We are in school because at present time we cannot do anything in our life without education. If we study at least we shall be able to guide our children to study. Education shall help us to face challenges in our life. We may also get some job and become self-independent”*. FGD Participants had a feeling that family and society has given less priority in girls’ education. They opined that this discrimination has happened due to the belief system that girls will eventually be sent to their husband’s home and boys have to take care of their parents. Such kind of view found dominant in society. This sense of feelings found more deepen in the family from the poorer economic background and lower caste settings.

- **Gender Discriminations:**

The respondents of focus group discussions across the sample districts mentioned that there is a tendency to enroll boys in private English medium school and girls in public/community schools where perceived quality of education is poor. These findings show that there is discrimination between girls and boys in education from behavioral aspect that girls’ education is of no use to parents compared to boys. Several instances of discriminations between son and daughter could be traced in the society where boys get priority over girls in sending tuition/coaching classes after schools.

¹Education in figures 2017, Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST).

²In regular category students sit in the examination for the first time.

³In exempted category students failed in the regular category only sit in the examination.

Regarding the discrimination between girl and boys, the chairmen of one of the School Management Committee of Bardiya said *"Because of education level and different sense of feeling parents are sending their sons to English medium boarding school where the perceived quality of education is good and daughters to public schools. In some cases, sons have been sent to schools of other cities having hostel facilities if cost is affordable. This is a new kind of discrimination appeared in the society."*

and agricultural field along with their parents pushing them out of school. A girl, who has got scholarship in the school of Jumla at district head quarter narrated her struggle for education.

A2: Institutional Barriers

'My name is Nisha Shahi (Name changed). I am 16 years old now and studying in class 7. Before three years also I was in class seven. I lived with my parents and two

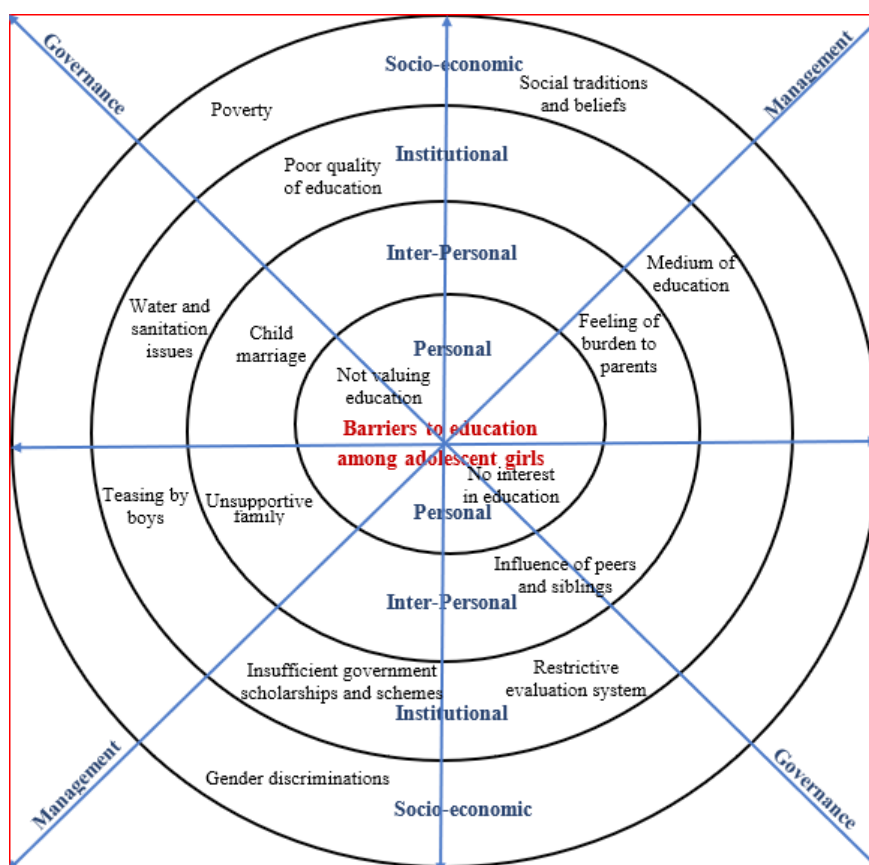


Figure 1. Conceptual framework on Barriers to school education among adolescent girls in Nepal

As per Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2018 published by GoN/NPC 28.6% of Nepal's population is multi-dimensionally poor. The deep analysis of the report reveals that this MPI figure got highest contribution from the education and health related parameters such as households that lack any member who has completed five years of schooling and under-nutrition.

The report outlined the reasons as the families lacking productive land and traditional agriculture adopted for living where natural calamities contribute to tragedies. The situation conceals all members of family irrespective of the age to work in field and take care of their cattle. In such settings the literacy of parents is also very low and unaware of the value of education although it is free (monthly fee and books). As stated by parent participants girls become engaged in household works including kitchen

elder brothers. Our economic situation is very poor and have difficulty in living. Out of two elder brothers, one appeared in SEE and went in cities in search of labor works while other brother dropped out in class 5. He got married and decided to go to India along with his wife in search of work.

We have small field for agriculture in distant place, buffalos, cows, rams and other domestic animals in home. I could not remain indifferent from the hardships of my parents. So, I discontinued my education to help them. I used to feel very sad while I was grazing cattle while other friends used to go to school. Sometimes I used to read the books of my elder brother who had left them at home. I also wanted to go to school but the situation did not allow me to do so.

After three years, my elder brother returned home from

India along with his wife and decided to stay at home. They started to give hand in parent's works. I got the information from our teacher that I can continue my study from the same class. My parents supported my interest to continue study and I joined again in class seven. I am facing difficulty for dress and study materials like book, copy, pen. I think that If there would have been income generating opportunities for my parents in the locality, I would not have faced the difficulty for education'.

Institutional barriers include the barriers regarding quality of education, evaluation system, medium of education, school environment, availability of scholarships and incentives.

- **Poor Quality of Education:**

A girl participant during focus group discussions in Jumla states. "My sister dropped out from school at class 4. She left school because she didn't understand her course. She failed in the class also. One of her friends got married at early ages. Later her husband did not care her and returned back to her parent's home. Now she is also not studying in school. There is a lot of works in home. Economic problem raised multiple problems in house and the consequences were the causes behind not continuing her studies". Poor quality of education found to lead into the series of consequences like poor learning achievement, failures in class, frustration, dropout from school, early marriage and vicious circle of socio-economic exclusion. These factors found interlinked to create huge barrier for girls to get rid from socio-cultural discrimination and economic marginalization.

- **Restrictive Evaluation System:**

Poor quality of education resulted in dearer learning achievement of students. Students having poor learning achievement tagged as 'fail' in the periodic examination and had to repeat the same class for a complete year. National figures of class Promotion, Repetition and Drop-out rates (Table 1) also indicate such practices across the nation.

Table 1. Promotion, Repetition and Drop-out (PRD) rates for BS 2074 (AD 2017-2018) in Nepal

PRD rates	Grade									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Promotion (%)	82.5	89.5	90.9	91.7	92.9	92.3	92.1	90.6	92.5	94.4
Repetition (%)	13.9	6.4	5.5	5.0	4.1	4.1	3.9	3.9	3.7	2.1
Drop-out (%)	3.6	4.1	3.7	3.4	3.1	3.6	4.1	5.5	3.8	3.5

Source: Education in figures 2017 (Ministry of Education, Nepal)

The repetition rate is the outcome of poor learning achievement and 'fail' in the yearly final examination and ultimately in the class. During focus group discussion and personal interviews participants expressed about the evaluation system that restricts students to promote the class due to poor learning achievement. Failure in the class

has been one of the most contributing factors of drop-out by the students.

A girl participant of a school in Jumla described "My sister dropped out from school at class 4. She left reading because she didn't understand her course. She got failed in class also. Her friends also left school. One of her friends got married at early ages. Later her husband did not care her and returned back to her parent's home. Now she is also not studying in school." During personal interview with chairman of the School Management Committee of a school in Gulmi told "Drop-out is there. After class 5 or children aged above 12 years leave school in high number. Boys go in labour market (City in Nepal or India) for employment whereas girls get married. And among the children of the family having weak socio-economic settings such trend is common."

- **Medium of Education:**

Parents and teachers in sample districts had felt that the course needs to be delivered in International language (English) similar to English medium private schools. Chairman of the School Management Committee in Jumla along with others communicated about the decision of their local level governments to start delivering the course in English medium similar to private schools. They also mentioned about necessary budgetary support provisioned for the schools to do so. During the focus group discussions in Bardiya, Tharu girl students told that in early grades the course should also be delivered in mother language. Course delivery in mother tongue helps them to understand the lessons.

- **Teasing by Boys:**

Participants of the focus group discussions in sample districts mentioned that teasing and bullying on the way to school by out of school boys or other school boys make their journey to school uncomfortable. The participants explained such things are more likely to occur if distance

between school and home is more and the way is not residential area.

- **Insufficient Government Schemes and Scholarships:**

This study found that government schemes and scholarships are there for Dalit girl students across the country and girls

of Karnali zone. The scholarship cover uniforms, books, bags, pens. During interview, girl participants receiving the scholarships mentioned that the scholarship is not sufficient to cover their real and hidden cost and extra money is needed to cover expenses. One of the Dalit participant girl of Gulmi district mentioned that the cash scholarship is taken away by her parents and use it in household costs even sometimes in smoking and drinking. The provision as a whole do not cover the scholarships for needy students.

- **Water and Sanitation Problem in Schools:**

Girls from all sample districts mentioned that they do not completely leave school during menstruation period but the girls also mentioned that either they do not come to school or return back to home during menstruation if there is a stomachache. The girl participants explained the reasons behind leaving school as lack of sanitary pads due to poverty or other reasons, toilets with facilities like water, disposals etc. Girls from across the sample schools pointed out that even if the toilet facility is there, they find difficulty in using due to cleanliness. This study found there was lack of awareness regarding health and hygiene issues during menstruation.

Micro-level barriers

Micro level barriers include inter-personal and personal level barriers.

B1: Inter-personal level barriers

Influence of peers and siblings, child marriage, family unsupportive to education and sense of economic burden to parents have been identified as interpersonal level barriers.

- **Influence of peers and siblings:**

A girl participant of Gulmi during personal interview narrated the story of her family. *'We are 3 sisters and one brother in our family along with parents. Parents are farmers. Her brother failed in class 10 and went to Butwal (One of the fast-growing hub city and capital city of province 5) for labor work. He did so because he has a responsibility of earning money for marriage of three sisters. Her two sisters failed in class 8 and drop-out. Now they are in home.'* According to the teacher participants of this school *'girls get married after drop-outs as they feel family and peer pressure to do so. One of the parents in Jumla mentioned that due to late entry in school and repetition in class due to 'fail', Girls dropout from school because they have to study in same class together with her juniors and sometimes cousin daughters in the same family.'* This study found dropping out of school and getting married is working as a domino effect influencing other girls also to follow the trends.

- **Child marriage:**

This study found child marriage of girls as a regular practice

in the sample districts. Such practice is dense with the uneducated girls and girls from the family back warded from socio-economic perspective. This practice has been observed among Tharu community in Bardiya, Dalit communities across the sample districts and economically poor families throughout. Many respondents of focus group discussions described the early age marriage of girls in their community have been observed among the girls reading in grade 6 and above. Although awareness of legal provision is there regarding the age of girl but several escapes like self-marriage, age change events and marriages in close and private ceremonies are common. Parents, teachers and SMC members from across the sample districts mentioned about the cases of child marriages and escapes in the community. Child marriage is there among boys also. Child marriages result in drop outs. This study observed the peer influences, fear of prestige of parents, dowry, low learning achievements, drop outs, poverty and human ecosystem driven by expectation of life as the deep root causes of child marriages.

- **Unsupportive family:**

During personal interview a girl student in Jumla narrated her and her out of school (drop-outs) friends' story. *'I am Juneli B.K. (Name changed). I am studying in class 9 in Jumla. I belong to Dalit family. My mother is doing service in nearby government office. I have friends in my community who do not go to school. They often tell me we are not lucky enough to study in school like you, eat foods like you and wear dresses like you. Friends tell that their family members assign more work at home, push them to go to graze cattle, work in field. Family members push them to work even during exam time barring them to attend exams. The situation compels them to become absent in school and incompleteness of education.'*

The assignment of more household works, no financial support to buy enough stationaries and reading materials for girls and enrolling boys of the family in English medium private schools are the reflection of unsupportive and discriminatory behavior to girls from the family. Sometimes there is a fear among parents regarding engaging their girl in 'love affairs' with boys in school and elopement with their boyfriends. As mentioned by girl students in Gulmi, they know the girl in their community who eloped with her boyfriend while she was studying in class 6, who later left her and is in her father's home. A teacher member of SMC in a school in Bardiya mentioned that two girls studying in grade 6 eloped with their boyfriends. Such cases support to the unsupportive behavior of family in girls' education.

- **Economic burden to parents:**

This study found the perception among the people in the society regarding ultimately girls has to go to their husband's

house and expenses made on educating daughters is only a burden to family. The cases of enrolment of boys in private schools and girls in public school has deep root in such interpersonal factors. Most of the respondents described economic reason of family as barrier and key reason of being girls out of school. Families who solely depend on agriculture and even do not own their own land found to migrate in labor market and the situation bar their children from education.

B2: Personal level barriers:

Not understanding the value of education and no interest in education by the children has been found as the personal level barriers in this study.

- **Not valuing education:**

The major factor that this qualitative exploration found among girls was not valuing education. During focus group discussion and in-depth interviews several girls were not sure about the outcome of education. They raised several questions linked with the value of education like 'What will happen by studying? Do we get jobs out of this certification? Do our problems be solved? Do we have different life? Do socio-cultural settings get changed? The level of awareness on value of education among the girls has been found as a barrier to education.

- **No interest in education:**

Drop-out students mentioned their own decision and interest to discontinue their study. The girls studying in school expressed high value of education during focus group discussion but out of school girls opined just opposite. Analysis of the statements of respondents who were continuing their study and drop-outs indicate the gap between probable outcome of education, low learning achievement, social-cultural trends. The overall environment and influence of interpersonal factors also found as the barriers in completion of school education of girls.

Management and Governance Barriers

Management and governance issues range in macro and micro level barriers. This study found that individual girl not being able to manage time, resources, family for her own education suffered low learning achievement. When such girls do not receive family support and come into the influence of peers tend to drop-out from school. The girls who have been able to manage time, resources and convince family members have been found successful in completion of education.

From the management perspective, teachers in class room are only agents to execute the action and deliver the services to children. Government agencies including local level governments, together with school management committee, parent teacher association govern the

management part of the school. Government resources and school's own private resources and local level helps of the parents are the resources.

At present context (promulgation of constitution of Nepal, 2015 and enactment of federal system) overall management and monitoring of schools has shifted to local level government. School managers (School Management Committee chair and members) mentioned about limitation of budget, resource, knowledge and skills to deliver the required services to uplift the education service.

The statements of participants of this study indicated that management issues like chain of command and accountability of teachers, limited mandates and role of SMC/PTAs, infertile use of government schemes and scholarships are barriers of education in schools for their proper management.

The management problem has been found not limited to socio-economic and institutional level only but it is widespread across the ecosystem. Management problem has been found in children to manage the time for their studies in home, teachers to manage the time and resources to best deliver the lesson, parents to manage their economic sources in children education and community leaders and influencers to manage their efforts to inspire the society towards the light of education.

There were cases where girls were able to self-manage and continue their education despite of all odds. The lack of such skill was found as the barrier in education of girls. Also, school managers have provisioned resources in very difficult situations and able to deliver high quality students. Such stories could be traced in many schools. Lack of such qualities was found as the barriers.

Discussions and Conclusion

The barriers to school education among adolescent girls vary with time, socio-cultural and economic settings of the family. The findings of this study also resonate with the findings of L. Bhagavatheeswaran et al. (2016) and GPE 2017. This study found additional factors hindering school level education of adolescent girls. This study found problem of management and governance among all stakeholders whereas the impact of governance problems is profound in institutional level and management problems at individual (personal) level.

L. Bhagavatheeswaran et al. (2016) and GPE 2017 identified four categories of barriers whereas this study found governance and management level problems also contributing as barriers. This study found macro level barriers working in socio-economic and Institutional level where as personal and inter-personal barriers contributing in micro level having direct touch in the girls' living. Where as governance and management level barriers contribute

macro as well as micro level. L. Bhagavatheeswaran et al. (2016) have identified ill health of girls as personnel level barrier whereas GPE 2017 have identified absence of female teachers in school also become barrier to girls' education as a teacher-related barrier from supply side. Whereas this study found not valuing education by the girls along with the not interested in education as personnel level barrier.

Individual adolescent girls not valuing education had a relation with socio-cultural settings of the society. They were not being able to comprehend the outcome of education in life due to the effect of other micro and macro level problems. The girls not valuing education were identified with depleted interest in education. The consolidated effect reflected with poor performance in class and examinations results in discontinuation of education or 'fail' in the class and drop-outs. In such girls, the effect of inter-personal factors like influence of peers and siblings, feelings of burden to parents is more. The family unsupportive to education push towards marriages in early ages resulting in child marriages. In some cases, girls found to opt for marriage without family consent termed as 'elopement' keeping themselves out of mainstream social spirits. The level of elopement found to vary with socio-economic status of the family that the girl belongs to.

At macro level, several institutional and socio-economic problems contributed to develop perception towards individual life and developed attitude of adolescent girls towards education. At institutional level numerous problems found to spread at different intensity. Poor quality of education delivered by teachers, medium of education (not favoured by students and parents), restrictive evaluation system, insufficient government scholarships and schemes, water and sanitation problems in school and teasing by boys on the way to/ from school have been found in this research also creating barriers to education of adolescent girls. The socio-economic factors like poverty, social traditions and beliefs, discrimination between son and daughter found deep-rooted in the society. These factors found to have more impact to adolescent girls than others.

At institutional level this research found medium of education as per the interest of the society/students and demand of the market as a hindering factor. UNICEF (2016) stated that Nepali language is the mother tongue for less than half (44.6 percent) of the total population but the education system is predominantly in this language. Provision of education in the mother tongue is very important to ensure the learning opportunities for children who do not speak, or have difficulty speaking in Nepali language. In addition, this study found very restrictive evaluation system (particularly yearly evaluation through written exam) and tagging them as a 'fail' and not allowing them to upgrade the class for a complete year as a major barrier of girls' education.

Restrictive evaluation system lead to 'fail' the girls most likely resulting in drop-outs. Bagale & Devkota (2015) identified economic status, family background, access and equity, quality degeneration, lack of school community relationship, public-private dichotomy as the reasons behind school dropout in Nepal. At macrolevel, socio-economic barriers like poverty and social traditions also found to be working as a barrier in girls' education. UNICEF (2016) stated Poverty is the most significant barrier to education as 41.8 percent of Nepal's population live below the poverty line according to Nepal Living and Standard Survey (NLSS) 2011.

Despite of the barriers this study found successful stories of few schools and girls doing very good in education. Those who were doing good in education have found to practice good governance skills and practiced self-management and leadership skills in society and institution. Such stories could be found exemplary in terms of management of individual, interpersonal and institutional level if the true value of education and true value of service towards education is understood. A motivated child and a head teacher have found to brought the change in own and institutional life. According to Mishra & Chiluwal (2018) skillful people and overall management action of the leader is the key success factor in any institution in Nepal.

Singh and Allison (2016) also found the similar observation where a proactive head teacher can make a difference in the public schools in Nepal. The authors also found that despite of poor academic performance of students in government secondary schools in Nepal there are few examples where students have consistently performed quite well. As per the researcher the Head teachers of such high performing students were found more proactive managerially and practiced good governance techniques. Despite of several problems motivated head teacher can lead to the changes to deliver outstanding results among students and society.

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