

# Educational and socioeconomic status of Majhis: A study of Adamtar, Dhading district of Nepal

Som Nepali

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**Abstract:** The research was conducted to find the educational status of Majhis. This is solely descriptive research in which educational condition of Majhis has been described along with their social and economic condition. Majhis should have improved their educational, social and economic condition because of easy access of school, market and social and political exposure. However there are no significant changes in their life style. So, the research was carried out. Data for this research were collected through interview and household survey. It was education issues. Therefore data were taken from students, teachers and head of the family.

**Keyword:** Majhis, Educational, Socioeconomic status, Adamtar, teachers and family

## INTRODUCTION

Nepal which is situated between the counties of China and India extends along the southern slopes of the mighty Himalayas for a length of about 550 miles <sup>1</sup>. Nepal is geographically very small country <sup>2</sup>. However, there are fairly geographical, environmental and vegetation diversities. There are not only variations of nature but also cultural variations, religious faiths and cultural traditions <sup>3</sup>. A small country like Nepal can be proud to be home to a host. There is no matter to say that Nepal is a well-developed garden with the multi races, multi lingual and different cultures of various castes. It is a country with Indigenous Nationality <sup>4</sup>. Following the unification of Nepal by the late King Prithvi Narayan Shah, the concept of unity in diversity was recognised by the state. "Nepal 4 Jaat 36 barna ko sajha fulbari ho" is a Nepali proverb that meaning "Nepal is a home to people of 4 castes and 36 sub-castes" <sup>5</sup>.

Majhi are one of the indigenous peoples of Nepal <sup>6</sup> - who have embedded relationships with the rivers and whose ancestral territories include hilly and inner Tarai regions along the tributaries of Saptakoshi River — Sunkoshi, Tamakoshi, Dudhkoshi, Arun, Barun, Likhu, Trishuli and Tamor.

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<sup>1</sup> Krishna Prashad Bhattarai, "Nepal - Krishna P. Bhattarai - Google Books," *Chelsea House Publishers*.

<sup>2</sup> Quy Toan Do and Lakshmi Iyer, "Geography, Poverty and Conflict in Nepal," <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022343310386175> 47, no. 6 (November 2010): 735–748.

<sup>3</sup> (Hodgson, 1874; D. Panthee et al., 2006; D. R. Panthee et al., 2006)

<sup>4</sup> (K Bhattarai et al., 2021; Keshav Bhattarai & Conway, 2021; M. Rai, 2017; Ranjitkar, 2020)

<sup>5</sup> (Bouillier, 1991; Kafle & Narayan, 2008; Rose, 2010; Simon et al., 2022; Thubten Jigme Norbu & Turnbull, 1972)

<sup>6</sup> (Subba et al., 2014)

Majhi have their distinct culture and customary ways of life <sup>7</sup>. They speak, Majhikura, a spoken language belonging to the Indo-European language family and are ‘nature worshippers’ – which they now prefer to call ‘tantric’ religion <sup>8</sup>. But many Majhi also practice syncretic religious practices following both their native and Hindu religious world- views <sup>9</sup>. According to the 2011 Census, the total population of the Majhi is 83727, and the majority of live in the hill as well as in the lowland (the Tarai) of the central and the eastern regions of Nepal. Traditionally, Majhi livelihood and customary ways of life revolved round the local rivers. Subsistence farming, fishing, boat making and helping people to cross rivers in their ferries constitute the traditional occupations of Majhis. In popular imagination, the word ‘Majhi’ conveys the identity of the river people who provided the important services of crossing people in their boats. These people who for centuries help people safely cross rivers are now one of the marginalized and excluded indigenous communities of Nepal <sup>10</sup>. Denied of their traditional rights to fishing and boat services and dispossessed of their communal land tenure system by the Nepali state and its ruling elites, Kipat, Majhi began progressively losing away their lands and traditional means of livelihood after 1950s when Nepal was believed to have entered the world of modernization and development <sup>11</sup>. Today, Majhi, like other indigenous groups and minority communities in Nepal, are struggling to continue their culture and identity and reclaiming their sovereign indigenous rights with the state <sup>12</sup>.

Ethnicity		Majhi
Population		83727
Urban/ Rural	Urban	9621
	Rural	74106
Ecological	Mountain	7365
	Hill	40519
	Terai	35843
Developmental region	Eastern	27940
	Central	48668
	Western	5208
	Mid- Western	1168
	Far Western	743

Source: <sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> (G. B.-R. A. M. Journal, 2020)  
<sup>8</sup> B Malla et al., “An Ethnobotanical Study of Medicinal Plants Used by Ethnic People in Parbat District of Western Nepal,” *Elsevier* (2015).  
<sup>9</sup> (Baral et al., 2022)  
<sup>10</sup> J Acharya, “Impacts of Urbanization and Development Activities on Sustainable Development and Resource Management of the Majhi People of Nepal” (2018).  
<sup>11</sup> **(J. Rai, 2014 pg. 2)**  
<sup>12</sup> Yogesh Dongol and Roderick P. Neumann, “State Making through Conservation: The Case of Post-Conflict Nepal,” *Political Geography* 85 (March 2021): 102327.  
<sup>13</sup> Rai, “Malaria, Tarai Adivasi and the Landlord State in the 19th Century Nepal: A Historical-Ethnographic

Majhis's ancestral occupation is fishing and boating. These people are found in many districts. It's difficult to point out their exalt mainland though they are indigenous people of Nepal. They make boat by chopping down the 'Boat of tree' (The stem of tree). They might have used the tree trunk as a boat before the invention of the boat.

Living besides river, fishing boating, looking for gold, farming and rearing animals are the main occupations of these people. They have different tradition of birth, death, wedding, feast and festivals from other races. Comparatively, they are financially, socially and culturally poorer than other castes. The accessibility of these people in the field of education is lacking because of their poverty and wrong cultures<sup>14</sup>. For study such kind of study and research will support to know the actual educational status, to point out the bad aspects and make plan for uplifting education by solving problems of Majhi caste in future. Later it denoted these people who shared occupationally engaged in fair service. In this way it is rich in terms of biodiversity and cultural diversity Nepal has been considered as multi-ethnic, multi lingual country of different caste/ethnic groups who have been living here from Mechi to Mahakali.

Majhis have their own native language but now it is not in practice because they speak Nepali language as their first language. They are Hindus they celebrate most of the Hindu festivals<sup>15</sup>.

The general objective of the research was to find the educational and socio-economic status of Majhis. However the research was carried out to achieve the following specific objectives: 1) To find out educational status and achievement of Majhi children, 2) To examine the social and economic condition of Majhi community and 3) To identify living standard of Majhi community in the study area.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Settlement*

Majhi have been settling in areas along the tributaries of Saptakoshi River — Sunkoshi, Tamakoshi, Dudhkoshi, Arun, Barun, Likhu, and Tamor. As there areas were inflicted with virulent malaria in the past, groups other than Majhi could not live and survive there. Also, Majhi were the first cultivators of the plane lands of in these river basins. After the Gorkhali king Prithvi Narayan Shah “unified” Nepal in 1825 B.S (1768 A.D) through his campaigns of conquest, the king reaffirmed Majhi's customary ownership of the land by granting them these lands under kipat (communal ownership of land) for their important services as ferry people<sup>16</sup>. Majhi needed to take government officers and postmen across different Ghats (river banks) even during the rainy season. They were not permitted to sell the kipat land to other individuals or organisations<sup>17</sup>.

Majhi have been living along Narayani River from ancient times. They settled in Chitwan and Tarai after migrating from Patharghat and Sisaghat. According to latest findings, there are ancient settlements of Majhi along the Bagmati River, Marin River, and Kamala river of Makwanmpur, Kavrepalanchok, Sindhuli, and Triyuga river of Udaypur. This also evidences that Majhi are the indigenous people of these areas<sup>18</sup>.

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Analysis.”

<sup>14</sup> Suresh, “Acknowledgement” (2011).

<sup>15</sup> Dol Narayan Shrestha, “National Population and Housing Census 2011 (Village Development Committee/Municipality) BARA Government of Nepal National Planning Commission Secretariat” (2014).

<sup>16</sup> (Anthropology, 2013)

<sup>17</sup> DP Shah, NB Singh - Nepalese Journal of Zoology, and undefined 2014, “Ethnobiological Study of the Majhi of Sindhuli District,” *cdztnu.edu.np* 2, no. 1 (2014).

<sup>18</sup> (Weekly, 2007)

### ***Type of Family***

Family is an important institution for Majhi, and they have the same term for family and house. They live in joint family, from grandparents to grandchildren<sup>19</sup>. Women come to live in their natal homes if they are widowed or separated/ divorced. They all work for running family. Although traditionally they lived in joint family, now they are attracted to nuclear family. Sons inherit equally after they separate from parents, but the jini property is taken by the son who cares the parents in stem family<sup>20</sup>.

Although the family was matriarchal in the past, now it is patriarchal, and all consider the father as the head. Death rites are done by sons. Families with no sons bring son-in-law in the house, and childless families adopt relative's children, and such godchildren inherit the property<sup>21</sup>.

### ***Livelihood***

Agriculture, ferry services, and fishing constitute the traditional occupation of Majhi community. Now the majority of Majhi are live in below the poverty line<sup>22</sup>. In the past, people and villagers used to pay a fee called khewa to Majhi for their services of crossing people across the river in their boats. Villagers residing around the rivers would give those grains yearly in the form of Dhungepathi. Hence, this form of reciprocal relationship ensured Majhi a stable source of income and means of livelihood until in the recent past. During the Panchayat period (1962-1990), such system was abolished, and a contract system was placed. The contractors were and are mostly high caste and clever people, and Majhis remain merely as workers. Also, due to building of bridges their customary services as boat people is in jeopardy. Due to the damming of the rivers, there is much less fish. In the past they would fish anywhere. But from the Panchayat period, Majhi were denied their traditional rights to fish from the local rivers when the state issued licenses and contract system for commercial fishing in the local rivers. As the consequences, Majhi themselves were displaced and relocated<sup>23</sup>. Now they have no right to do fishing. So, they have almost completely abandoned their fishing occupation.

### ***Land rights***

Majhi have been living along and around the river banks of the Saptakoshi from ages. They earned their living by sailing boat, fishing, and cultivating<sup>24</sup>. In the past, due to the endemic prevalence of malaria, people other than Majhi did not live in these areas. They made the land on the riverbanks cultivable. Majhi were toiling and making a living in their customary territories many years after the so-called "unification" of Nepal by Gorkhali ruler Prithvi Narayan Shah. But in 1885 vs, during the reign of king Rajendra, Majhi were given the land as kiptat. In exchange for their

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<sup>19</sup> Mahesh C. Puri et al., "Delivering Postpartum Family Planning Services in Nepal: Are Providers Supportive?," *BMC Health Services Research* 18, no. 1 (December 2018).

<sup>20</sup> Arun Kumar Joshi et al., "Utilization of Family Planning Methods among Postpartum Mothers in Kailali District, Nepal," *International Journal of Women's Health* 12 (2020): 487–494.

<sup>21</sup> Puri et al., "Delivering Postpartum Family Planning Services in Nepal: Are Providers Supportive?"

<sup>22</sup> Basanta Paudel et al., "Climate Change and Its Impacts on Farmer's Livelihood in Different Physiographic Regions of the Trans-Boundary Koshi River Basin, Central Himalayas," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18, no. 13 (July 2021).

<sup>23</sup> Sujata Shrestha, Uttam B Shrestha, and Kamal Bawa, "Socio-Economic Factors and Management Regimes as Drivers of Tree Cover Change in Nepal," *PeerJ* 6, no. 5 (2018): e4855.

<sup>24</sup> Dirgha J. Ghimire and William G. Axinn, "Community Context, Land Use, and First Birth," *Rural Sociology* 75, no. 3 (September 2010): 478–513.

collective ownership, Majhi needed to work as the postmen and providing ferry services for the government officials to cross these rivers for free, even in the rainy seasons<sup>25</sup>. The kiptat land could not be sold to people other than Majhi. Then in 1962 vs, the rulers appropriated and distributed land to their relatives, chakadiwala, and clever ones in the name of guthi for running of Hindu temple as birta, and only few were left for kiptat land under Majhi.

The land, which was made cultivable by Majhi, began to be confiscated by other groups who migrated to Tarai from hills. Due to big bridges, canals, and hydroelectric plants, Majhi were displaced, with eventual loss of their culture. The government did not provide adequate compensation for them, nor did Majhi get share of the benefits from these infrastructures. Majhi themselves were not aware of their rights, and the governments also became indifferent to their problems<sup>26</sup>.

### ***Challenges to Traditional Occupations***

In the recent years, due to the construction of bridges, both concrete and suspension, Majhi lost their traditional occupation of taking people across the river<sup>27</sup>. Next, the national park appropriated their land. Majhi even now use net and hooks to fish, but other people began to collect fish using electric current and chemicals, so there is reduction in fish in the rivers<sup>28</sup>. In this way, Majhi were detached from fishing occupation<sup>29</sup>.

Now they are compelled to do cultivation and cattle raising in whatever small landholdings they own<sup>30</sup>. They make marcha (yeast cakes used to make beer) and barter or sell it. Women sell liquor at the Ghat or Chautara. They take it as a good food item as it energizes and also fills their stomach<sup>31</sup>.

### ***Civil service***

Very few Majhi are involved in civil service. Due to their low education, the requirements for civil service are an obstacle to their entry because they cannot compete with other more educated non-Majhi. Majhi in the past were be allowed in civil service not only in Nepal but also in India. They were deliberately excluded from such jobs and were humiliated<sup>32</sup>. Elders recall that they were rebuked. Some Majhi who have changed their surnames to Thapa, Rayamajhi, and Rai are having difficulty because their heirs could not get pension as their surnames do not match<sup>33</sup>. Also, in their citizenship certificate, land ownership certificate, etc., they have written surname as Majhi but in pension book, it is written otherwise<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> Madhav Joshi and T. David Mason, "Land Tenure, Democracy, and Patterns of Violence During the Maoist Insurgency in Nepal, 1996-2005," *Social Science Quarterly* 91, no. 4 (December 2010): 984–1006.

<sup>26</sup> Keera Allendorf, "Do Women's Land Rights Promote Empowerment and Child Health in Nepal?," *World development* 35, no. 11 (November 2007): 1975–1988.

<sup>27</sup> (Sherpa et al., 2018)

<sup>28</sup> (Christie & Giri, 2011; Livelihood, 2018)

<sup>29</sup> Hans Hadders, "Establishment of Electric Crematorium in Nepal: Continuity, Changes and Challenges," *Mortality* 23, no. 1 (January 2018): 19–34.

<sup>30</sup> Punam Yadav, "Social Transformation in Post-Conflict Nepal," *Social Transformation in Post-conflict Nepal* (April 2016).

<sup>31</sup> Sudesh Raj Sharma et al., "Factors Associated with Place of Delivery in Rural Nepal," *BMC Public Health* 14, no. 1 (April 2014).

<sup>32</sup> (T. D.-T. S. A. Journal, 2016; The, 2013)

<sup>33</sup> MS Giri, MR Shrestha - Journal of Personnel Training Academy, and Undefined 2018, "Reform of Civil Service of Nepal with E-Government Practice," *academia.edu* (2018).

<sup>34</sup> Shree Krishna Shrestha and Narendra Raj Paudel, "Civil Service Management in Nepal," *Civil Service*

### ***Foreign employment***

About 12% of the surveyed households in the research region stated that overseas employment was their primary source of cash income, implying that at least one member of their family worked in a foreign country during the survey period (2012 A.D). Most of them go to the Gulf countries to work<sup>35</sup>. Among them, only some have improved their economic conditions. Many are exploited by the employment companies. Also, they have not been able to get the loans provided by the government for foreign employment<sup>36</sup>.

### ***Language and Education***

Majhi language is locally called Majhikura, which belongs to Indic group. Majhi do not have script of their own and Majhi language is used only in very few areas. Majhi use it as mother tongue in Ramechhap, Kavre, Okhaldhunga, Khotang, and Dolakha. There are regional dialects of Majhi language.

It is used only in everyday use, and not in education or media<sup>37</sup>. There is no newspaper, magazine, or article in Majhi language. Very few Majhi are getting education in their mother tongue<sup>38</sup>. Due to the monolingual policies of the state, due to the encroachment from other languages and lack of promotion and preservation of indigenous language, the use of Majhi language is seriously worsening. Many Majhi rightfully worry that their native language will become extinct unless there is an aggressive revitalization for its promotion and preservation<sup>39</sup>. The household survey undertaken for this study also highlights the challenges Majhi face in continuing their native language<sup>40</sup>.

As there are no traditional educational institutions, Majhi hand over their knowledge and skills to the next generation through the institution of family. Traditional knowledge and skills include fishing, sailing, making fishing nets, swimming, and making marcha (yeast cakes for making beer) are passed through the family.

Majhi have little access to modern education. Their literacy rate is 42.5%. Among the surveyed household in the study area, the literacy rate is 68% and about 72 % of the population in the age group 5-25 years is reported to be attending different levels of education. So still 30 % of the population in this age group is out of school for various reasons. Though the number of students attending school is encouraging but the fact that more than one fourth of school going population is out of school in the study area reveals the challenges Majhi students face in completing their education<sup>41</sup>.

Poverty and the need to travel far to pursue higher education are two main reasons for their low access to high education. Moreover, some graduates are unemployed. Due to the deprivation in education, they are not represented in civil services. Nowadays Majhi have realized the need to educate their children<sup>42</sup>. The higher number of school attending population in the study area also

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*Management and Administrative Systems in South Asia* (June 2018): 99–119.

<sup>35</sup> (Jones et al., 2013; Report et al., 2005; D Seddon et al., 2002; David Seddon et al., 2002)

<sup>36</sup> Udaya R. Wagle, "Socioeconomic Implications of the Increasing Foreign Remittance to Nepal: Evidence from the Nepal Living Standard Survey," *International Migration* 50, no. 4 (August 2012): 186–207.

<sup>37</sup> J Smits, AHM Huisman, and K Kruijff, "Home Language and Education in the Developing World" (2008).

<sup>38</sup> (Research, 2010)

<sup>39</sup> (S. T.-G. E. and L. R. Journal, 2010)

<sup>40</sup> (Linguistics, 2013)

<sup>41</sup> (Politics, 1995)

<sup>42</sup> (Development, 1999)

indicates Majhi increased awareness for educating their children. The majority of Majhi students (80%) attend the government schools in the study area. Only 12% of them attend private schools. The types of school can signal peoples' differential economic strata as the private schools are more expensive and also considered to be better education institutions in terms of the quality of education<sup>43</sup>. If we accept this consideration, then the majority of Majhi families in the study areas cannot afford to send their children in better educational institutions which can impinge on their chances for social mobility in the higher/professional education institutions thereby limiting their access to employment and other life chances. The majority of Majhi households in the study may have been sending their children to the government and community education institutions simply because the places lacks any private educational institutions<sup>44</sup>. But this scenario is less likely to be the reason, because richer Majhi can always send their children to private schools in other places as well.

Marriage, inability to pay for the education costs, and supporting household works are the three major reasons for students' drop-outs and discontinuity of Majhis students. Majority of school teachers are non-Majhi who are less likely to explain topics Majhi students do not understand in their native languages. Some Majhi students reported that they discontinued their education because teachers discriminated against them based on their ethnicity.

Some NGOs have funded for education of Majhi children by giving them a lump sum of money. But parents used it in other daily necessities, and when the money was finished they stopped sending children to school. Recently, with the provision of providing two litres of cooking oil to the family which sends children to school, children are going to school<sup>45</sup>.

## METHODS

### *Research Design*

The descriptive research design was used to describe the features of the population or phenomena that was being investigated. The features used to define the situation or population are usually descriptive categories, which are a type of category scheme<sup>46</sup>. So, the researcher conducted descriptive research design. To describe the educational status of Majhis inhabiting in Siddhalek-7, Adamtar, Dhading, the researcher adopted both qualitative and quantitative researches approaches.

### *Area Selection and Its Justification*

The researcher studied the educational status of Majhis who have been living in Siddhalek-7, Adamtar Dahding, which was purposively selected. The study area of this research was the educational status of Majhis. To study the educational status of Majhis, Majhis of Adamtar were selected because Majhis are the aboriginal of this village and they have easy access of education. However, they have not changed their living standard. Instead they have sold their property. They

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<sup>43</sup> PP Poudel, TH Choi - Current Issues in Language Planning, and undefined 2021, "Discourses Shaping the Language-in-Education Policy and Foreign Language Education in Nepal: An Intersectional Perspective," *Taylor & Francis* (December 2021): 1–19.

<sup>44</sup> Sonia Eagle, "The Language Situation in Nepal," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 20, no. 4–5 (1999): 272–327.

<sup>45</sup> Selma K. Sonntag, "Ethnolinguistic Identity and Language Policy in Nepal," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 1, no. 4 (December 1995): 108–120.

<sup>46</sup> Eunsook T. Koh and Willis L. Owen, "Descriptive Research and Qualitative Research," *Introduction to Nutrition and Health Research* (2000): 219–248; Helen L. Dulock, "Research Design: Descriptive Research," *Journal of Pediatric Oncology Nursing* 10, no. 4 (1993): 154–157.

have been spending very miserable life.

Many ethnic groups have changed their life standard after getting education and/or having the opportunities of education. However Majhis have not got significant changes in their living standard even if they have opportunities of education. They are still backwards in relation to other ethnic groups. So, the researcher selected Majhis and their educational status as a study area.

Likewise the researcher spotted Adamtar village, which lies in Siddhalek Rural municipality ward no. 7 in Dhading district because it is the place where Majhis have aboriginally been living for centuries and they have got easy access of education for more than four decades. In the same village and other neighbouring villages, people both ethnic and non-ethnic have got significant changes and have improved their living standard.

### ***Nature and Sources of Data***

This research included both primary and secondary sources of information<sup>47</sup>. Therefore, the anthropological used tools and techniques such as household survey, and interview were used to collect the information. Moreover, the relevant data were also collected by documentary sources like report, articles, journal, website, records etc. The nature of data was both qualitative and quantitative

### ***Universe and Sampling Design***

The population, often known as the universe, refers to the entire set of units being studied. Depending on the study's goal and scope, the population could include all citizens of the country, residents of a certain geographic place, or members of a specific ethnic or economic group. So, the universe of this study was Majhis of Adamtar village, which lies in Siddhalek Rural Municipality ward no.7 in Dhading district, which was purposively selected.

Sampling was a technique of non-probability sampling. Purposive or judgemental sampling was used in non-probability sampling. Twenty household surveys were carried out. Twenty interviews were carried out; ten to the teachers who had been teaching at the school of Adamtar, i.e. satyawati secondary school, and ten majhi students of upper grades.

### ***Data Collection Techniques and Tools***

Interview was conducted to collect information on educational issue underlying in the society. For this, three separate interviews schedule were prepared. One was for house hold head and the rest two were for teachers and Majhi children. The answers were filled in by the researcher by asking with respondents. Perceptions of the parents towards their children on education, economic status, health treatment, clothes were collected. This method was used to examine the validity of the data acquired from household survey.

For this structured interview schedule was prepared to obtain general information, socio-economic condition and for their daily life which mainly explore the type and extent of discrimination. The main contents in research interview schedule were as follows:

### **Education-Socio-cultural status- Health- Work load- Economic status; and -Marital status.**

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<sup>47</sup> SS Rosenthal, WC Strange - Handbook of regional and urban Economics, and Undefined 2004, "Evidence on the Nature and Sources of Agglomeration Economies," *Elsevier* (2004); Greta Morine-Dershimer and Todd Kent, "The Complex Nature and Sources of Teachers' Pedagogical Knowledge," *Examining Pedagogical Content Knowledge* (March 2006): 21-50.



Twenty household heads were respondents for the interview. Among the twenty, twelve were females and eight were males. All of them were farmers and/or porters. Regarding the teachers, all of them were the teachers of Satyawati Secondary School. Five were female teachers and five were male teachers. Among them, five would teach at upper level (i.e., above grade five) and five at lower levels (i.e., below grade five). Likewise the interview was also taken to ten Majhi students who were upper grades (i.e., above grade five). Among them, five were boys and five were girls.

Along with the interview, the basic information about family and other members was collected. In the first stage, information on the household was received by interviewing with the household head. In the absence of head of the family the form was filled by taking help from other members of the family. This type of interview was used to gather basic information about the household, such as the number of family members, literacy status, and schooling of male and female children

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Result*

Education can be viewed as the master key to unlocking all aspects of development. Another major element in lowering fertility, infant mortality, and maternal mortality is female education<sup>48</sup>. Because educated women are more conscious of the issue of health<sup>49</sup> and children than illiterate women, their age at marriage and family size are influenced by their education. Education affects women's behaviour in all aspects of life, including economics, politics, family, and society, but low socioeconomic status encourages women to have big families<sup>50</sup>. In the survey, Majhi's overall educational status was determined to be lower than the national average<sup>51</sup>.

Women members of the households were found illiterate but children are literate and go to school up class 12. The continuation of education is very low after class 12. In twenty household surveys, the researcher did not find anybody who has passed bachelor or been studying bachelor. Only one person has been involved in academic sector, i.e. teacher at Satyawati School. Although he has got good grades in S.L.C. and class 12, he discontinued his higher studies. He opined that he left his study because he got married and he had to look after his family and work in the fields. The following table shows Majhi children who have been attending school from Nursery to grade 12.

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<sup>48</sup> Pradip Rai, "A Study of School Enrolment in Bastim VDC, Bhojpur, Nepal" (2008).

<sup>49</sup> SP Devkota, S Bagale - Journal of Education and Practice, and undefined 2015, "Primary Education and Dropout in Nepal," *ERIC* (2008).

<sup>50</sup> Dharendra Wagle, "Dropout of Children from Schools in Nepal" (2012).

<sup>51</sup> Naruho Ezaki, "Enrolment Patterns of Individual Children Left behind in the Trend towards 'Quality Education': A Case Study of Primary Education in Nepal," *Education 3-13* 47, no. 5 (July 2019): 520–533.

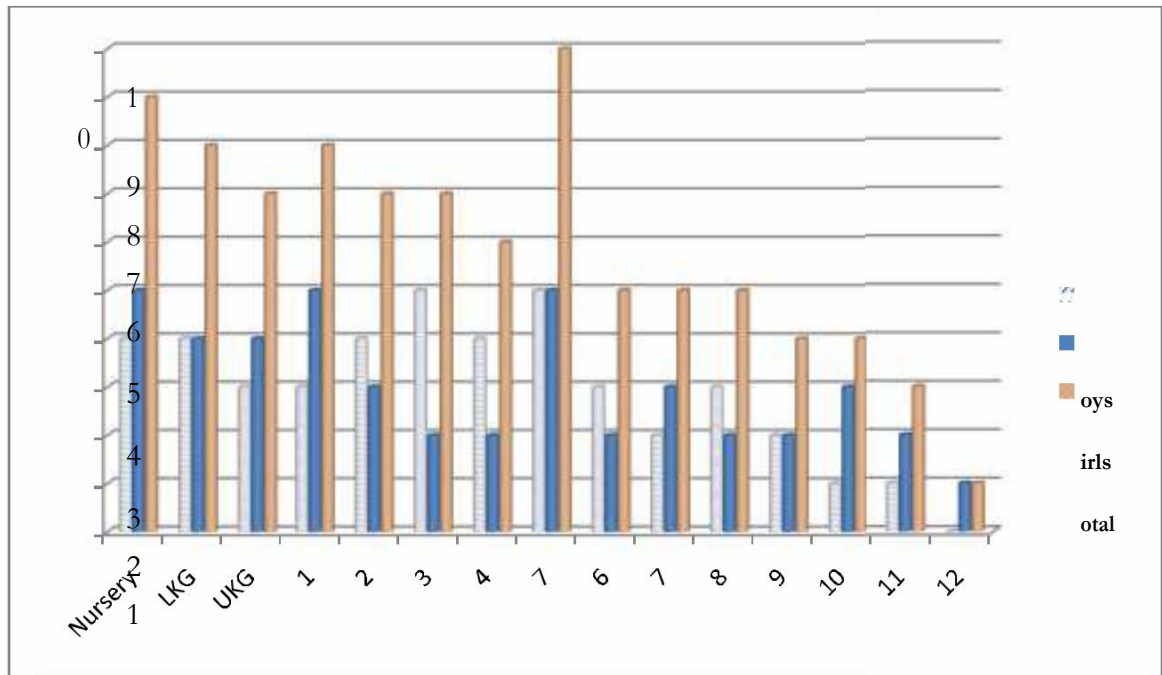
**Table.1** Total Majhi children in Satyawati Secondary School

No.	Class	Majhi Students		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Nursery	4	5	9
2.	LKG	4	4	8
3.	UKG	3	4	7
4.	1	3	5	8
5.	2	4	3	7
6.	3	5	2	7
7.	4	4	2	6
8.	7	5	5	10
9.	6	3	2	5
10.	7	2	3	5
11.	8	3	2	5
12.	9	2	2	4
13	10	1	3	4
14	11	1	2	3
15	12	0	1	1
	Total			89

Source: School Admission Record 2076 B. S

The above given table of students from Majhi community who appear in different grades in Satyawati Secondary School, Adamtar Dhading in the following bar diagram.

**Figure 2** Total Majhi children in Satyawati Secondary School



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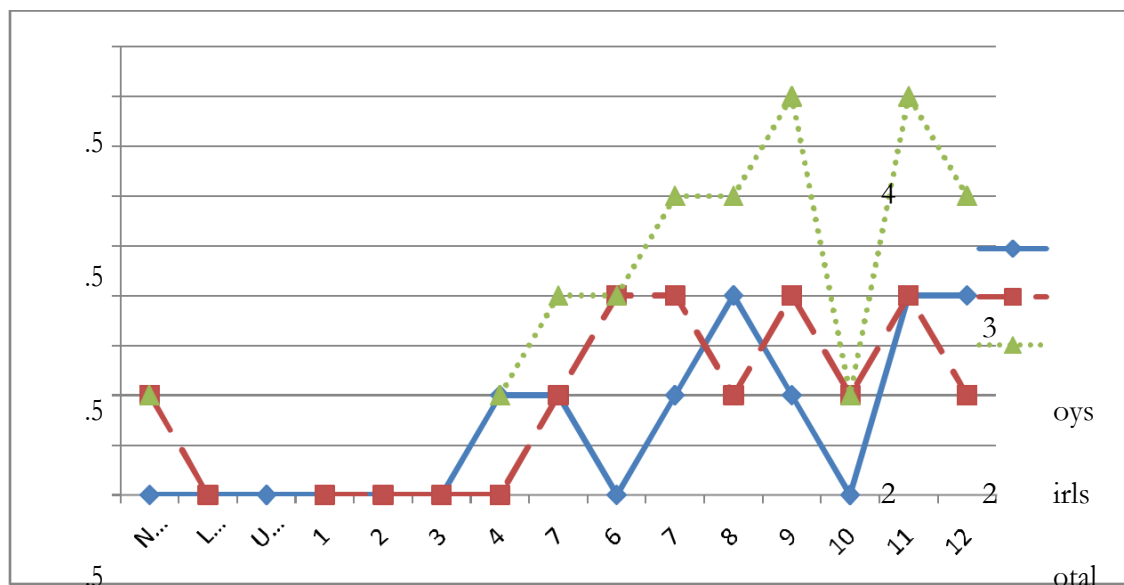
The above given shows that the number of students decreases as they go upper grades. It proves that in the early grades, the admission rate is satisfactory. However they drop classes out or discontinue their studies in upper grades. So, total number of students suddenly decreases after grade 10 or SEE and admission rate is lowest in grade eleven and twelve. The main cause of decreasing number of students is drop out. The following table shows the drop outs of student during academic year 2075 B.S.

**Table 2** Dropouts of Majhi children in Satyawati Secondary School

S. No.	Class	Drop outs of Majhi Students		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Nursery	-	1	1
2.	LKG	-	-	
3.	UKG	-		
4.	1	-	-	
5.	2	-	-	
6.	3	-	-	
7.	4	1	-	1
8.	7	1	1	2
9.	6	-	2	2
10.	7	1	2	3
11.	8	2	1	3
12.	9	1	2	4
13	10	-	1	1
14	11	2	2	4
15	12	2	1	3
	Total			24

The above given table of students' drop outs from Majhi community from Satyawati Secondary School, Adamtar Dhading can be shown in the following bar diagram.

**Figure 2** Dropouts of Majhi children in Satyawati S. School



The above given shows that the number of students’ drop outs increases as they go upper grades. The dropout rate in higher grades is higher than that of lower grades. In higher grades, boys’ dropout is greater than that of girls.

***The summary of household***

House hold surveys were purposively conducted in 20 families of Majhi community of Adamtar village in order to get the information about educational level, profession, occupation as per sex, age, and marital status. The survey focused on age wise distribution and their educational and occupational career. The summary of house hold survey can be shown in the following tables.

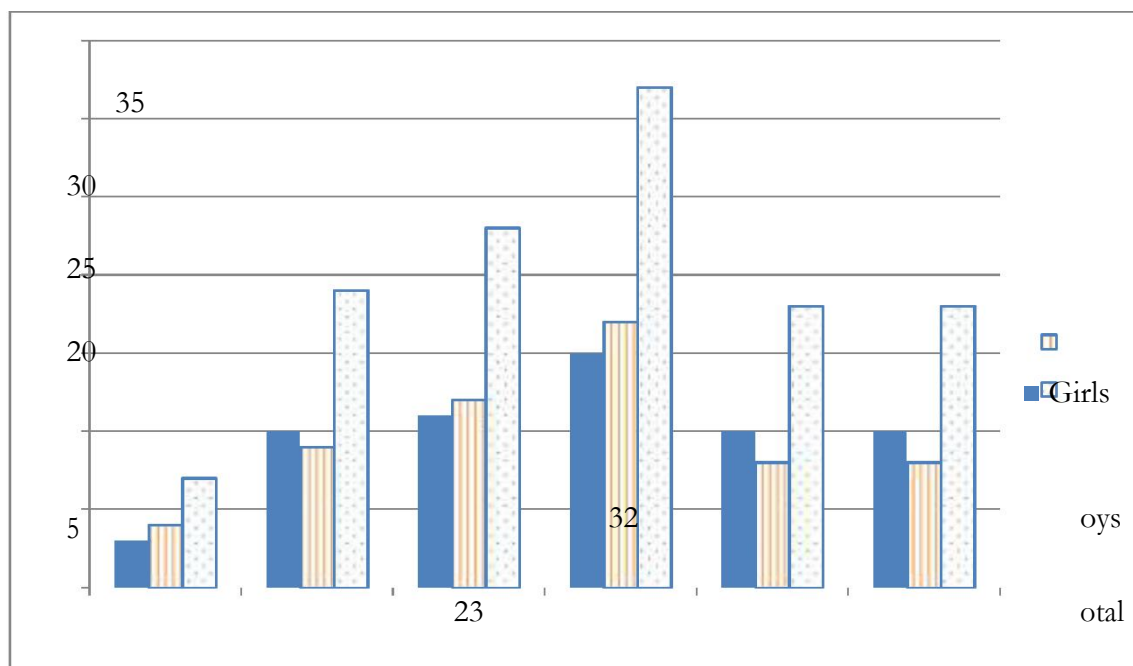
**Table 3** The summary of household

Age		No.	Education				Occupation					Marital status	
			illiterate	Literate(below	Below S.L.C	Above	students	Farming/house	Private job	Government	Foreign	Married	Unmarried
Below 4	Girls												
	Boys												
4-18 (school age)	Girls	0											
	Boys												
19-25 (college age)	Girls	1											
	Boys	2											
26-45 (Getting job age)	Girls	5	0				3					5	
	Boys	7	3									7	
46-60 (Old Age)	Girls	0					0					0	
	Boys												
60 above	Girls	0					0					0	
	Boys												
Total		17											

Source: Household survey

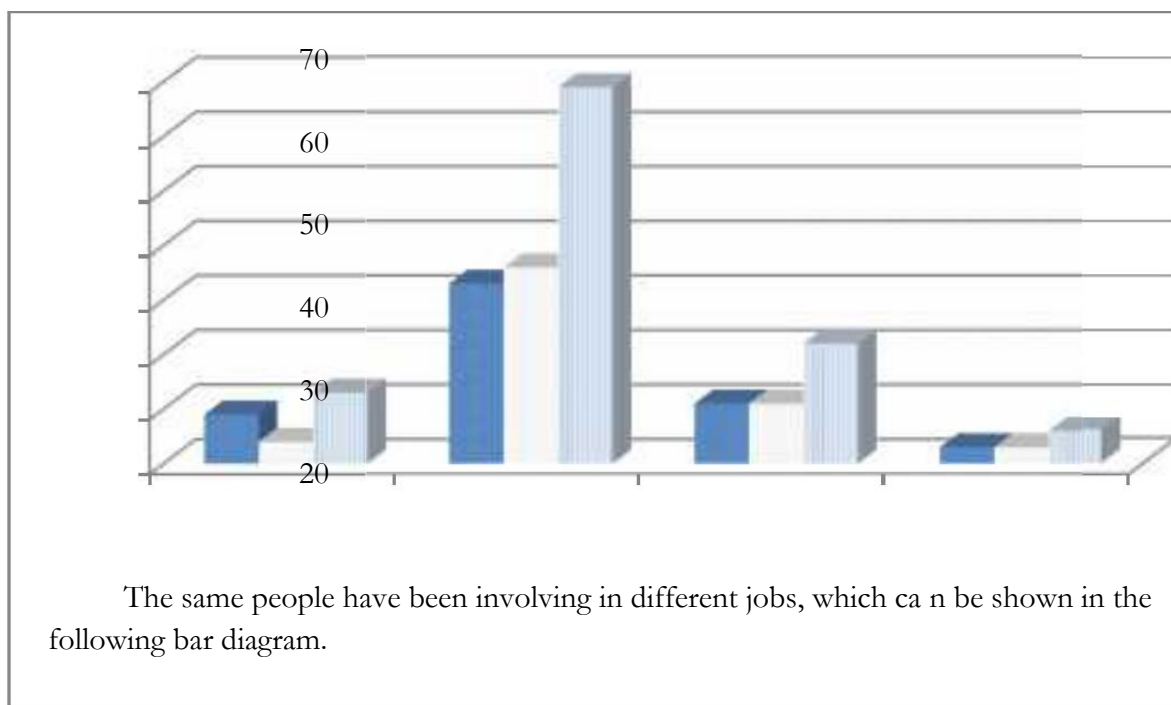
The above mentioned table shows educational and occupational distribution of sample population as per age groups. The sample population has been categorized into six categories, viz. below 5, between 4 and 18 (i.e. school age people), between 19 and 25 (i.e. college age people), between 26 and 45 (i.e. getting job age people), between 46 and 60 (i.e. old age people) and 60 above (i.e. inactive age people). These different distributions of people can be shown in the following diagrams.

**Figure 3** Age and sex wise distribution of total family members of household

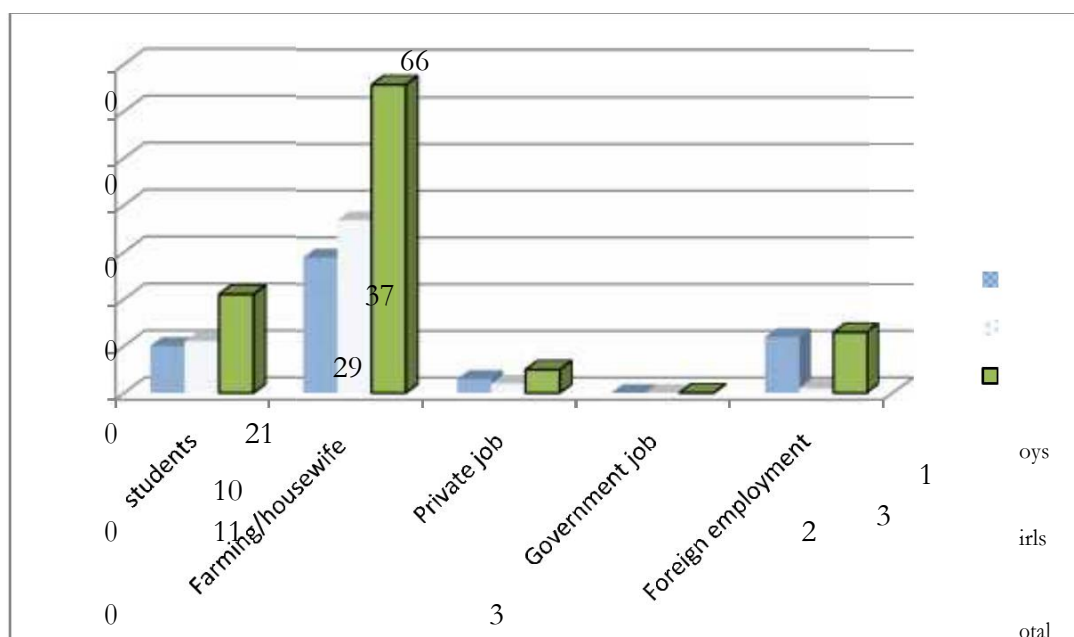


The age wise distribution of family members of sampled families for household can be shown in the following bar diagram. On the basis of above mentioned age wise distribution of family members, they are divided into illiterate people, literate people having or had education below class five, people having or had education below S.L.C /S.E.E., and people having or had education above S.L.C /S.E.E.

**Figure 4** Educational level of family members of household



**Figure 5** Employment condition of family members of household

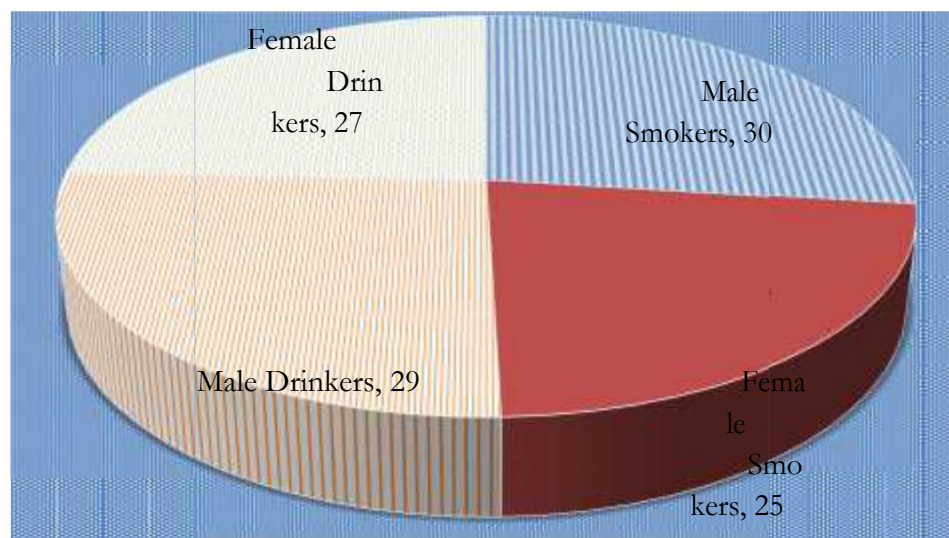


The given diagram shows that most of men have been involved farming and most of girls have been involved in housewife. None of them have been done government jobs. They have not even done private jobs except five people.

The survey was also conducted to find the number of smokers and alcohol drinkers. The survey proved that Majhis popularly drink and smoke. Not only males but also female's drink and smoke. The following pie chart shows number of male and female smokers and drinkers.



**Figure 6** Number of male and female smokers and drinkers



### Teachers' Experience towards Majhi Students

Twelve questions were asked to ten teachers who have been teaching different subjects in different levels at Satyawati Secondary School, where Majhi students of Adamtar study.

Level	Pre primary	Primary	Lower secondary	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Total
Number	1	3	2	2	2	10

The teachers were asked the questions to elicit the information about Majhi students' activities, achievement, challenges and involvement in curricular and co-curricular activities. The teacher who has been teaching in pre-primary pointed out that they are poorer than other non-Majhi students in personal hygiene; they are irregular and do not do their home assignment. They do not bring the things like pencil, note book, erasure with them. Regarding activeness of them, she pointed out that they are as capable as other non-Majhi students; and they are creative as well.

Likewise, other three primary teachers also had similar kind experience about Majhi students. Instead they pointed out that they frequently lie to the teachers when they ask them about their irregularity and home assignment. They pointed out that Majhi students are in both categories most intelligent and least intelligent. They also pointed out that their activities are highly affected by their parents' manner. All the teachers insisted that when Majhi students go upper grades, they become lazier and liar.

The teachers who have been teaching upper grades did not point personal hygiene as a problem. For them, irregularity and laziness are main problems. When a person's irregularity

increases, he or she becomes dropout of the school. They also pointed out that boys become more liar than the girls. Some of the boys have also been involved in bad manners such as drinking alcohol and smoking cigarette. They said that Majhi students decrease their achievement as they go upper grades. The same person who could hold positions in lower grades becomes weaker in upper grades. As a result, few of them complete S.E.E. and join class 11 and 12; and they have very poor performance in upper grades. Similarly, all the teachers of upper level replied that Majhi students are not as motivated as other non Majhi students. They lack both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

### ***Majhi Students' Remarks over Education***

To assess the educational status of a particular group of students, information should be taken from the same group because their educational status is determined by the attitude which they have towards education. So, interview was taken with 10 Majhi students. The interview was structured consisting of twelve questions. The interview was designed to elicit their attitude and motivation to education. The interview was taken with students of upper grades so that they could easily understand the questions and answer giving their nature and attitude. The respondents were five boys and five girls.

The first question was about their future aim. Out of ten, only one girl replied that she had aim to be teacher but other students remained silent to this question. It showed that they did not know why they were studying because they did not know their aims. When they were asked about the role model, the one who wanted to be teacher named former headmaster of this school but other nine students named local business man and women and foreign employees. When they were asked about reasons of going to school, nine of them did not tell any significant reasons except one.

In the next questions, they were asked about regularity in the classes. Most of them replied that they sometimes become absent and they go home at tiffin time and do not return school because their parents ask them to look after younger brothers and sisters or home when they leave home for work. Similarly, they were asked to check whether they would get family support for their studies<sup>52</sup>. All of them said that their parents never helped them. Two of them would sometimes get help from elder brothers and sisters. Five of them replied that they are mostly disturbed by their parents in the evening when they come home after drinking alcohol.

When they were asked about financial problems, five of them said that scholarship so they don't have any problems. However other five became serious because they had been facing scarcity of money. All of them said that they rarely have snack in canteen at tiffin time. During tiffin time, they go home and have rice and curry if their parents have left any rice.

### ***Guardians' Remarks over their Children's Education***

While taking house hold survey, interview was also taken with head of the family or available senior family member. Household survey was conducted in different 20 families of Adamtar. So, interview was taken with twenty different people representing different families. The interview was focused to elicit their and their children's educational achievement and social involvement.

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<sup>52</sup> (Education, 2017)

The very first question was about their involvement in social activities. Among twenty heads of the family, three heads and other two were the members of committees for community forest and drinking water supply. None of them were in vital posts, i.e. all were general members. It proves that they do not have active participation in community activities.

Similarly they were asked about their consciousness about health. Nineteen out of twenty people replies that they drink and smoke. Not only the family heads but also other family members drink and smoke sitting together in family. There was no discrimination between man and women regarding drinking and smoking. In two families it was found that children below sixteen smoke and drink. In twenty families, ten people were habitually drinking, and fourteen people were chain smokers. Surprisingly, it was found that all of them were familiar with family planning measures and most of them have adopted it. Regarding believing on witch doctor, mixed answers were found. All of them said that mostly they go to clinic or hospital when they and their family members become sick. They also admitted that they sometimes go to witch doctor. Most of them showed their opinion that they believe doctors more than witch doctors.

In the same way, they were asked about their children's education. They replied the questions in such a way that their duty is to send their children to school. Except that, all duties are of teachers and the children have to be aware of themselves about their education and future plans. When they were asked about educational achievement of their children and future career, eighteen people showed unconcern regarding the matter and two of them wanted to make their kids teachers. They replied the questions in such way that education is only for getting jobs. Most of them wanted their sons to send foreign country and daughter to get married before 20. Three of the twenty families had dropout students. However the parents and head of the family did not try any attempt to continue.

### ***Discussion***

Majhis of Adamtar are indigenous people of the locality. They have been living in that locality since the time of Prithvi Narayan Shah. Initially they were kept in that place to row boat to cross the Trishuli River at Adamghat. They used to row boat over Trishuli River and in free time they would fish with net and hook. When the suspension bridge was made, they left traditional occupation boating, and started working as farmer and labourer.

The village, Adamtar is nearby Prithvi Highway and is good for agricultural products. However the Majhis have not got such significant advantages from transportation facilities of available in Prithvi Highway and agriculturally good land. They have been spending very poor live, and they are really economically and socially disadvantaged. They do not have any significant contribution in social transformation.

A school was established in 2032 called Satyawati, which opened the approach of education for Majhis. However they did not take any advantage from school not only in the beginning years but also after 2046 BS. During Panchyat Regime, education was not compulsory. So, very few Majhi children entered school. After 2000 AD, education became compulsory, and most of Majhi children started to go to school. However, they did not spend many years in school. They did not complete their school education and they dropped the classes out in different level and grades. The trend of dropout is still continuous. They have satisfactory performance in initial grades but they become weaker when start studying in upper grades. As a result, they become failure in SEE and grade twelve examinations.

Regarding the present dropout rate, dropout of boys is higher than that of girls. The main

causes of dropout are economic, social and family background of the society. Boys leave the school when they become youth enough, and girls leave the schools when they get married. Similarly, they do not get family support from parents and guardian so they have poor educational achievement. They have scarcity of educational materials and good food.

Although they had their own culture and language, they do not use them anymore and follow Brahmin's culture. Most of them are smokers and drinkers. They smoke and drink openly. There are many evidences of premature death because of alcohol and smoke. Even the school age children are smokers and drinkers.

Strength of the society is to take medical facilities and they do not believe witch doctor totally. They do have child marriage but they still have early marriage. They regard education as a means of earning so they think that education for getting jobs not for knowledge. They are not significantly involved in social activities; they are not involved in committees of society. The modernization has not affected them.

## CONCLUSION

This research is concluded that the educational status of Majhis is still poor. The facilities available there should bring change in their life style but they have been spending very miserable life. The collected data showed that biologically or heretically they are capable enough but they do not get proper environment and financial support. They are educationally backwards but they are not such superstitious. They do not have their own culture and language. They have been assimilated with Brahmins cultures and their language. On the other hand, they are found as heavy smokers and drinkers.

In view of the low interest of the Majhi children in education, the need to adopt measures to motivate them towards education is very important. An awareness campaign in the Majhi community should be launched through the effective media so that the campaign can help the Majhi community to perceive the importance of education in life. Similarly income generating programs should be conducted by different social organization so that they can progress in economy. For this, effective poverty alleviation programs are essential.

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