

# Gender, Jobs and Education **Prospects and Realities in Nepal**

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Sushan Acharya, EdD  
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**Sushan Acharya**

# Acronyms

CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CDC	Curriculum Development Center
CEDAW	Convention to Eliminate all kinds of Discrimination against Women
CERID	Center for Educational Research, Innovation and Development
CRC	Child Right Convention
CREHPA	Center for Research on Environment Health and Population Activities
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DEO	District Education Office
DOE	Department of Education
ECA	Extra Curricular Activity
EDSC	Educational and Developmental Service Centre
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ERO	Education Review Office
EVENT	Enhanced Vocational Education and Training
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrollment Ratio
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HE	Higher Education
HISAN	Higher Secondary School Association Nepal
HISTAN	Higher Secondary School Teacher Association Nepal
HSS	Higher Secondary School
IIDS	Institute for Integrated Development Studies
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
MIS	Management Information System
MOE	Ministry of Education
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
MWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare

NASA	National Assessment of Student Achievement
NCED	National Center for Educational Development
NDHS	Nepal Demographic and Health Survey
NER	Net Enrollment Ratio
NFE	Non-formal Education
NLFS	Nepal Labour Force Survey
NLSS	Nepal Living Standard Survey
NPC	National Planning Commission
PGD	Post Graduate Diploma
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SSR	School Student Ratio
STR	Student Teacher Ratio
TOT	Training of Trainer
TPC	Teacher Preparation Course
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TSLC	Technical School Leaving Certificate
TUN	Teacher Union of Nepal
WDO	Woman Development Officer

# Executive Summary

Gender, Jobs and Education: Prospects and Realities in Nepal is part of the series of studies undertaken in Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal and Vietnam. Consolidating all the country studies, UNESCO Bangkok has published a synthesis report entitled 'Gender, Jobs and Education: Prospects and Realities in the Asia-Pacific'. In Nepal, as in other participating countries, an empirical study was undertaken in 2013 to understand the relationship between Nepal's labour market and the education system. Major lens used to see this relationship was gender. This report focuses on the involvement women and men participating in education and the labour market, Nepal's education system; and female and male students' perceptions about suitability of different occupations. The report then analyzes the relationship between different dimensions of education and the labour market. The study was conducted among 319 (158 female, 161 male) grade 10 students and 470 women and men engaged in different occupations. Research was conducted in 8 districts including Kathmandu Valley.

Nepali women's participation in education, the labour market, governance and politics has increased over a period a time. Women are gradually entering into occupations that are perceived to be suitable for men only. The political changes and deliberate effort made by the government and non-government sectors have largely contributed to this positive change. However progress is unevenly distributed among caste, ethnicities and locations.

The review showed that the labour force participation rate of women and men aged 5 years and above is almost equal. Among the employed population, there are more women than men. However among the 15 years and above population, male employment ratio is 7% points higher than the women employment ratio. The number of unpaid women workers is higher than unpaid male workers. A positive connection between educational attainment and employment is quite visible as the education data shows progress in female education, particularly, at school level. However at the tertiary level, female participation decreases.

According to the 2008 Nepal Labour Force Survey 61% of employed females aged 15 and above had never attended school, 20.3% had attained less than primary to primary level education, and 15% had attained lower secondary to secondary level education. This shows that most women enter labour force with a minimum level of education. Consequently, they end up in low skilled and low paid jobs, i.e. they often enter the informal sector, which is growing. More and more women and men are compelled to join informal sector employment which is considered to be vulnerable in terms of physical and financial securities. The number of women migrating to other countries to work in equally vulnerable conditions is also increasing. When illiterate or inadequately educated women migrate, they are often prone to exploitation. Foreign employment is thus a double-edged sword for many Nepali women who are poor, not formally educated, lack foreign (i.e. English) language skill, and are untrained and unfamiliar



with urban life styles. Many young girls and women who migrate either for work or education from rural areas to city centers also end up in vulnerable employment such as waitresses in restaurants and bar dancers.

Most grade 10 students who participated in this research irrespective of their sex believed the traditional gender stereotypical roles and responsibilities of women and men in society. Their perceptions about jobs suitable for women and men were guided by this belief. Women's gradual involvement in nontraditional occupations has not yet influenced their perceptions. A pattern was observed in the responses of adult married participants as well. Most of them could not go beyond the traditional norms regarding their choices of jobs suitable for their sons and daughters. Thus the study found a positive relation between the labour market outcome, the education system, and perceptions of young girls and boys, as well as adults.

Nepal's education system is largely centered on academics, and based on meritocracy. This has benefited a few selected students but left many behind. The system and society both share the notion that formal schooling is to turn their children into high achievers and those who cannot excel are not good at anything. Teachers who are groomed with this notion have neither been able to incorporate progressive vision regarding gender equality in their practices, nor have they been able to accommodate the changes that are observed in the labour market.

Factors from both the demand and supply sides contribute to the imbalance in education and the labour market. On the supply side, barriers include inequitable distribution of resources, limited access to affordable high school (grades 11 and 12) and tertiary education, gender insensitive practices in the classrooms and schools, a gap between policies and practices, unprepared and indifferent implementation level machineries, and States' inability to ensure security for women and girls. Barriers on the demand side include priority given to sons' education and interests over daughters', unequal gender and power relations, women's and girls' restricted mobility, early marriage, poverty, and culture to view men as the sole bread winner of the household. This research confirmed that women's and girls' educational attainment, the labour market and socio cultural norms, attitudes and practices are interwoven. This blending has contributed in shaping girls' and boys' perceptions regarding careers suited for women and men. The educational goal related to gender equity and equality therefore demands in-depth analysis and understanding of such interconnectedness of all the aspects that have bearing on girls' and boys' education.

Moreover, the ideological gap between school and community manifests in girls' schooling and education. Schools are required to function rationally. In other words, school machineries, including teachers, are expected to promote and/or follow equality and equity norms. Household and family norms and practices on the other hand, follow community rules, cultures and practices, which often do not agree with school norms. For example, the education system preaches for gender equality in access to education, educational processes and educational outcomes but, at the family level, the notion that sons are bread winners and parents' old age security determines parents' priority in terms of sons' and daughters' education. Intervention is thus necessary at all levels, be it for political or policy or programme implementation or family.

In this context, in order to mediate between different forces and levels that affect girls' and boys' education and career choices, some suggestions are proposed below.

- Political parties need to be aware of the role they must play in ensuring greater gender equality in education and employment.
- There needs to be far greater collaboration between different sectors.
- Monitoring systems need to be strengthened and enhanced.
- There needs to be a shared understanding and greater collaboration between school and community.
- Teachers need to be more informed practitioners.
- School leadership needs to support girls and boys in the development of their creativity and interests.

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# INTRODUCTION

Nepal's demographic composition is a panorama of multi-ethnics and multi-culture. Nepal Population Census 2011 (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2012) has recorded total of 125 castes and ethnic groups. Kshtriyas and Hill Brahmins are the highest in number, being 16.6% and 12.2% of the population, respectively. Similarly, among the 123 mother tongues reported, Nepali is spoken by 44.6%. Nepali is followed by Maithili, which is spoken as mother tongue by 11.7%. Ecologically Nepal is divided into 3 regions – Mountain, Hill and Tarai. Tarai is the plain land and is also known as Madhes. Many people who are originally from the Hill and Mountain regions have migrated to the Tarai and have been living there for decades. However, Madhesi as a social and/or ecological group consists of different caste and ethnic groups of their own. For example, there are Hill Dalits, Janajatis (ethnic), Brahmins and Kshtriyas; as well as Tarai Dalits, Janajatis (ethnic), Brahmins and Kshtriyas. In terms of religion according to CBS (2012) 81.3% are Hindu. This diverse composition has contributed to diverse social practices, norms and rituals on one hand, and rich cultural heritage on the other.

**Table 1: Nepal demographic information**

Year	2001	2011
Total population	23,151,423	26,494,504 (Women: 51.5%)
Sex ratio	99.8	94.2
Sex ratio of 0-4 age group	103	NA
Annual growth rate	2.25	1.35
Average household size	5.44	4.88

Source: CBS 2004 and CBS, 2012

Table 1 shows a decline in all major indicators of demographic feature. The data also shows more women than men. However among the 1, 921, 494 (7.25%) absent population (those away from home for more than 6 months at the time of census) 88% are men (CBS 2012). Therefore if the absent population is included, the sex ratio would be in favor of men. In other words the percentage of men in total population would be 55% if the absent males are added. Moreover, among the absent population the highest proportion (44.81%) is from the 15 to 24

<sup>1</sup> The Hindu caste system is broadly divided into four castes: Brahman, Kshtriya, Baishya and Shudra. Brahman is the highest ranking caste while Sudra is the lowest and is traditionally considered impure and untouchable. Dalit, so called untouchable caste is Sudra. Untouchability was institutionalized by different rulers at different times in Nepal. For example, King Jayasthiti Malla did it in Kathmandu Valley in the 14th century while King Ram Shah in Gorkha in the 17th century. Since the castes were based on their functions/jobs, e.g. Brahmins being teachers, Kshtriyas being warriors, Bhaisyas being businesspersons, and Dalit being the working class, all of them jointly formed a settlement. Therefore although some may outnumber others, all castes and ethnicities are found in all ecological regions of Nepal.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Population Census 2011 (CBS, 2012) 81.34% are Hindu, 9.04% Buddhist, 4.39% Islam, 3.05% Kirat, 1.42% Christian and 0.76% are Others, including not identified cases.

year age group (Ibid.). Most of the absent males have migrated for work. This means a highly productive group of people are out of the country.

Men and women in Nepal still marry quite early. Early marriage leading to child birth prevents more women than men from continuing and completing their studies, and entering the labour market. From 2001 to 2011 the Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM) (estimate of the average number of years lived as single or never married by those who marry before the age of 50) increased from 19.5 to 20.6 for women and from 22.9 to 23.8 for men (Bajracharya and Bhandari, 2014). The percentage of women married by age 15 has declined by 24% among 45 to 49 year old women, and has declined by 5% among 15 to 19 year old women (Ministry of Health and Population, et al., 2012). However, the Population Census 2011 found that 23.1% of the 15 to 19 year old women were married while only 7% of men in the same age group were married (Bajracharya and Bhandari, 2014). The median age at marriage for women ranges from 17 to 19 and for men it ranges from 19 to 22 across regions and locations (Ibid.).

Nepal's overall human development status, particularly in relation to education and health has improved. Consequently gender empowerment indicators have also shown a positive change. According to the Human Development Report 2013, Nepal's inequality adjusted Human Development Index (HDI) is 0.304, and the overall Gender Inequality Index (GII) (inequalities in reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity) is 0.485 (UNDP, 2013). Nepal's GII is however higher than that of Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Maldives, all countries from the region having medium level HDI (Ibid.). Nepal's gender equality measures such as reservation in the political field, government employment, and simultaneous reform in legal frameworks have positively affected GII. However, the regional disparity significantly widens to the extent that Gender-related Development Index (GDI) in Kathmandu Valley is 0.589 and Eastern Hill is 0.534; whereas in Central Tarai it is 0.463 and in Far Western Tarai it is 0.492 (UNDP, 2009 based on 2006 data).

The slow growth in HDI and GII needs to be analyzed from a historical context as well. For example, education, which is considered as one of the most important pathways to individual as well as national development, was historically only available to higher caste males. Caste was organized on the basis of functions that people performed. The higher caste males performed religious duties and were responsible for teaching and protecting the society and nation. In order to perform their duties these men were required to be formally educated. Education therefore became social and cultural capital of their families. Higher castes and some ethnic communities (e.g. Newar) from the Hill realized the benefit of education in modern society and began providing education to their daughters in higher speed than other castes and ethnic groups. However, gender disparity and traditional gender roles and relations did not change much although more men and also women began joining formal education and the labour market. In a patriarchal society even if they did not attain education, men continued to be revered.

Although Nepal's socio cultural practices vary across caste and ethnicities, socio cultural norms and practices related to men and women's positions and roles are largely influenced by Hindu philosophy. However family's economic condition cannot be ruled out when discussing women's status in society. For example, child marriages, witch-hunting, and social and cultural restrictions on widows are still in practice, particularly in rural areas and in poorer communities. Thus women who are destitute and single (mostly widows) are more likely to be the victims of witch-hunting and rape.

Domestic violence, which is also observed in Nepali society is largely the reflection of patriarchal attitudes and norms. The Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2011 found that one-third of married women between 15 to 49 years of age have experienced emotional, physical or sexual violence from their spouses (Ministry of Health and Population et al., 2012). The majority of such incidences go unreported. Despite the statutory provisions for violence against women, they usually do not disclose such incidences due to shame and threats from husbands and family members. Only 1 in 4 women victims of spousal violence seek help (Ibid.).

The culture of son preference is still in practice in Nepal. In almost all castes and ethnicities, women move in with their husband's family after marriage. They are not expected to take care of their own parents in old age. A married woman is rather expected to be more loyal and responsible towards her husband's family. Moreover due to relocation into their husband's home, frequent visits to their maiden home are often not possible. Sons on the other hand continue to live with their wives in their parents' home. They are responsible of taking care of their parents in old age and performing the last rite and after death rituals of their parents. Therefore sons are viewed as parents' old age security and given more preferences and opportunities. However, family structure has very much changed due to the high rate of male migration (both domestic and international) resulting in an increased number of older people living on their own and female headed households (Acharya, 2011). Abandonment and abuse of older parents by sons has also increased (Ibid.). Instances of daughters looking after parents are also rising. But the legacy of son preference still continues. This study also confirmed this assertion.

Continuity of the culture of son preference has been made easier by modern technology. Many couples can now access modern medical services to determine the sex of the fetus. Often times those who use this service do so to abort a female fetus. Unfortunately, this practice is an increasing trend (Bhattarai, 2011; Ghimere, 2013; CREHPA, 2007; and Rajbhandari, 2009). The declining female birth rate also reflects this trend. For example, the 2001 census reported that among live births there were 97 girls per 100 boys, whereas in 2011, there were only 95 girls per 100 boys (Ghimere, 2013). Abortion was legalized in Nepal in 2002 by amending some clauses of Nepal Code. However, it prohibits aborting unwanted fetuses based on sex. Despite this prohibition, since sex determination technology is available in almost all the major cities of Nepal people have easy access to such tests. The above mentioned research and news reports

safely indicate that many sex determination tests lead to abortions of female fetuses. UNICEF estimates that 20 % of all abortions (70,000 per year) are done with the intention to eliminate female fetuses (as cited by Bhandari and Mishra, 2012 and Subedi, 2011). Socio cultural pressure that family members often put on married women compels them to undergo the test and eliminate the fetus if it is female. Mothers also feel that it their obligation to produce son or a male heir.

Although women's educational status and social mobility have expanded and/or changed in a positive sense, they still lag behind men. Due to insignificant changes in gender relations, women are obliged to bear significant burden and violence. The tendency to share household obligations among young working men with working wives has increased. However, in most cases, men share household obligations because their wives also have earning jobs, and there is an absence of another adult woman at home (Koirala, 2013). Although men are observed performing household chores out of their conscience, this cultural change has a long way to go for it to show its effect in the larger society and to further develop new and changed norms and attitudes regarding men and women's roles and positions in society. In other words, household chores including child care and elderly care are still recognized as women's jobs. Additionally, many women still do not get to exercise their decision power in the family. For example, results from the NDHS 2011 showed more than half of the employed married women making independent decisions regarding utilization of earnings, however only 46% reported to be involved in making decisions about their own health care, major household purchases and visits to their families or relatives (Ministry of Health and Population et al., 2012). It showed that although economic empowerment is a major indicator of women's wellbeing and individual growth, this alone is not enough in a situation where other social and cultural factors are strong. All this indicates that Nepali women's education, career, and family's norms, attitudes and decisions influence one another.

Regarding women's employment, one can find a very wide range of practices and attitudes in Nepal. While there are many examples of traditional beliefs that a woman's place is at home and that her employment options are limited, an increasing number of young women in Nepal are beginning to train and gain employment in areas of work that are often traditionally seen as employment areas for men even in other countries around the world.

The armed conflict, which started in 1996 and continued for a decade, also resulted in an increase in the number of Nepali women entering paid employment (Menon and Rodgers, 2011). Many women were compelled to work for pay because they were left alone to take care of families as household heads due to family separation, husband's death, disappearance, migration and disability (Ibid.). However, more women than men are engaged in unpaid work, and the wage difference between men and women is significant, particularly in the informal sector and in small scale private business/companies.



Discussion about Nepali women's participation in the labour market requires probing into dimensions of internal and external migration. Due to the availability of different types of jobs requiring under-skilled to unskilled human resources, young women and men continuously migrate to urban areas and abroad. Many have never attended school or have dropped out. These women are often far away from their family's influence regarding career choice and utilization of their earnings. They are also the ones who are most likely to be the victims of exploitation in the labour market.

Furthermore, the population who do not identify themselves either as men or women in the traditional sense, (known as third sex), is growing but national level data is not yet available. Homosexuality and transgender also shows a growing trend. However, mainstream society views them as abnormal, and the acceptance and/or tolerance level is very low. There are cases where individuals in these groups have been abused and ostracized by their families, compelled to drop out of school and faced violence even from friends and neighbors when their sexual orientation was disclosed (Thapa, 2012).

# METHODOLOGY

The overall approach of the study has been exploratory, aiming to map educational options, investigate how females and males view careers regarding their appropriateness for women and men, and the extent to which the labour market correlates with these different aspects.

## A. Research participants and location

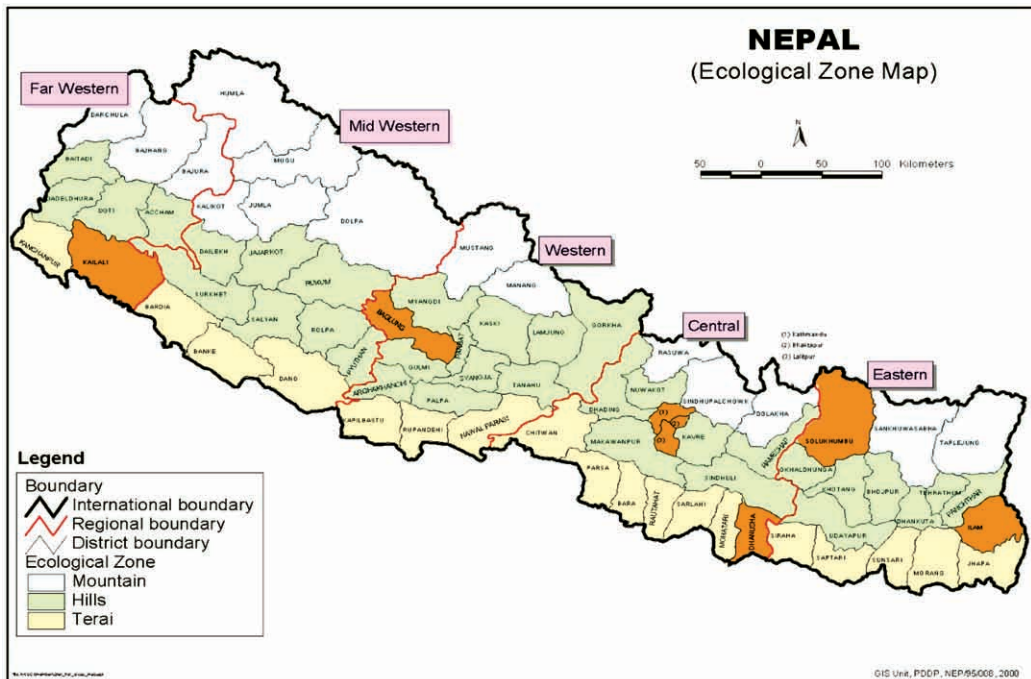
Participants can broadly be divided into two groups. One group was survey participants and the other was discussion participants. Survey method was used because this method made it possible to reach many people in short period of time. Survey participants were purposively selected from educational institutions and work places. Out of the 789 participants, 432 were survey respondents, 319 were Focus Group Discussions (FGD) participants from grade 10 and 38 were group discussion participants. Age of the survey participants ranged from 14 to 46 years as listed below in Table 1.

**TABLE 1: AGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

SN	Age range	Sex	Occupation	Remark
1	14 to 17	Female and male	Grade 10 students (158 female, 161 male)	
2	18 to 35	Female	Air hostess/flight attendants	
3	20 to 35	Female	Non-working Bachelor level students	
4	20 to 30	Male	Non-working Bachelor level students	
5	20 to 45	Female	Teachers	
6	20 to 46	Male	Teachers	3 were 46+
7	31 to 45	Male and female	Head teachers	
8	18 to 46	Female	Nurses	1 was 46+
9	20 to 45	Women	Job holder	
10	26 to 45	Men	Job holder	

Teacher representatives and female teachers who participated in the discussions were not asked to identify their ages. They were invited to semi-structured discussions primarily organized to collect qualitative data, therefore anything structured other than recording names and organizations was avoided. Nevertheless it is likely that their ages also fell under the same range as the survey participants as all were young and currently teaching with the exceptions of two retired female head teachers.

Given the diverse nature of Nepali society in terms of caste/ethnicity, region, etc., 8 districts were selected for the study. However all the tools were not administered in all 8 districts due to time and resource constraints. The selected districts are highlighted in the map below. Kathmandu Valley, located in the Central region, which consists of 3 districts- Bhaktapur, Kathmandu and Lalitpur are also numbered and listed. For further detail on sample size please see Annex Table 1A and 1B.



## B. Research Methods

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were applied to address the objectives of the research. Under the quantitative approach 2 methods were employed, namely a 5 point rating scale and a survey. Under the qualitative approach 3 methods were applied, namely FGDs, group discussions and interviews. Additionally, secondary data was derived from different documents and research reports. All the methods are briefly discussed below.

### Quantitative approach

1. Five point rating scale: A list with more than 25 jobs in a 5 point rating scale was given to all the 319 grade 10 students who participated in a FGD. Some rows were left blank for

<sup>3</sup> Madhesi are castes/ethnicities of Terai region. However immigrants from Hill or Mountain regions who are living in Terai are not known as Madhesi. Most Madhesi caste/ethnicities are generally a close community. Tharu, a large ethnic of Madhes is more egalitarian community than most Terai and Hill communities regarding women's position in the family and society. Kailali (sample district) is one of the districts where there Tharu population is high. Education status of Madhesi women is lower than that of other regions. Their participation in formal employment is also low.

them to add occupations that they felt were missing from the list. They were asked to rate all the occupations according to their preference. One being highly preferred and 5 being least preferred. Girls and boys were also asked to identify their social background (caste and ethnic). These data were later used to compare the career preferences of the students against their social backgrounds.

2. Survey: Two sets of questionnaires were prepared for adult men and women. One set was for those already employed, and the other was for unemployed Bachelor level students. Employed women and men who participated in the survey represented 5 different jobs namely, government service, financial sector, school teacher, nurse and flight attendant. Four hundred and thirty-two women and men participated in the survey. The main purpose of the survey was to gather information related to preference of occupation for sons and daughters in the respondents' families (their own and their parents' in retrospect); women's and men's roles in the workplace; infrastructure and resource availability in schools; and girls' and boys' participation in extracurricular activities.

### **Qualitative approach**

1. FGD: Thirty two FGDs were organized with grade 10 girls and boys from 8 districts. Age of the FGD participants ranged from 14 to 17 years. The main purpose of the FGDs was to collect information about their families' as well as their own perceptions regarding suitable careers for females and males; their wishes related to occupations and orientation they receive from teachers' regarding career choices.
2. Group discussion: Three separate group discussions were organized with representatives of Higher Secondary School Association Nepal (HISAN), Higher Secondary School Teacher Association Nepal (HISTAN); higher secondary public school teachers; the Teacher Union of Nepal (TUN); the Women Teacher Society; and different teacher organizations. The main purpose of these discussions was to collect information regarding approaches taken by schools and teachers to orient their students about careers and skill orientation provided to students.
3. Interview: Two different types of interviews (group and individual) were organized for different purposes. A group interview with three officials of the National Center for Educational Development (NCED) was conducted to discuss contents and processes of Teacher Professional Development (TPD). A Higher Secondary School Principle from public school in Bardiya district who serves as a trainer in TPD was also interviewed, particularly to understand the contents and ground level reality of TPD.

Two Curriculum Development Center (CDC) officials were interviewed to discuss the curriculum reviews and analysis from a gender perspective, and the implementation status of optional subjects in secondary schools. Additionally, separate interviews were organized

with 4 women working in Dhanusa district. Since there are fewer Madhesi women working in the public sector and their participation in education is comparatively low, 3 Madhesi women government officers were deliberately interviewed. Additionally, one Woman Development Officer (WDO) who was not Madhesi, but working in Dhanusa district for along time was also interviewed. The focus of these interviews was to gather local perceptions and practices about girls' education, careers and workplace experiences.

### **Secondary data analysis**

Secondary data was derived from national sources such as the Nepal Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) 2011, the Nepal Labour Force Survey (NLFS) 2008 and school statistical reports produced by the Department of Education (DOE). Other documents included academic studies and commissioned research reports. The purpose of the review was to derive information related to the socio cultural status of women, structure of the labour market, education structure, policies, etc.

### **C. Delimitation**

Advance literacy was required of the respondents in order to be able to respond to the quantitative tool, therefore only women and men with a certain level of education were selected. Moreover the Mid-Western region could not be included in this research due to financial constraints.

### **D. Limitations**

A major limitation faced during the study was summer vacation in school and colleges which is scheduled at different periods during May and June. Additionally, due to the closing of the fiscal year in mid-July office staff including those who work in banks were extremely busy in their work. Consequently the survey took longer than originally planned. This delayed the entire process.

Furthermore, literature related to some of the research areas was not available. Therefore extensive empirical work was necessary. The survey was made more extensive in order to capture the perspectives of diverse populations in a short time frame. This limited the time given to qualitative enquiry.

Lastly, the occupation list (to select occupations for sons and daughters) provided to the survey participants missed 'engineering' which traditionally is one of the most favoured occupations for boys. Only a few participants added it, and therefore the number of selections for 'engineering' was low. This was a sheer human error.

# CHAPTER I: SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT

## A. Role of men and women in the workplace

Information related to the sociocultural norms, and attitudes related to the role of men and women in the workplace was derived from the surveys, group discussions and interviews. Nevertheless, available information from secondary data sources was also used to a limited extent. Responses from teachers including head teachers and employees of other offices were separately analyzed because of the differences in the nature of their jobs as well as their work place environments.

In response to a question related to their roles, irrespective of where they worked, all respondents indicated that they performed duties as described in their job descriptions, which are in line with the positions that they hold in their respective institutions/organization/offices. In the case of additional work, both men and woman are assigned similar tasks as reported. However, survey participants provided different responses, in specific questions related to additional tasks that they are expected to perform. These are discussed below.

In the case of schools, among 17 head teachers 82.4% reported that they assign female teachers the task of taking care of primary level students and maintaining public relations. Forty-seven percent reported that they assigned female teachers intellectual work as well (e.g. preparing School Improvement Plan). The same percentage reported that the intellectual work assigned to female teachers is less challenging than the work assigned to male teachers. Female teachers also confirmed head teachers' responses. Thirty-nine percent (out of 41 who responded) reported that they are made to take care of smaller children; the same number reported that they are made to do intellectual jobs as well. Female teachers' responses also confirmed that in addition to teaching public relations is one of the major tasks that they are assigned.

A significant number (82.4%) of head teachers accepted that female teachers do take challenging jobs. However, more (94.1%) reported that challenging jobs are assigned to male teachers. Some head teachers also reported that women do not accept mentally as well as physically challenging jobs (e.g. taking assignments that require going out or staying late in school) due to household responsibilities and family restrictions. However, only 9.5% (out of 42 who responded) female teachers said that they do not accept challenging jobs due to household obligations. This indicates that the sociocultural norms related to gender (e.g. dos and don'ts that bind girls and boys, unchanged gender relations at the household level, gender stereotypes, etc.) shape girls' and women's temperament, which to a large extent effects women's job performance.

Forty three percent of the female teachers (out of 37 who responded) reported that male head teachers assign outside jobs and accounting more frequently to male teachers when compared to female teachers. In their observation female head teachers also assign out of school tasks to male teachers, but instead of accounting they are assigned administrative work. Female head teachers assign accounting jobs to female teachers. This shows that social mobility and biological differences are consciously or unconsciously considered when assigning tasks to male and female teachers. Moreover, female head teachers might also be considering the popular notion that women are more trustworthy and good at account keeping while assigning account related tasks to women teachers.

In group discussions, women teachers focused more on perception than roles. Regarding roles, they reported that both males and females do what is expected of them, and they are not given tasks that are not demanded by the profession. Regarding perceptions, they reported that people still fail to recognize women as head teachers. One of the female head teachers said that visitors come asking for the 'head master' but overlook the woman sitting at the head teacher's desk.

A female head teacher also shared that the District Education Office (DEO) mostly selects/nominates male head teachers for programs or functions. In female head teachers' observations, DEO staff (who are mostly men) are friendly with male head teachers. They socialize beyond business hours, which develops a bond between them. Due to their social connection, there is a possibility that the male head teachers get information regarding programs and opportunities from the DEO before hand, which may jeopardize opportunities for the female head teachers.

In the opinion of a recently retired female head teacher with many years of experience, though male staff and teachers cooperate and perform the required tasks, "my gut feeling says that they are not comfortable with women leadership". Another female head teacher currently in the job pointed out some drawbacks of female teachers. She reported that many do not want to be seen and come to the front line or take leadership. Some female teachers said this is partly because it is difficult to manage time between home and work, and partly because most women are socialized to be that way. In other words, women are trained and expected from childhood to be less active, less visible and less verbal in comparison to men. They concluded that until household and family members change, it will continue to be a challenge for many. "If we force our family or household to change, we ourselves will be ousted" said one female teacher. This kind of experience is likely to discourage women from entering paid employment outside of their homes on one hand, and taking more challenging tasks at work on the other.

Men and women working in other environments (government offices, banks, etc.) perform roles as per their job descriptions. Most women reported that they are given intellectual work as well. However, the survey showed that in offices, public relation tasks are often assigned to and expected of men. This, to some extent, sheds light on the expected roles and assumptions

about men's and women's abilities and their positions in society. In schools where most of the clients are parents and community members, women's support is sought in handling public relations. However, in offices where clients come from other levels and backgrounds (e.g., representatives of donor agencies, other offices and organizations, etc.) men's support is sought. In other words, where clients are presumed to belong to higher strata who require more intellectual interaction, men are placed at the forefront. This can be viewed from two angles- the influence of gender bias while assigning tasks in the offices and; women preferring to stay back and work rather than coming to the forefront and becoming more visible, as the female head teacher indicated above.

Although in offices, job assignment also depends on the sections that men and women work in, most working women responded that they are expected to do challenging jobs and they have performed such jobs. The nature of the workplace and education levels of the respondents required mental work therefore here 'challenging job' refers to mentally challenging work. Some (11.4% out of 35 who responded) females responded that their male bosses assign "intellectual but less challenging tasks than those assigned to men." However more (17.1% out of 35 who responded) reported that they are given "slightly lower profile jobs than those assigned to men". In the same category an insignificant number (2.9% out of 34 who responded) of men responded that they are given higher profile jobs than those given to women.

Madhesi women officers from Dhanusa district also shared similar experiences with regard to the roles and challenges they face in the workplace. Since all 3 women worked in government offices and in officer level positions, they had fixed job descriptions as per civil service rules. Therefore, there was no difference in the roles of men and women. One of the interviewees at the top level (i.e., district level Financial Controller), commented that working at the treasury "makes my work burdensome". In her experience men are doubtful about a woman's expertise therefore they choose not to obey her. The other 2 women also shared that people (both public and co-workers) do not trust women officers easily.

Bias against women workers in terms of role division in offices mostly occurs at lower level positions and at villages or remote areas. For example, often it is female primary school teachers who are assigned tasks such as making tea, shopping for the kitchen, etc. Duwadi (2009) also observed more incidences of bias against female teachers in primary only schools and in rural areas. He writes that female teachers who have to do cooking, cleaning and washing at home are obligated to do similar tasks at school as well. He observes that female teachers "...always have to engage in such errands on special-function days like Parent Day, Result Day, Picnic, etc. Female teachers are often told to clean the tables, make tea, and serve tea" (p. 108). This shows that there is a blurred division between domestic and public lives, particularly for those women who work at lower positions.



## **B. Statutory provisions related to women's employment**

This section presents major legal frameworks that the government of Nepal has enforced to address women's issues in employment and thereby ensure gender equality in the labour market. In order to protect women's rights both in the public and private spheres, Nepal has been forming new statutory provisions and amending discriminatory laws. Right to Equality (Article 13) and Right of Women (Article 20) guaranteed by the Fundamental Rights in the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 also put pressure to make changes to the existing provisions, and to make new provisions as well. Nepal also needed to amend the existing Acts and Regulations in line with the international instruments (e.g. CEDAW 1979, CRC 1989, etc.) that it is part of. In 2006 an Act to Amend some Nepali Acts to ensure Gender Equality, 2063 was promulgated (Nepal Gazette, November 2, 2006). Several provisions of 17 other Acts, including Nepal Code and provision related to women's rights to property, were amended accordingly. Nepal Code was also significantly changed in terms of gender equality and promulgated as the 'Twelfth Amendment of Nepal Code 2007'. Likewise, provision to allow children to obtain citizenship certificates through their mothers' name has been included in the Citizenship Act of 2006.

The constitutional provision to select candidates proportionately to ensure representation from different social and regional groups in the election of the Constituent Assembly 2007 quantitatively increased women in the political field. Sectoral interventions have also proved to be beneficial to protect women's rights and gender mainstreaming. All the Ministries have assigned a GFP (Gender Focal Point). The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW) has taken the responsibility of coordinating the GFPs. Furthermore, "the affirmative action policy adopted by the government in 2008 has encouraged young women to join the civil service. The adoption of a policy of reservation for women in the security forces (Nepal Army, Nepal Police and Nepal Armed Force Police) communicated the same positive message" (NPC and UNDP, 2013, p. 34). In the 1990s UNDP Nepal, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women Children and Social Welfare, under the Mainstreaming Gender Equality Program (MGEP) initiated a free coaching program for women interested in taking the Public Service Commission examinations. Since the completion of the UNDP supported MGEP, the Department of Women, Children and Social Welfare has been offering preparatory classes for women interested in taking officer level examinations in Kathmandu, and Non-gazette class position examinations in 15 other districts. Due to the lack of resource persons in other districts, preparatory classes for officer level examinations are not offered outside of Kathmandu.

Along with the growing participation of women in the labour market in general, and internal and external migration for work in particular, violation of women's rights and exploitation has also increased. The Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act 2007 was formulated in order to address this issue. Similarly, in order to address violence against women and men at the household level, the Domestic Violence (Offense and Punishment) Act 2009 has been

espoused. In addition to various government and non-government agencies, the Children and Women’s Cell in Nepal Police has actively been responding to issues related to trafficking and domestic violence. Table 2 presents major provisions enforced to protect women’s rights and gender equality in employment.

**TABLE 2: MAJOR STATUTORY PROVISIONS IN RELATION TO WOMEN’S EMPLOYMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT**

<b>Constitution, Acts and Rules</b>	<b>Relevant section/article and relevant subsection/ clause</b>
<p><b>Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007</b></p>	<p><b>18. Right regarding Employment and Social Security :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every citizen shall have the right to employment as provided for in the law.</li> <li>• Women, labourers, the aged, disabled as well as incapacitated and helpless citizens shall have the right to social security as provided for in the law.</li> <li>• Every citizen shall have the right to food sovereignty as provided for in the law.</li> </ul> <p><b>35. State Policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The State shall pursue a policy of encouraging maximum participation of women in national development by making special provisions for their education, health and employment.</li> <li>• The State shall pursue a policy which will help to promote the interest of the marginalized communities and the peasants and labourers living below poverty line, including economically and socially backward indigenous tribes, Madhesis, Dalits, by making reservation for a certain period of time with regard to education, health, housing, food, sovereignty and employment.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Labour Act,2048 (1992)</b></p> <p><b>With First Amendment 1998</b></p>	<p><b>5. Engagement in Work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minors and females may be engaged in the works normally from six o'clock in the morning till six o'clock in the evening, except in the prescribed conditions.</li> <li>• By making an appropriate arrangement with mutual consent between the proprietor and the worker or employee, the females may also be engaged in the works similar to the males.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>27. Provisions Relating to Health and Safety:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make provisions for separate modern type toilets for male and female workers or employees at convenient place;</li> </ul>
	<p><b>32. In relation to Lifting of Heavy Weight:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No worker or employee shall be engaged in the works of lifting, loading or transporting any load likely to cause physical injury or harm to the health.</li> <li>• The maximum load to be lifted, loaded or transported by an adult, minor, male or female workers or employees shall be as prescribed.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>42. Provisions Relating to Children:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where fifty or more female workers and employees are engaged in the work, the Proprietor of the Enterprise shall have to make provisions of a healthy room for the use of children of such female workers and employees.</li> <li>• A trained nurse, including some necessary toys, shall also be arranged for the children as mentioned in Sub-section (1).</li> <li>• The female workers and employees shall be provided time, as necessitated, to feed their suckling babies.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>48. Business of Hotel, Travel, Trekking, Adventure, Rafting, Jungle Safari etc:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Females may be engaged in work:</u> Females may be deployed in works in a hotel or travel agency at any time by making special arrangements of safety according to the nature of works.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Labour Rules, 2050 (1993)</b></p>	<p><b>4. Time for deploying a woman at work:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While deploying a woman worker or employee from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M in the Enterprise other than as mentioned in Clause (a) of Section 48 of the Act, she may be deployed at work as per the mutual consent entered between worker or employee and Proprietor.</li> <li>• While engaging a woman worker or employee pursuant to Sub-section (1), the Proprietor shall have to arrange for their proper security.</li> <li>• The Proprietor shall have to provide a notice of engagement of any woman worker or employee pursuant to Sub-section (1) to the Labour Office.</li> </ul> <p><b>11. No discrimination in remuneration:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal remuneration shall have to be provided without making discrimination to male or female worker or employee for engaging them in the works of the same nature of functions of the Enterprise.</li> </ul> <p><b>34. Maternity Leave:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A pregnant female employee shall be entitled to maternity leave with full pay for a period of Fifty Two days for pre and post delivery. Such maternity leave shall be granted only Twice during the entire period of service.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Civil Service Act, 2049 (1993) 2nd Amendment 2007</b></p>	<p><b>7. Fulfillment of vacancy in civil service:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to make the civil service inclusive, forty-five percent posts of the posts to be fulfilled by open competition shall be set aside and be filled up by having separate competition between the following candidates only, by considering the percentage into cent percent: (a) Women (33%), (b) Adiwasi/Janajati (27%), Madhesi(29%), Dalit(9%), people with disability(5%), Backward Area (4%)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Civil Service Rules, 2050 (1993) 8th Amendment 2010</b></p>	<p><b>59. Maternity leave</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In cases where a female civil employee becomes pregnant, she shall be entitled to a maternity leave of Sixty days before and/or after delivery.</li> <li>• If a female civil employee who is on the maternity leave pursuant to Sub-rule (1) so wishes, she may so take the maternity leave without pay for an additional period of Six months in maximum as not to be deducted from any leave.</li> <li>• A female civil employee going on the maternity leave shall be entitled to get full salary. A civil employee who has got the maternity leave and the maternity care leave shall be given an infant care allowance in a lump sum of Five Thousand Rupees for each infant for a maximum of two infants pursuant to Sub-section (3) of Section 32 of the Act.</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>59A Maternity care leave:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In cases where the wife of a male civil employee is to deliver a baby, such an employee shall be entitled to a maternity care leave of Fifteen days before and/or after delivery.</li> <li>• A civil employee going on the maternity care leave shall be entitled to get full salary.</li> <li>• The maternity care leave shall be given only for Two times during the service period.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Foreign Employment Act, 2064 (2007)</b></p>	<p><b>9. To provide special facility and reservation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Government of Nepal may provide special facility to the women, Dalit, indigenous nationalities, oppressed, victims of natural calamities and people of remote areas who go for foreign employment.</li> <li>• In sending workers for foreign employment, any institution shall provide reservation to the women, Dalit, indigenous nationalities, oppressed class, backward area and class and people of remote areas in the number as prescribed by the Government of Nepal.</li> </ul>

<p><b>The Foreign Employment Rules, 2064 (2008)</b></p>	<p><b>Provisions Relating to Fund</b></p> <p><b>26. Use of Fund:</b> (1) The Fund shall be used for the following activities, in addition to the activities set forth in Section 33 of the Act :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For Educational development of the families of the workers who have gone for foreign employment and those who have come back from foreign employment,</li> <li>• For assistance in medical treatment of the families of the workers who have gone for foreign employment,</li> <li>• For the reimbursement of the fees paid by the women who have been selected for foreign employment to obtain the orientation training,</li> <li>• For the establishment and operation of child care centers for proper protection of the children of the women workers who have gone for foreign employment,</li> <li>• For the establishment and operation of child care centers for proper protection of the children of the women workers who have gone for foreign employment,</li> </ul> <p><b>Power to appoint woman Labour Attaché:</b> In appointing the Labour Attaché pursuant to sub-section (l) of Section 68, a woman Labour Attaché may be appointed from amongst the women officers who have possessed the qualification for a country where one thousand or more women workers have been sent for foreign employment.</p>
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### **C. Norms and attitudes related to the types of careers/professions suited for men and women**

This section is primarily based on an empirical study. Very little research related to the types of careers/professions perceived as suited to, or appropriate for men and women is available. As such, women and men working in different professions such as civil service, banking, education and nursing as well as flight attendants, Bachelor level female and male students, and grade 10 female and male students participated in the survey, discussions and interviews.

The respondents were asked to select jobs from the list that their families perceived as suitable for sons and daughters (i.e., for their generation, and the jobs that they at present perceive as suitable for sons and daughters). The responses from each group were analyzed and the top 5 jobs perceived as suitable for sons and daughters were selected (see Annex Table 4). Based on

the frequency of the responses, certain jobs are perceived to be more preferred and suitable for each sex. The purpose of this analysis is twofold: to investigate the perceptions of the older generation (parents of the survey respondents) regarding job preference for their sons and daughters; and to identify the differences in these perceptions in the second generation, if any. Despite variations in the selection of suitable jobs for sons and daughters by different groups, a pattern could still be observed. For example, for respondents' families civil service followed by medical doctor were perceived as the most suitable professions for sons. Whereas for daughters, teaching, civil service, nursing and lower level health service related jobs were perceived as more suitable. The perceived suitability of jobs for sons has not significantly changed from family level/parents to the self (respondents). However, in case of daughters it has changed to some extent. For example, for daughters, more suitable or preferred jobs have now become medical doctor and civil service. However, teaching was consistently chosen among the top 5 jobs by almost all the respondents. At present, medical doctor is presumed more suitable or preferred than civil service for sons.

Interestingly, in the teachers' survey, it was only male teachers who selected categories such as daughters' job is "supposed to be as per their husband's wish," "that doesn't require socialization with the opposite sex" and "get married, then do whatever". Here it needs to be noted that out of 20 girls who participated in the FGD conducted in Dhanusa at least 2 were already married. A teacher from another school from the same district reported that there are more than 2 married girls in grade 10 in her school. This reality and girls' ultimate reliance on their families' decision regarding their education and career choice explains the head teachers' views to a large extent.

Although changes have occurred in terms of job choices for sons and daughters, it was observed that the selection of jobs for daughters is determined by respondents' own jobs as well. For example, nurses and air hostess/flight attendants preferred the same profession as suitable for daughters. However when it came to sons they selected civil service or medical doctor as the preferred professions. This was not observed in the case of female teachers. They did not select teaching as the preferred job for their daughters although they themselves were engaged in this profession. Teaching in schools is viewed as a burdensome and a low level job by most teachers in Nepal. It is also a less competitive job. "The teaching profession carries a low social status in the society. Those not able to get in to other professions take the option to become teachers. Poor and difficult working conditions make the profession unattractive for those better academically prepared and with other career choices" (Shams, et al., 2013, p. 66). Thus many teachers join this profession partly because they do not have other options, and partly because it is easier to get into teaching compared to other jobs. Consequently they spent their entire career life unsatisfied. Moreover, teachers are not transferred to other locations or districts like other government job holders and thus this option is viewed to be best suited for women.

Nevertheless, results from adult respondents of the survey, FGDs with grade 10 students, and discussions with other respondents including teacher representatives indicated that socio cultural norms regarding jobs suitable for women have steadily been changing. The increased number of women in the work force (e.g. in financial sectors, government offices, hospitals, etc.) has played a significant role in creating role models. This has contributed to the changing norms and attitudes of families and individuals. However, because of the perceived roles and responsibilities of men and women and hesitation to invest in girls' education, families and individuals still seem to be cautious in selecting jobs for girls. For example, grade 10 girls from Ilam said that their families prefer nursing because there is a trend of only girls pursuing this profession or teaching because it does not require much investment and is hassle-free. Grade 10 girls from Kailali also said that their parents want them to take occupations that do not require high investment, but still reap benefits (i.e. financial and social benefit), such as teaching because it does not require field visits for work purposes. These girls also added that daughters should not be allowed to make every choice themselves, and that some restrictions are necessary. Girls from Kathmandu on the other hand reported that their parents allow and encourage them to pursue their interests. Girls from Baglung said that their parents advise them to carefully consider their choices so as not to behave in a manner that society does not approve of. Thus girls' socio cultural environment, family economy and to some extent location, are the primary drivers for both the family and themselves when it comes to the selection of career as well as education. Moreover, as found by Koirala and Acharya (2005) many grade 10 girls were creating a ceiling for themselves due to their restricted social mobility, which is grounded in the relationship between women's sexuality and family dignity.

Male grade 10 students' views were not very different from that of girls'. In almost all FGDs male students stated that since girls have to take care of children and the household, and cannot travel, suitable jobs for them are those that consume less time such as teaching, tailoring, private tutoring, beautician and small home based business (e.g. food processing, handicrafts). They reported that girls are more skillful in such occupations and that these jobs require less physical labour. In one FGD in Dhanusa, boys said that because girls' first priorities are to perform household duties and keep their in-laws happy, they should seek jobs that are feasible in their spare time. The overall observations made by grade 10 male FGD participants were: they (boys) are physically stronger and bolder and can therefore do hard work; have leadership qualities, and have family support for their decisions and education; are responsible for their family's sustenance and therefore should have the capacity to sustain their family; and do not have to perform household chores and prefer work outside of the home. Conversely, male FGD students reported that girls are less strong and also prefer to do work that does not require much movement and therefore certain jobs are more suitable for girls and certain jobs for boys (see Annex Table 2). Other views expressed by boys included: men are the ones who come forward to fulfill society's demands and take challenges therefore certain jobs are more suitable for them; and men and women should take jobs according to their social, biological



and psychological situations, and cultural norms of society. This world view guides boys' and girls' socialization differently and thereby influences the world of work. Consequently more challenging jobs are given to male employees on one hand, and women are not keen on accepting challenging jobs on the other. This issue is discussed in more detail in the next section. The small number of grade 10 boys who selected nontraditional jobs (e.g. army, pilot, police, etc.) as suitable for women viewed that they (men) should share household chores as well.

Similarly, grade 10 girls indicated physical and social differences as determinants of the types of careers/professions suited to, or appropriate for men and women. Some were more explicit than others in this respect. For example, grade 10 FGD participants from Kailali district said that men and women have different deficiencies at work and therefore the distribution of different jobs for men and women would create a balance. The view that there are occupations that need to be divided between men and women owing to their biological formation was also reported in some of the FGDs. In other FGDs, girls viewed that women have been doing certain jobs (see Annex table 2) for many years (for example, air hostess/flight attendant, nurse, etc.), which reveals qualities in women like patience and responsiveness according to different situations. Men, according to these girls, should opt for employment with a good income, they should share their experiences and knowledge with other people, and with the help of such occupations they can create further job opportunities in their villages as well. Girls also admitted that boys have more freedom and opportunity in society while girls have less freedom and cannot make independent decisions due to security reasons and family restrictions; boys are more active, physically stronger and more confident; society reveres boys more than girls and puts more restriction on girls; men prefer women who give more time to family; and the nature of the society is patriarchal. Therefore in their views certain jobs are more suitable for boys than for girls.

The above deliberations indicate that gender stereotypes, gender roles, power structures and relations at the household level all influence young people's norms and attitudes regarding the types of careers/professions suited to or appropriate for men and women. Although at a philosophical level most of the grade 10 FGD respondents said that both men and women can do anything, gender stereotypes and disparities are deep seated in almost everybody's mind which is reflected in their selection of jobs for males and females. This indicates that young girls (grade 10 FGD participants whose age ranged from 14 to 17) still feel obligated to fit within gender stereotypes and roles.

# CHAPTER II. OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE LABOUR MARKET

## A. Labour force participation

Nepal experienced severe armed conflict for almost 10 years starting from 1996. During this period many families were displaced, many women had to enter the labour market for their families' survival and many young people, particularly men, fled the country. Most of them went abroad to work. However no significant growth can be observed between the Nepal Labour Force Survey (NLFS) 1998/99 and the NLFS 2008 regarding employment or Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR).

LFPR is the proportion of currently active population. In Nepal, according to NLFS 2008, LFPR of the population aged 15 years and above has decreased from 85.8% to 83.4% between 1998/99 to 2008. Age wise LFPR is presented below in Table 3.

**Table 3: Labour force participation rate of the population aged 5 and over by sex, age and locality (%)**

Age Group	Nepal			Urban			Rural		
	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female
All	68.5	68.5	68.5	54.6	60.2	49	71.1	70.1	71.9
5-9	13.4	11.2	15.6	4.2	3.7	4.7	14.6	12.2	17
10-14	52.7	47.2	58.7	23	21.2	24.6	57.1	51	63.8
15 - 19	71.2	68.7	73.4	40.2	41.1	39.2	77.5	75	79.5
20 - 24	80.9	86.3	77.7	63.6	70.2	57.9	85.3	91.6	82
25 - 29	88.6	94.9	84.4	77.6	91.3	66.3	91.1	95.9	88.1
30 - 44	82.9	97.4	89.5	82.6	96	70.5	95.3	97.8	93.5
45 - 59	90.7	95.3	86.1	76.2	88.4	63.6	93.1	96.5	90
60+	66.4	77.1	55.1	45.4	57	34.1	69.5	80	58.4
Youth (15-24)	75.5	75.4	75.6	--	--	--	--	--	--

CBS 2009, p. 61; and ILO, 2010, p. 24

## B. Employment

In simple terms, employment is defined as working in any formal or informal organization/institution with regular pay, irregular pay or without pay. By this definition 11,779,000 Nepalis are employed, of which 53% are woman. In terms of population ratio, male employment ratio in the 15 and above age group is 7 percent points higher than the women employment ratio in the same age group. Women's employment ratio to their population has in fact decreased by 10 percent points (CBS, 2009).

**Table 4: Overview of Labour Market**

Major Indicators	Labour Force Survey 1998/99			Labour Force Survey 2008		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Total number of employed age 15+ (in thousands)	4727	4736	9463	6259	5519	11779
Employment to population ratio (age 15 +)	80.5	88.3	84.3	78.5	85.5	81.7
Share of paid employees age 15+	24.1	76.0	16.0	26.2	73.9	16.9
Youth (15-24) employment rate	97.9	96.1	97	97.1	95.8	96.5
Average hours per week in the main job (age 15 +)	36.3	42.6	39.4	34.8	43.1	38.7

Source: CBS, 2009, pp. 67 & 176

When it comes to paid employment there is a significant gender gap. There are almost 2 million paid employees in the 15 and above age group in Nepal. Out of the total paid employees only 26.2% are women, and out of the total women labour force, only 8.3% are paid (Ibid.). This shows that among total number of employed individuals age 15 and above, there are more women (53%) than men, however most of these women are unpaid. This is a powerful indicator that helps understand gender equality situation in Nepal.

The association between educational attainment and employment shows that 61% of employed females age 15 and above have never attended school, 20.3% have attained less than primary to primary level education, and 15% have attained lower secondary to secondary level education (CBS, 2009). This shows that most women enter the labour force with a minimum level of education. Consequently they end up in low skilled, low paid jobs, i.e. often informal sector work.

Labour migration is very high in Nepal. At present approximately 1,500 Nepalis migrate to different countries as labourers every day (Bhattarai, 2013). Many men and women also migrate through unofficial channels, whose information is not available to the authorities. Due to the open border and unrestricted employment opportunities, a record of those going to India to work is also not available. Most Nepalis who are working in India are either employed in the informal sector or are self-employed. Official records show that by June 2012 approximately 2.4 million people obtained labour approval and migrated for foreign employment in more than 200 different types of occupations in different countries (Ibid.). It has been estimated that 10% of the total migrant workers are female (Ibid.). Internal labour migration is also very high. Many young women and men migrate to urban areas like Kathmandu for employment. Most of these youngsters who migrate without completing high school end up working in entertainment sectors. A discussion regarding women's involvement in the entertainment industry is presented later in this report.

### **C. Employment by occupation and sector**

According to NLFS 2008, almost 12 million Nepalis are currently employed. Broadly speaking 73.9% are estimated to be employed in the agriculture sector. Out of the total employed (both agricultural and nonagricultural work) only 2 million are paid employees and 9.8 million are self-employed<sup>4</sup>. Women comprise 26% of the total self-employed labour force. Among self-employed women, approximately 39% are without employees.

Among the 5 low-skill occupation groups as per Nepal Standard Classification of Occupation (NSCO) the highest proportion of employees were found in group 5, which is 'Service workers.' Women's share is large in lower skill occupations including 'Crafts worker' and negligible in higher skill jobs (CBS, 2009). The NLFS 2008 shows that more males than females are working in elementary occupations<sup>5</sup> (requiring only primary level education). Likewise, 116,000 males as opposed to 74,000 females are working as technicians (requiring education beyond secondary level but below degree level). This correlates with women's declining participation in upper level education. Figures 1 and 2 show male and female employment status by occupation.

### **D. Women in Nontraditional occupations**

Nevertheless, in Nepal in the last 7-8 years women's participation in nontraditional occupations has increased. More women are seeking skills training in nontraditional fields offered by the

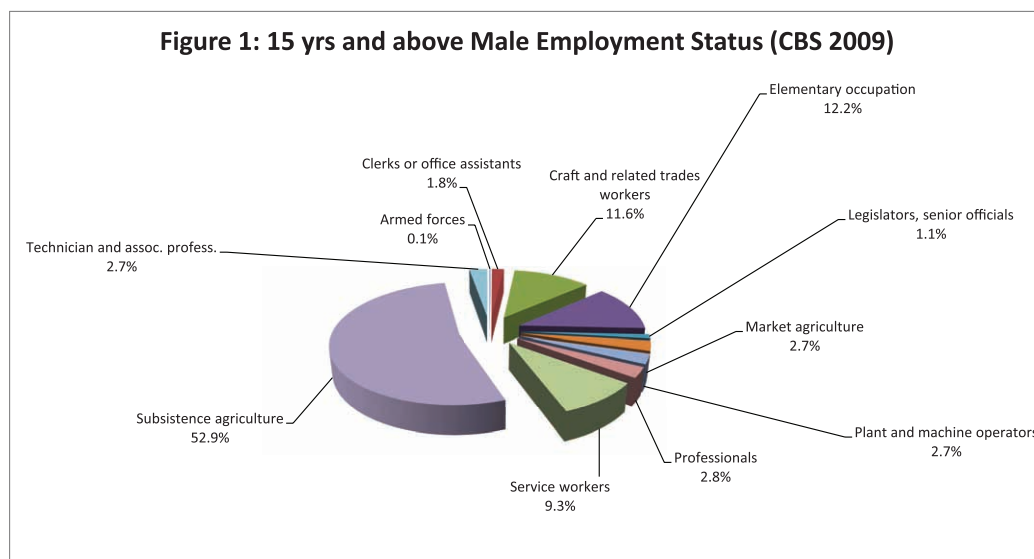
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<sup>4</sup> Self-employed is defined as "managing one's own business whether or not involved in producing the output" (CBS, 2009, p.15). Self-employment thus includes a range of activities including managing one's own business, having regular or occasional employees, growing agricultural products for consumption, fetching water and collecting firewood for household use, and working for other people without pay to fulfill obligations.

<sup>5</sup> Elementary occupations include students and not working population as well.

government as well as non-government sectors. For example, during 2006 and 2013 HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation alone provided training to 41,543 women in male dominated, and considerably risky occupations (Gyawali, 2014). In the experience of the team leader of HELVETAS, in the past when women were asked to participate in such training they dismissed it as men's occupation (Ibid.). Recently women like Lila Chaudhary, who is a photographer and Rampati Tharu, who is an offset printing machine operator, are gradually increasing in numbers (K.C., 2014). Kabita Chaudhary and Bina Chaudhary are getting trained as auto mechanics (Tharu, 2014). All of these women are Tharu, a Tarai ethnic group, and are freed Kamlaris. Similarly, 33 year old Jhakmaya Gharti, a hill ethnic from Baglung district has been running a barber shop in her village Burtibang for the last 10 years (Annapurna Post, 2014). Sangita Bhujel who is a 19 year old tractor driver runs a family business of transporting construction materials and food grain, and also does the loader's job, whereas, Manisha Shrestha, a Bachelor level student, is a radio technician working at a local radio station in Chitawan district (Khatiwada, 2014). Likewise, young Jyapu<sup>6</sup> women have started to play traditional musical instruments, which have traditionally been played by men during festivals and public events. In this way many women are gradually entering occupations that are perceived as men's only. Other such occupations that women are getting into include aluminum fabrication, electric wiring, electrical appliance repair work, carpentry, glass work, shoe making, light vehicle driving and maintenance work, cell phone repair, computer repair, bicycle, ricksha and motorbike repair, plumbing, and security associated work.

**Figure 1: 15 yrs and above Male Employment Status (CBS 2009)**



<sup>6</sup> Jyapu is one of the Newar communities of Kathmandu. Jyapus are basically known for farming/agriculture. Popular traditional Jyapu dance and music are performed during festivals and special occasions.

**Figure 2: 15 yrs and above Female Employment Status (CBS, 2009)**

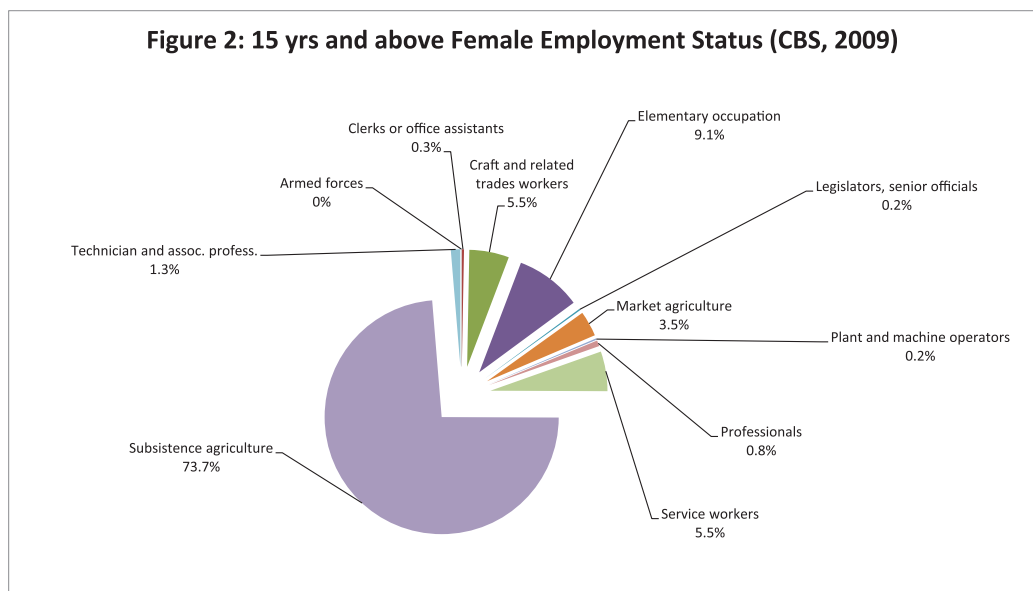


Figure 2 shows that the majority of women are involved in agriculture, and none of them are involved in the armed forces. This however does not mean that there are no women in the army and police forces. Women are increasingly joining the army and police forces but they are not in combat positions (armed forces) and are therefore not included under ‘armed forces’. Their share is 1.9%, 5.8%, and 3.4% in the Nepal Army, Nepal Police and Nepal Armed Force Police respectively (NPC and UNDP, 2013).

‘Other’ employers (e.g. family or individuals hiring different types of helpers) not covered by the identified sectors, are the largest employers for both women and men (see Table 5). Under identified sectors, registered non-financial sector is the largest employer, followed by the government sector. All sectors have a significantly higher number of male employees compared to the number of female employees.

**Table 5: Age 15 and above population in paid employment by sex and sector of employment (in thousands)**

	Total	Public corporation				Private corporation			Others
		Govt	Govt. Financial	Non-financial	NGO/INGO	Regd. financial	Regd. nonfinancial	Unregis-tered	
Female	521	72	4	9	16	7	118	65	230
Male	1471	266	14	45	41	16	333	213	542

CBS, 2009, p. 80

## **E. Informal sector employment**

Nepal's informal sector employment for the purpose of the NLFS includes only the non-agriculture sector. It is challenging to define informal sector activities within the agriculture sector, and a large portion of informal sector work occurs at home which is difficult to record (Suwal and Pant, 2009). Informal sector employment to a large extent can be defined as vulnerable employment because of the lack of job security, low and inadequate remuneration, and vulnerable working conditions. However, the informal economy is important for Nepal because "(1) It is a growing part of local and national economy; (2) Although incomes are low they are collectively large and valuable; and (3) It contributes significantly to employment" (ILO Nepal Country Office, cited by Sigmund, 2011, p. 9). The definition of informal sector is rather limited because it only relates to informal establishments and enterprises, and considers "the characteristics of production units (enterprises) in which the activities take place (enterprise approach), rather than in terms of the characteristics of the persons or of their jobs (labour approach)" (Sigmund, 2011, p. 6). According to this definition, in the Nepali informal sector, jobs would also include legislators, senior officials, professionals, technicians, service workers, salespersons, persons involved in food processing, and many others.

The NLFS 2008 estimated that approximately 2,142,000 of the population age 15 years and above are non-agriculture informal sector employees. Among them, approximately 36% are women (CBS, 2009). Out of the total employed population, there is a higher percentage of women (77.5%) than men (66.0%) who have main jobs in the informal non-agriculture sector (Ibid.). Most of the informal sector jobs include low skill jobs. As in other developing countries, in Nepal, restricted mobility, household responsibilities, gender based social and cultural norms, sexual division of labour and lower levels of education contribute to women's involvement in non-agriculture informal sector employment.

## **F. Unemployment and inactivity**

Unemployed individuals are those who are economically active, but for some reason not employed. In Nepal, the rate of unemployment has increased from 1.8% in 1998-99 to 2.1% in 2008 (CBS, 2009). Women's unemployment rate has increased more than that of men (see Table 6). The urban rural divide is also significant in this respect. The unemployment rates are 7.5% and 1.2% in urban and rural areas respectively.

**TABLE 6: INACTIVITY, UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT**

Major Indicators	Labour Force Survey 1998/99		Labour Force Survey 2008	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Economically inactive population (thousands)	--	--	1520	783
Unemployment <sup>7</sup> rate (aged 15 years and above)	1.7	2.0	2.0	2.2
Unemployment rate among youth (15-24)	2.1	3.9	2.9	4.2
Time related underemployment <sup>8</sup>	--	--	6.1	7.2

CBS, 2009, pp. 102 & 176

The NLFS 2008 has estimated that approximately 2.3 million of the population age 15 years and above are economically inactive. The unemployment rate among youth, which has increased over the past decade can to some extent be positively correlated with increased enrollment in tertiary education, as the NLFS 2008 found that most of the population age 15 years and above attending school were economically inactive (not employed, unemployed or not available for work). Please see Table 7 below.

**Table 7: Reasons for inactivity/unemployment among 15 years and above population**

Reasons	Female	Male
Attending school	21.5	51.7
Engaged in household duties	39.7	4.6
Old/sick	30.2	30.9
Disability	1.5	3.7
Others	7.1	9.1

CBS, 2009, p. 61

## G. Vulnerable employment

Often informal sector employment is vulnerable due to the lack of physical and financial safety, and the lack of other facilities (e.g. paid home leave, sick leave, social security contribution by the employer, etc.) that formal sector employment entails. Within the informal sector, the entertainment industry (massage parlours, dohori restaurants<sup>9</sup>, dance bars and cabin restaurants) is one of the most vulnerable work places for women and girls.

<sup>7</sup> "...the overall unemployment rates are very low. The notion of underemployment gives supplementary information for explanation of the low unemployment rates. Moreover, all the economically active people, who are not unemployed, are not fully employed. In other words, the group of people who are currently involved in some economic activities but inadequate and within the same period of time are seeking other or additional works are treated as the time-related underemployed. In this situation, the data on unemployment alone cannot fully explain the employment situation of the nation" (CBS, 2012, p. 90)

<sup>8</sup> "...persons involuntarily working less than normal duration are considered for inclusion among the time related underemployed" (CBS, 2012, p. 21).

<sup>9</sup> Restaurants and bars where traditional Nepali singing and dancing is performed.



One of the major implications of a decade long conflict in Nepal is increased internal migration, increased entertainment business in the urban areas, and growing involvement of young women and girls in it. The closing of carpet factories in the late 1990s also increased children's presence in the entertainment industry, particularly the sex trade (Terre des hommes, 2010). Domestic and cross-border trafficking of women and girls for work in the entertainment industry has also increased. Previously it was only Indian brothels where women and girls were trafficked to. But these days a large number of Nepali women are reported to be working in the entertainment industries in the Gulf countries and Africa as well (Terre des Hommes, 2010; Thapa and Gautam, 2013; and Tandukar, 2013).

Fear of being abducted and/or persuaded by Maoists, destruction of houses and death in the family during the armed conflict caused many young women and men, particularly those with no to low level of education to migrate away from their home villages and join the entertainment industry. In addition, youths are exposed to so-called modern life styles due to the access to mass media i.e. Television in rural areas located close to urban centers and where electricity is available. This has lured young girls and boys from villages to migrate to urban centers. These young people, particularly girls, are easy prey for pimps and/or human traffickers who roam around villages in disguise. Adjusting and finding a safe asylum on their own in city centers is equally challenging for young girls who come from villages. These desperate girls and women are easy prey for exploiters. All of these factors, in most cases, involuntarily push them to entertainment industries.

In the above context this sub-section is primarily based on 4 research projects related to women in the entertainment industry: (1) Trafficking and exploitation in the entertainment and sex industries in Nepal. A handbook for decision makers (Terre des Hommes, 2010); (2) Youth-led study on the vulnerability of young girls working in restaurants, bars and massage parlours in Kathmandu (Maiti Nepal, 2010), (3) Situation of slavery among women working in restaurant and massage parlours in Kathmandu Valley (in Nepali) (Shakti Samuha, 2008) and (4) Trafficking and its prevention in the experience of women affected by trafficking (in Nepali) (Shakti Samuha, 2008). All of the agencies involved in these studies are Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) working for women victims of trafficking, fighting against women's trafficking, and advocating for women's rights. These studies suggest that many young women who migrate from villages to Kathmandu Valley end up working in the entertainment sector and they are most likely to be victimized. Major findings of the studies are separately presented below.

- 1. Trafficking and exploitation in the entertainment and sex industries in Nepal. A handbook for decision makers (Terre des Hommes, 2010):** Terre des Hommes (2010) estimates that there are approximately 11,000-13,000 women and girls working in the entertainment industry in Kathmandu Valley alone. This research found the education

level of more than half of these women was primary or lower and one third had never attended school. The women reported that due to their low education level they could not find other types of employment (Ibid.). This study found that many girls in entertainment industry were below 18. However, they were often coached to lie about their ages when asked by police or social workers.

- 2. Youth-led study on the vulnerability of young girls working in restaurants, bars and massage parlours in Kathmandu (Maiti Nepal, 2010):** According to Maiti Nepal (2010) out of 299 respondents working in dance bars, massage parlours and dohori restaurants 80% were from out of Kathmandu Valley and 10% from within the Valley. Interestingly, 37.5% of the workers lived with relatives in Kathmandu. Almost 79% reported that they migrated in search of work because of poverty. Even though they were not involved in commercial sex work, they were viewed as commercial sex workers. This view enraged many women involved in this study.

Approximately 20% of the respondents migrated to pursue Higher Education (HE) and started working in the entertainment sector to pay for education. Among these women, 25.8% and 23.1% had attained primary and secondary level education respectively, while 17.7% could only read and write. However, most of them were unaware of the statutory provisions related to labour rights and owners' liabilities.

This study revealed that young women, many of whom were below the age of 16 were subjected to forced labour and sexual exploitation. The respondents reported that they received salaries on time, but not in full and that a portion of it would be withheld by their employers. Salary and benefits were based on physical appearance and experience, particularly in dance bars and dohori restaurants. The service charge mandated by the government rule did not apply to the workers. There were no holidays for these women and many were required to work 8 hours per day. Their dependence on tips to supplement their insufficient salary left them vulnerable to abuse by the customers. As reported by the respondents, misbehavior and sexual abuse by the customers were common phenomena that most women face. Although they had to bear abusive behavior to earn tips, many reported to be satisfied with their job from an economic point of view. A majority of these women reported that they were accompanied by assistants arranged by their employers to ensure that they get home safely after work. Although the respondents of this study said that they would not recommend other girls to be involved in such work Terre des Hommes (2010) found that the workers themselves brought new girls and women into the industry and were remunerated for it by their employers/owners.

- 3. Situation of slavery among women working in restaurant and massage parlours in Kathmandu Valley (in Nepali) (Shakti Samuha, 2008):** Three hundred women working in restaurants and massage parlours in Kathmandu Valley participated in a study undertaken by Shakti Samuha (2008). Thirty three percent of the participants of this study were under 18, and 41% were under 20. Fifty three percent of these women reported that they left their village in search of a better life. Fifty one percent were either non-literate or semi-literate. They reported that they could not continue their studies because of economic constraints. Although most women said that they were working as waitresses, they had to do other tasks as well and were subjected to sexual exploitation by customers and bar/restaurant owners. Almost one third said that they were not satisfied with their work and wanted to change occupations. Some owners behaved as guardians and almost 31% reported that they were provided with transportation to get home. However, some owners reported in interviews that their workers were not given salaries, but rather expected to earn money through tips and commissions. Only 24% of the Shakti Samuha's respondents said that they were satisfied with the remuneration that they received.
- 4. Trafficking and its prevention in the experience of women affected by trafficking (in Nepali) (Shakti Samuha, 2008):** Shakti Samuha (2008) conducted research with 260 women affected by trafficking from 31 districts. The study found that women from Brahmans/Kshtriya and Dalit castes, and Madhesi women, including Muslims were increasingly falling prey to traffickers. Previously it was mostly Janajati<sup>10</sup> women who were trafficked. Most of the respondents of Shakti Samuha (2008) said that they were unaware of human trafficking and were sold by parents or close relatives. Those trafficked were transported to different countries and made to work against their will. Respondents reported facing economic and physical exploitation, and movement and communication were also prohibited. Most of the women in the study were victims of trafficking due to 6 reasons- wishing to earn more, and leading a better life (45%); trusting in a love proposal (40%); domestic violence and abuse (32%); dreaming of a life better than village life (21%); weak economic condition of household (17%); sent by parents due to poverty (4%) (Ibid.).

Under-skilled Nepali women mostly end up working as domestic helpers in foreign countries. Many Nepali women migrate to Gulf countries and Malaysia to work as domestic helpers. Even former Maoist militias have migrated to work as domestic helpers. For example, Dolma Sherpa who participated in the armed movement of Maoist for 4 years 'to eradicate poverty' as she said, was found departing for Malaysia to work as a domestic helper (Bista, 2013).

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<sup>10</sup> Groups of ethnics, having distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Previously Hill Janajati women were trafficked more than others.

According to Tiwari (2013a), the Labour Attaché at the Nepali Embassy in Kuwait, women know what they are going to do, (i.e. domestic work), but they are not able to comprehend the consequences of foreign employment. In most cases, Nepali foreign employment agencies are not truthful with potential foreign labourers. Many companies even forge documents, and glorify the work which lures women and men to take the options offered to them. After getting there, forced labour, work without pay, long working hours without leisure time, insufficient food, physical and mental torture, gender-based violence, confiscation of passport, restriction in mobility and communication with family, etc. are the main problems that domestic workers in Gulf countries often face (Tiwari, 2013b). Since the processing fees charged by the labour suppliers are cheaper for informal sector employment such as domestic work, many under-skilled and poor women opt for this job (Tiwari, 2013c). Foreign employment is thus a double-edged sword for many Nepali women who are poor, not formally educated, lack foreign (i.e. English) language skill, and are untrained and unfamiliar with urban life styles.

Many women migrate to African countries as well, such as South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania and Madagascar to work as dancers in dance bars (Thapa and Gautam, 2013). These women often enter with a tourist visa which is available upon arrival and start working illegally. According to Standard Digital Online Media (2013) some Nepali women dancers were arrested in Nairobi for working illegally. As observed by Tiwari (2013a), in this situation as well, these women knew where they were going and what they were supposed to do, but did not understand the implications. Although half of their salary is deducted at the source by agents and some were not allowed to move freely, most women said that they enjoyed working in dance bars in Africa (Thapa and Gautam, 2013). Working conditions in African dance bars seemed to be better than in Nepali dance bars. One woman who happily returned home from Tanzania, reported that the owners locked them up to prevent them from escorting customers for their safety, but some women engaged in the sex trade because the salary provided to them was not sufficient to meet their expenses (Ibid.). However, Reshma Tandukar 27, a School Leaving Certificate (SLC) holder who owns a restaurant, has had experience working as a waitress in Nepal, and who has gone to Tanzania twice to work as a dancer, writes that she has never been physically or psychologically exploited, and that the world should be open to hardworking people (2013). Reshma started working right after obtaining her SLC to support her family of 6 after her father fell ill.

All the above cases, news reports and observations reveal that Nepali women's participation in the service sector is a very complex phenomenon. There is ample evidence of exploitation and vulnerability of women in this sector. However, reasons that women join this occupation need to be further investigated because most are young and decide to migrate and work in such occupations partly because they want to live a glamorous life, i.e. gain access to modern gadgets like mobile phones and fashionable outfits. Modernity for young people in Kathmandu is to adapt to nontraditional ways of living in terms of the use of modern gadgets, fashion, eating

out, family relationships, etc., all of which have largely been influenced by media (Liechty, 2010). The changing culture of Kathmandu certainly entices young women and men from rural areas. However, education which has also been one of the major factors that influenced cultural change in Kathmandu (Ibid.), is something that these working women do not get to enjoy. As experienced by women in the above studies Liechty (2010) writes, "With so much sexual stigma surrounding women, labour, and fashion, it is perhaps not surprising that a great deal of sexual fantasy is projected onto almost any seemingly independent women in public domain" (p. 242). Therefore, women working in the entertainment industry are more likely to be projected as sex workers thus augmenting their vulnerability to exploitation.

Many aspects of life and state structures are intricately woven in young women's career choice. For example, many girls and young women who end up working in vulnerable occupations were those who could not succeed in education and/or those who were not interested in study. Schools could not direct them towards other skills oriented or vocational fields. On the other hand, the country's declining economic growth and the existing labour market can hardly absorb different types of skilled human resources. In the past 3 years the economic growth rate of Nepal has been fluctuating from 3.8 in 2010-2011 to 4.5 in 2011-2012 to 3.6 in 2012-2013 fiscal years (Ministry of Finance, 2013). Nevertheless, Nepal's per capita income is estimated to increase from US dollars (USD) 713 in 2011-2012 to USD 721 in 2012-2013 fiscal year, and this increment is attributed to 'increased inflow of remittance and the growth in production of the services sector' (Ibid, p. Xiii). This data also confirms rise in foreign employment and in the entertainment industry.

Thus, despite the employment related problems and challenges, and growing social and psychological implications (e.g. family disintegration due to extra marital affairs leading to divorce, mental stress causing depression; Paudel, 2013, p. 5) foreign employment has been recognized as having 2 distinct advantages – remittance and skills development. For example the annual share of remittance in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 19.4%, 18.5% and 23.1% in 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 fiscal years respectively (Ministry of Finance, 2013). Additionally, according to a study undertaken by Nepal Rastra Bank (national bank) 47% of returned migrant workers came with new skills and approximately 16% were found using their new skills in income generating activities (Shrestha cited by Pyakuryal, 2009). Likewise, a recent study conducted by Nepal Rastra Bank on impact of remittance in Dhanusa (one of the sample districts of this study) found families allocating a significant amount of remittance in children's education and that children of migrant workers were spending more time in study at home (Nepal Rastra Bank, 2012).

Labour productivity is the "primary determinant of economic growth" (ILO, 2010, p. 29). However growth in labour productivity has been low in Nepal. For example, from 1999 to 2008 the average annual growth in GDP per worker was only 0.56 with a decline in labour productivity in mining and quarrying, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants,

real estate and renting, and social work but an incline in construction, utilities and financial intermediation (Ibid.). According to Pyakuryal (2009) low levels of labour productivity should be viewed in the context of infrastructure, health, education, institution and macroeconomic stability, as well as market efficiency, market size and technological readiness, among many other factors. Improvement of most of these factors is severely affected by political instability and degenerating political commitment. The direct impact of the political situation is observed in the governance and accountability situations, which are crucial to overall development and economic growth.

## H. Average monthly wage

Remuneration of paid employees includes two types of wages – cash and kind. Remuneration in kind includes the regular supply of food, clothing, housing and utilities. The wages presented in Table 8 includes gifts and bonuses as well. There is large wage gap between women and men, with women earning only 59% of the amount that men earn.

**Table 8: Average monthly wage in Nepali Rupees and US dollar**

Indicator	Labour Force Survey 1998/99			Labour Force Survey 2008		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Average monthly earnings (cash and kind combined) of paid employees (age 15 +)	1368	2389	--	3402 (USD34.7)	5721 (USD58.35)	5117 (USD52.19)

CBS, 2009

According to the NLFS 2008, salaries of technicians and clerks and the like were almost comparable between women and men, but in agriculture, crafts and related trades, and in elementary occupations, women's wage was lower. As mentioned in the NLFS 2008, the reason for the wage gap is partly due to the differences in hours of work. However in labour intensive work, women's wage was lower than that of men, even when the nature of the work, hours of work and the output was similar. This was seen despite the Labour Rules, 1993, which stipulates equal pay for equal work. In paid agriculture labour, men's daily wage can be double than that of women. For example, even in Kathmandu, women were paid Nepali rupees 250 (USD 2.5) and men 500 (USD 5) per day for rice paddy harvesting work (Darnal, 2013, p. 4). The daily average wage estimated by Nepal Living Standard Survey 2010 (CBS, 2011) also shows clear disparity in male and female wages (see Table 9).

**Table 9: Average daily wage in cash/kind received by wage earners (in Nepali Rupees)**

	Agriculture sector		Non agriculture sector	
	Cash	Kind	Cash	Kind
Male	145	68	234	92
Female	97	63	143	86

Source: CBS, 2011

# CHAPTER III. EDUCATION SYSTEM AND POLICIES

## A. Structure of the education system

The current structure of education in Nepal consists of the following levels and modes.

### School Education<sup>11</sup>

1. One to 2 year early childhood education for 3 to 4 year old children;
2. Basic education (grades 1 to 8) for 5 to 12 year old children;
3. Secondary level education (grade 9 to 12) for 13 to 16 year old children. Secondary level is divided into 2 levels – secondary level (grade 9 to 10) and higher secondary level (grade 11 to 12);
4. Basic education through alternative mode – 3 year Non-formal Education (NFE) primary education and 2 year open lower secondary education (grade 6 to 8) and;
5. One year open secondary (grade 9 to 10) education

Pre-primary to higher secondary level education is offered through different types of schools such as community with government aid, community without government aid, private or institutional schools, religious schools and alternative schools (DOE, 2012). Government aided schools which are identified as community schools are also called public schools. Out of the total enrollment, 81%, 84.3% and 84.9% are in secondary (grade 9 to 12), lower secondary (grade 6 to 8) and primary (grade 1 to 5) in community schools respectively, and these figures are gradually decreasing (Ibid.).

### Higher (tertiary) education

1. Three to 5 year Bachelor level;
2. One to 1 ½ year Post Graduate Diploma (PGD);
3. Two year Master's level;
4. One to 2 year Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and;
5. Three to 4 year PhD

Source: MoE, 2012, TU, 2012 and UGC, 2012

<sup>11</sup> As per the existing Education Act there are 4 levels: Primary (grade 1-5), Lower secondary: (grade 6-8), Secondary (grade 9-10) and Higher Secondary (grade 11-12). The School Sector Reform (2009-2015) planned to restructure the current school system to make it a coherent and integrated system of grade 1-12 and proposed 2 levels – Basic level (grade 1- 8) and Secondary (grade 9-12) (MOE, 2009). However there could be sub levels – primary (grade 1-5), lower secondary level (grade 6-8), secondary (grade 9-10) and higher secondary (grade 11-12) within two levels, partly because there are schools which either operate all, or only one, or a few of these levels. All such schools cannot be merged or closed in the near future. Moreover Higher Secondary level is governed by Higher Secondary Education Board and the rest is governed by the Department of Education. The process initiated to amend the Education Act, which would allow the MOE to legally restructure and integrate the school system could not be completed due to the dissolution of Constituent Assembly. Therefore for reporting purposes (e.g. school statistics) 6 levels are used – Primary: grade 1-5; lower secondary: grade 6-8; Basic: grade 1-8; Secondary: grade 9-10; Higher Secondary: grade 11-12; and Secondary: grade 9-12.



## **Technical education and vocational training (TEVT)**

In addition to formal and non-formal education, 1 to 2 year Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC) and 3 year technical diploma programs are available through TEVT. TSLC programs are tailored to those who have obtained their SLC (grade 10 national level examination) and also to those who have not. Those with SLC can join 15 to 18 month long programs, and those without SLC can enter into 29 month programs. Special programs for Dalits and Muslim girls, and scholarship programs for under privileged candidates are also available, among several other programs. The Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) and the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) have jointly started a trade school to provide short term trainings as a public private partnership initiative (CTEVT, 2012).

### **TEVT in formal school**

In addition to distinct streams of academic and technical and vocational education, technical and vocational education is also integrated into formal/mainstream school education.

Vocational skills education<sup>12</sup> under the banner of soft skills has recently been introduced into the lower secondary level (grade 6 to 8). Music education is also included in this level. The structure of the secondary (grade 9 to 12) education consists of 2 streams – General and Sanskrit; and Technical and Vocational. The curriculum of the general stream consists of optional subjects related to TEVT and soft skills in addition to core courses. In grades 9 and 10 Optional I and Optional II subjects, which are grouped within 5 areas of study (see Annex Table 6), namely, science and technology, language, social studies, vocational skills, and Sanskrit are available for schools to select from and offer (CDC, 2012). Each of these 5 areas includes a minimum of 2 subjects. Students have to select 1 course in grade 9 and 1 in grade 10. Thus they study a total 2 optional subjects in secondary level (grade 9 to 10).

The Secondary level (grade 9 to 12) curriculum of Technical and Vocational stream consists of applied sciences, and timely applied/functional optional subjects (Ibid.). Secondary level students enrolled in the Technical and Vocational stream study compulsory courses (40% course weight age) and technical vocational courses (60% course weight age). Hands-on training is mandatory for Technical and Vocational stream curriculum.

Higher secondary (grade 11 to 12) courses, including technical and vocational, and optional are managed in coordination and collaboration with the Higher Secondary Education Board, the CTEVT and universities. This level does not offer general education, i.e. students enroll in

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<sup>12</sup> A course named 'Occupation, vocation and technical education' has been introduced for grades 6-8. It includes soft skills as well as vocational skills such as kitchen gardening, food processing, herb farming, sewing and knitting, alternative energy, use of computers to access information, maintaining gadgets, etc. The course is divided into theory and practical work with each carrying 50% weightage.

separate streams. For example, they can enroll in education or commerce or science, and so on. Nepali and English are the only mandatory subjects for all streams. The optional subjects at this level are all related to a specific stream. Thus, students study Nepali and English irrespective of the stream that they join but all the other specific subjects related to their stream are made available under 'optional subjects'.

Students can move to and from General to Technical and Vocational streams in grade 11. Students who switch streams are mandated to complete relevant bridge courses as prescribed by the curriculum. There are also separate curricula for religious education in higher secondary level. Gurukul (traditional Hindu religious school), Gonpa (Buddhist religious school) and Madarsa offer courses as required by the respective religion in addition to mainstream core courses. Optional courses within religious education include courses relevant to the respective religion.

Education up to grade 8 education is general. From grade 9 it becomes more specific and guidance begins from this grade. However, teachers reported that vocational subjects included in grade 9 as optional subjects are not enough to enter the labour market. Furthermore most of the students who get through SLC aspire for an academic degree because of its greater social dignity compared to the vocational track. Schools do not select vocational subjects such as photography, agriculture, food and nutrition, clothing, etc. Although there are many optional subjects most schools only offer Account and Optional Mathematics because these subjects can be easily delivered through the existing resources (human, physical, technical), and schools can allocate full score to students in internal assessment of these subjects. Marks obtained in internal assessment add up to the final exam. "If full mark is given in internal assessment, schools are likely to have more students passed with higher scores" said a teacher representative. Since both the government and the public evaluate or rate schools on the basis of SLC results, most schools including private schools use this method.

Schools do not select and/or offer other technical and vocational subjects partly because they cannot manage financial resources to buy materials and hire human resources. Some schools even lack appropriate and adequate physical space to offer vocational subjects. One teacher reported that offering such subjects would be an additional burden because community mobilization is necessary to generate resources, vocational subjects require extra supervision, and guardians cannot contribute in any way. Schools are allowed to select optional subjects on the basis of students' interests and needs, and availability of resources. As mentioned above, in most schools Mathematics and Account teachers are available and additional resources are not required, and therefore these optional subjects are selected and offered. Nevertheless there are examples of innovative practices to offer optional subjects as well, e.g. in Sindhupalchok district a school invited a local man to teach students how to weave Doko (a local basket carried on the back with support on the head) and ghum (a folding mat used as umbrella/

rain shed) made of bamboo. A grade 9 boy weaved and sold ghums, which earned him 1,500 Nepali Rupees. Such sporadic cases need to be documented and shared with other schools. However documenting and sharing good practices is not adequately practiced by the system.

In the female teachers' group discussion one teacher said that subjects are linked with different occupations in one way or other, "But we are ambitious so we only give attention towards medical, science and engineering rather than towards developing entrepreneurship". In the same discussion some female teachers from Kathmandu observed that there is no provision in the curriculum, and there is no trend in schooling to guide and inform students about the occupational implications of different subjects.

Teachers from both private and public schools who participated in the discussions admitted that they have not been able to provide career guidance to their students. However a female head teacher who is retired after 38 years of experience in teaching, and is recognized for her efficiency and effectiveness in running schools, insisted that school is the prime location because this is where students gain overall knowledge and skills, and this is where students' attitude is formed and capacity developed. She viewed that teachers are knowledgeable about students' aptitude and if that aptitude is nurtured, students can grow. She emphasized that extracurricular activities therefore must be given priority as they allow teachers to identify students' aptitude, interest and skills. However in her observation most schools focus only on prescribed curriculum.

## B. Current concerns in terms of gender disparity in the education system

When the overall education system is neither effective nor efficient, students fail to benefit from it irrespective of their gender. This reflects the general functioning of the school system in Nepal. Nonetheless, from a gender perspective, women and girls lag behind their male counterparts. Gender disparity in literacy rate (see Table 10), decline in women's participation in HE, gender insensitivity in school classroom practices, son's education getting more priority, and economic conditions are a few common challenges and concerns in education.

Table 10: Literacy Status 1995/96-2011

Timeline	1995-96, Nepal Living Standard Survey (NLSS I)			2003-2004, NLSS II			2010-2011, NLSS III			2001, National population & housing census			2011, National population & housing census		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
15 years and above	19.42	53.49	35.57	33.8	64.5	48.8	45.0	72.0	57.0	34.9	62.7	48.6	48.8	71.7	59.6*
6 years and above	24.35	52.15	37.82	38.9	63.5	50.6	51.0	72.0	61.0	42.8	65.5	54.1	57.8	76.0	66.6

F: Female, M: Male, \*The literacy rate of 15 years and above is calculated from raw data by UNESCO Kathmandu Office.

The data presented in Table 10 shows that in 20 years the literacy rate of females age 15 years and above increased by 30% points, whereas the literacy rate of males from the same age group increased by only 19%. Similarly, during the same period, the literacy rate of females age 6 years and above increased by 34%, whereas the literacy rate of males from the same age group increased by only 24%. However, the gap between females' and males' literacy rate is still very wide because the starting point of females' literacy rate was much lower than that of men. Despite continued investment in women's literacy, gender disparity in literacy rate is wider among the 15 years and above population.

In general, when viewed from ethnic and caste dimensions literacy rates of some groups (e.g. Newar, Thakali, Brahmans/Kshatriyas)<sup>13</sup> are very high but district wise data (CBS, 2012) show that men's literacy rate is much higher than that of women across-the-board. The rural urban gap in literacy rate is also very high (see Table 11). The literacy rate of urban women is much higher than that of rural women.

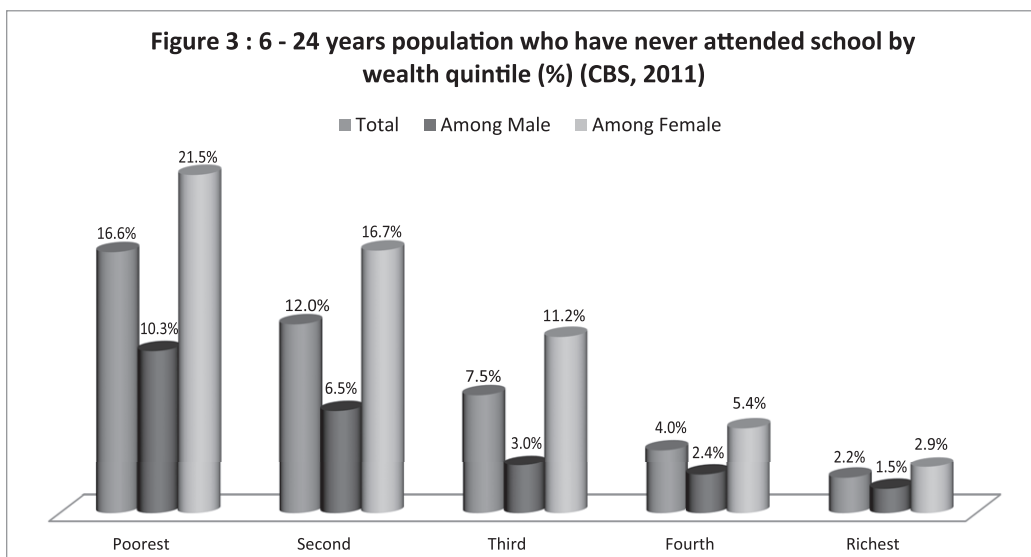
**Table 11: Urban-Rural disparity in Literacy**

Location	Urban			Rural		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
Age group						
15 years and above	65.8	87.0	75.6	39.1	67.2	51.3
6 years and above	75.3	89.4	82.5	53.9	73.0	63.1

G.C. & Shrestha, 2014 and CBS, 2011

The above data shows that woman's literacy rate decreases as their age increases. Likewise, in formal education their participation decreases in upper levels (See section D of this Chapter). According to CBS (2011) the percentage of women who never attended school is much higher (44%) than the percentage of men who never attended school (23%). Family economic condition also affects children's education in general and girls' education in particular. In other words as poverty increases women's chance of going to school decreases (See Figure 3).

<sup>13</sup> Newar and Thakali are officially Janajatis. However some Newars prefer not to be identified as Janajati. Since their overall status is much higher in terms of education and economy, information related to Newar may be excluded from Janajati, and is separately reported.



Although gender parity is almost balanced in lower levels of education across caste and ethnic groups, the gap excessively widens in upper levels. From a gender perspective boys' drop out in upper secondary level and their inability to get through SLC<sup>14</sup> are also matters of concern. Girls and boys from community schools and remote areas are more likely to fail the SLC examination. The SLC pass rate of girls is usually much lower than that of boys (MOE, 2012). In order to be eligible for higher secondary education (grade 11 to 12) one has to pass the SLC examination.

Absence of a favorable learning environment at the lower levels worsens children's performance and thus makes them ineligible for upper levels. This situation affects girls more than boys. The trend seen in HE enrollment confirms this observation (see Figure 4 and Table 14). Furthermore, due to the common practice of moving into the husband's house/family after marriage and the increased household responsibility with marriage, women's education is likely to get less priority after marriage. They may get to enroll but do not get enough time to study. This is one of the main reasons for their decreased enrollment in HE.

Another major concern is gender insensitivity in school and classroom practices. As found by Stromquist (2007) several Nepali studies have reported schools and classroom practices contributing to polarized masculinity and femininity. The kind of words and expressions teachers use when commenting on girls' inability to respond to questions; sexual abuse and harassment by teachers and male students; domineering behavior of male students and teachers'

<sup>14</sup> Officially 14+ is the age to appear in SLC examination but in actuality it varies from 14 to 16/17 as was the ages of FGD participants of this study.

indifference to such behavior particularly in Mathematics class; and bullying by male students (National Campaign for Education, 2013; Gyawali, 2012; Bhandari, 2012; Thapa, 2012; Sah, 2011; Bajracharya, 2009; Thapa, 2007; Parajuli and Acharya, 2008 and Lammichhane, 2003) are some examples which are likely to augment inhibition and apathy towards schooling among girls on one hand, and teachers' low expectation from girls on the other.

High priority given to son's education at household and family levels also short-changes girls. Such tendency is reflected in two ways. One, girls are enrolled but due to household obligations they have less time to study and to do school-work at home. Two, sons are enrolled in private schools while daughters go to public schools. Enrollment in private school is steadily growing with 14.2% in 2011-2012 to 15.3% in 2012-2013 of the total enrollment at basic level (grades 1 to 8) (DOE, 2011 and DOE, 2012). However girls' share in total enrollment in private school has remained around 43% since 2008. In 2012-2013 the Gender Parity Index (GPI) of enrollment at the basic level in private school was 0.74 (Ibid.). Here the intention is not to advocate for private school enrollment but to shed light on families' perception about quality education and their preference in terms of sons' and daughters' education

### C. Gross and net enrollment ratios at lower secondary and upper secondary levels

Girls' share in school enrollment has been increasing over the years (see Table 12). However their enrollment in the upper grades has been declining. The main reason behind the decline is the inability to get through to the end of the grade tests. Most families and girls themselves find it irrelevant to continue school. In other words, many girls lose interest in schooling. In boys' case, the need for wage earning work pulls them out of school in the upper grades.

**Table 12: Gross and net enrollment ratios and dropout by level (2012-2013)**

Level	GER			NER			Dropout (%)	
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys
Primary (1-5)	132.7	127.5	130.1	94.7	95.9	95.3	5.0	5.5
Lower secondary(6-8)	105.5	96.07	100.6	71.8	72.6	72.2	6.3	6.6
Secondary (9-10)	73.6	69.9	71.7	54.0	54.6	54.3	6.5	6.5
Higher secondary (11-12)	32.6	30.7	31.6	10.6	10.2	10.4	--	--
Secondary (9-12)	53.0	50.4	51.7	32.2	32.5	32.4	--	--

Source: DOE 2012, NER: Net enrollment ratio, GER: Gross enrollment ratio

From 2008 to 2012 girls' Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) increased from 92.6% to 95.3% and 40.1% to 54.3% in primary and secondary levels respectively (DOE, 2009 and DOE 2012). While celebrating girls' increased participation in education many children leave without completing grade 1. The dropout is highest in grade 1 with 7.7% (girls 7.2% and boys 8.1%) (DOE, 2012). Since repetition in grade 1 is quite high (19.9%), approximately 70% of the grade 1 entrants move to grade 2 in the second year. The gradual decline in enrollment in higher grades also

tells us that many children leave school without completing secondary education. The sharp decline in higher secondary level enrollment indicates that most girls as well as boys do not continue either due to their inability to get through the SLC examination or for other reasons. One of the main reasons of girls dropping out before completing grade 10 is still marriage. The increase in mean age of marriage indicates that girls leave schools for other reasons as well. Another pressing reason is the cost of higher secondary education. Higher secondary education, which is managed and operated under Higher Secondary Education Act 1989 and Higher Secondary Education Rules 1996, is not free. Books and fees are not subsidized. Within public high schools (government aided schools with grades 1 to 10) higher secondary levels (grades 11 and 12) are run like the private schools. Limited number of scholarships is available at this level for girls and for poor children. Some other reasons for dropping out of school are presented in Table 13.

**Table 13: Reasons for dropping out of school before completing grade 10 in 10-24 age group (%)**

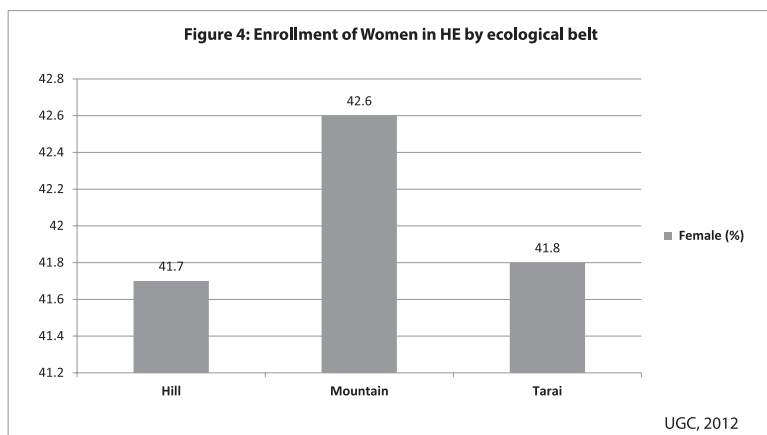
Age group	Economic constraints		Marriage		Fail in exam		Work		Not interested		Parents did not enroll	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
10-14	40.73	31.45	0.00	2.19	7.73	6.33	1.02	7.44	14.02	13.68	1.05	2.24
15-19	33.17	13.95	2.41	26.64	13.59	13.94	5.11	2.12	17.00	12.88	0.24	2.18
20-24	33.43	10.89	3.79	43.84	8.50	9.82	10.98	8.32	16.62	8.34	0.37	2.02

Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP)/GoN, 2011

According to the 'Nepal adolescent and youth' survey conducted by the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP, 2011) the main reason for dropping out of school among 15 to 19 year old girls is marriage. This correlates with the median age of marriage among 15 to 49 years old Nepali women. In terms of urban and rural areas, more rural adolescents and youth drop out of school when compared to their urban counterparts (Ibid.). In terms of gender, more boys seemed to drop out of school due to economic conditions but their percentage of leaving school for work is not much higher than that of girls, rather less in the 10 to 14 age group. It has to be noted that 'work' here does not necessarily indicate whether it means wage earning work or unpaid family work.

## **D. Enrollment at tertiary level**

Tertiary education is post-secondary education. It includes university education, degrees and trainings which are academic in nature. In a sense, tertiary education offers a range of options for lifelong learning as well. The University Grant Commission (UGC) is primarily responsible for maintaining a data base for this level. The most recent Education Management Information System (EMIS) report of UGC is from the 2010-2011 academic year.



The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of HE is 14.0 (Bachelor level 18.7 and Master's level 6.6).<sup>15</sup> Female's GER is 11.9, whereas male's is 16.1. Female's GER drops significantly from 16.8 in Bachelor to 4.2 in Master's level. The total enrollment in HE in 2010-2011 was 407,934. Out of the total enrollment, women's share was 170,395 (41.7%). Overall enrollment in Kathmandu (Hill, in terms of ecology) is the highest with 253,350 enrollees (62%). Due to the availability of more qualified teachers, HE institutions and learning resources, those who can afford to migrate to Kathmandu, do so to pursue HE. However the proportion of female students' share in enrollment is almost equal in all geographical regions (see Figure 4).

According to the UGC (2012) from 1980 to 2010, women's enrollment in HE increased by 23 percent points. However, it appears that many women drop out before graduating as only 23 women per 100 men obtained graduate or above degrees in 2001 (IIDS, 2011). The NLFS 2008 estimated that only 0.9% of women as opposed to 3.3% of men had completed degree level education (above higher secondary level) (CBS, 2009). The decline in women's enrollment in Bachelor and above levels in all areas of study (see Table 14) and low success rate in overall HE explain this phenomena to a large extent.

<sup>15</sup> A 5 year age group (17-21) is used to calculate the HE enrollment in Nepal. Seventeen to 19 year olds are Bachelor level and 20 to 21 year olds are Master level students (UGC, 2012). GER is thus calculated against the 17-19 year old population.



**Table 14: Level and stream wise enrollment of women in HE in 2010-2011**

Field of study	Bachelor		M.Phil		Masters		PGD		PhD.		Total		
	Fem	To'l	Fem	To'l	Fem	To'l	Fem	To'l	Fem	To'l	Fem	To'l	Fem%
Agri. & Animal Sci.	177	910	0	0	8	160	0	0	0	31	185	1,101	16.8
Ayurved	15	87	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	87	17.2
Education	68,931	132,685	31	194	7,707	25,228	36	45	6	61	76,711	158,213	48.4
Engineering	2,658	15,101	0	0	84	707	0	0	4	33	2,746	15,841	17.3
Forestry	79	333	0	0	3	32	0	0	0	0	82	365	22.4
Humanities & Social Sci.	18,193	43,472	119	212	8,574	25,193	4	11	19	152	26,909	69,040	38.9
Law	1,153	4,247	0	0	67	416	0	0	5	45	1,225	4,708	26.0
Management	44,921	109,705	13	89	6,075	18,655	16	42	2	16	51,027	128,507	39.7
Medicine	6,332	11,594	0	0	535	1,405	0	0	0	0	6,867	12,999	52.8
Sci & Technology	3,996	12,974	2	10	500	2,952	4	21	12	47	4,514	16,004	28.2
Sanskrit	86	660	0	0	17	286	0	0	10	123	113	1,069	10.5
Total	146,541	331,768	165	505	23,570	75,034	60	119	58	508	170,394	407,934	41.7

Source: UGC, 2012, p. 35. (Fem: Female, To'l: Total, Agri: Agriculture, Sci: Science)

Table 14 shows that of the total enrollment in HE, women's concentration is highest in Bachelor's level in all streams. When analyzed in terms of subject, their share is highest (45%) in education. Among Bachelor level technical streams, women's share is highest in medicine, which includes Bachelor in nursing. Bachelor level Science and Technology in which their proportion of enrollment is 2.7% includes health technicians as well.

Women's share in enrollment declines significantly in Master's level. Women's enrollment in the education stream, which is viewed as easy, and generally where under performers<sup>16</sup> are expected to enroll, significantly drops from 52% in Bachelor level to 31% in Master's level. Moreover, in 2010-2011 overall pass rate of Bachelor of Education (BEEd) was only 30%. However the proportion of women is not known.

## E. Enrollment in vocational track

The Management Information System (MIS) section of the CTEVT is the authorized national level body responsible for updating the database and disseminating national level information regarding TEVT. As of 2012, according to CTEVT, 25,313 are enrolled in 418 TSLC and Diploma level institutions affiliated with CTEVT (cited by MOE, 2012). However, data regarding training institutions published by CTEVT (2012) does not follow the same time line, not all have provided gender disaggregated data, and instructors' information is not gender disaggregated. Therefore it is not possible to derive cumulative gender disaggregated data of the TEVT enrollees. Furthermore, age wise TEVT enrollment data is not available.

<sup>16</sup> In the experiences of working teachers, and representatives of teacher unions and teacher organizations, those who are under performers join the education stream. This is further discussed in relevant sections later in this report.

Information from some institutions indicates that enrollment of women is much lower in TEVT courses except nursing. As an example, women's enrollment in TSLC in 5 institutions is presented in Table 15.

**Table 15: Enrollment in selected TEVT institutes in 2009-2010**

	<b>Institutes</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Female</b>
1.	Ilam Technical School, Ilam	40	29
2.	Janajoyti Higher Secondary School, Sarlahi	40	9
3.	Rapti Technical School, Dang	122	55
4.	Dhawalagiri Technical School, Mustang	29	8
5.	Madan Ashrit Memorial Technical School, Kathmandu	62	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>293</b>	<b>109 (37.2%)</b>

Source: CTEVT, 2012

Although the overall enrollment of women in TEVT seemed low, according to CTEVT (2012), special programmes have proven successful in providing access to socially and economically disadvantaged women and men. For example, a TEVT programme for Dalit and Muslim women that started in 2008-2009 from 2 districts in Tarai has proven to be successful, and has gradually been extending to other districts in Tarai (Ibid.). In this programme, tuition waiver, stipend, clothes, and transportation allowances are provided. Many development partners and donor agencies such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and the Asian Development Bank have been funding and/or working alongside the Nepali government to provide access to TEVT for marginalized women and men (CTEVT, 2012 and UNESCO, 2012). All of these efforts have helped in increasing access to TEVT. Scholarships are available under different headings such as merit based, classified, special<sup>17</sup>, and EVENT<sup>18</sup> (Enhanced Vocational Education and Training). However, since incentives are provided for particular trades/vocations, those who are eligible for classified scholarships and fulfill the quota have no option but to study courses in which scholarship and quotas are available. Therefore, despite these efforts, women either are not informed, do not have resources to pursue, or do not find TEVT relevant and appealing to them. Accessing TEVT courses is difficult for rural and remote residents due to the physical distance to the center, and moreover they might end up being enrolled in courses that they are not interested in or in courses that are less marketable (Bhandari, 2012). Therefore it appears that many women,

<sup>17</sup> Special and classified scholarships are made available to women, poor, religious minority, people with disability, Madhesi, Dalit, ethnic groups (Janajatis), former bonded labourers, poor, residents of remote areas, and other disadvantaged people (CTEVT, 2012). These scholarships are available in health trades, engineering trades and agriculture and food technology trades, and the recipients of the scholarship are to join the institute assigned by Exam Controller's Office (Ibid.).

<sup>18</sup> EVENT is a project under MOE supported by the World Bank.

particularly from remote areas are less likely to benefit from TEVT programmes. Nevertheless, government, semi-government, non-government and private technical institutes and projects such as CTEVT's 22 constituent and 367 affiliated technical institutes, 74 general schools with provision of technical education, and 463 private technical institutes, provide a wide range of TEVT (CTEVT, 2013). These institutes have been encouraging women and people from disadvantaged communities to join skill trainings in non-traditional trade and occupations through different incentive schemes.

## **F. Policies, initiatives and programmes to address gender issues in education**

Apart from international commitments such as the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) goal number 2 and 3, and the Education for All (EFA) programme, Nepal has devised specific policies and strategies to promote girls education and thereby achieve gender equality in education, specifically the Fifth Five Year Plan (1975-1980) (see Table 16). According to the statutory provisions that are available to ensure gender equality mentioned earlier, different Ministries such as the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Health and Population, the Ministry Federal Affairs and Local Development and the Ministry of Labour and Transport Management have relevant programs and provisions to ensure women's right and gender equality as relevant to their respected areas.

**Table 16: Government initiatives to minimize gender inequality in education**

Constitution, education specific provisions, development plans, strategies, programs	Some major provisions
Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education is a fundamental right (Article 13).</li> <li>• Primary education in Mother Tongue Education.</li> <li>• Free education up to secondary level.</li> <li>• The State shall pursue a policy of encouraging maximum participation of women in national development by making special provisions for their education, health and employment.</li> </ul>

<p>Education Act 1971 (7th Amendment 2001); and adjustment as per Republic Strengthening and Some Nepal Law Amendment Act, 2066 (2010)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representation of at least two female teachers District Education Committee.</li> <li>• Representation of at least one woman Village Education Committee.</li> <li>• Representation of at least one woman in School Management Committee.</li> <li>• Special supports for girl children and the students from the Dalit and underrepresented ethnic groups of below poverty line.</li> </ul>
<p>Education Rules 2002 (with 5th Amendment 2010)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of free education to students living below the poverty line including those from ethnic groups, Dalits and female.</li> <li>• Provision of female teacher position: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In primary schools where there are 3 approved teacher positions one must be female.</li> <li>- In primary school where there are seven approved teacher positions 2 must be female.</li> <li>- Primary schools with more than 7 approved teacher positions must have 3 female teachers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Representation of a woman teacher in District Education Committee.</li> <li>• A woman representative (social worker or educationist) in Village Education Committee.</li> <li>• A woman representation in the School Management Committee from among the parents to be selected by the parents themselves.</li> <li>• Special supports for girl children and the students from the Dalit and underrepresented ethnic groups of below poverty line.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Development Plans</b></p>	
<p>Fifth Plan (1975-80)</p>	<p>Appointment of female teachers in primary schools in order to increase girls' enrollment</p>
<p>The sixth Plan (1980-85)</p>	<p>Special programs to provide educational opportunities to girls and women from educationally backward communities</p>

The seventh Plan(1985-90)	Advocated for various incentive programs to girls such as scholarship, school uniforms, provision of hostels, free textbooks etc.
The Eighth Plan (1992-1997)	Continuation of incentive programs, implementation of Basic and Primary Education Program (BPEP), one female teacher in each primary school, NFE for 6 to 14 years out of schoolgirls.
The Ninth Plan (1997-2002)	Adopted mainstreaming, Gender equality and empowerment- a move towards gender justice Expansion of educational facilities and providing opportunities of quality education with continuation of BPEP
The Tenth Plan (2002-2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued emphasis on mainstreaming, Gender equality and empowerment, etc.</li> </ul>
Three Year Interim Plan 2007-2010 (11th Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One whole chapter of the Plan is dedicated to Gender mainstreaming and inclusion.</li> <li>In education programs related to gender equity and inclusion are in priority.</li> <li>Monetary incentive shall be augmented and distribution shall be made more transparent.</li> <li>Counseling service for students who have completed different levels shall be provided.</li> </ul>
Three Year Plan (2010-2013) (12th Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender equity development and inclusive education are priority programs in education sector.</li> <li>Develop and implement national and local programs to increase women and other disadvantaged children's access to education.</li> </ul>

<p>Thirteenth Plan (2013-2016)</p>	<p>Gender equality, inclusion and mainstreaming continued to be the priority. Some specific strategies and programs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Necessary programs for children’s physical, mental and intellectual capacity development.</li> <li>• Programmes to provide children with basic education and to retain them in school through effective collaboration with local government and community.</li> <li>• Initiation of a counseling system in educational institutes to provide counseling to the youths in areas concerning them.</li> <li>• Encourage government, non-government and private sectors to provide life skills to the youths.</li> <li>• Education and relevant skill based training for 16 to 25 year old youths.</li> </ul>
<p>Gender Mainstreaming and Girl’s Education Strategy Paper 2006 (MOE, 2006)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to assure gender equity at all levels of education structure and to systematically implement the above mentioned policies and provisions, the Ministry of Education and Sports formulated a Gender Mainstreaming and Girl’s Education Strategy Paper in 2006. The 16 specific strategies consist of provisions to address both access and quality related issues including arrangement to have female teachers provide necessary counseling to female students. It also has provision of networking and coordination for girls’ education. The strategy paper was developed with participation of non-government agencies working in the area of girls’ education and gender equity in education as an assumption that gender equality and girls’ education are shared responsibilities.</li> </ul>

<p>School Sector Reform Plan (2009-2015)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs to make teachers, school management committee and parents more responsible for their children's basic education.</li> <li>• Free and compulsory basic education implemented.</li> <li>• Arrangement shall be made for Girl child friendly school environment</li> <li>• Multi lingual education provisions.</li> <li>• Affirmative action initiated to ensure teacher recruitment from disadvantaged communities.</li> <li>• Minimum enabling conditions ensured for quality education.</li> <li>• To support in the integration of marginalized and HIV AIDs affected children.</li> </ul>
<p>Specific current programs and strategies to promote girls' (Source: Gender equity development section DOE file documents, 2012)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and improvement of school physical facilities.</li> <li>• Socio-psychological counseling to school going girls.</li> <li>• Scholarships from primary to higher secondary level.</li> <li>• Management of former bonded girl child labourer (Kamlari )<sup>19</sup>.</li> <li>• Expansion of school health and nutrition program.</li> <li>• Provision of cooking oil and day meal under food for education program.</li> <li>• Free primary education and free textbooks.</li> <li>• Twenty feeder hostel scholarship covering all 75 districts of Nepal.</li> <li>• Residential schools for children from Mountain regions and remote areas.</li> <li>• Recruitment of women facilitators for Early Childhood Programs.</li> <li>• Provision of women's literacy programs, adult schools and lower and secondary education through mode.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other national initiatives</b></p>	

<sup>19</sup> "The Kamaiya system is commonly known as an agriculturally based bonded labour system. Poor Kamaiya households either pledge children as collateral for loans, or children are sent to work in landowners' houses to secure Kamaiya contracts or to secure the rights to sharecrop" (Sharma and et al., 2001, p. 6). Girls of Kamaiya who are sent as labourers to landowners' houses are called Kamlari. Although the Kamaiya system is legally abolished, legacy still remains to some extent due to poverty. The Kamaiya system is mostly practiced in Western Tarai region.

<p>National Action Plan On implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 &amp; 1820. 2011/12– 2015/16]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure equitable, proportional and meaningful participation of women at all levels of decision making of conflict transformation and peace building processes.</li> <li>• Ensure the protection of women and girls’ rights and prevention of the violation of these rights in pre-conflict, during conflict and post conflict situations.</li> <li>• Promote the rights of women and girls, and mainstream gender perspectives in all aspects and stages of conflict transformation and peace building processes.</li> <li>• Ensure the direct and meaningful participation of conflict-affected women in the formulation and implementation of relief, recovery and rehabilitation programmes and to address the specific needs of women and girls.</li> <li>• Institutionalize monitoring and evaluation and ensure required resources for the implementation of the National Action Plan through collaboration and coordination of all stakeholders,</li> </ul>
<p>Three year Human Rights national Plan of Action 2011-2014</p>	<p>Education specific provisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning, child and gender friendly school environment.</li> <li>• Special programs to ensure free secondary education for target group.</li> <li>• Policy formulation for equitable access to higher education.</li> </ul>
<p>National Plan of Action for overall Development of adolescents 2014-2018</p>	<p>Roles and responsibilities of concerned government agencies are defined. Additionally the following provisions are also included,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define minimum standard for adolescent friendly school environment.</li> <li>• Scholarship and inspirational programs.</li> </ul>



# CHAPTER IV. EDUCATIONAL FACTORS AND PRACTICES

## A. Female teachers at lower and upper secondary levels

With the female teacher policy enforced in 2005 by the 3rd amendment of the Education Regulations 2059 (2002), the number of female teachers has steadily increased over the years. The increment is more visible at primary levels than in upper levels (see Table 17). The trend and status of women's education discussed in the previous chapter largely explains this situation (e.g., few women completing Bachelor's level education, increased representation of women in financial sectors<sup>20</sup> and service sectors, increased tendency to seek foreign employment).

**Table 17: Gender parity in teaching force by levels in all types of schools (as reported) 2012-2013**

Level	Female		Male		Total	GPI
Primary Level (1-5)	74,169	41.5%	104,365	58.5%	178,534	0.71
Lower secondary (6-8)	13,809	27.4 %	36,580	72.6%	50,389	0.38
Secondary (9-10)	6,426	17.3%	30,622	82.7%	37,048	0.21
Higher secondary (11-12)	2,863	15.5%	15,565	84.5%	18,428	0.18
Secondary (9-12)	9,289	16.7%	46,187	83.3%	55,476	0.20

DOE, 2012

The minimum qualifications required for primary and lower secondary level teaching is higher secondary level or equivalent and a 1 year teacher preparation course (TPC). The minimum qualifications required for secondary level teaching is a Masters in Education or equivalent with 1 year TPC (School Sector Reform Plan/MOE, 2009). Therefore, it is likely that most of the higher secondary level graduate women, whose number is higher than tertiary level graduates, join primary level teaching jobs. Moreover, concerted efforts to increase female teachers for decades have also contributed to the progress at the primary level.

<sup>20</sup> Growth of financial institutions from 2006 to 2012 (the figures do not reflect branches of the institutions)  
 Class A Licensed financial institutions (Commercial Bank): 18 to 31  
 Class B Licensed financial institutions (Development Bank): 28 to 88  
 Class C financial institution (finance company): 70 to 69  
 Class D Licensed Micro Finance Development Bank: 11 to 24  
 Saving and credit cooperatives (Limited Banking Activities): 19 to 16  
 NGOs (Financial Intermediaries): 47 to 36  
 (Nepal Rastra Bank, 2012, p. 2).

In summary, growth in female teachers has been very slow and steady. In 2008 out of the total teaching force, 38.6% (GPI 0.63), 24.7% (GPI 0.33) and 15.9% (GPI 0.19) at primary, lower secondary and secondary (9-10) levels respectively, were female (DOE, 2009). As mentioned above, primary level has shown more progress in this respect.

## **B. Teacher training on the use of gender sensitive language and pedagogy**

The National Center for Educational Development (NECD), an agency under the MOE, is responsible for overall human resource development of the MOE. The NCED teacher training programs included sessions on gender equality. Since such sessions were more theoretical, teachers who participated in teacher training were more familiar with the concepts. However, for the last few years, the NCED has initiated a demand based Teacher Professional Development (TPD) program. Previously conducted supply driven trainings have been replaced by demand based TPD.

TPD is designed in such a way that every teacher can access a total of 30 days training within a 5 year period (NCED, 2013). Each phase consists of 10 days. Five days are allocated for face to face training, 3 days for school based self-study (project work, action research, case study, etc.), and the remaining 2 days for follow up support or counseling where trainers visit schools and provide technical backstopping to the trainees.

Demands from teachers and head teachers are sought and collected through more than 1,053 Resource Centers located across the country. Demands are prioritized through different stages of the selection process. Issues/demands raised by at least 20 to 25 teachers are likely to be developed into training modules primarily because of cost, time and human resource implications. Areas or issues raised by only a few teachers are either left out or an attempt is made to incorporate the issue into other training modules. In summary, issues and needs raised by teachers, systems need, and subject specific issues are dealt with in the 5 day face to face training. However issues related to gender and social inclusion is hardly raised. Based on the topics trainers are outsourced from higher secondary schools or colleges locally. Issues to be included in teacher training usually come from international forums, central level machineries and other interest groups, but hardly from the ground level, as reported by a MOE staff with extensive experience in the NCED.

Furthermore, 7 areas (peace, human rights, and civic education; sex education; life skills; critical thinking; child friendly learning; value education; and school health and nutrition) are suggested in the 'TPD module implementation Training of Trainer (TOT) Manual' (Ibid.) as areas that can be incorporated into other training modules. In the TOT manual, gender sensitivity is included specifically under the 'child friendly learning' topic (p. 66). The package includes areas such as gender sensitive language and tone. However according to NCED staff, there is hardly any demand for training in such areas. Training related to subject teaching, material development in specific subjects, classroom management, and ways to encourage passive

children to actively participate in learning are commonly demanded. In the TPD TOT manual gender sensitivity is focused as an area needing attention but the extent to which this issue is addressed in actual training sessions is not known. NCED staff accept the need for gender sensitive language and pedagogy, however since the system adopted demand based TPD they cannot prescribe training areas that are not demanded. They assume that gender sensitivity is covered by training related to child friendly teaching. The general opinion was that although gender sensitive language and pedagogy is a cross cutting issue, it is unlikely that teachers would raise it or trainers would cover it in depth. The principal of a higher secondary school in Bardiya district (Mid-western Nepal) who was working as a trainer for TPD said that “Teachers are in fact oriented to focus on issues and problems related to subject specific teaching and that is why they all come up with technical issues instead of issues of equity and inclusion in their classrooms”. These different opinions and field realities indicate two things. One, the necessity of gender and socially inclusive practice is not yet recognized as quality imperatives. Two, the general assumption is that an improved subject teaching skill automatically improves quality of pedagogical practices. Both are matters of concern.

### **C. Approach to career counseling**

The situation of career counseling in schools was discussed primarily with grade 10 students; representatives of the female teachers’ society; TUN representatives; representatives of different organizations/associations of teachers; representatives of Histan; representatives of Hisan; and representatives of teachers of public higher secondary schools. Histan and Hisan represent private higher secondary schools. The information collected from the discussions revealed that formal career counseling does not exist in any type of school in Nepal. Exceptions may exist but none of the participants of the discussions identified any.

Most teachers from public schools said that they advise students only on the basis of their academic performance and they have not been able to educate students about different subjects, areas and sectors. One teacher reported that “Students oftentimes tell us what they want to be and we encourage them to go for it without further counseling or consultation.” Another teacher added that if students ask for advice regarding subjects to pursue teachers often suggest “In any case, study science in higher secondary level and get through it, then you can go into any stream”. Teachers persuade students to enroll in science because in this stream, students not only learn to work hard, but they also gain basic technical knowledge and skills, as well as mathematical and analytical skills which are useful in many fields. Other teachers reported that they advise students who are good in mathematics to continue in this stream because it is useful in life. In one of the FGDs, students reported that teachers encourage them to study the subjects that she/he teaches, while in other FGDs participants said that teachers usually encourage them to study hard, secure good marks, and pursue one’s interest, rather than advocating for any specific subject.

Generally there are more men in the Science and Technology fields of study. In the labour market as well there are more men in professional occupations, which include physicists, chemists, mathematicians and statisticians among many others (CBS, 2009). Girls are perceived to be less competent in Mathematics and Science and their participation in professional occupations is also negligible. HE enrollment trends confirm this, but school level examination results indicate otherwise. For example, the national assessment of grade 8 and grade 10 did not show significant differences in boys' and girls' scores in Mathematics and Science. According to the results of the national assessment undertaken in 2011<sup>21</sup> mean scores of boys and girls in grade 8 Mathematics were 45 and 41 respectively (Metsämuuronen and Kafle, 2013). In Nepali language it was 48 for boys and 49 for girls (Ibid.). Although the gender difference was not significant, ethnic and regional disparity was wide, and disparity in the average achievement of private (63%) and public (44%) schools was more significant (Ibid.). In the assessment of 10th graders who were preparing to sit for the SLC examination, mean scores of boys and girls in Mathematics were 18.1 and 18.5 respectively; and in Science it was 20.3 for boys and 21.0 for girls (EDSC, 2011). In Nepali language it was 16.4 for boys and 16.3 for girls (Ibid.).

Teachers' view regarding gender specific occupation selection was in keeping with the above results. In a group discussion a female teacher from a public school said "There is no such thing..... anyone can do anything in the teachers' views". Teachers from both private and public schools have the same tendency and viewpoint in this respect. For example, irrespective of gender those who score 90% in the grade 10 exam (SLC) are often advised to be medical doctors if not engineers. However, in the experience of a veteran principal of a Kathmandu based private women's college attached to higher secondary level, most parents or families still orient girls for marriage. Therefore, as soon as they reach Bachelor level 3rd year they are married off. In his observation they do not refuse or resist because they are already oriented and prepared for marriage. He said "Because of this most female students show no high aspirations. They are happy to get engaged in small scale work. However men/boys usually say that they will not work until they get a good degree/education". Similarly, in the FGD with girls the topic of marriage was discussed as an inevitable and important part of their lives. The above observation, mean age of marriage for Nepali women, and the grade 10 girl students' perception all positively correlate.

Some of the female teachers in the discussions said that girls mostly show interest in teaching, dancing and nursing but while delivering the curriculum, teachers do not discuss such interests. A female head teacher aptly added that "The concern is to overcome the hurdle (exam) which is right in front of them; occupation is a far away thing." Other teachers also admitted that they are concerned about finishing the curriculum on time and getting students through the

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<sup>21</sup> National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) is undertaken by the Education Review Office (ERO) of the MOE and assesses Nepali, Social Studies and Math of grade 8 students.

exams. In an education system where rigid student evaluation prevails and test scores are highly valued, other aspects of education become less important.

Private higher secondary schools and colleges are mushrooming resulting in high competition among institutions to enroll more students. One of the approaches used by many institutions is to offer a discount in fees. In this respect, a private higher secondary school teacher shared that parents usually refer to the discount offered by other schools and try to bargain. From the institution's perspective, he added that counseling occurs to encourage potential students to study subjects that the colleges/schools offer (e.g., candidates come in search for education or science but if the college offers only management, school authorities concentrate in counseling those students to enroll in management). He reported that in this regard, such counseling is aligned with the schools' interest.

As mentioned above, teachers' advice regarding career choice depends on examination scores. The better the score, the higher the chances of tempting students to pursue hard sciences and/or higher level technical degrees irrespective of the student's gender or interest. In other words, students' final examination scores are viewed as a basis to encourage them to pursue certain careers. This was confirmed by teachers from both private and public schools. However, public school teachers consider their students' economic conditions as well. As said by one of the public school teachers, "No matter how much we bless some students cannot be medical doctors". Nevertheless some high achievers get scholarships to pursue fields of their choice. For example, 5 students, including 1 girl from Neel Barahi Higher Secondary School located in Kathmandu, received scholarships in different private higher secondary schools to study science in the 2013-2014 academic year as reported by the head teacher. However not many students are fortunate enough to receive such scholarships because these types of scholarship schemes offered by private schools is motivated more by talent hunting to enhance their schools' image than by a sense of social responsibility.

Some teachers admitted that small occupations/enterprises also earn a decent living, but neither teachers nor families counsel students regarding these options. In their view, messages that students get in their homes, neighbourhoods and communities provide more guidance in career and subject choice. In this context generally 4 trends are observed in relation to students' selection of field of study and future career. The first is completely based on grade 10 (SLC) score or percentage; the second are teachers' suggestions; the third is based on the practices observed in their close circles (family members, neighbours and peers); and the fourth is market trends. However, social cultural norms and attitudes, and family economic condition cross cut all 4 trends. As indicated earlier, the family's financial situation is also a major decisive factor. Family's economic situation as a decisive factor in pursuing HE was reiterated by grade 10 students in every FGD as well.

High achieving students, particularly from private schools irrespective of gender prefer to study science and pursue medical or engineering degrees. They often assume that they are competent enough to succeed in the engineering or medical science streams. Schools, teachers' and families' contribution is significant in the cultivation of this kind of mentality. Teachers and families directly or indirectly encourage high achievers to pursue medical science or engineering. Whether she or he is actually interested or capable for such coursework is hardly considered. Thus many students, as said by one private school teacher, spend 4 years (undergraduate level) in confusion.

In Nepal social dignity is attached to occupation. For example, medical doctors and engineers continue to be highly valued in comparison to other occupations. They are regarded as being at the top of the occupational and social status ladder. As in the past, doctors and engineers have high salaries. One teacher concluded that "We don't advise our students to be a good person in future, we rather advise them to be an engineer or doctor". He added that parents and families also counsel their children in the same manner from a young age. However, in the opinion of another teacher, this kind of attitude has gradually begun to change among educated urban families. Due to the expansion of the financial sector, students and teachers are also inclined towards commerce or management streams. Nevertheless in the experiences of the teachers who participated in the discussion, students who score lower or in the second tier (Second Division in the SLC examination) usually join commerce or management streams. Those who secure even lower turn towards education and think of being a teacher as they see no other options. The comparatively easier courses of study in the education stream influences this decision.

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<sup>22</sup> SLC result follows the following ranking:  
Above 80%: Distinction  
60% to 79.99%: First Division  
45% to 59.99%: Second Division  
32% to 44.99%: Third Division  
Below 32%: Fail

Those who secure even lower turn towards education and think of being a teacher as they see no other options. The comparatively easier courses of study in the education stream influences this decision.

According to a public school higher secondary level teacher, parents in rural areas in particular are not aware of different occupations and therefore default to the suggestions of teachers or local elites regarding their children's education and career choices. In such places, it is often not appropriate or feasible to send girls away from home and therefore they are admitted in streams that are available in the local schools. For example, education and management are usually available in many places and as such most are admitted in these streams. Thus those who seek jobs afterward are most likely to either join teaching or financial institutions.

In many teachers' experiences, women whose performance is good prefer to pursue nursing. They reported that girls select nursing partly because of a sense of service and partly because of the possibility to go abroad. One female teacher stressed that the latter is a more reasonable justification because at one time the demand for nurses from abroad was high. There is still a chance of getting employment abroad in the nursing profession. Due to these reasons many Nepali men living and working abroad look for a bride back home with a nursing degree. This has certainly encouraged many women to pursue a nursing degree. With the growing number of hospitals and clinics in every corner in town, there is also a possibility of fast placement close to home. However, many nurses (76.6% out of 64 cases) who participated in the survey said that they selected this occupation because of interest. For 40.6%, job security was the reason for selecting it, and only 20.3% reported that they selected nursing with hope of working abroad.

Speaking about students' and families' choice of subject and occupation, a Madhesi teacher representing the Madhesi teachers' organization said that the job security that comes with a degree in medicine or engineering encourages many to pursue these professions. He added that there is no security in agriculture. The government does not offer loan security, protection when crop failures, or any other subsidies. Moreover, the government does not purchase produce and other harvests, and therefore people are afraid to take the risk of being employed in the agricultural field. The above deliberations and examples indicated two things: 1) there is hardly any opportunity or provision in schools to discuss innovative enterprises or career options, 2) the government's policies and priorities can have an indirect but strong influence on women's and men's career choice.

#### **D. Primary/secondary level curricula and textbooks from a gender perspective**

Curricula and textbooks are analyzed from a gender perspective time and again by the government as well as the non-government sector for different purposes. As a result curricula and textbooks have been revised and are gradually becoming more gender responsive. A major

review of grade 1 to 12 curricula and textbooks was undertaken by the MOE as preparatory work while developing the National Curriculum Framework 2007.

The Curriculum Development Center (CDC), an agency within the MOE audited primary level curricula and textbooks from a gender perspective in 2013. According to this audit, the curricula and textbooks of Nepali, Science, English, Math, Social Studies and Creative Art, and Health and Physical Education subjects are generally gender sensitive (CDC, 2013). However, the review has also identified areas where improvements are needed. A few examples include: 1) male figures and roles are still more highlighted; 2) a majority of all the literary works included in Nepali textbooks are written by men and; 3) women and men are confined to the gender stereotypical images and qualities in some books more than others.

A review of the audit report further revealed that, 1) Nepali textbooks seemed to be more gender biased than textbooks of other subjects and; 2) gender neutral language is considered as correct. Additionally, some reviewers/auditors expressed concern that men's roles are possibly being minimized. As such, the audit concluded that balance is essential (CDC, 2013).

## **E. Extra-curricular activities in school**

Most public schools organize extracurricular activities once a week. Education Rules 2002, clause 6 states that "Extra Curricular Activities and other programmes shall be conducted in the School" (p. 6). Clause 76 (Ibid., pp. 83-85) of the Rules also elaborates on the Extra Curricular Activity (ECA) programmes that schools should organize. However, the implementation of this clause is generally not monitored because administrative and academic issues receive more priority. Nevertheless schools conduct extra and co-curricular activities. Competitions are organized at the Resource Center level and the district levels as well. A variety of activities including indoor and outdoor games, dancing, oratory competitions, art and craft making and debates are organized. Students participate in different activities according to their interests. Teachers are also involved in selecting students for activities on the basis of students' aptitudes and skills. However, the survey with head teachers, male teachers, and female teachers revealed that in schools, irrespective of gender ECA places more emphasis on academic and/or mental activities such as quiz contests, debate/oratory competitions and dictation (see Table 18). It can be assumed that school employees find quiz contests and elocution more convenient to organize as these activities do not require any additional human or material inputs.



**Table 18: ECA selected by male and female students as reported by head teachers and teachers**

Games	Frequency of responses	
	Male student	Female student
Arts and craft	10	16
Athletics	28	18
Basketball	4	2
Cricket	17	0
Dance	19	52
Debate	24	33
Dictation	13	26
Drama	9	23
Educational tour	1	0
Football	42	3
Literary activities	33	32
Other Games	18	20
Quiz	50	66
Singing	19	48
Skipping	1	2
Tables Tennis	6	6
Volleyball	40	12
Total frequency of responses	334	359

Source: Field survey

When viewed from a gender lens a clear distinction is seen in the nature of ECAs that boys and girls participate in. The responses from all three groups of teachers revealed that girls generally participate in singing, dancing, and literature in addition to quizzes and debates, whereas boys mostly participate in volleyball, football, cricket and athletics<sup>23</sup> in addition to quiz contests (see Annex Table 5 for district wise responses).

Reasons given by the respondents (from head teachers, female teachers, and male teachers) for the selection of certain extracurricular activities and not others follow stereotypical notions of femininity and masculinity. For example, the justification that was most frequently given for the difference in the selection of activities between girls and boys was their physical differences – the perception that boys opt for physical activities more often than girls due to their physical

<sup>23</sup> For the purpose of analysis Kabaddi, running and KhoKho (local sport requiring physical movements) are included in the athletics.

strength. Some also gave a social justification- that family, friends and peer pressure deter girls from participating in nontraditional activities. The cumulative response showed that around 10% of the respondents identified girls' dress/uniform<sup>24</sup> as the preventing factor for activities that require movement. Twelve percent to 30% of the respondents also indicated that girls do not participate in physical activities due to their shy nature. Interestingly, the occupations that grade 10 FGD participants identified as suitable for boys and girls, and reasons given to their selection correlate with the trend in ECA selection and justifications given by teachers.

District and ethnicity wise analysis of girls' participation in sports correlates with the national scenario. It shows that almost all the female sports personalities (national footballers, cricketers, swimmers, martial arts players, weight lifters, other athletes, etc.) come from Hill castes and ethnics listed under Janajati (ethnic nationality) including Newar or Brahmin and Kshtriya. Even those participating from Tarai (Madhes) districts often belong to Hill castes and ethnics, with the exception of Tharu. Similarly in this survey, particularly among respondents from Dhanusa, none identified athletics as an ECA that girls participate in.

## **F. Infrastructure and resources in schools**

Infrastructure and resources are primarily comprised of components such as Student Teacher Ratio (STR); School Student Ratio (SSR); availability of teachers; teaching learning materials; condition and availability of school buildings and play grounds; games/sports materials; libraries; and science laboratories among other things. Some of these components are discussed below.

STR varies across districts and localities (see Table 19). For instance, classrooms of Tarai are usually overcrowded. Even within ecological belts one school may vary significantly from another. For example, in two schools located in Lalitpur and selected for the purpose of this study, one had only 16 students in grade 10 and the other had more than 50. However, redeployment of teachers initiated by the MOE has not been able to yield the desired results due to teachers' resistance, and their connections to and protection from political parties through various sister organizations of teachers.

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<sup>24</sup> In most public schools of Nepal, girls' uniform is shirt and skirt. These days uniform of many private schools include shirt and pants for both girls and boys. Very few public schools follow this trend.

**Table 19: STR and SSR in all types of community schools (based on reporting)**

Eco-belts	STR Primary (grades 1-5)	STR Lower secondary (grades 6-8)	SSR Basic (grades 1-8)	STR Secondary (grades 9-10)	STR Higher Secondary (grades 11-12)	SSR Secondary (grades 9-12)
Mountain	23	34	133	24	20	126
Hill	23	38	140	24	21	141
Valley	15	18	194	11	16	89
Tarai	44	61	279	31	23	185
<b>Total</b>	29	44	186	24	21	145

DOE, 2012

Due to political connections in most schools “irregular attendance, absenteeism and unwillingness to cover for other teachers often cause students to miss their studies. Attempts by Head Teachers to control teachers are likely to be treated as political” (Pherali and et. al. 2011, p. 8). This is one of the reasons for parents choosing to enroll their children in private schools where the management is stronger and political party influence hardly exists.

The availability of physical facilities is important as they attract and retain children in school, particularly girls. Many studies have identified lack of separate toilets with running water for girls as one of the major gender issues in the Nepali school system. In order to address this issue almost all plans and programs emphasize meeting the toilet and drinking water needs of all children, especially girls. With concerted effort, the number of separate toilets for school girls has increased. Information from the 2010-2011 academic year indicates that almost 80% of community schools have separate toilet facilities for boys and girls (see Table 20).

**Table 20: Availability of toilet and drinking water facilities in all levels of community schools**

Total community schools	Schools with Toilet facilities		Schools with Urinal facilities		Schools with adequate drinking water facilities
	Total schools with toilets facilities	School with separate toilets facilities for girls	Total schools with urinal facilities	School with separate urinal facilities for girls	
28,057	22,357	18,301	5,338	3,469	21,630
% of schools	79.7	65.2	19.0	12.4	77.1

DOE, 2012, p. 86

Fifteen out of 17 head teachers from 17 schools located in 8 districts who participated in the survey reported that their schools have adequate toilet facilities for girls. However, only 15 (out of 16 head teachers who responded) reported that there are water provisions in the girls' toilets.

Out of a total of 201,940 classrooms reported by 26,969 community schools, only 189,022 rooms were in good condition for teaching/learning purposes (DOE, 2012). Many classrooms required rehabilitation and 34,590 additional classrooms were needed for adequate space for students from all levels (Ibid.). Computers and electricity are also essential resources and data shows that schools with these facilities are steadily growing (Ibid.). However, these data need further verification because schools and local elites have a tendency to seek resources for additional infrastructure and upgrades (level upgrading) for other reasons such as political and personal interests, and thus reported data may be inaccurate (Multilingual Education Research and Expert Team, 2009). Similarly, reported data regarding physical facilities also have to be cautiously interpreted because schools have a tendency to underreport so a budget for the same purposes can be justified in the following year as well. The non-government sector also supports school physical facilities but schools often separate records and report only those built through the MOE grants.

Another important aspect, particularly from the perspective of adolescent girls, is availability of female teachers. Female teachers are considered key to creating a conducive learning environment for secondary level girls. However, as shown earlier in this report, many schools do not have female teachers. The presence of a dependable and approachable female adult in school is important for secondary level girl students to seek counsel (or talk to) about their thoughts and/or fears. Although the assignment of counsellors is one of the government's priorities, it has not yet been able to deliver. Thus, there is no help at school for many girls during times of social and psychological challenges such as times of stress due to examinations, or times of biological changes when they may have questions and concerns. The Center for Educational Research, Innovation and Development (CERID) (2009) also found that in the absence of female teachers, girl child friendly environments could not be created in schools because adolescent girls had no one to share their problems with.

## CHAPTER V. CAREER CHOICE

### **A. Grade 10 male and female students' plans to enter the labour market**

All 319 girls and boys from grade 10 who participated in FGDs had plans to enter the labour market. The reason for girls was more personal. For example, most girls who participated in FGDs wanted to work for independence as well as to fulfill basic needs. They preferred not to be dependent on their in-laws and husbands. Some viewed standing on one's own feet as being important because if their husbands were to leave them in the future, they would be able to live on their own. Some also viewed that husbands respect wives who earn. Others gave reasons such as contributing towards nation building and meeting the country's human resource needs for development. In general, most girls linked paid employment with security in life. Almost all girls viewed marriage as an inevitable part of their lives. However, they had doubts regarding the type of people, families and situations that they may find themselves in. Therefore, paid employment for girls was viewed as a security measure against an unknown future.

Most boys who participated in FGDs viewed entering the labour market as mandatory for them. They planned to enter the labour force to earn their living and become self-reliant, to meet family needs, to raise living standards for oneself and family, and for the overall development of their society and country. Other reasons for wanting to join paid employment included keeping one's life active and fulfilling one's wishes and desires. They also perceived employment in the labour market as a means of gaining social respect, a good life, and ultimately creating a good environment for the next generation. Traditional masculinity, which expects men to be bread winners and to contribute to the welfare of societies, was reflected in the boys' responses.

### **B. Grade 10 male and female students' plans to pursue tertiary education**

Almost all 319 (girls and boys) FGD participants studying in grade 10 reported that they would pursue tertiary education. Very few girls and boys said that they would not pursue further studies because their families could not afford it. Some boys planned to study only up to higher secondary level (grade 12) because, in their opinion, it is not possible to study and simultaneously look after the household as well.

Most girls were not sure how far they could pursue their studies. Although they were able to specify the fields of study they wished to pursue and obtain a degree in, the girls had doubts regarding the level of education that they would be able to attain. They identified 4 factors

that could decide their level of education: 1) SLC score; 2) families' financial capacity; 3) parents' or families' preferences and; 4) marital status and post-marriage situation. Nevertheless, their wishes included various subjects and occupations such as health assistant, nursing, education, medical, engineering hotel management, and scientist, among others. However, in the end most girls left the final decision regarding their HE up to their families' wishes and families' financial capacities.

SLC scores, followed by the financial situation of their families, were the major factors contributing to decisions of the level and field of study for the boys as well. For example, some thought of pursuing humanities because it is less costly. However, some wanted to study science because, in their views, this field opens many paths, and a degree in science makes it easier to find a job. Some wished to pursue management, medical, and engineering degrees, while others preferred to pursue technical education.

### **C. Jobs that grade 10 male and female students expect to have in the future**

A broader question was asked to uncover what students imagined themselves doing at the age of 30. In terms of profession they presented a wish list ("wish" list because they knew that the field and level of study are determined by many factors beyond their control). In the midst of uncertainty, girls named a range of professions such as teaching, banking job, civil service, acting, medical profession, nursing, hotel management and engineering. All the girls were certain they would have paid employment. Some also mentioned that they would be economically independent.

The boys' wish lists for professions at 30 years of age included teaching, engineering, business, civil service, medical profession, bank management, self-employment, acting, farming and jobs as athletes. Some boys said that they would be economically independent, and qualified/skillful in their professions by the age of 30.

In addition to listing jobs that they imagined themselves doing, both girls and boys were certain that by the age of 30 they would be married with children. Girls said that they would perhaps be taking care of children, doing household chores and also be employed. Boys also said that they would be employed and taking care of their families. In other words, both girls and boys saw themselves settled in both professional and family lives by the age of 30. The mean age of marriage in Nepal is quite low and the socio cultural norms largely expect girls and boys to be married and have children by their mid-twenties. Although this has been changing for urban dwellers, rural residents still adhere to it. Therefore given the socio cultural context, girls' and boys' expectations to settle down and be employed by the age of 30 is quite reasonable.

#### **D. Careers/occupations perceived suitable for females and males**

Two types of tools were used to identify girls' and boys' career choices for themselves and for the opposite sex: 1) all the FGD participants were asked collectively to identify the jobs that they found suitable for females and males and 2) all the FGD participants were asked to rate occupations according to their preference on a 5 point rating scale with 1 being the most preferred and 5 the least preferred. The average of all ratings related to each occupation was calculated. Analytical domains were gender and caste/ethnicity.

Girls and boys were not very explicit in identifying the types of jobs that they viewed as more suitable for males and females in FGDs. However, when they were asked explicitly to list the jobs that they thought were more suitable for males and jobs that they thought were more suited for females, disparities clearly surfaced. Interestingly, boys' and girls' opinions did not differ much. For example, both boys and girls identified jobs in farming, army, police, sports, businesses, driving, and employment as medical doctors, engineers, scientists, and pilots as more suitable for males. While teaching, fashion designing, dancing, social work/service, tailoring/knitting nursing and employment as airhostesses/flight attendants and beauticians were identified as more suitable for females. Interestingly, although more than 70% of employed women are in the agriculture sector (CBS, 2009) girls and boys perceived employment in this sector as more suitable for men. Boys identified civil service as equally suitable for both females and males, whereas girls viewed civil service as more suitable for males. These responses show that the increasing number of women in the police force and other non-traditional occupations have hardly influenced the perceptions of these children. This also indicates that there is an absence of discourses in schools regarding career options. The FGD participants were also asked the reasons behind identifying certain occupations for males and certain for females. The rational were varied in the sense that some students' responses were overly patriotic, which is more a reflection of what they have been taught by teachers and curriculum, whereas some clearly attributed the selection to perceived gender roles and biological differences. The top 5 jobs identified as suitable for boys and girls are presented in Table 21 (for detail see Annex Table 2).

**Table 21: Occupations perceived as suitable for boys and girls by grade 10 FGD participants (in Rank)**

Occupation perceived as suitable	Priority rank by girls'		Priority rank by boys'	
	For Boys	For Girls	For Boys	For Girls
Acting		Fifth		
Agriculture related technician				Fifth
Agriculturist/farmer	Fifth		Fifth	
Air Hostess/Flight attendant		Third		Third
Army	Fourth		Fourth	
Athlete			Fifth	
Beautician				Third
Business	Third		Third	
Dancing/Choreography				Fifth
Driving			Fourth	
Engineer	First		First	Fifth
Medical doctor	Second	Fourth	Second	Fourth
Nurse		First		Second
Pilot	Second		Fourth	
Police			Fifth	
School/College teacher	Fourth	Second	Second	First
Singing		Fifth		

Source: FGDs

Table 21 shows that in relation to career choice, boys' and girls' perceptions have tilted towards traditionally and socially accepted norms and attitudes. For example, service oriented or jobs requiring care and nurturing are identified as more suitable work for women by both girls and boys. Girls' choices of ECAs and their career choices positively correlate. In other words, girls' preferred ECAs as reported by the head teachers and teachers matched with their own perceptions regarding careers suitable for females. Although in some FGDs girls and boys reported that both males and females are equal and they are capable of doing any type of job, in reality, inherent socio cultural norms appears to influence perceptions regarding career choices.



FGD participants were also asked to rate the occupations according to their preference on a 5 point rating scale. From a gender perspective the result was not significantly different from their perceptions regarding occupations suited for women and men. As reported by teachers during the group discussions, when viewed from caste and ethnic perspectives boys' and girls' preference regarding occupations seemed to be influenced by their surroundings. For example, Brahmans/Kshtriyas girls' rating of employment in the army is lower than that of girls from Janajati groups. This preference can be directly linked with the fact that more men from Janajati groups than from Brahmans/Kshtriyas in totality join the army (British, Indian or Nepal army)<sup>25</sup>. In another instance Brahmans/Kshtriyas girls' ratings of employment as beauticians and dancers was lower than that of Dalit girls' ratings. This can also be explained from Brahman/Kshtriyas' socio cultural norms which still glorify academic and/or knowledge based occupations over manual work. Irrespective of gender and caste/ethnicity the rating for civil service ranged from 2.5 (ethnic male) to 3.3 (Dalit female) out of a scale of 5. Madhesi males, and Dalit males and females rated civil service more highly than other groups (see Annex Table 3).

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<sup>25</sup> There are more Kshtriyas (43.50%) followed by Brahmans (8.64%) in the Nepal Army. Percentage of hill ethnics (hill Janajatis) is much higher than that of Brahmans, hill Dalits and Madhesi castes and ethnics (Nepal Army, 2014). Previously, in the British Army only Gurung and Magar men were recruited (which was intensified in 1884), but after 1980 Rai and Limbu men were also recruited (Gurung, 2011). All four are Janajatis.

## CHAPTER VI. ANALYSIS AND LINKAGES

The education system needs to be viewed against the value given to education by the members of society. In Nepal traditionally formal education was the cultural and social capital of males from higher caste groups. As a result of obtaining formal education certificates and degrees they were regarded as highly knowledgeable and competent members of the society. Traditionally most of the male from these caste groups required education to undertake traditional occupations. Practices and policies of education are still influenced by this traditional framework to some degree. Thus the correlation between career choice of girls and the education system context and policies is thus difficult to separate from the context where education is structured and practiced.

### **A. Correlation between career choice of girls and the education system and policies**

The correlation between career choice of girls and the education system and policies is difficult to separate from contexts where education is structured and practiced. Girls' career choice and the education system and practices are all connected to and influence one another. Nonetheless the country's socio cultural practices and economic growth also need to be considered when analyzing these connections. The above discussion and deliberations demonstrate that Nepali school education is more academic and meritocratic. Focus is given to academic courses. Although periodic student assessments are applied, high priority is given to summative (at the end) evaluations rather than formative (on-going) evaluations. Scores and percentages obtained in final examinations are highly valued over other social, vocational and life skills. Teachers who are accustomed to and guided by this kind of system hardly construct different kinds of learning environments and expectations for students, particularly for girls. Parents are also very conscious of the social dignity and respect that come with high scores, academic degrees and certain vocations. However, family and society have their own expectations from girls, which eventually contribute to girls' disposition, schooling and career choice.

As schools function more rationally they revere and encourage high achieving girls to pursue the same subject as advised for boys. However many girls are not able to obtain high achievements or continue their studies due to unfriendly pedagogical practices; inadequate school and home learning environments; traditional socio cultural norms and attitudes that venerate boys' success more than girls'; and family economy. All these factors create barriers for girls to select subjects and careers that they are interested to pursue.

There are policies and provisions to address gender issues in education. Different programs to promote girls' education are being implemented by government and non-government organizations. Monetary and other kinds of incentives provided to girl students are examples of interventions which have partially contributed to their increased enrollment and attendance. Existing initiatives however do not necessarily help cultivate girls' interest and aptitude or help them academically because such interventions are not linked with quality outcomes. One of the reasons for this is the lack of internalization and commitment to address issues at the implementation level i.e., schools and districts. In addition, the education system has not been able to associate incentive with performance and outcomes.

Fewer women in HE is reflected in their insignificant participation in professional jobs (engineers, medical professionals, school teachers) and senior official positions with only 0.8% and 0.2% respectively. Hence, a positive relationship between women's education and their participation in the labour market is observed. Their participation in elementary occupations (requiring only primary level education); service works; and crafts and related trade works are higher with 9.1%, 5.5% and 5.5% respectively. As noted earlier, women's participation in TEVT is very low. This is partly because vocational skills are seen as men's domain as most of the skills require physical labour, and partly because women cannot access facilities as most do not get the information about skill training in a timely fashion. Moreover, disadvantaged women who receive scholarships are not likely to join the subject/trade of their choice because incentive is allocated to certain vocations only. Thus women can neither continue to upper levels of formal education nor pursue vocational training conveniently. As a result they are likely to be left with limited options in the labour market.

## **B. Correlation between career choice of girls and education factors and practices**

Education related factors and practices influence girls' HE attainment and so does the presence of female teachers. First and foremost, parents are more willing to send their daughter(s) to school, where there are more female teachers owing to the safety of girls and potential physical harassment by male teachers. Moreover, female students feel comfortable talking with female teachers about their concerns, which may be biological, social, academic, or mental, providing them with an important source of support. Female students also look up to their female teachers as their role models, who directly or indirectly influence female students' disposition, career choices and their parents' decision regarding the pursuit of their daughter's HE.

Although studies in Nepal do not consistently show positive correlation between the presence of female teachers and girls' education, female teachers are still considered to be a positive factor influencing girls' learning (Bista, 2005, CERID, 2009). Moreover, the chances of having female instructors in the vocational track are minimal because of the small number of women who assume positions in vocational fields. Female teachers are concentrated in the primary

level and their presence declines in the upper levels and vocational trainings where at least a Bachelor level degree or equivalent qualification is required for teaching. This situation reinforces the traditional notion that higher level jobs and technical vocational fields are men's domains. Consequently, female students are left with very few examples to motivate themselves to continue their studies and to pursue HE and technical vocational fields.

Furthermore, gender issues, gender sensitivity and their implication on girls' and boys' learning are not covered adequately by teacher training programs. Both the training providers and the trainees do not recognize gender and equity issues as quality imperatives. As such, teachers are likely to consciously or unconsciously acknowledge traditional notions of gender constructs that influence classroom practices, and girls' and boys' selection of ECAs and subjects. This perpetuates girls' tendencies to continue to see themselves fit for traditionally accepted occupations and roles for females. Since teachers, families and even the education system give importance to academic excellence, which is more often based on the students' scores achieved in summative evaluations, ECAs that have been accommodated in the curriculum for students' holistic development fail to serve the purpose. As a result teachers who take account of nothing but the students' scores, both the boys and girls are deprived of an environment that would help them explore and pursue their interests and creativities. Moreover, encouraging students to pursue areas of study for HE in which they have scored highest does not necessarily guarantee their interest or competence in it.

As mentioned earlier, both girls and boys develop their own understanding of gendered roles that are highly influenced by socio cultural norms and attitudes from an early age. These social and cultural factors have shown to strongly influence their interests and choices regarding their areas of interests and studies. Girls, particularly those with good scores and high academic achievements, may not pursue HE or advanced level technical education in spite of the encouragement and inspiration they receive from their teachers. As for many girls who fail to score well in their examinations and/or happen to belong to poorer economic backgrounds, their choices are often extremely limited.

Although there is no significant disparity in boys' and girls' achievements in school level Mathematics and Science, the gender gap "in latent ability is widening in upper grades" (ERO, 2014, p. 394). Declining proficiency influences girls not pursue these subjects after SLC and consequently they often end up in lower skill occupations. As mentioned above, both school and home factors contribute to this trend. However the education system's heavy focus on academic excellence but inadequate support, shortchanges girls who often do not have a favorable learning environment at home, in terms of time, space, guidance and support. Teachers concentrate on finishing the curriculum within a prescribed time frame and preparing students for examinations rather than preparing students to be independent learners and critical thinkers who are 'learning to learn' and 'learning for life'. Most children in community schools start to falter academically at the primary level, as confirmed by the

average scores of grade 8 produced by National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA). Many girls can neither cope with the heavy emphasis placed on higher order academic work at HE particularly in Science, Mathematics and other technology based fields, nor do they try to succeed because they were never encouraged to enter these disciplines in the first place. In these situations, girls who do not fit within the academic frame are left behind and end up taking less challenging subjects and occupations later in life. As a result, most of the women and girls enter the informal sector, where their employment is vulnerable. The propensity to join the management and education streams, decreasing tendencies to complete degree level education and low HE attainment rate among women exemplify the above observations. Women's low education rate and high involvement in the informal sector with unpaid work increases the risk of financial insecurity and poor health, reinforcing the poverty trap that women continue to be caught in. Therefore gender equality in all spheres is highly essential to break the circle of disparity. Increased gender equality in households, markets and society positively contribute to educational attainment, women's health, and access to markets, leading to increased labour force participation, productivity, earnings and improved children's well-being (The World Bank, 2007, p. 5).

### **C. Correlation between career orientation of girls and the overall structure of the labour market**

As noted earlier, most women enter the labour force with a minimum level of education. Moreover, women with higher secondary degrees are mostly employed as 'technicians and associate professionals' and in 'service works' in addition to the subsistence agriculture. Thus grade 10 female students' perceptions and preferences regarding occupation, their rationale behind selecting certain occupations for boys and certain occupations for girls, and the composition of the labour market<sup>26</sup> all correlate positively with one another.

The notion that males are stronger than women and therefore more fit for certain kinds of jobs are ingrained in most girls' minds. This kind of orientation and the nature of the labour market where there are very few female role models in nontraditional jobs orient young girls to pursue less challenging subjects and less challenging careers. Families' gender stereotyped attitudes and norms are also shaped by the labour market.

The uncertainty shown by grade 10 female students regarding the direction of their future lives, and the large portion of economically inactive women spending time performing household duties (CBS, 2009) also provides ground to suspect that many of them expect to be married

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<sup>26</sup> Occupations grade 10 girls identified as suitable for women such as teaching, nursing, social work, acting, dancing, singing, etc. are classified as 'technicians and associate professionals', and airhostess/flight attendant, fashion designing, etc. are classified as 'service works'.

and do unpaid household work after acquiring HE or above education. This type of thinking contributes to the already high numbers of economically inactive women. Therefore, women's education, social norms and expectations, gender stereotypes and women's participation in the labour market combine to create a vicious cycle, and thereby contribute to young girls' career orientation.

In Nepal, there is usually a great ideological gap between schools and households. Schools' relations with the locale are very weak because of their hierarchical and modernized nature. Schools are structured to follow 'scientific' and 'rational' thinking whereas communities follow the relational model. This is why schools/teachers often provide inputs to students on a merit basis irrespective of gender, whereas family's decisions and practices are largely influenced by community decisions and practices. Communities follow cultural norms, values and/or gender stereotypes, and try to create boundaries for girls and boys and thereby limit girls' educational and career opportunities. Sexual abuse that girls are likely to face also compels families and communities to create boundaries for girls. In addition, teachers' classroom practices are not necessarily gender sensitive either. Girls who are high achievers are able to succeed due to their own inherent capacity, ability to manage time for study, hard work, and family and/or siblings support and influences. Therefore girls who lack these qualities but could potentially succeed in school are unlikely to get opportunities to pursue HE and subjects of their choices.

The influence of family and community is stronger than that of school. Communities and families offer lifelong support whereas schools are temporary dwellings. Therefore it is important for girls to be accepted by and belong to their community and family. Moreover, a support system for women outside of the household and immediate community does not exist in Nepal. This leaves them with little choice other than accepting advice and instructions given by their families in terms of education and career.

#### **D. Correlation between the education system and policies/factors and the structure of the labour market**

As said earlier both in-school and out-of-school factors contribute to girls' low participation and success in education and careers. Meritocracy based system favors both boys and girls equally as long as they are high achievers. Yet due to multiple reasons girls' educational attainment rate continues to remain lower than that of boys. Attempts have been made through interventions at the policy as well as program levels to create girl friendly school environments. Young women are gradually entering nontraditional vocations as well. But due to their low participation in HE, their presence in higher order technical and professional fields is comparatively low. This is one of the reasons for wage disparity.

Educational policies and programs have not been able to yield expected outcomes. One of the reasons is the weak implementation of programs and policies. Many schools lack human and technical capacities, as well as the infrastructure needed to implement reform agendas (e.g. introduction of skill based subjects, child centered teaching/learning, gender friendly environment, etc.). Teacher commitment and professionalism are also major issues. Factors beyond the control of schools, such as family influences and decisions cannot be ignored either. Family priorities are a strong determinant of girls' education attainment. More girls are entering school but they lack adequate time at home to do school work. Families require help in performing household chores and it is often girls who should share household duties due to the culture of sexual division of labour. Household obligations increase with the girls' age. Moreover, since girls' education is not a priority, whether they have the time to prepare for school or not is not a concern for most families. The notion is that sending children, particularly girls to school for 6 hours every day is more than enough time and contribution on the family's part. The tendency to think in terms of opportunity cost influences the extent to which household chores are assigned to girls. Moreover, the notion that sons take care of parents and they are the breads winners determines the priorities families set in terms of sons' and daughters' education. This is reflected in the higher enrollment of boys than of girls in private schools that are perceived as quality education providers.

## REFLECTION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Nepali women's participation in education, the labour market, governance and politics has increased over a period of time consequently improving their overall situation. Women are gradually entering occupations perceived suitable for men only. The political changes and deliberate effort made by the government and non-government sectors have largely contributed to this positive change. International instruments and treaties have also created pressure for this change. However, the changes are yet to be equalized. There remains a significant gap in gender equality between urban and rural dwellers. Similarly, the changes are more visible among some castes and ethnics groups. For example, there are significantly greater numbers of women from some ethnics and caste groups in nontraditional occupations. This imbalance is observed in education attainment rates as well. Both demand and supply factors contribute to this imbalance. On the supply side, barriers include inequitable distribution of resources, limited access to affordable high school (grades 11 and 12) and tertiary education, gender insensitive classroom and school practices, a gap between policies and practices, unprepared and indifferent implementation level machineries, and States' inability to ensure security for women and girls. Barriers on the demand side include priority given to sons' education and interests over daughters', unequal gender and power relations, women's and girls' restricted mobility, early marriage, poverty, and culture to view men as the sole bread winner of the household.

In general, the education system's success lies in linkages among education practices (curriculum delivery, student assessment, learning environment, etc.); the labour market; society's expectations; and female and male students' expectations. When viewed from a gender perspective, success of education lies in linkages between education interventions (policies, strategies, programmes, etc.); duty bearers' temperament (behavior, attitude, worldview, etc.); and the socio cultural environment that constructs gender roles and relations. It is indeed a challenge to analyze and understand the ramifications of all of these mutually inclusive aspects that affect girls' and boys' education in different ways. This research confirmed that women's and girls' educational attainment, the labour market and socio cultural norms, attitudes and practices are interwoven. This blending has contributed in shaping girls' and boys' perceptions regarding careers suited for women and men. The educational goals related to gender equity and equality therefore demand in-depth analysis and understanding of interconnectedness of all the aspects that have bearings on girls' and boys' education. Policies, strategies and programs are required to be grounded on such analysis and understanding to achieve the desired outcomes.



Furthermore, the ideological gap between school and community manifests in girls' schooling and education. Schools are required to function rationally. In other words, school machineries, including teachers, are expected to promote and/or follow equality and equity norms. Household and family norms and practices on the other hand, follow community rules, cultures and practices, which often do not agree with school norms. For example, education factors and practices preach for gender equality in access to education, educational processes and educational outcomes but, at the family level, the notion that sons are bread winners and security during parents' old age determines parents' priority in terms of sons' and daughters' education. It is a paradox that teachers, who are social leaders, often accept gender inequitable cultures and practices instead of advocating and reorienting families and communities towards change. In this context, a strong bridge is needed between schools and communities, which is currently lacking in Nepal.

Women and girls require social respect, as well as physical and financial security. In Nepal, all three are often possible through engagement in family and community networks. It is very important for a Nepali woman to develop and maintain good relations with her kinsfolk and sustain the sense of belonging. Lack of engagement in family and a feeble bonding with them could put women's social respect and, physical and financial security at risk. Therefore, women and girls are more likely to compromise their educational and occupational aspirations if they sense that their choices could ostracize them from their families and communities.

Moreover, due to the expected roles and limitations, girls often create a ceiling for themselves, which influences their efforts and choices of subjects to pursue. Consequently, many women end up in low skilled, low paid jobs (i.e. often informal sector work, as well as unpaid work). It is therefore important to view women's and girls' occupational choices not only in relation to the education system but also in relation to larger socio cultural factors and family income. A strong connection is necessary between the education system, the labour market and socio cultural factors that promote girls' and boys' learning opportunity, creativity and interests and also curve the gender stereotypical perceptions that most girls and boys continue to grow with. Some suggestions to help materialize this overarching goal are proposed below.

### **At the national level:**

Political parties need to be aware of the role they must play in ensuring greater gender equality in education and employment:

- Political parties should regularly be informed and made aware of the condition of education system, its outcomes, and the role they need to play in carrying out reforms at both national and district levels.
- Lobbying for change and action are also necessary to persuade political parties to identify issues, make commitments and take necessary action.

### **There needs to be far greater collaboration between different sectors:**

- Sectoral co-ordination, i.e. between the Department of Labour, the Department of Women and Children and Social Welfare, and the Department of Education and academia is essential to mobilize technical and financial resources needed to ensure gender equality in career orientation.
- Functional collaboration between the CTEVT, the CDC and the DOE is essential for the successful delivery of skills-based courses for girls as well as boys in school.

### **Monitoring systems need to be strengthened and enhanced:**

- The government needs to develop stronger monitoring mechanisms to ensure that all statutory provisions related to gender equality in the workforce are properly enforced.
- Systems of monitoring need to be enhanced to ensure they include both quantitative and also crucial qualitative information. Monitoring needs to be informed by research programmes, both at the macro policy level and at the micro or local levels in order to identify gaps and inform the design of more equitable policies and programmes.
- There needs to be a system which ensures that schools are evaluated periodically on a sample basis regarding visible and invisible gender equity and sensitivity situations. The ERO/MOE needs to be strengthened and assigned to this task.

### **At local level:**

Shared understanding and greater collaboration between school and community is necessary:

- There needs to be ongoing dialogue between schools and communities regarding issues related to gender and employment.
- Government initiatives to ensure gender equity in education need to be deep rooted in order to mediate the opposing forces between formal schooling and the socialization process of girls and boys.

### **Teachers need to be more informed practitioners:**

- Teachers need to learn from examples of good practices and use these to help develop their own practice. This approach could be used in action research projects which provide teachers with a structure within which they can reflect on their own practices.
- Teachers need to be encouraged to be proactive and to recognize that changes in the employment aspirations of girls does not merely come from following the curriculum and using text books. They should seek examples of women working in nontraditional trades and use them as examples and role models in their teaching. Teachers should also recognize and develop strategies to overcome cultural/familial pressures that are in opposition to girls' educational/career goals.

### **School leadership needs to be supportive of the development of girls' and boys' creativity and interests:**

- Schools need to recognize ECA as a learning opportunity that has far reaching effects in girls' and boys' future learning and career choices.
- Education authorities need to orient school leaderships to utilize ECA as a platform to change gender stereotypical perceptions and qualities that girls and boys carry with them.

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## Annexes

Annex Table 1A: Type & number of research participants, & location

Region	Central Tarai	Eastern Hill	Valley				Eastern Mountain	Western Hill	Far western Tarai	Total
			Dhanusa	Ilam	Kathmandu	Bhaktapur				
<b>Participants</b>										
<b>Grade 10 female students who participated in 5 point rating &amp; FGDs</b>	20	20	20	20	18	20	20	20	158	
<b>Grade 10 male students who participated in 5 point rating &amp; FGDs</b>	23	20	20	20	18	20	20	20	161	
<b>Survey</b>										
Bachelor level non-working women	13	15	XX	XX	7	10	XX	15	60	
Bachelor level non-working men	11	15	XX	XX	6	10	XX	15	57	
Women school teacher	11	9	8	6	9	3	XX	20	66	
Men school teacher	9	7	8	7	7	9	XX	XX	47	
Head Teacher survey	6	2	2	2	2	2	XX	2	17	
Working women	9	2	33	15	XX	3	XX	XX	62	
Working men	6	4	25	XX	XX	4	XX	XX	39	
Nurses	20	XX	28	18	XX	XX	XX	XX	66	
Women flight attendants	XX	XX	18	XX	XX	XX	XX	XX	18	
<b>Total respondents of survey</b>									<b>751</b>	
<b>FGDs with grade 10 male and female students</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	<b>32</b>	
<b>Group discussion:</b>										
Higher Secondary School and Teacher representatives (1 man doing CA course & 1 attempting MBBS entrance exam also participated in this discussion)									9	
Teacher Union Nepal & representatives of different Teacher Organizations									14	
Women teacher society									15	
<b>Total participants of the discussions</b>									<b>38</b>	

**Annex Table 1B: : Selected schools**

SN.	Districts	Name of the Schools		Total
1.	Baglung	Tribhuvan Higher Secondary School (HSS)	Janamat High School	2
2.	Bhaktapur	Bageshwori HSS	Adarsha Azad HSS	2
3.	Dhanusa	SankatMochan HSS	Shree Madhyamik Vidhyalaya (High School)	2
4.	Ilam	Bhagawati HSS	Adarsha HSS	2
5.	Kailali	Sarada HSS	Shree Panchodaya HSS	2
6.	Kathmandu	Janasewa HSS	Mangal HSS	2
7.	Lalitpur	Mahalaxmi HSS	Luvun High School	2
8.	Solukhumbu	Shree Janajagriti HSS	Garma High School	2
<b>Total schools</b>				<b>16</b>

**Annex Table 2: Occupations perceived as suitable for boys and girls by grade 10 FGD participants**

	Occupation perceived as suitable	Frequency (girls)		Frequency (boys)	
		Boys'FGD	Girls' FGD	Boys' FGD	Girls' FGD
1.	Accountant/CA	3	1	2	1
2.	Acting	3	9	5	6
3.	Agriculture related technician		1		
4.	Agriculturist/farmer	8	4	8	3
5.	Air Hostess/Flight attendant		13		8
6.	Army	10	1	9	
7.	Baby sitting				1
8.	Bank employee/Banker	6	3	1	2
9.	Beautician		7		8
10.	Business	12	3	10	2
11.	Carpentry/construction worker	2		3	
12.	Chef	1			
13.	Civil service	5	3	2	2
14.	Contractor			1	
15.	Counsellor		1		
16.	Dancing/Choreography	3	6	1	6
17.	Department store worker				1
18.	Driving	5	2	9	1
19.	Driver's assistant	1			
20.	Engineer	14	5	13	6

**Annex Table 2: Occupations perceived as suitable for boys and girls by grade 10 FGD participants**

	Occupation perceived as suitable	Frequency (girls)		Frequency (boys)	
		Boys'FGD	Girls' FGD	Boys' FGD	Girls' FGD
21.	Fashion designer	1	6	2	4
22.	Fine artist	1	2	2	
23.	Foreign employment	2		3	
24.	Hotel manager	2	1	2	2
25.	Industrialist	2		1	
26.	Janitor	1			
27.	Journalist	2	3	3	2
28.	Legal profession	3	6	2	2
29.	Literary (Writer, poet)	1	1	1	
30.	Mechanics			1	
31.	Medical doctor	13	10	11	7
32.	Modeling		1		2
33.	Musician			1	
34.	Nurse		16		13
35.	Office manager	1		1	
36.	Office staff		2		2
37.	Pilot	13	4	9	3
38.	Police	7	1	8	1
39.	Politician/leader	3	3	7	2
40.	Psychologist		1		
41.	Receptionist/office assistant		2		2
42.	School/College teacher	10	15	11	15
43.	Scientist	4	1	3	1
44.	Self employment	1	1		1
45.	Singing	4	9	4	5
46.	Small shop owner		1		2
47.	Social mobilizer		1		1
48.	Social worker/service	2	6	1	2
49.	Sports person	5	2	8	3
50.	Tailoring/knitting		6		5
51.	Technician (e.g overseer, plumbing, electrician & others)	5		3	
52.	Travel & Tour business including tour guide	1		1	1
53.	Veterinary doctor			1	

**Annex Table 3: Preferred occupation of grade 10 male and female students by ethnicity**

SN	Occupations						Brahman/Kshtriya						Hill ethnic						Madhesi caste/ethnic						Dalit							
							Male			Female			Total			Male			Female			Total			Male			Female			Total	
	N	M	N	N	M	N	N	M	N	N	M	N	N	M	N	N	M	N	N	M	N	N	M	N	N	M	N	N	M	N		
1.	Accountancy related	49	1.9	43	2.1	92	2	56	2.2	62	1.8	118	2	18	2.6	22	2.4	40	2.5	19	2.0	8	2.4	27	2.1							
2.	Agriculture technician	46	2.5	42	2.0	88	2.3	53	2.5	59	1.8	112	2.1	18	2.2	22	2.3	40	2.3	18	2.6	8	2.3	26	2.5							
3	Air Hostess/Flight attendant	48	1.7	42	2.6	90	2.1	51	1.6	66	2.5	117	2.1	18	1.5	21	2.5	39	2	16	1.7	8	2.9	24	2.1							
4	Army	48	2.5	38	1.8	86	2.2	54	2.0	62	1.8	116	1.9	18	2.3	23	1.8	41	2	15	3.0	6	2.2	21	2.8							
5	Bank staff/banker	49	2.6	41	3.0	90	2.8	54	2.7	67	2.6	121	2.6	19	2.8	22	2.6	41	2.7	19	2.2	7	3.0	26	2.4							
6	Beautician	49	2.0	44	1.8	93	2	53	1.4	64	2.4	117	1.9	18	2.2	24	2.7	42	2.5	19	1.1	8	2.5	27	1.5							
7	Business	50	2.7	44	1.8	94	2.3	51	2.9	62	2.3	113	2.5	18	2.8	23	2.3	41	2.5	19	2.7	8	2.8	27	2.7							
8	Civil service	50	2.6	43	2.8	93	2.7	49	2.5	63	2.9	112	2.7	18	3.0	24	2.7	42	2.8	18	3.1	8	3.3	26	3.2							
9	College teacher	50	2.7	44	2.7	94	2.7	51	2.5	61	2.3	112	2.4	18	3.0	23	3.1	41	3	19	2.5	7	1.3	26	2.2							
10	Dancer	17	3.2	17	2.3	34	2.8	31	2.7	31	2.5	62	2.6	2	2.0	9	2.6	11	2.5	7	2.9	3	3.3	10	3							
11	Farming	48	2.8	41	1.6	89	2.2	52	2.6	60	2.0	112	2.3	18	2.2	22	2.0	40	2.1	19	2.3	8	1.9	27	2.2							
12	Fashion Designer	7	3.0	8	3.3	15	3.1	20	3.5	21	3.2	41	3.3	1	1.0	7	3.0	8	2.8	5	3.2	2	4.0	7	3.4							
13	Fine artist	50	2.4	43	1.8	93	2.2	51	2.4	62	2.0	113	2.2	19	2.9	23	2.2	42	2.5	19	2.0	8	2.3	27	2							
14	Foreign employment	48	2.0	41	1.5	89	1.8	56	1.8	63	1.8	119	1.8	18	1.9	21	1.5	39	1.7	18	1.8	8	2.0	26	1.8							
15	Forestry related	48	1.9	44	1.8	92	1.9	49	2.1	61	1.7	110	1.9	18	2.1	23	2.2	41	2.2	19	1.9	8	1.8	27	1.9							
16	Health technician	47	2.0	42	2.4	89	2.2	50	2.4	59	2.6	109	2.5	16	2.9	24	3.0	40	3	19	2.6	8	3.5	27	2.9							
17	Industry	50	2.6	44	1.9	94	2.3	51	2.7	61	1.9	112	2.2	19	2.2	22	2.3	41	2.2	19	2.3	8	2.1	27	2.2							
18	Job in NGO	49	2.7	42	1.9	91	2.3	50	2.5	60	2.2	110	2.3	17	2.3	23	2.4	40	2.4	18	1.8	6	1.8	24	1.8							
19	Journalism	49	2.4	40	2.0	89	2.2	55	2.4	59	2.1	114	2.2	19	2.4	23	2.8	42	2.6	18	2.3	8	2.8	26	2.5							
20	Medical doctor	50	3.1	45	3.2	95	3.2	50	2.7	62	2.9	112	2.8	19	3.2	24	3.2	43	3.2	19	3.4	8	3.6	27	3.5							
21	Nurse	49	1.8	43	3.2	92	2.5	48	1.8	67	2.9	115	2.4	19	1.7	24	2.8	43	2.3	19	2.3	8	3.3	27	2.6							
22	Pilot	50	2.3	44	2.7	94	2.5	59	2.1	60	2.2	119	2.2	19	2.6	24	2.3	43	2.4	18	2.6	8	3.5	26	2.8							
23	Police	44	2.6	34	1.9	78	2.3	51	2.3	57	1.6	108	2	15	2.3	22	2.0	37	2.1	14	2.0	4	2.0	18	2							
24	Politician	50	2.0	40	2.0	90	2	60	1.9	68	1.1	128	1.5	18	2.2	22	2.0	40	2.1	19	1.6	8	2.0	27	1.7							
25	School teacher	50	2.6	44	2.7	94	2.6	54	2.5	64	2.4	118	2.4	18	2.6	24	3.0	42	2.8	16	2.6	7	2.3	23	2.5							
26	Self employment	47	2.3	44	2.3	91	2.3	50	2.8	59	2.3	109	2.5	18	2.3	21	2.0	39	2.2	19	2.9	8	2.1	27	2.7							
27	Social worker	49	3.2	44	2.7	93	3	55	2.5	65	2.4	120	2.5	19	2.3	24	3.0	43	2.7	19	2.7	8	3.1	27	2.9							
28	Sports person	50	2.7	44	2.1	94	2.4	53	2.8	63	2.3	116	2.5	18	2.8	21	2.4	39	2.6	19	2.5	8	2.6	27	2.5							

Source: Five point rating scale filled by FGD participants



**Annex table 4: First five careers/professions perceived suitable or appropriate for men and women by family and the self based on number of frequency**

	1st		2nd		3rd		4th		5th	
	Family	Self	Family	Self	Family	Self	Family	Self	Family	Self
<b>Non working Bachelor's level male student</b>										
Son	Civil Service	Medical doctor, Civil service	Bank job	Social work/ service	Medical Doctor, Teacher, NGO job, social work/ service	Bank job	Army	Teacher, Army	Police	Self employment
Daughter	Teacher, AHW/Nurse/ medical science related	AHW/Nurse/ medical science related	Medical doctor	Teacher	Civil service	Bank job	Bank job	Civil Service	Social work/service	Medical doctor
<b>Non working Bachelor's level female student</b>										
Son	Civil Service	Medical doctor	Medical doctor	Civil Service	Bank job	Bank job	Self employment	Teacher	Teacher	Social work/service
Daughter	Civil Service	AHW/Nurse/ med science related	Teacher	Teacher	Bank job	Civil Service	AHW/Nurse/ med science related	Bank job	Self employment, Beautician	Beautician
<b>Male teacher</b>										
Son	Civil Service	Medical doctor	Teacher	Civil Service	Medical doctor	Teacher, Self employment	Employment in industry	Bank job	Social work/service	Self employment
Daughter	Police, Forestry related	Forestry related	Army, Sports person, Lawyer, engineer, as per husband's wish	work that doesn't require to socialize with opposite sex, marry off then what ever job	Accountancy, politics, work that doesn't require to socialize with opposite sex	Police, as per husband's wish	Pilot, Fine artist, Journalist,	Lawyer, Politic, Fine artist	NGO job, agriculture related job	Sportsperson
<b>Female Teacher</b>										
Son	Medical doctor, Civil service	Medical doctor	Bank job	Civil service	Teacher, NGO job	Bank Job	Employment in industry	NGO job	Pilot	Employment in industry

**Annex table 4: First five careers/professions perceived suitable or appropriate for men and women by family and the self based on number of frequency**

	1st		2nd		3rd		4th		5th	
	Family	Self	Family	Self	Family	Self	Family	Self	Family	Self
Daughter	Civil service	Civil service	Teacher, AHW/Nurse/med science related	Doctor	Bank job	Bank job	Self employment	NGO job, Self employment	Social work/service	Farming, Accountancy, Employment in industry
<b>Head Teacher</b>										
Son	Medical doctor	Medical doctor	Civil service	Civil service, self employment	Bank Job	Engineer	NGO job, Self employment, Police	NGO job, bank job	Pilot, Social work/services, Army	Teacher, Pilot, Social work/services, Police
Daughter	Teacher, Civil service,	Civil service	AHW/Nurse/med science related	AHW/Nurse/med science related	Agriculture related, as per husband's wish	Teacher, Medical doctor, Bank Job, Accountancy	Medical Doctor, NGO job,	Air hostess/Flight attendant, Army, work that doesn't require to socialize with opposite sex,	work that doesn't require to socialize with opposite sex, marry off then what ever job, police, Social work/services, beautician, farming, Air hostess/flight attendant, Employment in industry, bank job	Lawyer, marry off then what ever job, politics, social work/services, Beautician, farming, Agriculture related, NGO job
<b>Working men</b>										
Son	Medical doctor, Civil service	Civil service	Teacher, Social work/service	Medical doctor	Police	Self employment	Sportsperson, NGO job	Bank Job	Bank job, pilot, accountancy, Fine artist, journalist	NGO job
Daughter	Medical doctor, Civil service	Medical doctor	Teacher, social work/service	Civil service	Police	Bank job	NGO job, Self employment, sports person	Self employment	Journalist, fine artist, pilot, accountancy	Teacher, Accountancy
<b>Working women</b>										
Son	Civil service	Medical doctor	Medical doctor	Farming	Teacher, Bank Job	Civil service	NGO job, Employment in industry, pilot, accountancy, sports person, army	NGO job	Journalist, fine artist, social work/services, agriculture related, forestry related	Self employment, pilot

**Annex table 4: First five careers/professions perceived suitable or appropriate for men and women by family and the self based on number of frequency**

		1st		2nd		3rd		4th		5th	
		Family	Self	Family	Self	Family	Self	Family	Self	Family	Self
Daughter		Civil service	Civil service	AHW/Nurse/med science related	Medical doctor	Teacher	AHW/Nurse/med science related	Medical doctor	Bank Job	Bank Job	NGO job
<b>Nurse</b>											
Son		Medical doctor	Civil service	Civil service	Medical doctor	Bank job	Bank Job	Pilot	Self employment, Employment in industry	Self employment	NGO job
Daughter		AHW/Nurse/med science related	AHW/Nurse/med science related	Bank job	Medical doctor	Civil service	Bank Job	Medical doctor, teacher, beautician	Civil service	Airhostess	Teacher
<b>Air hostess/Flight attendant</b>											
Son		Civil service	Medical doctor	Medical doctor	Bank Job, Pilot	NGO job, Bank job, Self employment	Teacher, civil service, NGO job, Self employment, Forestry related, Agriculture related, farming,	Teacher, Forestry related, accountancy, Social work/ service	Army, Sportsperson	Farming, Sportsperson,	Police, Social work/ service, Journalism. Fine artist, Air hostess/flight attendant, AHW/Nurse/med science related
Daughter		Air hostess/flight attendant	Air hostess/flight attendant	Bank job	AHW/Nurse/med science related	AHW/Nurse/med science related, medical doctor	Pilot	Civil service, teacher	Teacher, medical doctor, civil job, Bank Job, Accountancy, Forestry related, agriculture related	Self employment, Pilot, Fine artist	Journalist, Fine artist, Beautician, self employment

**Annex Table 5: Responses of head male and female teachers regarding game participation by male and female students by district**

Games	Ktm		Ilam		Dhanusha		Bhaktapur		Solukhumbu		Lalitpur		Kailali		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Quiz	7	7	6	12	9	15	4	4	5	7	7	8	12	13	50	66
Debate	5	6	2	6	2	6	1	1	2	3	2	4	10	7	24	33
Dictation	3	3	0	3	2	5	1	3	2	5	2	3	3	4	13	26
Singing	2	3	3	8	4	11	1	4	2	3	2	9	5	10	19	48
Dance	4	6	3	9	5	7	0	6	2	3	2	12	3	9	19	52
Drama	2	0	0	5	3	5	1	2	0	3	1	3	2	5	9	23
Literary activity	7	5	6	5	4	5	1	2	3	5	6	5	6	5	33	32
Volleyball	5	3	7	3	4	0	6	0	3	3	4	1	11	2	40	12
Basketball	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	2
Football	5	2	7	0	8	0	5	0	1	1	4	0	12	0	42	3
Tables Tennis	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	4	1	0	0	6	6
Athletics	4	3	3	4	8	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	7	1	28	18
Arts and craft	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	3	4	1	1	4	2	3	10	16
cricket	3	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	8	0	17	0
skipping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	2
Other Games	2	4	5	5	5	5	4	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	18	20
Edu. tour	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>359</b>

**Annex Table 6: Grade 9-10 optional subject area and group for general and Sanskrit education streams**

Subject area	Group 1 (Science/technology)	Group 2 (Language)	Group 3 (Social)	Group 4 (Vocational)	Group 5 (Sanskrit)
Optional I	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Information Technology</li> <li>2. Mathematics</li> <li>3. Commerce</li> <li>4. Mathematics</li> <li>5. Traditional medicine</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English</li> <li>2. Urdu</li> <li>3. Chinese</li> <li>4. German</li> <li>5. Korean</li> <li>6. Spanish</li> <li>7. Malaya</li> <li>8. Sanskrit</li> <li>9. Bhot language</li> <li>10. Arabic</li> <li>11. Japanese</li> <li>12. Bengali</li> <li>13. Hebrew</li> <li>14. Hindi</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Health Education</li> <li>2. Sociology</li> <li>3. Economics</li> <li>4. Law</li> <li>5. Rural development Education</li> <li>6. Non formal education</li> <li>7. Cooperative Education</li> <li>8. History</li> <li>9. Gerontology*</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agriculture education</li> <li>2. Tourism education</li> <li>3. Vegetable gardening</li> <li>4. Journalism</li> <li>5. Office operation and account</li> <li>6. Art (handicraft and fine art)</li> <li>7. Food science</li> <li>8. Dancing, music and singing</li> <li>9. Library science</li> <li>10. Early Childhood development education</li> <li>11. Floriculture</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Karma Kanda (Ritual)</li> <li>2. Phalit Jyotish (Predictive astrology)</li> </ol>
Optional II	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Science</li> <li>2. Aayurveda</li> <li>3. Environment</li> <li>4. Computer Science</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National Languages of Nepal</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Physical education</li> <li>2. Civic education</li> <li>3. Geography</li> <li>4. Value education</li> <li>5. Population education</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cattle farming</li> <li>2. Poultry</li> <li>3. Horticulture</li> <li>4. Education</li> <li>5. Herb farming</li> <li>6. Photography</li> <li>7. Home science</li> <li>8. Sewing/knitting</li> <li>9. Silkworm farming and beekeeping</li> <li>10. Marketing and finance*</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Veda</li> <li>2. Sanskrit literature</li> <li>3. Justice</li> <li>4. Grammar</li> <li>5. Neeti Sastra (Moral education)</li> <li>6. Sidhanta Jyotish (Theory of Astrology)</li> </ol>

CDC 2012, 9-12 Curriculum structure, 2069 (2012). CDC, p. 5, Sanothimi Bhaktapur.

\*These two are added from this year therefore not included yet in the written curriculum

**Annex 7: Guiding questions: FGD with girls and boys studying in grade 10**

**Name of the School:**

**District and location:**

- What types of occupations are appropriate for sons and daughters in your family? Why? What type of occupation does your family want you to take? why?
- Do you plan to work in the future? if yes why? if not why not?
- What kind of occupation do you like to enter into? why?
- How do you convince your family if your selection did not match their?
- What do your teachers tell you about career selection?
- What types of occupations do your teachers think you should take? why?
- What type of occupations do you think your male/female should take?
- What type of jobs do you think are appropriate for men and women? Why?

Male	Female

- Do you plan to study after SLC? How much and which subject? If not why not?
- What do you see yourself doing when you are 30 years old?

### Annex 8: Occupation preference: 5 point rating scale for FGD participants

Ethnicity:		Boy		Girl		
<p>How much do you like the following occupations? If it is best for you tick number 1 and if it is worst for you tick number 5. If it is good to have tick number 2; if it is ok tick number 3; and if it is worse tick number 4. If any occupation is missing from the list please feel free to include them and rate them accordingly. Thank You!</p>						
SN	Occupation	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Pilot					
2.	Air Hostess/Flight attendant					
3.	School teacher					
4.	College teacher					
5.	Medical doctor					
6.	Nurse					
7.	Health technician					
8.	Bank staff/banker					
9.	Agriculture technician					
10.	Accountancy related					
11.	Forestry related					
12.	Beautician					
13.	Sportsperson					
14.	Fine artist					
15.	Journalism					
16.	Politician					
17.	Social worker					
18.	Business					
19.	Industry					
20.	Farming					
21.	Job in NGO					
22.	Civil service					
23.	Self employment					
24.	Foreign employment					
25.	Army					
26.	Police					
27.	Dancer					
28.	Fashion Designer					

**Annex 9: Guiding questions-Interview with Madhesi women government officers**

- What has been your experience working in this position?
- How does your community view your job and position?
- Since it is very rare to have woman boss, particularly in Madhes how do men and women view and behave with you?
- Working in this position is more demanding and challenging. How have you been managing
- your family life and work?
- What kind of challenges do you usually face at work/office?

**Annex 10: Guiding questions-Group discussion with HISTAN, HISAN, TUN and Women teachers' society**

- From which grade do you start orienting students about career perspectives?
- How do you prepare them regarding career selection? girls? boys?
- How does current education system and curriculum help male and female students pursue
- their occupational interests?

**Additional question to female teachers**

- How is your work environment?

**Annex 11: Guiding question- NCED personnel**

- How are teachers prepared to use gender sensitive language and pedagogy in the classrooms?

**Annex 12: Survey Questionnaire for working men and women**

Name (Optional):	Unmarried:
Name (Optional)	Unmarried:
Married:	Caste/Ethnicity:
Sex:	Position:
Education Qualification:	Years of experience (if applicable):
Working organization & location:	

- Occupation:**
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flight attendant | <input type="checkbox"/> Government Office             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher          | <input type="checkbox"/> Bank staff                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nurse            | <input type="checkbox"/> Others (please, specify)..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Head Teacher     |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student          |  |

**Age group (please tick the appropriate box):**

- 15-20     21-25     26-30     31-35     36-40     41-45     46 and above

Please tick all the appropriate responses to the following questions and provide reasons where requested.

<b>Previously which occupations did your family think appropriate for sons and daughters?</b>		
<b>Occupations</b>	<b>Son</b>	<b>Daughter</b>
Accountancy		
Agriculture related		
Air Hostess/flight attendant		
Air plane pilot		
Army		
Bank Job		
Beautician		
Civil Service		
Employment in Industry		
Engineer		
Fine artist		
Forestry		
Job in NGO		
Journalist		
Medical doctor		
Nurse		
Other health related occupations (e.g. Medical Representative, AHW, etc.)		
Own farming		
Police		
Politics		
Self employment		
Social work		
Sportsperson		
Teacher		
Work that doesn't require to socialize with opposite sex		
Whatever after marriage		
Work as per husband's wish		
Others if any		



**At present which occupations do you think appropriate for sons and daughters?**

Occupations	Son	Daughter
Accountancy		
Agriculture related		
Air Hostess/flight attendant		
Air plane pilot		
Army		
Bank Job		
Beautician		
Civil Service		
Employment in Industry		
Engineer		
Fine artist		
Forestry		
Job in NGO		
Journalist		
Medical doctor		
Nurse		
Other health related occupations (e.g. Medical Representative, AHW, etc.)		
Own farming		
Police		
Politics		
Self employment		
Social work		
Sportsperson		
Teacher		
Work that doesn't require to socialize with opposite sex		
Whatever after marriage		
2.1 Why do you think so? Please provide 2 main reasons.		
a.		
b.		

**3. Did you get to work where you wished to?**

Yes	
No	

**4. Did your family like the occupation that you select?**

Liked	
Did not like	

<b>5. How did you continue if your family didn't like your job?</b>	
Convinced the family	
Ignored family's opinion and stood firm in my decision	
Don't know	

<b>6. What kind of behavior is expected of you in your work place/office?</b>	
Always cheerful	
Not quick in sharing personal opinion	
Not share personal problems	
Share personal opinion soon	
Share personal problems	
Speak less	

<b>7. Social and physical environment of work place/office</b>	
Adequate water and separate toilet with water	
Cautious about women's needs	
Have experienced sexual abuse during work	
Have not experienced sexual abuse during work	
Indecent joking with women	
No possibility of sexual abuse	
Possibility of sexual abuse	
Respectful to women	
Safe	

<b>8. How do you feel doing job related challenging tasks? (Physical and mental)</b>	
Don't feel difficult , have done it	
Have not encountered yet	
Can't do due to household reasons	
Don't like doing challenging job so stay away from it	

<b>9. Why did you decide to take this occupation?</b>	
Convenient location	
Desire to provide service to the sick	
Does not hamper household work	
Get to travel all the time	
Hope to go abroad to work	
Job security	
Matched with my interest	

Physical and personal safety	
Satisfactory salary and benefits	
This is what I found	
Please specify others	

### For Working Women and Men only

10. What types of work does your boss make you do apart from your job description?	
Intellectual	
Intellectual but less challenging	
Intellectual but less challenging than assigned to male colleagues	
Similar task is assigned to men and women	
Tasks that does not show superior than men	
Tasks that require to go out from office	
Tasks that do not require to go out from office	
Tasks that develops closeness	
Tasks that require to visit other districts	
Tasks that do not require to visit other districts	
Filing and cleaning	
account Keeping	
Administrative	
Public relation	
Taking care of students from lower grades	
Task as per need and situation	
Indicate if any other (e.g make tea, mange office kitchen, manage picnic)	

### For head teachers only

11. What kind of tasks do you ask your female teachers to do besides teaching?	
Intellectual (E.g. preparing school improvement plan)	
Intellectual but less challenging than assigned to male colleagues	
Similar task is assigned to men and women	
Tasks that does not show superior than men	
Tasks that require to go out from office	
Tasks that do not require to go out from office	
Tasks that develops closeness	
Tasks that require to visit other districts	
Tasks that do not require to visit other districts	
Filing and cleaning	

Account Keeping	
Administrative	
Public relation	
Taking care of students from lower grades	
Task as per need and situation	
Indicate if any other (e.g make tea, mange office kitchen, manage picnic)	

<b>12. What kind of tasks do you ask your male teachers to do besides teaching?</b>	
Intellectual (E.g. preparing school improvement plan)	
Intellectual but less challenging	
Similar task is assigned to men and women	
Tasks that does not show superior than men	
Tasks that require to go out from office	
Tasks that do not require to go out from office	
Tasks that develops closeness	
Tasks that require to visit other districts	
Tasks that do not require to visit other districts	
Filing and cleaning	
account Keeping	
Administrative	
Public relation	
Taking care of students from lower grades	
Task as per need and situation	
Indicate if any other (e.g make tea, mange office kitchen, manage picnic)	

<b>13. How do female teachers feel about taking school related challenging (mentally and physically) tasks?</b>	
Don't find it difficult, they do when required	
Don't ask to do because it will be difficult for them	
Don't want to do challenging work therefore stay away from such work	
Can't due to household obligations	
Can't due to family restriction	

<b>14. How do male teachers feel about taking school related challenging (mentally and physically) tasks?</b>	
Don't find it difficult, they do when required	
Don't ask to do because it will be difficult for them	
Don't want to do challenging work therefore stay away from such work	
Can't due to household obligations	
Can't due to family restriction	
Don't find it difficult, they do when required	

### **For teachers only**

<b>15. What kinds of work does your male head teacher make you do besides teaching?</b>	
Intellectual (E.g. preparing school improvement plan)	
Intellectual but less challenging	
Intellectual but less challenging than assigned to male colleagues	
Similar task is assigned to men and women	
Tasks that does not show superior than men	
Tasks that require to go out from office	
Tasks that do not require to go out from office	
Tasks that develops closeness	
Tasks that require to visit other districts	
Tasks that do not require to visit other districts	
Filing and cleaning	
account Keeping	
Administrative	
Public relation	
Taking care of students from lower grades	
Task as per need and situation	
Indicate if any other (e.g make tea, mange office kitchen, manage picnic)	
Intellectual	

<b>16. What kinds of work does your female head teacher make you do besides teaching?</b>	
Intellectual (E.g. preparing school improvement plan)	
Intellectual but less challenging	
Intellectual but less challenging than assigned to male colleagues	
Similar task is assigned to men and women	

Tasks that does not show superior than men	
Tasks that require to go out from office	
Tasks that do not require to go out from office	
Tasks that develops closeness	
Tasks that require to visit other districts	
Tasks that do not require to visit other districts	
Filing and cleaning	
account Keeping	
Administrative	
Public relation	
Taking care of students from lower grades	
Task as per need and situation	
Indicate if any other (e.g make tea, mange office kitchen, manage picnic)	

**For Head teacher and teachers**

<b>17. Does your school have adequate toilets for female and male students?</b>
<b>18. Does toilet for female student has running water?</b>
<b>19. What kind of ECA do female students usually participate in?</b>
<b>20. What kind of ECA do male students usually participate in?</b>
<b>21. If female and male students participate in different types of activities please provide at least 3 reasons for it.</b>

### Annex 13: Survey questionnaire for non-working Bachelor level student

<b>Name (optional)</b>	<b>Sex:</b>
Ethnicity:	Area of study/stream:
Name of the institute:	

**Age group (please tick the appropriate box):**

15-20    21-25    26-30    31-35    36-40    41-45    46 and above

Please tick all the appropriate responses to the following questions and provide reasons where requested.

<b>1. Which occupations does your family think appropriate for sons and daughters?</b>		
<b>Occupations</b>	<b>Son</b>	<b>Daughter</b>
Accountancy		
Agriculture related		
Air Hostess/flight attendant		
Air plane pilot		
Army		
Bank Job		
Beautician		
Civil Service		
Employment in Industry		
Engineer		
Fine artist		
Forestry		
Job in NGO		
Journalist		
Medical doctor		
Nurse		
Other health related occupations (e.g. Medical Representative, AHW, etc.)		
Own farming		
Police		
Politics		
Self employment		
Social work		
Sportsperson		
Teacher		
Work that doesn't require to socialize with opposite sex		
Whatever after marriage		
Work as per husband's wish		
Others if any		

<b>2. Which occupations in your opinion are appropriate for sons and daughters?</b>		
<b>Occupations</b>	<b>Son</b>	<b>Daughter</b>
Accountancy		
Agriculture related		
Air Hostess/flight attendant		
Air plane pilot		
Army		
Bank Job		
Beautician		
Civil Service		
Employment in Industry		
Engineer		
Fine artist		
Forestry		
Job in NGO		
Journalist		
Medical doctor		
Nurse		
Other health related occupations (e.g. Medical Representative, AHW, etc.)		
Own farming		
Police		
Politics		
Self employment		
Social work		
Sportsperson		
Teacher		
Work that doesn't require to socialize with opposite sex		
Whatever after marriage		
Work as per husband's wish		
Others if any		
Why do you think so? please give 3 reasons.		







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