

Social Exclusion in Public Education: A Study of Public Schools at Yamunamai Rural Municipality, Rautahat

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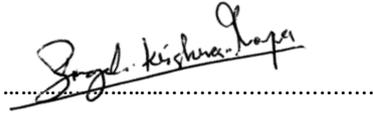


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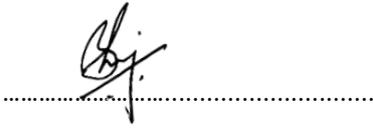
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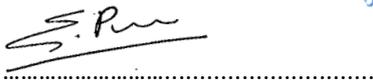
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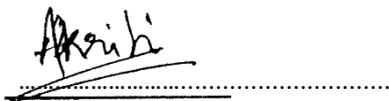
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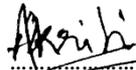


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Declaration

I hereby declare that the report entitled "Social Exclusion in Public Education: A Study of Public Schools at Yamunamai Rural Municipality, Rautahat" is my own work and has not been submitted to any academic institution for any other degree.



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Date: 8th November 2022

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Abstract

Social exclusion is understood as ostracism, denying access to resources and opportunities. It occurs in housing, employment, democratic participation, etc., due to unequal resource access and power distribution. Social exclusion affects the quality of life, equity, and cohesion of a person and society. It is multidimensional and of different levels. According to Amartya Sen (2000), the outcome of social exclusion is that the affected individuals or communities are prevented from participating fully in their society's economic, social, and political life.

Further, the definition of social exclusion differs from country to country—for example, in the western world VS developing countries. In the western world, segregation mainly occurs due to class and financial status. There is no disparity in terms of language or caste, nor is there any language barrier. Thus, their central focal point in social exclusion/inclusion is based on disability. On the other hand, developing countries have a high level of multiple disparities in terms of caste, ethnicity, class, and language. Therefore, all these terms include within the framework of understanding socially inclusive education.

This study focuses on social exclusion/exclusion in public education at Rautahat. Schools are the first connection to the outside world. It helps develop relations with the outside world and families, further aiding in building relations in societies. Where there is no social exclusion, there is a rise in social inclusion. A socially inclusive education system leads to an increase in the enrolment and retention rate with a decrease in the dropout rate. It helps people make educated choices and open further opportunities in the labor market. Furthermore, it helps to produce like-minded individuals who promote social harmony and inclusivity and help create a tolerant and accepting society.

The primary objective of this study is to examine experiences of educational exclusion experienced by students at selected schools (8 schools from Yamunamai Gaupalika at Rautahat), examine the different underlying reasons for such exclusions, and examine any practices that schools adopt in their attempts to reduce exclusion. Similarly, this study answers the question: How do students experience educational exclusion? What are the reasons that contribute to educational exclusion? What has been or can be done to minimize educational exclusion?

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Acronyms

SE	Social Exclusion
SI	Social Inclusion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
IMF	International Monetary Fund
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
I-PRSPs	Interim - Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
NPC	National Planning Commission
VDC	Village Development Committee
ICTs	Information and Communication Technology
MOFALD	Ministry of Federal Affair and Local Development

Introduction

1.1 Background

Inclusive education is an inclusive learning environment for all, regardless of class, caste, gender, ethnicity, and abilities. Inclusive education consists of equal opportunities and access to all people of different backgrounds. Allan (2003) notes that social inclusion is one of the most complex notions, characterized by a lack of shared understanding about what it means to be socially included and the necessary conditions to achieve social inclusion. There are various benefits of inclusive education. It primarily focuses on polishing communication skills, fostering friendships, developing a positive image of oneself, exposure to new perspectives, and respect for others. Inclusive education also offers the opportunity to learn from others. New friendships can help one to learn to accept individual differences and provide an opportunity to learn new things.

Consequently, inclusive education can also lead to the enrichment of knowledge from various perspectives. Overall, an inclusive education leads to a better-quality education for everyone. It can also help change discriminatory attitudes, one of the significant problems in a developing nation's society, i.e., caste-based discrimination, class segregation, gender discrimination, etc. Educational institutions, specifically schools, act as the first relationship with the outside world and family. Thus, inclusive education assists in developing social relations and interactions beyond the family realm. It allows the students to accept, understand, and attend to differences and diversity.

While the western world focuses on more inclusive education regarding disability, developing nations, such as Nepal, need to have a different outlook and focus on socially inclusive education. In the western world, there may be segregation due to class and financial status. However, they do not have a language, caste, ethnicity, or language barrier disparity. Thus, their central focal point for inclusive education is based on disability. On the other hand, developing countries face various disparities in terms of caste, ethnicity, class, and language. Therefore, their central focal point should be socially inclusive education.

Consequently, it can be seen that the meaning of 'inclusive education' would differ from place to place. Albeit inclusive education is vouched for theoretically, it is not the case in the real-world scenario. Looking at it practically, various factors act as barriers to inclusive education at different levels in multiple spheres/dimensions. Some of the factors which act as barriers are listed below:

Physical infrastructure

Physical infrastructure plays a massive role in capability deprivation. There may be a lack of or mismanagement of funds, leading to improper infrastructure, including an inaccessible classroom for children using wheelchairs due to the presence of an elevator or ramps. This would act as a capability deprivation for those with disabilities as they would have no access to classrooms.

Inadequate resources

Resources can determine whether a person has access to opportunities or not. Inadequate resources may lead to capability deprivation, which in turn, would lead to social exclusion. For example, there may be a need for more trained and experienced teachers. This would result in suboptimal learning for the students, not allowing them to reach optimal learning.

Cultural/ Social

Nepal is a multi-ethnic nation full of various castes and religious groups. The prevalence of caste/class/gender discrimination increases the risk of social exclusion. Being rich in tradition and culture has also led to many social evils, stigmas, and discrimination. For example, the social norm of child marriage may block the child from attaining a full-fledged education and minimize employment opportunities in the future.

Economic

In terms of an economic barrier to socially inclusive education, the schools' fees may be too high for children coming from a family with poor economic backgrounds. However, there is a policy that guarantees free education in public schools. This guarantees a high rate of enrolment of students from various economic backgrounds. However, the retainment and attendance rate of students still may be low if there is no proper schooling or care for them. For example, if mid-day meals are being provided to students, it may act as an incentive for families to send their children to school instead of sending them to work and earn money.

Geography and Climate

In terms of geography, the locations of the schools may be too far off, resulting in the students having to walk 1-2 hours to school or even more. This would further be hindered due to the need for transportation services the schools should provide. In terms of the Rautahat district, the area is prone to flooding during the monsoon season, which leads to schools being entirely shut down. This would further hinder the completion of curriculums in the school.

Curriculum/ Pedagogy

It is imperative to have custom tailor-made curricula inclusive to children with disabilities. For example, if there is a student with a visual disability (blind), the curriculum must be provided in Braille form too.

Thus, this study strives to understand how children, both girls, and boys going to school, maybe socially excluded in the public education system, why they are excluded, and what actions are being taken to decrease social exclusion.

1.2 Problem Statement

A socially inclusive environment must enhance the community's quality of life. It also promotes society's overall development by honing people's social skills in terms of friendship skills, peer models, problem-solving skills, positive self-image, and respect for others. Social exclusion leads society further astray in terms of overall development. Social inclusion in public education is highlighted in this study because the advantages mentioned above can trickle down from the schools to families, teaching parents and families to be more accepting of differences.

With the reduction of social exclusion in public education, there will be an increase in the enrolment and retainment rate and a decrease in the dropout rate and also a higher number of children who will attain education. Likewise, with the decrease in the dropout rate, fewer children will not attain an education.

Education is a process that supports learning, knowledge acquisition, and the development of skills for one's character. Education improves societal thinking and aids in eradicating social injustices and also combating societal disparities aids in the uniform growth of a nation. Education enables us to pursue a living and defend our fundamental rights. The wealth and poverty gaps can also be addressed with education. By raising income and reducing poverty, education is essential for economic progress.

It can also help people to make educated choices and open further opportunities in the labor market. In general, it can also produce like-minded individuals who promote social harmony and inclusivity and help create a tolerant and accepting society. Understanding the mechanisms by which people are excluded is crucial for combating social exclusion. Institutions and behaviors that mirror, uphold, and replicate established societal attitudes and values exclude people, particularly those of dominant social groups.

In various countries, non-citizens are frequently denied access to some governmental benefits, leaving them vulnerable to poverty. Other times, rigid social structures, like the caste system in South Asia, determine a person's place in society based on their ancestry, like when people with disabilities are excluded from services, markets, and political involvement due to a lack of understanding of their needs or due to social attitudes. For example, when minority groups are excluded due to linguistic hurdles, the exclusion is typically more subtle and accidental. The following objectives in the

next section will provide a deeper understanding of why this research focuses on social exclusion/inclusion.

1.3 Objectives

The principal objective of this research revolves around understanding those who are socially excluded, how they are socially excluded and what has been done to improve social inclusion among those segregated. Thus, the objectives for this research have been listed as follows:

- To examine experiences of educational exclusion experienced by students at selected schools
- To examine the different underlying reasons for such exclusions
- To examine any practices that schools adopt or adapt in their attempts to reduce exclusion

1.4 Research Questions

Following the three objectives of this research, as mentioned above, the following research questions have been formulated:

- How do students experience educational exclusion?
- What are the reasons that contribute to educational exclusion?
- What has been or can be done to minimize educational exclusion?

1.5 Significance of the study

In a socially inclusive society, everyone has the best chance to flourish and enjoy life. It encourages a community's inclusive and all-around growth. Additionally, it improves one's physical and emotional well-being, workplace productivity, and employment outcomes. To maintain their dignity, sense of security, and the chance at a better life, they must be included in society. In order to combat any social isolation people may face daily, it is crucial to encourage people to feel connected to and valued by society. Being a part of society and having dependable relationships are essential factors in determining one's health and wellness and one of the most effective indicators of successful recovery from trauma. Economic participation is strongly tied to social inclusion.

Moreover, without chances for employment, education, and training, people are left in severe poverty. Social inclusion, however, benefits an individual's well-being, the larger community, and our economy. Furthermore, achieving social inclusion and gaining the above advantages is one step closer to inclusive education. An inclusive education is a pathway to attain social inclusion.

All students' full and productive involvement, accessibility, attendance, and academic success are the main goals of an inclusive education, especially those who, for various reasons, are excluded or at risk of marginalization. Thus, this study aims to

understand educational exclusion and what steps can be taken or have been taken to promote educational inclusion.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The significant limitations are that this study only focuses on understanding social exclusion in the education system of only Rautahat. Furthermore, the vast topic is narrowed down to limited themes and indicators

Literature Review

This chapter of the study delves into understanding the need for a socially inclusive education system for people of various backgrounds. Due to the dynamic and multidimensional nature of social exclusion, the numerous challenges and significant global trends are also discussed. It will also touch upon the status of Rautahat and social exclusion regarding disability and inclusive policies. Inclusion has significant advantages for all individuals, including those with special needs and their families. All the students who participate learn to appreciate others and that everyone has unique talents. Students share knowledge. When inclusion policies are in place, children with special needs are given the same opportunity to engage in the same kinds of programs and activities as children without special needs.

Similarly, Children with (or without) impairments can benefit from inclusion in many ways, including friendship skills, peer role models, problem-solving abilities, positive self-image, and respect for others. This may also spread to their families, influencing them to accept diversity more readily. It is essential to keep open lines of interaction with families to establish consistency between home and school because parents are a child's first teachers and are the people who know them best. Working together and developing a relationship with families is a crucial component of inclusion and can aid children in realizing their full developmental potential.

It is morally right to promote social inclusion, and it also makes responsible economic sense. Disadvantaged group exclusion can be detrimental if overlooked. The impacts most frequently measured at the individual level include lost income, lifetime earnings, poor schooling, and poor employment outcomes. Additionally, it harms one's physical and mental health, leading to further racism and discrimination. Foregone GDP and human capital wealth can be used to measure the monetary cost of social exclusion at the national level.

Social exclusion has been deemed dynamic and multidimensional due to its impact on different levels and multiple spheres. In terms of levels, social exclusion is acted out at individual, household, group, societal or communal levels. Meanwhile, in terms of dimensions, social exclusion impacts four major spheres: economic, political, social, and cultural.

Similarly, while the meaning of social exclusion differs from place to place, the same applies to the numerous indicators and measurements. Developing countries face various caste, ethnicity, race, class, and language disparities. For example, in a culturally rich nation such as Nepal, the focal point of social exclusion should be based on caste. However, the same cannot be applied throughout the world. Countries such as the United States of America majorly face racism and so, in accordance, should focus on racial discrimination. Thus, the national definitions and measurements of social exclusion differ from country to country.

Moreover, Indicators for social exclusion are challenging to define due to the subjective judgments or personal perspectives of the people who have faced discrimination and segregation. While there are ample objective indicators to measure social exclusion, it is proved to be difficult to measure subjective judgments as the challenges faced by people differ from one another, and there is no standard measurement.

While measuring social exclusion is a challenge, data collection is a hindrance, too, due to its dynamic nature. Therefore, the data is usually gathered from different sources (national census and surveys). However, these data are collected for different purposes, which can lead to underrepresentation and under numeration. Carr-Hill (2013) estimated that, due to omissions and under-enumeration, an estimated 300 million to 350 million people at the highest risk of exclusion and extreme poverty may not be represented in household surveys in developing countries.” (Leaving no one behind: the imperative of inclusive development Report on the World Social Situation, 2016)

2.1 Background on Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is relational. It is manifested “in recurrent patterns of social relationships in which individuals and groups are denied access to goods, services, activities, and resources” (Gore & Figueiredo, 1997). In some cases, exclusion may be ‘open and deliberate’, ‘unofficial’, or ‘subtle and unintended’ (Beall & Piron, 2005). Power is multidimensional and includes ‘agenda-setting power’ as well as various forms of domination, intimidation, and violence (Lukes, 2005). As de Haan (1998) highlighted, social exclusion often implies that someone or something is doing the excluding, making it contestable and laden with power. Social exclusion has individual elements because the way exclusion is understood and experienced varies (Beall & Piron, 2005). Social exclusion is one of the crucial topics in existing social policy discussions in OECD nations. Even though there is much disagreement over the exact definition of the term (Evans, Paugham, and Prellis, 1995; Atkinson, 1998; Klasen, 1998), some of the most helpful definitions have attempted to emphasize that social exclusion is concerned with the “inability to participate effectively in economic, social, and cultural life and, in some characteristics, alienation, and distance from mainstream society” (Duffy, 1995).

Social exclusion is primarily concerned with the interaction between the person and society, as opposed to poverty and unemployment, which concentrate on people or households. In many ways, it seems appropriate to draw comparisons between discussions of social exclusion and discussions of the constraints of the disability. In the latter scenario, it is widely acknowledged that a physical or mental disability can create a significant barrier to social interaction and that the state is responsible for reducing or eliminating these barriers. Similarly to this, societal constraints hamper excluded people’s ability to engage with society and can be seen as the cause of social exclusion among non-disabled groups (Kalsen, 1998). Thus, those excluded due to other obstacles and disadvantages should also receive official assistance in overcoming their exclusion.

2.2 Background on Social Inclusion

The 2030 Agenda is founded on the idea that everyone should benefit from the wealth and live up to minimal well-being standards. This is encapsulated in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to secure, among other things, healthy lives and access to education, modern energy, and information, as well as to liberate all people, all nations, and all facets of society from poverty and hunger.

The Sustainable Development Goals only cover a small portion of the issues related to social inclusion. Given the variety of global circumstances, only some global goal-setting agendas can fully address the numerous dimensions of exclusion or comprehensively promote inclusion. As mentioned, Social inclusion is a process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social, political, and cultural life and enjoy a standard of living considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures they have greater participation in decision making which affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights (Commission of the European Communities, 2003).

Social inclusion is enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice, and respect for rights for those disadvantaged due to age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic status, or other factors. Social inclusion is thus a process as much as a goal. Since social inclusion is frequently utilized in government policies, legislation, treaties, or agreements, as well as scholarly literature, it can be regarded as an international norm (Wiener, 2009). In particular, target 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals asks for creating more “inclusive institutions at all levels,” turning “inclusion” into a development buzzword. Norms are concepts with varying degrees of abstraction and specification regarding core principles, organizational ideas, or prescribed practices (Wiener, 2009). According to Zwingel (2012) and True (2010), when applied to various home contexts, global norms take on new meanings; some lose significance as a result, while others acquire it. There is some level of exclusion in every society; thus, there needs to be agreement on what constitutes an acceptable threshold of inclusion or exclusion.

2.3 Stages of Social Inclusion

There are four stages/ processes of inclusion: exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion. Initially, in exclusion, there is neither access for all nor interaction with the mainstream due to barriers acting as a form of discrimination. The second stage, ‘segregation’, consists of being ostracized by being kept separate from the mainstream. It also consists of specialized schools with tailor-made resources to meet specific needs. It is then followed by the third stage of ‘integration,’ where the children are expected to adjust to activities, teachers, and the class, rather than being the other way around. The final stage, ‘inclusion,’ is a child-centered approach where the needs of all the children are addressed. It also focuses on the right to participate, leading to enhanced interactions, engagements, and participation.

2.4 Major Global Trends

Social exclusion and inclusion impact the micro (individual) and macro (societal) levels. It is evident that social exclusion's severity and the groups it affects change with time and context. Exclusion has occasionally been accepted and institutionalized historically by governmental, religious, societal, and other authorities. Other times, it has been practiced insidiously and subtly by members of society.

Even when racism and other forms of discrimination have been officially addressed, their effects may still be negatively felt on marginalized populations' well-being. The world has gradually become less accepting of social exclusion in numerous ways. However, significant trends in globalization, demographic change, and climate change have impacted exclusion and still do. According to the World Meteorological Organization, in 2014, the number of climatic risks brought on by droughts, extremely high temperatures, floods, and storms increased globally.

Social exclusion makes people and groups more vulnerable to environmental shocks, which makes affected people and groups more vulnerable to exclusion. For example, in the case of Rautahat, a flood-prone area, schools have been closed for an entire month due to the climate. The community's flooding has made it impossible for children to reach their schools, let alone the schools that operate. It has also destroyed homes, making it impossible for families to live in them. This has led to the displacement of some members of society, putting them at a more significant disadvantage.

Urbanization is one feature of the changing global society that is altering the nature of social exclusion. Cities are hubs for social mobility, paid employment, and economic expansion. Urban inhabitants generally have easier access to health care, education, and other essential services than rural ones. Cities also provide a more diverse and open social environment than villages. However, they also establish new axes of exclusion (World Bank, 2013). One difference between urban and rural communities is the degree of income and wealth inequality. Places marked by extreme deprivation and a lack of services coexist with areas with high levels of wealth and modern infrastructure, resulting in a clear separation between the "haves" and the "have-nots," which furthers the latter's social exclusion.

Population aging worldwide, along with urbanization, has resulted due to decreased fertility rates and rising life expectancy. The population aging process is expected to speed up in the upcoming decades, especially in developing nations. More senior citizens are at risk of social and economic exclusion in areas where population aging has not been accompanied by job creation, productivity increases, growth in public investment and savings, and public investment and savings have not kept pace with population aging. They risk losing their independence and the freedom to make decisions that will affect their well-being, in addition to the possibility of lower incomes and worse health.

ICTs (information and communication technology) and technological progress, in general, can be crucial social inclusion channels. They link people to information sources and opportunities, such as public services, legal rights, skill development,

jobs, and markets that could be unavailable or only marginally accessible in other contexts. For instance, texting on mobile devices and the internet allows anyone, even members of marginalized groups, to consult with doctors and get reminders to take essential medications (World Bank, 2016). Furthermore, social networks that help people organize and family and friend connections are fostered by digital ICTs. They also promote accountability and openness in society. The “digital divide,” a term used to describe the extreme imbalance in access to such technologies, maintains exclusion and worsens gaps in many ways. ICTs can increase exclusion and foster new divisions by, for instance, spreading false information and facilitating online crime and censorship.

2.5 Challenges of measuring social exclusion

Social exclusion has no standard definition and is deemed to be contextual. As mentioned above, social exclusion is difficult to measure due to the difference in definitions and measurement indicators from country to country. Similarly, salience depends on the country and the stage of a person’s life. This section discusses the numerous challenges to measuring social exclusion.

The national definitions and measurements of social exclusion vary. Likewise, while objective indicators may be measured by each country establishing its standards, there are also subjective indicators that make measurements very difficult. It will be ineffectual to measure subjective indicators as there need to be tools to help measure personal reflections, judgments, and perceptions. Even so, the subjective and objective indicators must be disaggregated by age, sex, ethnicity, race, income level, and residence, place of birth / nationality, and level of ability (disability). However, we must also be careful while grouping the indicators. Grouping indicators based solely on traditional criteria will increase the risk of missing new forms of exclusion.

Consequently, the availability, accessibility, and use of data make it difficult to define social exclusion and analyze its impacts. Usually, the data is gathered from various sources such as the national census, polls, surveys, etc. However, the data from the above sources have been gathered for their purposes. It is also impossible to conduct statistical analysis all the time following the data gathered from the above sources when measuring social exclusion. Therefore, the data collected from these sources would not be viable as they cannot be transformed into a tool for a comprehensive international assessment of social exclusion due to the lack of one composite index.

Another disadvantage of using the data collected from censuses and surveys of different purposes may be underrepresentation where data has been collected from isolated or atypical households. Age groups may also be another drawback when using the data collected from censuses and surveys of different purposes, as it may need to be more adequate for measuring social exclusion. For example, if a survey was conducted amongst youths aged 16 to 20; it cannot be applied to this particular report itself as it will be looking at children from grades 1 to 6, who are roughly 9 to 14. Under-numeration is another disadvantage of using data collected from other

censuses and surveys. For example, a survey may have been conducted with participants who are homeless. This would make it difficult to reach out to those participants.

2.6 Review of Inclusive Policies

Policies must be context-specific, considering political and social, and economic factors. Redistribution (of power and economic resources) must be a part of them because general growth will not improve social exclusion. Economic and social policies that combat discrimination directly support specific groups, and use objectives and quotas can lead to greater group equality in assets or earnings. Political policies establish formal and informal mechanisms to guarantee that each group has a voice in political power and decision-making. This is crucial for averting conflict in particular.

A federal constitution, proportional representation, decentralization, allowing for vetoes by ethnic or religious groups, and reserving seats in parliament are examples of strategies. They also include a strong and ethnically balanced judiciary combined with fundamental human rights and power sharing through job reservations or quotas. It is crucial to understand policymakers' knowledge of and attitudes toward social inclusion, their ongoing professional development in these areas, their perspectives on the obstacles to and enablers of policy development, and revision in the contexts in which they have particular expertise.

Politics, which is significantly impacted by perceptions and attitudes, play a significant role in determining the viability of social inclusion policies. The viewpoints of policymakers are particularly significant in this situation. Nearly by definition, the most influential player in the policy sphere is the policy maker. However, they are also the ultimate insiders of the policy-making process – almost by definition. Therefore, comprehending the political dynamics that ultimately determine policy results might benefit immensely from their perspectives and testimonies. PRSPs, public expenditure reviews, and support for the Human Rights agenda present opportunities for policies to address SE. The member nations create their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) in a collaborative process that includes domestic stakeholders and international development partners, including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). The country's macroeconomic, structural, and social policies and programs over a three-year or longer horizon to promote broad-based growth and reduce poverty are described in PRSPs, which are updated every three years with annual progress reports. They also include associated financing needs and

Significant sources of financing. Interim PRSPs (I-PRSPs) give the procedure for collaboratively creating a fully developed PRSP and explain the current knowledge and analysis of a country's poverty status. They also describe the current poverty reduction plan.

Policies in the education system are also critical because they aid in developing expectations, accountability, and quality standards for learning and safety in a

school. Without them, schools would lack the organization and functionality required to meet children's educational needs.

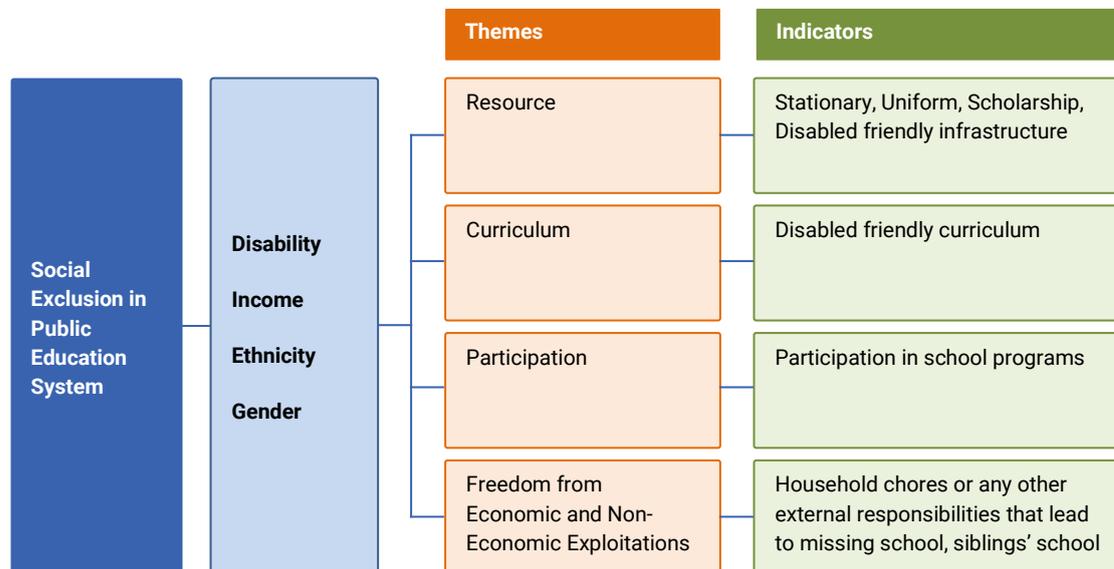
All relevant parties must agree on a shared vision that is backed by several specific actions that will be taken to put this vision into life if inclusive education is to be successful in constructing inclusive communities. The transition to inclusion should be gradual and built on clearly stated concepts that address system-wide growth and multi-sectoral approaches encompassing all facets of society. Through active collaboration between policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders, including active participation of local community members like political and religious leaders, local education officials, and the media, the barriers to inclusion can be removed.

It is crucial to conduct a regional situation analysis on the issue's extent, the resources at hand, and how best to use them to encourage inclusion and inclusive education. Support for everyone's right to education must also be mobilized, fostering agreement on inclusiveness and excellence in education. Regarding policy formulations, the legislation must be changed to support inclusive education following international agreements, declarations, and recommendations. Besides, it is necessary to support the development of the local ability to advance the movement toward inclusive education while establishing methods for evaluating the effects of inclusive and high-quality education.

Moreover, when formulating the policies, it must also be considered to establish community- and school-based systems to track down children who are not in school and find strategies to encourage them to do so. In order to strengthen the policies, the teachers must be assisted in comprehending not only limited to their roles in education but also the fact that including diversity in the classroom is an opportunity rather than a problem.

Conceptual Framework for Social Exclusion/Inclusion

In this section, different conceptual definitions and terms are offered that make the conceptual framework of this study. Further, it contributes to conceptualizing different elements that contribute to educational exclusion. In addition to this, needed operational definitions are offered based on which the analytical framework for the report is developed.



3.1 Indicators and Themes

In terms of themes, the following have been selected as the basis of this study:

- Resources
- Participation
- Curriculum
- Freedom from Economic and Non-Economic Exploitations

Mario Briggeri (2004) has developed a list of relevant capabilities for children in different domains and dimensions. The following themes have been selected due to the belief of necessity and relevance for this research.

Resources

In order to understand the level of accessibility of resources, this theme is central as it helps to create an opportunity to build an inclusive environment and the inadequate access to resources leads to capability deprivation. This, in turn, leads to social exclusion as it acts as a barrier to participating in activities. For example, are their desks and chairs/ benches for the students? As a by-product of this theme, the indicators which look at the availability and satisfaction of stationeries, uniforms, scholarships, and disabled-friendly infrastructure have been selected. The availability and satisfaction level of stationery items and uniforms are examined to examine whether there are any opportunity differences between various castes and children from families of different economic backgrounds. Similarly, the availability of scholarships in terms of gender, economic background, ethnicity, and disability of the students will be examined.

Having an enabling environment ensures the inclusion of children with disabilities. An enabling environment refers to an environment that is accessible to people with disabilities in all spheres of society, i.e., social, cultural, physical, economic, etc. This accessible environment meets the needs of a broader range of people, which further increases the range of benefits for people in general, in turn increasing the support for changes. A universal design in the school's infrastructure must be accessible and of optimum utilization. The availability and satisfaction level of disabled-friendly school infrastructures regarding disabled students will be examined. For example, are there any ramps at school so that children using wheelchairs have easy access to their classrooms?

Curriculum

A school's curriculum plays a significant role in the relevance of social exclusion in the education system. Thus, to understand if there is an enabling and inclusive environment for students with disabilities, this theme has been considered. Inclusion based on the curriculum can help ensure opportunities for students with disabilities to engage with others. As a by-product of this theme, an indicator that looks at the school's curriculum, if it is tailor-made to include students with disabilities, has been selected. For example, a blind child must be provided with textbooks in Braille writing.

Participation

Public participation adds further information to judgment, such as knowledge of the scientific or technological field, the environment in which decisions are executed, and people's histories and biographies. A decision can be made better or worse depending on the available facts. It is crucial that every person participates in society and, likewise, in the education sector too. Participating students have learned the content thoroughly enough to explain new ideas to their classmates. This degree of reasoning goes beyond ordinary text comprehension and enhances memory.

Additionally, by cooperating, participation can assist students in learning from one another and improve comprehension.

In a multicultural nation such as Nepal, which is ethnically diverse, the theme of Religion and Identity can play a huge role. Various castes, especially minorities, face discrimination and segregation. Thus, there must be an opportunity for them to participate, so students' participation in school programs and activities in terms of their ethnicity is looked at. Similarly, participation through the lens of gender, disability, and income is observed too. This will also allow a sense of whether there is social inclusion or exclusion in schools' activities.

Freedom from Economic and Non-Economic Exploitation

Economy and capability go hand in hand in terms of social exclusion and inclusion. A poor economy may lead to poverty, which in turn will lead to capability deprivation. For example, if a boy child comes from a family with a poor economic background, she might be forced to go to work and even miss out on school. Similarly, if a girl child comes from a family with low income and both her parents have to focus on work, she may be forced to stay at home and take care of her younger siblings or a sick/disabled family member and miss out on school.

Therefore, the final theme is 'Freedom from economic and non-economic exploitations. This theme measures the level of exploitation in social and economic spheres of social exclusion. In order to measure this theme, indicators have been formulated which revolve around missing out on school because of either household chores or any other external responsibilities. For example in this theme questions include, "Do you miss school because of household chores?" and "Are there any external responsibilities restricting you from attending school?"

Research Methodology

This research took place at Yamunamai Rural Municipality at Rautahat. A total of 8 public schools were visited, and data was collected from grades 3 to 8. Participants were selected from each class/ grade 3 to 8, where at the most, three boys and three girls were randomly selected. Understanding the views of the local students and how included they feel will contribute to answering the research questions. The data collected are both primary and secondary. Similarly, qualitative and quantitative data have been collected. In terms of qualitative data collection, numerous methods such as surveys, questionnaires, literature review, naturalistic observation, and case studies have been used.

Nepal is multi-ethnic and rich in culture; prevalent social evils and traditions hamper social inclusion opportunities. Accordingly, case studies have also been conducted where appropriate, such as in the cases of social evils and child marriage. Likewise, the Likert scale has been used to collect statistical data in quantitative data collection. The rating scale consists of satisfaction and availability of the indicators, and the rating options are “Highly satisfied, positively satisfied, satisfied, negatively satisfied, and highly unsatisfied.” Typically, attitudes, knowledge, perceptions, values, and behavioral changes are graded using a Likert scale for empirical analysis. When rating their answers to evaluative questions, respondents might choose from a series of statements on a Likert-type scale (Vogt, 1999).

The qualitative data collected for the analysis have been thematized. When analyzing qualitative data collection, such as interviews, social media profiles, and survey responses, thematic analysis is a convenient way to learn more about people’s beliefs, knowledge, experiences, or values. As for the quantitative data, an excel matrix was used to analyze the data statistically. Excel sheets have been used to code and track themes of the qualitative data. New themes and sub-themes can be created in additional columns; consequently, it will allow one to see what themes each participant’s responses relate to.

The data analysis tool STATA was used to perform quantitative data analysis. It will further assist in cross-tabulating data and produce more in-depth and detailed examinations and correlations of different indicators. For example, one could look at stationery items’ availability based on ethnicity and income. This helps to show whether equal opportunity is given to children from financially weaker backgrounds and minor castes.

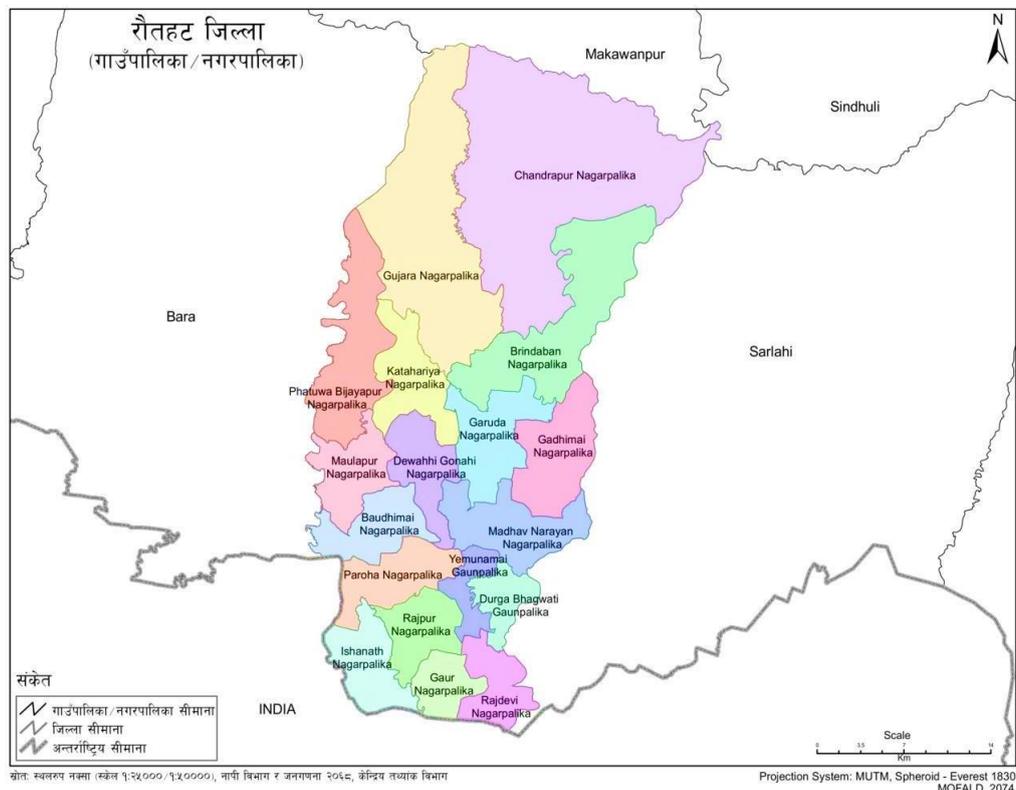
The quality of data analysis can be enhanced by paying attention to secondary data, such as news stories, reports, etc., and contrasting them with the original data gathered. The primary ethical concern for this research was consent. In order to ensure that people make an informed decision about participating in a research project, consent was taken before interviewing each respondent as part of ethical consideration.

4.1 Choosing Research Site

Nepal has five development regions with differing levels of poverty and presenting the level of poverty in percentage (%): Far West (41), Mid-west (44.8), West (34.5), Central (27.1), and East (27.6). This data has been obtained from the National Planning Commission (NPC, 2010). 42 Regions differ in their demographics and by caste and ethnicity. They also differ in economic potential and the degree to which they experience geographic challenges due to remoteness, particularly concerning the highly mountainous terrain of the Himalayas. Nepal is administratively divided into 75 districts, 3,915 village development committees (VDCs), and 59 municipalities.

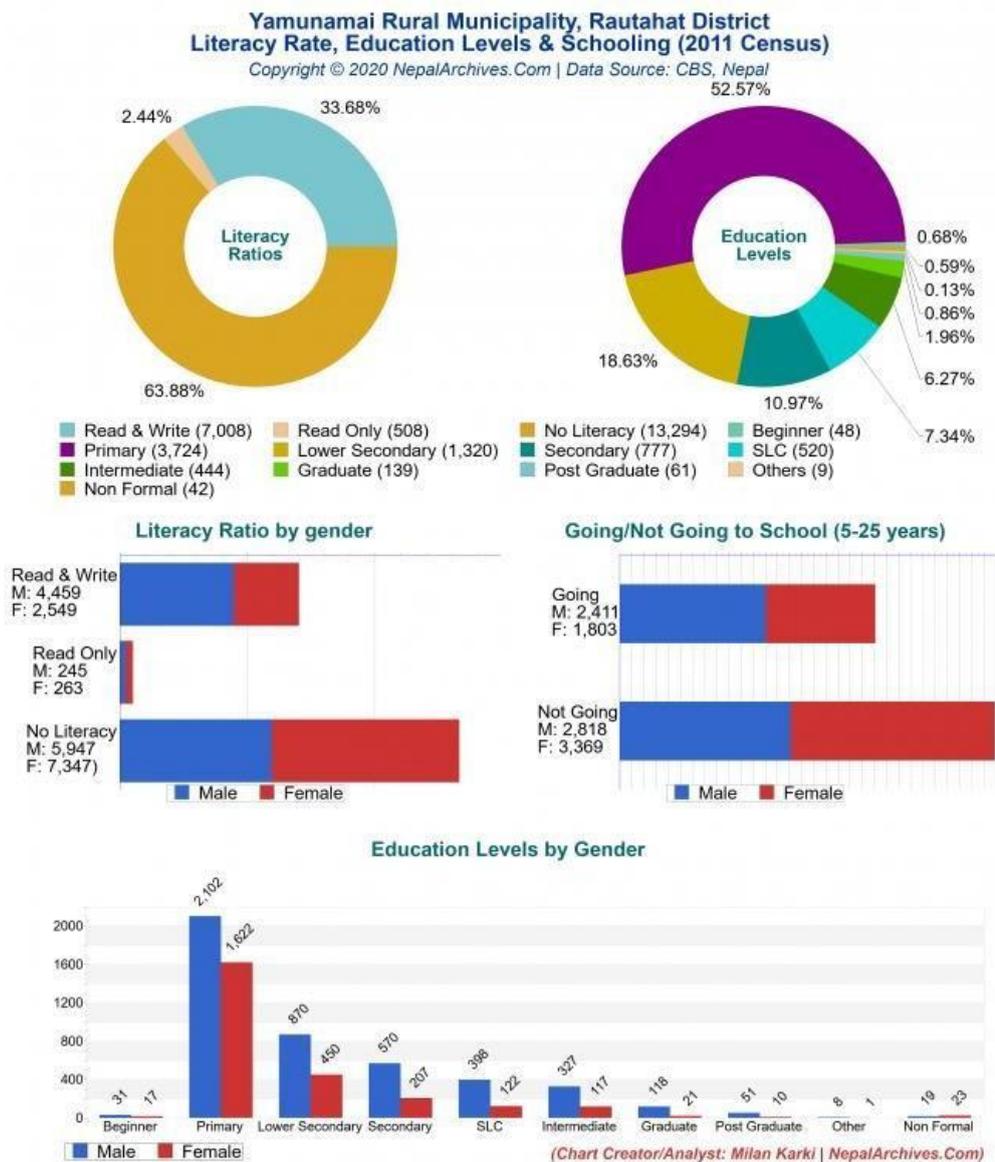
Among Nepal's 77 districts, Rautahat District, is a part of the Madhesh Province. Gaur is the district's administrative centre. Its 1,126 km-sq-2 area, which includes municipalities like Garuda, Chandrapur, and Paroha, had a population of 545,132 in 2001 and 686,722 in 2011. There are 16 municipalities and 2 VDCs in this district altogether. The highest percentage of [HINDU AND MUSLIM] in Nepal, at roughly 19.465 percent, is found in Rautahat, among other districts (106,111 persons in 2001). The Rautahat District had a population of 686,722 per the 2011 Nepal census. From this group, 60.3% spoke Bajjika as their mother tongue, followed by 19.3% Urdu, 6.1% Nepali, 4.3% Bhojpuri, 3.3% Tharu, 3.0% Maithili, and 1.7% Tamang. Hindi was spoken by 30.4% of district residents, Nepali by 16.8%, Bhojpuri by 10.8%, and 3.6% by Bajjika as their second language.

Figure 1: Rautahat District



The education status in Rautahat is one of the worst in the country. There are still 42,240 children in Rautahat who cannot access a school, despite the government’s aim to make education available to every child. Among the 75 districts in the nation, Rautahat has the lowest percentage of literacy, and according to concerned officials, one-third of the district’s children do not attend school. According to Rural Development Center Rautahat, children from Muslim and Dalit communities are the ones who do not attend school.

Figure 2: Yamunamai Literacy rate, education levels and schooling



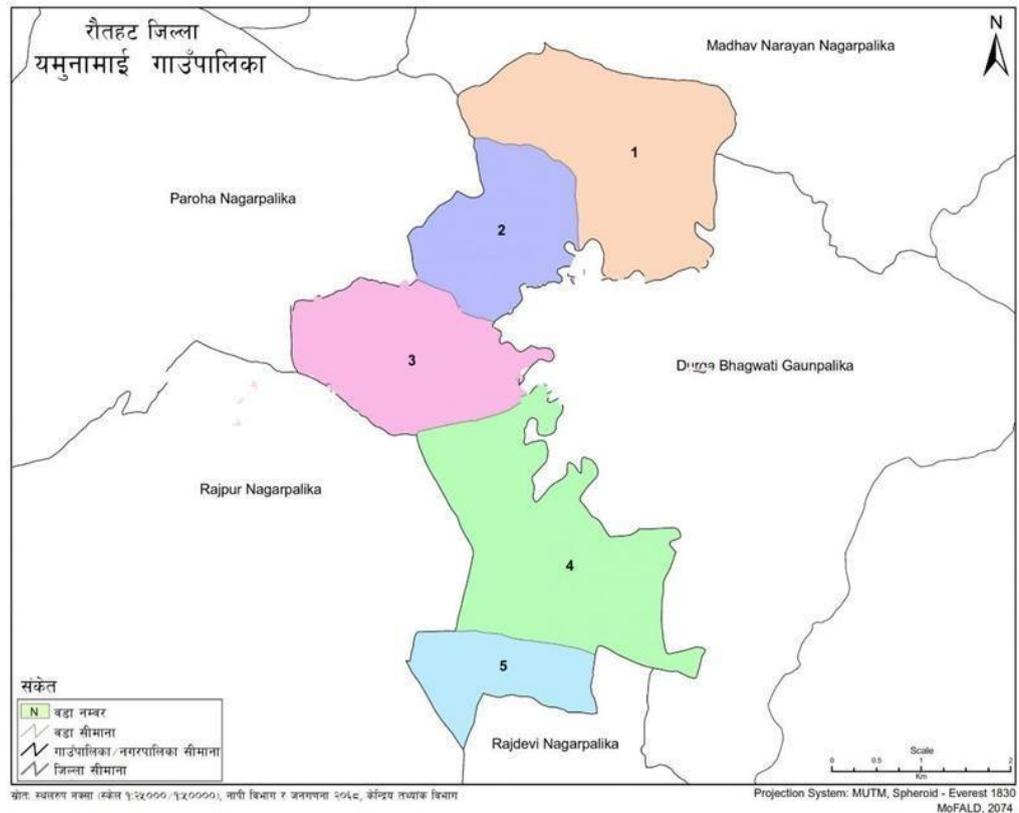
As of 2011, only 7,008 persons in Yamunamai Rural Municipality were completely literate, meaning they could read and write, and 508 others could read but not write. The population’s male-to-female literacy ratio was nil.

According to the Nepal Rural Development Center, Gaur Nagarpalika, the district headquarters, has more than 1,000 children out of school. Rautahat has the most prominent

Islamic community in the country and Islamic leaders say they do not tend to send their children to school. According to Maqsood Alam, a Juddha Higher Secondary School's governing board member, involving children in household chores from an early age and then sending them to Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata in India for work is still widespread. He indicates, "More than 50,000 young people from the district set out for jobs in various Indian cities and other countries. Most of our funding goes into constructing roads and canals and providing aid to flood victims"

Whereas, Arun Kumar Saha, mayor of the rural municipality where the school is located in Durga Bhagawati, says that although we help schools financially, it is out of our budget to upgrade their buildings. However, the DEO of Rautahat, Gokarna Dhvaj Karki, immediately shifts the blame: "Since the country turned federal, the main level does not do local budgeting. Only enough money is available for the District Education Office to run its office. Municipalities must create budgets; our job is to monitor and approve them.

Figure 3: Yamunamai Gaupalika



Yamunamai (Nepali: यमुनामाई) is a rural municipality in Rautahat District, a part of Province No. 2 in Nepal. It was formed in 2016 occupying 5 current sections (wards) from previous 5 former VDCs. It occupies an area of 16.70 km² with a total population of 23,884.

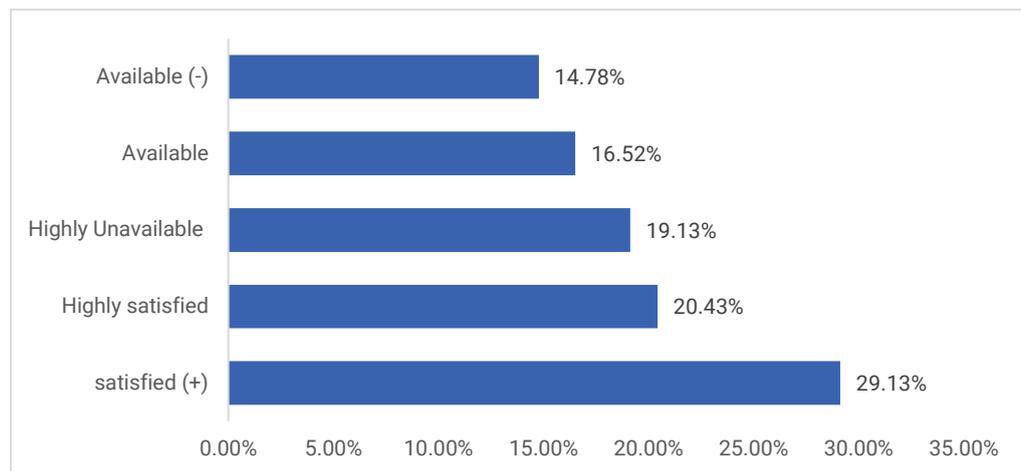
Findings and Analysis

This chapter on intersectional analysis will be across different dimensions and domains. In this section, I will look at the availability and satisfaction of stationeries across gender, ethnicity, and income. This chapter of the dissertation reports the findings of the study and has been divided according to the framework as mentioned earlier themes:

5.1 Resources

The graph presented below tabulates the availability of stationery items. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 29.13% rate the stationery as positively available, followed by 20.43% rating highly available. However, 19.13% of respondents rated highly unavailable, followed by 14.78%, negatively available. Likewise, 16.52% of respondents gave a rating of available, which is satisfactory on the Likert scale. Presented below is the table in a bar graph of the availability of stationery in percentage:

Figure 4: Availability of Stationery in Percentage

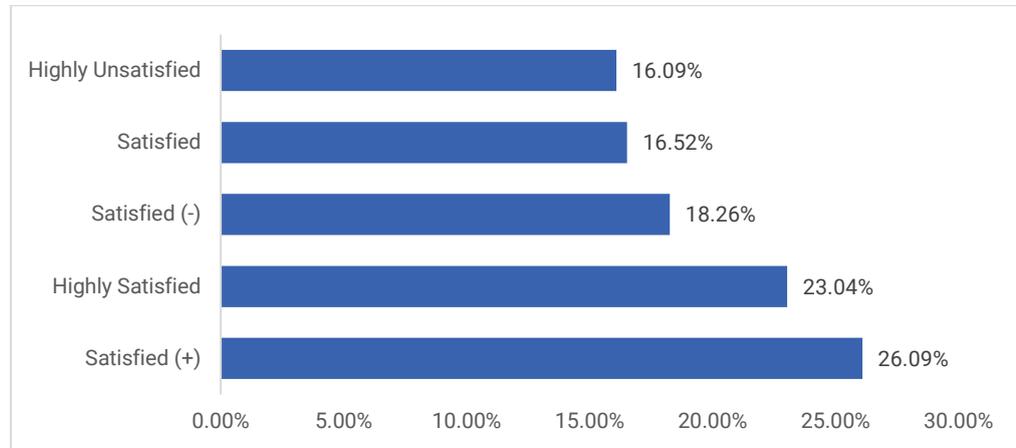


Source: Field Survey, 2022

The bar graph presented below tabulates the level of satisfaction with the percentage of stationery items. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 26.09% rate the stationery as positively satisfied, followed by 23.04% rating highly satisfied. However, 16.09% of respondents rated highly unsatisfied, followed by 18.26% rating negatively satisfied.

Likewise, 16.52% of respondents rated satisfied, which is only satisfactory on the Likert scale.

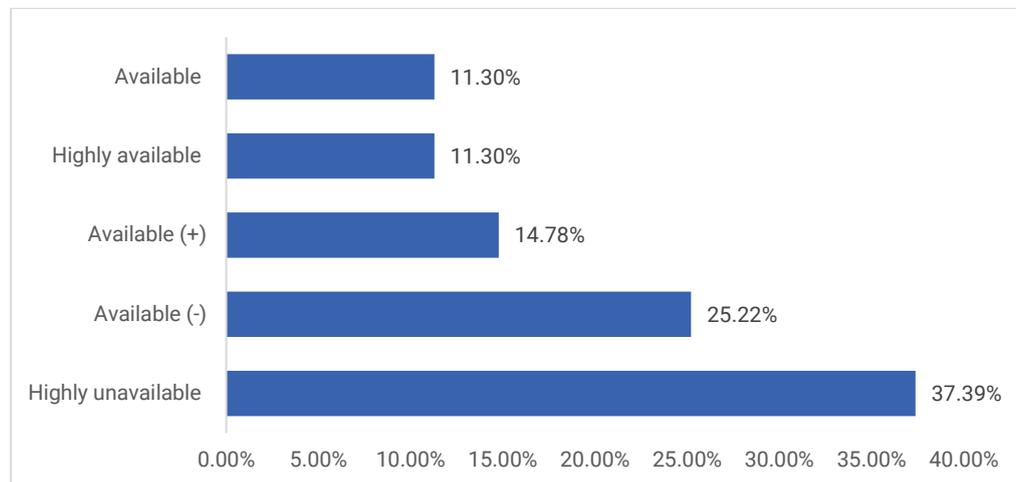
Figure 5: Satisfaction of Stationary in Percentage



Source: Field Survey, 2022

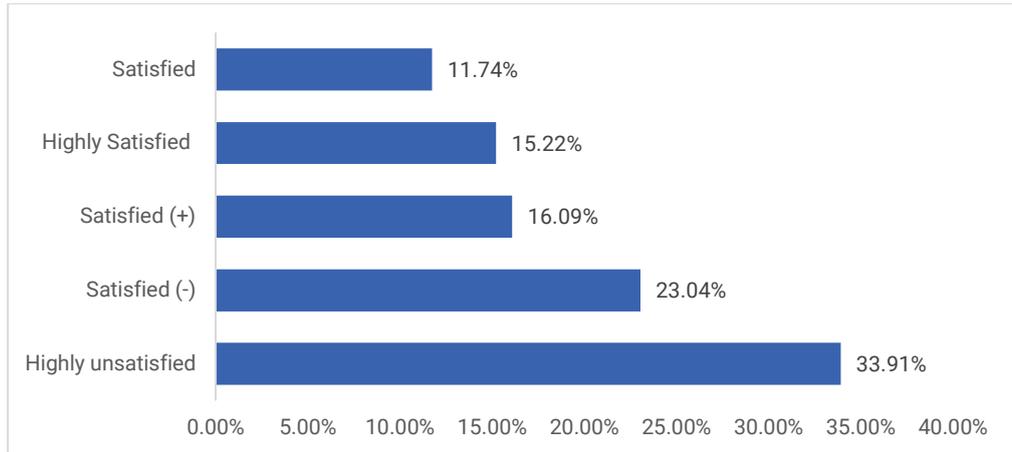
The bar graph presented below tabulates the availability of uniforms in percentage. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 14.78% rate the uniforms as positively available, followed by 11.30% rating highly available. However, 37.39% of respondents rated highly unavailable, followed by 25.22% negatively available. Likewise, 11.30% of respondents gave a rating of available, which is satisfactory on the Likert scale.

Figure 6: Availability of Uniforms in Percentage



The bar graph presented below tabulates the satisfaction of uniforms in percentage. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 16.09% rate the uniforms as positively satisfied, followed by 11.74% rating highly satisfied. However, 33.91% of respondents rated highly unsatisfied, followed by 23.04% rating negatively satisfied. Likewise, 15.22% of respondents rated satisfied, which is only satisfactory on the Likert scale.

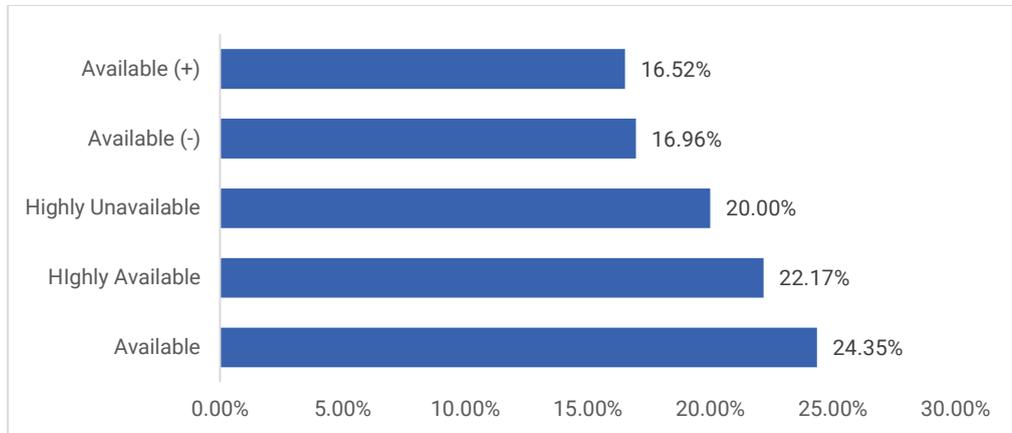
Figure 7: Satisfaction of Uniforms in Percentage



Source: Field Survey, 2022

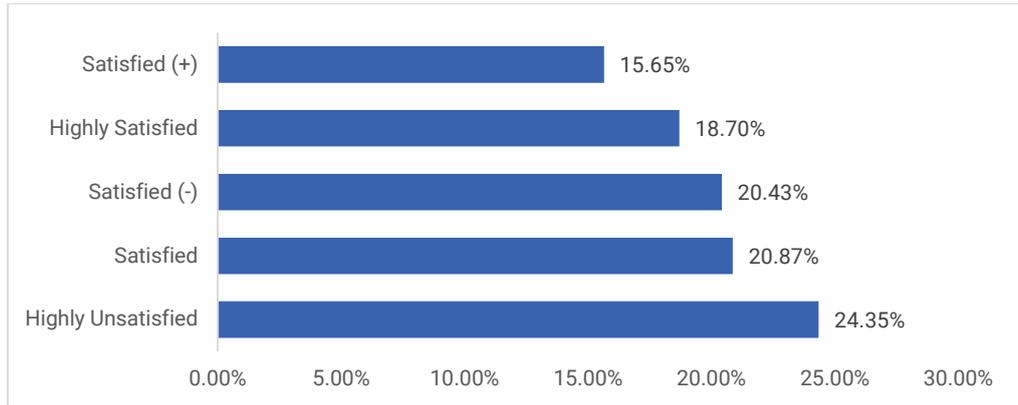
The bar graph presented below tabulates the availability of scholarships in percentage. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 16.52% rate the scholarships as positively available, followed by 22.17% rating highly available. However, 20.00% of respondents are rated highly unavailable, followed by 16.96% as negatively available. Likewise, 24.35% of respondents gave a rating of available, which is satisfactory on the Likert scale.

Figure 8: Availability of Scholarships in Percentage



The bar graph presented below tabulates the satisfaction of scholarships in percentage. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 15.65% rate the scholarships as positively satisfied, followed by 18.70% rating highly satisfied. However, 24.35% of respondents rated highly unsatisfied, followed by 20.43% rating negatively satisfied. Likewise, 20.87% of respondents rated satisfied, which is only satisfactory on the Likert scale.

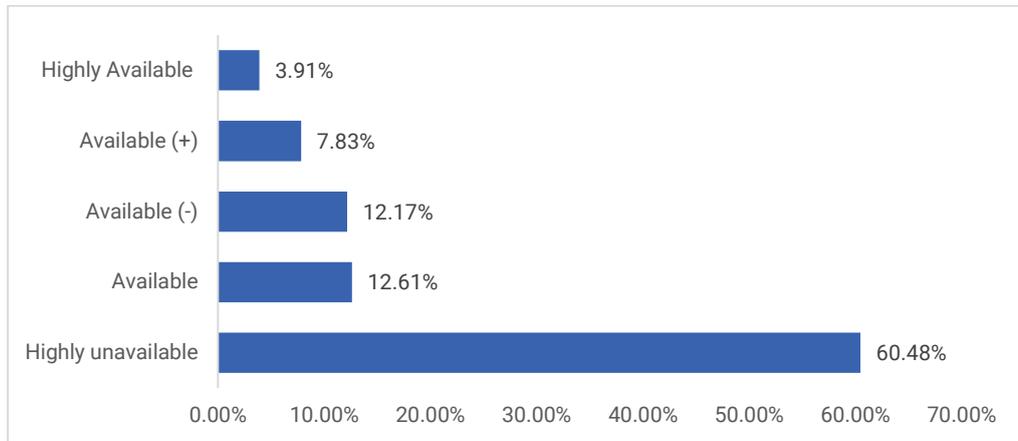
Figure 9: Satisfaction of Scholarships in Percentage



Source: Field Survey, 2022

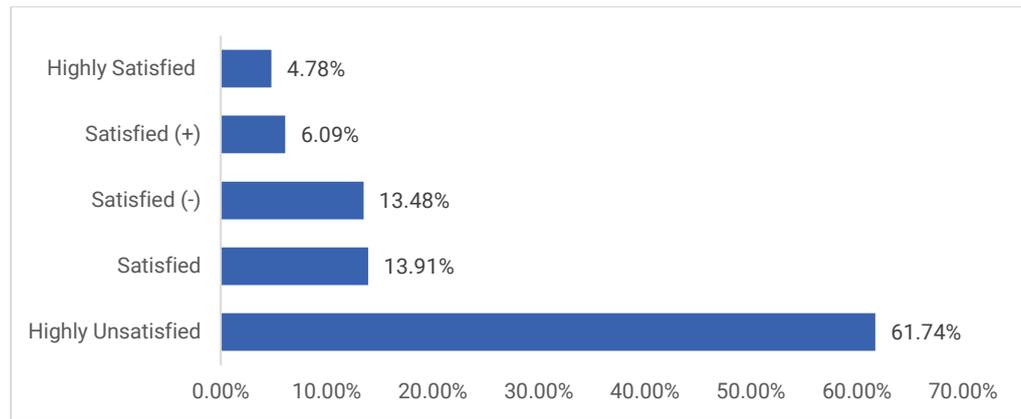
The bar graph below tabulates the availability of disabled-friendly infrastructure in percentage. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 7.83% rate the infrastructures as positively available, followed by 3.91% rating highly available. However, 60.48% of respondents rated highly unavailable, followed by 12.17% negatively available. Likewise, 12.61% of respondents gave a rating of available, which is satisfactory on the Likert scale.

Figure 10: Availability of Disabled Friendly Infrastructure in Percentage



The bar graph below tabulates the satisfaction of disabled-friendly infrastructure in percentage. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 6.09% rate the disabled social infrastructure as positively satisfied, followed by 4.78% rating highly satisfied. However, 61.74% of respondents rated highly unsatisfied, followed by 13.48% as negatively satisfied. Likewise, 13.91% of respondents rated satisfied, which is only satisfactory on the Likert scale.

Figure 11: Satisfaction of Disabled Friendly Infrastructure in Percentage

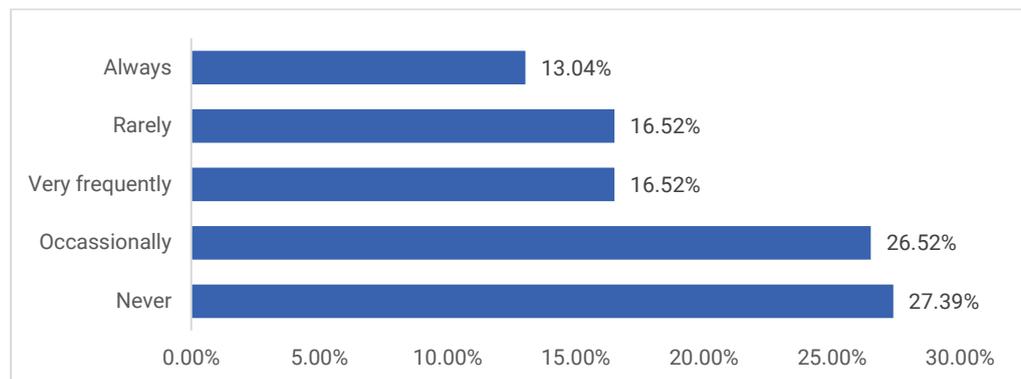


Source: Field Survey, 2022

5.1.1 Participation

The bar graph below tabulates the question “Have you ever participated in activities such as sport and training?” in percentage. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 27.39% of respondents have never participated in any sports and training activities, followed by 16.52% having rated rarely. Likewise, 16.52% of respondents have chosen ‘very frequently’ while 26.52% have chosen ‘occasionally.’ Further, only 13.04% have said they have always participated in sports and training activities.

Figure 12: “Have you ever participated in activities such as sport and training?” in Percentage



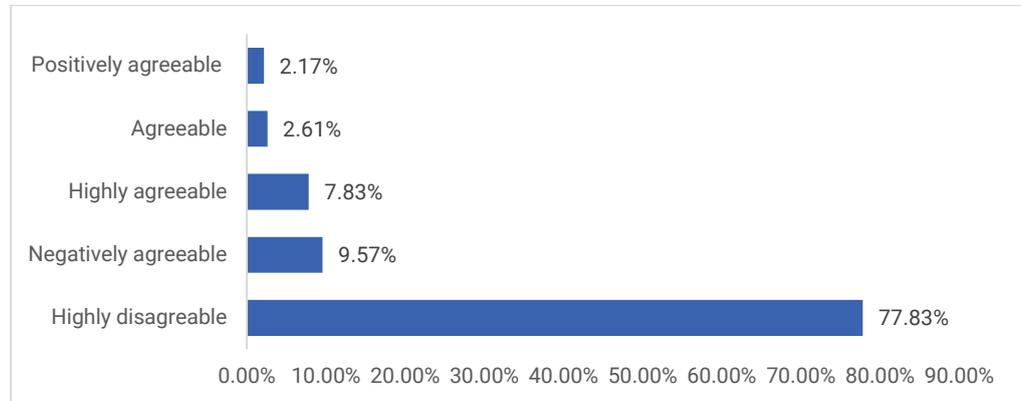
Source: Field Survey, 2022

5.1.2 Curriculum

The bar graph below tabulates the question, “Is the school’s curriculum tailor-made to include students with disabilities, for example, a Braille textbook for the visually impaired.” In percentage. It shows that out of 230 respondents, 2.17% of them positively agree that the school’s curriculum is tailor-made to include students with disabilities, followed by 2.61% only agreeing. However, 77.83% of respondents highly

disagree, followed by 9.57% negatively agreeing. Likewise, 7.83% of respondents gave a rating of highly agreeable.

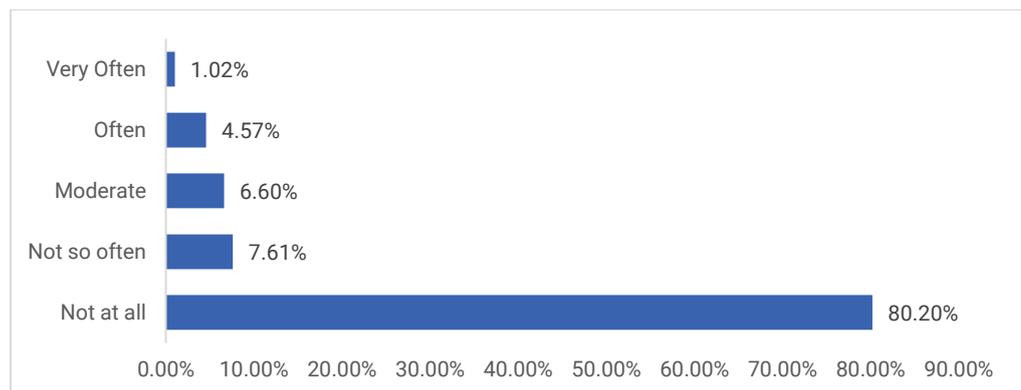
Figure 13: “Is the school’s curriculum tailor made to be inclusive of students with disabilities? For example, Braille textbook for visually impaired” in Percentage



5.1.3 Freedom from Economic and Non-Economic Exploitations

The bar graph presented below tabulates the question “Have you ever not attended school because you have to do household chores?” in percentage. It shows that out of 197 respondents, 80.20% chose the option “not at all,” followed by 7.61% choosing “Not so often.” Likewise, 4.57% chose “often,” while 1.02% chose “very often.” Similarly, 6.6% chose the option ‘moderate.’

Figure 14: “Have you ever not attended school because you have to go to do household chores?” in Percentage

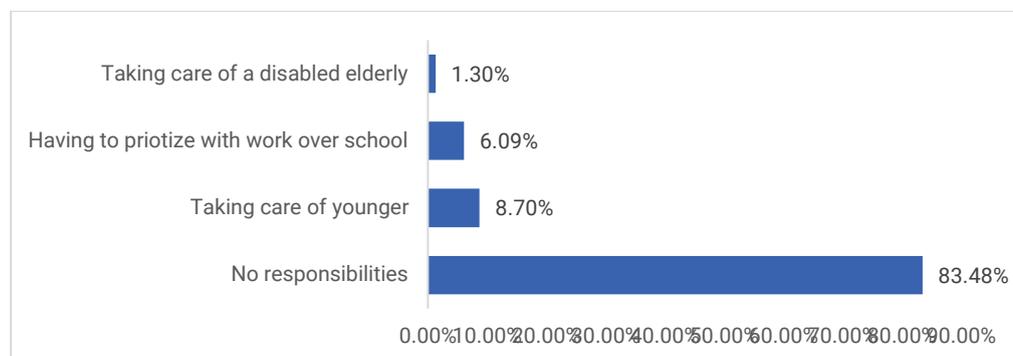


Source: Field Survey, 2022

The bar graph presented below tabulates the question “Are there any external responsibilities that restrict you from attending school regularly?” in percentage. Out of 230 respondents, it shows that 83.48% of respondents say they have no responsibilities that restrict them from attending school regularly. While 6.09% said

they had to prioritize work over school, another 0.43% said the same. Similarly, while 1.30% said they had to take care of a disabled elderly, 8.7% said they had to take care of their younger siblings.

Figure 15: “Are there any external responsibilities that restrict you from attending school regularly?” in Percentage



Source: Field Survey, 2022

The following section of the study analyzes the data presented above for further discussion.

5.1.4 Participation

The following table represents the cross tabulation of participation with gender, ethnicity and disability each:

Table 1: Participation and Gender

	Female	Male	Total
Always	4.4	8.7	13.1
Never	14.4	13	27.4
Occasionally	14.8	11.7	26.5
Rarely	7.8	8.7	16.5
Very Frequently	9.1	7.4	16.5
Total	50.5	49.5	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The respondents were asked if they have ever participated in activities such as sport or training. The first table which is cross tabulated with gender shows that the male students (8.7%) always participate more than the female students (4.4%), exactly half the number of males. By the same token, it can also be seen that a lesser number of male students (13%), as compared to the female students (14.4%), never participate in activities. By this, we can conclude that a higher number of the male students take part in activities at school as compared to female students.

This may be due to social reasons such as gendered discrimination, which is very relevant in rural areas such as Rautahat. When female students were asked if they

felt shy or ashamed to be a girl, some replied, “Yes, because girls are girls; we are different and weaker than boys. ‘Another reason may be the preference for different activities for boys and girls. While primarily boys like to play sports such as football and cricket, girls do not prefer such physical activities.

Table 2: Participation and Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Always	Never	Occasionally	Rarely	Very frequently	Total
Bin	0.0	0.9	1.3	1.7	1.7	5.7
Brahmin	0.0	0.4	0.9	0.4	0.4	2.2
Chamara, Harijan, Ram	0.0	1.3	1.7	0.0	0.0	3.0
Dhobi	0.0	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.4	3.5
Dusad, Pasaman, Pasi	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
Kanu	3.0	3.5	3.9	0.9	3.5	14.8
Lohar	0.4	1.3	2.2	1.7	1.7	7.4
Malaha	0.0	0.9	0.9	0.4	1.3	3.5
Muslim	2.6	6.5	3.9	2.2	2.2	17.4
Yadav	0.9	4.8	3.5	0.4	2.2	11.7
Others	6.1	6.1	7.4	7.8	3.0	30.4
Total	13.0	27.4	26.5	16.5	16.5	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The above table which cross-tabulates participation with ethnicity shows that mostly Muslims (6.5%) never participate in activities at school, followed by other (6.1%) ethnicities and Yadavs (4.8%). Meanwhile, the highest number of respondents who always participate in activities are from others (6.1%) ethnicity, followed by Kanu (3%).

This may be due to the fact that the highest number of respondents besides others are Muslims (17.4%) and Kanu (14.8%). Nonetheless, this cross tabulation also shows a disparity between the Muslims and other ethnicities. Besides, when students were asked if there has been caste-based discrimination at school, regarding this question most of them replied with “No.” However, when asking Muslim and minority caste students if there were any caste-based discrimination, they replied, “Yes, in school, the teachers scold us and discriminate against us, saying that we are of lower castes. Even in the neighborhood, we face societal level discrimination.”

Table 3: Participation and Disability

	NO	Total
Always	13.0	13.0
Never	27.4	27.4
Occasionally	26.5	26.5
Rarely	16.5	16.5
Very Frequently	16.5	16.5
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In the table presented above, participation across disability has been looked at to show the correlation between the two. As presented, there were no respondents with disabilities. However, the respondents had friends and classmates who were disabled and answered likewise. This cross-tabulation shows a clear indication of how disabled children never (27.4%) rarely (16.5%) and occasionally (26.5%) participate in activities. A maximum number of the children with disabilities do not participate in activities due to the fact that there is no disabled friendly infrastructure.

5.1.5 Resources

The following table represents the cross tabulation of the availability of resources (stationary, uniforms, scholarship and disabled friendly infrastructure) with ethnicity, and disability each:

Table 4: Stationery and Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Available	Highly available	Highly Unavailable	Negatively Available	Positively Available	Total
Bin	1.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	3.0	5.7
Brahmin	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.4	2.2
Chamara, Harijan, Ram	0.9	0.9	0.4	0.9	0.0	3.0
Dhobi	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.9	0.9	3.5
Dusad, Pasaman, Pasi	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.4
Kanu	1.7	3.9	3.9	0.9	4.3	14.8
Lohar	1.3	1.3	1.7	0.4	2.6	7.4
Malaha	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.9	1.3	3.5
Muslim	3.0	5.7	1.3	2.2	5.2	17.4
Yadav	1.3	2.2	1.7	3.0	3.5	11.7
Others	6.1	4.8	7.8	4.3	7.4	30.4
Total	16.5	20.4	19.1	14.8	29.1	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table above represents the cross tabulation between the availability of stationery items with ethnicity. Most of the respondents are from “others’ ethnicity, 30.4% respondents. Likewise, Muslim respondents (5.7%) say that stationary items are highly available to them while Kanu respondents (3.9%) say that stationary items are highly unavailable to them.

This table shows a disparity between Muslim and Kanu respondents in terms of availability of stationary items. This may be due to the students’ class factor as well. Many of the schools we had visited gave priority to students from 1 to 5, providing them with mid-day meals, drinking water, uniforms, stationeries, and textbooks. A total of 19.1% respondents said that stationary items were highly unavailable to them while 20.4% said that the items were highly available to them. Thus, this may have varied due to the classes they were in.

Similarly, when some students were asked who was provided with stationery items, they responded by saying, “Those who are of a financially weaker background or Dalits, students of the lower class, are provided with resources.”

Table 5: Stationery and Income

	Available	Highly available	Highly Unavailable	Negatively Available	Positively Available	Total
Do not know	5.3	6.5	5.7	3.0	11.3	31.8
Fifteen-Twenty Thousand	1.3	0.9	2.6	2.2	3.5	10.5
Five-Ten Thousand	3.1	1.7	4.8	2.2	5.2	17.0
Ten-Fifteen Thousand	2.2	0.4	2.2	3.0	2.6	10.5
Twenty Thousand and above	4.4	10.9	3.5	4.3	5.7	28.8
Total	16.4	20.4	18.7	14.8	28.3	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table above represents the cross tabulation between the availability of stationery items and income. Majority of the participants did not know their family's income (31.8%), followed by 28.8% participants who came from financially well to do families with an income of 20,000 and above. In terms of highly unavailable stationary items, 43 respondents received no stationary, the majority of those respondents did not know their income (5.7%) followed by 4.8% respondents who came from the financially weaker background of 5,000-10,000 income. In terms of highly available stationary items, 20.4% respondents received stationary items, where most respondents (10.9%) came from financially strong backgrounds with incomes of above 20,000, followed by 2.6% respondents who did not know their family's income.

This table shows that even though a student who comes from a financially weak family does not get priority in receiving stationary items. However, this assumption cannot also be made due to the fact that only 2.6% respondents were taken from each class. Thus, this analysis may not be made general as there might have been more students from lower class families that did not get to partake in this study.

Table 6: Uniform and Ethnicity

	Available	Highly available	Highly Unavailable	Negatively Available	Positively Available	Total
Bin	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.7	5.7
Brahmin	0.4	0.0	1.3	0.4	0.0	2.2
Chamara, Harijan, Ram	0.0	0.0	1.7	1.3	0.0	3.0
Dhobi	0.9	0.0	1.3	0.9	0.4	3.5
Dusad, Pasaman, Pasi	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
Kanu	1.7	2.6	4.8	2.2	3.5	14.8
Lohar	0.4	0.4	3.5	1.3	1.7	7.4
Malaha	0.0	0.4	1.7	0.9	0.4	3.5
Muslim	2.2	3.0	3.9	4.3	3.9	17.4
Yadav	0.0	1.3	3.9	5.2	1.3	11.7
Others	3.9	2.6	14.3	7.8	1.7	30.4
Total	11.3	11.3	37.4	25.2	14.8	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table above represents the cross tabulation between the availability of uniforms and ethnicity. The highest number of respondents (30.4%) were from other ethnic backgrounds, followed by Muslims (17.4%). When looking at the respondents who

have said that the uniforms are highly unavailable, the other ethnic background students have the highest number of respondents (14.3%) followed by the Kanu ethnic background students (4.8%). Likewise, when looking at the respondents who have said that the uniforms are highly available, the Muslim students (3%) have the highest number of respondents followed by Kanu and other ethnic background students with 2.6% respondents each.

Table 7: Availability of Scholarship and Ethnicity

	Available	Highly available	Highly Unavailable	Negatively Available	Positively Available	Total
Bin	1.3	0.4	1.3	1.7	0.9	5.7
Brahmin	0.9	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.4	2.2
Chamara, Harijan, Ram	0.4	0.9	0.4	0.9	0.4	3.0
Dhobi	0.4	1.3	0.9	0.4	0.4	3.5
Dusad, Pasaman, Pasi	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
Kanu	0.9	4.8	2.6	3.0	3.5	14.8
Lohar	2.6	2.2	1.3	0.9	0.4	7.4
Malaha	0.9	0.4	0.0	0.0	2.2	3.5
Muslim	4.3	6.1	1.7	2.2	3.0	17.4
Yadav	4.3	1.3	1.7	2.6	1.7	11.7
Others	7.8	4.8	9.6	4.8	3.5	30.4
Total	24.3	22.2	20.0	17.0	16.5	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table above represents the cross tabulation between the availability of scholarships and ethnicity. According to cases gathered from respondents, we found out that some of the schools used to distribute resources such as midday meals, stationary items, textbooks and safe drinking water to students from grades 1 to 5. Thus, to examine the experiences of education experienced by students, I have looked at the data gathered in terms of availability of scholarship across ethnicity of the respondents. From the cross tabulation presented above, we can see that scholarship is 'positively available' (16.5%) and 'highly available' (22.2%) to most respondents. Meanwhile, 20% respondents believe that scholarship is 'highly unavailable' while for 39 respondents, scholarship is 'negatively available'. Likewise, many participants (24.3%) believed that scholarship was satisfactorily 'available' to them.

Analysing the availability of scholarship in terms of ethnicity, we can see that it is highly available to the Muslims and Kanu respondents. By the same token, it is highly unavailable to respondents from other ethnic groups (9.6%), followed by Kanu respondents (2.6%). This data may have resulted in so, due to the high number of Kanu respondents, 14.8% in total. Similarly, only 1.7% Muslim respondents say that scholarship is highly unavailable to them. Therefore, we can say that Muslims and Kanu are given more priority in terms of scholarships, in comparison to students from other ethnic backgrounds.

Table 8: Disability and Availability of Disabled Friendly Infrastructure

	NO	Total
Available	12.6	12.6
Highly Available	3.9	3.9
Highly Unavailable	63.5	63.5
Negatively Available	12.2	12.2
Positively Available	7.8	7.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table above represents the cross tabulation between the availability of disabled friendly infrastructure in reference to disabled students. While there were no disabled respondents, there were other students who had disabilities. The table above shows that out of 230 students, a majority of 63.5% students believe that their schools' infrastructure is not disabled friendly, along with 12.2% other respondents who believe that it is negatively available. Likewise, 7.8% students believe that disabled friendly infrastructure is positively available, along with 12.2% other respondents who say it is highly available at their schools. Similarly, 12.6% students gave a satisfactory answer of "available". This shows that most of the schools do not have an enabling environment, making their infrastructure exclusive to students with disabilities.

In the case of understanding disabled social infrastructures, only one school, "Shree Janta Ma Vi," was seen to have ramps for students who used wheelchairs. There were ramps for easy access to a toilet and classrooms on the ground floor. When asking respondents why only their school had ramps, they informed us of a student with a disability in grade 5. This student's hands were turned outward, and he was the only student with a disability at the school. When asked more about the student's situation, many respondents talked about the headmaster looking after the child personally. A student stated that our headmaster has funded his uniform, stationery, and textbooks and our headmaster has allowed him to study and make something of his life by aiding him financially with his own pocket's money" – Dami Kumari Sharma, 8th grade, Shree Janta Ma Vi. This student has been allowed to participate in the education sector and has been looked after financially and materialistically. Every month the headmaster gives the child's family certain sum of money from his pocket so that it will be easy for his family members to look after the child.

5.1.6 Freedom from Economic and Non-Economic Exploitations

There are various reasons in the economic as well as social spheres that promote social exclusion in society. Such reasons may be gender discrimination, which would further trickle down from societal sectors (families) to the education sector (schools). The table presented below represents the cross-tabulation of gender and household chores:

Table 9: Household Chores and Gender

	Female	Male	Total
Moderate	1.5	5.1	6.6
Not at all	39.6	40.6	80.2
Not so often	5.6	2.0	7.6
Often	1.5	3.0	4.6
Very often	0.5	0.5	1.0
Total	48.7	51.3	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In order to examine the different underlying reasons for social exclusion, I have cross tabulated gender with the question “Do you miss school because of household chores?”. As shown in the table above, there were a higher number of male respondents (51.3%) as compared to female respondents (48.7%). Majority of both males (40.6%) and females (39.6%) said that they do not miss school at all because of household chores, followed by 5.6% females and 2% males saying they did not miss school so often. Likewise, 1.5% females and 3.0% males said they often missed school while 0.5% male and 0.5% female each said they had to miss school often. Similarly, 1.5% females and 5.1% males gave a satisfactory answer of “moderate”, meaning they sometimes had to miss school and sometimes did not have to miss school because of household chores. The data gathered shows that a higher number of males respondents had to miss school because of household chores. However, this may be due to the fact that there were a higher number of male respondents too. Most of their household chores consisted of either taking care of a younger sibling or taking care of their parents when sick.

Table 10: Sex and External Responsibilities

	Female	Male	Total
Having to prioritize work over school	2.2	4.3	6.5
No responsibilities	40.4	43.0	83.5
Taking Care of a disabled elderly	0.4	0.9	1.3
Taking care of younger	7.4	1.3	8.7
Total	50.4	49.6	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table presented above represents the cross tabulation of sex and external responsibilities that result in the students missing out on school. In order to examine the different underlying reasons for such exclusions, I have chosen this cross tabulation so as to examine how gendered roles at homes lead to children missing out on school. From the data gathered, we can see that there were 50.4% female and 49.6% male respondents, almost equally balanced. While only 2.2% females had prioritised work over school, a greater number of male respondents (10) had to prioritise work over school. Similarly, while 4.3% female had to take care of disabled elderly, 0.9% males had to take care of a disabled elderly. Likewise, 7.4% female respondents had to take care of younger siblings while only 1.3% males had to take care of younger siblings.

This data shows the traditional gendered roles still at play where females are tasked with work within the household realm while the males are tasked with work outside the household realm. A higher number of males had to prioritise work over school while a higher number of females had to prioritise taking care of their siblings or a disabled elderly. However, a majority of the respondents (83.5%) said that they had no responsibilities and were not stopped from attending school regularly.

5.1.7 Curriculum

The table presented below represents the cross-tabulation of disabled respondents and curriculum:

Table 11: Curriculum and Disability

	NO	Total
Positively agreeable	2.2	2.2
Agreeable	2.6	2.6
Highly agreeable	7.8	7.8
Highly Disagreeable	77.8	77.8
Negatively Agreeable	9.6	9.6
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In order to examine whether schools have adapted or adopted any practices in their own way to reduce exclusion, I have cross tabulated the data gathered from disabled respondents and the question “Is the curriculum tailor-made to be inclusive of students with disabilities?”. From 230 respondents, there was not a single student with a disability. However, the respondents had friends who were disabled and responded to the question accordingly. A majority of 77.8% respondents highly disagreed, saying that the curriculum was not inclusive along with 9.6% students who negatively agreed. Likewise, only 7.8% respondents highly agreed, saying that the curriculum was inclusive, along with 2.2% other respondents who positively agreed. A total of 2.6% students gave a satisfactory rating of “agreeable” when asked if the curriculum was inclusive of students with disabilities.

From this, we can conclude that most schools did not have an inclusive curriculum for students with disabilities. This created an opportunity deprivation for students with disabilities. For example, if there were a child who wished to enroll in the school but was blind, he/she would have difficult time learning as there would be no braille textbooks provided to them. They would have to rely solely on their hearing skills in the classroom. It would put them at a significant disadvantage compared to other students, further discouraging them from pursuing an education. Consequently, this would result in the blind child dropping out.

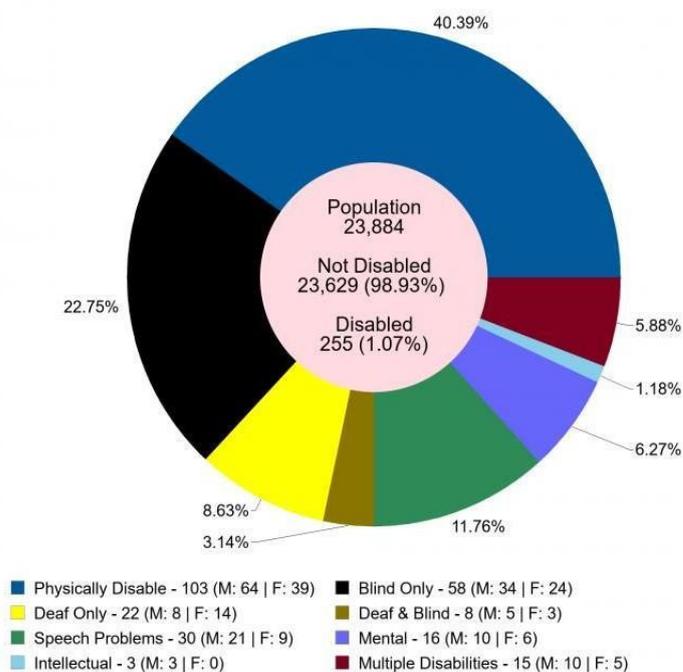
5.1.8 Rautahat and Disability

Out of a total population of 23,884, there were 255 (1.07%) disabled people in Yamunamai Rural Municipality, 155 of them were men (60.78%), and 100 of whom were women (39.22%). There were 103 people with physical disabilities, 16 with mental disabilities, and 3 with intellectual disabilities. Similarly, there were 58 blind people, 22 deaf people, and 8 people who were both blind and deaf. Additionally, 30 people reported having speech issues. 15 individuals had various impairments in total.

The pie-chart presented below shows a more accurate portrayal of the people with disabilities as well as gender ratios.

Figure 16: Ratios of Disabled Population

**Yamunamai Rural Municipality, Rautahat District
Ratios of Disabled Population (2011 Census)**
(Copyright © 2020 NepalArchives.Com | Data Source: CBS | Creator: Milan Karki)



Source: Field Survey, 2022

Conclusion

As discussed above, social exclusion/ inclusion is looked at in two spheres: 'Economic' and 'Social.' Poverty, inequality, lack of decent and accessible public services, inadequate public transport, social welfare systems, and lack of suitable housing are significant causes of social exclusion. Social exclusion creates further poverty by excluding people from development benefits and denying them opportunities, choices, and voices to claim their rights. The relationship between poverty and social exclusion is two-way.

Moreover, from the data gathered in this study, we can conclude that there is a substantial level of discrimination and segregation among students regarding genders and castes. For example, a 14-year-old Muslim girl studying at Rajput Tulashi said that she faced much discrimination, abuse, and harassment, not limited to the school, the community she lived in, and her household. Besides, being a Muslim girl results into facing different form of segregation, without no decision-making choices, and assault by the people of the society as well as her family members. Her family has fixed her marriage, and while she does not want to marry at this young age, she has no say in the matter due to the immense pressure from her family. Girls are seen as a burden, and families want to marry them off early. This case is no different, where she is to be wed off to a very aged man, "old enough to be my grandfather," as she said.

Similarly, there is minimal emphasis on disabled-friendly infrastructure and a lack of focus on people with disabilities, regardless of whether they are students or teachers. These exclusions have arisen from various factors, such as deep-rooted caste-based discrimination and the patriarchal way of life in the village. However, steps have been taken by the school to tackle such forms of exclusion. For example, children from lower castes or low-income families have been said to be provided with resources (stationary items and uniforms). While some schools give out uniforms, some give out money ranging from Rs.400 to Rs.800 so students can buy uniforms.

In conclusion, whereas some global trends have favored social inclusion, others have promoted social exclusion. There is no indication, as things stand, that exclusion will be overcome. Instead, if humanity is to leave no one behind, this societal evil must be addressed head-on. To be successful in this endeavor, good people must support the efforts of excluded communities and individuals to be included. Additionally, as the process usually entails significant social change, it will need personal fortitude, ethical considerations and perseverance.

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Annex







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