Reconstructing Dalit Identity in an Urban Context: The Experience of Pokhara

[1]Shanta Kumari Khatri, [2]Naresh Paudel*
[1]Department of Sociology, P. N. Campus
[2]Department of Geography, P. N. Campus
Corresponding Author: npaudel@pncampus.edu.np

Abstract

This study explores the reconstruction of Dalit identity in the urban context of Pokhara, Nepal, highlighting how urbanization offers both opportunities and challenges for marginalized caste groups. Using a qualitative research approach, 25 Dalit participants from various sub-castes were interviewed via telephone, allowing for deeper insight into their lived experiences, identity negotiations, and strategies of social navigation. Findings reveal that while explicit caste discrimination is less visible in the urban setting compared to rural areas, caste continues to operate in subtle, symbolic, and institutionalized forms. Participants adopted dual strategies; some concealed their caste to avoid exclusion, while others asserted their identity to claim rights through affirmative action and NGO support. The research reveals intra-Dalit hierarchies and enduring inequalities formed by intersections of caste, class, gender, and occupation. Despite legal protections, caste-based stigma persists, often masked by urban modernity and institutional silence. The study concludes that urbanization does not automatically dismantle caste hierarchies but instead reconfigures them in new ways. Understanding Dalit identity reconstruction in cities like Pokhara is essential for informing inclusive urban policy and advancing social justice in contemporary Nepal.

Keywords: Dalit identity, caste, urbanization, Pokhara, Nepal, discrimination, social justice

Introduction

Dalits, who comprise approximately 13.1 percent of Nepal's population (Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2011), remain among the most socially and economically marginalized groups. Despite decades of political change and constitutional promises of equality, the Dalit community

continues to face systemic exclusion from land ownership, political representation, quality education, and dignified employment (Cameron, 2007; Bhattachan et al., 2009). Historically confined to the bottom of the caste hierarchy, Dalits have been subjected to spatial segregation, untouchability, and social stigma. These enduring inequalities are not merely historical remnants but active structures that shape Dalits' everyday experiences in contemporary Nepal.

The migration of Dalits from rural villages to urban centers such as Pokhara has created new possibilities for social transformation. Urban environments, unlike tightly regulated rural settings, provide a degree of anonymity, economic diversification, and exposure to rights-based discourses through education and media (Adhikari & Deshingkar, 2015; Cameron, 2009). Scholars such as Folmar (2007) and Gray (2012) argue that urban spaces offer opportunities for the reconstruction and negotiation of Dalit identity, allowing individuals to escape rigid caste surveillance. However, this optimistic view is tempered by evidence that caste-based exclusions are reconfigured, rather than erased, in cities. Even in urban areas, caste continues to shape access to housing, employment, social capital, and political participation (Lawoti, 2010; Tamang, 2011).

This paper explores how urban transformation intersects with Dalit identity in Pokhara, Nepal's second-largest city and a rapidly urbanizing space. Drawing on qualitative data gathered through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, the study investigates how caste-based discrimination persists in subtle, often hidden ways, and how Dalits employ everyday strategies to assert dignity and navigate systems of inclusion and exclusion. Through the lens of lived experience, the paper examines whether urban migration truly facilitates the reconstruction of Dalit identity or whether it simply reshapes old inequalities in new forms within Nepal's post-conflict political landscape.

Politics and Caste in Nepal

Caste remains one of the most enduring and deeply rooted systems of social stratification in South Asia, and Nepal is no exception. Among the most marginalized within this system are the Dalits, formerly known as untouchables, who have historically faced systemic exclusion, stigmatization, Although Dalits often share language, religion, and cultural practices with non-Dalit populations, they continue to be perceived as ritually impure and socially inferior (Cameron, 1998; Ahuti, 2008). This notion of inferiority, grounded in the Hindu ideology of pollution and purity, has long shaped societal attitudes and institutional structures (Dumont, 1970; Srinivas, 1952).

The codification of caste-based inequality was formalized in Nepal with the implementation of the *Muluki Ain* (Legal Code) in 1854 under Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana. This legal framework reinforced Brahminical dominance by ranking citizens into caste categories with differentiated rights, duties, and punishments (Hofer, 1979). While the Interim Constitution of 2007 and the Constitution of Nepal (2015) legally abolished caste-based untouchability, the legacy of caste oppression continues to permeate everyday life. Dalits still face discrimination

across spheres such as education, employment, religious practices, and political representation (Bhattachan et al., 2008; Bhattachan et al., 2009).

From a sociological perspective, caste and ethnicity are analytically distinct: caste is a hereditary, hierarchical system that ascribes social status at birth, whereas ethnicity is generally defined through shared language, ancestry, and culture without necessarily implying inequality (Gellner, 2007; Gray, 2012). However, in Nepal's political discourse and state policies, the boundaries between caste and ethnicity are often blurred (Hutt, 1997; Folmar, 2013). This conflation has led to the marginalization of Dalit voices in broader debates about indigenous rights and recognition, as they are often excluded from the officially recognized indigenous nationalities (Janajati), such as the Gurungs, Magars, and Tharus (Gellner, 2007; Adhikari & Gellner, 2016).

The fragmented nature of the Dalit community linguistically, culturally, and geographically, further weakens political unity and mobilization. Unlike Janajati groups who are often regionally concentrated and culturally cohesive, Dalits are dispersed across the country and divided into more than two dozen sub-castes, including Bishwakarma, Damai, Sarki, Gaine, and Badi (Bhattachan et al., 2009; B.K., 2007). These subgroups often struggle with internal hierarchies and rivalries, making the formation of a unified Dalit political identity difficult. Caste-based marginalization is further compounded by intersections with gender, class, and geography. For example, Dalit women face double discrimination both as women and as Dalits, rendering them marginalized even within their communities (Kabeer, 2006; Sunar, 2008).

Although Dalits played a significant role in political movements, including the Maoist insurgency that promised radical social justice and inclusion, their political representation in post-conflict Nepal remains largely symbolic and superficial (Lawoti & Pahari, 2010; Bownas, 2015). As sociologist Jeffrey Guhin (2014) argues, legal frameworks that prohibit exclusion are often undermined by informal practices and cultural codes. This observation is particularly relevant to Nepal, where caste-based discrimination continues to manifest in housing, employment, marriage, and political appointments despite legal guarantees of equality (Cameron, 2009; Bhattarai, 2014).

Furthermore, Dalits remain significantly underrepresented in national and local governance. Political elites from dominant castes frequently appropriate Dalit voices, claiming to represent their interests without genuinely addressing structural inequalities (Lawoti, 2010). In conclusion, caste continues to be a powerful institution governing access to resources, dignity, and representation in Nepal. The persistent confusion between caste and ethnicity in public policy, combined with internal fragmentation within Dalit communities, poses a serious challenge to effective political mobilization. Addressing caste-based inequality in Nepal, therefore, requires more than legal reforms; it demands structural transformation in representation, shifts in social attitudes, and meaningful cultural inclusion.

Methodology

This study employed telephone interviews as a qualitative research method to explore how Dalits in the urban context of Pokhara reconstruct their caste identities. The use of telephone interviews was a sociologically meaningful decision, as it provided participants with a degree of anonymity, safety, and comfort, crucial when discussing sensitive and often stigmatized issues such as caste-based discrimination, identity negotiation, and intra-Dalit exclusion. This approach aligns with feminist and critical sociological methodologies, which prioritize the voices of marginalized communities and create space for more honest, reflective, and nuanced narratives.

A total of 25 Dalit participants were interviewed, representing various caste subgroups including Gandharva (Gaine), Nepali (Sarki), Bishwakarma (Kaami), and Pariyar (Damai). Participants were selected through snowball sampling, based on accessibility and feasibility, and had to meet three inclusion criteria: (1) self-identification as Dalit, (2) being 18 years of age or older, and (3) residing in Pokhara either permanently or temporarily.

The sample included a diverse cross-section of individuals in terms of gender, caste subgroup, and occupation, ranging from politicians, musicians, and tailors to shopkeepers, domestic workers, and unemployed youths preparing for foreign employment. This diversity enabled an intersectional analysis, highlighting how caste interacts with class, gender, and livelihood in shaping the lived experiences of Dalits in the urban environment.

The interviews addressed key themes such as social mobility, livelihood strategies, caste-based stigma, identity formation, and urban adaptation. The rich, contextually grounded narratives revealed how Dalits actively navigate both opportunities and structural barriers in Pokhara's rapidly changing urban landscape. Thus, beyond serving as a data collection tool, telephone interviews provided a methodologically inclusive, ethically sensitive, and sociologically informed approach to studying the evolving dynamics of Dalit identity in contemporary urban Nepal.

Result and Discussion

Urban migration has long been a critical factor shaping social dynamics in Nepal, particularly for marginalized communities such as the Dalits. Historically subjected to caste-based discrimination and limited access to resources in rural areas, many Dalits have increasingly moved to urban centers in search of better opportunities and social mobility. Pokhara, as a rapidly growing city, presents a unique context for exploring how such migration affects caste identity and social status. Understanding the patterns and motivations behind Dalit migration to urban spaces sheds light on broader processes of social restructuring and resistance within Nepalese society.

Migration and Urban Relocation: Rooted Yet Moveable

The Dalit community in Pokhara primarily comprises individuals who have migrated from nearby villages (20 individuals) and neighboring districts (5 individuals). Although their migration isn't from very distant places geographically, it holds deep social meaning. This move isn't just about changing where they live but also about restoring and redefining their social status. Choosing to live in the city is a strategic choice, where they pursue new opportunities while challenging caste-based barriers.

According to Migration Theory, Dalits often relocate to urban areas seeking relief from caste-based oppression and opportunities for social advancement (Deshpande, 2011). In cities, traditional caste hierarchies tend to be less strict, offering a level of anonymity that provides Dalits greater freedom in social interactions and opens up new possibilities. Additionally, parents who recognize the importance of modern education prioritize bringing their children to the city for better schooling. They view education as a crucial pathway to social mobility and actively strive to enhance social prestige through it.

Additionally, many wives of young men working abroad have also moved to the city to escape the burdens of traditional rural labor and to seek a better life for themselves and their children. For them, the city symbolizes hope, where education, services, and at least some level of respect are available. This shows how gendered migration and caste-based aspirations intersect, with women also moving toward economic and social empowerment. Therefore, Dalit migration to Pokhara is not just a physical move but also a form of resistance against caste oppression and a process of social change.

Urban Complexity: Discrimination, Identity, and Social Navigation

The experiences of Dalit migrants in Pokhara reveal the complex dynamics of caste identity and discrimination in an urban setting. While overt caste-based discrimination that is prevalent in rural areas appears to be less visible in public urban spaces, it persists subtly within households and private domains. Participants noted that discrimination in public spaces is reduced compared to villages, yet the deep-rooted caste attitudes remain unchanged within families and close relationships. This duality illustrates how urban anonymity and social diversity create space for greater social fluidity, but entrenched caste structures still shape everyday life.

Dalits in Pokhara navigate these complexities through adaptive identity strategies. About half of the respondents openly accept their Dalit identity, while others prefer to hide it, often due to fear of discrimination or social exclusion. Such strategic concealment, including avoiding caste discussions or changing surnames, exemplifies everyday resistance, highlighting the negotiation between stigma and agency in urban caste relations. Conversely, many assert their identity proudly within organizations, social movements, and when accessing affirmative action, indicating a context-dependent flexibility in identity performance.

Social relations also reflect these tensions. While some neighbors and colleagues recognize caste identity respectfully, many reduce Dalits to stereotypes, such as associating them with menial work ("kota khana ko lagi"). Despite this, Dalits maintain active social networks through clubs, organizations, and groups, which serve as platforms for collective solidarity and resistance. The involvement of Dalits in nine organizations, twelve clubs, and four groups underscores their increasing social mobilization in the urban context.

Generational shifts further complicate the picture. Younger Dalits reportedly reject caste identities more openly and do not experience caste-based discrimination as intensely, signaling a gradual erosion of caste consciousness among new generations. However, older generations continue to hold onto traditional identities, reflecting an intergenerational tension in the reconstruction of caste identity.

Importantly, migration to Pokhara has facilitated greater access to education, employment, and social respect for Dalits compared to rural areas. Participants consistently noted improvements

in these domains, emphasizing education as a crucial factor in their upward mobility. Parents prioritize modern education for their children, viewing it as the key to achieving social prestige and breaking free from caste-based limitations. This educational aspiration is often linked with migration, as families move to the city to provide better schooling and future prospects.

Moreover, the gendered aspect of migration is evident in the movement of wives of young men working abroad. These women leave behind traditional rural labor burdens to settle in the city, seeking improved living conditions and opportunities for their children. For them, the city represents a hopeful space where education, services, and respect are more accessible, reflecting the intersection of gender, caste, and migration in shaping Dalit life.

Dalit migration to Pokhara is not merely a geographical relocation but a multifaceted process of social restructuring, resistance, and identity renegotiation. Through education, social networks, and strategic navigation of caste stigma, Dalits actively reconstruct their identities and assert their place within the urban social fabric. Their experience points to a future of cautious optimism, where opportunities coexist with persistent challenges of caste discrimination.

Urbanization: A Double-Edged Sword of Empowerment and Inequality

Dalit communities in Pokhara experience urbanization as a source of new opportunities for education, employment, and social mobility. Participants reported easier access to government jobs, entrepreneurship, and higher education as key pathways for socio-economic advancement. These developments align with modernization theories that view cities as centers for accumulating social capital and driving economic progress.

However, these benefits are not equally distributed. The intersection of caste with class, gender, and occupation creates complex layers of exclusion, even within the Dalit community. Subtle forms of caste discrimination persist in marriage networks, housing access, and workplace dynamics, often manifesting symbolically rather than overtly. This indicates that urbanization reshapes rather than dismantles caste hierarchies, allowing structural inequalities to persist in new, less visible forms.

Despite these ongoing challenges, the urban environment plays a vital role in transforming Dalit identity. Participation in organizations, access to social networks, and inclusion in formal education have enabled a reconfiguration of caste consciousness. Respondents shared that through involvement in social groups, engagement with social media, and exposure to educational curricula, they have begun to understand and express their caste identity in more empowered and flexible ways. This process resonates with Judith Butler's theory of performative identity, which views identity as fluid and continuously constructed according to social context rather than fixed.

Resistance through Collective Agency: Analysis

In Pokhara, the Dalit community is actively resisting caste-based discrimination and inequality not just on an individual level, but collectively as well. Participants shared that they have started raising their voices through media, social groups, and public demonstrations. This shows that social change among Dalits is not merely a matter of personal awareness but is deeply connected to the development of a collective political consciousness. In this context, Paulo Freire's

theory of *critical consciousness* is highly relevant. According to Freire, oppressed groups develop the power to resist only when they fully understand the inequalities and oppression they face. Similarly, Dalits in Pokhara have come to recognize the realities of caste discrimination and are collectively standing up against it, which is a direct reflection of this critical awareness.

Engagement in social networks and organizations has strengthened Dalits' identity and voice. Once united in groups, individual fears and vulnerabilities are replaced by collective strength and confidence. This not only encourages them to openly embrace their identity but also motivates political organization and collective action for new social rights. However, this collective resistance is not without challenges. Internal divisions and sub-caste distinctions sometimes weaken unity within the Dalit community. Therefore, in this struggle, it is crucial to strengthen not only the fight against external caste discrimination but also internal cohesion. Political leadership and the development of a shared cultural consciousness are essential to raising awareness about their common identity and goals.

Ultimately, the collective resistance of Dalits in Pokhara is laying the foundation not only for the reconstruction of their social identity but also for a sustainable and powerful political struggle against caste-based discrimination. This resistance will play a key role in advancing Dalit inclusion and equality in society.

Ambivalent Social Relations and Stereotyping

Respondents experience their caste identity within social relationships as deeply ambivalent and often contradictory. While some people acknowledge and respect their Dalit identity, many others reduce them to stereotypes, accusing them of merely "taking quotas" or benefiting from affirmative action. This kind of stereotyping reflects what sociologists call caste-based symbolic violence, a subtle but powerful form of social exclusion where Dalit identity is devalued and dismissed as lacking merit or competence.

Such symbolic violence operates beneath overt discrimination, shaping everyday interactions by undermining the social worth of Dalits. It reveals how caste hierarchies continue to persist in urban settings, not always through direct oppression but through stigmatizing narratives that question Dalits' achievements and reinforce social boundaries. This ambivalence in social relations creates a complex dynamic where Dalits are simultaneously visible yet marginalized, recognized for their identity but delegitimized in terms of social status and opportunities.

Understanding this ambivalence is crucial for addressing the social barriers Dalits face, as it points to the need for challenging not only material inequalities but also the deeply ingrained cultural perceptions that perpetuate caste stigma in subtle ways.

Generational Shifts: Changing Perceptions of Caste Identity

Participants shared that the younger generation tends to avoid openly identifying with their caste. Many mentioned that their children or youth do not take caste names or prefer not to highlight their Dalit identity. Moreover, most respondents said their children do not identify as Dalit and have not experienced caste-based discrimination themselves.

This shift reflects broader social mobility and the influence of urban life, where individual merit and personal achievements often take precedence over inherited social categories. The younger generation seems to be redefining identity beyond traditional caste boundaries, signaling a significant change in caste consciousness.

However, this transformation also carries potential risks. As caste identity becomes less visible or acknowledged, there is a danger that awareness of caste-based oppression and its historical roots could fade. This could weaken collective efforts toward social justice. Therefore, while embracing individual identity is important, it is equally crucial for the younger generation to remain aware of caste inequalities and continue advocating for structural change.

Future of Dalit Identity in Pokhara: Hope with Caution

Most interviewees expressed an optimistic view of the future for Dalits in Pokhara, describing it as "good" or promising. This optimism is closely tied to the development of urban citizenship, where access to education, increased income, and political participation have begun to empower Dalit communities. Many respondents noted that their life goals such as education, employment, and social respect have improved significantly compared to life in the village.

They also emphasized that the city offers new opportunities, highlighting how urban life has expanded their access to resources and platforms for social mobility. Dalits are actively reconstructing their social and caste identities through education, economic progress, and political engagement. These factors collectively contribute to a stronger, more visible Dalit presence in Pokhara's urban landscape.

However, this hopeful outlook must be approached critically. The transformation of urban caste identity is neither complete nor uniformly experienced. Structural inequalities and subtle forms of exclusion persist, reminding us that the promise of urban empowerment comes with ongoing challenges. The future of Dalit identity in Pokhara holds great potential, but it also demands continued vigilance and collective effort to ensure that gains in empowerment translate into lasting social justice.

Discussion

The Dalit community in Pokhara has experienced significant social, economic, and political changes over the past decades, reshaping their identity in complex ways. Rapid urbanization, expanding educational opportunities, employment prospects, social networks, and political participation have all contributed to empowering Dalits. However, these transformations

have also brought new challenges and forms of inequality. Thus, the process of reconstructing Dalit identity in the city is multifaceted and dynamic.

Urbanization has connected Dalits to new lifestyles and social structures beyond traditional rural caste hierarchies. While it has opened avenues for social mobility and economic advancement, subtle forms of caste discrimination persist in urban settings, often masked and symbolic rather than overt. This symbolic violence continues to marginalize Dalits, limiting their full inclusion in the social fabric and impeding social justice efforts.

Education remains one of the most critical tools for Dalit empowerment. The younger generation increasingly pursues education in both private and public institutions, which not only enhances their skills and opportunities but also fosters new forms of caste consciousness and awareness. Economically, Dalits engage in diverse employment sectors and entrepreneurial activities. Many youth seek foreign employment, while women increasingly participate in urban small businesses and services, contributing to greater household income and autonomy. Yet, economic disparities and discrimination in wages and job access remain significant obstacles.

Politically, Dalits in Pokhara are becoming more active and visible. There is an increase in Dalit representation at local and national levels, supported by a growing network of Dalit organizations advocating for rights, equality, and social justice. However, internal divisions within the Dalit community, such as sub-caste hierarchies, pose challenges to unified political action and collective mobilization.

Culturally, Dalits are engaged in reviving and redefining their identity through social institutions, cultural events, and community awareness programs. While urban lifestyles sometimes create tensions between traditional practices and modern values, ongoing efforts seek to balance the preservation of cultural heritage with progressive change. Social relations in the multicultural urban environment of Pokhara present mixed experiences for Dalits. Many report reduced caste discrimination in public spaces compared to rural areas, but continue to face prejudice and stereotypes at the household or interpersonal levels. The rise of social media and greater media representation has helped amplify Dalit voices, yet negative stereotyping and social stigma persist.

In conclusion, the reconstruction of Dalit identity in Pokhara is shaped by a complex interplay of urbanization, social struggle, and expanding economic and political opportunities. While signs of empowerment are encouraging, new forms of inequality and discrimination remain entrenched. Understanding the contemporary reality of Dalit identity requires a multidimensional approach that recognizes both structural constraints and individual agency. This situation signals both challenges and opportunities in the ongoing journey toward Dalit empowerment and social justice. Sustainable transformation will require coordinated efforts across policy, cultural awareness, and political leadership to ensure a just and inclusive urban future for Dalit communities in Pokhara.

Conclusion

The process of reconstructing Dalit identity in Pokhara is multifaceted and complex, encompassing social, economic, cultural, and political dimensions. Urbanization has opened new avenues for empowerment and opportunity for Dalits, yet subtle and covert forms of caste-based discrimination persist. Educational and employment opportunities have propelled the younger generation toward greater social mobility, but structural barriers remain entrenched.

Political representation and social movements have amplified Dalit voices and fostered activism; however, internal divisions and sub-caste hierarchies continue to challenge collective unity. Cultural revival efforts have strengthened ethnic identity and enhanced social pride, but traditional prejudices and discrimination still affect daily social relations. Overall, sustainable reconstruction of Dalit identity requires integrated efforts involving structural reform, inclusive policies, strong political leadership, and cultural awareness. Although the path is challenging, the Dalit community in Pokhara shows optimism and progress in economic, social, and political spheres. True equality and justice will be achievable only when inclusive and participatory development is embraced across all levels of urban society.

References

Adhikari, J., & Deshingkar, P. (2015). *Migration and social change in Nepal: Rural–urban migration and the remittance economy*. Routledge.

Adhikari, K. P., & Gellner, D. N. (2016). New identity politics and the 2012 collapse of Nepal's Constituent Assembly: When the dominant becomes 'other'. *Asian Ethnicity*, 17(1), 98–120. https://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2015.1135194

Ahuti, I. (2008). *Dalit emancipation movements in Nepal: A historical perspective*. Kathmandu: Samata Foundation.

B.K., M. (2007). *Nepal ma Dalit samaj: Utpatti, bikash ra bartaman awastha* [Dalit society in Nepal: Origin, development and current situation]. Kathmandu: Samata Publication.

Bhattachan, K. B., Sunar, T. B., & Bhattachan, Y. K. (2008). *Situation analysis of Dalits in Nepal*. Kathmandu: National Dalit Commission.

Bhattachan, K. B., Sunar, T. B., & Gauchan, Y. M. (2009). *Caste-based discrimination in Nepal*. Indian Institute of Dalit Studies.

Bhattarai, K. (2014). *Dalits and untouchability in Nepal: Perspectives from below*. Himal Books.

Bownas, R. (2015). *Dalits and the Maoist insurgency in Nepal*. In M. Lawoti & A. M. Pahari (Eds.), *The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: Revolution in the Twenty-First Century* (pp. 75–94). Routledge.

Cameron, M. M. (1998). *On the edge of the auspicious: Gender and caste in Nepal*. University of Illinois Press.

Cameron, M. M. (2007). Considering Dalits and political identity in imagining a new Nepal. *Himalaya, the Journal of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies*, 27(1), 13–26.

Cameron, M. M. (2009). Considering Dalits and political identity in imagining a new Nepal. In D. Gellner (Ed.), *Ethnic activism and civil society in South Asia* (pp. 262–290). SAGE Publications.

Cameron, M. M. (2009). *Untouchable healers: Dalit medicine and social equality in Nepal*. South Asian Studies, 25(2), 203–222.

CBS. (2011). *National Population and Housing Census 2011 (National Report)*. Government of Nepal.

Deshpande, S. (2011). Caste and urban migration: Patterns and implications. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 46(29), 49–57.

Dumont, L. (1970). *Homo hierarchicus: The caste system and its implications*. University of Chicago Press.

Folmar, S. (2013). Disciplining the "Dalit": Caste, state, and academic representations in modern Nepal. *Studies in Nepali History and Society*, 18(2), 263–295.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Continuum.

Gellner, D. N. (2007). Caste, ethnicity, and inequality in Nepal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42(20), 1823–1828.

Gray, J. N. (2012). Re-visioning the nation: Dalit perspectives on a new Nepal. *Himalaya*, 31(1), 24–34.

Guhin, J. (2014). Why worry about inequality? Religiosity and stratification in the United States. *Sociology Compass*, 8(7), 952–961.

Hachhethu, K. (2009). Ethnic politics and the building of an inclusive state. In D. Gellner, J. Pfaff-Czarnecka, & J. Whelpton (Eds.), *Nationalism and ethnicity in a Hindu kingdom* (pp. 185–212). Harwood Academic.

Hofer, A. (1979). *The caste hierarchy and the state in Nepal: A study of the Muluki Ain of 1854*. Universitätsverlag Wagner.

Hutt, M. (1997). *Unbecoming citizens: Culture, nationhood, and the flight of refugees from Bhutan*. Oxford University Press.

Kabeer, N. (2006). Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third millennium development goal 1. *Gender & Development*, 13(1), 13–24.

Lawoti, M. (2010). *Towards a democratic Nepal: Inclusive political institutions for a multicultural society*. SAGE Publications.

Sharma, S. R. (2006). *Nepalma jatiya pahichan ra rajnitik prashna* [Ethnic identity and the political question in Nepal]. Kathmandu: Social Science Baha.

Srinivas, M. N. (1952). *Religion and society among the Coorgs of South India*. Oxford University Press.

Sunar, T. B. (2008). Dalit women and intersectionality: The case of Nepal. *Nepal Feminist Review*, 1(1), 37–54.

Tamang, S. (2011). Caste-based discrimination and affirmative action in Nepal. *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, 4(2), 126–138.