NGOs in reshaping Socio-Economic status of Tharus
Of Dang district in Nepal
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Ethnic issue has got an important agenda both between the academicians and practitioners. Nepal being a multi-ethnic country, the ethnic issues have been coming up mostly after the restoration of democracy in 1990. At present the government has identified 59 ethnic groups as the indigenous people in Nepal. Among these ethnic communities Tharus stood as the second largest ethnic groups in Nepal. Despite this community live in Tarai– the food-basket of Nepal, they are also termed as ‘backward ethnic group’ in Nepal. More specifically, Tharus are the disadvantage groups and even the urbanization process does not make much impact in their livelihoods.

This study was directed to answer, “do the NGOs help to bring the tharus in the main stream of development?” The study aims to analyze the role of NGOs to reshape Tharu’s socio-economic status. For this, primary information was taken from Tulsipur municipality of the Dang district. Some of the NGO executives such as Backward Society Education (BASE), Tharu kalyankari Samite, Gramin Mahila Utthan Kendra, Social-Upgrade Progress Education (SUPER) and other NGOs working in the same area were also discussed to collect primary information. Altogether 50 Tharus were randomly selected for the discussion and interviews.

The study shows that social and economic status is still downtrodden because of their compulsion of being as semi-slaves of landlords. The tharu labors are also called kamaiya are mostly deprived from the access to the education, health, employment and other productive infrastructure of development. Political changes and modernization do not affect majority of Tharus. Around 28 percent of the total populations living in Dang district were Tharus. Most of the Tharus lived in rural area and some others in urban township. Low income, unproductive labor, lack of autonomy, landlessness, illiteracy etc are the main identity of this community. Comparatively, they are weaker than other community, for example 87.9 percent rural and 65.08 urban Tharus are depends on agriculture but this profession is not sufficient for sustaining their livelihoods. The study report reveals that 31 percent Tharus haven't own land. Thus, they couldn't able to increase their income and they suffered from varied problems. Government also somehow failed to change their socio-economic conditions. Despite the impact of NGOs\ INGO work at urban areas they are partially success to increase their living standard and capabilities. Hence this study holds significance and can provide the insights on the role of NGOs for socio-economic intervention of a backward community Tulsipur municipality of the Dang district.

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