



Socio-Cultural Conditions of the Kami Community: An Anthropological Study of Bobang Village, Baglung



Sabitri Lamichhane

Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Premier College, Affiliated to Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Email: sabitrilamichhane33@gmail.com

Orcid Id: 0009-0000-9644-7568

ARTICLE INFO

Reviewed: March 5, 2026

Revised: March 25, 2026

Accepted: April, 25, 2026

Keywords

Metalworking, Traditional Vocation, Blacksmithing, Kami Community, dalit, Sociocultural Change

ABSTRACT

This study looks at the sociocultural circumstances, educational difficulties, and changing dynamics of the Kami community, a well-known Hill dalit tribe that has traditionally worked in metalworking and blacksmithing, in Bobang Village, Baglung district. due to poor family finances, household duties, traditional vocations, and seasonal migration, which restrict access to education and economic mobility, many Kami youngsters drop out between grades 5 and 7 despite being close to schools. Children are forced to work in wage labor, agriculture, or ironwork due to financial limitations that further limit their access to higher education. However, industrialization, media exposure, economic opportunity, and a more transparent political climate are driving significant socio-cultural change in the neighborhood. Although women's political engagement is still low, traditional vocations are changing and younger generations' knowledge of education is growing, encouraging attitudinal shifts and intercommunity integration. The study offers insights for academics, policymakers, and practitioners looking to improve dalit empowerment, educational access, and rural development in Nepal by highlighting the dual function of education in fostering social and economic success.

© 2025 Journal of development ReviewSMC All rights reserved

1. Introduction

The Himalaya, the Hill, and the Terai are Nepal's three main natural zones, each of which has its own unique way of life, languages, attire, cultural customs, and socioeconomic circumstances. For example, the Himalayan area is home to a number of ethnic and caste groups, such as the Sherpas, Bhotiyas, Thakalis, dolpos, and Kamis, each

of which maintains unique cultural identities influenced by historical and ecological surroundings.

Nepal's social structures have historically been influenced by the Hindu caste system, and the country is largely acknowledged as being multilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural. Based on conventional occupation and place of birth, this system

creates a hierarchical social structure. Often referred to as "untouchables," dalits have long held the lowest social ranks and experienced severe marginalization in the social, economic, and political spheres. The dalit category includes a number of caste groups, such as Kami, damai, Sarki, Lohar, Sunar, Paswan, dom, Tamta, Mushar, and Santhal. While the Chamar are well-known among Terai dalits, the Kami make up one of the biggest Hill dalit communities (CBS, 2011). dalits make up around 12.82 percent of Nepal's population, although they have long been denied access to jobs, education, and other sociopolitical chances. The Persian word "Kamin," which was used to refer to peasants, craftsmen, and landless laborers in eighteenth-century Mughal documents, is thought to be the source of the name "Kami" (ILO, 2005).

The Kami were introduced in different context and perspectives, the author, Ghatani(2024) presents 'The word 'Kami' is said to have been derived from the word 'Kamaune' meaning 'to earn' or 'to manufacture', Kami are caste groups involved in metal works. The Kami have historically been connected to metalworking and blacksmithing. Locally known by names like Bishwakarma, Sunar, Lohar, or Shahi (INSEC, 1996; Parajuli, 2000), they produce domestic goods, agricultural equipment, iron tools, and, in the case of Sunars, gold and silver decorations. In the past, the Jajamani system known locally as Bali or Khan mediated their economic interactions with other caste groups. Kamis traded their vocational skills for food or other rewards. Even though this system has

been lessened by modernity and economic changes, its legacy may still be seen in some rural areas.

Dalit people have traditionally faced barriers to work, housing, holy sites, water sources, and intercaste marriage due to the pervasiveness of caste-based discrimination in Nepalese culture (Cox, 1994). The Kami, who have historically been identified as ironworkers, make up a sizable Hill dalit group in Bobang Village, Baglung district. According to local reports, the hamlet is rather homogenous and has been continuously settled over many generations. Alongside socio cultural, economic, and educational developments brought about by modernization, migration, and larger social transitions, their population has increased to around 1,441 households.

This research is to investigate the sociocultural circumstances of the Kami community in Bobang Village in light of the historical marginalization of dalits and the socioeconomic difficulties they encounter. It examines how their social structure, cultural customs, economic activity, and educational standing have changed throughout time. In addition to offering insights for academics, decision-makers, and development professionals interested in advancing social inclusion and community development, the study deepens our awareness of the modern realities faced by dalit communities in rural Nepal.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nepal is a multiethnic and socially diverse country with a long-standing caste system that has significantly influenced social

interactions and resource access. dalit people still face social isolation, especially in rural regions, despite legislative changes and constitutional measures meant to end caste-based discrimination. Access to education, economic opportunity, social involvement, and cultural acknowledgment is still restricted by practices related to untouchability and caste prejudice.

Dalits have historically been marginalized in a number of areas, including marriage, religious customs, property ownership, work, and education. They are typically considered "untouchables" within the Hindu caste system. dalit households continue to be physically and socially isolated from upper caste groups in many rural communities, which perpetuates long-standing patterns of poverty, illiteracy, and limited socioeconomic mobility.

Occupational groups including Kami (blacksmiths), Sunar (goldsmiths), damai (tailors), and Sarki (cobblers) are located in lower social strata within this hierarchy, which has limited their involvement in social, economic, and educational activities. due to scarce resources, economic hardship, and ongoing social prejudice, the Kami group in particular which has historically worked in metalwork under the Jajamani system faces greater difficulties in rural places like Bobang Village, Baglung district.

Kami families continue to have poorer educational achievement than households from upper castes, with social norms and socioeconomic limitations playing a role in school dropout rates. There is little study that

particularly looks at the socio-cultural and educational circumstances of the Kami at the local level, even while more general studies target dalit marginalization.

The sociocultural circumstances and changing dynamics of the Kami community in Bobang Village, dhorpatan Municipality, Baglung district, are examined in this research. It answers the following research questions in order to accomplish this goal:

Research Questions:

What is the Kami community's present educational and sociocultural standing?

How has the Kami community changed socioculturally throughout time?

Why do Kami people participate less in work, education, and development initiatives?

What variables affect Kami children's attendance and completion of school?

The research offers a thorough grasp of the social, cultural, and educational context of the community by investigating these issues. In addition to providing useful information for policymakers, development professionals, and academics interested in dalit empowerment, educational inclusion, and social development, the findings add to academic debates on caste, social inequality, and rural change in Nepal.

Objectives of the Study

Examining the sociocultural and educational circumstances of the Kami community in Bobang Village, dhorpatan Municipality in Baglung district, and investigating the community's changes throughout time are the primary goals of this research. The following

are the study's particular goals:

To assess the educational and sociocultural circumstances of the Kami community within the research region.

To determine what causes the Kami community in Bobang Village to alter their way of life and sociocultural customs.

To examine the Kami community's engagement and educational standing in the research region.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Traditionally categorized as dalits in Nepal, the Kami minority has experienced economic marginalization, social prejudice, and restricted educational opportunities. Despite these difficulties, many people continue to engage in ancient professions like metalworking and blacksmithing, which are still vital to rural lives. However, compared to higher caste groups, Kami households frequently receive insufficient recompense, making them economically disadvantaged.

Living standards and possibilities are heavily influenced by socioeconomic variables, while more general trends like urbanization, modernization, migration, and population increase have lately changed rural socio-cultural, economic, and educational systems. The Kami community's traditional jobs, means of subsistence, and way of life have all been impacted by these developments.

Systematic anthropological research on the local socio-cultural circumstances of the Kami is still lacking, especially in Bobang Village, dhorpatan Municipality, Baglung district, despite an increase in the

study of caste prejudice and dalit disadvantage. As a result, this study is important from an academic and practical standpoint. By examining sociocultural circumstances, educational attainment, and continuous social transformations among the Kami, it makes a scholarly contribution to the literature on dalits and rural sociology. Policymakers, development professionals, and social groups may use its practical insights to assist the welfare and empowerment of underprivileged people by promoting social inclusion, educational advancement, and economic possibilities.

2. Review of Related Literature

In South Asian civilizations, including Nepal, the caste system continues to be a key component of social stratification and inequality (Cameron, 1998). Both Western sociological theories and South Asian religious and cultural viewpoints have been used in a sizable body of academic research to examine caste relations, hierarchical structure, and discriminatory behaviors (Guneratne, 2002). With an emphasis on the sociocultural and educational circumstances of the Kami group, this chapter examines pertinent scholarly research on caste and ethnic hierarchy, dalit identity, and caste-based discrimination in Nepal.

This chapter also looks at previous empirical research on social change, livelihood systems, and educational status among hill dalit populations, particularly the Kami caste, as well as theoretical viewpoints on caste structure and historical interpretations of the dalit community

(Bennett, 2005). While many academics have studied dalit marginalization and caste-based discrimination in Nepal, there is still a dearth of in-depth anthropological study that focuses on the micro-level sociocultural circumstances of the Kami group (Pariyar, 2009).

There is ongoing discussion on the caste system's historical roots in Nepal. According to some academics, the Vedas, Mahabharata, and Manusmriti ancient Hindu texts that depict organized social hierarchies are the source of dalit societies (Hofer, 2004). Nevertheless, there is not any historical or archeological data that explicitly connects these ancient writings to Nepal's modern dalit community.

As a result, this chapter uses a variety of scholarly materials about caste hierarchy, dalit identity, and social change in Nepal, such as books, research reports, academic theses, peer-reviewed journal articles, and computerized databases. The following sections summarize and examine the key conclusions and academic arguments from these works:

2.1. Caste/Ethnic Groups and the Varna System

The Indian subcontinent, where social hierarchy was traditionally organized using the Varna system, is often regarded as the birthplace of the caste system. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra were the four main social categories identified under the traditional Chatur Varna system. During the Vedic era, this system was first linked to occupational responsibilities and the division

of labor, but it eventually developed into a strict hereditary hierarchy.

Beyond India, this caste-based social system had an impact on communities in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. Researchers have also detected caste-like discrimination in other parts of the world, such as among South Asian diaspora populations in Africa, the Caribbean, and Europe and the Buraku community in Japan.

G. S. Ghurye (1996) asserts that the caste system is a rigorous, institutionalized type of social stratification with distinct structural characteristics. It is essentially predicated on a segmental division of society in which people are assigned membership to certain social groups at birth, so defining their social roles, identities, and occupations. Because of the hierarchical structure of these societies, status, power, and prestige are distributed unevenly among the many castes. By enforcing limitations that prevent contact and relationship between caste groups, the system further controls social interaction patterns and reinforces social borders.

Additionally, the caste system contributes to structural inequality by institutionalizing social and religious disadvantages for lower castes while concurrently giving higher castes benefits and privileges. One of the most important tools for upholding caste borders and guaranteeing the system's continuation throughout generations is the endogamy principle, which requires marriage within one's own caste. When taken as a whole, these traits show how the caste system has traditionally served as a means

of maintaining social inequality, limiting mobility, and forging long-lasting divides between privileged and underprivileged groups.

2.1.1 Caste System in Nepal

Nepal, a traditionally Hindu-majority nation, did not initially have a strict caste system; in the last century or two, its organized hierarchy became apparent. Bista (1996) asserts that caste ideology influenced societal attitudes, encouraging ambition and flexibility in certain groups while imposing fatalism and poor self-esteem on others, impeding social advancement. Nepali Hinduism has always upheld caste distinctions, favoring upper castes and marginalizing groups like the Kami due to shamanistic and indigenous customs from the early Gopal and Kirat period.

Jayasthiti Malla's 14th-century reforms, which restricted conduct, occupation, and housing by caste and strengthened social rigidity, marked the beginning of the formalization of caste (Lamsal, 2008). Caste was further formalized in the Muluki Ain of the 19th century, which placed dalits, including the Kami, at the bottom and Tagadhari castes at the top.

The Kami, who were historically metalworkers in Bobang Village, faced social marginalization, limited access to resources, and restrictions on their ability to work and get married. Although formal caste discrimination was outlawed by legal reforms in 2007 B.S., subtle socio-cultural disparities still exist. However,

social consciousness, industrialization, and education are progressively improving their circumstances. Analyzing the changing sociocultural position of the Kami group in Bobang requires an understanding of these past and present caste-based factors.

2.1.2 Hill dalits: The Kami Community

Blacksmithing and metalworking have long been connected with the Kami community, one of Nepal's largest Hill dalit tribes. The Persian word "Kamin," which was used in Mughal records to refer to peasants, craftsmen, and landless laborers, is thought to be the source of the name "Kami," suggesting a historical link between the community and livelihoods based on crafts (Singh, 1993). This etymological context emphasizes the Kami people's long-standing link with expert manual labour.

By creating tools, weapons, and household items, craftspeople like blacksmiths, goldsmiths, and metal craftsmen have historically contributed significantly to local economies. In the past, Nepal had small-scale factories that produced iron, copper, and other metal products for trade and home consumption. Occupational guilds, such as Sunar (goldsmith), Tamta (coppersmith), Lohar (blacksmith), and Chunara (wood craftsman), were frequently formed around certain trades. However, when the caste system became increasingly strict during the Rana period, occupational groups like the Kami were socially classified as lower caste groupings.

Even though the Kami group has historically

been marginalized, recent research shows that certain members have steadily increased their access to education and career mobility. Community members are becoming more involved in professional fields such non-governmental organizations, government services, and education (Nepal dalit Strategy Report, 2002). However, many Kami households still face socioeconomic difficulties and caste-based prejudice, especially in rural areas.

2.1.3 Social Life of the Kami Community

The Kami community's social life is a reflection of both long-standing cultural customs and slow socioeconomic change. Rural living circumstances and conventional job positions have an impact on their household structures, livelihood patterns, and social organization.

2.1.3.1 Household Structure

In rural Nepal, family living situations and economic standing are frequently reflected in household characteristics. despite the fact that the majority of rural families own their own homes, the quality and building materials differ greatly according on financial means (Nepal dalit Strategy Report, 2002). Compared to upper caste groups, dalit households are more likely to have thatched roofs, mud walls, and wooden planks for their homes, according to studies (TEAM Consult, 1994). Only a tiny number of dalit households own homes made of sturdy materials like concrete or tiles; the majority live in homes with thatched roofs.

In rural locations, Kami homes are typically

rectangular buildings with low ceilings and one or two stories. These homes frequently had several functions, such as housing, housing for cattle, and workspaces for Aran, like blacksmithing. While the top floor is utilized for living space, the ground floor is often used for storage or housing animals.

However, housing patterns among Kami households have steadily changed in recent decades due to improvements in economic situations, migration, and modernization. Some traditional homes have been altered or replaced with brick buildings, stone walls, and tin or slate roofs in areas like Bobang Village, which reflects larger socioeconomic shifts in the neighborhood.

2.2 Theoretical Review of Social Change

To examine and comprehend social transition processes in civilizations, social scientists have created a variety of theoretical stances. Frameworks like Sanskritization, modernization, and Westernization may be used to analyze social development in Nepalese society, especially among marginalized groups. These theoretical stances aid in the explanation of how sociocultural norms, economic activity, and educational involvement change over time within communities. These theoretical frameworks are used in this study to examine the sociocultural shifts taking place in the Kami community of Bobang Village in Baglung district. The community's traditional customs and social standing have gradually changed as a result of social interaction, exposure to new cultural influences, and socioeconomic progress.

2.2.1 Social Change

Ongoing societal developments in places like Bobang village have a direct impact on dalits living in both rural and urban locations. Their socioeconomic standing has steadily increased in terms of work, income, education, and living conditions as urbanization and modernization have grown (Bennett, 2005). Food habits, attire, housing patterns, and general lifestyle all exhibit these changes in day-to-day living. Their living conditions have also changed as a result of advancements in technology, education, transportation, and communication (Gurung, 2014).

Additionally, the Kami community's economic activities and value systems have been influenced by the engagement of INGOs, NGOs, and CBOs, which have promoted sociocultural and educational growth. Theoretically, these changes may be explained by the modernization, acculturation, and Sanskritization processes that influence dalit social development (Srinivas, 1966). Globalization is intimately associated with modernization, which has hastened social development through access to communication technology, healthcare, transportation, and political engagement (Giddens, 1990). Additionally, migration is important because it encourages the acceptance of new sociocultural and economic practices by transferring habits, information, and skills.

While Sanskritization reveals dalits' propensity to mimic upper caste rites and lifestyles in order to elevate their social standing, acculturation entails lower caste

groups adopting higher caste cultural norms (Srinivas, 1966). However, the progressive erosion of traditional cultural identity might also result from these processes. Notwithstanding these developments, caste-based prejudice and untouchability continue to be significant barriers that restrict dalits' ability to engage in social and cultural activities and contribute to their social and psychological marginalization (Bennett, 2005). dalits, particularly the Kami of Bobang village, continue to experience severe socioeconomic and political disadvantages since they are the lowest caste. As a result, this study looks at how their sociocultural practices are changing and how their lives are being shaped by their educational and economic circumstances.

3. Research Methodology

The study examines the sociocultural, economic, and educational circumstances of the Kami community in Bobang village, Baglung, using a combination of descriptive and analytical research designs. data were gathered utilizing a variety of techniques, such as focus groups, key informant interviews, structured interviews, observation, and case studies. Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used to examine the data for systematic interpretation. dhakal & Nyaichyai (2025) asserts that the methodology serves as a roadmap, outlining the steps and techniques researchers will use to collect, analyze, and interpret data, ensuring the reliability and validity of their findings. It clarifies that methodology serves as a precise manual for

researchers, outlining how they will gather and examine data. It guarantees the validity, accuracy, and dependability of the study findings.

3.1 Research design

Descriptive and analytical research designs serve as the foundation for this investigation. The broad patterns of the Kami community, such as their rituals, economic standing, educational circumstances, and the changes taking place within the group over time, are presented using the descriptive study approach. It also explains their social structure, educational and sociocultural circumstances, and the character of their interactions with other caste groups as well as within their own caste.

3.2 Study Area and Rationale for Selection

The current study was conducted in Bobang village in the Baglung district as part of a study named "Socio-Cultural Conditions of the Kami Community: An Anthropological Study of Bobang Village, Baglung." The Kami group makes up around 57.77 percent of the villagers. Their educational quality is nevertheless poor, despite their reasonably secure economic situation; for example, it is not unusual to encounter a fourteen-year-old child in second grade. The following list of factors led to the site's purposeful selection:

The caste mix of Bobang village is diverse, with a notable concentration of the historically disadvantaged Kami (Dalit) population.

There are 7,088 people living in Bobang Village. With 1,441 houses and 57.77% of

the population, or 4,095 people, the Kami community is the largest among them.

Traditional occupational castes make up the majority of the population, and their main sources of income are agriculture and hereditary skills.

3.3 data Collection Techniques

The following methods were used to get the data for this study:

3.3.1 Interview Schedule

To gather primary data from homes, a structured interview schedule with both closed-ended and open-ended questions was created. Population dynamics, family size, household income, profession, lifestyle patterns, income from traditional and modern vocations, cultural customs and rituals, gender status, and other general factors were among the data collected. A single responder, either male or female, was chosen from each home. While qualitative data was interpreted using percentages and chronological context, quantitative data was evaluated at the household level.

3.3.2 Observation

In order to conduct interviews and study different facets of everyday living, such as lifestyle, dietary habits, housing conditions, sanitation, agricultural practices, customs, and cultural behaviors, the researcher visited dalit families during fieldwork. The educational and sociocultural circumstances of Bobang's Kami community were also noted. The approach of non-participatory observation was used.

3.3.3 Key Informants' Interview

This approach was used due of its adaptability in gathering detailed viewpoints and ideas. Key informant interviews were conducted utilizing a checklist that highlighted historical context, current and previous sociocultural circumstances, and changes across time. The word secretary, the elderly, women, young people, and former VDC members of the Kami village were among the informants.

3.3.4 Focus Group discussion (FGD)

Three focus groups were held: one with women, one with young people, and one mixed group that included adults, the elderly, men, and women. The sociocultural and educational settings of the past and present, the types of prejudice encountered across time, the forces behind sociocultural development, and their effects on the community were all covered in these conversations. FGDs were crucial in gathering accurate and thorough data.

3.3.5 Case Study

Through group talks and one-on-one conversations, case studies were carried out with specific women, young people, and senior citizens of the Kami community. These case studies concentrated on the community's evolving patterns and social standing in relation to earlier times.

3.6 data Analysis and Presentation

Descriptive analysis was performed on the data gathered during fieldwork. The data were categorized and divided into qualitative and quantitative categories once the fieldwork was finished. Computer-based methods

were used to tabulate quantitative data, while descriptive analysis was used to assess qualitative data. Tables and direct quotes have been added to the report to improve precision and clarity. The opinions of the respondents have been displayed in their original format to highlight different circumstances. To guarantee a cogent explanation and interpretation, the results have been methodically arranged into chapters and sub-chapters.

4. Study Area and Respondents Profile

This chapter emphasizes the locations where the Kami population is concentrated and gives a summary of the research area, including a brief description of Bobang Village in Baglung district. It also looks at how the community's social structure and cultural trends are influenced by its geographic location, demographic makeup, and natural resources.

4.1 Physio Geographic Setting

Bobang Village is located around 110 kilometers north of Baglung Municipality. The main study area is located inside dhorpatan Municipality and is administratively separated into three wards: wards 7, 8, and 9. Adhikari Chaur to the east, Nishi and Bohora to the west, Bonga dohan to the north, and devisthan to the south are the village's neighbors. The village's northern portion is located inside a wildlife protection area. In terms of climate, the area has comparatively pleasant summers and extremely harsh winters.

4.1.1 Natural Resources

Although the lower belt has comparatively adequate water supply, the village is mostly

mountainous and has little water resources in most wards. In addition to fruit trees like orange, lemon, and apple that can be found throughout the hamlet, common tree species include Chilaune, Katush, and Simal. Bird species such as parrots, pigeons, Kalich, doves, and Jureli are abundant in the region. Wheat, millet, potatoes, and maize are important agricultural crops.

4.1.2 Population Composition of the Study Area

Bobang Village has a total population of 7088 people living in 1,441 homes, with 3838 females (54.15%) and 3250 males

Table 1

Caste/Ethnic Composition of Bobang Village

Ward No.	Total Population	Magar	Chhetri	Bahun	Newar	Kumal	Sunar	Damai	Kami	Adai	Kayat
7(1-3)	2032	292	205	65	5	0	405	10	1005	45	0
8(4-6)	2574	275	294	17	13	9	205	21	1565	175	0
9(7-9)	2482	355	75	55	25	15	75	7	1525	305	45
Total	7088	922	574	137	43	24	685	38	4095	525	45
In %	100	13.01	8.1	1.93	0.61	0.34	9.66	0.54	57.77	7.4	0.64

Source: Field Survey, 2025

According to the statistics, the Kami group makes up the majority (57.77%) of Bobang Village's total population. Their population is evenly dispersed over Wards 7, 8, and 9. This trend illustrates the Kami caste's population dominance in the research region, whereas other castes and ethnic groups are represented in lower amounts.

4.1.4 Facilities

Bobang Village has a number of contemporary physical amenities, such as the following: communication, health, education, and transportation.

(45.85%) (Source: dhorpatan Municipality, 2025). With homes from a variety of ethnic and dalit groups, including Kami, Adai, Kyat, Sunar, damai, and Magar, the hamlet is an example of a diverse society.

4.1.3 Caste and Ethnic Composition

The Kami community makes up the majority of Bobang Village's population, while Magar, Adai, Sunar, Kyat, and Chhetri are also significant caste and ethnic groupings. The table below shows the village's specific caste and ethnic makeup.

4.1.5 Education

Gyanodaya Primary School was established in Ward No. 2 in 2022 B.S. and has since been elevated to a Secondary School, marking the beginning of education in the hamlet. Additionally, the hamlet now has both private and public elementary schools.

4.1.6 Transportation

Bobang and Burtibang are connected by a 15-kilometer motorable road. Burtibang and Bobang are connected by regular transit five times a day, giving the locals vital mobility.

4.1.7 Health and Sanitation

An Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM), Village Health Worker (VHW), and Assistant Health Worker (AHW) provide basic curative and preventative health services at the village's health post. Nevertheless, the hamlet lacks both private clinics and pharmacies. Although some sections still lack pure water, the majority of wards have piped taps that provide safe drinking water. All homes will soon have access to clean drinking water thanks to the efforts of the local government.

4.1.8 Market

Bobang is home to tiny motels and local stores where locals purchase and sell goods.

Villagers rely on Burtibang, the closest metropolitan hub, to satisfy their bigger supply demands for more commodities.

4.2 Respondent Profile

The demographic features of the respondents, such as population, marital status, and educational attainment, are detailed in the following sections.

4.2.1 Population Composition

A population's age and sex distribution is important because a healthy and active population is essential to the advancement of civilization. The distribution of respondents' ages and sexes is shown in the following table.

Table 2:

Distribution of Respondents by Age and Sex

Age Group	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
15–29 yrs	2	14.28	2	18.18	4	16
30–44 yrs	6	42.86	6	54.55	12	48
45+ yrs	6	42.86	3	27.27	9	36
Total	14	100	11	100	25	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Just 16% of respondents were between the ages of 15 and 29. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 30 and 44 (48%) and 45 and over (36%). due to home distance, the researcher tried to equalize the number of male and female respondents, although this was not always feasible.

4.2.2 Marital Status, Marriage Type, and Average Age of Marriage

One important social institution that keeps society's social structure and continuity intact is marriage. The following summarizes the respondents' age at marriage, kind of marriage, and marital status.

Table 3:*Marital Status of the Respondents*

Marital Status	Female No.	Male No.	Total	Marriage Type	
				Arrange	Inter-Caste
Married	5	6	11	8	3
Unmarried	4	5	9	-	-
Widow/Widower	2	3	5	3	2
Total	11	14	25	11	5

Source: Field Survey, 2025

There were 14 men and 11 women among the 25 responders. Of them, five were widowed (two women and three men), while eleven were married (five women and six men). There were reports of both intercaste and planned marriages. While ages for second weddings vary, the average age at first marriage was

is divided into two categories: literate and under SLC.

Table 4:*Educational Status of the Respondents*

Education Status	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
Under SLC	7	63.64	9	64.28	16	64
Literate	4	36.36	5	35.72	9	36
Total	11	100	14	100	25	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The respondents' educational status by gender is shown in Table 4. According to the data, the majority of respondents, both male and female, are classified as "Under SLC." In particular, 16 respondents (64%) 7 females (63.64%) and 9 men (64.28%) have schooling below the School Leaving Certificate level. On the other hand, a smaller percentage of respondents four females (36.36%) and five men (35.72%) are classified as "Literate,"

between 12 and 18 years old. Focus group talks showed that love marriages, including intercaste partnerships, are becoming more widespread, despite the fact that arranged weddings are still prevalent.

4.2.3 Educational Status of the Respondents

The respondents' educational attainment

making up a total of nine respondents (36%). Overall, the chart shows that the majority of respondents have not finished SLC. The educational attainment of males and girls follows a similar trend, with just a small percentage possessing basic literacy above the under SLC level.

Bhubaneshwari Primary School was the first local school where the Kami people had

access to formal education after 1950. Every participant in the research stated that they sent their kids for example boys and girls alike to either public or private schools free

from discrimination based on caste. However, the ability to pursue higher education has been hampered by geographical and financial limitations.

Table 5:

School-Going Kami Students in Secondary School, Bobang

Grade	Kami		Other Castes	Grand Total
	Girls	Boys		
One	1	2	10	13
Two	1	-	10	11
Three	1	2	15	18
Four	1	-	15	16
Five	2	-	15	17
Six	-	2	19	21
Seven	2	1	32	35
Eight	2	2	31	35
Nine	2	2	31	35
Ten	-	2	27	29
Total	12	13	205	230

Source: Field Survey, 2025

There are now 230 pupils enrolled in the high school, 25 of them are from the Kami community. Early grades (I–IV) had lower enrollment, whereas upper grades (6–8) and lower grades (1–3) have notable dropout rates. Only a small percentage of Kami pupils stay on to grade 10, according to survey results. Many youngsters drop out to help with home duties and traditional ironwork, which limits their educational chances, according to Mrs. Aas Maya B.K., 22. Nonetheless, the Kami community is gradually improving because to improved education, microcredit programs, and economic activities.

Ms. Aas Maya Kami, 20, recounted her story

of becoming the first female from the Kami community in the hamlet to attend school through grade 9, highlighting educational equality. She stated that there was no prejudice at the institution and highlighted the availability of scholarships for dalit pupils, guaranteeing equal educational chances. This is a reflection of Kami children's increasing educational integration and community support for education.

4.2.4 Reasons for Hindrances to Educational Expansion of Kami Children

Focus groups and key informant interviews have identified a number of problems that impede Kami children's educational progress:

Weak economic status of Kami households.

Reliance on conventional jobs that reduce the value of formal education.

The idea that one may have a fulfilling life without attending school. Early marriage customs for both boys and girls. Growing interest in job prospects abroad. The effects of climate change.

Conclusion

The economic situation of Kami children's families, the majority of whom are middle- or low-income, is a significant influence in school dropout. Although schools are available in the neighborhood, many youngsters leave after completing basic literacy to help with home duties or work in conventional jobs. Boys frequently assist their dads in ironwork or labor, while girls help their moms with domestic and farm work, especially in higher-caste families, resulting in high dropout rates in grades 5-7. Financial limitations further restrict children's access to higher education, requiring them to work in agriculture, ironwork, day labor, or

sell food to augment their family income. Seasonal movement between the lower belts in the winter and dhorpatan in the summer also affects school attendance. Overall, job demands and economic need remain the most significant hurdles to educational achievement.

Despite these problems, the Kami community of Bobang is undergoing significant socio-cultural changes as a result of industrialization, media exposure, economic possibilities, and a more open political climate. Traditional jobs are shifting, and younger generations are becoming more conscious of the need of education. Education shapes community perceptions and promotes intercommunity inclusiveness, although women's political engagement remains limited. Sociocultural changes should promote upward socioeconomic mobility, with education functioning as a means of both social and economic progress. The study successfully captures these processes, providing insights into the changing educational and social situations in the Kami community.

References

- Bennett, L. (2005). *Gender, caste, and ethnic exclusion in Nepal: Following the policy process from analysis to action*. World Bank.
- Bhattachan, K. B. (2001). *Existing practices of caste-based untouchability in Nepal and strategy for a campaign for its elimination*. ActionAid Nepal.
- Bista, D. B. (1996). *Fatalism and development: Nepal's struggle for modernization*. Orient Longman.
- Caplan, P. (1972). *Priest and cobblers: A case study of social change in a Hindu village of western Nepal*. Chandler Publishing House.
- Central Bureau of Statistics. (2021). *Statistical pocket book*. National Planning Commission Secretariat.
- Cox, T. (1994). The current socio-economic status of untouchables in Nepal. *Occasional Papers in Sociology and Anthropology, Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Tribhuvan University*.
- Dhawal, P., & Nyaichyai, L. (2025). Chi

- square test analysis in use of digital library on the basis gender, education levels, and regional differences. *International Journal of Sustainable Development*, 11(1), 40–47. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijdsr.20251101.14>
- Dhorpatan Municipality. (2025). *Municipality profile of Dhorpatan, Baglung, Nepal*. <http://www.dhorpatan.villageprofile.org>
- Ghatani, S. (2024). Caste based exclusions: A study of Gorkha Dalit identity and re-imagining Northeast writings and narratives. *Language, Culture, and Border Identity*, 373.
- Ghurye, G. S. (1969). *Features of the caste system in social stratification*. Oxford University Press.
- Giddens, A. (1990). *The consequences of modernity*. Stanford University Press.
- Gurung, H. (2014). *Social demography of Nepal*. Himal Books.
- INSEC. (1996). *Nepalma jatiya chhuwakhuta*. INSEC Publication.
- International Dalit Solidarity Network. (n.d.). *Asia*. <http://www.idsn.org/asia.html>
- International Labour Organization. (2005). *Dalits and labour in Nepal: Discrimination and forced labour*. ILO.
- Jana Utthan Pratisthan Kathmandu. (n.d.). *Federation of Nepal*. <http://www.fedonepal.org>
- Jana Utthan Pratisthan. (1997). *Muluki Ain*. Ministry of Law and Justice, Law Books Management Board.
- Lamsal, H. B. (2008). *A comparative study on intra-Dalit untouchability* (Research report submitted to SIRF). SNV.
- Lamsal, M. (2008). *Social structure and caste system in Nepal*. Academic Press.
- National Dalit Strategy Report. (2002). *Situational analysis of Dalits in Nepal*.
- Nepal Dalit Information System Resources. (n.d.). *Nepal Dalit Information System Resources*. <http://www.nepaldalitinfor.20m.com>
- Nepal South Asia Centre. (1998). *Nepal human development report*.
- Parajuli, D. B. (2000). The process of Sanskritization among Bishwokarma in Baglung Municipality area. *Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, Patan Multiple Campus.
- Sharma, P. R. (1977). Caste, social mobility, and Sanskritization in a tribal Hindu society: A study of Nepal's old legal codes. *Kailash*, 5(4), 277–299.
- Shing, K. S. (1993). *People of India: The scheduled castes* (Rev. ed., Vol. 11). Government of India.
- Srinivas, M. N. (1966). *Social change in modern India*. University of California Press.
- TEAM Consult. (1999). *The conditions of the Dalits (untouchables) in Nepal: Assessment of the impact of various development interventions* (Report submitted to UNDP).
- UNICEF. (1987). *Children and women in Nepal: A situational analysis*. UNICEF.
- United Nations Development Programme. (2004). *Nepal human development report: Empowerment and poverty reduction*. UNDP.