

Educational Experiences of Slum and Migrant Children in Government Schools of Kathmandu Valley

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Abstract

Access to quality education remains a significant challenge for children living in slums and those migrating from Nepal's interior regions. This study comprehensively examines the complex educational, social, and economic obstacles faced by students attending government/public schools in slum areas and children from low-income urban families. Employing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including structured interviews and questionnaires, data were collected from 50 students responding to 21 thoughtfully prepared questions. Additionally, nine students were interviewed in-depth to further explore socio-economic and educational challenges. The findings reveal critical issues; notably, 42.1% of children cited a lack of management and discipline within public schools hindering their pursuit of quality education, with financial constraints affecting 44.7% of the student population. Encouragingly, 77.6% of students reported no instances of discrimination within their school environment. The surveyed respondents encompassed an age group spanning from 13 to 18 years. This research underscores the urgency of addressing educational disparities to ensure a brighter future for marginalized youth in Nepal.

Keywords: Education disparities, Slum children, Migrant children, Government schools, Quality Education

Introduction

In the City of Kathmandu, Nepal an unfolding educational narrative shines a light on the struggles of children coming from slums and distant areas. This narrative holds immense significance as it unravels the barriers impacting the educational journeys of these young learners.

Problem Statement:

Nepal, nestled between China's Tibet Autonomous Region and India, boasts a population of 29,164,578 [1]. However, beneath the surface resides a tale of educational inequality, despite a literacy rate of 76.3% [1]. This exploration delves into the lives of those whose circumstances obstruct education. Amid Kathmandu's landscape, public schools strive to provide for the underprivileged, yet economic challenges persist. Dedicated educators endeavor to deliver quality within government-funded institutions. Here, two educational realms coexist, weaving distinct stories into Nepal's educational fabric. This research homes in on public school children, often from

slums and poor households. However, while guaranteeing free education, Nepal's constitution encounters obstacles to realization. This study unearths marginalized children's experiences within Nepal's government school system. Through interviews and questionnaires, it seeks to illuminate challenges, bridging statistical data with the lived realities of these children. Embarking on this journey, our aim is to unearth the challenges shaping government school education for slum and migrant children in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Objectives and Research Questions:

- How do the families of these children manage their finances, considering their residence in slum areas and rented houses?
- What factors motivate these children to attend Government schools?
- To what extent are these students content with the learning environment and instructional quality within Government schools?
- Aside from financial constraints, are there additional challenges that impact the educational experiences of these children in their school lives?

Methodology

Area of Study:

This research is conducted in Kathmandu Valley, specifically targeting public school students from the Bagmati River slum area and families who have migrated to Thapathali. The chosen public schools for the study are Vishwa Niketan, Gujeshwori School, Pragati Shikshya Sadan Secondary School, and Durbar High School.

The selection of the Bagmati River slum area serves as a strategic approach to gaining profound insights into the myriad challenges faced by the students residing there. This locale boasts a diverse population of migrants, inhabiting rented spaces, which creates a captivating backdrop for our study. Notably, this settlement holds historical significance as an economically disadvantaged community, rendering it an optimal choice for our research. The extensive, two-decade involvement of St. Xavier College in assisting these children, encompassing coaching sessions and home visits, further elevates the authenticity and credibility of our investigation. By focusing sharply on these areas, this research convincingly aims to reveal the precise challenges of slum and migrated children within Kathmandu's public school system. Additionally, it's worth noting that the conversion rate used for currency is 1 Nepali Rupee (NPR) equal to 0.0076 US Dollars (USD).

Research Design

Incorporating a dual-pronged methodological approach, this research encompasses both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. The focal point is adolescents aged 13 to 18, attending public schools, encompassing both genders. A meticulously crafted set of twenty-one multiple-choice questions, designed to resonate culturally, was administered with personalized guidance in the classroom. The survey was conducted in person, ensuring a physical presence, and formulated in Nepali, the native language of the participants. Utmost importance was given to ethical considerations, and explicit consent from each participant was obtained. Data compilation was facilitated through a Google Form. Additionally, face-to-face interviews were conducted,

involving four female and five male participants, utilizing a predetermined set of questions. The research sample comprised 50 students from government schools, originating from slum and migrant families. Upholding ethical standards, participant anonymity was guaranteed. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed. A total of 21 questions were distributed among students aged 13 to 18, spanning grades 8 to 10. With verbal consent secured, the questionnaire was administered individually. Data collection took place between July and August of 2023. Furthermore, in-depth verbal interviews were conducted with 9 students, guided by a predefined questionnaire. To ensure comprehensive data collection and triangulation, a mixed-methods approach was adopted. This involved interactions with students, observations within familial settings, engagements with parents, representative surveys, and an extensive analysis of pertinent literature and documents. By embracing this holistic strategy, qualitative, quantitative, and secondary data were integrated, facilitating a robust and multifaceted exploration

Literature review

The context of education in Nepal forms the backdrop against which this study's significance unfolds. While prior studies have addressed aspects of education and socio-economic status, a critical gap becomes evident - the distinct challenges encountered by slum and migrant children in Kathmandu Valley remain insufficiently explored.

Economic constraints often compel families to opt for government-run schools. However, a discernible discrepancy arises - government schools, when compared to their private counterparts, struggle to provide an equivalent learning environment. Tsujita Yuko's research underlines this divide, spotlighting the perceived variance in quality between government and private schools. [2]

The inflation rate of 7.44% in July 2023 casts a shadow on the lives of slum residents, further exacerbating the challenge of financing education. An interesting observation emerges - a greater number of students seek supplementary coaching in higher grades. This reveals a narrative in which aspirations encounter financial realities, echoing Tsujita Yuko's findings on the increasing financial burden impeding slum children's education. [4]

The private tutoring phenomenon within slum communities presents an intriguing pattern. The figures - 68.2%, 81.8%, and 100% - underscore the pivotal role of private tutoring in sustaining education. Amidst the educational journey, private tutoring emerges as a vital driver that extends learning beyond conventional classroom boundaries. [4]

Beyond Nepal's borders, the specter of caste-based discrimination surfaces. Despite Nepal's portrayal as a caste-free society, echoes of historical hierarchies persist. Amidst the facade of equality, remnants of hierarchy continue to influence education and society. This multi-dimensional narrative involving ethnicity, caste, religious identity, and language underscores the struggle for inclusivity, where equality intersects with ethnicity and language. [2]

Amidst these intricate threads, poverty weaves its own pattern. In the midst of the challenges, girls bear a disproportionate burden, grappling with limited resources and societal expectations. The overarching

presence of poverty permeates this complex landscape, disproportionately impacting girls and further complicating their educational journey. [2]

The assemblage of these challenges not only highlights the research's significance but also its urgency. It is not merely an academic endeavor, but a vital undertaking that unearths barriers

obstructing the education of slum and migrant children. This endeavor navigates economic constraints, disparities in educational quality, caste-based hierarchies, and the specter of poverty. The resonance of this research lies not only in its findings but also in its mission - to illuminate a path toward a more equitable and inclusive educational landscape for all children in Nepal. [2]

Findings

This section presents the culmination of our study’s data collection process, which involved a two-fold approach. Quantitative data were gathered comprehensively from all students aged 13 to 18 years participating in the Partnership in Education program at St. Xavier’s College. In contrast, qualitative insights were derived through in-depth interviews with a specific cohort of nine individuals. Together, these findings shed light on the educational challenges and aspirations encountered by slum and migrant children who are enrolled in government schools within the Kathmandu Valley. Through the juxtaposition of both quantitative and qualitative data, this analysis offers a holistic understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing the educational journeys and future aspirations of these students.

Quantitative Findings: Socio-Economic Conditions of the Students: The study included a wide range of students, spanning from 8th to 10th grade, ensuring a diverse representation of socio-economic backgrounds. It was observed that fathers exhibited varying levels of educational attainment, with around 22.4% having no formal education. On the other hand, approximately 43.8% of mothers were found to lack educational qualifications. Interestingly, a noteworthy majority of mothers (55.1%) identified themselves as homemakers, while a smaller proportion (16.3%) were actively involved in generating a monthly income.

Working Condition of the Parents: The findings uncovered that a noteworthy 39.1% of families’ main earners dedicated extensive hours, exceeding 8 per day, highlighting their significant work commitment. When examining the overall monthly income distribution, a diverse spectrum of financial circumstances emerged. Notably, 24.5% of individuals earned below 10,000 Nepali Rupees, whereas a considerable 30.6% fell within the range of 10,000 to 30,000 Nepali Rupees. Surprisingly, despite the disparity in income levels, a majority of 51% of participants asserted that their earnings adequately supported their families, while the remaining 49% expressed the contrary viewpoint.

Financial Sources and Housing: The participants reported receiving financial support from relatives (31.6%), loans (23.7%), donations (23.7%), and other sources (18.45%). Regarding housing expenses, 46% paid 5,000 to 10,000 Nepali Rupees for house rent, indicating a considerable portion of their income was allocated for shelter.

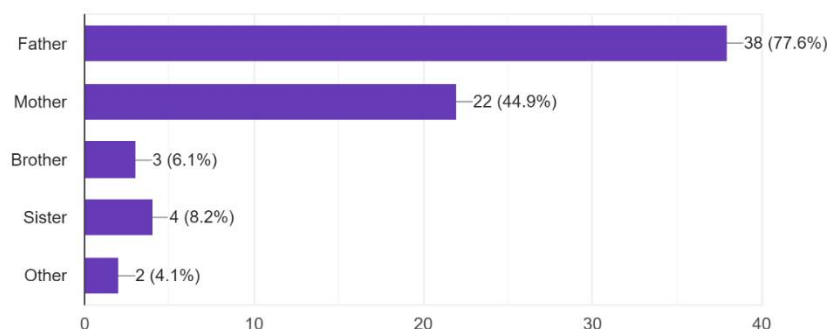


Figure 1: Earners in the family

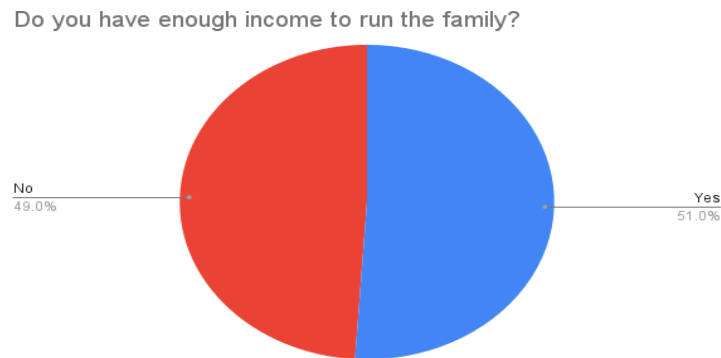


Figure 2: Pie Chart representing responses to “Do you have enough income to run the family”
 Motivations for Attending Government School: Reasons, for Choosing Government Schools; The main factor driving students to attend government schools was limitations (37.5%) followed by the perception of receiving education (10.4%). Many participants (29.2 %) opted for government schools due to their expectations of facilities while 27.1% believed in the quality of education provided by these schools.

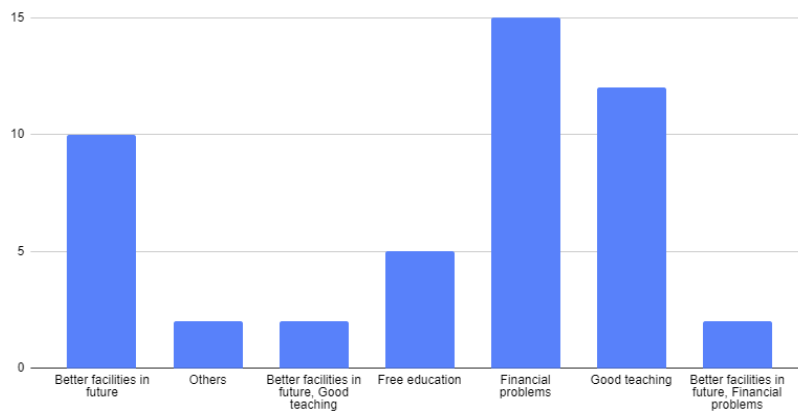


Figure 3: Reasons for attending a government school

Academic Challenges and Aspirations: The study revealed the challenges students faced in their pursuits. Mathematics emerged as the subject (31.62%) followed by science (46%) Nepali language (24%) and English (8%). Despite these difficulties, 78% of students expressed confidence in the competence of their teachers.

Social Environment: A majority of students (77.6%) reported an environment without experiencing discrimination at school although 22.4% acknowledged instances of discrimination occurring. Additionally, other obstacles included issues, lack of a study environment at home personal problems, conflicts with parents, and various concerns. **Educational Aspirations and Challenges:** The study identified that the primary difficulty faced by government school students was a lack of management and discipline within schools. Harassment, among peers also posed a challenge. Moreover, the lack of access, to high-quality education has become an obstacle highlighting the need to tackle these challenges in order to ensure that every student has fair educational opportunities.

Evaluation and Significance: The quantitative findings provide valuable information on the socio-economic characteristics, motivations, academic challenges, and social environments of students enrolled in public schools in the Kathmandu Valley. Concerning the socio-economic backgrounds of the participants, the data highlights significant discrepancies in parental education, with a

sizable portion lacking formal schooling. This emphasizes the impact of parental educational backgrounds on students' educational journeys. Furthermore, a significant portion of participants in the study reported insufficient family income, emphasizing the financial difficulties experienced by many students. A majority of the students cited financial constraints as the main reason for choosing government schools, highlighting the importance of economic factors in their school selection. However, a noteworthy percentage of students also selected government schools with the expectation of future improvements in facilities and a belief in the quality of education provided. This indicates that while financial considerations are crucial, perceived quality and future prospects also influence students' decision-making. The quantitative data relating to academic challenges aligns with the qualitative findings, revealing that a significant number of students find mathematics and science to be the most difficult subjects.

Despite the myriad challenges faced, a noteworthy proportion conveyed their trust in their educators, thereby emphasizing the pivotal role played by teacher caliber in effectively combating academic obstacles. The uplifting revelation of a predominantly positive social milieu as reported by a majority of students is undeniably heartening. However, the recognition of instances of prejudice serves as a stark reminder of the ongoing imperative to establish all-encompassing and discrimination-free educational environments. To summarize, the quantitative outcomes shed light on socio-economic disparities, incentives, scholastic hurdles, and communal dynamics prevalent in government schools within the Kathmandu Valley. These valuable insights form a robust groundwork for formulating targeted interventions and policies aimed at effectively addressing the identified challenges while fostering equal and unbiased educational prospects for each and every student.

Qualitative Findings:

Respondent 1: Respondent 1 discloses that their sole caretaker, a single mother, actively pursues employment in the construction or labor sectors to provide for her two children. In order to ensure their sustenance, she has resorted to borrowing money from neighbors. The children frequently endure episodes of hunger and rely on staples such as rice and dal for sustenance, consuming them twice a day—prior to and subsequent to attending school—and occasionally before retiring for the night. Moreover, respondent 1 receives scholastic materials and assignments from their teachers. However, comprehending these tasks poses a challenge, prompting the children to seek additional tuition classes for enhanced understanding and improved performance during examinations. Non-completion of homework invites punitive measures including the exertion of physical force by teachers. When probed about their future aspirations, respondent 1 portrays a sense of ambiguity and lacks a definitive vision. The demands of their daily life, encompassing household responsibilities and chores that extend beyond school hours, contribute to a perpetually hectic schedule. It is noteworthy that dropout rates within public educational institutions remain noticeably high, primarily stemming from a combination of insufficient motivation and the formidable obstacles imposed by their domestic circumstances. To provide financial support to their mother, respondent 1 occasionally engages in manual labor. Acquiring appropriate attire for school poses challenges, with the family typically possessing only one or two outfits for various occasions. Occasionally, the neighbors extend assistance by providing clothing.

Respondent 2: According to respondent 2, public education isn't entirely free. Discrimination based on language, ethnicity, location, economics, social status, and gender is absent both among students and teachers. The parents' combined monthly income is approximately 10,000 Rupees (\$77), and they reside in a rented room. Due to the inadequacies of the government school system, respondent 2 avails free tuition at St. Xavier's College to compensate for the lack of quality teaching. Poor home environments and familial responsibilities contribute to students' academic struggles. Despite facing these challenges, students are content with teaching quality, though discipline remains an issue. Inadequate facilities at school and home further hinder academic performance. Respondent 2 helps with household chores and cooking, especially when parents are occupied with work.

Respondent 3: Managing household chores fall under the responsibility of respondent 3, who simultaneously juggles multiple cleaning jobs to earn 3000 Rupees per month from each. On top of that, respondent 3 extends support to the family by collaborating with NGOs, resulting in an earning range of approximately \$0.75 to \$1.51. It has been four years since the parents migrated, and sadly, the family still lacks essential assets and even a proper bed. Despite harboring a strong aspiration to pursue education, respondents 3 battles with self-confidence issues regarding the future, believing their capabilities to be inadequate for achieving significant accomplishments. Fate, according to respondent 3, is often attributed as the cause for these ongoing challenges.

Respondent 4: Ten years ago, respondent 4's family made the courageous move from rural Nepal, establishing a new life for themselves. Their monthly income, approximately \$75, is diligently earned to sustain not only themselves but also their beloved grandparents. The journey has not been without its share of struggles, as respondent 4 has faced discrimination stemming from their origin. Moreover, the disruptive force of the COVID-19 lockdown has presented formidable challenges to their educational pursuits. Residing in a densely populated region afflicted by water scarcity adds another layer of complexity to their daily existence. However, undeterred by these formidable obstacles, respondent 4 firmly believes in the transformative power of education, recognizing it as the key to unlocking their cherished aspirations.

Respondent 5: In the aftermath of the 2015 Nepal Earthquake, Respondent 5 draws attention to the glaring void that emerged within their school - the absence of a library. This unfortunate circumstance has had a significant impact on the educational opportunities available to students. Furthermore, the presence of disciplinary issues within the school, compounded by the fact that Respondent 5's mother holds a job with irregular working hours and their father's intermittent employment, further disrupts the teaching environment. The perspective shared by Respondent 5 sheds light on the intricate challenges confronted by educators and underscores the paramount significance of education. They accentuate how exposure to individuals who possess a sound education often translates into improved life prospects, thus underscoring the wide-ranging societal implications that education can have. Respondent 6 Transitioning to the sixth respondent, this remarkable individual harbors aspirations of attaining the esteemed position of a bank manager. Their unwavering motivation blossoms from the inspiring success stories that permeate their vibrant neighborhood and resonate within their own familial realm. A profound recognition of the indispensable role education plays in forging a path toward a prosperous career fuels their inner drive. Even in the face of adversities posed by seasonal floods and the arduous trials of residing in a slum, respondent 6 emerges as a paragon of resilience. Their tenacity is buoyed by

the backdrop of their parents' modest educational background, which serves as a potent force propelling their unwavering pursuit of knowledge and academic excellence.

Respondent 7: Respondent 7, residing in a humble rented abode with scarce resources, cherishes a fervent aspiration to emerge as an artist. Their unwavering determination stems from the profound influence of their mother, who serves as an inexhaustible wellspring of inspiration. Education, regarded as a beacon of hope, holds the key to navigating the labyrinthine trials of existence, embodying respondent 7's pro-found comprehension of its boundless power to effect remarkable metamorphoses.

Respondent 8 In the pursuit of a fulfilling career, Respondent 8 paints a vivid picture of their future as a nurse, fueled by a profound desire to provide compassionate care to the ailing and vulnerable. Despite grappling with the intricate concepts of science, Respondent 8 embraces the timeless significance of education, even in the face of their family's constrained socio-economic circumstances. This unwavering dedication to their educational path serves as a testament to their resolute commitment.

Respondent 9, driven by aspirations to excel in the fields of physics and astrophysics, confronts formidable obstacles presented by demanding subjects and domestic obligations. The presence of an uneducated single parent serves as a powerful motivator, instilling within respondent 9 a relentless pursuit of knowledge. The notion of strict discipline, however, is viewed as counterproductive according to respondent 9's perspective.

Thematic Analysis:

Theme 1: Financial Struggles and Economic Hardships

The narrative shared by Respondent 1 paints a poignant picture of the stark financial instability often endured by single parents. Their story vividly illustrates the heart-wrenching necessity of borrowing money just to provide meals for their children, serving as a stark reminder of the precarious economic circumstances that many find themselves in. Turning to the account of Respondent 3, we're confronted with the harsh reality faced by a family where the mother juggles multiple cleaning jobs, yielding only a meager income to sustain her loved ones. The absence of even basic assets and the palpable lack of self-confidence within this story serve as a testament to the profound impact of economic hardships on one's personal aspirations. In the narratives of both Respondent 1 and Respondent 3, a resounding call for social and economic support systems emerges. These stories underscore the immediate and pressing need for robust support mechanisms to alleviate the heavy financial burdens borne by individuals and families grappling with economic adversity.

Theme 2: Educational Disparities and Challenges

Respondent 2's discussion highlights the absence of discrimination in the educational environment but also reveals the need for free tuition at St. Xavier's College to compensate for the deficiencies in government schools. Respondent 4, a migrant, discusses discrimination and educational challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 lockdown, emphasizing the importance of education as a means of achieving ambitions. Respondent 5 points out the absence of a library in school following the 2015 Nepal Earthquake, affecting learning opportunities. As we delve deeper into the narratives of these respondents, a theme emerges – one that underscores the disparities present

within the public education system. Their stories serve as a reminder of the pressing need for additional educational support structures, infrastructure enhancements, and targeted allocation of resources to effectively address the multifaceted challenges faced by students today.

Theme 3: Family Support and Motivation

Moving onto the third theme, we encounter a spectrum of aspirations and the pivotal role of family support and motivation in shaping these dreams. Respondent 6, for instance, draws their inspiration from the achievements of neighbors and relatives, nurturing ambitions of becoming a bank manager. The limited educational background of their parents serves as a compelling motivator, driving their pursuit of education. Meanwhile, Respondent 7 harbors dreams of becoming an artist, spurred on by unwavering encouragement from their mother. In their eyes, education serves as the potent solution to surmount life's myriad challenges. In another perspective, Respondent 8 envisions a future as a nurse, driven by an innate sense of compassion and purpose. This aspiration not only reflects their career goals but also signifies a desire to serve the sick and suffering. Lastly, Respondent 9 draws motivation from a single parent, who, despite lacking formal education, provides unwavering support and encouragement for their educational journey. These stories collectively underscore the vital role of family support and inspiration in molding career aspirations and goals. They serve as a testament to the transformative power of familial encouragement in driving educational pursuits forward.

Theme 4: Embracing the Power of Education

The stories woven by our respondents in Theme 4 resonate with a resounding belief in the transformative power of education. Take Respondent 4, for instance, who views education as an indispensable conduit toward realizing ambitions, even in the face of formidable challenges. Respondent 6 echoes this sentiment, recognizing education as the very pathway to economic mobility and emphasizing its pivotal role in securing a promising career. Respondent 7, too, sees education as a beacon of hope, a potent solution to navigate life's myriad challenges, thus demonstrating an unwavering positive attitude towards learning and personal growth. Meanwhile, the unwavering determination to pursue education, despite grappling with economic limitations, is a common thread among these respondents. It's palpable in the determination of Respondent 8, reflecting a profound commitment to their goals. Lastly, Respondent 9's resolute ambition to become an academician in physics and astrophysics serves as a powerful testament to the pivotal role of education in their life journey. Together, these narratives underscore the collective belief in the immense potential of education to surmount challenges and propel individuals toward the realization of their personal aspirations.

Theme 5: Resilience and Perseverance

In Theme 5, we delve into the remarkable stories of resilience and determination exhibited by our respondents. Respondent 4's narrative is a poignant illustration of the tenacity required to overcome hurdles, including those related to migration and disruptions in education. Similarly, Respondent 6's aspirations and the emphasis on resilience reflect the ability to navigate challenging circumstances with unwavering resolve. These respondents serve as inspiring beacons, showcasing the remarkable capacity of the human spirit to endure and persevere in the face of adversity. They

embody the indomitable will to overcome obstacles on their educational and career journeys, offering a source of inspiration to us all.

Theme 6: Nurturing Discipline and Environment

Theme 6 brings us to an exploration of the intricate interplay between discipline and the learning environment. Respondent 5 sheds light on the repercussions of a post-earthquake scenario, particularly the absence of a school library, while also highlighting the influence of family dynamics on disciplinary matters. Conversely, Respondent 9 advocates for a more balanced and nurturing educational environment, cautioning against overly strict discipline. These respondents collectively underscore the vital importance of cultivating a supportive and balanced educational atmosphere. They draw attention to the profound impact of both external factors, such as school infrastructure, and internal factors, like family dynamics, on shaping the overall educational experience. In the synthesis of both quantitative and qualitative data, we gain a comprehensive understanding of the educational landscape for children attending government schools in the Kathmandu Valley. This enables us to effectively address our research objectives. To begin with, the families residing in slum areas and rented houses face significant financial struggles, highlighting the stark economic disparities. The quantitative data support this, revealing varying income levels among participants, with nearly half of them grappling with insufficient earnings to support their families. In vivid qualitative narratives, we witness parents juggling multiple jobs, resorting to borrowing money, and confronting economic hardships. It becomes evident that the socioeconomic context greatly influences children's access to resources and educational opportunities, emphasizing the urgent need for tailored support for families facing similar circumstances. Additionally, the motivations driving these children to choose government schools resonate with our research objectives. The quantitative findings shed light on financial constraints as a primary driver, while the qualitative insights provide a deeper understanding. They emphasize the significance of free education, the anticipation of improved future facilities, and trust in the quality of education provided. These motivations underscore the critical interplay between affordability and perceived educational value in shaping school choices. Furthermore, the assessment of students' satisfaction with the learning environment and instructional quality within government schools reveals a heartening trend. A significant majority expresses unwavering confidence in their teachers, aligning harmoniously with our research objectives. This highlights the pivotal role of educators in preserving a positive perception of educational quality.

Lastly, the exploration of additional challenges impacting the educational journeys of these children uncovers both quantitative and qualitative evidence. The quantitative data draw attention to subjects perceived as the most demanding, particularly mathematics and science. Through qualitative narratives, we delve deeper, uncovering issues related to discipline and management within schools, instances of peer harassment, as well as personal struggles, parental conflicts, and limited access to quality education. These multifaceted findings underscore the breadth of challenges extending beyond mere financial constraints, necessitating a comprehensive approach to enhance the educational experiences of these students.

In conclusion, the amalgamation of quantitative and qualitative findings weaves a tapestry of profound insights into the educational challenges and aspirations of children attending government schools in the Kathmandu Valley. While financial constraints and motivations for

selecting government, schools align with our research objectives, the spectrum of challenges extends beyond these parameters, encompassing academic, social, and familial dimensions. To effectively address these multifaceted challenges, a holistic approach is imperative – one that bridges economic disparities, enhances educational infrastructure, and fosters a nurturing and inclusive learning environment.

Discussion

Public schools often attract the interest of children who aspire to attend private institutions, perceiving them as offering a superior education. Despite this desire, financial constraints frequently force them to choose public education as their only viable option. It is worth noting the findings of Yuko Tsujita (2009), which reveal that economically disadvantaged families often find private schooling unattainable, making government-run schools the default choice.

Nepal's educational landscape is currently undergoing transformative changes amidst numerous challenges. The School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP, 2009-15) has emerged as a strategic response, considering both national experiences and global commitments. Its aim is to address the evolving needs and complexities of Nepal's education system [3].

Dedicated teachers form the cornerstone of any educational institution. Their unwavering commitment creates an environment conducive to effective learning, fostering both academic achievement and personal growth. Passionate educators possess the power to shape students' attitudes and instill goal-setting behaviors.

Education is a fundamental human right that not only uplifts individuals out of poverty and inequality but also fuels overall development. According to a concerning report from UNESCO in April 2023, socio-cultural and economic factors deprive 244 million children and youth of education. Nepal's Constitution (Article 31) enshrines the right to free and compulsory basic education, extending free secondary education to all citizens.

In India, the "Right to Education Act, 2009" guarantees free and compulsory education for children up to the age of 14. Ensuring enrollment, regular attendance, and active participation in education for children in impoverished urban areas is of utmost importance [8].

Education plays a pivotal role in uplifting the socioeconomic status of a society. Urban slums, characterized by overcrowding and abysmal living conditions, exemplify the strong connection between education and poverty. The literacy rate in these areas is alarmingly low [12].

The influx of rural migrants to cities, driven by poverty and natural disasters, has resulted in the proliferation of slums. Unfortunately, these underprivileged urban neighborhoods often lack basic necessities, including access to education [7]. Many slum dwellers identify more with city life than their rural origins, aspiring to improve their socioeconomic status [9].

However, the physical conditions of slum dwellings are far from suitable for a healthy living environment. Cramped spaces, inadequate ventilation, shared toilets, and unhygienic cooking facilities pose serious health challenges [10].

These subpar living conditions have a detrimental impact on children's studies. Noisy and crowded rooms hinder concentration, while unclean environments lead to various health issues. Additionally, limited income contributes to malnutrition, negatively affecting attendance and academic performance, particularly among disadvantaged students who also bear the burden of household chores [9][10]. The majority of slum dwellers rely on unskilled labor, with primary

livelihoods revolving around jobs such as agricultural labor, brick-making, and construction [11]. The challenges highlighted in this discussion emphasize the urgent need for comprehensive educational reform in slum communities. It is crucial to address issues related to inadequate infrastructure, unhygienic living conditions, and socioeconomic hardships to ensure equal access to quality education and create a brighter future for these marginalized children.

Limitations

Incorporating a vast array of samples, it is worth noting that the reliability of data collection could have been further fortified by engaging a more expansive and heterogeneous participant pool. The usage of self-reported responses brings about a certain level of uncertainty, casting doubt on the accuracy and genuineness of the provided answers. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that a portion of the accumulated data tangentially explored subjects unrelated to the primary focus of the study, causing a diversion from the central concerns surrounding the educational encounters of slum and migrant children. To attain a more holistic comprehension of the subject matter, future research endeavors should strive to surmount these limitations and refine the research approach accordingly.

Recommendations

Expanding upon the knowledge acquired from this study, there exist numerous promising avenues for further investigation that can significantly contribute to attaining a comprehensive understanding of the educational experiences of slum and migrant children. A meticulous exploration into the role that technology plays in bridging educational gaps within resource-constrained environments possesses the potential to yield invaluable insights into pioneering approaches aimed at enhancing learning outcomes.

Crucially, delving into the impact of parental involvement and community engagement in augmenting students' educational experiences emerges as an imperative task. Additionally, conducting a comparative analysis of the effectiveness exhibited by diverse models of community learning centers in slum areas could offer valuable guidance in the establishment and optimization of such facilities. Engaging in longitudinal studies that meticulously track the academic progress and life trajectories of slum and migrant children can provide profound insights pertaining to the enduring consequences of interventions and policies.

Moreover, a comprehensive exploration of the cultural and social factors that exert influence upon the aspirations of slum and migrant children can furnish strategies aimed at harmonizing education with their individual goals. Lastly, undertaking an investigation into the intricate relationship between mental health and educational outcomes among marginalized children could illuminate potential interventions geared toward bolstering their overall well-being.

By dedicating attention to these diverse research avenues, educators, policymakers, and stakeholders can effectively collaborate to formulate targeted interventions and policies that foster an education system characterized by equity and inclusivity for slum and migrant children attending government schools in Nepal.

Recommendations to Support Slum and Migrant Children:

Considering the insights gleaned from this comprehensive study, several key recommendations emerge to address the educational challenges encountered by slum and migrant children attending government schools in the Kathmandu Valley. Firstly, it is of paramount importance to prioritize the enhancement of educational quality within these schools. This can be accomplished by implementing targeted teacher training initiatives and equipping educators with a diverse range of effective pedagogical techniques. These techniques should include differentiated instruction, which caters to the varied learning needs of students. Moreover, the introduction of mentorship programs involving experienced teachers holds immense potential to offer students personalized guidance and unwavering support, thus cultivating a highly conducive learning milieu. In order to surmount the financial constraints that often impede students' pursuit of education, the government should consider initiating need-based scholarship programs. These programs would cover essential educational expenses such as textbooks, uniforms, and stationery, thereby ensuring that financial limitations do not hinder students' access to education. Additionally, forging partnerships with local businesses and organizations can open doors to invaluable internship programs and vocational training opportunities. By equipping students with practical skills through these collaborative efforts, their future employability prospects can be significantly enhanced.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is paramount to acknowledge that this study sheds light on the myriad challenges faced by slum and migrated children attending government schools in Kathmandu Valley. The research emphasizes the urgent need for supplementary coaching to counteract the deficiencies in educational quality prevalent within these institutions. It is worth noting that the limited education and time constraints of parents hinder their ability to provide adequate academic support, thus necessitating external assistance. This study underscores the pivotal role of fostering a conducive home environment to address the dearth of long-term academic goals, concentration, and regular study habits among these students.

A considerable proportion of families, approximately 44.7%, encounter substantial financial barriers that impede their access to quality education. Moreover, the study underscores the critical significance of augmenting school management and discipline, as evidenced by the challenges faced by 42.1% of participants. Given that government schools in Kathmandu Valley are often located in close proximity to slum areas, focused attention is warranted to enhance the learning experience within these institutions. Additionally, meaningful interventions should be implemented to facilitate parental involvement and guidance.

Consequently, this research serves as a resounding call for the authorities to recalibrate their approach towards addressing these educational disparities. It is imperative to tackle the identified challenges head-on and implement robust strategies to improve educational quality, alleviate financial constraints, and resolve discipline issues. By prioritizing teaching quality, fostering conducive academic environments, and narrowing socioeconomic gaps, the government can proactively contribute to nurturing a generation of empowered and well-equipped individuals. This approach will transcend the limitations of their circumstances and set them on a promising path toward a brighter future.

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