

Exploring Power Dynamics: Domination, Discrimination, And Social Exclusion On *Likhe*

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Abstract

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This paper explores how Dalits in Nepal are discriminated in terms of caste-based hierarchy and untouchability. It analyzes the novel Likhe and information derived from six major English students. The textual information and data collected from the interviews have been analyzed using the cultural representation theory; semiotic and discursive approaches by Stuart Hall (1997). Both data were integrated based on the thematic analysis. To prove textual evidences, researchers selected Dalit participants for their live experiences. Hall's theoretical concept is suitable to represent Dalit issues. Likhe, his parents and other characters like Sānnāni, Kāle Kāmi and Dalit males and females experience harsh cultural discrimination and untouchable practices both in theories and practices. The non-Dalits keep distance and mistreat Dalit characters in all walks of life private homes as well as at public places such as schools, temples, water sources. The representation shows non-Dalits torture Dalit students at school periphery not allowing the drinking water, and touching the pitcher.

Likhe was offered the leftover food while Cāuri and Cāure were exploited. Dalit characters are addressed as, “dum” (water untouchable), “dumkā chāurā” (untouchable /infant of a dog), “achut” (untouchable), and “bādarko chāuro” (an infant of a monkey). Six participants unanimously agreed that Dalit people are still facing domination and caste discrimination inhumanly and appeal to eliminate such bad practices. This insight opens up an avenue of scholarly discussion in academia to address the entrenched systems of discrimination to foster a just and equitable society devoid of prejudice based on caste, color, and gender.

Keywords: Caste, discrimination, exploitation, representation, untouchable practice

Introduction

In the context of Nepal, historical caste division and Varna system was legally strengthened

by *Muluki Ain* (Civil Code, 1854) that divides Nepali people in four Varnas: Brahmins- priests and scholars, Chhetries-warriors and rulers, Vaishyas-merchants and farmers, and Shudras-laborers and service providers. The Varna system was practiced into the caste system and domination, discrimination and untouchable practices began legally in the Nepali society thereafter. Accordingly, the fourth Varna was kept on the bottom and regarded as the lowest caste. Based on this, Shudras were treated as untouchable in Nepal. After 1972 A.D., the word 'Dalit' was used in India and in order to replace 'Achut' and 'Shudra' and include all people from different regions of Nepal, Dalit word was used. Therefore, the word 'Dalit' was the product of Dalit movement (Magarati et al., 2025, p. 12). Having been dominated for a long time, Dalit people individually and in groups tried to express themselves, feel heard, and participate meaningfully in conversations and decision-making processes. Individually or in groups, Dalits have been facing caste division, caste discrimination, cultural misconduct, exploitation, and ill-treatment. Magarati (2021) claims that Dalit males, females and children have been struggling for their existence, self-respect, identity and prestige in different places. They face caste discrimination in private homes of the upper castes, school periphery, water sources, public places and working spots. The text was written immediately after the promulgation of the constitution of 2047 B. S. The textual evidences are not sufficient to claim Dalits in Nepal are dominated and discriminated in private homes and public places as well at present, it is essential to include interview for personal experiences for making the claim credible and trustworthy. The real-life experiences are represented from the language they use, clothes they wear, economic status they have and political power they use are all representation as Hall claims through semiotic as well as discursive approaches. People have done many researches focusing Dalit issues but this research is based on data from the text and real-life experience of Dalit is analyzed. Therefore, it has novelty in the field of academia because many researches are carried out analyzing the textual evidences rather, they lacked live experiences on caste discrimination and untouchable practices.

In this context, researchers asked questions such as how are Dalits dominated, discriminated, humiliated and exploited in the text and in their real lives. Why do non-Dalits use derogatory words for Dalits? To address aforementioned questions and analyzing the present socio-cultural practices, the Nepali narrative *Likhe* (2073 B.S.) that was written by Sarad Paudel was selected. *Likhe* - the main Dalit character and son of Cāure and Cāuri was sent to Rijal Bista's house to look after cattle due to their poverty believing that he will support his parents. The innocent child becomes the victim of words and actions there. Bista's family dominates, discriminates, humiliates and exploits in actions and gives torture in words. They beat him, abuse him, dominate and discriminate and provide him with leftover food. Bista's family addresses him in the name of '*achut*' (water untouchable), '*dumkā chāurā*' (untouchable with people, puppy), '*pauni*' (untouchable), and '*bādarko chāuro*' (an infant of a monkey). His parents are also dominated, tortured and humiliated due to their caste and economic status. *Likhe*, tired of the actions and words of Bista's family, declined food, rejected commands, and then decided to leave that house. He decided to move to India and live a free life, but he was bitterly tortured there. Similarly, to support textual evidences, six participants were selected for their live experiences. The text and participants were selected purposively. The text was selected due to the required contents for analysis and interpretation whereas participants were selected hoping to get the required information and live experiences. Only six participants were selected because they

could only provide proper information. The textual information was gathered from information and description whereas information (data) from participants was gathered through structured questions to analyze socio-cultural domination. The cultural representation theory was implemented. Finally, the researchers concluded, discussed, and recommended further research areas. The present research is not the final one rather significant due to the issue raised that will benefit new researchers and academicians.

Review of Literature

The significant insights reviewed from different researchers such as Mathur et al. (2025) emphasized education is a powerful tool for resistance against cultural domination. Similarly, Charmakar (2024) highlighted Dalits have been excluded in society therefore, resistance needs for emancipation and freedom from cultural domination in Nepali communities. In the same way, Magarati (2021, 2023) focused on Dalit trauma created by the evil socio-cultural environment in Nepal and resistance in general from the side of Dalits against the socio-cultural domination of the so-called the upper caste people. Yadav's (2023) ideas were also based on cultural domination and resistance of Dalit community against dominant people. Ellefsen et al. (2022) presented evil socio-cultural practices against black people and their resistance against racism.

Mathur et al. (2025) claimed that Bama resisted discrimination and domination and turned herself as writer. As Christian Dalit, she faced discrimination by the so-called the upper caste people as well by her own castes. Therefore, the researchers reported that education raises the consciousness of Dalits which assists to fight against caste-based discrimination at all levels of society. Charmakar (2024) explored that the poem presented Dalit consciousness and their resistance against caste discrimination and practice of untouchability. Charmakar explored class consciousness and Dalit consciousness in Pabitra's anthology of poem, *Yugko awaj [Voice of era]*.

The anthology addresses agony, pain, suffering, inequality, injustice, discrimination, exploitation and oppression. Pabitra encourages Dalit people to fight and resist against such domination and discrimination. She highlights the revolt against the caste system for the overall transformation of the whole Dalit community. Moreover, the researcher has claimed that Dalit literature representing Dalit issues in society has become the mirror (pp. 141-142). The paper focused on the speaker's resistance against dominant people's domination, humiliation and biasness and reclaims the lost cultural identity of Dalits. Similarly, it prioritizes conscious stylization of the narrative in an unconventional way to issue a political statement.

Magarati (2023) presented lived experiences of people from the Dalit community. The research recounts contexts of both verbal and physical abuse, as well as ongoing discrimination within and between castes, illustrating the painful reality faced by this marginalized group especially Dalits. The cultural trauma caused by untouchable practices is particularly incurable, akin to cancer, is more crucial than economic and political problems. Magarati's research focused on the trauma of Dalit characters and the appeal of emancipation from such cultural domination, but lacked ways and types of resistance of Dalits for their cultural emancipation. Yadav (2023) on the other evaluated critically the relevance of language, motifs, myths and legends to create a counter narrative resisting canonical narrative. Yadav attempted to provide an insight regarding how Dalit writers interrogate the casteist public sphere to posit writing as the means of registering protest and asserting their voices (p. 264). The paper focused

how the author resists the socio-cultural domination of the so-called the upper castes and reclaims the lost cultural identity of Dalits. The paper also analyses the author's conscious stylization of the narrative in an unconventional way to issue a political statement. This paper also lacked the ways of resistance based on textual evidences and lived experiences from the Dalit community.

Ellefsen et al. (2022) viewed that racial discrimination appears in many forms and so does the opposition to it. Against the dominant people and institutional or state policies on racism, how racially marginalized people resist in their everyday lives. The results focused those participants resisted by ignoring, confronting, sharing experiences about, reporting and protesting it. Such resistances play the social function against racism. Magarati (2021) discussed the trauma of Dalit characters in general and Likhe's in particular. Likhe faced discrimination in terms of language and food in Bista's home while working there. Likhe rejected leftover food and resolved not to consume it. With determination, he took the food and disposed of it in the drain pipe (Paudel, 2073, p. 75). This act signifies awareness and defiance. Though he faced hunger, he chose to refuse it. In aggression, he used abusive language towards Bista's wife for such disrespectful and harsh treatment. Physically wounded Likhe refused to wash the dirty dishes and he cursed the elderly woman to himself because he could do nothing to her. This implicit reaction signifies his internal resistance without visible expression (Paudel, p. 76). Likhe showcases resistance during a Labor Organization program in Delhi (Paudel, p. 275). This awareness symbolizes the Dalit struggle and urges all Dalits to adopt such consciousness (Magarati, 2021, p. 281). This research focused on the socio-cultural representation of Dalits in general, so it could not wholly focus on resistance based on text and participants' views. It lacked a full focus on ways of resistance.

The aforementioned empirical reviews displayed the socio-cultural domination of the so-called the upper caste people, trauma created by such domination, discrimination, and exploitation and resistance of Dalits against the discrimination. However, those papers lacked a representation of Dalits and domination, discrimination, humiliation and exploitation by the upper caste people based on textual evidences and live experiences of Dalit people. Therefore, this research is essential. Many researchers have carried out research on such topics but they lacked the personal sharing and experiences to justify the claims that Dalits are still discriminated, humiliated and exploited based on caste, therefore this research was essential.

Theoretical Framework

This research was based on the main theoretical insights of Stuart Hall (1997) on cultural representation of Dalits confined on Semiotic Approach (Poetics) and Discursive Approach (Politics). To support main theoretical insights, theorists like Ambedkar (2018) for caste is the monster, Marx (1844) for religion and illusion, Barker (2002) for cultural practices, Foucault (1964) for discourse, Nayar (2008) for cultural discourse and identity, Said (2007) for political and ideological ideas, Derrida (1997) for oppositional meaning, Storey (2009) language for relation of power and Pandey's (1983) ideas for caste were embedded as supportive theoretical tools to interpret and analyze the collected data. Cultural representation refers to whatever actions and activities that are practiced by people in society. They are practiced according to the culture and cultural practices. Some activities are conscious and some are unconscious to dominate Dalits. Hall's (1997), Semiotic Approach (Poetics) refers that how language and representational system produces meanings and Discursive Approach

(Politics) examines effects and consequences of representation simultaneously- how these meanings are connected to power, ideology and construction of the social identities. Due to the lack of power, political access and economic status, Dalits have been marginalized (p. 6). Unless Dalits raise their voices through writing, acting, works, music, print and electronic media and paintings, they resist. Cultural resistance is using of culture to challenge dominant social norms and power structures. It can involve creating a new world vision, or preserving cultural identity.

Indicating impact of caste hierarchy and untouchable practices, researchers in this section included Marxist analogy: "religion with opium" (Marx, 1844, p. 47) to represent evil socio-cultural practices based on Hindu Varna system. The comparison between religion and caste hierarchy is presented. Like opium that affects human body, human beings are illusioned temporarily. People get temporary relief from all kinds of socio-cultural evil though it brings people together in specific belief systems. As Marx (1844) claimed it gives temporarily relief but it in long run affects badly (p. 153). Religion makes people slave like and dominates people on the basis of blind faith. If a person is insulted and humiliated, it creates critical situation in society. If members are insulted and humiliated, a crucial situation is created and society becomes unhealthy. In this context, the self-respect and dignity of all the members in society should be ensured.. Religion is also valued a kind of specific form of representation so both religion and representation display and create societal values. Moreover, Nayar (2008) opined that the cultural discourse of humiliated, dominated and discriminated Dalits generates particular meanings/identities (p. 25) of the Dalit community. The pandemic situation created in Nepali society due to caste discrimination and untouchable practices. Researchers concentrating on Gramscian thought argue that Dalits have been suffering under the cultural hegemony in Nepal. The so-called political leaders from the political parties manipulate Dalits and get their votes in the name of job, social justice and socio-cultural emancipation but their speech change into political stunt rather than transformation in reality. This is the scenario experienced by the Dalits generation to the generation.

Hall (1997) states that the representation of the insulted and humiliated people becomes the discourse from the margin which is not "the transparent" representation of the 'real' but the construction of knowledge through the operation of a code (p. 213). The representation of common people through the codes documents is a specific historical situation of marginalized people facing existential and identity crisis. The words used for Dalits to disrespect are: *Dum kā Chaura*, *Dum* and *cor* (thief) and honorific words for non-Dalits are as for Derrida, "the binary opposition is never a simple structural relation; it is always a relation of power" (as cited in Storey, 2009, p. 127). In Nepali society, unequal power relationship is reflected even in naming and addressing each other. This is the reason that non-Dalits use derogative words for Dalits. In this reference, Hall's semiotic approach (Poetics) is applied to expose how representation and language produce meaning in society. So, honorific words are used for the privileged groups, whereas derogatory words are used for the underprivileged groups. This is the discourse of powerful people and rulers (Magarati, 2021, p. 236). Pandey (1983) in this situation opines "Caste discrimination has two forms: the first is the discrimination on the bread and the second is the discrimination and helplessness in the marriage of daughters" (p. 56). The non-Dalits subjugate and distance Dalits in cultural functions like feast and marriage. Therefore, practicing untouchability is the upper castes' discourse that concentrates on Hall's discursive approach (politics) and Gramsci's

cultural hegemony based on ideology of the dominants. That is why, we can claim that cultural domination and discrimination have become crucial than the economic status and political access.

Aforementioned caste discrimination and untouchable practices are well addressed in Ambedkar's (2018) statement that "caste is the monster that crosses your path. You cannot have political and economic reform, unless you kill this monster" (p. 42). Similarly, Ghurye (2016) claims "Shudras' business was assigned to be a servant of another, washing his superiors' feet. He is declared to be unfit for sacrifice" on the basis of Hindu Varna system" (p. 27). They could not perform a sacrifice, listen to or recite the Vedic texts, nor could practice austerities (p. 31). Ghurye (2026) further asserts that discrimination of caste was in food and drinks, it is because the Brahmins put restrictions on the acceptance of food and drink from the Shudras during the second stage of the development of their culture. Food and drinks of Shudras were not accepted by the upper castes" (p. 92).

Methodology

This paper implemented a qualitative research design. Data were collected from the purposively selected text and Dalit students. The researchers used primary and secondary sources. The required primary data were collected from the book *Likhe* and interviews with six Dalit students; five bachelor level and a master level student whereas secondary data were collected from the library sources. The researchers collected the available novels written by both Dalit and non-Dalit novelists in the library. Researchers studied the text that contained subjugation, exclusion, and untouchable practice was chosen. The researchers collected needed data related to caste discrimination, humiliation, exploitation from the text information and interviews. They were interviewed using subjective questions regarding cultural exclusion in different places in society. Collected data were reviewed, categorized and organized into categories or themes, and analyzed based on representation theories. Before interpretation and critical analysis, the researchers started with the subject matter. To support the claim, researchers included quotes from the text and experiences collected through the interview, and related theoretical insights regarding the representation were embedded, critically analyzed, and interpreted and listed major results. This research was fundamentally based on the core principles of cultural representation. Researchers analyzed fictional and non-fictional data to justify the claim to its credibility and reliability based on thematic analysis remaining on the contact zone.

Results and Discussion

Dalits in Nepal have been put on the bottom due to the caste biasness based on Hindu Varna system. In order to fulfill the objective to explore the dynamics of power: domination, discrimination and humiliation on Dalit characters in the selected text, appropriate contents were selected, and to support these contents, interview was conducted with Dalit students and analyzed and interpreted using appropriate theoretical parameters. The researchers found that the untouchable practices prevail in taps, wells, temples, work places and homes. The upper caste people dominate Dalits in their actions, words and behaviors. Whatever treatment *Likhe* and his father face in *Rijal's* home represents the real plight that Dalits face in the name of untouchable practices. *Cāure* and *Likhe* are allowed to sit on the edge of the courtyard in *Bist's* home (pp. 8-9). Likewise, *Likhe*, a cowherd in *Rijal Bist's* house faces the evil untouchable practices in his early age (p.11) who is distanced and allowed him to stay on the cowshed. He undergoes physical and psychological trauma there. This is the representation of Dalit children who face such problems in everyday life (as cited in Magarati 2021, p. 228). It is contextual

to implement Ambedkar's (2018) statement that caste is the monster that crosses your path. You cannot have political and economic reform, unless you kill this monster (p. 42). Dalits in Nepal have been the victim of such orthodox Hindu culture and its bad impacts. Due to this, they have been suffering from cultural trauma so it has hampered Dalit community.

Similarly, Dalits are discarded and they do not have permission to walk along with non-Dalits. Dalits should go down side when non-Dalits walk on the road and maintain distance when non-Dalits approach nearby. Unfortunately, when Dalits touch non-Dalits, they make them pure sprinkling holy water on their body. This is what the most of the orthodox Hindu people believe. Further, Dalits are not allowed to share same water sources such as, wells and taps where non-Dalits usually go and fetch water. For instance, Bajai orders Likhe to go the pond downward where dirty water from upper pond is flowing (p. 11). The pond is very dirty. This proves that some non-Dalits neither love Dalits nor treat as human beings. Sometimes they show their crocodile's tears just to show their sympathy. Such inhuman actions and behaviors are repeated in Dalits' life in society. In the same way, 'Bajai (grandmother) and non-Dalits are presented cruel because they are rigid in cultural and religious activities. They use a child as a laborer and provide leftover food. This example proves that some non-Dalits lack humanity and kindness which is crystal clear (p. 74). Further, Dalit students are excluded in school premises, inside and outside the class (p. 93). Not only this, people in the village are asked to clean the glasses and pots (p. 108). They are compelled to do this task otherwise they get physical punishment. Dalits are subjected to face such an evil practice every day in the Nepali society (Magarati, 2021, 2023, 2026). In this context, referring caste discrimination, researchers quote from Marxist analogy that "religion with opium (p. 47)." Temporarily, opium affects human beings unlike religion keeps them in illusion. Religion makes people slave due to lack of reason and dominates people on the basis of blind faith. Dalits in Nepal have been the victim of evil cultural practices that has long root of caste division and untouchable practices.

Dalits have been excluded in politics, economic access and decision making. Therefore, the Dalit community have faced a critical situation and facing trauma physically and psychologically. When members are insulted and humiliated, society becomes unhealthy. It is the duty of the nation to ensure the self-respect and dignity. In this context, Nayar (2008) opines that the cultural discourse of humiliated, dominated and discriminated Dalits generates particular meanings/identities (p. 25 as cited in Magarati et al., 2026) of the Dalit community. A pandemic situation in Nepali society Caste discrimination and untouchable practices have created. Following Gramsci, we can argue that Dalits have been suffering under the cultural hegemony in Nepal. In Hindu Varna system caste division and caste discrimination is regarded a dominants' culture. Therefore, it can be relevant to state "culture is a sort of theatre where various political and ideological causes engage one another" (Said, xvi as cited in Magarati et al., 2026). Dalits are victim of tradition and superstitions that can be seen clearly in Likhe. Once Bajai puts necklace somewhere and blames to Likhe that he has stolen. She calls an herbal doctor to find the real thief. Bajai orders witchcraft to spell mantras and he is given husked rice; he will vomit the blood immediately (p. 45). It shows that people believe in Pundit and whatever he decides is right. Dalits are victim of such traditional practice in society as Likhe. So, researchers' focus is to prove that Dalits are victim of traditional belief in luck, curse, tradition, fasting, God, witchcraft, spelling mantras and satisfying god by offering cock when Likhe was suffering from fever (p. 83).

This is the ignorance which results in the loss of money, suffering and sometimes untimely death of innocent people (as cited in Magarati, 2021, p. 233 and Magarati et al., 2026). This is the upper caste discourse that is constructed to dominate and subjugate Dalits. Dalits are blamed as the rule breaker, disloyal, thugs and thieves. Despite this, Dalits do their duty innocently and responsibly. It is proved by Likhe and his parents.

Likewise, researchers present verbal oriented domination and discrimination on Dalits in society. To address Dalits, non-Dalits call '*Dum*' and '*Chauro*' for Dalit and their children. They hold negative attitudes towards Dalits. They consider Dalits only as workers, untouchables, slaves and cowherds (pp. 12-13). Non-Dalits use derogatory words to address Dalits, which is their direct domination and humiliation. Likewise, another example is presented that how the upper caste people insult Dalits by calling them 'untouchable' and '*Dum*'. Dalits' children are addressed as '*Dumkā Chāurā*' [untouchable/infant of a dog] whereas non-Dalit children are addressed '*bāje*, children, *Sānā Mukhiyā*, *Sānbābu*, and *Sānnāni* (p. 40). These signify honor for them. This discourse proves that whatever the upper castes do is right. What they speak is the law. The law is in favor of them. So, power structure is always in their favor (Magarati, 2021, p. 235 as cited in Magarati & et al., 2026). Dalits silently accept such humiliations and move on otherwise they will be physically punished or insulted verbally. The representation of the insulted and humiliated people becomes the discourse from the margin which is not "the transparent" representation of the 'real' but the construction of knowledge through "the operation of a code" (Hall, 1997, p. 213). The representation of common people through the codes documents is a specific historical situation of marginalized people facing existential and identity crisis. The humiliating words used for Dalits: *Dumkā Chāurā*, *Dum* and *Cor* and honorific words for non-Dalits are as for Derrida, "the binary opposition is never a simple structural relation; it is always a relation of power" (Tyson, 2008, as cited in Storey, 2012, p. 127). In Nepali society, unequal power relationship is reflected even in naming and addressing each other. This is the reason that non-Dalits use derogatory words for Dalits. In this reference, Hall's semiotic approach (Poetics) is applied to expose how representation and language produce meaning in the society. So, honorific words are used for the privileged groups whereas derogatory words are used for the underprivileged groups (Magarati, 2021, p. 236). Dalits have been biased by the society undergo cultural trauma due to derogatory terms as well (Magarati et al., 2026).

In order to clarify the evil cultural practices, researchers present another example. Dalits are compelled to maintain distance otherwise they are punished physically and mentally. They always suffer from cultural trauma of touching non-Dalits. They are forbidden to sit even in the middle of the courtyard. This is the reality. Animals are loved and cared. Dogs go inside but human beings are treated worse than them (pp. 8-9). Likewise, due to the hangover of caste discrimination, Likhe stood up and moved away when Sānbābu approached nearby. This event mirrors reality of evil cultural practices and clear reflection of society. The evil socio-cultural practices in the text are supported by the live experiences of Dalit students. Referring caste discrimination and untouchable practices participant 1 has heard that Dalits are treated badly and discriminated in temples and private houses (2024, 10:43). The participant 2 opines that caste division exists in society. They discriminate in marriage, temples, religious activities, and private homes (1-2.35). She thinks that all castes are equal but the upper caste people dominate and discriminate Dalits. Therefore, this is not good and fair. She unpleasantly says

that “upallo jātkā mānche kahi jādā Dalitālāi dekhe bhane sāit bigriyo bhanchan” ‘The upper caste people while going outside claim that the day will be bad if they see Dalit on their way. They take it as bad luck (2024, 10:21).’ In this context, Pandey (1983) opines caste discrimination exists in two forms: on bread and in the marriage of daughters (p. 56). Therefore, Magarati et al. (2026) assert the upper caste people dominate and discriminate Dalits in food and marriage consequently. The upper castes’ discourse is to create trauma that concentrates as Hall’s discursive approach (politics) and Gramsci’s thought of cultural hegemony based on ideology of the dominants.

The participant 3 shares that he does not feel domination and discrimination himself. He has seen that in the village a Brahman boy got married with a Dalit lady but parents and relatives of that boy separated them. That was because the lady was from Dalit family. Similarly, he shares that his parents and grandparents were dominated and discriminated. Because of caste discrimination and untouchable practices, people have been representing by making films, for example, *Purna Bahadurko Sarangi* (2081/ 2024). He has heard from media and read from the newspapers about domination and discrimination. The participant 4 shares her experience while she was going to the field from her office. “Ma Birendranagar 16 Meheli tira field mā jādā pahilā kothā cha basnalāi bhanekomā pachi jāt sodhnu bho ra jāt Damāi bhanne thāhā pāye pachi kothā sāno cha basna pugdaina bhanera tānu bho” ‘when I went to Birendranagar 16, Meheli for field visit and asked for room with the house owner, they were ready before they knew the caste. When they knew that she was related to Damai, they pretended that the room is very small and it will not be good.’ Another event she shared that “sāthiko gharumā jādā sāthiharule sadhai bhanthe sabai bhannu tara jāt nabhannu, hāmi bhanchau u hāmrai jātko ho bhanera” [while going to friends’ house, her friends usually said that you can say your name but do not tell everything, we will tell that she belongs to our caste, trans Magarati et al., 2026].

Dalit people have been killed which was known from the media. Nabraj B.K. (May 23, 2020) and Samjhana Basyal were killed because of caste discrimination and untouchable practices. Such practices are more in village areas than urban areas, she claims. Though she has not experienced but she shares that her grandparents were put outside and given food separately. They cleaned their pots themselves and sprinkle holy water for making the pots pure. (2024, 17-39) The participant 5 narrates his own story that he faced in his society that “*Garmi mahinā thiyo, chiso pāni lyāuna ma ekpatak pasalmā gayeko thiye. Maile pāni chiso cha ki chaina bhanera frez mā bichār gare. Sāujile kina choyeko ma phirtā lidaina bhanera pāniko botal bāhira phāldiye*” [I went to a shop to bring cold water and checked the freeze but the owner became angry and said that that bottle is impure and that bottle cannot be returned, he said and threw it outside’ 1-2 mts]. In school friends called him Kami to dominate. “*āune jāne bhayepani ekpatak party mā upallo jātko māncheko ghar bhitrai basera khāna lāgeko dekhera uniharuko herāi ra byebahār badaliyo*” [Even though there was regular interaction, once they saw us sitting and eating inside a higher-caste person’s house at a party, their gaze and behavior changed.] He shared another incident that as friends they come and go and enter inside the house but one day when he was having food sitting inside the upper caste house they changed their behavior and looked differently at him.’ He added that “*Kuwāko pāni Dalitle chudā yo pāni nachou hāmi birāmi hunchau bhanthe upallo jātkā mānisharu*” [When a Dalit touched the well water, upper-caste people used to say, ‘Don’t touch this water, we will fall sick.’ He shared that the upper caste people used not to allow Dalits to touch the well because they become sick.’ Miserably he expressed

that due to caste discrimination and untouchable practices, the upper caste people killed Nabraj B.K. It is justified as Ghurye's statement that Shudras were assigned to non-Dalits. Dalits are not suitable for sacrifice, listen or recite the Vedic texts (pp. 27-31 as cited in Magarati, 2021, p. 157). Dalits are still the victim of the bad practice of culture, constructed and practiced by people in Nepali society (Magarati et al., 2026). The constitution of Nepal 2015 forbade people to discriminate in any name but Dalits are dominated, discriminated, exploited, and killed in the name of caste and untouchable practices.

After analysis we found that Dalit characters in the text and even in the present society have been the victim of evil socio-cultural practices in their daily lives. They have bitter experiences of these evil cultural practices despite the law and policies against them were promulgated. Dalits have been victims because the policies and law are not implemented strictly and issues of Dalits were not taken seriously. The rulers take Dalit problems for granted only. They were ready to abolish "Sati Pratha" (ritual suicide or killing of women, also known as suttee, is the practice of burning a Hindu widow alive on her husband's funeral pyre-July 8, 1920/) and "Kamaiya/Kamlari Pratha" [bonded labor in Western Terai in Nepal-July 17, 2000 (Shrawan 2, 2057 B.S.)] and abolished easily. But they raise Dalit issues as political stunt but do not seem serious for them. This cultural issue does not relate to Dalits only but with the Nation in general. Therefore, it should be addressed in time. The society has murdered Dalits alive by considering them "other", "distanced them" and by "untouchable practices." Therefore, Dalit children suffer from trauma by birth and it is crucial than economic scarcity (Magarati et al., 2026). As in the text, Likhe, his parents and other Dalit characters suffer more by humiliation and caste discrimination than economic status. Six participants also shared more torture by cultural practices than by economic deprivation. Dalit characters did not mind when they were given less wages, leftover food and bad clothes and pots to use rather traumatized by distancing them, making them other, not allowing them to drink water from the pitcher in school and addressed with derogatory terms. So, this research explores evil cultural practices are still practiced in society that is proved by the sharing of six students from their life experiences that differentiate from the existing literature. To do this, researchers were careful to maintain the ethical considerations.

Conclusion and Implications

Researchers concluded that the research fulfilled the objective to explore and justify untouchable practice, humiliation and exploitation on Dalit people. Dalits are distanced in the textual description and even in the present days in society in private homes and public places. Dalit children and their parents are humiliated theoretically and practically. Likhe was given leftover food, addressed with derogatory terms and other Dalit characters as well. It is mentioned in the constitution of Nepal 2015 that people will not be discriminated based on caste, religion, sex, gender, regions, and culture. The bad cultural practices have created trauma on Dalits. Therefore, unless and until, Dalits are emancipated from the socio-cultural trauma, they cannot live happily. The non-Dalits repeat such discrimination due to the power that they hold based on politics, economics and cultural discourse they create themselves. It is structural policy that compelled Dalits to face such bad impacts of the socio-cultural practices. Despite the policies against caste discrimination and untouchable practices, due to the lack of their effective and strict implementation, Dalits have been facing caste discrimination, untouchable practices, humiliation, and exploitation. Power holders demand charity on Dalit male,

female, children, and physically impaired people, rather not implemented practically. It is proved that policies are made but they are not implemented strictly. Every year we make slogans to transform society rather we remain the same. We give advices very strongly but we do not implement ourselves. Wherever Dalits go either private homes or public places; they are tortured in the name of caste, and untouchable practices in words and actions but the policy makers remain silent and indifferent as well. Dalits are traumatized every day and policy makers are indifferent but take such issues for granted. Therefore, nation and its rulers need to be conscious in time to reform society and status of Dalits implementing policies strategically. The question arises that how long do we rote the slogans and stunt of social transformation? The time has come to show the result to emancipate and liberate Dalits from such inhuman and uncivilized socio-cultural practices. Now proper education and awareness programs are needed for policy makers and rulers (political leaders) than marginalized people especially Dalits. Policies for social inclusion, positive actions and positive attitude are essential for strict implementation for emancipating Dalit community in Nepal.

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