

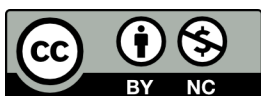
Socio- Economic Status of The Majhi Community in Lalbandi, Municipality

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Abstract

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Nepal is the country of ethnic diversity and identities. Among them Majhi is an indigenous ethnic group, primarily residing in the inner Terai and hilly regions along the banks of rivers and streams. This article aims to study socio-economic status of Majhi Community of Lalbandi in Sarlahi. Descriptive and analytical research design have been employed to conduct this study. Primary and secondary data were collected via interview schedule and key informant interview. Observation and field visit was also used to find the activity and patterns of the Community. In the course of study, 80 Majhi people were selected as respondents who were heads of household consisting 20 respondents from each ward by the help of purposive sampling. It is found that the socio-economic pattern of Majhi people of the study site is changing due to shifting pattern of livelihood. They have shifted their traditional occupation fishing, boating to agriculture, labour work, carpentry, driving, teaching, foreign employment, etc. which has changed their income level and ways of livelihood in positive way. Inclusive initiatives have integrated them to mainstream and uplifted their lifestyle.

Keywords: Community, livelihood, majhi, traditional, transformation.

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Introduction

Nepal, a small yet incredibly diverse country nestled in the Himalayas, is home to a rich tapestry of multiracial, multi-ethnic and multicultural communities. With 142 caste and ethnic groups and 124 spoken languages (NSO, 2022) the Nepalese people have cultivated a vibrant and unique social lifestyle that blends tradition with a deep sense of belonging. This diversity is not a recent phenomenon but has evolved over centuries, shaped by the country's geography, history and interactions among the people. The traditional lifestyle of Nepalese people is deeply rooted in their ethnic identities, religious beliefs and communal practices. Major groups like Magar, Tharu, Tamang, Thami, Sherpa, Gurung, Madheshi people and Majhi each contribute distinct customs, languages and traditions to the nation's cultural mosaic. Despite these differences, a shared sense of harmony and coexistence binds these communities together (Nepali, 2022).

Socially, Nepalese life revolves around family, community and religion. Most Nepalese people traditionally live in joint families, where multiple generations share a household, fostering strong inter- generational bonds. Agriculture remains a cornerstone of their livelihood (Nepali, 2022). Since ancient times, the Nepalese have mentioned a lifestyle that balances adaptation with preservation. While urban centers like Kathmandu, Pokhara, Janakpur and Hetauda have embraced modernity, rural areas continue age-old practices like weaving, pottery, agriculture, and animal husbandry. Spirituality permeates daily life, with Hinduism and Buddhism coexisting alongside indigenous animist traditions, evident in the countless temples, monasteries and sacred sites dotting the landscape (Pant, 2078 B.S.).

In essence, the Nepalese people's lifestyle is a testament to their ability to thrive amid diversity, weaving a collective identity from a multitude of races, ethnicities and cultures. This enduring way of life, passed down through generations, reflects resilience, unity and profound connection to their house, land and heritage (Pokharel, 2057 B.S.).

The Majhi people are one of the Nepal's indigenous ethnic groups, known for their deep connection to the rivers that flow through the country and a traditional lifestyle centered around fishing, boating, and river transportation. Recognized as one of the 59 indigenous nationalities in Nepal, Majhi are classified as a highly marginalized ethnic group. Their traditions, lifestyle and culture are intricately tied to their riverine environment, reflecting a heritage that has persisted for generations

despite modern challenges. Original place of Majhi was Madhya Pradesh, India. The Majhis have been living in the Mid-Hills region through the inner Madhesh, passing through Mithila from India before two thousands years ago. Because they are living in the Mid-Hilly region, they are called Majhi (Kandel, 2055 B.S.). When they entered Nepal, they may have separated from the Terai indigenous Tharu people as well as Danuwar and settled in the hilly regions at the river banks (Pokhrel, 2057). Socio- economic Status (SES) refers to the social and economic standing or position of an individual or group in a society. It is often measured by factors such as: income, education, occupation and access to resources, etc. (Narayan, 1999).

The socioeconomic status of Majhi community is described as low, primarily due to their reliance on traditional occupations, marginalization, geographic isolation and lack of access to education or modern job opportunities. The socio-economic challenges of this community are being examined in this study.

Review of Related Literature

Nepal is a country of various ethnic and marginalized groups and diversity. Majhi is one of the ethnic groups residing on river banks of hill and Terai. With the growing population, modernization and desire for alternative sources of livelihood, Majhi people are leaving the place of their origin and they have undergone vast shift in profession.

According to the Census 2021, the Majhi constituted 111,352 population in Nepal. Extrapolating from 2021 census data for Sarlahi (862,470 total population), the Majhi population in the district is 9,215 (Male 4,589 and female 4,626) individuals, assuming their proportion has remained relatively stable (NSO, 2022). The Majhi are a minority group in Sarlahi, overshadowed by larger communities like Yadav (15.5%), Koiri/Kushwaha (7.9%) and Musalman (7.9%) (District Profile Sarlahi, 2024). Mostly they were migrated from Marin and Kamala basins of Sindhuli district and rest from Ramechhap district and surrounding and residing in this locality since 5-6 generations. Below is an exploration of the Majhi people:

Majhi Traditions

Majhi traditions revolve around their intimate relationship with rivers and nature. They are nature worshippers, often describe as following a animist belief system, through many also blend Hindu practices into their spirituality. Key traditions include:

Koshi Puja

A significant festival where they honour the Koshi river, offering prayers and sacrifices to the river deities. This reflects the belief in the spiritual power of rivers; which is known by “Ladi Puja” in their own tongue. In the Majhi language "Ladi" refers to the river or Nadi, often personified as a familial figure, such as a "mother's brother" or a protective deity (Bimali, 2020). The term "Koshi Puja" ties the rituals to this specific river, while "Ladi Puja" is a broader term that emphasizes the worship of rivers or "Nadi" in general, reflecting the Majhi's nature worshiping tradition. During Ladi/ Koshi Puja, they gather on the river banks, play traditional musical instruments and offer scarifies (e.g. goats, chicken or ducks). They also worship fishing nets, boats and other tools along with natural elements like bamboo, grass and stones symbolizing deities. They also consume typical dishes and pray for dead-soul's and gods (Himalayan News Service, 2021).

Ancestral Worship

Majhis sing songs in their mother tongue to invoke ancestors, accompanied by dances during rituals like Bhumi Puja (land worship) and Jhakani Puja.

Panchbali

A sacrificial ritual is marked to appease gods, showcasing their reverence for nature and spiritual forces.

Death and Life Rituals

Traditionally managed by a customary institution called Majhisewa, which upholds social norms, resolves disputes and conducts rites like birth, marriage and death ceremonies. These traditions are fading due to modernization, migration and displacement, but they remain a core part of Majhi identity.

Varieties of Majhi Community

Majhi are not a monolithic group; they exhibit regional variations influenced by their river-based lifestyle, geographic spread and interactions with neighboring communities. While unified by their river-based lifestyle, differences emerge in dialects, customs and occupations (Surya, 2018).

There are no officially recognized ‘sub-varieties’ or distinct sub-groups within the Majhi Community, though differences arise due to geographic dispersion and

interaction with neighbouring ethnic groups like Bote, Tharu, Tamang or Danuwar, with whom they share some occupational and cultural similarities. These variations are subtle and often tied to local traditions or the specific rivers they live near. For instance:

River-based Identity

Majhis living along the Saptakoshi river system may have distinct practices or folklore compared to those along the Gandaki or Karnali river systems.

Cultural Adaptations

In some areas, Majhis have integrated aspects of neighbouring communities' traditions while retaining their core identity as river-dependent people. Despite the minor differences, the Majhi Community is unified by their shared language (Majhi Bhasha/ kura), occupation (fishing and ferrying), and cultural reverence for rivers.

Major Residing Sites of Majhi People in Nepal

Majhi community primarily resides in the inner Terai and hilly regions of Nepal, always in close proximity to the rivers and streams. Their settlements are strategically located along riverbanks, reflecting their reliance on water bodies for sustenance and livelihood. Key residing sites include:

Saptakoshi River System

This is a major hub for Majhi settlement, encompassing seven rivers: Indravati, Bhotekoshi, Tamakoshi, Sunkoshi, Arun, Barun and Likhu. Districts like Sindhupalchowk, Kavrepalanchowk, Ramechhap, Sindhuli, Dolakha, Okhaldhunga, and Khotang are home to significant Majhi population near these rivers (Ghimire, 2014).

Gandaki River System

Majhis live along the Kali Gandaki and its tributaries particularly in western Nepal.

Inner Terai Regions

Settlements are found in districts like Chitwan, Sindhuli and other lowland areas near rivers.

Specific Villages

Examples include Majhi near the Jyadi river, Lamidada in Ramechhap and settlements along the Dudhkoshi and Tamakoshi rivers. Their other notable settlements are Ghopatar, Jayaramghat, Bhadareghat and Rasuwaghat.

Eastern and Central Nepal

The Majhi language is widely spoken in these regions, indicating a strong presence. These locations are typically simple villages with round houses made up of stone or clay, often clustered close together near river shores, emphasizing their dependence on aquatic environments (Pant, 2078 B.S.).

Relation with Rivers

The Majhi community's relationship with rivers is profound and multifaceted, shaping their identity, livelihood and culture:

Livelihood

Traditionally, Majhis are fishermen or boatmen. They use handmade wooden boats called "dohis" to ferry people, goods and livestock across rivers, practice that historically made them vital to transportation and trade in Nepal. Fishing, using nets and hooks, sustains their diet and provides income (NLSS, 2023).

Cultural Significance

Rivers are central to Majhi folklore, songs and dances, which constitute their beauty and power. The Koshi/ Ladi/ Nadi Puja, a unique river-worship ritual, highlights their spiritual bond with water.

Settlement Patterns

Their homes are built along river banks, reflecting a lifestyle adopted to aquatic ecosystems. This proximity ensures easy access to fishing and boating opportunities.

Challenges

Modern developments like bridges, dams (e.g. Sunkoshi-Marin Diversion Project), and environmental changes (pollution, overfishing, and climate change) threaten their traditional river-based occupations, forcing many Majhis to shift to agriculture, labor or other varieties of earning for livelihood (PAFN, 2020/21).

The Majhi Community in Lalbandi Municipality, primarily are engaged in traditional occupations like fishing and boating, faces significant barriers to socio-economic advancement due to entrenched marginalization, as explained by marginalization theory, which highlights how systematic exclusion limits access to resources and opportunities. Social mobility theory suggests that aborigines' low socio-economic status is perpetuated by limited educational attainment and lack of access to modern occupational sectors, restricting upward mobility. According to livelihood transition theory, the Majhi Community's reliance on traditional livelihoods is increasingly unsustainable due to environmental changes and market shifts, pushing them toward precarious alternative income sources. Despite some government interventions, such as affirmative action policies, the Majhi community experiences limited social mobility due to persistent caste-based discrimination and inadequate infrastructure in Lalbandi Municipality. Marginalization theory further underscores how aborigines' geographic isolation in rural areas exacerbates their exclusion from urban economic opportunities and social networks that could facilitate development. Efforts to improve their socio-economic status require targeted interventions, such as skill development programs, to align with livelihood transition theory and enable the Majhi Community to diversify into more sustainable and modern livelihoods (Narayan, 1999).

In essence, rivers are life blood of the Majhi community, defining their economic activities, cultural expressions and historical resilience. Despite external pressures, their identity remains tied to Nepal's waterways, making them the “guardians of the river” in the Nation’s cultural landscape (Pant, 2022).

Key municipalities or villages near rivers such as Barahathawa, Hariwon, Lalbandi could host Majhi Communities, though they are not explicitly documented as Majhi dominated areas (District Profile Sarlahi, 2024).

Dhakal (2023) showed an in-depth study on the agricultural production patterns and their economic implications for the Magar community residing in Kalika Municipality, Chitwan. The research emphasized how traditional agricultural practices are gradually being replaced by semi-commercial and commercial farming due to access to better irrigation, market linkages, and cooperative support systems. Dhakal highlighted that the shift in farming methods has contributed meaningfully to household income and food security among the Magar population. Furthermore, the study illustrated that socio-cultural practices and land ownership patterns continue

to impact the choice of crops and farming intensity. The research delivers valuable insights into how ethnic communities like the Magar are adapting to changing economic and environmental conditions while preserving their cultural identity in agriculture (Dhakal, 2023).

Lalbandi is a municipality in Sarlahi district, Madhesh province, Nepal, along the East-West Highway. It is bordered by Ishwarpur Municipality to the east and south, Haripur Municipality to the west and south, Sindhuli district to the north, and Hariwon Municipality to the west direction. Lalbandi Municipality was formed on May 18, 2014, by merging the former VDCs as Parwanipur, Netragunj, Jabdi, Ranigunj, Narayankhola, Pattharkot, and Lalbandi. It comprises 17 wards in total now. It has approximately 238.5 Sq. Km. (92.09 sq. miles) geographical area and 66,419 total population (Male: 32,883 or 49.5% and Female : 33,536 or 50.5%) and 14,873 households spanning the Chure (Siwalik range), Bhabar and outer Terai region, with subtropical climate. It is also known for tomatoes production and other agro crops, fruits and vegetables (Lalbandi Municipality Profile, 2024).

Objectives

The main objective of the study were to have an understanding on:

- The social mobility and changes that have taken place in the Majhi community.
- The economic status that has taken place among the Majhi community members and its impacts on their socio- economic status and occupation.
- The actors and factors that have contributed to the change and continuity of Majhi's social and economic life over the years in the study site and community.

Research Questions

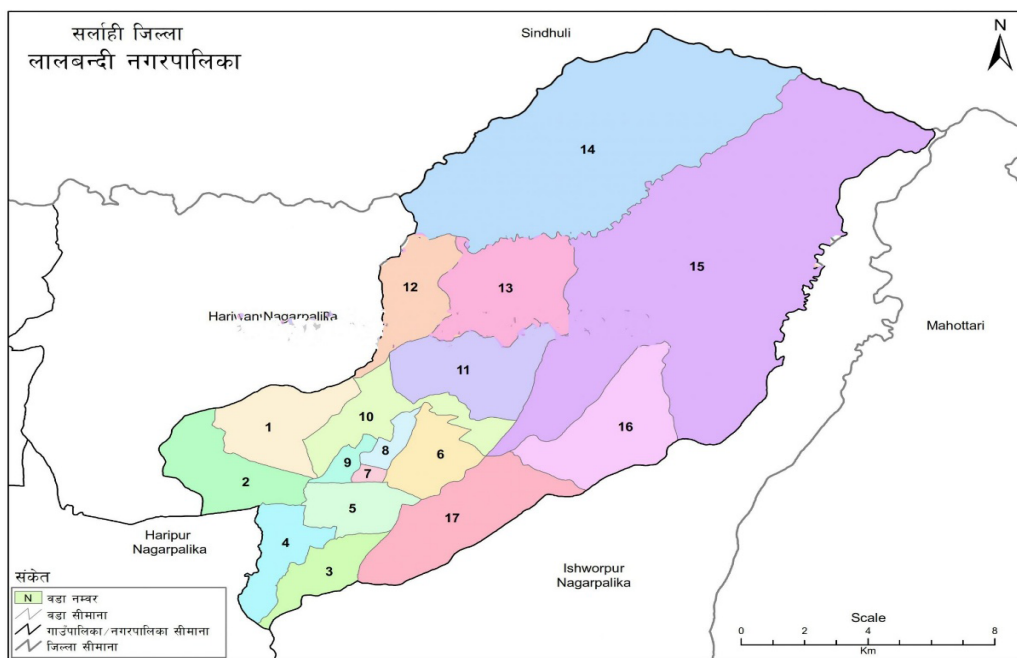
- Are they staying in the place of their origin?
- Have Majhi people been continuing their traditional occupation or there has been shift?
- What changes have occurred in their economic and social life?
- How have they been affected by modern life style?
- Is there reasonable or inclusive participation in mainstream?

Study Site and Method

Lalbandi Municipality Ward Numbers 5, 12, 13 and 16 were the study site of this study located in Sarlahi district of Madhesh Province in Nepal. The site is inhabited by Majhi for hundred years around. According to the record of respective wards, there are 253 Majhi's households in total.

The study follows the more quantitative approach and analysed the data collected from the field. Both the primary and secondary source of the data were included in the study. Primary data were collected through interview schedule, observation and field study. The livelihood pattern, current situation of the respondents was noticed and recorded. Purposive Sampling method was used and 80 respondents were selected for the study consisting 20 respondents from each ward. Among total respondents 34 were male and 46 were female. Questions were asked to them according to the objective of the study. Secondary source of the data collection was used through library research method. Books, articles, reports, other published documents and online resources, etc. were the main source as secondary data. Conclusion of this study has been made on the basis of primary source of the data.

Map of Lalbandi Municipality



Significance of the Study

This research may contribute to up to date empirical information of the Majhi people which are useful for policymakers at all three levels of government in formulating and designing plan and policies considering the upliftment of the indigenous communities.

It may increase the participation of marginalized communities' like Majhi in mainstream of political system. It can contribute or suggest in formulating Majhi language curriculum or course in basic level education in their mother tongue to preserve the culture and heritages. This study is meant to be a wake-up call for stakeholders, planners and concerned authorities. It advances for equitable and inclusive society addressing the difficulties experienced by Majhi people.

Discussion and Results

The research was conducted in Majhi community in Lalbandi, Sarlahi. The specific results with discussion was found as presented hereunder:

Demographic Situation of Majhi Community

The Majhi people residing in the study site of Lalbandi Municipality Ward Numbers 5, 12, 13 and 16, their household size along with the male and female population is presented in the table 1 below:

Table 1

Demographic Status of Respondents (Majhi people)

Ward number	Household size of Majhi people	Ward-wise No. of Majhi people			Percentage
		Male	Female	Total	
5	70	204	246	450	32.70
12	113	261	282	543	39.46
13	13	36	42	78	5.66
16	57	125	180	305	22.18
Total	253	626	750	1376	100.00

Source: Lalbandi Municipality Profile, 2024 and Field Study, 2024.

The given table shows that there are 253 households of Majhi and 1376 Majhi people in Lalbandi Municipality. Among them 70 Majhi households and 450 Majhi people are in ward number 5. As well as 113 households of Majhi and 543

Majhi people are in ward number 12, 13 households of Majhi and 78 Majhi people in ward number 13, 57 households and 305 Majhi people are in ward number 16. Likewise, there are 204 male and 246 female population of Majhi in ward number 5, 261 male and 282 female population of Majhi in ward number 12, 36 male and 42 female populations of Majhi in ward number 13 and 125 male and 180 female Majhi people are residing in ward number 16. The number of respondents taken as the sample in total is 80 consisting 20 from each ward. Among them 9 male and 11 female were taken from Ward No. 5, 8 male and 12 female were taken from word No. 12, 7 male and 13 female were considered from ward No. 13, and 10 male and 10 female represented as sample from Ward No. 16.

Socio-Economic Status of the Respondents

In this study, 80 respondents participated. All of the respondents were from Majhi community and mainly they are farmers, some are foreign country returner and others. However their age, sex, language, religion and educational status is different. Tables given below show these status of the respondents.

Table 2

Age Structure of the Respondents

Age Group (in years)	Ward -wise No. of Respondents				Total	Percentage
	5	12	13	16		
20-29	4	3	4	5	16	20.00
30-39	5	4	5	4	18	22.50
40-49	7	7	6	6	26	32.50
50-59	2	4	2	3	11	13.75
60 Years and above	2	2	3	2	9	11.25
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100.00

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Above table 2 indicates 20% respondents are between age group 20-29 years age, 22.5% are between age group 30-39 32.5% are in among 40-49 years age group and 13.75% are in the age group 50-59 years and 11.25% respondents are in the age group 60 years and above. Majority of the respondents are in between 40-49 years age group and least are above 60 years and above age group.

Table 3*Sex Structure of the Respondents*

Sex	Ward-wise No. of Respondents				Total	Percentage
	5	12	13	16		
Male	9	8	7	10	34	42.50
Female	11	12	13	10	46	57.50
Others	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100.00

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Table 3 shows that there are 42.5% male and 57.5% female respondents. It shows more female than male population in study site which is very common in national scenario too.

Table 4*Educational Attainment of the Respondents*

Educational Status:	Ward-wise No. of Respondents				Total	Percentage
	5	12	13	16		
Illiterate	5	7	6	6	24	30.00
Basic level	11	12	13	12	48	60.00
Secondary level	3	1	1	1	6	7.50
Bachelor level	1	0	0	1	2	2.50
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100.00

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Education is one of the basic social components in any society or individual. It helps to live a life in the best possible way and also helpful in solving the daily life activities. The educational attainment of the study area or the respondents was presented in table 4. It shows that 30% of the respondents are illiterate. Among the respondents 60% have got basic level education, 7.5% have completed secondary level education and only 2.5% respondents are with bachelor level as educational attainment. Table 4 describes educational attainment level of the respondents which is not satisfactory.

Table 5*Composition of Respondents by Language they know and use*

Language	Ward-wise No. of Respondents				Total	Percentage
	5	12	13	16		
Majhi (Majhikura)	2	3	1	1	7	8.75
Nepali	15	15	17	14	61	76.25
Others	3	2	2	5	12	15.00
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100.00

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Language plays a vital role in performing one's ideas, views and intimacy. Same way language is easy access for communication in any society. Modern society is not dependent upon anyone language. People in the society or community members speak one or more than one language. It is assumed that speaking more than one language is better than knowing only one language. Table 5 explains the status of language that the respondents know and use in their daily life activities. It was found that only 8.75% know their typical Majhi language which is also called Majhikura and use it very rare, it is because of influence of other languages and no more concentration towards own typical language. 76.25% respondents are using Nepali language and 15% of them know and use other languages as Hindi, Bajjika, Tharu, Tamang, etc.

Table 6*Religious Composition of Respondents*

Religion	Ward-wise No. of Respondents				Total	Percentage
	5	12	13	16		
Hinduism	18	17	19	20	74	92.50
Nature/Prakritee	1	1	0	0	2	2.50
Christianity	1	2	1	0	4	5.00
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100.00

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Religion is a source of spiritual fulfillment, offering a connection to a higher power or divine presence. It can act as a coping mechanism, providing comfort and

hope during times of hardship or uncertainty. Religion is also defined as the believe over super natural power. Less or more almost all people of the world are bound by the name of religion. Because of common lifestyle with Hindus many Majhi people are practicing Hinduism. Table 6. notes that 92.5% respondents are following Hinduism as main religion where as 2.5% follow Nature/ Prakritee Dharma and 5% are the followers of Christianity.

The Ownership and Size of the Land

The ownership of land and size of the land that they occupy significantly play a role for livelihood and economic activities. The ownership over land and size of the land they have in the study site or belonging to respondents was found as in the table 7 presented below.

Table 7

Ownership and Size of the land Owned

Land Holding Nature and Size	Ward-wise No. of Respondents				Total	Percentage
	5	12	13	16		
No Land or Land-less	2	4	3	3	12	15.50
Ailani or Non-Registered Land	5	8	10	15	38	47.50
Nambari or Registered Land	13	8	7	2	30	37.50
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100.00
Up to 5 Kattha	10	7	10	11	38	55.88
5 to 10 Kattha	6	6	5	4	21	30.88
10 to 20 Kattha	2	2	1	2	7	10.30
Above 20 Kattha	0	1	1	0	2	2.94
Total	18	16	17	17	68	100.00

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Above presented table 7 notes ownership of the land and size that is with respondents. Data shows that 15% respondents do not possess their own land, 47.5 % respondents have *Ailani* or non-registered land and only 37.5% respondents have registered or *Nambari* land.

Likewise, 55.85% respondents have up to 5 *kattha* land, 30.88% respondents have 5 to 10 *kattha* land, 10.30% respondents possess 10 to 20 *kattha* land and only 2.94% people have been holding above 20 *kattha* land.

Types of Housing in the Study Site

Types of house is a mirror that reflects the socio-economic condition that the people have. The house types of the respondents was found as following:

Table 8

Types of Housing

Types of Housing	Ward -wise No. of Housing/Respondents				Total	Percentage
	5	12	13	16		
Hut/Bamboo-Straw House	4	6	5	3	18	22.50
Traditional Stone -Clay House	2	2	4	4	12	15.00
Khapada or Tayal roofed House	8	6	4	5	23	28.80
Zink or Jasta roofed House	3	2	3	3	11	13.70
Concrete or Pakki House	3	4	4	5	16	20.00
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100.00

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Data presented in table 8 retains that 22.5% houses of the respondents are made up of bamboo and straw or hut. Fifteen % houses of the respondents are traditional or made with stone and clay. There are 28.8% *khapada* or *tayal* roofed houses, 13.7% *Zink or Jasta* (corrugated sheet) roofed houses and 20% concrete or *pakki* or building houses are there. Increasing number of concrete or *pakki* or building houses in the study site helps to say that income level is growing up mostly by foreign earning and varieties of income generating involvement inside the country which is described more in Table 9.

Occupation or Means of Livelihood Strategies

Respondents had only traditional or ancestral occupation for their livelihood but it has been changing drastically since 3-4 decades and economic responsibility has increased with changing life pattern in the study community. This pattern has changed gradually as changing in time, ruling system of the state and by the effect of open economy. Nowadays every family owns a few members of livestock, cultivation system and try to have a piece of land.

Study community is based on agriculture, animal husbandry, labour work, driving, carpentry, masonry, trade, teaching, employment in and outside the country. The table 9 below is the scenario of the means of livelihood or occupation of the respondents.

Table 9*Occupation or Means of livelihood*

Occupation they involved	Ward -wise No. of Re-				Total	Percentage
	5	12	13	16		
Traditional/Fishery and so on	1	3	2	2	8	10.00
Animal Husbandry	1	2	2	1	6	7.50
Farming/Agriculture	4	3	5	4	16	20.00
Labour Work	2	3	1	1	7	8.70
Seasonal Labour (outside the Palika)	1	2	1	1	5	6.20
Foreign Employment	5	4	4	5	18	22.50
Others: Masonry, Driving, Carpentry	6	3	5	6	20	25.00
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100.00

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Table 9 shows the data of respondents related to their occupation or means of livelihood where 10% respondents follow their traditional occupation as fishery and so on, 7.5% have animal husbandry, 20% have farming or agriculture, 8.7% labour work, 6.2% seasonal labour who go outside the Palika, 22.5% foreign employment and 25% others as masonry, driving, carpentry, teaching, etc.

Annual Income and Expenditure

The money earned by an individual, household, family, business or government over a specific period is income. The money spent on goods, services or obligations during a specific period is expenditure. Understanding and managing income and expenditure is crucial for financial health, informed decision making and economic stability at both personal and societal levels. The following table 10 highlights annual income of the respondents in the study site:

Table 10*Annual Income of the Respondents*

Annual Income (in rupees)	Ward -wise No. of Respondents				Total	Percentage
	5	12	13	16		
Below 50 thousands	5	4	4	5	18	22.50%
50 thousands to 1 lakh	2	3	3	4	12	15%
1 lakh to 2 lakhs	3	4	3	3	13	16.25%
2 lakhs to 4 lakhs	4	4	4	3	15	18.75%
Above 4 lakhs	6	5	6	5	22	27.50%
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100%

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Table 10 notes status of annual income of respondents in study site. Data indicates that 22.5% earn below 50 thousands, 15% earn 50 thousands to 1 lakh, 16.25% earn 1 lakh to 2 lakhs, 18.75% earn 2 lakhs to 4 lakhs annual income. While talking about expenditure of the respondents it was found as table 11 given here under.

Table 11*Annual Expenditure of the Respondents*

Annual Expenditure (in rupees),	5	12	13	16	Total	Percentage
Below 50 thousands	6	6	5	7	24	30
50 thousands to 1 lakh	4	5	6	5	20	25
1 lakh to 2 lakhs	3	4	5	4	16	20
2 lakhs to 3 lakhs	5	3	3	1	12	15
Above 3 lakhs	2	2	1	3	8	10
Total	20	20	20	20	80	100

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Data presented in table 11 shows that 30% respondents spend below 50 thousands, 25% spend 50 thousands to 1 lakh, 20% spend 1 lakh to 2 lakhs, 15% spend 2 lakhs to 3 lakhs and only 10% spend above 3 lakhs rupees per year.

Access in Mainstream of the State

After the reestablishment of democracy and declaration of republican system in Nepal the social security, lifestyle and empowerment of Majhi people is increasing day by day as other various backward and indigenous group or communities. Involvement of Majhi members in political and communal practices is also increasing. Provisions of inclusiveness by laws and acts in present days is being favorable in transformation system of Majhi people. Their involvement as elected local representative or ward-member and selection as different committee member as School Management, Consumer Groups, etc. has been helping to prove their transformation issues in present days. A small scenario to address the uplifting quotes for their interest could be presented in a table below.

Table 12

Access in Mainstream of the State

State of Representation	No. and Name of Ward-wise Representative			
	5	12	13	16
Ward-member	1	1	1	1
Name	Chitra Kumar Kushwar	Shreeman Majhi	Balbir Majhi	Mangale Majhi
Remarks	Current	Current	Current	Ex (past)

Source: Field Study, 2025.

Table 12 deals with the political consciousness and access of Majhi community. There are at least one ward member elected from Majhi people in ward No. 5, 12, 13 in current elected body and ward No. 16 had one member in ex or old elected body. It proves the changing empowerment of Majhi people in present days than past.

Recommendation for Implications

Based on discussion and findings, the research provides a set of recommendation as mentioned hereunder:

- Government (Federal, Provincial or Local) can be suggested to adopt or formulate policies of inclusiveness and implement them accordingly.
- The authorities must highlight the need for policies that address their marginalization, support livelihood transitions and enable social mobility.

- Research underscores the importance of aligning community based adaptation initiatives.
- Community organizations can hold the powerful instruments for holistic development of concern community or people.
- Capacity development and formulation of local plans is crucial for considering diverse perspectives.
- It is a crucial resource for scholars and practitioners for the further researches based on other aspect of Majhi Community or other geographical or administrative sites.

Conclusion

This article is an attempt to deal with socio-economic status of Majhi people in Lalbandi Municipality, Sarlahi. Demographic status, age-sex, religious and language composition, educational attainment, ownership and size of the land owned, types of houses, occupation or means of livelihood, annual income and expenditure of the respondents, etc. are the areas covered in this study. The educational attainment is not so satisfactory where higher education is very low. They have shifted their traditional occupation fishing and boating to agriculture, labor work, masonry, carpentry, driving, teaching, foreign employment, etc. which have been changing their income level and ways of livelihood in positive direction. They do not practice their own mother tongue and culture is influenced by others' culture and language. Based on the findings of the study, a picture of transformation in socio-economic status is observed. Awareness, income generating, poverty reduction, educational strengthening and uplifting programs should be focused and carried out by the concerned authorities. Majhi people are also being elected in Ward level as people's representative and are brought in mainstream of the state.

They had miserable life where they used to go to serve *Sahu* (money lenders), *Mahajan* (business men), *Pancha* (elites) or so-called rich person in very low wages especially in kind (grains) and engage in traditional caste based activities. They had faced several challenges such as sickness (no access to medical checkup or maintain health and hygiene), no education, difficulty in housing, no sufficient food stuff to consume. But we saw and found changes in such all miserable condition. They are having with many access in socio-economic strength in present days, having modern

life style, mostly able to have sufficient food stuff, could care about health, education and increasing entrepreneurship as well as decision making power.

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Conflict of interest Statement

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