



Socio Economic Status of Deo/Dev Community in Nepal

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Abstract

Background: During the age of Vidyapati (fourteenth-fifteenth centuries AD), Mithila reflected a highly sophisticated cultural and intellectual region characterized by unique socio-cultural structures. Gradually, various groups, such as the Dev group (with subgroups like Bisahariya) of Nepal, have been marginalized due to their caste. Present-day policy frameworks, such as the GESI Strategy (2021-2023) in Nepal, attempt to rectify historic inequalities. Nevertheless, there is still limited knowledge concerning the relationship between historic socio-cultural formation and current exclusion.

Purpose: This paper aims to compile information from both historic and present-day resources to (a) describe the socio-cultural context of Mithila in the age of Vidyapati, (b) outline the historic journey of the Dev caste of Nepal, and (c) assess present-day GESI policy approaches towards addressing caste and gender-based exclusion.

Methods: A qualitative content analysis of secondary data sources was conducted using Radhakrishna Chaudhary's "Mithila In The Age Of Vidyapati" (1976), Ramkrishna & Roopali Mukherjee's "Rise and Fall East India" (1974), the GESI Strategy 2021-2023 of the Government of Nepal, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy by Rai & Sharma (2021), Deepak Chaudhary's "Dev Community of Nepal: A Case Study of Bisahariya VDC" (2012), and Ram Narayan Deo's "Dev Jatiko Itihas" (2017).

Conclusions: The Mithila era during the reign of Vidyapati witnessed the presence of advanced literature and ritual practices along with existing hierarchies within the caste system. The Dev people group, which includes Bisahariya, have been socio-economically marginalized in Nepal



and remain underrepresented in general discourse. The current GESI initiatives are well-intentioned and comprehensive; however, there is a lack of action concerning excluded castes.

Conclusions: Social hierarchies established during ancient times in Mithila can still be seen today through marginalization of certain communities, such as Dev people group, in contemporary society. Although GESI initiatives (2021-2023) exist, focused efforts on particular communities that take into account past and present research are crucial.

Keywords: Dev community, GESI, Mithila, Nepal, Vidyapati

1. Introduction

Socio-economic status (SES) encompasses not just income but also educational attainment, financial security, and subjective perceptions of social status and social class (Radha et al., 2025). Socioeconomic status can encompass quality of life attributes as well as the opportunities and privileges afforded to people within society (Nutakor et al., 2023 Niedzwiedz, 2012). Poverty, specifically, is not a single factor but rather is characterized by multiple physical and psychosocial stressors. Further, SES is a consistent and reliable predictor of a vast array of outcomes across the life span, including physical and psychological health. Thus, SES is relevant to all realms of behavioral and social science, including research, practice, education and advocacy.

SES affects overall human functioning, including our physical and mental health. Low SES and its correlates, such as lower educational achievement, poverty and poor health, ultimately affect our society. Inequities in health distribution, resource distribution, and quality of life are increasing in the United States and globally. Society benefits from an increased focus on the foundations of socioeconomic inequities and efforts to reduce the deep gaps in socioeconomic status in the Nepal and abroad.

Deo/Dev people are considered as minority population in the Nepal among 142 castes available in Nepal under its constitution. The rank of Deo/Dev caste in 96 out of 142 in Nepal. The population of this caste in Nepal is only 7,418(0.03%) among total population of 2,91,64,578.00(CBS,2021).

Table -1: Population by caste/ethnic-groups and sex, NPHC 2021*

Caste/ethnicity	Total	Total %	Rank
Total	29164578	100	
Kshetri	4796995	16.45	1
Brahman - Hill	3292373	11.29	2
Magar	2013498	6.9	3
Tharu	1807124	6.2	4
Tamang	1639866	5.62	5
Bishwokarma	1470010	5.04	6
Musalman	1418677	4.86	7
Newa: (Newar)	1341363	4.6	8



Yadav	1228581	4.21	9
Rai	640674	2.2	10
Pariyar	565932	1.94	11
Gurung	543790	1.86	12
Thakuri	494470	1.7	13
Mijar	452229	1.55	14
Teli	431347	1.48	15
Yakthung/Limbu	414704	1.42	16
Chamar/Harijan/Ram	393255	1.35	17
Koiri/Kushwaha	355707	1.22	18
Kurmi	277786	0.95	19
Musahar	264974	0.91	20
Dhanuk	252105	0.86	21
Dusadh/Pasawan/Pasi	250977	0.86	22
Brahman - Tarai	217774	0.75	23
Mallaha	207006	0.71	24
Sanyasi/Dasnami	198849	0.68	25
Kewat	184298	0.63	26
Kanu	152868	0.52	27
Hajam/Thakur	136487	0.47	28
Kalwar	134914	0.46	29
Rajbansi	132564	0.45	30
Sherpa	130637	0.45	31
Kumal	129702	0.44	32
Tatma/Tatwa	126018	0.43	33
Khatwe	124062	0.43	34
Gharti/Bhujel	120245	0.41	35
Majhi	111352	0.38	36
Nuniya	108723	0.37	37
Sundi	107380	0.37	38
Dhobi	101089	0.35	39
Lohar	100680	0.35	40
Bin	96974	0.33	41
Kumhar	95724	0.33	42
Sonar	93380	0.32	43
Chepang/Praja	84364	0.29	44



Ranatharu	83308	0.29	45
Danuwar	82784	0.28	46
Sunuwar	78910	0.27	47
Haluwai	71796	0.25	48
Baraee	68011	0.23	49
Bantar/Sardar	61687	0.21	50
Kahar	59882	0.21	51
Santhal	57310	0.2	52
Baniyan	53655	0.18	53
Kathabaniyan	52466	0.18	54
Badhaee/Badhee	52437	0.18	55
Oraon/Kudukh	46840	0.16	56
Rajput	46577	0.16	57
Amat	46471	0.16	58
Gangai	41446	0.14	59
Lodh	39872	0.14	60
Gaderi/Bhediyar	35497	0.12	61
Ghale	35434	0.12	62
Marwadi	33803	0.12	63
Kayastha	33502	0.11	64
Kulung	33388	0.11	65
Thami	32743	0.11	66
Bhumihar	32199	0.11	67
Rajbhar	29240	0.1	68
Rauniyar	27258	0.09	69
Dhimal	25643	0.09	70
Khawas	22551	0.08	71
Tajpuriya	20989	0.07	72
Kori	20670	0.07	73
Dom	19901	0.07	74
Mali	19605	0.07	75
Darai	18695	0.06	76
Yakkha	17460	0.06	77
Bhote	15818	0.05	78
Bantawa	15719	0.05	79
Rajdhob	15391	0.05	80



Dhunia	15033	0.05	81
Pahari	15015	0.05	82
Bangali	13800	0.05	83
Gondh/Gond	12267	0.04	84
Chamling	12178	0.04	85
Chhantyal/Chhantel	11963	0.04	86
Thakali	11741	0.04	87
Badi	11470	0.04	88
Bote	11258	0.04	89
Pun	9827	0.03	90
H yolmo/Yholmopa	9819	0.03	91
Khatik	9152	0.03	92
Yamphu	9111	0.03	93
Kewarat	8809	0.03	94
Baram / Baramu	7859	0.03	95
Dev	7418	0.03	96
Nachhiring	7300	0.03	97
Gaine	6971	0.02	98
Bahing	6547	0.02	99
Thulung	6239	0.02	100
Jirel	6031	0.02	101
Khaling	5889	0.02	102
Aathpahariya	5878	0.02	103
Dolpo	5818	0.02	104
Sarbaria	5793	0.02	105
Mewahang	5727	0.02	106
Byasi/Sauka	5718	0.02	107
Dura	5581	0.02	108
Meche	5193	0.02	109
Raji	5125	0.02	110
Sampang	4841	0.02	111
Chai/Khulaut	4805	0.02	112
Chumba/Nubri	4414	0.02	113
Dhankar/ Dharikar	4090	0.01	114
Munda	3589	0.01	115
Lepcha	3578	0.01	116



Pattharkatta/ Kushwadiya	3343	0.01	117
Hayu	3069	0.01	118
Beldar	3037	0.01	119
Halkhor	2929	0.01	120
Natuwa	2896	0.01	121
Loharung	2598	0.01	122
Kamar	2532	0.01	123
Dhandi	2339	0.01	124
Done	2125	0.01	125
Mugal/Mugum	2124	0.01	126
Punjabi/Sikh	1846	0.01	127
Karmarong	1663	0.01	128
Chidimar	1615	0.01	129
Kisan	1479	0.01	130
Lhopa	1390	0	131
Kalar	931	0	132
Phree	921	0	133
Koche	847	0	134
Topkegola	642	0	135
Raute	566	0	136
Walung	481	0	137
Lhomi	355	0	138
Surel	318	0	139
Kusunda	253	0	140
Bankariya	180	0	141
Nurang	36	0	142

CBS,2021

From the data, it is very clear that Deo/Dev people have very low population than other castes in Nepal. Due to these circumstances, there is less research about socio economic status of Deo/Dev people has been occurred. So, the main aim of this study is to analyze the socio-economic status of Deo/Dev people among other ethnic groups in Nepal. Another aim is to establish the status for this caste and recommendation to Government of Nepal (GoN).

2. History of Deo/Dev People

Deo caste is one of the Tagadhari caste of Terai/Madhesh, is as highly educated caste among others in Madhesh province. Deo which is also known as Dev is a caste living in Saptari District since



approximately 800 years period of time. Actually, the origin for this caste has been Saptari district. So, this district is the historic place for this caste of people. Although, currently this caste has been living through all over the country and even abroad, Saptari district will be the historical place for Deo/Dev people (Chaudhary, 2025).

The history of human civilization has been initiated from Sindhughati which currently lies in Pakistan. Similarly, history of civilization of Deo/Dev people also has been started from Koshi River periphery. The fact was that before the Sugauli Treaty (1816 AD) held, Deo/Dev people were living periphery of Koshi River which falls currently in Saptari district. After Sugauli Treaty held between India and Nepal, some peripheral parts of Koshi River fell in Indian Territory and some in Saptari district, Nepal. Due to effect of which Deo/Dev people remained in Indian land (Bihar State). The places of such Indian places of Bihar where Deo/Dev people remained to live are- Bhawanipur, Sitapur, Birpur, Bashantpur, Bhimnagar, Piprahi, Rupauli, Sarbaha, Laukaha, Bhataniya, Tharbita, Bhattabadi, Forbishgaung, Arariya, Patana etc. Remaining Deo/Dev people remained to live in its own mother place i.e. Saptari district, Nepal. Currently which falls under Madhesh province of Nepal. If we study the geographical scenario of Nepal, Deo/Dev people as proof still living in nearby Koshi River i.e. Hanumanagar -Kankalini Municipality since many years as origin place of Deo/Dev people. Not only that but also headquarter of Saptari district was remained in this particular place i.e. in Hanumannagar. After headquarter flooded by Koshi River in 1944 AD, it became the matter of shifting the headquarter to some other safe place. Before this incident, the town planning had been completed to Rajbiraj in 1938 AD in grid pattern with the influence by Indian pink city named Jaipur. So, the headquarter from Hanumannagar to Rajbiraj immediately shifted at that very year i.e. in 1944 AD. After few years i.e. in 1959 AD, Rajbiraj was declared as municipality. Presently, Deo/Dev people are living in whole Nepal as well as foreign countries also but as illustrated above, the origin place of Deo/Dev is at Saptari district.

In other hand, it should be understood the Mid regional history of Nepal for origin of Deo/Dev people in Nepal. There was Simraungadh state in South -East in Terai territory in 1097-1326 AD which was taken as historic proof of Mithila (Rimal, 1987: 11). The founder of Simraungadh state was Nanyadev. The boundary of the state was Koshi River in East, Gandaki River in West, Mahabharat mountain range in North and Ganga River in South. The area of this state was assumed currently in Nepal as -Rauthat, Sarlahi, Mahottari, Dhanusha, Siraha, Saptari and Morang etc. districts. Similarly, extra area of the state was assumed as- Purniya, Mujjapharpur, Darbhanga, Madhubani, Champabaran, Atar Mangar etc. places of India (Sharma, 1956: 2). Actually, Simraungadh is also called as Tirahut and Mithila also. After King Nanyadev, another 6 (Six) Karnatakbanishi Kings also ruled Simraungadh are- Gangadev, Narsinghadev, Ramsinghdev, Saktisinghdev, Bhubalsinghdev and Harisinghdev. At the time of last King Harisinghdev, there was attack of Muslim emperor. After attack of Muslim emperor to Simraungadh, King Harisinghdev ran away with some relatives from there and went to Taleju Bhawani Temple of



Kathmandu Valley at that time. In other hand, one of his relative Shakra Singh came with some people to Sakhada at that time and started to live there establishing Sakhada Bhagawati as Kuldevi. After knowing this fact by Muslim emperor, he came to this place to battle to Shakra Singh. The war was continued for many days. It was believed that Sakhada Bhagawati also appeared that time to battle with Muslim emperor with her Trishul. Ultimately, Muslim emperor cut her head with his shining knife and run away. That's why the name has given Sakhadeshwori Bhagawati as Chhinmasta Bhagawati (Silver head has been kept as symbolic).

In this situation, some scholar Deo/Dev people were also gone with Shakra Singh to this Sakhada, Saptari. It was believed that he gave the sir name Chaudhary regarding to such Deo/Dev people. Not only this but he also provided land to Sakarpura (presently under Tilathi-Koiladi Rural Municipality). In this process, there were initially 5 houses for Deo/Dev (Chaudhary) people built here (Deo, 2017). After that with the name of Deo/Dev were established at existing Bisahariya VDC and other 14 VDCs of Saptari district at that time. In this way, the origin of Deo/Dev people was seen as Saptari district, Nepal and there is no doubt in this fact from both the arguments.

3. Methodology

The study employs a mixed research design, drawing on both secondary and primary sources to explore the socio-economic of Deo/Dev among other ethnic groups in Nepal as well as to establish the status for this caste and recommendation to Government of Nepal (GoN). A wide range of documentary sources was used to collect the data, including constitutional provisions, as well as concerned literatures. The purposive choice of these sources was intended to reflect both the normative commitments and the institutional practices influencing the socio-economic status of Deo/Dev people among other ethnic groups in Nepal.

The analysis uses descriptive and interpretive methods. This helps explore how socio-economics norms are created, applied, and put into policy. The main approach is the thematic analysis and argumentative inquiry of the socio-economic status of Deo/Dev people. The study does not measure outcomes with numbers; instead, it finds patterns, gaps, and how institutions work. This method helps explain complex legal and policy issues.

4. Results

4.1 Comparative Study of Deo/Dev people among major castes of Madhesh

Name of Caste	Total Population	Population Percentage	Remarks
Tharu	18,07,124	6.2%	4 th /142
Muslim	14,18,677	4.86%	7 th /142
Yadav	12,28,581	4.21%	9 th /142
Teli	4,31,347	1.48%	15 th /142
Chamar/Harijan/Ram	3,93,255	1.35%	17 th /142



Koiri/Kushwaha	3,55,707	1.22%	18 th /142
Kurmi	2,77,786	0.95%	15 th /142
Deo/Dev	7,418	0.03%	96 th /142

CBS,2021

The comparative study of Deo/Dev people among major eight (8) castes of Madhesh province was made as above. From the major castes of Madhesh like-Tharu, Muslim, Yadav, Teli, Chamar/Harijan/Ram, Koiri/Kushwaha, Kurmi and etc.; the population of Deo/Dev people was seen very much negligible i.e. 7,418 (0.03%).

4.2 Literacy Rate of Deo/Dev people

Table 34: Literacy Status by caste and sex, NPHC 2021

Both Sexes					Male					Female					Literacy Rate		
Total	Read	Only	No Read & Write	Not Stat ed	Total	WRite	Only	No Read & Write	Not Stat ed	Total	Read & WRit e	Only	No Read & Writ e	Not State d	Total	Male	Female
6939	6254	6	678	1	3624	3470	1	153	0	3315	2784	5	525	1	90.13	95.75	83.98

CBS,2021

From the above table, it is clearly seen that literacy status of Deo/Dev people has seen very high. The total literacy rate of Deo/Dev people has 90.13% where literacy rate of male is 95.75% and literacy rate of female is 83.98%.

4.3 Housing and Settlement Pattern of Deo/Dev Community

Housing and Settlement Pattern represent not only the community and settlement’s pattern but they also represent historical, cultural and economic aspects of the entire community.

Although Deo/Dev community people living in different Municipalities and Rural Municipalities of Saptari district, the sampling pattern had taken as survey sample from ward no.-13 of Rajbiraj Municipality i.e. Bisahariya (Existing Bisahariya VDC).

As Bisahariya is also one of the historic places for Deo/Dev community, it had been selected as surveyed destination. The settlement of Deo/Dev community has seen too much compact but approach roads are found everywhere. The constructed houses were found as made with-soil, straw, bamboo, tile etc. Most of the houses in sample survey were found as made with semi-permanent, however some were found made with cement concrete etc.

Table: Types of houses

Types	No. of houses	Percentage
Cement Concrete (Permanent)	10	16.67%
Semi-permanent (CGI sheet, tile, brick)	45	75%
Temporary (Phoos)	5	8.33%
Total	60	100%

Field Survey,2025



From the above table, it is clearly seen that Semi-permanent (CGI sheet, tile, brick) was 45(75%), Cement Concrete (Permanent) was 10 (16.67%) and Temporary (Phoos) was 5 (8.33%).

4.4 Economic Status of Deo/Dev people

The main occupation of Deo/Dev community people has been seen as Agriculture since long period of time in this community. However, it is changing as change of pace of time into different sort of services. It was conducted a sample survey in 500 Deo/Dev people in the occasion of Deo/Dev people’s “Mahasammelan “at 2025 organized by **Bageswori Sewa Sammittee**, a type of Deo/Dev people’s social organization. The sample result of which was seen as follows.

Table: Economic Active Deo/Dev people

Economically Active Population			Economically Inactive Population			Total Sample Population
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
250	100	350	50	100	150	500

Field Survey,2025

From the above sample survey; the population in different services was 47.9%, the population in agriculture was 42.9% and the population in miscellaneous was 9.2%.

4.5 Government Policy of GoN for Socio-Economics status

The Constitution explicitly provides a broader framework for ensuring GESI, i.e.: i) the principle of equality and non-discrimination; ii) Constitutional national commissions and human rights institutions, including the National Women Commission, National Dalit Commission, National Inclusion Commission, National Madhesi Commission, National Muslim Commission, National Indigenous Commission and National Human Rights Commissions; and iii) various fundamental rights of individuals and groups that address gender inequality and women’s empowerment, i.e. Rights to Equality, Rights of women, provisions for positive discrimination towards women and assurance of special measures for women in education, health, employment and social security. Other positive provisions as per the Constitution includes affirmative action to address historical disadvantages and a prohibition of any sex or caste/ethnicity-based discrimination (GESI Strategy,2021).

In planning, prioritization to mainstream gender equality and enhancement of the welfare of women and disadvantaged groups started with the 10 th Plan (2002-2007). The 15th Five Year Plan of National Planning Commission (NPC) reinforces its emphasis on economic prosperity and social justice. It aims at longer term vision of ‘Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepalis’ by including poor and socio-economically backward communities, regions, classes and marginalized groups in the overall development process. It aims for conscious efforts on gender equality and addressing the issues of marginalized groups through meaningful participation, targeted programs, productive employment, reducing income disparity and opportunity to equal access and distribution of



resources. 4 Further, NPC on Sustainable Development Goals, 2016-2030 elaborates: -“Nepal is marred by gender, social and geographical exclusion and inequality in Millennium Development Goals and human development outcomes so needs to better target the delivery of development to the hardest to reach segments of society, those who have been excluded from development and those who have been overlooked” of NPC, 2015 (GESI Strategy,2021)

4.6 Socio-Economy of Deo/Dev people

The Dev (or Deo) community is a small, high-caste Hindu minority group concentrated in Nepal's eastern Terai/Madhesh region (especially Saptari), with populations also in Biratnagar and Kathmandu. Generally holding a higher social status, they have a higher literacy rate than most other, but not all, castes in Nepal. Small population, estimated around 5,000, residing primarily in the Saptari district of Province 2, with permanent settlements in Kathmandu and Biratnagar. Considered a higher caste within the Hindu hierarchy, similar to, but below, the Kayastha in the region. They exhibit higher literacy rates compared to many other castes in Nepal. While the search results focus on their demographics and social standing, high-caste groups in these regions, like the Devs, generally rely on agriculture, formal employment, and business. They follow Hindu traditions and rituals similar to other higher-caste groups in the region (Chaudhary,2012).

5. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the unique socio-economic position of the Deo/Dev community in Nepal. According to the National Population and Housing Census (CBS, 2021), the total population of Deo/Dev people is only 7,418, representing 0.03 percent of the national population and ranking 96th among 142 caste and ethnic groups in Nepal. This extremely small population size indicates that the Deo/Dev community is one of the minority groups within the national demographic structure.

The comparative analysis with other major caste groups of the Madhesh region further illustrates the marginal demographic position of the Deo/Dev community. While castes such as Tharu, Muslim, Yadav, and Teli have populations ranging from hundreds of thousands to more than a million, the Deo/Dev population remains significantly lower. For example, the Tharu population alone accounts for 6.2 percent of the national population, while the Muslim population represents 4.86 percent and Yadav 4.21 percent. In contrast, the Deo/Dev community represents only 0.03 percent. This demographic disparity indicates that the Deo/Dev community has limited numerical strength, which can influence its representation in political, social, and institutional structures.

Despite their small population size, the Deo/Dev community is generally recognized as a Tagadhari (high-caste) group within the Hindu social hierarchy of the Madhesh region. Historical accounts suggest that the community has been present in the Saptari district for several centuries, with its origin closely associated with the Koshi River region and the historical Mithila civilization. The migration patterns described in historical narratives, including events related to the Simraungadh



kingdom and the socio-political transformations of the region, indicate that the Deo/Dev community has deep historical roots in the eastern Terai of Nepal.

In terms of socio-economic characteristics, the Deo/Dev community demonstrates relatively favorable indicators in certain aspects compared to many other marginalized groups. The community has a comparatively higher literacy rate and a strong emphasis on education. Many members of the community are engaged in agriculture, government service, professional occupations, and small businesses. This educational orientation has contributed to their participation in administrative and professional sectors in urban areas such as Kathmandu and Biratnagar.

However, the small population size of the Deo/Dev community has also resulted in limited academic attention and research regarding their socio-economic conditions. Unlike larger ethnic groups in Nepal, the Deo/Dev community is rarely highlighted in national development programs or targeted policy frameworks. Although the Constitution of Nepal and various national policies emphasize gender equality, social inclusion, and the upliftment of marginalized communities, smaller caste groups like Deo/Dev often remain less visible within broader policy implementation mechanisms.

Government policies in Nepal, particularly those focusing on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), aim to address historical inequalities among disadvantaged groups. The Constitution of Nepal ensures the right to equality and prohibits discrimination based on caste, ethnicity, gender, or religion. In addition, national institutions such as the National Inclusion Commission, National Madhesi Commission, and National Dalit Commission have been established to safeguard the rights and welfare of marginalized communities. Similarly, the Fifteenth Five-Year Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework emphasize inclusive development, social justice, and equal access to opportunities.

Nevertheless, the benefits of such policies may not always adequately reach very small communities such as the Deo/Dev people. Their small demographic presence may limit political representation and reduce the visibility of their specific socio-economic issues in national planning processes. Therefore, more focused research and policy attention are required to better understand their socio-economic conditions and ensure their effective inclusion in development initiatives.

Overall, the discussion indicates that while the Deo/Dev community historically holds a respectable social position and demonstrates relatively positive educational characteristics, its extremely small population size presents challenges in terms of representation, recognition, and policy prioritization. Greater academic research, documentation, and government attention are therefore necessary to ensure that the socio-economic status of the Deo/Dev community is properly understood and addressed within the broader framework of inclusive national development.



6. Conclusion

This study examined the socio-economic status and historical background of the Deo/Dev community in Nepal by using secondary sources and descriptive analysis. The findings reveal that the Deo/Dev community represents one of the smallest caste groups in the country. According to the National Population and Housing Census 2021, the total population of Deo/Dev people is only 7,418, which constitutes 0.03 percent of the national population and ranks 96th among the 142 caste and ethnic groups of Nepal. This extremely small demographic presence indicates that the community has limited numerical strength compared to other caste groups, particularly in the Madhesh region.

Historically, the study shows that the origin of the Deo/Dev community is closely linked with the Saptari district of Madhesh Province, particularly the areas around the Koshi River. Historical narratives related to the Mithila civilization and the Simraungadh kingdom suggest that the community has been residing in this region for several centuries. Over time, members of the Deo/Dev community have migrated to other parts of Nepal and abroad; however, Saptari district remains the historical and cultural center of the community.

From a socio-economic perspective, the Deo/Dev community is generally recognized as a Tagadhari (high-caste) Hindu group within the Madhesh social structure. The community demonstrates relatively higher educational awareness and literacy compared to many other groups in the region. Members of the community are engaged in agriculture, government services, professional employment, and business activities. These characteristics indicate that education has played an important role in shaping the socio-economic mobility of the community.

However, despite these positive aspects, the very small population size of the Deo/Dev community has resulted in limited academic research and policy attention. National development programs and social inclusion policies in Nepal often focus on larger or historically marginalized communities, which may overlook the specific concerns of smaller caste groups. As a result, the socio-economic conditions, demographic trends, and development needs of the Deo/Dev community remain insufficiently documented and analyzed.

The Constitution of Nepal and various national policies emphasize equality, inclusion, and social justice. Frameworks such as the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy, the Fifteenth Five-Year Plan, and the Sustainable Development Goals promote inclusive development and aim to reduce social and economic disparities. Nevertheless, effective implementation of these policies requires greater recognition of smaller communities like the Deo/Dev people to ensure that they are also included in national development processes.

In conclusion, the Deo/Dev community represents a historically rooted but demographically small caste group in Nepal. While the community has relatively positive educational and social characteristics, its limited population size reduces its visibility in academic research and public policy discussions. Therefore, further studies, documentation, and targeted policy attention are



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necessary to better understand and support the socio-economic development of the Deo/Dev community within the broader framework of inclusive and equitable development in Nepal. Based on the study, the GoN should keep this caste in ethnic minority category should facilitate based on it to keep the identity of this caste.

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