

CHAPTER 20

STATUS OF CHILDREN IN NEPAL

Pragya Pant^{*}

Sharad Nepal^{**}

20.1 Introduction

We in Nepal love children very much. No family is complete without them and a woman who cannot bear a child is declared barren and treated with disdain and contempt. Children are not a homogeneous category. Like adult, children too are divided into different categories on the basis of their social and economic status, physical and mental ability, geographical location etc. Children apart from being the most vulnerable section of the society are also the nation's future leaders and citizens - vulnerable in the sense that they unlike their peers are not able to articulate their specific needs, wants and aspirations and always face the risk of being exploited. This is especially true in developing countries where the level of awareness towards human rights is very dismal. Children have been the victim of subjugation where the state intervention is glaringly lacking. Child labor, sexual harassment and trafficking of children for servitude and prostitution have remained as the major stumbling blocks of all developing countries like Nepal. Children are more prone to exploitation in the absence of effective implementation of existing laws to protect them. One would not disagree with the argument that children being the building blocks of the society need special care and nourishing. And the nation's future lies in the same vulnerable section of the society upon reaching adulthood, the children are not only going to solder the onerous task of contributing to their nation's development endeavors but also become responsible citizens of the country. It is for this very reason all nations rich or poor, big or small spare no efforts to ensure their children's all round development.

The government of Nepal despite all the constraints has felt the need to initiate a crusade against all forms of exploitation against children. The post democratic governments have made the required amendments in the Child Protection Act to ensure that the rights of the children are protected at any cost. It was in the midst of this atmosphere that the convention of right of child was ratified, the Declaration of the World Summit for Children was signed and the children found

^{*} Ms. Pant is Director, Community Recovery Centre, Nepal.

^{**} Sharad Nepal is a Statistical Officer of Central Bureau of Statistics.

a place in the Constitution of Nepal. The establishment of a special court to deal with child related injustice is a major stride forward in protecting the rights of the children.

20.2 Problems Relating to Development of Nepalese Children

Children issues were not of the greater importance to Nepalese Government till 1980s. Children as a development concern was only included for the first time in the seventh Plan (1985-90). Nepalese children are facing various difficulties due to social beliefs, persistence of poverty, gender discrimination, and illiteracy relating to their development.

Traditional beliefs have contributed significantly in many Nepalese families as a result of which sons are more preferred. Religious, social and economic compulsions regard sons as not only valuable but also an indispensable asset whereas daughters are taken as financial burden to their parents.

Due to the persistence poverty children's labor forms part of the family support for their subsistence. According to the 2001 census, about 29 per cent of the children within the age group 10-14 are economically active and among which about 62 per cent are engaged in Agriculture and related activities.

Gender discrimination among children can be seen glaringly in Nepalese society from the time immemorial. This is true for most ethnic groups in Nepal. This discrimination causes girls doubly disadvantaged as family faces difficulties arising from economic hardships and related problems such as poverty, disability, homelessness etc.

20.3 Nepal's Commitments on Children Issues

The World Summit for children convened by six Heads of States and Governments was held at the United Nations in New York on 29 - 30 September 1990. Main objective of the convention was to focus its attention and commitments at the highest political level on children issues, formulating goals and strategies to ensure survival, protection and development of the children for the social-economic development of all countries. This historic gathering of presidents and prime ministers endorsed a summit declaration and a plan of action to implement the declaration for the survival, protection and development of children. In order to follow up the summit some 60 heads of states and governments had gathered in New York for the United Nations special session on children from May 8-10, 2002. The special session had concluded with global agreement on the

proposed outcome document 'A World Fit for Children', which contains a series of goals on child health, education and a plan of action to attain them in the coming decade. Nepal had a high level participation in both the summit and special session and expressed its commitments to fulfill their goals.

The 11th summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) held in Kathmandu from 5-7 January, 2002 proved to be very significant for the protection of the right of the children of the region. The SAARC leaders including Nepal had expressed their strong commitments for the regional arrangements for the promotion of welfare of children. The Summit was also believed to be instrumental in improving the socio-economic and educational condition of the children of the region. Similarly, Nepal has participated different regional and international conferences held in different countries and signed the agreements related to child rights, child labor, and different issues on children.

In view of the above commitments and policies of the state as regards to its children, it would be highly useful and interesting to examine the existing and socio economic condition of the children as revealed by the census 2001.

20.4 Total Population of Children and their Distribution

Population Census 2001 reports the total population of the country as 23.15 million with an annual growth rate of 2.24 percent. The children, here in this paper is defined as the number of people under the age 15 years. The children population in the age group 0-14 is 8948587 which is 39% of the country's total population. The percentage of children in total population by gender is presented below:

Table 20.1: Percent of children population 0-14 years, 1981-2001.

Age Group	Census Years								
	1981			1991			2001		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
0 – 14 (%)	41.4	41.9	40.7	42.4	43.5	41.3	39.3	40.1	38.5
Population (0-14)	6211	3227	2984	7840	4011	3829	8948	4562	4385

Source: Population Census 1981, Vol. I Part I, Table 5

Population Census 1991, Vol. I Part I, Table 5

Population Census 2001, Vol. I National Report, Table 10.

The share of children population has gone down by 3 per cent than that of 1991. The percentage of children's population was higher for 1991 which was 42.4 followed by 41.4 and 39.3 for 1981 and 2001 respectively.

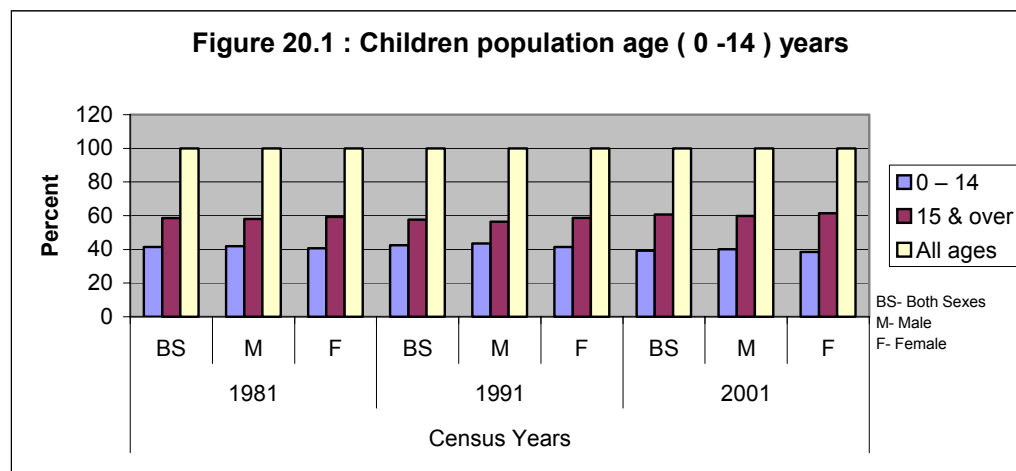


Table 20.2: Distribution of children population 0-14 years by 5 years age group, 1981-2001

Age Group	Census Years								
	1981			1991			2001		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
0 - 4	37.3	36.8	37.7	34.6	34.2	34.9	30.7	30.6	30.9
5 - 9	35.3	34.6	35.9	35.8	35.6	35.9	35.9	35.8	35.9
10 - 14	27.4	28.6	26.4	29.6	30.2	29.2	33.4	33.6	33.2
Population (0-14)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source : Same as Table 20.1

Table 20.2 presents the children population according to the age group 0-4, 5-9 and 10-14. The table reveals the highest percentage of children population of 37.3 in the age group 0-4 for the census of 1981 followed by 35.3 and 27.4 for the age group 5-9 and 10-14 respectively. Whereas for the censuses of 1991 and 2001 the percentage of children population at the age group 0-4 seems to be lower than other age groups 5-9. It is mainly due to the popularity, coverage and greater acceptance of family planning methods in the country.

Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2001 report that knowledge of family planning among Nepalese men and women are nearly universal. There has been an impressive increase in the use of contraception in Nepal over the last 25 years.

The decrease in proportion of children population in the age group 0 – 4 for the year 1991 is explained as it may be due to the misplacement of person into the next age group in addition to under reporting of children particularly the new born. (BDS Dangol)

Table 20.3: Percentage distribution of children population 0-14, development regions, Nepal 1981-2001.

Regions	Age Group	Year	Both Sexes	Male	Female
EDR	0-14	1981	24.9	24.6	25.2
		1991	23.7	23.7	23.8
		2001	22.7	22.7	22.7
CDR	0-14	1981	32.1	32.3	31.9
		1991	32.2	32.7	31.8
		2001	33.7	34.0	33.5
WDR	0-14	1981	20.6	20.6	20.5
		1991	20.7	20.5	20.8
		2001	20.3	20.2	20.4
MWDR	0-14	1981	13.4	13.3	13.5
		1991	13.6	13.4	13.8
		2001	12.7	12.6	12.8
FWDR	0-14	1981	8.8	9.0	8.6
		1991	9.5	9.5	9.6
		2001	10.3	10.3	10.3

Source : Same as Table 20.1

Table 20.3 presents the children population distribution by development regions for the census year 1981-2001. It is seen from the table that Central Development Region has the highest share of children population (33.7 per cent) followed by Eastern Development Region (22.7 per cent), Western Development Region (20.3 per cent), Mid-Western Development Region (12.7 per cent) and Far Western Development Region (10.3 per cent) respectively for 2001. The trend of distribution is same as the previous censuses.

Table 20.4: Percentage distribution of children population (0-14 years) by ecological regions, Nepal, 1981-2001.

Ecological Region	Census Year	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Mountain	1981	8.1	8.1	8.1
	1991	7.6	7.5	7.6
	2001	6.5	6.5	6.6
Hill	1981	47.0	46.8	47.2
	1991	45.5	45.0	45.9
	2001	45.1	44.5	45.7
Terai	1981	44.8	45.0	44.5
	1991	46.8	47.3	46.3
	2001	48.3	48.9	47.3
National	1981	100.0	100.0	100.0
	1991	100.0	100.0	100.0
	2001	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source : Population Census 1981, Vol II, Table 5.

Population Census 1991, Vol IV, Table 5.

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. I, Table 1

Table 20.4 presents the percentage of children population by ecological regions. The table shows that the Terai Region has the highest percentage (48.3 per cent), Hill Region has 45.1 percent and the Mountain Region has the lowest percentage (6.5 per cent) of children population for 2001. The trend of distribution remains similar for three censuses 1981-2001.

20.5 Sex Ratio

Sex ratio is defined as the number of males per 100 females. The sex ratio at birth is the number of male births per 100 female births.

Table 20.5: Sex ratio by age group, Nepal, 1981-2001.

Age Group	Census Year		
	1981	1991	2001
0 – 4	106	103	103
5 – 9	104	104	103
10 – 14	117	108	106
0-14	108	104	104

Source : Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part I, Table 5.

Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part I, Table 5.

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. I, Table 10.

Table 20.5 presents sex ratio by age group for 1981-2001. Except for Census 1981, the sex ratio more or less remained same in 2001 for the age group 0-4 and 5-9. It may be due to the higher sons' birth in the beginning and later higher death occurred among female babies. It again expresses the socio economic discrimination against female child prevailing in the country. Sons are preferred more and their health is much concerned to their parents.

20.6 Health Status of Children

Healthy children represent a healthy nation. Reducing infant and child mortality has been a goal of population policy. The health of children in Nepal is closely and integrally linked to several factors from geographical location, climate, the socio cultural practices and attitudes to economic changes that are taking place in the country.

As has been stated earlier, the population census 2001 reports that population in the age group 0-14 comprised 39 per cent of the total population. Over 85 per cent of the country's population is rural and more than 40 per cent children in this area suffer from malnutrition and various diseases. Diarrhea diseases continue to be a major cause of death among Nepalese children. The use of oral re-hydration therapy is still low at 32 per cent.

His Majesty's Government is committed to "Health for All" and focused its attention towards primary health care. But existing inadequate health infrastructure, insufficient health manpower and limited resources are the major obstacles in attaining government objectives in the health sector. The major health facilities available in the county are centered around the urban areas.

Rural people generally do not visit the health posts and 70 percent of births happen without any contact with a trained practioners. Health services in most of the rural areas are provided by village health worker (VHWs), maternal child health workers (MCHWs), female community health volunteers (FCHVs) and traditional health practioners.

20.6.1 Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Under 5 (U5) Mortality Rate

Infant mortality Rate (IMR) is the number of deaths under one year of age per 1000 live births during a period of time, usually one year. IMR is directly related to the socio-economic level and general health condition of a country. One of the important reasons of infant and child mortality is

the limited use of health care service by mothers. Similarly there are a number of other factors related to infant and U5 mortality. This include low levels of per capita income, poverty, poor sanitation, female illiteracy, poor quality of health service, inadequate nutrition and low use of oral re-hydration therapy.

Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2001 NDHS, 2001 states that infant mortality rate has reduced considerably from 1991 to 2001. It has gone down from 107 to 64 per thousand during the period. Similarly U5 mortality has also declined during the same period from 158 to 91.2 per thousand. Vaccination program and supplementation of vitamin A capsules are the main reason behind the significant improvement of IMR and U5 mortality.

20.6.2 Immunization

The immunization of children is an important factor that contributes to the child's chance of survival. Immunization is a high priority government program due to its crucial role in reducing infant mortality. Immunization coverage has improved significantly over the last five years (1996-2001). NDHS, 2001 states that the percentage of children age 12-23 months who are fully immunized by 12 months of age increased by 67 percent from 36 percent in 1996 to 60 percent in 2001. Coverage with all three doses of DPT increased from 51 to 71 percent of children while complete Polio coverage increased from 48 to 90 percent of children. BCG coverage increased from 73 to 83 percent and measles vaccination increased from 45 to 64 percent of children.

20.6.3 Children's Nutritional Status

In terms of nutrition, breast feeding is universal in Nepal. Exclusive breast feeding is necessary and sufficient to meet the nutritional needs of infants up to the age of 4-6 months. It protects the child from diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections (ARI) and other diseases. Over 90 percent of children in Nepal are exclusively breastfed up to 6 months. Mostly children are provided solid food in addition to breast feeding after five to six months. In most communities this is observed as the important day for the child known as 'pasnee' rice feeding day. It is mostly performed in the fifth month for girl child and six month for the male child. The child's share of milk is gradually reduced with the rice feeding time. But majority of mothers continue to breastfeed their children up to two years.

Accepting the healthy children as the pillar of the country 'Food and Nutrition Policy' has been set for the first time in the eighth Plan in the process of formulating National Development Policy. It has mainly focused to the children of the country.

The nutritional condition of mother and child is very poor in the country and this problem mostly concentrated among the disadvantaged poor. It varies from district to district, community, household and individuals. Children are mainly suffering from Vitamin A deficiency, Anemia, Goiter and Cretinism due to malnutrition. NDHS 2001 states that 52 percent children in rural areas are more likely to be stunted where as figure for this is 37 per cent for urban areas. Similarly 61 per cent, 53 per cent and 47 per cent children are more likely to be stunted in Mountain, Hill and Terai respectively. NDHS, 2001 states that this is probably because healthy food is more readily available in the hills and terai than in the mountain.

20.7 Educational Status

Education is a foundation on which the destiny of a nation is laid. Most of the developing countries like Nepal which despite allocating a sizable portion of meager resources to the education sector every year is still faced with the challenge of bringing the light of education to all its' people, mainly the children. Since children are the nation's future citizens, leaders and captains of industry and commerce, any investment made by the nation in availing literacy programs to children having no access to education facilities will ultimately benefit both the nation and its people in the long run.

The Children Act 2048 mentions the child's right to education. Children as the voiceless section are unaware of their rights. The convention of child rights has put forth the concept of compulsory primary education and free education to all. The human rights declaration mentions the right of each person to education. Nepal has expressed its commitment everywhere in such declaration and making its efforts towards the improvement of educational status of children. The educational status of Nepalese children can be examined through their literacy rates, enrolment ratios etc. Census data provides the literacy rates according to the age group 6-9, 10-14 and so on. Children within the age group 6-14 are mainly concentrated in primary to secondary education.

Table 20.6: Literacy rate of children population (age 6-14) by Sex, Nepal 1981-2001.

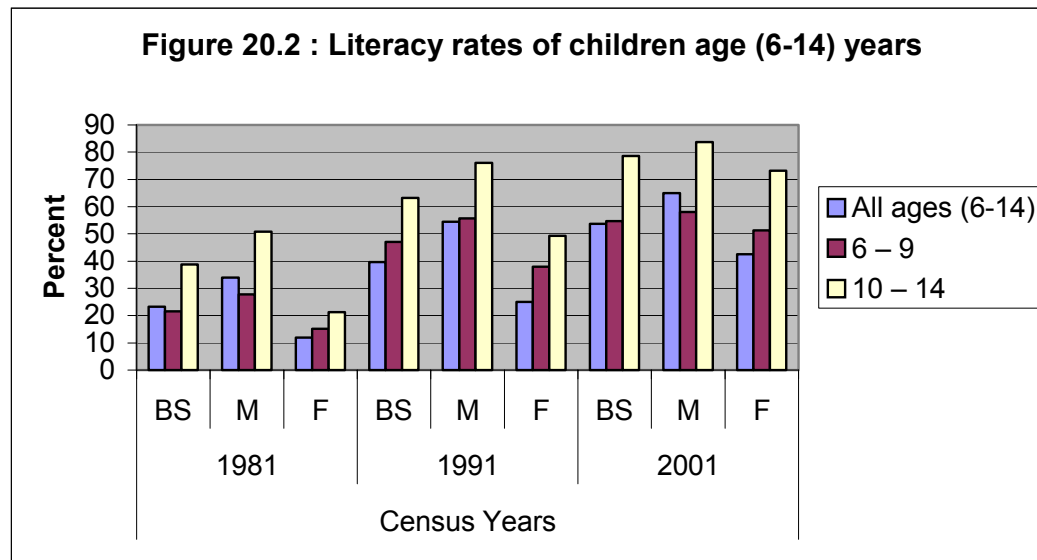
Age Group	Census Years								
	1981			1991			2001		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
All ages	23.3	34.0	12.0	39.6	54.5	25.0	53.7	65.0	42.5
6 – 9	21.6	27.8	15.2	47.0	55.7	38.0	54.7	58.0	51.3
10 – 14	38.8	50.8	21.2	63.2	76.0	49.3	78.6	83.7	73.2

Source : Population Census 1981, Vol. 1, Part IV, Table 14

Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 11

Table 20.6 presents the literacy rate for children within the age group 6-9 and 10-14. The overall literacy rate for 2001 is estimated at 65.0 for males and 42.5 for females. The literacy rate for female has gone up to 51.3 per cent from 38.0 per cent for the age group 6-9 during the period of 1991 – 2001. Whereas the male literacy rates for this age group in the same period has gone up from 55.7 percent to 58 percent. The increase in literacy rate for female in this age group is much higher than the literacy rate for male. Compare to the literacy rate of 15.2 percent for female in



this age group for the census year 1981, the literacy rate showed a marked improvement over the latter census period. Similarly, the literacy rate for female in the age group 10-14 went up from 49.3 per cent to 73.2 percent during 1991-2001, the literacy rate for male in the same age group reached from 76.0 percent to 83.7 percent during the same period. The literacy rate for this age group was 21.2 percent for female and 50.8 percent for male in the census year 1981. The higher

rate of literacy for female children may be attributed to increased awareness amongst the parents towards their daughters' education.

Table 20.7: Literacy rate of children population by single age (6-14), sex, Nepal 1981-2001.

Age	Census Years								
	1981			1991			2001		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
6	14.0	17.5	10.5	34.3	40.1	28.3	34.8	36.8	32.7
7	20.3	26.2	14.5	46.1	54.4	37.6	52.8	51.9	49.8
8	24.3	31.1	16.8	51.0	61.0	40.4	61.8	65.7	57.5
9	29.5	38.3	20.4	58.3	69.3	46.9	72.7	76.8	68.6
10	34.4	44.4	22.6	47.0	55.7	38.0	72.4	77.4	67.1
11	42.5	54.7	28.5	60.0	71.8	46.9	81.8	86.0	77.5
12	38.0	49.8	23.9	68.4	80.4	55.3	78.4	83.8	72.5
13	42.2	56.2	26.4	61.9	74.7	47.8	82.5	82.4	77.2
14	40.0	53.9	24.0	65.5	79.2	51.0	80.7	86.3	74.9

Source : Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 15

Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 11

Table 20.7 reveals the children literacy rate by single age group (6-14) for 1981-2001. The literacy rate for the age 6 is the lowest among other ages. It seems that most parents are not sending their children at proper schooling age due to many reasons. However, the literacy rate has been increasing in successive ages in most cases.

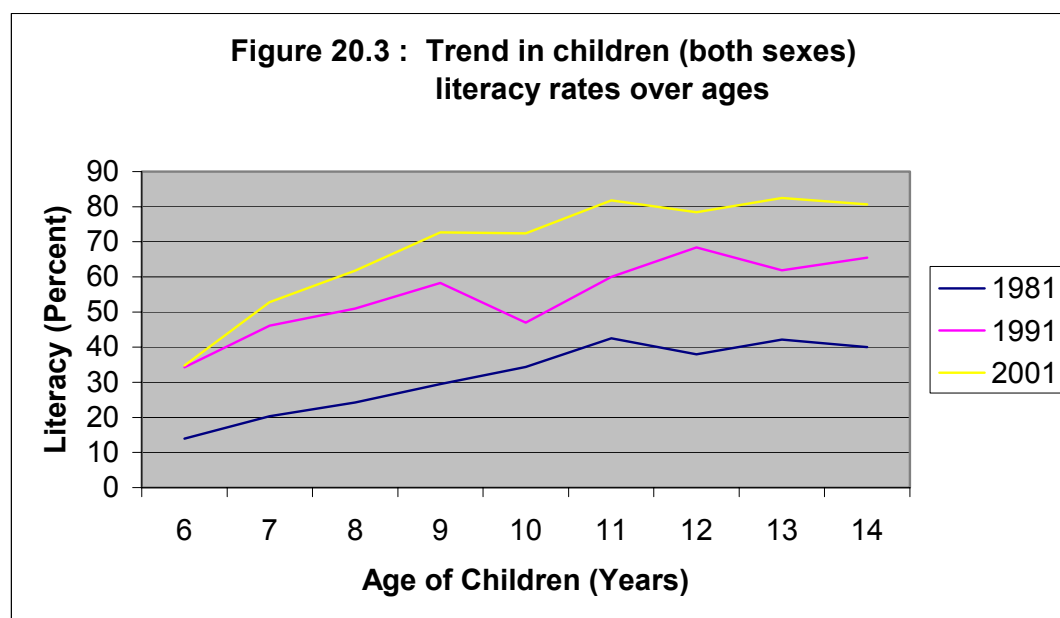


Table 20.8: Literacy rate of children (6-14) by development region, Nepal 1981-2001.

Age Group	Development Region	Census Years								
		1981			1991			2001		
		Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
6-9	EDR	25.9	32.4	19.2	50.1	58.0	42.0	54.6	57.5	51.6
	CDR	21.3	27.0	15.2	44.7	53.0	35.9	55.2	58.6	51.8
	WDR	25.0	32.1	17.8	54.9	61.2	48.4	59.6	62.0	57.1
	MWDR	13.7	19.0	8.3	37.0	47.7	26.2	49.8	53.4	46.1
	FWDR	13.2	19.1	7.3	37.3	51.0	23.4	48.8	53.9	43.5
10-14	EDR	43.2	55.6	29.1	68.4	79.3	56.7	80.5	84.3	76.4
	CDR	37.2	47.5	24.6	59.9	71.7	46.5	75.2	80.4	69.6
	WDR	45.5	59.4	29.6	72.9	82.4	63.1	85.3	88.7	81.7
	MWDR	28.2	40.6	14.1	52.3	70.5	33.3	76.6	82.3	68.6
	FWDR	28.5	41.2	7.3	51.0	73.1	27.0	74.9	84.2	65.1

Source : Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 14

Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 11

Literacy rate by development region for the age group (6-9) and (10-14) is presented in Table 20.8. The literacy participation rate is higher for 2001 for all development regions followed by 1991 and 1981. In 1981, the Eastern Development Region and the Western Development Region have had highest literacy rates of 25.9 percent and 25.0 percent for the age group (6-9) whereas this rate has gone up in favor of Western Development Region in the case of both the age groups (6-9 & 10-14) for both the census year 1991 and 2001. In most cases, the Far-Western Development Region has lagged behind in children literacy rates.

Table 20.9: Literacy rate of children (6-14) by ecological region, Nepal 1981-2001.

Age Group	Ecological Region	Census Years								
		1981			1991			2001		
		Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
6-9	Mountain	14.5	19.8	9.1	39.5	51.2	27.5	44.0	48.6	39.4
	Hill	22.3	28.9	15.7	52.6	60.6	44.5	58.9	61.4	56.4
	Terai	22.0	27.9	15.7	41.8	50.6	32.5	52.4	56.1	48.4
10-14	Mountain	30.9	43.1	16.7	55.7	74.2	35.9	74.1	83.3	64.6
	Hill	41.4	54.8	25.8	69.1	89.2	55.6	85.1	89.2	80.9
	Terai	37.4	47.7	24.8	57.6	69.5	44.0	72.9	78.5	66.7

Source : Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 14

Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 11

Table 20.9 presents the children literacy situation by ecological regions for the age groups (6-9) and (10-14). Although literacy rates amongst children in both age groups have consistently on the increase over the census periods, there are notable variations between the ecological regions. The hill regions recorded highest level of literacy status: 58.9 percent for age group (6-9) and 89.3 percent for age group (10-14) for the census year 2001. The mountain region has generally remained at lowest level in children literacy status in every census periods (1981-2001) except the fact that children literacy amongst age group (10-14) has shown considerable improvement in 2001. The literacy rates amongst children in the age groups (6-9) and (10-14) in the mountain regions stands at 44.0 percent and 74.1 percent respectively for the census year 2001. The low level of children literacy status in mountain region is explained by many factors such as inaccessibility, inadequate educational infrastructure and facilities as well as socio-economic hardships that prevailed compare to other two regions.

Table 20.10 : Children population age 6 -14 by educational attainment, sex, Nepal 1981-2001.

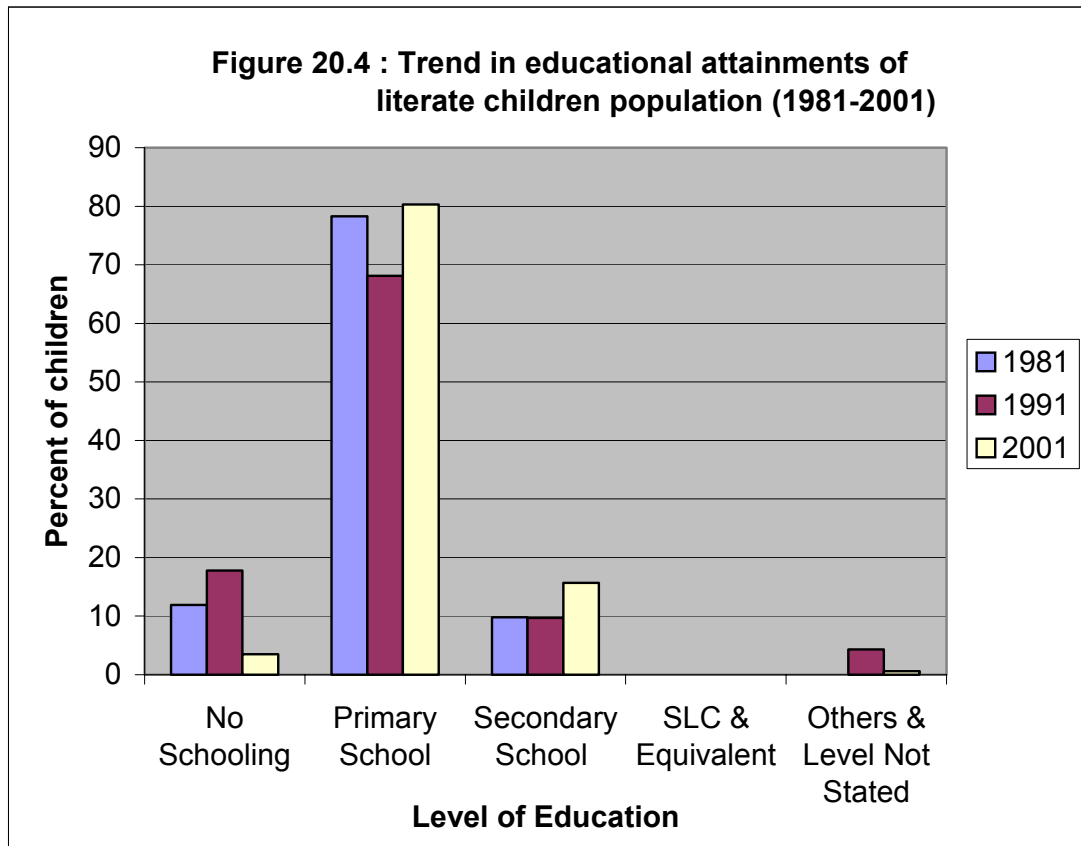
Educational Attainment	Sex Age	Census Years								
		1981			1991			2001		
		6-9	10-14	6-14	6-9	10-14	6-14	6-9	10-14	6-14
No Schooling	Both Sexes	17.1	9.0	11.9	27.7	11.0	17.8	6.6	1.7	3.5
	Male	16.4	8.1	10.7	26.8	9.6	16.5	6.7	1.5	3.4
	Female	19.2	11.2	14.3	29.1	13.4	20.1	6.5	2.1	3.7
Primary (1-5)	Both Sexes	82.9	75.8	78.3	64.9	70.3	68.1	92.7	73.1	80.3
	Male	84.0	76.2	78.8	65.9	70.7	68.8	92.7	73.0	80.1
	Female	80.8	74.8	77.2	63.4	69.6	67.0	92.8	73.2	80.5
Secondary (6-10)	Both Sexes	-	15.2	9.8	-	16.4	9.7	0.0	24.7	15.7
	Male	-	15.7	10.4	-	17.5	10.5	0.0	25.1	16.0
	Female	-	14.0	8.5	-	14.6	8.4	0.0	24.3	15.2
SLC & Equivalent	Both Sexes	-	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
	Male	-	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
	Female	-	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Others	Both Sexes	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.1	0.1
	Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.1	0.1
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.1	0.1
Level Not Stated	Both Sexes	-	-	-	7.3	2.2	4.3	0.5	0.4	0.5
	Male	-	-	-	7.2	2.1	4.2	0.5	0.4	0.4
	Female	-	-	-	7.5	2.4	4.5	0.5	0.4	0.5

Source : Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 15

Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part X, Table 31

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 13

Table 20.10 shows the level of educational attainment amongst the literate population of children age (6-14). The children in the mentioned age group have educational attainment mostly at primary school level and to an extent the secondary school level. The census of 1981 indicated that out of the literate population of children within age group (6-14), those with educational attainment primary school accounted 78.3 percent and secondary school level 9.8 percent while those not attaining formal schooling represented 11.9 percent.



The educational attainment levels amongst the literate children population reported by 1991 census have been somewhat different because it showed increase in the percentage of children attaining no formal schooling besides the level being not stated has also been significant. A marked improvement in educational attainments among children population is observed in 2001 census.

According to 2001 census, the literacy rate of children age 6-14 stands at 67.7 percent (72.0 percent for male and 63.6 percent for females). About 80.3 percent of the children age (6-14) who are classified as literate have attained primary school level and 15.7 percent secondary school level and the rest mainly include those not attaining formal schooling.

School level educational statistics published by the Department of Education is the main source of school level statistics of the country. The annual report besides other important education information provides information on gross and net enrolment ratios of primary to secondary level of school education.

The gross enrolment is defined by the education department as the total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of ages, expressed as the percentage of eligible official school age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school year. The trend in gross enrolment from 1996 to 2001 is presented in table 20.11.

Table 20.11: Gross enrolment ratios by different school level, sex, Nepal 1996-2001.

Year	Level								
	Primary			Lower Secondary			Secondary		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
1996	117.2	134.6	98.6	50.3	60.1	39.8	34.7	42.9	26.8
1997	122.0	139.7	103.8	59.6	64.9	42.0	36.1	45.6	26.9
1998	123.9	140.7	106.2	53.4	62.2	44.3	38.7	47.5	30.0
1999	127.7	143.1	111.5	56.9	66.4	47.2	39.0	47.5	30.7
2000	119.8	130.6	108.4	58.3	67.4	49.1	37.1	44.4	29.8
2001	124.7	134.1	114.7	63.2	72.2	54.0	43.8	51.8	36.0

Source : Education Statistics of Nepal, different publications, MOE, HMG/N

Above figures show that gross enrolment ratios for primary level has exceeded 100 percent and it reached from 117.2 in 1996 to 127.7 in 1999 and showed increase to 124.7 in 2001 after a drop to 119.8 in 2000. However, the table further reveals the variation in gross enrolment by gender. Similarly, in lower secondary level the gross enrolment ratios have gone up from 50.3 to 63.2 over the period 1996-2001.

Gross enrolment ratios in lower secondary are almost one half the primary level enrolment ratios. It may indicate low completion rate of primary education. The gross enrolment ratios for secondary level have increased from 34.7 to 43.8 over the period 1996-2001. The trend of completing the lower secondary level seems to be better as compared to primary level completion.

Table 20.12 : Gross enrolment ratios by development region, Nepal 2001.

Development Region	Level								
	Primary			Lower Secondary			Secondary		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
EDR	124.7	134.1	114.7	63.2	72.2	54.0	43.8	51.8	36.0
CDR	114.2	125.8	101.9	60.9	72.1	49.8	38.8	46.8	30.7
WDR	141.6	144.4	138.6	74.9	94.7	57.7	46.1	61.4	33.3
MWDR	137.0	153.8	119.7	53.5	66.9	40.1	30.7	42.1	20.3
FWDR	120.5	132.0	108.4	52.3	66.8	37.1	30.2	43.6	17.2

Source : School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal, Departments of Education 2001 (Table 35)

Gross enrolment ratios (GER) for school level education by development region for 2001 are presented in Table 20.12 Western Development Regions recorded the highest rate of gross enrolment ratios 141.6 for primary, 74.9 for lower secondary and 61.4 for secondary school education and it is followed by Eastern, Central, Mid-Western and Far-Western regions respectively for every level.

Table 20.13 : Gross enrolment ratios by ecological, Nepal 2001.

Ecological Region	Level								
	Primary			Lower Secondary			Secondary		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Eastern Mountain	182.6	192.8	172.3	73.2	80.1	66.4	45.2	50.1	40.3
Central Mountain	155.6	168.5	142.2	60.9	72.1	49.8	38.8	46.8	30.7
Western Mountain	154.4	153.1	155.6	74.9	94.7	57.7	46.1	61.4	33.3
Mid-Western Mountain	138.9	180.1	96.6	43.6	67.8	18.8	25.6	44.6	7.6
Far-Western Mountain	146.4	166.7	124.9	53.7	73.6	32.4	36.6	53.6	20.0
Eastern Hill	147.2	151.1	143.2	77.4	84.2	70.7	53.6	62.0	45.6
Central Hill	137.1	144.5	129.5	57.5	66.2	49.1	38.2	45.0	38.2
Western Hill	162.7	159.2	166.5	84.9	89.0	80.8	58.7	65.6	52.2
Mid-Western Hill	152.0	169.1	134.4	53.0	66.7	39.5	31.7	44.2	20.3
Far-Western Hill	116.3	126.5	105.3	42.0	57.1	25.8	25.9	40.8	11.7
Eastern Terai	98.0	106.7	88.8	58.0	64.3	51.5	47.3	53.3	41.4
Central Terai	91.7	109.4	72.7	46.3	55.6	36.1	31.8	38.1	24.5
Western Terai	107.7	120.3	94.2	56.2	65.9	46.1	37.8	44.6	30.9
Mid-Western Terai	119.4	130.7	107.9	56.0	67.0	45.2	30.7	39.0	23.0
Far-Western Terai	114.2	123.4	104.7	60.6	72.3	48.4	31.2	41.9	20.9

Source : School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal, Departments of Education 2001 (Table 35)

Gross enrolment ratios by ecological regions for 2001 are presented in Table 20.13. The gross enrolment ratios for eastern mountain region remain at highest level amongst all for primary education whereas western hill has the highest ratio of gross enrolment for lower secondary and secondary levels. Similarly, the table shows that mid- and far-western regions have lowest GER for female in lower secondary and secondary levels.

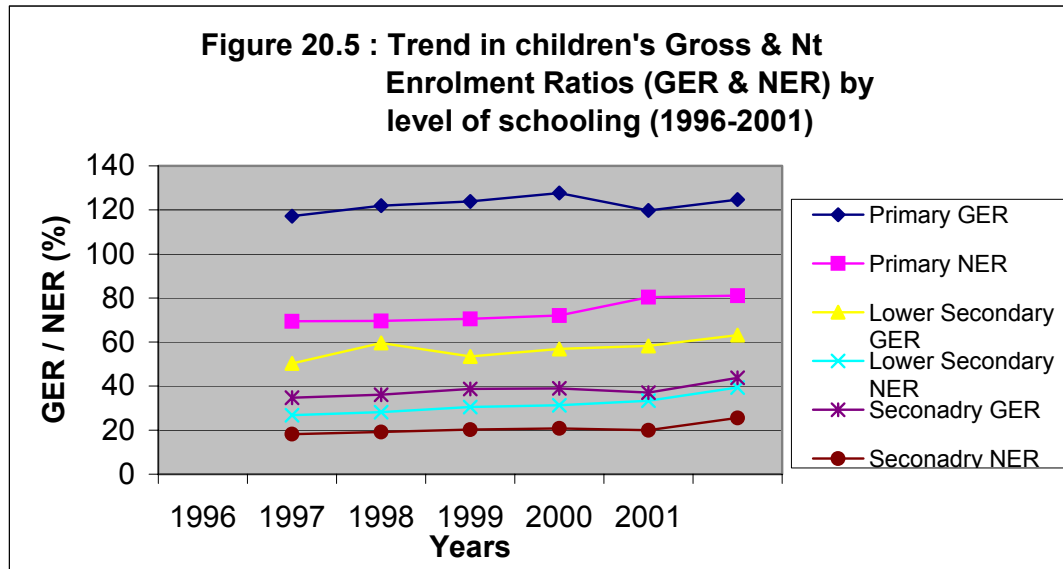
The net enrolment ratio (NER) is defined as the enrolment of the official age group for a given level of education expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population.

Table 20.14 : Net enrolment ratios by different school level, sex, Nepal 1996-2001.

Year	Level								
	Primary			Lower Secondary			Secondary		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
1996	69.4	79.4	58.7	26.8	32.1	21.0	18.2	22.1	13.9
1997	69.6	78.9	59.9	28.2	34.0	22.3	19.1	24.1	14.3
1998	70.5	79.4	61.2	30.5	35.7	25.2	20.2	24.5	15.9
1999	72.1	79.4	64.4	31.3	36.9	25.5	20.8	25.3	16.3
2000	80.4	86.0	74.6	33.3	38.6	27.9	20.0	24.1	16.0
2001	81.1	86.9	75.1	39.4	45.0	33.7	25.5	30.2	20.9

Source : School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal, Department of Education (1996-2001: Tables 21, 29, 29, 21, 45 and 36 respectively)

Table 20.14 presents net enrolment ratios by different school level for Nepal for the year 1996-2001. It indicates a wide divergence between gross and net ratios. The net enrolment ratios are increasing at very low rate. In 2001, the net ratios were 81.1 percent for primary level, 39.4 percent for lower secondary level and 25.5 percent for the secondary level. The rate has tended to increase when compared with the net enrolment situation of 69.4 percent for primary, 26.8 percent for lower secondary and 18.2 percent for secondary school level in 1996. The figures suggest that efforts are still needed to increase students' participation rate at the lower secondary and secondary levels.



20.8 Minors at Work

Child labor reflects the socio-economic condition of a country. As the families have to face difficulties arising from economic hardship, it directly affects and has a long term implications on the status of children. In such a dire economic reality the children invariably become the first casualties in that they have to contribute their share of labor so that their families can afford the two square meals a day. Nepal has its share of problem as far as child labor is concern. We can see our children working everywhere from disorganized to organized sectors. How is the child labor defined? The ILO definition (1983) on child labor is by far the most widely accepted definition. It states “Child labor includes children prematurely leading adult lives, working long hour for low wages under conditions damaging to their health and their physical and mental development, sometime separated from their families, frequently deprived of meaningful education and training opportunities, that could open up for them a better future.” Nepal has been showing its seriousness in addressing the issues of child labor in the country. In 1997, Nepal signed the Amsterdam Declaration on Child Labor and the Oslo Declaration on Child Labor. And it has ratified the ILO convention 138, on the minimum age of employment. In June 1999, it adopted the ILO convention 182 which seeks elimination of hazardous and worst form of child labor. The constitution of Nepal forbids the engagement of the minors in a factory, mines or in a dangerous work place. Similarly, Nepal has already prohibited forced and compulsory labor and has also ratified the United Nation’s Convention on the Right of Child and expressed its commitment in the international level for the protection and promotion of child rights. The Children Acts of Nepal prohibits the employment of children below 14 years in manufacturing industries. In 2000, the government introduced an act that requires an employer to provide the child worker with education, vocational training and medical treatment. The government is now

working with the ILO to eradicate child labor in hazardous work by 2005. Child labor is a violation of human rights and child rights as such Nepal has also formulated laws that discourage and eliminate the child labor. However, the goal has not successfully achieved due to poverty and other social and economic reasons.

20.9 Children Participation in Economic Activities

The census data provide information on children participation rate on economic activities, their active children participation on different occupation, industrial classification and employment status.

Table 20.15: Economic activity participation rate for children in the age group 10-14, Nepal 1981-2001.

Age Group	Census Years								
	1981			1991			2001		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
10 – 14	56.9	61.3	51.9	22.8	18.1	27.9	28.8	27.3	30.4

Source: Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part V, Table 21
 Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part XIII, Table 50
 Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 25

The Table 20.15 presents the economic activity rate within the age group 10-14 for the census years 1981-2001. The activity rate was very high in 1981 as compared to latter census periods for the mentioned age group. The participation rate has been reduced considerably to 22.8 percent in 1991 from 56.9 percent in 1981. This is mainly due to increasing educational participation rate in this age group during these two periods. The activity rate seems to be higher for this age group in 2001 than in 1991. It is mainly due to addition of the job seekers and extended economic activity category in 2001 census which was not included in the previous censuses.

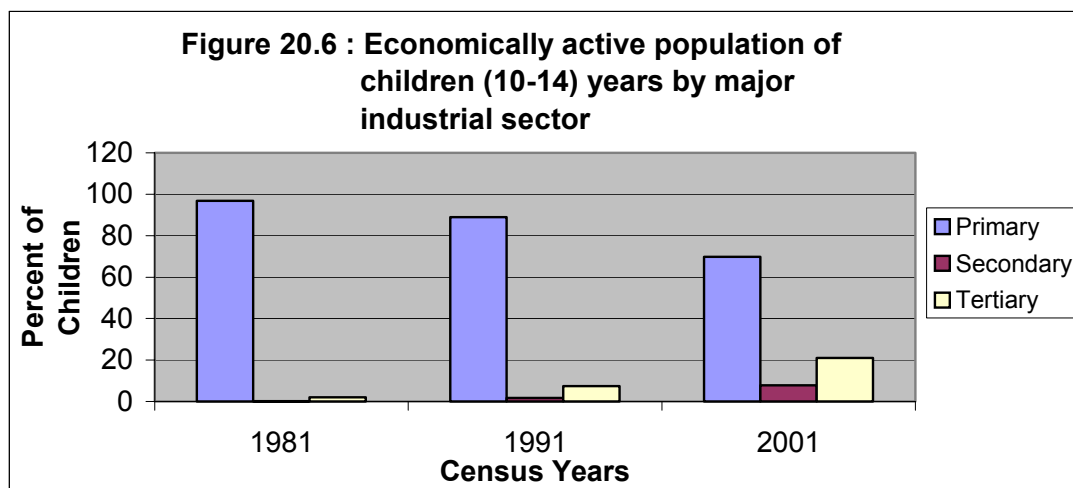


Table 20.16: Economic activity participation rate of children (10-14) by development region, Nepal 1981-2001.

Age Group	Development Region	Census Years								
		1981			1991			2001		
		Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
10 - 14	EDR	52.2	55.2	48.8	19.6	16.7	22.6	28.6	27.8	29.5
	CDR	54.9	61.7	46.8	20.9	19.2	22.9	25.2	24.8	25.8
	WDR	56.5	58.0	54.7	17.4	12.5	22.5	25.8	24.2	27.4
	MWDR	66.3	70.7	61.1	34.8	24.5	45.6	36.2	33.3	39.1
	FWDR	67.0	72.6	60.4	33.0	21.1	46.0	38.1	33.6	42.7

Source: Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part V, Table 21
 Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part XIII, Table 50
 Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 25

Table 20.16 presents economic participation rate by development region for 1981-2001. Participation rate for the population within the age group 10-14 on economic activity was highest for all regions in 1981. It has reduced considerably in 1991 due to higher number of children participated in school education. Among the five development region, Far-western region has the highest rate of economic participation rate in most of the census years 1981-2001 which is followed by Mid-western, Western, Eastern and Central region respectively.

Table 20.17 : Economic activity participation rate of children (10-14) by ecological region, Nepal 1981-2001.

Age Group	Ecological Region	Census Years								
		1981			1991			2001		
		Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
10 - 14	Mountain	68.5	68.0	69.0	39.8	25.9	54.5	46.8	42.5	51.2
	Hill	60.2	60.7	59.7	26.4	17.3	35.9	28.3	25.8	30.9
	Terai	50.9	60.6	39.0	16.2	17.6	14.6	26.7	26.6	26.8

Source: Population Census 1981, Vol. II, Table 20
 Population Census 1991, Vol. IV, Table 21
 Population Census 2001 (Unpublished table)

Table 20.17 presents the economic activity participation rate of children (10-14) for 1981-2001. Among three ecological regions the mountain region has the highest rate (46.8) of participation on economic activity in the age group 10-14 and terrain has the lowest rate of 26.7 for 2001. The trend is same in the previous census year 1981 and 1991. As mentioned earlier for national rate of

participation on economic activity, the trend in ecological region resembles the same pattern, i.e. the highest rate for 1981 and reduction at a considerable rate for the following censuses 1991-2001.

20.9.1 Occupational Distribution

The census data provide information on the occupational classification of the children (10-14) involved in economic activity.

Table 20.18: Percentage distributions of economically active children (10-14) by major occupation group, sex, Nepal 1981-2001.

Major Occupation	Census Years								
	1981			1991			2001		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Prof. tech. workers	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Admin. worker	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	-	-
Clerical worker	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.1
Sales worker	0.1	0.2	0.1	6.3	1.0	3.4	6.5	5.6	7.4
Service worker	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.5	9.6	4.3	2.1	3.0	1.3
Farm, fish worker	97.2	96.7	97.9	88.8	83.4	92.5	61.5	60.0	62.9
Production worker	1.4	1.7	0.9	2.3	3.4	1.6	0.2	0.2	0.1
Intermediate worker	-	-	-	-	-	-	28.8	30.2	27.6
Others	0.8	1.0	0.6	1.0	1.6	0.5	-	-	-
Not stated	-	-	-	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.2	1.3

Source: Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part V, Table 24

Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part XIII, Table 51

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 28

Table 20.18 presents the distribution of active children by major occupation group 1981-2001. It shows that majority of active children in the age group 10-14 are engaged in agriculture. The dependence on agriculture occupation is going down over the years. This rate was 97.2 in 1981 followed by 88.8 and 61.5 for the year 1991 and 2001 respectively. In the year 2001, the table shows 28.8 percent children in the age group 10-14 are participating as intermediate workers. This category was not in existence in previous censuses. The reason behind higher percentage of intermediate workers after agricultural occupation is mainly due to the inclusion of number of workers viz street vendors and related workers, street vendors of non-food products, door-to-door

and telephone sales persons, shoe cleaning and street services like street barbers, domestic helpers and cleaners, watch persons, garbage collectors etc.

20.9.2 Industrial Sector

Table 20.19: Percentage distributions of children active population (10-14) by major industrial sector, Nepal 1981-2001.

Industrial Sector	Census Years								
	1981			1991			2001		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Primary ¹	96.8	96.3	97.5	88.9	83.5	92.6	69.8	71.3	68.6
Secondary ²	0.1	0.1	0.1	1.7	2.2	1.6	7.9	7.4	8.3
Tertiary ³	2.1	2.6	1.4	7.4	12.5	5.3	21.0	20.8	22.6
Others	-	-	-	0.1	0.3	0.0	-	-	-
Not Stated	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3

Source: Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part V, Table 24

Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part XIII, Table 51

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 15

- Note: 1) Primary sector includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting
 2) Secondary sector includes mining quarrying, manufacturing and construction
 3) Tertiary sector includes electricity, gas and water, transport communication and other services.

Table 20.19 presents the percentage distribution of children population (10-14) by major industrial sector 1981-2001. The children population within the age group (10-14) is distributed by three broad industrial sectors. It is seen from the table that 69.8 percent of the active children in the age group 10-14 are employed in primary sector of the economy in 2001. This rate was 88.9 for 1991 and 96.8 for 1981. The secondary sector had employed 0.1 percent of the children active population for 1981 which had gone up to 1.7 in 1991 and 7.9 in 2001. The tertiary sector has employed 2.1, 7.4 and 21.0 percent of active children population respectively during the period of 1981, 1991 and 2001.

20.9.3 Employment Status

Table 20.20: Employment status of working children (10-14), Nepal 1981-2001.

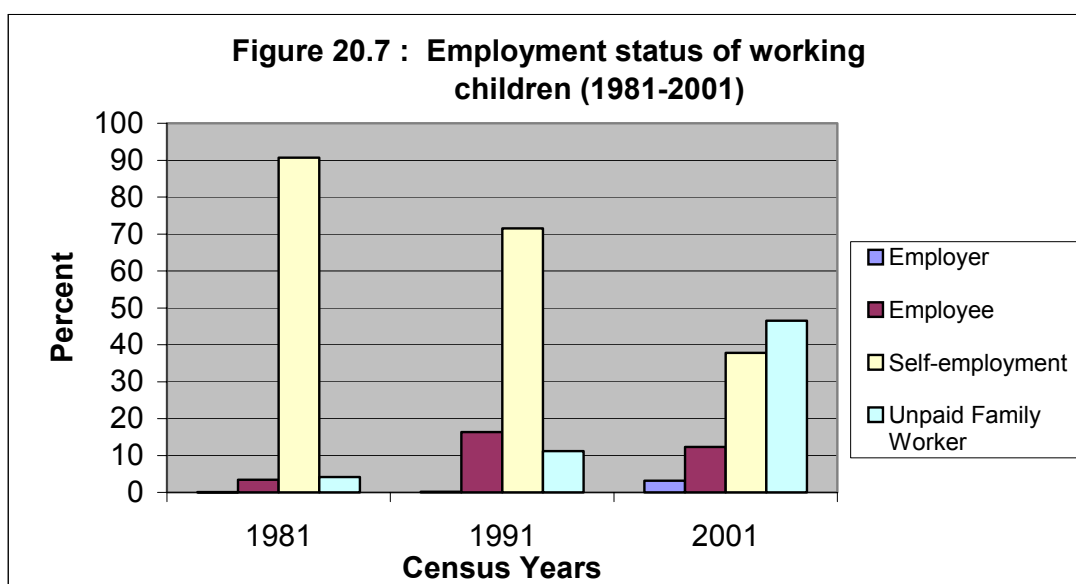
Status	Census Years								
	1981			1991			2001		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Employer	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	3.2	3.9	3.3
Employee	3.4	4.3	2.1	16.3	24.6	10.4	12.3	19.8	9.3
Self-Employed	90.7	90.6	90.9	71.5	64.2	76.6	37.8	41.8	42.1
Unpaid Family Worker	4.2	3.4	5.4	11.2	10.1	12.0	46.5	60.6	45.1
Not Stated	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.6	0.6	0.6	-	-	-

Source: Population Census 1981, Vol. I, Part V, Table 25

Population Census 1991, Vol. I, Part XIII, Table 53

Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 32

Table 20.20 presents the percentage distribution of active children population (10-14) by employment status. The table reveals the children as employer represent negligible percentage up to 1991. The 2001 census estimates this percentage at 3.2. Similarly, the majority of children have their employment status as self-employed as of census year 1991. But this reduced to 37.8 percent in 2001. Children as unpaid family worker have increased considerably from 11.2 percent in 1991 to 46.5 percent in 2001. The increase of children in unpaid family worker category is supported by the increase in educational participation.



20.9.4 Domestic Worker

Information on domestic workers has been generated for the first time by the population census 2001. It shows that one percent of the households (39955 households) in Nepal has domestic workers and these domestic workers consists of 57295 in numbers of which 62.8 percent are males and 37.2 percent females.

Table 20.21: Percentage distribution of domestic workers by sex and age group, Nepal 2001.

Age Group	Number of Domestic Workers				As a % of Total
	Sex	Male	Female	Both Sexes	
14 Years & Below	No.	8246	9557	17803	31.1
	%	46.3	53.7	100.0	
15 Years & Over	No.	27751	11741	39492	68.9
	%	70.3	29.7	100.0	
All Ages	No.	35997	21298	57295	100.0
	%	62.8	37.2	100.0	

Source: Population Census Results in Gender Perspective, Population Census 2001, Vol. I, Table 2.6

Table 20.21 presents the number of domestic workers by broad age groups and by sex. It shows that 31.1 percent of the domestic workers are children 14 years of age and below. Out of these children classified as domestic workers 46.3 percent are boys and 53.7 percent girls. It is also observed that among the male domestic workers 22.9 percent are children of 14 years age and below, that among the domestic female domestic workers 44.9 percent are of 14 years age and below.

20.9.5 Status of Children by Their Living Arrangement

This type of information has been generated for the first time in 2001 population census. It generally states with whom the children under 16 years are living for their livelihood. Children are classified in eight categories under this heading viz biological parents, biological father, biological father and step mother and so on.

Table 20.22: Percentage of children age below 16 years by status of living arrangement, sex, Nepal, 2001.

Status Living Arrangement	Sex		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Biological Parents	87.6	88.0	87.2
Biological Mother	5.5	5.4	5.6
Biological Father	1.2	1.2	1.1
Biological Father & Step Mother	0.8	0.7	0.8
Biological Mother & Step Father	0.6	0.6	0.7
Other Relatives	0.9	0.8	1.0
Employer	0.6	0.6	0.7
Others	2.4	2.3	2.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Population Census 2001, National Report, Vol. II, Table 38

Table 20.22 presents the percentage of children below 16 years of age by status of living arrangement. The table shows that majority of children (87.6 per cent) are living with their own parents. The percentage of other living arrangements of children are biological mother (5.5 per cent), biological father (1.2 per cent), biological father & step mother (0.8 per cent), biological mother & step father (0.6 per cent), other relatives (0.9 per cent), employer (0.6 per cent) and others (2.4 per cent). The variation in percentage of children living arrangement by sex is not significant.

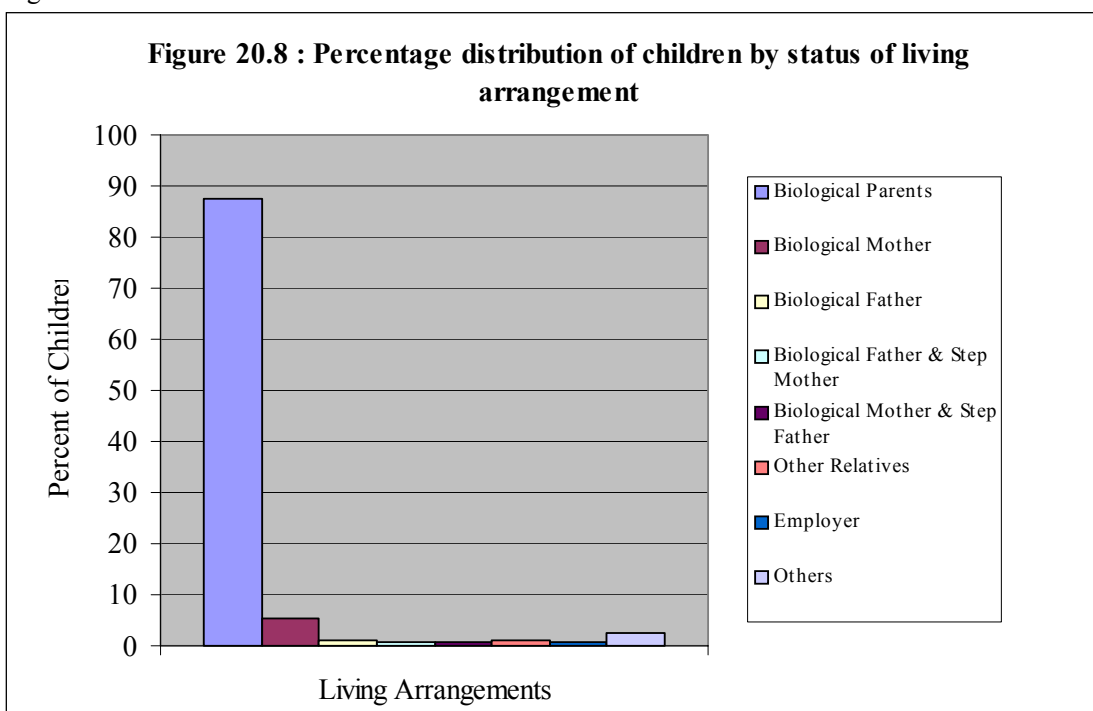
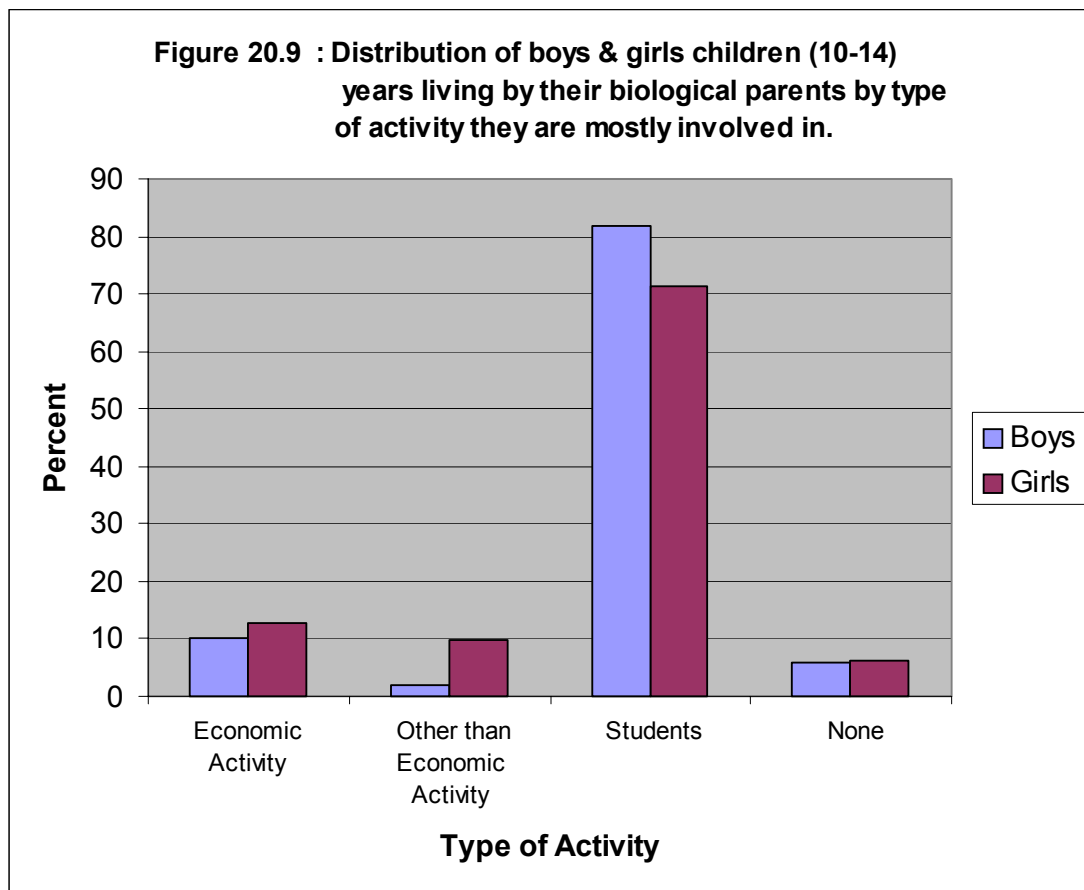


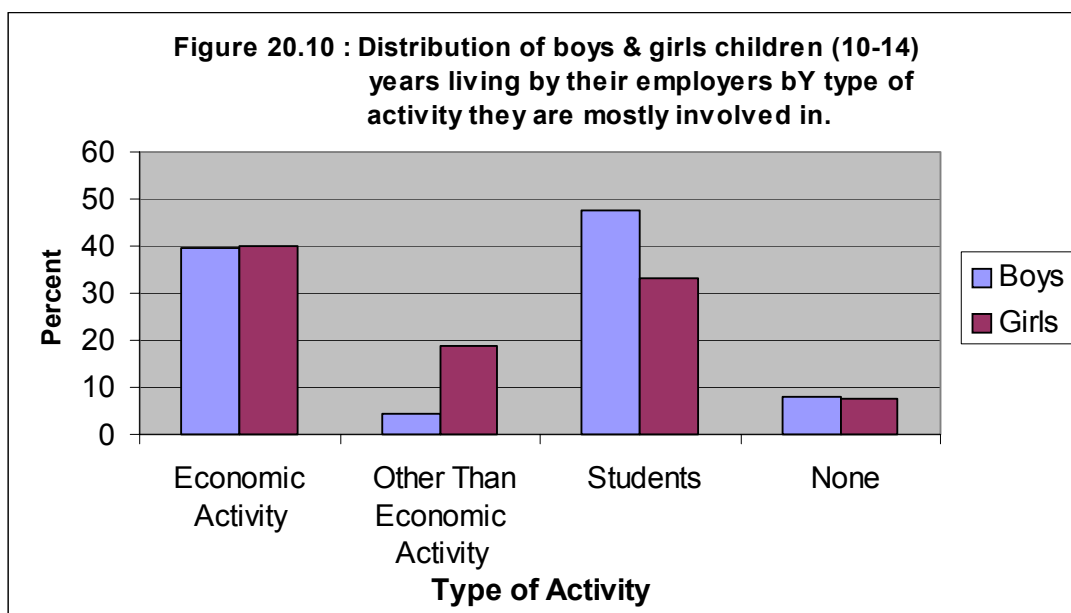
Table 20.23: Percentage distribution of children age 10-15 by type of activity they are mostly involved in and by status of living.

Status of Living Arrangement	Type of Activity					
	Sex	Economic Activity	Other than Economic Activity	Students	None	Total
Biological Parents	Both Sexes	11.5	5.7	76.8	6.0	100.0
	Male	10.2	2.1	81.9	5.8	100.0
	Female	12.9	9.7	71.4	6.1	100.0
Biological Mother	Both Sexes	16.0	5.2	73.5	5.4	100.0
	Male	14.5	1.6	78.6	5.4	100.0
	Female	17.4	8.7	68.5	5.3	100.0
Biological Father	Both Sexes	24.0	9.8	57.9	8.3	100.0
	Male	21.4	3.2	67.0	8.5	100.0
	Female	26.7	16.6	48.6	8.2	100.0
Biological Father & Step Mother	Both Sexes	24.6	10.1	56.5	8.8	100.0
	Male	21.6	2.4	66.7	9.3	100.0
	Female	27.2	16.9	47.5	8.4	100.0
Biological Mother & Step Father	Both Sexes	26.6	11.3	52.3	9.9	100.0
	Male	24.2	3.1	62.4	10.2	100.0
	Female	28.5	18.0	44.0	9.5	100.0
Others Relative	Both Sexes	22.9	10.0	58.3	8.8	100.0
	Male	21.1	2.5	67.4	9.0	100.0
	Female	24.4	16.5	50.5	8.6	100.0
Employers	Both Sexes	39.9	12.1	40.1	7.8	100.0
	Male	39.7	4.4	47.8	8.1	100.0
	Female	40.1	19.0	33.3	7.6	100.0
Others	Both Sexes	22.6	9.3	61.4	6.7	100.0
	Male	20.5	2.4	70.7	6.4	100.0
	Female	24.5	15.8	52.8	7.0	100.0
Total	Both Sexes	13.3	6.2	74.4	6.1	100.0
	Male	11.8	2.1	80.0	6.0	100.0
	Female	14.9	10.4	68.4	6.3	100.0

Source : Population Census Results in Gender Perspective 2001, Vol. II, Table 4.4

Table 20.23 presents the number of children aged 10 – 15 years by type of activity they are mostly involved in and by status of living arrangements. Of the total children in this age group, 19.5 percent have been found to be involved either in economic activity or in activity other than economic activity. By gender category it is noticed that out of the total girls in this age group 25.3 percent have been involved either in economic activity or in activity other than economic activity while the corresponding figure for boys is only 13.9 percent. About 74.7 percent of the children have been found in study and this by gender shows that 80 percent of the boys are in study as against only 68.4 percent girls. The table reveals variations of children’s type of activity by status of their living arrangement. While it is generally observed from the table that children living with biological parents get better opportunity than those living with people other than biological parents. As has been observed from above figures, 81.9 percent of boys and 71.4 percent of girls living with biological parents have been found to be engaged in study whereas only 12.3 percent of boys and 22.6 percent of girls have been involved either in economic activity or activity other than economic activity. Amongst different status of living arrangements, the children living with employers have considerably lower percentage being involved in study (47.8 percent for male and 33.3 percent for female) and relatively higher percentage being engaged in either economic or other than economic activity (44.1 percent for male and 59.1 percent for female).





20.10 Conclusion

Children as the future leaders and the builders of the nation need special attention and care and their issues have to be well reflected in the development planning process of the country. This study highlights some aspects of the children population and the analysis of the trend as revealed by the decennial population census 1981-2001. As contrary to overall population scenario the children's sex ratio is completely in favor of male children which in one way may attributed to traditional discriminatory outlooks that existed in Nepalese society against the female child. The census information have depicted decreasing trend of the proportion of children in total population; the percentage of children has reduced over the years by about 3 percent from 1991 to 2001. This can mainly be attributed to increasing acceptance and popularity of the family planning among the people. While the health status of children has tended to improve over the period 1991-2001 as suggested by such indicators as infant mortality and U5 mortality rates which have gone down significantly, yet there are many aspects of the health situation that need to be greatly emphasized, though immunization coverage and vitamin A capsules distribution has been raised to a considerable rate. One important aspect of children population is the rise in the literacy rates which have gone up to a considerable extent. Many improvements as regards to quality of education, physical facilities and infrastructure development are very much needed. The rates of literacy among girls' children showed significant improvement. It is encouraging to observe that children economic activity participation rates have remarkably gone down, which unlike in the past, has decreased the practice of child labor utilization. This trend is definitely a positive indication of the increasing focuses on various aspects of children development in the future.

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