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## Untouchability in Nepal and the world

I had an older friend, Mukesh, who was like a brother to me, a beautiful gentleman who earned a good living working as a civil engineer. Mukesh and I used to hang out in the playground where we used to stay under a big tree's shadow and laughed and talked all day, played table tennis, and tagged with all our friends, but one day, he suddenly stopped attending gatherings or parties. He was totally out of contact, so I tried reaching out to his household members, only to find that Mukesh had locked himself in a room for ten days straight and started smoking weed along with Mushrooms, cocaine, and other more complex substances. His mother cried on my shoulder as she explained, "Mukesh, my only child, has been going through depression and tried hanging himself in the room and overdosing himself with sleeping meds many times."

With tears in her eyes, she explained that Mukesh and his family had gone to ask for the hand of Pretti (the girl Mukesh was madly in love with) at her house, but Pretti's parents had refused to even meet with them, acting as if they weren't home. Some three or four days later, Mukesh and his family discovered that Pretti would be engaged to Kabir Sharma. Kabir was from a brahmin lineage of a higher class, so her family arranged their marriage quickly.

Mukesh's mother claims that Pretti contacted him the night he asked for her hand at her place and said they shouldn't see each other anymore since her parents didn't want her to marry

someone from a lower caste and had already made plans for her to get engaged to someone else. Hearing this sank Mukesh into a deep depression; the last time I saw him was when he was dragged away by the police for disturbing the neighborhood all night by yelling and screaming from his balcony, smashing vases in the street, and damaging his own home's internet antenna after consuming excessive amounts of cocaine and alcohol. Mukesh's experiences demonstrate how the minor unsolved issue of Untouchability in Nepalese culture is still ruining many people's life, motivation, and self-confidence.

A historically followed practice in Nepal and many other parts of the world, Untouchability is a form of discrimination and social exclusion. According to Wikipedia," Untouchability is a practice that has its roots in Hinduism's varna system, a caste-based social structure. In Nepal, there are four castes: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. Each caste has several subcastes, and each has traditionally had a specific occupation. This caste differentiation was started by the late king Jayasthiti Malla in the late 16th century", as we learned in middle school from grades 6 to 10 in our country as well because Untouchability is one of the burning issues till this date. Untouchability persists in various forms after being abolished from Nepal.

From my point of view, prejudice toward lower castes continues to be prevalent, and discrimination still occurs across the nation as the upper-class people still haven't fully opened up toward accepting lower caste people as equals. Therefore, more must be done to end this practice and raise everyone's standard of living in Nepal. Numerous lives in Nepal have been devastated by Untouchability; my friend has been rehabbed for two years and was sent to prison for two weeks. One of the cases shown by Gopal Sharma about The head of the Kathmandu-based Dalit NGO Federation said the killing of Nabaraj Bika, 21, who was chased into a river with his

friends as he prepared to elope with a 17-year-old girl from a higher-caste family, was a failure of governance which has forced many of the most defenseless people to suffer in silence.

Untouchability resides in one or the other country with different culture and treatment that follows as well.

According to the Nepal Demographics and Health Survey (NDHS) conducted in 2016, about 17% of the population in Nepal practices untouchability. This data shows that nearly one in five people in Nepal still face discrimination based on their caste or social group. This is a significant issue, as it means that a large portion of the population is denied access to education, healthcare, and other essential services simply because they belong to a particular social group. As stated by National geography writer HILLARY MAYELL," More than 160 million people in India are considered Untouchable—people tainted by their birth into a caste system that deems them impure, less than human".

One example of Untouchability in Nepal is the practice of "Dalit" households being required to perform menial tasks for higher-caste families, such as cleaning latrines or disposing of animal carcasses; this shows a degrading practice that perpetuates the social and economic marginalization of Dalit communities.

Another example is the exclusion of Dalit communities from accessing specific public spaces, such as temples or wells. This practice is rooted in the belief that the presence of Dalits in these spaces would pollute them and make them "unclean."

In addition to being unethical, the practice of Untouchability is illegal and goes against basic principles of human rights and the nation's constitution. It is not acceptable in modern-day Nepal to behave so harshly toward people of lower castes. The government has taken action to end these violent actions and ensure everyone is treated equally. For instance, the government

has begun educating the general public about the destructive effects of prejudice, and it has also given a special political seat in each high post, such as Health ministers, members of parliament plan discussion, and many other jobs in the public sector.

The Government of Nepal has taken steps to address the issue of Untouchability, such as passing laws to protect the rights of marginalized communities; by providing special seats in higher position jobs, loan programs with minimum interest, and many more educational opportunities for Dalit children. However, there is still a long way to go in eradicating this deeply ingrained practice.

It is important to note that Untouchability violates human rights and goes against the principles of equality and non-discrimination. Efforts must be made to eliminate this practice and ensure that all individuals in Nepal are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their caste or social group.

### **Work Cited**

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