



Title	Education in post-post earthquake Nepal : an exploratory study on how education has been affected by the Great Ghorka Earthquake
Author(s)	Kuipers, Rob
Citation	平成28年度学部学生による自主研究奨励事業研究成果報告書. 2017
Version Type	VoR
URL	<a href="https://hdl.handle.net/11094/60327">https://hdl.handle.net/11094/60327</a>
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## 平成 28 年度学部学生による自主研究奨励事業研究成果報告 書

ふりがな 氏 名	カイパス ロブ	学部 学科	人間科学部 人間科学コ ース	学年	3 年
ふりがな 共 同 研究者名		学部 学科		学年	年
アドバイザー教員 氏名	Christie Lam	所属	人間科学研究科		
研究課題名	Education in post-post earthquake Nepal: an exploratory study on how education has been affected by the Great Ghorka Earthquake				
研究成果の概要	研究目的、研究計画、研究方法、研究経過、研究成果等について記述すること。必要に応じて用紙を追加してもよい。				

### Research Aim

On Saturday April 25th 2015, a 7.9-magnitude earthquake severely hit Nepal, one of the poorest countries in the world. The earthquake made extensive damage to the country and caused many injuries and deaths. Nearly 600,000 houses and 5000 schools have been completely destroyed, while thousands of schools have been seriously damaged. Immediately after the earthquake, SafeTheChildren and UNICEF warned that the large-scale destruction of schools would have a significant effect on children's access to education. In many areas there are only a few schools, which means that children cannot go to an alternative school in the case that their own school has been destroyed. Therefore, the organizations appealed for a quick rebuilding of the destroyed and damaged schools.

However, one and a half year have passed since the earthquake, and the rebuilding process has been very slow. In total, 21,169 classrooms were completely destroyed and 27,452 classrooms were partially damaged. By the end of September 2016, only 8,856 of these classrooms were rebuilt or were being rebuilt by the Nepal government and agencies. No clear plan had been implemented for the remaining classrooms. These schools had no other option than to build temporary school buildings to ensure education. Such temporary school buildings do not provide an ideal learning environment and might not be suitable to accommodate all children (NRA, 2016).

As Nepal was in the process of developing and strengthening its quality and access to primary and secondary education, and was already facing several challenges in this regard (e.g. high drop-out rates and low enrolment rates in secondary school), it is important to understand how the earthquake has affected education and whether or not existing problems have exacerbated. In the light of this, our research project has attempted to explore how education in Nepal has been affected by the earthquake.

## **Research plan**

Much research has been conducted on education in Nepal, particularly on school enrolment and drop-out rates. However, no studies have looked at the situation after the earthquake. Besides that, there is limited data available on Nepal after the earthquake, and none of this available data covers education. Therefore, we decide to travel to Nepal for a period of 14 days to gather first-hand qualitative data, as well as to conduct observations. We have chosen to interview teachers and principles, to understand through their narratives how education in their school has been affected by the earthquake. Due to time and budget limitations, and the exploratory nature of this research project, we limited the focus of our study on one rural village with the aim to use this village as a case study. A village called *Katunge* was chosen as a case study, because this village is located in the area that was severely affected by the earthquake, the schools in the village were affected in different ways and hence a good comparison between the schools can be made.

An analyses of the effect of the earthquake on education in Nepal should be able to compare the post-earthquake situation with the situation before the earthquake. As mentioned earlier, much research has been conducted on education in Nepal and this literature gives a good image of the general situation in Nepal before the earthquake. However, this literature does not focus specifically on Katunge village, and can thus tell us little about education in the village before the earthquake. We have used the existing literature on education in Nepal to identify the key issues with education in the country. As this is a short summary about the conducted research project, a literature review is out of the scope of this paper. Based on the literature review, we have decided to focus on several themes in our research: school enrolment, absence, drop-out rates, quality of education, material damage (buildings and teaching materials), and teacher absence. We have chosen to take a phenomenology approach; the teachers were asked to describe and compare the situation before and after the earthquake and were asked to explain how the education was affected by the earthquake.

Detailed analysis and discussion of our findings from the qualitative data we have collected will be submitted, at a later stage, for a possible field notes publication or general media publication. A perspective article on the reconstruction process in Nepal, which has been largely based on our fieldtrip to Nepal, has been submitted to a peer-review journal.

## **Methodology**

A qualitative approach was used to gather in-depth data. Seven schools were contacted through already established contacts in the village, and we were eventually able to visit only five of these schools due to bad weather conditions. We gather data through semi-structured focus group discussions in three schools, and semi-structured interviews with the principle in two schools. We were unable to conduct focus groups discussions in these two schools, because in one school there was only one teacher and in the other school the teachers were absent that day. Please refer to appendix 2 for a list of participants and schools. The interviews each lasted between 59 and 120 minutes. All interviews were recorded, but not transcribed. Detailed notes were taken during the interviews and these notes as well as the audio recordings have been analyzed for the summary section provided below.

## Summary of the research findings

### Material damage

The five schools suffered different types of damage during the earthquake. In school A, five classrooms completely collapsed and two rooms were severely damaged. Most of the school's materials were stored in the teachers' room, and since this room didn't collapse all the materials were still usable. In school B all the classrooms, a library, a computer room, a science lab and all the toilet buildings completely collapsed. Approximately 90 percent of all the materials, including 10 computers and all the furniture, were completely destroyed. School C (4 rooms) and school D (4 rooms) collapsed entirely during the earthquake. In school C, all the teaching materials were destroyed, while in school D approximately 90 percent of the materials were destroyed. School E was the only school that didn't collapsed or suffered any damage.

Despite the severe damage most schools endured, all the schools managed to resume education after two months, but managed to do so in different ways. School A, B and D had build temporary learning centers (TLC), within the two-month period after the earthquake- when education was suspended nation-wide- and were so able to provide education to all students after education was supposed to be resumed. School C was unable to build a TLC in this two-month period, and classes were taught from a local house until a one-room TLC was completed four months after the earthquake. The schools had different sources for funding the TLCs: school A and D received financial support from non-governmental organizations, while school B and C received financial support from the district's education department.

All schools received only financial support for the materials that were necessary to build the TLCs, and had to rely on free labor from teachers and locals to complete the buildings. All four schools indicated that the locals were willing to help with building the schools. Two schools indicated that at first many people were rather hesitated to help with building the TLC buildings, but that more people wanted to help after the teachers and some village leaders had argued in community meetings that rebuilding the schools should be a priority. The other two schools explained that rebuilding the school was considered a first priority in their village immediately after the earthquake. One principal even said in the interview that "locals were asking him everyday about when education would be resumed or the school would be rebuild," and later explained that people in his village are nowadays very eager to send their children to school because "many people want their children to work overseas or in the city (e.g. Kathmandu), and education can help them to achieve this". All the schools indicated –at some point in the interview- that many people in Katunge want their children to go to school, because it is perceived that going to school increases the children their chance to work overseas, and that this can explain why the locals completed the TLCs in such a timely matter.

In contrast with the rapid pace in which the TLCs were build, the rebuilding process of the school buildings has been slow. Three of the four schools that were damaged during the earthquake had secured funding for rebuilding school buildings by the time the interviews were taken place. Two of these schools (A and D) received the funding for all the necessary buildings, while the other school (B) still needed funding for 8 more rooms. Despite having secured the funding, only school B managed to

start rebuilding the buildings and expected them to be completed by the end of 2016. The other two schools could not start the rebuilding process, due to bad weather conditions and lack of transportation to the village. As their previous TLCS were unsuitable to offer education for a long period, school A saw no other option than to relocate classes to the damaged previous damaged buildings and school D was forced to build new TLCs at another location to be able to accommodate all students.

### **Enrolment rates, drop-out rates and absence**

Although education was already resumed two months after the earthquake, student absence and the number of students enrolled in the schools has been negatively affected by the earthquake. As the graph in appendix 2 shows, all the schools saw a sharp decrease in the number of students enrolled after the earthquake. All schools explained that this decrease was due to the fact that many families moved out of Katunge families, and that most of these families now live in larger cities such as Kathmandu, Pokhara and Dhading-Besi. Four schools indicated that it were mostly rich families and families with sons working overseas that moved out of the village, and that these families are now often sending their children to private schools. One school explained that it were mostly poor families without land that moved out of their ward. None of the schools experienced students dropping out of school as a result of the earthquake, however it must be noticed that the schools pointed out that drop-out rates or students not enrolling in school had never been a major problem in the village.

In contrast, student absence after the earthquake has been a major problem for all the schools. In one of the schools, 30 students –of which 24 were girls and 6 were boys- didn't come to school during the first month education was resumed. The teachers of this school named fear that another earthquake would happen and parents requiring their children to work as reasons for why the student didn't go to school. After this month, the local government and a NGO launched a one week counseling and awareness campaign, and this resulted in that all the children went to school again. However, the teachers pointed out that they need to give free pencils and notebooks to students and have to reduce the exam fees for more families to ensure that children continue to go to school, because many families are unable to pay for these school expenses as result of the earthquake. In another school, the principle indicated that 20 percent of the students are frequently absent compared with 5 percent before the earthquake. This school indicated that the need for children to work at home and the inability of families to pay for text books, pencils or other materials were the main reasons for this increase in student absence. Interestingly, this school was not providing free materials and the teachers admitted during the interview that it was common for them to get angry at students who do not bring the required students materials. The teachers even argued that them getting angry at students for not bringing certain materials would definitely contribute to more students being absent. When asked why the school was not providing free materials to poor families, the principle indicated that the school had not sufficient resources to do so.

The problem with student absence in the two schools indicate that the earthquake might have exacerbated the major problem of student absence Nepal has been facing for a long time, and that this extend and duration of this effect depends on the way the school responds to the problem. Both schools clearly pointed out that children from poor families and girls were more likely to be absence after the

earthquake. However, the first school quickly identified the challenges these groups face, and not only supported them with what they need, but were also supportive and understanding of their situation. This resulted in that student absence was no longer a problem, in contrast with the second school where it continued to be a problem. The others schools also explained that they had to be more understanding of the situation many students were facing after the earthquake and were also providing free materials to students. Therefore, student absence had also not increased in the other three schools, however the teachers argued that the chance of student being absent definitely increased as a result of the earthquake.

### **Quality of education**

In all the interviews, teachers indicated that the quality of education had been severely impacted by the earthquake. In four schools, the teachers talked much about the problems that they were experiencing in the TLCs. As the TLCs are constituted of only tin roofs and wooden beams, many teachers described that it is very hot in the rooms during sunny weather, while rain is floating inside during rainy weather. Other commonly described problems in the TLCS are: noise from outside or other classrooms due to thin walls, a lack of space, students going to different rooms, and students getting distracted by people that walk by. All the teachers described that the TLCS are not an ideal learning environment, and that both students and teachers cannot concentrate well in the TLCS.

Another large problem for most of the schools is the lack of teaching materials and furniture. In three schools, nearly all the teaching materials were destroyed, and none of these schools secured funding for new materials. The teachers in these schools explained that this is a large problem, because they are unable to fully explain the content that they are teaching. Especially for the school that used to have a science lab, library and computer room the lack of materials was problematic. The principle of this schools explained that “without the materials, we cannot teach the subjects we are suppose to teach. We can only teach them the subjects through textbooks, which makes it difficult for students to understand (the content). In stead of science, we now mostly teach students agriculture”. The other two schools tried to solve their problems by making posters about the teaching content themselves.

For four schools, it was also a problem that a large part of the furniture had been destroyed during the earthquake. Two schools had to wait approximately three months for new benches and white boards, and students had to sit on the floor during this period. In one schools, they till lacked a few benches and desks by the time the interviews were conducted. Another school had not received any support for furniture, and the children had to sit on the floor. The teachers in both schools explained that this was problematic, since this also means that they have no desk and that materials and clothes get dirty when the floor is wet.

Psychological problems among students and poor living conditions after the earthquake were also commonly described issues that affect the quality of education. In all schools, including the school that suffered no damage, teachers explained that students are very afraid that another earthquake will happen and that this affects their ability to concentrate on their study. One teacher described for example that “students start to cry or panic when a stone or rain hits the roof of their TLC, because student think that the noise is caused by an earthquake”. Another teacher explained that “the steel pipes where the students had to sit on sometimes move, and that children cry because they think that the

movement is caused by an earthquake”. All teachers that we have talked to explained that psychological problems, such as fear and depression affects the quality of education every day, and that it is difficult for them to deal with those problems and disruptions in class. Besides that, in every interview, teachers explained that many children had not been doing their homework since the earthquake, because they lack electricity or have no good place to study in their temporary homes as a result of the earthquake. Many children also need to work when they come home and/or do not have materials and furniture that is necessary to finish their assignments. As a result, the students are not well prepared for the class, and teachers have been spending more time on explaining the content.

All the schools argued that the quality of education and students performance were negatively affected by the above mentioned problems. However, it was difficult for teachers to support this claim with data. Only one school was able to estimate the effect the earthquake had on student performance; they estimated that 10 percent of their students were performing less well due to the earthquake. Most of the teachers also shared that they fear that the earthquake and the lower quality of education would have lead to students getting lower grades at their school leaving exam or less students going to secondary school. This would be very problematic and further research should focus on this.

#### **Teachers attitudes towards their work**

Teacher absence is an issue commonly described in the literature about education in Nepal. During the interviews, only one school was willing to admit that teachers had been absent several time, because they had to deal with rebuilding their own house or personal problems after the earthquake. Other teachers did not report that they had been absent since the earthquake. However, many teachers expressed that their job had been more challenging and time consuming since the earthquake, because they were responsible for rebuilding the school, making sure that the children would continue to go to school, and had to deal with problems that the children were facing as a result of the earthquake. Many teachers also indicated that their job had been more challenging for them, because their houses and livelihood been affected by the earthquake. As one teacher described: “I come home and see a broken house and feel sad, when I go to my school I see another broken building and feel sad”. One of the principles explained that he did not come to his school during the first months, because it was to difficult for him to be confronted with the fact that he had to rebuild both his house and his school. Such stories make it clear that teachers are also facing many problems after the earthquake, and that this might effect their teaching and ability to focus on their work.

#### **Conclusion**

This paper has briefly described how education in a rural village in Nepal has been affected by the 2015 Great Ghorka Earthquake. Our findings suggest that existing problems with education in Nepal, particularly regarding quality of education and student absence, have exacerbated by the earthquake. More research is needed to study other areas and the long-term effects of the earthquake. To ensure better quality education, it is crucial that the Nepalese government and partner organizations start to allocate more resources for teaching materials and start to rebuild the remaining affected schools soon, since our research has shown that the quality of education is problematic in temporary learning centers.

**Sources**

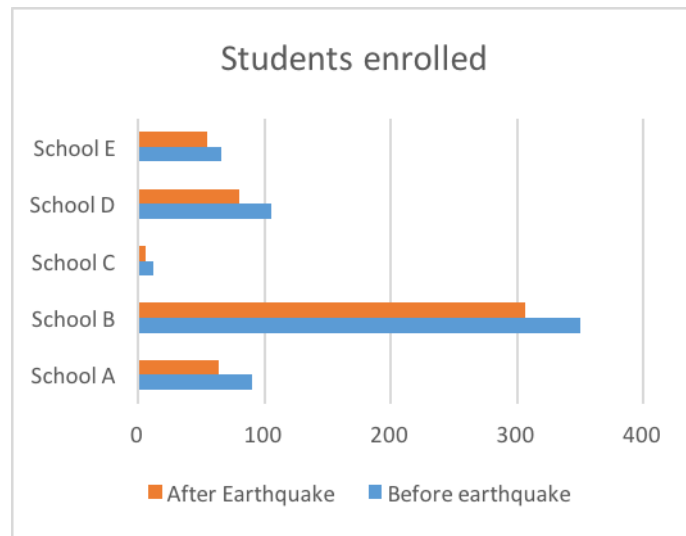
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**Appendix 1**

<b>School</b>	<b>People Interviewed</b>	<b>Type of education offered in the school</b>	<b>Damage after earthquake</b>
<b>School A</b>	5 teachers (3 male, 2 female)	Grade 1-5	5 rooms collapsed, 2 rooms damaged
<b>School B</b>	5 teachers (3 male, 2 female)	Grade 1- 12	All class rooms, science lab, library, computer room and 90 percent of materials were destroyed
<b>School C</b>	Principle (male)	Grade 1,2,3	Entire school collapsed, all materials damaged
<b>School D</b>	Principal (male), 4 teachers (3 male, 1 female)	Grade 1-8	School collapsed, 90 percent of materials were destroyed
<b>School E</b>	Principle (Male)	Grade 1-8	No damage



### Appendix 2



### Appendix 3: pictures of temporary shelters







