Managing Diversity in Special Education: Challenges for Effective Teaching and Learning Process in Special Schools of Nepal

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Abstract

Purpose: This research study was based on to analyze the teachers’ activities for managing diversity and challenges for effective teaching and learning process in special schools of Nepal. Method: In this study, the data collection and analysis process were based on interpretive paradigm followed by qualitative research design. Both head teachers and teachers (six head teachers and twelve teachers) were selected as core respondents of the study from six schools (three special and three integrated) based on Kathmandu and Bhaktapur districts by using purposive sampling method. Furthermore, in-depth interview, focus group discussion, and document analysis were used as the prominent tools for data collection. Results: The results of the study indicated that teaching students with diverse needs was quite difficult job for teacher. The study also showed that special teachers did not do proper activities for managing diversity in the classroom. Moreover, numerous factors such as rigid curriculum, lack of teacher training, lack of content integration, inequitable pedagogy, poor practice of scaffolding, low opportunity of self-regulated learning, and insufficient practice of cooperative teaching were identified as the prominent challenges for effective teaching and learning process in the special schools of Nepal. Conclusion: Therefore, this study suggested proper practice of diversity management, adequate teacher training, flexible curriculum, adequate content integration, and cooperative teaching practice helps to ensure the effective teaching and learning process in diverse classroom.

Key words: Diversity management, effective teaching learning, content integration, self-regulated learning, cooperative teaching

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I. Introduction

Nepal is a multicultural, multilingual, and multiethnic country most of the inhabitant peoples are from diverse social, cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. The national census 2011 showed that there are 125 caste/ethnic groups and 123 languages spoken as mother tongue in Nepal. Addressing this issue has massive implications for the special education sector to reach out the diverse ethnic groups to provide equitable education for all, especially regarding the provisions of education for all, special curriculum, textbooks, least-restrictive environment, cooperative learning, special teacher training, and teaching students on their mother tongues (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012; Nepal Law Commission, 2015).

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) preserves the common aspiration of multiethnic, multilingual, multi-religious and multicultural characteristics of the Nepalese people with a bond of allegiance to national independence, integrity, national interest and prosperity of the country. Politically, Nepal is a federal republic with a multiparty system of government and the dominion bestowed in people. The constitution guarantees the fundamental right to education and lays down the directive principles of the federal state, provinces, and local bodies on education and the right to education (Government of Nepal, 2015). Moreover, Nepal is a secular country with 81.34% Hindu, 9.04% Buddhist, 4.38% Islam, 3.04% Kirat and 1.41% Christians. Where these five religions cover more than 99% of the total population, and the remaining less than one percent encompasses Jain (0.01%), Prakriti (0.46%), Bon (0.04%), others (0.007%), and unspecified (0.03%) (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

The government realized that diversities in the country in terms of language, culture, social status, education for disadvantages group, education for children with special needs, play significant role in teaching and learning activities. In this regard, the government established general, integrated, and special schools for people with disabilities and without disabilities. To fulfill this purpose there are 32 special and 22 integrated school with 380 resource classes are established in Nepal. Where 74,829 differently disabled children are enrolled (Ministry of Education, 2017). In addressing the issues of under achievement and school reform, multicultural education has become one of the focal points in the increasingly intense conflict over racial and ethnic equality (Rodriguez, 1999). In the context of Nepalese special school’s there are many students who belongs from multicultural, multiethnic, multi-linguistic backgrounds. Hence, most of the classrooms that may be in rural or in urban areas, are found multicultural. They did not have same language, religion, culture, social rituals and beliefs. Therefore, due to these diverse phenomena the teaching and learning activities are affected and the achievement of students is not satisfied as our expectation.

The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) mandates focused that all children are
entitled to a “free and appropriate” education. Children who have disabilities come from different socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic group receive special education services under designated categories, although many children do not always fit neatly into the designated categories. Although educational services are better determined by the child’s need than the category label, special education do serve important functions, such as allowing professionals to more easily communicate with each other and families about the meaningful differences in children’s learning and behavior (Heward, 2006).

Moreover, Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) takes a broad and inclusive view of diversity. CEC believes diversity means understanding and valuing the characteristics and beliefs of those who demonstrate a wide range of characteristics. This includes ethnic and racial backgrounds, age, physical and cognitive abilities, family status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religious and spiritual values, and geographic location. In addition, CEC is equally committed to welcoming and encouraging the leadership and involvement of members from diverse groups in the association (Council for Exceptional Children, 2008). To address the needs of students, the government of Nepal has developed the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) for the July 2016 to July 2023. This SSDP focuses to continue its effort to ensure equitable access to quality education for all (Ministry of Education, 2016).

1. Problem Statement

The world is shrinking at an incredible pace, and as a result of our communities and schools are daily becoming more diverse than ever before. These changes come differences in culture, beliefs, values, custom, language, and ethnicity (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009; Banks, 2016). In this regard, government of Nepal promised to provide quality education by addressing the issues of linguistic diversity to bring some reform in education policy for ensuring the right of diverse ethnic groups to get education in their own language (UNESCO Kathmandu Office, 2015). In the context of Nepal, there are many challenges (language, culture, religion, race, ethnicity, and gender) for effective teaching and learning in the special education sector due to diverse background of the students as well as teachers. It takes long time to adjust and provide equitable teaching and learning environment to all students. Many Students have difficulty in group or cooperative learning because of their culture, language, and religion. Beside this, in the classroom most of students have problems for mutual understanding and tolerance in a particular content area of the subjects to be discussion.

Culturally and linguistically diverse group students are different from majority of Nepal culture or different from the teacher. At this condition, the teacher should plan and implement instructional strategies that is considerate of and sensitive to students’ linguistic of cultural differences (Gollnick & Chinn, 2004;
Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2010). But in the context of Nepal, there is lack of special instruction provision for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Most of the students are taught in the general instruction mood where all the diverse background students are placed. Moreover, almost the teachers are also from diverse background but while teaching in the classroom he/she did not care about the students’ diversities they have been teaching students by using their own instructional technique and different language even in Nepali or English which was not suitable for students.

The Curriculum Development Center (CDC) developed the local mother tongue curriculum in 22 different mother tongues, children reference materials in 15 different mother tongues, and guideline books for basic level class (6-8). According to the curriculum development center, local mother tongue will be the medium of instruction for all subjects in the primary level, local mother tongue and language of official use for all subjects except Nepali and English in classes 4 and 5. In addition, local mother tongue will be used as a medium of teaching and learning in non-formal education sector as well. These practices are enhancing the quality of education and access to all children in school education, but it is not practicable and appropriate to cover the needs of all students in Nepal (Curriculum Development Center, 2007).

Nevertheless, the problem of diversity continues to be debated at many levels of our society including schools, instruction strategies, curriculum, work places, and the political arena (Boutre, 1999). Hence, the diverse backgrounds affect the teaching and learning activities of the students. In Nepalese special education classroom, there are diversities in speaking language of students. The teacher may have use different language that is distinct from the medium of the instruction in the class which is directly affect the learning achievement of the students. Consequently, this method of instruction may not suitable for diverse backgrounds of the students. Therefore, this research paper has tried to detect the challenges for effective teaching and learning process in special school in Nepal for their future enhancement.

2. Research Questions

All children are acceptable to an education, including those with disabilities and diverse backgrounds. Public special schools are required to educate all children regardless of the type or severity of their disability and diversity. All school age children with disabilities that meet the criteria for school education services must be provided appropriate educational services without cost of the family (IDEA, 2004; as cited in Cartledge et al., 2009). To fulfil the slogan of IDEA and norms of special education, government of Nepal developed special education policy to ensure the right of the children with disabilities. But the policy was not appropriate and suitable, it was more theoretical and less practical as well as unable to
address the current needs of the children with disabilities and diverse backgrounds. In this regard, the practice of managing diversity and effective teaching and learning processes are not satisfied, student’s centered, and carry the norms of special education in most of the special school’s in Nepal. Without proper accommodation it is very difficult to guarantee the educational right of the children. Consequently, formulated inclusive/special policy must be executed by identifying, assessing, and addressing the needs of the student’s in the school environment. In this regard, this research paper was carried out to answer some questions such as: What kinds of activities have been executing by teachers for managing classroom diversity? What are the challenges of effective teaching and learning process in special classroom? What are the appropriate ways to improve the challenges of teaching and learning process in special classroom?

II. Research Method

1. Research Design

Teaching students with diverse background and managing diversity in the classroom is quite tough job for teachers in the schools. A research design is a tactical plan that sets out the extensive structure of research work (Brewer, 2000). This research paper was based on interpretive paradigm in relation to qualitative research design (Cresswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It helps the researchers to collect the in-depth information of the study area. In this research, the data were collected through the qualitative research tools, as well as analysis and interpretation of the data was derived on the basis of knowledge and understandings obtained by special education context.

2. Sampling Method and Research Participants

To fulfill the purpose of the research paper, the researcher selected six head-teachers (three from special school and three from integrated school) and twelve teachers (six from special and six from integrated school) were chosen from six schools (three special school and three integrated school) by using purposive sampling method (Kumar, 2005; Singh, 2006) as a research participants of the study from Kathmandu and Bhaktapur district of Nepal. In addition, all the head teachers and teachers were teaching in Kathmandu and Bhaktapur district to the children with special needs and without special needs. The detailed information of the participants is as given below:
### List of Research participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Number of Informants</th>
<th>Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kathmandu</td>
<td>Special</td>
<td>Head teacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5 to 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8 to 12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhaktapur</td>
<td>Special</td>
<td>Head teacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7 to 13 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4 to 11 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Tools for Data Collection

The researcher has used in-depth interview, FGD guideline, and related documents analysis as prominent tools for data collection which was open and exploratory in nature (Charles, 1998; Creswell, 2009). Furthermore, different documents such as journal article, relevant textbook, special education resource books, and web-search through Google were reviewed to gather essential data. For the purpose of data collection, the researcher went to the sample schools and tried to establish rapport building with the head teachers and teachers by clarifying the purpose of study. The researcher had conducted group discussion based on FGD guideline with teachers and took an in-depth interview with the head teachers on research topic.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The collected data were analyzed and interpreted thematically relating with the formulated research questions. The researcher has also used research objectives as a center point for data analysis. In this regard, the researcher interpreted obtained data by using qualitative research design on the basis of interpretive paradigm. In this research, the primary mode of analysis is the development of theme from the raw data as well as specific theme had been deducted from frequently reading of the raw data. In this process, the researcher has gather all the data and then collected data were edited, classified, categorized, and analyzed by generating different theme as per the research questions (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).
III. Results

In the present time most of the classrooms are diverse and thus the challenges of teaching and learning are significant. Students represent diverse cultural, religious, language, and ethnic backgrounds (Polloway, Patton, & Serna, 2008). Due to these diverse backgrounds, managing diversity and teaching to them are really challenging for professionals and paraprofessional in the schools. In this regard, most of the special schools in Nepal were bring to the challenges of inclusion, managing diversity, and effective instructional strategies. The major challenges to managing diversity and effective teaching and learning activities faced in special schools that were discussed as the results of the study.

1. Teachers’ Activities for Managing Diversity in Classroom

This study found out various reasons that most of the students with diverse backgrounds facing different difficulties in the special classrooms, in relation to this fact, there were not proper strategies followed by teachers to managing diversity and effective teaching learning activities in the classrooms.

1) Poor Practice of Managing Diversity in the Classroom

Our communities and schools are daily becoming more and more diverse. These kinds of changes come differences values, beliefs, custom, culture, and language which adversely affected the education sector. This multitude of differences among people has important implications for educators (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009). Moreover, diversity in the classroom create huge challenges for teacher to managing and teaching students with diverse backgrounds (Jung & Pandey, 2018). In this regard, Nepal is multicultural and multilingual country almost 123 languages are spoken (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012). Due to these kinds of diversity most of the teachers were facing challenges to managing diversity in the classroom and conducting effective teaching and learning activities. Hence, the research finding indicated that, most of the students were enrolled in the special classroom with diverse group including language, culture, religion, and socioeconomic class. But the teachers and head teachers were not focusing the students’ diversities in the classroom teaching. They were using same and general instructional strategies in the classroom to teach the students with diverse background. In the diverse classroom teacher’s role is quite valuable to meeting the needs of the students but the result showed that, the teacher and head teacher were not skilled, active, and lack of knowledge to manage the diversity problem in the classroom as well as there were not any specific plan or practice for managing diversity. In addition, almost teachers were from also diverse background, but they were teaching all the students in same languages specially in
Nepali, and not using their experience in real classroom teaching. In relation to this fact, a teacher from inclusive school replied,

"Teacher role is very important for teaching students with diverse background. In our classes most of the students belongs from different diverse group, due to this huge diversity in the classroom it is really challenging to manage and conduct effective teaching and learning activities. To this reason, while teaching in diverse classroom we are facing lots of problem that the students has create" (B- Teacher from Special School-A).

"Curriculum Development Center had developed local curriculum in 22 different local language. But it is not sufficient for all learners to enhance their learning abilities in diverse classroom. Specially, we are tackling language problem in the diversified classroom. Most of the special schools there are lack of knowledge and trained teacher for managing diversity in classroom which directly or indirectly impact the teaching learning practices" (D-Teacher from Integrated School-B).

Hence, the voice of teacher represented the real situation of the special schools where most of the teachers were facing difficulties in diverse classroom. Teaching students with diverse backgrounds is quite difficult for the teacher if they are not skilled and knowledgeable. Most of the students were not beneficial from the diverse classroom teaching strategies and their achievement was also low. In addition, teachers were not using their skills and knowledge in the classroom for the effective and productive learning of the students.

2. Challenges of effective teaching and learning process

Teaching is an intellectual pursuit, both science and an art (Banks, 2016). Professionals should provide a safe learning environment to students with diverse backgrounds and class should be safe places (Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013). In this regard, the study indicated the following challenges in relation to effective teaching and learning in special schools.

1) Rigid Curriculum

In Nepal, Curriculum Development Center developed the local curriculum in 22 different mother tongues, children reference materials in 15 different mother tongues, and guideline books for basic level class (6-8). In addition, local mother tongue will be the medium of instruction for all subjects in the primary level (Curriculum Development Center, 2007). The curriculum is key aspect for all the learners
and it is center of education, by how adequately it can support and accommodate the diversity and variability of learners (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014). In this regard, the research results indicated that it was very complicated to implement local (mother tongue) curriculum in diverse classroom specially in Kathmandu and Bhaktapur district. Because most of the schools located in this area, there were more than five different language spoken students were studied in one classroom. So, if the teacher used one mother tongue curriculum in the classroom for teaching students then the other students are excluded, and they were passive in teaching and learning activities. However, the study showed that the curriculum implemented at school was not found flexible and accommodate the learning needs of the diverse students. In relation to this reality, a head teacher from special school mentioned,

“It is good because the curriculum development center developed the mother tongue curriculum in 22 different languages. But in fact, it is applicable for that area where most of the students are speaks same language in the classroom. But in the case of our school we are in different situation because here are more than five different language speaking students have been studying together in the same class” (A-Head Teacher from Special School-C).

The statement given by head teacher reflect the actual situation of the particular area. Curriculum is most important aspect of the whole education system and it guided the students what they want to be in the near future. But the result realities showed that, present curriculum is not suitable and appropriate for diverse learners as well as it did not address the needs of the students.

2) Lack of Teacher Training

The good teaching begins with the good and obedient teacher, learning from the learners; put yourself in students place so that teacher may understand what s/he learn and the way to understand (Kierkegaard; as cited in Shevitz, Stemple, Robinson, & Jeweler, 2008). In this regard, teacher training is quite necessary for all the teachers to managing diversities and make their teaching and learning activities more effective. For the purpose of enhancing capacity, skill, knowledge, and professional qualities of the teacher, National Center for Educational Development (NCED) conducted thirty days special teacher training programme into three (ten/ten days training) phases all over the Nepal (Curriculum Development Center, 2007; Ministry of Education, 2017). In this regard, the study found most of the head teachers and teachers were not satisfied about the training given by NCED. They said that the special teacher training program was very short as well as training only based on the theoretical aspect. In addition, the training program did not address the real situation of the school environment and the needs of the students. In this esteem, two
teachers from special school replied.

"In fact, we are facing different problem in the school environment. Specially, managing diversity and effective teaching and learning. The training given by NCED was very short, it helps to us only understanding of theoretical aspect of the problem. But it is not suitable for solve the actual problem that we are facing in the diverse classroom. Moreover, in the training period there were not any special training session for managing diversity in the classroom" (Teacher-A and Teacher-B from Special School A).

The opinion given by teachers denotes the actual scenario of the training that they had received. It means, most of the teacher were not satisfied about the special teacher training programs and they were facing different difficulties for managing diversity and effective teaching and learning process.

3) Lack of Content Integration

Content integration involves using examples from various culture to explain different principle, theories, and concepts. The basic concepts, principles, and theories are not altered in any way, but the use of example from diverse culture can assist in making the instruction clearer for students with diverse background (Tam & Gardner, 1997). Hence, the study showed that teachers and head teachers were not use the example of different cultural aspect to clarify the concepts of various contents and theories. They were only use the example what the textbook mentioned in every unit. In addition, while teaching students with diverse backgrounds the teachers were selected the example of books relating to their life and try to make the concept clear. But these kinds of practices are not sufficient for content integration.

In relation to this fact, three teachers from an integrated school replied,

"Content integration practice is less used in our teaching and learning activities. We mostly use the textbook example to clarify the concepts and theories related to given subject area. But in some cases, we try to use content integration for teaching students with children who are learning English at the beginning phase. In fact, we have a limited time to teach the all contents in a particular semester or yearly program, so it is difficult to apply content integration to all subjects" (Teacher-C, Teacher-D, and Teacher-E from Integrated School-B).

Hence, the response given by teachers clarify that the practice of using content integration in the classroom teaching was not significant and appropriate. Some teachers are really energetic and eagerness, they had been using content integration while teaching English as a second language. But, such endeavors were not enough for making teaching and learning activities more effective in diverse classroom.
4) Inadequate of Equitable Pedagogy

Equitable pedagogy encourages teacher to match the instruction with the learning style of the diverse students (Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009). This means, teachers teaching strategies based on the students demands and needs not for teacher intension. In this regard, the study indicated that teachers and head teachers were trying to apply equitable instructional techniques in the classroom. But they did not do any hard work to make an equitable instruction planning more effective. Most of the teachers were using teacher-centered instructional pedagogy for teaching students with diverse background. In addition, students were not actively participated in teaching and learning activity they are only listener of what teacher taught in the classroom. In this regard, a head teacher from special school responded,

"In the diverse classroom, equitable pedagogy is quite important to address the needs of students. I also try to teach students by using equitable instructional method. So, most of the children are participated and interested in teaching and learning. But in our school situation is a bit different from others. Because in our schools, every classroom there are more than four language speaking students are placed. At that condition I cannot properly apply the equitable instructional techniques to every student in every classes" (B-Head Teacher from Special School-A).

The voice of head teacher represented the real practices what they were doing actually in the classroom to make teaching and learning more effective. Their understanding and attempts were really appreciated. Actually, some of the teachers were not obedient to applying their knowledge and skills in the classroom teaching. Besides this, some of them had been trying to their best in everyday to increasing students’ performance even in limited resources. Therefore, such attempts were not sufficient to make instructional strategies equitable.

5) Poor Practice of Scaffolding

Scaffolding has been taken as effective instruction techniques for teaching students with diverse needs. Scaffolding describes interactions between teachers and students that facilitate the learning process. In this process teachers think aloud or talk through the steps they follow to reach a specific conclusion (Stone, 1998). In relation to this theme, the study indicated that most of the teachers did not have the proper concept, knowledge, and idea about the scaffolding and how to use this method in the classroom teaching. Moreover, in selected sample schools there were some newly appointed teacher who were literally known about the term and concept of scaffolding, but they were not follow the teaching strategies an exact process of scaffolding but until or unless the similar. In this regard, the research study indicated there was a bit practice of scaffolding used by newly appointed teachers and other teachers were still unknown about
it. In relation to this fact, a teacher from special school replied,

"Scaffolding is a good instructional practice where teacher supports the students and providing feedback. But the term scaffolding firstly I heard in my academic master level course. But in fact, while teaching students with diverse background I am using theme of scaffolding in my classroom teaching but not completely. In addition, my classroom has many students, limited time, limited staff, no support teacher, and inflexible of physical infrastructure which create challenges for implementing scaffolding instruction in the classroom" (C-Special Teacher from Special School-B).

The real scenario given by special teacher proved that, the bitter reality of the classroom teaching and learning. They did not have an adequate concept and knowledge about the term of special education instructional strategies like scaffolding. However, some teachers were doing really hard work for betterment of classroom diversity and effective teaching and learning. They were always positive and energetic to do better for students and improve their achievement even in the scarcity of different resources.

6) Low Opportunity of Self-Regulated Learning

Students must become independent learners and able to direct their own behavior in ways that assist in maximizing the amount of time engagement of learning through self-regulated learning. Teachers have the responsibility for assisting students to become independent learners and to structure the classroom environment to help students achieve the goal (Serna & Lau-Smith, 1995). Hence, the result of the study indicated that teachers and head teachers were not provided sufficient self-learning time for students. They were always teaching students by their own ways specially lecturer method. In addition, most of the teachers were not prepare the certain strategies or plan for teaching students such as, action plan, goal setting, goal planning, and self-management. They were always entered in the classroom with out lesson plan, unit plan, no classroom management, took the students book and start to teaching. it means, students did not get any opportunities for self-learning and unable to direct their own behavior and achieve the goal. In this regard, two teachers from integrated school reacted,

"Self-regulated learning strategies is good for students. Because it gives plenty of time to students for study and they are able to determine their own activities and behavior to achieve the goal. But in the case of our schools we cannot able to provide self-learning time to each student. Because the number of students is a lot and time is fixed. But somehow, we are providing self-study time to a student once a month randomly" (Teacher-B and Teacher- C from Integrated School-A).
The voice mentioned above indicates that most of the teachers were not using the self-regulated teaching learning strategies in the diverse classroom. They claimed that they had a large number of students and limited time was barriers for implementing self-regulated teaching techniques. But it was not vigorous reason for to support their statement.

7) Insufficient Practice of Cooperative Teaching

Cooperative teaching is becoming an increasingly popular instructional approach for learners with disabilities, pupils who are at risk, as well as providing access to the general education curriculum, and enhancing the performance and participation of students with special needs in the general education classroom (Thousand, Villa, & Nevin, 2007; Villa & Thousand, 2016). In this regard, research finding indicated that most of the teachers and head teachers were not using the cooperative learning practice in their classroom teaching. In addition, they also stated that it was quite difficult to implementing within their schools’ due to untrained teacher and lack of resources. In as sample schools, most of the teachers and head teachers were teaching students by using general teaching method and neglecting the diverse needs of the students. Most of the students in a sample schools were not satisfied to the teaching and learning activities conducted in schools by their teacher. In relation to this fact, two teachers replied,

“I know the cooperative learning practice is quite beneficial for students with diverse needs as well as students who have been struggling for learning. In fact, in our school we are unable to apply the cooperative learning strategies for teaching students with diverse needs due to lack of knowledge, untrained teacher, lack of resource materials, lack of infrastructure, diverse backgrounds of students, large number of students in the class, and lack of special education teacher” (Teacher-B and Teacher- C from Special School- A and Integrated School- B).

The statement mentioned above seems to be the realistic situation of the special schools in Nepal. They did not have sufficient resource materials for making teaching and learning activities more effective. Due to this reason, they were unable to apply the cooperative learning strategies in their schools. Mostly they were using general curriculum and general teaching learning strategies for teaching students with diverse needs.

3. Appropriate Ways to Improve the Teaching and Learning Process in Special Schools

To implement special education successfully in diverse classroom, teachers teaching strategies must be executed that help students acquire knowledge from the viewpoint of diverse ethnic, cultural, religion, and language (Banks, 2016). Therefore, to conducting effective teaching and learning activities in the diverse
classrooms teachers have to identify stages of students and teaching strategies that can be used to help students for better understanding of content matter and make them active and curious for learning. Hence, the research study showed that, there were different kind of hindrances that affected teaching and learning activities in the diverse classrooms which are already discussed above. In addition, most of the teachers and head teachers were not satisfied about the government policy regarding to special education as well as almost teachers in the schools were untrained specially in special schools and lack of knowledge about the disabilities, special education, teaching strategies, and managing diversity in the real classroom settings. in this regard, most of teachers and head teachers replied,

"Being special teachers, we are facing a lot of problem regarding to managing diversity and conducting effective teaching and learning activities in special schools. Government provided training to us, but it was very short and only based on theoretical aspect. So that, if government and policy makers have focus on these factors such as; clear provision for managing diversity, flexible nature of curriculum, adequate teacher training, sufficient resource materials for content integration, promote equitable pedagogy, using scaffolding, give opportunity for self-regulated learning, and apply the strategies of cooperative learning will be appropriate ways to improve the teaching learning processes of special classroom" (Special Teachers from Special School A, B and C).

"Most of the special school of Nepal’s are diversified due to students language, culture, and religion. In this regard, the teaching and learning practices has been influenced by their diversified background. Therefore, we suggested that if the government body should have focused on implementing flexible curriculum for them, some how the teaching and learning activities will be improved and students also get more benefit” (Teacher C and B from Integrated School A and D).

The statement given by the participants proved the real situations, that government, policy makers, and other related stockholders should have seriously thinking and focused on it. In conclusion, the study results showed that the actual situation of managing classroom diversities and the challenging factors that directly or indirectly affected the effective teaching and learning process in special schools in Nepal.

IV. Discussion

The increasing diversity within the nation and its schools poses serious challenges as well as opportunities (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Howard, 2010). As well as, the movement of school reform,
public policies, court cases, and legislative mandates have been enacted to provide maximum opportunities for children with diverse background (Obiakor, 1994; as cited in Utley & Obiakor, 2001). In the context of Nepal, the development trends show a rapid growth of school enrolment of school age children in the past few years, but the diverse background of the students create difficulty in teaching and learning activities in the special schools. In the classroom there were diversity in speaking language, culture, and religion, and sex, but teachers and head teachers did not do proper activities for managing classroom diversities. Furthermore, the teacher may have his or her own language that is diverse from the medium of teaching and learning in the classroom. In this regard, most of the teacher deliver their subject matter or content in the classroom to their own techniques by using their own language specially in Nepali. This kind of teaching strategies may not be suitable in the diverse backgrounds of the classroom by observing the perspective of inclusive education. Hence, schools and the teachers must find ways to respect the diversity of their students as well as help to create unified effective teaching and learning environment in the schools.

In Nepal, the Curriculum Development Center (CDC) developed the local curriculum in 22 different mother tongues, students’ reference materials in 15 different mother tongues, and guideline books for basic level class (6-8) (Curriculum Development Center, 2007). As per the CDC, local mother tongue will be the medium of instruction for all subjects in the primary level. The research results indicated that it was very complicated to implement local (mother tongue) curriculum in diverse classroom specially in Kathmandu and Bhaktapur district. Because most of the schools located in this area, there were more than five different language speaking students were studied in one classroom. Moreover, study indicated that teachers and head teachers were trying to apply equitable instructional techniques in the classroom. But they did not do any hard work to make an equitable instruction planning more effective. Most of the teachers were using teacher-centered instructional pedagogy for teaching students with diverse background.

To implement diverse education successfully, teaching strategies must be implemented that help students acquire knowledge from the perspectives of diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups; clarify and analyze their values, identify courses of action, and act in ways consistent with democratic and human values (Banks, 2016). Hence, NCED conducted thirty days special teacher training programme into three phases (ten/ten days) all over the Nepal (Curriculum Development Center, 2007; Ministry of Education, 2017). In this regard, the findings of the research indicated that most of the head teachers and teachers were not satisfied about the training given by NCED. They said that the nature of special teacher training program was very short, only focused on the theoretical aspect, did not address the real situation of the school environment, and the needs of the students. Effective educational programs should help students to explore and clarify students cultural identities (Banks, 2016). In relation to this, the study showed that
teachers and head teachers were not use the example of different cultural aspect to clarify the concepts of various contents and theories. They were only use the example what the textbook mentioned in every unit.

Students should be taught how to study by way of cooperation with others in the common causes of learning. In a learning community, students interact student-on-student and student-on-teachers (Lotan, 2012). Research finding indicated that most of the teachers and head teachers were not using the cooperative learning practice in their classroom teaching. In addition, through using scaffolding instruction, teachers think aloud or talk through the steps they follow to reach a specific conclusion (Stone, 1998). The study indicated that most of teachers they did not have proper concept, knowledge, and idea about the scaffolding. Teachers have the responsibility for assisting students to become independent learners and to structure the classroom environment to help students achieve the goal (Serna & Lau-Smith, 1995). Effective teachers in diverse society must have democratic attitudes, values, multicultural philosophy, and the ability to view salutations from diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives and point of view (Banks, 2016). The result of the study indicated that teachers and head teachers were not provided sufficient self-learning time for students. They were always teaching students by their own ways specially lecturer method. In addition, most of the teachers were not prepare the certain strategies or plan for teaching students such as, action plan, goal setting, goal planning, and self-management in a diverse classroom.

V. Conclusions

Students learn and demonstrate their competences in different ways. The preferred mode of demonstrating task mastery for some is writing, whereas others do better in speaking, visualizing, or performing. Most of the students with diverse needs has been facing difficulties in learning to their classrooms. In addition, most of the Nepalese special schools, there are not proper strategies, skills, and knowledge to addressing the needs of students with diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, most of the teachers and head teachers are failure to managing diversity in the classrooms and they are using general teaching strategies to teach the students. Therefore, most of the students are struggling a lot in the classroom for adjustment, developing knowledge, understanding content matter, maintaining the good relationship between teachers and peer groups, solve the academic problem, active participation in teaching and learning and difficulty to achieving the academic goals.

In the diverse classroom, the teacher role is quite valuable to meet the needs of students. In relation to this, government of Nepal provide the thirty days special education teacher training under the NCED, as well as curriculum development center developed the local mother tongue curriculum for making teaching
and learning activities more effective in diverse classrooms and to meet the needs of students. But such endeavors are not enough to address and ensure the needs of students with diverse backgrounds. Moreover, poor practice that generally made by teachers and head teachers towards managing diversity in the classroom, rigid curriculum, lack of teacher training, lack of content integration, inadequate of equitable pedagogy, and poor practice of scaffolding are the significant factors for creating difficulties in effective teaching and learning activities. Furthermore, low opportunity of self-regulated learning and insufficient practice of cooperative teaching also directly or indirectly create challenges for effective teaching and learning activities in special schools in Nepal. Due to this reason, most of the students with diverse backgrounds barely get success in classroom adjustment, problem of active participation in teaching and learning process, and difficult to achieve desired goals. Therefore, adequate devotion should be paid towards their problems on time for their optimal participation in learning and make teaching and learning activities more active accelerative in special schools.

References


특수교육의 다양성 관리: 네팔 특수학교에서의 효미적 수와 학습 과정의 피체

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국문초록

특수교육의 다양성 관리:
네덜란드 특수학교에서의 효과적 교수와 학습 과정의 과제

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연구목적: 이 연구는 네팔 특수학교에서 이루어지고 있는 다양성 관리에 의한 교사의 활동과 효과적 교수 및 학습 과정을 위한 교사의 활동을 분석하고자 하였다. 연구방법: 연구 방법은 해석적 패러다임에 기초한 질적 연구 설계가 적용되었다. 연구 대상은 카트만두와 박타풀 지역의 6개 학교(3개 특수학교, 3개 통합학교)에서 유의추출 방식을 통해 교장 6명, 교사 12명이 포함되었다. 자료를 수집하기 위해 심층면담, 포커스 집단 토의, 문서분석이 실시되었으며, 그 과정에 참여 자료는 개방형 및 탐색형 질문이 이용되었다. 연구결과: 연구 결과에 의하면 다양한 학습을 지도하는 일은 교사들에게 매우 어려운 업무인 것으로 밝혀졌다. 아울러, 연구는 특수교사들이 교실의 다양성에 대해 적절히 관리하지 못하고 있으며, 경직된 교육과정, 혼란이 부족한 교사, 내용 통합의 부족, 불공평한 교육, 비해 교수 실제의 부족, 자기조절학습 기회 부족, 협력 교수를 위한 불충분한 연습 등을 교수학습 과정의 가장 두드러진 문제점으로 지적하였다. 결론: 따라서 이 연구는 다양성 관리를 포함한 교사의 적절한 혼란, 유연성 있는 교육과정, 내용의 적절한 통합, 협력교수의 실천을 통해 다양한 학생들로 구성된 학급을 효과적으로 지도할 필요가 있음을 지적하였다.

주요어: 다양성 관리, 효과적인 학습지도, 내용 통합, 자기조절학습, 협력교수