LEADERSHIP INFLUENCE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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A Dissertation

Submitted to

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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Philosophy in Education

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation represents my original work and that it has not been submitted for candidature for any other degree.

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Babu Ram Bhusal December 26, 2013

Degree Candidate

DEDICATION

To those community college leaders who have been leading the upliftment of their institutions in highly turbulent socio-political situations.

Master of Philosophy in Educational Leadership dissertation entitled Leadership Influence on Quality Enhancement at Community Colleges of Babu Ram Bhusal presented on December 26, 2013.

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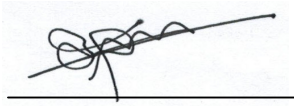

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the dissertation of Babu Ram Bhusal for the degree of *Master of Philosophy in Educational Leadership* presented on December 26, 2013

Title: Leadership Influence on Quality Enhancement at Community Colleges

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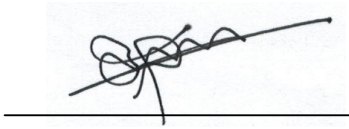

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This study was conducted as an attempt to see the influence of educational leadership on employees for motivating them in quality enhancement mission. The assumption behind it was the need of creative and innovative leadership for motivated and efficient team spirit in quality education. Researcher's professional experience of above a decade had played inspirational role behind selecting the topic from quality attempts of community colleges. The research questions were obviously centralized in the leadership perceptions and their strategic efforts for imparting quality education.

The main purpose of this research was to study and explore the influence of leadership in motivating the employees for improved performance. The philosophical and theoretical support of transformational leadership theory and continuous improvement approach strengthened the research. I gave due emphasis to leadership behaviors, faculty development, promotion of effective team work and practical efforts in real field as well. Those themes of my study were guided by the philosophy

that transformational leaders inspire and stimulate followers to transcend their own self interests for higher collective purpose, mission or vision.

The research adopted interpretative research paradigm with the beliefs that the perceptions of participants and theoretical support with researcher's understanding could derive meanings through continuous interactions and interpretations. From philosophical stance**,** I believed that knowledge could be generated on the ground of multiple realities and people's subjective expressions. I had adopted in- depth interview and field observation as primary sources and the other printed documents and available literatures were taken as the secondary sources. The basic data were collected from twelve participants of three different community colleges with differences.

The perceived data were presented and interpreted under various themes via perceptions and efforts in quality enhancement, leadership influence on employees, human resource development and mobilization for institutional strength and shifting threats into opportunities. The roles of leaders were found critically supported by the followers. The differences in the quality of observed research sites were specifically on the ground of formation and implementation of strategies. The findings hinted varied and insufficient attempts of leaders as the prominent cause behind quality deterioration in community colleges. The concluding remarks further encourage college leaders in general and community college leaders in particular to plan and implement farsighted strategies to cope with the ever widening challenges in academia.

_____ December 26, 2013

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ABBREVIATION

AGM: Annual General Meeting

ARS: Areas Restricted for Studies

BBA: Bachelor in Business Administration

BBS: Bachelor in Business Studies

CA: Campus Assembly

CMC: College Management Committee

FSU: Free Students' Union

HR: Human Resource

IQMC: Internal Quality Management Circle

KU: Kathmandu University

NPC: National Planning Commission

PCA: Public College Association

PSDU: Professional Skills Development Unit

QAA: Quality Assurance and Accreditation

SHEP: Second Higher Education Project

SSR: Self Study Report

TA & DA: Travel Allowance and Daily Allowance

TOR: Terms of Reference

UGC: University Grant Commission

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Originally developed to be an extension of high school, community colleges have become an essential part of the nation's educational fabric (Cunningham, 2009, p. 60). The statement illustrates the scenario of community colleges in USA where community colleges were established to meet the growing needs of the people of lower strata. The goal was to make the community colleges fit into the students' and the communities' lives, not the other way around. Community colleges are "deliberately inclusive" (Griffith & Connor, 1994, as cited in Cunningham, 2009, p. 60).

In Nepalese context the political change of 2046 B.S. begot a large number of community colleges to serve the educational needs of common people (B. N. Ojha, personal communication, February 25, 2012). As the title defines community colleges are found devoted in the service of common people of inclusive nature. At the same time they get adequate public sympathy and support. Gilfert (2010) made an effort to assess the relationship between parenting satisfaction and academic performance of community colleges. He found both the enrolment and the attrition of community colleges very high (p.17).

Cunningham (2009) views that, "there is symbolic relationship between the citizens and the community colleges" (p. 62). The citizens keep extra interest and support to such colleges with service motive. Due to the adverse situation of the students, the college administration had to ease them with extra devotion and favor

which depended on the kind of leadership in the colleges of their involvement. I had, therefore, given due emphasis to the leadership activities in this research work.

The leaders of community based colleges feel themselves responsible to envision strategies and set framework for the effective implementation or procurement plan in long and/or short term basis (Astin & Astin, 2000, as cited in Schmitz, 2008, p. 9). Leadership is inherently value-based and concerned with fostering change. They try their best to exhibit task oriented and relation oriented behavior in such a way that they maintain closer proximity with the fellow employees. Such kind of behavior obviously leads to the feeling of change oriented behavior and realization of organizational citizenship. The rational mind set of these leaders and their field performances have to go in the same line for the inspirational motivation of the esteemed members.

Bass & Riggio (2006) remark that " the norms develop because of what leaders stress as important, how they deal with crises, the way they provide role models, and whom they attract to join them in their organizations" (p.100). This definition highlighted ideal role and skill to handle the crisis. I feel that the leaders of the academic institutions are those forerunners who deserve rights and acknowledge duties to provide an ideal role model to the institution as the finest track for all. Krishnan (2003) opines that "leadership alters and elevates the motives, values and goals of followers through the vital teaching role of leadership, enabling leaders and followers to be united in the pursuit of higher goals". Their strategic activities guide and lead the institutions to the expected target in the creative participation of all the stakeholders.

Dahlgaard, Kristensen, and Kenji (2007) gave visionary expressions that "leadership is the driving force behind policy and strategy, people management,

resources and processes leading ultimately to excellence in result" (p. 212). It seemed worthy to state that the leaders play crucial role for the inspirational motivation of the followers towards accomplishment of organizational goals in joint effort. Leaders of academic institutions need ideal personality, inspirational role model, visionary ideas, long term development strategies and transparent management skills to address growing expectations of the stakeholders. Their administrative and managerial skills ensure institutional sustainability and time specific transformation of the institutions amid the competitive educational market. So the leadership practices are regarded extremely important and researchable in case of tertiary education.

Quality is a philosophy with dimensions and can be summed up as 'doing things properly' for competitiveness and profitability (Dahlgaard et al., 2007, p. 14). Quality education, at the same time, is a highly complex and debatable issue of present intellectual arena due to various perceptions and modalities in practice. Though advocated in various occasions, we don't find any specific model and practice for rendering quality education and models differ in context. Three-Year Interim Plan (2007-2010) emphasized on the production of research oriented and competitive human resource so as to develop knowledge based society. The emphasis of national education policy seemed to be oriented towards creation of life skills through the preparation of educated, trained and research oriented manpower.

Quality education tends to enable the learners with their ability to generate skills, gain sustainability, adopt professionally and demonstrate change (Tomlinson, 2004). In fact, quality has to be defined from the angle of adjustment of the learners after the completion of academic programs. The above stated definition of quality education hinted that life skills, changes in living standard, confidence in person, role awareness and the like can be additional indicators while explaining quality of

education. Since community colleges have been imparting their services at razor's edge, the strategies should be guided by established norms of quality management perspectives. The theoretical lenses and existing practices of quality, in my realization, should be analyzed to find appropriate quality improvement model for our context. This sector is highly researchable in course of getting the finest track of higher education for long future.

The prominent steps in a quality program are management commitment and a quality improvement team (Sallis, 2002, p. 45). The above version proves the employees of any organization as the most valuable assets and responsible members among the stakeholders. The most human aspects of these people are to be addressed positively in case of desiring their maximum dedication and devotion in the assigned responsibilities. If the leaders fail to address the expectations and to regard the potentiality of the fellow warriors in time, their capacity will be either unproductive or counterproductive in long run.

The World Bank Report (1998) says that higher education is a repository and defender of culture, an agent of change in this culture, an engine for national economic growth, and an instrument for the realization of collective aspirations (p. 1). Since one of the major factors behind uplifting human civilization to present culmination is the education in general and higher education in particular, higher education functions as the touchstone in course of rectifying nation's intellectual strength. Varghese (2003) presents the prevalence of three types of financing and management in higher education viz. public financing and management, private financing and management, and foreign financing in education. The types of these colleges differ on the basis of funding modality, participation of the stakeholders, and existing legal provision or national education policy.

In our context, there is the existence of three types of colleges via constituent colleges, community colleges and private colleges on the basis of financing or funding for their operation (UGC Nepal, 2010). Constituent colleges have heavy interruption of turbulent political influence and private colleges are beyond the capacity of common people. While studying the issues of higher education in Nepal, Acharya (2009) states that private colleges create gap between rich and poor, and community colleges are found significantly contributing for equity and access.

The community colleges were in a unique position to attend the needs of many underserved populations (Cunningham, 2009, p. 14). Community colleges are regarded as the destination for a large number of communities at present especially by virtue of their affordable fees and unhampered academic activities (Ojha, 2012). These colleges get affiliation from various universities and render their services under their own rules and regulations. These colleges are public properties but no direct financial address of the government except the nominal support from the University Grant Commission.

We find involvement of local community in the establishment and operation of community colleges and the property ownership remains within the institution and ultimately to the nation (Ojha, 2012). In straight to say, community colleges have been offering their services to the nation generating the resources of their own and not for profit motive. The existing chaotic socio-political condition and strong grips of technology have positively challenged the leadership of these colleges to formulate and implement certain time specific strategies to combat the upcoming threats. A successful leadership with strong vision, missions, goals and objectives is strongly mandatory in this grand work. The role of present leaders, involved in these colleges,

determine the destiny of the entire institution and help in paving the future road map of the nation's education.

Amid above mentioned conditions and rapidly advancing technological practices**,** the leaders of higher educational institutions are passing very hard time in their jobs. The fellow employees are to be motivated in such a way that their collective efforts pave the future road map of higher education towards time specific and demand driven outcomes. The leadership, in this sense, has to play the role of catalyst/ change agent to foster competitive advantages. If the leaders create values, nurture employees, give them responsibilities and make them accountable in their esteemed profession, their employment turns into ownership. This situation ultimately leads to institutional success. This research makes its bases on the same issue with the need of sustainability and struggle for valuable existence.

Researcher's Perceptual Story

The present research topic deals with the influence of leadership on team spirit in the line of promoting quality in academia. There is genuine reason behind my selection of this research topic. I am an employee, as senior faculty, in one of the community colleges of Kathmandu Valley. In course of my service of more than a decade I have got opportunities to have a closer observation of the overall administrative works of my college. Though our college has been recognized as a reputed educational institution, it seems deteriorating both in quality and quantity in recent years. I feel that the prominent reasons behind this flaw are inefficient leadership and employee dissatisfaction that have hindered the effectiveness in performance.

In occasional informal gossips most of my colleagues express their dissatisfaction towards leadership and seem strongly demotivated towards the main

stream of the college. They blame the leadership basically on the ground of fair performance appraisal, job accountability, stability in decisions and implementation, impartial team spirit and staff participation in decisions. Some of them hesitate to express their inner feelings assuming me to be closer to the administration simply because of my seniority. I feel that the colleagues are right to a great extent because their feelings are positive in the line of institutional development.

I believe that quality enhancement depends mainly on the role of leaders. Their artistic handling and motivation of the staff ensure effective team work. Though the fellow members also play important role in this grand mission, the major responsibility of motivating the employees remains with the leader. The efforts and motives of the administration of my college don't seem adequate to address the dissatisfactions of the staffs. The strategies of the past have been outdated and the advancement in policy is away from recent practices. I always expect the forerunners of my institution devote for drastic change but my suggestions are not given any priority.

I always desire ideal administrative modality and sound interpersonal relationship among college members for its harmonious development. The existing chaotic situation of my college has raised a number of questions in my mind. Why does such a conflicting situation prevail in our college for so long? Why does not the administration worry in time for efficiently addressing the prevailing dissatisfactions of the staffs? How can we unite and energize the entire team members for smooth college development? What could be the appropriate scheme to evaluate the performance of all the institutional members so as to motivate them towards devotion in work? How can the college face the open market competitions of academic arena? Such questions were deeply rooted in my mind almost unanswered for long time.

This curiosity of change oriented leadership inspired me to see the other community colleges in term of leadership practices, the influences of their behavior on employee motivation and team spirit for change. This research topic got origin from these all mixed feelings, curiosities and expectations. My research, therefore, is an outcome of vigorous attempts while generating perceptions and ideas of the representatives from community colleges. As a researcher, I believe that education has to enable the learners to cope all the difficulties of life including the professional settlement. I don't give importance to the certificates if they don't support in livelihood. Regarding the enhancement efforts I am clear that the employees of academic institutions have to be led and motivated by visionary leadership in the quality mission.

Rationale of the Study

Economic, social and political forces, in many countries, have amalgamated to produce a climate in which academic institutions feel continued pressure to improve and raise levels of achievement (Harris, 2010, p. 693). The crux of any research depends on the justification of its needs along with the full fledge study of the existing pool of knowledge. Generally, academic research works are the product of some sort of addition in the available strength of the field. As a researcher, one has to prove why the topic needs further study and what will be its implication in future perspectives. The present topic keeps high importance owing to the growing participation of the community in sustainable community college programs and extreme needs of further expansion of programs that take in-depth study as pre-requisites.

Haris (2004) expresses his view that "the complexity and shrinking of today's global marketplace literally forces people to capitalize on their differences to progress

together" (p. 2). The ideas reflect reality of social advancement of our time with its impact for long future. The present academia has been critically affected due to advancement in science and technology, rapid globalization, socio-political conflicts, advancement in curriculum, continuous deterioration in cultural values, and poor professional ethics. We are bound to accept the bitter reality that the academic institutions of present time are fragile in both moral and intellectual grounds mainly due to excessive profit motive and unhealthy competition in the use of available resources. The leaders of these institutions seem busy in planning and implementing short term strategies which may not always ensure positive result for long.

This research is an outcome of a vigorous study of the leadership practices as the experiences for long time. The challenging role of the college leaders can pave strong roadmap for ensuring quality strength in academia. The participants, as the representative characters of educational field, can develop a framework for future. To cope with all kinds of chaotic circumstances and to achieve academic excellence, the prevailing leadership has to play the role of change bearer. S/he has to initiate and inspire all the fellow warriors in such a way that they feel entirely responsible for the all round development of the institution. The team work effectiveness can be perceived from various angles but the major factor is ideal leadership with clear vision.

Due to turbulent political situation, lack of firm educational policy, mushrooming tertiary educational institutions in private sector and uncontrolled affiliation from foreign universities, higher educational institutions are facing numerous bewilderments in Nepalese context. Quality education, life skills, personality development, job placement and fair accountability are also threatening aspects in this ground. The researchers of this nature will succeed to determine

certain framework in which the academic leaders can formulate their strategies for change. So this research can be expected to be supportive in standardizing the educational quality especially in the higher educational institutions on community basis.

The problems facing education systems in South and Southeast Asian countries often appear to be alike, for example, poorly trained teachers, inadequate supply of textbooks, weak management, little or no instructional supervision and poor facilities (Chapman & Adams, p. 68). Nepal lies in the same region and all the above stated problems ultimately depend on and settled by leadership efforts. If we fail to study the efforts of community colleges and develop strong base to cope with the growing challenges, community colleges will face the threat of extinction. The only back force of quality innovation is not other than research that helps to formulate foundation of knowledge. This topic, in this sense, deserves the quality to be researched which ultimately provides back force to all concerned for the days ahead. In other words, this topic should be researched to mitigate the prevailing loopholes in quality efforts of community colleges.

Statement of the Problem

Schmitz (2008), in his doctoral thesis, expressed his opinion, that "community colleges are known for their ease of access, excellent academic programs that meet learners' needs, low cost and a broad array workforce training" (p. 1). His version indicated the admission of students from low financial capacity that fits Nepalese context as well except their condition of academic excellence. Community colleges were intended to educate the underserved including women, minorities, and working adults (Cunningham, 2009, p. 14). The study clearly hinted that community colleges

were dedicated to the discovery and development of those people whose abilities had been overlooked.

Community colleges, in Nepalese context, were usually established in combined efforts of the local community and the forerunners of the prevailing society. We don't find proper financial support from the side of the government for easing the promotion of these colleges and the fees of community colleges are nominal and affordable (Ojha, 2012). These colleges are not for personal profit as that of private colleges and obviously operating in limited resources. Gilfert (2010) made thorough study of American community colleges and remarked that student enrolment in community colleges is at an all times high, while simultaneously, so is student attrition. According to the American Association of Community Colleges (2006), only 22.4 percent of community college students in 2004 actually earned a degree or certificate within three years of initial enrolment (p. 19).

The above stated studies and the discussed information made an easy realization that a large number of common public attended community colleges but the uneven and critical situation resulted into high rate attrition. In the similar sense Nepalese community colleges are in pressure to compete with government managed constituent colleges and heavily invested business venture of private sector at the same time (Ojha, 2012). His experience from the leader's position is the real reflection of tertiary level education in our context. The government seems indifferent to above three hundred community colleges of the nation that serve 33.4% youths who seek higher education (UGC, 2011/12, pp. 37, 58-64). According to University Grant Commission Report (2010) the community colleges are getting nominal grant of small token as financial support.

The community colleges get affiliation from the universities and are left in the form of autonomy without any specific guidelines for operation. The responsibilities of all kinds remain in the management committees and leadership in action (Dr. Ishwor Gautam, President of Public College Association, in personal communication, July 15, 2013). As a result, the educational leaders of these community colleges are compelled to struggle for academic excellence provided with very nominal resources. Globalization, increased competition, teachers' professionalism, and technological changes, as well as teacher and student diversity, make the requirements of leadership increasingly complex (Dhakal, 2013, p. 2). Advancement in the field of science and technology, globalized educational market, turbulent socio-political situation, and growing need of competing with private sector are some of the numeral challenges that the community colleges are compelled to face. The leadership of community colleges, therefore, is working at the razor's edge and their existence depends entirely on the education they impart.

The Continuous Improvement (CI) approach, in the views of Temponi (2005), covers the parallel development of people, equipment, supplies, materials and procedures (p.3). Community colleges are under compulsion to compete present complex market with their continuous attempts for improvement. Had community colleges been able to ensure the quality in the line of demand driven education, the need of private colleges would fall in shadow. The demarcation between private colleges and community colleges is basically in term of quality itself. The exhibited role of community college leaders has been insufficient and inadequate in this regard especially to compete with the mushrooming private colleges in our context and the leadership is bound to accept inferiority in quality at present (Ojha, 2012).

In the words of Joshi (2000) the monopolistic role captured by the public institutions seems to be fading especially witnessed since last two decades due to simultaneous growth of private institutions (p. 40). The evidences of community college inferiority in presence of private colleges can be perceived that the average pass rates at the bachelor level's level at TU constituent campuses, community campuses and private campuses are around 11%, 25% and 50% respectively (The World Bank, 2007). The idea is that the major threat in front of community colleges of present times is the deterioration in quality. Though poor resources turbulent socio-political situation also play vital role the prominent responsibility goes to the leadership on how it understands quality education and promotes strategies for innovation. The need is transformation and not merely slight change in existing quality.

How do the leaders of community colleges perceive the concept of quality education? How do they make visionary strategies in the line of quality enhancement? How do they get success to motivate all the stakeholders in the overall development of college? How do they tackle the unfavorable situations in course of leading? How do they get support from the fellow members? Why could not such a large number of community colleges fulfill the need of educational market place and gave space to the private sector? Is the product of community colleges inferior to that of private sector? Such crucial concerns and issues had been deeply rooted in my mind for long giving space to this research.

I believe that community colleges, due to their unique and entirely different identity, should succeed to stand in A Grade in case of education they impart. The perceived information and public attraction give rich evidences that community colleges have become the places for people from lower strata causing high enrolment

and high attrition (Gilfert, 2010, p. 17). The ultimate solution to the problem, in my view, is quality enhancement which is an outcome of visionary leadership dedicated to institutional transformation. My research got origin from the same ground.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this research was to study and explore the influence of leadership in motivating the employees for improved performance. More specifically, the study attempted to analyze and describe the perception of college leaders about quality education and their inspirational strategies to promote integrated teamwork for continuous improvement in quality.

Research Questions

The following research questions, as the guiding principles, had been set so as to achieve the purpose of this research:

a. How do the community college leaders perceive the concept of quality education?
b. What strategic activities help them promote integrated teamwork for continuous improvement in quality?
c. What problems and opportunities do they find in their leadership practices?

Delimitation of the Study

This research has attempted to explore the perceived notion of educational leaders in reference to the influence of leadership activities in the process of enhancing quality education in community colleges. The focus was laid on the leadership role which obviously is only one of the various sectors that determine the quality as a whole. So the study deserves a number of delimitations. Delimitation, as the term defines, is giving demarcation to the study in the line of narrowing down the study area and it plays crucial role in research to ease the content coverage.

The most prominent delimitation, as hinted above, is related to the coverage of the factors that play crucial role in ensuring quality education in an institution. No matter what affecting factors are hindering the quality mission in community colleges of our context, the research has studied the role of college leaders assuming it as the prominent factor. So the study does not cover the other influencing factors behind quality enhancement.

In course of data generation also the perceptions of the college leaders were made the bases instead of observing their real life administrative practices. The researcher depended on the information given in the form of their perceptions from their lived experiences. As a result, the research adopted in-depth interview as the major tool for data generation. Similarly, specific focus was given to their inspiration of the leadership activities towards the employees, the most important members among the stakeholders. Similarly, the study focused on the influence of the leadership on the employees leaving other aspects of leadership practices aside. In case of quality efforts, major emphasis was given to the application of the education in life which may not represent the entire crux of getting education. In real sense, the research was expected to be a small part of knowledge and practices of the community colleges.

Organization of the Research Report

This research report has been organized in eight chapters. The first chapter covers the introductory part of the study which includes the study background, researcher's perceptual story, and statement of the problem, purpose and research questions, rationale and delimitations of the study. The second chapter deals with the related literature as the theoretical support to the research. It is followed by theoretical framework. The third chapter deals with the methodology which covers

research design, tools and techniques, data collection procedures and conceptual framework of the study.

The following three chapters consist of the presentation and interpretation of the data on the basis of research questions. More specifically, chapter four deals with leadership perceptions and strategies regarding quality enhancement at community colleges where the fifth chapter covers the interpretation of the issues related to human resource development, their motivation for distinct performance and synergistic outcome. Similarly, chapter six presents the perceived opportunities in front of community college leadership as the bright aspects which are consequently followed by threats as the hindrances. Likewise, chapter seven is concerned with the major findings of the research along with the discussions in context to the theories. Finally, the eighth chapter presents my conclusions followed by implications targeted towards the uses and further development of the research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight (2006) express their views that, "a literature review is a critical summary and assessment of the range of existing materials" (p. 122). I take research as the process of further strengthening the existing knowledge in the related field. For it, I had to know the minute details of the prevailing knowledge related to the topic before daring to go deeper than that. I was fully aware of this essence. As a qualitative researcher, I made a thorough and critical evaluation of available literature with adequate input from my impression on it. It had eased me to find appropriate gap of my research. The contents of my literature review were related theories, approaches and policy provisions including national and international practices on leadership, team spirit and quality enhancement. I tried my best to limit the coverage of literature as guided by my research questions and I have put the literature under various headings and sub-headings.

Review of Related Theories and Approaches

For me the theories and approaches are the existing pool of knowledge that direct, guide, condition, and facilitate in promoting the research. My research topic was related to quality strengthening efforts in academic institutions. I made thorough and specific study of the related theories and approaches at the stage. The theories and approaches were simultaneously discussed and cross evaluated at the analysis stage so as to generate authentic meaning from the bases of the field information. The most relevant theories and approaches had been prioritized and discussed under the following headings:

Transformational Leadership for Innovation in Academia

The concept of transformational leadership was coined by James Mac Gregor Burns (1978) in his famous book on political leadership and enlarged by Bernard M. Bass (1985) through various researches. It is a highly advocated and trusted model for academia in which the leaders reach beyond the effects of established norms by transforming the followers towards changed visionary organizational structure. "Transformational leaders transform the personal values of followers to support the vision and goals of the organization by fostering an environment where relationships can be formed and by establishing a climate of trust in which visions can be shared"(Bass, 1985 as cited in Stone et al., 2004). This definition focuses on the formation of long term organizational vision and mission to impress/inspire the followers for their self devotion in the organizational mission.

Transformational leadership is the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (Northouse, 2008, p. 176). The value driven leadership succeeds in motivating the followers to abandon their personal and devote for the sake of radical change in organization. Everyone, in the inspirational urge of such leaders, is eager to uplift the quality of the institution leaving the self aside.

Similarly, Luthans (2008) says that "transformational leadership is based more on leaders' shifting the values, beliefs, and needs of their followers" (p. 424). Personal norms and values are converted into those of institution. Transformational leaders provide vision and sense of mission for the overall development of organization and all round development of its members. This sort of innovative environment promotes intelligence, rationality, creativity and sense of transformation in organization. They have timely information system, sound interrelationship, and

inspiring work environment, shared vision in decisions and automation in implementation. Regarding the mission of transformational leadership, Champoux (1996) gives his views that a leader has to emphasize charisma with individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. This creates a sense of inspiration and motivation towards the followers. As a result, the leaders gain trust and respect in long run but are criticized in some situations as their vision demands additional effort of the followers.

Northouse (2008) further states that "transformational leadership creates a culture in which employees feel empowered and encouraged to freely discuss and try new things" (p. 190). From the above definition I learnt some significant steps of creating change in organization by a transformational leader. Such a visionary leader has to be a strong role model that the fellow members of the organization can follow as the source of inspiration. S/he has to articulate a clear and appealing vision along with explanation of its implementation strategies. It suggested the way for educational leaders to launch programs in full participation of the esteemed followers or fellow employees.

Transformation of any organization is a gradual process that depends on many facets and dimensions of the leadership process. The initiation and development of significant changes of any organization is a grand process that can't be limited to any particular and definite framework. The leader has to be optimistic in the future plan and build confidence among all concerned. As a change agent, the leader has to demonstrate various attributes such as visionary, ethical, interactive, passionate**,** etc. This situation will create a gradual transformation of organization. Above ideas go side by side with the version of Ozaralli (2003) that a leader creates an organizational

environment where followers feel empowered to seek an innovative approach to distinct performance (p. 7).

Stone et al (2005) are of the opinion that transformational leaders solicit their followers' ideas and creative solutions to problems (p. 351). Being dynamic in nature, transformational leadership can be regarded as an ideal leadership for all ages because it encourages the procedures of searching advanced options to substitute outdated ones. Transformational leadership theory advocates the ideal mechanism of leadership in which the followers are gradually empowered for responsibilities so as to free the leaders from their day to day responsibility. The leaders at the same time can be involved in further innovative works. Shared vision, maximum upliftment of individual knowledge, promotion of team spirit, opportunities for leadership development, high level motivation, etc. are some of the numeral strategies of transformational leadership that distinguish it from other general leadership models.

According to Bass (1990) transformational leaders embody the four traits or characteristics via idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual motivation and individualized consideration. The leaders having these characteristics demonstrate balance between institutional progress and employee development. These characteristics can be further elaborated in this way.

Idealized Influence

Idealized influence is the charismatic element of transformational leadership in which leaders become role models who are admired, respected, and emulated by followers (Avolio & Bass, 2002, as cited in Stone et al., 2004, p. 350). At this stage, a visionary leader provides vision, mission goals and objectives of the institution as the strategies of quality enhancement. "Transformational leaders are endowed by their followers as having extra ordinary capabilities, persistence and determination"

(Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 6). According to them, the leaders are able to reassure the followers that the obstacles will be overcome.

The idealized influence was realized by Robbins, DeCenzo, Bhattacharya, & Agarwal (2009) that transformational leaders provide vision and sense of mission, instill pride, gain respect and trust (p. 457). Such kind of trust, according to the theory, works as the driving force in promoting organizational spirit. The fellow members get those planning as a matter of pride and they demonstrate respect and trust towards their leader. Since they believe on the leader's articulation of bright future, they follow the leader without any doubt.

Inspirational Motivation

Regarding the motivating efforts of transformational leaders, Stone et al (2004) opine that they "build relationships with followers through interactive communication, which forms a cultural bond between the two participants and leads to a shifting of values by both parties toward common ground" (p. 350). The leader of the organization communicates high expectations from the fellow staff in very simple way with an urge to their creative dedication. "They create clearly communicated expectations that followers want to meet and also demonstrate commitment to goals and shared vision" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 6). The trust and expectation ensure their efforts without any doubt on the results.

This sense of motivation of all the employees makes an easy answer why transformational leadership is essential for institutional transformation. In the words of Robbins et al. (2009), transformational leaders are capable of communicating high expectations, using symbols to focus effort and expressing important purposes in simple ways (p. 457). The above expressed views of the scholars are directed towards

inspirational motivation of the leaders because they need to impress the followers with the articulation of their visionary programs.

Intellectual Stimulation

Transformational leaders, according to Bass and Riggio (2006), "stimulate their followers' efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems and approaching old situations in new ways, p.6". They inspire the followers to look at problems from different angles. The intellectually stimulating leader encourages followers to try new approaches but emphasizes rationality (Bass, 1990b as cited in Stone et al., 2004, p. 351). They are aware of the fact that the entire progress of the organization depends on the intellectual capacity of its employees.

The leaders of academic institutions are concerned with the dealing of human intellect. Transformational leaders are expected to promote intelligence, rationality and careful problem solving in their esteemed organizations (Robbins et al., 2009, p. 457). The leadership is committed to promote intelligence and rationality among all the members. The capacity of the staff, therefore, is well recognized and encouraged for careful problem solving in visionary leadership.

Individualized Consideration

Another important aspect of transformational leadership is the priority and regard of the leaders on every individual. "Transformational leaders pay special attention to each individual follower's needs for achievement and growth by acting as a coach or mentor" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p.7). They give personal attention, teach each employee individually, coach and advice them for their best performance. If employees need nurturance, the leader will nurture; if employees need task structure, the leader will provide task structure (Northouse, 2010, as cited in Rowe & Guerrero, 2010). They are certain that the progress of the organization ensures good of its

people. One of the specialties of transformational leadership is that "followers' mistakes are not publicly criticized and creativity is openly encouraged" (Stone et al., 2004, p. 351). There is no any evidence that the employees are dealt with some sense of partiality. This is one of the major reasons why we find strong team spirit in these organizations.

The above four factors signify that a leader has to build followers' expectations by envisioning a mutually desirable future and articulating how to attain it. These leaders are self confident deserve a long term vision and have strong convictions in that vision. They are ideal role models; devote their selfless service and source of inspiration for the followers. Due to their capacity exhibit a profound and extra ordinary effect on the followers, the followers are inspired to transcend their own self interests for the good of the organization. As a result, an ideal team work, with strong commitment, moves ahead with their fullest potential.

Transformational practices serve as guidance for leaders to accomplish their achievements or to get extraordinary things done (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, as cited in Abu-Tineh et al., 2008). Those practices, according to them, are: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. The dimensions of leadership practice, proposed by Kouzes and Posner, seem the reformed version of the four aforementioned traits of a transformational leader. The leaders are eager for innovation in the organizations they are involved into.

As discussed in Chapter One the community colleges of Nepal are struggling for existence at present. The present research aims at enhancing quality in those colleges in application of transformational leadership as the catalyst in course of empowering and advancing all the stakeholders towards the highest achievements.

For the same regard I chose transformational leadership as the theoretical base of my research. Transformational leaders, in my realization, are self confident, intelligent, and cultivate vision and foresight, sense of responsibility, optimistic outlook and flexible attitude.

I made critical evaluation of the available information in reference to the transformational leadership principles. I included my personal perceptions about the leadership roles in higher educational scenario of our context. Leadership theories, leadership perceptions from the study sites and my perception as a researcher made a combined whole as report of my research.

Shared Vision for Institutional Strength

The question of eagerness to excellence depends on the involvement of the employees in the strategic decisions. Yukl (2008) argues that the most extreme form of shared leadership occurs when all important decisions are made collectively, and the leadership responsibilities for daily operations are distributed among the members and rotated frequently (p. 128). His argument supports the democratic norms of decisions that the employees perform the tasks decided by them. It ensures sense of ownership and they are internally motivated to offer their selfness devotion naturally. Shared vision in decisional sectors has to be initiated by the leaders which are related to the types of leadership.

In the opinion of Sergiovanni (1992) the desired goal for publicity provided education is the creation of the 'virtuous institution' characterized by a covenant of shared values' and by an ethos of caring and respect for persons. The concept of virtuous institution here is not other than the sense of organizational membership in which the employees feel themselves as the most responsible members of the institution not mere the workers. To develop such kind of situation they should be

regarded, informed and involved in all the stages of organizational progress including the planning aspect. It very much depends on the type and motif of the leaders.

In the same regard, Hellriegel and Slocum (2005) say that the highest form of ethical decision making involves a careful determination of who will receive benefits or incur costs as the consequence of a decision. Their argument is in the line of involving those stakeholders in decision who are affected positively or negatively by its consequences. If this is practiced in the real field, the leaders will be safe from any kind of adverse result but it depends on their willingness and adequate knowledge of shared decision making process. In response to employee involvement in decisional roles, Hernandez et al. (2000) discuss the need for an open climate that includes the influence of lower-level personnel when dealing with conflict resolution. When institutions are at the stage of critical decisions especially in the process of conflict handling, the experience and expertise of the lower level employees keep greater value.

In the context of Nepalese community colleges, the establishment and operation both were from the team work and the effective handling also requires an efficient team spirit. If the staffs are imposed the decisions made from the management committees, the members can reduce the performance. They may limit their contribution to the mere formality and ultimately team conflict may take place. It is, therefore, expected that the leaders of community colleges involve the fellow members in all the institutional decisions to ensure their creative participations in the expected enhancement of quality. It is further supported by the ever practiced transformational leadership theory. So, the concept of shared vision was found highly reliable to accomplish this research.

Leadership Influence on Performance

Idealized influences (Bass, 1990) of transformational leaders display positive influence and motivation to the employees in such a way that the organizations move ahead in the path of continuous progress ensuring selfless dedication of all. If the leaders demonstrate ideal model behavior and exhibit dedication in the working field, a kind of team spirit is maintained. In fact the followers learn from the role of their leaders.

Regarding educational leadership Bush (2011) prefers instructional leadership for effective influence of the team members. In his words "instructional leadership, often described as learning-centered leadership, focus on the direction of influence, learning and teaching" (p. 37). The remark gives proper combination of leadership influence in teaching learning process. It is the behavior, trust and expectation towards the leaders that influence the followers devote in the field without any question against them.

Bennis and Goldsmith (1997) argue that "competence, congruity, and constancy, caring- these are the qualities a leader must embody in order for trust to be created in a group" (p. 5). The argument signals the major dynamics of leaders. As the figure head of the institution, a leader has to become ever ready for tension factor, time factor and risk factor. All these factors ensure their different identity as the forerunners or torch bearers of the institutions. The entire ups and downs of the institution depend upon the visionary ideas and milestone that the leaders pave as motto, vision and mission for organizational development.

An efficient leader has to perform interpersonal, informational and decisional roles (Auffl, 2002). Interpersonal role is vital in bridging the feelings of the employees with that of organizational spirit. If the leaders fail to ensure constructive

participation of all the stakeholders and periodical change in the organization, the existing strategies will be out dated and the leaders will lose the trust from all sectors. This article seems a strong base in the division of the roles performed by the leaders who want to transform the leaders.

Leaders of an organization work within a clear framework of structure that defines formal division of job tasks, span of control, chain of command, centralization and decentralization, and coordination (Robbins, Judge, & Sanghi, 2007). Leaders of academic institutions demonstrate certain behavioral attributes that inspire and motivate the followers or co-workers for their selfless dedication in institutional development. Such kinds of behaviors stimulate for continuous involvement of all the members towards tireless journey of organizational upliftment. Until and unless the employees have strong faith on the behavior and vision of the leaders, they don't devote their heart and efforts in full range. The leaders, according to the above definition, are master controller of all the activities with adequate involvement of the esteemed followers.

The foundation of present research can be paved on A Three-Dimensional Taxonomy of Yukl (2008) which advocates three important leadership behaviors via task oriented behaviors, relations oriented behaviors and change oriented behaviors. These behaviors best match the above listed characteristics of transformational leadership and the third one is more focused to fulfill the need of continuous improvement approach.

The attempts, proposed above, can match the critical evaluation of the exhibited leadership practices in community colleges with their impact on employee performance. Leaders are expected to make their own strategies for staff empowerment, satisfaction, motivation, and willingness to work. I saw those

indicators from the angle of quality enhancement which is most expected and most essential strategy to overcome the perceived challenges in front of community colleges. I believe that motivated and inspired staff know the inner aspects of the institution and keep their heart and mind in work. So, the theory is most relevant to my research.

Professional Upliftment: Learning Organization Approach

Senge (1990) states that learning organizations are organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the result they truly desire, where new and expensive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continually learning to learn together. A learning organization, as the name defines, is able to change its shape and features continuously through the process of learning, adapting and acting.

Similarly, Gravin (1993) defines a learning organization as "an organization skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge, and modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights." Learning, in organizational sense, refers to the accumulation of the complex attitudes, knowledge and skill that individuals as well as groups need for adaptation in changed environment.

Kalmon (2003) stated about the need of creating state wide online learning organizations in an article. The article has proposed four basic principles for this purpose via supporting physical schools, collaborating with other online programs, meeting broad based educational needs and supporting a broad range of learners. This mission has been addressed as a window for peeping the opportunities. Formation of changed educational vision, action learning and staff development schemes, periodical changes in curriculum and assessment procedures, address national and

global issues, embrace technological advancement, etc. are some of the numeral aspects of learning related to educational institutions.

In course of developing learning organization concept, Senge (1990) proposes the need of two basic types of learning for a living organization. The first is adaptive learning related to the reaction and compromise of the employees in environmental changes. It helps create an ideal organizational learning culture. The second is generative learning related to the individual as well as institutional innovation. This process leads to the total reframing of the established experiences and strategies.

In this regard, Ford (2006) has proposed three power principles: creating the space for new communication interaction, safeguarding a credible and open process, and reclaiming suppressed views as the basis in establishing an environment conducive towards managing reciprocal-relational power (p. 518). He claims these principles as the core principles for empowering the members into organizational stream. Staff empowerment, in positive sense, is the real empowerment and strengthening of the organization. The overall achievement of knowledge in an organization is regarded as a highly valuable asset only after its application in real action. Knowledge is economy, power and change agent in modern organizational scenario if it is used wisely.

Chang and Lee (2008) express their views that the level of relevant knowledge accumulation, organizational innovation, and even organizational culture and performance are deeply affected by the environment surrounding the organization (p. 3). The effect of knowledge accumulation gives strength in organizational innovation which empowers the members as well as organization itself. It is further stated that every department must keep up their innovation activities in order to sustain business

growth and take the lead in the market place. The concept of learning organization is obviously the pre-requisite in this mega scheme. Regarding organizational power, Stoner, Freeman, and Gilbert (2009) say that the corporations can foster profit-making innovations by encouraging employees to think like entrepreneurs, and giving them the freedom and flexibility to pursue their projects without bogging down in bureaucratic inertia. This idea emphasizes unhampered working environment to all the employees with sufficient support in both the moral and strategic ground.

Learning organizations are living organisms that keep the members alert for accepting any new offers for building their capabilities. Gruidl and Hustedde (2003) say that the learning organization approach offers the promise of providing extension educators with mechanisms to demonstrate the value of the work that they are doing in improving the long term stability and effectiveness of the organizations.

"New knowledge and innovative ideas can be discovered through reflection, research and systematic learning activities, or acquired externally by imitation, purchase of expertise, or participation in joint venture" (Yukl, 2008 p.332). According to him individuals as well as team members can be encouraged, inspired, facilitated and empowered for gradual learning. Knowledge, in fact, can be shared and imparted each other as per the need of the individuals and the organization. All the members of the organization need to feel comfortable that their innovative role ensures the holistic success of the team. It depends on the visionary leadership, enthusiastic teamwork, availability of essential resources and organizational strategy.

In the same aspect Ford (2006) opines that "open communication, employee self-efficacy (autonomy), power sharing, a genuine participative democratic climate, valid and well distributed information are descriptive attributes of relational processes embedded within a particular kind of environmental milieu" (p. 499). This

vision of managing the learning environment has covered the overall organizational strategies that help transform a normal organization into a learning organization.

Nasseh (1996) expresses his views that the procedures, structures, tradition, culture, and social systems are very powerful factors in shaping the design, commitment and implementation of learning activities. The concept of innovation and existing norms, values, systems, etc. are given balanced emphasis in a learning organization so as to ensure long term strategy.

The above definitions advocate the idea that learning organizations are living organisms that inspire their employees to remain dynamic in their field in long term vision so that the upliftment of their individual professionalism as well as extraordinary achievement of organizational goals can be ensured. A learning organization is regarded as a unique platform for collaboration and creativity of the whole community comprised of all the stakeholders. In this sense, we can't limit it within the periphery of a single institution. There is such kind of ideal environment that the members don't keep a single stone unturned in course of forming 'group culture' and 'group intelligence'.

This concept best fits in the field of academia forever. If the institutions fail to embrace the challenging business pace, they can be outdated and insufficient at any time. Educational institutions play key roles in the overall development of the nation for they take responsibilities of producing human resources for all sectors. The concept of learning organization, for the same sense, has to be adopted in academic institutions for their long term sustainability. In case of community colleges, the concept of learning organization can enable the entire team work with ever updated skills and widening horizon of knowledge. So the concept of learning organization

has been given space in this research with the hope to give strong theoretical support to the findings.

Employee Motivation for Team Spirit

The distinct performance of any staff can be expected from that foundation where staff satisfaction and their willingness to the actual field for the maximum devotion are kept as the guiding principles. Regarding the fulfillment of employees Robbins et al. (2009) present Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. The theory covers five basic needs of human beings on priority basis via physiological, safety, social, esteem and self actualization. Physiological needs cover food, shelter and other bodily needs where as safety needs are related to security from outward harms. Social needs refer affection and belongingness. The esteem need is defined as condition of self-respect, status etc. Similarly the theory advocates self actualization as the drive to become what a person is capable of becoming.

Among the five needs of Maslow the first two have been explained as lower level or basic needs and the remaining three are taken as higher level or secondary needs. To involve the employees' full potentiality in the quality concern, the leaders have to address the above mentioned needs of their fellow employees to the optimum stage. The ideas signal the progress of any institution depends on the holistic motivation of its people.

Emphasizing the value of staff development, Tomlinson(2004) opines that " reward strategy, performance review and assessment mechanisms, career progression and training and development activities are aspects of systems that ensure performance is managed" (p. 135). His definition seems to state that staff development, transparent mechanism of performance evaluation and timely reward

for extra ordinary outcomes give collective synergy to the organization ensuring further motivation.

Staff empowerment is a cognitive state that results in increased intrinsic task motivation manifested in four cognitions via meaning, competence, self determination and impact (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990, as cited in Ozaralli, 2003). In his views, an employee needs value of organizational goals, possess self efficacy, autonomy in performance and their presence should be meaningful. The prevailing leadership has to envision transparent scheme in staff development and the use of their potentiality for the maximum development of the institution.

Tomlinson (2004) is of the opinion that "performance management can achieve strategic change, build new cultures and make quality improvement happen" (p. 130). Systematic performance management attempt ensures change in the overall organizational scheme, promotes working cultures and ultimately culminates to the height of unexpected and miraculous change. Quality management, at the same time, is equally associated to present academia. He further quotes Boyett and Conn (1995) that:

> High performance behavior for leaders include effective influencing, driving for results, inspiring for others, achieving results through people, requires team working, developing your people, developing yourself; and thinking the business requires analytical thinking, conceptual thinking, business judgment and understanding the business context. (p. 135)

The above remark highlights the need of motivational strategies that inspire all the members of institution to involve in continuous development of themselves as the most responsible member or change agent. One can't understand and utilize the quality context until he/she originates the scheme of developing the people involved

in it. Employee development and their satisfaction is the key to success of any institution.

Quality improvement is a gradual process in cumulative efforts of all the stakeholders. However, the major role goes to the leadership. The community colleges are normally led by the campus chiefs but there is combined effort of a number of people technically termed as administrative team. This team work effectiveness is, in fact, the real or authentic body responsive to ensuring quality education. It is the personal scheme and capacity of the team leader to encourage the members for their maximum efforts in the overall development of organization. If the leadership fails to involve all the members in this line, the conflict can gradually destroy the organizational progress and ultimately collapse the organization.

Quality Enhancement: An Inevitable Journey

"Quality is never attained in an absolute sense; it is constantly being sought, it is a dynamic process" (Bowden & Marton, 1998, as cited in Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2004). Both of the above stated quotes signal the critical perception about quality. Though educational institutions boastfully claim to have been imparting quality education, they are found advocating the partial truth as the blinds in traditional stories express their realization about shape and size of an elephant. What are the basic norms and measurements of quality education? Which demarcations should be crossed before claiming quality in their services or products? In fact, quality is claimed partially in all the senses and it is normally judged from the angle of utilization of the achieved qualification in living. My realization of quality education is not other than the applicability of the quality of education in real life scenario.

Odhiambo (2008) believes that quality of education is generally determined by the inputs such as curriculum content, instructional materials and equipment, school

culture, teacher pupil ratio, costs and guiding policies, quality assurance, learning duration and above all the quality of the teachers and management practices. He focused on a large number of inputs and policies that affect the quality of education as a whole. The definition has ignored the outcome aspects i.e. the adoptability of the learners in course of their professional settlement. Tomlinson (2004) was found a bit broad in his vision how the education is expected to bring changes in the life of the learners. He expected the perceived and overt changes through his visionary expressions that:

> Improved self management increases an education leader's ability to cope with stress, resolve conflict, manage change and manage to change, achieve sustainable, peak performance, build and lead effective teams and influence organizational cultures. (p. 1)

In business language the input should be justified in the proportion to the output or production. The distribution of educational opportunities is to be understood as the allocation of sufficient educational inputs in order to insure retention, advancement relevant learning among all the pupils in a given educational system (UNESCO, 2000). Educational institutions see the results of their external or board exams in the line of making claim of imparting quality education. Neither the certificate ensures the students' all round development nor does it guarantee the employability in future.

Quality management is the way of life of an organization committed to customer satisfaction through continuous improvement (Kenji, 1990, as cited in Dahlgaard et al., 2007, p. 14). The process of imparting quality education in community based higher educational institutions of Nepal is really tough mainly because of fierce competition with private colleges and partly because of vague

national educational policies of the nation. These colleges make their own strategies of quality enhancement on the basis of available resources, skills of existing human resources and need of the stakeholders (Ojha, 2012). Their schemes, according to him, are inspired and affected in continuous manner as per the changes in educational practices in the co-existing institutions. The researches and teaching learning activities, therefore, are directed by the leadership roles and support from the followers. These practices of quality development in community colleges were critically studied and analyzed with emphasis to leadership roles. The related theories are of vital importance in this regard. The efforts above gave some hints that community colleges could take leading role in ensuring quality in higher education in our context.

Continuous Improvement Approach

Continuous Improvement (CI) Approach, as defined by Temponi (2005), is developed from Japanese word *kaizen*, which means incremental improvements of the on-going processes. It is a realistic, proactive and measurable approach to quality (p. 3). He further opines that the process of continuous improvement includes people, equipment, supplies, materials, and producers. He has quoted CI cycle of Deming and Shewart known as the P-D-C-A (ie; plan, do, check and act) in the line of demonstrating how the process of implementing CI approach can advance. The seventh and thirteenth of Deming's fourteen points via institute leadership and institute a vigorous program of education and self improvement respectively worth value in the context of continuous improvement as an approach.

This approach is a continuous and ever going process and, therefore, best addresses all the upcoming complexities in organizations. Regarding continuous improvement scheme Sallis (2002) further highlights

> CI is an approach for a permanent shift in an institution's focus away from short-term expediency to the long-term quality improvement. Constant innovation, improvement and change are stressed, and those institutions that practice it lock into a cycle of continuous improvement. They make a conscious attempt to analyze what they are doing and plan to improve it. (p. 25)

Regarding the concept of continuous improvement Deming has thrown light on his 5th Principle of Transformation. The projected principle aims to improve constantly and forever the system of production and service, to improve quality and productivity, thus constantly decrease costs (Deming, 1986, as cited in Redmond, Curtis, Noone, & Keenan, 2008). This principal best matches the basic attempts of transformational leadership and seems applicable in higher educational institutions in the sense of striving to be responsive to the needs of students and other stakeholders, improving and developing curricula, promoting the highest standards of scholarship in teaching and research and in constantly questioning if courses are achieving their intended outcomes (Redmond et al., 2008, p. 436). Since higher education of present time has been advancing in rapid motion within turbulent socio-political situation and strong grip of technology, this dynamic change model seems strongly applicable for long run.

One of the vital aspects of quality enhancement is employee empowerment, satisfaction and motivation towards performance. According to Ozaralli (2003) empowerment is a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organizational members through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness. This definition seems focusing on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, efficient teamwork and quality enhancement. He accepts the four

conditions via meaning, competence, self determination and impact as the process of employee involvement in quality enhancement. Transformational leadership best serves the purpose of employee empowerment.

Regarding the study of quality indicators of school sector Cheng (2003) has presented three wave quality assurance strategies for bright present and future of academic institutions which are applicable in this research. The waves are technically termed as internal, interface, and future waves for quality assurance in education. Cheng states that:

> The first wave of school reforms and initiatives focuses mainly on internal quality assurance and makes an effort to improve internal school performance, particularly the methods and processes of teaching and learning. The second wave emphasizes interface quality assurance in terms of organizational effectiveness, stakeholders' satisfaction and market competitiveness and makes an effort to ensure satisfaction and accountability to the internal and external stakeholders. The coming improvement initiatives should be moving towards the third wave, which emphasizes strongly future quality assurance in terms of relevance to the new paradigm of education concerning contextualized multiple intelligences (CMI), globalization, localization and individualization.

These three waves can be taken as guidelines for time specific innovation in academia. The third wave is a challenge for the leaders in the upcoming days because the future is beyond the grip of present traditional mindset. The leaders, influenced by the post modern mind set; focus on new cultural setting that essentially acknowledges flexibility, adaptability and networking. Their administration is guided by the concept of empowerment, collaboration and participation. As a result, all the

prevailing ambiguities, difficulties and conflicts are replaced with the work culture and all the employees feel themselves as the most important change agent for the institution. In the ideas of Ellington (1996), quality efforts include:

> Encourage staff both through internal means (taking an interest in what they are doing, showing them that their effort is appreciated etc.) and via more formal channels such as the establishment of teaching readerships or fellowships or awarding prizes, salary increments or other tangible rewards for good teaching. (p. 2)

The present research is a thorough and systematic study of the leadership efforts at community colleges in course of justifying demand driven education and meeting the requirements of globalized educational market place. Since CI Approach focuses on time specific changes in the direction of transformation, it doubtlessly matches the requirements community colleges of our context. Community colleges are in fierce competition with ever advancing academia of present globalized world. If they ensure the changes in continuous manner as directed by this approach, all the upcoming challenges can be gradually met. I had, therefore, adopted this approach in support of my authentic cross justification in meaning making process of my research. I was, however, strongly alert to the question of my finding from other lenses too where ever I found the meaning lacking adequate theoretical support.

The Bases for Quality Measurement

Quality is difficult to define and is an elusive concept (Sallis, 2002). As defined above it is difficult to pinpoint a specific criteria or demarcation that justifies quality of education. I take it as a relative term studied from the angle of learner satisfaction. Houston (2008) expresses his views in this confusing situation that the links between accountability mechanisms and quality improvement always remain

unclear. So the question of tracer study, job placement, quality audit, life skill etc. take due emphasis in the process of assuring and accrediting educational institutions or educational programs.

Quality has different meanings to different people (Dahlgaard et al., 2007, p. 14). The case of quality assurance, therefore, is about consistently meeting product specification or "getting things right first time, every time" (Sallis, 2002, p. 17). Quality can be defined in the cost of conformance to requirements and can only be measured by the cost of non-conformance (Dahlgaard et al., 2007). The above version indicates uncertainty and multiplicity of meaning.

Some educational institutions are linked with professional responsibility, while others result from the competition inherent in educational market place or from the need to demonstrate accountability (Sallis, 2002, p. 4). Regarding the bases of quality measurement Sallis (2002) has projected Four Quality Imperatives via the Moral Imperatives, the professional Imperatives, the Competitive Imperatives and the Accountability Imperatives. The Moral Imperative, in his views, is the provision of the best quality education to the learners that brightens the way of life. The Professional Imperative refers to those professional duties of the educators that ease the learners their settlement in the expected field. Likewise the Competitive Imperative deals with the strategic moves that help the institutions exceed in quality in the globalized market place. In other words, competition requires strategies that clearly differentiate institutions from their competitors. The Accountability Imperative has to do with the question of being responsible to the stakeholders including the social sectors.

Though all the above quality imperatives deserve space in the research, the second imperative i.e. the Professional Imperative was given higher importance. The

professional ethics of the college leaders and the fellow members are expected to enrich their services to the standard that the learners get adjusted easily in the work life after completion of their educational degrees. In this way these four quality imperatives were regarded as the touchstone in the process of studying the efforts of quality enhancement in the colleges of my study.

Policies and Practices for Quality Enhancement

This section covers the studies of the related areas in practical sense which is obviously related to the national and international practices in quality enhancement efforts of academic institutions. My belief is that the community colleges are advancing for quality improvement at the razor's edge and they must apply specific strategies for struggle to exist in this globalized world for long. The below stated evidences, collected from the real practice field, are the accumulations of experiences and I expect them to guide the research in further strengthening the pool of knowledge.

International Practices

In the international scenario, the demand driven education is prioritized with the slogan "education for life". According to The Dakar Framework for Action (2000) the education system of USA recognizes the social and professional value of teachers as essential actors within quality education by establishing agreed-upon policies for certification, improvement of working conditions, remuneration and incentives for continuing improvement of professional skills (pp. 35-42). Along with the slogan of inclusive education they opened the academic avenue for the joint efforts of the state and community for quality education.

Chapman and Adams (2002), in a study of education of Developing Asia, found inadequate teacher in-service trainings, low salaries and misallocation of

teachers as major problems and constraints in higher education quality in Philippines (p. 13). The above versions state that the high emphasis has been given to improvement in the management of education and professional development of teachers. The system redefined the administrative structure with managerial autonomy and fair accountability in case of leadership responsibility. The central crux of their education system is education as public good and the mission centralizes the concept that quality education depends on the development of teachers' professionalism.

Asia-Pacific Conference on EFA (2000) developed guiding principles, specific goals and targets for 2015 and it was incorporated in The Dakar Framework for Action. The conference regarded education for improving the quality of life and as an essential part of social and human development. It further declared new opportunity for civil society with the offer for the involvement of NGOs, the media, the private sector and other civil society stakeholders. This open access broadened the scope of education and many countries including Nepal practiced their wider perspectives in quality education especially community participation in nations' education. It was also taken as a threat to the management for being ever updated and ever resourced to compete the open educational market.

The problems facing education systems in South and Southeast Asian countries often appear to be alike, for example, poorly trained teachers, inadequate supply of textbooks, weak management, little or no instructional supervision and poor facilities (Chapman & Adams, 2002, p. 68). The situation has improved to a great extent during the recent decade but the quality system has to improve a lot to face the need of highly acclaimed quality education.

Educational market, as described in the preceding paragraphs, is really complex and developed as per the demand in the contemporary situation. No any example can be regarded as the model for our context because it can either be outdated or unfit to the situations and resources available. The norms of international practices can simply be taken as the examples to cross check the national level practices that are given below.

National Level Policy Provisions

The idea of establishing multi-universities was initially introduced by the National Education Commission, 1992 which was formed by the government established after the restoration of democracy in Nepal in 1990 (Khaniya, 2009, pp. 12 -13). The Tenth Plan (2002) urged universities to "develop qualitative, participatory and competitive higher education in different disciplines" (p. 456). The policies opened higher avenues for the expansion of higher education in full fledge. The practices, however, were with higher difficulties and opportunities along with several vicissitudes. In one hand we find establishment of mushrooming educational institutions of various disciplines in both school and tertiary level. On the other hand the education policy of the nation entered into further bewilderments. Both internal political instability and rapid globalization seem equally responsible behind present chaotic situation in academia. Neither the quality of education sector is in the nation's grip nor do the policy makers seem successful to formulate long term education policy that ensures bright picture onwards. As a result, the need of a visionary national education policy with due clarity regarding quality, equity and access was realized.

The Public College Regulatory policies (Bidhan, 2067) of Public College Association states in its preamble that the community colleges were established in

public participation and not for profit motive (p. 1). The Education Administrative Regularity of the same association (2067) gives high priority to research and research based teaching as the mission of ensuring innovation in services (pp. 6-7). The Public College Association has boldly demanded Public University to regulate above 300 hundred community colleges and the major political parties have taken the demand positively (I. Gautam, personal communication, July 15, 2013).

Community Colleges at Glance

Public based non-profitable colleges are known as public colleges in Nepal (Dangal, 2068, p. 1). We find the bases of community colleges in public need and serving the lower and lower middle class people from their establishment. Though these colleges were established strictly under national education policy and affiliated universities, they are found autonomous in case of administration (Ojha, 2012). These colleges neither get adequate financial support nor realize proper public control over financial transactions except community concern as demanded by college. As a result, they seem like private institutions in some sense. In fact, these colleges are entirely responsible towards the local public and the stakeholders in case of service and autonomous for the rest. They are responsible towards the local public in case of planning and implementing their regulatory and development schemes too.

There are 335 community colleges affiliated from Tribhuvan University bearing 33.4 % burden of higher education (UGC, 2011/12, pp. 37, 58-64). The nature of public involvement lacks uniformity in the community colleges of Nepal at present. The service accountability is also checked differently in these colleges as per the public concern and involvement. The college administrators feel differently responsible towards transparency as per the public questioning in this regard. This sort of unclear policy and vague provisions have adversely inspired the management

committees to develop their own and unique strategies for public exposure in regard to financial and other transparencies. This background support was developed to highlight the role of leaders in advancing these colleges in the creative support of the society and the fellow members.

University Grant Commission (UGC) has assisted some of the community colleges in quality enhancement and infra-structure development via performance grant and matching grant respectively (UGC Report-2010). This opportunity has inspired the colleges to uplift their strategies and documentation procedures so as to meet the basic standard. These colleges are in rapid progress in case of documentation and transparency due to this sort of encouragement from UGC. The commission has begun the process of quality assurance and accreditation in recent years. UGC, Nepal defines that:

> Accreditation is the process by which authorized body evaluates the quality of a higher education institution as a whole or of a specific educational program in order to formally recognize it as having met certain predetermined minimal criteria or standards. The QAA provides opportunities for institutions and their programs to assess their performance and their weaknesses. (QAA Guidelines, 2012)

Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee (QAAC) has made a scheme of evaluating higher educational institutions in various aspects. On the basis of this provision, the educational institutions or specific academic programs get certificate of accreditation. This practice has recently been applied in our context. Around half a dozen community colleges have got this certificate so far and a large number of colleges are in line to get accredited (UGC Bulletin-2012). This provision has

supplied positive inspiration to the colleges for their rigorous attempts to get QAA certificates and ensure sustainability.

Review of Studies Conducted in the National Context

I have given space to the national level researches conducted basically in the context of quality issue in this stage. While studying the prevailing problems and constraints in higher education quality of Nepal, Chapman and Adams (2002) found that Nepalese educational institutions lacked trained teachers and opportunities for follow up professional development programs. The findings further indicated that the teacher morale was yet to be enhanced and to be trained to become sensitive to emotional, psychological as well as educational needs of the students (pp. 14-17). The studies indicate the condition of Nepalese educational scenario in highly struggling stage with lack of basic requirements.

Vanlalhriata (2009) researched on the topic "Influence of leadership style of principals on school climate and commitment of teachers" to see the impact of the leadership behavior on school climate and employee motivation. His study concluded that the academic leaders with democratic values, norms and strategies were comparatively more successful in uplifting performance status. The finding of his survey research seems giving emphasis to organizational citizenship where the employees realize as the most responsible member of the institution. The research does not cover the world wide essence of transformational leadership except a brief introduction in literature review.

Pokharel (2011) made an attempt to studying the impact of head teachers' leadership styles on teacher's professional motivation. He inducted significantly positive correlation between leadership styles and teacher motivation with conclusion that the high initiation structure and high consideration leadership styles are the best

influencing factors for teacher motivation. He has given due emphasis to the aspects of institutional development and teacher's professional development in his conclusions. The research, however, seems insufficient in case of pinpointing the exactly expected leadership behaviors and perceived impact on teacher's professionalism.

Similarly, Khadka (2010) studied the job satisfaction of institutional school teachers from four dimensions via salary, incentives and benefits, work itself, working environment and performance appraisal. His study has given critical remarks regarding the job satisfaction of the participants. The conclusion emphasizes the needs of adequate incentives, benefits and security in compared to effective job environment and performance appraisal. The study doesn't cover the role of leaders as a prominent cause behind employee job satisfaction.

In a survey research on teacher motivation Shah (2004) also comes to recommendation that teachers' fair performance appraisal is the major cause behind their poor performance. The study indicates that reward and punishment on the basis of teacher dedication inspires them in the working field. The research has demanded a specific system is demanded that could inspire the dedicated human capital in the path of academic excellence.

Above discussed empirical researches were related to my research topic partially. Most of these researches were conducted in the high school level scenarios. How are leadership behaviors supportive in case motivating the entire team in the line of complete organizational synergy in tertiary level of community sector? This seems an important concern of nation's higher education. Though the case of community college leadership has been a hot issue for nation's development, I didn't find any specific research articles on leadership efforts of community colleges dealing with

team work effectiveness for quality enhancement. My research, therefore, has been a rigorous attempt to see the perception as well as efforts of community college leaders to influence and inspire the fellow members in quality enhancement efforts. In other words, it is an attempt to establish a strong base of discussion for the quality aspects of community colleges.

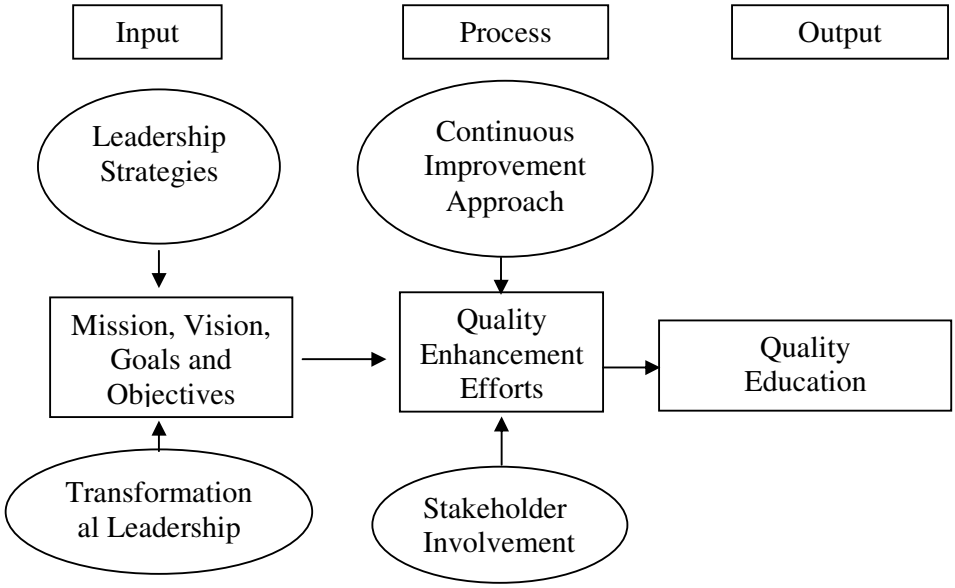
The process of quality enhancement is highly diversified and its accountability is further complex in real practice because there is no any specific pin pointing framework to measure them in terms of quality. Academic leaders take the matter of quality as a challenge and the success or failure of the institution depends entirely on their efforts. Team spirit, employee motivation and performance increment are the bases of institutional success. We find the practice of various quality enhancement models and the researches also roam around them. Though we find a large pool of researches in the field of leadership efforts and quality performance, there is serious lack of this study in community colleges of our context. To cope with the growing challenges in academia, community college leaders are supposed to be more strategic in support of research. My research, therefore, is expected to unravel the perceptions and practices of this field prevailing in community colleges fulfilling the existing gap.

Theoretical Framework

I have developed this theoretical framework on the basis of the review of various published materials discussed above. For me theoretical framework is related to the philosophical guidelines so as to condition and shape the research from authentic provisional angle. It helps the researcher in paving the way to the research as demanded by the research questions and conditioned by the problem statement. The framework, however, has been developed as a brief presentation of the concept

on how the prevailing theories assisted the researcher to conditioning the entire research.

My theoretical framework is an outcome in support of Transformational Leadership Theory and Continuous Improvement Approach in the continuous improvement in academic quality. I have carried on this research on the belief that highly efficient and dedicated educational leaders with visionary strategies can lead the community colleges to the best performance assisted by the entire stakeholders. The rest of the information can be generated from the figure below:



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is the process of making claims (Creswell, 2003, p. 7) and research method is a road map to carry on the activities of research in smooth way without any kind of bewilderments. It advocates or develops logic behind particular method used by the researchers in the context of their study and explains why the researcher is using a particular method or technique (Kothari, 2002). It is concerned with the analysis of why particular strategy has been adopted instead of other alternatives and how the research work should be undertaken with the underlying assumptions of the chosen method.

The research methodology, in this chapter, explains the procedures of conducting research including research design, the underlying philosophical assumptions, different methods, tools and techniques of data collection, and interpretations so as to reach the conclusions and further implications. Attempts were made to interpret the generated information by comparing and contrasting them with available theories and existing practices of both national and international level. My attempts as a researcher were guided by the norms that qualitative approaches allow room to be innovative and to work more within researcher-designed frameworks (Creswell, 2003, p. 23). The segmented parts of the research strategies are as follow:

Research Design

Research design is a strategy that specifies approaches to be used for gathering and analyzing the data relevant to the research problem (Kothari, 2002) or a guideline to connect theoretical paradigm with empirical world, and a means to address the two

critical issues of representation and legitimization (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It is a strategy or frame work developed to facilitate the researcher so as to accomplish the research works in scheduled pattern with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money. In other words, research design has to produce decisions what, where, why and how aspects of research. The researcher has to make mind whether s/he will follow quantitative or qualitative or mixed method of research before entering into practical research work. The researchers adopting a qualitative perspective are more concerned to understand individual's perception of the world (Bell, 1993, as cited in Given, 2008).

The most debatable issue of present research field is research paradigm. Paradigms are regarded as a basic set of beliefs that guide action (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). I have planned to use interpretative research paradigm to see the existing leadership practices in community colleges of Nepal with the impact on quality enhancement. I believe that the long times working experiences of college leaders can be expressed in their perceptions and interpreted in contextual ways. Interpretation was taken in the form of analysis with support from the side of established knowledge. As materials for discussion, both the primary and secondary sources of data were interpreted under various themes giving specific shape to the findings. The entire research process was guided and conditioned by three research questions and well discussed problem statement.

The theoretical bases of my research were Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985) and Continuous Improvement Approach (Temponi, 2005). My focus within these theories was on exhibited leadership behaviors and performance of the employees especially improved due to positive leadership. The themes of those two theories gave direction to cross interpret the information

generated from the field of my study. The information were generated from the community college leaders and other targeted participants via in-depth interview, observation and field notes. There was prevalence of subjective impression of the researcher as the norm of qualitative research. Available printed materials and authentic document supported me in this regard. For carrying on the research I had formulated the outlines of my research plans including brief description of ontology and epistemology.

Ontology

The basic concern of the researcher was to make claims about what knowledge actually is and how we, as a researcher, can manage to achieve it. Creswell (2003) says that "ontology is the philosophical assumption that makes claims about what knowledge is". It is knowledge claim and is regarded as the starting point of all the researches. What people of the living society believe, in fact, deals with the ontological assumption. In opposed to the positivistic view point of scientific research, social science accepts the condition of plurality in meaning and, therefore, meaning differs from researcher to researcher and similarly context to context. In other words non-positivists believe in context specific multiple realities.

I believe that reality is entirely subjective in nature and should be evaluated on the basis of specific context. The ontology of my research is that quality education is accepted and realized as an outcome of scholastic activities of a dynamic team work led by a visionary leader. It is affected in most of the academic institutions due to the lack of the sub-ordinates' creative participation in decision making as well as implementation process or inability of the prevailing leadership. In other words, people perceive quality from the reflection of the outcome in the real field that the learners are expected to perform. The participants of this research were expected to

share their understanding of quality education from long time experience of working field. This, however, is not single reality because there are multiple realities as claimed in the views of constructivism.

Epistemology

The philosophical foundation related to ontology is epistemology that deals with "how we know the knowledge or truth" (Creswell, 2003, p. 6). Epistemology is related to the theory of knowledge with application to its methods, techniques and general principles in the line of grasping knowledge. The core of epistemology is how the knowledge of reality can be acquired and whether knowledge is something that has to be personally experienced (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, as cited in Cohen, Manion, and Marrison, 2007). In other words, epistemology has to deal with the how aspect of generating knowledge. My belief behind this notion is that there are various reasons why quality enhancement efforts can't be applied uniformly.

The epistemological stand point of my research is how we can generate the actual knowledge from the large pool of information scattered. As directed by the norms of qualitative research inquiry, continuous interactions between the researcher and the participants made the source of knowledge of my research and the theoretical lenses further strengthened the meaning of the research. The interpretation of the data, as mentioned below, demanded the gravity of interaction until the research reached to the saturation. Meaning making, for me, was a deliberate attempt controlled and conditioned by the theoretical constraints.

Axiology

As a qualitative researcher I was highly concerned to the humanitarian aspect which is technically known as axiology. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) stated that axiology deals with "the role of values in inquiry" (p. 10). Do the values of

researcher influence the research? This question is very much related to the field of qualitative research. Participants' perceptions and feelings were addressed in an unhampered way with due stage to the researcher's subjectivity in interpretation. In other words, the researcher led the interpretation of the data without violating the norms and essence of the participants' opinions.

From axiological view point I was clear that researcher's personality and participation should not dominate the research and the findings were to emerge from the real world without any out effect. The knowledge of the researcher, however, supported to enriching the meanings or findings of the research. One can understand it as the positive influence of the researcher's value in the research.

Interpretative Research Paradigm

Paradigm is a guideline or road map that instructs and guides the researcher to the appropriate destiny. Qualitative data analysis is almost inevitably interpretive and its process is more of a reflexive, reactive interaction between the researcher and the de-contextualized data that are already interpretations of a social encounter (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 282). The present study was based on interpretative research paradigm which is associated with unstructured qualitative methods, including participant observation studies and in-depth interviews. Regarding interpretive research paradigm, Henn, Weinstein and Foard (2010) remarked that human action can only be understood by relating it to the conscious intentions, motives and purposes, and ultimately the values of the agent who performs it. The researcher, in this sense, is one of the active members to interact on the subject.

The concept of subjective meaning, the base of interpretative paradigm, was traditionally coined by Herbert Blumer (1938) as a theoretical background known as symbolic interactionism. Flick (2006) expresses his view that meanings are derived

from or arise out of the social interaction and modified through an interactive process. The recently developed concept in social research is interpretative interactionism which is widely advocated by Denzin and Lincoln (2005) as well. The definitions hinted the process of meaning making that ideas emerge when there is continuous inter-action and interpretation on the given themes. In case of this research, the interpretation took place on the perceptions of college leaders on the theoretical bases of various literatures.

Glesne (1999) is of the opinion that qualitative research is in the alignment with interpretive approach that "portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and ever changing" (p. 5). Its essence is that the researcher, at the same way, can't be separated from the knowledge or findings. The continuous interaction and interpretation with subjectivity of the researcher are mandatory in the line of generating meaning of qualitative data. This approach relies on naturalistic approach viz. interview, observation and document study. I believe that the perceived information reaches conclusion after adequate interpretations.

Crabtree and Miller (1999) express their view that interpretive paradigm tries to explore the interrelatedness of different aspects of people's life. I realized that the perception and practices of long term established notion of community college leaders can be exposed bit after bit in the continuous interpretation of the available information. In course of generating the perceptions of community college leaders, I've decided to carry on this social research in qualitative approach that demands subjective impressions as the bases of knowledge formation. That's why I adopted interpretative research paradigm in this dissertation.

Nature and Sources of Data

This research work was accomplished with the use of data generated from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data played crucial role in collecting the required information as the perception of the participants and other field information where as the secondary data supported the process of enriching and legitimizing the information generated from the primary data.

Primary data of this research were comprised of the information collected from the lived experiences of the participants and, therefore, played vital and authentic role in the development of the research. As demanded by the qualitative research, limited number of participants fulfilled the requirements of the research. For that I chose two community colleges of Kathmandu Valley and one community college from Tanahu district. The colleges were selected purposively on the basis of researcher's ease and intention to generate rich information. As for the participants, I got information from three campus chiefs, three program coordinators, and three senior faculties from each college in equal proportion from all. The major informants, however, were the leaders of those colleges i.e. the campus chiefs.

In fact, the study covered the cases related to success or failure of those college leaders. The program coordinators and senior faculties were taken as the sources for confirmation of the information delivered by the campus chiefs. The program coordinators were administrative personals usually supporting the campus chiefs. The senior faculties were picked up purposively from the sector of non-administrators. The participants were pseudo named so as to maintain confidentiality.

The secondary sources of my research were various printed documents including books, research journals, research reports, policy documents etc including the UGC publications. Similarly available policy plans, bulletins, magazines, internal

rules and regulations, and periodical minutes of study location also were highly supportive to strengthen the information of this research. I made massive use of internet and other e-sources also. Those all materials were supportive in course of developing interview guidelines, literature review and analysis of the primary data.

Selection of the Study Site

Creswell (2011) states that "the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (p. 178). The researcher can elicit the expected data with minimum efforts if the participants deserve the required information. The gravity and variety of information generated from such participants can give strength to the study. The researchers are expected to keep rich information about the sites so as to make reliable and timely selection.

At this stage I selected the expected colleges purposively in course of choosing the essential categories and sizes. I consulted the General Secretary of Public College Association (cited above) to get the required information about my participants. The emphasis was given to the varieties in the sizes as well as the kind of academic strength the colleges had achieved. I also gave due emphasis to the kind of territory for varieties in the expectation of the learners and other stakeholders of those colleges. The selection of the study field was made basing on the ideas of Patton (2002) that information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research.

While getting the participants of my study, I tried to emphasize on the differences in college status and academic reputation as well so that I could get varieties in administrative practices. I had selected the participants from two colleges of Kathmandu Valley, one from the inner city and the other from around ten kilometer

away from the Ring Road. In my preliminary study of the selected study sites, I did not get satisfactory progress of those colleges in quality enhancement efforts. Finally, I visited the academic advisor of University Grant Commission who informed me that the third college of my selection, situated outside the valley, was at the final state of quality accreditation with drastic changes in the overall administrative system. As a result, Jan Aadharsha College stood the third institution in my purposive selection. From the college and the research participants, I got so rich information with efficient efforts in quality attempts that I succeeded to present its success story as the model document (Chapter IV) for enhancing quality in community colleges.

Data Generation

Qualitative research usually relies on field observation, participation in the natural setting, interview and analysis of the related documents (Creswell, 2003). Natural setting obviously ensures easy flow of perceptions with motive of improvement. Situation plays a vital role in giving meaning to the voices of the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Various methods and tools are used by the researchers in collecting data. Since qualitative research believes on multiple realities and subjective truths, I implied in-depth interview, field observation and field notes as the tools of data generation. The main source of information, however, was the interview with the selected participants. Field observation with reflective notes of the researcher and study of the available documents were regarded as supporting tools to enrich the gravity of the data.

For the purpose of data generation, I managed to take note from the interaction among the available faculties of the concerning colleges and used electronic devices to record the interview. I took field notes in cumulative way in each visit to make cross check to the generated information from the other tools. The observation notes

of all the visits of each college were included in the research memo. In addition to that, I gave a thorough reading to all the available printed materials including magazines, journals, prospectus, minutes etc as per the availability. The information generated from such studies played crucial role in legitimizing the findings and discussions.

Procedure of the Field Work

Visit of the study site was highly exciting and interesting stage for me. The selection and attempt of generating data made the entire research effective. At this stage, I got support from different sources to identify or get information about the participants of my study. For the interview, I fixed the time schedule with the campus chiefs of the targeted colleges. It became easy to fix time with the other participants of the same college after the interviews with the campus chiefs. After the required background information, I conducted the interview with the research participants which was duly recorded and transcribed. At the same time, I managed to prepare field notes from the observation made during the visits.

Similarly, I conducted a brief interactional group discussion with available faculties of the colleges. I managed to jot down the information from the discussion regarding the teamwork effectiveness in fostering quality education in those colleges. The information generated from such informal discussions, however, were included in the observation reports without any special section. In case of Jana Adharsha College, the group discussion was worthy enough and the perceived information has been included under separate heading via success story in chapter four. The detailed information about field works has been presented under various headings below:

In-depth Interview: Prominent Tool

Interviewing, as the major source of my research, got due emphasis during the process of the entire data generation. As stated above, I collected the participants' telephone number, email and other possible ideas to know about them. Similarly, I gave them adequate ideas about me, my research topic and any other information they required. Their convenient times for visit were asked and noted down. Then, I visited the perspective research sites within the scheduled times.

After the normal formality, I elaborated about my topic, the need of their invaluable information about my research problem and the rest of the things they inquired about. That was the stage in which I had succeeded to build rapport with them. I gave adequate emphasis to make conducive and friendly environment so as to encourage them to express their feelings and inspirations without any kind of hesitation. Some of them agreed to sit in the interview in the same meeting where as the others changed the time schedule due to their unavoidable circumstances.

During each interview, I asked for their consent to record the speech. The in-depth interviews were recorded through electronic media with full coverage. The recorder was on and the issues were raised gradually. I had already requested them to give specific and short reply of various questions related to different issues so that there would be no problem of repetition of same thing again and again. At the mean time, I was aware of not restricting their flow of expression. I was eager and excited to capture their real experiences and opinions. Sometimes, I had to make polite and mild interruptions to probe another issue. Some of the issues were made redundant by their opinion on the previous issues. In some of the queries, I found them going far deeper than my expectation. In this way, the recording of interview data was successfully completed.

Since mine were appointment based interviews, I was not in tension whether some important issues could be missed. Double shot interviews were applied to basically the campus chiefs of each college. The reason behind it was my declaration that campus chiefs would be the major participants to cover the leadership attempts. The interviewees were further consulted to kill the confusions after the data were formally transcribed. I met the campus chiefs in formal setting in the second attempts as well. In the cases of the other participants, I made calls whenever some expressions were unclear or ambiguous. It gave me chance to take their final conscience on their expressions. I gave space in the same data with mild corrections.

Field Observation for Reflective Memos

Observation, according to Blaxter et al. (2006), involves the researcher in watching, recording and analyzing events of interest (p. 178). The definition focuses on the study of the minute details of the activities observed by the researcher during the visit. As the nature of qualitative research, subjectivity and plurality in meanings are regarded as the prominent features while carrying the research. Though the perceptions of the research participants played prominent role in this research, the reflective memos of my observation also got heavy space in this research.

For me, the basis of study site observation was face value and academic environment of the colleges including teaching learning and other administrative regularities. The observation guideline also included the study of department wise activities and impact on quality matter. I was keenly interested to observe the leadership attempts in the day to day administration in the participation of the concerning stakeholders. The observation was also oriented towards the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the college as a whole. Adding my perceptions on the observation, each visit was developed in observation memo.

In each visit, I had noted down my personal realizations about quality efforts of the selected colleges. At the end of the scheduled visits of each college, the major realizations were given formal notes in the form of reflective memos. I developed three reflective memos one for each college and got their support at the times of data interpretation. The memos of my study give sufficient hints that the efforts of the members of are clearly reflected in the field. In other words, the observation of the face value and teaching learning activities of the colleges denote quality efforts adopted in the colleges. I realized that the efforts are insufficient and applied differently in the colleges of my selection.

Data Transcription and Thematization

Transcription is "the procedure for producing a written version of the interview" (Hancock 2002, p. 14). According to Cohen et al. (2007) transcribing is "a crucial step, for there is the potential for massive data loss, distortion and the reduction of complexity" (p. 281). Transcription, according to them, is the procedure for producing a written version of the interview in which both the size and description level of the text or message can be reduced. This process of transcribing demands clear conversion of the oral version into written without misguiding the essence of the intended meaning.

This stage was very lengthy and highly tiresome because all the participants of my interview were Nepalese educational stakeholders. I mean, their responses were supposed to be translated from Nepali version into English along with transcribing. Regarding theme generation and analysis of qualitative data various steps are in practice. Cohen et al. (2007) synthesize them as follow:

- Generating natural units of meaning;
- Classifying, categorizing and ordering these units of meaning;

- Structuring narratives to describe the interview contents;
- Interpreting the interview data.

The above guideline supported me to finalize the prominent issues for my research. I made adequate study on how the meanings of oral discourse could be communicated on written script. I transcribed the interview of all the participants in deeper sense with vigorous attempts so that I could get true and sufficient information for my interpretation. In case of theme generation, I kept the related responses under the same issue. I had to face a very hard time at that stage because I needed to match the information and accumulate them in various issues related to my research questions. Some of the participants gave so important ideas that I was bound to re-shuffle the issues generated even affecting the research questions.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Richards (2003) states that analysis is neither a distinct stage nor a discrete process; it is happening within interpretation. In other words the process of interpretation proceeds side by side along with the analysis without any specific demarcation between these two. The process of content analysis is carried out by the researcher along with his/her reflections on it which is technically known as subjective interpretation. Patton (2002) was of the opinion that interpretation involves explaining the findings, answering why questions, and attaching patterns into an analytical framework. The process of this framing is sincerely guided by the research questions. This stage facilitates the researcher to generate meaning in the required way.

The present research generated the central themes in inductive way. "Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to

data collection and analysis" (Patton, 1980, as cited in Bowen, 2005, p. 217). In my research, my first and for most step was to declare the central issues or themes of data based on my research questions. Then, I carried on content descriptive analysis by identifying, coding and categorizing the primary pattern of data. I used three co-moving steps known as data reduction, data display and drawing conclusion and verification. After the identification of significant statements, I coded and categorized them according to my research questions. I also carried out cross interview analysis of the common statements by different participants for further confirmation.

The main guidance to my findings were given and conditioned by the theories and approaches that I have already discussed in the literature review section above. Those guidelines along with the research questions brought my interpretations in the right track. Taking those issues as the backbone of the study, I made analysis of the responses on various issues from different perspectives. Researcher's minute observation of the site, records of the stakeholder remarks, study of the available printed materials etc. were given due emphasis in course of meaning formation.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are thought to arise predominantly with research designs that use qualitative methods of data collection (Blaxter et al., 2006, p. 158). Ethical issues play crucial role in research basically to protect the researcher cross the moral boundary. The participants were duly informed about the nature of the research and the impact the research would have on them before collecting the data (Creswell, 2003). During data collection procedure, I had given high priority to this regard. First of all, I gave my identity, background knowledge and clear information about my attempt of collecting the data. I built up due intimacy with the participants so that they felt comfortable to share their experiences and perceptions. I avoided the

situations that could create a kind of temptation or pressure in the mind of the participants. At the same time, I promptly assured them that there wouldn't be any kind of disclosure of their privacy and the expressions would be kept confidential.

Regarding the formality, I got written consent of the participants and all the information were generated without disturbing the natural setting of the institutional operation. The professional dignity of each respondent was protected and they were allowed to provide their autonomous responses. All the participants were pseudo-named in data presentation section so as to avoid the discloser of their identity in future. The researcher's professional honesty was duly maintained avoiding plagiarism, incorrect capture of the responses, false interpretation, and any other fraud activities.

Credibility/Trustworthiness

At this stage, I tried to prove the credibility of data or made them worthy of belief. The state of credibility demands the representation of the accurate interpretation of human experience. Since it is a qualitative research, I had to rely on thick description of data. At this stage, I saw field notes or memos, applied the process of member checking and observed the meanings from theoretical lenses. The flexible and responsive interaction program, conducive interview environment, moderate intimacy with the participants, and minute records of the deep observation of the site contributed to make my study credible.

For the richness of information, I had selected the participants from different responsible positions. My participants were campus chiefs along with program coordinators and senior faculties. The former two categories belonged to the administrative personalities and the third category represented non-administrative

senior employees. The selection of participants from various strata of their day to day responsibility helped me to see the contents from various angles.

Similarly, I tried to get accurate, true and rich content from the participants through my vigorous attempts with prolonged study. Natural setting and rapport building further helped me in this work. Likewise, I cross checked my findings from the angle of past experiences and established norms. The experiences of their long term service and planning for future made deeper understandings in leadership maturity.

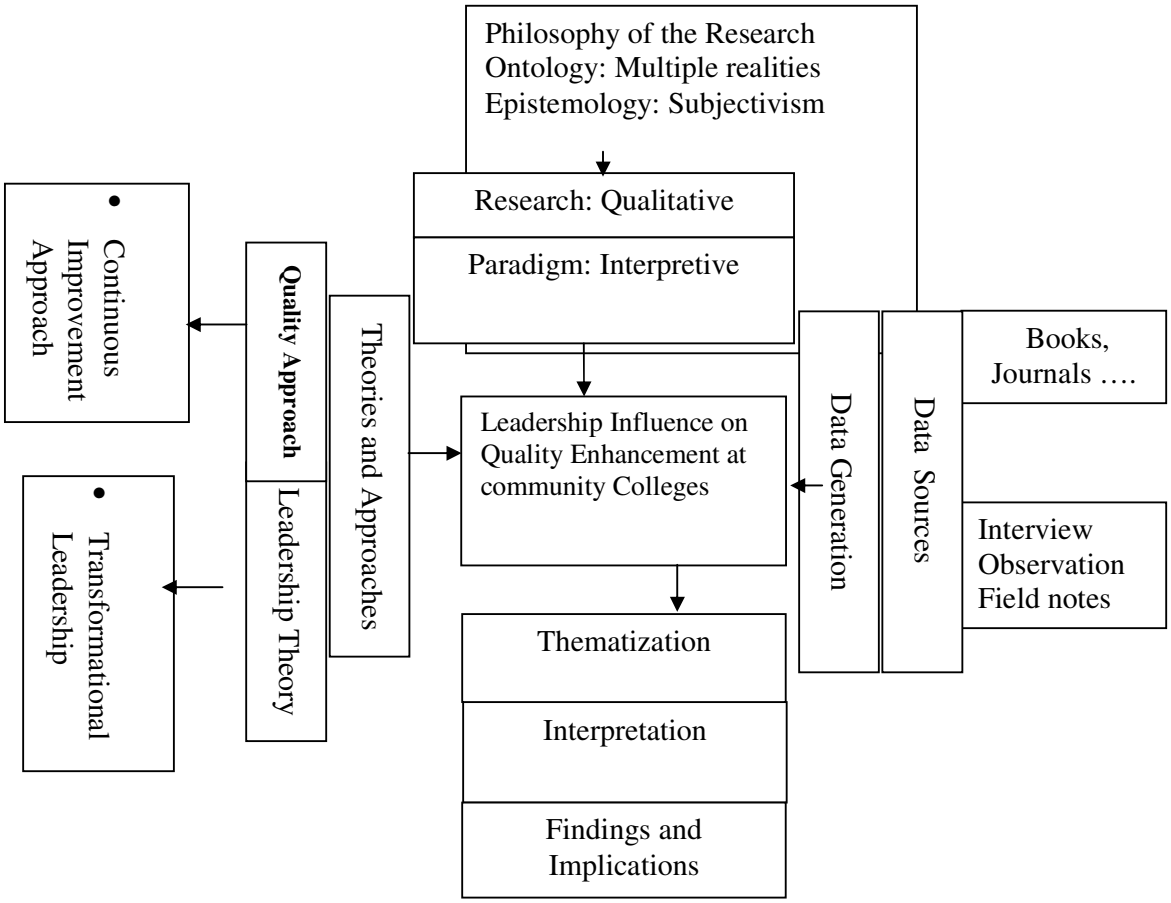
Conceptual Framework

I take research as a deliberate effort of generating higher level knowledge on the basis of existing literature, experiences of the stakeholders and the efforts of the researcher. The researcher, in this regard, has to make a specific mind set to handle the materials in certain framework that makes the entire research successful. The structure of such kind of frame along with the theoretical support is technically known as conceptual frame work. It is mandatory for each research to justify the procedural aspect of the research.

I have developed my conceptual framework on the basis of philosophical and theoretical stand points that formed the base of this research. I have taken transformational leadership theory and continuous improvement approach as the theoretical support in this research. The process of data generation as well as thematization has been clearly stated in this framework. From philosophical stand point, multiple realities and subjectivism were regarded as ontology and epistemology respectively.

The data were generated from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources comprised of in-depth interview and field observation where as the secondary

data were generated from various published documents including college magazines. The achieved data were analyzed and interpreted under interpretative research paradigm so as to reach the conclusions. The implications stated the provision of further strengthening of the research. The entire research framework has been presented below.



CHAPTER IV

PERCEPTIONS AND STRATEGIC MOVES FOR QUALITY

This chapter is the result of rigorous presentation of the perceived data from study site and construction of meaning out of the lived experiences of participants. The major tool of the data generation was in-depth interview. The ideas of the perspective participants were further supported by the observation of study site and study of the available documents. Legal strength was justified through cross study with transformational leadership theory and continuous improvement approach. As guided by the first and second research questions, the perceptions and strategic efforts in course of ensuring quality were given due emphasis in this section.

Quality Education: Multiple Perceptions

Quality has different meaning to different people (Dahlgard et al., 2007, p. 14). No two experts ever come to the same conclusion when discussing what makes an excellent school, college or university (Sallis, 2002). Similarly, in the opinion of Chapman and Adams (2002) education quality apparently may refer to inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes (p. 12). Here, output referred to the results or merits or degrees and outcome meant the application of the achieved education. The above statements advocate the partial and subjective realization of quality issue which is widely discussed in present academia.

In the views of Tomlinson (2004), quality education tends to enable the learners with their ability to generate skills, gain sustainability, adopt professionally and demonstrate change. The focus of this definition is on the professional adjustment and sustainability as the major aim of gaining education. In the views of Dahlgaard et

al. (2007), quality is a philosophy with dimensions and can be summed up as 'doing things properly' for competitiveness and profitability (P.14). Subjective impressions and time specific perceptions were clearly stated in the above statements. Educational institutions and the educational activists need to pave their strategies with the goals and objectives in such a way that their product can find long term sustainability in their professions.

As directed by my research questions, I attempted to inquire the participants about their perception and efforts towards quality education. My question was directed by Continuous Improvement (CI) Approach, the theoretical base of the research. This approach is regarded as one of the most advocated TQM approaches based on Deming's (1982) quality management scheme. I made the base of the quality vision by Temponi (2007) with the belief that the colleges make their strategies on the basis of this understanding. Regarding the perception towards quality education, Rajan, the campus chief of Shuvarambha College, remarked:

> *Education should support the students in professional settlement. If the learners get adequate skills to adjust in the expected field with the help of the education they get, such institution can claim to be imparting quality education. It should reflect in the field and can be measured with records of the graduates in working field. The institutions can make systematic study on it. (Interview: May 6, 2013)*

His opinion was really worthy for representing the applicability of education. He did not emphasize on the marks or merit of the learners but focused on the development of students' perspectives and capabilities. The ideas best match the concept of Dahlgard et al. (2007) in which they expect organizations "provide sufficient confidence that a product or service will satisfy customers' needs" (p. 7).

The needs that satisfy the learners in educational sense are employability or professional adjustment.

He further informed that the institutions should be able to see the working field of their graduates and judge their quality of service. The concept of tracer study, specific norm of UGC regarding Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA), best fits with this remark. Regarding the expected outcome of education mostly scholars emphasize on the development of well skilled and multidimensional personality in students so as to fit everywhere. The core outcome required from the university is one of building capabilities in students for engaging in effective action in all domains of knowledge (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2007, p.183). I had asked the same question related to the perception towards quality education to the chiefs of Suryodaya College and Jana Adharsha College also. The former told in short that the skills and insight knowledge of the learners could be determining factors of quality service. The latter gave his opinion in this way:

> *Education is not only targeted towards the marks or results of the students but also focuses towards the application of the achieved knowledge in the real life practices. The educational institutions should be able to give certain skills in the learners that they will easily adjust in their professional life. The curricula and teaching learning strategies should be formed and applied in such a way that the learners will easily acquire such kind of capacity at the time of getting degree. (Interview: May 25, 2013)*

All the above quoted college leaders showed their matured understanding and commitment that education was not merely for the degree but for the life itself. The underlying rational was to motivate and reward individuals pursuing personal career development and to become more employable in changing job market (Pate et al.,

2003, p.168). The focus was on the time specific skills and knowledge that could ease professional adjustment after completing the degree pursued.

While asking the same question to Binisha, she expressed her opinion thus:

> *Quality education, in my opinion, is such kind of education that enables the students to settle professionally after they pass certain level from the institution. Educational institutions should not only give certificate and license for work but also offer the essential skills to make their easy professional settlement. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

Her ideas did not produce any kind of contradictory version on quality issue with those of the above two participants. She was well aware of the fact that academic degrees should be supported by the practical skills of the targeted profession. The perceived opinions of my participants go closer to that of Houston (2007) that "quality as demonstrated conformance to accountability requirements has been privileged over quality improvement as learning about how we can do better towards achieving our purpose" (p. 69). Purpose, here, is more inclined to the professional adjustment that is the most awaited and perceived outcome.

All of the above stated participants expressed similar ideas regarding quality education. I cross checked the perceptions of the participants of my research with 10 steps quality improvement strategies of Juran (1980) whose teachings stressed the customers' point of view of products' fitness for use of product (As cited in Dahlgaard et al., 2007, p. 7). Houston (2007) further argued that the most important work of academic institution is "very successfully preparing young people to go out and contribute to society" (p.71). Both the perceived practical knowledge and theoretical stance fitted the highly advocated norms of demand driven education as an outcome of learner cantered teaching and skill based learning. This section gave

support to the theoretical assumption of total quality management in education. Practical aspects were found always going side by side facilitating the institutional plan and implement their strategies.

Quality Enhancement: Efforts and Claims

Quality enhancement is a mission of the institution in which the staffs need to be committed to an underpinning philosophy, beliefs, values and assumptions (Lomas, 2004, p.159). Lomas (2004) further discussed regarding quality efforts that "a conducive organizational culture is required in order that new ideas can be discussed, assimilated, modified, accumulated and then implemented"(p. 160). The perceived knowledge of the participants regarding quality education made me curious how the efforts of my participants could inure skills in the learners related to their professional settlement.

Before 1990s, higher educational institutions focused on quality control where as the newer trend has highlighted the notion of quality management (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2007, p. 175). The changed notion of quality education has focused on systematic approach to education. For the purpose of receiving the perceptions of the stakeholders regarding quality attempts, I desired to inquire whether the community colleges claimed to have been rendering quality education in their esteemed institutions or not. I got ground of this question in support of my research question regarding quality efforts and theoretical base from Continuous Improvement (CI) Approach, as defined by Temponi (2005). In my query about their claim of imparting quality education to the students Rajan said:

> *In addition to the regular curricular activities, we add practical skill based works. We implement practical courses of BBA (Bachelor in Business Administration) in BBS (Bachelor in Business Studies) programs. Likewise we*

> *involve the students in entrepreneurship with banks and other financial institutions. We have developed written agreement for internship with a number of banks serving the locality. The students are sent there for their internship and become more efficient with practical experiences. Similarly the students of humanities go to the community to study different subjects, get practical lessons and generate ideas in the form of presentation and report writing. (Interview: May 6, 2013)*

His version hinted the situation that the college had given importance to practical classes and field practices in various institutions in the form of internship. The students were provided with adequate ideas and confidence that the service would satisfy their needs ((Dahlgaard et al., 2007, p. 7). In the opinion of Blackmore (2004) "the attitudes and methods will have to change if institutions are to achieve any value added return for the amount of resources" (p. 134). The expected outcome was relative and satisfaction relied on not other than the professional settlement. The other participant of the same college, Sanjaya, gave some input in support of the above statement:

> *The students of BBS third year are supposed to undergo a research project on compulsory base. They are not at all allowed to carry on their research on the topics already researched in the past three years. Such topics are categorized under Areas Restricted for Studies (ARS). This attempt has inspired and motivated the students to dig out the knowledge in depth rather than duplicating it in superficial level. This strategy has been really effective in the last three years. The students have realized change in their research based writing skills. (Interview: May 9, 2013)*

His inputs had centralized to the quality of research work that the students needed to undergo along with their prescribed course of graduation level. The nexus between teaching and research is a positive influence on the quality of teaching (Anderson, 2000 as cited in Lomas, 2004, p.161). In fact, the ideas were related to research based teaching and practice based learning activities. Lomas' article gave insight that the present academia has been facing a great challenge in embedding educational quality through research based teaching. In a question about specific contribution for quality enhancement in Shuvarambha College, Sanjay further said:

> *Heads of various subjects enter the classes and collect suggestions regarding teaching learning. Those suggestions/complains are discussed in the staff meeting without pinpointing the specific problem of any teacher. This process ensures improvement of the prevailing shortcomings without humiliating any teacher. Since we don't disclose the secrecy, there exists no any gap between the teachers and the students. It helps to maintain harmonious relationship between the students and the faculties. (Interview: May 9, 2013)*

Regarding the efforts of learner centered teaching Sanjaya finally summed up thus:

> *Our main intension is to accelerate their spirit in real learning. It has really shown change in college results. In numerical portion, the subject teachers give extra numerical problems to the students. The students involve in such kind of practices associating it to their daily life. Similarly, the students get regular and periodical assignments in theoretical portion. This assignment is regarded as the base for quality enhancement. (Interview: May 9, 2013)*

The ideas of Rajan and Sanjay were in the same spirit with similar commitment regarding the efforts in practice based education. The kind of collaborative work

culture for academic excellence was in the theoretical support with Laurie Lomus (2004). His opinions go like this:

> Embedding quality can be considered as requiring the development of a culture within an academic department, faculty or higher educational institution where staffs strive continually to improve the quality of provision and where it is a naturalistic process with a desire for excellence being routine and commonplace. (p. 158)

Though the young leaders were seen energetic and enthusiastic, my observation of the college did not show essential symptom in support to their version and the magazine of the college also did not reflect it directly. The college had not published any research journal yet. For the conformation of those ideas I asked the same question to Kasyap. He expressed his views as follow:

> *The present campus chief has shown bright symptoms of improving quality in compared to the previous one. The former campus chief was not so responsible towards the prevailing problems in teaching learning. The present leadership seems positive towards the resource management and updating the strategies may it be the case of ECA (Extra-curricular Activities) or technology related teaching learning. We have realized gradual change in this ground but there is no such illustrated achievement so far. (Interview: May 10, 2013)*

The input from the side of the senior faculty, who was not involved in administrative work, really gave support to the ideas of the leaders. The remarks of the administrators were partially supported by the opinion of the faculty. Though the efforts of quality enhancement were not fully reflected in the implementation, their commitment and clear vision showed bright rays for future. This condition with rays

of change best suited the CI approach captured by the Japanese word *kaisen* which means incremental improvements of the on-going processes (Temponi, 2005, p. 19). Shuvarambha College seemed to be advancing in the leadership of the newly appointed campus chief with the reflection of very little change so far.

Regarding the college efforts in quality enhancement and its reflection in the field, I made queries to the other participants as well. Keshab expressed his strategies that the staffs were instructed and guided frequently in the staff meeting for their project works and student centered teaching. It depended on the nature of the teachers how creative they were. His facial expressions and my observation of the field both signaled me that the teaching learning activities of that college were still traditional and the question of students' employability was almost ignored issue then.

Keshab was not found serious in the case of research based teaching, practical skills in learners, and professional adjustment after the completion of their academic degrees. His efforts were not supporting the strategies related to the norms of CI Approach. The proof behind the above stated ideas is the perception of the senior faculty who charged the campus as simply a routine worker. He instructed the staffs for excellence but did not propose any scheme for it. "The process of continuous improvement includes people, equipment, supplies, materials, and producers" (Temponi, 2005, p. 19). Since the college leader relied on the mere instruction for quality enhancement, continuous improvement attempts were not effective in that college.

I asked Binisha, "What strategies do you personally adopt for giving quality education to your students?" Her reply was:

> *I always prefer student centered teaching. I encourage the students' creativity in learning. As guided by the subject I involve them in various project works,*

> *practical presentation, opinion sharing, group works etc. Due to time restriction and lack of supporting materials, I am unable to carry on my classes according to my desire. So far as the role of the students is concerned, most of the students involve in creative learning without objection. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

She showed the limitation of time and resources and repeated her desire to conduct learner centered teaching. The condition of the college showed that the college leader lacked proper strategies for institutional transformation. According to Mayfield and Mayfield (2007), change oriented leadership behaviors include motivation, goal setting, giving feedback, coaching, and securing needed resources (p. 6). Though the senior faculty seemed to be highly creative and intellectual she was unable to show her skills due to lack of leadership initiation and essential resources. At the time of the interview, she was highly confident and willing to share the efforts in her professions. I was further interested to see the administrative support in her practice based teaching. In response to my query, whether she would get adequate administrative support in her mission or not, she stated:

> *Yes. The administration inspires and motivates us for practice based teaching in the staff meetings but we don't get any specific guidelines in practical sense. We are bound to finish the prescribed courses in the scheduled time. We don't have sufficient supporting materials for practice based teaching specially research based teaching. The administration compels us to complete the course and does not see the course gravity seriously. As a result, we are more concerned to the completion of the course rather than the quality teaching. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

The confusing expressions of the campus chief were well supported from the views of the senior faculty that there was prevalence of traditional teacher centered teaching learning activities. "Leader can play a pivotal role for eliciting follower creativity, but appropriate feedback from members can also increase leader creativity" (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2007, p. 8). As the expression signals, the college needs visionary strategies of the leader and creative support from the side of the fellow members.

I felt that the college needs transformational leadership qualities to "inspire followers to transcend their own self interests for the good of the organization (Robbins, 2004, p. 235). The opinions of both of my participants gave ideas that they had clearly realized the need of improvement in teaching methods especially practice, technology and research based teaching. The change, however, depended entirely upon the leadership on how the leader could give scheme, motivate the team and build trust towards the college mission.

In reply to the same question of quality efforts, Bidhyadhar expressed his opinion that they had given high priority to technology and research based teaching. He claimed that the teaching learning activities were completely system guided and the students were regarded as the active members of teaching learning activities. In my query about the proof or reflection of quality education, he told,

> *Ours is a community college and we have been running college in cost recovery basis not for profit motive. The college was established in the need and participation of community and the program expansion also is guided by the needs and decision from the local community. Most of our graduates are local and they have been involved in various fields in the same locality. Some of the graduates have been appointed in national level fields including the*

> *civil service. We have been getting information that our product has got remarkable position in the fields they are involved. The records of such placement are being made systematic through tracer study by our counseling and placement unit. (Interview: May 25, 2013)*

Jana Adharsha College, in my observation also was found being rapidly improving the internal as well as external quality of the institution and seemed successful in expanding its services to the local and national level market. The college was extending its academic programs on the basis of the consumption at the market. That's why the college had been successful in adjusting a large number of the graduates professionally.

While asking about the detailed records of the students' professional adjustment from the field study, the campus chief remarked that the college was in the process of tracer study and the result had not been achieved yet. Sukumar stated the following remarks regarding quality enhancement scheme:

> *Our mission is to apply research and technology in teaching. Our newly developed various committees and systems have supported in this work. All the programs are conducted in proper planning and full participation of the concerning staff. We don't launch any program randomly in ad hoc basis. So the quality of result has increased at present. There is considerable involvement of the stakeholders through various functioning committees and departments. (Interview: May 27, 2013)*

I found the expressions of Rajan and Sukumar well synchronized and clearly practiced in the field. Sukumar, according to the campus chief, was the most responsible and authorized person to plan and implement certain schemes that could justify the quality. The above expressions reminded me the expressions of Lomas

(2004) who opined that "quality enhancement is more transformative and it requires a deliberate change process including teaching and learning" (p. 3). The claim of the research participants was easily justified by the face value of the college because everything was displayed on various boards in college premises.

In my curiosity about modernized teaching-learning activities of the college, the senior faculty, my esteemed participant of Jana Adharsha College, boastfully explained that the entire staffs were committed to fulfilling quality mission and there were drastic changes in quality during short span of time. The entire members of the college were found strongly committed ensuring a creative team work. In the views of Yukl (2008), a shared understanding about what needs to be done and why it is important increases member commitment to carry out the strategy (p. 342). The leadership seemed successful in raising a sense of ownership and participation in strategy building. Regarding the process of system development, Sukumar remarked:

> *The major work we began was systematic documentation of each and every program we conducted. We developed campus operational guidelines, organizational structure, job description of all the people involved in the college, various committees including research, publication, internal management, exam, students' council, parents teachers association, student counseling and job placement, complain management etc. All the stated provisions are functioning at present and the college has been moving efficiently within clear system. (Interview: May 27, 2013)*

Team performance also depends on the extent to which the interdependent activities of different members are mutually consistent and synchronized (Yukl, 2008, p. 344). The words of Sukumar exhibit the scenario of effective team performance how Jana Adharsha College had made drastic progress in the recent years. He

explained the recent development in the systems and documentations that helped the college in proper way.

As stated earlier, quality issue had been given high priority in Jana Adharsha College and all the activities were guided by the system perspectives. The system reflected in the college premises was obviously an outcome of efficient leadership. Leadership power is a tool to enhance emergent behaviors among workers (Martin& Marion, 2005, p. 142). The same symptom was visibly reflected through the face value of the college. My observation of the college activities gave ideas about the exhibited face value. The written statements on the walls and printed materials of the administrative strategies, dedication of the employees and perpetual devotion of the students signaled that the college was advancing in full fledge.

Under the issue of leadership perceptions and efforts for quality education all the participants forwarded very rich information. Though the quality efforts differed in those three colleges of my study site, the participants showed their matured understanding about quality education. Shuvarambha College was in the first stage mission of quality enhancement and Suryodaya College had not taken strategic move yet. The recent achievements of Jana Adharsha College were found really worthy and the systems were mission statements of the entire team in combined efforts. My observation report and personal reflections gave me ideas that the entire advancement of any academic institution depends entirely upon the quality and efforts of the leadership. It reminded me the opinion of Martin and Marion (2005) in the quote "leadership best serves by enabling the knowledge processing environment" (p. 140). Knowledge processing environment means sound academic environment with adequate use of human potentiality.

Leadership Strategies: Aiming Institutional Transformation

The discussion of this chapter began with my curiosity to the leadership strategies behind the enhancement of academic quality in academia. According to Ozaralli (2003), a leader promotes an organization by developing intellectually, stimulating and inspiring followers to "transcend their own self interests for a higher collective purpose, mission or vision" (p.1). The crux and expectation of this question was to deal with the issue of leadership strategies, the impact of those strategies in influencing the employees for their selfless devotion and positive consequences in quality enhancement.

The presented literature review guided me to observe leadership strategies from the angle of transformational leadership theories as the theoretical base of this research. A leader has to get trust from the esteemed team members through the qualities of competence, congruity, and constancy, and caring" (Bennis and Goldsmith, 1997). Did the leaders of my study field impress the team members with those qualities? My field approach was strictly concentrated to that aspect.

In response to my query regarding formation of policies and strategies, Rajan said:

> *We have Campus Assembly (Campus Sabha) of ninety members. It comprises of the founder members, resources developers, political representatives, social workers, local educationists and other forerunners of the society. Two bylaws viz. financial and academic are discussed in the AGM (Annual General Meeting) every year. Most of the policies are formulated as per the need of the management in the same. (Interview: May 6, 2013)*

The above views focused basically on the role and responsibility of the managing body at supreme level in course of forming general rules. This approach of

formulating the general rules and regulations best suits the provision of CI cycle proposed by Deming and Shewart which is known as PDCA cycle via plan, do check and act (Temponi, 2005, p. 19). It did not indicate the involvement of the employees in the decision making level. In the counter question regarding the promotion of team spirit, he remarked:

> *We have developed the concept of faculty wise and subject wise committees. We conduct periodical meetings with the provision of allowances. Frequent meetings and discussions in quality issues ease overcoming the possible hurdles in the work. Though we don't have any specific written documents regarding team spirit, we make every member realize the sense of their responsibilities and the expectations of college. (Interview: May 6, 2013)*

The above two remarks of my participant showed very clear provision about formation of strategic policies and participatory approach in decision making so as to promote team spirit. Those remarks relate to the process of decision making in groups with commitment of each member in implementation. Groups have more relevant knowledge and ideas that can be pooled to improve decision quality and active participation will increase member understanding of decisions and member commitment to implement them (Yukl, 2008, p. 356). At the same time he realized his shortcomings that they lacked specific written document for team spirit. He further gave information that Campus Assembly worked in the formation of rules and the employees' team would function at implementation level. The same question was responded by Kasyap as follow:

> *The present leadership calls periodical meetings with the intention of generating our suggestions. There is a unit to run exam and timely exposure of the results. In case of ECA also the responsibility has been given to some*

> *staffs. The leadership has formally requested the staff to support for quality enhancement and tried to involve the other stakeholders to some extent. (Interview: May 11, 2013)*

The provision of staff meeting seemed well practiced in case of sharing information of Management Committee decisions and generating suggestions for effective implementation. I added a counter question about staff involvement in policy level decisions and Kasyap remarked:

> *In case of major decisions of infrastructure and policy procedures the campus chief forwards the agenda in Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Management Committee. The staffs are basically involved in the discussions regarding teaching, exam, disciplines, extra activities etc. Sometimes the campus chief takes suggestions related to policy of college development but it is not mandatory by law. (Interview: May 11, 2013)*

Above mentioned two versions indicated partial application of team culture that inspired the members in problem solving. In the opinion of Stone et al (2004), "transformational leaders solicit their followers' ideas and creative solutions to problems, there by including followers in problem solving" (p. 351). The leaders of Shuvarambha College seemed unable to keep the fellow members in the main stream of forming organizational policies. The team, therefore, lacked the efficient ownership towards the main streaming of quality enhancement.

The next participant of the same college, program coordinator, was exactly in the same version with the campus chief. The aforementioned data of Shuvarambha College signaled two ways system of strategies formation via management level and employee level. The employees had to follow the decisions made by the management without any question. The campus chief would take the insights from the staff simply

to keep them positive to the main stream or to generate ideas from them. As stated by Dahlgaard et al. (2007), "leadership is the driving force behind policy and strategy, people management, resources and processes, leading ultimately to excellence in result" (p. 212). But he could find the situation rather easier if he had given due emphasis to the staff's creative participation in policy level decision.

The data further hinted that the staff had accepted the system positively trusting on the leadership. It is obviously interrelated to the qualities and conditions of application of transformational leadership. From Ozaralli (2003) I came to realize that one of the important characteristics of transformational leadership is to "create an organizational environment where followers feel empowered to seek an innovative approach to perform their job without a feel of being penalized" (p. 7). The definition gave clear orientation towards safety and security of the staffs from the side of the prevailing leadership. In the same case, Keshab opined:

> *All the policies and strategies including quality and staff welfare are duly decided from the management committee. We don't have any other body or sector to make decisions. The authority of implementation remains with the campus chief. Basing on the requirement, the campus chief takes initiation in implementation and informs the team members when ever needed. We discuss day to day matters with the staffs in staff meeting. (Interview: May 13, 2013)*

His opinions indicated that the management committee was all powerful body in case of strategic decisions. The role of the team members was limited to the function as directed by the management committee and supervised by the campus chief. The role of campus chief, however, existed in both the sectors i.e. the management and implementation. The question of shared vision, as demanded by the quality spirit seemed ignored in Suryodaya College. Gil, Rico, Alcover, and Barrasa

(2005) quoted team climate inventory (TCI) of Anderson and West (1998) related to four factors: vision, participation, task orientation, and support for innovation. The writers were related to the application of change oriented leadership in balance with distinct performance and employee satisfaction.

In the views of Srikanthan and Dalrymple (2007), "the holistic model of quality in higher education concerns a basis for the development of a collective consciousness or shared values, among the stakeholders of an institution" (p. 175). The ideas and procedures of Suryodaya College ignored team work effectiveness limiting the entire administration in traditional or top down management system. Binisha expressed similar ideas thus:

> *As a community college, we believe and follow the norms and decisions of management committee. We are called in periodical meetings in which the administration demands our suggestions regarding effective teaching learning and evaluation. The major decisions related to staff welfare and institutional policies are beyond our level. The administration is not under compulsion to consult the fellow staff in case of policy related decisions. I work as a class teacher and I have been given certain responsibilities to promote disciplinary works in the class I am involved. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

Both the participants, representatives of leadership and teaching faculty, were in the same version in traditional decision making process which seemed the major obstacle in quality enhancement. The data reflected special lack in the norms of shared vision in decision making as one of the most important needs for institutional strength. "The most extreme form of shared leadership occurs when all important decisions are made collectively, and the leadership responsibilities for daily operations are distributed among the members and rotated frequently" (Yukl, 2008).

The issues discussed above were found in the same line as the reflection of my field observation thus:

> *The teaching learning activities of the college were going on in the scheduled routine works. Neither the staffs involved in the discussion of any creative works nor were they ready to give extra guidance to the esteemed students. There was dead silence around the college premises. The leaders were continuing their day to day works separately and there was no any close behavior between the administration and the staffs. The face value of the college also did not signal any creative works except the regular classes. (Memo # 02)*

My observation obviously supported the above discussed situation of Suryodaya College i.e. lacking the norms of continuous improvement efforts. It is contrasting situation to the above discussed cases that critical success factors to quality management and continuous improvement initiatives include: top management support, open communication, effective coordination and mutual trust (Cheng & Heng, 2002, as cited in Tempony, 2005). The same issue regarding policy formation was further asked to the participants of Jana Adharsha College. Bidhydhar informed:

> *The plans and policies are formulated in the support of the fellow staff in my leadership and submitted in annual meeting of campus assembly every year. The decisions of this body are carried on by the concerning administration throughout the year. The decisions in the middle of the session, however, are made by the management committee. No any decision is made without the prior concise of the staff so that they feel some sort of ownership in decisions and they support in the implementation without any question. (Interview: May 25, 2013)*

His perception gave ideas that the strategic policies were formulated from the working field and submitted to the management committee and general assembly for validity. The campus chief led the campaign of team members and the decisions taken to the management committee or general assembly were their shared vision. As per Jong and Hartog (2007) ,"Leaders can generate ideas and explore opportunities by directly stimulating and probing employees to generate ideas, supporting open and transparent communication processes, creating avenues for knowledge sharing and diffusion and assigning challenging tasks to the employees" (p. 58). It was quite related to the strategies of Jana Adharsha College and the chief of college seemed safe from the risk because he could be supported by the fellow staffs in all the difficulties.

From the above stated perceptions of Bidhyadhar we got further ideas of campus assembly as the supreme authority of the college. It was, however, a legitimate body in the representation of the all the stakeholders including the staffs. In the words of Crawford (2005), the process of institutional transformation is founded on empathy, understanding, insight, and consideration; not manipulation, power wielding or coercion (p. 7). In that sense the staffs were the major initiating agents in natural way regarding the policy formation. It has a good link to quality management approach along with staff empowerment that "the quality approach should be transformative, improvement driven, empowering, effective and sensitive" (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2007, p.184).

The process of decision making in Jana Adharsha College was somewhat matching the process of cross-functional team work representing the members from each strata of working unit (Yukl, 2008, p. 338). Sukumar and Binaya, two other participants of this research, also emphasized the constructive role of the entire staff in decision making at policy level. Sukumar remarked:

> *Our college has made U turn in the process of decision making at present. In the past we used to impose the decision of the management committee to the staff with high expectation of their services. The staff used to surprise for unexpected orders or instructions from the higher level. They did not feel the work to be their own. As a result, they used to follow the instruction under compulsion. Our new policy has made all the staff involved in grand mission of decision making ultimately ensuring increment in performance. As a result, we have realized change in their contribution in college development. (Interview: May 27, 2013)*

Robbins & Coulter (2005) define team as a group whose members work intensely on a specific, common goal using their positive synergy, individual and mutual accountability, and complementary skills (p. 413). The condition of team synergy, however, is an outcome of the visionary leadership with positive attitude and trust. The relationship between innovation and leadership is difficult to articulate reciprocal effects on each other (Crawford, 2005, p. 8). The perceptions of the participants and my field observation hinted that common goal, positive synergy, mutual accountability and complementary skills were realized as the key terms of leadership practices in Jana Adharsha College. The clue to the recent success of the college was their effective team work.

The generated data showed Jana Adharsha College, having practices of democratic norms and participatory approaches, highly successful in fulfilling the basic requirements of present academia in regard to the decision making in team spirit. Martin and Marion (2005) see leadership roles in maintaining an enabling knowledge processing environment and in controlling inhibitors that limit the ability of the organization to adopt change and ultimately manage knowledge gaps (p. 140).

The role of academic leader, according to the above quoted scholars, seems in the line of protecting the exhibited hurdles of quality mission. The display of various action plans, system plans and procedures in the college premises were captured in the same way during my field observation. I asked about the role and influence of college leader (i.e. the campus chief) behind this progress in quality matters to Sukumar. His reply was:

> *Our campus chief is an ideal and visionary leader with tireless devotion in actual field. He is highly energetic, supportive and cooperative person. He does not claim TA and DA (Travel Allowance and Daily Allowance) while going to Kathmandu and other places. He never demands rise in personal? benefits and facilities. We decide his facilities and impose. Further he keeps all the employees in equal distance. He applies organizational justice and encouragement to every one without any kind of partiality. In short, to say the entire progress of this college is due to his leadership and we are his faithful followers. (Interview: May 27, 2013)*

The expressions above express the selfless contribution of the campus chief in the motivation of his fellow beings. As the representative of the college, Sukumar expressed that they were proud of working under such a visionary leader. In the opinion of Ozaralli (2003), transformational leaders create a dynamic organizational vision that often necessitates a metamorphosis in cultural values to reflect greater innovation (p. 2). Since metamorphosis means complete change it suits the reflected changes of Jana Adharsha College. At the mean time I inquired Sukumar about the influence of campus chief, the team leader, in day to day working field. The reply was:

> *In my opinion a leader has to initiate the works and the entire work is planned and implemented by the team. In our case we have developed various units and responsible bodies which plan and propose the needs of their department. It is discussed in the leadership level and approved from concerning authority. In the need of overall college development case the chief generates the ideas or strategies. That's how the campus chief is doubtlessly a successful team leader and change agent in our case. (Interview: May 25, 2013)*

Binaya spoke in this regard that the staffs were well convinced, inspired and motivated in their responsibilities due to their trust on the leader and the consequences of his administration. The followers of transformational leaders transform their personal values to support the vision and goals of the organization by fostering an environment where relationships can be formed and by establishing a climate of trust in which visions can be shared"(Bass, 1985, as cited in Stone et al., 2004).

Binaya further stated that the staffs felt most responsible and authorized member of the college with strong commitment due to inspirational motivation of their leader. The perceptions presented above reminded me the ideas of Bass and Riggio (2006) who regard transformational leaders having extra ordinary capabilities, persistence and determination. They advocate the transformational leaders such kind of doubtless forerunners who deserve qualities to impress the others. Transformational leadership is the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (Northouse, 2008, p. 176).

I had asked for the perceptions about leadership qualities to the participants of the other colleges as well. In response to my question about leadership qualities, Rajan was little unwilling and expressed his views as:

> *My leadership (with little hesitation)….m….. Basically, we run college in team spirit and team leadership. At the time of decision, the leadership takes the agenda and we decide with ample discussion and inputs from all. Since it is decided in common, it is taken as their own property by everybody and goes in easy implementation. In this sense, I can say it as democratic leadership. I feel pleasure to share with you that my friends support my agenda without any objection. (Interview: May 6, 2013)*

With little gap and confusions he further stated,

> *Due to the active participation of all the staff in decision making process, we don't find any kind of confusion in implementation. The whole team is involved for the change of the college. This team spirit, unity and ideal team work is, in fact, the main strength of our college. (Interview: May 6, 2013)*

He seemed to be emphasizing team spirit and shared vision in decision. At the same time he emphasized the team to be actually involved in all kinds of decisions. He did not separate the management level decisions and implementation level decisions that normally exist in most of the institutions. His arguments, however, were critically supported by the senior faculty. In my query about influencing behavior of the college leader towards the employees, Kasyap said,

> *The chief does not keep distance with the staffs. He behaves with every one as friend and regards everything of the staff. I don't have any question against his regards to the employees. The college, however, could not show drastic change as demanded by the complexity of education market place. I would like to advise him to bring ambitious programs and demand our devotion so*

that the college advances in quality issue in short time. (Interview: May 11, 2013)

The ideas above gave some sort of contradictions because the bold expressions of the campus chief were critically supported by the senior faculty. His objections were on the ground of innovation. The leadership seemed to be inspiring the followers in the routine works rather than institutional transformation. Such kind of leadership is termed as transactional. While comparing transactional and transformational leadership, Luthans (2008) says, "The more traditional transactional leadership involves an exchange relationship between leaders and followers, but transformational leadership is based more on leaders' shifting the values, beliefs, and needs of their followers" (pp. 424-425).

Both Rajan and Kasyap were giving similar argument and emphasis to the team spirit as the central emphasis of the administration. However, the latter seemed dissatisfied in case of adequacy of the programs that could give certain height. His expectations could be correlated to the norms of transformational leadership to create a culture in which employees feel empowered and encouraged to freely discuss and try new things (Northouse, 2008, p. 190). Culture, in this regard, is the condition of mutual trust and sound relationship among all the members. Though the chief was sympathetic to all the staffs, he could not propose ambitious programs for drastic change in quality. The senior faculty expected visionary role of his campus chief. I had put the same question to Binisha. She replied,

I am moderately satisfied with the administration of my campus chief. Though he is a capable person, he does not take the chances so seriously on most of the occasions. Similarly, he does not make thorough evaluation of the contribution of all the employees with timely reward. Despite this, the friends

> *feel their responsibilities positively and dedicate for the quality education in the college. That's why we have satisfactory results so far. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

She pointed out two major weaknesses of her campus chief. He used to ignore the opportunities in some cases and the specific contribution of the staff would be overlooked that would discourage their additional dedication in the working field. Such kind of frustration in the employees hints a kind of chaotic situation against expected leadership behavior. Yukl (2008) was of the opinion that leadership behaviors are especially relevant for increasing member commitment to shared objectives. I found the leadership of Suryodaya College lacking such kind of leadership from my observation as well. In my additional query about some loopholes in the change scheme, Binisha promptly replied:

> *Exactly (With high agreement). If the administration works in the same way as the staffs expect, we have heavy chances to improve the quality of this college. The campus chief, as the head of the institution, should be able to treat all the staff equally and encourage them in the full involvement in quality issue. The chief of our college devotes very less time and efforts in the real working field. Similarly, we can't expect impartial judgment of our contribution. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

From the participants of various colleges of my study site and from the observation of the administrative activities, I generated the insights that the differences in the quality are basically due to the leadership efforts. The collective perceptions of my participants and my observational reflections reminded me the collegial efforts proposed for higher education institutions. Srikanthan and Dalrymple (2007) put their views that

> Quality management as adopted higher education must be made to preserve the traditional values of academic freedom and collegial modes of operation. As flexible approaches are developed, the relation between administration and academics, and industry and education sectors, could be expected to change from one of antipathy (or apathy at best) as at present, to one of synergy. (p.178)

The leader of Shuvarambha College seemed highly popular among the staffs and had collected sympathetic support from the followers. His efforts, however, were inadequate to meet the growing needs of the competitive educational market place. The rays of hope were found due to recent decisions from the management committee and the staffs were hopeful for bright future.

The administrative modality of Suryodaya College, as per the information for my research, was entirely traditional without any symptoms of innovation. The staffs were indifferent towards the leadership and institutional strategies. There were no other alternatives and they were bound to follow the policies of the college without cross question. In my query about recently applied efforts for change Binisha spoke:

> *All the day to day activities including teaching learning and evaluation are going on continuously in our college. Mostly, the decisions are made on ad hoc basis and the administration is not under compulsion to follow the suggestions of fellow members. The campus chief prefers to instruct the employees for their involvement in quality mission but it has been unsuccessful in our context. Collective efforts and creative participation approach are not uniformly applied in our college. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

Neither the leader of Suryodaya College could propose specific scheme of quality issue nor the fellow members showed rays of satisfaction there. Above

discussed situation, the perceived reflection of quality attempt of my field, reminded my reflections thus:

> *At the very entrance of my visit to Suryodaya College I remembered my schooling long before. We used to involve in rote learning in the guidance of the teachers in my high school studies. The school environment showed no any symptom of teaching learning except the buzzing sound of our intensive loud reading. Neither I saw impressive face value with reflection of scholastic activities nor did the employees respond me as a new comer there. (Memo # 3: May 12, 2013)*

My reflections were focusing on my expectation of sound academic environment and ideal social behavior as a visitor of an academic institution.

Chapter Summary

This chapter includes presentation and interpretation of the data drawn from the study field. The presentation part is followed by the possible interpretation from the researcher's perspectives simultaneously so as to ease the readers. At the same time the ideas raised for the discussion are strengthened with discussions of the available theories including Transformational Leadership Theories and Continuous Improvement Approach.

The data has been placed under various themes as guided by the participants' perceptions. The first research question and the first half of the second research question were addressed in the chapter and the headings included perceptions and efforts towards enhancing quality in community colleges including leadership strategies.

CHAPTER V

TEAM SPIRIT FOR SYNERGISTIC EFFECT

This chapter covers the attempts of community college leaders to develop synergistic effects for quality enhancement in practice. The participants of my interview expressed their invaluable opinions on various attempts of leadership to motivate team involvement as an illustratable impact on teamwork effectiveness. The transcription of the generated data, scattered in a large pool of information, were narrowed down into specific issues. Those responses had been categorized under different themes so as to make easy generation of the intended information. The second research question gave me proper direction to shape the themes of my study. The generated data had been presented below under various themes:

Staff Development for Distinct Performance

Staff development scheme is a crucial part of leadership strategies and the notion is based on the realization that the staffs are the invaluable assets of any organization. The concept behind this issue was that the entire development and transformation of any organization depended on the improvement of the staff quality. In this regard, the concept of Learning Organization, developed by Senge (1990), was taken as the theoretical base and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Robbins et al., 2009) had supported in the motivation of the staff for their distinct performance.

Regarding staff development scheme of an institution the opinions of Ellington (1996) keep worth. His vision impulses to:

> … take steps to disseminate good practice throughout the institution e.g. by circulating information about innovative teaching or by encouraging staff

> involved in innovation to share their ideas with the colleagues through such things as innovative teaching for shared interest groups and self-help groups. (p. 2)

The issue of staff development and their motivation towards higher performance was discussed in review section in detail. In the ideas of Odhiambo (2008), accountability systems designed to punish teachers and not provide them with the much-needed professional development experiences will not be the solution to the country's educational problems (p. 428). The emphasis is on the rewards and encouragements rather than negative impact of punishment. College leaders' perceptions towards the application of staff development scheme in real practice were taken as the primary source of knowledge in present research.

Yukl (2008) puts, regarding staff development, to "facilitating team learning for adaptation to change, quality of performance strategies and collective efficacy" (p. 343). Srikanthan and Dalrymple (2007) state that "the core values to be nurtured in engendering quality improvement in higher education institutions are represented by commitment, collaboration and transformation" (p.187). Both the above stated versions indicate human capital development, promotion of collective efforts and innovation through distinct performance. The central essence of their ideas is realized distinctly that skill development is the only root way to promote quality. While asking about faculty development scheme in the college, Rajan said:

> *We have developed the concept of Professional Skills Development Unit (PSDU) and it has been approved from Campus Assembly. The unit has begun the preliminary level practices. The scheme will be implemented for the professional development of our faculties and we expect them to generate*

ideas in guiding the students in learner centered teaching. (Interview: May 6, 2013)

The above mentioned ideas of campus chief matched the opinion of Crawford (2005) that the way for organizations to become more innovative is to develop and utilize the employees' ability for maximum progress of the organization and people. He seemed to be emphasizing the value of human capital as an important asset of organizational development. I realized that the leadership of the college has to create an enabling organizational culture that could inspire self confidence in the employees. Self confidence is likely to be a major source of satisfaction and strengthened potency (Gil et al., 2005, p. 12). Rajan claimed the positive condition of the employees in this regard. The views of the campus chief were further elaborated by Sanjaya, next participant of the same college, with some scheme in implementation. His version went like this:

The main motto of our college is to develop the staff as most important assets of organization. We realize that the sustainability of the college depends entirely on their capability development, satisfaction and contribution. We have developed a long term scheme in this field and implementing gradually. The learners are really benefited with their change in professionalism due to this scheme. (Interview: May 9, 2013)

The ideas of the second participant were little contrasting with the first one and seeking justification. The former explained keeping the staff development in long term strategy where as the latter presented the condition well settled in real practice. The above stated views towards staff development were supported by the intellectual stimulation aspect of transformational leadership. Transformational leaders, according to Robbins et al. (2009), are capable of having a profound and

extraordinary effect on followers as they "promote intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving" (p. 457).

Similarly, Stone et al. (2004) express their views that the leader inspires followers to see the attractive future state, while communicating expectations and demonstrating a commitment to goals and shared vision (p. 3). The above version was seeking the implementation of transformative strategies in creative participation of the followers but Kasyap, the non administrative staff of the same college, was not favoring the version of the administrators in the same sense. His reservations were in the practice of faculty development scheme. He expressed his views as:

> *Though we sit and discuss periodically about effective teaching learning, we haven't conducted any specific trainings, workshops and seminars to uplift the teaching learning activities of the college……. Staff development is too important part in front of the college. The staff should be trained for research and technology based teaching. Similarly the staff can be taken to different colleges for generating ideas regarding teaching, physical infrastructure, resource generation etc. These things are lacking in our college. (Interview: May 11, 2013)*

Leaders of an academic institution have to focus on the development of every staff with maximum utilization of their hidden potentiality by giving personal attention, treating each employee individually, coaching and advising for excellence (Robbins et al., 2009, p. 457). In my field study and observation of the college location, I realized that there were not any specific schemes in the line of staff development. There were no any reflecting documents displayed in the college premises that could be dealing with faculties in their professional development. I

realized that the schemes were in the process yet to be applied. The gap existed between projection and implementation of faculty development scheme.

The context inspired me to comparing the concept of employee development with continuous improvement approach. CI approach is a people focused system that aims at continual increase of performance by stressing learning adaptation as keys to the success of an organization (Deming, 1994, as cited in Tempony, 2005, p. 2). Similarly in the views of Jong & Hartog (2007), the way for organizations to become more innovative is to capitalize on their employees' ability to be innovative (p. 17).

Chapman and Adams (2002) made a thorough evaluation of strategic activities of South and Southeast Asian countries in terms of education systems and pinpointed the existing problems. Their research found the problems like poorly trained teachers, inadequate supply of textbooks, weak management, little or no instructional supervision and poor facilities (P.68). Among the above stated problems, most of the features were deeply rooted in case of Shuvarambha College and B. The same issue was asked to the participants of Jana Adharsha College. Bidhydhar expressed his views as follow:

> *The operational guideline of our college has clearly stated that all the faculties should involve at least for five hours in research related activities every week. Likewise we give token money to all the staff if they proceed in their higher studies of M Phil and Ph D. We publish college magazine every year with creative writings of the faculties as well as the students. Similarly the staffs are encouraged in the field of writings and publications. In case of effective teaching learning activities we conduct trainings and workshops periodically. We take the staff in periodic field visit and experience sharing of*

> *different institutions. Along with the process of QAA spirit, we have been guided by the UGC in faculty development scheme. (Interview: May 25, 2013)*

The recent staff development scheme was reflected the in the field during my observation. The magazine of the college gave brief glimpses that all the faculties and students were well convinced to involve in research works. The college was found publishing its annual magazine regularly. The research journal, according to the campus chief, was under process of publication. The ideas expressed by the chief of IQMC at Jana Adharsha College were exactly in the same spirit. He stated

> *We have prepared the operational guidelines of our college in course of developing documents for QAA certificates. Faculty development scheme is a very important part of the document and it is an outcome of our combined effort. We had high challenges of ensuring quality education, developing faculties and meeting global competition. So we made clear announcement to all the staff encouraging them for continuous knowledge upliftment. All the staffs took that announcement as a chance and involved in creative works. As a result the traditional 'gossip culture' has turned into 'work culture'. (Interview: May 27, 2013)*

The ideas of Sukumar were matching exactly with the spirit of learning organization. Organizational members in a learning organization expand their capacity continually to reach the state of their true desire (Senge, 1990). There was reflection of staff development scheme in printed and displayed documents around the college premises. My field observation also gave strong support to their opinions and developed a kind of faith in me that the entire staffs were dedicated for the maximum utilization of their potentiality. The situation reminded me the expression of Yukl (2008) that "the shared belief among organizational members is called collective

efficacy or potency" (p. 345). While asking Binaya about the college support in her professional development, she replied that the entire team was committed to professional development and duly supported by the college administration. She spoke further,

> *The college has given specific frame of promotion and other benefits on the basis of staff development and quality increment. We are convinced and trying our best for our professional development. The administration has further assured that the benefits will be decided on the basis of dedication and efficiency and our contribution will be the only base of deciding our facilities. (Interview: May 28, 2013)*

The ideas of Binaya justified the importance of employees' performance and its impact on institutional development. According to Dahlgaard et al. (2007), employees are not only the greatest and most expensive asset but that they alone are the creators of quality i.e. "people make quality" (p. 212). Administrators' perceptions, employees' remarks and researcher's field observation were uniformly supporting the staff development spirit of Shuvarambha College and the recent progress of the college was proof for it. It reminded me that the situation had warranted the organizations to emphasize the role of employees and invest on them for the progress of the entire organization. In fact the college was developed as a learning organization with a corporate culture characterized by increased customer satisfaction through continuous improvement in which all employees actively participate (Dahlgaard et al. 2007, p. 16).

The concept, however, was not found adopted in all the community colleges in the same spirit. Binisha said, "Staff development scheme can be made transparent so that the entire staff can seek their academic strength through continuous learning".

Her ideas were not found implemented in her institution in the expected way and she opposed her administration thus:

> *Neither the administration encourages the staff in skill development scheme nor does it regard the achievements of them. There is the condition of wholesale promotion and increment of facilities in our college. Though the campus chief gives enough briefings of quality teaching in staff meetings we don't get any specific guidelines and support for it. We have never attended any trainings and workshops during last three academic years. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

She had strong dissatisfaction towards the administration for not giving staff development scheme. She was further unhappy for not organizing the trainings and workshops in periodical basis that are basic requirements of quality enhancement and faculty development. According to Gil et al. (2005), change could be achieved "by developing the skills of team members or by fostering the self confidence of the team" (p.12).

The only way to develop confidence and competence in the employees is through skill development. The same aspect was found lacking in Suryodaya College and my queries were overlooked by the campus chief. He remarked that the administration had been unable to launch staff development scheme effectively due to limitation of resources and other unavoidable circumstances. He seemed regretting for ignoring the recent trend of giving priority to human resources. The situation further hinted the efforts of change oriented leadership. Change oriented leaders inspire organizational members by motivating the environment, encouraging innovative thinking, explaining need for change, and taking personal risks (Gil et al., 2005, p. 3). My findings of the field observation were giving easy reflection to the

situation discussed above because the institution gave no any symptom of organizational innovation except continuation of traditional teaching learning.

Team Spirit: the Most Expected Mission of Academia

In the views of Yukl (2006), a team is a small task group in which the members have a common purpose, interdependent roles and complementary skills. In other words, team refers to a group whose members work intensely on a specific, common goal using their positive synergy, individual and mutual accountability, and complementary skills (Robbins & Coulter, 2005, p. 413). The above definitions explain team as a group of people committed for specific task with mutual support and sound coordination. Since the collective efforts of the employees result into unexpected achievements, this issue plays vital role in institutional transformation. I had asked a question to Bidhyadhar regarding team work effectiveness how he would promote and claim his internal team spirit. This question was guided from the realization of my field observation. In response he said:

> *We have academic council comprised of campus chief, assistant campus chiefs and heads of different departments. The committee makes decisions for the whole academic year in anonymous way. Campus chief does not take any decisions without the consent of the team members. As a result the whole team involves in decision as well as implementation. It ensures the sense of ownership in the working field. The subordinates are encouraged to involve in the mainstream of college development both in case of decision as well as implementation (Interview: May 25, 2013).*

The concept of academic council seemed internal team of responsible members who deserved the rights of leading the institution. The ideas of Bidhyadhar proved team work effectiveness in formation of their self governed policies ensuring

their ownership in college. His administrative style was found participatory in both cases of policy formation and implementation. I further asked him how they would carry on their team work in work division and implementation. The reply was:

> *We prepare the TOR for all the administration and subject wise departments. All the expected programs are kept in the meeting of academic council for decision before actual implementation. If the members of academic council have any suggestions or reservation in it, we make timely reformation. Then the responsibilities are decided and taken into action without any confusion. Since the concerning members are involved in the decision, it becomes their own scheme and they devote in the implementation without any kind of confusion. The members of academic council work as the representatives of the members of their department and convey the message to them prior to the implementation. In case of serious decisions, we take the issue in the discussion of management committee and general assembly respectively (Interview: May 25, 2013).*

I had asked Bidhyadhar to explain the prevailing influence of his leadership on the team members, he felt little uneasy and suggested to ask that question to his fellow staffs. After little clarification he spoke thus:

> *One fact is that I am simply a member of this institution and I can't do anything without invaluable support of my friends. Whatever has been done here is the product of the entire team. I have been encouraged by the team and I am strongly committed to lead the college basing on this back support of my colleagues (Interview: May 25, 2013).*

In regards to a motivated and inspiring team work, Houston (2007) remarked that the most important thing was the willingly working environment. He was of the

opinion that the staffs as well as the learners should be eager and excited in teaching learning activities. He gave equal emphasis to teaching and research as part of generating knowledge. He further stated:

> Quality depends on a structure that supports both teaching and research equally well. If you've got happy staff who are excited and fulfilled in what they're doing so far as research and teaching is concerned and you've got students who are motivated and happy and so on as a result of that, then I think you've got a quality product. Quality is an all-encompassing attitude. (p. 72)

The above explained situation is the expectation of the employees of our context too. Kasyap gave his expectation thus:

> *For quality education, the leadership has to focus on effective teaching learning, quality exam system, staff motivation for their devotion and use of technology in learning in place of traditional teaching. The most important aspect of teaching at present times is research based teaching. The staffs should be encouraged and inspired to involve in research works so that they feel pleasure in the assigned works. (Interview: May11, 2013)*

From the above discussed perceptions and theoretical bases hinted me to realize that well inspired and encouraged team with adequate attraction to the working field lead to success of the organization. Forceful appeal of the employers give pretended dedication only.

Staff Motivation: Driving Force for Organizational Strength

As guided by the research question and assisted by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Robbins et al., 2009), my further attempt was to see the perceptions on motivational factors. "Motivation is a human psychological characteristic that

contributes to a person's degree of commitment" (Stoner et al., 2009, p. 468). Similarly Robbins et al. (2009) define motivation as the processes that account for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal (p. 193). As defined above employee motivation influences the staffs for their self interest and willingness to continuous devotion in work that ensures quality performance.

My attempt was to see staff satisfaction, motivation to the works and its impact on their performance. About my query, Sanjay stated

> *The staffs are completely assured that their contribution will be evaluated and addressed with adequate priority. Additional contributions are addressed in monetary value. To avoid absenteeism we pay the reserved leave multiplying it with 1.5%. This concept has really supported the regularity of the classes. In addition to this we develop the provision of timely permanency, financial support for M Phil and Ph D studies, provident fund, retirement benefits, etc which are some of the motivating factors of effective team spirit of this college. Staff motivation and dedication are the major reasons behind quality improvement of this college. (Interview: May 9, 2013)*

The above statements hint that the college is well developed in the quality matter but the senior faculty of the college seems critical in this ground. The provision of staff motivation in Shuvarambha College seemed matching with the lower level needs (Robbins et al., 2009, p. 195) that are satisfied externally, such as physiological and safety needs. I asked the senior faculty, my esteemed participant, whether they were well motivated in their professional responsibilities by the employers or not. He was found quite critical in this regards. The disagreements of Kasyap were basically

related to institutional regards, staff involvement in decisions, fair performance appraisal, and their mainstreaming. In his words:

> *Some sorts of dissatisfactions are seen in staff involvement in institutional decisions. Though we are informed and involved in discussion, we feel ignored if our opinions are not applied. In such a condition, we feel being isolated from the main streaming of institutional development and our dedication decreases. (Interview: May 11, 2013)*

He addressed my further queries thus:

> *We are compelled to believe and follow the decisions of the administration regarding institutional policies, construction works, and budgeting. Similarly, we want fair evaluation of our contribution with proper regards but the college seems unable to do so in many cases. In case of incentives, we have compromised due to the financial condition of the college. (Interview: May 11, 2013)*

The above data hinted that the staff have made mind in case less incentives. All they desire is their involvement in decisions and fair evaluation of their contribution. The remarks above signalized the focus on the higher-order needs. According to Robbins et al. (2009), the higher order needs are the needs that are satisfied internally, such as social, esteem, and self actualization needs (p. 195). The higher order needs advocate that the staff offer their selfless dedication towards institutional goals if they realize that they get adequate regards from their employers. Regarding quality management, Dahlgaard et al. (2007) states that the "total quality is a holistic concept which requires quality motivation of all people in an organization towards a common goal" (p. 212). I did not see any documents that could justify certain evidences of staff motivation during my observation of the day to day works.

The same question was asked to Binisha. There were some symptoms of dissatisfactions but unwillingness to expressions during the interview. I realized that she was nervous and skeptical to exposure of her expressions that could affect her job. After my assurance of confidentiality, she exposed her perception thus:

> *Sometimes I feel a kind of de-motivation in the works. When the friends show their unwillingness to work and objections towards the haphazard decisions and poor performance appraisal, I realize the same in my case also. The contribution is not addressed in monetary value and other inspiring rewards properly that obviously de-motivates the employees. The dedicated staffs get frustrated when all of them get similar payments, promotions and regards. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

In my follow up question with desire to more specific details, she said:

> *The other dissatisfaction is related to pre-plan in launching the programs. I always prefer timely planning of everything and timely accomplishment of the works but it does not happen all the times in our college. Sometimes unexpected programs are imposed and we are bound to follow them without any questions. If the staff know the program in advance, they make mind to accomplish the tasks in full fledge. (Interview: May 18, 2013)*

The perceptions of Kasyap and Binisha were matching in many aspects with nominal differences. The major objections were centralized towards both lower level and upper level needs (Robbins et al., 2009). Performance appraisal, in their views, could be related to rewards of the additional dedication in compared to the fellow staffs. They were further dissatisfied towards the haphazard decision making without the required conscience of the concerning staffs. Such kind of centralized decision making process, practiced in Suryodaya College, was against the norms of

transformational leadership theory as well. I kept the same question of staff motivation to Bidhydhar. His ideas were:

> *The first and most important motivating factor is the faith of the staff towards community college. The leadership has succeeded to assure the staff that the good of the college necessarily ensures good of its employees. We have been providing TU scale with other general benefits such as grades, provident fund, administrative allowances etc. The performance of every member of the college is thoroughly evaluated with proper reward and punishment scheme. The staffs have right to claim their contribution through self appraisal which should be recommended through the head of the department. Permanency, promotion and grades are determined on the same basis. The faculties with weaker performance are also given trainings and chances to uplift their quality standards. Thus the employees are motivated in the mission of quality enhancement. (Interview: May 25, 2013)*

The views of Bidhyadhar followed the concepts of staff motivation with the address of individual needs. Robbins et al (2009) state that motivation is the willingness to exert high levels of effort to reach organizational goals, conditioned by the effort's ability to satisfy some individual needs (p. 274). The visionary ideas of Bidhyadhar were exactly in the line of above stated theory of employee motivation and strongly supported by Sukumar. In response to my question, Sukumar said:

> *As the members of a community college, all the faculties as well as non-teaching staff trust the leadership and are convinced for secured future. The leadership seems successful to create such kind of faith in the main stream. QAA spirit and the initiation of University Grant Commission is another reason behind this motivation. In fact, all the members of this college*

> *including the management committee are involved in selfless dedication for QAA certificate and working with faith that the college will ensure bright future of all the employees. (Interview: May 27, 2013)*

Both the above stated administrators were confident and boastful while exposing their latest scheme of staff motivation in the institutional development of the college. The brightness of their faces and the face value of the college hinted clearly that they had been running the college within established system and employee satisfaction. Stoner et al. (2009) opine that transformational leaders motivate us to do more than we originally expected to do by getting us to transcend our own self interests for the sake of the team, organization or larger policy (P. 514). The responses of the senior faculty, the next participant of the same college, also gave strong support to the above mentioned ideas. My question was replied by the Binaya in the following way:

> *We, the staff, have full trust on our leadership and we believe that the resources will be utilized to the maximum benefit of the college and its employees. We are involved in all the important decisions. We feel proud to be the member of this college and the recent development of the college has inspired us in further development. In this condition why to be dissatisfied? (Interview: May 28, 2013)*

The confident and inspiring expressions of the participants of Jana Adharsha College made me realize that the success of any institution depends entirely upon the satisfaction of its employees. He was giving his perceptions from the higher level satisfaction as the most important feature of a transformational leader. Transformational leaders "motivate us by raising our need level to the higher order needs, such as self actualization" (Stoner et al., 2009, p. 514).

Chapter Summary

This chapter dealt with theme drawn from the study site as directed by the second research question. The assumption behind this discussion was that well developed and highly motivated team of members makes synergistic attempt to enhance quality in organization. I made an attempt to present and discuss on the data drawn from the study sites in support of staff development and motivation theories. Leadership qualities were given due emphasis in this regard.

The data were kept under some specific themes which were elicited from the pool of data drawn in course of research. The themes included the areas such as human resource development, their motivated involvement for team spirit and its impact in quality attempts. The discussion followed the data at the same stage.

CHAPTER VI

PROBLEMS, OPPORTUNITIES AND REFLECTIONS

The present chapter deals with the prevalence of opportunities and threats in front of community college leaders. And it was further expected to connect with the hidden queries how they would handle those adverse situations. In fact, this issue was also discussed under problem statement section along with the obstacles in front of community colleges. I have used the terminologies such as problems, challenges and threats synonymously to cover the real perceptions of the research participants regarding the perceived hindrances in their leadership practices. So the issues pros and cons are taken as the common agenda of all the educational stakeholders.

Seeking Change amidst Hardships

The challenges and opportunities are the concerns of all the stakeholders in course of fostering change in the institution. As guided by the third research question I was seeking the efforts of the colleges how they tackled the adverse situations. I was more concerned in their attempts of handling the hardships in the line of quality enhancement. I found the views of Odhiambo (2008) having worth in this regard:

> There is need to provide all stakeholders, including political leaders, parents, educationists and students with a chance to examine the challenges that have dodged the countries quality education agenda and to develop consensus on ways of addressing them. Quality issues must take precedence over everything and all players must be involved in the provision, management and monitoring of the education system (p. 428).

As a researcher I was intending to assess the strengths and weaknesses of community colleges in terms of quality aspect. I had already got some ideas about those colleges during my observation and interaction with the available faculties. I kept the issues related to opportunities and problems in front of the college to Rajan. Our conversation went in this way:

> *Me: Would you tell some strong aspects of your esteemed institution?*
>
> *Rajan: The central location, easy accommodation in compared to the city, public support and participation, continuous involvement of the remaining (some of them died) founder members etc are some of the numerous strengths of this college.*
>
> *Me: About the threats in front of this college?*
>
> *Rajan: The major threat of this college is the land. It has been quite difficult to launch programs in a small place. Resource generation is also equally difficult part in front of us. But we believe that we can generate resources in our joint efforts. Other burning issues in front of colleges like ours are the continuous socio-political conflicts, technological advancements, growing expectations of the esteemed stakeholders etc.*
>
> *Me: Do you take students' participation as an opportunity or a threat to the college?*
>
> *Rajan: Though we feel little indifference of the city students in the main spirit of the college development (this in fact is a city), we have not got any specific hindrances from the students and they have been cooperating us in the quality enhancement. We don't have the provision of FSU (Free Students' Union) but we have realized the need of Students' Council at*

present. So we can take this co-work as an opportunity for college development. (Interview: May 6, 2013)

The above conversation was inter-related to the third research question but broken into different parts. The combined sense of the responses centralized to more opportunities. Despite those all positive aspects, the campus chief pinpointed some hindrances basically due to students' active involvement in political activities and lack of sufficient learning resources. The situation reminded me the overall development scheme of CI approach. According to Temponi (2005), the process of continuous improvement, in general terms, includes the development in people, equipment, and supplies, materials and producers (p. 3).

Sanjaya highlighted on the extreme need of infrastructure development to address the growing need of learning resources. He stated that the management was highly committed and hopeful for it. From the opinions of Sanjay, I learnt the message that Shuvarambha College was strictly devoted in the development of learning resources but the achievements were quite insufficient. The staffs, however, were assisting the administration without any question. The same question of problems and opportunities was asked to Kasyap. He expressed his opinion in this way:

Community support is the major opportunity of this college. Program expansion, resource management as per the need, alternatives to plus two phasing out and physical infrastructure are the major threats in front of us. Library, technology based teaching, lab facilities, etc. also are insufficient. Similarly, staff development is another important part in front of the college. (Interview: May 9, 2013)

The query related to the opportunities and threats in front of community colleges was asked to Binisha. Her reply was:

> *Since it is a community college, it has heavy chances to get support in future from all the sectors including the government. Similarly, it gets public sympathy and positive response from all the stakeholders. The major threat is to compete with the private colleges in present globalized world. The leadership has to make farsighted strategies to promote team spirit to face all the competitions and to enhance quality in education (Interview: May 18, 2013).*

When I insisted for sharing other problems like administration related ones, Binisha was a bit open to the feelings. She exposed his perceptions thus:

> *I prefer to keep the problems in two sectors: internal problems are some sort of groupism among the staffs and sense of partiality in allocating responsibilities and incentives. Some trusted staffs get favor and priorities in most of the occasions and the complains are overlooked. Externally also, we realize turbulent political hindrances and pressure of power groups in staffing and other benefits. Sometimes, the staffs need to face the problems of the students as well (Interview: May 18, 2013).*

Her expression made it clear that the employees had complete faith on community colleges and expected the visionary leadership to encourage everyone for their contribution in quality enhancement. All the comments, though a bit bitter, were simply oriented towards her insist and expectation for change. Such desires, according to Stoner et al. (2009), can be fulfilled by transformational leaders who, through their personal vision and energy, inspire followers and have a major impact on their organizations (p. 514).

In my counter question whether her college was advancing in that line Binisha got little hesitated and remarked that all the dreams would not come true. From her facial expressions and words I got the reflections of her dissatisfactions and expectations for change. The campus chief of the same college gave brief ideas on this regard that the college administration was conscious about its opportunities. The field observation did not show any change in the recent days and I did not find any written document of the college.

My next attempt was Jana Adharsha College where Bidhyadhar kept his views regarding the opportunities and threats in such a way:

> *Obviously, we are proud in rendering our service to the common people in affordable fees. The kind of education in such nominal fees has been possible due to strong support from the prevailing community. In this sense, strong community support and efficient team are the main opportunities of my leadership. I am highly glad and hopeful for this case. The threats are the technology, competition with the mushrooming private sector and growing needs of the community. The question of government address to the community colleges is also a big issue as a threat in front of us. (Interview: May 25, 2013)*

The above stated visionary ideas were supported by both the other participants of Jana Adharsha College. Sukumar expressed his additional view that the college management was committed to convert all the threats into opportunities. The senior faculty was of the opinion that the major asset of the college was its efficient team work. In response to my query about efforts for overcoming the existing problems, almost all the participants gave emphasis to team spirit. Only the transformational leaders can generate such kind of team spirit through their idealized influence. The

leader's influence helps others to look at the futuristic state, while inspiring acceptance through the alignment of personal values and interests to the collective interests of the group interests (Avolio & Bass, 2002, as cited in Stone et al., 2004, p. 350). For justification they gave argument of community support and government address to those colleges.

Whatever discussed during the interview the participants focused on the confusing scenario of community college in term of government address. The Public College Association (PCA) has demanded the establishment of Public University in joint investment of the government and local community. The government has taken the proposal positively and assured to proceed after the formation of new constitution (Ojha, 2012). Regarding future strategy, Rajan, also an active member of community college movement and Ex. General Secretary of Public College Association, expressed thus:

> *Community colleges have been rendering their services to the nation using the limited resources. Due to community involvement and support, community colleges have succeeded to establish different identity in the society. We have demanded with the government that community colleges should be supported by the government with specific policy and add. Our model is to develop community colleges in public-government partnership model. The movement's main demands are as follow: public university without government interference, 50% investment from the government, public participation and involvement of the stakeholders etc. (Interview: May 6, 2013)*

His ideas deserved a mixture of opportunities and threats in front of community colleges. As one of the active members of community college movement, Bidhyadhar said:

> *My feelings, as one of the active members of community college movement, are in line with the establishment of public university as the Umbrella University for all the community colleges. The public should realize that the development of any sector depends on the type of community involvement in educating the youths of the nation. After that the employees of community colleges will be further motivated for their devotion in services. (Interview: May 25, 2013)*

The above version was basically intended towards the prevailing confusing situation of TU affiliated community colleges. The employees of community colleges have jointly demanded the establishment of Public University and the government as well as political parties has shown their sympathy towards this issue (Ojha, 2012).

Lastly, I asked a pertinent practical question to my participants whether they had felt any kind of conflict in the team work that created difficulty in settlement. A synergistic collaboration at the learning interface: high quality programs are anchored in collegial and supportive cultures that invite widespread involvement (Haworth & Conrad, 1997 as cited in Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2007, p.181). My query was basically focusing on the need of unified teamwork for distinct performance. Regarding it Rajan was found in highly comfortable position in his field. He shared his perception thus:

> *Normally, I don't feel any kind of conflict or confusion in my team work. All the members of my team accomplish the tasks of their job description. If, sometimes, any confusion takes place we sit and discuss on the matter and*

make easy solution for effective team work. My team work is quite smooth and the entire energy is used in quality enhancement. (Interview: May 6, 2013)

The views of the campus chief were supported by the program coordinator, the other participant of the same college, with further clarification. His ideas go like this:

We don't have any kind of mistrust, conflict or ego between the administration and the faculties that hinders the quality of the college. We keep periodical staff meetings and faculty wise meetings to make plan as well as discussions on students' progress. Quality issue has been given highest emphasis in the college development scheme. (Interview: May 9, 2013)

Kashyap supported the expressions of the two participants. Next, I asked Binisha regarding the prevalence of team conflict especially among the administrators. With little unwillingness, she exposed the leadership conflict of her college. Her opinion was:

Yes. Sometimes the coordinators expose their dissatisfactions with us. They too complain about evaluation of their contributions and their involvement in planning. We simply suggest them to leave the planning part in the hand of top administrator. Sometimes we don't find unanimous voice of the administrators in the field. (Interview: May 18, 2013)

Bidhyadhar, on the other hand, showed a very ideal team work without any kind of conflicting situation. He exposed that the entire administration used to run in common understanding and decision. That was the prominent facture of his administration. In his words:

I haven't felt any such difficulties so far because all the members are well known about the fact that dedication ensures better future of all. If, sometimes, any confusion takes place we sit and discuss on the matter and

make easy solution for effective team work. My team work is quite smooth and the entire energy is used in quality enhancement. The major asset of this college is an ideal teamwork. We don't try to keep any one aside from the main stream of the college on the discrimination of any ground. That's why I feel easy in my administrative works. I feel pleasure to work with the fellow members hand in hand. (Interview: May 25, 2013)

Their situation was similar to that of Shuvarambha College in many cases. The additional remark was that the chief used to enjoy working with the fellow members.

Impressions from the Study Sites

Observation enables researchers to understand the context of programs, to be open-ended and inductive, to see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed, to discover things that participants might not freely talk about in interview situations, to move beyond perception-based data, and to access personal knowledge (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 306). They have classified field observation in three types via highly structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Field observation plays crucial role in qualitative research especially to assist reflecting researcher's subjectivity. The central attempt of these researchers is to generate ideas through physical setting, human setting, interactional setting and program setting.

During the field visit I was fully conscious to make minute study of the administrative activities and the college environment with focus on academic activities. Whenever I saw any impressive glimpse, I recorded that in short and took a photograph. Some of my efforts of getting in contact with my participants also gave strength to my observation reports. Since I had approached those colleges for

research purpose, I focused on the activities that were relating to my research questions.

I was impressed to see the main building of Shuvarambha College in U shape with open compound in the middle with sound academic environment. The classes were going on without any kind of disturbance. Above five hundred students along with twenty faculties, as reported by the campus chief, were involved in teaching learning activities then. Though it is a community college, I didn't notice any slogans and banners of political activities representing various students' organizations. Similarly, there was no any provision of free students' union in the college.

The office of the campus chief was at the northern side adjoining with the account cum general administration. Neat and clean office with no any scattered documents showed very easy handling of the administration. A transparent wooden cupboard, the centre of attraction, demonstrated various important documents in very much effective way. Among the documents: two files related to consumers (Upabhokta Samiti) and consumer rights (Bhogadhikar) pulled my attention because it was easy reflection of stakeholders' involvement and public information. The gate was open to all the visitors without any obstacle and formality ensuring easy access to the public. Official works were going on without any delay at the time when the campus chief was giving me general information about college.

During my short stay in the office the campus chief introduced me with some administrators, teachers, guardians and former campus chief. This open behavior of the campus chief signaled that he didn't keep any distance among the fellow members of the college. It also gave me hint that he didn't have any serious team conflicts in front of his leadership practices. I realized the team spirit of the college because the interview of the latter was also in the same line with the campus chief regarding the

leadership practices, quality efforts and faculty development. The peaceful educational environment impressed me a lot.

In my third visit the gate keeper expressed his view that he had been serving the college for last twelve years and the condition was improving day by day. He was signaling towards the staff facilities and students' enrolment as the indicators of college improvement. I ignored the fact of facilities as it was their internal matter and asked him whether he was happy to work there.

While I was outside the gate, a middle aged lady stopped me and inquired about the last period of BBS third year class. She might have thought me as the staff there. She informed me that she was guardian and her daughter studied in BBS third year in the same college. She further spoke in response to my query that she was satisfied with the quality of education of the college. She further added that the fee also was affordable as Nepali slogan *Ghati Heri Had Nilnu* (Swallow the bone according to the size of the throat). I realized that the guardians have realized community colleges fit for middle and lower class people.

Suryodaya College, centrally located in the Kathmandu district and regarded as the leading community college, was not new for me. I had visited the college several times and had known about it through different media. My interest was to see the recent development of the college in quality aspects whether the college was successful to cope with the growing needs of the educational arena today. The first sight of the college during my observation hinted me that the college had been running the regular programs in traditional way.

The teaching learning activities of Suryodaya College were scattered in various small buildings. The administrative works were rendered from various places and no any display materials could indicate the processes clearly. Similarly, there

was not any specific unit to deal with the students in terms of counseling and placement services. The most impressive aspect of the college was behavior and support of the staffs. I was not treated as the outsider and every staff I consulted favored me in my research work.

During my second visit for the real interview with the campus chief, there was a political program of the students' union. The campus chief seemed in pressure and suggested me to take the remaining information from the other staffs. He simply gave me ten minutes time but assured me to give the time on the other days as well. This behavior hinted me that he was positive towards research works and the visitors for research purpose.

I was impressed from the behavior of the staff of all three colleges. In case of face value or outward attraction Jana Aadharsha Colllege was found really impressive. I found the college located in a beautiful and pollution free lap of mountain facing northwest. There were basic pieces of information at the entrance with an attractive gate. I saw various notice boards and information banners of the college in different places. The notices belonged to public information including Charter of Citizens, Institutional Motto, Mission, Vision, Goals and Objectives, Students' Code of Conduct, Staff Code of Conduct, Organizational Structure, Managing Board, Donors, Administrative Portfolio etc. Those display of information indicated that the college was functioning under proper system developed by the entire college family.

While interviewing the concerning participants of Jana Adharsha College, I was informed that the college had given high priority to research and research based teaching. In course of document study I did not find any research journal published from the college covering the research articles. The administration informed that the

research and publication unit of the college was working for the publication of research journal. The college, however, had been publishing college magazine every year with detailed information and creative writing. The magazine seemed successful in exposing college activities to the stakeholders.

That particular attraction of Jana Adharsha College had impressed me in my first visit. As informed in my interview session, the college had made drastic change during the process of QAA certification. I realized that the college had developed certain systems, produced visual materials indicating the system and displayed them in such a way that the visitors could get informed simply from their sight. The additional attraction was the Health Check Up Unit in separate room with the provision of regular medical service and periodical health check up by the established medical personals.

Success Story: A Source of Inspiration

From the study of the available documents and the information from the authority I came to know that Jana Adharsha College (A reputed community college of Gandaki Zone) was established in the initiation and support of the fore-runners of the local community comprised of educationists, social workers, politicians and professionals of different sectors. The college was named after a national emblem and run completely in the service of the nation. It got gradual height during and immediately after the political change of 2046 BS. The popularity of the college was possible mainly due to community support and partly because of its sole existence in the field of higher education. As a result it was renowned as alternative name for higher education at the region.

The ever widening popularity, however, was gradually hampered due to mushrooming private colleges and fierce competition with their massive investment in

education. Unhealthy political scenario of the nation was reflected in the college management and students' activities. The representatives of a single political party captured the management of the college for around a decade and the teachers also were actively involved in political activities ignoring the academic activities. The college began to deteriorate in both quality and quality with heavy despair in front of its stakeholders.

In the mean time, University Grant Commission began to address community colleges as very important asset of nation's higher education. Under Second Higher Education Project (SHEP), UGC recognized it as C Grade College on the basis of performance and infrastructure development. It got above fifty lakhs financial support from UGC in term of performance grant and matching grant. By then the social awakening and visionary leadership of the new campus chief, the management committee was reformed insuring the participation of all the political parties with sound understanding. The new management collected public sympathy and donation from all sectors under the grand scheme of respecting the donors. The college got financial support from various sectors including Indian Government, Lions Club, District Development Committee, Municipality etc. as a result the entire infrastructure of the college got drastic change in a short span of time.

The mindset of the college stakeholders got 'U' turn in case of quality together with the change in its face value. The campus assembly of above thousand people, among the donors, was formed as the supreme body to guide the college management. The management committee, as stated above, also was reformed in inclusive nature with the motive of quality upliftment. The leadership was highly conscious that the development of the college depends on the development of its people. The teachers, non-teaching staff and the students were motivated and strongly committed in this

grand mission. The faculties were encouraged to develop their academic career through M Phil, Ph D and skill oriented trainings. The traditional teaching-learning was replaced with modern research and technology based teaching. Students were given due emphasis and given proper counseling and care. Gossip culture was substituted by work culture. Job descriptions were reformed and staff performance appraisal was transparently applied. The phase of the development was regarded as a glorious period of the college.

The college took its grand step with application in UGC for QAA (Quality Assurance and Accreditation) for authentic certification of imparting quality education. After getting guidelines from the UGC the management began to modernize the entire administrative and academic activities. The college established a specific unit named Internal Quality Management Circle (IQMC) for the development of the documents for QAA. The unit also began to plan and implement quality enhancement schemes along with the monitoring and checks. The college began to write its self study report as the basic step of to QAA certification. The management took it as an opportunity to reform the overall system of college regulation and UGC gave guidelines and support for the same.

The entire organizational system got modernized ensuring internal quality as well as external face value. At present, all the stakeholders are devoting their selfless services in the mainstream of college development with faith in mind that the good of the college results in the good of the employees. As a result, this college is given an example of model community college of the region at present and it can be regarded as the source of inspiration for academia.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I tried to make clear presentation and interpretation of the perceived data with critical evaluation. The large pool of massive data as the perceptions of community college leaders were presented with cross study in the form of interpretation. The theoretical support related to transformational leadership and continuous improvement efforts for quality enhancement gave support to make interpretation more credible.

The data were presented under various thematic sub headings. The sub-headings included some of the prominent opportunities and threats with due emphasis in course of highlighting the future guidelines for leading these colleges. Researcher's observation note and success story of one of the participant college were the additional parts of data presentation.

CHAPTER VII

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The present chapter begins with discussions on findings drawn from the presentation and interpretation of the perceived data in the preceding three chapters. My aim was to draw findings as the central themes from the review of literature and field data. It followed discussions on the findings with the already identified and established knowledge, and theoretical perspectives. The information generated from the research field comprised of in-depth interviews, observation reflections in the form of memo and study of available documents. The data were further discussed with the support of transformational leadership and continuous improvement approach from theoretical lenses. The entire process was guided by the understanding that the analysis of qualitative data is "an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions and writing memos throughout the study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 190). Similarly, the discussion was guided from the ideas that writing the research analysis involves summarizing, condensing, and illustrating what the researcher identifies as the main themes (Smith et al., 2009).

After the completion of the thorough analysis of thematic data, I began to make the detailed discussions on each issue along with the descriptions of the findings. The perceived findings elicited from the field data were discussed in contexts of quality issues with the cross confirmation to the theoretical perspectives. I was aware of the fact that qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants' definition of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen

et al., 2007, p. 461). The findings and discussions of this research have been presented under the following thematic areas as guided by the research questions:

Multi-faceted Perspectives on Quality Education

The attempt was guided by the first research question "How do the community college leaders perceive the concept of quality education?" As a researcher, I was known and convinced towards the fact that the understanding of quality issue of the educational leaders would play crucial role in uplifting the quality of the targeted institutions. The concept of quality education, as discussed in the preceding chapters, is entirely subjective and interpreted from various angles. The participants of my research made me realize that they had sound understandings about the norms of quality education. Out of the established debate of input, process and output, as an achievement of educational institutions, most of the participants emphasized on the priority to consequences or achievement. The focus of their perception was employability or professional adjustment as the central aspect or prime objective of gaining academic degree.

Rajan, the chief of Subharambha College, expressed his view that the educational institutions should impart the kinds of academic qualities and working skills to the learners that they adjust in their working fields without difficulties. He further remarked that the colleges could study their field as their own judgment regarding quality. His expressions reminded the ideas of Dahlgaard et al. (2007) who projected quality issue as a holistic concept that included two different ideas i.e. quality as 'consistency' and quality as 'fitness for purpose' (p. 14). The second suits the case of education that education is aimed at the employability or professional settlement.

Similarly, Bidhyadhar, the chief of Jana Adharsha College, emphasized on the application of achieved degrees in the real working field. His ideas gave guidance to the institutions to develop the programs and implement in the same spirit. In his words, "The curricula and teaching learning strategies should be formed and applied in such a way that the learners will easily acquire such kind of capacity at the time of getting degree". In the same regard, Keshab, the chief of Suryodaya College, gave emphasis to development of insight knowledge in the learners. He was found in the line with Dahlgaard et al. (2007) that educational institutions should seek "perfection within the context of quality culture" (p. 14). Though little confusing expressions and feelings at the time of interview, he seemed to be emphasizing on the process of capability development in learners so as to fit in their work life.

The perceptions of Binisha, the senior faculty of Suryodaya College, hinted her expectations from the institutions. She was bold in her expressions that the college should judge their quality service from the angle of students' professional adjustment. She gave her sarcastic feelings that the fleeing of educated Nepalese youths to foreign land in the post of labors was due to failure of the educational institutions. She was furious at the time of interview (Memo # 02) and her ideas seemed to be guided by her dissatisfaction towards the administration of her own college. In fact, her dissatisfactions were the result of her objection to the administration that ignored the theoretical ground that quality education tends to enable the learners with their ability to generate skills, gain sustainability, adopt professionally and demonstrate change (Tomlinson, 2004).

Sanjaya, the coordinator of Subharambha College and Sukumar, the IQMC head of Jana Adharsha College, were found really energetic and positively involved in their job responsibilities. Regarding their perceptions about quality education both of

them remarked that the quality should reflect in the working field and bare certificates would have no any meaning if the learners failed to perform expected roles in the fields they were assigned. During the interview and field observation, I was impressed by their inspirational moves and hopeful expressions. Both of them were found young, energetic and motivated to the main stream of their perspective college development schemes. Their commitments reminded me the version of Houston (2007) that authentic quality improvement is more likely to result from approaches to systemic intervention that encourage exploration of question of purpose and of the meaning of improvement in context (p. 61).

On the contrary, Kasyap, the senior faculty of Subharambha College, tried to explain educational quality in term of merit. He remarked that academic institutes should succeed to enable the learners get higher grades or percentage so that they are selected in the national as well as international job market. The ideas did not match the concept of Dahlgard et al. (2007) in which they expect organizations "provide sufficient confidence that a product or service will satisfy customers' needs" (p. 7). The needs in educational sense are employability or professional adjustment. Kasyap was found focusing on the need of technical and vocational education at the same time. As a researcher I realized that he was also focusing on the employability or professional adjustment aspect and matching the opinion of the other participants in that sense.

The perceptions of my participants reflected their maturity in understanding towards the concept of quality education which was beyond my expectation. Though the expressions differed in person, the central emphases of almost all the participants were found in the same spirit and none of them gave priority to the grades or percentage of the certificates only. In other words, I found them well known and

motivated towards the modernized concept of demand driven education. The British Standards Institution defines quality in term of "*fit for purpose"* (Sallis, 2002, p. 13). Sallis' version about quality was "it is not an end in itself, but a means by which the end product is judged as being up to (or not up to) standard" (p. 13). Since the main purpose of education in easing the living, it stands in the same line with the above participants.

Varied Efforts to Quality Enhancement

The discussion of the preceding section of this chapter produced a kind of curiosity in me on how the research participants ensured distinct performance in their esteemed organizations. This discussion is based on the second research question: What strategic activities help college leaders promote integrated teamwork for continuous improvement in quality? Their strategic roles are proved as driving forces to lead the overall quality of the institutions so as to supply highly competent, innovative and entrepreneurial man power to the society. As Martin and Marion (2005) remark, "the leader must cast a critical eye on existing policy and programs to seek new and better methods to achieve organizational objectives" (p. 149). The leaders, in the same regard, are the change agents or torch bearers of the team who play front and prominent role on how to transform life through education. The discussions were based on the norms of continuous improvement approach that systems and procedures need to be improved, reorganized or re-specified to improve academic quality (Sallis, 2002, p. 38).

My query about the efforts of quality education was responded by Rajan that they had implemented practice based BBA courses in partial base in BBS programs and they had developed a kind of institutional collaboration with various business organizations and social sectors. Such attempts would support in enabling the students

in practical studies as well as job settlement. The above version exemplifies the philosophy of Martin and Marion (2005) that higher education can establish effective knowledge processing that enables creating teaching learning even with tremendous lack of funding pressures and increased expectations from stakeholders (p.150).

His ideas were further supported by Sanjaya that the students were undertaken through creative research works of various fields every year. He claimed balanced mobilization of staff and combined effort as the supporting measures of quality enhancement. For making the weight-age they used to give extra numerical and theoretical assignments to the students. Thus practice and research based teaching along with emphasis to practical knowledge were the claim of Shuvarambha College in case of proving innovation. Sallis (2002) explains that the common causes of quality failure can include poor curriculum design, unsuitable and poorly maintained buildings, poor working environment, unsuitable systems and procedures, insufficiently creative timetabling, a lack of necessary resources, and insufficient staff development (p. 38). His ideas went side by side against mal-practices of quality efforts resulting poor performance.

Kasyap, on the other hand, charged the administrators for keeping the teaching learning entirely in traditional way. He expressed his views thus: “Though the present leadership seems positive towards the resource management and updating the strategies we have not realized any illustrated achievement so far”. He agreed the gradual reflection of quality and staff motivation in compared to the past. He gave credit to the new campus chief for it. He was focusing on the internal quality rather than the advocacy as Houston (2007) gave his views that “authentic quality improvement should focus on improving processes of research and service towards learning rather than assessing perceived quality of outputs” (p. 69). The college could

not show any specific professional skill oriented trainings except the orientation and internship services. During the field observation I realized that the college had to seek some alternative ways of students' skill development in addition to the regular teaching learning activities.

In my queries regarding the efforts for quality education, Keshab gave very easy answer that he used to instruct the faculties in the staff meeting and the rest of the efforts depended on the creativity and willingness of the teachers. He ignored the present notion of quality improvement in the strategic approach of the team leaders. His traditional approach was found moving with the version of Sallis (2002) that "the majority of quality problems are the fault of poor management, rather than poor craftsmanship" (p. 43). The leader had to impose his visionary ideas as idealized influence i.e. providing vision and sense of mission, instilling pride, and gaining respect and trust (Robbins et al., 2009, p. 457).

Binisha seemed furious towards the campus chief that he continued his administration simply in day to day works. She stated her views clearly that the entire facilities of the staff also depended on the outcome of leadership efforts. Their expressions matched with the causes behind lower performance via "the poor working environment, unsuitable systems and procedures, insufficiently creative timetabling" (Sallis, 2002, p. 38). I was further curious about her personal efforts about quality teaching. She reflected her efforts that she would encourage students' creativity in learning through various project works, practical presentation, opinion sharing, and group works. Due to indifferent leadership, time restriction and lack of supporting materials she was unable to carry on her classes according to her desire.

Since Binisha's attempts were not supported from the administration she was frustrated. Still she was dedicated in her continuous attempts. During the interviews

with them I was eagerly observing the activities of the students and the faculties in their regular teaching learning without any interruption. The college premises and printed documents also reflected the similar kind of situation without any specific efforts in the face value (Memo # 02). In clear understanding of the situation of Suryodaya College, there was no application of transformational leadership that goes further seeking to arouse and satisfy higher needs (Schmitz, 2008, p. 11).

Bidhydhar seemed quite confident in his version that the college had adopted research and technology based teaching. All the teaching learning activities were system guided and the quality service was reflected in various fields through the performance of their graduates. The product of their college was appointed in national as well as local level job market. It was an example of outcome based service and they had given due emphasis on team work effectiveness. He was found in the line with Schmitz (2008) who expressed his views that the leaders were expected to possess a myriad of skills- corporate, political, and academic- to adequately deal with the internal and increasingly large number of external constituents (p. 44). The campus chief, therefore, seemed bold and confident in his efforts of recent years. The field impressions in my observation reflected the strategic efforts of quality enhancement (Memo #03). He was well supported by Sukumar in quality enhancement efforts and delivering the mission to the informants.

Sukumar was found highly excited and dedicated to quality issues of his college after getting guidance and support from the UGC. He expressed his ideas that the college was re-structuring the systems of their college in the line of producing saleable human resource. The entire academic procedures along with general administration were developed in proper system and conducted in pre-planned way. In course of preparing Self Study Report (SSR), the approaches were modernized in

the guidance of IQMC Unit. He exposed the secrecy behind recent success that they prepared the overall strategies in creative participation of the esteemed stakeholders. They developed mutual commitment to translate their vision into working field.

It is leadership that establishes a vision and translates into customer service and builds the structures and organizational culture that empowers staff to deliver a quality service (Sallis, 2005, pp. 14-15). The strategies prevailing in Jana Adharsha College resembled the continuous improvement approaches which were sole contribution of leader and the whole team carried the mission as their own. Since all the staffs participated in the planning there was no objection in implementation. Various functioning committees and departments were the responsible bodies to implement the organizational schemes. The responsible members of those committees and departments were the change agents and supporters of the campus chief.

Sukumar further informed that they developed campus operational guidelines, organizational structure, job description of employees, various committees including research, publication, internal management, exam, students' council, parents teachers association, student counseling and job placement, complain management etc. The latest development of the college ensured system guided approach to quality improvement. Since all the units worked effectively in their mission to quality education, the leadership would get opportunity to proceed unhampered planning for further development.

The recent changes in the operational system and their reflections in the quality issue proved Jana Adharsha College as the leading college among the colleges of my selection. The need for self sustainability of Nepalese community colleges was found addressed to a greater extent in that college. The staffs were not only excited

and motivated towards the mission but also taken change as their own responsibility. No one was found in doubt that the entire credit behind the change or transformation was the leadership of college chief. In this sense, the quality efforts of recent years resembled the characteristics of transformational leadership.

Shuvarambha College, on the other hand, was found changing gradually. The leaders were found excited and motivated for the change but the field lacked sufficient proof for it. The expressions of the senior faculty gave hints that the new campus chief had given slight symptoms of change and the staffs were more hopeful towards him. I did not find any activities as the proof to recent transformation during my field observation. Similarly, the face value of the college also did not reflect any specific features of institutional transformation. The teaching learning activities, however, were going on effectively in very systematic way. I realized that the quality efforts of the college were oriented towards transformational leadership but the leaders needed trainings for strategic attempts.

I found Suryodaya College, though located in the centre of Kathmandu Valley, operating entirely in traditional leadership styles. The college leaders used to suggest all the staffs for quality education and the rest of the efforts dropped on the hand of the staffs. So the quality depended almost on the capability and willingness of the individual staff. The responses of Binisha clarified that her frustrations were basically due to indifference of the leadership in achievements. She expressed her bitter experiences that all the staffs would get similar incentives, promotions and regards no matter how creative they were and how much dedication they deserved. She tried her best for quality enhancement but her sole efforts without synchronizations with the whole team would not give greater value to the college.

My realization covered similar situation during the observation of college activities. I did not see the reflection of recent activities in the college premises except the political slogans of the students. Those politics related materials also were not systematically demonstrated. The scenario hinted that the college was lagging behind in recent changes mainly due to weaker leadership competencies. I realized that Suryodaya College needed the strategic lead in the line of transformational leadership.

Theoretical Base for Exhibited Leadership

The preceding chapter included the efforts of leadership in course of offering quality education in community colleges. The same research question related to the strategic activities of quality enhancement was strictly related to the type of leadership as the driving force for leading quality mission. I made attempts to see the exhibited leadership activities of the participants from the angle of transformational leadership. Transformational leaders attempt and succeed in raising colleagues, subordinates, followers, clients, or constituents to a greater awareness about the issues of consequence (Bass, 1985, as cited in Schmitz, 2008, pp. 11-12). This chapter discussed the perceived leadership practices with the theoretical bases of administrative activities of the esteemed colleges. It covered the types of leadership and application of leadership practices in the esteemed colleges of my research. The perceptions of the participants were discussed with cross verification with the theories in this chapter.

In response to the policy formation and implementation in institutional transformation, Rajan remarked that the entire policy level decisions of their college were made in the supreme body via General Assembly. The assembly passed financial and academic bylaws through annual general meetings and implemented in

his leadership throughout the whole academic year. He gave very clear ideas that the campus chief, as the team leader, would put the agenda of quality enhancement for the year and the assembly normally gave unanimous agreement in most of the cases. Such qualities of leader matched with the version of Sallis (2002) that "transformational quality is achieved not through adhering to systems and procedures, but through the exercise of leadership" (p. 14).

I found the strategy of the chief in Shuvarambha College in the line of PDCA Cycle of Deming and Shewart that covered the general trend of policy formation (Temponi, 2005, p. 19). Would the strategy ensure innovation in the college? It was very much related to the question regarding the use of transformational leadership in the college. The exhibited face value and the observed activities could not ensure the condition expressed during the interviews. The campus chief, however, claimed that he made the creative involvement of various team members in decision making process. The members were the representatives from various subject committees and other functioning committees.

Sanjaya supported the provision adopted by Rajan and opined that the decisions were made from two levels via management level and staff level. He was clear in his version that most of the decisions were made from higher level and the staffs were supposed to follow them without any question. Kasyap gave critical opinion in the same regards that the staffs were involved in very trivial matters such as ECA planning and action plan. Though the entire team had trust on the activities of the leadership they were bound to follow a large number of decisions made without their concise. He gave his invaluable suggestions that the involvement of the team members would ease the administration to work for long.

Leadership played the role of change agent as the driving force in the institution in case of people management in quality enhancement (Dahlgaard et al., 2007, p. 212). The leaders had to develop a kind harmony in the involvement of team members at both management and implementation level to ensure institutional transformation. It would ease the management in people mobilization because the staffs could feel some sort of ownership in that case.

Keshab, on the other hand, gave the overall responsibility to the management committee in case of policy formation. He did not think of forming any other sector for policy formation. According to him, the management committee would make institutional strategy and gave the implementing authority to the campus chief. The campus chief would lead the mission and consult the rest of the team members whenever he needed support. Periodical staff meetings would ease him disseminating the schemes for change. He did not show any symptoms of staff involvement in decisional level.

Binisha spoke without any hesitation that her administration was indifferent towards involvement of fellow beings in quality efforts. She charged the campus chief to be limiting the administrative works to the traditional model via top down administration which did not match the norm of transformational leadership. The projected periodical staff meetings would limit to the decision sharing and scheme projections. My field observation and study of the institutional activities also supported the findings that changes were not planned in Suryodaya College. The field, as mentioned in my reflective memo, resembled the teaching learning scenario of completely traditional times.

Bidhyadhar addressed the same issue regarding the formation of institutional policies quite distinctly. He expressed his visionary ideas that the campus chief was

simply the team leader and the policies were formulated in various departments in his initiation. He led the campaign with adequate authority to the fellow units. The whole scheme was presented and approved from the campus assembly before taking it to the implementation. It was a good model of stakeholder involvement in decisions. In his own words, "No any decision is made without the prior concise of the staff so that they feel some sort of ownership in decisions and they support in the implementation without any question". His expressions matched with the strategy of idealized influence of transformational leaders who are "capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on followers" (Robbins et al., 2009, p. 457).

Leaders can generate ideas and explore opportunities by directly stimulating and probing employees to generate ideas, supporting open and transparent communication processes, creating avenues for knowledge sharing and diffusion and assigning challenging tasks to the employees (Jong & Hartog, 2007, p. 58). The above stated strategy was found applied in Jana Adharsha College which resembled the reflection of transformational leadership practice in the field. Smith & Rupp (2003) were of the opinion that leaders must create an environment in which other members feel trusted and empowered to make decisions (p.164). Exactly in the same model, the college practiced decisions through a legitimate body, Campus Assembly, in the representation of the all the stakeholders including the staffs as the result of leadership initiation.

Regarding staff involvement in decisions, Sukumar discussed the situation of drastic change in the recent years. He gave the credit to the campus chief. The campus chief offered selfless dedication with the communication of high expectations and without claiming extra incentives so as to motivate the fellow beings in work. It was a good example of transformational leadership with inspirational motivation.

Inspirational motivation refers to “communicate high expectations, use symbols to focus efforts, and express important purposes in simple ways” (Robbins et al., 2009, p. 457).

The leadership of Jana Adharsha College informed that they used to decide the policies and programs from the management committee in the past and it was informed to the staffs for effective application. It was mostly new and unexpected to the staffs and they were bound to follow it under compulsion. Since the staffs did not involve in decisions, they did not feel a kind of ownership in the mission. In course of getting QAA certificate they got complete orientation for the change in administrative modality. They began to decide all the policies and programs from working teams termed as departments and the validity was given from the management committee that secured the representation of the staffs as well. It gave symptoms of shared leadership that ensured the participation of the entire team in both decision and implementation.

The most extreme form of shared leadership occurs when “all important decisions are made collectively, and the leadership responsibilities for daily operations are distributed among the members and rotated frequently" (Yukl, 2008, p. 128). The administration ensured the application of staffs’ decisive power in quality enhancement mission. The improved model was regarded highly effective and the results justified its effectiveness. The combined efforts of the leader and the followers in both decision and implementation promoted institutional transformation. “Effective transformation requires that the vision is shared by everyone throughout the organization. Both leader and followers work in collaboration to transform themselves and the organization” (Schmitz, 2008, p. 12).

The face value and staffs creativity of Jana Adharsha College, as per my understanding during field study, proved the above stated expressions of the participants and theoretical bases. While inquiring the leadership role behind the exhibited change, Sukumar was further excited. He expressed his views that the leader (i.e. campus chief) demonstrated selfless dedication in the field. He was regarded as both vision creator as well as instant performer from the front. He demonstrated ideal leadership behavior with impartial human relationship and fair organizational justice to all the fellow staffs. In the straight version the entire achievement of the college was due to his ideal and visionary leadership that deserved the qualities of transformational leader.

While speaking about the internal policies, Sukumar presented two ways strategies for change. The general day to day policies and programs were developed from various working committees and the departments to assist the leadership whereas the higher level change related strategies were brought to the staffs for decision by the leader. Such kind of double step strategy proved the roles of transformational leaders who recognize the basic needs in potential followers but go further seeking to arouse and satisfy higher needs (Schmitz, 2008, p. 11). The campus chief led the mission with adequate trust to his team members. Since all the staffs were kept in the discussion of policy formation, there was no any question against staff ownership. The major responsibility of institutional innovation, at the same time, was with the leader himself.

While asking about leadership role Binaya shared her perception that the leader was doubtlessly a source of inspiration to all the staffs. She praised his dedication, impartial judgment and willingness to lead change. The situation of leadership practice of the college resembled the features of transformational leaders

who transformed their personal values to support the vision and goals of the organization by fostering an environment where relationships could be formed and by establishing a climate of trust in which visions could be shared(Bass, 1985, as cited in Stone et al., 2004). The situation further reminded me the version of Northouse (2008) who defined transformational leadership as the process whereby a person engaged with others and created a connection that raised the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (p. 176).

In my queries about the type of leadership, Rajan was a little hesitated and expressed his views that he was team based leader with adequate trust to them. He preferred to be known as democratic leader with participatory decision making process. The ideas of this sense were fully supported by the program coordinator whereas critically supported by the senior faculty of the same college. The coordinator praised him to be fit for team culture. The senior faculty was not satisfied in the demonstrated change oriented strategies. He praised the leader especially on the ground of inspirational motivation and individualized consideration but commented on the lack of visionary planning. In fact, he expected drastic change in quality of both internal as well as external aspects.

From the ideas of Rajan and Kasyap, I found mixed and confusing practice of leadership in Shuvarambha College. In case of team work effectiveness, the college could be comparatively regarded as the model college but the leadership was unable to discard idealized influence and intellectual stimulation (Bass & Riggio, 2006) which are regarded as the basic characteristics of transformational leadership. However, the faith of senior faculty towards the exhibited role of campus chief hinted the availability of effective team culture. The campus chief trusted the team in many cases.

The leadership roles in Suryodaya College were found quite different in many cases. The leader was charged especially for lacking planned programming and fair performance appraisal. The campus chief overlooked the opportunities of the college in many occasions and the staffs were evaluated randomly. As remarked by the senior faculty the college could improve a lot in a short span of time if the administration would devote their full potentiality in working field. In the contrary to the expectation of the staffs, the campus chief would dedicate very less time and efforts to the quality enhancement sector. He was found against the words of Schmitz (2008) that the leader has to dedicate to recognize the potentiality in the followers and utilize their efforts for higher needs (p. 11).

Despite such kind of negligence from the part of leadership, the staffs offered their tireless dedication in the working field. This supported to promote considerable achievements in the field. From theoretical perspectives, one can easily assume that the leadership of Suryodaya College was entirely in traditional model with top down administration. The motivating speech in the staff meeting and expectation of change were normal approaches applied in the college. The college needed visionary leadership as the catalyst for change. Binisha's demand of innovative leadership seems justifying the basic leadership behaviors especially relevant for increasing member commitment to shared objectives (Yukl, 2008, p. 342).

Binisha further informed that the chief of the college proposed the activities randomly on ad hoc basis. Such hasty programs were supported by the staffs just for the fulfillment of the assigned duties. It was the reason behind low motivation in the actual performance. In opposed to this practice, transformational leaders (Stoner et al., 2009) produce long term plan in support of the fellow members, ensure their ownership in main stream of quality enhancement and get maximum dedication of

staffs (p. 514). The theory seems urging for the application of inspirational motivation of the fellow members.

During the college visits no any signals of change were resembled. The only efforts of the various students' organizations were haphazardly pasted around the college premises. Those materials in messy demonstration signaled that the students were allowed to perform their activities without any specific guidance from the administration. The college premises did not give required information about academic activities (Memo # 2). Had there been application of transformational leadership, I would notice the recent changes in quality efforts of the college. It reminded me the traditional teaching learning activities of my schooling during my childhood around twenty five years back. We used to involve in traditional rote learning activities following the instructions of the subject teacher and the head teacher was quite unaware as well as unwilling to know the classroom activities.

Here, I made cross study of the perceived information of those three representative colleges with the directional guidance of transformational leadership theory and continuous improvement approach. Jana Adharsha College was found advancing in quality issues mainly due to the provision of systematic efforts. They were strong in team work under visionary leadership. All the members were found strongly motivated and committed for institutional development. The collaborative efforts had been reflected in the college premises with attractive face value. Researchers' reflective memo and perceptions of the participants were going in the same line side by side. Above stated situation of Jana Adharsha College resembled the application of transformational leadership that motivates us to do more than we originally expected to do by raising our sense of importance and value of our tasks (Stoner et al., 2009, p. 514).

Shuvarambha College was found in the middle of Suryodaya College and Jana Adharsha College in case of quality concern. The new campus chief (Kasyap informed) was young, energetic and committed with strong faith of his fellow members. He was highly hopeful to prove change in the quality in near future but the field did not show such kind of efforts in my observation. The expressed version and reflected situation did not match the expected trust on the leadership. The gap could be supported by the words of Mayfield and Mayfield (2007) that "leadership behavior is embedded in an organizational context and bounded by organizational constraints" (p. 7). The restrictions were basically created due to lack of resources as explained by the campus chief. The remarks of Kasyap were the immediate proofs for justifying the strategies of the college. There are some hopes to show considerable improvement in the quality service in near future. The leadership, however, was quite behind in case of strategies for institutional transformation.

I found Suryodaya College run in completely traditional operation system. Simply, the management committee would make the essential decisions in the recommendation of the campus chief. The staffs had no any involvement in decisions except giving some suggestions. The campus chief was not compelled to consult the staffs but he used to seek suggestions simply to get their support in implementation. He was incompetent in his advanced leadership practices and ignored the opportunities that needed prompt actions. He did not give priority to performance appraisal which discouraged the staffs for extra devotion in work. The leadership practices of Suryodaya College were found having weak leadership power that is regarded as a tool to enhance emergent behaviors among workers (Martin & Marion, 2005, p. 142). Binisha, in the same sense, was clear that leadership in her college was the most traditional one as the prominent cause behind lower quality education there.

HR Development for Institutional Innovation

I took the issue of human capital development into consideration basing on the general assumption of *Be Good and Do Good*. The concept of continuous learning was taken as the base as people are keys to quality (Dahlgaard et al., 2007, p. 212) and the organization would remain in continuous learning. Learning organizations (Senge, 1990) demand people continually expanding their capacity to create the result they truly desire, where new and expensive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continually learning to learn together. It was based on the organizational scheme to staff development through facilitating team learning for adaptation to change, quality of performance strategies and collective efficacy (Yukl, 2008, p. 343).

My attempts of inquiring the scheme of staff development in community colleges were also related to the second research question i.e. 'What strategic activities help college leaders promote integrated teamwork for continuous improvement in quality?' The assumption was that the skilled human resource could deserve the capacity to guide the learners to the expected destination. The participants were asked how the perspective colleges involved their staffs in continuous learning and capability development. Learning philosophy expected the staffs update their knowledge in such a way that they'd never get outdated in front of newer generation. The scheme of staff development is directed towards Dahlgaard et al. (2007) that "an organization is as good as its people" (p. 212).

In response to the question of human capital development, Rajan expressed his views that the college had already established Professional Skills Development Unit (PSDU) and approved from Campus Assembly. The unit would handle responsibility of developing efficient human resources might it be the case of students

or staffs. He shared his ideas that the unit would enable the faculties to conduct learner centered and research based teaching. The college had got inspiring environment after the formation of new staff development policy. The latest policy of staff development was found in the same spirit with Sallis (2002) that transformational quality blends the aspirations of customers with the empowerment of staffs (p. 15). Staff empowerment is obviously related to capacity building and improvements in incentives. The program coordinator supplied supporting inputs with the remarks that the college had adopted policy to regard staffs as the most important assets. He proposed the organizational realization that the sustainability of the college depended entirely on staff capability development, satisfaction and unhampered contribution for change. Such kind of institutional strategy best matches the norms of transformational leaders who attempt and succeed in raising colleagues, sub-ordinates, followers, clients or constituents to a greater awareness about the issues of consequences (Bass, 1985, as cited in Schmitz, 2008, pp. 11-12).

I found the application of intellectual stimulation as one of the features of transformational leadership in the visionary ideas of two consequent participants. Similarly their expressions matched the views of Sallis (2002) that "CI demands to ensure that there is systematic approach to the development of staff and an adequate investment in their training" (p. 48). The senior faculty of the same college, however, was not ready to accept the condition applied in the college. He exposed the field reality that the college had not conducted any training, seminar or workshop so far for the development of the staffs.

The exhibited performance and perceptions signal lack of systems and willingness in quality enhancement. As stated by Sallis (2002), "The failure in quality is invariably due to passion without system, or system without passion……..

Both system and passion ensure quality" (p. 48). From leadership angle Sallis (2002) further added that the causes of quality problems could include lack of knowledge and skill on the part of particular members of the staff, lack of motivation or communication failures (p. 39). The interest of staff development, in Suryodaya College, was limited to the discussions in staff meetings and the leadership could not propose any specific scheme that could support quality enhancement. During my observation of the study site also I could not grab evidences as the outcomes of any programs. Neither the written documents covered such information. The situation hinted that the schemes made by the administration were yet to be implemented in creative participation of the whole staffs.

Bidhyadhar explained the provision of staff development that the scheme was clearly stated in the operational guidelines. According to the guidelines every faculty had to involve for at least five hours a week in research related activities. The staffs involving in M Phil and Ph D studies were offered token money. They published college magazines and research bulletins covering the research articles of the staffs as well as students. Other staff development schemes were trainings, workshops, seminars and field visits. All those activities were conducted systematically according to the guidelines of the college. Staff development scheme of Jana Adharsha College seemed as an outcome of leadership role in maintaining an enabling knowledge processing environment (Martin & Marian, 2005, p. 1).

Sukumar made further clarification that the recent scheme was developed in the constructive suggestion of UGC. He informed that the college prepared documents for QAA certificate including the operational guidelines (UGC Report, 2010). The open announcement of faculty development scheme was taken positively by all the staffs and their mission succeeded to transform the entire institution from

'gossip culture' to 'work culture' (Interview: May 27, 2013). He explained that the staffs were confident and clear that the promotion and benefits depended on the kind of qualification and professional skills.

The senior faculty understood the provision of staff development stated above in the same way. She expressed her realization that the college had given adequate chances and encouragements in that field. They were well convinced towards prevailing provision of promotion and increment of incentives basing on the development of academic qualification and professional skills. I got several research articles and opinion columns in the magazines and bulletins during document studies. Similarly I saw the faculties busy in their creative works during their leisure periods. I had not seen such provision in the other colleges of my study. The innovative approaches applied in Jana Adharsha College followed the train of Gil et al (2005) that leadership roles include encouraging innovative thinking, explaining need for change, envisioning change and taking personal risks (p. 314).

In Suryodaya College, on the other hand, the faculties were allowed to move home after their scheduled periods were over. Though the staffs were suggested to updating quality on regular basis, the college had not given clear provision for it. The administration was indifferent towards the differences in the quality service of the staffs. The aggressive version of Binisha hinted that the administration was lacking the provision of positive discrimination among the staffs. She informed that there was no application of any specific model in promotion system of her college. Thus the higher achievers were discouraged for further progress. She disclosed the bitter reality that she had never got chance to attend professional trainings and seminars so far. The need of transformational leadership was realized for ensuring change by

developing the skills of team members or by fostering the self confidence of the team (Gil et al., 2005, p. 324).

The condition of Suryodaya College resembled an institution with completely traditional teaching learning. Either the leadership was unknown to the modern approaches to quality enhancement or he ignored the scheme simply because the change required certain extra contribution. I did not find reflection of human resource development scheme applied in the college. It confirmed the lack of transformational leadership in that college. In the views of Srikanthan and Dalrymple (2004), the leadership efforts of quality are represented by commitment, collaboration and transformation (p. 187). The campus chief, in the mean time, was unwilling to accept it as the weakness of the leadership. He gave very easy response that the college could not launch staff development programs due to limited resources and time constraints. However, he did not mind to realize that the college needed capable human capital.

The discussions above were the easy answer to the question of human resource development in the grand mission of quality enhancement. Jana Adharsha College was found in right position with illustratable schemes for staff development. The efforts, however, were insufficient to cope with the growing demands of the institution. Shuvarambha College was in the initial stage with mandatory documents for implementation. I found heavy difference in the stated provision and perceived knowledge in working field. Suryodaya College, on the other hand, had not made any specific scheme for faculty development so far. The need of leadership with creative will power, visionary ideas and creativity would be the answer behind the question of staff development in Suryodaya College.

Collaborative Efforts for Effective Performance

The present sub-chapter got its ground with the assumption that combined efforts make higher production in compared to the total sum of the individual efforts. While addressing the research question about leadership strategies for quality enhancement, staff motivation and performance increment issues play vital role. Team work effectiveness is normally regarded as an outcome of effective leadership practices. Effective handling of the entire team depends on the role of leaders that create a dynamic organizational vision necessitating a metamorphosis in cultural values to reflect greater innovation (Ozaralli, 2003, p. 2). In straight words, the effective performance of organizational team depends on the quality leadership.

I had asked a question related to team work effectiveness to Bidhydhar with expectation to know what strategic practices were made in the college on team work issues. In response, he presented his perception that the college had adopted unique team work practices with wider involvement of stakeholders. They had formulated academic council comprised of campus chief, assistant campus chiefs and the heads of various departments. Those forerunners of the administrative sector would plan and implement the overall administrative as well as academic activities of the college. The ideal team was also known as internal management committee. The team work had strengthened the position of the campus chief because the members of the team would take the risks of all kinds that exist in the working field. The kind of leader-member collective efforts practiced in Jana Adharsha College were found in the views of Mayfield and Mayfield (2007) that leader can play a pivotal role for eliciting follower creativity with sufficient feedback from the fellow members (p. 8).

In my further query, Bidhyadhar stated that the council would prepare the terms and conditions for all the functioning departments with commitment to

implementation. The involvement of all the members of council would insure their ownership in working field ultimately with high motivation. In case of some serious decisions the council would recommend to the management committee and campus assembly respectively. The provision of decision making in Jana Adharsha College reminded me the version of Dahlgaard et al. (2007) that leadership is the driving force behind policy and strategy (p. 212). While asking about the impact of his leadership on team work effectiveness, Bidhydhar was a bit nervous and suggested me to ask his fellow members. Further, he added that his achievements were the results of strong colleagues behind.

Kasyap kept his visionary ideas about effective team work as an outcome of leadership inspiration. He was of the opinion that the leaders were the motivators and main source of inspiration in that grand mission. The leaders had to inspire and motivate the fellow members for their dedication especially in research and practice based teaching learning. He commented that the staffs of his college had not got such kind of inspiration then. The impression of the field during my visit also gave signal that the team had to get further inspiration and motivation for more dedication in work.

Motivated Team Spirit as the Key to Success

As per my involvement in academic sector, I believe that among the various aspects of leadership success the prominent one is staff satisfaction. In an educational setting, transformational culture is a function of staff motivation and efficient leadership in a setting that is student centered (Sallis, 2002, p. 15). Only the satisfied and motivated staffs can dedicate their efforts for the good of the students. The discussions below were guided by this understanding that unskilled and demotivated employees are the root cause of lower productivity.

While asking the situation of staff satisfaction and motivation in real practice, Sanjay remarked that the college had prioritized that sector. He made further clarification that the college had kept the provision of time specific permanency, provident funds, retirement benefits, leave payment and financial support to M Phil/ Ph D studies for motivating the staffs. He added that the results of the annual board exams were improved in the recent years due to the emphasis to the staffs. The above stated words supported the application of TQM theory to a large extent. Sallis (2002) explained the theory that "Deming was particularly concerned with employee motivation and the importance of pride, joy and job satisfaction to the delivery of quality services" (p. 41). Well motivated staffs, in the sense, would deserve power to succeed.

Kasyap, on the other hand, denied the application of above stated provision in the college. The reason behind the differences in voices of two members of the same college was disclosed after getting perception of Rajan. In fact, they had given permanent appointment to around one third staffs only and most of the above stated provisions were applicable to the permanent staffs only. The participant of my research did not fall under that category and therefore did not know the provision yet. The motivating strategies applied to the one third staffs go against the views of Schmitz (2008) who opined that effective transformation required creative involvement of everyone throughout the organization (p. 12).

While asking further whether staff dissatisfaction was really due to facilities only, Kasyap added his opinion that the staffs were ignored from the mainstreaming of the college in some occasions. They were not involved in the decisions of many important aspects including the finance, and human resource development policies. According to Mayfield and Mayfield (2007) effective leadership behaviors include

staff motivation and goal setting to enhance worker garden variety and creativity (p. 6). The leadership of Suryodaya College lacked such qualities and staff dissatisfaction was reflected in the performance as well. The same issue was further asked to Binisha. She was little unwilling to speak in that issue but I gave full confidentiality and she exposed the reality of her college. There was prevalence of staff dissatisfaction mainly due to random and haphazard decisions. She also pointed out the condition of poor performance appraisal as one of the causes of lower performance of the staffs. There was the provision of similar promotions and facilities to all the staffs no matter whatever the differences in contribution.

Bidhydhar spoke confidently on the issue of staff motivation that the college was impartial in judgment of their performance with fair organizational justice. In my request for further clarification to the version, he spoke that the performance of every member was thoroughly evaluated with proper reward and punishment scheme. The staffs had right to claim their contribution through self appraisal which should be recommended through the head of the department. Permanency, promotion and grades were determined on the same basis. The faculties with weaker performance were also given trainings and chances to uplift their quality standards. Thus the employees were motivated in the mission of quality enhancement.

I was really impressed towards the application of self appraisal form and organizational decision for staff benefits on the basis of their contribution. The employees with weaker performance were suggested and supported for improvement in their field. The provision practiced in the college can be accepted as the inspirational guidelines to the advancement of staff performance in any institutions of growing nature.

Sukumar emphasized on the words of the campus chief and presented the existing scenario that the whole team was motivated to get QAA certificate in the initiation of UGC. They were fully convinced with the leadership that the good of the college would surely ensure better facilities to the staffs. The confidentiality of the research participants, the perceived face value around college premises and my realization of the overall staff activities gave glimpses of a well motivated team spirit in the institution. Binaya further added her realization that there was no any question of staff dissatisfaction towards management except the limitation of resources. The situation discussed above reminded me the expressions of Stoner et al. (2009) that transformational leaders motivate the employees by raising their need level to the higher order needs, such as self actualization (p. 514). Staffs were regarded as the most important assets by the transformational leaders.

Converting Threats into Opportunities

I developed the discussions of present topic being guided from the commonly perceived philosophy that the leaders were created to convert threats into opportunities. The last supporting question of this research was "What problems and opportunities do the community college leaders find in their leadership practices?" Regarding the issue of opportunities, Rajan presented the prevalence of easy access, public sympathy, ideal team work and sound relation with the students. He was in favor of non-political council of students as the back support to the academic activities. While inquiring about the major threats of the college, he gave emphasis to the limitation of physical infrastructure. The college had missed many opportunities due to lack of sufficient land. Socio-political scenario, in his views, was also an affecting factor behind slow pace of college development.

Sanjaya revealed the status of college management to be oriented towards maximum development and utilization of learning resources. Kasyap, the non administrative participant of the same college, agreed to the above version of the two administrators regarding the availability of strong team work and community support. His opinion differed on the ground of leadership dedication. He was of the opinion that the leadership could do more than the prevailing situation. Regarding the threats, he showed the problems related to program expansion, alternative to plus two phase out, library, lab, and technology based teaching.

Binisha realized that the major challenge in front of the community colleges was the fierce competition with the mushrooming private colleges. She realized two levels of threats in front of her college via internal and external threats. Internal problems included some sort of groupism among the staffs and sense of administrative partiality in allocating responsibilities as well as incentives. Some trusted staffs used to get favor and priorities in most of the occasions and the complaints were overlooked. Externally also she realized turbulent political hindrances and pressure of power groups in staffing and other benefits. Sometimes the staffs faced the problems of the student movement as well.

Bidhyadhar expressed highly positive symptoms in his college with strong community support and efficient team spirit. The college was advancing to the optimum level in systematic approaches to quality enhancement. Confusing government policy, competition with high investment of private colleges and staff sustainability were regarded as the major threats in front of the college. Sukumar gave further clarification that the college was committed to convert all the threats into opportunities. Every member of the college was clear about the road map how the college was going to meet the growing challenges of globalized education market.

While inquiring about the mitigating strategies against the prevailing threats in front of their colleges, the participants of this research gave anonymous voice. They gave main credit to three things via leadership, team spirit and community support. The idealized influence of the leadership can support in creating the other environments as well. According to Avolio and Bass (2002) the leader's influence helps others to look at the futuristic state, while inspiring acceptance through the alignment of personal values and interests to the collective interests of the group interests (as cited in Stone et al., 2004, p. 350). As one of the leading figures of community college movement, Rajan was found hopeful that the limitation of the resources in front of the community colleges would be solved with the positive government address to their demands. He showed the possibility of public support in infrastructure development as well. Their service to the students of lower and lower middle class families was the major reason behind that expectation.

The last question regarding the conflicting situation in the participated colleges was related to the prevalence of team conflict that could hinder organizational progress. The large majority of the research participants, except Binisha, opined that there were no any serious conflicts and the minor ones were easily solved in mutual discussions. Binisha, in opposed to the others, exposed the conflicting situation in her college in many grounds. There were much dissatisfaction of the staffs and they used to expose periodically. Sometimes the coordinators also expressed dissatisfaction towards the administration. However, I did not realize any specific dissatisfaction reflected in the fields during my observation of the study sights.

Chapter Summary

Present chapter, the most prominent one from the role's perspective of the researcher, dealt with the central parts of the data which were in the preceding chapters. The perceptions of research participants were evaluated deeply so as to draw the focusing or core information that deserved the representation of the whole data. Obviously, shorter than the presented data, the elaboration was in the form of the narration and interpretation as the theoretical norm of this research. Researcher's perceptions and literature support gave authenticity and strength to the findings which was regarded as the discussion.

The findings of this research are also placed under various subjective themes as guided by the research questions. The critical discussions on the findings made easy move to the writings. The expectation of each research question was given due emphasis in discussion section. Short comings in the real administrative field were conditioned in support of theoretical background as the guidelines to college leadership. Regarding the notion of quality education the participants supplied matured opinion but the implementation aspect was not of that standard. The cause and dependency both went to the leadership as the threats and opportunities. The only answer found from the discussions was the strategies of leadership in the line of motivating the entire team in quality mission.

The participants revealed the reality that the community colleges had their bases on the public and their survival depended entirely on public support. That's why the staffs were found expecting and trusting more to the leadership. Leaders on the other hand needed to formulate their strategies keeping the limitation of the resources in mind. The ultimate need, as the finding of the research, was to convert

those threats into opportunities. The leaders at the same time were found hopeful to succeed in their mission with strong team support and public sympathy.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The present research was conducted using interpretative research paradigm under qualitative approach. Interpretative research paradigm is regarded appropriate and widely used for in-depth understanding of events and characteristics (Best & Kahn, 1999). The findings were obviously directed from the perceptions of the participants with the background support of a large pool of literature. The primary data of in-depth interviews were explained in response to the transformational leadership theory and continuous improvement approach. As the final section, this chapter is the presentation of the entire information in the form of conclusion. Additionally, the future applications of the research findings were displayed in the succeeding section as the form of implications. The sub-sections below cover the above stated headings in separate forms.

Summary

This research, as the title suggests, is an outcome of the combination of the information from various sources via the perceived data, available literature and the researcher's knowledge on leadership attempts in community colleges in quality enhancement mission. Though away from the rigidity, the assumption was the need of creative and innovative leadership for motivated and efficient team spirit in quality education. My work experience of above a decade had played inspirational role behind the selection of this topic. The research questions were, obviously, centralized in the leadership understanding and their strategic efforts in community colleges.

The research was philosophically supported and conditioned with the application of Transformational Leadership Theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985) and Continuous Improvement Approach (Temponi, 2005). I made thorough and critical study of the above mentioned theories in terms of their impact on higher educational scenario of our context. I gave due emphasis to leadership behaviors, faculty development, promotion of effective team work and practical efforts in real field as well. Those themes of my study were guided by the philosophy that transformational leaders inspire and stimulate followers to transcend their own self interests for higher collective purpose, mission or vision (Ozaralli, 2003, p. 1) and they fit the needs of community colleges. The literature review was narrowed down as demanded by three specific research questions. At the final stage, I reached the research gap after making brief study of the empirical researches.

The next important step was taken to discuss on the methodology part. As a qualitative research, I selected interpretative research paradigm with the beliefs that I could interpret the perceptions of research participants and theoretical support with my understanding as a researcher. It was guided by the theoretical assumption that the researcher can derive meanings from social interaction and modified through an interactive process (Flick, 2006). I felt that knowledge could be generated on the ground of multiple realities and people's subjective expressions. I had adopted in-depth interview and field observation as primary sources and the other printed documents, available literatures etc. were taken as the secondary sources. The basic data were collected from twelve participants of three different community colleges.

In the next step, I presented and interpreted the perceptions of the research participants under various thematic areas. The interpretation was with the belief that human action could only be understood by relating it to the conscious intentions,

motives and purposes, and ultimately the values of the agent who performs it (Henn, Weinstein and Foard (2010). The real data were presented in their original format so as to demonstrate the data authentically and they were duly supported with the help of literature. I made slight interpretations with researcher's impressions being within the norms of qualitative research. The findings of research were discussed serially in the next step within the similar themes. The themes were entertained under various sub-headings as directed by the research questions. This section was found really critical because the central forms of the data were elucidated from massive heap of the data presented in the preceding chapter. Each distinct idea was supported by the theoretical norms.

Lastly, the efforts of the researcher were summarized briefly. I drew conclusions as the central themes of the research findings. The conclusions covered leadership perceptions on quality issue, their strategic efforts, impact of leadership behavior on team spirit and continuity in quality enhancement. The study was further extended with the future implications of the research on various grounds via academic policy formation, support in leadership practices and support in further research.

Conclusions

The present sub-topic deals with the outcome of the overall research. I had made the research questions as the bases of discussion with the support of the theories behind. The findings suggested that the educational leaders of present times need to impart such kind of education that ensures professional settlement of the learners as an outcome of their studies. It inspired us not to limit the scope of education to the mere degrees or merits that the learners get at the end of the academic sessions via summative evaluation. Such understanding is slightly in the same line with Dahlgaard et al. (2007) that quality service has to ensure customer satisfaction, people

satisfaction and impact on society (p. 212). My professional experience of a long time and present competitive job market give full support to the findings.

Though the participants of my research expressed anonymous voice about quality education, they saw confusions on the way to imparting such kind of education to the learners. The research projected the need of some specific strategies to modify their services in demand driven way. Though the leaders were found having grave desire of imparting best quality education, the efforts were not uniformly applied. The reflected strategies like research based teaching, subject-wise project works,; students' presentation in Jana Adharsha College gave bright symptoms. The changes in teaching learning activities were visualized in the college premises during my observation (Memo # 3). The ultimate way, paved by the leaders, for organizations to become more innovative is to capitalize on their employees' ability to be innovative (Jong & Hartog, 2007, p. 17). The research gives concluding ideas in this regard that colleges have to develop strategic plans for the overall quality scheme as the road map to lead the institution ahead. The research recommended a campaign in the hand of a visionary leader with willingness to institutional transformation.

The research paved the way that community colleges need to insure innovation in teaching learning activities for their sustainability. The above discussed strategies such as learner centered and research based teaching, project works, students' presentation, field visits, collaboration with different organizations, additional assignments for preparatory exercises, opinion sharing expressions, role play etc. deserve worth at this stage. If these colleges fail to set long term vision for quality enhancement, they will be losing their battle gradually with the ever widening globalized educational arena. The philosophical assumption behind it was that the

leaders had to know the real meaning and purpose of quality education prior to formulating the strategies for quality enhancement. Since the community colleges are moving in a very critical stage at razor's edge (Ojha, 2012), the leaders need to formulate and implement some sort of visionary strategies to face ever increasing challenges and to grab widely emerging market opportunities.

Similarly, this research has given deserving remarks that the quality depends on the development and motivation of the employees to the greater extent. Though the attempts and outcomes were insufficient, the participants hinted their maturity in the inevitability of skilled and motivated human capital. The esteemed participants pointed out that the colleges can establish a separate unit for staff development. The unit can conduct trainings, seminars, workshops, field trips and many such schemes so as to enable to staff cope with the growing market demands. Such kind of creative teaching learning revealed the process of stimulating and probing employees to generate ideas, supporting open and transparent communication process and creating avenues for knowledge sharing (Crawford, 2005, p. 58).

Regarding staff motivation, the findings of this research emphasized that the colleges need to make the employees realize themselves to be the most responsible and authorized members of the institution. Such kind of institutional ownership can be developed through various approaches including participatory decision making process. Most of the sub-ordinate participants of this research were found raising this issue. They argued other motivational factors including incentives, permanency, promotion, security, retirement benefits, self esteem, and impartial performance appraisal. The findings resembled the application of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Robbins et al., 2009, p. 194) that covers five basic needs of human beings on priority basis via physiological, safety, social, esteem and self actualization.

The other important aspect drawn from this research is the availability of an ideal team spirit with wider sense of dedication for excellence. The participants perceived the college as a living organism made up of people from different strata where everyone has a distinct role in its innovation. Such kind of environment for creative involvement of all the stakeholders is in the hand of leadership technically known as institutional head or the campus chief. This is the representation of the voices of my research participants. So the discussion can reach the conclusion that the community colleges need to broaden their social horizons with the maximum people's participation in general and continuous devotion of the esteemed employees in particular. A transformational leader can play the role of catalyst in promoting such kind of team spirit in the widely spread community colleges.

Since the performed efforts of the study sites were found quite insufficient in many aspects, I revealed that the drawbacks resulted from poor working environment, unsuitable systems and procedures, insufficiently creative timetabling, lack of adequate learning resources and socio-political conflicts (Memo # 2). It hinted the situation that community colleges need to gear up in their strategies to face the growing competitions with government supported constituent colleges and mushrooming private colleges with massive investments. All the colleges need to convert the perceived threats into opportunities. The ultimate way to reach such a destination is visionary leadership with strong commitment and bold support of an efficient team.

Implications

Basing on the research question, conclusions have been drawn including understanding and strategic efforts for quality enhancement, leadership support behind the expected success, ideal team spirit, opportunities and threats. I feel that

the ideas generated from such studies can play important role in dismantling the unhealthy traditional administrative foundation and kindling the light for amicable academic platform. The implications of this study, though unlimited possibilities, can have basic importance in the following areas:

Support in Academic Policy Formation

It is publicly known that the development of any nation depends entirely on the education policy they formulate. Tertiary education has further importance as it deals with the intellectual minds including the leaders. The present research supports in critical handling of the existing bewilderments in course of leading community college in most confusing national scenario. While formulating educational policy for the future, the policy makers can get support from the findings of this research.

My beliefs enable me to understand that leading educational institutions in present globalized and chaotic scenario is handling a very critical time. It would be better if the nation trained and encouraged the leaders in such a way that the path of academic leadership could be widened for long future. Similarly, the concept of team leadership and team culture can assist them to overcome possible hurdles onwards. Since the present research has given invaluable finding from the long term experiences of presently acting educational leaders, the policy makers find it worthy enough.

I realize that quality education is highly discussed and challenging need of every nation with ever widening global possibilities. Policy makers of present academic arena, therefore, will find this research as a valuable document in task of formulating policies for academic strengths in higher education. There would be reformation in the leading approaches in tertiary education if the government could

widen the scope of research in teaching learning activities. In that sense this research is expected to be useful.

Assist for Leadership Practices

This research has revealed that globalized educational world, ever advancing scientific and technological instruments, increasing expectation of the respective stakeholders, social-political conflicts, and wider perspectives of the learners have added continuous challenges in educational leadership today. The concept of quality education has made professional settlement of the learner further complex and the educational institutions are unaware of the fact that the tracer study can support in judging the quality of education they impart (UGC Report, 2010). The college leaders have been working with such kind of bewilderments ahead.

Leadership development, on the other hand, is a gradual process with a lot of efforts. Trainings, seminars, workshops and periodical experience sharing can help the leaders and future leaders make their strategies for further development. Since this research is an outcome of collective experiences of long term practices of college leaders, it can be a strong document for them to share experiences. Leadership comprises of the top level administrators along with the fellow employees leading various departments. Since the participants represent different strata of college administration, the findings cover ideas of varied sectors.

The findings of this research can be adopted in case of forming institutional policies, developing team spirit, handling periodical hindrances along with stakeholders' involvement. The other possibilities can be related to the development of research and practice based teaching learning, application of technology to the highest level, and widening educational horizons. Leadership practice, in my realization, is a critical imitation of the forerunners that the research best serves and

the accumulated ideas of this research are expected to assist the leaders of present academia.

Literature for Research

I realize that research is an ongoing process as the accumulation of perceived knowledge for widening its scope. Researchers, in this regard, make ample studies of the prevailing literature so as to add their perspectives in it. That's why the related materials deserve worth in further advancing the research works. This research is an accumulation of lived experiences of the college leaders related to different layers and having different perspectives. The findings were supported by various theories and approaches including transformational leadership and continuous improvement approach.

The participants of this research and the supporting literature hinted that community colleges have been playing crucial role in the tertiary level education of the nation. The documents related to these colleges can be regarded as the master documents for the researchers who have been involved in the studies of higher level. The scholars of this level, at the same time, are found strongly motivated in promoting research related activities and inspired by the recent trend of research and technology based teaching learning. This material is expected to keep little worth in this sense.

Chapter Summary

The desire of generating the central ideas related to quality enhancement in community colleges was materialized in this chapter. The participants' perceptions from two consequently preceding chapters and available literature of theoretical portion were blended with high efforts of the researcher in this section. The short and specific expressions of thematic ideas covered the contents demanded by the research

question. I made discussions on the problems presented in Chapter One in the form of problem statement.

The findings were placed in various paragraphs chronologically in the same ways and importance of the generated themes. All the research questions were addressed turn by turn in short. The findings of this chapter were invaluable for institutional regularity as the guidance to improvement. The implications were presented in three sub-headings via policy formation, leadership efforts and support to further researches. The discussions gave ideas how the research would be supportive to future endeavors.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix I: Description of Research Participants

Code	Pseudonyms	Name of the College (Modified)	District	Date of Visit
CC1	Rajan	Campus Chief of Subharambha College	Lalitpur	5-10 May, 2013
CC2	Keshab	Campus Chief of Suryodaya College	Kathmandu	12-17 May, 2013
CC3	Bidhyadhar	Campus Chief of Jana Adharsha College	Tanahun	24-28 May, 2013
PC1	Sanjaya	Coordinator of Subharambha College	Lalitpur	5-10 May, 2013
PC2	Kiran	Coordinator of Suryodaya College	Kathmandu	12-17 May, 2013
PC3	Sukumar	Coordinator of Jana Adharsha College	Tanahu	24-28 May, 2013
SF1	Kasyap	Senior Faculty of Subharambha College	Lalitpur	5-10 May, 2013
SF2	Binisha	Senior Faculty of Suryodaya College	Kathmandu	12-17 May, 2013
SF3	Binay	Senior Faculty of Jana Adharsha College	Tanahu	24-28 May, 2013

Appendix II: Guidelines to Interview the Campus Chiefs

1. Concept and efforts towards quality education
    a. How do you perceive the concept of quality education? What are major indicators of quality education?
    b. What is the relation of education to quality of life/living?
    c. Does your institution deliver quality education to the students? What are your basic claims of imparting quality education?
    d. How do you plan and implement strategies for the overall quality in your college?
    e. What are your basic attempts of quality enhancement?
    f. How do you plan and implement quality monitoring and checks in your college?
    g. How have you taken the concept of quality assurance and accreditation? Do you believe the provision of QAA supports the development of academic institutions?
2. Leadership and Team Spirit
    a. How do you understand leadership in higher education? Could you express your opinion about role of leadership?
    b. What, in your opinion, are the core values and beliefs about successful educational leadership?
    c. How do you explain leadership practices within your college?
    d. What are your responsibilities in building an enabling environment in your college?
    e. What are the basic leadership practices to uplift the overall performance of the students?

f. How has the leadership been supportive in quality promotion of your college?

g. How do you plan and apply change policies for improvement?

h. What steps do you focus on to strengthen team work in your college?

i. How do you inspire and motivate the staff for their creative participation in college development?

j. What problems and prospects to college leadership do you perceive at present?

k. How do you prioritize modern teaching tools and techniques in teaching?

l. What sort of internal and external factors impress the leadership practices?

m. What are the important features of the team spirit in this college?

n. What factors are hindering the team work spirit of your college?

3. Stakeholders participation and extension services

a. How do you involve your fellow administrators and other stakeholders in deciding institutional policies and procedures? In implementation?

b. How do you inspire and motivate the sub-ordinates of your administration to uplift the standard of your institution?

c. How do you inspire local communities to involve in college development?

d. Have you developed any scheme to serve the local communities? How?

e. What sort of extension services are the prominent ones in last three years?

f. What, in your opinion, are the major challenges and opportunities of your college?

Appendix III: Guidelines to Interview the Sub-ordinates

a. How do you perceive the concept of quality education?

b. What are major indicators of quality education?

c. Is your college imparting quality education? What are the evidences to claim quality education in your college?

d. How do you explain the leadership type of your institution? What are the major characteristics of leadership practiced in your institution?

e. What is the process of formulating and implementing institutional policies and procedures in your college?

f. Do you realize creative participation of all the stakeholders in quality enhancement in your college?

g. Does your college conduct staff development programs in regular basis? What aspects are left behind?

h. Is there a good team spirit in your college? Do you think that the staffs of your college are motivated in the main stream of quality enhancement?

i. What, in your opinion, are the major challenges and opportunities of your college? Is the leadership able to cope with the present situation?

j. How is this college different from other private colleges? From constituent colleges?

k. Do you see satisfactory participation of the local people in this college? Does this participation facilitate quality enhancement? How?

Appendix IV: Guidelines for Visiting Study Sites

As a qualitative researcher I followed the following guidelines at the times of my visits of the study sites:

1. Face value and academic environment of the colleges
2. Greenery, sanitation and other environmental aspects that ease promoting smooth teaching learning
3. Teaching learning and other administrative regularities
4. Stakeholder involvement and support to the leadership
5. Keen observation of the department wise activities and impact on quality matter
6. Easy and smooth delivery of the information at the time of interview and cross check to the existing scenario
7. Perceived strengths and weaknesses of the college as a whole
8. Reflection of researcher's impressions on the notes