# SHAPING SCHOOL CULTURE: ROLE OF PRINCIPAL AS A LEADER

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DEDICATION

*Those school leaders who dare to shape their school culture ideal*

# ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this research was to find how Principal as a leader shapes the school culture. With more than 16 years of experience in six different schools and colleges the researcher noticed that school culture and Principal's leadership vary from school to school. Hence this research was conducted to find Principal's role in forming school culture.

This qualitative research was conducted with interpretive paradigm and ethnography method. Three schools were chosen purposively of three different categories; government, trust based and private and from three different districts Laitpur, Kaski and Kathmandu respectively. The data was collected through observations, open interviews and document analysis. Qualitative data analysis software called ATLAS ti (6.2) was used to code the data generated. Themes were developed manually to answer the research questions.

Findings of the study suggested that Principal's effort to spread school vision beyond the school earned admiration from the society in return. Principal's motivation through one's own examples and efforts resulted in motivated and dedicated teachers. It was found that a friendly and humorous Principal gets students' high attention and gains their respect forming positive culture. Principal's humanistic approach and values through caring, understanding, friendly and polite behavior produced active and confident students revealing effective culture. Rituals and ceremonies like assembly rituals, events, sports, and festivals helped the students to learn practically revealing the effective school culture. Autocratic approach of Principal made teachers disappointed forming toxic culture. Students were found to

be scared with an unfriendly and serious Principal revealing toxic school culture. Principal's high vigilance resulted in formal culture. Lack of Principal's approach for shared goals and proper reward system resulted in toxic culture. Principal show teachers their long-term growth and provide good remuneration to motivate them.

The study concluded that Principal's high social cohesion, personal consideration, friendly, humorous, caring and understanding behaviors result in homely school culture. Similarly his/her importance to all round education, vision beyond school, one's own effort and examples, desire for high achievement result in the achieving school culture. My study also found that high vigilance, contingent reward, and management by exception, high emphasis on values and enforcement of the programs from the Principal results in the official school culture. But when Principal is unfriendly and scary, lacks strong vision and values, has very low communication and lacks effective leadership, it results in futile school culture. In reality, schools have a dynamic mix of the four types of the school culture rather than possessing a single type exclusively. An appropriate combination of homely, achieving and official school cultures result in effective or positive end of the "School Culture Continuum", whereas the domination of futile and official school cultures result in the toxic end of the continuum.

The abstract of the thesis of *Bishwo Udhir Poudel Gharti* for the *Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education* was presented on October 7, 2012.

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Bishwo Udhir Poudel Gharti

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# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| CERID | Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development |
| DEO | District Education Office |
| EFA | Education for All |
| HOD | Head of the department |
| HT | Head Teacher |
| KU | Kathmandu University |
| MOES | Ministry of Education and Sports |
| M. Phil | Master of Philosophy |
| OM | Office Manager |
| PTA | Parents-Teachers Association |
| RED | Regional Educational Director |
| SLC | School Leaving Certificate |
| SMC | School Management Committee |
| SMT | Senior Management Team |
| TU | Tribhuvan University |
| VP | Vice Principal |

# CHAPTER I

# PROLOUGE

## Introducing the Chapter

In this chapter, I have begun with a brief synopsis of my unpredicted advent in to the teaching profession. I have also explained how my 16 years of experience in the knowledge industry helped me to decide the research area. Then I have elucidated that the purpose of my research was to understand and share my understanding how the Principal of a school can develop conducive culture in his/her school which fosters better learning of students and better working environment for teachers. Then I have described how I progressed with the research inquiries. I have then mentioned the significance of my study followed by delimitations. And finally I have presented the organization of the research report.

## Entering the Teaching Profession

A very short period of acquaintance in 1993 was the beginning of my teaching career. Subsequent to my final examination of grade eleven, I had a month vacation. One of my former teachers offered me a teaching position to substitute a teacher on examination leave in his newly established private school named Saraswati School (name changed). I accepted thinking that it would be good idea to pass the time.

My first ever experience of going to school as a teacher gave a feeling of achievement, pride and a sense of like someone special you are. Teaching the students the things, they have not known made me realize that I was an important person for them and gave a kind of deep satisfaction to my inner heart. I started

enjoying teaching those juvenile children and by the end of the month, I found myself totally being emotionally involved and fascinated with the profession and the innocent little cuties. But after the teacher on leave returned, I went back to my school for grade 12.

After the completion of grade twelve in 1994, I wanted to be independent and thought of earning my own bread. Then, I moved to Kathmandu with mere SLC and 10+2 certificates hoping to teach in a school and continue my higher education in a morning college. After searching for a teaching job for more than a month, I was called by a primary school called Janata School (name changed). I realized that I could grow in the teaching field with this school and started enjoying the job. After this, a long story of struggles follows to bring myself in today's situation.

In the past sixteen years, I have worked in six different schools and colleges right from a primary level teacher to a college Principal. Beside that I have also worked in few government schools and Buddhist monasteries for a couple of research activities in the field of education. I strongly feel that I still have so many things to learn in this field. I never find myself to be a knowledgeable and satisfied teacher or administrator rather always a thirsty person trying to relief the unknowing thirst with various ways out. For which I found myself sometimes joining formal university course, sometimes researching at the height of 4000 meters in Solukhumbu (the district of Mount Everest) about education situation in monasteries or sometimes coordinating EFA project to aware teachers, parents and Parents- Teachers Association (PTA) members of government schools about access and the quality of education. In order to sharpen and update myself in this field, I joined PhD program at Kathmandu University, School of Education. Prior to this, I completed M. Phil in Educational Leadership from the same University in 2006.

Now, when I try to reflect back my experience of all the schools that I studied in and worked as a teacher, a researcher and an administrator, I realize visibly that the various aspects like teacher-student relation, teacher-administrator relation, the students' behavior, the collaborative climate, the way daily rituals were conducted, the values and expectations differ from school to school. And from Deal and Peterson (1998) I understood that the norms, values, expectations that differ from school to school are the distinctive school culture. From Shukla (1999), I understood that every organization has its own set of beliefs, assumptions, values, shared feelings and perceptions, which influence the actions and decisions taken by the members of that organization and the influencing factor is known as the organizational culture.

I further understood that the organizational culture is developed over a period of time in every organization and similar is the case with every school (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Appropriate organizational culture in a school creates consensus and unity among the school members which ultimately motivate staff for the betterment of students and school (Stolp, 1994). With this, I understood that those schools, where I worked were different due to their culture.

When I reflect back my experiences in those schools, I also realize that the Principals of those schools were also different in terms of their behaviors. The way teachers and students responded to Principal was also different from school to school. Stolp (1994) said that the school leaders especially Principals are the key agents to shaping culture in the school. The valuable insight that I gained from my experience and literature was that *Principal does make the difference to form the school culture*. And from Ubben and Hughes, (1992) I realized that the lesson I learnt was true. For them, Principal plays a significant role in school's either success or failure. Stolp and

Smith (1995) also say that the Principal plays a vital role in the formation of the school culture.

## Deciding the Research Area

As a PhD fellow of Kathmandu University School of Education, it was eminent for me to finalize the area for doctoral research. From my 16 years of experience in the educational field and the insight I gained, *the Principal does make the difference to form the school culture*, as mentioned above helped me to decide about my research area. I decided to conduct research in Principal's role in forming school culture. I shared this thought with my professors in the university. Their constructive response motivated me to move forward with the idea. So I came up with my tentative research topic as *"Principal's Leadership Role and School Culture"*. This went through a number of alterations before getting its final name as mentioned now as the title in the front page.

## My Research Purpose

The insight I gained from my initial literature review, as mentioned above and my previous work experience made me think that perhaps the schools could become more effective when they develop an appropriate culture. I also thought that perhaps school Principal can play the major role to develop conducive culture in his/her school which fosters better learning of students and better working environment for teachers which result in better school performance and student behavior. In the given context, the purposes of my research were to observe how teachers and students perceive and practice their school culture, find how the leadership of Principals is perceived by the teachers and students and explore what influences Principal's leadership has in shaping the distinctive school culture.

## My Research Problem

After going through the preliminary literature, I understood school culture as the school's own traditions, norms, values, beliefs and expectations that directly or indirectly guide everybody in the school (Chiang, 2003). According to Stolp (1994), effective positive school culture occurs when Principals, teachers, and students model the elements of the school culture important to the school together. But the Principal is the most important as the actions of the Principal are noticed and interpreted by others. With this knowledge in my mind, I came up with an initial query, what roles do Principals play in forming the school culture?

Moore (1999) said that school is also an association of culture because of the socialization that occurs within it and it is an institution for the cultivation of academic development. According to Jerald (2006), in schools with positive culture both teachers and students are happy and confident and they treat each other with due respect. At this juncture, I remembered the very first school I taught, where the Principal, students and teachers behaved like a small family. With this, I realized that I must dig the perceptions and practices of the teachers and the students in order to explore about the school culture.

According to Gupta and Agrawal (2007), Principal is an important leader who leads his/her team for the betterment of the school and to grow a positive school culture. Koontz and Weihrich (1990) also say that leadership is the art or process of influencing people. Hence I realized that students and teachers get influenced from their Principal as per their perceptions towards him/her. Then I remembered about the examples of my previous schools where I worked. I asked myself what perceptions did those students and teachers had towards their Principals who made them follow their particular way. I realized that I must explore the perception of the teachers and

students about their Principal's leadership to explore my query about the relationship of Principal's leadership with the school culture.

I got the notion that school Principals influence student achievement, teachers' motivation, school vision, allocation of resources, organizational structures and organizational learning (Rice, 2010). According to Deal and Peterson (1998), Principals have eight major symbolic roles to shape the school culture. The eight roles of the Principal are historian, anthropological sleuth, visionary, symbol, potter, poet, actor and healer. Similarly I understood that the school Principal carry extremely significant role in the teachers' performance and students learning (Ubben & Hughes, 1992). These conceptions made me think seriously that I must find out what values and actions do the Principals carry out to mold the typical school culture.

## My Research Questions

When I looked back to the problems once again, I realized, on the basis of those problems I must develop few specific research questions that would guide my research to find answer to my initial query 'what roles do Principals play in shaping the school culture?' In order to dig up the answer for this, I tried to identify the specific research questions that would also fulfill my three research purposes mentioned above.

1. What perceptions and practices do teachers and students have about their school culture?
2. What perceptions do the students, teachers and Principals' have about their Principal's leadership?
3. What influences do the Principal's leadership practices have in the school culture?

## Significance of My Research

Organizational culture and leadership, although two separate areas are linked with organizational performance. Researchers have seen the links between leadership styles and performance and between organizational culture and performance (Ogbonna & Harris, 2000). But here in this research, I have tried to see the link between the leadership characteristics and organizational culture of schools. McBride (2011) says that evidences show leadership has very significant effects on the quality of school organization and on students' learning. She emphasizes that there is no documented evidence of any school successfully turning around its students' achievement in the absence of talented leadership. She also says that school leadership works as a catalyst for unleashing the potential capacities that already exist in the school. Subedi (2005) also found that school leaders and school culture and climate are also the significant factors that influence the school effectiveness.

My study has made a surgical view of the bond between Principal's leadership role and the school culture. I believe that I have explored the patterns of Principal's leadership characteristics in the selected schools to experience how leadership was exercised in relation to the way school activities were conducted and what symbolic roles s/he played to give different meanings to the students and teachers, that finally decided about the distinctive school culture in each school. I have seen how the Principals as the leaders in the schools under study promoted their values through their dialogue, actions and symbolic gestures (Picucci, Brownson, Khalert, & Sobel, 2002). I am highly optimistic that my research outcome will be significantly useful to future researchers, educational policy makers, school Principals and school supervisors from three aspects of the educational landscape; theory, policy and practice as I have described below.

First of all, the literature that I have reviewed in Chapter II will provide a theoretical foundation for those individual and organization wishing to investigate the various aspects of Principal, leadership, organizational culture and school culture. I have reviewed various conventional, contingency, transactional and transformational theories of leadership. I have collected sufficient knowledge to establish Principal as a leader in school. I have also presented various types of organizational culture like Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy and Market culture. I have also explored about the various levels of the organizational culture from easily noticeable artifacts level to the hidden level assumptions also known as cultural DNA. Then I have presented a thick literature about the various aspects of school culture, positive versus toxic school culture, elements, dimensions, and types of school culture. I have also explored about Principal's role in school culture, features of effective school culture, Principal's leadership role in school culture and effect of school culture in school performance. I hope these enriched collection of literature can be useful for the future students, researchers or the knowledge seekers.

Secondly, I hope, the findings of my research may be helpful at the policy level for the preparation of future Principals required for inculcating desired culture in the schools as I came to understand that the mere structural changes will not improve the schools (Stolp & Smith, 1995). I expect my study will also help the future Principals to take appropriate strategies and actions in order to bring desired positive culture in their schools (Deal & Peterson, 1998). I strongly hope that as per my findings in the final chapter many features that can be significant in shaping the school culture can be instilled in the future Principal right from their education and trainings.

I also feel that the outcome of this research may be useful, at the practice level in the other schools of similar circumstances for creating positive rewarding culture and eliminating the toxic culture if any. But I strongly put down to the readers to relate my thick description of the schools under study at their context and implicate only wherever feasible. For example vision and values can be shared with the school members through the artifacts, rituals, ceremonies, stories and actions by the Principal so as to develop the desired culture. Principal can give special priority to the cultural and co-curricular activities too as various rituals and ceremonies in the school can play vital role to bind the school family together towards the shared vision. I anticipate my study will also encourage low performing schools to develop confidence that they can equally be as competent as the successful schools, given the strong leadership and culture. These are just the few importance of my study. I further open to the readers to relate my ethnographic study at their situation, with high consciousness about the similarity and suitability.

## Delimitations of the Research

This research is limited in its scope as it has focused only on Principals' leadership practices and their role to form the corresponding school culture. There might be various other internal and external factors that also influence the school culture which this research has not covered in its scope. I have basically focused in Principals' transactional and transformational leaderships in this study as the literature also supported that these two leadership theories to be vital in shaping the school culture. Similarly regarding the school culture, I have relied in the five types namely, hothouse, survivalist, formal, welfarist and effective school culture. Basically I have based my study on the visible level artifacts and to some extent to the second level, values and beliefs of the organizational culture. My study has been able to touch in

very less amount regarding the deepest level, basic assumptions of the organizational culture.

## Organization of My Research Report

My thesis restrains seven chapters. In Chapter One, I have explained how I entered in to the teaching profession and how my 16 years of experience in the knowledge industry inspired me to choose the research area. I have also talked about the research questions, significance and purpose of my research and delimitations of my study.

In Chapter Two, I offer a wide-ranging literature review on the key terms of my research. I have started the chapter with the explanations of the term leadership and various leadership styles. Then I have explained about the various leadership theories. After that I have explored the literature on Principal and Principal as a leader. I have also explained about organizational culture, its levels, school culture and the elements of the school culture. I have also presented Principal's role in school culture and earlier researches done in this area. At the end of the chapter, I have developed the initial conceptual framework of the study.

In Chapter Three, I have talked about my way of getting into the qualitative research to dig out the answers for the research questions. I have started with my understanding of qualitative research and my philosophical considerations. I have also explained about ethnography as my research method. Further, I have talked about how I addressed the quality standard to maintain the quality of my research. At the end of the chapter, I have described about the ethical issues I considered to address my certain obligations towards my research participants and the schools where I conducted the research.

In Chapter Four, I have explored and revealed the perceptions of teachers and students and practices of school culture in the three schools under study on the basis

of my observations, interviews and the document analysis. I have portrayed the cases of the three schools and described the true features of the schools. The chapter is quite bulky due to the obvious thick description of the situation in an ethnographic research.

In Chapter Five, I have revealed the perceptions of the teachers and students have about their Principal's leadership. I have also extracted the Principal' own perspectives and my view of their leadership. For each of the three schools, I have first introduced in brief account about the Principal. Secondly, I have tried to explore the Principal leadership through the eyes of the students and teachers. Then in the next section Principal's view and finally mine.

Similarly in Chapter Six, first I have presented my reflection about school culture on the basis of my thick description mentioned in the Chapter Four. Then I have portrayed my reflection on the Principals on the basis of the Chapter Five. Finally I have tried to compare their leadership role with the prevailing school culture to find the relationship between the two to extract answer to my third research question of the study; how the Principals' leadership practices influence the school culture?

And finally the summary of my study, the key findings, conclusion and implications are given in Chapter Seven. I have started with the summary of my overall research activities, and then I have presented my major findings and discussions. After that, I have drawn conclusion of my overall research where, I have also developed a new conceptual framework to depict the Principal's leadership role on the school culture. Then at the end, I have discussed about the implications of my research from three facets of the educational background; theory, policy and practice.

## Summary of the Chapter

I have initiated this chapter with a brief overview of my unforeseen influx in to the teaching profession in search of inner happiness. Then I have described how I moved to the Capital city in order to seek out independent life and career development. I also tried to reveal the things that I have realized and learned during the course of more than sixteen years of my experience. I described how I slowly got immersed in the field of teaching-learning, educational administration and in the world of educational research.

Then I moved forward with a concise synopsis of how I was inspired to conduct research particularly in the vicinity of Principals' leadership and school culture. In the next part I have tried to justify the purpose of the research. After that I have mentioned how I identified my research questions. Moreover the significance of my research from three aspects of the educational landscape; theory, policy and practice is mentioned. After that I mentioned the delimitations of my research. And at the end of the chapter I have mentioned about the organization of my research report before summarizing the chapter.

# CHAPTER II

# EXPLORING THE LITERATURE

## Introducing the Chapter

Literature review is both a summary and explanation of the complete and current state of knowledge on a limited topic. It is a critical and evaluative account of what has been published on a chosen research topic (Loughborough University, 2010). For me as a researcher, a literature review is a means of representing my knowledge about school culture and leadership, including vocabulary, theories, key variables and phenomena, and its methods and history (Randolph, 2009). From my research topic I considered three terms as the key terms of my research; Principal, Leadership and School culture. Then I started my expedition on literature based on the periphery of these three terms. I explored various books, journals, previous researches, on-line articles, digital thesis etc that provided me the context and ideas for the design of my research.

I have started this chapter with the introduction of the concept of leadership and leadership styles. Then, I have reviewed the trait, behavioral, contingency, transactional and transformational leadership theories. In the next part of the chapter, I introduced the term "Principal" and then I have talked about school Principal as a leader. I have focused in the transactional and transformational leadership of school Principal. Then I went on exploring the terms "Culture", "Organizational Culture", and "Levels of Organizational Culture. After that I searched for "School Culture" and "Elements of School Culture". I have also explored the typology of school culture.

Then I have outlined the features of effective school culture. After that I have explained about "Principal's position in School Culture". After mentioning about few earlier researches done in the area, finally I have developed my initial conceptual framework to start the research with.

## Leadership

As per Day and Antonakis (2011), there is no specific and widely accepted definition of leadership because there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are leadership theories. Hakala (2008) says leadership in very simple language is one's ability to get others to willingly follow. It is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2004). From Keeja (1998), I understood that although leadership can be expressed in many different ways, broadly speaking it can be viewed as the ability to influence others by persuasion, example, and tapping inner moral values. Similarly Koontz and Weihrich (1990) say that leadership is defined as influence, that is, the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically toward the achievement of group goals. According to them, leaders act to help a group attain objectives through the maximum application of its capabilities. They further expressed that leaders do not stand behind a group as they facilitate progress and inspire the group to accomplish organizational goals. I liked the way they have given a good example of orchestra leader, whose function is to produce coordinated sound and correct tempo through the integrated effort of the musicians.

Dessler (2000) has defined leading as one of the five basic functions of managers in getting others to get the job done; maintaining morale; and motivating subordinates. A leader is different from simply a manager. The vision of a leader distinguishes him/her from those who are simply a good manager (Ubben & Hughes,

1992). They further say that a leader has the capacity to create and communicate a view of the desired state of affairs that induces commitment among those working in the organization.

## Leadership Styles

Newstrom and Davis (1993) say that the total pattern of explicit and implicit leaders' actions as seen by employees is called leadership style. According to Koontz and Weihrich (1990), leadership behavior and styles can be classified on the basis of how leaders use their authority to lead their followers. Some of the most frequently talked-about leadership styles are autocratic, bureaucratic, democratic, laissez-faire, participative, servant, task-oriented, etc (Martinuzzi, 2008). I have tried to explore each of them in brief as it would be significant to explore the leadership styles of the Principals in my study.

Autocratic leadership is an extreme form of leadership, where a leader exerts high levels of power over his or her employees or team members (Martinuzzi, 2008). People within the team are given few opportunities for making suggestions. It is the belief system where managers suspect all human beings to be lazy and naturally inclined to doing careless, poor quality work and believe that their focus of activity must be to control, check and bully their subordinates to work properly (Mahesh, 1993). According to Staw (1991), bureaucratic leaders ensure that their staff follows procedures exactly. Bureaucratic management is repetition-oriented, seeking efficiency through doing the same thing over and over again. It is rules and formal structures oriented, defining procedures and rewarding faithfulness to them. Democratic leadership focuses on principles of equity and social justice (Doyle & Doyle, 2005). It is defined as the performance of three functions: allocating responsibility among the associates, empowering group members, and supporting the

group's decision-making process (Gastil, 1994). Although a democratic leader will make the final decision, he or she invites other members of the team to contribute to the decision-making process. Laissez-faire leadership occurs when there is an absence or avoidance of leadership (Barnett, 2008). Most often, laissez-faire leadership works for teams in which the individuals are very experienced and skilled self-starters.

McCrimmon (2007) says that participative leadership means involving the team in making some, but not all, key decisions. It believes that motivating employees who are knowledge workers is based on making them feel valued. This leadership assumes there is simply no better way to make people feel valued than to ask them, genuinely, for their advice. A participative style tends to lead to good teamwork and creative collaboration. Similarly, Shahani (2008) says, in Participative Leadership group members are involved in the decision making process right from the start, by contributing their ideas and suggestions. Participative leader is a strong believer in team work. The notion of "Servant Leadership" emphasizes the leaders' duty to serve his/her followers. Leadership thus arises out of a desire to serve rather than a desire to lead (Bolden, Gosling, Marturano, & Dennison, 2003). In many ways, servant leadership is a form of democratic leadership, as the whole team tends to be involved in decision-making (Martinuzzi, 2008).

Task-oriented leader focuses on prescribed relations between the leader and his or her followers. The leader provides guidelines and instruction and the followers do the tasks consequently (Varaki, 2003). A highly task-oriented leader focuses only on getting the job done, and can be quite autocratic. He or she will actively define the work and the roles required, put structures in place, plan, organize and monitor.

## Review of Leadership Theories

According to Robbins and Judge (2007), there are four major theories of leadership, namely Trait Theories, Behavioral Theories, Contingency Theories and Charismatic Theories. And Burns (1978) has divided the leadership in to two major categories known as transactional and transformational leadership. I have tried to explore each of them in brief. But I have based my study basically on Burns' transactional and transformational leadership model.

### Trait Theory of Leadership

Trait Theory of leadership came in to existence with the beginning of the scientific study of leadership in early 20th century and ruled till 1950s. It considers personal qualities and characteristics that differentiate leaders from non-leaders. This theory believes that most of the successful leaders share four common traits (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004). They are intelligence, maturity and breadths, achievement drive and honesty. It considers that successful leaders have higher intelligence than their subordinates. They are emotionally mature and have a broad range of interests. They are result oriented and when they achieve one goal, they seek another. And finally successful leaders are honest in their words and works (Robbins & Judge, 2007).

### Behavioral Theories of Leadership

The second leadership theory is the Behavioral Theories of Leadership developed in 1950s. It is two dimensional as it considers the two dimensions of leadership behaviors namely initiating structure (task or product focus) and considerations (employee relationship focus). Behavioral theories propose that specific behaviors differentiate leaders from non-leaders (Robbins, 1991). Hellriegel and Slocum (2004) have mentioned several versions of this model. Ohio state studies, Michigan studies and the managerial grid are the major behavioral theories.

A series of studies on leadership were done in Ohio State University under the direction of Ralph Stogdill, starting in the 1950s (Pierce & Gardner, 2002). The team identified two typical dimensions of leader behavior namely, initiating structure and consideration for employees. Initiating structure refers to the extent to which a leader is likely to define and structure his/her role and those of employees in the search for goal attainment. Consideration refers to the extent to which a leader is likely to have job relationships characterized by mutual trust, respect for subordinates' ideas, and regard for their feelings (Newstrom & Davis, 1993). The team concluded that leaders who exhibit high degree of both initiating structure and consideration produce favorable situations (Hoy & Miskel, 2001).

The Michigan studies were conducted around the same time as the Ohio State Leadership Studies (Robbins & Judge, 2001). The study found the similar result as Ohio State with different names to the two behaviors as production centered behavior and employee centered behavior (Pareek, 2004). Similarly the Managerial Grid developed by Blake and Mouton based on two leadership behaviors, "concern for people" and "concern for production". It also concluded that high emphasis on both is the most effective leadership behavior as leaders try to achieve high production through effective use of participation of people (Pareek, 2004).

Later, researchers did not find consistent evidence of a universally preferred leadership style across tasks or situations. From these inconsistent findings, it was proposed that success of the leader's behavioral style must be contingent on the situation. That resulted in the development of contingency theories in 1960s.

**Contingency Theories of Leadership**

Contingency theories were developed during 1960s and credit for development is largely given to Professor Frederick Fiedler. According to Wagner (2009),

Contingency Theories focus on particular variables related to the environment that determine which particular style of leadership is best suited for the situation. It is believed that no leadership style is the best in all situations. Success of a leader depends upon a number of variables, including the leadership style, qualities of the followers and aspects of the situation. These theories are based on the idea that the best style of leadership depends on a variety of factors relating to the individuals involved and to the environment in which leadership occurs (Sisk & Williams, 1981). They seek to make scientifically validated statements concerning the conditions under which any given leadership style is most likely to be effective. According to Chatterjee (2007), four of the best known contingency models are Fiedler's contingency model, Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory, Robert House's path-goal model and Vroom and Yetton's normative model.

Fiedler's Contingency Model assumes that the leader will have the most influence when using a task-oriented style under favorable conditions where s/he is accepted, the task is structured and the leader has strong position power. On the opposite side, the leader's control will be least when the leader is not accepted, the task is complex and unstructured and s/he has little position power (Chatterjee, 2007). Another major contingency approach to leadership is Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory which emphasizes the evolving goals and knowledge of followers are important variables in determining the effectiveness of a leadership style. They explained that the relationship between a leader and followers moves through four phases as followers develop and mature and that leaders need to vary their style with each phase of the followers (Robbins, 1996). The third contingency theory of leadership is the Path-Goal Theory developed by Robert House in 1971. According to Daft (1995) and Robbins (1996), this theory believes that performance based rewards

by the leaders can motivate followers. It believes that effective leaders can motivate followers by clarifying the goals, linking reward with performance and explaining the path to achieve the goals.

Victor Vroom and Philip Yetton developed leader participation model that related leadership behavior and participation to decision making (Chatterjee, 2007). This model is mainly based on the assumptions that leadership style varies with the number of follower who may be affected by the decisions of the leader and how consultative is the leader with the followers while taking decisions. It also assumes that no decision-making style is completely fit to all situations.

**Charismatic Leadership Theory**

Northouse (2004) says that Charismatic leadership is also known as value based leadership which reflects the leaders' ability to inspire others with ones strongly held core values. It involves motivating and directing followers primarily by developing in them a strong emotional commitment to a vision and set of shared values. Charismatic leaders influence followers appealing to their emotions at a deep level by showing great passion and devotion to the vision and values (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004). In charismatic leadership style the leader injects huge doses of enthusiasm into his or her team, and is very energetic in driving others forward (Musser, 1987). In contrast to the transformational leaders, charismatic leaders are not concerned with the development of others but they attract followers' attention, convince them of the merits of their vision, and establish a strong following (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). The pure charismatic leaders do not focus on developing followers into leaders. They transform the needs, values, preferences, and aspirations of followers from self-interests to collective interests (Hoy & Miskel, 2001).

**Transactional and Transformational Leadership Model**

As mentioned by Boyett (2006), James McGregor Burns wrote a book called "Leadership" in 1978 A.D. Burns mentioned that regardless of all the previous leadership theories like traits, behaviors and contingency, leadership at the basic label is all about an exchange in which both leaders and followers give and take something. With this notion, Burns divided leadership into two types known as transactional and transformational. In transactional leadership there is ordinary exchange of values and benefits whereas in transformational leadership, the exchange is of higher level and long term where both leader and followers are aroused and ultimately transformed. According to Kaur (2012), leadership theories like behavioral and situational were concerned with transactional leaders where leaders motivate followers by establishing goals and clarifying roles and task. And as per Leithwood and Jantzi (2005), transformational leaders can be directive, participative, autocratic or democratic as per the situations. I have tried to explore both transactional and transformational leadership in details as I have based my research in this model.

Transactional leadership starts with the premise that team members agree to obey their leader totally when they accept the job because they are satisfied with the return (Wee, Wee, & Huang, 2006). The focus of a transactional leader is to secure the work effort of followers through the use of incentives (Farrell, Souchen, & Durden, 2008). The leader has the right to "punish" team members if their work doesn't meet the pre-determined standard. This type of leadership is the give and take business between the leader and followers, satisfying both of them. Hoy and Miskel (2001) say transactional leadership is a form of contingent reinforcement. The leader reinforce through promise, rewards, threats and disciplinary actions depending upon the contingent behavior and performance of the followers. In his book, "Leadership",

Bass recognized three elements of transactional leadership, namely contingent reward, active management by exception and passive management by exception (Boyett, 2006).

In contingent reward, there is an economic and emotional exchange between leaders and followers. The leader tells the followers what to do if they wanted to be rewarded for their efforts. The leader recognizes and rewards the followers' achievements. In active management by exception, the leader monitors the performance of the followers to find out mistakes so that the corrective actions could be taken. In passive management by exception, the leader waits and sees until the severe errors are made by the followers (Boyett, 2006). The followers are punished for the severe mistakes.

Tomlinson (2004) say that transformational leaders realign the organization's culture with a new vision, and a revision of its shared assumptions, values and morale. The purpose is for the transformation of the organization for the betterment. Transformational leaders are highly visible, and spend a lot of time communicating. They don't necessarily lead from the front, as they tend to delegate responsibility amongst their teams. According to Certo and Certo (2006), Transformational leadership inspires organizational success by deeply affecting followers' beliefs in what an organization should be, as well as their values, such as justice and honesty. Transformational leadership creates a sense of duty within the members of the organization, encourages new ways of handling problems, and promotes learning for all the members. According to Hoy and Miskel (2001), the foundation of transformational leadership is in the individual values and beliefs of leaders. Transformational leadership is not a substitution for transactional leadership rather the

successful leaders are both transactional and transformational (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005).

There are four components of transformational leadership namely, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. According to Stewart (2006), in idealized influence, leaders show their charismatic leadership through their power and confidence. Leaders become role models and are admired by the followers. Through inspirational motivation leaders generate enthusiasm and motivation in the followers. They share attractive vision of the future. Under individualized consideration, leaders take care of the needs and developments of the followers. Leaders provide emotional and social support to followers to develop and empower them. And through intellectual stimulation, leaders stimulate the followers to be creative rather than publicly criticizing them. New ideas and ways from the followers are encouraged by the leader.

From the description of transformational leadership provided by Boyett (2006), the basic traits, behaviours and the perception of the followers of the transformational leader can be categorized as per the four components of the transformational leadership. They are tabulated as below.

*Table 2.1. Components and Features of Transformational Leadership*

| **Components** | **Traits, Behaviors and Followers' Perceptions of Transformational Leader** |
|---|---|
| Idealized Influence (Charisma) | Followers have complete faith and pride upon the leader<br>Leader goes beyond self-interest and is a model to followers<br>Leader displays power, confidence and reveals strong values<br>Expects mutual trusts with the followers<br>Emphasizes collective sense of mission and purpose<br>Takes stand on difficult issues and is consistent with the values |

| | |
|---|---|
| Inspirational Motivation | Followers perceives the leader as their source of inspiration<br>Leader is enthusiastic and optimistic about the future<br>Envisions new posibilities and sets high standards<br>Provides continuous encouragements to the followers<br>Draws the followers' attention on what it takes to be successful<br>Shares attractive vision for the future<br>Expressess his/her confidence that followers will achieve their goals |
| Individualized Consideration | Leader gives time in teaching and coaching the follower<br>Gives personal attention to the followers<br>Treats follower as an individual rather than as a member of a group<br>Focuses on followers on developing their strengths, provides advice<br>Leader provides emotional and social support to followers to develop and empower them<br>Recognizes that individuals have different needs, abilities and aspirations |
| Intellectual Stimulation | Followers think that leader encourages different views and ways<br>Followers feel free to express their ideas and opinions<br>Leader discourages traditional ways of doing things<br>Encourages new way of thinking to deal with traditional problems<br>Encourages critical view and creativity<br>Suggests to see things from different angles |

## Principal

Now I move to explain about "Principal" as it is another key term in my research. Principal is the one who holds a position of presiding rank, especially the head of an elementary school or high school. Principal is also sometimes known as head teacher. In Nepal, the Principals in the government schools are called the head teachers (Head Sir or Head Madam). We can find in larger schools that the Principal is assisted by one or more vice-Principals or assistant Principals as per the requirements. The

position of vice Principal is secondary to the Principal with regard to school governance but the Principal has the ultimate responsibility for the school as a whole.

According to Gupta and Aggarwal (2007) as the head of the school, Principal has multiple roles, responsibilities and relationships. S/he is a teacher of teachers and supervisor not only of teachers but of service personnel as well. Sometimes s/he is a disciplinarian and a psychologist, at least to the extent of being able to detect maladjustments within the school. Again sometimes, a Principal is also a financer in organizing the school budget and a lawyer at least to the extent of knowing his obligations, rights and legal abilities as well as of those of all school personal. Similarly Principal has to be a socialist, technical expert and an expert in group dynamics for working effectively with staff, pupils, public and the authorities. This made me realize that Principal is an important leader who leads his/her team for the betterment of the school.

## School Principal as a Leader

Blank (1987) provides the conception that research on high schools have found that the role of the Principal as a leader is critical in creating school conditions that lead to higher student academic performance. Those conditions are setting high standards and goals, planning and coordinating with staff, having an orientation toward innovation, frequent monitoring of staff and student performance, and involving parents and the community. Principal as a leader should have various traits. Principal as a leader covers the significant role of supervising the curriculum, improving the instructional program, working with the staff to identify a vision and direction for the school, and building a close and harmonious working relationship between the school and its community (Portin, Shen, & Williams, 1998). There is a close relation between the success of the organization and Principal's leadership behavior because it

is the Principal who organizes, inspires leads and inspects the school members so as to realize the aims of the school (Karakose, 2008).

Evans (1995) says that Principal should have a stated vision for the school and a plan to achieve that vision. As a leader in school s/he clearly states goals and expectations for students, staff, and parents. Principal should be visible all over the school. S/he should be trustworthy and straight with students and staff. Principal should have a sense of humor and is a role model for students and staff. Finally, as a leader of school, Principal should be able to offer meaningful kindness to staff and students. As a leader, Principal should provide a sense of mission to their schools, engage in participative management, provide support for instruction, monitor instruction and should be a resourceful person (Daresh, 2001).

Glickman (2002) says, as a school leader, a Principal is attacked with so many student needs, parent concerns, teacher concerns, and district and state requirements that it seems terrible to do everything (Glickman, 2002). For dynamic schools, Principals should be different from that of traditional school. Such Principal is termed as a Principal-in-charge (Rallis & Goldring, 2000). S/he does his/her work by attending to the management of the building and by maintaining standard operating procedures. S/he motivates and coordinates through variety of ways to get the work done. Organizations can measure the leader's effectiveness through the use of 360-degree instruments, which collect ratings from the boss, peers, stakeholders, direct reports and others (Fleenor & Bryant, 2002).

Every Principal has stories, sharing real life experiences through narrating method (Celik, 2010). Principal's stories could be important messages conveying the success (or failure) of the Principal to others. Such stories also reveal the background of the Principals. Analyzing the stories helps to understand the leadership behaviors

of school Principal. Personal beliefs, attitudes and values, shape how Principal interacts with students and teachers. S/he needs more than an understanding of the classroom environment and proposed learning outcomes (Carrington, 1999). Principal needs to listen and observe closely to understand the cultural and social institutional setting, beliefs and values of teachers and others who deal with a diverse range of students in the school. A person cannot be a leader just by taking the position of the Principal. To be a leader, s/he needs to be viewed as one who can bring change for the betterment of school (Moore, 1999).

With the above mentioned knowledge about Principal as a leader, I made analysis of the three Principals of my study about their role as leader. Since I based my study on transactional and transformational leadership model, I have further explored about the Principals' characteristics as a transactional and transformational leader.

**Principal as a Transactional Leader**

Transactional leadership in school sets clear managerial structures and followers know exactly what is expected of them (Lavery, 2011). Principal as a transactional leader motivates teachers and students by rewards for their performance. School Principal as a transactional leader also uses three elements of transactional leadership, namely contingent reward, active management by exception and passive management by exception. Under contingent reward, Principal pursues economic exchange to meet the teachers' physiological needs in return for their contracted services. For example, Principal raises the teachers' salary or recommend for promotion as per their performance. Under active management by exception, Principal maintains high levels of vigilance to ensure that teachers and students meet the school standards. S/he frequently monitors the teachers' performance and takes corrective actions when

needed and even punishes teachers and students when the performance or behavior is not as per the standards, under passive management by exception.

Transactional Principals are only trusted by applying contingent rewards. They are likely to enhance teachers' effort, independence and satisfaction but do not tend to incite intelligence like transformational Principals. They are less concerned about teachers' needs and commitment to a team's common goal. Such Principals can be effective but cannot achieve the personal satisfaction of teachers as the transformational Principals. Bass (1985) as mentioned in Costellow (2011) said that transactional Principals who fulfill the self-centered anticipations of the teachers gain reputation. But when they fail to fulfill, they lose reputation and are no more considered effective. Under the transactional Principal, teachers might take shortcuts to complete the task for reward. Doing so, quality may suffer if the Principal does not monitor closely. Teachers will concentrate on ways to satisfy themselves, rather than do what is best for the school.

**Principal as a Transformational Leader**

As mentioned by Leithwood (1994) in Bush and Glover (2003), Principal as a transformational leader performs eight major functions. S/he first of all builds school vision then establishes school goals. S/he provides intellectual stimulation and offer individualized support to the teachers and students. Modeling best practices and demonstrating high performance expectations are other functions. Principal also creates productive school culture and develops structures to foster participation in school decisions. Principal as a transformational leader is characterized by more flexible, versatile and responsive leadership behavior and helps the teachers become more participative and democratic (Lucas & Valentine, 2002).

Principal as a transformational leader influences the behaviors of teachers and their attitudes by inspiring them, through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation (Engels et al, 2008). As per Lavery (2011), transformational leadership has frequently been proposed as an appropriate form of leadership for school Principals. Lavery has given examples of how an effective Principal uses the four factors in his/her leadership. Principal provides a model for the behavior of teachers through strength of character and personal achievements i.e. charisma. S/he communicates high expectations for the school through a dynamic and professional presence i.e. inspiration. Through the individual consideration, s/he attends to the needs of individual teacher or student. And finally through intellectual stimulation, s/he encourages teachers and students to think of old problems in new ways. Through these four factors of transformational leadership, Principal moves his/her school beyond surface changes to deeper transformations and changes the core business of school like pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. For such transformation of school, Principal develops common goals, ensures teachers and students empowerment, ensures collaborative culture and promotes teacher development. From the description of Navickaite and Janiunaite (2010), the features of school Principal as a transformational leader have been categorized as per the four components of the transformational leadership as below.

*Table 2.2. Components and Features of Principal as a Transformational Leader*

| **Components** | **Features of School Principal as Transformational Leader** |
|---|---|
| Idealized Influence (Charisma) | Involves the school community in creating school vision<br>Achieve the school vision through coperation of all the school members |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Has strong belief in the school vision |
| | Spreads the school vision beyond the school |
| | Gains confidence and respect from teachers and students |
| Inspirational Motivation | Inspires the teachers and students to strive for more than only their personal goals |
| | Creates an atmosphere to make every teacher and student feel valued |
| | Shows democratic management by involving teachers and students decision making |
| | Encourages the teachers and students to get involved into a new activity by showing one's own examples and efforts |
| | Principal shares attractive vision for the future |
| | Encourages the teachers and students for teamwork |
| Individualized Consideration | Pays great attention to every teacher and student of the school individually |
| | Takes care of professional development of teachers and progress of students |
| | Helps to create collaborative environment among the teachers |
| | Provides emotional and social support to the teachers and students to develop and empower them |
| | Considers the teachers' personal needs |
| Intellectual Stimulation | Motivates teachers to consult and discuss new teaching-learning methods |
| | Allows the teachers to implement their innovations |
| | Creates conditions to do experiments and take risk |
| | Shows tolerance when teachers make mistakes |
| | Shares the leadership with others and encourages others to develop as a new leader |

After exploring about the leadership theories and school Principal, I realized that I should explore about the literature about school culture, as it is another key term

of my study. To find out about school culture I started with exploring about culture, organizational culture and then moved to school culture.

## Culture

Before plunging into the school culture directly, first I tried to feel what culture and organizational culture are. Culture in general reflects the whole complex of a traditional behavior which has been developed by the human race and is successively learned by each generation (Birukou, Blanzieri, Giorgini, & Giunchiglia, 2009). They further say that the culture of any society consists of the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior which the members of that society have acquired through instruction or imitation and which they share to a greater or less degree.

Barrett (1984) defines culture as the body of learned beliefs, traditions, and guides for behavior that are shared among members of any human society. Again Bennett (1998) says that the culture of a group is the strange and unique way of life revealing the unique meanings, values and ideas of the group in material form in institutions, in social relations, in systems of beliefs, in mores and customs. It reveals how social relations of a group are structured and shaped and the way those shapes are experienced, understood and interpreted (Bennett , 1998). From the above definitions I understood that culture consists of something that is shared and learned by a group of people, but the content of the culture varies with the context (Birukou, Blanzierie, Paolo, & Giunchiglia, 2009). I also realized that culture supports effective performance only when the culture is able to adapt to changes in the environmental conditions and a culture cannot be forced but must be shared (Rose, Kumar, Abdullah, & Ling, March 2008).

## Organizational Culture

From the vague concept of culture from general anthropological point of view, I slowly moved towards understanding the culture of an organization. The culture of an organization is a commonly held in the mind framework of organizational members about the basic assumptions and values which new members are expected to be taught (Smith, 2004). Organization cultures is a holistic construct that describes the complex set of knowledge structures which organization members use to accomplish and generate social behaviour. The organizational culture lives on through the values, beliefs, stories and rituals that have developed and shared by personnel in an organization through the years (Griffin & Moorhead, 2009). A strong culture provides shared values and norms that ensure that everyone in the organization is on the same track (Robbins, 1996).

Culture is a complex phenomenon that not only range from underlying beliefs and assumptions but it is also revealed in visible structures and day to day practices (Fey & Denison, 2000). The culture of the organization reveals the pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Moran & Meso, 2008). Individuals bring their own personal experiences to the group domain, which blend to form a shared culture of the organization as a whole (Schein, 1991). Hence organizational culture is always shared norms and values. The success or failure of an organization is decided by its culture. Successful organizations have cultures that were passed on through story, slogan and deeds to motivate employees by giving meanings to their work (Brown, 2004).

Organizational culture defines the core values, assumptions, interpretations and approaches that characterize an organization. The culture of the organization is reflected in the climate, which impacts the organizational community, the quality of leadership, relationship among the members, and the aptitude to work together for the organizational achievement (Novak, 2008). Every organization develops its framework of competing values to organize and interpret its organizational phenomena (Ubius & Alas, 2009). Four dominant culture types- hierarchy, market, clan and adhocracy emerge from the frame work. Most organizations develop a dominant culture style choosing one out of the four types to determine its competitive area.

## Types of Organizational Culture

On the basis of stability or flexibility of the organization and its internal or external focus, the culture of the organization can be divided in to four types (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). The four types of the organizational culture are Clan or Collaborate culture, Adhocracy or Create culture, Hierarchy or Control culture and Market or Compete culture. I have further explored about each of them below.

### The Clan (Collaborate) Culture

The organizations with clan culture stresses on teamwork, employee involvement programmes and corporate commitment to employee ( University of Toronto, 2009). It assumes that the environment can best be managed through teamwork and employee development, costumers are partners, organization is held together by loyalty and tradition etc. Group loyalty and sense of tradition are strong in such organization (Kerr & Slocum, 2005). It gives emphasis on the long-term benefits of human resources development and group cohesion. The leaders are the mentors, facilitators and act like bonding mechanisms and they emphasize on loyalty and

tradition. Their strategic approach focuses on human resources and cohesion (Smart & St. John, 1996).

**The Adhocracy (Create) Culture**

This culture is also known as highly adaptability culture. The organizations with such culture, strive for long-term growth and acquiring new resources ( University of Toronto, 2009). The major goal of such organization is to foster adaptability; flexibility and creativity where uncertainty, ambiguity and information overload are typical (Fralinger & Olson, 2007). Such organizations emphasize to produce innovative products and services and to adapt quickly to new opportunities (Kerr & Slocum, 2005). It gives a dynamic, entrepreneurial and creative place to work. For them success means gaining unique and new products or services.

**The Hierarchy (Control) Culture**

The organization dominated by this culture is portrayed as a formalized and structured place to work (Cheng & Liu, 2005). The long-term concerns of such organization are stability, predictability and efficiency. Formal policies hold the group together. For such organization success means dependable delivery, smooth scheduling and low cost ( University of Toronto, 2009). They are internally focused with stability and control. The leaders in this culture are like coordinator or organizer using the rules and policies as the primary bonding mechanisms (Smart & John, 1996).

**The Market (Compete) Culture**

Organization with such culture is a result driven organization focused on job completion and goal achievement. It emphasizes on winning others (Niederle & Roth, 2003). Its long-term focus is on competitive action and achievement of measurable goals and targets. For organization with dominant market culture, success means market share, competitive pricing and new market penetration (Cheng & Liu,

2005). It is externally focused with stability and control. The leadership style is that of producer or hard driver and goal attainment is the primary bonding mechanism (Smart & John, 1996).

## Levels of Organizational Culture

Schien, (1991) developed the three levels of organizational culture model that moves from visible to invisible ( University of Toronto, 2009). The three levels as suggested by Schien were the artifacts level, the values and beliefs level, and the underlying assumptions level.

### Artifacts

The first level is visible artifacts such as traditions, stories and symbols. They can be observed in daily features of organizational life such as activities, rituals, ceremonies, jargons, language, clothing, manner of address, written values, organizational chart, office layouts and so on ( University of Toronto, 2009). Artifacts can be seen, heard and felt by the outsiders when they entered the organization (Budd, 2009). The visitors may experience the artifacts of an organization as a mood, feelings, and certain style of the members and the physical appearance of the organization.

I understood that as a researcher, if I want to trace the complex pattern of school culture, I should begin at the artifact level, but identification of culture at this level only scratches the surface of understanding (Stolp & Smith, 1995). I can only get a glimpse of the complete picture. For more understanding, I should move to the second level of culture which provides deeper analysis into the values and beliefs that guide the school.

### Values and beliefs

The second level of the organization culture consists of espoused values and beliefs with respect to strategies, goals and philosophies revealing the definite way of

thinking. It is all about the judgment of what is good and what is bad in the organization (Godfrey, 2003). They are the basic organizational characters of the organization through which the members of the organization develop a sense of direction that guides their day-to-day behavior (Stolp & Smith, 1995). If a new member can fulfill the values, s/he can be socially validated accepting as the part of the group's internal relations. A person who goes against those values will not be accepted by the group (Budd, 2009).

**Underlying Assumptions**

The third level of organizational culture is the most basic level consisting of perceptions and basic assumptions (University of Toronto, 2009). Due to its recessive nature it is also known as Cultural DNA (Budd, 2009). It is very difficult to recognize this level of culture as it is generally hidden in the unconscious dimensions of school life and taken for granted by the organizational members (Stolp & Smith, 1995). The easily recognizable artifacts and deeper values and beliefs become a part of the taken for granted attitude to the organizational members as the time passes and become the underlying assumptions level of the organizational culture.

In my study I have tried to explore all three levels of the organizational culture of the three schools. The artifacts and rituals revealed the first level of the organizational culture. Similarly the second level of organizational culture was specially embedded in the vision and values in the schools. And the third level, the basic assumptions were hidden especially in their stories and relationship.

## School Culture

School as an organization, has its own culture. School culture is the school's own unwritten rules and traditions, norms, and expectations that shape the way Principal,

teachers and students act, how they dress, what they talk about or avoid talking about, whether they seek out colleagues for help or don't, and how teachers feel about their work and their students (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Schools have a culture that is definitely their own. School culture are the complex rituals of personal relationship, a set of folkways, mores, and a moral code based upon them and it is the powerful spiritual force in the school (Stolp & Smith, 1995). For example in a school, a new teacher may be oriented by the Principal that "we don't tell students to shut up! You are stupid". "We don't talk to our students that way here. We encourage the students to speak up here". By telling this the Principal is talking about their school culture (Picucci, Brownson, Khalert, & Sobel, 2002).

Deal and Kennedy (1982) defined school culture in general as the shared beliefs and values that closely knit a school community together. Culture of a school or a classroom is the peculiar and distinctive way of life of the school or class, the meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of beliefs, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life (Bennett, 1998).

School culture is an organized set of thoughts, beliefs, and norms for interaction and communication. It is about how people treat each other, how they value one another, how school staff work together and get along together in a professional and personal sense, it is the consensus about what is important, and it is the way everyone in the school does business all of which may influence cognitions, behaviors, perceptions and expectations (Sailes, 2008).

By creating an awareness of school culture, educators can better understand the meaning of their day to day activities and how their school evolves towards continuous improvement. The aim of interpreting a school culture is thus to understand meaning and symbols as they have been created by the members of the

culture (Colley, 1999). Similarly, I understood that schools are very complex, conservative, cultural structures and by nature, maintain the status quo unless they are staffed with effective leaders who serve as change agents. Effective leaders have to be able to read the culture and know how to effect systemic change that will support school improvement (Garland, 2004). The most effective change in school culture happens when Principal, teachers, and students model the elements of the school culture important to the school together. But the Principal is the most important as the actions of the Principal are noticed and interpreted by others (Stolp, 1994). A school's culture can be either positive or negative, both growing from its vision and its established values. But the strength of the culture, either strong or weak depends on the actions, traditions, symbols, ceremonies, and rituals that are closely connected with that vision and values (Jerald, 2006). For example a school may have a positive culture focusing on student achievement and success but if there are no follow up actions, traditions, ceremonies and rituals to reinforce the culture, then the positive culture would not make any impact.

According to Wagner (2006), the three main aspects of school culture are professional collaboration, collegiality and self-determination or efficacy. He further says these are the three major indicators of the health of a school's culture.

**Collaboration**

Collaboration in school is the degree to which teachers work together, share information and instructional strategies. Collaborative culture encourages having constructive discussions and debates (Center for improving School Culture, 2004). It is believed that the learning of the teachers is as important as the learning of the children. Teaching and learning is believed to be a complex process in which learning is co-constructed by teachers and students in a specific context in a

collaborative manner (Praxis Group Inc, 2006). Collaboration empowers the school community through the fusion of abilities that each individual of the team brings and that collectively make the team more effective (Moore, 1999).

Teachers are said to be engaged in true collaboration in a learning community if they create and assess lessons together and generate common curricula and assessments (Loyola University, 2008). Such teachers make a team and meet regularly to focus on teaching and learning. They set learning improvement goals for the team and observe each other's teaching and offer constructive feedback. Collaborative culture promotes a collective purpose for learning hence the effective schools are characterized by professional collaboration culture (Praxis Group Inc, 2006). According to Mulford (2007), the advantage of collaboration culture is revealed in increased moral support, morale and teacher learning.

**Collegiality**

Similarly, regarding the second indicator of the school culture as "collegiality", it is a sense of belonging, emotional support, and inclusion as a valued member of the organization (Center for improving School Culture, 2004). It is the manner in which teachers interact with one another (Whiteley, 2008). Teachers are said to be engaged in collegial harmony if they are engaged in informal conversation about teaching to share information about students and to share what they are doing in their classroom (Loyola University, 2008). Such teachers give spontaneous advice in conversation with colleagues and share new ideas for classroom activities. Collegial teachers have common goals, common values and common norms which they keep open to new potential for positive change (Wheelam & Tilin, 1999). Such teachers see beyond individual success for the benefit of the team as a whole. I understood that the pure interest of listening to each other's classroom experiences highly inspire and support

each other. This helps the teachers to develop self-efficacy in their teaching and assessment skills (Dole, Nisbet, Warren, & Cooper, 1999).

**Efficacy**

Center for improving School Culture (2004) explains the notion of efficacy as the view of stakeholders towards themselves. It is all about whether the teachers respect the research supported evidence about good teaching or they prefer in the status quo. Collective teacher efficacy results in the shared beliefs of the teachers, capability on their efforts to have a positive effect on students (Mulford, 2007). Looking other way round, professionalism is the sense of efficacy on the part of teachers. The school Principal can take actions to improve the teachers' efficacy. S/he can put up instructional knowledge and skills through trainings create opportunities for teachers to collaborate to share skills and experience, provide feedback to teachers and engage teachers in decision making procedure (Brinson & Steiner, 2007).

In my study I have tried to explore all these three indicators to reveal the health of the school. These helped me to find whether the school health was positive or toxic.

## School Climate Vs School Culture

School climate is the reflection of the physical and psychological aspects of the school (Michigan State University, 2004). School climate is a narrower concept than school culture. Climate describes people's shared perceptions of the school whereas culture grips not only how people feel about the school but also the assumptions, values and beliefs of the school members. School climate focuses on the impressions, feelings and expectations held by the members (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

School climate is subject to change more easily than the school culture and provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning process. It is the

atmosphere, personality and behaviors of the members of the school (Novak, 2008). The culture of the school determines its climate. School climate is the first step to improvement but the culture determines if improvement is possible (Gruenert, 2008). School climate is a product of the overall culture of the school, a part of school culture and school climate emerges from school members' shared perception of the school culture. Griffin and Moorhead (2009) clearly say that climate is concerned with the current atmosphere whereas culture is based on the history and traditions.

Schoen and Teddlie (2008) opine that climate is the physical environment of the school (buildings, play grounds, corridors etc.), the social system (relationship and interaction between the members) and the expectations about teacher behavior and student outcomes. But they say that there is no single universally agreed upon best definition of school culture. Still they referred the previous definitions of Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Deal and Peterson (1999) to take it as shared beliefs, values, unwritten rules, traditions etc. They also highlighted that organizational climate are generally viewed from psychological perspective, whereas organizational culture is viewed from anthropological perspective. In simple terms, I understood that the culture is the cause and the climate is the visible effect. And a positive culture fosters a positive climate. Then I questioned myself, what a positive school culture is?

**Positive Vs Toxic School Culture**

According to Lambert (1998) that there is no one best school culture to call as a positive school culture but latest research and knowledge of successful schools identify some common features. In these cultures, staff, students, and administrators value learning, work to enhance curriculum and instruction, and focus on students. According to Jerald (2006), Schools with positive culture posses a widely shared logic of purpose and values, standard of continuous learning and improvement, a

commitment to and sense of responsibility for the learning of all students; collaborative, collegial relationships, and opportunities for staff reflection, collective inquiry, and sharing personal practice.

Furthermore, successful schools often share a widespread professional language, collective stories of success, wide-ranging opportunities for quality professional development, and rituals that celebrate improvement, collaboration, and learning (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). All of these elements construct promise, build motivation, and promote learning for staff and students of those winning schools. For schools to be successful there is a need for administrators to recognize their respective school culture and build upon positive factors to promote a healthy environment for individuals (Chiang, 2003).

Sigford (1998) says that there is power in positive thinking. According to him, positive people seek out other positive people. In the context of school, students request teachers who make them feel good as the stress decreases the ability to learn. School sometimes needs a staff get-together for the fun. It is good idea for administrators to schedule times when the staff can play together and build the positive feelings of the group.

Strong shared norms and values of school results in strong influence of school culture over school members. And strong positive culture results in promotion of academic performance of the school (Celik, 2010). School culture with high commitment creates valuable learning environment. A school culture that supports hard work and high achievement must have certain ingredients like inspiring vision, focus on students and teacher learning, supportive relationship amongst the members, effective leadership etc (Brown, 2004).

Principals of a school with positive culture encourage understanding and respect for individual differences and strive for high educational standards and levels of achievement for all students. In a school with positive culture, one can feel a calm and orderly atmosphere where students look dignity and confident. Teachers are found talking about their work with intensity and professionalism and both the teachers and students look happy rather than stressed. Students and teachers treat each other with respect (Jerald, 2006).

Like the next side of the coin, some schools have the cultures with "toxic" norms and values that obstruct growth and learning. Such school cultures lack a clear sense of purpose, have norms that reinforce inertia, blame students for lack of progress, discourage collaboration, and often have antagonistic relations among staff. These schools are not healthy for staff or students (Peterson, 2002).

Goodwin (2008) says that the features of toxic school culture can be regarded as; there may be more discipline problems, and higher turnover of administrators and teachers. Such depressing culture even manipulates some beginning teachers to escape the profession after a short period. Toxic cultures stimulate feelings of unfriendliness and hopelessness. The focus is on negative aspects like failure of students, failure of programs, failure of new ideas etc. Energy is wasted on maintaining the negative values causing high levels of stress which are adverse to be part of that culture (Kilian, 1999). The Principal or the leader does not concern with the development of social or moral environment and the internal development of the school this leads to deterioration of the system and the school as a whole (Fullan, 2002).

As cited in University of Texas (2002), Deal and Peterson mention that in toxic school culture, students are often viewed as the problem rather than as valued

clients. Teachers and staff believe that they are doing the best they can and don't search out new ideas. Frequently they share stories and historical perspectives on the school that are often negative, discouraging, and demoralizing. They often Complain, criticize, and distrust any new ideas, approaches, or suggestions for improvement raised by anybody. They rarely share ideas, materials, or solutions to classroom problems. Such schools have few ceremonies or school traditions that celebrate what is good and hopeful about their place of work.

The school culture can also be strong or weak. When cultural elements are strongly established, they are deeply rooted in the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of the school members. When these elements are strong, the school members feel responsible to protect that culture (Picucci, Brownson, Khalert, & Sobel, 2002). Strong culture is associated with positive characteristics, teachers' positive attitudes, students' positive behavior and outcomes. Teachers and students are more satisfied and productive in the schools with strong culture than in the schools with weak culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995). In my study, I have tried to analyze each of the activities in the schools to distinguish between the positive or toxic part of the school culture. Each of the features or activities of school can be divided into groups called elements of school culture, which I have tried to look at below.

## Elements of School Culture

The elements of school culture can be the norms, values, beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, traditions, attitudes, behaviors, symbols (artifacts), stories and myths existing in the school and understood by the members of the school family (Stolp, 1994). These elements shape what the members think and how they act to form the unique culture in the school. According to (Peterson & Deal, 2009) the elements of the school

culture can be categorized into five major sorts. Here, I have tried to explore each of the elements in detail.

**Architecture, Artifacts and Symbols**

Architecture and Artifacts are the infrastructure and the physical environment of the school that send messages about what is important and valued in the school. Symbols are the representations of the values and the beliefs in terms of action, displays, logos, artifacts etc (Peterson & Deal, 2009). They not only give the immediate perception through the visible signs but also about the implicit values and beliefs prevailing in the school (Stolp & Smith, 1995). For example when a class five student is given a chance upon his/her request to provide suggestions and feedback to another student of the same class about his/her presentation just done in the class, the values and the beliefs of the teacher about the students is more important that what feedback the student gave.

**History and Stories**

Every school has its past that borne in the records, hearts and the heads of the school members. These past influences much of the happenings in the present and in the future. These historical moments are transmitted to the new members by the old members in terms of the stories (Peterson & Deal, 2009). The school culture is the creation of a chain of varied and ever-changing social relationships among who work and live in the school. Hence the school culture is affected by its history as it is the historically transmitted patterns of values, beliefs and traditions (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

**People and Relationship**

It is the informal network in school that builds trust and collaboration between the school members (Peterson & Deal, 2009). Intimate relationship between the school

members, celebrating birthdays, engaging in social activities, weekend gatherings etc develop pleasant organizational climate (Ubben & Hughes, 1992). The morale and the spirits of the students and staff are higher in the schools with strong healthy culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

**Rituals and Ceremonies**

Rituals and ceremonies help to keep the school members connected foster renewal and provide opportunities to bond with each other. They mark the passage of time, honor the accomplishment of valued goals and celebrate the possibilities of new hopes and dreams (Peterson & Deal, 2009). Proper traditions established in the school help positively to the students learning (Ubben & Hughes, 1992).

Traditions, rituals and ceremonies like daily assemblies, prize giving day and annual functions express the school culture symbolically (Bush, 1995). The rituals and ceremonies represent two levels of culture, the first one being the surface level experience of the events and the next being the internalized values that go with the students wherever they go in the future (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

**Vision and Values**

Vision is the picture of the hoped future of the school of what it can become. Successful school Principals develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They express and reinforce this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and students to share the vision. They direct the philosophy, structures and activities of the school towards achieving this shared vision (Bush & Glover, 2003). Values are the core of what school considers important and valuable (Peterson & Deal, 2009). An understanding of values and beliefs is an important element in the management of school (Bush, 1995). The values the school Principal carries is extremely significant to the school. The Principal of an effective school

values and believes in the ability of all children to learn equally (Ubben & Hughes, 1992).

## Typology of School Culture

The constituents of the dimensions of the school culture situated in a school decide about its culture type. Chokoko and Rampai (2011) in Townsend and MacBeath (Ed) have explained that there are five major types of school culture on the basis of two domains namely, *social control* and *social cohesion*. These two domains can be compared with the *initiating structure* and *considerations* of the behavioral theories of leadership. Social control is related with task orientation (initiating structure) and social cohesion is related with human relation (considerations) factor. The degree of combinations of these two domains gives rise to five different types of school culture. The five types of school culture are the hothouse school culture, the survivalist school culture, the formal school culture, the welfarist school culture and the effective or ideal school culture. In this study I have tried to categorize the culture of the three schools on the basis of these types. Here, I have explored each of the types of school culture in brief.

### Hothouse School Culture

McMurtry (2005) said that under the hothouse school culture, the educational activities and performance is considered extremely high. Both the social control and social cohesion are high. This culture may lead to success in academic performance. The Principal has high expectations from the teachers and students due to which they have to work in fear and pressure. Stoll (1998) called it a pressured and controlled school culture. The Principal of such school is result oriented. The Principal provides the opportunities for personal development and teamwork. The Principal is highly enthusiastic and committed so wants the teachers and students to be same.

**Formal School Culture**

In formal school culture, the task orientation (social control) is very high whereas the human relation (social cohesion) factor is very low (Chokoko & Rampai, 2011). The Principal focuses more on the formal rules, policies and discipline. The culture of collaboration and collegiality lacks here. Teachers blame the students for poor performance. There lacks humanistic environment and the academic achievement are likely to be poor. Stoll (1998) called it custodial, traditional and unapproachable school culture. As per McMurtry (2005), such schools regard themselves as disciplined with traditional values. Principal has high expectations from teachers and students and is clear about what school stands for. The Principal looks suspicious with new ideas and feels easy with what has been working well through past experience.

**Survivalist School Culture**

In survivalist school culture, the educational activities are very low (Chokoko & Rampai, 2011). Both task-orientation (social control) and human relations (social cohesion) are low. Collaboration and collegiality are absent in such school culture. Such school exists in a situation of 'at risk'. Teachers and students do not feel free to ask for help and express their feelings. The ability of teachers is ignored; disciplinary problems are seen in teachers and students and the academic performance is likely to be low. Stoll (1998) also called it insecure, alienated, isolated and at risk school culture. According to McMurtry (2005), in such schools, there are lots of problems that are not being tackled. Some other features of survivalist school culture are low teachers' and students' morale, under-achievement, under-funding, poor relationship between the school members and staff groupism.

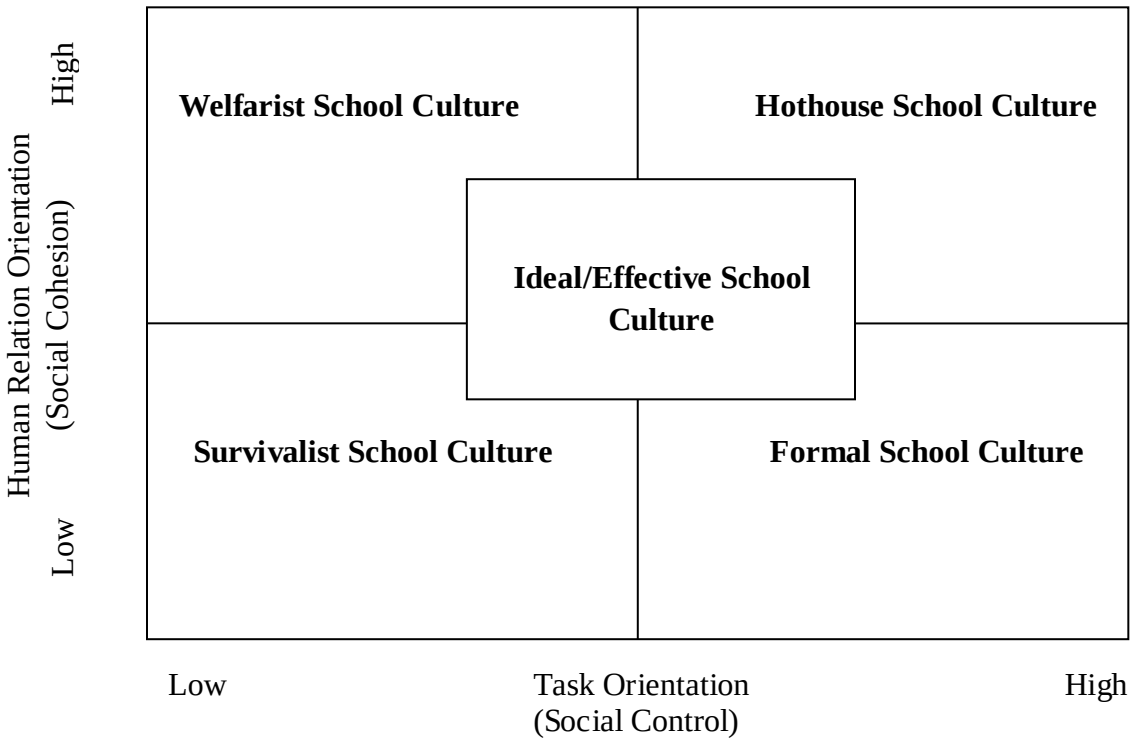
**Welfarist School Culture**

In the welfarist school culture the task orientation is low and human relation is very high. Due to the lack of hard work for academic achievement, the academic performance can be low. Stoll (1998) named it relaxed and cozy school culture. McMurtry (2005) says such school sees education as being about individual development, which is far more than just passing exams. Students feel that they have a relaxed, open and friendly atmosphere where they are given space to grow, develop and learn. They think that life skills are as important as the grades in exams. The Principal and teachers are committed to a child-centered philosophy of education.

**Ideal/Effective School Culture**

In practice, we rarely see a single of the above mentioned types in a school. effective school get the right mix at the right time. Effective school culture is characterized by optimum level presence of both task orientation (social control) and human relation (social cohesion) orientation. The Principal has high expectations and his/her support for achievement is equally high. There is warm relationship between the Principal, teachers and the students and absence of fearful environment. Collaboration and collegiality occur spontaneously. According to Stoll (1998), this is the ideal, optimal and most effective school culture as it has the features of all the previous four types of school cultures at optimum level. In the figure below, ideal school culture is at the center of the four school cultures, taking moderate amount of social cohesion and social control in order to create the most favorable environment.

*Figure 2.2. A Typology of School Culture*




In my study, I have tried to analyze the mix of the two domains; social cohesion and social control in the three schools, where I conducted my research. I have tried to see the features of the above mentioned five types of school culture in the schools. I have also attempted to explain how far the Principals in each of the three schools have mixed the features of various types of school culture to make their school culture effective or toxic.

When I tried to compare the four types of organizational culture namely, clan, adhocracy, hierarchy and market cultures with the types of school cultures, I found some linkages between them. I found some similarities between hothouse school culture and adhocracy organizational culture. Both of them emphasize teamwork, innovation, risk taking and high pressure for better performance. Similarly, I felt the formal school culture to be related with the hierarchy organizational culture. Both of them emphasize on rules, policies and stability. I found clan organizational culture to

be somewhat related with welfarist school culture. Both of them focus in friendly environment, participation, teamwork and leader is more like a facilitator. But I could not find any relation between survivalist school culture and market organization culture. This may be due to the difference of the basic nature between the business corporate and schools. This concept is depicted in the table below.

*Table 2.3. Comparision Between Organizational and School Culture Types*

| **School Culture** | **Organizational Culture** | **Degree of Similarities** |
|---|---|---|
| Hothouse | Adhocracy | Some similarities |
| Formal | Hierarchy | Some similarities |
| Welfarist | Clan | Some similarities |
| Survivalist | Market | Not Related |

## Features of Effective School Culture

Fink (2000) as mentioned in Schoen and Teddlie (2008) has highlighted some of the cultural norms of a sound or effective school culture. In such school culture, Principal engages school members to develop shared goals and everybody in the school know where they are going. Each member in school takes the responsibility for success. Wider involvement of teachers and students build up commitment towards the school goal. There exists higher collegiality among the teachers with a feeling, "we are working on this together. There is a feeling of continuous improvement in the teachers and students. The school Principal is always ready to provide support to the teachers and students. The Principal has confidence in his/her work so that the teachers and students have trust and hope in the Principal. There is mutual respect between Principal, teachers and students. The school culture has the tradition of celebrating rituals and ceremonies to bind the school members together and to build

trust and hopes. Humor becomes a part of the school culture that reduces tension, develops a sense of belonging and enables difficult issues to be openly discussed in a collaborative fun.

Hoy and Miskel (1991) suggest that effective school culture share a common set of features. It has shared values and consensus on 'how we get things done around here'. The Principal establishes him/her as a hero who symbolizes core values of the school. The school has distinctive rituals that exemplify widely shared beliefs. Teachers and students act as situational heroes and heroines. There exist rituals of acculturation and cultural renewal. Rituals are celebrated to transform core values to the school members. There lies a balance between innovation and tradition, and between autonomy and control.

Similarly Schoen and Teddlie (2008) have mentioned some of the most commonly cited characteristics of effective school culture. As per them, effective school culture has a positive school climate. It has a strong leadership at the school site and high expectations for student achievement. There is high teacher collaboration and effective instruction. There is frequent monitoring of student learning. In my study I have tried to search such features in the school that make the effective school culture.

## Principal's Leadership and School Culture

Several studies reveal that Principals have vital influence on the culture of the school and through the school culture, on the teachers' functioning and wellbeing. Though Principal may take crucial decisions in collaboration with others, s/he still holds the responsible position for those decisions and their implementation (Engels, Hotton, Devos, Bouckenooghe, & Aelterman, 2008). Principal, by position has a greater influence in decision making. Principal as a leader creates and reinforce values,

norms, behaviors within the culture. What s/he gives emphasis as important, how s/he deals with problems, the way he she provides role models, the way s/he communicates with others and whom s/he selects to join the school as teacher or staff shapes the expected norms, values and behaviors in the school (Bass & Riggis, 2006).

Rice (2010) said that for decades Principals have been recognized as important contributors to the effectiveness of school. They influence student achievement, teachers' motivation, and school vision, allocation of resources, organizational structures and organizational learning. Principal's effective leadership increases the teachers' effectiveness. His/her job is complex and multi-dimensional. A Principal is the one and the most important person to determine to attract and retain high-quality teachers. Similarly, the findings of case studies of effective and ineffective schools conducted by Mathema and Bista (2005) revealed that the head teacher is the key factor influencing school effectiveness. They found that the head teachers in effective schools are bold, decisive, goal oriented, committed and well prepared to make a difference. Principal can ensure that outstanding teaching and learning can extend to outside the classroom or school building as the learning of the children does not begin and end at the classroom door (DeVita, 2010).

Gupta and Aggarwal (2007) say that Principal of a school can be compared to the captain of a ship. They further emphasize that schools are good or bad, flourishing or perishing as the headmaster is capable, energetic or reserve. Schools rise to fame or sink to shadows as greater or lesser headmasters have charge of them. As per Deal and Peterson (1998), Principals do many things for schools to help them achieve success. They first of all shape the vision and mission, provide instructional leadership and nurture it in others, they manage and administer complex organizational processes, they shape the school culture and they build and maintain

positive relations with community and parents and finally they lead and support school improvement and change. Similarly, Fullan (2002) mentions that the Principal has several roles to play as per need like leader, manager, motivator and team player for the betterment of the school and to develop a positive school culture.

Principal as an architect continually monitors the school to keep the mission and vision in focus and is committed to the mutual purposes (Moore, 1999). In the book "Shaping school culture", Deal and Peterson (1998) have mentioned the eight major symbolic roles of a Principal to shape the school culture. The eight roles of the Principal are historian, anthropological sleuth, visionary, symbol, potter, poet, actor and healer. As a historian a Principal tries to understand the past of the school as the echoes of the previous crises, challenges and successes resound in the present and in the future (Deal & Peterson, 1998). As an anthropological sleuth, Principal analyses the current set of norms, values and beliefs that define the current school culture. For that s/he tries to study the teacher's room, classrooms, hallways etc. For the role of visionary, s/he has a regularly sprouting vision and works with other leaders and the community to define a deeply value focused picture of the future for the school. As a symbol the Principal insists values through his/her getups and action. Principal continuously shapes the traditions, rituals and ceremonies to impart the values and beliefs. Sometimes Principal acts as a poet and uses the rhetoric language to emphasize values. Principal also acts as an actor and healer as per the situations.

Hoy and Miskel (2001) say Principal strengthens school culture by repeatedly publicizing the core ideology in speeches at meetings and ceremonies. S/he also uses physical symbols. Principal keeps decisions and actions consistent with the ideology and emphasize the ideology through rituals and ceremonies. According to Schein (1992), the leader creates the school culture. The leader's beliefs, values and basic

assumptions are transferred to the mental models of the subordinates. This process of building culture occurs in three ways. First, the leader only hires and keeps subordinates who think and feel the way s/he does. Secondly the leader indoctrines and socializes subordinates to their way of thinking and feeling. And finally the leader's own behavior is a role model that encourages subordinates to identify and thereby internalize his/her beliefs, values and assumptions.

According to Stolp and Smith (1995), a successful Principal plays three major roles to build up a school culture. S/he facilitates the vision process, blends internal and external demands and learns from failure. At first a Principal makes sure that a vision comes not just from an idea but from the unity of purpose that is achieved when all members believe in, claim as their own and act jointly. For this, the Principal acts as not only the originator of vision but also as the facilitator. S/he develops shared vision through consensus. Secondly, they say that school culture goes beyond the front offices, classrooms and hallways to external demands like meeting the academic goals in the board exam, community needs, parents' desires and government requirements. A successful Principal orchestrates the blending of the various internal and external demands. Thirdly, they emphasize that failure of a kind or other is an unavoidable component of life. A successful Principal learns from failure through personal reflection and passes that message to the school members.

A Principal does not directly affect student achievement, but rather indirectly affects learning by impacting on the school culture. Principal as a change agent, impacts on the school performance through transformation of the school culture (Macneil, Prater & Busch, 2009). Researches show that Principals who exhibit both transactional and transformational leadership are successful in their ability to raise teachers' morale, performance and school-wide productivity.

The relation between Principal's leadership and school culture is the core of my study. My overall research was exclusively focused in this theme. In order to summarize the major themes from the above mentioned reviews, I developed a table highlighting the significant roles of a Principal that influence the culture of the school. These themes helped me during my data collection and data analysis of this research.

*Table 2.4. Principal's Role in School Culture*

| S. N. | Principal's Role in School Culture |
|---|---|
| 1 | Holds significant position for decision making and implementation regarding plans, policies, procedures etc. that ultimately guides the culture of the school |
| 2 | Creates values, norms and behaviors to shape what, how, when should be done and should not be done |
| 3 | Provides role models for other school members to act and behave as the school members |
| 4 | Selects likeminded people to join the school as new members so that they get adjusted with the existing norms and values |
| 5 | Influences student achievement, teachers' motivation and school vision |
| 6 | Leads for school improvement and change |
| 7 | Persistently monitors school values, mission and vision if going as expected |
| 8 | Plays symbolic roles to guide others to act within values and norms |
| 9 | Strengthens school culture by repeatedly emphasizing the core ideology in meetings and ceremonies |
| 10 | Involves others for the unity of purpose by developing sense of ownership through participatory approach |
| 11 | Learns from past failures through reflection and corrects oneself and facilitates to correct others |
| 12 | As per the situations, shows both transactional and transformational leadership to raise teachers' morale, school performance and to develop shared norms, beliefs and values |

## School Culture and School Performance

School culture has significant role in the performance of the teachers and students of the school. The success or failure of the students and teachers and school as a whole depends upon whether the culture of the school is positive or toxic. Deal and Peterson (2009) said that a school's culture sharpens the focus of daily behavior in school and increases attention to what is important and valued in school. It builds commitment to and identification with core values of school. A positive school culture strengthens motivation of the teachers and students whereas a toxic school culture reduces. Positive school culture also encourages hard work, commitment for achievement, attention to problems solving and focuses on learning of all students. School culture either enhances collegiality, collaboration and self efficacy in the teachers and students or it diminishes them.

The culture of a school affects everything that happens in the school and of course the student achievement and learning (Wagner, 2006). In addition to the formal classroom curriculum, school culture is the hidden curriculum. According to Celik (2010), a strong positive school culture with strong shared norms and values helps to promote the academic performance of the school. Principal of such school encourages understanding and respect for individual difference and strive for high educational standards and achievement for all students. The positive culture enhances students' and teachers' dignity and confidence. This results in high professionalism, happiness and mutually respectful environment (Jerald, 2006).

Colley (1999) also emphasizes that the culture of each school drives the daily happenings and says that the culture either enhances or stifles growth. The culture of the school is the foundation for school improvement (Saphier & King, 1985). A school's culture may support teachers who try to improve their teaching or it may

laugh at anyone who tries to stand out from the crowd to do the things differently. It might promote teachers to work on projects together or it might trouble anyone who seeks such collegial support. The school culture may encourage teachers to set high standards for students or it may send a message that these kids are the empty vessels to be filled up and can't be expected to do much better (National Staff Development Counsil, 1998).

The culture of schools creates distinctions among them providing a sense of identity (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). Strong school culture acts as social glue that binds people together and provides the appropriate standards for behavior. It has opposite performance if it is weak and toxic. Healthy school culture makes the satisfaction and morale of the students and staff higher. Research show that school culture is the most significant factor in determining the success of school restructuring (Stolp & Smith, 1995). School culture develops professional community in school by enhancing collaborative relation between the teachers. Mission statement of school can be translated in to shared vision and achieved through shared effort only through positive school culture.

Maslowski (2001) has referred several writers to abstract some relations between school culture and school performance. It has been mentioned that the culture with teachers' input in decision making through participatory approach is enhancing factor for school effectiveness. A culture with shared vision and shared goals reflect a unity of purpose among the teachers that is likely to result in a consistency of practice. Similarly, the culture of teachers' collegiality and collaboration helps to achieve the shared goals. It is also mentioned that school's cultural features are linked with the achievement of the students. In my study I have also tried to reveal how the culture in the three schools affected their performance.

## Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory

Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory places the social context of a person at the heart of his/her learning process. The theory focuses that human cognition and learning are social and cultural course rather than individual (Cooper, 1998). It assumes that we cannot understand the learning of a person independently from the social and cultural forces. These forces influence the individuals and their socio-cultural interactions that have great impact in their learning. Learning is thought to occur through interaction, negotiation and collaboration (Scott & Palincsar, 2009). The goal of teaching is to support students to connect in the activities, talk, and use of tools in a way that is steady with the practices of the community to which students are being set up.

According to Vygotsky, cultural development of an individual occurs in two phases (Sewell, 2006). First it occurs socially between people and secondly on the individual's psychology. The point where social experience is transferred to the individual learning is the zone of proximal development also known as the construction zone. The notion of zones of proximal development suggests that the objectives of teaching must be to recognize abilities that are in the process of developing and effort to forecast what the learner will do independently in the future (Scott & Palincsar, 2009). Given this, it is assumed that in school context, students and teachers first practice the social norms and values of the school as a part of daily practices then they internalize in their individual psychology to make a part of their culture.

## Earlier Research Findings

During my study, I could not find any evidence of doctoral research conducted in the field of school culture in Nepal. Very few researches have been conducted in this area in the United States, Canada, South Africa and Australia. I found only one

academic research (Masters Level Dissertation) conducted in Nepal about the school culture. Amgain (2009) tried to explore the evidence of overall extent of health of school culture within the Nepali context. For this he conducted a survey research with respect to three components of health of school culture; collaboration, collegiality and efficacy. He designed the survey from positivist perspective and conducted in 13 public and 41 private schools of lalitpur district of Nepal. His participants were 361 teachers and Principals. He conducted the research to find out the answers in four major questions. First he tried to find the current condition of the school culture with respect to collaboration, collegiality and efficacy. Secondly he tried to find if there was any difference in health of school culture between private and public schools. His third inquiry was how the Principals and teachers of the secondary schools perceived the importance of healthy school culture. Finally he tried to find out what were the areas to be addressed and taken care of in order to develop healthy school culture.

These were his major findings from the research. He found that collaboration, collegiality, and efficacy were very important components of a healthy school culture. Teachers and the Principals of the sample schools strongly valued the importance of healthy school culture. The school culture required modification, improvements, and further investigation and assessment of critical areas to address and improve the level. He also found, as compared to private schools, the level of health of school culture at public schools was more critical. With these four major findings, he concluded from his research that the schools in Nepal are yet to gain enough maturity over collaboration, collegiality, and efficacy to be recognized as culturally healthy schools.

For the doctoral research Colley (1999) in Virginia State University studied to identify specific cultural elements within one elementary school to provide

information about the school's identity and functioning. Values, beliefs, play, rituals, ceremonies, and cultural objects were included as the cultural elements. The study uncovered evidence to demonstrate that the awareness of the school members about the school's culture influences how the culture works. The findings of the research were that culture of a school community is dynamic and exists as a reflection of the school members. It will grow or wither depending on the understanding and perception of the school members. The significance of school culture must be recognized and acknowledged to address a school's efforts to enhance or change.

Another doctoral research I found was from University of South Africa. Oyetunji (2006) researched to examine the connectedness between head teacher leadership style and school climate. The research focused on the improvement of climate in Botswana secondary schools through the head teacher's appropriate use of leadership styles in different situations with a view to answer the following questions: What different leadership styles are employed by school head teachers? What are the different types of climates in schools? Are the leadership styles of school head teachers responsible for the climate that exists in their schools? What are the implications of the head teachers' leadership styles for school climate? How can school climate be improved? What roles can the head teachers, teachers and other stakeholders play to improve school climate? Various leadership styles used by head teachers and the corresponding climates were identified. The findings indicated that the type of climate that exists in schools is related to the head teacher's leadership style.

Florence (2008) investigated the effect of Principal's leadership behavior on school learning culture in some selected secondary schools in Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria. She used descriptive survey design. Her study population comprised 65 secondary

schools randomly selected out of 161 secondary schools in Ekiti State. The data was collected through questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed and three hypotheses were tested using the spearman rank correlation and the one way ANOVA. Her findings showed that leadership behavior of a school Principal affects the school learning. Based on the findings, she recommended that a better understanding of leadership behavior should be learnt by the school Principal through regular attendance of seminars or workshop on leadership and school management.

Barnett and McCormick (2004) conducted a research in "Leadership and individual Principal teacher relationship". Using the combined approach of multilevel analysis and structural modeling, they investigated the relationships of leadership with school learning culture. They collected the data from a random sample of 373 teachers. Their results suggested relationships between leadership and school learning culture did exist, and they highlight the importance of individual Principal-teacher relationships in schools. Transformational approaches to leadership have increasingly been advocated for schools. Research evidence suggested that the effect of leadership on student learning outcomes is mediated by school conditions such as goals, structure, people, and school culture.

The leadership factors that matter in school culture change was investigated by Eilers and Camacho (2007). The urban elementary school profiled in this case study was considered low performing based on state-mandated assessment scores from the time the school opened its doors in 1998 until very recently, putting the school on academic watch under the terms of the "No Child Left Behind Act". They say, however, in recent years the school realized a significant turnaround with the placement of a proactive Principal and internal specialized supports accompanied by district office support. Survey data on school culture measures demonstrated an

improvement in professional communities of practice, collaborative leadership, and evidence-based practice. Their case study provided evidence that leadership coupled with multiple and coherent district supports can result in dramatic change at a school in a short period.

Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID), Tribhuvan University conducted a research focused on the school related activities of the Head teachers' (HT) leadership with regard to improving education quality and school management (CERID, 2004). Nine HTs of the sampled schools from different districts of Nepal were individually interviewed; six of them were from primary schools, two from secondary schools and one from a lower secondary school. The research found that HT's position is at the critical point at which all the mechanisms of education system. His/her strong leadership provides an effective coordination between and among the school teachers, school management committee (SMC) members, students and parents. It was also found that HTs are often the role model that directly influences the school environment and inspire people in the community and gives new height to the school.

Similarly, a team conducted a research for the Ministry of education and sports on school effectiveness and student performance in the SLC examinations taking 14 effective and 14 ineffective sample schools of Nepal (Subedi, 2005). The research analyzed different aspects of school effectiveness that influence the performance of the students in the SLC examinations. The study indicated that school leadership and school culture and climate are also significant factors that influence the school effectiveness. The study found that the Principals of effective schools are more stable, firm, confident and result oriented. Such Principals were found to be focusing their time, effort and energy for the students' achievement and positive

social image of the school. Regarding the school culture, the study indicated that the schools were found to be practicing celebrations, social functions, anniversaries, norms, values, institutional practices, relationships, expectations and beliefs. The study found that the school members of the effective schools accept and comply with the abovementioned elements of the school culture positively and effectively whereas, in the ineffective schools the school members were found repeatedly practicing undesirable cultural elements.

From the review of the above mentioned earlier researches, I gained some valuable insights that guided me to move ahead with my research. I understood that school members strongly value the importance of healthy (positive) school culture. I also learnt that school culture is dynamic and exists as a reflection of the school members as per their perception. School culture has significant role in the school effectiveness and Principal (Head Teacher) has a significant role in the school culture.

## My Conceptual Framework

With the insight I gained through exploring the literature, I developed an initial and simple conceptual framework to start my research journey. As an interpretive researcher, I went to the field with some pre-understanding or 'priori' knowledge (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988). But at the end of the research, I came up with more socially constructed realities of the schools, their culture and the Principals' leadership role in shaping the unique school culture of each school. Hence, I developed my final conceptual (theoretical) framework at the end of the research, which I have presented in the chapter seven.

For now, I have presented my conceptual framework with which I started my research. The key terms in this research were "Principal", "Leadership", "Organizational Culture" and "School Culture". I developed the conceptual

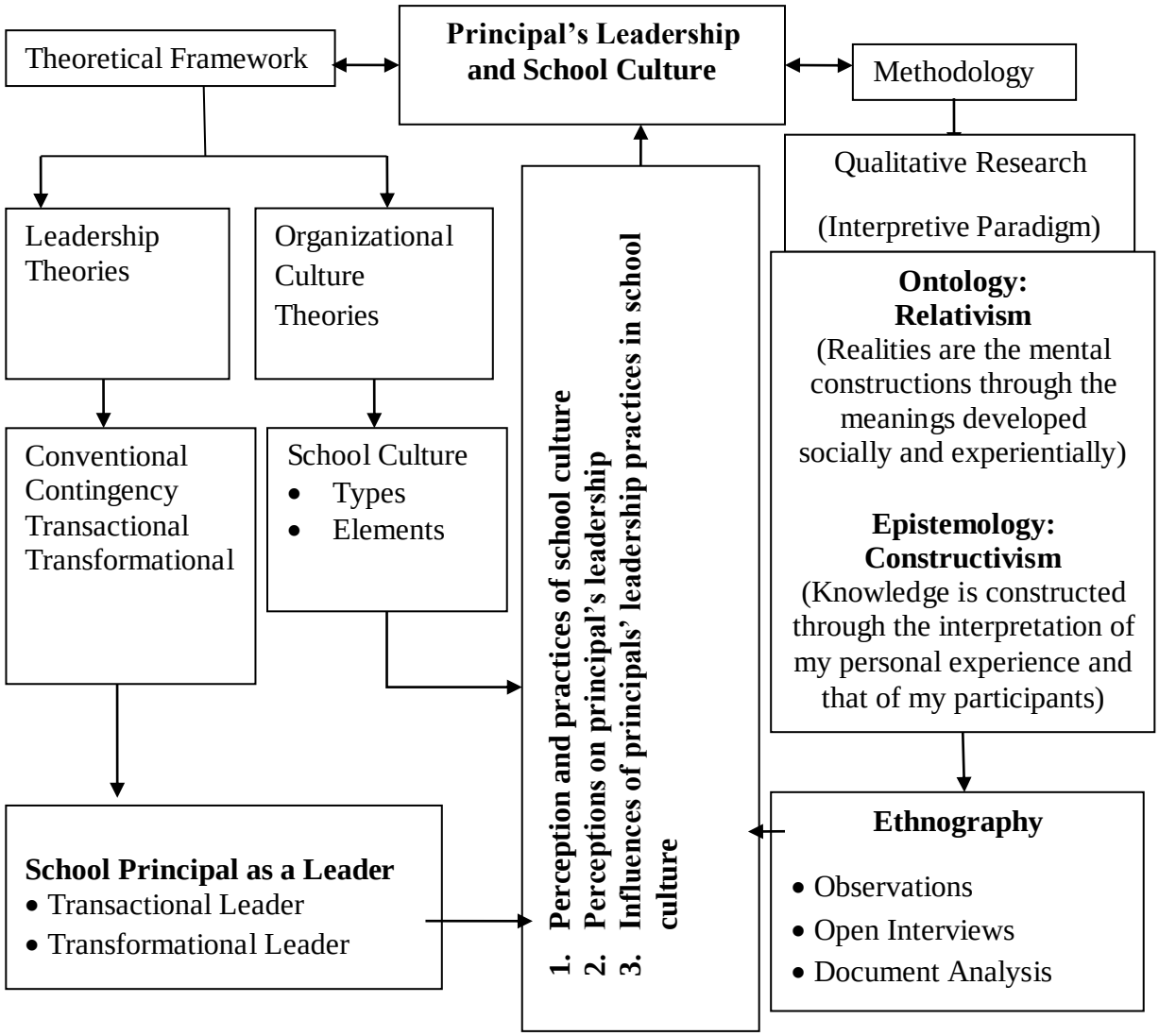
framework of this research on the basis of the knowledge I gained through the literature review on those key terms. The Principal plays the vital role in forming the distinctive culture in his/her school (Stolp, 1994). Members of the school interpret their experience, values, beliefs and assumptions in terms of the cultural elements of the school (Deal & Peterson, 1998), and they will be devoted to activities and behavior which are dependable with these values, beliefs and assumptions (Stewart, 2000).

The Principal's role in school culture is to act with care and concern for others, work to develop shared visions of what the school's cultural values should be, and work on team-building to achieve it (Stolp, 1994). School Principals, being the leaders, can influence and mold school culture in positive ways. Principals working with teachers, students and community members to create a commitment to common values and a bond between one another and the school can create successful school cultures (U.S. Department of Education, 1990). By virtue of position, preferences made by the Principal are likely to apply greater pressure on the culture than are those made by other members (Reitzug & Reeves, 1992).

My priori understanding in this research was that there are two major branches of theoretical aspects for this study. The first one deals with the leadership theories and the second deals with the organizational culture theories. Various leadership theories have been evolved at various stages in the history. But the notion of transactional and transformational leadership model developed by Burns in 1978 encapsulates all the previous theories with its new insights. Hence, I assumed Principal's transactional and transformational leadership has impact in the school culture which can be explained by looking at the perception and practices of school culture, perceptions on Principal's leadership and influence of Principal's leadership

practices in school culture. These are also explained by the second theoretical aspect of my study, the organizational culture of school. I supposed making a surgical analysis of these with the help of real field experience through qualitative ethnographic method would explain Principal's leadership role in forming school culture. This notion as my initial concept of the study is depicted in the figure below.

*Figure 2.3. My Conceptual Framework*




## Summary of the Chapter

Although, I was quite confused in the beginning about what to do and how to proceed in reviewing literature, I slowly made my way later. I went through various books, journals, previous researches, on-line articles, digital thesis etc in order to prepare this chapter. I started with defining the leadership as the ability to influence others by persuasion, example, and tapping inner moral values and as the art or process of

influencing people toward the achievement of group goals. After that I reviewed some well-known leadership styles and the leadership theories. I focused in transactional and transformational leadership theories as it covered all the traditional theories. Then I tried to make clear the concepts of "Principal" as the one who holds the top most position in a school. After that, I explored Principal as a leader of school, who plays vital role in the behavior and the performances of the rest of the school members.

In the next part of the chapter, I tried to explore what organizational culture and school culture are. I discussed about the various types and levels of organizational culture. After that I discussed about the elements and types of school culture. Then I highlighted the features of ideal school culture and Principal's position in school culture. I explored some previous researches done in this area before finally developing the initial conceptual framework for my research.

# CHAPTER III

# GETTING INTO THE RESEARCH

## Introducing the Chapter

In the previous chapter, I tried to explore the theoretical aspect of Principal's leadership and school culture. It gave me a strong base to further proceed my inquiry. In this chapter I, have tried to reveal my research approach, method, purposive sampling, research participants, data collection and the process of analyzing the data. In the beginning, I was quite bewildered regarding the contents and organization of this chapter. But reading some books on research and seeing the sights of some previous researches, slowly gave me some fresh ideas that suited to my study.

I have begun this chapter with the explanation of how I decided to choose qualitative research as my research approach. Secondly, I have further explained my understanding of this research style. Next, I have described the philosophical considerations of my inquiry in terms of relativism as my ontological and constructivism as my epistemological standpoints. After that I have explained ethnography as my research method in which I have introduced observation, open interviews and document analysis as the data collection methods in my inquiry. After that, I have outlined how I purposively chose three schools of different categories from three different districts of Nepal as the research sites for collecting the data. Then I have explained how I selected the research participants and after that I have outlined how I collected the data.

Next, I proceeded to explain how I made sense of the data. Then I described writing as a method of inquiry followed by the description about the crystallization and immersion process for the data interpretation. I have then talked about various quality standards that I considered in this inquiry to address the quality of this qualitative study. Then at the end I have addressed various ethical issues that I considered in this research.

## My Research Paradigm

I came to realize that my determination of the research aim, analysis goal, my specific research questions, appropriate mode of engagement all shape my worldview of the research, which is my research paradigm (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). My paradigm is a set of basic belief and worldview about the nature of truth and about my relationship to the truth (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). I chose qualitative research for my study. I have two major reasons to choose qualitative approach for this inquiry. At the outset, looking at my research questions, I found qualitative research to be the appropriate to answer them. According to Schein (1991), organizational culture is typically so taken for granted that most of the time organization members are not even conscious about them. It is not possible to express them in numerical value through surveys and structured interviews. Hence the study of the organizational culture requires the use of anthropological methods such as prolonged ethnographic observations and unstructured interviews. With this information, I could not trust upon the mere quantitative figures to explore the perceptions and practices of the teachers, students, Principals and impact of Principal's leadership role performance in forming the unique culture in schools. I understood due to the subjective nature of the term "school culture", it could not be calculated by numerical analysis. To really understand the culture, I should be able to understand the systemic patterns of the

school and the relationship between them, through qualitative inquiry (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

Secondly, during my M. Phil and PhD classes, I came to know about this style of research as an intensely personal process and crucial to every aspect of the qualitative way of looking at life (Ely, 1991). From McLeod (2001), I learnt that qualitative inquiry focuses in generating new insights into old problems and the lived experience of all those participating in the research. I realized that qualitative research is not just about testing a hypotheses or a theory rather it is more open-ended and exploratory where researcher can demonstrate his/her art. Qualitative research has the potential to be theoretically more rigorous than its numerical counterpart (Marvasti, 2004). In addition qualitative researcher is like a dancer or a choreographer in designing and in reporting the research project because dance and qualitative research, both are the arts of interpretation (Janesick, 1994). All these enduringly attracted me and resulted in the aspiration of being a qualitative research dancer.

Under the qualitative approach, I have used interpretive paradigm. In contrast to experimentalism, I have tried to open up the social world of the three studied schools in all their dynamic dimensions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). I have studied the lives in the schools that are loaded with multiple interpretations and grounded in cultural complexities.

## My Understanding of Qualitative Research

In simple language, I have understood qualitative research as the research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. Bryman (2008) has defined qualitative research as the way in which people being studied understand and interpret their social reality. Qualitative research

is said to be inductive as the theory is generated out of the research. The ontological position of qualitative research is relativism as it believes that the reality is the outcomes of the interactions between individuals. And the epistemological position of qualitative research is constructivism because it believes that understanding of social world can be obtained through exploring the interpretation of that world by its participants. Similarly, Ritche and Lewis (2003) have also commented about it as a naturalistic, interpretative approach concerned with understanding the meanings which people attached to phenomena like actions, decisions, beliefs, values etc. within their social worlds.

Going through Crabtree and Miller (1999), I understood that qualitative research explores the meanings, variations and continuous experiences of phenomena and tries to capture their holistic or interconnected nature. This research method searches truth from the natives in their habitat by looking and listening and by engaging. It further made me clear that in this method data is collected by observation and/or interview being engaged with the field in some active manner. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), qualitative research uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic. It focuses on context is emergent rather than tightly anticipated and is fundamentally interpretive. The qualitative researcher views social phenomena holistically. S/he systematically reflects on who s/he is in the inquiry. S/he is sensitive to his/her personal biography and how it shapes the study. S/he uses complex reasoning that is multifaceted and iterative (Joshi, 2008).

McLeod (2001) said that the data in qualitative research is analyzed through different organizing styles such as template, editing, immersion, crystallization to arrive at a meaningful knowledge. I came to know that in recent years, this style of research has become increasingly influential within social science, education, health

and other areas of human science. For the people wishing to undertake research into real-life topics and problems in these fields, qualitative inquiry offers a set of flexible and sensitive methods (Joshi, 2008). It helps in opening up the meanings of areas of social life that were previously not well understood. With this understanding about qualitative research, I was further assured that it is the appropriate research style for my study.

## My Research Design

Berg (2006) has defined "Research Design" as a careful planning of research in advance. I understood it as a framework of the procedures for research that covers the decisions regarding the philosophical assumptions, strategies of inquiry, specific methods of data collection, analysis etc (Creswell, 2009). My choice of research design reflects my decisions about the priority I give to various dimensions of the research process (Bryman, 2008). I have stated my unique research design for this study as below:

### My Philosophical Considerations

From Guba & Lincoln (1994), I understood that philosophy guides the research activities. My research philosophy is my fundamental beliefs about the world and about the nature of the inquiry that I have conducted. My philosophy resolves my perspectives and shapes my understandings of how school culture and Principal leadership are connected with each other in my researched world. The ontology and epistemology are the two branches of philosophy. Below, I have explained about my ontological and epistemological assumptions as follows.

### My Ontological Assumption

For me, "Ontology" is a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of existence or reality. It is concerned with beliefs about what there is to know about the world

(Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In my understanding, some of the key ontological issues in social research are: if social reality exists independently of human conceptions and interpretations; if there is a common, shared, social reality or just multiple context-specific realities; and if social behavior is governed by laws that can be seen as immutable or generalized (Bryman, 2008).

In simple language I understood that an ontological issue concerns with if the social and natural worlds exist in similar ways or if the social world is very different because it is open to subjective interpretation. Two opposite views have been noticed with the passage of time. Early researchers (positivist) believed that the social world was similar to the physical world and was governed by universal, fundamental laws. Whereas the contemporary qualitative researchers, as I learnt from Ritche and Lewis (2003), believe that the social world is regulated by normative expectations and shared understandings and hence the laws that govern it are not unchangeable.

From the above explanations I understood that there are two standpoints regarding the nature of existence or reality. According to Bryman (2008), the central point of orientation regarding ontological considerations is the question of whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors i.e. realist standpoint, or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from perceptions and actions of social actors i.e. relativist standpoint.

Given this, relativism is my ontological standpoint in this inquiry. I believe that there is no single reality rather multiple realities regarding the leadership of Principals and the culture of the schools and they are intangible mental constructions of my research participants rather than an object like thing (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). I believe that realities regarding school culture and leadership of Principal may change

according to context and situations of the schools, Principals, teachers and students. In my research I have assumed that multiple realities exist and that findings are subjective to my research participants and their situations rather than objective.

**My Epistemological Assumption**

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), "Epistemology" is concerned with ways of knowing and learning about the social world and focuses on the question: How can we know about reality and what is the basis of our knowledge. I found that there are two major thoughts in epistemology: positivism and constructivism (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

I came to know that positivists, also called naïve realist advocate that the social world is independent of and unaffected by the researcher. The reality is assumed to exist and driven by natural laws and mechanism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The positivists believe that facts and values are distinct, thus making it possible to conduct objective and value free inquiry. They believe that the researcher's detached observations are the final authority in theoretical disputes. According to positivism, the methods of the natural sciences like hypothesis testing, causal explanations and modeling are appropriate for the study of social phenomena because human behavior is governed by law-like regularities (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

I realized that constructivism has quite a different view. Constructivism stresses the importance of interpretation as well as observation in understanding the social world. I found it as an integral part of the qualitative research. Constructivism tries to explore the interrelatedness of different aspects of people's lives, which is a very important focus of qualitative research (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

My epistemological position in this research is constructivism. In my research I have assumed that knowledge is not received from a store but constructed with

interpretation of my personal experience and my interaction with my research participants about how they construct the meaning of their world (Schwandt, 1994). I have believed that through the interactive interview with the Principals, teachers and students and my observations of the day to day interactions between them have helped me to develop my knowledge about the culture of the schools and the leadership roles of the Principals. I have described more about this in my research method and data collection.

**My Case Schools and Participants**

I selected three schools of different category from Kaski, Lalitpur, and Kathmandu districts. A semi-government (trust-based) high school called Kaski School was selected from Kaski district. It was selected because it is considered to be one of the best schools in Nepal in terms of performance and culture. Since I was familiar with the Principal and some of the teachers, I thought I would get easy access for the research purpose and hence selected the school. Similarly, a government high school known as Lalitpur School was selected from Lalitpur district as referred by the officers in the District Education Office. The officers referred me the school as it was the best performing government school in the district. Then a private high school called Kathmandu School was selected from Kathmandu district. I selected the school because it was increasingly earning its reputation in the city for its child friendly approach. The Principal of the school was one of my previous colleagues in an educational project hence; it also made me easy to approach. In this way, I selected three schools of different categories for my study. Since this is a qualitative and ethnographic research, I gave emphasis in comprehensive and in-depth study of and limited to those three schools rather than in the number of sample schools (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

While choosing the participant teachers, I considered several things purposively. First, I looked for openness nature of the teachers during my rapport buildup. I knew that openness was required to get their emic perspective freely and openly. Next, I considered the teachers of various levels like primary, lower-secondary and secondary within the schools. I also considered the gender balance between the teachers. Regarding the students, I asked the teacher coordinators to refer the participants in my research considering the representation of various classes and gender balance. I went on interviewing the teachers and students until I felt that the data started repeating causing data saturation (Ely, 1991).

**Ethnography as My Research Method**

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) explain that ethnography is an attempt of a researcher to describe the culture or aspects of culture that a particular group of people share in common. The ethnographer shares the meanings the group members take for granted and then describes the new understandings for the readers or outsiders.

I also understood that ethnography as a research method has certain features. It emphasizes strongly on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena rather than testing hypotheses. It has a tendency to work basically with the unstructured data not coded during data collection. It investigates on small number of cases and it analyses data by interpreting the meanings and functions of human actions (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). It believes that reality is contextual and relational rather than fixed and position free (LeCompte & Preissle, 1994). I also learnt that the common methods used in ethnography are observation, interviewing and collection of artifacts and texts (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

For me, ethnography is a systematic study of a particular cultural group or phenomenon, through extensive fieldwork in the selected natural setting. This study

was conducted focusing on cultural interpretation where I as an ethnographer was the major data collection instrument (Riemer, 2009). This kind of study brings complex, personal, and thoughtful insights and meaning to the inner workings of social settings, like schools in my case.

In this research, I have used ethnography as my research method. Under ethnography, I have used ethnographic case study method. An ethnographic case study of a school is an in-depth study of a particular school with the aim of producing a nuanced description of the pervading cultural setting (Butvilas & Zygmantas, 2011). I spent two months in each of the three schools observing the natural settings and events of the schools, interviewing the Principals, teachers and students and reading the artifacts and texts available to me. I visited Kaski School during the months of July and August, 2011. Similarly, during November and December I visited Lalitpur School and Kathmandu School was visited in the months of January and February 2012. I used all the three common data collection approaches of ethnography; observation, interviewing and document analysis. I have talked more about these three ethnographic data collection approaches and how I made use of them in my research in the upcoming section below.

**My Way of Collecting the Data**

Here in this section, I have explained about the three ethnographic approaches of data collection namely, participant observation, in-depth unstructured interview and document analysis. I have also elucidated how I utilized each of them in collecting qualitative data for my research.

**Observation**

In simple words, I understood observation as a research approach in which I as a researcher spend prolonged periods of time in the subject's natural environment,

unobtrusively collecting data observe that of which I am also an integral part (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

My role in this inquiry was as the privileged observer. All the three Principals were familiar to me in a way or other before I went to their schools for the research. This made my access easy to the participants. With the help of the Principals, I first built rapport with the teachers. Joining at their gossips, having tea together or joining at their sun sitting were the ways I used to establish close relations. This made be easier to get access to observe their classroom teaching and observing other various situations.

During the school hours, I collected the data through observations, interviews, photographs, short video clips and recorded them in the field diary, digital audio recorder and digital camera. I attended various events and programs of the schools like assemblies, cultural programs, football tournaments, parents-teachers meetings, students' meetings with the teachers etc. with an intention of intensive observation. I also observed the hostels during the weekends. I observed four classes in each of the schools while the teachers were teaching in the class. I also observed the Principals moving around the school, students playing, and informal communication of the Principals, teachers and students in the schools, over a period of two months in each of the schools. All my prolonged observations in the schools helped me to immerse in their context and even notice the difference between real and verbal behavior of the Principals, teachers and students.

At the end of every day I wrote my daily log book with the help of the field diary, audio record and photographs. I always wrote the daily log book the same day of the observation so that the memory of the school activities of the day remained afresh.

**Open Interview**

An open interview is an open-ended, discovery-oriented method that is well suited for describing the situation, program processes and outcomes from the perspective of the participants. Open interviews are excellent tools in ethnography (Willis, 2004). Getting into something in-depth is to get a more detailed knowledge about it (Wengraf, 2001). The goal of the interview is to deeply explore the respondent's point of view, feelings and perspectives. Unstructured interviews build upon one interview question and are aimed at unearthing the participant's thoughts, feelings and views of the phenomenon under study. The interest of the researcher is focused upon the person as a whole and, through unstructured conversation; both the participant and interviewer contribute to the final result.

According to Boyce and Neale (2006), open interviews are useful when we want detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviors or want to explore new issues in depth. The strength of qualitative interviews in research is the possibility of expanding the depth of information being gathered (Kvale, 1996). In line with this, the ideal of the qualitative interview is to hunt for the deep, rich and contextual stories. Interview is based on the basic assumption that the life we live influences who we are and how we interpret events in life and we want access to the respondents' inner and uncensored thoughts and reflections in order to understand the reality.

In my research, I made use of open ended interviews to obtain the perception of Principals, teachers and students about leadership styles and to assemble information about the various aspects of prevailing school culture. In each of the three schools, I conducted unstructured interviews twice with each Principal, three teachers and four students during my two months visits in each school. The first

interview with the Principals and the teachers lasted for about two hours but with the students they lasted for about an hour. The second one to check their consistency lasted for around fifteen minutes. I tried to make the interviews as informal talks so that they could talk openly without being too conscious that they were interviewed. I also assured that their names and the identity of the school would not me mentioned anywhere for the ethical considerations in order to encourage them for free expression. In order not to disturb the teachers and students with their academic activities, I conducted the interviews during the leisure periods, before or after school hours. For the Principals, I conducted their interview as per their convenient time.

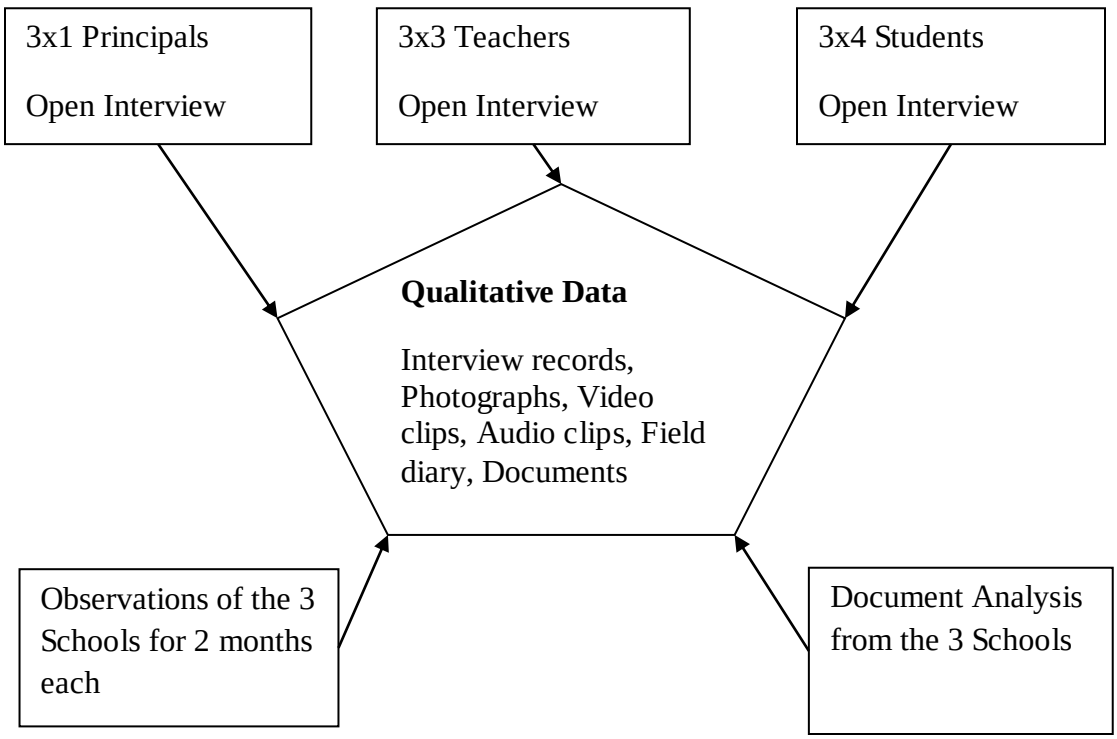
**Document Analysis**

Document analysis can be a separate method in research but in this research I have used it just as an additional method (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). I scrutinized the school brochures, school magazines, school newsletters, notice boards and wall papers in addition to other methods like observation and interview to haul out some ideas about the school culture and the types of leadership practiced over. Basically I got the information about the schools' espoused values, rules, policies, events, communication process, expectations from teachers and students etc from document analysis.

I have also dissected over the documents like school brochure, school magazines and school newsletters as far as they were available. I have intensively read through the rules and regulations, disciplinary policies for the teachers and students of each school. Documents were sufficiently available in the Kaski School and Kathmandu School but I must confess that I could not get enough written rules, regulation and policies in the Lalitpur School. they simply said that as it is a government school, the rules and regulations are as per the government's provision.

I have presented the diagrammatic presentation of my data collection approaches in the figure below. The figure explains about the sources, approaches of generation and forms of my qualitative data for the study.

*Figure: 3.2. Diagrammatic Presentation of My Data Collection Approaches*




**My Way of Data Analysis and Interpretation**

I strongly agree with Lacey and Luff (2007) for saying that there are probably as many different ways of analyzing qualitative data as there are qualitative researchers doing it. My research being a qualitative research, it was an interpretive and subjective exercise where I have been intimately involved in all the processes rigorously, developing my own personal ways of presenting, analyzing and interpreting the data. So in my research, I don't believe so much in "this is way it should be done".

After I collected the data, I started making sense of it through a number of activities. I entered the information into my daily log book and maintained the transcriptions of the interviews (Ely, 1991). I know doing everything by me would take much time and was going to be tedious, but I have chosen to do so to be more familiar with the data in the course. In doing so, I believe that I also would get the opportunity to start analyzing the data simultaneously (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). I did the typing and transcribing as soon as possible after the observation and the interviews so that I would not forget anything significant. By doing all the activities like observing, recording, transcribing, writing, typing and analyzing solely by myself I tried to be a qualitative researcher as a *bricoleur* rather than simply a researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

I have used "Writing as a Method of Inquiry" to not only to explain the data but also to think and analyze the data. I have also used qualitative software for "Data Coding" in my own personal way. After coding the data initially through the software I used "Thematic Analysis" for getting the detailed and intimate knowledge that would be nearer to the research questions. And I have used Crystallization and Immersion for Data Interpretation. Let me explain them all one by one.

**Writing As a Method of Inquiry**

As a qualitative researcher, I considered writing as an ongoing process and part of my research. Writing is in fact regarded as performativity through which qualitative researchers can unfold multiple truths from the data (Richardson & Adams, 2005) in Denzin and Lincoln (2005). For me, writing is not only regarded as explaining and describing the data but also as a tool to uncover and generate data. There was no demarcation of when to write and when not to write; rather preference was given to writing as an embedded task of my research.

For me as a qualitative researcher, "telling" through writing is as much as about "discovering" (Ricci, 2003). However, my discovery might be limited to only as far as I could interpret my experience and the experiences of my research participants. I believe readers too; can only discover my experience insofar as they can interpret through their own experiences.

Richardson sees writing as being a way of finding out about yourself and the world – "a method of inquiry" (Richardson, 2001). She describes it as being both a method of data collection and a method of data analysis. She uses writing as a method of data analysis by using writing to think. A great part of that inquiry is accomplished in the writing because, for her**,** writing is thinking, writing is analysis, and writing is indeed a tangled method of discovery (Richardson & Adams, 2005).

During my data collection, at the end of day, I wrote the daily log book from the field diary, photo graphs, video clips, interview record and document analysis. While entering my data of the day into the journal, I also practiced writing as a method of inquiry. In my field diary, I just recorded anything that I observed, heard or felt useful at in the school, without my personal judgment or analysis. While writing the daily log book (journal), I started pouring my analysis. In this way for me, writing the journal became a method of exploring and analyzing the data. I did rigorous writing the same day of data collection when details were fresh in my mind. Writing was not a new research tool for me, but a method of inquiry (Richardson & Adams, 2005). I believe writing as a method of inquiry is better suited to research, such as mine which helped my analysis to be more open to possibilities by allowing writing to be useful as both data and analysis.

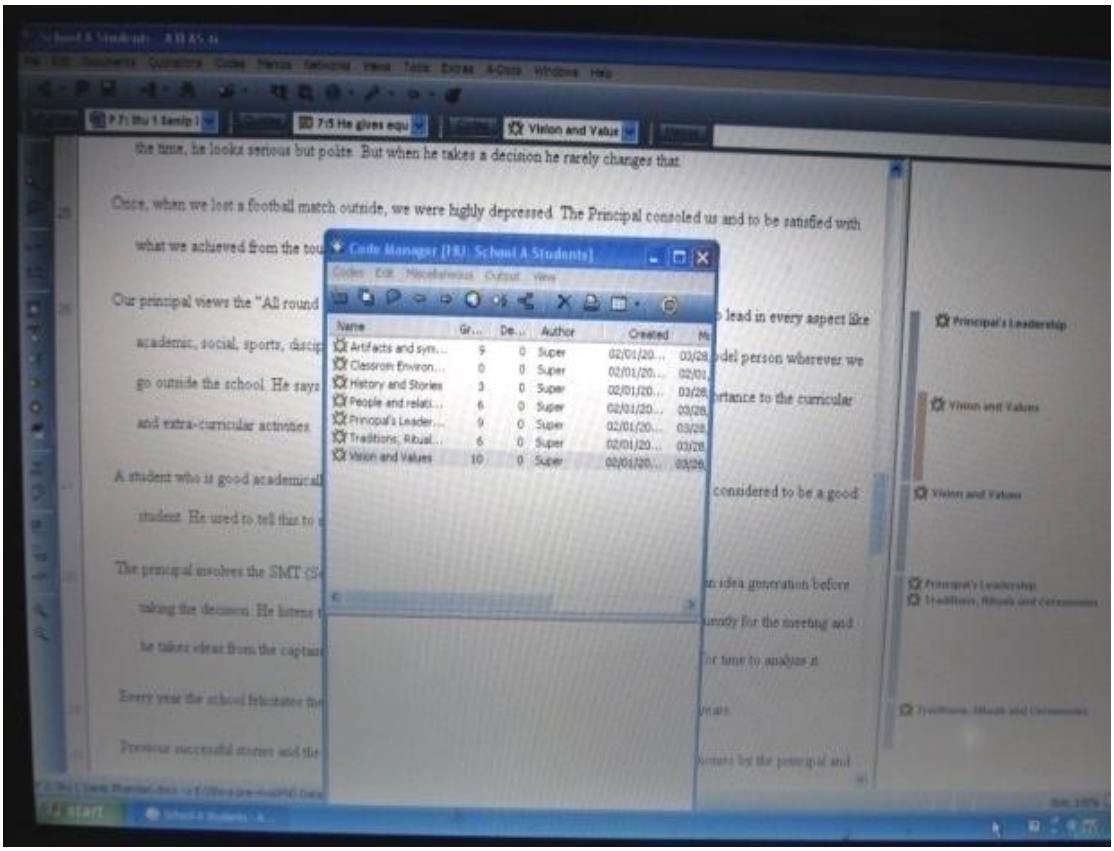
**Qualitative Software for Data Coding**

After I finished collecting the data from the three schools, there were piles of field journals, interview transcripts, photographs, video clips, documents and records of the schools. I found myself like swimming in the middle of the sea, not knowing which direction to swim to catch the seashore. I realized, the qualitative data is so bulky and there is no clear cut formula and tools to tame it as in the case of quantitative analysis.

So I decided to use computer software to tame my massive data. I searched for "qualitative data analysis software" in the internet. The Google gave me several options like NVIVO, MAXQDA and ATLAS TI (6.2). The first two provided the trial version software which could be used for large research projects but could be operated for 30 days only. I chose ATLAS TI (6.2), because it provided an option of trial version for unlimited time, with limited features, but enough for academic research like mine. Then I downloaded the software in my laptop, printed the manual that came along with the software and tried to explore the software.

After studying for nearly a week, I realized that there was no enough time and no person who could guide me to use all the features like memoing, linking with the photos and videos, linking with the geo-sites etc of the software in my research work. But what I learnt was "Data Coding", the most important feature provided by the software for qualitative researchers could be of real help for me. My fellow PhD researchers had shared that they engaged huge amount of time just for data coding which they did manually. Hence, I decided to go on with the software, thinking that it would save my time and would be a new achievement in my context. The picture below reveals how I used the software to code and categorize my data.

*Data coding in ATLAS TI (6.2)*




I used the code names, which I developed from my literature review. The software helped me to categorize the whole ocean of the data into categories like Artifacts, Vision, History, Traditions, Relationship and the Principal's leadership. After I tamed the bulky data into manageable categories in comparatively very less time, it made me easier for further manual thematic analysis and interpretation of the data.

**Developing Themes**

After developing categories through coding process using ATLAS.TI (6.2) software, I started to identify small number of themes or emergent concepts by re-coding the coded data manually (Creswell, 2009). For this I read and re-read the coded data again and again to get the detailed and intimate knowledge (Ely, 1991). Then I developed sub-categories within each category in order to develop themes nearer to

the research questions. I also selected the verbatim narratives of the participants to link the data to the categories and the sub-categories. Then finally I re-arranged the data and narratives as per the research questions in different chapters.

**Crystallization and Immersion for Data Interpretation**

A crystal has many surfaces, each surface totally different from one another. But as a whole a crystal looks completely different from each surface. In the research process, the term Crystallization entails the meaning of multiplicity as a crystal has multiple angles through which the researcher can get the crux of knowledge s/he claims to know. According to Crabtree and Miller (1999), crystallization consists of cycles whereby the analyst immerses him/her into and experiences the text, emerging after concerned reflection with perceptive crystallizations, until reportable interpretations are reached.

The interpretation of qualitative data often revolves around triangulation but crystallization is probably better (Meij, 2007). Crystallization is the idea that observing or investigating various facets of an object of study can often best characterize the phenomenon under study. The combination of facets and ways of observing yields a multiple-shaded picture.

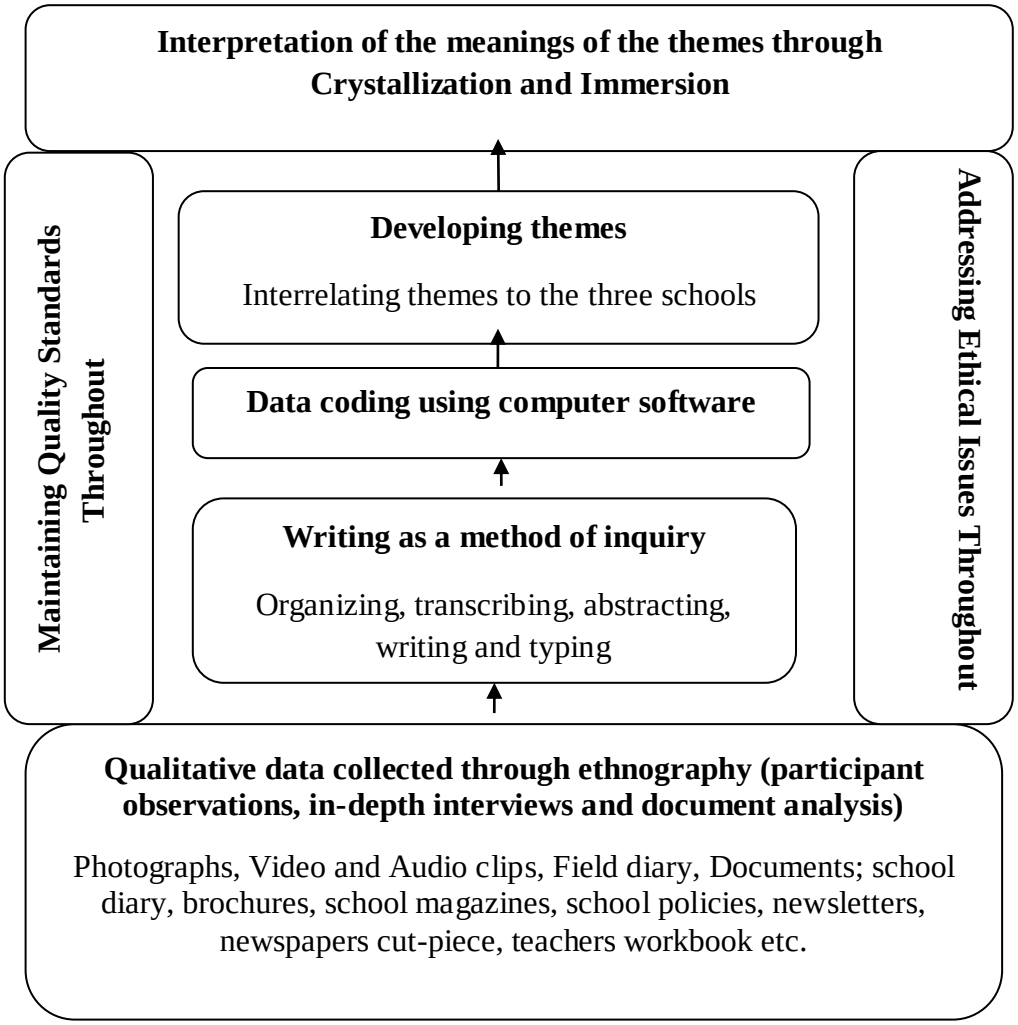
First, I immersed myself in the data collection and analysis procedure. I used photographs, document analysis, observations, short video clips and in-depth interviews to acquire the cultural elements and the leadership perceptions and

practices in each school. I also extracted the Principals', teachers' and students' perceptions and understandings through their emic perspectives. Then I put side by side with the knowledge obtained from the literature study. It provided me the opportunity to make interpretive and descriptive analyses of the symbolic and contextual meanings of the routine practices of everyday life in the school I researched (Katz, 2001 ). Then I drew my interpretation.

Each piece of data I collected was a surface of crystal. I viewed it from multiple angles giving opportunity to the readers to do the same. The data when crystallized gives the completely different meaning. I collected the surfaces through numerous observations, interviews and document analysis with various natures of participants like Principals, teachers, and students of the three different schools which finally formed a crystal. This crystal can reflect the light differently to different people depending upon the angle it is seen from.

I have presented the diagrammatic representation of my data analysis and interpretation procedure in the figure below.

*Figure 3.3. Diagrammatical Representations of Data Analysis and Interpretation*




**Quality Criteria**

According to Bryman (2008), the quality of the qualitative research cannot be judged with the same criteria as that of quantitative research. The quality criteria for qualitative research are trustworthiness, and authenticity. To address these, I used prolonged engagement, multiple perspectives, member checking, thick descriptions and participants' vignettes to maintain the quality of my study. I have described each of them bellow.

In each of the three schools, I spent around two months for prolonged engagement making persistent observation from the three schools using various methods like observation, interview, and document analysis until I felt that the information so obtained has saturated and started repeating. I observed the schools at various situations and parts like general assemblies, class assembly in one of the schools, classrooms while the teachers teaching, classrooms without teachers and students, school libraries, backyard, toilets, hostel, cafeteria, Principal's office, teachers' room, students at play, teachers while informally communicating, teachers at the meeting, Parents' day, PTA meeting, Teachers-students meeting for educational tour, students organizing football tournament etc.

I have used a blend of several tools like observation, open interview, and document analysis to see from various angles. Similarly, I collected data from various sources like Principals, teachers, students, documents etc. I interviewed the students and teachers from various levels balancing the gender as far as possible. I believe that these multiple layering of understanding and interpretation enriched my research process (Alvermann, Brien, & Dillon, 1996).

After transcribing all the interviews, I went back to all the three schools for member checking. I handed over the interview transcripts to each interviewee and had informal interview once again to check whether they are consistent with their first interview. I allowed them at least one hour to read their transcripts and check that if they have any disagreement with my understanding in the interview. I even gave them option to keep the photocopy of their interview transcripts. Then I asked them to sign the transcript if they agree with the interview transcript. I also provided them my email address and requested them to write if they have any disagreement,

suggestions and feedback. These all made me assume that I correctly represented their feelings.

In qualitative research, potential for transferability is enhanced by thick description (Ely, 1999). For this, I have provided a thick description of my researched schools, their cultural elements, day to day activities, events, classroom activities etc. But I strongly suggest that the responsibility is on the reader and future researchers to evaluate its applicability in their settings. For example, my inquiry can be useful in studying the impact of Principal's leadership role performance in the culture of other schools or in researching other aspects of the school culture, leadership role, Principals etc. in other school settings. My conceptual framework can be used for the future research in school culture. But the findings of the future researchers can be different than that of mine. I would like to invite for the future researchers who are interested in school culture and Principal leadership area for these purposes.

To make the qualitative research dependable, the researcher should keep all phases of the research process, fieldwork notes, interview transcripts, in a safe and accessible manner (Seale, 1999). To examine the adequacy, they could be examined through the procedure called "auditing". I noted my observations in the field book every day as and when I observed anything significant in the schools. I also captured the various moments of the school activities and school environment through my camera. Similarly I recorded all the interviews and classroom teaching in my digital audio recorder. Later, I transcribed the interviews listenting to the digital audio records. My field book diaries, various photographs, audio records, interview transcribes are all safe with me digitally and manually.

Complete detachment of values is not possible in qualitative research as the researcher's personal values cannot be totally detached from my research (Seale, 1999). I have brought the emic perspectives of my participants of how they see their reality. I have also used participants' vignettes in my theses to bring the originality of the participants' understanding of their world.

**Ethical Issues in My Research**

From Bogdan and Biklen (2007), I knew that ethics mean lifelong obligations to the people who have touched the researcher's life in the course of conducting the research. I also felt certain obligations towards my research participants and the schools where I conducted the research. They are as mentioned below.

**Informed Consent**

I knew that all researchers are responsible for ensuring that participants are well informed about the purpose of the research they are being asked to participate in and feel free to make an independent decision without fear of negative consequences (Fritz, 2008). Hence, I took the permission through written application to the Principals of the schools to observe the school premises, classes, interview students, teachers, and administrators for the sake of research. After getting the acceptance, I shared my idea with the participant students, teachers and administrators individually. After getting their consent only, I started their individual interview and class observations.

**Freedom to withdraw**

I also mentioned in the application to the Principal and orally to every participant that anybody may withdraw from the agreement whenever they feel that they have been hampered due to the research and no more like to be involved in the research process.

**Confidentiality and Anonymity**

For the sake of confidentiality, I used pseudonyms to represent all the participants of my research. The names of the schools were also kept confidential to fulfill the ethical requirement. Hence I have used the pseudonyms for the three schools. The features and the photographs of the school were used to reveal the exact situations rather than to identify the schools and participants.

**Avoid Disturbance**

During the observations I regarded myself as the researcher and did not disturb the seen as far as possible. For the period of the observations, I never spoke and gave comment to anything as it would mean my judgment and disturbance to the participants. I just sat and observed quietly like a fly on the wall (Ely, 1991). I never remarked negatively about the school environment.

## Summary of the Chapter

I began this chapter with the introduction of my research approach and my understanding of qualitative research. I mentioned that in simple language, I have understood qualitative research as the research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. Secondly, I have explained why I chose qualitative analysis explaining why I thought this research style to be appropriate for my research. In the third section, I have described the philosophical consideration of my inquiry. I explained how ontology and epistemology, the two branches of philosophy guided my research activities. I explained that relativism was my ontological standpoint in this inquiry and my epistemological position in this research was constructivism.

In the fourth section I introduced Ethnography as my research method and observation, in-depth interviews and document analysis as my data collection

methods. Then, I explained about my purposive sampling method to choose the schools for data collection in the fifth part of this chapter. After that, in the sixth part, I explained about my research site and the methods of collecting the data. Next, I proceeded to explain how I made selection of the research participants. After that I mentioned about my way of collecting the data. I described about my way of data analysis and interpretation. For this I mentioned how I used writing as a method of inquiry, qualitative software for data coding, thematic analysis followed by the crystallization and immersion for data interpretation. Then, I talked about quality standards I followed in this inquiry to ensure the quality of this qualitative research. At last, before summarizing the chapter, I talked about the ethical issues.

# CHAPTER IV

# PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF PREVAILING SCHOOL CULTURE: THREE CASES

## Introducing the Chapter

My first research question was how the teachers and the students perceive and practice their prevailing school culture? In this chapter, I have tried to explore and reveal the perceptions of teachers and students and practices of the three schools under my study on the basis of my participant observations, in-depth interviews and the document analysis. I have portrayed the cases of the three schools of my study with the pseudonyms of Kaski School, Lalitpur School and Kathmandu School. I have described the true features of the schools; best tried to bring the 'emic' perspective of the participants through vignettes of their direct quotation and some photographs which I captured during my observations with an aim to reveal the exact situations rather than to help the readers identify the schools. In fact the photographs have been used as a part of data. I must also confess that this chapter is quite bulky; I have no options but to give justice to the ethnographic case studies of three schools.

## Case 1: Kaski School

The Kaski School, established in 1966 is situated on the outskirts of Pokhara sub-metropolis city, on the laps of towering crystal clear Annapurna range. It lies merely 5 Km north of the heart of the city spreading widely on 13.5 hectare (270 Ropanies) of land. It is linked with the main city by a fine, tarred motor road with a regular

public bus and taxi services. The school also provides its own transportation services to the day students and the teachers with its three school buses.

The school is a non-profit institution owned by Nepal Government (Ministry of Education) but runs under the Public Educational Trust and has to generate the operating cost from its own resources. The main resources are the tuition fees from the fee paying students and the international donations. There are 1072 students studying out of which 32 percentages are girls and 20 percent of the total students, especially the students from remote villages receive full scholarship including the hostel facilities. The records reveal that the school was able to produce excellent results both in SLC and 10+2 board exams. For the last ten years school has secured 100% result with most of the students in the Distinction in both the SLC and 10+2 exams. The school has won Regional educational shield for 16 times and National educational shield for one time.

**Introducing the Students and Their Perceptions**

My first participant student in Kaski School, was Samip Bhandari, a boy from Chitwan (around 120 KM away from the school) studying Cambridge A-Level. He studied here from Class 4. He understands the mission of this school is to give world class education to the poor people of the villages through scholarship schemes. "Knowledge, Character and Service" is the school motto. He thinks all the three things are required to be successful in the life. As Sailes (2008) said such personal understanding is influenced by the school culture. The boy said,

*The school is recognized all over the country, I get good response from my relatives from Chitwan, when I tell them that I study in this school.*

He thinks the school serves for the poor but talented students with the international level of education for free. He further said that this school provides all-

round education, it not only focuses on curriculum but also ECAs like sports, speech, music, plays etc. The unique feature of this school for him is that various programs are organized by the students independently like football tournament, hostel programs etc. He perceives that the school has student friendly environment and polite and friendly teachers. So he seems to be fully satisfied and proud to be a part of the school revealing his high spirit, a part of positive school culture (Wagner, 2005). The boy further expressed his positive perception by saying,

*I have never experienced un-polite and angry teachers in this school. Other staff like gate keepers and canteen staff are also very polite. They give priority to the students' problem first whenever we ask for help. Students are not scared with the Principal and the teachers unnecessarily.*

According to him, during the teaching in the classrooms, all the students are equally focused by the teachers. The classes are not silent; the class goes interactive with the teacher and the students. According to Gruenert (2008), such culture determines that students' improvement is possible in the class. The boy further added,

*We have fun fair, science exhibition and parents' day every year. Besides that we have hostels program from each hostel in a month, throughout the year.*

According to him, students are satisfied with the education and the facilities provided by the school. According to Jerald (2006), such environment where students are dignified, happy and satisfied indicates positive school culture. The boy also said that he thinks the school will be improved technically in the future and may grow to University in the future.

Another participant was Rabi B.K., a class 8 boy from Gorkha (around 100 KM away) and studied in Kaski School from class 4 in full scholarship. He likes the

school building as it represents the Nepali culture and likes the natural environment of the school very much.

He added,

*General cleanliness of the hostel periphery, dormitory, toilets is maintained by the students. But four days a week, major cleaning is done by the clerks. Students have routines for cleaning so that we learn the social behaviors.*

*(Students in cleaning duty)*

*(Senior football ground)*

Ubben & Hughes (1992) also say proper traditions established in the school help positively to the students learning. The boy perceives that curriculum and ECA are equally focused in the school. Every Friday they have at least one competition organized. They are also sent outside to participate in various competitions. Cultural programs are also organized frequently in the school. Every month there is at least one cultural program. Field trips with in the city and around are frequently organized as per the need. Long educational tours are organized once in every two years to each class. That is why he enjoys in the school very much. He also adds,

*If we do not understand any things in the class, we can go to the teacher's room or their quarters and ask with them. All the teachers stay inside the school so we get extra care. This is the part I like most about this school.*

According to him, teachers are friendly with the students. When they meet students in the play ground they talk with the students in a friendly manner. Such positive characteristics are associated with strong positive culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995). The boy also said that he also likes the traditions of the school. New teachers and students are introduced and welcomed in the morning assembly. Farewell program is organized to the outgoing teachers and students. Ex-students are introduced in the assemblies whenever they visit to school. He added that students organize the tournament for Basketball, Cricket, Football, and Badminton every year. Debate, quiz, poem, essay writing competitions are also organized frequently. He thinks this is the unique feature of this school.

*(Boys organizing inter-class football tournament) (Musical performance in assembly)*

Sarita K.C. from class 11 was my 3rd participant student in Kaski School. She is from a semi-rural area in Kaski district and studied here from class 4. Before that she studied in a private school near her home. She likes this school as there is no system of physical punishment in the school. Students are suspended or expelled in severe case but before that plenty of counseling is done. This is the humanistic approach for positive student behavior (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). She perceives,

*The school motto means first we should organize knowledge, and then we have to build good character. Then we must use our knowledge and character to serve others.*

She likes certain rituals of the school. Old teachers are felicitated when they complete 20 years in the school. Previous successful stories of the school are shared by the teachers in the class and sometimes the Principal recalls in the assemblies to motivate students. She said, the first day of the new academic session is marked differently. New students are welcomed in the assembly and the Principal gives speech to encourage the students to study well in the new class. As per her understanding, teachers do not like dead silent classes. They encourage students to make class interactive. Students also ask questions when they are not clear. She further added,

*The teacher student relation is very friendly. We don't have to hesitate in front of the teachers. In class also we don't hesitate to ask questions. When the teachers and students meet each other, the interaction is friendly. We wish them and smile. They also ask about our how about and about our studies.*

She said that she is satisfied with the facilities like, school & hostel building, classrooms, TV, games, labs etc. Sometimes students complain about food but normally students are satisfied. She thinks the speed of the internet is quite slow and that has to be made faster.

A class 9 girl, Uma Baral from Pokhara is my 4$^{th}$ participant student in Kaski School. Before she joined this school as a fee paying student in class 4, she used to study in Saint Marry's School, Pokhara. As per her understanding, the motto of the school "knowledge, character and service" means that knowledgeable person without good character and motive of service is like an animal and feels that all three are required in human life. She likes the architecture of this school as it is unique and different than that of other schools.

As per her, small disciplinary cases are handled by the class teachers and supervisors and only major cases are handled by the Principal. But nobody gets physical punishments here. She added,

*Teachers share previous successful stories in the class and in assemblies. They also give the good examples of ex-students. Nepali teacher is my ideal person. He shows personal care to every student and his every class is very inspiring.*

All students are equally focused in the class. Weak students are given remedial classes. The classes are interactive rather than one-way teaching from the teacher. Punctuality is maintained by everybody including the teachers. By telling this she is talking about the prevailing school culture (Picucci et al, 2002). She added,

*The fun fair, cultural program, science exhibition, various tournaments organized by the students etc are the unique programs of this school which is not seen in other schools. Students' representatives are included in taking decisions by the Principal and teachers.*

Students are generally satisfied by the facilities. Sometimes some students talk about their dissatisfaction about the facilities but they do not give suggestions through the suggestion box. They say that nobody will look the suggestion box. Sometimes when things are lost from the class she wished they had locker system in the class. Here, I felt some weaker and toxic part of the school culture (Goodwin, 2008).

**Introducing the Teachers and Their Perceptions**

My first teacher participant in Kaski School was Mr. Raju B.K., who has been teaching Social Studies for 16 years. Like the students, he also feels that the historical and unique architecture of the school reveals our Nepali culture. He perceives that

one of the attractive features of this school is its natural environment which is very difficult to find in any other school.

According to him, School motto is explained time to time by the Principal in the speech and by the subject teachers in the classrooms. I thought this is how culture is shared and learned by a group of people and the content of the culture varies with the context (Birukou et al, 2009). The teacher added,

*I think the norms and values of this school are different from that of other well performing private schools of Nepal. We don't focus the toppers and board results only. We equally focus for all the students' learning rather than preparing the students for examinations only. In additional to the government curriculum, we have some more supplementary courses in the subjects like in English, Social studies and Mathematics.*

He said, departmental meeting of each subject is conducted once a week. Sharing is done there; teachers can easily keep their ideas in such meeting.

*I accept that we don't have the culture of sharing and collaboration among the teachers. Some time we share in the departmental meetings only. There is no system of peer teaching learning. As an HOD if I enter any class, they take me as an inspector.*

He thinks that there lacks special program to remember and recount the historical moments. Sometimes examples are given in the Principal's speech and senior teachers share informally with the new teachers.

*There is no direct discrimination among the teachers and students and the basis of class and caste. But sometimes I feel some teachers show a kind of awkwardness because I am a dalit (so called untouchable).*

He looks dissatisfied with certain things in the school. He said that there is no punishment system but he feels the importance of punishment to keep the students in discipline. In his school days he used to be in strict discipline so he also expects same in his students. Student guidance and counseling service is lacking here. There is no system of rewarding effective teachers by the school. This revealed the weaker part of their culture (Picucci et al, 2002).

Deepak Gurung my second teacher participant in the school has been teaching English here for 8 years. He thinks this school was established by the missionary objective to give the educational opportunities to the poor villagers of the region to get national and international level education for free. He thinks the school has fulfilled the objective. He says this school is developing continuously in terms of infrastructure and programs. He said,

*The government enforces their curriculum which is not good for such school. Freedom has to be given to develop our own curriculum so that we can stop the students going to Darjeeling, New Delhi and South Indian for school education. There are many private schools which can ensure 1st division and distinction to the students in the board examination. We don't focus in rote learning and get distinction in the exam. We emphasize to develop students with free mind, confidence and wide vision. This is our culture.*

I found the teacher at this point values learning and to enhance curriculum and instruction, and focuses on students, revealing a part of positive school culture (Lambert, 1998). He said that he still feels awkward to speak in the mass. He thinks this is because of his school education where he was not allowed to speak in front of teachers and had to stay in a strict discipline. But when he sees the self-initiating

nature of the students here, he gets amazed. He perceives that the school culture has given that ability to the students.

He does not like having to stay 24 hours in the school as he can't even go to attend masters' class in Morning College. He perceives this stops the academic development of the teachers. He said,

*May be the school administration thinks if a teachers gets over qualified s/he leaves the school for better opportunity. That is a narrow mind. This system was developed by the foreigner Principals who worked here in the past and it still prevails.*

He said that his classes are generally noisy because his method of teaching is interactive and participatory. He does not believe that the students are the empty vessels. He added that as a subject teacher he is fully independent in the teaching methodology. He also revealed some weaker parts of the school culture as he said,

*We don't get any detail orientation in the beginning of the session. A simple meeting is conducted to give the new routines. I don't think the 'Teacher Guideline' is implemented fully. There lacks the orientation and supervision.*

Sarita Gurung, a lady who has been working in the school for 22 years was my 3rd participant teacher. She says that she has worked here for prestige as the school has a good reputation in the region. But she thinks now because of the weak leadership the school is going down, the impact of which will be seen in the future. She expressed her dissatisfaction this way,

*I may not sound good but I have to say that the Nepali Principals, after the school was left by the mission, failed as the successful leaders. Few even set bad examples by influencing the SMC to change policy for their personal benefit. They*

*failed ethically as a leader and could not do well for the school too. Now I feel that we are not yet ready to take the Principal from within the school.*

I found her strong belief that Nepali Principals cannot work as effectively as the foreign Principals. She looked dissatisfied with the meetings too as she said that in the meetings teachers can only share the problems but cannot get the opportunity to generate the ideas through brainstorming and provide suggestions. She does not like programs being simply thrown from up those clashes with teachers' timing. She said that she doesn't hesitate to speak the truth but other teachers feel fear to say "No" to the Principal even if they feel that it is wrong. To me, this indicates some part of toxic culture (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

She remembers that she enjoyed working in this school during the time of foreign Principals because they used to be fair in their action. She said,

*I used to be motivated to conduct activities voluntarily. For examples, at that time, I ran girls football club. I was not a football player myself but I couched the girls' football team. We took two teams to the inter-school competitions. And those two teams reached the final and played with each other. This proves that even if the teacher does not know himself or herself but if s/he is motivated s/he can do a lot.*

She perceives that now teachers are not giving such extra time to the students because they are not satisfied even though they cannot show their dissatisfaction. She feels the spirit of teamwork has been going down. I found the teacher Sarita to be very much dissatisfied to the present school administration and the Principal.

**Elements of Culture in Kaski School**

In this section, I have presented the practices of the cultural elements of the school under five different headings as mentioned by Deal and Peterson (1998). They are

architectures and artifacts, history and stories, rituals and ceremonies, people and relationship and vision and values.

***Architectures, Artifacts and Symbols***

I remembered Fey & Denison (2000) saying that culture is also revealed in visible structures and day to day practices of the organization. I noticed in the Kaski School that visible artifacts, the first level of the organizational culture could be observed in daily features of school life such as activities, rituals, ceremonies, jargons, language, clothing, manner of address, written values, office layouts and so on ( University of Toronto, 2009).

I noticed that on the way to the reception from the gate there is a clean and green garden giving a pleasing welcoming environment to the visitors. The awards received by the school are nicely displayed outside the reception (front office) in a safely protected shutter. The shutter is opened during the school days so that the visitors automatically have view on it. Photos of the Founder Principal, national board topper student, teachers and staff serving the school for more than 20 years are nicely exhibited at the hallways. SLC board results are also displayed statistically. Organizational structures of the teaching and non-teaching staff members are exhibited as the two wings under the Principal. All these gave me a feeling that everything is so well organized, revealing the first visible level of their school culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995)

There are some wood craft like portrays of a farmer, engineer, scientist etc. in the main admin building. The arts are related to domestic industry, technology, communication, agriculture etc. From the Principal, I understood that the wood crafts reflecting the history of the school emphasizing on the skills based vocational education during its establishment.

*(Wood craft in the school building)*

*(Awards display shutter)*

On 20th July 2011, I sat near the waiting shed near the gate and tried to observe the things going around to find the culture in visible structures and day to day practices (Fey & Denison, 2000). It was not possible to observe the most of the 13.5 hectare of the school compound from there but I could clearly feel the purity of the natural environment the school possesses. Then I went around the school, trying to cover a portion of the school lower ground. The upper ground was the academic blocks and the lower ground meant the widely open area for ten hostels, several staff quarters, maintenance department, laundry section, football grounds, basketball court, cricket pitch, lawn tennis court, dining hall and green wood stocks here and there. In front of the dining hall are a small fish pond and a basket ball ground near the pond. Near the pond is a tree full of jackfruit, seemed untouched by the students.

I saw at least three hoarding boards emphasizing the English language for the general communication. But I did not find students speaking in English with each other outside the classroom during my visits. Hoarding boards are also at different areas emphasizing to keep the school environment neat and clean. I also noticed outside each classroom are boards where students' work like poems and essays are pasted. Plenty of flower pots are in front of the classrooms. There is also a "Wish you a happy birthday" board which has the spaces for the date and the names to be

filled up. But nothing was mentioned there. I guessed the personal birthdays are marked here. At this juncture, I remembered Stolp & Smith (1995) saying what values are expressed in school environment and how school layout is arranged are the integral parts of the school culture.

All the classrooms blocks and the hostels are built with stone in Nepali Pagoda style and the classrooms are stone roofed and they face to the clean and green assembly ground making a rectangular shape. According to Bennett (1998), such uniqueness reveals their unique values and meanings of the organization. There are three separately compounded girls' hostels within the school compound and seven separate hostels for boys. There are solar panels in every hostel for hot water system. The facilities and resources of the school for both boys and girls include well-equipped classrooms, library, and three separate well equipped labs for Biology, Chemistry and Physics, multipurpose gymnasium hall, playgrounds, and a health centre. The gym hall, which is a unique feature of this school, is a multipurpose hall for gatherings and sports.

The school library is a big hall with full of books-shelves around and the reading tables. Around 60-70 students can be adjusted easily at a time. A separate corner, partitioned with the glass walls, containing around 30 seats for the 10+2 (Higher secondary education consisting of class 11 and 12) and Cambridge A-Level students. They have 14,000 volumes of Nepali and English books and all the local and National daily news papers also. There are also plenty of audios, CDs and VCDs related to English Language, Science and Geography classes. I realized the school has enough infrastructures for promotion of student learning, revealing its positive school culture (Celik, 2010).

*(Students in the library)*

*(Students on the Playground)*

Whenever I passed through several classes, I noticed classes going very smoothly, students very patient, quite often interacting, no unnecessary noise, polite teachers etc. I did not find teachers shouting at or scolding the students. Teachers always used soft voice to the students. All these gave me the humanistic impression of the school culture (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). Below is an abstract of one of my class observations…

> *The Teacher started by saying*
> *"I can't remember what we did yesterday". The students shouted*
> *"Role of Parents" sir! (I thought what a unique way of reviewing). Then he asked a student to explain in detail. The boy replied. The teacher asked*
> *"Monika! Is it correct? What else?*
> *Shatkar! Could you write on the board? The boy went to the board and wrote*
> *"The role of parents is great in the success of every child." (5th August 2011)*

My general impression of the classes after four observations is the students are active, fearless and interactive. Mathema and Bista (2005) say that a fearful mind cannot learn. According to them, fear and failure are very closely linked. I found the students actively taking part in discussions. Teacher praised the students for their effort and good answers. Teacher first discusses, get the answers from the students and finally organize the answer. There were several English and Nepali slogans on

the walls of each classroom. There was a duty roster of the students in each class. There were several arts, notices and students' writings on the classroom notice board. Through these, I found the morale and the spirits of the students and teachers very high revealing the strong healthy culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

During my visits all students and teachers were found punctual to their classes. They have first and second bell system, this manages the punctuality. For example, after the lunch break, the first bell goes to signal everybody to enter the class. The teachers also go to the class. Then after 5 minutes the second bell goes to start the class.

During my visits I did not find any example of teachers' collaboration except few instances of sharing at the respective departments. But Moore (1999) says that collaboration empowers the school community through the fusion of abilities that each individual of the team brings and that collectively make the team more effective. When I asked with the teachers and the Principal about the collaborative practices, they also felt that they lack it. In a collaborative environment, teachers are involved in problem solving jointly, practice together the skills for development of expertise, enrich their thinking process and transfer the individual knowledge into organizational knowledge (Moran, Uline, Hoy, & Mackley, 2000).

During my visits to the school I noticed few peculiar things which I could not categorize to any particular cultural element of the school culture but I felt those things were significant in some way in shaping the school culture. Here are some examples.

On 22nd August 2011, I watched the football match between class 9 B and 10 A. One of the student from 10 A was found to be aggressive on the ground with an opponent player. He got a yellow card. Teachers watching the match discussed with

each other commenting that he should not have done that. One of them said that they should counsel him later. Other teachers agreed to him. I realized the teachers seemed to be alert and serious at the students and they are supportive to each other. At this point I remembered Saphier and King (1985) saying that a school's culture may support teachers who try to improve or it may laugh at anyone who tries to stand out from the crowd to do the things differently.

On 7th 2011, teachers in the science department were informally praising the unexpected questions raised by the students in the class. The HOD said that was the beauty in teaching in that school. He added that students bring so many new concepts which the teachers never think. As per Colley (1999), students react on the basis of how they are valued by the teachers. So I realized that there is two way role of the teachers and the students in forming the shared culture (Schein, 1991).

The inside first page of the students diary has the National anthem. It reveals the values given to the patriotism. The first section of the dairy contains all the necessary information of the school like class schedule, time schedule from early 5:45 bell to the last light out bell of 11:00 PM., the annual school calendar, dates of public holidays etc. The dairy also contains a page on the introduction of the school, the cell numbers of all the staff, personal information form for the students, school rules for the students, rules for morning/evening study hour, basic study skills, guidance for the good behavior in the classroom and study hour, exam preparation technique. Then the second part of the dairy contains the assignments record forms. I felt all the information that a student is likely to need are all provided clearly in the diary. From this I realized that clear information flow to the students is highly valued in the school (Bush, 1995).

***Vision and Values***

The mission statement of the school focuses on imparting education of an international standard, provide all-round education with an affordable cost and ensure holistic development of child. The motto of the school is "Knowledge, Character and Service". These are the second level of the organization culture as per Schien, (1991).

I came to know that a previous Principal called Bamb officially removed the corporal punishment around 28 years ago. Other foreign Principals who worked here in the past demolished the practice of corporal punishment system. Now it is in the written policy and guidelines to the teachers. The disciplinary problems are solved through counseling to the students and with the help of the parents. As Godfrey (2003) said, I realized humanistic approach is valued in the school, which is a part of their school culture.

The written rules for the students are mentioned in the school diary. Students make their own code of conduct for their classroom. The teachers' workbook contained various valuable information and guidelines to the teachers that guided me to mark what the school values (Bennett, 1998). The teacher guideline emphasizes that a proper planning in teaching is a key to successful and effective teaching. Teachers are expected to set a high standard in their attitudes, behavior and professional ability. They should be conscious that the students will look to them as examples. From the teachers' workbook, I understood that the school has clear guideline to the teachers regarding its teaching philosophy. It is also understandable from the teachers that the guidelines are not strictly followed due to the lack of clear explanation and monitoring revealing the weaker part of their culture (Fullan, 2002).

According to the Principal, the school gives equal importance to the ECAs as

the curriculum because the school focuses in all round education of all the students. By all round education they mean four things; academic, skills, leadership and spiritual development of the students. That is why they have ECA department equivalent to the other academic departments. Students are encouraged to organize various programs independently under their management. I realized that all round development of the students is what they value most at the school (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

The Principal further said that the students face the SLC exam in their own natural preparation. The school does not emphasize for any extra effort and extra class. Their target is to get the lowest deviation between the highest and the lowest score. For example this year out of 121 students appearing in the SLC 107 got distinction and remaining 14 students got at least 75% marks. The Principal further said,

*But the first question people ask me is what your highest score in the SLC was. I think this is the wrong trend that prevails in the education world to measure the quality of the school. This is a wrong social concept which is against our school philosophy of "learning for all.*

All the participants in a way or the other indicated that the school has already started showing its future vision to be developed as a university in the long term future as the land and infrastructure is favorable for the school to grow as a university. As Farrell (2009) said they have shared educational agenda or vision which is more strategic and powerful. The Principal also shared that he is focused currently in developing the school technologically. Immediately, he is introducing IT in teaching learning through the ICT Project.

***Rituals and Ceremonies***

According to the Principal, there is a separate ECA department in this school like any other academic department. Plenty of ECAs is a culture of this school. Various activities like sports and co-curricular activities are the tradition from the past hence the present Principal has also continued that. Students are divided into 4 houses to run extracurricular activities efficiently and competitively. Extracurricular competitions includes various sporting activities, singing and dance, quizzes, essays, poetry elocution, spelling etc. Different clubs are organized according to the interest of the students. Various sporting activities are also organized at the student's own initiation. Students' involvement empowers them and enables them to learn from the life experience (Fletcher, 2003).

From the students and the teachers I came to know that the school conducts different kinds of assemblies in different days. On the Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays they have general assemblies. On the Mondays they have day students and hostel students separately to address their distinct issues. On Wednesdays they have class assemblies where they address their class issues and make various presentations from the students. On Fridays there are no assemblies and the classes are started directly because the school day is short on the Fridays.

On 16th July 2011, I went to observe their general assembly. Students were gathering there, catching up their respective lines. Patriotic song was being played in the loudspeaker as the students were joining their respective lines. After few minutes, the music went off, the School Choir sang the national anthem from the stage and others joined the anthem.

After the national anthem, all the students sat on the carpeted floor in their class wise line. Then two boys went to the stage and sang two pop songs, Nepali and

English, with a guitar. Then a teacher welcomed me from the stage as a visitor and the ex-student. Then he announced the winners of several internal competitions. The winners were applauded with the clap. After that the teacher announced about the leave weekend, the students screamed with joy. It shows that how the things are done in the school, as a part of their school culture (Picucci et al, 2002).

One Wednesdays, all the classes conduct the assembly in their own classroom. According to the class 8 teacher, usually they first discuss the class problems and matters if any then they open the floor for the students' presentation like poem, song, IQ, quizzes, current information, one act plays etc. Students have proved here that they can play a vital role in shaping school culture if they are involved meaningfully (Fletcher, 2003). Here is an example of class assembly.

*I went to class 8A. They welcomed me as a guest. Two students acted as the MCs. I was addressed as "our guest" by the MCs. The class assembly lasted for 20 minutes where many students took part in varieties of programs. Girls also participated equally as the boys. Some items were humorous enough to refresh the students.*

*At last I went around the classroom and asked the students about the objective of such class assembly. The students replied, "To explore the hidden talent, to enhance the creativity and to build up the confidence." The students replied confidently. (4th August 2011)*

The students and the teachers revealed that various activities are organized in this school throughout the year and in most of the activities, students play the major role. Students organize the tournament for Basketball, Cricket, Football, and Badminton every year under their own leadership and they collect fund from the sponsorship of the corporate houses.

On 18th July 2011, I also got an opportunity to observe the opening ceremony of the football tournament organized by the class 10 students. Students started the program by welcoming and announcing the names of the chief guests and other guests. Principal was the chief guest because the program was organized by the class ten students. Two national players namely, Anil Gurung (Football) and Sipora Gurung (Volleyball) were also invited as the guests. After the speech, class ten students showed entertaining performances. The boys showed break dance and the girls showed hindi dance, both made thematic to "Football".

*(Class ten boys dancing)*

*(Football ground, Gym hall at the background)*

Then everybody was guided to the football ground, just outside the gym hall. The banners of the sponsors were displayed at the sides of the ground. Players appeared with the FIFA flag at the front and FIFA Anthem. The game started when the Principal handed over the ball to the Match Referee. All the guests were offered to sit on the chairs arranged around the ground. Some students were running to provide the chairs to those who did not get. Other students were freely moving here and there but looked decent.

On 7th August 2011, I got a chance to observe the "Nepali debate competition" organized by the Nepali department teachers. Twelve participants were called on the stage, 2 girls and 10 boys. Other students listened patiently, clapped

after every speech was over. They seemed disciplined. A teacher was video-recording the program to keep as the record in Nepali Department. The Principal appeared in the middle, he was welcomed by the MC. The Principal watched the program quietly for 20 minutes. The MC controlled the noise of the listeners by using polite requests to be civilized. I understand that there is vice-versa relation between positive people and positive culture. (Sigford, 1998). And I also realized that the school culture gives values to the students' activities (Bennett, 1998).

Every Sunday, they have general teachers meeting at the general staff room where the Principal and the OM give significant information and direction for the week ahead. Then every week the teachers conduct departmental meetings to discuss their departmental agendas. The departmental meetings are conducted under the chairmanship of the HOD but the Principal is also invited as the guest.

I got an opportunity to observe the departmental meeting of the social studies department on 19th August 2011. The HOD collected about the progress of test week with each teacher. They reported their situation. The second agenda was about the notice to prepare the question papers for the second term examination. HOD distributed the task to several teachers for different papers as there were multiple teachers teaching the same subject at different sections. In the mean time Principal entered the room and sat at a corner. Then the HOD informed that next week there was a training program to the staff about "Child Right". I realized that the meeting could have been made collaborative so that the teachers could work together, share information, discuss on instructional strategies and help each other in planning class activities (Center for improving School Culture, 2004).

Every year the students have the class-wise picnic with their class teachers and the subject teachers. The Principal also participate in the students' picnic for a

couple of hours. Students have educational excursion after every two years to various parts of Nepal and India. Besides the students' picnic teachers have a separate teachers' picnic every year. The end of the academic session is marked by a dinner party. These are the traditions of the school of expressing the school culture symbolically (Bush, 1995).

***History and Stories***

The records show that Kaski School was established in 1966 as a result of the joint effort of MOE, an international mission and local social workers of Kaski district as a non-profit education institution. Initially the facilities were primitive with all the thatched-roofed mud and bamboo huts. There were only 45 boarding students, poor boys collected from various remote areas and 5 teaching staff. The school was established to provide education to the talented poor students of the remote villages of the region and it is still continued through scholarship schemes. Like Peterson and Deal (2009) said, I found, the past of the school still influences much of the happenings in the present. These historical moments are transmitted to the new members by the old members in terms of the stories. The school was designated as a co-educational regional school in 1985 with English as the medium of instruction in an agreement between Nepal government and an international mission. I saw a copy of the agreement in the silver jubilee souvenir of the school.

The present Principal is the 19th Principal of the school. The photographs of the previous 18 Principals are displayed in the Principal's room. Out of those 18 previous Principals, the students and the old teachers remember few of them for their significant contributions in shaping the system of the school. One of the previous Principals is also remembered for his failure despite his high ability and hard work. The present school culture seems to be affected by the historically transmitted

patterns of values, beliefs and traditions of the previous Principals (Stolp & Smith, 1995). I have presented the perceptions of teachers and students about the previous Principals in the chapter 5.

In Kaski School, the previous successful stories and the history are shared with the students in various occasions and ceremonies by the Principal and the old teachers. As per the students, senior students also share previous stories to the junior students informally during the free play time. Ex-students association also shares past experience in various occasions. The present Principal frequently remembers the past Principals who started several traditions and rituals in the school and for their philosophies. It seems to me in line with Brown (2004) saying that successful organizations have cultures that were passed on through story and slogan.

Photo of the national board topper student is nicely displayed at the hallways. I thought this is a way of sharing the previous successful story. The SLC and the 10+2 results, national award and the regional awards are also displayed at the hallway outside the front office. At this point, I linked with Griffin and Moorhead (2009) saying that the organizational culture lives on through the stories and rituals that have developed and shared by personnel in an organization through the years.

***People and Relationship***

The teachers revealed that the Principal is friendly and do not expect formality from the teachers. Mulford (2007), says such friendly environment gives self efficacy to the teachers. More about the teachers' perception in this regard is described in the next chapter. But I saw on 22nd August 2011, the Principal also appeared in the football match for about an hour. He talked informally and friendly way with many teachers and the students time to time.

I frequently observed that the teachers in the staff room talked informally and friendly manner. Most of the time, I found the teachers sharing about the teaching-learning matters with each other in a cooperative way. Following is one of my observations…

> *I was in the Science department where 4 teachers were sitting on their seat and working. I sat quietly trying to observe them. They talked informally about the departmental matters. They talked about the old video tapes related with the science curriculum. Teachers were suggesting to the HOD to replace the tapes with new CDs if the departmental budget was left. (7th August 2011)*

On 19th August 2011, in the social studies department, I found teachers informally talking and smiling. Similarly from the departmental meeting in the social studies department, I realized that the teachers have collegial relationship between them (Whiteley, 2008). Below is an abstract…

> *The meeting went on in very low voice but the teachers were speaking quite gently without much hesitation. Then the HOD informed that one of the teachers was preparing a speech for the assembly of the next day as it was an education day. The HOD also advised to emphasize in English Language while teaching in the class and while speaking with the students outside the class. (19th August 2011)*

One day, the students of class ten were busy in working at the stage, preparing for the opening ceremony. The Principal was around the stage advising and helping the students (18th July 2011). With this, I guessed that the Principal is caring to the students. The student, Samip believes that the Principal is very polite to the students and very understanding person.

*Once, we asked the Principal that we wanted to work as social volunteer in a*

*project, "Habitat for Humanity". He encouraged us. We also went to "Gai Ghat" for forestation program through his encouragements. We asked for his permission in the last hour. We were feeling doubt but he happily gave permission but made us alert that we were representing the school so we were not to forget our moral values and the behavior should be good.*

The student, Rabi exposed that sometimes the Principal comes to the hostels and praises the students for doing well in studies and other activities and encourages continuing it or doing better. The Principal shows care to the students. He also thanks and appreciates the students openly in the assemblies in front of everybody when they perform well in any activity. Sharita said,

*Whenever we meet the Principal, first we greet him. Then he asks about our how-about. Sometimes he also asks if we have any problem. In class 10 we had a problem in understanding a teacher. Later he frequently asked if it was ok then.*

Uma revealed that the Principal shows his love and care to the students during his assembly speech and when he meets the students on the way. The Principal smiles and speaks few words on the way.

On 6th August, 2011, I noticed, while the football match was going, the teachers were giving supportive words to the students of their respective hostel, when the players happen to come near while hitting the ball. In another case on 9th August, 2011 around 40 to 50 students entered the library and took out books from various parts and started reading. I noticed friendly and polite relation between the librarian and the students. Students smiled as they entered. I got some other evidences too.

Here is a part of my class 8 observation.

> *After all the students spoke, the teacher recalled the entire speaker's unique view for further discussion. In-between, the teacher was also asking questions. A boy said, "Sir! I didn't get your question". Students were not silent…they also gave their view. I noticed there was no sign of fear in the students, yet the class was disciplined. I also noticed that the teacher called the students respectfully like "Roshan Ji". (5th August 2011)*

This case made me realize that the students are fearless with the teachers and the teachers respect the students' individuality. I also noticed that in a debate contest, the MC teacher controlled the noise of the listeners (students) by using polite requests to be civilized. The students responded with silence. These are indicating healthy environment (culture) in the school (Chiang, 2003). Whenever I passed through the school building, I never saw the evidence of teachers shouting at or scolding the students. Teachers always used soft voice to the students. I also noticed and remarked several times that the non-teaching staff talks with the students very politely.

On the 20th July 2011, I went to the football ground, where the boys were making arrangements for the match. They were arranging the sound system and some were arranging chairs for the teachers. Some boys were tying up the sponsors banners. Some boys were warming up by kicking the balls. Bigger boys were calling the smaller boys by *Bhai* (small brother) in order to pass the ball. Boys were calling each other with "Timi" (a polite way of calling the friends) while working together to hang the banners and drawing the line with white powder.

Similarly on 11th August 2011, I went around the school compound. Students were moving here and there in small groups freely in relaxed mood. Some small boys

and girls were taking rest under the shed of Woodstock near the 10+2 building. During my visits, I never found students fighting or quarrelling with each other. With all these, I thought the students have good and cordial relationship with each other indicating the positive school culture (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

## Case 2: Lalitpur School

Lalitpur School, now a government school managed by the community was established by local youths in the year 2026 BS (1969 AD) in a temple periphery to provide literacy opportunity to the local children of the community. It lies at a semi-urban locality of Lalitpur district, around 7 Km south of the Capital city. It is connected with the main city of Lalitpur by a tarred motor road with a regular public transportation service. The school does not have its own transportation services.

The record in the administration section reveals that there are 690 boys and 760 girls (total 1450) students studying from play group to class 12. Around 100 students are receiving a nominal amount of scholarship for tuition, uniform and books from various NGOs and INGOs. The primary block is few minutes' walk away from the secondary block. The school has a separate special section in the primary block where around 30 blind, deaf and mentally retarded students of diverse levels are educated together. The SLC results of this school for the last three years were declared as the best among the government schools in Lalitpur district.

### Introducing the Students and Their Perception

Sami Shrestha, a local girl studying in class nine, was my first student participant in Lalitpur School. She joined this school in class one. Before she studied in a local private school but her parents liked this and brought her here. She too likes this school because the SLC result of this school is very good and teachers are friendly She perceives,

*Teachers treat us like their sons and daughters. They show care to us. Teachers share recent information which is related with our course by reading the newspapers in the class. Teachers let us share what the students already know relevant to the course in front of the class.*

*(Students gossiping with a teacher)*

*(Girls at volleyball training)*

The girl said the ECAs in the school are volley ball and basket ball trainings, parents' day, school day, scout activities etc. She also mentioned that junior students are taken for educational visit to different parts within the valley. Class ten students are taken to places like Lumbini, Pokhara, Gorkha etc. for educational tour.

She could not remember the school motto/slogan when I asked her if she knew it. I thought the school motto should have been taught to the new members (Moran & Meso, 2008). The girl further said that various celebrations are organized like: (i) Dashain Celebration: where students dance and sing before the dashain vacation begins, (ii) Teachers Day: they offer gifts to the teachers by raising money voluntarily from the students. (iii) Children's Day: students present various cultural programmes. Similarly they have parents' day and school day celebrated every year. She added,

*In the parents' day the history of the school is remembered and those who played vital role in the past are remembered. Their photos are also displayed.*

The girl feels that teachers care all the students' learning in the class. They don't care only the good students. Sometimes the teachers scold to draw the attention. Naughty students are punished by giving classroom cleaning duty. Students obey the teachers. For uncaring and unfriendly teachers, students do not pay attention in their class. She perceives that such teachers think that their duty is to teach only and whether the students learn or not is not their problem. Such teachers beat the students in class. In such classes, students make noise and even sing at behind. At this juncture, I felt the toxic culture present in this particular school (Peterson, 2002).

My second participant student in Lalitpur School was Namrata Shakya, a local girl studying in class 10. She joined this school after she passed class 2 from a private boarding school of the same locality. She likes it because it has all the facilities of private schools and teachers teach in English medium. From her, I understood the school gives high value to the effective and systemic change to support school improvement (Garland, 2004) through infrastructural development and English language. She felt,

*The recent developments in this school are construction of the new school buildings, fans have been added in the classrooms, developments of three separate labs for the physics, biology and chemistry, internet facility added in the computer lab etc. The results in the SLC examination are improving every year. It started improving after the school chose to appear in the SLC in the English medium.*

At this juncture, I felt it was in line with the study conducted by Full Bright Consultancy (2011) as it found that with the transfer of management responsibility to community, the head teachers are more creative and active in improving the physical facilities like furniture, play ground, toilet etc.

The student 2 said that sometimes when students bunk the class they are called in the office. She doesn't know what happens there. When the students are found violating the rules and regulations, teachers call their parents and talk. Sometimes when the boys are found smoking in the toilet, they are taken to the office and sometimes they get beating in the office. With this I felt the presence of toxic culture in the school (Goodwin, 2008). She added,

*Teachers check our uniform every day. We have to put tie and come in full uniform. Sometimes few students come in out dress also. Teachers ask them for the reason. If they have genuine causes, they are excused.*

I understood, although this is a government school, it has made the tie compulsory to make its own culture as Deal and Peterson (1998) say that schools have a culture that is definitely their own. She further said that annual ceremonies in the school are farewell, parents' day, dashain festival celebration, teachers' day, children's day, etc. Students organize many such ceremonies and teachers also help students in organizing. Students also give speeches in such occasions.

Generally the students show respect to the teachers. Teachers do not insult the students. They show care to the students. The teachers say that they are like friends and guardians. As Jerald (2006) said students and teachers treat each other with respect revealing their positive culture. The girl said, students are interactive and easily ask when they are not clear. Although I did not find any interactive class during my observations, the girl advocated for the positive school culture (Chiang, 2003). She also added,

*Sometimes students, teachers and HT sit for meetings. For example, recently we had such meetings about organizing the farewell program to the SLC graduates. I was also present in the meeting. It was students, program so we requested for*

*meeting. We explained our proposal and asked for the budget. We also raised money from the students' side and got some help from the school's side and organized the program. The program was our design, but HT and teachers also gave several suggestions.*

At this juncture, the involvement of the students reveals the teacher-students collaboration for students' learning (DuFour & Eaker, 1998).

Nabin Shrestha, studying in class 9 was my 3rd student participant from Lalitpur School. He has been studying here from class one and before he studied in a private school. He said that his father was not satisfied with the previous school so he brought him here. In his opinion, the motto of this school, "Education for Social Change" means that through the right education, people can bring social change because he thinks when people are educated, they can bring social change. He perceives that classes are interactive; students share what they know without any hesitation when the teachers are teaching. But I did not find such interaction during my observations at all. He remembers that he studied in English medium right from class one. He said,

*I have full confident in English language proficiency. This is good because I am equivalent to the students of private school. I will not have any language problem in the job competitions tomorrow.*

He assumes teachers are not rude. They are friendly. They do not insult students. Students don't get physical punishments from the teachers but sometimes when students act foolish they give slaps. I found his contrasting opinions here,

*Students' dresses are tightly checked. We are not allowed to keep long hair. Once teachers came in to the class with scissors and they cut the long hairs of the boys roughly in one side only. The next day those boys came in proper hair cut.*

For him, several ECAs in this school are basket ball, volley ball, table tennis, cultural programmes, competitions, poem contest etc. Some of the programs are volunteered by the members of "School Child Club". He explained that the monitors of all the classes make the "School Child Club". Monitors in each class are selected through the election. Usually the top position holders of the class win the election to be the monitor. He added that they also have school scout which work as volunteers during occasions and ceremonies. For me it revealed the culture which is definitely their own (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

He opined that the school facilities are enough and as a student he is satisfied. He said that they have practical classes also as per the need and students' works are displayed in the notice board. But I did not find the students work being displayed during my visits. The boy looked satisfied and positive towards the school trying to reveal the positive school culture (Lambert, 1998).

*(Water filter plant donated by a local NGO)*

Sameer Acharya from Class 12 is a local boy. Although there are many private schools in this area, he joined this school. The main cause is although this is a government school, it gives all the facilities that a private school gives and that too at almost free of cost. He perceives the main philosophy of the school is to give quality education to those who cannot afford private schools. He further said,

*Education for Social Change is the motto of this school. Some students here are from very conservative family. This is a village area and the community is very conservative. Students are taught in this school social perspective and they are encouraged to share their knowledge they gained with their family members at home. By applying the knowledge learned, in the society, social change is expected.*

I thought the school has been able to direct the philosophy, structures and activities of the school towards achieving this shared vision, "Education for Social Change" (Bush & Glover, 2003). He added that the school has managed scholarships to many very poor students through NGOs and INGOs. This has also helped in the social change.

He opined there is no child club or student council in the higher secondary (H.S.) section as in the primary and the secondary. They don't have ECAs like debate, quiz etc. in the H.S. section. Students also don't give much interest as they are under the pressure of the course completion. The boy perceives, here in this school, most of the teachers are friendly with the students. He added,

*We don't hesitate to put our view and ideas. HT and teachers listens to us. Recently science students had such meetings. The students put their view that their practical classes are being conducted in very minimum numbers. Now the extra practical classes are managed on Saturdays.*

I understood as per Brown (2004) that the boy perceives that the students are valued as a part of positive school culture. The boy feels that the school is able to manage good infrastructure because HT can convince the donors easily showing the students' good performance. He feels the administration part is quite loose at the +2 level. Discipline is not maintained and the students are not as regular as in the school

level. He wishes the administration was as strong as in the school level. The boy revealed some toxic culture at the H.S. level (Peterson, 2002).

**Introducing the Teachers and Their Perception**

Mr. Sarad Adhikari has been teaching mathematics at the secondary level for last 13 years. He also works as the head of academic department, one of the four voluntarily created departments, although formally there is no provision from the government's side. The other parallel departments are Examination department, ECA department and Disciplinary department. I guessed the culture of the school has motivated him to do the extra work voluntarily (Colley, 1999). He added that departmental meetings are held 6 times a year. Teachers' general meetings are held 3 times a year. Extra meetings are held if needed. Other unplanned meetings with the HT and parents are held frequently as the situations demand. He added,

*We frequently call parents to discuss about their children's status in the school. Parents are also very serious and sensitive about their children. By beating and expelling students, we don't contribute to the society rather we increase problems. We do counseling with the students and parents.*

According to him, the only informal gathering ceremony for the teachers is the annual picnic. Each teacher is affiliated with one of the teachers' association related to a political party. But they have very good professional relationship between them and are not influenced by the politics inside the school. I thought he tried to reveal his high efficacy towards his profession by saying this (Mulford, 2007). He added,

*First of all we are teachers of this school. We may have our different ideology outside, but when we are inside the school, we are serious in our profession. We have no record of ideology crash between the school members.*

*(Teachers enjoying the winter sun while doing their work)*

In his opinion, at present the objective of the school is to improve the English language proficiency and be the best government school in Nepal. It is already the best in the district with 100 percent result in SLC. Now they are focusing in the overall quality of the education and make a model school in the whole Nation. With this he reveals strong positive culture focused to result in promotion of academic performance of the school (Celik, 2010). Regarding the teachers' collaboration he said,

*We help each other outside the classrooms but do not enter each other's class. Even in the Lunch break we share about class issues and teaching practices. Teachers take negatively if HT enters their class. They think it is unnecessary because teacher think that they couldn't be rightly judged by a single visit. What if teachers do not teach properly when the HT is not present? I think we can only be judged by our output.*

With this, it helped me to understand that they have very low teachers' collaboration in the school (Loyola University, 2008).

Mr. Rajesh Maharjan, who has been teaching here for last 25 years, was my 2nd teacher participant. Now he works as the primary level coordinator. He perceives that the school is named with the philosophy that the students of this school should be exemplarily creative youth of tomorrow. According to his perception the values and

objectives of the school is also revealed through its name (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). He remembers,

*We emphasized in English language from 1987, introduced tie as a school uniform from 1988. It was a joint shared effort of the SMC members, HT and the teachers. Then students started being proud of their school as they looked like private school students. The parents and the students started being aware about the tidiness and also encouraged in building the English environment in the school.*

He said that the dedication of the teachers of this school has convinced the donors, hence they have better infrastructure than other government schools. I understood that he is a motivated teacher as he has been working in a reputed school now after their collective effort to improve in the past. I thought the culture of the school was the foundation for the school improvement (Saphier & King, 1985). Regarding the extra-curricular activities, he said,

*The extra-curricular activities that we generally have in our school are: Sports week, Parents day, Tours/ Picnics, debates, quizzes, speech competition etc. There are four houses in the Primary section. Child club and teachers are divided in several groups to conduct various programs.*

He said there are 9 members in the child club mostly from class 5. They manage the morning assembly, maintain cleanliness, control the class, and conduct ECAs and gardening. They also raise fund for students' welfare fund. According to DuFour & Eaker (1998), all of these activities construct promise, build motivation, and promote learning for students.

The teacher added that they have daily reporting system in class 5 by the students turn by turn about what happened and what they did yesterday. He assumes

that students can develop confidence through reporting in the class. Regarding the physical punishment, he said…

*We used to give physical punishment in the past but now we have stopped that. But sometimes we just show stick in the class. We are also conscious about the student bullying and we discourage such activities in the school.*

Seema Maharjan, a lady teacher has taught here for 9 years in the contract basis. She said, there are many contract teachers here and their salary is very low in comparison to that of the permanent teachers. They have raised the problems to the HT and SMC but the problems have not been solved yet. She added,

*HT and SMC have been able to find out so many sources for the infrastructural development of the school, which is in fact very good. But they should not forget that teacher satisfaction is equally important. Actually contract teachers are doing a kind of voluntary job because of their passion in teaching. But the question is how long can we do?*

As per her, there are teachers' unions affiliated to the various political parties. To some extent, they influence in the management too. She feels especially the teachers in the contract basis are discriminated in the promotion because they don't go after political parties. She insisted although teachers who are in union may claim that they have no political influence when they are inside the school, there are influences indirectly. So at this point, as per Kilian (1999), I found some complex toxic situations causing stress to the teachers although the previous participants overlooked it. But she feels the school administration is not rigid to the teachers and the students regarding educational matters. And she added,

*Here, the quality education means to give an equal opportunity to every student to develop his/her personality and talent. For example, we focus the weak*

*students differently as per their capacity. We are implementing CAS system to judge and evaluate the students in day-to-day activities in the class.*

She looked satisfied as far as the school culture regarding quality education is concerned revealing the positive culture (Celik, 2010). She said, there are no competitors around here for this school in regards of the students' intake and the results in the board examinations. This school has rather become a great challenge to the private schools around here. She also revealed the absence of collaborative culture as per Mulford (2007), in the school this way,

*HT monitors our teaching from outside the room. I think the class observation is not necessary because we get distracted. But if he sits and gives feedback, I don't have any objection.*

She said that in her class, she let the students put their views more than she does. She thinks, the students know many things as we do. So she makes the class interactive this way. She has shared this in the teachers meeting and others have also implemented this. I got a glimpse of teachers' collegiality at this point (Whiteley, 2008). But I did not get any evidence during my two months visits.

**Elements of Culture in Lalitpur School**

As in the case of the Kaski School, I have presented the cultural practices of Lalitpur School under five different headings. They are architectures and artifacts, history and stories, rituals and ceremonies, people and relationship and vision and values.

***Architectures, Artifacts and Symbols***

The school layout is tightly placed in a compound of nearly 1 hectare land. The administrative block consisting of 7 rooms and a meeting hall is attached with the main gate. The classroom buildings are at the far-end side of the compound facing towards the gate. The classrooms are well ventilated and furnished. Basket ball

ground, volley ball court, and TT table are all tightly positioned in front of the classrooms. As Peterson and Deal (2009) said, all these gave me an immediate perception about the school culture that it values overall development of the students but they lack enough resources, especially land.

The name of the school is written right above the gate. The school motto is also mentioned there. Some charts are hung on the hallways. One of them mentioned about the frequency of various activities in the school. Like, SMC meeting 9 times a year, PTA 4 times, teachers meeting 10 times, Parents' day 1 time and ECAs 13 times. Another chart reveals about the teachers' code of conduct. There was a separate chart of code of conduct of teachers made by the teachers union affiliated to a political party. I felt it as an evidence of presence of political influence in the school.

When I went to the student's toilet to observe, felt difficult to distinguish between the gents and ladies toilet because the students had overwritten some parts and erased some parts to make confusion intentionally. I just chose one- blindly guessing that to be the male one, still not being clear. The toilet was quite dirty and stinging. Some vulgar sentences were written on the walls. As per Goodwin (2008) such disciplinary problem features the toxic school culture.

Outside the Principal's room, in a small notice board read, "We see the things, not the way they are but the way we are". That remained unchanged throughout my visits for two months. Shields and trophies that the school received in the past are displayed in the HT's office. I asked myself is that important to the Principal only?

*(Trophies displayed in the Principal's room)* *(Staff room)*

The Primary block is situated a few minutes' walk away at a peaceful location near by a small jungle. The school building is a newly constructed with the aid from an INGO. The stairs are clearly separated with colored arrow for up and down so that the small students do not collide with each other. I thought that is revealing that they value the safety of the children (Bennett, 1998).

It seems to me that unlike most of the government schools in Nepal, this school is privileged to have well constructed cemented buildings in both the primary as well as the secondary blocks. All the classrooms are well ventilated and well furnished. They have well equipped science lab, computer lab and library, but remained closed most of the time. Both the blocks have good drinking water filter plants donated by local NGOs. For the primary students, toilet is well constructed but poorly maintained as it was quite dirty and stinging. At the front of the toilet there is a marble craved which mentioned that the toilet was constructed with the donation from an INGO. The secondary toilet building are also cemented but poorly maintained. According to Sailes (2008), it is strongly sending the message that the school culture does not foster the importance in the proper maintenance.

I went around the classrooms several times during my visits. I generally found teachers teaching in English inside the classrooms although it was a

government school. Sometimes, I heard students clapping from classrooms. I thought this was a positive approach inside the classes. But most of the time students were silent and only the teachers' sound could be heard. I thought the school culture encourages the teachers to think that kids are the empty vessels to be filled up by the teachers (National Staff Development Counsil, 1998).

During my visits, I observed 4 classroom teachings. In class 9 English class, which I observed on 14th November, the teacher straightaway started the lesson without drawing the students' attention, while the students were still making noise by talking with each other. As the teacher kept on preaching about the lesson, which was still not clear to me, the volume of noise slowly went down. I took out my diary, and started jotting down the class happenings in points. At the front, the teacher was speaking in his own world, a one way teaching, without interacting with the students. I could still see the students were talking with their bench mates in their own world and there was no effort from the teacher to draw attention to make the class one. At this juncture, I remembered Colley (1999) and thought students react on the basis of how they are treated by the teachers. Some students were completely silent, in their own world. I could also see some educational charts and students code of conduct on the walls. But the walls looked quite dirty, perhaps not painted for years. Even the floor was quite dusty and papers lying revealing the weak culture (Picucci et al, 2002). Here is a short glimpse of the class,

*Suddenly, the teacher spoke loudly, "now I'll ask some questions to you"! Students produced an exclamatory sound, "Amah…"*
*The teacher wrote on the board: Look! The dear _____ grazing (is, are, were)*
*Then he pointed a boy and said, "You! Stand up. Choose the correct one". The boy said "are"*
*The teacher: "yeah! Dear is a collective noun so we always use plural, can you say why not were, it is also plural". The boy remained silent. The teacher replied, "Because the sentence is simple present. Sit down". (14th November)*

While all these things were happening between the teacher and the boy, other students were impatient, inattentive and involved in side talking. The teacher pointed another girl to stand up after writing another question on the board. Teacher did not call students by their name failing to use the humanistic approach (Hoy & Miskel, 2011). He never tried to draw the attention of the whole class. Few students were humming and singing in their own world and the teacher was completely unnoticed about that. According to Mathema and Bista (2005), performance of children can be improved by improving the instructional methods and teacher students' relationship, which seems to be lacking in this class. As per Schein (1991), the culture is also "the way things are done here". So I thought this is their culture here.

But I found quite a different environment in class 8, where a lady teacher was delivering social studies class on 22nd December, 2011. The teacher started the class by asking a girl in the third bench, "What do you mean by social inequality". The girl stood and replied, "The gapping made between the poor and rich, son and daughter and upper and the lower etc. is the social inequality." The teacher asked the girl to sit and started to explain more about the term. In this way the teacher asked questions to

few boys and girls. Students started looking their books and notes. Teacher wrapped up after each answer. Here is an excerpt from my journal…

> *The teacher was using the English language most of the time and she had good English. She also promoted the students' interaction by listening to them when they spoke. Her sound was loud and caring. The class looked controlled in the subject matter. There were 16 boys and 17 girls in the class. (22nd December, 2011)*

Most of the time the teacher was using perfect English language and the students were answering in correct English. Throughout the period there was interaction between the teacher and the students. The teacher was able to draw the attention of all the students. Frequently the teacher asked the students to write down certain points in their copy. As Stolp & Smith (1995) said the morale and the spirits of the students and teacher were higher revealing strong healthy class culture.

The notice board mentioned that the break after the 2nd and 6th period had been suspended so as to finish the school time 20 minutes earlier due to the winter season. But during my visits I found teachers and students still practicing the break time. I thought the basic assumption there is that the notice is not important (Schein, 1991).

I found being late for 5-10 minutes was taken as a normal in the school. When the teachers were unpunctual to the classes, students were found naturally late to the classes. Many students enter the classes 3-5 minutes later the teachers. Here is a glimpse…

> *Teachers slowly moved to class for second period. Even after ten minutes two classes were still without the teachers. In front of class 7(B) students were teasing and kicking each other. A boy from class 6 came to call a*

*teacher sitting in the sun. He waited for some time to get the teacher's response as the teacher was talking with another teacher. In the other class teacher who came from outside the gate was 15 minutes late; there was nobody to watch that except me a visitor. (4th December, 2011)*

During my visits, I did not find any example of teachers' collaboration except an example of sharing session of the English teacher about "Fundamental English Conversation in School". English teacher who recently got training from an NGO was going to have a sharing session with the other teachers so that they could enhance the English environment in the school. According to the Principal,

"*Whenever a teacher is sent for trainings by the school, they come back and share the knowledge gained to other remaining teachers about how we can implement that in our school."*

In this school also, during my visits, I noticed few peculiar things which I could not categorize to any particular cultural element of the school culture but I felt those things were significant in some way in understanding the school culture. Here are some examples.

I got introduced with the foreign lady. I came to know that she was from USA and was visiting the school for four months under the full bright program. When I told her about my purpose of visiting the school, she said that I chose a right school since it was one of the best amongst the government schools in Nepal. (6th November 2011)

On 5th December, 2011, class 10 students were gathered in a hall for conducting a meeting for educational tour. The students were chattering excitedly. Then the math teacher started conducting the meeting. At first it was difficult to draw the attention of the students, but in a caring parental way he began to speak about the

exiting tour that is going to begin the next day, which easily drew the students' attention. I remembered Colley (1999) saying students react on the basis of how they are treated by the teachers. I felt it would have been better if the Principal was also present there to speak few words to the students. I thought, as per Evans (1995), the Principal's availability as the leader was missing there.

On 1st December, 2011, I went at the backyard, behind the school building. Three boys were squatting and playing mud and talking. I approached to them and started talking informally. They revealed that they were from 10 B and the teacher was absent, that's why they are out. When I suggested why they don't go to the library in such occasions. They said that library is always closed except when their teachers take them to the library once in a blue moon.

***Vision and Values***

The school does not have any clear written mission statement. According to the Principal, now the mission of the school is to bring positive change in the society through the proper education hence, the written motto of this school is "Education for Social Change". The present Principal conceptualized the motto 16 years ago. The Principal says, the motto means that if an educated person cannot contribute to the society then the education s/he received is incomplete. According to Celik (2010), School culture with such high commitment creates valuable learning environment. He added,

*I like to see my students practically implementing the knowledge they gained from the school into their day-to-day life at home and in the society. This also applies to the teachers and parents.*

On 15th November, 2011, the HT, Head of the academic department and the disciplinary department were in the sun talking quite seriously. I did not hesitate to

join them as the HT welcomed me with the eye contact (signal). I slowly understood that they were talking about the few problems seen in the students in the recent days. They were mainly focusing in the hairstyles of the boys. They were discussing whether to call barber in the school and get the boys hair cut.

The Principal stated that they don't give physical punishments to the students. They believe that classroom and school should be child friendly. The teachers have taken several trainings about child friendly teaching. They believe that behavioral change can be brought more effectively through the friendly ways rather than through the corporal punishments. The effect of corporal punishment is temporary. Permanent change can be brought through the behavioral change by establishing friendly relationship with the students (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). The Principal added,

*Through the child-friendly steps we are gaining more respects from the students. In the past, we used to give corporal punishment to the students and they were also very rude. When we started showing respect to their individuality, they also started to realize and became more polite and show respect to the teachers and started behaving in matured way.*

The school administration could not provide any written rules and guidelines to me when I asked for. The administration officer said that the rules for the teachers are as per the educational act of the government.

The Principal said that he believes; only the students with distinction marks are not the good students. Even an average or below the average students can also be a successful person in a certain area in the future. It revealed to me his personal philosophy of definite way of thinking that ultimately impacts the school culture (Godfrey, 2003). He stressed,

*I don't believe in students' failure. I believe that a student can be a failure in*

*one exam but it does not mean that s/he has not learned anything. That student can still do a lot in the future. I trust that every student can be a success.*

The Principal further focused that he tries to follow instructional leadership because he feels teachers also need support and guidance to be effective teachers (Ubben & Hughes, 1992). He instructs the teachers that when they are confused, frankly tell the students that they would find and tell in the class later rather than trying to pretend that teachers should know everything.

The Principal says, now their future plan is to focus in overall quality rather than in the numbers and infrastructure. He is planning to focus in continuous evaluation system and to start skill based technical courses like in the area of agriculture and electrical. He has also initiated in informal education and the plan is to eliminate illiteracy from this locality. The informal classes are now at the lower-secondary level, his future plan is to take them up to the SLC level. Here is what he uttered,

*For the technical education in Agriculture and electrical, I am planning to develop a shared vision along with the NGOs and CBOs of the locality and the stakeholders. This area has very fertile land but people do not have idea about the modern farming system. Hence such manpower should be produced. Students get frustrated when they fail in one or two subjects in SLC and they stop their education.*

He thinks that such students can earn their livings through such technical trainings in the field of Agriculture and Electrical. He further emphasized that many houses are constructed in this area every year and it is difficult to find person with electrical skills required for the wiring of the new house. In future it will be a model school in the whole Nation. The vision, what they value the most, seems to be the SLC result oriented (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

***Rituals and Ceremonies***

*(PTA Meeting)*

*(Primary Block Assembly)*

During my observation, I found that in the primary section, they practice the reporting system for the students of classes 4 and 5. One of the students is asked to write the summary report of the previous day and read in front of the class turn by turn. Here is a sample,

> *I went to class 5 to observe the class reporting. A girl came in front of the class with her diary and read the report of the activities of the previous day. She started right from her moving towards the school and described the major happenings of the day. She summarized the activities of each class period and included how she passed the lunch break. (21st December, 2011)*

When I asked the primary in-charge about the objective of such report writing, he said, that was to give exposure to the students to speak up, to help them improve their writing skills and to make the habit of consciously observing the activities. As per Picucci et al, (2002) I understood it as their culture to make the students active learners.

They don't have morning assemblies in the secondary block at all because the higher studies' classes run in the morning in the same building. National anthem is

sung in the class. But at the primary block the morning assembly is quite colorful with student's speech, school pray, march pass and quiz revealing their ritualistic tradition (Deal & Peterson, 1998). The bell rings at 9:55 for the assembly then the students lineup for assembly while disabled students stay at the balcony in front of their classroom. The monitors of each class arrange the line and stands in front of their respective class. Then the school sings the national anthem and recites the school prayers in English language. After that a teacher conducts the physical drill for 4-5 minutes. Then the student's speech and quiz are conducted before they march pass to their classrooms. I understood their culture of valuing students' active learning through their mores and customs (Bennett, 1998).

Here is a short glance,

> *A small girl came up and gave a speech on "Cow" in English. Then the teacher asked questions about cow to the students. Few students went to the stage to answer the different questions turn by turn. Right answers were clapped for. Disabled students were watching the whole activities from their balcony. After the assembly, the students march passed and went to their classrooms. (21st December, 2011)*

From the teachers and the students, I came to know that the major annual ceremonies the school observes are farewell to the SLC batch, parents day, Dashain festival, teachers' day, children's day, Poet Laxmi Prasad Devkota's birthday and Sarashwati puja. And the extra-curricular activities that are generally organized in the school are: sports week, educational tours, debates, quizzes, speech competition etc. Such rituals and ceremonies have helped to keep the school members connected and provided opportunities to bond with each other (Peterson & Deal, 2009).

The school does not conduct any regular weekly teachers' meeting for sharing

and planning together. After every examination, they meet for the result analysis and discuss about any other new issues seen during the examinations. It indicates low teachers collaboration (Moore, 1999). Sometimes they have PTA and SMC joint meetings where they discuss about the school management and developmental issues. The four departmental heads conduct meetings with the Principal as and when necessary. This year all the teachers were taken for special retreat. I felt it good as school sometimes needs a staff get-together for the fun to reenergize the teachers (Sigford, 1998). The Principal said,

*This year I took the teachers to "Daman" for the retreat where we seriously discussed about the implementation of CAS program. The reason to take them there was to create more concentrated environment so that the teachers became fresh and did not escape showing their personal work. The meeting was very effective and the teachers are implementing CAS very seriously now.*

Junior students are taken for educational visit to different parts within the valley. Class ten students are taken to places like Lumbini, Pokhara, Gorkha etc. The only informal gathering ceremony for the teachers is the annual picnic. Class teachers and the subject teachers take their students to picnic, field trips and the educational tours. Informally, teachers go for short tours in small groups on their own. As per Ubben and Hughes (1992), this has created favorable relationship between the teachers and students through recreational learning.

***History and Stories***

Lalitpur School was established in 1969 inside a temple periphery to provide literacy opportunity to the local children. There was no school building at that time and classes used to be conducted at various parts of the temple. The school was started from Primary level by few volunteers of the local youth library.

According to the teacher, who also studied in the same school, later some literate youth of the community took initiation to shift the school at this place (the present primary block). They legalized the land in the name of the school with the help of the government and constructed the school building with the help from the local community. The local community voluntarily served the school because they desperately needed a school to educate their children. He further highlighted,

*The school is named with the philosophy that the students of this school should be exemplarily creative youth of tomorrow. In 2043 BS the school was divided in to the primary and the secondary block. The secondary block was transferred 200 meter away to nearby the road side, where it is now.*

According to the Principal, the school remembers those who contributed in the establishment of this school. They have been honored in the annual ceremonies. Some of them are even in the SMC now. They have also honored the teachers who taught voluntarily during the time of establishment. The schools with positive culture reflect and honor their past as it has great impact in their present (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

The Principal expressed that he has heard about the great contributions of the founder Principal who was one of the initiator and provided volunteer service for several years. But as far as he knows, the Principals who came later could not contribute a lot for the school because of which the school was in very poor situation by the time he took over the responsibility 26 years ago. It was almost closed due to the lack of resources and local people could not trust upon this school and sent their children to other schools. He added,

*Within 26 years, the school has revived its history and now it is sound in many aspects. Although it was under my leadership, equal credibility goes to our dedicated*

*teachers, and the parents whose concerns and direct involvement have contributed a lot for this. In the beginning, the parents' involvement was nil. But later, slowly we started getting their help. SMC also has great contribution. Now, the parents of the local area give first priority to this school for their child's education.*

He further remembers that they started teaching in English medium 15 years ago from class one. The same batch gave SLC in English medium 5 years ago. The results as well as the reputation reached to the new heights after the students started appearing in the SLC in the English language. As an effective leader, the Principal was able to read the culture and brought systemic change that supported the school improvement (Garland, 2004).

***People and Relationship***

On 28th November, 2011, I was sitting on the sun with few other teachers. The Principal also came and sat separately in the sun. He looked around the school and classrooms from where he was sitting. He noticed three teachers inside a classroom. He asked another teacher sitting in the sun, "What are those three teachers doing in one class"? The teacher said, "They are discussing about Picnic sir". The Principal commented that there is still a week left why should they disturb the class now?

Then he went to that class called the teachers out and talked for a while. After that he came back. After some time he revealed that he scolded the teachers and told them to send the students home if they were feeling lazy to teach. I thought with this, as Martinuzzi (2008) said, the Principal revealed his autocratic way of dealing with the teachers.

On 15th December, 2011, the Principal asked one of the teachers, who had gone in the educational tour, to sponsor a round of black tea (for four people sitting in the sun) on the occasion of returning from the educational tour. The teacher smiled

and ordered 4 cups of black tea from the canteen. At this juncture, as per Wagner (2006) I found friendly environment in their relationship revealing the positive part of the school culture.

On 1st December, 2011, In the course of informal talking of the teachers, one of the teachers said that the Principal had mind for not being informed about the class picnics. Teachers initiated and managed on their own without informing the Principal. I understood that they have communication gap due to the absence of formal procedure revealing their weak culture (Picucci et al, 2002).

Generally when teachers were free they were found sitting in the sun talking with each other. Some teachers were found talking humorously at each other. Teachers read news papers and sometimes shares teaching-learning related issues in the sun revealing their collegial culture (Loyola University, 2008). On first December 2011, a part time teacher entered the school in formal dress with a red tie. Other teachers started teasing him. They said he looked like the Principal of the school. Everybody laughed revealing that it was not as per the general expectation of their culture (Sailes, 2008). On 1st December, 2011, few girls were playing "Rubber band (*Chungi*)" near the volleyball court. Principal approached near them. They stopped playing; all of them stood silently facing the Principal. Their face blushed. I thought the girls were scared with him. Student Sameer Acharya also revealed that the Principal is quite a less friendly in comparison to the other teachers. This may be because of the position and next may be he has less contact with the students since he does not take regular classes. He added,

*He always encourages us to be good, studious and improve our scores in the examinations. HT does not go in students' picnic. The class teacher goes with us.*

On 28th November, 2011 students from a class came towards the gate. The

science teacher who was sitting in the sun scold the students for coming out of the class before the school ended. He returned the students, the students went back and sat in the sun, smiling. The environment did not look humanistic (Hoy & Miskel, 2001).

On 18th December, 2011, few teachers were sitting on the sun; two boys from class 12 came and joined the group. One of the boys humorously said that the math teacher was looking handsome with the new Nepali cap. The teacher smiled. I sensed the friendly relationship between them revealing the positive aspect of their culture (Novak, 2008).

Throughout my two months visits, I did not find any case of the students fighting and quarrel with each other. Students always looked playing and communicating decently with each other. On 6th November 2011, I noticed coming and going students warmly greeting each other at the gate. Some of them were even hugging. That was the time for morning shift students to go home and the day shift students to enter the school revealing positive climate (Wagner, 2006).

**Case 3: Kathmandu School**

Kathmandu School is a private school located at the heart of the capital city, Kathmandu. It has its own seven school buses and four school vans that go throughout the city to provide transportation facility to the students. The school has arranged two separate blocks for the primary and the secondary levels. Both the blocks are laid out within 5-6 ropanies (0.25 hectare) of land each.

The school was jointly established in the year 2005 by five likeminded people with an aim to provide "Learner-centered education" to the middle class families. There are now nearly 600 students studying from class one to ten. The school has

sent its first batch to the SLC examination, where all the students passed in the distinction and the first division.

**Introducing the Students and Their Perceptions**

Biraj Sijapati (Student 1) a boy from class 8 was my first student participant from Kathmandu School. He joined this school in class II. Before that he studied in another private school in Kathmandu. He perceives the school motto "Meaningful education for meaningful life" as good education makes students' future good. He said,

*The Principal and teachers tells us to be good citizen first then only we can be a good professional in the future. They say that the primary objectives of the school are to produce good citizens.*

I understood it as the culture of the school, a commonly held in the mind framework of organizational members about the basic assumptions and values which the students are taught (Smith, 2004). The boy said, when students have any personal or class related problem first they approach to the class teacher. Class teachers are very friendly and the class is like a family. They don't hesitate to speak with the teachers. The boy added,

*Every Sunday we have class meeting with the class teacher. We share our class related problems and make plans for the class-wise competitions. We have free discussions and every student can speak freely in such meeting. We respect our teachers by heart. They are like our second parents. They give us good advises that will make our future good.*

The above perceptions of the boy reflected the child friendly climate in the school (Novak, 2008). The boy said, the morning assembly in the school consists of

National Anthem, School Anthem and sharing session of the students about journal, visits, facts etc.

*(Students practicing music)*

The boy could not remember about the exact mission statement and where in the school was mentioned that. But I thought, according to Deal and Kennedy (1982), school mission should be shared with all the members to closely knit a school community together. Only after some time the boy told that according to the Principal, the mission of the school is to make good citizens and human beings with all the qualities that a human should have.

Regarding the classroom environment, the boy said that teachers expect silence when they are teaching in the class but students can raise hand and speak or ask question. Sometimes teachers let the students interact among each other. At this juncture, the teachers' basic assumption about the classroom discipline is revealed (Budd, 2009).

The boy perceives that students' works are displayed around the wall everywhere in the school to reflect the students' hard work. He also feels good to see his creation being displayed. I also saw during my observations that the corridors and the classrooms walls were full of students' creative articles. The boy also said that he is satisfied with the varieties of the extracurricular activities in the school like basket ball trainings, music, vocal, traditional and modern musical instruments, dance,

drama, art, writers' workshop etc. for me, it revealed the positive school culture as Sigford (1998) said that positive thinking and positive people make the positive school culture.

Shantwana Parajuli (Student 2), a girl from Class 8 joined this school in class 5. According to her, the school motto is written at the several places like the school Jerseys, School copy, School logo etc. For her the school motto means that students must get good education first then they should implement in their life to make their future good. She said, School motto is also mentioned in the school song. I remembered Brown (2004) for saying that school culture can be passed on through stories and slogans. The girl feels this school is different in many aspects from her previous school. She said,

*For example my previous school was largely book based and teachers based. But here we have various opportunities to learn practically and show our talents in various fields. In my previous school, teachers used to give priority to the front benchers only but here teachers give care to all the students equally.*

She said that teachers here do not give physical punishments. Sometimes teachers send the students out of the class. If assignment is not submitted on time, students are asked to submit twice or thrice. Sometimes the Principal calls the parents. Students are also sent for counseling. Generally when students perform poorly, when they are not mixed up with the friends, and do not submit assignments on time regularly, they are sent for the counseling. According to her, to some extent, those students change after the counseling. I found the counseling culture to be a unique way of this school revealing their definite way of thinking towards positive student behavior (Godfrey, 2003). She further said about the culture of the school,

*We have students' council. In every class, there are captains and Vice-Captains. And there is the school captain and the school vice-captain. Their role is to guide the students so that the school norms are not violated and to help the teachers and the school at various occasions. Students do not organize any programs on their own. They only help the teachers.*

She mentioned about the various positive aspects of the school. She feels various programs and competitions are organized in the school to increase the confidence of each student. The teachers tell that their school is different and special than others so students behave differently and are proud of their school.

She said, sometimes HOD comes and sits in the class when another teacher is teaching in the class. HOD helps to explain to the students, keeps record of the teacher and the students. The presence of HOD does not make much difference to the teachers but students are very silent on such day. I thought class observation for teachers' collaboration through teachers' assessments is taken normally here (Loyola University, 2008).

The student 3, my 3rd participant student from the school was Bipul Bhattarai, a boy studying in class 9. He studied here from class 3. His parents brought him here feeling that this school is better and different from his previous school. He feels that this school is different from the previous one as in the previous school, teachers focused in memory based learning but here, teachers teach more practically and he feels it is easy to understand here. His parents also say that he has improved after coming to this school. I realized the practical based teaching of this school has resulted in the market culture giving competitive advantage to it (Cheng & Liu, 2005).

The boy thinks the objective of this school is to bring new philosophy in teaching by making the students understand rather than memorize the facts. He thinks the distinct objective of this school is teaching practically. He gave an example,

*We went to Jiri and studied the life style, society and tradition of the people. We also studied about their religious thinking and their educational thinking. We also saw the Technical school. We found that the technical school was promoting the SLC failed students in the field of health, engineering and agriculture. We also saw the cheese production.*

When he said that, I remembered DeVita (2010) saying that the learning of the children does not begin and end at the classroom door. The boy further said that generally the teachers do not give corporal punishments but sometimes when students misbehave in the class. When students do not pay attention in the class, teachers get angry and they beat on the back bone or pull ears or hairs. I realized that teachers go against the school policy of the humanistic approach (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). The boy emphasized that the teachers focus all the students equally while teaching in the class but sometimes they get irritated when students do not understand. They tell the good students to explain for them. At the end of the year the teachers provide the evaluation sheet to the students to evaluate the overall classes of the teacher. I understood that the school culture supports and focuses not only on students learning but also on teachers' learning as well, which is a symbol of positive school culture (Brown, 2004).

Bipasha Bhattarai (Student 4) joined this school in class 3 and now she is in class 9. She feels that there is a lot of difference between her previous school and this. She remembers her previous school was very strict in terms of discipline.

Teachers used to give very hard physical punishment. The Principal was very much a scary person. The teachers were also very scary. But the environment here is quite easy and friendly. Teachers are not very strict and do not give physical punishment. She feels that she can learn easily here because the teachers teach in the friendly manner. I found like other students, she was influenced by the humanistic approach of the school culture (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). She further explained the school culture this way,

*We have lots of ECAs here like music, dance, drama, arts, fieldtrips etc regularly. Because of this we enjoy in this school and we can easily concentrate in their studies. We the students put our demands and voice through the class meeting with the class teacher. The class teacher forwards our issues to the school administration. We can freely put our ideas in the meeting.*

She thinks the main objective of this school is to impart such ability to the students so that they can freely share their ideas without any hesitation and have the ability speak confidently. Besides that the good result is always there. This means the quality education here. I thought the school has been able to share its values with its members (Peterson & Deal, 2009). She explained,

*Our teacher focuses all the students equally. We can ask anytime. When we are not satisfied with the teaching of any teacher, we can keep our voice to the block in-charge. We can easily put our voice and we don't need to hesitate for that.*

She said that there are various clubs in the school like music, dance, arts, social, literature, drama etc. But students do not organize any program independently. Programs are organized by the school and students only help the teachers in the program. Here I thought the school culture still does not have

confidence in students' ability and in students' involvement empowers them and enables them to learn from the life experience (Fletcher, 2003).

**Introducing the Teachers and Their Perceptions**

Neetu Upreti was my first teacher respondent in Kathmandu School. She joined this school 6 years ago. Before coming here she had worked in 3 other private schools. She feels this school is vast different from other 3. First of the entry system was different. Students were also involved in teacher selection process. She further emphasized the difference this way,

*I felt the difference of this school from the very beginning. Assessment system, curriculum, culture etc everything was different. In addition to the government curriculum we have our own school curriculum for each subject. School curriculum is more practical based. For example, "Festivals of Nepal" are taught in every school because that is included in the government curriculum. But our school curriculum includes celebrating and studying about festivals practically and the students have various roles to play to celebrate festivals in the school.*

With this, I realized as told by Stolp and Smith, (1995), the school has the complex rituals of celebrating all the festivals for the powerful spiritual force in the school. Similarly she gave another example of practical education. Before teaching "Plant Life", students are taken to the Botanical garden. They observe closely the varieties of plants there and then fill up the work sheet prepared by the subject teacher on the basis of their lesson. Group discussion and presentation is done in the class. Then only the lesson as per the government curriculum is taught to them. When they read the books, they find that they have already understood it.

She said that they don't use the word "discipline" here rather they expect responsibility and positive behaviors in the student. According to her, the school

believes a discipline child may not always be responsible but a responsible child is always disciplined. In Nepal, fear is one strategy that schools and teachers use to control discipline which destroy children's' intelligence and thoughts negatively (Mathema & Bista, 2005).

As per her experience, new teachers are given full orientation about the school vision, values, norms and procedures by the Principal and the old teachers before they are given the work and classes. I thought, in this way the school culture is taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in the school (Moran & Meso, 2008). She added, BOD along with the Principal has individual teachers meeting and sharing at the end of every academic year. There BOD gives feed back to the teacher and teacher can also give feedback and dissatisfaction to the Management. BOD members also share the future plan of the school that their vision is to extend this school to different parts of the country. By this I understood that the BOD members try to develop shared beliefs and values that closely knit the school community together as told by Deal and Kennedy (1982).

She stressed that there is no kind of teachers union at all in the school. If teachers have any problem they can directly talk to the management so she thinks they don't need union here. Students put suggestions and complaints in the suggestion box if they do not like teachers' dealing and behaviors. Sometimes students directly suggest the teacher about teaching-learning and that is taken normally here. I realized such positive factors of the school culture have promoted a healthy environment for individuals (Chiang, 2003).

She said,

*This is a good organization. I am proud to be here. This school is a learning place not only for the students but also for the teachers. I feel, I am developing and growing as an educational leader.*

*(A girl delivering speech in the assembly)*

*(Project work displayed in class 4)*

Sharada Subedi was my second participant teacher in the school who teaches Nepali at the lower-secondary level. This is her fourth year in this school and before that, she taught in a government school outside the valley. She said that she worked in several schools but this school is different from others in the regard of the philosophy of teaching learning. Here practical teaching is focused and the teachers also get opportunity to learn and grow.

She perceives the mission of this school is to focus in practical learning rather than in memory based education. I remembered Brown (2004) saying that a school culture that supports hard work and high achievement must have certain ingredients like inspiring vision, focus on students, teacher learning, etc. which I found in this school. She added,

*The students here are enthusiastic, interactive, participative and fearless in learning. For an outsider they might look undisciplined in the beginning. The evaluation system is different. We follow the continuous evaluation system. We record the activities of the individual students continuously.*

She perceives that they don't have the demarcation of good and bad students. Students can be slow and fast learner in every class. The teachers here focus on the slow learners. She thinks all the classes in this school are noisy and interactive but nobody complains about any class being noisy. Silent classes are taken as a problem here. By telling this, I realized the teacher is talking about their distinct school culture (Picucci et al, 2002).

The teacher said that student behavioral problems are handled by counseling first by the subject or grade teacher then by the Principal and lastly by the counselor. Class room rules are made by the students and teachers in participative way. The orientation is given to the students in the beginning of every session regarding the school norms and values. Teachers have to sign in the teachers' code of conduct while joining the school. All the teachers follow that. Previous history, stories, philosophies are shared with the new teachers during the orientation week in the beginning of the year. As per Jerald (2006) and Celik (2010), to me, the above mentioned features revealed the positive culture of the school.

Sagar Pokhrel (Teacher 3) has been working here for six years. He is teaching Social Studies in the secondary level. He also found vast differences between the previous schools and this school. He said that the teaching in the previous schools was teacher-centered so he used to enter the class without preparation and teach from the text books. But he found here the teaching to be student focused so they need to prepare for the practical learning of the students and lots of time is consumed in designing and preparing materials for the activity based teaching. Once again I understood that the core of what the school considers important and valuable is the practical based learning of the students (Peterson & Deal, 2009).

He said that he is satisfied with the remuneration because it is above the government scale. He also feels that as a novice teacher, he is learning and growing here because of the different teaching-learning methodology here. As per Wagner (2006), I understood the culture of the school affects everything that happens in the school and of course the teachers' satisfaction and learning. The teacher further said,

*Our students are fear-less. They do not hesitate to talk and put their problems in front of the teachers and the Principal. They are noisy and talkative in the class. We take all these positively because we know and understand what our students are like. But for the new teachers, it is very difficult to digest in the beginning. Slowly they get adjusted to the school philosophy of making students fear-less so that they can actively participate in teaching-learning process.*

He further opined that the individual record keeping of the students and activity based planning of the class is also hectic for the new teachers and many teachers quit also. But he feels, to those teachers who are passionate to teaching and want to grow as a good teacher, this school is a good learning place. I realized all these peculiar and distinctive way of life of the school, the values and ideas embodied in social relations, in systems of beliefs and customs, revealed the school culture (Bennett, 1998).

As per the teacher, famous writers and poets of Nepal are requested to share their views and experience with the students in the writers' workshop. This year they invited poet Madhav Ghimire and Byakul Maila. Students write reflective journal everyday reviewing their learning at the school. Teachers give the narrative reporting of the students explaining the various abilities of a student in their evaluation of a student from the teachers' point of view. He added,

*Students are evaluated continuously by the class teachers. For example, if a student does not do homework repeatedly the class teacher talks with the parents and keeps the records in the written form. All such records are used to evaluate the students. Similarly the teachers are also continuously evaluated by the HODs. Observation is always going on.*

**Elements of Culture in Kathmandu School**

As in the cases of the Kaski School and Lalitpur School, I have presented the school culture practices of Kathmandu school under five different headings. They are architectures and artifacts, history and stories, rituals and ceremonies, people and relationship and vision and values.

***Architectures, Artifacts and Symbols***

The primary block and the secondary block, both are at the densely populated location of the heart of Kathmandu city. Both the blocks are laid out within 5-6 ropanies of land each. They have very limited play grounds for the children. All the buildings and play grounds are rented. The compound walls are painted with the pictures thematic to environment, traffic awareness, nationality, co-existence of the various religions etc revealing a bit of their shared values (Robbins, 1996).

*(Pictures on the compound wall, various religions and national symbols)*

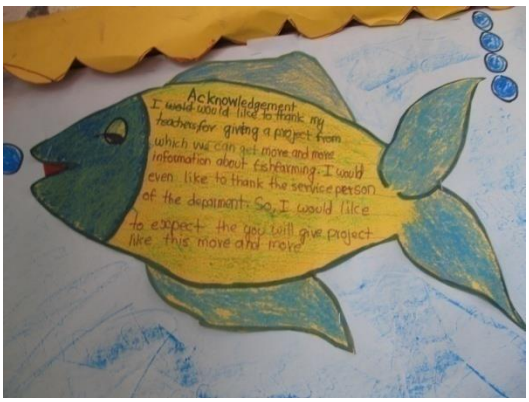
Near the main gate is situated the reception (front office) room. Near the door

is a notice board, where the mission statement of the school is pasted in English and Nepali languages. The school calendars with several Pictures of the students are also hung. Others on the board are few quotations, school prospectus and few lines on "Think Positive". There are two abstract pictures on the wall, nicely framed. The names of the students who created the pictures are written at the bottom of the pictures. Some trophies and medals are displayed on the cupboard. Few daily news papers and monthly magazines are placed on a table for the visitors to read.

The hallways and the corridors are full of students' works like paintings and poems displayed colorfully. That is revealing that the students and their creations are valued in the school culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995). Outside few primary classes were big chart boards where the title read "We Visited Different Places during Vacation". The photographs of students with their parents and the places they visited are pasted. On the staircase to the first floor are several scenery pictures. One big frame contained the student drawn picture of Nepal. The fourteen zones are covered with different grains each. As per Fey & Denison (2000) I realized that these visible structures reveal that the school values the students learning through activities rather than through books only. Description of the field visit to a fish farm is also pasted. Here is a glimpse of my field record,

> *All the classrooms were full of students work displayed on the walls. There was hardly any space left in the walls to add any. There were also Job chart and the sharing chart. The teacher explained that students do several duties like cleaning, maintaining, informing jobs. And every day the first 15 minutes of the first period is allocated to the students to share the recent affairs with their friends. (December 30, 2012)*

The secondary block is separately situated around 50 meters east, within the same locality. The secondary classrooms also contain the chart papers with students' work but not as much as in the primary. Quotations, code of conducts, duty chart are in each classroom. While walking around, several times during my visits, I found all the classes in this school being noisy and interactive most of the time, rather than silently listening to the teacher. I felt that all these artifacts are signaling their positive school culture (Budd, 2009).



*(Students' creations on the corridors)*

The school motto "Meaningful Education: Meaningful Life" is printed in the school gate in both the primary and the secondary block. It is also printed in the students' track suit and the copies. I felt, through these the school is giving stress to what it values. The primary block holds three rented buildings with 29 rooms altogether. There is a basket ball ground and a small open area of about 2 ropanies for play ground. Similarly the secondary block possesses a rented building with 12 rooms and a basketball court. The main school library is in the primary block with around two thousand books. There is another small library in the secondary block too. Besides these every class has its own small class library, mainly to engage the students who finish their class assignments earlier. I felt it as a brilliant way. There is one newly purchased "Smart Board", electronic board in the common room, near

the primary library.

During my visits, I noticed the classrooms to be fully decorated with students' creations, lots of quotations around the walls, polite teachers, interactive students, fearless environment, noisy and unrest class. Here is a sample of my observation,

> *The classroom walls were full of charts and the students' paper works. The class was fully decorated. There was a small section of class library. Classroom norms made by the students were also there. All the students looked alert without any fear. They looked eagerly waiting for their turn to give answer. When there was a right answer there was a round of applause. (23rd January,2012)*

*(Classroom library)*

*(Students' creations inside the classroom)*

Similarly on 26th January 2012, I went to class 5 B with the Grade teacher. I noticed very active and confident student on that day. The students became ready for the presentation on the vacation assignment on story review. A boy went to the front and explained the story with the help of chart paper with pictures. The boy explained the story he read confidently with the help of the pictures drawn by him in a chart paper. Then the teacher asked questions about the story. She also asked the morale of the story. The boy replied. After that the boy asked for the suggestions with the friends. Then what happened is…

> *Several hands were up for the suggestions. A boy stood and said "Your presentation was nice you had good eye contact but it would have been better if you had told about the lady bugs also. You repeated "one day" many times you said "two pair of wings" it should be "a pair of wing" etc. (26 January, 2012)*

Similarly other students also gave lots of suggestions confidently. The teacher gave the final suggestions. Other students went to the front and same process was repeated. I remembered Fletcher (2003) saying that students' involvement empowers them and enables them to learn from the life experience. A girl started as it was her turn. Students were still talking with each other and nobody listened to the girl. The teacher stopped the girl and told loudly, "Class are we ready?" whole class said, "Yeas!" then the teacher asked the girl to start. I found a different way of drawing the students' attention. Although the teacher was commanding, she used polite tone throughout the period. The morale and the spirits of the students were high revealing strong healthy culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

The problem of classroom punctuality was not seen throughout my visits. All the classes run in time. Sometimes the bus students arrived late in the school due to the traffic problem in the city. That was not an issue at all by the administration. Throughout my acquaintance, I did not find any teacher being late for the class like in Lalitpur School. As per Celik (2010), I felt punctuality is highly valued for creating positive school culture for the promotion of academic performance of the school.

As per the Principal, up to class 5, they practice collaborative teaching because there are two teachers in each class, the grade teacher and the co-teacher. They divide the roles among themselves but both of them are present in the class. Every Friday the teachers of the primary level sit together with their subject HOD to

plan together for the coming week. According Jerald (2006) this also reveals the teachers' collaboration. But in the higher classes there is no collaboration directly except some types of sharing.

On the December 28, 2012 students frequently came to call their parents from the reception. They were talking in Nepali Language with each other and with the receptionist. The Communication between the receptionist and the students was polite and warm revealing positive culture (Jerald, 2006).

Next to the Principal's room was also the "store room". the time table of the several activities done in the room like preparing materials, distribution of material, kitchen record, Tea time etc was clearly mentioned on the door. I thought the students and teachers would not have any confusion in visiting the store room in appropriate time only. I thought, it clearly indicated how teachers and students are expected to deal with the store, a part of their culture (Sailes, 2008).

***Vision and Values***

The mission of the school is mentioned as to develop all aspects of school life in meaningful situation so that children achieve their full potential both academically and socially. The school claims that this education takes place within a challenging, stimulating and caring environment in which educational values are central to the ethos of the school and its teaching. The school motto is "Meaningful Education for Meaningful Life". According to the Principal, This means that life is meaningful if you can contribute and lead in the society positively. For that the students should be prepared from their childhood through practical education rather than just bookish knowledge. Students are taught here to appreciate the positive aspects of the society. The teaching learning procedure is guided by the school motto as their philosophy (Bush & Glover, 2003).

Generally when students perform poorly, are not mixed up with the friends, and do not submit assignments on time regularly, they are sent for the counseling. According to the student 2, to some extent, those students change after the counseling. The Principal said that they don't accept corporal punishment as it is a kind of crime and unproductive action in the long term. They develop positive behavior in the students through counseling. During the counseling, they help the students to identify their problem and find the solutions themselves. I realized that they make humanistic approach for positive behavior (Hoy & Miskel, 2001).

I went through the several documents of the school which the Principal provided cordially upon my request. I found there was a clear guideline for the teachers regarding the punishments for students as per offences. The corporal punishment was strictly banned in the school. In the first step, the teachers were instructed to counsel the students 2-3 times focusing on what done, why, what could be the alternatives, what is the impact or consequences of the act or offence. If that did not work teachers could detain the students with extra work to be done by informing the parents and the class teachers. At the third stage the offenders were sent to the Disciplinary In-charge and finally to the Principal or CEO. Only the CEO and the Principal could take decision to give capital punishment or suspend if needed.

There was another document where clear guideline was given to the teachers regarding the monthly test. Teachers were asked to arrange feedback sharing after each monthly, carry follow up activity in the class, have individual counseling and meet parents if needed. In yet another document, teachers were given clear guideline regarding the ongoing assessment of students. Ongoing assessment included the performance of students in class works, home assignments, projects, class tests and participation during different teaching learning activities in or outside the classroom,

reflection of acquired knowledge and skills in daily life etc. Teachers were also given a guideline for planning teaching-learning activities for a unit or a lesson. As per Lambert (1998), I realized the written rules were to develop common understandings for their common positive culture to enhance curriculum, instruction and focus on students. Every day the first 15 minutes of the first period is allocated to the students to share the recent affairs with their friends. Principal's educational philosophy focuses in conceptual learning. Her advice to the teachers is to make the concept clear to the students first.

Famous writers and poets of Nepal are requested to share their views and experience with the students in the writers' workshop. This year they invited poet Madhav Ghimire and Byakul Maila. Students write reflective journal everyday reviewing their learning at the school. Teachers develop their own practical curriculum that go side by side with the government curriculum.

BOD members share the future plan of the school that their vision is to extend this school to different parts of the country. According to the Principal, their future plan in terms of infrastructural development is to have their own land and building that supports their teaching-learning philosophies. Then only they will be able to impart education fully as per the vision. They also want to develop the staff who could work according to the school philosophy. As per Bush and Glover (2003), the school as a successful organization directs the philosophy, structures and activities of the school towards achieving the shared vision of imparting meaningful education (Bush & Glover, 2003).

***Rituals and Ceremonies***

A glass covered board at the hallway contains the photographs of the students being involved in "Science and Math Fair", "Field Trips" and "*Dipawali* Celebration." The

school has a typical tradition of celebrating every festival so that the students learn about the Nepali culture and traditions practically.

On 27th January, 2012 as I entered the gate, I saw the Principal writing something on the message board. In the message, she was inviting all the students and staffs for the "Saraswati Puja" to be organized in the school the next day. The next day was Saturday and a public holiday. Next day, there were around 100 students, 25 parents and 15 teachers in the auditorium hall. The English teacher conducted the program. Teachers worshiped the idol of Saraswati decorated on the table. A girl from class 7 spoke few words about the day. The girl spoke about Saraswati as the goddess of education. Then the English teacher called a boy on the dash and together they chanted the Saraswati mantra (Chanting) in Nepali. The English teacher explained the importance of the day on the basis of Hindu religious literature. He emphasized the importance of celebration as to make new educational resolutions. From Ubben and Hughes (1992), I realized such traditions established in the school might have helped positively to the students learning.

Morning Assembly consists of National Anthem, School Anthem, Sharing session about journal, visits, facts etc. Primary, lower-secondary and secondary assemblies are conducted at three different locations separately. The Principal visits all the assemblies turn by turn in different days. First of all the national anthem is sung and then the school song. The school song is mainly focused in knowledge, learning, implementing the knowledge for the well-fare of the society, brother wood in the society etc. Their enriched traditions and rituals reveal the values the school possesses (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

Every day the school sings birthday song for the birthday boys and girls. Then the ages of the birthday students are summed up and the school claps as many times.

Then few students are allowed to voluntarily share about the recent books they read or the journal, visits, facts, recent happenings etc. According to Peterson and Deal (2009), such activities develop informal network in school that builds trust and collaboration between the school members. I notice

*A girl from class 6 went to the stage and she was given a micro-phone. She shared a story of her that occurred to her during the vacation. (January 29, 2012)*

*Annual Activities*

The school emphasizes in various ECAs like swimming, games and sports, competitions, science fair, educational tour, celebrating all the festivals in the school etc. Educational excursions are also conducted every year to give exposure to the students. Other annual functions celebrated in the school are the Parents day, School day, teachers 'day, children's' day etc. Such activities have helped to mark the passage of time, honor the accomplishment of valued goals and celebrate the possibilities of new hopes and dreams (Peterson & Deal, 2009).

Every Sunday the students have class meeting with the class teacher. They share the class related problems and make plans for the class-wise competitions. They have free discussions and every student can speak freely in such meeting. According to the teachers and the Principal, all the teachers and the administrators sit for a week long orientation meeting in the beginning of each academic session. The school vision and mission, teaching learning philosophy, lesson planning procedures, policies regarding the dealing with the students etc are rigorously discussed there.

On every 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, teachers have meeting with the level wise coordinator and prepare lesson plans together and share with the all the teachers. Then the plans are submitted to respective coordinators before leaving. Suggestions provided by coordinators have to be implemented by the teachers. The

coordinators check that during the class observations.

Finally at the end of the every academic session, the Principal and the CEO have feedback meeting with every teacher individually to review the past year. The Principal and CEO provide feedback to the teachers regarding their overall performance of the year and the teachers also give feedback to the school administration regarding the managerial weaknesses which they generally put into operation in the next session. Such meetings have provided opportunities for teachers to collaborate to share skills and experience, provide feedback to teachers and engage teachers in decision making procedure (Brinson & Steiner, 2007).

Every year the students are taken to the class picnic by their class teachers and the subject teachers. The Principal also joins the picnic and enjoys with the students. Besides the picnics, students are also taken for the field trips frequently for the practical learning as well as for the recreations. Students also celebrate all the festivals celebrated in Nepal in the school. This is done for the dual purpose of recreation and learning. Sports activities are also conducted regularly in the school.

Every year, a separate teachers' picnic is organized by the school. Besides that the Principal initiates for frequent hiking and dry picnic. All the teachers participate happily in such programs. The CEO and the Principal offer the end of the session party to all the teachers and the staff. Teachers feel it is a good organization and feel proud to be here. According to Sigford (1998), there is vice-versa relation between positive people and positive culture of the school. I also felt the satisfied and happy teachers and students promote a healthy environment for positive school culture (Chiang, 2003).

***History and Stories***

The Principal remembered that the school was jointly started in the year 2005 by five

likeminded people. One of the founders was herself. She feels the school progressed in short time because they have good understanding between the founders. She remembers that she was going through the "Learner-centered teaching" training program, where she met other friends. After the training was over, five of them planned to open a school with the new philosophy of learner-centered teaching. She further added…

*Our objective was to provide practical education through learner-centered teaching even to the middle class children. At that time, we felt that schools with such philosophy were very limited hence we decided to contribute in this field.*

The Principal remembers that there were around 90 students and 15 teachers initially. It was very difficult to find the teachers who could teach in such philosophy. Hence they collected enthusiastic, dedicated and growth oriented teachers through the public relation and they were given intensive training for 15 days before they were sent to the classrooms. Then continuous boost-up trainings and feedback were given throughout the year. I understood that they taught their culture to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in the school (Moran & Meso, 2008). The Principal added…

*In the first year, students were also collected through the public relationship. When we explained our new philosophy to our friends and relatives we were able to collect 90 students. Then the parents of those students communicated about the school and our philosophy. Now we cannot accept all the interested guardians and the students because of the high competition for the limited seats available.*

The Principal feels that the school is quite new and has not developed any successful stories yet. She believes that although the public has liked the school very much in the 7 years, the school is still in the beginning phase with their vision. She

further said…

*We still have a lot of things to do to impart education as per our philosophy. We are just making preparations like developing the teachers according to learner centered practical teaching, developing infrastructure etc. Because of our new approach we gained publicity prematurely. We still have a long way to go in order to meet our vision.*

***People and Relationship***

The Principal expresses that the school policy is to have friendly relationship between the Board, Principal and the Teachers. She says that they try to minimize the concept of formality and hierarchy which has helped to maintain understanding. When teachers come up with dissatisfaction, the Principal shares the managerial problems in a friendly manner and they are convinced revealing the clan culture of the school (University of Toronto, 2009). She was found talking with the teachers in a friendly and appreciative way. Here is what I noticed…

> *The computer teacher came and showed a paper print to her. She admired him, "Very good! Can you please give a copy to me? It's very good". (January 22, 2012)*

With this, I remembered Brown (2004) saying that successful organizations have cultures that motivate employees by giving meanings to their work. The Principal frequently uses her message board to communicate with the teachers. Through her clear communication, I found that the teachers were not at all confused about their roles and the Principal's expectations. And revealing the positive culture of the school, she uses very friendly and encouraging language in her message which encourages and motivates the teachers (Sailes, 2008). I saw several such messages during my visits of which a sample is presented below.

*"Good morning everybody*
*It's really good to see that you all have managed your classrooms and materials well. We are delighted to see you all planning according to the discussion made in yesterday's department meeting. We would like to appreciate you all for the wonderful messages written on the class room boards. It really seems that you all are charged up for the new beginning. Let us all remember and review the target we have set for this term and work accordingly to achieve it. (January 19,2012)"*

During my visits I found friendly relationship between the teachers. During the leisure time they were found sitting in the sun in small groups and talking informally. They call "timi" (word used to call ones close friend) to each other like intimate friends. On the first day after the winter vacation the primary coordinator handed over a welcome card in the assembly to each teacher. This revealed that the cordial relationship is institutionalized. All these reveal a positive school culture valuing collegial relationship (Jerald, 2006).

The Principal revealed that there are no teachers unions hence the teachers are not divided. Teachers stay even after the school time in groups to work together informally. Up to class 5, they have collaborative teaching because there are two teachers in each class, the grade teacher and the co-teacher. They divide the roles among themselves and work in mutual understanding revealing the collaborative culture (Center for improving School Culture, 2004).

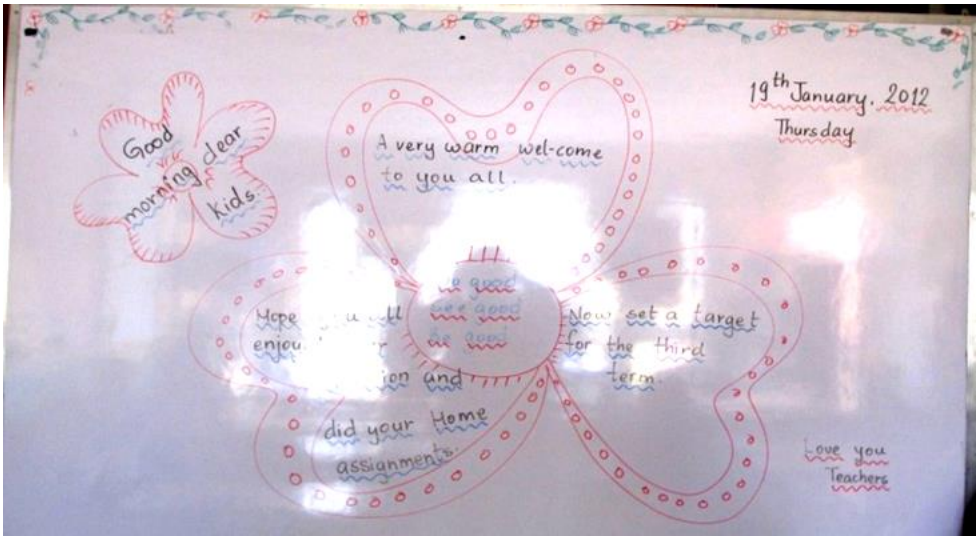
There is a white board in the main hallway. Everyday there is a new message to the students from the Principal. She writes the message on her own handwriting. On January 2, 2012, after the assembly, the Principal sent the lower secondary classes to their class rooms and the secondary classes remained there. The Principal told the

students that some representatives from Cambridge A- level are now visiting the secondary block for supervision so the students will remain there for some time. Although it is very cold, if you are interested you can organize or basket ball match. The students said "Yes!" in a loud voice. She exclaimed "yes?" she laughed for some time from the stage. I thought she expresses her feelings to the students without being reserved as a Principal.

*"She is friendly. When I meet her she gives advices like speak politely with the people, speak in English, to be hygienic etc. She also corrects our grammar while we speak."*

According to the interviewed students, the Principal speaks politely and does not show strictness. When students fight by quarreling, she scolds at that time strictly. She sends the students to counseling room. When students do not perform well in exam or when they do not do homework for several times, they are sent to the counseling.

On the first day after the vacation (January 19, 2012), the teacher conducting the assembly asked the students how many went to their class and saw the welcome message written on their board by their class teachers. After the assembly, I went to see one of the classrooms to see what message had the teacher written on the board. The board was decorated with the color markers. A big flower was made on the board. The petals of the flower read, "Good morning dear kids! A very warm welcome to you all! Hope you all enjoyed your vacation and did your home assignment. Now set a target for the third term. Love you-your teachers.




*(Welcome message to the students from teachers)*

The students revealed that when they have any personal or class related problem first they approach to the class teacher. The class teachers are very friendly and the class is like a family. Generally the class teacher solves all the problems hence, they don't have to go to the Principal. The environment reveals the positive school culture (Jerald, 2006).

Whenever I went around the school, I found that senior students communicate with each other in friendly manner. I did not find any case of students fighting or quarrelling throughout my visits. As I mentioned already in the classroom environment, the morale and the spirits of the students were found high in classroom discussions and participations revealing strong healthy culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

**Summary of the Chapter**

In this chapter, I presented the data that I collected using ethnographic method from the three schools under the study. I tried to bring the teachers' and students' perception about their school culture and also tried to explore the cultural elements of the schools.

The students of Kaski School feel privileged as the school focuses in all round development of the students and encouraged to be independent and responsible. I noticed interactive and fearless students and friendly teachers. Teachers also revealed their satisfaction about the school but felt that there was not enough communication and meetings with the administration. The school values the overall development of the students rather than only the academic achievement. The students in Lalitpur School feel proud of their school as it is distinctive from other government schools in terms of infrastructure; English language proficiency and SLC board results. Teachers in general, looked satisfied with their job except the contract teachers. They don't have collaborative environment. Most of the classes run in teacher-centered mode. Some disciplinary problems prevail in the school.

The students of Kathmandu School perceive that the school provides child friendly environment and the school values practical learning rather than memorizing the facts. Teachers feel that they get opportunity to learn child-friendly, practical mode of teaching in this school. The school artifacts reveal that the school environment was child-friendly but inadequate playground. Students are very interactive and confident in class.

# CHAPTER V

# PERCEPTIONS ON PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP

## Introducing the Chapter

In this chapter five, I have tried to fetch the perceptions of the teachers and students have about their Principal's leadership. I have also extracted the Principal' own perspectives and my view of their leadership. I have divided this chapter into three sections presenting about the three Principals of the three schools. For each of the three schools, I have first introduced in brief about the Principal. Secondly, I have tried to explore the Principal leadership through the eyes of the students and teachers. Then in the next section Principal's view and finally mine. As in the chapter four, this chapter too contains the thick description of the situations. Here too, I have purposefully presented the participants' narratives so as to bring their say without disruption.

## Principal Navin Sharma

Mr. Navin Sharma 49 is the present Principal of Kaski School, who is the 19th Principal of the school. He joined the school 23 years ago as a secondary level social studies teacher. As per the policy of the school he got series of promotion in the past 23 years. He was working as the Hostel Supervisor in the recent years. Suddenly he was promoted to the Principal (via V.P for six months) very rapidly due to the sudden crises aroused in the leading position in the school after the international mission running the school withdrew its management. This is his fourth year as the Principal in Kaski School.

**Students' Perception about the Principal**

According to the student, Samip Bhandari, the strength of the present Principal is that he gets access to the students individually to find the problems about the students, teachers and the management. He is successful in developing the school infrastructure and different programs like A-Level, the only B.E. in software engineering in Nepal by finding international donors. Recently he visited Australia and found huge donation. I thought the boy perceives the Principal convinced the donors through his vision as a transformational leader (Tomlinson, 2004).

The student further added that the Principal is caring, understanding and polite. When he meets the students on the way, he smiles and asks, "How are you"? Students are not scared with the Principal. It reveals to me that the Principal possess the features of a Charismatic Leader too (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004). When they have any queries and demands they easily approach to the Principal. He is a friendly Principal. He convinces students in friendly way. He lets the students keep their view one by one. He further said,

*I was the school captain for several years, so I got lot of opportunities to communicate with the Principal. Sometimes he even called me at his quarter to get opinion and suggestions about several matters. He used to get the students' view about several things through me. He fetched my opinion about what should be done in certain circumstances. Principal collects opinion from other students also in different ways. The Principal is also very polite to us and he is very understanding.*

I found that the student felt valued by the Principal. Regarding the Principals' movement around the school, the student 1 said that besides his office he can be encountered at any place any time like hostel, dining hall, classrooms, play grounds etc. Sometimes he enters the classroom when the class is going on. Sometimes he

comes to the hostel when the students are playing indoor games. Sometimes he comes to the 10+2 building to see the class punctualities etc. he watches' the students games also.

*He appears informally at the picnics and parties like dancing and talking. He does not show much humorous behavior. Most of the time, he looks serious but polite. But when he takes a decision he rarely changes that.*

I thought the Principal is expected to be an actor and healer in this situation (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Samip remembered, once, when they lost a football match outside, they were highly depressed. The Principal consoled them to be satisfied with what they achieved from the tournament. The student also opined that the Principal views the "All round education" as the quality education. For them all round education means to lead in every aspect like academic, social, sports, discipline etc. The Principal encourages them to be a model person wherever they go outside the school. He says the course and the curriculum is not all in all. He gives equal importance to the curricular and extra-curricular activities. Here, the boy revealed his perception of the Principal's values of "All round education" (Stolp & Smith, 1995). The boy further said,

*The Principal involves the SMT (Senior Management Team) members, other teachers and students in idea generation before taking the decision. He listens to everybody. He calls the hostel captains and class captains frequently for the meeting and he takes ideas from the captains before taking the decisions. When a new idea is given he asks for time to analyze it.*

This reveals his understanding of the Principal's participatory approach (Shahani, 2008). Rabi B.K. also perceives that the Principal goes around checking whether the teachers are performing their duty well or not. He has seen the Principal

going everywhere in the school like classes, ground, dining hall, hostels etc. The student remembers,

*When he comes to the hostel he talks with our hostel parents first. Then he talks to the students to cross-check. He encourages us to study hard and participate in various activities and encourages students to organize various programs from the students' side.*

The boy further says that the students do not get scared with the Principal unnecessarily because he is not strict type of person. If students are talking unreasonably in the class, then they stop talking when they see the Principal coming otherwise students keep on doing what they were doing even the Principal comes there. Here, I found the Principal continually monitors the school to keep the mission and vision in focus (Moore, 1999). The boy also said,

*Principal comes in our picnic. He attends every picnic of the students. He comes in the middle and talks for some time, he dances if we request him then he leaves. He does not make jokes.*

According to the boy, to give any notice and information, the Principal announces in the assembly. Then the same is pasted in the main notice board. The main notice board is located in the main hallway. Every student passes through that area at least 4 times a day.

Sarita K.C., a girl from class 11, revealed that the students do not scare with the Principal when they meet him suddenly. She says that if any student goes with new ideas, the Principal takes some time to think first. Then he accepts it if the idea is positive or fruitful. They requested to arrange time for video shows during the weekends because they felt bored. After few days he arranged the schedule for them. The girl opines…

*I think Principal does not focus in curriculum only. He thinks the ECAs like Football, event managements. Debate, quiz, sports meet, exhibitions are also equally important.*

She also added that the Principal involves the student representations to make decisions about student related affairs. There are various types of representations like class captains, house captains and hostel captains.

Uma Baral, a girl from class 9 also states that the Principal frequently goes around the class and play grounds. Students get alert when he comes but do not get scared. Small disciplinary cases are handled by the class teachers and supervisions. Only major cases handled by the Principal. But nobody gets physical punishments here. She added,

*He focuses in curriculum and ECAs equally. He accepts students' ideas also by asking for suggestions in the meetings with the students. Students' representatives are included in taking decisions by the Principal and teachers.*

**Teachers' Perception about the Principal**

The teacher, Raju B.K. looked quite dissatisfied as he said, although the present Principal was promoted through their pressure, he gives more emphasis to the non-teaching staff and non-teaching activities and management rather than in the teachers. The teacher thinks as an academic leader, he has not been able to give more time to the academic activities. The teacher opines that the Principal's supervision and inspection is more in the academic sector than in the maintenance, laundry, dining hall and hostel area. But the budget is allocated more in the latter areas. But I realized, as per Glickman (2002), as a school leader, a Principal is attacked with so many problems that it seems terrible to do everything. Still the teacher thinks the Principal is friendly with the teachers. He further stressed,

*He is friendly with the teachers. He does not expect formality from us. Principal teacher's relationship is very good. So there is no chance for the communication gap. I think the Principal students' relation is over friendly than required. When some problems arise, students prefer to go to the Principal directly rather than going to the level wise supervisors.*

He further added that the Principal and V.P. checks whether the classes are running or not but they do not supervise in detail about whether teachers are meeting the curriculum plan or not. Every teacher is given a lesson diary which the HOD checks time to time. The V.P. checks in the terminal basis and the Principal signs once a year. He cannot find when the diary was filled, whether before teaching or not. I thought may be the Principal lacks as the role of the instructional leader here (Ubben & Hughes, 1992).

The teacher opines that the Principal's supervision and inspection is more in the academic sector than in the maintenance, laundry, dining hall and hostel area. But the budget is allocated more in the latter areas. He further added,

*He mainly focuses in the school motto "Knowledge, characters and service" as the objective of the school. He also emphasizes in the international level all round education.*

The teacher viewed that the Principal rarely complains individuals about the weakness but speaks in general in the meetings to indirectly indicate the weaker areas. He included that as the HOD, he can decide independently about various activities related to the subject as far as the activities do not create financial burden to the school. He perceives it as the distributed leadership of the Principal (Gronn, 2002). But he looked dissatisfied in the fact that the teachers' representative in the SMC was picked up by the Principal on the basis of seniority of the teacher because he has

served the school for 34 years.

The teacher, Deepak Gurung stated that he has a good relationship and communication with the Principal because he understands what is being a Principal like as he had already worked in school administration in other school. He supposes the Principal here is a worker like other teachers. But many teachers are conditioned with the understanding that Principal is a boss. Hence a communication gap is created. He added,

*I think the Principal in this school is a part of the system that has been established here in the last 46 years. Now Principal does not do anything personally. The system does everything here. The Principal just maintains the system here; very few Principals in the past who were really dynamic changed or improved the system. Those Principals are still remembered now.*

Through his perception, I thought the Principal exercises bureaucratic leadership style (Bush & Glover, 2003). According to his understanding, the V.P. is responsible for the internal networking and the Principal is responsible for the external networking. But, due to the inefficiency of the V.P., the present Principal has to give time in the both. The Principal also implements the level-wise supervisor for the proper networking to him.

According to his experience, the present Principal is not so humorous and effective speaker like the preceding foreign Principals. Previously, the foreign Principals used to be humorous even in the assemblies to draw the attention of the students. Now days the assemblies get noisy when there is the Principal's speech. He further said,

*I have not got the personal encouragement from the present Principal but I used to get from Chan in the past. He used to understand my feelings towards the*

*school He used to be my good friend and consoler when I got depressed.*

From his perceptions, I understood the Principal failed in building a close and harmonious working relationship with the school members (Portin, Shen, & Williams, 1998).

The teacher conceives that for the present Principal the major objective of the school lies in the school motto, i.e. knowledge, character and service. He always focuses in it. The school culture which has been established in the last 46 years emphases in child-centered education. Students are free and independent here. And the Principal practices the same. But he thinks the present Principal also assumes the academic excellence as the human excellence in his recessive mind, although he preaches for the all round education. He regards the first position holder of the class as the best student in practice. This, I considered the basic assumptions of the Principal, the cultural DNA as told by Budd (2009). The teacher further revealed his opinion,

*In the beginning days he did not accept other's ideas. But with the time and experience he has learnt to accept the ideas given by others. I have personally given several ideas regarding the teachers' management issues and trainings and development programs. He accepted and implemented them.*

I understood this as the Principal transformed from the autocratic leader (Martinuzzi, 2008) to democratic leader (Gastil, 1994) with his experience. Sarita Gurung, a lady who has been working in the school for 22 years remembers that in the recent years, the old teachers started getting promoted to the VP and the Principal. She asserts that they failed as the Principals. Few even set bad examples by influencing the SMC to change policy for their personal benefit. They failed ethically as a leader and could not do well for the school too. Now, she feels that they are not

yet ready to take the Principalship from within the school. She recalls that the present Principal was promoted from among the teachers who have worked for a long time. At this point, I thought as per the teacher's perception, the Principal failed as a leader to organize, inspire and lead all the school members so as to realize the aims of the school (Karakose, 2008). She showed her frustration this way…

*It may sound like back biting but the truth I feel is the present Principal is the least capable of all the Principals I have seen in this school. He has not been able to show the true leadership. He has promoted his relative by going against the school policy for his personal benefit. I raised voice against his action. He has influenced the SMC to suspense me from the position of the hostel supervisor. I feel it is injustice for me.*

The lady seemed to be highly frustrating as she said that in the meetings they can only put their problems but they cannot get the opportunity to generate the ideas through brainstorming. Sometimes the programs are simply thrown to them from up that clash with their timing. Later when the time is not enough to complete the course, that is fully under the teachers' responsibility.

She feels that because of the weak leadership of the Principal, the school is going down, the impact of which will be seen clearly in the future. She doesn't have good term with the VP and the Principal because they do favoritism among the teachers. They don't like to hear about the teachers' frustrations and the SMT is fully influenced by the V.P. and Principal. She perceives the Principal and administrative to be fully autocratic (Mahesh, 1993). She further stressed,

*I have worked here for prestige, not for money. The Principal is against me because I was his rival to him in the course of Principal ship. Now he is taking revenge and suspended me from the position of the hostel supervisor. I don't hesitate*

*to speak the truth. But other teachers feel fear to say "No" to the Principal even if they feel that it is wrong.*

She added to reveal her annoyance that the Principal is misusing his position to give her torture. She considers the ability in the Principal is he can convince anybody with his diplomatic language, and in the name of diplomacy he lies to the people. At this point she accepts the charismatic leadership of the Principal as well, although negatively (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004).

During my informal talk, the games teacher who has been working in the school for last 33 years views that the positive aspect of the present Principal is that he has been able to bring higher donation from the government and the international donors. He opined…

*Basically he is also running the school under the system set by Bamb and other foreign Principals but like all other Nepali Principals he also does some extent of discrimination between his liked staff and others. Nepali Principals are not fully fare like the foreigners.*

At this point, I realized that he has the belief that Nepali Principals are inferior to the foreigners. I questioned myself if it was the common belief of the teachers making it a part of the school culture (Deal and Kennedy, 1982). Or do the Nepali Principals really lack this trait which makes them failure leader as per the trait theories of leadership (Robbins & Judge, 2007)?

The librarian opines that he is totally independent to take the decision about the library. As a librarian he is not over controlled from the upper level. Principal and the Admin officer frequently ask for the suggestion if they have to take decisions about the library. The librarian feels that here in this school, every department is

independent and there is no system of enforcement from the upper level. To me, this is an example of distributed leadership (Gronn, 2002).

**Principal's Own Perception**

The Principal, Nabin Sharma recalls the memory that he joined the school 23 years ago as a secondary level social studies teacher. He was working as the Hostel Supervisor in the recent years. He was promoted to the Vice Principal and then to the Principal very rapidly from the Hostel supervisor due to the sudden crises aroused in the leading position. The Principal shared that after the mission left, the school became weak in terms of finance and leadership. He remembered, two Nepali educationists who joined directly as Principal after the mission left could not be sustainable. Teachers even threw one of them by not supporting him at all. That happened because the old man could not understand the school culture, and tried to rule the school in an autocratic manner. Principal A remembers that, first year of the Principalship was a very difficult time for him because most of the teachers did not have reliability in a Nepali Principal. I thought due to the experiences of the inefficiency of the previous Nepali Principals, teachers have developed the taken for granted attitude about the inferiority of the Nepali Principals that became the underlying assumptions level of the organizational culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995). He remembered…

*During that time I was able to bring huge financial support from the ministry of education to sustain the school. Then I used the participatory approach to handle the school. Then slowly I started gaining credibility. In these three years I have brought 3.25 corrodes of donation from national and international sources. This has been used for the further development of the school. Now I am proving that even*

*Nepali management and leadership can equally run this school as the foreign Principals did.*

To me, it shows the Principal slowly changed the attitudes, beliefs and values of the staff through his vision and action through idealized influence as a transformational leader (Leithwood, 1994). I thought, after the mission left, the Principal played several roles as per need like leader, manager, motivator and team player for the betterment of the school and developed a positive school culture in order to bring the school in this situation (Fullan, 2000).

The Principal claims that he has been able to bring a new project called "ICT in Education". This project, according to him will revolutionize the teaching learning process as per the need of the twenty first century. For this project the government has supported 75 lakhs rupees. Other expenses are covered by the school's own resources. The main resources are the tuition fees from the fee paying students and the international donations. Here he proved himself to be a leader as Moore (1999) said, a person cannot be a leader just by taking the position of the Principal but to be a leader, s/he needs to be viewed as one who can bring change for the betterment of school.

The Principal recognizes himself to be a very busy and hardworking for the betterment of the school. He claimed that he works in the school almost 10 hours a day. He revealed that from 6:30 to 7:30 AM, he stays in the B.E. building because their classes start at 6:30. 7:30 to 8:15 he stay in school office to observe the morning study hour. Then he goes for lunch and come back to office at 9:30. Up to 4 in the afternoon he stays in the school and around. I thought he is doing right as a Principal as Evans (1995) said that Principal should be visible all over the school and should be trustworthy and straight with students and staff. I understood his personal examples

and efforts encourage the teachers and students through inspirational motivation of a transformational leader.

He added that every day he visits to the dining hall, the health center and hostel buildings. Sometimes he just walks around the big school compound visiting several departments as he thinks walking is also a part of management. At this juncture he is a perfect anthropological sleuth to analyze the current set of the school culture (Deal & Peterson, 1998). This is also an active management by exception of a transactional leader.

He said,

*I try to attend the weekly meetings of the subject wise department. I listen to their discussions and give some feedback. I take the ideas and suggestions from the students in various ways. First way is I talk with the students on the way. I try to give time to talk informally and then ask for the problems and suggestions. Secondly many students put their problems and suggestions in the suggestion box. Students also express their problems and ideas in the meetings. Sometimes they just come in a small group and ask for my time and we also have meetings with the class captains, hostel captains etc.*

I understood that the Principal practices participatory leadership by making the students feel that they are valued McCrimmon (2007). This is also an inspirational motivation of a transformational leader. And I thought he has a good practice because student's participation in school decision making results in several positive benefits, including greater connectedness and sense of community within the school, reduced level of destructions, and an overall improvement in student behavior and attitude (Mulford, 2007).

The Principal said that he conducts SMT meeting every Sunday to review the past week and plan for the coming week. SMT meetings are focused in academic and management issues. SMT consists of Principal, VP, OM and the Supervisors of the various levels. Academic committee meetings are conducted once a month with the Departmental heads of all the subjects. The Principal asks for the suggestions in such meetings following the consultative I leadership as per Vroom and Yetton's Normative Model (Chatterjee, 2007). Before that every department has weekly meetings so that the teachers can pass their suggestions and ideas through the Departmental heads. Here, I understood that the Principal practices the distributed leadership through VP, and HODs (Gronn, 2002). This is also an intellectual stimulation of a transactional leader, sharing the leadership with others and encourages them to develop as new leaders. He said,

*I get creative suggestions and ideas in the group meetings like SMT, Departmental and Academic council meetings.*

Every Sunday there is a general teachers meeting for 20 minutes which is only an informative meeting. The Principal and the OM give valuable information to the teachers regarding to the academic and management matters respectively. Through this, he uses idealized influence of a transformational leader to achieve the school vision through cooperation of all the school members (Engels et al, 2008). Teachers also inform about the critical matters but that cannot be an interactive due to the limitation of time.

**Principal Navin Sharma in My Eyes**

My first meeting (as a researcher) with the Principal was on 11th July 2011. After some time of informal discussion, I explained him about my visit and the interest of visiting the school for about two months for the purpose of the research. I handed

him my letter of application. He said that he would discuss about my request in the teachers meeting on the following Sunday and inform me later. He called me back on the following Tuesday to inform me that they collectively accepted my proposal and were ready to help me. I understood it as his participatory leadership style to decide about giving permission to me for the research McCrimmon (2007). To me, he used inspirational motivation to make his colleagues feel that they are valued and he used intellectual stimulation by participating others in decision making as a transformational leader.

During my acquaintance as a researcher, I observed Principal's availability and roles at various circumstances. I thought this supported Evans (1995) saying that Principal should be visible all over the school. On 22nd August 2011, at some stages in the football tournament organized by the class ten students, the Principal also appeared time to time. He talked informally and in friendly way with many teachers and the students time to time. He also talked with the members of the organizing committee separately and left for some other works. I thought he had some other obligations. I remembered Glickman (2002) saying, as a school leader, a Principal is attacked with so many student needs, parent concerns, teacher concerns, and district and state requirements that it seems terrible to do everything. So I perceived that he managed to show his presence in the ground and left for some other important works. at this point I understood that as a transformational leader, he used inspirational motivation to encouraging the teachers to get involved in school activities by showing one's own example. Here is a short glimpse from my journal…

> *One of the teachers who joined late in the middle of the conversation said that he did not see the Principal on the ground that day. Other teacher said that the Principal was here an hour ago in the previous match. I*

> *realized that Principal's presence is expected. Maybe this is usual in this school. Maybe Principal is generally available everywhere like the students said in the interview. (22nd August 2011)*

Similarly, during the debate contest organized by the Nepali department on 7th August 2011, the Principal appeared in the middle of the program. He was welcomed by the MC and also mentioned that the whole Nepali department are enthusiastic with the presence of the Principal. The Principal watched the program quietly. Most of the time, he was writing something in his black diary which he always carried. After around 20 minutes he left the hall.

I saw every day, the Principal going around the classes, which according to Deal and Peterson (1998) is the "Principal's school tour" or the "Principal's walk", showing his presence and giving several messages indirectly. On 17th august, 2011, I was in the library talking informally with the librarian. The Principal suddenly appeared in the library to glance the newspapers. After few minutes, he went around the library glancing over the books racks. He smiled with some students and then left the hall. After some time the librarian told me that Principal frequently visits to the Library as a part of his tour throughout the school. He just goes around the Library and leaves. He does that 2-3 times a week. Here, I assumed that as an active management by exception of a transactional leader, the Principal maintains vigilance in every part of the school.

The Principal also appeared in the departmental meeting of the Social studies department on 19th August 2011. He watched the meeting quietly for 10 minutes and then interrupted the meeting and kept his few suggestive words about the remedial classes to the weak students after the school time. He asked the teachers to think over

it and left the room. Here, I understood it as an intellectual stimulation of the Principal as a transformational leader to motivate teachers to consult and discuss about new ideas. Then I noticed…

> *I noticed the volume of the teachers' voice was up after the Principal left. Teachers started talking humorously in much relived manner. Two teachers started talking separately with each other. The HOD asked to share with everybody. They said that nothing so special and stopped talking. I thought it was the evidence for me to conclude that teachers act differently in front of the Principals. (19th August 2011)*

On the inauguration ceremony of the football tournament on 18th July, 2011, the Principal gave a long inauguration speech, in a monotonous tone explaining how various extracurricular activities are organized in the school. Slowly the students looked bored and they did not listen to the Principal's long speech rather they started talking with each other. Here is a part of my journal, dated 18th July, 2011.

> *The Principal, in between the speech warned the student to pay attention. A lady, probably a guardian sitting next to me commented that the students never pay attention to the Principal's speech. She said, "The Principal does not know how to attract the students rather tries to control in the middle of the speech".*

I thought the Principal lacked a sense of humor and mass speaking technique to hold the students' enthusiasm, and could not be a role model for students at this point as told by Evans (1995). Here, I felt the lack of idealized influence of a transformational leader in the area of the sense of humor and mass speaking to the students.

**Principal Santosh Devkota**

Mr. Santosh Devkota 52 was the Principal (commonly known as the Head Sir in the

school) of Lalitpur School during my observations. He took over the school as the 8th Principal 26 years ago when the school was almost closed due to the lack of resources and the distrust of the local people towards the quality of education provided by the school. During his tenure he transformed the school from one of the least performing to the best performing in the district. Sadly, I came to know that he untimely demised due to the heart stroke after few days of my observation period was over.

**Students' Perception about the Principal**

Sami Shrestha perceives that the Principal is polite to the students. He always encourages the students to be good, studious and improve in the examinations. The girl said,

*Most of the time, he is around his office area. He regularly comes to the class area to check while the classes are running. He generally looks from the window and go. But when the class is without the teacher he comes in and teaches us.*

Hence, according to the student, the Principal reveals his humanistic approach (Hoy & Miskel, 2001) and instructional leadership by focusing in the academic achievement of the students (Ubben & Hughes, 1992).

Namrata Shakya assumes that some students are scared with him. When he comes they stop playing. Some students even hide themselves or run away when they see him coming towards them. I felt this is against what Jerald (2006) says about positive school culture where students look happy rather than stressed and students and teachers treat each other with respect. Namrata stressed that the Principal never goes in the students' picnics. Still the student said that he shows parental care to the students.

*HT first speaks to us when we suddenly meet each other on the way (within the school). Sometimes he makes eyes contact and smiles. He emphasizes on the social*

*change through education. I think this is also the unique objective of this school.*

She also said that when students go to the Principal with new ideas regarding the ECAs he accepts it. Sometimes students, teachers and HT sit for meetings. Students feel good when HT moves around while the classes are running. Students do not make unnecessary noise when they see him. To me, it shows that students are scared with the Principal. I also understood that as per the girl, the Principal practices participatory approach with the students (McCrimmon, 2007).

Nabin Shrestha also recognizes that students are scared with the Principal and when they see him coming, some students even run away from the scene. The student has not got any personal encouragements from him but he always encourages the whole class to be good, studious and social. Sometimes the students go to him to complain about the class problems. He listens to the problem and fulfills as far as possible. The boy highlighted,

*When the HT is in school, he moves here and there around the classroom and at the backyard. When he finds students bunking the class and sitting at the backyard, he sends them to the DI (Disciplinary In-charge).*

Nabin further perceives that the Principal wants to make this school very peaceful and providing good education as he emphasizes in effective teaching. He focuses in every student's learning equally and focuses mainly in Teaching-learning rather than in ECAs. He has brought several improvements like new buildings, computer lab, drinking water etc. I understood that the boy perceives the Principal as an instructional leader (Ubben & Hughes, 1992).

Similarly for Sameer Acharya too, HT is a kind of person who emphasizes in education rather than ECAs. He likes teachers to involve in education during the off periods also. When the students are not satisfied in anything or have complaints they

directly talk with him and he listens takes positive steps. I perceive that the actions of the Principal are noticed and interpreted by the student as the most important person to solve the students' problems (Stolp, 1994). The boy expressed,

*We go to him regarding our class problems. Sometimes when we don't understand the teaching of the new teacher, we go and complain and he solves our problem as far as possible. Our classes starts early in the morning so we complained the problems of the darkness in the class, then he managed generator for us. The same generator is used for the evening informal classes. He fulfills our genuine demands as far as possible.*

Sameer further assumes that the personal nature of the Principal is such that he focuses only in education. He manages extra classes to the weak students and likes to see every student passing through the internal and the board examinations. For that he puts his every effort. The students like his personal nature of working hard for every student's success. He does not stop weak students in pre-send up examinations like in the other schools. I found as per the boy's perception the Principal has the feature of the positive school culture by ensuring the learning of all the students (Jerald, 2006). But he further said,

*He does not have humorous nature. Normally he looks serious and steady. But when we have leisure periods he comes with the newspapers and entertain us by reading interesting articles.*

But Deal and Peterson (1998) focus that the Principal should be able to be humorous and actor as per the situation. As per the understanding of the student 4, although there are many private schools in this area, students prefer to join this school. The main cause is although this is a government school, it gives all the facilities that a private school gives and that too at almost free of cost. The main

philosophy of the HT is to give equally quality education to those who cannot afford private schools and also not to make any student a failure. The boy remembers…

*During the speeches given by HT in various occasions like parents' day and school day, he mainly focuses in that, government school can also give quality education and also develop English language proficiency like in the private schools.*

As the student perceives, the school is able to manage good infrastructure because HT can convince the donors easily showing the students' good performance. HT has played the major role in the quality improvement and in the generation of donations. Without his initiation nothing could have happened. I understood that the boy perceives the Principal as a transformational leader who transformed the school with his strong vision, values and effort (Leithwood, 1994).

**Teachers' Perception about the Principal**

According to the teacher, Sharad Adhikari, parents who are involved in SMC and PTA, really admire the present Principal to bring the school in today's situation. Parents are very positive because the Principal has made a government school as competitive as a private school in terms of infrastructure, results and English medium teaching. From the teacher, I understood that the Principal proved to the parents that schools are good or bad, flourishing or perishing as the headmaster is capable, energetic or reserve (Gupta & Aggarwal, 2007). The teacher highlighted…

*As a Principal, his management is very good. I have taught in various schools in the past. The teachers are of equal capacity and level everywhere. Teachers are good everywhere. The main difference that makes the schools different is the leadership of the Principal. Our HT has that leadership quality that has made our school better than others.*

I found his view matching with Mathema and Bista (2005), as they also said

that the effectiveness of a teacher is much more a function of the nature of the schools in which they work rather than the characteristics that they possess as individuals. The teacher perceives the Principal to be very active person as he would be observing tiny and micro activities which generally others do not take care of. He observes the classes frequently from outside the classrooms as he passes by during the school tour. He is frequently movable during the class time and watches even how teachers utilize their leisure time. Principal does not directly control the students. They are controlled through the departments. Students discipline is also controlled by the department. Here he tries to apply distributed leadership (Spillane, 2005).

Besides the teaching of math, the teacher is motivated by the Principal to work as the head of academic department. He now enjoys working and coordinating academic activities. The teacher added,

*The Principal does not expect the teachers to give more time than the time given by any other teacher from any other government school. But he requests the teachers to see if they can give extra care to these students within the same time as allocated by the government. His main philosophy is whatever the time teachers give to the school, give it seriously.*

At this juncture, I remembered Karakose (2008) saying that there is a close relation between the success of the organization and Principal's leadership behavior because it is the Principal who organizes, inspires, leads and inspects the school members so as to realize the aims of the school. Teacher further says, the Principal stays here from 6 in the morning to 7 in the evening except at the lunch time. The Principal does not have the habit of making jokes and humor. He is always a Principal. I felt this is against what Evans (1995) said that Principal should have a sense of humor. According to the teacher,

*HT thinks the major objective of the school as the actor for the positive social change. That's why he also focuses in the informal education to the local illiterate people of the community. Those classes run in the evening in the school. When he happens to meet an uneducated parent, he forcefully enrolls in the informal class.*

The second teacher, Rajesh Maharjan perceives that the Principal is a devoted leader and fully utilizes his knowledge and education. He has the ability to be an ethical leader by showing examples himself. The teacher perceives that he has the ability to speak effectively to the point, as per the need. He is expert in hitting to the point through his direct and indirect communication, which makes him a perfect leader. He gives a dashing hit through his speech when people are wrong. So the Principal is rhetoric as per the situation (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

The teacher has experienced that when the Principal visits the primary block, the teachers get alert. They think like he might have come for inspection, he might come to my class kind of alertness. A bit of fear can be seen in the teachers. I understood that the Principal's walk give different meanings to different people. The teacher said further,

*HT shares future vision in the meetings. He talks mostly about teaching-learning models to be implemented. Generally he focuses in improvement in the English environment and implementation of the education in social change because they are the today's need. He tells the teachers to use at least 50% English language in the class.*

The third teacher, Seema Maharjan who has taught here for 9 years on contract basis perceives that the HT focuses in overall development of the school. As per the need of the situation, he becomes strict and friendly. She further stresses that the HT and SMC have been able to find out so many sources for the infrastructural

development of the school, which is in fact very good. She stressed,

*HT communicates about the educational philosophies through the teachers meeting and even through one to one personal talks. HT has played a very important role in the development of effective educational environment in the school. We can easily share our new ideas regarding teaching-learning in the meetings. We don't feel any hesitation and HT also welcomes such ideas. But he should not forget that contract teachers are equally important and their facilities should be raised.*

She says that the HT monitors their teaching from outside the room and she thinks the class observation is not necessary because she gets distracted. But if the Principal sits and gives feedback, she does not have any objection.

**Principal's Own Perception**

The Principal, Santosh Devkota said that he has great admiration about the great contributions of the founder Principal during the establishment of the school and his volunteer service for several years. According to him he remembers the founder Principal during the annual functions of the school. I understood the historical moments are transmitted to the new members by him in terms of the stories (Peterson & Deal, 2009). He figures out that the Principals who came later could not contribute a lot for the school because of which the school was in very poor situation by the time he took over the school 26 years ago. He says the school was almost closed due to the lack of resources and the distrust of the local people towards the school.

The Principal assumes that within 26 years, the school has revived its history and now it is sound in many aspects. Although it was under his leadership, he gives equal credibility to the dedicated teachers, SMC and the parents. But I thought as the leader he needs to be given the full credibility for bringing the change for the betterment of school (Moore, 1999). That was possible mainly due to the Principal's

leadership performance (Blank, 1987). I understood through transformational leadership, the Principal moved his school beyond surface changes to deeper transformations and changed the core business of the school (Lavery, 2011).

About the school motto, he said…

*Education for Social Change is our school motto. I brought this 16 years ago. From this, I mean that if an educated person cannot contribute to the society then the education s/he received is incomplete. I like to see my students practically implementing the knowledge they gained from the school into their day-to-day life at home and in the society.*

By this he reveals that he values the societal enhancement through the education most important and considers it as the purpose of the school (Deal & Peterson, 1998). I understood through this idealized influence, he spread the school vision beyond the school to the community as a transformational leader. This personal values and beliefs of the Principal has become the second level of the school culture revealing the definite way of thinking about the judgment of what is good and what is bad in the organization (Godfrey, 2003). The Principal as the leader has played the significant role in establishing the values among the students and teachers that the knowledge learnt in the school should be implemented in the society for its betterment (Rice, 2010). He said that he preaches this to the students through the teachers, through his speech in various occasions and through the parents during their gatherings. I understood, through inspirational motivation, as a transformational leader he inspires the teachers, parents and students to strive for more than only their personal goals.

The Principal said that he believes that only the students with distinction marks are not the good students but even an average or below the average students

can also be a successful person in a certain area in the future. He does not believe in students' failure. He believes that a student can be a failure in one exam but it does not mean that s/he has not learned anything. That student can still do a lot in the future. I thought the value the Principal carries is extremely significant to the school in forming its culture that focuses in the recognizing of all children to learn equally (Ubben & Hughes, 1992). Through such idealized influence, he has gained confidence and respect from teachers and students as a transformational leader.

He emphasized that to bring good behavior in the students and the teachers he starts several practices himself. He believes in, "Be sample, and be simple". He said that he never tells to do this and that. First, he indirectly demonstrates himself and that is slowly copied by other teachers and the students. To me, it is an inspirational motivation of the Principal as a transformational leader. Here is his version,

*I started respecting the students, slowly teachers learned from me. I never gave order to do this and that. The school ground used to be full of papers and chocolate wrappers. I kept dustbin at several places. Then I picked up the papers and put them in the dustbin. At first the students laughed at me, the teachers also laughed at me. But slowly they learnt from me. Now the school compound is kept clean by everybody. This has become our culture.*

To his action, I understood that as per Deal and Peterson (1998), the Principal as a symbol to the school members insists values through his action. He thinks that he provides open opportunity to bring new ideas in the meetings and thinks the teachers do not hesitate to provide new ideas to him sometimes that can be really fruitful. He feels that he has given authority to the departmental heads. As per his saying, he likes to follow the distributed leadership (Spillane, 2005). I found this as the intellectual stimulation of the Principal as a transformational leader. He revealed his view by

saying,

*I transfer the responsibility as well as the authority to others because a single Principal cannot do everything. Our primary in-charge has the full authority, responsibility and facility equivalent that of a primary level Principal of other primary schools. And there are four departmental heads in both the primary and secondary levels. And all the remaining teachers are divided into these 4 departments. At the secondary level, VP is under me. Full authority has been delegated to the VP so that nothing is delayed or postponed in the absence of the HT.*

He believes that he has easily accepted the presence of the teachers' unions in the school and told the teachers that politics must be for the betterment of the school. He thinks the politics and the teachers unions have not affected him negatively. The teachers have not brought the problematic side of the politics like in the other schools. With this, I understood that the Principal values that it is not bad to have political affiliation in the school, whose influence is also seen in the teachers accepting the political affiliation as a part of their culture (Godfrey, 2003). He further said,

*I invite the teachers to keep up with their ideology but told them to be conscious that their evaluation is done by the administration, students and the parents on the basis of their performance.*

He perceives that the position of the Principal is very burdensome. He feels that 10 years from his total life has been decreased because of the post. He has to be controlled and conscious all the time, be careful all the time while speaking with the teachers, students, parents, community members and the donors. He cannot act freely and enjoy the personal life because he has to be conscious about what message will be given to others through his actions. He can't be humorous and relaxed because everybody watches him. So he thinks that it is very difficult to be a Principal. I

thought I could understand his problems because I remembered Glickman (2002) saying that as a school leader, a Principal is attacked with so many problems that it seems terrible to do everything. But I don't agree in him saying that a Principal cannot be humorous with the teachers and students (Deal & Peterson, 1998). He added,

*Sometimes, I get aggressive to the teachers who knowingly violate their code of conduct. Otherwise I am always conscious that I have to speak formally and steadily to everybody. I have told some of the senior teachers at the higher-secondary level of the school that not to bring viruses from other institutions and we have our own culture here.*

The Principal perceives that he follows instructional leadership because he feels teachers also need support and guidance to be effective teachers. He feels that he has to self evaluated him about what others feel about his communication style. Some teachers and the ex-students have shared him that they felt energized by his communication with them. Sometimes when he is absent in the parents meeting, the parents get dissatisfied and later they complain about his absence being largely felt in the meeting. With these he feels good. I thought he feels that parents consider him as a charismatic leader (Northouse, 2004). As he has gained confidence and respect from the parents, this is his feature of a transformational leader.

He thinks that the word Head Teacher (Principal) has been made as a fearful creature because of the practices in every school. Teachers and parents, when cannot handle the children, they show fear to the students in the name of the HT. Hence the students get feared especially in the junior classes. Senior students who have dealt with him do not get scared but behave in a matured way. With this I understood, once the students deal with him, they gain confidence and respect towards him because of

his idealized influence (charisma) of a transformational leader.

He thinks walking around by a Principal is a part of management. To me, this is his active management by exception as a transactional leader. Regarding his "walk around", he said…

*I apply MBWA (Management by Walking Around), which I learnt in my M. Phil class. I frequently go around the classes which gives important messages to the teachers and students to be serious about their work. Sometimes I have realized that teachers teaching in Nepali language in the classroom suddenly swift to the English language when they see me coming.*

With his saying I understood that as a transactional leader, he maintains a high level of vigilance to ensure that teachers and students meet the school standards. He feels that there are few things that he has not been able to do so far and wants to do them in the future. He considers that the salary of the contract based teachers is very low although they are new and more capable in comparison to the permanent teachers. But due to the lack of resources he is unable to raise their salary. He feels pity on them. At this point, he revealed his individualized consideration as a transformational leader but blamed the lack of resources for not being able to solve the problem. Next point he said is, during the summer season, the classrooms are very hot. He feels like providing fans to every class. He also wants to establish an enriched library in a big hall. I thought such visions of the Principal direct the philosophy, structures and activities of the school towards achieving those (Bush & Glover, 2003). I understood he has vision for the future as a transformational leader.

**Principal Santosh Devkota in My Eyes**

During my visits, I observed that most of the time the Principal was in his office or in the sun sitting, talking with the teachers in leisure or reading the news papers. But

time to time he went around the classroom area too. Since the school compound was not so big, his movement was also limited. He frequently goes around the classes which gives important messages to the teachers and students to be serious about their work. Through this he gets more understanding of the prevailing school culture (Moore, 1999). I understood this as his vigilance as a transactional leader. Here is a short glimpse of his "walk around".

> *The Principal walked around to watch the classes and then he observed the new building under construction for the new Library and the science lab with the help of donations from INGOs. Then he came back and observed the attendance board. He complained to a teacher that class ten students are still absent even on the third day of their return from the tour. (14th December, 2011)*

Through such 'walk around", the Principal gave several symbolic messages to several people making it a part of management (Deal & Peterson, 1998). During my observation period, I found his voice to be moderately commanding to the teachers and students. But he revealed a kind of parental care while he spoke to them. On 1st December, 2011, few girls were playing "Rubber band (*Chungi*)" near the volleyball court. Principal approached near them. They stopped playing; all of them stood silently facing the Principal. Their face blushed. Principal spoke for some time and students moved to their class area. I thought the girls were scared with him. I considered that as the individualized consideration of the Principal as a transformational leader, but in a bit autocratic manner (Stewart, 2006).

On 12th December, I found that the Principal was busy in talking with parents in his office. Later, I came to know that the Principal was counseling the guardians at his office about their son studying in class ten who was caught carrying marijuana

during the educational tour. He explained that he gave three options in front of the boy. The first one is to complain to the police, second to send him to the rehabilitation centre, and third to give him one last chance if he could convince the parents and the school. Then he said that the boy cried for ten minutes and pleaded that he would completely stop it and won't repeat it again. Principal Counsels the guardians in front of the child when their child has any disciplinary problem. I understood, through personal counseling, Principal uses inspirational motivation as a transformational leadership when necessary.

On 14th December, 2011, the Principal was sitting in the Sun. he called the head of the ECA department and told him to postpone the volleyball training for the time being due to the starting of the CAS for the second term. Then he called the head of the disciplinary department and asked to inform one of the teachers not to use the mobile phone during the class time, receive (or call back) the call only after the class. I found, this way he practices distributed leadership (Spillane, 2005). I understood, this way he uses intellectual stimulation as a transformational leader to share the leadership with subordinates.

On 15th December, 2011, the Principal, in a friendly manner, asked one of the teachers, who had gone in the educational tour, to sponsor a round of black tea (for four people sitting in the sun) on the occasion of returning from the educational tour. He smiled and ordered 4 cups of black tea in the canteen. Then, two more class ten teachers joined the group. Social Studies teacher said that the SLC exam is approaching near and the students are not serious at all. Then they discussed seriously about how the class ten situations could be improved as many students are not serious for their up-coming board exam. The Principal instructed to have series of examinations after the Pre-send up to engage and sharpen the students. I thought, the

Principal should have conducted a meeting to get ideas from the teachers for intellectual stimulation as a transformational leader.

On 20th December, 2011, the Principal played a significant role in the formation of new PTA body. In his speech to around 200 parents, he said, for every parent, their dream is the future of their child. If their child becomes a failure, their dream is shattered. He sang a Nepali song… *"udayo sapana sabai hurile"* (dreams are taken away by the hurricane). I found this way the Principal sometimes acts as a poet and uses the rhetoric language to emphasize the values (Peterson & Deal, 2009). PTA can play a vital role not to bring such situation in the parents. He saluted for the roles played by the parents in the development of the school in the past. Here, I felt the idealized influence (charisma) of the Principal as a transformational leader (Stewart, 2006), as he displayed power and confidence and revealed his strong values and beliefs to gain confidence and respect from the parents. Here is what he said…

*Little seed is enough for large amount of production. Similarly, your seed effort will harvest tremendous development of the school. The parents of this school are great. We have got your time and concern with that help we have become a model school. But I have to give education to some parents too. I have seen some of our parents involved in gambling activities in the public places. Please remember that your children will learn that from you.*

Although the Principal gave time to the parents to decide how they could choose their representatives, the parents relied upon him as he knew all the parents individually and their ability to help in the PTA. Then the Principal chose 8 parents and 3 teachers for the PTA. All the parents accepted easily. I thought the parents have great faith upon the Principal. I thought the Principal even possesses full reliability and faith from the parents and teachers to choose parents and teachers'

representatives for the PTA due to his leadership performance (Blank, 1987). This I felt as a charisma of a transformational leader.

### Principal Junita Lama

Ms. Junita Lama 43, has been working as the Founder Principal of the Kathmandu School since its establishment seven years ago in the year 2005. She is one of the five founder members of the school. She had gone through the "Learner-centered teaching", a teacher training program just before opening the school. After the training was over, she along with her four like hearted friends opened the school with the new philosophy of learner-centered teaching. The impact of the training can still be seen in her actions as her actions are child friendly and are admired by the children.

### Students' Perception about the Principal

The student, Biraj Sijapati perceives that the Principal is friendly and speaks politely. When the boy meets her she gives advices like speak politely with the people, speak in English, be hygienic etc. She also corrects the English grammar when he makes mistake while speaking. According to his experience, during the assemblies, the Principal generally speaks about the notices, information and achievements. Sometimes she speaks humorously in the assembly so that all laugh, creating favorable environment with humor and injecting huge doses of enthusiasm to drive others forward as a charismatic leader (Musser, 1987). Students enjoy and feel like hearing her speech in the assemblies. She encourages students to keep up with the good things and achievements. She also informs about the weaknesses to be improved. As Koontz and Weihrich (1990), I recognized that the Principal as a leader influences with her art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically toward the achievement of group goals. The student

further said,

*Principal is frank with us; hence we do not have to be scared with her. She never gives physical punishments but sometimes she gives writing work as the punishments when students violate rules. Principal also goes to our picnic. She also dances and enjoys with us. When suddenly we meet the Principal in school, she smiles. When suddenly she comes to our group we look at her why she came. But we don't feel fear. We take it lightly.*

As the boy perceives, the Principal explains the basic objectives of the school as moral development, social behavior, respect native rituals (our culture) etc. He further explains that the Principal tells them to be good citizen first then only they can be good professionals in the future. She says that the primary objectives of the school are to produce good citizens. He remembers that the Principal tells that the students have got the opportunity to study in such a good school and the parents have made effort for their future. Hence, the students should study hard and be good citizens. As told by Certo and Certo (2006), the Principal as a transformational leader, inspires the students for organizational success by deeply affecting their beliefs in what the school and the students should be like.

The second student, Santwana Parajuli also recognizes that the Principal behaves normally with everybody and does not expect extra respect just because she is the Principal. She understands that the students make mistakes because it is the nature of the children. The girl highlighted,

*She is humorous when she is happy. But when we do what should not be done, she becomes serious. We enjoy her speech in the assemblies. But sometimes when she scolds us when we don't follow the rules, at that time we feel boring. If assignment is not submitted on time, students are asked to submit twice or thrice.*

*Sometimes the Principal calls the parents for counseling.*

I realized that the Principal is different from that of traditional Principals to motivate and coordinate through variety of ways to get the work done (Rallis & Goldring, 2000). The girl perceives that students are scared with Principal in comparison to the other teachers but it does not mean that students hesitate to speak with her. In the speech given to the students, she tells them to set a target and always work on to achieve that target.

For the student Bipul Bhattarai the Principal is caring to the students but sometimes when necessary, she is strict also. She is helpful and arranges fieldtrips to the students. She makes humor in assemblies also. The boy remembered,

*Once we went for an inter-school debate competition. We could not win the competition. When we came back to school frustrated, the Principal consoled us personally that winning is not everything. By participating also you have learnt many things. That learning is more important than winning the competition.*

I understood the Principal plays the roles of actor and healer as per the necessity (Deal & Peterson, 1998). The boy recalls that during the result time, she speaks personally to every student along with the parents. She talks about the strengths and suggests that students can do better next time. He thinks that although the Principal's office is in the primary block, she visits the secondary block also frequently. Principal shows the students love and care by congratulating the students in the assembly. She is friendly with the students. She goes to the picnic with the students and enjoys by making jokes and dancing. As the Principal of a school with positive culture, she encourages happiness rather than stress (Jerald, 2006).

The boy focused,

*If the students want to sit in a meeting with the Principal, we have to give*

*application first through the block in charge. Then she arranges time for us. Last summer, we asked for a meeting and requested for wall fans and reference books in the library. The Principal gave the responsibility to the block in charge to manage that and she managed that.*

Here she applies the distributed leadership (Spillane, 2005). The boy thinks the objective of the Principal for running this school is to bring new philosophy in teaching by making the students understand rather than memory based learning.

Similarly the student Bipasha Bhattarai identifies the Principal as a very friendly who talks politely with the students personally. She listens to the students and the students can easily share their problems. The Principal looks happy and humorous most of the time revealing the nature of the leader of the school with positive culture (Chiang, 2003).

She also perceives that the Principal does not give physical punishment to the students even when they behave naughty. They are counseled and sometimes the parents are called. This reveals that the Principal creates humanistic environment in the school (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). According to him, the students put their demands and voice through the class meeting with the class teacher. The class teacher forwards the issues to the school administration. The students don't have to hesitate to speak with the Principal. The Principal passes information through the block-in-charge to all the school members through circulation when the Principal cannot visit everywhere.

**Teachers' Perception about the Principal**

When I talked with the teachers about their perceptions about the Principal, all the three teachers compared the present Principal with the Principals of the previous schools where they worked in the past. For example, the teacher, Neetu Upreti

remembered one of her bitter experiences and told that she would never forget a sentence spoken by one of her former Principals, "I have bought your time from 10 to 4. Within this time you have to do whatever I say." She said the present Principal is different. On the one hand she is very strict and demanding. On the other hand she knows to forgive and is very encouraging and motivating person like a guardian. As per the teacher, I thought the Principal as a charismatic leader influences followers appealing to their emotions at a deep level by showing great passion and devotion to the vision and values (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004). Regarding this, the teacher emphasized,

*This school has progressed so much just because of the Principal, not because of other founder members. Teachers are retained here and there is very less turnover because of the Principal. She is so dedicated that she works here up to late night. She coaches and mentors the teachers rigorously. She teaches everything in detail from planning to copy correction. She gives feedback in such a motivational way that we feel like doing our best.*

The teacher further stresses that the Principal gives merit cards to teachers and students in the assemblies openly to encourage the best performers. Teachers merit cards are given for punctuality, dedication, dress code, class activities etc. Students are encouraged by smiles, stars and merit cards. Now the HODs do that on behalf of the Principal. I understood as a transformational leader, the Principal provides intellectual stimulation and offer individualized support to the teachers to motivate those (Bush & Glover, 2003).

The second teacher Sharada Subedi thinks that to some extent, the teachers show a kind of hesitation in front of the Principal but that is because of the position, not because of the personal nature of the Principal. Most of the teachers take the

Principal as their idol person. Teachers stay here doing their work even after school time because they see the Principal working here late night. Here I understood, the Principal as a symbol insists values through her actions (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

New teachers are given full orientation about the school vision, values, norms and procedures by the Principal and the old teachers before they are given the work and classes. The teachers can easily share their new ideas or supporting ideas to the Principal and the other teachers. She signaled that the Principal always encourages for new ideas, by saying…

*The school is growing and extending every year we need many vice-Principals, HODs and coordinators in the future. We are not expecting to find the right person from outside. You are the trained persons under the school philosophy. So you are the one who deserve those future positions. Please make yourself ready for those positions. One of our friends was promoted to V.P. this year.*

Here I found that as the leader of the organization with The Adhocracy (Create) Culture, the Principal focuses in the growth and adaptability of the school (University of Toronto, 2009). The teacher conveyed that they don't feel that Principal is the boss. She is so caring and friendly that teachers forget that she is the boss. She is the one who sends the SMS like teachers' day wish and New Year wish to the teachers first. The Principal also initiates for hiking and dry picnic frequently. I remembered Ubben and Hughes, (1992) saying that such intimate relationship between the school members, celebrating birthdays, engaging in social activities, weekend gatherings etc develop pleasant organizational climate. Similarly, Sigford (1998) says that it is good idea for administrators to schedule times when the staff can play together and build the positive feelings of the group.

Similarly, the teacher, Sagar Pokhrel feels that the nature of the Principal is

friendly and practical. He feels that the Principal is capable to guide the teacher of any subject equally and is strict in duty but understands the teachers' problems too. He believes that the Principal makes the working environment enjoying. Although the charge is given to the block in-charge and HODs, Principal also visits different blocks and classes frequently.

The teacher values that the teachers are also naturally influenced by the devotion and dedication of the Principal towards the school. Teachers automatically become more serious and careful towards teaching-learning process because of the Principal's nature as a symbolic leader. He takes that the Principal is also a professional teacher trainer because of which she has a wide range of knowledge and personal skill of training and motivating the teachers. I felt these are the characteristics of a successful leader (Robbins & Judge, 2007).

**Principal's Own Perception**

The Principal Junita Lama remembers that her initial objective in opening the school was to provide practical education through learner-centered teaching even to the middle class children. At that time, she felt that schools with such philosophy were very limited, accessible only to the high class family, hence she and her 4 other friends decided to contribute in this field. It seems to me that they started the school with a definite vision and values which play a vital role in forming the organizational culture of their own (Robbins, 1996). I understood that as a transformational leader, she had strong belief in the school vision.

She remembers that it was very difficult to find the teachers who could teach in such philosophy in the beginning. Hence they collected enthusiastic, dedicated and growth oriented teachers through the public relation. They set certain pre-requirement criteria like dedication, learning attitude, student friendly intuition and a deep interest

to learn new teaching philosophy etc while searching for the teachers through public relationship. To me, it reflected their values, the core of what school was to consider important and valuable, a part of their to be school culture (Peterson & Deal, 2009).Then she said, the new teachers were given intensive training for 15 days before they were sent to the classrooms. Then she gave continuous boost-up trainings and feedback throughout the year. Through such trainings, the Principal as an architect continually monitored and reinforced the school to keep the mission and vision in focus and committed to the mutual purposes (Moore, 1999). I understood this as an active management by exception of a transactional leader. The Principal remembers…

*The founder members were all from the teaching background. This made us easier to make a good understanding. Although the public has liked us very much in these 7 years, we feel that we are still in the beginning phase with our vision. We still have a lot of things to do to impart education as per our philosophy. We are just making preparations like developing the teachers according to learner centered practical teaching, developing infrastructure etc. Because of our new approach we gained publicity prematurely. We still have a long way to go in order to meet our vision.*

From this I understood as Tomlinson (2004) said that she as a transformational leader is preparing the organization's culture with as per the future vision. She remembers, initially she used to totally guide the teachers to design the teaching-learning activities, dealing with the students, correcting the copies etc. Now, 75 percent of the activities are done by the teachers themselves within the framework of the school philosophy. In the beginning years she used to take the observation classes and guide the teachers. Now, most of the observations and guidance are done by the

level-wise HODs. I found the Principal practicing participative and distributed leadership at this point (Shahani, 2008). She interferes only in the critical situations. HODs are trusted because on the one hand, they have learnt the school philosophy and on the other hand it is an exposure to them to grow as the future leaders because the school is growing and certainly need more leaders in the future. I understood that she followed Robert House's Path-Goal leadership model at this point (Robbins, 1996) because she motivated teachers by clarifying the goals, linking reward with performance and explaining the path to achieve the goals. And from transformational leadership point of view, I consider this as her intellectual stimulation to develop teachers as the new leaders.

She said that she also goes for class observation as far as possible. Primary and lower-secondary teachers take it normally. Secondary level teachers did not like in the beginning. She convinced them that they learn from each other and to take her as one of the students. Now the teachers take it normally. At this point, as a charismatic leader, she inspired the teachers with her strongly held core values (Northouse, 2004). Through such inspirational motivation, she encouraged the teachers for collaboration and teamwork as a transformational leader.

Regarding the management of the school, she said…

*We have work division amongst the five founders. The works are divided in to public relation, publicity, infrastructure development, programs development and extension and the academic management. I see only the academic management so it is very much comfortable to work as the Principal here. Of course the works are interrelated to each other. We have frequent meetings with the founders, HODs and the teachers. Hence, we are progressing smoothly.*

Here, with such perfect distribution of task among the five founders, I found a

good example of distributed leadership (Spillane, 2005). She perceives students do not hesitate to come to the Principal's office with their problems. But since there are block in charges and the HODs, most of the problems are solved by them. Still sometimes students approach to her without any hesitation. As per Jerald (2006), Principals of a school with positive culture create such environment where students look confident. Through her idealized influence as a transformational leader, she has gained the confidence and respect from the students.

She revealed that her future plan in terms of infrastructural development is to have own land and building that supports the school's teaching-learning philosophies. Then only she thinks the school we will be able to impart education fully as per the initial vision. She also thinks the need to develop the staff who could work according to the school philosophy. As a successful school Principal, she has developed a vision for her school based on the professional value and she expresses and reinforces this vision at every opportunity and influence the staff and students to share the vision (Bush & Glover, 2003). Her attractive vision for the future provides inspirational motivation to the teachers for teamwork, which proves her to be a transformational leader.

**Principal Junita Lama in My Eyes**

On December 28, 2012, the Principal took me to her office from the reception. On the way, some teachers greeted her with smile. Principal asked for their how about. While all these were happening, from the nature of their smile, I sensed very friendly and warm relationship between them. I considered the confidence and respect shown by the teachers as the idealized influence of the Principal as a transformational leader.

Then we entered her room. It was a small room with a table full of files and folders and few cupboards with books and documents. At the back of the Principals

chair was a window that overlooked the front part of the school compound including the reception and the gate. She ordered two cups of tea from the canteen through intercom. When a lady brought the tea, Principal asked her if the teachers who were coming to the school were getting *khaja* (snacks) even though it was the winter vacation. From this I thought she cares about the teachers and values them as important. And this implicit values and beliefs of the Principal symbolically revealed the prevailing culture in the school (Stolp & Smith, 1995). This I considered as the individualized consideration of the Principal as a transformational leader.

The Principal's office is on the first floor. Just outside her door was a white board. The Principal writes message to the teachers on the board every day. Throughout my visits, I noticed the board and found that she gives clear message to the teachers. Below is an example, the message written on 2nd January 2012.

> *Good Morning dear colleagues!*
> *Fair Narratives are cross-checked and kept in my office (I-V).Most of grade teachers have maintained almost perfect Narrative writing. Congratulations and thanks. Sampling of Grading Part needs some correction works! Please go through all once again so that you would not miss anyone which needs correction. Actually, Tip-Ex correction work not allowed in Grading Area! However, let us do this time so as to give perfect look next time!!!*
> *Have a good time!*

This symbolically gave two important meanings to me. First the Principal has very clear and cordial communication with the teachers. And secondly, the Principal actually cares the every detail activity of the teaching learning. For me both of these are the significant roles of the Principal as a leader for the positive school culture

(Portin et al, 1998). Through the messages, I found inspirational motivation and individualized consideration of the Principal as a transformational leader.

During my visits, I found the Principal was very frank with the teachers and the students. Here is a part of my record on January 2, 2012.

> *The Principal was laughing and smiling while she was speaking in the assembly. After sometime the Principal sent the lower secondary classes to their class rooms and classes 8 and 9 remained there. The Principal told the students, "Some representatives from Cambridge a- level are now visiting our secondary black for supervision so you will remain here for some time…*
> *Although it is very cold, (she smiles)… if you are interested you can organize basket ball match.*
> *The students shouted joyfully "Yes!"*
> *She exclaimed "yes?" she laughed for some time from the stage.*
> *I thought, she expresses her happiness to the teachers and students without being reserved as a Principal. (January 2, 2012)*

I interpreted that as the Principal of a positive school culture she has supportive relationship amongst the members and has effective leadership (Brown, 2004). I also remembered that the teachers and students look happy rather than stressed in a school with positive school culture (Jerald, 2006). I considered this as the charisma of the Principal as a transformational leader to gain respect and confidence from the school members.

On 3rd February 2011, I observed the parents' day. Principal's speech on the Parents' day focused on that the school has been successful in creating a positive sensation in arena of education throughout the different parts of the country because of the supports of the parents and society and the capable school family members including the board, teachers, students and all the staff. She took the opportunity to

share few achievements of the year. She mentioned that under the framework of the school curriculum and academic plan, they have taken the children to different villages and historical areas to study about the history, geography and soci-economic life and culture. For the interactions the school invited various figures like the writer of the National Anthem, Mr. Byakul Maila, National Poet Mr. Madhav Ghimire, various writers and social workers. Through this she revealed her strong values and beliefs about the school's unique way for students' experiential learning. I understood this as the idealized influence of a transformational leader. She also mentioned that she has full confidence in the vision, mission, plans, strategies and actions. As an inspirational motivation of a transformational, she revealed her enthusiasm and optimism. Here is a glimpse of her speech…

*Once again, I would like to promise that we are committed and we will be always determined to give meaningful life with meaningful education to our children. Let us work together once again and let's have wonderful years ahead. Let's help our students to grow as the proper, able and useful Human Resource for the country. Have a good time. (3rd Feb, 2012, Principal's speech on Parents' Day)*

There is a white board in the main hallway. Everyday there is a new message to the students from the Principal. She writes the message on her own handwriting. Through the messages, the Principal shares her values, beliefs and vision with the students as a transformational leader.

On January 19, 2012, there was a message to the students.

*Good Morning, Dear Children !*
*I hope that all of you had a wonderful weekend! Are you taking good precautions to avoid winter-hazards or not? Take care! Here are few reminders for you to begin the 3rd term properly.*
*Have you cooperated by bringing the Exam papers to discuss in the class?*
*Have you tried to understand teachers' feedback or to ask those if any confusions?*
*Are you ready for correction works so that you will be able to gain more confidence for coming days?*
*And of course, I believe that all of you will have exciting practice sessions for the Partents' day! It will be possible when you all operate as responsible members?!*
*Have a Good Day!!*

**Summary of the Chapter**

I started this chapter with brief introduction of the Principal Navin Sharma of Kaski School and then I tried to explore the Principal's leadership through the eyes of the students and teachers of the Kaski School. I also presented the Principal's perception about his leadership actions. Then I presented the Principal from my viewpoint. I repeated the same procedure for Principal Santosh Devkota and Principal Junita Lama of Lalitpur School and Kathmandu School respectively. My attempt in this chapter was to arrange my data as per my second research question; what perceptions do the teachers and students have about their Principal's leadership?

Principal Navin Sharma gets access to the students individually to find the problems about the students, teachers and the management. Students perceive the Principal as caring, understanding, and friendly and are visible at any place. The teachers perceive that the Principal has been able to bring higher donation from the government and the international donors showing the convincing school vision. But

some teachers feel that they have not been able to choose their representative in the SMT as the Principal picked up all by him. They feel that the Principal is friendly with the teachers and does not expect formality from the teachers. The Principal Sharma perceives that he went through very hard and risky time before he was finally able to win the confidence with his hard work and success to convince the donors. He thinks he takes the ideas and suggestions from the students and teachers in various ways. He uses inspirational motivation to encouraging the teachers by showing one's own example but lacks a sense of humor and mass speaking technique to be a role model.

The students of Lalitpur School assume that Principal Devkota generally speaks politely and encourages the students to be good, studious and is always a serious person. Some students are even scared with the Principal. The students perceive that the Principal emphasizes on the social change through education which is also the unique objective of this school. The teachers revealed that the major objective of the Principal for the school is to be the actor for the positive social change. Principal has the ability to be an ethical leader by showing examples himself. He has a strong belief that the education they impart to the students should be useful to the society. He emphasizes on "Be sample, and be simple" to bring positive changes in the school. He also thinks walking around of the Principal is a part of management in schools. His future vision is to make it the best government school in Nepal. As per the situation, he acts as a poet and uses the rhetoric language to emphasize his values. He values that education should be constructive to the society.

The students of Kathmandu School assume that Principal Junita is friendly and speaks politely and humorously. Students enjoy and feel like hearing her speech in the assemblies. The teachers believe that on the one hand the Principal is very strict

and demanding and on the other hand she knows to forgive and is very encouraging and motivating person like a guardian. Most of the teachers take the Principal as their idol person and are influenced by the devotion and dedication of the Principal. Principal Junita perceives that her basic aim is to provide practical education through learner-centered teaching. She believes in collaboration as she emphasizes in Principal and teachers can learn from each other. In my eyes, she is a caring, friendly and humorous Principal. She regularly communicates to the teachers and students through speeches and written messages. She highly emphasizes the child-friendly teaching learning environment.

# CHAPTER VI

# REVISITING SCHOOLS' CULTURE AND PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP

## Introducing the Chapter

In this chapter, I have revisited the chapters four and five to analyze the qualitative data presented in those chapters regarding the school culture and Principals' leadership respectively. First I have presented my reflection about school culture on the basis of my thick description mentioned in the chapter four. Then I have portrayed my reflection on the Principals on the basis of the chapter five. Finally I have tried to compare the Principals' leadership role with the respective prevailing school culture to find the relationship between the two.

## Revisiting the Schools' Culture

In this section, I have re-examined the school culture of the three schools on the basis of the five elements of school culture as said by Deal and Peterson (1998).

### Architecture and Artifacts

The Kaski School has clean, green and pleasing welcoming environment. Trophies, historical photographs, organizational structure, class-wise photographs are well organized, revealing the first visible level of their school culture. Students and teachers like the natural environment of the school very much. The school possess highly enriched infrastructure for students learning. The shields and trophies that the school received are openly displayed so that every visitor could see. These are the features of effective school culture (Schoen & Teddlie, 2008). To me these reveal the first and surface level of the school culture (Schein, 1991). But although the school

emphasizes in English language as the medium of communication, students were not found doing so.

The students of Lalitpur School feel proud of their school as it is distinctive from other government schools in terms of infrastructure; English language proficiency and SLC board results. The school is privileged to have well constructed cemented buildings, well ventilated and well furnished but poorly maintained. They have well equipped science lab, computer lab and library, but remained closed most of the time. The school lacks enough land for play ground. Shields and trophies that the school received in the past are kept in the HT's office instead of displaying openly. Some evidences in the school, especially the behaviors of the students in the class and the writings in toilet reveal the presence of disciplinary problems, indicating the toxic school culture (Goodwin, 2008). Despite such symptoms of toxic culture, the school is one of the best among the government schools in Lalitpur district in terms of results and reputation.

The Kathmandu School artifacts reveal that the school environment is child-friendly but inadequate playground. The mission statement, trophies and medals are displayed in the reception visible to every visitor. Pictures on the compound walls reveal their respect to the social values. Students' works being displayed colorfully on the hallways and classrooms reveal clearly that students' creations are valued in the school culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995). The classes are generally noisy and interactive with very interactive and confident students and friendly teachers. All these artifacts are signaling their positive school culture (Budd, 2009).

**Vision and Values**

The mission statement of Kaski School focuses on imparting education of an international standard, provide all-round education with an affordable cost and ensure

holistic development of child rather than just bookish knowledge. The school gives equal importance to the ECAs as the curriculum because the school focuses in all round education of all the students. According to Vygotsky, the objectives of teaching must be to recognize abilities that are in the process of developing and effort to forecast what the learner will do independently in the future (Scott & Palincsar, 2009). To me, this is the espoused values of the school, the second level of the school culture (Schein, 1991). But the teachers feel that Principal, in his recessive mind values that the students with high academic score are the good students. Punctuality is highly respected by everybody. Students feel privileged, independent and responsible as the school focuses in all round development of the students. Teachers do not focus in result oriented memory based learning; rather they prepare the students to be confident and skillful. These reveal the welfarist school culture (McMurtry, 2005). The morale and the spirits of the students and teachers are very high revealing the strong healthy culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995). But teachers also feel that there is no system of rewarding effective teachers and opportunity for professional development. This is against the values of positive school culture. The school has future vision to be developed as a university.

Lalitpur School does not have any written mission statement. The Principal's oral mission is to bring positive change in the society through the proper education hence; the motto "Education for Social Change", which reveals the values of the school towards the community (Deal & Peterson, 1998). The school policy is not to give physical punishments to the students but evidences show that some teachers violate this. This shows the basic assumption of the teachers is that punishment is necessary. To me this the third level of the school culture also known as the cultural DNA (Budd, 2009). School lacks teachers' collaboration except some sharing session

from the teachers visiting seminars outside. Their future plan is to focus in overall quality, implement continuous evaluation system and to start skill based technical courses like in the area of agriculture and electrical. This reveals that the school has clear future plan revealing the effective school culture (Schoen & Teddlie, 2008). But most of the time students are silent and only the teachers speak in the classrooms. Most of the classes run in teacher-centered mode. This is against Vygotsky's social cultural theory where learning is thought to occur through interaction, negotiation and collaboration (Scott & Palincsar, 2009). Punctuality is poorly maintained. These reveal the school values teacher centered teaching, strict discipline and good result in examination (Deal & Peterson, 1998). To me it revealed the domination of a formal school culture (McMurtry, 2005).

The mission of Kathmandu School is to help children achieve their full potential both academically and socially. They value the practical based learning rather than memorizing the facts from book. They don't value corporal punishment; rather develop positive behavior in the students through counseling and helping students to identify their problem and find the solutions themselves. They make humanistic approach for positive behavior (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). But some teachers use physical punishments in classrooms against the school policy. School values learner-friendly teaching and has enriched rituals and ceremonies to develop confidence in the students. These reveal the effective school culture (Schoen & Teddlie, 2008). The future plan of the school is to extend this school to different parts of the country and to develop infrastructure to support child friendly teaching-learning philosophies, indicating welfarist school culture (McMurtry, 2005).

**Rituals and Ceremonies**

Various activities are organized at the student's own initiation in Kaski School revealing their unique rituals of making the students as active participant of the learning process (Peterson & Deal, 2009). The school conducts different kinds of assemblies in different days to give various exposures to the students. Large numbers of activities are organized in this school throughout the year and in most of the activities, students play the major role revealing effective/ideal school culture (Hoy & Miskel, 1991). Every week the teachers conduct departmental meetings and discuss their departmental agendas. Later, they are presented in the SMT meeting by the HOD. But teachers feel that general meetings involving all the teachers are lacking.

In Lalitpur School, they don't have morning assemblies in the secondary block at all revealing the lack of daily rituals to bind the school members together (Deal & Peterson, 1998). In the primary section, they practice the reporting system, quiz, speech etc to help students improve their skills and confidence. Few annual ceremonies are organized in the school. There is no regular weekly teachers' meeting for sharing and planning together revealing low collaboration. Educational excursions are organized for the students every year within and outside the valley.

In Kathmandu School, morning Assembly consists of National Anthem, School Anthem, Sharing session about journal, visits, facts etc. The school emphasizes in various ECAs like swimming, games and sports, competitions, science fair, educational tour, celebrating all the festivals in the school etc. Educational excursions are also conducted every year to give exposure to the students. These indicate that they have enriched rituals and ceremonies (Deal & Peterson, 1998) Every Sunday the students have class meeting with the class teachers to share the class related problems and make plans. Teachers and the administrators sit for a week

long orientation meeting in the beginning of each academic session, where annual plan is made jointly. On every alternate Sundays, teachers have meeting with the level wise coordinator and prepare lesson plans together and share with all the teachers, revealing collaboration. Every Friday the teachers of the primary level sit together with their subject HOD to plan together for the coming week. These show that to some extent they have teamwork and collaborative environment indicating hothouse school culture (Stoll, 1998).

**History and Stories**

Kaski School was established to provide education to the talented poor students of the remote villages of the region and it is still continued through scholarship schemes. Like Peterson and Deal (2009) said, the past of the school still influences much of the happenings in the present. The historical moments are transmitted to the new members through classroom stories and Principal's speeches. The students and the old teachers remember few of the previous Principals for their significant contributions in shaping the system of the school or for failure. The present school culture seems to be affected by the historically transmitted patterns of values, beliefs and traditions of the previous Principals (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

Lalitpur School was established by local youth to provide literacy opportunity to the local children. Now the school is dedicated for the community. The school is named with the philosophy that the students of this school should be exemplarily creative youth of tomorrow. The school remembers and honors those who contributed in the establishment in the past. The schools with positive culture reflect and honor their past as it has great impact in their present (Deal & Peterson, 1998). The results and the reputation improved after the students started appearing in the SLC in the English medium. As an effective leader, the Principal was able to read the

culture and brought systemic change that supported the school improvement (Garland, 2004).

The Kathmandu School was jointly started in the year 2005 by five likeminded people with the new philosophy of practical based education through learner-centered teaching. Although the public has liked the new philosophy of the school, it is still in the beginning phase with the vision.

**People and Relationship**

Students of Kaski School feel teachers and Principal are friendly with the students. When they meet students in the play ground they talk with the students in a friendly manner. The Principal also participates in the students' picnic for few hours, which students find pleasing. Warm and friendly relationship exists between Principal, teachers and students. These also reveal the welfarist school culture (Stoll, 1998). But there lacks teachers' collaboration except few instances of sharing at the respective departments.

In Lalitpur School, the Principal has autocratic way of dealing with the teachers revealing survivalist school culture (McMurtry, 2005). He is sometimes humorous with the teachers but never with the students. He never enjoys with the students. Students are scared with the Principal but look confident with the teachers. Generally when teachers are free they sit in the sun talking with each other. Some teachers talk humorously with each other.

The Kathmandu School policy is to have friendly relationship between the Board, Principal and the Teachers, try to minimize the concept of formality and hierarchy to maintain understandings. The Principal talks with the teachers and students in a friendly, appreciative and humorous way. Friendly relationship between the teachers exists revealing that the cordial relationship is institutionalized for a

positive school culture valuing collegial relationship (Jerald, 2006). Teachers stay even after the school time in groups to work together, revealing the collaborative culture (Center for improving School Culture, 2004). Teachers are also very friendly with students and the class is like a family. To me this revealed their basic assumption of child-friendly environment, the third level of school culture (Budd, 2009).

During my visits to the schools I noticed few peculiar things which I could not categorize to any particular cultural element of the school culture but I felt those things were related with the school culture. In Kaski School, Teachers seemed to be alert and serious at the students' activities even outside the classroom. Teachers in the science department informally praise the unexpected questions raised by the students in the class. In Lalitpur School, a foreign lady visiting the school for four months under the full bright program told that the school was one of the best amongst the government schools in Nepal. I asked myself how she could judge that. In Kathmandu School, there was a computer on the left side of the Principals' desk. On top of the CPU were the sculptures of "Ganesh" and "Laughing Buddha". I thought this was the evidence of the Principal's spiritual practices.

**Revisiting the Principals and Their Leadership**

As per the students' perceptions, I found that the Principal Navin Sharma gets access to the students individually to find the problems about the students, teachers and the management. I understood that as a Principal, he learns from students and staff and gets acquainted with them to bring effective change in school culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995). The students also revealed that as a participative leader, the Principal involves the students in making some, but not all, key decisions (McCrimmon, 2007). Principal involves the student representations to make decisions about student related

affairs. By these actions of the Principal, I realized that he believes students' involvement empowers them and enables them to learn from the life experience (Fletcher, 2003).

I understood from the perceptions of the students that the Principal Sharma encourages the students to participate in organizing various programs and tournaments under the students' management. For me, this reveals the participative leadership style of the Principal, which tends to lead to good teamwork and creative collaboration (McCrimmon, 2007). I understood that the Principal believes that student's participation in school decision making results in several positive benefits, including greater connectedness and sense of community within the school, reduced level of destructions, and an overall improvement in student behavior and attitude (Mulford, 2007).

Students perceive that they are not unnecessarily scared with the Principal, as he is caring, understanding, friendly and polite. The Principal encourages them to be a model person wherever they go outside the school. To me, by this the Principal tries to spread the school vision beyond the school. This shows, he has important effects on student learning (DeVita, 2010). Students also said that when the students are down, the Principal consoles them perfectly as a healer (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

The students also perceive that besides the office, the Principal can be encountered at any place any time like hostel, dining hall, classrooms, play grounds etc. The Principal's visibility all over the school, has given many positive messages to the school members (Evans, 1995). To me, it is his active management by exception of a transactional leader, maintaining a high level of vigilance to ensure that teachers and students meet the school values. He appears informally at the picnics and parties like dancing and talking but does not show much humorous behavior.

Although his presence gives positive message, I feel, by not being humorous as per the context, he fails to be effective from positive culture point of view at this point (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

Similarly, as the students say, small disciplinary cases are handled by the class teachers and supervisors, only major cases are handled by the Principal (Stolp & Smith, 1995). As an effective Principal, he does not do everything by himself. He involves others to do the minor works for him (Spillane, 2005).

The teachers perceive that the Principal Sharma has been able to bring higher donation from the government and the international donors showing the convincing school vision. As a visionary leader, he has been able to involve the SMC and the senior teachers in creating rewarding visions for the future (Deal & Peterson, 1998). But some teachers feel that they have not been able to choose their representative in the SMT as the Principal picked up all by him. As per Leithwood and Jantzi (2005), transformational leaders can be directive, participative, autocratic or democratic as per the situations.

The department heads feel that every department is independent and there is no system of enforcement from the Principal and upper level. As a learning school, administrators and teachers are open to change and feel free to take professional risk for the ultimate improvement of the school (Silins et al, 2002). The Principal gets feedback from every department. By recognizing and creating a shared language and vision, the Principal tries to make a broad change in school (Stolp & Smith, 1995). But a teacher had a contrasting feeling that teachers do not get opportunity to give constructive feedback.

Teachers also feel that basically the Principal is running the school under the system set by previous Principals. Like all other Nepali Principals, he also does some

extent of discrimination and favoritism between his liked staff and others. Teachers even complain that as an academic leader, he has not been able to give more time to the academic activities as he gives more time to support service issues. But I feel that it should not be forgotten that Principal has multiple roles, responsibilities and relationships (Gupta & Aggarwal, 2007).

The teachers feel that the Principal is friendly with the teachers and does not expect formality from the teachers. As a democratic leader he focuses on principles of equity and social justice being theoretically different from positions of authority (Doyle & Doyle, 2005). Teachers also feel that the Principal does not supervise in detail about whether teachers are meeting the curriculum plan or not and do not engage all the teachers in making plan and policies.

Teachers feel that for Principal Sharma, the major objective of the school lies in the school motto. He always focuses in it. By this, the Principal is revealing himself as a symbol to emphasize his values (Deal & Peterson, 1998). In practice, he regards the first position holder of the class as the best student. Principal as an instructional leader gives higher emphasis on managing teaching-learning as the core activity of the school (Bush, 2007).

With the time and experience he has learnt to accept the ideas given by others regarding the teachers' management issues, trainings and development programs. As a Participative leader he involves the team in making some decisions. He believes that motivating employees who are knowledge workers is based on making them feel valued (McCrimmon, 2007). As per a teacher, teachers are dissatisfied with the Principal for not making the meetings interactive. Here, teachers are not motivated as with the previous Principals and cannot say "No" to the Principal even if they feel that

it is wrong due to the fear of revenge. This is a symbol of toxic culture in the school (Goodwin, 2008).

The Principal Sharma perceives that he went through very hard and risky time before he was finally able to win the confidence with his hard work and success to convince the donors. He remembers that, at first it was a difficult time for him because most of the teachers did not believe in a Nepali Principal. The Principal recognizes himself to be a very busy and hardworking for the betterment of the school, is visible all over the school, friendly and communicative with students and staff. He thinks he takes the ideas and suggestions from the students and teachers in various ways. He has a strong vision to introduce ICT education, which is a costly venture.

The students of Lalitpur School assume that the Principal Santosh Devkota generally speaks politely. He always encourages the students to be good, studious and improve in the examinations. They assume as said by DeVita (2010), the Principal's encouragements have important effects on their learning. But it is understood from the students that the Principal is more focused in the academic achievement than in other extracurricular activities. He focuses in teaching learning rather than in ECAs.

He regularly visits to the class area to check while the classes are running. Principal is visible all over the school, which has given many positive messages to the school members (Evans, 1995). Students feel that teachers and students become serious at their work by Principal's such walk around. I understood that as a transactional leader, it is his active management by exception, maintaining high level of vigilance to ensure that teachers and students meet the school standards.

The Principal has never been in the students' picnics and has never shared

humorous moments with the students. The students perceive that the Principal is always a serious person. He has failed to be a symbolic leader by not being able to act per the situations (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Or in another way, I understood that he has given a symbolic message that Principal means a serious person. Some students are even scared with the Principal. This shows that the Principal has been a symbol of fear to the students, a symptom of toxic school culture (Peterson, 2002).

The students perceive that the Principal emphasizes on the social change through education which is also the unique objective of this school. This shows that as a leader in the school he clearly states goals and expectations for students, staff, and parents (Evans, 1995). Students perceive that the Principal has created various departments to solve the students' problems through the teachers. To me, this indicated that the Principal applies distributed leadership instead of trying to involve in everything (Gronn, 2002).

The students understand that he has brought several improvements like new buildings, computer lab, drinking water etc. and has given emphasis to English language environment in the classrooms. I understood, as a leader, he brought changes for the betterment of school (Moore, 1999). By adapting to the English environment the HT has given the Adhocracy (create) culture ( University of Toronto, 2009). Such organizations emphasize to produce innovative products and services (Kerr & Slocum, 2005).

As per the students' understandings, the main philosophy of the HT is to give equally quality education to those who cannot afford private schools and also not to make any student a failure. With these, the Principal has spread the school vision beyond the school and has gained confidence and respect from teachers and students.

Through the teachers' perceptions I came to know that the Principal is very

active person as he would be observing tiny and micro activities which generally others do not take care of. He is frequently movable during the class time and watches even how teachers utilize their leisure time. He demonstrates that dynamic Principal motivates and coordinates through variety of ways to get the work done (Rallis & Goldring, 2000). To me, all these are the Principal's active management by exception as a transactional leader. The teachers revealed that the major objective of the Principal for the school is to be the actor for the positive social change. That's why he also focuses in the informal education to the local illiterate people of the community. Principal as a leader has built a close and harmonious working relationship between the school and its community (Portin et al, 1998). He played a vital role to spread the vision beyond the school.

From the teachers, I further understood that the Principal has the ability to be an ethical leader by showing examples himself. He leads others to change through action rather than asking school members to make changes revealing a strong work ethic (Picucci et al, 2002). The Principal has gained confidence and respect from the school members. He has proved that by recognizing and creating a shared language and vision, a Principal can make a broad change in school (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

The Principal shares future vision in the meetings. Generally he focuses in improvement in the English environment and implementation of the education in social change. According to Certo and Certo (2006), Transformational leadership inspires organizational success by profoundly affecting followers' beliefs in what an organization should be, as well as their values, such as justice and integrity. Through this style of leadership, he has created a sense of duty within organization members.

Principal Devkota assumes that within 26 years, he has been able to revive the school under his leadership, but gives equal credibility to the dedicated teachers, SMC

and the parents. He has a strong belief that the education they impart to the students should be useful to the society. He emphasizes on "Be sample, and be simple" to bring positive changes in the school. The Principal believes that even an average or below the average students can also be a successful person in a certain area in the future. He perceives that he follows instructional leadership to support and guide to be effective teachers. He also thinks walking around of the Principal is a part of management in schools. His future vision was to improve the academic performance of the school to make it the best government school in Nepal.

The students of Kathmandu School assume that Principal Junita Lama is friendly and speaks politely. Sometimes she speaks humorously in the assembly. In the speech given to the students, she tells them to set a target and always work on to achieve that target. As a successful Principal, she has important effects on student learning (DeVita, 2010). Students enjoy and feel like hearing her speech in the assemblies. It seems to me that she has gained confidence and respect from the students (Tomlinson, 2004).

Students perceive that their Principal is a friendly and humorous person with everybody. They said that Principal also goes to students' picnic and enjoys. To me she is a perfect actor as a leader as she can play various roles as per the situations (Deal & Peterson, 1998). The students' understanding is that the Principal explains the basic objectives of the school as moral development, social behavior and respect native rituals (our culture). She says the primary objective of the school is to produce good citizens. As a leader in the school, she clearly states goals and expectations for students, staff, and parents (Evans, 1995). As a transformational leader, she has inspired the teachers and students to strive for more than only their personal goals. But it seems to me that school members are not involved in creating the school vision,

rather it is the Principal's personal vision.

As per the students, most of the problems are solved by the block in charge and the HODs. As a dynamic Principal she motivates and coordinates through variety of ways to get the work done (Rallis & Goldring, 2000). The Principal passes information through the block-in-charge to all the school members through circulation when the Principal cannot visit everywhere. This seems to be her intellectual stimulation as a transformational leader by sharing the leadership with others and encouraging others to develop as a new leader.

Students also perceive that the Principal visits all the parts of the school frequently which gives many positive messages to the school members (Evans, 1995). To me, this is her active management by exception as a transactional leader, maintaining high levels of vigilance to ensure that teachers and students meet the school standards. But during my visits, I found that her visits to the secondary block were very low. The students perceive that the Principal does not give physical punishment to the students even when they behave naughty. They are counseled and sometimes the parents are called for counseling.

The teachers believe that on the one hand the Principal is very strict and demanding and on the other hand she knows to forgive and is very encouraging and motivating person like a guardian. Most of the teachers take the Principal as their idol person. She has the art of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically toward the achievement of group goals (Koontz & Weihrich, 1990). At this point, I realized that the Principal has gained the respect from the teachers through focusing her time, effort and energy for students' achievement and image of the school (Subedi, 2005). Teachers even said, the school has progressed so much just because of the Principal. From (Gupta & Aggarwal, 2007) I understood schools

are good or bad, flourishing or perishing as the headmaster is capable, energetic or reserve. She coaches and mentors the teachers rigorously and gives feedback in a motivational way. Principal as a transformational leader is characterized by more flexible, versatile and responsive leadership behavior and helps the teachers become more participative and democratic (Lucas & Valentine, 2002). As per the teachers, the Principal Lama has such features.

Teachers revealed that Principal gives merit cards to teachers and students in the assemblies openly to encourage the best performers. I understood this as Principal's contingent reward as a transactional leader (Lavery, 2011). Teachers merit cards are not so effective in the secondary level but it is very encouraging at the primary and the lower-secondary level. The Principal has several roles to play as per need for the betterment of the school and to develop a positive school culture (Fullan, 2002).

The Principal gives full orientation to the new teachers about the school vision, values, norms and procedures before they are given the classes. Teachers also perceive that the Principal always encourage for new ideas. As per the teachers, The Principal makes the working environment enjoying. She is so caring and friendly that teachers forget that she is the boss. She is the one who sends the SMS like teachers' day wish and New Year wish to the teachers first. The Principal also initiates for hiking and dry picnic frequently. The teachers are also naturally influenced by the devotion and dedication of the Principal towards the school. Teachers automatically become more serious and careful towards teaching-learning process because of the Principal's nature as a symbolic leader. Principal uses symbolic gestures to communicate what she values (Picucci et al, 2002).

Principal Lama perceives that her basic aim is to provide practical education through learner-centered teaching even to the middle class children. She feels that they still have a lot of things to do to impart education as per their philosophy and are just making preparations of teachers and infrastructure. She perceives that new teachers should be given intensive trainings about school beliefs and values before sending to the class. She believes in developing new leaders from the existing teachers. She believes in collaboration as she emphasizes in Principal and teachers can learn from each other. To me, this is the second level of the school culture (Schein, 1991). She revealed that her future plan in terms of infrastructural development is to have own land and building that supports the school's teaching-learning philosophies.

**Principals' Leadership and the School Culture**

Students of the Kaski School are disciplined and constructive as Principal Sharma encourages being a model person and focuses in all round education rather than in the bookish knowledge only. As a transformational leader, he encourages the students (Navickaite & Janiunaite, 2010). As per Bass and Riggis (2006), Principal as a leader creates and reinforces values, norms, behaviors within the culture. What s/he gives emphasis as important shapes the expected norms, values and behaviors in the school (Bass & Riggis, 2006). To me, this is a symbol of welfarist school culture, where social cohesion seems to be very high.

Students feel that they are valued because the Principal takes their ideas in various ways. He lets the students keep their view as a participative leader (McCrimmon, 2007). He knows, as said by Stolp and Smith (1995) that a vision comes not just from an idea but from the unity of purpose that is achieved when all members believe in, claim as their own and act jointly. According to Hoy and Miskel

(1991), this is a symbol of effective/ideal school culture. Classes are decorative with educational materials and students are interactive and confident in the class as the Principal believes in fearless environment and has cultured the teachers with the same philosophy. As a leader he indoctrines and socializes subordinates to his way of thinking and feeling (Schein, 1992). For an outsider like me, the positive artifacts of the school clearly show the child friendly values and the beliefs of the Principal (Budd, 2009). Students are not unnecessarily scared with him because he is caring, understanding, friendly and polite. He has created an atmosphere to make every teacher and student feel valued and respected. By doing this, he has gained respect from the teachers and students too.

Students make code of conduct and follow, they seriously do classroom and hostel duties. Students take leadership in organizing various programs in and out of the class as the Principal and the school culture value the all round development of the students. Students feel they are getting international level education for the Principal focuses in all round education and new technology in education. Through this, the Principal has gained respect from the students. As per McMurtry (2005), focus in all round development of the students, and students being confident and satisfied revealed the presence of welfarist school culture.

SMT meetings are conducted regularly to solve the problems and set clear targets as the Principal relies in SMT heavily rather than developing shared vision from all the teachers as a transformational leader (Hoy & Miskel, 2001). But the teachers feel independent in their subject matters since the Principal has faith upon the teachers' capability and he practices democratic leadership (Gastil, 1994). Teachers and the students respect the punctuality since the Principal goes around checking the punctuality and is visible all over the school, any time. His vigilance as an active

management by exception of a transactional leader seems to be successful in this regard. By doing these, as per Schoen and Teddlie (2008) the Principal has created an effective/ideal school culture.

Plenty of cultural, extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are conducted frequently in the school as the Principal values them equally as the academic activity. And he achieves this through involving the teachers and students. As per Mcmurty (2005) this is welfarist school culture as the Principal thinks that life skills are as important as the grades in exams. There exists warm relationship between the Principal, teachers and the students because the Principal is polite and friendly and so do the teachers. As a transformational leader, he encourages teachers and students to be polite and friendly by setting one's own example. Physical punishment is not used at all because the Principal believes that results in producing rude students. As Lambert, (1998) mentioned, the Principal values the positive school culture that has already been established in the school, hence the teachers also openly admire the students' creativeness, as a part of a positive school culture. According to Stoll (1998), such high social cohesion indicates the symptoms of welfarist and hothouse school culture.

History and stories are passed to the new teachers and students formally and informally which indicate that the school history is valued (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Previous Principals are remembered by all. Teachers and students think the school will grow in a university in the future indicating that the Principal has shared this vision. Students do not enjoy the Principal's speech in the assemblies indicating he lacks the effective public communication skills to be an effective leader (Stolp & Smith, 1995). Some teachers feel that they were more motivated with the previous foreigner Principals. At this juncture, the Principal lacks the interpersonal skills.

There is no significant teachers' collaboration; it seems that he does not value the teamwork. Some teachers are not serious in lesson plans as they encompass taken for granted assumptions, the third level of organizational culture (Stolp & Smith, 1995) which indicate that it lacks Principal's supervision. To me, these resemble the survivalist school culture, where both social cohesion and social control are in low amount (Stoll, 1998). Teachers are not satisfied with their representative in the SMT as the Principal picked up the representative without going through the democratic procedure. At this juncture, he seems to be an autocratic leader (Martinuzzi, 2008).

The Principal took high risk by taking over the position at the very difficult situation of the school. As an entrepreneur, he brought new plans and convinced the donors. Now, he is planning to transform the school to ICT based education. The Principal has shared attractive vision for the future. These indicate the hothouse school culture as both the social control and social cohesion are very high (Stoll, 1998).

Lalitpur School has good infrastructure in comparison to the other government schools because of the Principal's ability in convincing the donors. The school possesses better English language proficiency in comparison to the other government schools because of the Principal's high value to the English language (Godfrey, 2003). What the Principal gives emphasis as important shapes the expected norms, values and behaviors in the school (Bass & Riggis, 2006). At this I understood, as a transformational leader he set a vision in the past and later he achieved it through the cooperation of the school members. Principal Devkota set high expectation and achieved through social cohesion reveals the hothouse school culture (McMurtry, 2005).

Sometimes teachers in Lalitpur School feel that they get disappointed by the Principal due to his autocratic leadership. This reveals the formal school culture (Chokoko & Rampai, 2011). Principal selects the teachers' and parents, representatives for the SMC revealing his charismatic leadership role to win the parents' and teachers' trust (Musser, 1987). As said by Engels et al (2008), Principal as a leader, by position has a greater influence in decision making. Parents are highly satisfied with and respect the Principal. Informal education is given to the parents too, showing the Principal's strong belief in the social change through education, as per the School Motto. Here, the Principal as a leader creates and reinforces values, norms, behaviors within the culture. As a transformational leader, he spread the school vision beyond the school.

Most of the classes in Lalitpur School are silent, listening to the teachers teaching form the front clearly showing the lack of the Principal's training, supervision and orientation. That is also seen in lack of students' concentration and teachers' effectiveness in the class. Some teachers beat students against the school policy due to the lacking shared policy and Principal's supervision. Beating students for the disciplinary control is the taken for granted basic assumption, the third level of the organizational culture (Schein, 1991). And punctuality is not maintained by the teachers and the students as it is not taken seriously by the Principal. Teachers are politically affiliated and influence to some extent as the Principal has no objection for the teachers to be affiliated with the politics. Evidences showed students smoke in the toilet and write vulgar words indicating the toxic culture and lack of the Principal's supervision and seriousness. In ineffective schools the school members repeatedly practice such undesirable cultural practices (Subedi, 2005). These are the toxic part of the school culture (Peterson, 2002). Such disciplinary problems, low performance

and low teachers' and students' morale reveal the survivalist school culture (Stoll, 1998).

Rituals and traditions are more at the primary level and very less in the secondary level as the Principal focuses more in the SLC examination results only. There are no regular teachers' meetings indicating that the Principal does not feel the importance of shared vision. He has a basic assumption that the school runs under the established government rules and he is the administrator. According to Schein (1992), the leader's such beliefs, values and basic assumptions are transferred to the mental models of the subordinates, and thus create the school culture. With this, the school seems to have a hierarchy organizational culture (Cheng & Liu, 2005). This notion is against the transformational leadership. These reveal the formal school culture.

There is no strong relationship between the Principal, teachers and the students, lacking collegiality (Center for improving School Culture, 2004) and indicating a weak culture. The Principal never goes in students' picnic. Although the students said that they feel teachers and Principal are friendly and polite but some students are unnecessarily scared with the Principal. At this juncture, I felt the Principal lacking charisma as a transformational leader. Such low social cohesion is the symbol of survivalist and formal school cultures (Stoll, 1998).

Teachers and students think the school will be the best in Nepal in terms of SLC results, as a reflection of the Principal's strong focus in examination orientation. The school has established good reputation amongst the government schools as a result of the hard work of the Principal and teachers for results. It has become a good competitor to the local private schools due to the Principal's concentration for English proficiency and infrastructure development as an instructional leader (Ubben &

Hughes, 1992). It seems that the Principal has shared his future vision with the teachers for inspirational motivation but it seems to be focused in the board examination result only. Such high expectations for academic achievement show the hothouse school culture (McMurtry, 2005).

Students make code of conduct but do not seriously follow and no classroom duties are made. Students do not organize programs on their own. Here, it seems that the Principal has no belief that when students are motivated, they can be creative (Fletcher, 2003). Fullan (2002) mentions that the Principal has several roles to play as per need like leader, manager, motivator and team player for the betterment of the school and to develop a positive school culture, which seems to be lacking here. I understood that he lacks intellectual stimulation to the students. This reveals the survivalist school culture.

In Kathmandu School, The hallways, classrooms and the corridors are full of students' works displayed showing the Principal's belief of students could be made creative provided opportunities (Fletcher, 2003). Students are also involved in teachers' evaluation through questionnaire at the end of every academic session. The Principal believes in students' capacity and they are not empty vessels. Principal as a leader creates and reinforce values, norms, behaviors within the culture. What s/he gives emphasis as important shapes the expected norms, values and behaviors in the school (Bass & Riggis, 2006). Through her inspiration, students feel that they are valued. This reveals the effective/ideal school culture (Stoll, 1998).

Classrooms are neat and well decorated with the students made educational materials. Students do classroom duties revealing the Principal's philosophy of students can be taught the social norms as the hidden curriculum (Jerald 2006). The playground is clean but congested and unsafe showing the lack of required child

friendly infrastructure for the school. But the classroom environment is characterized by interactive students, fearless environment, noisy and unrest class, clearly showing the Principal's values for providing fearless environment to the students (Stolp & Smith, 1995), as she mentioned in the interview. Gupta and Aggarwal (2007) emphasize that schools are good or bad, flourishing or perishing as the headmaster is capable, energetic or reserve. Such relaxed environment reveals the welfarist school culture (Stoll, 1998).

ECAs and CCAs conducted in the school throughout the year as the Principal emphasizes in practical based fieldwork. With this, I found that Principal believes that outstanding teaching and learning can extend to outside the classroom or school building as the learning of the children does not begin and end at the classroom door (DeVita, 2010). This is also a symptom of welfarist school culture.

The Principal emphasizes on "Self-Responsibility" rather than "Discipline". She believes a self responsible person is naturally disciplined, not necessarily vice versa. Natural behaviors of children are not discouraged. But few secondary level teachers beat students against the school policy; here the Principal lacks the monitoring, revealing her weakness in active management by exception as a transactional leader. This reveals that the Principal is against the formal school culture. Rather her child friendly philosophy of education reveals the welfarist school culture (McMurtry, 2005)

Teachers feel it is a good organization and feel proud to be here. The Principal has been able to motivate the teachers by showing their long-term growth. Teachers are satisfied with remuneration because it is above the government scale. I understood this as the Principal's transactional leadership through contingent reward. Friendly and less-formal relationship exists between the teachers and the Principal as

the Principal practices collegiate environment (Whiteley, 2008). Teachers feel the Principal provides the friendly and humorous environment. This also shows the welfarist school culture.

The School Song focuses about the meaningful education for meaningful life as mentioned in the school motto, giving emphasis to their unique beliefs. They have their own practical curriculum that go side by side with the government curriculum. The Principal has high caliber to direct every teacher to make their school curriculum meaningful, as per their vision. Teachers have regular meeting with the level wise coordinator and HODs and prepare lesson plans together and share with all the teachers, empowering them through collaboration (Moore, 1999). This reveals the school's clan culture ( University of Toronto, 2009). Such high level of social cohesion and social control reveal the hothouse school culture. As Rice (2010) said Principal is an important contributor to the effectiveness of school. She influences student achievement, teachers' motivation, and school vision, allocation of resources, organizational structures and organizational learning.

Information flows clearly and effectively between Principal to teachers and to students as the Principal writes the message to the teachers and the students on the message boards every day showing that the Principal plays vital role as a clear communicator. They also have frequent meetings to share information and instructional strategies showing the symptoms of collaborative culture (Moore, 1999). As Schein (1992) said, the Principal as a leader indoctrines and socializes subordinates to her way of thinking and feeling.

Nepali tradition and culture are highly emphasized by the Principal and the school which is clearly revealed in the artifacts and the cultural celebrations by the students and the teachers. Full orientation is given to the new teachers by the

Principal and the senior teachers about the school vision, values, norms and procedures before they are given the classes. The Principal is effective facilitator revealing the clan organizational culture in the school (Kerr & Slocum, 2005). She seems to be alert that the new teachers should learn their culture to be a part of the family. This shows, school philosophy is given high priority by the Principal.

The teachers are influenced by the devotion, dedication and friendly behavior of the Principal. For the teachers, she is like a parent figure, again as a part of the clan culture. At this juncture, I remembered Hoerr (2005) saying that whether a school is moving ahead from struggling status to acceptable or going from satisfactory to good or moving from good to great, Principal plays the vital role. Principal C seems to be playing very effective role to develop effective/ideal school culture.

**Summary of the Chapter**

The school culture of the three schools and their Principals' leadership was revisited from analytical point of view. I based my analysis mostly in the five elements of school culture and the transactional and transformational leadership models in order to explore the leadership of the three Principals. Revisiting the three schools' culture and the Principals gave me few insights.

When Principal is available at various parts of the school, it is an active management by exception of a transactional leader to maintain vigilance in every part of the school. A Principal makes his/her colleagues feel that they are valued and by participating others in decision making as a transformational leader. Teachers are not satisfied when they feel that participatory meetings are not conducted with the teachers and the Principal picks up the teachers' representative for SMT without going through the democratic procedure. Teachers expect effective rewarding system and opportunity for their professional development to be motivated. Students are

disciplined and constructive when Principal focuses in all round education rather than in the bookish knowledge only.

Students take leadership in organizing various programs in and out of the class when Principal and the school culture value the all round development of the students. Students feel that they are valued when Principal takes their ideas in various ways. Teachers and the students respect the punctuality when Principal goes around checking the punctuality.

Principal sometimes acts as a poet and uses the rhetoric language to emphasize his/her values. Teachers get disappointed when the Principal exercises autocratic leadership. There is no warm relationship between the Principal, teachers and the students when there lacks collegiality. The students look confident and fearless when a Principal emphasizes on child-friendly teaching learning environment and is friendly, humorous, dedicated and parental Principal among the students and teachers. Such Principal has strong values and beliefs about the school's unique way for students' experiential and practical learning. Effective Principal has very clear and cordial communication with the teachers and cares the every detail activity of the teaching learning. Principal is able to motivate the teachers by showing their long-term growth. The teachers are influenced by the devotion, dedication and friendly behavior of Principal.

# CHAPTER VII

# EPILOGUE

## Introducing the Chapter

In this concluding chapter, I have embedded my overall study into four compartments. I have started with the summary of my overall research activities in the first compartment. Then in the second part of the chapter, I have presented my major findings. After that, I have drawn conclusion of my overall research where, I have also developed a new conceptual framework to depict the Principal's leadership role on the school culture. Then at the end, I have discussed about the implications of my research from three facets of the educational background; theory, policy and practice before depicting the areas for future research.

## Summary of My Research

I launched my research with a research question, what roles do Principals play in forming the school culture? Then I developed three specific research questions as; what perceptions and practices do teachers and students have about their school culture? What perceptions do the students, teachers and Principals' have about their Principal's leadership? And what influences do the Principal's leadership practices have in the school culture? I mentioned the details of these in the chapter one.

After that, I went through the expedition of literature review and developed a simple initial conceptual frame work to start my research journey. As a qualitative researcher, I was aware that the conceptual frame work could be only a temporary as I made with some priori knowledge (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). As per my initial

conceptual framework, my assumption was that Principal's transactional and transformational leadership has impact in the various factors like his/her values, beliefs, actions, students and teachers' values and beliefs, their behaviors, various traditions and rituals in the school, symbols and relationship. These are also illuminated by the organizational culture theory of school. I believed that surgical analysis with the help of real field experience using ethnographic method would be able to explain Principal's leadership role in forming school culture. I stated these in the chapter two of this study.

Then, I started my journey with the qualitative approach, interpretive paradigm and ethnography method. I collected the data through participant observation, in-depth interview and document analysis. I chose the schools purposefully of three different categories and from three different districts. I used qualitative data analysis software called ATLAS ti (6.2) to code the tremendous data generated through in-depth study. I made an interpretive analysis of the data collected through emic perspective of ethnography. I explained these in detail in the chapter three.

In the chapter four, I presented the teachers' and students' perception about their school culture and tried to explore the school culture elements of the three schools. I presented the cases of the three schools separately. Students in Kaski School revealed the school focuses in all round development of the students and they are encouraged to be independent and responsible. Teachers revealed that they prepare the students to be confident and skillful rather than marks oriented. The assembly rituals of the school are unique. Several annual activities are organized by the students. There exists warm relationship between the school members. Lalitpur School students feel proud of their school as it is distinctive from other government

schools. Students perceive; the school values the education for social change, some amount of physical punishment is given to the students. Teachers don't have collaborative environment. Classes run in teacher-centered mode. Some disciplinary problems prevail in the school. The students of Kathmandu School perceive that the school values child friendly and practical education. Teachers looked satisfied and perceive that the students are participative and confident. The school highly emphasized students' creation and confidence but lacks adequate playground.

In the chapter five, I made an attempt to find the perceptions on Principals' leadership. Students perceive that Principal Navin Sharma gets access to the students individually, is caring, understanding, friendly and polite. The teachers perceive that the Principal has convincing school vision, runs the school under the established system, makes some extent of discrimination and favoritism, and is friendly. The Principal perceives that he takes the ideas and suggestions from others, has a strong vision to introduce ICT education, and is hard working. For me, he is a participatory leader, uses inspirational motivation but lacks a sense of humor. The students of Lalitpur School assume that Principal Santosh Devkota generally speaks politely, is encouraging, walks around for inspection, is always a serious person, and emphasizes on the social change through education. The teachers perceive him as an actor for the positive social change, has the ability to be an ethical leader by showing examples himself. The Principal assumes that he has been able to revive the school under his leadership, has a strong belief that the education they impart to the students should be useful to the society, emphasizes on being example. For me, he shows a high level of vigilance, acts as a poet and rhetoric and values that education is for the society. The students of Kathmandu School assume that Principal Junita Lama is friendly polite, humorous motivating speaker, values social behavior and respects Nepali culture.

The teachers believe her to be strict but very encouraging and motivating person devoted and dedicated towards the school. The Principal Lama perceives that she believes in developing leadership from the teachers and believes in collaboration. For me, she is a caring, friendly, humorous Principal, has good communication skills, and emphasizes the child-friendly teaching learning environment.

My attempt in the chapter six was to analyze the qualitative data I presented in the chapters four and five. Hence in this chapter I revisited the school's culture, the Principals' leadership and influence of the Principal's leadership in the schools' culture. Principal uses inspirational motivations to encourage the teachers to get involved in school activities hence the teachers are dedicated. Students are disciplined and constructive, take leadership in organizing various programs when Principal values the all round development of the students. When students feel that they are valued by Principal, they are disciplined. Teachers and the students respect the punctuality if Principal values the punctuality. When Principal lacks the sense of humor, is serious most of the time, there lacks warm relationship with the teachers and the students. When Principal is instructive, counsels teachers and students, acts as a poet and uses the rhetoric languages, values English language and social change, then the school has outstanding performance. Principal's autocratic leadership results in disciplinary problems. If Principal is friendly, humorous, dedicated and parental and gives emphasis to child-friendly environment, then students look confident and fearless. When Principal has strong values on experiential and practical learning, the classes are lively. Principal's high beliefs in students' capacity produce responsible students rather than just disciplined. The teachers are influenced by the devotion, dedication and friendly behavior of Principal which make them dedicated and friendly themselves.

## My Findings

Based on the ethnographic case study of three schools, I have drawn several findings regarding school culture and Principal's leadership. My findings suggest that Principals played vital role either positively or negatively and indirectly if not directly to form the particular culture at their school. I have presented my findings below.

It was found that pleasing and welcoming environment, well-maintained infrastructure, display of students' creations revealed positive artifacts, the first visible level of school culture. The artifacts and the physical environment seen in the school compound revealed the norms and the values practiced in the school. It was found that enriched infrastructure did not necessarily ensure positive school culture. Proper maintenance and care was needed. The poor maintenance reflected negligence of Principal revealing the toxic school culture. Destructive natures of the students were also found in such case. Lack of principal's transactional leadership through active management by exception was felt in such case.

In general, students were found to be proud of their school's reputation and the cultural elements which made their school distinct from others. Students were found to like the child-friendly approaches of the Principals and teachers while dealing with them. Students and teachers were found to be learning the norms and values of the school first socially then practiced them internalizing in their mind as a part of their culture as mentioned by Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (Sewell, 2006).

The school which gave equal importance to the ECAs as the curriculum focused in all round education of all the students. This was the espoused values of the school, the second level of the school culture (Schein, 1991). Teachers felt that they did not focus in result oriented memory based learning but prepared the students to be confident and skillful. These reveal the vision of a transformational leader.

Punctuality was highly respected in such school emphasizing positive culture. Such school valued the practical based learning rather than memorizing the facts from book. But in opposite case, silent and teacher-centered classes were found.

It was found that Principal's effort to spread school vision beyond the school earned admiration from the society in return resulting in hothouse culture. This is the transformational leadership quality of the Principal. Students and teachers were found to be proud when their school was positively distinctive from other schools. This formed cohesiveness amongst them to form welfarist culture.

As a transformational leader, Principal's motivation through one's own examples and efforts resulted in motivated and dedicated teachers creating hothouse school culture. It was found that a friendly and humorous Principal gets students' high attention and gains their respect. Principal's humanistic approach and values through caring, understanding, friendly and polite behavior produced active and confident students. It was found that students felt good when the Principal participated in their picnic, be friendly and humorous, creating welfarist culture.

Rituals and ceremonies like assembly rituals, events, sports, and festivals helped the students to learn practically revealing the effective school culture. Varieties of school assembly were found in effective school, providing varieties of learning opportunities to students. When students organized various rituals on their own initiation, they became active participant of the learning process. Schools used assembly rituals to impart their norms and values. As the members of positive school culture, they accepted and complied with the practices of positive school culture (Subedi, 2005). Students were found dissatisfied when there were low rituals and ceremonies in the school.

In school with positive culture, Principal motivated teachers for practical and experimental way of teaching rather than focusing in the traditional ways. It was found that Principal used feedback from the students to improve the school culture. It was also found in effective school, Principal focused in child friendly approaches. A child-friendly teaching practice produced participative and confident students. Teachers dealing in humanistic manner produced active fearless and interactive students. I found this to be in line with Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory which emphasizes learning occurs through interaction, negotiation and collaboration (Scott & Palincsar, 2009).

It was found that teachers did not like the autocratic way of management. Autocratic approach of Principal made the teachers disappointed, dissatisfied and de-motivated forming formal and survivalist culture. Students were found to be scared with an unfriendly and serious Principal revealing toxic school culture. Teachers were found to be taking the Principal's vigilance as a check towards them to find out if they were following the school norms. They were found acting differently during such visits. Principal's high vigilance revealing active management by exception as a transactional leader resulted in formal culture.

Lack of Principal's approach for shared goals and proper reward system resulted in survivalist culture. Teachers were found to be dissatisfied when they were not involved in developing shared vision. They felt programs being enforced from the administration resulting in a formal school culture. Lack of regular teachers' meetings resulted in lack of shared norms and values that ultimately resulted in disciplinary problems. Teachers were not satisfied when they could not choose their representative in the SMT.

Teachers were not serious at lesson plans when there lacked collaborative environment to create sense of ownership and effective supervision from the Principal. Lack of collaboration resulted in the poor implementation of the school policy. When teachers were not punctual to the class, students were naturally late. These revealed the Principal's weak value towards punctuality causing toxic school culture. Silent classes listening to the teachers teaching from the front resulted in the lack of students' concentration and teachers' effectiveness revealing the Principal's training and orientation and formed toxic school culture. It was found when Principal showed teachers their long-term growth opportunities and provided good remuneration that resulted in motivated teachers forming welfarist and hothouse culture. Principal with humanistic approach was found to be focusing in counseling the students instead of the physical punishments creating welfarist culture. But some teachers were found giving physical punishments to students against the school policy.

Few peculiar things were found which could not be categorized to any particular cultural element of the school culture but those things seemed to be related with the school culture. In Kaski School, teachers were found to be alert and serious at the students' activities even outside the classroom. I understood this as their feelings of their responsibility towards the students. I remembered that learning of the children does not begin and end at the classroom door (DeVita, 2010). This was found effective in creating positive school culture. Teachers were found informally praising the unexpected questions raised by the students in the class. I understood this as their evidence of supporting the students to speak up. This helped the students to be fearless and confident. This is the symptom of welfarist school culture (McMurtry,

2005). And despite several evidences of toxic school culture, one of the schools was found to be performing well in the SLC examinations and had good reputation in the society. This may be due to the socio-cultural context of the school, where Principal's high emphasis for the academic achievement worked well. The findings also indicated that the school culture of the private and semi private schools are more positive than the government school. Although I cannot generalize this finding, it is parallel with the findings of a positivist survey conducted in 13 public and 41 private schools of Lalitpur district of Nepal (Amgain, 2009).

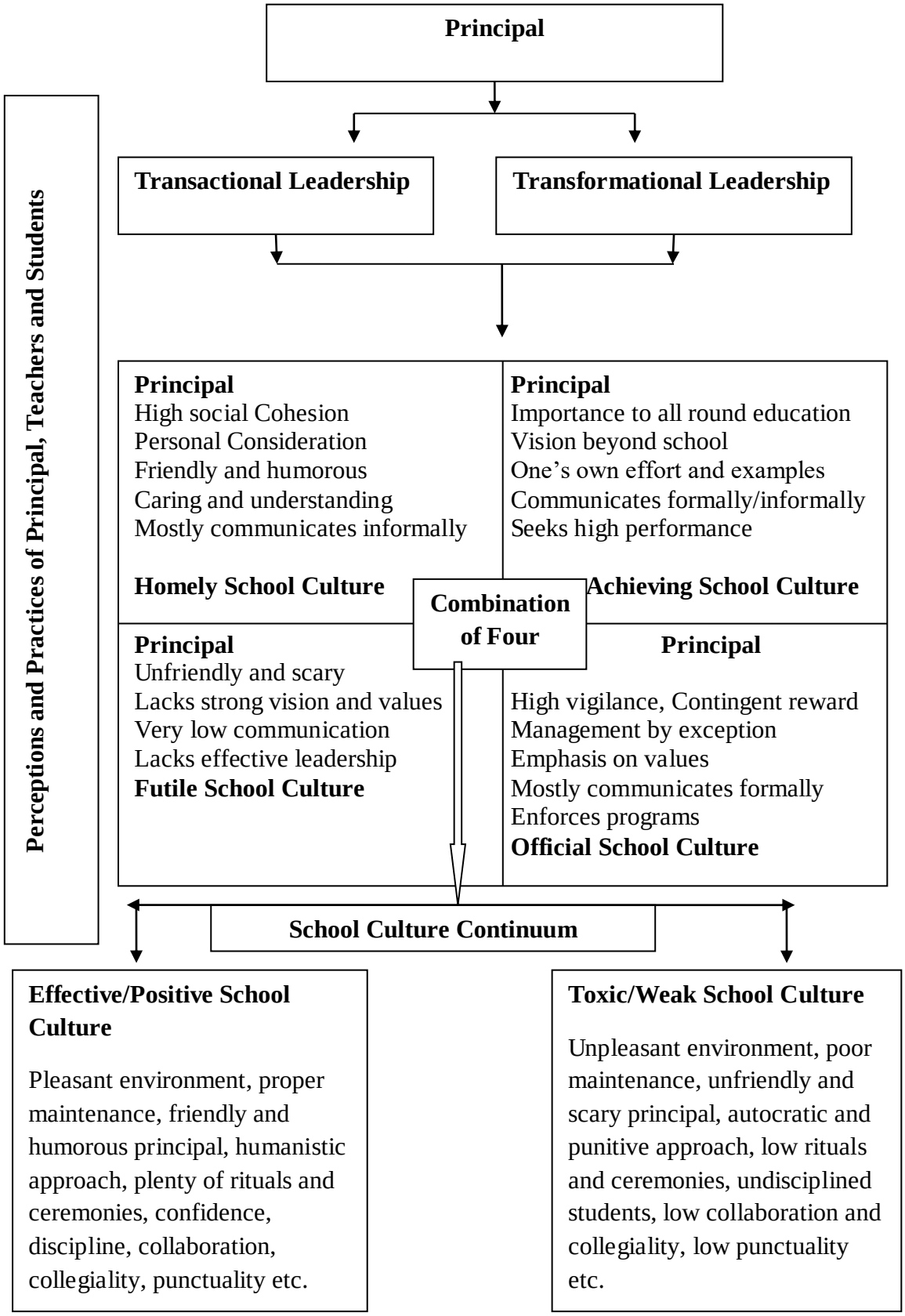
## Conclusion

Based on my findings, I have developed my own terms to represent different types of school cultures. My findings concluded that Principal's high social cohesion, personal consideration, friendly, humorous, caring and understanding behaviors result in *homely school culture*. Similarly his/her importance to all round education, vision beyond school, one's own effort and examples, balance of formal and informal communication, desire for high achievement result in *achieving school culture*. My study also found high vigilance, contingent reward, management by exception, high emphasis on values, formal communication and enforcement of the programs from the Principal results in *official school culture*. But when Principal is unfriendly and scary, lacks strong vision and values, has very low communication and lacks effective leadership, it results in *futile school culture*.

In practical reality, schools have a dynamic combination of the four types of the school culture rather than possessing a single type exclusively. I have developed the concept of "school culture continuum" to explain the notion. In one end of school culture continuum, an appropriate mix of homely, achieving and official school cultures result in effective or positive school culture. This is the most desirable and

recommendable school culture. On the other end of the continuum lies, domination of futile and official school cultures resulting in toxic or weak school culture. The culture of any school lies within these two ends of the continuum and that may move along with time and situation. The effort of the Principal should be to keep towards the first end as far as possible. This is visible in Figure 7.1. On the basis of my conclusions from the study of the three schools, I have modified my conceptual framework as the outcome of my research. My modified conceptual framework is depicted in the figure 7.1 next page.

*Figure 7.1. My Final Conceptual Framework*



How the teachers and the students perceive about the Principal's leadership role and about their school culture also has impact on their behavior and practices of the cultural elements (Stolp & Smith, 1995). Hence, in the school society, the Principal's leadership role, their distinct cultural elements, students and teacher's perception and behavior all are interconnected with each other to form the distinctive school culture, that vary from school to school.

The distinct school culture of a school can either be dominated by positive or effective school culture with some recessive toxic characters or vice versa. As per my findings, some of the features of effective or positive school culture are pleasing environment, proper maintenance of the facilities, friendly and humorous Principal, humanistic approach of the Principal and teachers, plenty of rituals and ceremonies to celebrate where students can learn practically, students are confident, disciplined, constructive and feel empowered and valued by the teachers and Principal, teachers have collaboration, collegiality (friendly relationship) and efficacy (morale), punctuality is respected and school has its own local school curriculum in addition to the mandatory board curriculum.

The toxic and weak school culture has displeasing environment, poor maintenance of the facilities, unfriendly and scary Principal and teachers, punitive approach keep the students in discipline, low rituals and ceremonies and low students' role in organizing them, undisciplined and destructive students often seen in the destructions of the school properties, low teachers collaboration, collegiality and efficacy, low punctuality, silent and teacher centered classes, decisions are enforced from up etc. But some amount of formal school culture seems to be playing positive role in the schools and even teachers and students accept that. This may be due to the socio-cultural context of the schools.

## Implications

I believe that my research outcome can be implicated from three aspects of the educational setting; theory, policy and practice. At the theory level, the literature that I have reviewed in Chapter II provides a theoretical groundwork for those individuals and organizations wishing to investigate the various aspects of principal, leadership and school culture. The practicing Principals, educational administrators and the teachers can also be benefitted in understanding the theoretical backdrop of their school setting, leadership in the school and the symbolic meaning from cultural perspective of everything that happens in their school.

Secondly, at the policy level, I hope the findings of my research would be helpful for the preparation of future Principals and teachers required for inculcating a positive culture in the schools as the Principal plays the most vital role in shaping the culture of the school to positive or toxic. The government of Nepal has invested huge amount of funds and foreign donations in the government schools for the school improvement plans (Dangal, 2010). But the output is clearly not as per the intention. According to the study conducted by Educational and Developmental Service Centre (2011), even after completing the class 10 courses in schools and going for rigorous private tuition classes, the SLC results of public schools are very low. This shows the ineffectiveness of teaching learning environment in schools. People have distrust in the government schools as compared to the private schools in general. I believe that it is high time to think the mere structural changes will not improve the government schools (Stolp & Smith, 1995).

According to a study carried by MOE, only around 30 percent of the students enrolled in grade 1 complete primary education regularly (Adhikari, 2010). The study indicated that the role of teacher is very important in leading the children to learn and

recommended that schools should manage their overall aspects by applying their knowledge and skills. For this it is impossible without positive culture of collaboration (Deal & Peterson, 1998). My study suggested that now the government should try with the cultural perspective if a permanent positive change is desired in the government schools of Nepal. A large scale national level research can be conducted on the basis of my conceptual frame to find the cultural improvements required in the schools of Nepal. In my study, the government school (Lalitpur School) was also highly competitive as a private school. I hope lesson could be learnt from its school culture and the Principal's leadership. The future school leaders and the future teachers should be equipped with full knowledge and skills regarding a positive school culture. Reward and promotion of the head teachers and teachers should be done on the basis of their performance in creating positive school culture and school performance. This will help the future Principals and teachers to take appropriate strategies and actions right from the beginning in order to bring desired positive outcome in their schools (Deal & Peterson, 1998).

Hence, I would like to recommend the policy makers and universities to prepare teachers and principals with deep understandings and skills to prepare schools with effective school culture with an appropriate combination of achieving, homely and official school culture. For this teachers and principals should be able to establish warm relationship with each other and with the students. Skills required for collaboration and collegiality should be departed. Principals should be prepared with the aptitude to be able to act as autocratic and democratic, transactional and transformational, humorous and formal as per the situation and context of the school and the followers.

I also consider that the outcome of this research can be realized, at the practice level in the schools of similar circumstances for creating positive rewarding culture and eliminating the toxic culture if any. My study is helpful to school management to practice the elements of positive school culture at their settings. For example, it can be learnt from my research that when you are a happy and a humorous Principal with the students and teachers, you earn more respect and cooperation from them, hence it is not necessary to be reserved. Similarly, rituals and ceremonies enhance the learning of the students and improve the social relationship between the school members hence, it is not necessary to stick solely in the curriculum. A separate practical curriculum could be developed that go side by side with the mandatory curriculum that helps for the effective learning of students.

Likewise, Principal can be alert to make the visible artifacts of the school pleasing and attractive to give first positive impression to the visitors. Interactive classes with appropriate level of noise can be preferred rather than the silent and teacher-centered classes for the active learning of the students. Principals can make effort to spread the school vision beyond the school to the society for making the school distinctive and reputed. Counseling can be used for the permanent change to make students responsible instead of the physical punishments for the temporary discipline. From this research, the government schools can also learn to move a step forward to enhance their English language proficiency. These are just the few examples. I let the readers to relate my thick ethnographic description of the three schools at their context and implicate wherever feasible.

## Areas for Future Research

In these ethnographic case studies of three schools, I tried doing an in-depth study with the aim of producing a nuanced description of the prevailing cultural setting

(Butvilas & Zygmantas, 2011). It is nuanced description because research is just like opening the window and looking at the world. We can see the world but we don't see the whole world. Hence, I see enough spaces for the future researchers to research in the area of school culture and Principal's leadership role. In this study, my research participants were only the teachers, students and Principals. Future researchers can conduct similar research including the parents and community perspective as well. It is up to the future researchers whether they replicate this research with same objective and methods or modify them as per their philosophical considerations, additional literature review and contexts. Based on my final conceptual frame work, future researchers can also make comparative analysis between the cultural elements of high performing and low performing schools. I also feel that based on my study findings, action research can be conducted to transform the schools with toxic culture to the schools with positive culture. My findings also indicated that the school culture of the private and semi private schools are more positive than that of the government school. I could not generalize this finding being a qualitative research with a single case of a government school. I would like to suggest future researchers to conduct a large scale survey to find if it can be generalized or falsify.

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APPENDIXES

## Appendix A

Guideline for Open Ended Interview

(The questions below were used just for guideline and reminder for the open-ended unstructured interview)

1. How do the teachers and students perceive about their Principal's nature (personal attributes)?

2. What kind of relationship does the Principal have with the teachers and students?

3. What do they perceive about the Principal's visionary attributes?

4. What do they perceive about Principal's values, beliefs, norms?

5. What understandings do the Principal, teachers and students have about the history (stories), vision &values (the base of the culture), rituals & ceremonies (culture in action), artifacts& architectures (symbols and signs) of the school?
6. How do they distinguish about the school's punitive or humanitarian environment?

7. What is their insight of the school culture type?
8. What is the role of the Prinipal in developing school culture (participatory/ collaborative or authoritative/commanding)?

9. What values, beliefs and norms are revealed by the Principal and how are they transferred among the school family?

10. What kind of relationship does s/he prefer with students and teachers how such relationship has contributed to influence them to practice the culture?

11. What other mechanisms does s/he use/apply in forming the desired school culture?

## Appendix B

Observation Frame

(A guideline for school observation)

A. General impression

1. The feeling of walkthrough the school.
2. Educational equipments and facilities seen around.
3. Traditional ways and values observed.
4. General impression of the library.
5. Are the classrooms and hallways airy and light?
6. Are the students work displayed? Where?
7. What are the school uniform and school t-shirt like?
8. Instructional style and methods.
9. Teacher-student relationship
10. Principal-teacher relationship
11. Principal-student relationship
12. Humor, satisfaction and collegiality amongst the Principal, teachers and students.
13. Is it a learning organization? How?
14. Student-focused curriculum and activities
15. Unique tradition in the school
16. Teachers' pride in their kids.

B. Vision and value

17. What reveals about the history of the school?
18. What purpose does the school show?
19. Where the vision and mission statement can be seen?
20. What seems to be the purpose and definitions of success?
a. Achieving extracurricular success,
b. Performing well in teaching,
c. But do they focus on students' learning?
d. Learning for the elite,
e. Learning for all students.
21. Any banner revealing the vision and value

C. Ritual and ceremony

22. Any procedures or routines (Rituals) those are infused with deeper meaning? Assembly speech, staff meets, greeting and goodbye rituals.

23. Ceremonies: periodic events that bind people to each other and shape unwritten cultural values and rules; school day, parents day, well-come programme, fare-well ceremony, graduation day, management ceremonies.
24. Traditions: significant events that have a special history and meaning and that occur year in and year out; traditions that build professionalism, celebratory gatherings.

D. History and Stories

25. Are there any events in which the new members are told about the school history?
26. How the school deals with its history? Does it celebrate history in public festivals?
27. Any typical stories of the school those are told and retold to the new members?

E. Architecture and Artifacts

28. Symbols and signs on the walls
29. Mission statement displayed anywhere?
30. Displays of student work?
31. Displays of past achievements (awards, trophies and honors)
32. Symbols of diversity
33. Historical artifacts and collections
34. Symbolism of the physical plant and architecture.
35. Evidence of collaborative culture.

## Appendix C

A Sample of Interview Abstract

Kathmandu School, Student 3: Bipul Bhattarai

1. I studied here from class 3. Now I am studying in class 9. Before I came here, I studied in a private school in Maitidevi. My parents brought me here feeling that this school in better and different technology.
2. I feel that this school is different from the previous one. In the previous school teachers focused in memory based learning. But here teachers teach us more practically and it is easy to understand here. My parents also say that my study improved after coming to this school. My parents are happy with this school and I am also happy.
3. Principal Madam is caring to the students. Sometimes when necessary she is strict also. She is helpful and arranges fieldstrips to us. I this she is a person of good nature.
4. Sometimes she is angry when students do what they were not supposed to otherwise most of the time she is humorous. She makes humor in assemblies also.
5. Once we went for an inter-school debate competition. We could not win the competition. When we came back to school frustrated, the Principal consoled us personally that winning is not everything. By participating also you have learnt many things. That learning is more important than winning the competition.
6. During the result time she speaks personally to every student along without parents. She talks about our strength and suggests that we can do better next time.
7. The Principals office is in the primary block but she visits this secondary block frequently. The secondary block is in the supervision of the block-in charge, Shanti Madam.
8. When students misbehave the block-in charge talks with the students and asks "what punishment shall I give to you?" when the offender apologize, s/he is forgiven that time by giving warming.
9. When students do not pay attention in the class, teachers get angry and they beat on the back bone or pull ears or hairs.
10. Generally the teachers do not give corporal punishments but sometimes students misbehave in the class. They do not pay attention in the class while the teacher is teaching but involve in the side-talking. It thinks it is nature for a teacher to get angry in such situation.
11. In my understanding the Principal also thinks that it is ok to beat students sometimes.
12. Principal shows the students love and care by congratulating the students and providing gifts in the assembly. She is friendly with the students. She talks personally and suggests us. She goes to the picnic with us and enjoys by making jokes and dancing.

13. If the students want to sit in a meeting with the Principal, we have to give application first through the block in charge. Then she arranges time for us.
14. During the last summer we asked for a meeting and requested for wall fans and Reference books in the library. The Principal gave the responsibility to the block in charge to manage that and she managed that.
15. Every Sunday we have class meeting with the class teachers. We talk about our problems in the class first then we put them to the upper level.
16. When the Principal suddenly appears we greet her, she also smiles and greet us. Then we do normally what we were doing. We don't need to be scared with her.
17. I think the objective of the Principal for running this school is to bring new philosophy in teaching by making the students understand rather than rote learning. I think the distinct objective of this school is teaching by practices.
18. I don't know about the school mission. I have not seen anywhere around the school.
19. Our school gives us quality education because all the teachers who teach us at the secondary level are Masters Degree holder and they are experienced. They teach us practically and interactively. They let us share what we know in the class and teachers also take us for fieldstrips. This is quality education in my understanding.
20. We have various ECPs like swimming, games and sports, competitions, science fair, educational tour etc.
21. We went to Jiri and studied the life style, society and tradition of the people. We also studied about their religious thinking and their educational thinking. We also saw the Technical school. We found that the technical school was promoting the SLC failed students in the field of health, engineering and agriculture. We also saw the cheese production.
22. We have dress code. For two days we put house dress and for four days we put the school uniform. Teachers do not have uniform. They put formal dress.
23. I think here the students are considered as good students if they have good behaviors and good academic performance.
24. I think the students get self respect because the teachers do not behave harshly with the students and they do not hurt the students by their speech.
25. While teaching in the class, sometimes our teachers tell us that we have got the opportunity to study in good school with so many facilities. Our teachers focus all the students equally while teaching in the class. They tell us that we could ask them as many times as we could if we do not understand in the class. Students make various things and show in science and Art exhibition.
26. Our school motto emphasize that our life will be fruitful with good education. Our teachers and Principal explain that in various occasions.
27. The most importance is given to the education and behaviors in this school.
28. All the teachers are friendly with each other. They do not visit each other's class while teaching. But sometimes the Principal visits.
29. There is a suggestion box near the Principal’s office. Sometimes students give suggestions are improvements. Such suggestions are implemented. But sometimes students take the suggestion box as a joke and put the chocolate wrappers in it.

30. Sometimes the teachers provide the evaluation sheet to the students to evaluate the overall classes of that subject

# Appendix D

(A Sample of Coded Data)

**Report: 14 quotation(s) for 1 code**

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**HU:** Kaski School Teachers
**File:** [D:\Documents and Settings\Administrator\My Documents\Scientific Software\ATLA...\Kaski School Teachers.hpr6]
**Edited by:** Super
**Date/Time:** 2012-02-01 22:22:00

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**Mode: quotation list names and references**

**Quotation-Filter: All**

**Principal's Leadership**

**P 7: Teacher 1 Raju VK.docx - 7:2 [Although the present Principal..] (5:14) (Super)**
**Codes: [Principal's Leadership]**
**No memos**

Although the present Principal was promoted through our pressure, monitoring that the new Principals in the schools should be selected from the pool of well-qualified and experienced teachers from within the school now we are not so much satisfied with his performance as a Principal. He gives more emphasis to the non-teaching staff and non-teaching activities and management rather than in the teachers. I think as an academic leader, he has not been able to give more time to the academic activities.

**P 8: Teacher 2 Deepak Gurung.docx - 8:6 [I think the present Principal ..] (17:19) (Super)**
**Codes: [Principal's Leadership]**
**No memos**

In the beginning days he did not accept other ideas. But with the time and experience he has learnt to accept the ideas given by others. I have personally given several ideas in teachers' management issues and trainings and development programs. He accepted and implemented.

## Appendix E

Sample field book journal

**16th July 2011**

I reached the school at 9:45. I saw the teachers and students going towards the gym hall. The gym hall, which is a unique feature of this school, is a multipurpose hall for gatherings and sports. The gate keeper informed me that the school assembly is being started in the gym hall. I also went there and stood at the side where the teachers were standing. The Principal smiled from the front to reveal that I was welcomed there. Students were gathering there, catching up their respective lines. Patriotic song was being played in the loudspeaker. After few minutes, the music went off, the School Choir sang the national anthem from the stage and others joined the anthem.

After the national anthem, all the students sat on the carpeted floor in their class wise line. Then two boys went to the stage and sang two pop songs, Nepali and English, with a guitar. Then a teacher welcomed me from the stage as a visitor and the ex-student. Then he announced the winners of the internal competitions. The winners were applauded with the clap. After that the teacher announced about the leave weekend, the students screamed with joy. Other significant events I noticed were as follows:

Most of the students were in the Red tie but few of them were in blue tie. According to the Principal, the students with the blue tie were the members of the student council. They have class representatives in each class. They have different kinds of assemblies in different days. On the Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays they have general school assemblies. On the Mondays they have day students and hostel students separately to address their distinct issues. On Wednesdays they have class assemblies where they address their class issues and make various presentations from the students. On Fridays there are no assemblies and the classes are started directly because the school day is short on the Fridays.

After the assembly, I went around the school compound. The school ground was neat and clean. The awards received by the school were nicely displayed outside the reception in a safely protected shutter. The shutter is opened during the school days. School post box was also kept outside the reception for the hostel students. Class-wise photos were also displayed there.

Photos of the founder Principal, national board topper student, veteran teachers and staff serving the school for more than 20 years nicely displayed at the hallways. SLC board results were also displayed statistically. Organizational

structures of the teaching and non-teaching staff were displayed as the two wings under the Principal. Photos of the previous Principals were displayed in the Principal's room and the photos of the previous vice-Principals were displayed in the vice-Principal's room.

There were several hoarding boards emphasizing the English language for the general communication. Hoarding boards were also at different areas emphasizing to keep the school environment neat and clean. There were several neat and green gardens on the either sides of the pathways.

The school was established in 2023 B.S. and the school motto is **Knowledge, Character and Service.**

I had an informal talk with the games teacher who served the school for more than 25 years. He still remembered some of the sportive students who passed out from the school 17 years back. He also knows where those students are and what they are doing now. He revealed that he was satisfied with the pay-scale of the school as it was higher than the government scale and he also got the residential facility. He likes the beautiful environment of the school.

The secretary of the Principal joined our conversation introducing him. He said that he had been informed about me by the Principal and he had already circulated the notice to all the departments about my research observation for one month.

I sat at the reception for some time where I discovered that the students come frequently to contact at their home through the telephone. The students were treated politely by the receptionists. The environment revealed gentleness.

## Appendix F

Research Participants

| Kaski School | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| S.N. | Name | Sex | Age | Position |
| 1 | Samip Bhandari | Male | 18 | Student |
| 2 | Rabi B.K. | Male | 14 | Student |
| 3 | Sarita K.C. | Female | 17 | Student |
| 4 | Uma Baral | Female | 15 | Student |
| 5 | Raju B.K. | Male | 43 | Teacher |
| 6 | Deepak Gurung | Male | 41 | Teacher |
| 7 | Sarita Gurung | Female | 40 | Teacher |
| 8 | Nabin Sharma | Male | 49 | Principal |
| Lalitpur School | | | | |
| S.N. | Name | Sex | Age | Position |
| 9 | Sami Shrestha | Female | 15 | Student |
| 10 | Namrata Shakya | Female | 16 | Student |
| 11 | Nabin Shrestha | Male | 15 | Student |
| 12 | Sameer Acharya | Male | 18 | Student |
| 13 | Sharad Adhikari | Male | 38 | Teacher |
| 14 | Rajesh Maharjan | Male | 45 | Teacher |
| 15 | Seema Maharjan | Female | 31 | Teacher |
| 16 | Santosh Devkota | Male | 52 | Principal |
| Kathmandu School | | | | |
| S.N. | Name | Sex | Age | Position |
| 17 | Biraj Sijapati | Male | 14 | Student |
| 18 | Santwana Parajuli | Female | 14 | Student |
| 19 | Bipul Bhattarai | Male | 15 | Student |
| 20 | Bipasha Bhattarai | Female | 16 | Student |
| 21 | Neetu Upreti | Female | 31 | Teacher |
| 22 | Sharada Subedi | Female | 29 | Teacher |
| 23 | Sagar Pokhrel | Male | 35 | Teacher |
| 24 | Junita Lama | Female | 43 | Principal |